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Undoubtedly there are all sorts of languages in the world, yet none of them is without meaning. If then I do not grasp the meaning of what someone is saying, I am a foreigner to the speaker, and he is a foreigner to me (1 Corinthians, 14: 10-11).

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- **Languages and literatures teaching and learning.**

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(LITERARY) LANGUAGE AND SOCIAL CONDITIONING

THE POLYSEMY OF SYMBOLS
IN THE NOVEL "OBLOMOV" BY IVAN GONČAROV

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Abstract
The polysemy of the symbols "house", "path", "light" in the novel "Oblomov" by Ivan Gončarov is discussed in the article. The attention is focused on how these symbols help to reveal the images of the main characters in the novel: Il'ja Oblomov, Andrej Štol'c, Olga Il″inskaja, Agafia Pšenicyna.

Keywords: *image, symbol, home, way, light, food, sun*

Rezumat
În articol, supunem cercetării polisemia simbolurilor „casă", „cale" şi „lumină" în romanul lui Ivan Goncearov „Oblomov". O atenţie deosebită se acordă felului în care aceste simboluri dezvăluie chipurile personajelor centrale din roman: Ilia Oblomov, Andrei Shtoltz, Olga Ilinscaia, Agafia Pşeniţina.

Cuvinte-cheie: *imagine, simbol, casă, cale, lumină, mâncare, soare*

We considered the problem of interpreting the image of Oblomov in the cultural, historical and literary aspects in our previous articles. We concluded that Oblomov is an integral artistic image, whose unambiguous interpretation leads to a simplification of the meaning of the novel (Brajuc, 2018a). We showed the unity of "type" and "character" in the structure of Oblomov's image. We explored the artistic devices that the author uses to create the image of the main character. We found that the dominant device in the novel is a multi-stage antithesis. We proved that the peculiarity of I. Goncharov's antithesis is that it does not convey total separation and difference, but it paradoxically expresses synthesis, unity (Brajuc, 2018b). We compared the image of Oblomov with the concepts of Russian culture and literature ("laziness" and "peace"), and we also compared his image with other characters in the novel (Andrej Štol'c, Olga Il″inskaja, Agafia Pšenicyna) (Brajuc, 2019a). We characterized the symbols "house", "path", "light" and we demonstrated their artistic role in the structure of Oblomov's image (Brajuc, 2019b).

The author also uses the symbols "house", "path" and "light" when describing the characters of the novel, when creating a figurative system, using lexemes included in the semantic fields of these names.

Štol'c's father mentally paved a rut for Andrej, a "path", but the son should not follow exactly the path that his father intended for him. Accord-

ing to Gončarov, the Russian university will make Štol′c the son not a philistine, but a doer:

"Since olden times, doers have been cast in five, six stereotypical forms, lazily, half-eyed looking around, put their hand to the public machine and moved it along *the usual rut* drowsily, *putting their foot* in the *trail* left by their predecessor. But the eyes woke up from drowsiness, *brisk wide steps*, lively voices were heard... How many Štol′c should appear under Russian names!" (Гончаров/Gončarov, 1981, p. 171).

As we can see, Štol′c's path, his life purpose is the antithesis of Oblomov's life path.

The father treats Andrej in the same way as his father, Andrej's grandfather, did to him, "letting go to all four sides":

"—...*The lamp burns brightly, and there is a lot of oil in it.* You are well educated: all the careers are open to you... Well, if you don't have the skill, if you *can′t suddenly find your own way*, if you need to consult, ask —go to Reingold: he will teach you. ...He has a four-story *house*. I′ll tell you the address..." "Don′t tell me", Andrej objected, "I′ll go to him when I have a four-story house, and now I′ll do without it..." (*idem*, p. 165).

Štol′c wants to go his own way, he is confident that he can build a house. Štol′c's father compared his life to the burning of an icon-lamp, which burns brightly, and there is plenty of oil in it. It is no longer the image of Oblomov's sun, which is part of nature and which shines regardless of people. The lamp burns brightly because it contains oil. As I. Pyrkov noted, "...one of the light images of the novel concerning Štol′c the son bears, as we would say, a generic, family seal. This is an image of a burning lamp" (Пырков/Pyrkov, 2000). Štol′c prefers "the slow burning of fire".

The dominant in the symbolism of Štol′c's "path" is movement, running, and he is compared to a horse. The horse is a symbol of strength, speed, indefatigability. Štol′c manages both transactional and heart duties with dexterity, he knows how to notice the "curvature" in his path in order not to stumble and go properly. Oblomov, on the other hand, thought that there was a stone on his way that prevented him from realizing in life. Štol′c does not have such stones, he does not doubt the correctness of his path:

"He went firmly, vivaciously... It seems that he controlled both sorrows and joys... as with the steps of his feet... A simple, that is, *direct*, real outlook on life, that was his constant task, and, gradually reaching its solution, he understood its whole difficulty and he was internally proud and happy whenever he happened *to notice a curvature in his path and take a straight step... He felt the ground under his feet* even among enthusiasm" (Гончаров/Gončarov, 1981, pp. 167-169).

Despite the fact that in the description of Štol′c's life path, the verb "to leap" is frequent:

"...he said that" the normal purpose of a person is to live four seasons, that is, four ages, *without leaps* and carry the vessel of life to the last day, without spilling

any drop in vain, and *that an even and slow burning of fire is better than a fierce blaze*, no matter what poetry burns in them. ...And he *kept going and going stubbornly along the chosen path"* (*idem*, p. 170).

Štol'c, unlike Oblomov, is able to follow the chosen path stubbornly, not relying on "chance" and "fate", hence the different perception of the "abyss" by Oblomov and Štol'c. The abyss is impassable, irresistible for Oblomov. But any obstacle, any barrier is surmountable for Štol'c:

"There is no need to add that he went towards *his goal, bravely going through all obstacles*, and unless he gave up the task when a wall arose in his path or *an* impenetrable *abyss* opened. But he was not able to arm himself with the courage that, closing his eyes, *would leap over the abyss* or rush to the wall *at random*. He *will measure an abyss or a wall*, and if there is no sure means to overcome, he will go away, no matter what someone may say about him" (*idem*, p. 171).

When Štol'c says that they want to build a pier and build a highway in Verkhlyov, "so *Oblomovka will be not far from the main road,"* Oblomov is horrified by this news, because the long road violates the holistic, closed world of solar eden of Oblomovka. Štol'c thinks that at last "the rays of the sun have fallen" on Oblomovka, that the "dawn of new happiness" is rising over it. This is in that Oblomovka, which, in the view of Il'ja Il'ič, is "all in shine, in the rays of sun...".

Štol'c is trying to bring Oblomov onto the "high road", where there is progress, civilization, movement. He constantly calls him abroad with him. Arriving at Oblomov, he does not listen to his objections, but demands "physical and mental gymnastic". Štol'c's life path is conveyed through the metaphor "on the move", that is, without stopping. He says to the distraught Oblomov:,

"We will have lunch somewhere *on the move*, then we will go home at two, three, and... *On the way you will shave: I'll take you*" (*idem*, p. 177).

"Well, Il'ja, *hurry, hurry*!" (*idem*, p. 179).

Under the influence of his friend's speeches, youthful dreams and desires light up in Oblomov, he asks Štol'c to lead him wherever he wants:

"Give me your will and mind and *lead me* wherever you want. Perhaps I will follow you, but I *will not move alone*" (*idem*, 1981, p. 190).

Štol'c vows that he will take Oblomov first abroad, then to the village and help find a case for a friend, he says that he will not lag behind, everything will be decided now or never. Under the influence of Andrej's speeches, Oblomov is full of decisiveness. The question of the "path" for Oblomov becomes a Hamlet question:

"What should he do now? *Go forward or stay*? This Oblomov's question was deeper than Hamlet's for him. *Going forward* means suddenly throwing off a wide

robe not only from your shoulders, but also from your soul, from your mind... *What's the first thing to do? ...To go* abroad for six months, *...to go where everyone goes, by railroads, by steamers*, *...to go* to the fields, *to go* to elections, to a factory, to a mill, to a wharf. ...It means *going forward...* And so the whole life! Farewell to the poetic ideal of life! *This is not life*, but some kind of *forge*; *there is eternal flame, chatter, heat, noise...* when to live? Wouldn't it be better to stay? *To stay* means *...to grow old peacefully in the apartment of Tarantiev's godmother...* "Now or never!" "To be or not to be!" *Oblomov got up from the chair, but he was not immediately able to put on a shoe and sat down again*" (*idem*, pp. 193-194).

Hamlet's suffering turns into a comic situation. Oblomov's path does not run where there are railways and steamships, where there is flame, chatter, heat, noise – all this is in the antithesis of the peace and sun of Oblomovka. The character's feet do not have time to get out on the Štol′c road, because they do not fall into the shoes. Oblomov's preparations for the journey proposed by Štol′c are also comical. The combination of "Oblomov and the Sea" sounds like an oxymoron, it does not fit into the mind of the reader, just as a travel coat and a travel bag are incompatible. The only thing that is associated with the image of Oblomov is a bag for provisions, but this already sounds like an oxymoron for Štol′c's "path".

Štol′c still managed to influence his friend to some extent and try to change his life path. He introduced him to Olga. Olga's image is also revealed through the symbolism of "path" and "light":

"...She, although unconsciously, *went a simple, natural path of life* and by a happy character, by a sound, not outwitted upbringing, *did not avoid* the natural manifestation of thought, feeling, will, even to the slightest, barely noticeable movement of eyes, lips, hands. It is because, perhaps, she *went* so confidently along this *path*, that from time to time she heard nearby some other, even more *confident steps* of the "friend" whom she believed, and measured *her step* with" (*idem*, p. 197).

"Olga *went* with her head bent slightly forward, so slender, nobly resting on her thin, proud neck; she moved with her whole body evenly, *striding lightly, almost imperceptibly*" (*idem*, p. 200).

Olga strides confidently in the same way as Štol′c, especially since he, like a loyal friend, tries to direct Olga's movements. And at the same time, her step is light, almost elusive. It is noteworthy that Olga, just like the main character, believes in fate, despite all her determination, intelligence and desire to build and change not only her life path, but also Oblomov's "path":

"I am waiting, looking only for happiness, and I believe that I have found it. If I am mistaken, if it is true that I will cry over my mistake, at least I feel here (she put her hand to her heart) that I am not to blame for it; it means that *fate didn't want it, God didn't give it*" (*idem*, p. 270).

The name Olga means "saint", "torch", her surname comes from the name Ilia, the name of the god of thunder. Olga's planet is the Moon, a source of

light, one of the celestial luminaries deified by the Slavs (Ермолаева/Ermolaeva, 2006, p. 21).

When the reader gets to know Olga, her "light" portrait is imperturbably calm, she was very glad when she met Štol'c:

"...although her eyes *did not sparkle*, her cheeks *did not glow with a blush*, but an *even, calm light spread* over her whole face and a smile appeared" (Гончаров/Gončarov, 1981, p. 196).

"Olga was not a beauty in the strict sense, that is**,** *she had neither whiteness, nor bright colors of her cheeks and lips, and her eyes did not shine with rays of inner fire...*", but at the same time the author points out that thin and compressed lips are "...a sign of a thought continuously directed at something, the same presence of a speaking thought *shone* in the sharp-sighted, always vigorous, never letting through the gaze of dark, gray-blue eyes" (*idem*, p. 200).

Sharp light fluctuations (from burst to fading) form the basis of Olga's "light" portrait.

Driving around the houses of Petersburg with Štol'c, Oblomov feels, "...how unhappy he is, how all good things perish from lack of participation, activity, how *faintly life flickers*..." (*ibidem*). But Oblomov transforms, begins to "burn", having come to Olga, his beloved sun appears:

"During lunch, Oblomov experienced the same torture as the day before, he chewed under her gaze, spoke, knowing, feeling that above him, *like the sun*, this gaze was standing, *burning* him, disturbing him, stirring his nerves, blood" (*idem*, p. 201).

Something lit up inside Olga with the appearance of Oblomov, too:

"...a smile crawls over her face, then it *lights up her* eyes, then it *spills* over her cheeks, only her lips are compressed, as always" (*idem*, p. 202).

For Oblomov, Olga's singing is like lightning, from which he "flashes", which destroys him:

"His heart was beating, his nerves were trembling, *his eyes sparkled* and flooded with tears from words, from sounds, from this pure, strong girlish voice. ...Oblomov *flared up*, exhausted, holding back tears with difficulty, and it was even more difficult for him to stifle a joyful cry, ready to escape from his soul *...At that moment he would have gone even abroad, if he had only had to sit down and go.* In conclusion, she sang Casta diva: all the delights, thoughts in the head, rushing by *lightning*, trembling like needles running through the body—all this *destroyed* Oblomov: he was exhausted" (*idem*, p. 204).

The author's irony in the words that Oblomov would even go abroad emphasizes the power of the influence of Olga's singing on the character. Oblomov sees only light and burning in Olga, she "flashes" from his words when he compliments her, as Oblomov "flashes" from her singing:

"My God, how pretty she is! There are such in the world! ...This *whiteness*, these eyes, where, as in the abyss, it is dark and at the same time something *shines*... it

must be the soul! ...At the heart, right here, it seems to begin to *boil* and beat..." (*idem*, p. 207).

"Sing it! he said. —This is the compliment I've been waiting for! —she interrupted him, *flashing* joyfully" (*idem*, p. 208).

"...Don't ask me to sing, I won't sing like that anymore... Wait, I'll sing one more..." she said, and immediately her face *flushed, her eyes lit up*, she sat down on a chair, took two or three chords strongly and began to sing" (*idem*, p. 209).

The experience of Olga's future love and passion and the experience of Oblomov's true love-passion are described in parallel, "light" lexemes reveal the reciprocity of feelings and the unity of experiences here: to glow, to sparkle, lightning, to flash, ray, fire, flash, to shine, dawn, brilliance:

"Her cheeks and ears *were red* with excitement; sometimes the play of *lightning* of the heart *flashed* on her fresh face, *a ray of* such ripe passion *flashed*, as if she was experiencing a distant future time of life in her heart, and suddenly, this *instantaneous ray extinguished* again, again the voice sounded fresh and silvery. And the same life played in Oblomov; it seemed to him that he was living and feeling all this —not an hour, not two, but for years... Both of them, motionless from the outside, *were bursting with inner fire*, trembling with the same trepidation; there were tears in their eyes, caused by the same mood. All these were symptoms of those passions that must, apparently, once play in her young soul, now still subject only to temporary, flying hints and *outbursts of dormant forces of life.* She ended with a long melodious chord, and *her voice was lost in him. ...The dawn* of the awakened, from the bottom of the soul of rebellious happiness *shone* on his face; a look filled with tears was fixed on her... *His eyes shine*, my God, there are tears in them! —...This look was motionless, almost *insane*; it was *not Oblomov* who looked at them, *but passion*" (*idem*, p. 210).

Il'ja Il'ič and Olga's explanations and conversations take place on the move, they walk in the park, walk along the paths, Olga tries to bring Oblomov onto the road of life, where there is no sleep and peace, she wants to be a "guiding star" for Oblomov:

"She instantly weighed her power over him, and she liked this role *of a guiding star, a ray of light* that she would pour over a stagnant lake and she *would be reflected* in it" (*idem*, p. 241).

"...But more and more often she *pushed him forward*, further, knowing that he *would not take a single step himself and he would remain motionless* where she left him" (*idem*, p. 242).

The metaphor "guiding star" emphasizes the symbolism of "path" and "light" in Olga's image. Emotional and mental experiences, mood swings and inner excitement of the character are described using "light" metaphors:

"*Her eyes suddenly opened wide and flashed with amazement*" (*idem*, p. 218). "*She changed in her face: two pink spots disappeared, and her eyes dim*" (*idem*, p. 218).

"*...Her affectionate and curious look began to burn him again*" (*idem*, p. 219).

"...Then suddenly her face lit up with a ray of a smile..." (*idem*, p. 220).

At the same time, there was a "ray of thought", "sparks of the mind" in her gaze. Her face "lit up with consciousness". Gončarov uses a detailed simile to show the maturation of Olga Il″inskaja, comparing the soulful vigilance that came to her with the sun that illuminated the earth:

"Then her face was gradually filled with consciousness: *a ray* of thought, guess-work made its way into every feature, and suddenly the whole face *was illuminated* with consciousness ...*The sun* also sometimes, coming out from behind a cloud, gradually *illuminates* one bush, another, the roof and suddenly *floods* the whole landscape with *light*" (*idem*, p. 228).

Štol′c wanted the cheerful Olga Il″inskaja to shake apathy and drowsiness from his friend:

"Stoltz thought that if the presence of a young, pretty, intelligent, lively and part-ly derisive woman was introduced into Oblomov's sleepy life, it would be like bringing *a lamp* into a gloomy room, from which *an even light*, a few degrees of heat, would spread in all dark corners, and the room will become more cheerful. That was the whole result that he achieved by introducing his friend to Olga. He did not foresee that he would bring in *fireworks*, and Olga and Oblomov did not anticipate that, even more so" (*idem*, p. 233).

But there is no place for fireworks in Oblomov's dreams, he is afraid of insane passions leading to explosions, and expects a "quietly flickering ray of sympathy" from his chosen one:

"...And in twenty, thirty years he would have met in her eyes the same meek, quietly *flickering ray of sympathy* on his warm gaze. And so on to the grave!" (*idem*, p. 212).

"He would run away from a woman in horror if she suddenly *burns* him with her eyes or moans herself, falls on his shoulder with her eyes closed, then wakes up and wraps her arms around his neck until he suffocates... This is *a firework, an ex-plosion of a barrel of gunpowder*; and what's next? Stunned, blinded, and scorched hair" (Гончаров/Goncharov, 1981, p. 213)!

In Oblomov's dream, the "path", the "river" should be calm, without fire-works, as well as feelings:

"But isn't this the secret goal of everyone: to find the unchanging physiognomy of peace, the *eternal and even flow* of feeling in your friend? After all, this is the norm of love... ...To give passions a legal outcome, to indicate the order *of the flow, like a river*, for the good of the whole region" (*idem*, p. 212).

Oblomov thinks that with the angel Olga, his dream of quiet and bright love will come true. But Olga's "river", her life and feeling, her "road" are not like the "quiet stream" in Oblomov's dream:

"This voice *will sound* someday, but *it will sound* so *strong*, it will burst out with such *a chord* that the whole *world will stir up*! Both the aunt and the baron will recognize, and there will be a rumble from this voice far away! That feeling will

not make its way as *quietly as a stream*, hiding in the grass, with a barely audible murmur" (*idem*, p. 259).

Oblomov and Olga's love is combustion, fire, light. All their experiences, thoughts, doubts, joy, pain are conveyed by "light" metaphors and epithets, from bright glow to extinction:

"Happy, *radiant*, as if "with a month in the forehead", in the words of the nanny, he came home, sat down in the corner of the sofa and quickly drew the name "Olga" across the dust in large letters on the table" (*idem*, p. 221).

"The pride played in him, the life *began to shine*, its magic range, *all the colors and rays* that did not exist until recently" (*idem*, p. 225).

"Suddenly his face *darkened*" (*idem*, p. 226).

"He's having fun, easy. It's so clear in nature. All People are kind, everyone enjoys; everyone has happiness on their faces" (*idem*, p. 226).

"From the previous mistake he was only scared and ashamed, but now it is hard, awkward, cold, *sad at heart, as in wet, rainy weather*" (*idem*, p. 234).

"Perhaps that *spark* of participation, which he so carelessly extinguished at the very beginning, will completely disappear. It *was necessary to inflate it again*, quietly and carefully, but he definitely did not know how" (*idem*, p. 241).

"...Sometimes a *glimpse* of feeling erupts from her, like *lightning*, like an unexpected whim, and then, suddenly, she concentrates again, withdraws into herself..." (*idem*, p. 242).

"...*The colors* started *to play* on the cheeks; thoughts moved; desires and will *flashed* in her eyes" (*idem*, p. 245).

"She... read the book, and there were certainly lines with *sparks* of her mind in the book, here and there *the fire* of her feelings *flashed*..." (*idem*, p. 246).

"Now both day and night, every hour of morning and evening took its own image and was either full *of rainbow radiance*, or *colorless and gloomy*, depending on whether this hour was filled with Olga's presence or passed without her..." (*idem*, p. 247).

"He looked at her like *a burning glass*, and could not look away" (*idem*, p. 249).

"Oblomov's face was *blooming*, his eyes were filled *with rays*" (*idem*, p. 255).

The light and the sound, the light and the melody in various variations reflect the love of the characters:

"This is how the same motive played out between them in various forms. The Meetings, the conversations, it was all one *song, sounds*, one *light* that *burned brightly*, and only its *rays* were refracted and split into pink, green, yellow and trembled in the atmosphere surrounding them. Every day and hour brought new *sounds* and *rays*, but *the light burned the same, the tune* sounded the same. Both he and she listened to these *sounds*, caught them and rushed *to sing*, which everyone

heard in front of each other, not suspecting that other *sounds* would sound tomorrow, other *rays* would appear, and forgetting the next day that there was another *singing* yesterday. She dressed *the outpourings* of her heart in those colors that *burned* her imagination at the moment, and she believed that they were true to nature, and hurried in innocent and unconscious coquetry to appear in a beautiful headdress in the eyes of her friend. He believed even more in these *magical sounds*, in *a charming light* and hurried to appear to her fully armed with passion, to show her all *the brilliance* and all the power *of the fire* that devoured his soul" (*idem*, pp. 256-257).

In a fit of feelings, Olga and Oblomov do not think about the difference in their life positions, about the different paths they have to go, believing in the power of their love and in the opportunity to become happy. Oblomov wants the rays of Olga's light to live in him forever, and Olga dreams that from her "ray" Il'ja Il'ič would be revived to life:

"Oblomov, in essence, did not care whether Olga was Cordelia and whether she would have remained true to this image or she *would have gone a new path* and transformed into another vision, if only she would appear in the same *colors* and *rays* in which she lived in his heart, if only he was happy. And Olga did not ask if her passionate friend would lift her glove if she threw it into the lion's mouth, whether he would throw himself into *the abyss* for her, if only she saw the symptoms of this passion, if only he remained faithful to the ideal of a man, and, moreover, a man waking up through her to life, if only from *the ray* of her gaze, from her smile, *the fire* of cheerfulness *burned* in him and he would not cease to see in her the purpose of life. And therefore, in the flashed image of Cordelia, in *the fire* of Oblomov's passion, only one moment, one ephemeral breath of love, one morning, one whimsical pattern was reflected. And tomorrow, tomorrow something else *will shine*, maybe just as beautiful, but still different..." (*idem*, p. 257).

The image of Olga is always in front of Oblomov in the morning, day and night, but he would like to experience only the "warmth of love" and not feel anxious:

"...No, life *touche***s**, wherever *you go*, it *burns*! How many *new movements* and activities have suddenly been pushed into her! Love is a very difficult school of life" (*idem*, p. 248)!

Oblomov does not imagine how it is possible to part with Olga, to leave to solve matters on his estate, he wants to be with her always. But one day he doubted whether Olga really loved him, whether it was a deception, how she could generally fall in love with him, for what. The author, with the help of "light" metaphors, conveys the inner state of the character. After Olga's confession of love, Oblomov returned home, watched the setting summer sun with his eyes, without taking his eyes off the dawn, recalled Olga's "ray of gaze", thought only that the warmth and light would return tomorrow. But:

"Tomorrow morning Oblomov got up pale and *gloomy*; there were traces of insomnia on the face; the whole forehead was wrinkled; there was *no fire* in the eyes, no desires. ...The image of Olga was in front of him, but he was hovering as

if in the distance, in a fog; *without rays*, as a stranger to him; he looked at him with a painful gaze and sighed" (*idem*, p. 258).

"...And, it seems, yesterday he looked into Olga's soul and saw *a bright* world and *a bright* fate there, read his and her horoscope. What happened? ...It often happens to fall asleep in the summer on a quiet, cloudless evening, with twinkling *stars*, and think how good the field will be tomorrow with morning *light* colors! How fun it is to go deep into the thicket of the forest and hide from the heat! ...And suddenly you wake up from the sound of rain, from *gray* sad clouds; cold, damp..." (*idem*, p. 259).

"Isn't this a mistake?" suddenly flashed through his mind *like lightning*, and this *lightning* struck his heart and broke it. He groaned" (*ibidem*).

Oblomov thinks that in Olga's life there should appear a young happy man with a "fluttering spark" in his eyes, like Olga's, with a "bouncy gait" and with a "sonorous voice." Then Olga will "flare up", according to Oblomov. He believes that Olga's love burns with a "false light" due to the absence of "fire" (true love). Il'ja Il'ič writes a letter to Olga, in which his love with Olga is presented in dark colors, in the form of an abyss on their path of life:

"...I realized how quickly *my feet slide* only tonight: only yesterday I managed to look deeper into *the abyss* where *I am falling*, and *I decided to stop*. I talk only about myself — not out of selfishness, but because when I lie at the bottom of this *abyss*, you will all fly high, like *a pure angel*, and I don't know if you want to look into it. Listen, without any hint, I will tell you straight and simple: you do not and cannot love me" (*idem*, p. 261).

"...Your present love is not true love, but future love; it is only an unconscious need to love, which, due to the lack of real food, in the absence of *fire, burns with a false*, non-heating *light*" (*idem*, p. 262).

When Oblomov "with animation" writes a letter, his eyes shine, his cheeks burn. He wants happiness for Olga and he is afraid to be a burden on her path, full of storms and movement. Oblomov awaits with trepidation Olga's reaction to the letter. Her tears, which he did not expect, "seemed to *burn* him, but in such a way that it made him feel *warm, not hot*" (Гончаров/Gončarov, 1981, p. 267). Olga reproaches Oblomov for seeing only gloomy in the future, for not enjoying today's happiness and burning, for selfishness, for the fact that in words he rushes into the abyss, is ready to give his life, but he is afraid to live and to love in reality:

"*Go*", she said quietly, "where you *wanted to go... Lie* on your back again," she added later, "you won't be mistaken, *you won't fall into the abyss*"...Farewell, Ilia Ilich, and *be... at peace*; because your happiness lies in this" (*idem*, p. 270).

Oblomov begs for forgiveness, says that now he is not afraid of anything and wants everything to return and be as before. He asks her for a branch of lilacs as a sign of reconciliation. To which Olga replies, "— Lilacs... *moved*

away, disappeared! ...Look, what are left: faded! —*moved away, faded*! He repeated, looking at the lilacs. —*And the letter moved away*! he suddenly said" (Гончаров/Gončarov, 1981, p. 272). The symbols "path" and "light" coincided in one phrase: everything passed, moved away, faded. Oblomov wants everything to freeze and not change, but this is impossible. The predestination of their path is also expressed through the symbolism of flowers. N. Zolotnickij writes about lilacs, "In the east, where, as we know, lilacs originate, it serves as an emblem of sad parting, and therefore a person in love usually gives it to his beloved there only when they disperse or part forever" (Золотницкий/Zolotnickij, 1994, p. 252). Choosing lilacs as an emblem, a symbol of love, the characters are unaware of it. Oblomov, who says: "...I do not like mignonettes or roses, and he does not assume that he refuses those flowers that are symbols of love and love attraction, and he, together with Olga, prefers lilacs to them, which at the very beginning of their relationship prophesies separation" (see Грачева/Gračeva, 1997).

Olga saw not only selfishness in Oblomov's letter, but "tenderness," "caution", "care for her", "fear for her happiness", "clear conscience", everything for which she loves Oblomov:

> "She seemed to Oblomov in brilliance, in radiance, when she said this. Her eyes *shone with* such a triumph of love, a consciousness of her strength; there were two *pink* spots on her cheeks. And he, he was the reason for it! With the movement of his honest heart, he threw this *fire*, this game, this *brilliance* into her soul" (Гончаров/Gončarov, 1981, p. 275).

A "hot summer reigns" after Olga and Oblomov's explanation, only sometimes "clouds come and go". If Oblomov has difficult dreams and doubts knock at his heart, "Olga, like *an angel*, stands guard; she looks into his face with her *bright* eyes, finds out what is in his heart, and everything is quiet again, and the feeling *flows smoothly* again, *like a river*, with *the reflection of* new patterns in the sky. "The power of Olga's love is conveyed through a detailed metaphor: "It *burns* here..." she pointed to her chest... "Don't bother me, let me cry... *the fire will come out in tears*, it will be easier for me..." (*idem*, p. 282).

And constantly in Oblomov's dreams there is a house full of light and love:

> "He rushed to write, to think, he even went to the architect. Soon the plan of the house and garden was located on a small table. It was a spacious family home with two balconies. "Here I am, here Olga is, here is a bedroom, a nursery... smiling, he thought" (*idem*, p. 278).

> "...Oblomovka, *bright* as a holiday, all in *shine*, in the sun's rays, with green hills, with a *silver* river swung open before him**;** *he walks with Olga* thoughtfully along an extended alley, holding her by the waist, sits in the gazebo, on the terrace..." (*idem*, p. 288).

The symbols of "home", "path" and "light" are always intertwined in the descriptions of the main characters, revealing the essence of artistic images.

Oblomov is worried about what other people will say about his relationship with Olga, he is afraid that they will not be able to fight the passion, which is like an abyss:

> "Olga, you are young and do not know all the dangers. Sometimes a person is not in control of himself; some infernal power infiltrates him, darkness falls on his heart, and *lightning flashes* in *his eyes*. The clarity of the mind fades: respect for purity, for innocence, all this is carried away by the whirlwind; the person does not remember himself; passion breathes on him; he ceases to control himself, and then *an abyss* opens under his feet" (*idem*, p. 293).

Olga is not afraid of the abyss, she says: "Let it open!" Moreover, Olga does not see any lightning in Oblomov's eyes. Oblomov has a fever inside, he decides to make Olga a marriage proposal, but "what seemed so simple to him at home, natural, necessary, smiled at him so much, which was his happiness, suddenly became some kind of *abyss*. He was afraid *to step* over it. He had to take a decisive, bold *step*" (Гончаров/Gončarov, 1981, p. 296). Moreover, Olga teases him, "*The abyss* opens up, *the lightning flashes...* be careful" (*idem*, p. 298)! Oblomov, having made a marriage proposal, expects from Olga not pride and firmness, but tears and passion, he would like Olga to follow him along his "path" and could sacrifice herself for him:

> "Sometimes love doesn't wait, it doesn't endure, it doesn't expect... I don't know which *path* it is. The *path* where a woman sacrifices everything: calmness, rumor, respect and she finds a reward in love... it replaces everything for her. Do we need this *path*? — No. — Would you like to seek happiness in this *path* at the expense of my calmness, loss of respect? ...Would you like to know if I would sacrifice my peace of mind to you, *if I would go with you along this path*? ...*Never, no way*! she said firmly. He thought about it, then sighed. — Yes, that is a *terrible path*, and *it takes a lot of love* for a woman to follow a man *on it*, to perish and still love... Why would you *not follow it...* — Because... later people always... part on it..." (*idem*, pp. 299-300).

This dialogue shows that Olga, for all her love for Oblomov, is not able to follow him always and to the end, she has her own "path" on which she hopes to lead Oblomov. And for another woman, Pshenitsina, the "path" of the character is not important, Oblomov is the main thing for her, so she is ready to sacrifice everything in her life "path".

After Olga's confession, "Oblomov *was shining* when he went home. His blood *was boiling*, his eyes *were sparkling*. It seemed to him that even his hair *was on fire*. So, he went into his room and suddenly *the radiance disappeared* and his eyes stopped motionless in unpleasant amazement in one place: Tarantiev was sitting in his chair... He forgot that *gloomy sphere*, where he had lived for a long time, and he lost the habit of its suffocating air. In an instant,

Tarantiev pulled him down as if from heaven again into *the swamp*" (Гончаров/Gončarov, 1981, p. 301). The third part of the novel tells that the "rays of love" are gradually extinguished, "the poem passes". Oblomov needs to work, build a house, build roads, "duty, serious life begins." He thinks what step to take first: ask the aunt for Olga's hand or go to the ward "to write some paper", he needs to look for an apartment, and this is "the second step". Olga says "You first take two steps, and then..." But it is difficult for Oblomov to follow the "path" proposed by Olga and Stoltz. He suffers on these trips to the town, trying to solve the difficult questions of the way of life for him, there is not enough money for anything. The end of August is coming, it rains, the summer cottages are emptying and Oblomov moves to the Vyborg side of town:

> "...Autumn evenings in the city were not like long, *bright* days and evenings in the park and grove. ...And this summer, blooming love poem seemed to stop, went more lazily, as if there was not enough content in it" (*idem,* p. 316).

Olga "sadly" sees off Oblomov with her eyes, "her heart cries," "she wants to sing, but she cannot". She demands from Oblomov that he moves more, and he gets more and more tired of this and he admires Agafia Pšenicyna more and more, who does not rush him anywhere, cooks deliciously and has "strong, like a sofa cushion, never worried chest". Oblomov comes up with an illness in order to postpone the meeting with Olga, she cries, urges him not to be lazy in letters:

> "He lay down with loud sighs, got up, even went out into the street and kept looking for *the norms of life*, such an existence that would be full of content and *flow quietly*, day by day, *drop by drop*, in silent contemplation of nature and quiet, barely creeping the phenomena of family, peaceful and busy life. *He did not want to imagine it as a wide, noisily rushing river, with seething waves, as Stoltz had imagined it.* "This is a disease," Oblomov said, "*a fever, a jumping with rapids, with dam breaks, with floods*" (*idem,* p. 353).

Oblomov returns to his ideal — walking in a circle of life's "path", like a quiet river, which he finds in Pšenicyna.

Olga refuses to believe that the unbuilt bridges across the Neva and Il'ja's illness prevent them from meeting, she worries, goes to Oblomov on the Vyborg side, and this has a stunning effect on him. Olga sees that Oblomov deceived her, that he goes down again. The character admits that passions and worries take away his strength, that he will die if Olga is not around:

> "Now I breathe, look, think and feel you. Why are you surprised that in those days when I don't see you, I fall asleep and fall down? Everything is disgusting to me, everything is boring; *I am a machine*: I walk, do and do not notice what I do. *You are the fire and power of this machine*," he said, kneeling down and straightening up. His eyes *sparkled as they* used to in the park. The pride and the willpower shone in them again. "Now I am ready to go where you tell me to, to do whatever you want. I feel that I live when you look at me, speak, sing..." (*idem,* p. 367).

Olga is the "fire" that makes Oblomov live. But is he able to go for the sake of Olga to hardship and sacrifice? Olga says:

"I am your goal, you say and *go* to it so *timidly, slowly*; and you still *have a long way to go*; you have to get higher than me. I expect this from you! I met happy people, I saw how they love", she added with a sigh, "everything *boils* with them, and their peace is not like yours; they do not lower their heads; their eyes are open; *they hardly sleep, they act!* And you... no, it doesn't seem like love, that I am your goal..." (*idem*, p. 367).

For all their attraction to each other, they speak different languages. For Olga, love is movement, burning, boiling, for Oblomov it is sunny peace of Oblomovka. Neither Olga is able to follow Oblomov to the end, nor he is able to give up the peace for her sake. This is the tragedy of the character, because he gradually "goes out", dies even with all his positive qualities:

"Look, look at me: am I not *resurrected*, am I not living at this moment? ...Let me live today with this feeling... Oh, if the same *fire burns* me, which *burns* now, and tomorrow and always! After all, if you are not there, I *go out*, I *fall*! Now I revived, resurrected..." (*idem*, p. 368).

"How easy it is to breathe in this life, in Olga's sphere, in *the rays* of her virgin *brilliance*, vigorous strength, young, but subtle and deep sanity! ...How she *clearly* sees life! How she reads *her path* in this overwise book and guesses his path by instinct! *Both lives must merge like two rivers*: he is her head, leader" (*idem*, p. 369)!

But the two lives never merge into one "path". Olga's "fire" and "angelic light" could not change Oblomov; in the end, she despaired of fighting the character's laziness and apathy:

"You would fall asleep deeper every day, wouldn't you? And I? Do you see what I am? I will not grow old, I will never get tired of living. And with you we would begin to live from *day to day, wait for Christmas, then Shrovetide, go to visit, dance and not think about anything*; we would go to bed and thank God that *the day is soon over*, and wake up in the morning wishing that *today would be like yesterday...* this is our future, am I right? Is this life? I will pine, I will die... for what, Il'ja? Will you be happy..." (*idem*, p. 386).

But Oblomov had just such an ideal of life from the beginning: "the path of the circle", "the path of the sun", all-repetition, family stability, as in Oblomovka. Olga did not understand Oblomov's ideal from the beginning, for her this is not life.

In Pšenicyna's house, life moves from day to day in a circle, and the character is happy with such a life. The characters living in the solar circle incline towards roundness: Oblomov is full and round, Agafia Matveevna has grown plumper, even the objects in this house are round: there are pot-bellied and miniature teapots, cups, jars, pans in the kitchen, a round table in the dining room, sugar loaves, tubs, pots, baskets in the pantry. There are objects that have a certain color around Oblomov: "a curtain with a red festoon, which is the work of Agafia Matveevna's hands", teapots "with flaming

hearts", geranium. There are bunch of the rowan above the fence. In the folk worldview, red symbolizes the sun:

"A joyful ray of sun beat through the windows from morning to evening". The room on the Vyborg side, where Oblomov lives now, is "*bright*, clean and fresh". Agafia Matveevna is "very white". She is "at the zenith of her life". Her chest and shoulders shone with "contentment and fullness, her eyes *shone* with meekness and only housewifely solicitude". Oblomov "approached her like *a warm fire*, and once approached very close, almost to the blaze, ...to the outbreak". "He approached Agafia Matveevna, as if he was approaching a fire, from which it becomes warmer and warmer..." (Гончаров/Gončarov, 1981, p. 401).

However, in this case, we are not talking about the fire of passion, the fire of love, but about the fire of the hearth, the focus of the house, family. The hearth is the beginning that unites people into a family. Oblomov, brought up at his home in Oblomovka, "among the meek and warm manners and customs of his homeland, passing for twenty years from embrace to embrace of his relatives, friends and acquaintances", was deeply "imbued with the family element" and always yearned for him. The image of a hearth around which his whole life would be built, the life of his friends, relatives, lives in his dreams. Gončarov compares worshiping the fire of the hearth in Oblomovs' house with Vesta's worshiping the fire. The inhabitants of Oblomovka did not know another fire and did not want to know any. Vesta in Roman mythology is the goddess of the hearth, "eternal fire" was maintained in her temple.

The dream and the life largely coincided on the Vyborg side. Everything is calm and quiet here. The fire of the hearth burns in the house of Agafia Matveevna, who appears to the character as "kind" (Agafia from the Greek is "good", "kind"), "God's gift" (this is how the name Matthew is read), and she plays the role of a hearth keeper, its mistress. The service to the home and the service to Oblomov merge into one for her. God the Thunderer Il′ja the Prophet is understood by the Slavs as a deity creating harvests, he is praised as the patron saint of harvest and fertility, a sower, a reaper. The fact that the character bakes pies, cheesecakes, bread is important in the context of the novel. She bears the "bread" surname Pšenicyna. As Olga is intended for Oblomov, because she is Il″inskaja, so Agafia is intended for him, because she is Pšenicyna. Olga, in the fate of Oblomov, symbolizes the divine, angelic light to which the character is attracted, dreaming of a solar paradise, and Agafia is the light of the earth, domestic, home, associated with tradition and family. Il′ja Il′ič is the sun that shone in the life of both Olga and Agafia. For them Oblomov "radiates", "shines". They themselves "shine" in the rays of the sun – Oblomov, they revere him.

The symbolism of the "home" is also revealed through the theme of food, associated with the image of Pšenicyna. The plot center of the novel is the

everyday and spiritual life of the protagonist – Il'ja Il'ič Oblomov. For Oblomov, the kitchen was the basis of life, most of the time was allocated to food. In the text of the novel, the attitude towards food acts as a measure of attitude towards the world, life, and also becomes a kind of "language" that allows one to express one's own view of the world. Therefore, the food, as well as sleep, is not only a satisfaction of physical needs, people eat and sleep as much as the "soul" wants, as much as the "soul" asks for. Hence, in Gončarov's novel, the characters eat often and tasty. Nothing "occupied the minds" to such an extent as care for food in Oblomovka. The characters liked to eat here:

> "The kitchen and the dinner were the main concern. The whole house discussed the dinner..." (Гончаров/Gončarov, 1981, p. 114).

According to the life philosophy of the inhabitants of Oblomovka, "a decent person must first of all take care of his/her table". They do not just eat and drink: their appetite imperceptibly turns into true gourmandise, cooking, into virtuoso skill, and the kitchen appears in a kind of temple (Краснова/Krasnova, 2000).

The apotheosis and symbol of Oblomov's satiety and general contentment is the gigantic pie, which was baked on Sundays and holidays. This cake required twice the usual amount of flour and eggs. Hence, as a result, "there were more groans and bloodshed in the poultry yard" (Гончаров/Gončarov, 1981, p. 115). The pies were baked with chickens and fresh mushrooms in Oblomovka. This pie "the gentlemen ate the next day; the remains fell into in the maiden room on the third and fourth day; the pie survived until Friday, so that one completely stale end of the pie, without any filling, was given in the form of a special favor to Antip, who, crossing himself, fearlessly destroyed this curious fossil with a crash" (*ibidem*). The feast continued until it was time to bake a new pie. As noted by J. M. Loshchits, a real cult of pie reigns in Oblomovka. In the folk worldview, a pie is one of the most graphic symbols of a happy, abundant, blessed life. Pie is a "nosh-up", a cornucopia, the pinnacle of universal fun and contentment. Feasting, celebrating people gather around the pie. The warmth and the fragrance emanate from the pie. Thus, a kind of mythologeme "pie", containing the meaning of being, appears in the novel. "The "kingdom of sleep" of Oblomovka revolves around its pie, like around a hot star" (Лошиц/Lošic, 1977, pp. 172-173). It is these pies that Agafia Pšenicyna prepares, it is no coincidence that Zahar says that they are no worse than Oblomov's pies.

Sharing food in this world is not an everyday detail, but a symbol of unity. From immemorial time, food, both in one's family and in the world, has been a sacred act, a rite among the Russian people. It began and ended with a prayer of thanks. Cheerful and informal communication, friendly family conversation, discussion of upcoming affairs happened at the table. The ta-

ble was the rallying of family brotherhood, a symbol of unity. In the dream-world of Il'ja Il'ič Oblomov, "food" must certainly be shared with spiritually close people, with a "colony of friends" living in the neighborhood, it is then that it acquires its true, social content. When Štol'c visits Oblomov during his birthday for the first time on the Vyborg side, he shares a table with a friend. There is a commonality of topics, openness, trust, correctness, sensitivity in their dialogue. The dialogue ends with a toast to Olga. Both characters eat and drink the same things, which stimulates rapport in conversation. Štol'c urges Oblomov not to "extinguish the fire", not to "remain in the dark" again, he says that he promised Olga "to dig him out of the grave". During Štol'c's second visit to Oblomov, the conversation testifies to the spiritual disunity of the characters. Oblomov alone talks about food at the table:

> "Štol'c winced as he sat down at the table... Štol'c did not eat any lamb or dumplings, he put down his fork and watched with what appetite Oblomov was eating it all" (Гончаров/Gončarov, 1981, p. 456).

> Upon learning that Olga was married to Štol'c, Oblomov says:

> "No, tell her, remind her that I met her in order *to put her on the path*, and that I bless this meeting, *bless her on a new path*" (*idem*, p. 453)!

At first glance, it seems that Oblomov's dream-world is manifested in the life of Il'ja Il'ič on the Vyborg side. Indeed, Oblomov is trying to realize his idea of an ideal life arrangement, his life norm here, on the Vyborg side: "Life is like poetry"; he tries to build an ideal, idyllic world, like the world living in his dreams. Everything flows according to a long-established, unchanging routine in the life of the character on the Vyborg side, breakfast, lunch and dinner are also the main events of the day, and "taking care of food" becomes the main concern of the inhabitants of the house of Agafia Matveevna Pšenicyna. Their "menu" is striking in its variety and abundance and is mainly represented by dishes of traditional Russian cuisine: soups, cereals, pies, and a variety of pickles.

The world of Oblomovka and the Vyborg side is the apotheosis of the material principle, which is greatly facilitated by Gončarov's pictorial narrative style. "Spirit" is not here. There is nothing that in Oblomov's dream world constituted "spiritual harmony": there is no "colony of friends", no "pensive silence", no arguments with his wife about what they read, no "joy", "pleasure" from exercise (Il'ja Il'ič walks out of necessity: so, the doctor prescribed) and, finally, there is no desired peace, to which Oblomov has been striving all his life. There is no that "fun", that "sweetness", that fullness of human existence, which consisted in the harmony of the bodily and spiritual principles.

Štol'c urges on Oblomov, "Get out of this pit, out of the swamp, into the light, into the open space, where there is a healthy, normal life!" To this Ob-

lomov replies, "I am fused to this *pit* with a sore spot: try to tear it off — there will be death... Oh, Andrei, I feel everything, I understand everything: I am ashamed to live in the world for a long time! But *I can't go your way with you*, even if I wanted to..." (Гончаров/Gončarov, 1981, p. 506). Before Štoľc "...suddenly "an abyss opened", a "stone wall" was erected, and Oblomov seemed to have disappeared..." (*idem,* p. 507). So, the character remained faithful to his life "path" and "sun". Shortly before his death, he thoughtfully observes how "the evening sun is drowning in the fire of the dawn".

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LES RELATIONS ROUMANO-OCCITANES, TRACÉES PAR LES AMIS POÈTES ALECSANDRI ET MISTRAL /

THE ROMANIAN-OCCITAN RELATIONSHIPS TRACED BY FELLOW POETS ALECSANDRI AND MISTRAL

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Abstract

The present article is centred around the biography of two writers – Vasile Alecsandri and Fr. Mistral. Our aim is to provide the reader with an overview of the common literary values for which they both fought. Even though they had two parallel destinies, their lines cross, reflect each other and correspond to each other. References to Alecsandri pose questions regarding the great family of Romanian writers, such as Sadoveanu, Pilat, Coşbuc and many others.

Keyword: *Alecsandri, Mistral, meditative poetry, civic poetry, origin, mirrored cultures*

Rezumat

În articolul de faţă, ne propunem o incursiune în biografia a doi scriitori, Vasile Alec-sandri, respectiv Fr. Mistral, încercând să aducem în faţa cititorului un extract al valorilor literare comune pentru care au militat cei doi. Două destine paralele, dar a căror linii majore se intersectează, se oglindesc, îşi corespund. Trimiterile la Alecsandri interpelează marea familie a scriitorilor literaturii române, precum Sadoveanu, Pilat, Coşbuc şi mulţi alţii.

Cuvinte-cheie: *Alecsandri, Mistral, poezia meditativă, poezia civică, origine, culturi în oglindă*

L'étude de la vie et de l'œuvre de Fr. Mistral, ainsi que la connaissance du destin humain et artistique de V. Alecsandri, nous mènent à la conclusion que, entre les deux grands poètes, il y a une sorte de parenté morale et esthétique qui a déterminé une grande estime réciproque et une amitié qui allait se développer. Ces sentiments durables se sont réfléchis dans les relations nouées entre leurs pays, la France (et notamment, la Provence) et la Roumanie, en constituant un objet de curiosité et d'enseignement, qui conserve, comme nous l'avons déjà déclaré, un intérêt indéniable, plus net, à tout prendre, qu'autres sujets.

C'est de Maillane que la patrie d'Alecsandri reçut le plus juste et le plus éloquent tribut d'admiration ! Apparemment modeste, l'offrande, en fait, par la plume du Maître, devenait celle de toute la Provence. Et, à travers la Roumanie, c'est la latinité qui est concernée.

Ce sont, on les devine aisément, des raisons fortes et particulières qui ont fait naître cette parenté entre les deux poètes.

Le parallélisme de leurs destins humains et artistiques est déterminé, en premier lieu, par leur structure organique semblable.

Mistral, comme Alecsandri, était un homme profond et complexe. C'était un rêveur et un réaliste, un fantaisiste et un esprit lucide, un homme qui vécut, du point de vue matériel et spirituel, sans mesquinerie, comme sans excentricité, un homme pondéré, dont l'âme absorbait les riches nourritures de la poésie et du bon sens populaire.

Sa physionomie avait quelque chose de bon, de souriant, de calme, fait par une vie de plein air méridional.

Exprimant la forte impression que lui a produite la rencontre du poète, Alecsandri écrivait, dans une de ses lettres : « Mistral est une personnalité marquante en Provence et il serait partout grâce à son génie poétique. Il a une belle prestance, front large, couronné de mèches grises, sourire attrayant et allure franche et de bon aloi. Nous nous sommes vus comme si nous nous connaissions depuis vingt-cinq ans, et nous nous sommes quittés bons amis » (Alecsandri, 1960, p. 241).

Cette santé, cette mesure, ce fort équilibre de sa structure ont fait de Mistral un classique, un olympien. Cependant, le poète ne méprisait pas la beauté et les satisfactions de la vie, ni de l'art. Il était un épicurien, qui souvent goûtait la volupté.

C'était un homme sincère et loyal, un homme généreux, sans rancune, compréhensif. Mistral était d'accueil familier, d'une patience inlassable, d'une humeur égale et gaie (« La gaîté, c'est la marque et l'effet du génie », écrivait Michelet). Mais il y a de la majesté et de la grandeur dans sa simplicité, « la dignité des rois et des bergers », comme l'avait défini Lamartine.

Son jugement était sérieux, parfois dur, car cet homme avait une éthique étonnamment juste, tant pour les autres, que pour lui-même. C'était un homme aux convictions bien ancrées, longuement méditées, par-delà son sourire indulgent et aimable, un grand homme qui n'entendait pas trahir ses convictions, un homme dépourvu d'illusions, mais aussi de scepticisme. De son regard aigu, il a surpris les nuances les plus passagères de la beauté du pays et, en même temps, il a eu une profonde compréhension de la psychologie de son peuple. Il était doué d'une profonde sensibilité lyrique, d'une intelligence sagace, du sens de l'humour et de la satire impitoyable.

Toutes les qualités qui caractérisent la personnalité humaine de Mistral ont fait de lui le chef de file incontesté des coryphées, un conducteur et un manieur d'hommes, consommé au service d'une haute politique spirituelle.

Les mêmes traits caractéristiques de son profil humain et moral, sa formation intellectuelle et idéologique, son talent artistique ont déterminé l'originalité de son art, un art à la fois personnel et social.

En un temps où le romantisme épuisait sa force et la générosité de ses inspirations sociales, Mistral donnait l'exemple d'un art civique, profondément militant.

Son art est le résultat de sa conception artistique, qui est si rapprochée de celle du poète-citoyen Alecsandri, et que nous avons mise en valeur plus haut.

La conception de la poésie de Mistral se rattache au romantisme. La poésie doit servir le peuple, la patrie, sans souci personnel de confidence et d'expansion. Pour lui, écrivain politique déclaré, la littérature, de quelque genre qu'elle fut, était toujours engagée, tout avait de l'importance, un sens et une substance, comme il l'avait appris de Lamartine et de Hugo. Dans la littérature de l'époque, Mistral occupe une position insulaire, par l'accent presque sans terme de comparaison, posé sur l'idée d'utilité de la parole écrite. Son œuvre est la preuve magistrale que le génie confère une atroce responsabilité.

Créateur par excellence, le poète est pour Mistral celui qui donne dans ses vers l'expression fidèle des joies, des peines et des espérances de ses concitoyens. En-dehors de cette mission, il n'a pas d'ambition personnelle. Il a conscience de l'indestructible lien qui unit le poète au peuple, considérant que, par tout ce qu'il a de meilleur, le poète appartient au peuple. C'est par là justement qu'il aboutit à une définition plus précise de ses sources poétiques, en célébrant la terre natale, le peuple, les hommes.

Comme Virgile, le poète de Maillane a chanté les paysans et les troupeaux. Il a écrit pour les gens des mas, mais Mistral n'a rien concédé au goût du peuple, à la facilité ou à la vulgarité. Nous nous trouvons devant une poésie longuement élaborée, aux ciselures minutieuses, chargée d'une émotion vibrante. Le message de Mistral est celui de la perfection.

V. Alecsandri a saisi de bonne heure cette haute qualité du maître de Maillane, la grandeur et la beauté de l'œuvre de celui-ci. L'estime témoignée à l'homme se double toujours d'une vive admiration à l'égard de l'artiste, de son génie poétique.

Les sources d'inspiration sont presque les mêmes chez Mistral et chez le poète roumain. Épiques, parce qu'ils ont disposé d'une immense matière épique, ils sont lyriques aussi. Les thèmes de leurs œuvres sont les thèmes de la vie, de la réalité.

Peu philosophes, les deux poètes sont peu méditatifs. Ils ne s'aventurent pas parmi les chimères, ils ne tournent pas le dos au réel. Ils cultivent une poésie purifiée des brumes métaphysiques (peut-être, chez Mistral, il y a une certaine métaphysique religieuse), une poésie optimiste, qui glorifie les beautés de la nature et de l'amour, qui chante la vie.

Leurs idées, leurs attitudes ont une clarté et une simplicité exemplaires. D'où cette vision optimiste de la vie, cette tonalité affective majeure, lumineuse, qui est le propre de leur inspiration.

Mistral a voulu donner à son pays une œuvre épique surtout, capable de l'incarner tout entier. Et il a réussi. Alecsandri n'a pas désiré autre chose. Ce fut un beau rêve. Ce fut leur idéal commun.

L'amour pour le peuple et la décision de trouver dans ses chansons la première source d'inspiration de leurs œuvres constituent une forte liaison

entre les deux poètes. En cherchant à sauver la langue provençale[1] de la décadence, Mistral se tourna instinctivement vers le peuple, comme vers le seul dépositaire des valeurs traditionnelles du pays. En Roumanie, également, Alecsandri, nous le savons déjà, en quête de ces mêmes valeurs les a découvertes, lui aussi, dans les milieux populaires. A Maillane, comme à Mircești, c'est « aux gens de la terre » que l'on s'adresse, pour trouver les valeurs révélatrices du génie national. Cette attitude de confiance dans le peuple et dans ses valeurs morales et artistiques les ont menés vers une véritable doctrine « poporaniste », qui eut un rôle décisif dans leur éthique, leur esthétique, leur combat politique et social. Jusqu'où allait cette doctrine ? Nous le savons déjà. Plus loin chez Mistral que chez Alecsandri, mais, même chez le poète roumain, elle fut visible pendant toute son activité civique et littéraire.

Examiner le rôle des chants populaires dans l'éveil du sens poétique chez Mistral, leur apport à ses doctrines et à sa poésie, la place tenue par le folklore dans l'essor du Félibrige et les tentatives de celui-ci comme moniteur du folklore et tout cela avec l'arrière-plan social et sentimental qu'on doit pressentir c'est réaliser un travail de fond. Nous n'avons ni l'ambition, ni les moyens de l'accomplir. Nous nous proposons de dégager seulement quelques aspects du problème, pour mettre en valeur les similitudes théoriques et pratiques entre Mistral et Alecsandri, dans ce domaine si important de leur activité.

Nous avons insisté, plus haut, sur la renaissance du lyrisme européen et roumain dans un contexte politique et littéraire passionné « nationaliste » sous l'influence de la poésie populaire et sous l'impulsion de l'exemple donné par les pays anglo-saxons.

La pénétration en France de la sentimentalité et des idées préromantiques et romantiques suscita lentement un certain intérêt pour les chants populaires. Mais la rénovation poétique qu'on pouvait en espérer, ne se produisit, on le sait, que très faiblement. Pas d'œuvres poétiques de valeur[2]. On eut surtout en France, ce que Paul van Fieghem appelle le « romantisme intérieur » (van Tieghem, 1925, pp. 19-25), représenté par de grandes personnalités artistiques, qui produisirent des chefs-d'œuvre. Seuls les romantiques mineurs prirent goût en somme au « romantisme extérieur », celui des chants et des contes populaires (Nerval, 1854).

« Et l'on peut regretter », écrit F. Baldensperger, « que trop de circonstances contraires, une insuffisante complicité d'imagination chez nos poètes, la longue habitude d'une poésie trop régentée, trop indifférente à la vraie simplicité aient empêché notre littérature de se retremper aux sources populai-

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[1]Considérée par Constantin I. Istrati « d'une similarité frappante » avec le dialecte aroumain (Istrati, 2011, pp. 73-74).

[2]Ni les musiciens français n'eurent guère plus d'oreille pour la musique populaire française, sauf Berlioz et Ravel.

res et d'avoir à ce moment l'équivalent de ce que Bürger, Schiller ou Goethe avaient donné en Allemagne, ou de ce que l'évêque Percy avait appris à tenter aux poètes anglais » (Baldensperger, 1907, p. 131).

Mais le romantisme méridional, représenté surtout et longtemps par le Félibrige, plus ouvert à certains courants des idées et sentiments, que le romantisme d'expression française, a réalisé, dans des larges proportions, une synthèse féconde entre l'élément populaire et l'élément savant.

Sous l'impulsion du génie de Mistral et animé par un patriotisme incandescent et revendicatif, les Félibres ont recours aux chants populaires et au folklore, et ils les ont utilisés poétiquement dans leurs œuvres, pour assurer le maintien de la « haute civilisation traditionnelle » de leur pays.

Mistral, surtout, avait le sens du folklore, ainsi que l'intuition de ce que pouvait gagner son œuvre, en mettant en valeur cette source d'inspiration. Auprès de cette muse, et en partie grâce à elle, le poète a purifié son cœur et en même temps son art, lui donnant une force nouvelle, et l'éloquence du rhétorisme et du didactisme.

Sur les lèvres de sa nourrice, Alecsandri a entendu chanter les doïnas et les ballades séculaires. Sur celles de sa mère, le maître de Maillane a écouté le murmure des temps passés; de ces voix, l'un et l'autre, comme d'une eau vivifiante, s'imprègnent et se fortifient.

Le « mystère » et le secret de leurs chefs-d'œuvre se trouvent dans cette parfaite assimilation artistique des éléments folkloriques les plus divers.

L'attitude de Mistral envers la langue de son pays, comme celle d'Alecsandri, est le résultat de la même doctrine « poporaniste ». Pour eux, la vitalité d'une langue, comme celle d'une nation, se mesure à la dignité morale de ceux qui la parlent, ainsi qu'à l'élévation intellectuelle de leur littérature. En 1882, devant les membres du « Cercle artistique de Marseille », Mistral affirmait sa foi, en ces termes : « En voulant réhabiliter le provençal, nous avons la certitude de faire une œuvre de patriotes, œuvre de dignité pour notre race et notre pays. Car tous les peuples tiennent et ont toujours tenu à leur langue naturelle, parce que dans la langue se moule et brille le caractère de la race qui parle. Une langue, pour tout dire, c'est le portrait de tout, c'est la Bible de son histoire, le monument vivant de sa personnalité ».

La même vérité, il l'a dite déjà, en vers, dans l'« Ode aux Catalans », de 1860 :

« Des Alpes aux Pyrénées et la main dans la main
Trouvères, élevons donc le vieux parlé roman,
C'est le signe de famille,
C'est le sacrement qui joint les fils aux aïeux,
L'homme à la terre, c'est le fil,
Qui tient le nid dans la ramée »[3].

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[3]En provençal : « Dis Aup i Pirenèu e la man dins la man / Troubaire, aubouren dounc lou vièi parla rouman; / Acò's lou signe de famiho, / Acò's lou sacramen qu'is àvi joun li fiéu / L'ome à la terro; acò's lou fiéu / Que tèn lou nis dins la ramiho… ».

La foi du maître est celle du Félibrige tout entier. Langue des empereurs et des rois autrefois, langue des paysans maintenant, elle mérita de vivre, puisque c'est la langue de la vie du peuple, de ses joies et de ses souffrances. Mistral ne croyait jamais que la langue de sa Provence qu'il avait voulu réhabiliter, disparaîtrait. Le Félibrige visait à préserver, cultiver et défendre la langue maternelle (Zamfir, 2013, p. 64). À Saint-René-Tallandier, qui lui avait fait l'objection d'écrire « Mireille » en provençal, pas en français, le poète répondait : « Quant à la disparition plus ou moins prochaine de la langue provençale, il m'est impossible d'y croire. De même que les idiomes antérieurs aux conquêtes des Romains, tels que le grec, l'arabe, l'allemand, le basque, le celte, ont survécu à la langue latine, je suis convaincu que notre langue populaire vivra autant que notre peuple de Provence. Une langue est le produit d'un climat aussi bien que les mœurs et la végétation » (Ripert, 1946, p. 21).

De là, le grand souci du poète d'enrichir la langue de son peuple et de l'épurer. On sait que Mistral a été parfois accusé d'avoir créé une langue artificielle, fabriquée pour son usage et celui de ses amis. Si parfois on éprouve quelque difficulté à comprendre certains passages, c'est que le poète emploie des mots techniques des pâtres, des moissonneurs, des gens des mas, et aussi des vocables anciens, tombés en désuétude. C'est un essai de faire de cette langue un instrument poétique de premier ordre, plus concret et plus chantant, et toujours adapté aux sujets de ses œuvres. Ainsi, il ne donnera pas seulement à la langue d'oc les titres de noblesse, en l'employant à écrire des chefs-d'œuvre ; il montrera aux érudits et aux artistes du monde entier qu'elle est la richesse d'une langue méprisée, que l'on croyait réduite au rang du patois.

La recherche du folklore et du passé n'interdisent pas l'intérêt pour le présent, et la curiosité de l'avenir. La méditation sur hier éclaire toujours, dans l'œuvre de Mistral, comme dans celle d'Alecsandri, aujourd'hui, et le thème du présent est une source permanente de leur poésie. Poètes-citoyens, ils se sont trouvés, dès le début, au centre des événements. L'œuvre de la renaissance nationale de leur pays est inimaginable sans leur contribution. Le front dans le ciel et les pieds solidement plantés dans le sol de leurs terres natales, ils enregistrèrent le jeu des réalités, car ils étaient restés, jusqu'à la fin de leurs jours, des facteurs importants de toutes les transformations de leur époque.

Le sentiment de la participation à l'œuvre collective trouve chez Mistral une expression suggestive, une image émouvante. De là, la multitude des poésies de « circonstances », une expression artistique fidèle des problèmes de son époque, de la responsabilité qu'il s'assuma pour l'avenir. La poésie de Mistral est un hymne robuste d'espérance et de foi, comme indique la belle strophe du chant de la « Coupo santo » :

« Vuejo nous lis esperanco

E li raive dou jouvènt,
Dou passat la remembranço
Et la fe dins l'an que vèn »[4].

Par une telle évocation, le poète patriote Mistral a défini sa doctrine. Il ne veut s'appuyer sur le passé que pour construire l'avenir. Ce n'est pas de regret romantique, de complaisance morbide, c'est la confiance en l'humanité de l'homme, en sa capacité de tendre inlassablement vers l'avenir.

Cette aspiration vers la source robuste de la vie a fait de Mistral et d'Alecsandri des poètes de l'amour et de la nature. « Du moment », disait Mistral, dans une lettre adressée à Roumanille, « que le beau, l'amour et la liberté sont exclus d'un livre, ce livre est fade à coup sûr ».

Le chantre de Maillane a exalté et divinisé l'amour dans des vers d'une incandescence troublante et d'une grande force expressive. Il n'a pas chanté l'amour platonique des troubadours, ni l'amour dévorant des romantiques, mais l'amour sain et créateur, qui prolonge la vie, sa beauté et sa toute-puissance.

Les deux poètes ont aussi adoré la nature de leurs pays. Ils ont excellé dans cette communion avec la nature, qu'ils ont exprimée non point par la contemplation, mais par une analyse intense. De là, les deux poètes ont décrit avec une précision pittoresque le soleil, les arbres (Mistral, la mer), les plaines, le travail. Ils en sentent le charme, ils nous le font sentir.

Poètes de la nature (« la grande couveuse qui renouvelle indéfiniment les générations des êtres », dit Mistral, dans « Calendal », « peuple les mers, revêt les monts de hautes forêts, étend ses garrigues sur les ruines des cités »), ils sont, surtout, des poètes de la nature humanisée par l'homme, fécondée par le travail de celui-ci. Ils ont saisi, sous l'apparence extérieure, le signe durable des choses et, au-delà du paysage, le sens de la présence humaine. Leurs poésies sont un éloge suprême au travail, au travail manuel. « Sfîntă muncă de la țară, izvor sacru de rodire » (Saint travail des paysans, source sacrée de la fécondation), dit Alecsandri; « Le travail transforme l'homme en Dieu », dit Mistral.

Plus que l'oeuvre du poète roumain, celle du poète provençal est une immense fresque du travail manuel. C'est ainsi qu'à travers toute son oeuvre, on voit se dresser les héros de son époque rustique : moissonneurs, laboureurs, pâtres, pêcheurs, charpentiers, menuisiers. En célébrant la noblesse des travaux de ces « gens de mas », Mistral avoua, encore une fois, son grand amour pour le peuple, pour les vertus physiques et morales de celui-ci.

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[4]«Vers-nous les espérances/ Et les rêves de la jeunesse,/ Du passé la remembrance / Et la foi dans l'an qui vient ».

Si rapprochés par les motifs artistiques de leurs oeuvres, Mistral et Alecsandri ne se séparent non plus en ce qui concerne la forme. L'adaptation de la forme au fond est parfaite. Cela se voyait même dans leurs logis : Mistral dans sa claire maison d'un beau village, sous un ciel enchanteur, parmi les lauriers et les fleurs enivrantes, Alecsandri à Mirceşti, au milieu d'une grande plaine verte. De là, la santé fraîche de leurs vers, la spontanéité de leurs rythmes, la grande richesse d'images. Ils sont des poètes de plein air, des poètes du soleil, de la lumière. Ils sont des cigales.

Plus artiste qu'Alecsandri, Mistral est un véritable maître de la forme. Il a eu toujours la conscience de l'œuvre bien faite, travaillée dans le détail jusqu'à la perfection. Ce souci de la forme, c'est un des généreux enseignements que peut donner l'étude de l'œuvre mistralienne. Il faut remonter aux troubadours pour trouver, « une telle habileté technique, un renouvellement si complet des formes strophiques, une telle sûreté de rimes, de tons, de moyens littéraires » (voir Ripert, 1918). La musique des vers du Maître de Maillane est la qualité dominante de son art inégalable.

On pourrait citer encore d'autres mentions éparses, d'autres coïncidences et similitudes entre les deux poètes. Ce que nous avons voulu mettre en valeur, c'est le parallélisme de leurs destins d'homme et d'artiste. Les deux hommes s'ignoraient lorsque, au début de leur vie, dans un même esprit, ils ont pris, chacun de leur côté, des voies semblables et qui fatalement doivent se rejoindre. Ils se rencontrent, et les liens qui vont désormais les unir, uniront, par la même occasion, la Roumanie et la Provence.

Pourrait-on signaler des influences de Mistral sur l'œuvre d'Alecsandri ? Il est difficile de nous prononcer. Car, c'est en 1882 que les deux poètes eurent leurs premières relations. Or, à cette date, Alecsandri se trouve à la fin de son activité littéraire. Après la rencontre de Mistral et des Félibres, il a écrit deux grandes œuvres dramatiques, où il célèbre l'idée de la latinité (Leu, 2013), mais nous ne pouvons pas dire que, dans ces pièces, il y a des influences importantes, quoique certaines de Mistral. Il nous semble que des circonstances historiques semblables, une atmosphère littéraire commune, ont déterminé ce parallélisme de leurs destins de poètes, dont nous avons parlé plus haut. Les voies semblables de leur vie et de leur art les ont unis et les ont rendus amis. Et une amitié située sur le plan des idées et des sentiments, au-dessus des intérêts temporels, reste durable. Alecsandri a plusieurs fois parlé (surtout dans sa correspondance) de Mistral et il n'a jamais cessé d'admirer le grand poète.

L'estime et l'admiration de Mistral pour Alecsandri, très vives, étaient moins exactement motivées, parce que, si Alecsandri pouvait lire le français, le poète de Maillane ne connaissait pas le roumain. Mais on est sûr qu'il s'est fait traduire des textes et qu'il eut vite deviné, sur quelques échantillons, les mérites du poète roumain. Mistral voyait en Alecsandri un représentant du génie de son peuple, une incarnation des virtualités de la race latine. Et il était particulièrement sensible à cela. Voilà pourquoi la mort du poète rou-

main devait dicter au poète provençal une lettre, dans laquelle l'homme et l'artiste se rencontraient, pour exprimer, à la femme d'Alecsandri, la douleur d'avoir perdu un ami, et pour témoigner une fois de plus l'admiration des Félibres et de lui-même : « Personnellement… Je pleure avec vous l'ami souverainement bon qui m'avait ouvert son âme, son cœur et sa maison… Le nom d'Alecsandri est inscrit dans le ciel des bons génies de la Provence, comme il l'est au panthéon des plus pures gloires latines et des immortels fondateurs de la nationalité roumaine »[5]. Plus tard, Elena Văcărescu, à l'occasion de quelques conférences en Provence, 1927, constate le fait que le nom d'Alecsandri était encore prononcé avec admiration par le peuple occitan (Moţoc, 2010, p. 154).

Alecsandri étant mort en 1890, les relations entre Mistral et le poète roumain n'ont pas pu durer bien longtemps. Mais les contacts ont continué et les rapports qui s'établirent, dans le dernier quart du XIXe siècle, entre la Roumanie et le Midi de la France, furent, sans doute, plus nombreux qu'on ne le soupçonne aujourd'hui.

Par les voies de la poésie, deux pays se sont trouvés rapprochés. L'amitié qui naît entre écrivains, entre simples individus, gagne toujours les peuples. Alecsandri, Mistral, Roumanie, Provence, c'est dans la patrie de la latinité qu'ils se rencontrent et fraternisent.

La tentative d'établir des rapports de tempérament, de sujets et de formules littéraires entre les poètes roumains et Mistral n'est pas inutile non plus. L'idée nous en fut suggérée par la poésie de Ion Pillat, dédiée à Mistral.

Pourquoi cet artiste cultivé et raffiné, qui, dans son âge mûr, semble un Lucullus réfugié dans le sein de la nature, s'est approché du Maitre de Maillane? Parce qu'il s'est retrouvé dans la pensée et la sensibilité de celui-ci. Ion Pillat est un poète, « traditionaliste » (comme sont tous les poètes qui ont appartenu au mouvement littéraire « Gîndirea », dont le traditionalisme a été conscient et a eu la valeur de programme); sa structure l'attache au sol natal, sa nature est calme et sentimentale. C'est un sensuel énivré de couleurs et d'arômes, un chantre du paysage national par excellence, doué d'une perception visuelle singulière, un impressionniste sensible et comme on n'a pas manqué d'en faire la remarque, apparenté, par cette sensibilité chromatique, à Renoir.

Sa poésie est d'une tenue classique sereine, équilibrée. On peut trouver certaines similitudes de structure et de modes d'expression semblables entre Mistral et Ion Pillat.

Les mêmes similitudes on les trouve dans la poésie du Transilvain George Coşbuc, dont l'oeuvre garde, depuis les premiers vers jusqu'aux derniers, une particulière inspiration ensoleillée. Tout baigne dans le soleil et la lumière. De même qu'Alecsandri aspirait sans cesse au soleil, de même le

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[5]Lettre inédite à Pauline Alecsandri, Maillane, le 12 septembre 1890, Ms Bibl. Académie de la R.S. de Roumanie, S. 115 (LX).

Transylvain Coşbuc nous suggère ses préférences pour la « brise légère des rivages méditerranéens », qui est, dans son œuvre, l'expression métaphorique d'une ambiance sereine.

Le rythme de sa poésie est très souvent le rythme de la lyrique mistralienne. En lisant la ballade « Nunta Zamfirei » (Les noces de Zamfira) il nous semble qu'on entend un chant du poème « Mireille ».

En prose, les mêmes caractéristiques nous les trouvons dans « Amintiri din copilărie » (Souvenirs d'enfance) de Ion Creangă. Dans ces souvenirs, un rôle primordial joue, ainsi que dans les « Mémoires » de Mistral, la glèbe natale; il revit, fraîches comme le premier jour, les joies de l'enfance, en fixant le cadre physique et moral et tout ce qui, selon lui, avait contribué, en son temps, à la naissance et à la précision de certaines idées, de certains sentiments qui, par la suite, firent partie intégrante de l'image qu'il se formait du monde.

La sérénité de l'univers enfantin, une sensibilité disciplinée et régie par la sagesse et la mesure sont les traits dominants de cet écrivain classique.

Les mêmes traits définissent l'oeuvre de M. Sadoveanu, un autre conteur moldave représentatif qui appartient au type apollinien.

D'ailleurs, un grand rameau de la littérature roumaine, qui commence avec Alecsandri et passe par Creangă, Coşbuc, Pillat, Sadoveanu, définit, admirablement, par les motifs et les modes d'expression, la tradition ensoleillée de l'art roumain, l'esprit apollinien de celle-ci.

Ce qui caractérise la psychologie du Roumain, généralement parlant, c'est cette apollinisation du fond dyonisiaque, cette tendance à infléchir la passion violente selon les exigences de la forme et de la mesure. Conséquence probable de ses origines, de son histoire, de son expérience de la vie, des vicissitudes traversées au sein d'une géographie unitaire et harmonieuse, invitant elle-même à la pondération. La culture roumaine appartient au type apollinien.

Toute l'évolution de la littérature roumaine, si on l'analyse à ce point de vue, dénote une sorte de « classicisme » latent. Nous n'avons pas de ces grands obsédés, de ces caractères excessifs, pathétiques, ténébreux, aux contemplatifs extatiques que nous rencontrons, par exemple, dans le romantisme européen.

La poésie même d'Eminescu est une expression de cet esprit apollinien (qui n'implique pas l'absence d'un contenu pathétique, mais un façonnement rationnel de ce contenu). Titanique et excessif pendant sa jeunesse, le poète évolue plus tard vers une expression de l'essentiel d'une pureté classique : l'élément titanique s'est sublimé en un art limpide et profond. Arghezi, le plus grand poète roumain depuis Eminescu, représente aussi une admirable apollinisation du dyonisiaque humain.

C'est l'originalité de la littérature roumaine, de la culture roumaine en général, car la peinture de N. Grigorescu ou de St. Luchian, la musique de G.

Enescu, les sculptures extrêmement stylisées, mais en essence populaires, Olténiennes de Brâncuși, la pensée de Xenopol, T. Maiorescu, N. Iorga etc. présentent les caractères d'un style apollinien.

Ces expressions éminentes de l'esprit roumain peuvent être toujours approchées de l'art de Mistral qui affirme, dans des formes d'une grande beauté, cette dialectique vivifiante de l'universel et du singulier, du rationnel et du passionnel. Elles s'encadrent, sans doute, dans la tonalité humaine générale qui caractérise la physionomie morale de la grande famille des peuples latins.

Dans un de ses discours prononcés aux fêtes de la latinité de 1882, V. Alecsandri disait : « Sîngele apă nu se face » (Le sang ne change jamais en eau).

Toutes ces similitudes, ces correspondances de structure morale et artistique que nous avons tenté de trouver entre la littérature roumaine et la littérature provençale, démontrent la vérité des dires d'Alecsandri. Car la physionomie esthétique d'un peuple ou d'une famille de peuples garde toujours le cachet de l'originalité de leur complexe humain et spirituel.

Dans son hommage dédié, en 1930, à Mistral, dont nous avons parlé plus haut, N. Iorga, insatisfait de tout ce qu'on a réalisé dans son pays pour la cause de la fraternité latine, disait « S-ar fi putut și s-ar putea face mai mult ».

Le grand historien a parfaitement raison. On aurait pu cependant faire davantage et on pourrait encore le faire. Car, traduite dans le langage de la poésie à Montpellier, en 1878, l'idée latine a ouvert une large perspective vers l'avenir. Aucune autre conjoncture socio-politique et littéraire que celle des dernières décennies du XIXᵉ siècle n'a su créer une telle base de départ à la lutte commune des peuples en vue de la réalisation de nobles desseins du devenir humain. Les conditions historiques après 1900 n'ont pas été, il est vrai, toujours favorables à la manifestation des idéaux d'Alecsandri et de Mistral. Mais les idées qu'ils ont professées se sont imposées à leurs contemporains comme une réalité.

Leurs successeurs, à leur tour, ont reçu un noble héritage moral et culturel. Le champ d'action de l'idée latine restera toujours immense.

Le monde évolue, mais la culture mondiale de notre siècle fait, on le sait, une place de plus en plus large, dans ses préoccupations, à l'idée des liens littéraires et politiques, au souci de conserver et de promouvoir les enquêtes de la pensée et de la sensibilité humaine. Les exemples ne nous manquent pas. Ainsi, en 1943, en pleine guerre, un nombre d'intellectuels de Montpellier (Tănase, 1959, p. 22), cette ville de la science et de la poésie, qui a rendu de grands services à la cause de l'idée latine, se propose de ranimer les anciennes relations provençales-roumaines. Mais les circonstances internationales de ce moment-là n'ont pas permis la réalisation de ce projet. Et pourtant, celui-ci n'est pas resté sans conséquences. Le professeur Ch. Camproux, l'un des animateurs du projet de 1943, a fait publier, dans la revue « Steaua »

(L'Etoile) de Cluj-Roumanie, deux articles : « La littérature occitane aujour-d'hui » (août 1958) et « Mireille » (décembre 1959). La revue provençale « L'Astrado » a consacré son troisième numéro (1967) à un hommage à Alec-sandri et à la Roumanie. Lettres, mémoires, articles critiques et poésies se réunissent pour témoigner la décision des successeurs des Félibres provençaux de mettre en valeur le programme humaniste de leurs devanciers.

Pour continuer l'ancienne initiative de la montpelliéraine « Société des langues romanes », le 25 octobre 1966 s'est constituée, à Paris, une « Acadé-mie du monde latin », qui réunit des personnalités représentatives des peu-ples français, italien, espagnol, portugais, roumain. La nouvelle Académie est considérée « une alliance pacifique de culture, d'un caractère purement spirituel », privée de tendances de « racisme » et d'« impérialisme latin ». El-le se propose de lutter pour la cause, « de l'unité du monde latin ». Dans cet-te direction de l'alliance s'inscrit aussi le geste de la Reine Elisabeth de Roumanie qui a décoré plusieurs félibres pour les traductions qu'ils ont fai-tes des poèmes signés par Carmen Sylva (Irvin Rozei, 2013).

Nous ne connaissons pas le résultat de l'action de cette « Société des lan-gues romanes ». Mais cette initiative de créer une telle association, à notre époque aussi compliquée, et les exemples de valorisation des traditions mo-rales et culturelles, que nous avons donnés plus haut, nous affermissent dans la conviction que, loin de perdre de leur actualité, les idées de Mistral et d'Alecsandri sont restées vivantes.

De tout ce qui a été dit jusqu'ici, nous espérons que l'on a pu dégager cer-tains aspects essentiels du problème et aussi une confirmation de notre as-sertion quant au caractère nécessaire et actuel de la question des relations entre Alecsandri et le Félibrige, entre la littérature roumaine et celle du Midi de la France, dans la deuxième moitié du XIXᵉ siècle.

Il n'est plus, pensons-nous, besoin d'autres mots pour montrer de quelle manière les idées qui se sont trouvées à la base de ces relations ont servi le progrès moral et culturel, en ouvrant une large perspective aux efforts des hommes vers la compréhension et l'intelligence de l'autre.

Pour établir les proportions réelles des événements sociaux et littéraires sur lesquels nous avons insisté, nous avons commencé par démontrer que les rapports entre Alecsandri et le Félibrige ne se situent pas sous le signe du hasard et de l'improvisation.

L'examen des relations entre les deux partenaires et de la façon dont ces relations se sont réalisées, a mis en évidence, d'une part, le caractère organi-que de celles-ci et, d'autre part, l'ampleur et la diversité des modalités les plus susceptibles, employées à faire pénétrer dans le monde latin un messa-ge humaniste.

Certes, l'effort de faire s'épanouir l'idée des rapports culturels et politi-ques entre les peuples n'a pas été absent des étapes antérieures de l'histoire, bien que des circonstances objectives l'aient empêché de se manifester de fa-çon conséquente et aient ainsi appauvri ses résultats. L'histoire de la culture

européenne dans son ensemble offre généreusement le tableau d'impressionnantes tentatives des individus et des peuples de faire triompher l'amour de l'homme, la justice, la beauté. Mais, comme nous avons déjà déclaré plus d'une fois, aucune autre conjoncture historique n'a pu créer une telle base pour le rapprochement des peuples dont « le sang, la langue et la pensée coulent d'une même source », que la deuxième moitié au XIXe siècle.

En pleine période des éveils et des explosions nationales et, en même temps, des dépassements « supranationaux », des initiatives individuelles et collectives mettent, d'une manière forte, le problème des communautés de langue, de culture, des mœurs.

Pour le monde latin, c'est le Félibrige qui a assumé, dès ses débuts, la mission complexe de contribuer au développement d'une ancienne idée, celle du rapprochement des peuples latins.

À la réalisation de ce vaste programme à long terme ont contribué toute une série de facteurs et de tendances favorables. D'abord, il faut citer cette constellation socio-politique propice, sous laquelle s'est manifesté le Félibrige.

En 1913, le marquis de Villeneuve écrivait : « Le Félibrige est venu à son heure : né plus tôt, il aurait été noyé dans les derniers reflets de l'épopée napoléonienne, la plus grande, la plus tragique, la plus fulgurante des tentatives césariennes. Elle avait échoué, mais elle a laissé, derrière elle, des lueurs si éclatantes que, pendant plus d'un demi-siècle, les yeux ne pouvaient voir autre.

Né plus tard, il n'aurait pas pu rendre la vie à des choses définitivement mortes et à une nation succombant sous le poids de ses fautes passées » (Jouveau, 1970, p. 470).

À ces conditions historiques - objectives, favorables - s'ajoute l'unité de conception du monde des Félibres, de leurs aspirations politiques et littéraires, de leur volonté de lutter à la poursuite des plus respectables réalisations humaines. Cette unité de conception et des buts a garanti l'unité de leurs efforts.

Il convient néanmoins de remarquer aussi les formes les plus diverses adoptées par les Félibres pour la réalisation de leur programme. Parmi ces procédés, utilisés avec intelligence et dévouement, les concours littéraires et scientifiques, les fêtes de la latinité ont trouvé partout l'écho le plus profond. Car « comparer et rapprocher les poésies et les littératures de langues latines », disait A. Glaize aux Fêtes latines de 1878, « c'est rapprocher les peuples et préparer l'alliance littéraire, intellectuelle, artistique des peuples latins ». C'est pourquoi, les fêtes félibréennes n'ont pas été purement littéraires, mais toujours des actes pacifiques, européens et internationaux.

D'ailleurs, l'échange de valeurs culturelles et littéraires répond toujours à un besoin constant de confrontation artistique et fortifie le sentiment de la solidarité chez les écrivains de tous les pays, qui, par-delà les frontières géographiques et politiques et toutes les particularités de l'expression poétique, sont unis par l'idéal suprême du progrès et de l'entente entre peuples.

C'est dans cet esprit qu'il convient d'évoquer la « Weltliteratur » de Goethe et de rappeler ce que l'auteur de « Faust » disait à Eckermann: « ...la poésie est le bien commun de toute l'humanité ».

Pour le triomphe de l'idée latine, le Félibrige a travaillé infatigablement. Il s'est toujours trouvé dans ses rangs des hommes qui lui ont donné leur temps et leur talent. Mistral fut le premier. Nous pensons avoir mis en évidence le rôle essentiel de celui-ci dans le développement et l'application des principes du Félibrige. Ce grand apôtre de l'idée latine et le chef incontesté du mouvement n'a jamais rien oublié de ce qui pourrait servir le programme et les buts des Félibres. C'est l'oeuvre du Maître de Maillane qui a donné de l'éclat aux faits, qui a conservé au Félibrige, tout au long de son existence, une audience internationale.

La Roumanie n'est pas restée en dehors des aspirations fraternelles de ses sœurs. L'idée latine a trouvé dans ce pays un terrain fécond de manifestation. Car cette idée ne caractérise pas seulement l'idéologie moderne des écrivains roumains du XIXᵉ siècle. Plus ancienne, elle a préoccupé, d'une manière très perceptible, l'esprit des chroniqueurs moldaves et valaques (Gr. Ureche, M. Costin, C. Cantacuzino). L'activité scientifique et littéraire des représentants de l'Ecole Transylvaine (S. Mieu, Gh. Sincai, P. Maior, I. Budai-Deleanu) n'a eu d'autre appui que la conscience de l'hérédité et des traditions latines du peuple roumain.

L'incessante lutte menée sur le plan culturel, au long des siècles, pour remplacer l'alphabet cyrillique par l'alphabet latin est aussi une expression convaincante de la même idée. En luttant pour sa renaissance, pour son individualité nationale, pour son unité, le peuple roumain, dans toutes les circonstances de son histoire, souvent peu favorables, a affirmé, avec ténacité et orgueil, la conscience, non point d'une inexistante pureté de sang, mais d'une réalité plus certaine, celle de la langue, de la civilisation, de la culture et des mœurs latines.

Durant la première moitié du XIX° siècle, la période de l'éveil national des Roumains, l'idée latine revêtit une forme matérielle et politique. La principale tendance qui marque le chemin de l'activité des écrivains-citoyens de la génération révolutionnaire de 1848 (N. Bălcescu, M. Kogălniceanu, D. Bolintineanu, plus tard Al. Odobescu) est l'affirmation de l'idée latine, mise au service de la cause de l'individualité et de l'unité nationale. Toute intense que soit l'idée du « dacisme » qui s'est manifestée, à un moment donné, dans la pensée et l'œuvre de quelques représentants de la culture roumaine (M. Eminescu, B.P. Hasdeu, L. Blaga etc.), elle n'a pas pu abattre la conscience, plus ancienne et plus puissante, de l'hérédité latine.

V. Alecsandri fut aussi un brillant défenseur de l'idée latine. Tout au long de sa carrière littéraire et politique, il a affirmé la conviction que les peuples, ayant la même origine, les mêmes croyances, les mêmes intérêts et les mêmes devoirs doivent avoir aussi les mêmes destinées, car ils sont solidaires et ont la même mission à remplir. C'était aussi la conviction de Mistral.

Dans notre travail, nous avons mis en relief la communion d'idées et de sentiments qui a caractérisé la pensée et l'activité des deux écrivains. Le parallélisme de leurs destins d'hommes et d'artistes a assuré la base féconde des rapports fraternels qui ont unis, depuis 1878, la Roumanie et le Midi de la France. Ils ont été des êtres semblables, quels que soient le lieu où chacun d'eux est né et les conditions de vie au milieu desquelles ils ont vécu.

C'est sur la base de cet élément commun, le plus important de tous, que se développent toujours la science, la littérature, l'art et aussi les rapports entre individus et peuples.

Les manifestations littéraires qui ont eu lieu dans le Midi de la France et la Roumanie pour célébrer et renforcer l'idée latine ont été nombreuses et convaincantes. Nous les avons mises en valeur, en suivant leur ordre chronologique. Ce qui demeure important pour nos conclusions, c'est que, dans un sens ou un autre, la confiance dans la vie, l'humanité, la puissance de la poésie adopte toujours, pour se manifester, les formes les plus diverses et les plus durables. Ce qu'Alecsandri, Mistral et ses Félibres ont construit sous le soleil doré de leurs idéaux communs ne s'effondrera jamais.

La continuation de l'héritage culturel a représenté incontestablement l'un des aspects les plus intéressants de l'époque qui suivit les dernières décennies du XIXe siècle. La conviction que les nations issues d'un même sang, nourries des mêmes traditions culturelles et faites pour se respecter et s'entendre ne doivent avoir entre elles d'autres contestations que les luttes pacifiques et fécondes de l'esprit, a guidé le programme humaniste des successeurs de Mistral et Alecsandri.

Mais les efforts de ceux-ci ne sont situés sous une autre constellation de l'histoire socio-politique et culturelle. De là, le nombre plus réduit des manifestations « latinistes ». Pourtant, elles n'ont jamais cessé, et, en maintes occasions, on eut la preuve qu'elles demeuraient solides. Nous n'en voudrions comme preuve que les manifestations de sympathie dont le centenaire de la naissance de Mistral, en 1930, fut le prétexte.

En outre, la fidélité à l'héritage des initiateurs de l'idée latine au XIXe siècle n'est pas abandonnée. Elle est pratiquement inépuisable comme nous l'avons déjà déclaré plus haut. La tradition est, sans cesse, « ouverte » et s'enrichira toujours.

Car, il ne faut jamais perdre de vue que l'histoire des cultures est tridimensionnelle : des racines du passé et du tronc présent poussent, comme une préfiguration logique, comme une conséquence nécessaire, la couronne et les fruits de l'avenir.

« Que la lumière éclate et que la nuit s'efface », dit le Roumain Alecsandri. « Que tout ce qui est beau reluise, que tout ce qui est laid disparaisse », lui fait écho le Provençal Mistral.

Ces mots nous serviront de dernière conclusion, comme un hommage rendu à ceux qui, à une époque aussi dramatique que la leur, ont manifesté l'aspiration élevée à exprimer « la condition humaine ».

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LANGUAGE AND LITERATURES
TEACHING AND LEARNING

BRIDGING KNOWLEDGE IN SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION. MACEDONIAN-ROMANIAN CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC INTERFERENCES AND THEIR ROLE IN TEACHING AND LEARNING ROMANIAN IN NORTH MACEDONIA

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Abstract
Our article deals with the interference between Macedonian and Romanian cultures and languages and its importance in teaching and learning Romanian as a second language in North Macedonia. Many aspects are discussed, such as: cultural context of second language acquisition; lexical, semantic and grammatical corpus creation for this acquisition.

Keywords: *culture, language, interference, teaching, learning*

Rezumat
În articol, supunem cercetării interferențele dintre culturile şi limbile macedoniană şi română, interferențe de care se cere a ține cont în predarea şi învăţarea românei ca limba a doua de comunicare în nordul Macedoniei. Sunt analizate o serie de probleme: contextul cultural al studierii limbii a doua, crearea corpusului lexical, semantic şi gramatical, necesar studierii în cauză etc.

Cuvinte-cheie: *cultură, limbă, interferență, predare, învățare*

1. Framing Cultural Context of Second Language Acquisition. The Case of Romanian in North Macedonia

New cultural perspectives on second language acquisition have been created and the plethora of studies regarding the role of the language as a social practice or learning a language through its culture occurred in the field in the last century. Moving slowly from considering language as structured of multiple three dimensions (object, referent, word) to *ethnographies of communication* (Heyms, 1964, p. 2), philosophical and functional-cognitive approaches (Heidegger, 1982; Halliday, 2014) that linked the language to mind reflections, the theoretical frame of second language acquisition has gradually added new dimensions to the practical components of learning and teaching. Continuing an academic endeavor to delve in the field of Romanian as a second language as a cultural and linguistic construct taught to foreigners (Stanciu 2011, 2015, 2017, 2020, 2021), this article attempts to identify new possibilities for teaching Romanian as a second language in the North-Macedonian context by using a gradual strategy of discovering cultural and linguistic interferences in a comparative perspective, to comment

on the difficulties encountered by students while learning Romanian and to offer some didactic solutions to the problems of comprehension and language transfer (code-switching).

Both cultures (Macedonian and Romanian) belong to an unbounded space (the Balkans) with blurred and changeable borders or rather frontiers. Even at the linguistic level the variety of the terms belonging to different language families and groups puzzle the educated philologist/reader of the context. Apparently, a place with no name before the 19th century, the realm of the Balkans has become by the time a controversial space that fed the imagination (Todorova, 1997) and imaginary (Jezernik et al., 2007) of *reinvention and intervention* (Goldsworthy, 2004, p. 25) generating a plethora of academic disputes mainly focused on centrality or marginality, fragmentation and unity, cultural and linguistic convergences and divergences. Although the initial sets in studying the Balkans were mostly ethnographic (Cantemir, 1973) and later on they became quite linguistic (Sanfled, 1930; Rosetti, 1986; Friedman, 1980, 2002; Joseph, 1999), since the end of the 20th century they have switched to cross-cultural approaches including history, folklore, literature, as well as linguistic anthropology, namely the role of language in building ethnicities and expressing mentalities (Friedman, 1986, 1994, 2001, 2003a; Olteanu, 2004).

2. Setting the Terms: Preliminary Research Hypotheses, Concepts and Methods as Tools for Analysis and Interpretation

Arts, folklore, history, literature, culture have become modalities of conveying meaning through cognitive frames encoded in images, processes, words and phrases meant to mirror human realities groupable in different lexical and semantic fields depicting life scenes as *modalities to shadowing the real* (Crapanzano, 1999, 2006). Thinking of language as *cultural practice* (Duranti, 1997, p. 23), modern anthropology redefined culture as communication and reframed the focus on second language acquisition as communicative and *symbolic competence* (Heyms, 1972, 1980; Kramsch, 2006), namely *the capacity to acquire language through culture* (Duranti, 1997, p. 36). Some interesting openings might be noticed in the process of analyzing languages from discursive and pragmatic perspectives, on the one hand, by gradual reveal of the meaning, on the other hand, through deepening the interpretation by decoding *conceptual metaphors* (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 18). A cultural approach to second language acquisition implies: comprehending language as an instrument of communication, tracing etyma to their languages of origins, interpreting meaning in a gradual manner (basic, secondary, abstract, pragmatic and metaphorical), assessing the role of languages in building cultural identity.

The following concepts and methods will be used within this article:

- *Fusing (*Hatim, 2006, p. 13*) contrastive analysis, discourse analysis and translations* (Johanson, 2008) meant to bridge different levels spanning from phonetics, grammar (morphology and syntax), colloca-

tions, phraseology, word formation in order to give a continuum to interpretation and integration in the holistic system of language;

- Compatibility of *genetic relationships*, *convergent development* (Weinrich, 1958, pp. 378-379) and *contact induced changes by mutual reinforcement* (Lindstedt, 2014, p. 168);
- *Etymological confluences* (Poruciuc, 1988) and *lexical interferences* to justify the circulation and the evolution of the words in a comparative perspective keeping the matrix of phonetic body changes following laws and meaning deviation through mechanisms of metonymy, and metaphorization;
- *Comprehension* as a deep understanding at all levels, links and structures of *language architecture* (Coşeriu, 1998);
- Relevance of *language awareness* and *motivation* in challenging the learners of L2, L3 (Stanciu, 2014, 2020).

Lexical, Semantic and Grammatical Corpus Creation and Description as Basis of Knowledge Bridging

Working in classes of Romanian language and literature as well as in two workshops of lexicography and translations allowed our teams made of teachers and students to collect cultural and linguistic samples or words-concepts consisting of lexical, semantic and grammatical information. During the last two years we succeeded to collect and insert over 30 000 headwords in two dictionaries (Macedonian-Romanian, Albanian-Romanian) with their meaning stratified in basic, secondary and metaphorical. Each entry in our dictionaries is exemplified by collocations, phrases and sentences meant to differentiate the meaning in the context and the entire lexicographic stock has resulted from this team endeavor and it has been used in the classes of Romanian language and civilization, Romanian literature and Romanian contemporary language. In this context in which languages with different origins were in 'contact situation' (Sala, 1997, pp. 43-44; Steinke, &Vraciu, 1999, pp. 36-44; Weinreich 1968, pp. 88-99), multiple fluxes and layers can be noticed in different directions spanning from bilingualism to cultural exchanges, exerting reciprocal influences and resulting in overlapping strata. Three important steps in the process were possible: co-inhabitation, bilingualism and later the assimilation either of Romanian elements in some areas (Moravia, Ukraine) or Slavic ones in others (Walachia).

In organizing the information within this article, I will be using etymological explanations as layers and interferences to separate the loanwords origins and circulation and to underline the differences of the etyma in both Macedonian and Romanian languages. A specific attention has been paid to the links between standard languages and diasporic non-standard vernaculars which reciprocally influence each other. The comparison and contrastive analysis of three languages supposed to have been in contact over the cen-

tury and affected by the main languages imposed by different empires can explain the existence and the evolution of numerous lexical items and syntactic structures identical or very similar in meaning and phonetical body.

Different modalities of bridging the target languages have been taken into consideration during the last two academic years together with a constant reflection on teaching strategies based on comprehension and self-confident use of language.

Substratum and its Reverberations in Macedonian and Romanian

Maybe the most productive field of analyses and inspiration has been represented this time by the Balkan Studies rather cultural than linguistic, which allows a stratigraphy in etymology chronologically organized as historical continuity motivated by subsequent language domination and imposing, but it also explains the inferential meaning resulted from possible confluences and motivated by transitional areas of lexical items circulation. The interest for Balkan studies comprises cultural and linguistic problems belonging to ancient substratum of Thracian and Illyrian dialects, which left some minimal traces in both Macedonian and Romanian languages. The pressure of *substratum in the Balkans, defined as* central Paleo-Balkan group that included languages existing on the Balkan Peninsula (Thracian, Dacian, Illyrian and Macedonian) all *unsettled dialects* (West, 2007, p. 157) which have been feeding contemporary ethnic and national cultural and linguistic mythologies. Thracian and its related dialects used north of Danube Getae and Dacian were probably spoken from the time of Homer to the Middle Ages. The ethnic composition of people living that time in this cross-border area has continuously changed and the existence of a pidging language which could be used over the territory is hardly tenable. In these circumstances of possible language contact and interference there is no special argument in the favor of language adoption, displacement or improvement. There were plenty of opportunities for the adoption of loan-words but how they have been moved and replaced to express new concepts, objects and techniques is again hardly demonstrable. An important theory as an elite domination was created on the basis of archaeology related to Thracian Kings' Valley in Bulgaria, fortresses in Romania but due to the scanty written sources excepting for Herodotus' narratives and some twenty words found in inscriptions, nobody was able to prove the existence of such an impressive civilization and the vanishing of a numerous population. Some Balkan relics (Kazluzhaya, 2001; Poruciuc, 2008; Alexe, 2021) have been discussed over the time as belonging to this thin layer despite of semantic divergences registered in Albanian, Macedonian and Romanian. Among them the most important seem to be Albanian *kodēr*, Macedonian and Romanian *kodru, codru* 'forest' and Albanian + Mak. *stopan*, Romanian *stăpân* 'master, owner, landlord' which are still keeping a similar phonetical body and quite similar meaning in all three Balkan languages. Many of those approximately 100 words belonging to

substratum and interpreted like this by different scholars (Russu, 1959, 1981; Brâncuş, 2002) have remained controversial and were reinterpreted by recent scholars in a quite polarized vision (Alexe, 2021; Paliga, 2004; Ungureanu, 2016) either like originating in Latin or in the Balkan stock of words with unclear origins.

Latin and its Survivals in the Balkans

Romance (Speaking) Balkans is a second etymological track approched by two groups of researchers at a distance of less than 15 years rather from a contemporary cultural perspective than a strict linguistic one. The Romance Balkans have benefited from an International Commission on Balkan Linguistics of the International Committee of Slavists and Romanists dealing with various aspects of the Romance languages, which reunited scholars in the field of humanities from Balkan- -related area (cultural studies, anthropology, history), an area animated by an effort to help the linguists move towards an interdisciplinary approach as a sine qua non in Balkan Studies. A rich collection of papers having in the collocation Romance Balkans has been published in English, French and German gathering studies in this field of cultural and linguistic interference of substratum, Latin and so-called Slavic Balkan. What is considered to belong to Balkan Romance languages, as a part of Balkan League (Friedman, 2000) from the current synchronic aspect, include (Daco-) Romanian as spoken in Romania and Moldova and south Danube Romance oases like the Aromanian and Megleno-Romanian of the Central and Western Balkans together with almost vanishing Istro-Romanian and Bayash dialects spoken by some hundreds of people in Croatia.

As a non-clearly defined linguistic space with rather open cultural and linguistic frontiers than with clear boundaries has been extended by contemporary contacts between Balkan and non-Balkan Romance languages. From the diachronic perspective the succession and interference of faiths in the space of the Balkans might explain an overview of Balkan Romance at the cross-road of cultures, languages and religions. However, the first Christianity which overlayed with what was called folk/popular Christianity, the second Orthodoxy found in interference with the Catholicism, Islam and Judaism are all present and represented in the Balkans. I considered as a good reason to explain the etymological and lexical-semantic interference in the Balkans the theory of "mutual reinforcement of change" (Lindstedt, 2000). What is known as convergence model is corroborated by the fact that the *Balkan Sprachbund* properties are most numerous in those parts of the Balkans where the greatest number of languages are co-territorial. The epicentre of Balkan etymological and lexical stock of words seems to be in the area around the southern parts of the lakes of Ohrid and Prespa, where Greek, Albanian, Macedonian and Aromanian intersect.

In the attempt of defining a context of analysis merely subjective and still questionable I will begin by establishing some limits and formulate some assumptions as main questions meant to receive by the end some possible answers.

The hypothesis and questions as well are the following:

1. How we can define Romance (Speaking) Balkans in the wider field of Balkan Studies?
2. Is there a clear line of separation between Latinity and Romance (Romance languages and cultures)?
3. Can we speak about Romance Balkans only from a linguistic point of view or it is a complex cultural construct?
4. What are the best or at least the most convenient for interpretation methods of different aspects of this *more imaginary than real space* (Todorova, 1997, p. 323)?

The grammatical structures of the languages and dialects spoken in this area were actually very perspicuously similar to each other (Mišeska Tomic, 2004). The Romance Balkans field of studies has been developing, different conferences and projects were designed and organized by research teams from the Institute for Balkan Studies, Belgrade. This international linguistic conference focused on the diachronic and synchronic dimensions of Romance languages in the Balkans, the historical influence of Latin and the Romance languages on other Balkan languages. Comparative linguistics, etymology, onomastics, geographical linguistics, linguistic anthropology, applied linguistics, theoretical and methodological issues came into focus while addressing various questions and phenomena linked to the presence of Romance languages and culture in the Balkans. Many were described and elucidated from different scientific standpoints. The variety of topics and approaches suggests that both Romance and Balkan studies should be broadened and adapted to meet the exigencies of ethnic studies. The beginning of the 21st century in Balkan Studies saw growing interest in the vernaculars of small ethnic groups in the Balkans like Aromanian, Istro-Romanian and Megleno-Romanian. As in modern linguistics, current research is interested in non-standard varieties, especially from the point of view of a combination of functional and typological approaches: each non-standard variety is a self-contained system. The fundamental postulate of linguists working in Balkan dialectology today is that any dialect is as good and systemically complete as any other, whether standard or non-standard. A key difference is that a standard is the object of conscious intervention, whereas a non-standard is not. There is a long and rich tradition of Balkan linguistics, but it has by and large focused on historical issues and mainly dealt with phonology and morphology. Traditionally, far less attention has been directed toward the syntax of the Balkan languages (Rivero & Ralli, 2001). The situation

can be compared to that of Slavic linguistics which has deep roots in its philological origins. While the study of linguistic systems has diverged considerably from theories of literature in recent decades, Slavic linguistics remains firmly committed to the pursuit of synchronic and diachronic knowledge that often simply cannot be captured by formalist approaches. In fact, Slavic linguists continue to engage in diachronic studies whereas many linguistics departments do not. These anthropological and socio-linguistic articles endeavour to avoid the traps of inventing new ethnic myths in the construction of small ethnic groups, or the myth of Roma "nomadism" in opposition to the myth of "territory" among sedentary peoples. The stress on the "Romance", apart from traditional Balkan linguistic fields and a diachronic approach (etymology, onomastics, etymology points to current research in Balkan linguistics, whether mutually coordinated or not.

My interest(s) in reflecting on and researching the Balkans goes back to 2010 when I participated in a conference on the topic held at the University of Washington, Seattle, organized by the Association of Balkan Studies, settled in Ohio, the USA. The title of the conference "18th Biennial Conference on Balkan and South Slavic Linguistics, Literature, and Folklore'' clearly spoke about the multitude of fields, topics and perspectives on a cultural land with not very clearly defined boundaries but rather an open space with changeable frontiers, including not only the Balkan Peninsula, but also today Romania, Ukraine, Hungary, Slovakia, conquered, controlled and dominated by different ethnic communities and state organizations like dutchies, empires and kingdoms (Ancient Celts, Illyrian and Thracian, Roman, Byzantine, Bulgarian-Vlach, Cumans, Petchenegs and Tatars, Ottomans) (Curta, 2016, 2020).

Traced back to the 18th century when the first "Romanian anthropologist and ethnologist'', Dimitrie Cantemir, formulated some ideas about the Balkans, this domain of cultural studies has been fed by German Slovenian linguists (Kopitar, 1829; Schleiher, 1852; Hahn, 1954; Miklosich, 1861; Meyer 1891), who discovered connections between Albanian, South Slavic languages and Romanian or underlined the role of the others, the ancient people living in the Balkans (Tomashek, 1893 about Thracian) or the Aromanians and Meglenits (Weigand, 1895).

Sanfeld's book (1930) opened the perspective of linguistic approaches to a cultural realm, which over the centuries has intermingled folklore, history and mentalities and was mirrored in the national literatures of the new republics/states of the Balkans. There are Numerous perspectives on union *linguistique balkanique*, *Sprachbund* or *language league* (Friedman, 1986; Joseph 1999) going to details about definiteness (Mladenova, 2007; Di Sciullio, 2013; Miseska Tomic, 2009), clitic doubling (Kalluli & Tasmowski, 2008) or to linguistic morpho-syntax (Rivero & Ralli, 2001), language and cultural typolo-

gy (Coseriu, 1972; Joseph, 2002; Joseph & Friedman, 2012; Saramandru, 1986; Asenova, 2002; Dragomirescu & Geană, 2021).

Beginning mostly from the "travel literature'' an entire field of Balkan anthropology either linguistic or social has sprang up since the 19th century through the writings of Martin-Leake, 1930, 1935; Ross, 1841; Curtius, 1852, which evolved and splinted into different directions like political and ethnic studies (Bjelic & Savic, 2002; Kaplan, 2005; Austin, 2017), folklore and literature (Beissinger, 1998; Muthu, 2002, 2004), ethnology and mentalities (Olteanu, 2004; Mesnil & Popova, 2007) and a plethora of linguistic studies. Todorova's book (1997) designed new visions on the imagining and imaginary Balkans (among others Jezernik, 1998; Jezernik et al., 2007).

Rich *lexical inventory* stratified in *etymological layers* (ancient Balkan languages: Thracian and Illyrian; Balkan Latinity, Balkan Byzantium, Slavic influence, Balkan Turkic: Cumans, Pethchenegs, Tatar, Ottoman Turkish). An attempt to give a continuity to the words evolutions was marked by the integration of multiple terms labeled as Romance, Slavic or Turkic into a wider Indo-European and non-Indo-European cultural frame).

Thinking about separation as a dissection of parts from a living organism (in a continuous evolution, marked as humans by changes, struggles and worries), I would prefer using some main concepts and methods for tracing back lexical items to Balkan Latinity and interpreting them in the light of:

1. *cross-cultural frames/scenes* as modalities to evoke, link, represent and organize realities that have been defined and used in cognitive linguistic and cultural anthropology by different scholars (Hymes, 1972; Haliday, 2014 [1984]; Lave, 1988; Crapanzano, 1998, 2004; Chomsky, 2009) mostly pointing out the connections between language and mind and underlining the pragmatic, social and ethnic dimensions of languages;
2. *etymological confluences* (Poruciuc, 1998) as a modality to explain the process of cultural interferences as a result of *contact induced changes made by mutual reinforcement* (Lindstedt, 1998, 2002, 2014);
3. *analysis and comparison of discourse* and *metaphorical meaning* (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Fairclough, 2006 [1992]) as a modality to interpret significations of the words in a continuum.

Since the 19th century some terms like Balkan and/or Danube Latinity (Fischer, 1985), Balkan Romance (Sikimic & Asic, 2008; Geană & Nevaci, 2016; Dragomirescu, 2020) and Roman-Speaking Balkans (Sorescu-Marinković et al., 2021) have been used interchangeably for defining a field of cultural and rarely linguistics studies which combine two ditinctive layers: Vulgar Latin as a language connected to the Balkans surviving until the 6th century when the Slavs where supposed to plundering into the peninsula divided Latinity and separated the common or Proto-Romanian (a language including south Danube dialects) into Daco-Romanian spoken north

of Danube and Romanian south dialects (Aromanian, Megleno-Romanian and Istro-Romanian) which survived as oases of Latinity in the Balkan and Istria Peninsula. Romance languages seen as springs-off of Latin interactionally and in a symbiosis developed specific lexis, etymologies and morpho-syntactic patterns. Being quite difficult to establish the fluxes of loans and the languages through/via which the words were borrowed, I would prefer to use the concept of linguistic relicts/vestigial elements to denominate the lexical units (headwords) found among languages and circulating across the dialects and languages of the Balkans. The main methods used for analysing are comparative and dissociative, because numerous terms labelled by the time as Slavic are properly Indo-European roots preserved in the Illyrian-Thracian substratum before they were borrowed in Romanian and Slavic languages. To separate such words first roots belonging to the layer of Slavic inherited vocabulary were eliminated from the inventory, whose relicts can be found in anthroponomy and toponymy as well. Some terms with Latin origins arrived in Romanian as a result of assimilation by both ethnic groups in the period of co-inhabitation. Moreover, for a lot of terms, the etymological history implies analysing the role of layers and steps before entering the Romanian language or their evolution on the Romanian terrain because Old Slavic terms can have Greek, Iranian and Latin origins and sometimes the Old Slavic and later Old Slavonic served as carriers of Byzantine (Greek) or Turkic words (Evseev, 2009, p. 24; Stanciu, 2015, pp. 5-9; Stanciu, 2021) into Romanian and belonging to what is generally named 'Slavic elements with Balkan character' (Capidan, 1943, pp. 230-231; Graur. 1954, pp. 42-47; Pătruţ, 1971, pp. 241-246). Additionally, the existence of some terms with Slavic origins common for Hungarian, Slovak, Slovene and Ukrainian opened the hypothesis of long-term cultural contacts in the Carpathian Mountains and Pannonia plain (Bogdan, 1894, p. 36; Miklosich, 1861, p. 24). Different words and roots followed a complicated way being Slavic loans in Romanian through a Hungarian intermediary. The inexistence of a written Greek and Latin culture until the 15th century gave to oral and folklore literature a special value and generated the polarized opinions in exagerating the number of Slavic terms in Romanian (Evseev, 2009) or connecting and re-evaluating them in relations with their Indo-European roots, which led to sorting the South Slavic words as a part of Balkan linguistic union.

Etymologies and Lexis: Identical Meaning and Phonetical Body, Semantic Convergences and Divergences

Commencing writing a Macedonian-Romanian dictionary together with some scholars and students from the Faculty of Philology "Blaze Koneski'' in Cyril and Methodius University of Skopje, I have paid attention to two main dimensions of language adaptation/internationalization (common terms and terminologies borrowed in the last three decades of independence

and separation from Former Yugoslavia) and standardization (defining the norms of Macedonian contemporary and literary language) as well but within this presentation I will be paying attention to some ancient words discovered in my recent reads and translations, considered to belong to Balkan Latinity and being shared by Macedonian and Romanian language.

As a basis of comparison, I chose Aromanian and Megleno-Romanian etymological dictionaries and other papers related to the dialects written and published in both countries (Capidan, 1941; Papahagi, 1974; *Dicționarul Limbii Române*, vol. I-XIX, 2010; DEX, 2016; Atanasov, 1978; Ilievski, 1988; Naster, 1988; Stankova, 2009; Ugrinova-Skalovska, 2010; Bastova, 1993; Aleksoska–Chatroska, 2005; Atanasov, 2012; Atanasov, 2022). Thinking of a continuum between North-Danube dialect generally called Daco-Romanian and the South Danube Romance enclaves like North Greece and Macedonian Aromanians and Meglens, as well as other oases of Latinity in Bulgaria, Serbia, Croatia some scholars (Rosetti, 1986; Friedman, 1986, 1996, 2000, 2001, 2003a, 2003b, 2007, 2010) formulated the hypothesis of a linguistic league/union which implies a common stock of words and morpho-syntactic patterns to be found in all Balkan languages either Indo-European (Albanian, Greek, Romance and Slavic or non-Indo-European (Turkic). Some recent articles (Joseph, 1998; Friedman, 2002) and books (Joseph & Friedman, 2012; Alexe, 2015, 2021) brought into sight new notes on the lexis circulation and morpho-syntax of Balkan typology that might be shared by all the languages in the peninsula.

On the other hand, we have not to forget that Latin terms have remained the main tool of lexis internationalization and some fields of science like medicine but also agriculture, war (military) household, religion have spread around numerous other language families like German, English, Romance and others.

These resemblances can be noticed in the numerous vocabulary items shared with Albanian, Bulgarian, Greek, Macedonian, Serbian and Turkish, and morpho-syntactic features common to the 'linguistic Balkan community' (Sandfeld, 1930, p. 36; Russu, 1981, pp. 79-102; Friedman, 2000) mostly understood as 'a convergence area' (Joseph, 1999, pp. 220-221). The differences are obvious in its unique heterogeneity lacking fixed contours and demonstrating a previous usage of a Latin idiom prevailing over the Slavic one and superposing various strata.

In the process of writing a Macedonian-Romanian Dictionary as well as in the teaching activities, I have involved students, the majority of which were with some main cultural and linguistic background (Albanian, Aromanian, Greek, Macedonian, Serbian) in projects focused on lexicography, translations and Balkan studies (anthropology, mentalities) seen as modalities to assess knowledge and to receive feedback from the learners of Romanian language in North Macedonia.

Registering in the dictionaries up to 10 000 headwords so far with gradually stratified meaning (basic, secondary, metaphorically deviated) and differencing contexts marked by phrases and sentences numbered by 1, 2, 3 organized from core/center to significant margins (conceptual metaphors): Two examples of sense degradation Mk. *азно* 'treasure'> Rom. *hazna* 'cesspit, dung hole' while the primordial meaning moved to the background of language and became less used. An interesting case of meaning evolution in symbiosis is a derivate of a Latin root *lenis* 'laziness' and the collective and place suffix *-işte* that generated a sublime word in Romanian *linişte* 'quietness'.

Old Lexical Items in The New Linguistic Garments or Blurred Etymologies for the Words from Substratum

Albanian served as a basis of comparison for Romanian substrate elements belonging to so called Thracian-Illyrian stock of words. However, Albanian and Romanian comparable vocabulary items have been connected to two different etymological strata like those of Balkan relics or Latin etyma that survived in the three languages (Albanian, Aromanian and Meglen Macedonian, Romanian) supposed to be in long term contacts in ancient times and in the period of Roman Empire domination.

A few words supposed to belong to substratum have been analyzed and interpreted as survived in Albanian, Macedonian, Aromanian, Megleno-Romanian and Dacian-Romanian (Brâncuş, 2002, pp. 22-39; Candrea, 1932; Capidan, 1923, pp. 444-554; Giuglea, 1922, p. 346; Mihăescu, 1960, pp. 279-290; Niculescu, 2007, pp. 32-37; Polák, 1958, pp. 693-699; Rosetti, 1947, pp. 342-356; Rohr, 1999, Rohr, 2002; Russu, 1959, pp. 49-83; Ungureanu, 2016, pp. 15-22; Alexe, 2021). They are considered to be relics or vestigial elements circulating in both contemporary languages: Alb. *avull* – Mk.Ar. Mg. *ăbur*-Rom. *abur* (Atanasov, 1978, p. 23) 'steam' is in fact an Indo-European term having cognates in Sanskrit *abhrá*, Avestan *awra*, Middle Persian *abr* 'cloud', Pashto *abrah* and Balochi *hawr* 'rain', Ossetian *ha-abrá* 'sky' and even Latin and English 'aura'. An interesting case of common etymology, divergent semantics and meaningful symbolism is represented by the pair Mac. *кóпил*е (-ња), bastard' (Popovski & Atanasov, 2007, p. 295) and Rom. *cópil*₁ 'maze runner/tiller, unwanted plant' and *copíl*₂ 'child, infant, descendant, offspring'. Connected to etyma from different languages like Albanian, Greek, Hungarian, Old Russian, South Slavic or even Thracian these terms display a variety of meanings spanning from concrete like *steam* or *bastard*, 'child, tiller' to metaphorical such as *aura, tramp, vagabond, vagrant*. Although explicable at the metaphorical or even mythological level such a difference in meaning places the words among the Balkan linguistic vestigial elements claimed by the artisans of modern national but in fact Indo-European languages. Among other linguistic relics of the Balkans (Kaluzhkaja, 2001, p. 239) with unclear etymology we can mention a term like Mac. *стопан*, Rom. *stăpân*,

Arom. Mgl. *stăpân* (Poposki & Atanasov, 2007, p. 710) 'boss, master, (land)owner/lord, proprietor', which has developed as other ancient words some derivates adjectives, nouns (Mac. *стопанство* 'national economy') and verbs (Rom. *a stăpâni* 'to dominate, to master, to own' and a variety of meanings in collocations, expressing domination, ownership, self-confidence (*stăpâne, stăpâne/Mai cheamă şi-un câine; stăpânul inelelor, săpân pe sine*).

Other terms supposed to belong to pre-Latin stock that was absorbed in Romanian and South Slavic languages as well as in Aromanian and Meglen dialects spoken in Macedonia are those related to poverty: Rom. *sărac* 'poor' was supposed to originate in Old Slavonic *sirŭ* 'abandoned' with cognates in Bg. Mac. Srb *sirak* 'orphan'. The second pair Rom. *sărman* – Mk. *сиромашен* 'misfortunate, poor'< Gr. *heiromahos* 'hand/palm worker' cannot be connected neither in phonetics nor in meaning and derivative mechanism (Vinereanu, 2009, p. 773). Labeled as with Albanian, Greek or Old Slavic origins such terms remain among the Balkan words with *unclear origins* (Alexe, 2021 [2015], pp. 142-143), blurred meaning, but fruitful polysemy and symbolism. The same is valid for entire lexical fields like: adjectives about animals (Alb. *shterp,* Rom. *sterp* 'barren, dry, sterile'), cattle breeding (Alb. *turmë,* Rom. *turmă* 'herd'), name of the birds (Alb *shtërk,* Rom. *stârc* 'heron'), parents, marriage and wedding terminology either nouns or verbs (Alb. *krushk*, Rom. *cuscru* 'parents in law', Alb. *nunë,* Rom. *nună* 'God mother'; Alb. *martuar,* Rom. *a mărita* 'to marry', Alb. *tatë,* Rom. *tată,* Mac. *татко* 'father'), funeral places (Alb. *qimiter,* Rom. *cimitir* 'graveyard'), banks, places of habitation, parts of the house (Alb. *katun,* Rom. *cătun* 'hamlet, small village'; Alb. *paret,* Rom. *perete* 'wall'), verbs (Alb. *shtupaj,* Rom. *a astupa* 'to cover'; Alb. *mërmerij*, Rom. a *murmura* 'to whisper'; Alb. *shkëmbej,* Rom. *a schimba* 'to change, to exchange'; Alb. *strigë,* Rom. *a striga* 'to call, to shout', Alb. *shtrengo*j, Rom *a strânge* 'to collect, to gather, to harvest, to tighten; Alb. *tradhti*, Rom. *a trăda* 'to betray').

Latin and its Survivals in the Balkans

A quite unclear distinction is attested between Balkan Latinity represented by some lexical units believed to survive by oral channels of communication and Balkan Romance Speaking (Sikimic, 2008; Geană & Nevaci 2016; Sorescu-Marinković et al., 2020). The last one remains rather a cultural construct than a linguistic one. Scholars of different backgrounds and origins (Pascu, 1923; Koneski, 1965; Nastev, 1968) have listed over the time only some concepts words found across languages often used and with a fruitful symbolism. I decided to analyze and interpret those words of mixed and unclear origins that remained important due to their rich and inferential symbolism.

Celebrations and their rituals are among the ancient words-concept whose meanings roots stay between languages: The Romanian noun *colind-*

Macedonian *koleda* 'carol' have a diminutive term in Rom. *colindeţ* and Bg. *колиндец* denominating a bun or a round shaped loaf given to the carol singers and a correspondent verb Rom. *a colinda*, Bg. *koleduvam*, Srb *kole(n)dovati*, Slo. *koledovati* 'going from house to house to perform good wishes songs accompanied by ritualistic gestures like tilling a furrow in the yard, throwing seed, making noise and touching cattle and people by a magic stick' enriched the metaphorical meaning of the word relating it to agricultural and sun celebrations performed this time. The terms were related to two different roots like Latin and Greek *kalende – calendae* and South Slavic *kolo* 'round shape, wheel' as a shape of the sun and further it can be followed to a folklore interpretation expressing cult of sun and sacred trees (Caraman, 1930, p. 39; Caraman, 1983; Liaku-Anovska, 2019, pp. 319-320). As a term with puzzling etymological explanations Rom. *Crăciun* might be found in similar phonetical forms and the same meanings in different languages like Hungarian, Aromanian in Macedonia (Schütz, 1966, p. 34; Nastev, 1988, p. 67), Old Russian *Карачун* as reminiscent from Turkic languages all revealing ancient cults of sun, fire and trees and symbolically depicting a cycle of celebrations and practices related to the cosmic year renewal and winter solstice.

Some linguistic relics of Latin origin can be found in Macedonian and Romanian in identic or similar forms and meaning: Mac. *кандила* - Rom. *candelă* < Lat. *candelum*; Mac. *олтар* – Rom. *altar* < Lat. *alter*; Mac. *поган* - Rom. *păgân* < Lat. *paganus* 'pagan'.

The next one preserved in South Romania and some Slavic cultures such as Bulgarian, Macedonian, Serbian and Ukrainian displays an ethnographic reality, hidden in a custom with different names *Kaloushari* and *Rousalka*, a complex ritual of healing having the same scenario, personages and functions in all above-mentioned cultures. If in South-Central Bulgaria and Romania the dance is known as Kaloushari, in Macedonia and Northern Bulgaria the name is *Rousalki* dance (Benovska-Sъbkova, 1991, pp. 9-10; Capidan, 1923, pp. 190-191; Ghinoiu, 2013, p. 198; Pamfile, 1997b, pp. 45-55; Vojtovich, 2002, p. 447). The custom and the dance are performed in the Whitsun week and all functions, scenario and personages are alike to the Slavic nations' folklore. Its roots originating in ancient times allude, on the one hand, an initiator process, mentioning the cult of the death, of the horse, of the sun, and, on the other hand, resonate a medieval model of brotherhood by the secret ties among the members of the group, together with beliefs in fairies, divinatory and magic practices as using herbs and water for cleaning and curing (Bârlea, 1983, p. 64; Fochi, 1976, p. 50; Ghinoiu, 2002, p. 339; Ispas, 2003, pp. 148-151; Marinov, 1891, p. 166; Vasileva, 2002, pp. 169-172; Vinogradova, 1995, pp. 494-495; Vulcănescu, 1987, p. 380). Ethnographic data confirm the preservation of practices in Balkan area and the continuation of personages' image in Eastern Slavic area. In Bulgaria and South Macedonia groups of

men were going from house to house or in the fields bless the plants and cure the people. Where there was a sick person, they named the 'house of Rousalki' signifying that members of a family were affected by fairies and put the swords over the head of ill person believing that like this they will cure him/her by performing magical dances named *horo* around the tortured person. The participants in these spiritual journeys performed in this sacred period followed the rules strictly, first they did not make a cross before the meals and in the night, they did not greet each other or with the villagers. They kept silence while passed from one house to another and spent the night in the same place. When they performed the dance, they did not allow anybody to enter the circle. Only the sick person could enter and exit the circle. When they get closer to the next village, they sent a person to check if another group of people roam in the place. It was not desired to encounter another group of performers. Groups of dancers went during the week from one village to another in Northern Bulgaria, Southern Romania and Serbia. The group was always formed by an odd number of members. Their attire is made up of caps and flowers wreaths, shoes, white shirts and pants, on the girdle they wear bells, and a long stick called *tojag* used for touching people and dancing with it in a circular movement around the ill person.

It has been stated by some Aromanian and Macedonian Scholars that the Vlachs in the Balkans were not very good at agriculture and the mountain relief rather favored cattle breeding than agriculture. This might become an explanation of the not so numerous presences of Latin terms regarding agriculture in Macedonian. Otherwise, the Indo-European ones (Dersken, 2009) are well represented in Romanian and all Romance languages, including Macedonian. The unique Latin term in this field supposed to be borrowed by both languages through Old Church Slavonic was preserved in an identic phonetical form *рало* 'beat axe,' in Macedonian and in altered but similar versions Mac. *ралица* – Rom. *rariță* 'butting (small) plough' in Romanian and regional Macedonian (Derkesen, 2009, pp. 302-303; Tomici, 1986, p. 847; Poruciuc, 2016, pp. 159-180). From an anthropological ethnographic point of view, it is believed that Aromanians were good cattle breeders and merchants as well (Capidan, 1945) and they travelled with their flocks and goods within the Balkans without borders. Two words reminiscent in both languages might witness the ancient features of this mountain and rural profession: Mk. *бивол* – Rom. *bivol* < Lat. *buballus* represent the ancestor of contemporary Rom. *bou* 'bull', was depicted in folk songs of both cultures. Significantly, in legends of Moldavia the animal appears on the flag and the coats of arms, shields as a mythical aurochs involved in hunting scenarios of state foundation. From the civilization of shepherds surprisingly both languages preserved the same term: *урда* - Rom. *urdă* 'cottage cheese' with ob-

scure etymology and only in Romanian survived the Latin one *brânză* 'cheese' also found in Eastern Slavic languages like Russian and Ukrainian as a relic.

Housing as a cultural dimension of existence has revealed over centuries various concepts related to building and masonry, the role of fire in creating the atmosphere of family and home or generated myths of long-lasting shelters or fortresses that required a sacrifice to resist in time: Mac. *шкидла*, Rom. *scândură* and Mac. *шинра* < Lat. *scindula* 'board, tile of wood' underline the role of wood in building tradition and the distribution of the terms from this semantic field in two main stylistic registers: Rom. *scândură* is the general and neutral word in the standard languages, while Rom. *şindrilă* is the colloquial and popular one.

Slavic or Indo-European?

Having been integrated in the frame of Romanian ethnogenesis, the Slavic influence was seen simultaneously as a factor of separation and unification. On the one hand, the Romanian language by the Slavic settlements in the Balkans was isolated from Eastern Romanic area and it is perceived as a 'Latin oasis in a Slavic Sea' (Tapon, 2010, p. 453), continuing a language imposed by the process of Romanization and having multiple peculiarities resulting from the cultural, geographical and linguistic context. On the other hand, it seems that the Slavic influence gave Romanian language a sense of continuity because it added to the autochthonous substratum (Dacian-Getae-Illyrian and Thracian) and the Latin one a significant stock of lexis, integrating it into the Balkan context and favouring the links between north and south of Danube, where the contacts among ethnic groups were never interrupted (Brâncuş, 2002, p. 11; Kopitar, 1829, pp. 64-65; Papahagi, 1923, pp. 93-94). In the last two decades, the hypothesis of continuity was interpreted as a reaction of the Romanian historians to counterposing arguments to Hungarian and Soviet mainly political ideologies of discontinuity, conquests and migrations.

In fact, ancient words belonging to Indo-European and non-Indo-European stock have evolved at the confluences of cultures and languages and significantly changed their meaning throughout their evolution. Therefore, those more than 10000 words labelled like Slavic in Romanian or those denominating the same concepts across the cultures, but remaining with controversial and unknown etymologies can be grouped as confluent results from Indo-European or Turkic dialects. The attempts to stratify the substratum as Balkan with different origins either Thracian-Dacian, Old Celtic or Latin denote a conceptual inconsequence as autochthonous means either one of them reunited under pre-Roman (Poruciuc, 2011, 2016) and some research led to various extends spanning from some words of possible Old Germanic

origins (Poruciuc, 1992, 1999, 2000, 2005, 2008, 2011, 2016) to voluminous dictionaries of Dacian or Thracian languages (Paliga, 2009, 2020; Rohr, 1999, 2002).

Some examples analyzed below bring some insights into the field and suggest an etymological stratigraphy explained in connection with empire evolution and population settlements in the cultural territory. As it has been already demonstrated by different scholars at different times (Šafarik, 1890; Bezlaj et al., 1976) Slavic does not have neither from an ethnic standpoint nor from a linguistic one, a unity across the cultures, but rather at least three branches with a broad range of alike lexical items, but maybe in the same measure of different ones. On the one hand, the layers of Slavic have been rarely and randomly analysed in a stratigraphic approach until recently and in connection with Indo-European terms as inherited lexicon (Derksen, 2008, AHDEL, 2010). On the other hand, the investigation of Slavic inherited lexicon has never considered yet the extended links to Romanian. In result, Romanian remains considerably alike to and significantly different from all Balkan and surrounding Slavic languages, a difference which generated a considerable debate over its provenance due to sharing a 'Balkan destiny' (Flora, 1968, p. 13; Rosetti, 1986, p. 74) and reconnection to Romance languages in the 19th century.

It is commonly acknowledged in many old and new works that the influence of the Slavic language is one of the most powerful among the non-Romance influences on the Romanian language although it remained 'of obscure character' (Iroaie, 1943, p. 29; Panaitescu, 1971, p. 13). The topic of many academic controversies over the years, with many unknown and highly variable interpretations, this dimension of the Romanian language and culture is still an open field for cultural research. Over time, a lot of foreign and Romanian researchers have underlined, in numerous papers, the importance of the Slavic influence on the Romanian language considering it 'the longest and strongest among non-Romance ones' (Hristea, 1982, p. 41; Poruciuc, 2010, p. 15; Puşcariu, 1940, p. 277; Rosetti, 1986, p. 293), but to assess the dimensions of this influence is difficult because there are different sources and degrees as well as different layers coming one after another in history (Giuglea, 1988, p. 139), often replacing the centres of cultural diffusion, actioning with different degree of intensity in different regions and having regional varieties.

The first period of so-called Slavic influence is still unclear due to the co-existence of three different elements like the Romanic, the Old Bulgarian (Frâncu, 1999, p. 87) and the Ruthenian ones (Bărbulescu, 1929, p. 21), bilingualism and cultural exchanges with often changeable shapes, caused by the barbarian invasions. In addition, the second period is marked by a continuous change of centre of cultural diffusion and regional assimilation of Old Church Slavonic culture and language: first Bulgarian, after the 12th century, the Serbian one in the South West of today's Romania, respectively, Russian

and Ukrainian in the Eastern one. Although numerous researchers labelled as Slavisms various terms as undoubtedly originating in Slavic (Leschber, 1999, 2010, 2012; Mihăilă, 1973, pp. 21-26; Miklosich, 1861, pp. 5-53; Rosetti, 1986, pp. 292-320; Ungureanu, 2016, pp. 28-43) by taking in consideration their belongingness to 'Slavic inherited vocabulary' (Derksen, 2008, pp. 26-27), namely Baltic (Vraciu, 1972, pp. 125-185), Latin and Lithuanian (Meillet, 1905, pp. 323-325) and other Indo-European words (Vraciu, 1965, pp. 283-298), which passed first into Proto-Slavic, later into Slavic languages and finally into Romanian make the number significantly smaller. Therefore, the presence of comparable terms in Romanian and Slavic as resulting from Indo-European roots is not relevant for Slavic linguistic heritage of Romanian, which consists mainly of two dimensions: autochthonous items shared by the two ethnic groups in the period of co-inhabitation and vestigial elements, namely terms resulting from assimilation of groups of Slavs in the Romanian territories as a result of cultural contacts. Many of the words existing in different stylistic registers like core vocabulary, popular, archaic, dialectal or regional, are either transmitted by oral channels and reflect folk knowledge exchanges or less numerous cult loans were transferred by Old Church Slavonic.

The main methods used for analysing are comparative and dissociative, because numerous terms labelled by the time as Slavic are properly Indo-European roots preserved in the Illyrian-Thracian substratum before they were borrowed in Romanian and Slavic languages. To separate such words first roots belonging to the layer of Slavic inherited vocabulary were eliminated from the inventory, whose relicts can be found in anthroponomy and toponymy as well. Some terms with Latin origins arrived in Romanian as a result of assimilation by both ethnic groups in the period of co-inhabitation. Moreover, for a lot of terms, the etymological history implies analyzing the role of layers and steps before entering the Romanian language or their evolution on the Romanian terrain because Old Slavic terms can have Greek, Iranian and Latin origins and sometimes the Old Slavic and later Old Church Slavonic served as carriers of Byzantine (Greek) or Turkic words (Evseev, 2009, p. 24; Stanciu, 2015, pp. 5-9; Stanciu, 2021) into Romanian and belonging to what is generally named 'Slavic elements with Balkan character' (Capidan, 1943, pp. 230-231; Graur, 1954, pp. 42-47; Pătruț, 1971, pp. 241-246). Additionally, the existence of some terms with Slavic origins common for Hungarian, Slovak, Slovene and Ukrainian opened the hypothesis of long-term cultural contacts in the Carpathian Mountains and Pannonia plain (Bogdan, 1894, p. 36; Miklosich, 1861, p. 24; Olteanu, 1958, p. 22). Travelling through different Indo-European language groups, numerous words have acquired secondary and metaphorical meaning becoming 'trichotomical' (Paliga, 2012, p. 347).

Different words and roots followed a complicated way being Slavic loans in Romanian through a Hungarian intermediary (Densuşianu, 1999, pp. 241-242; Şăineanu, 1900, pp. 33-34; Ivanov & Toporov, 1974, pp. 164-167). The inexistence of a written Greek and Latin culture until the 15th century gave to oral and folklore literature a special value and generated the polarized opinions in exaggerating the number of Slavic terms in Romanian (Evseev, 2009) or connecting and re-evaluating them in relations with their Indo-European roots, which let to sorting the South Slavic words as a part of Balkan linguistic union

Taking distance from excessive underlying of Latinity formulated by the members of the Transylvanian School, passing through a process of foundation of theoretical principles, in the last two centuries, the etymology of Romanian has evolved in three different directions, the natural maturation based on the development of comparative and structural linguistics (Candrea & Densusianu, 1914; Cihac, 1870, 1878, 1900; Hasdeu, 1983; Coteanu & Sala, 1987, Şăineanu, 1900), a stratification based on separating different layers and influences (Bogdan, 1905; Drăganu, 1933; Mihăilă, 1960, 1962, 1967, 1971, 1973, 1974, 1996; Paliga, 1987, 1991, 1993, 2006; Ungureanu, 2016, pp. 9-28; Ungureanu, 2019; Vraciu, 1980, pp. 24-32), a perspective to diversification by considering complementary approaches, such as anthropological, cross-cultural and multi-linguistic confluences (Kahl, 2011, 2015; Poruciuc, 1998, 2010, 2015, 2016). Therefore, instead of thinking of only one language source of what are generally called Romanian Slavic terms I preferred accepting multiple etymologies, tracing etymological paths and following the evolution of the words from the earlier occurrences to the current stages of meaning development by designing what has been named 'etymological charts' (Nourai, 2010, p. 12).

"The geography of Slavic loans in Romanian language" (Mihăilă, 1963, p. 27) has had centers of influence and edges creating overlaps and delimitating ethnographic and linguistic borders. There are three different situations in today Romanian provinces: on the one hand, Moldavia experienced the early influence of Proto-Bulgarian, on the other hand, of Kievan Russian and Ukrainian (Vernardskij, 1976, pp. 42-43; Vascenco, 1959, p. 329), Walachia was massively influenced especially by Proto-Bulgarian and later on by Macedonian, Montenegrin and Serbian, while priests found a shelter in the monasteries and developed the printing of first religious books, in Transylvania Latin was used in the Catholic Church, while Old Slavonic was the language of personal correspondence and deeds.

Due to the space limitations, I will analyze only some words that were not registered in Derksen's dictionary and have become the reason of my personal reflection on Indo-European roots and their semantic evolution. This is rather a continuation of my article (Stanciu, 2021) about the toponym

Volna in which I exposed the method of retracing etymologies to the ancient languages and following their circulation around classical as well as their echoes or reverberations in modern languages.

Romanian etymological dictionaries (Ciorănescu, 2002; DLRM; DEX; MDA) have recorded as of Slavic origins numerous words connecting their etymologies only to one idiom like Bulgarian, Serbian or Russian. This link induces the idea of a direct borrowing without considering the multiple etymological layers, which better explain the evolution in meaning. Therefore, more than 4000 words with uncertain (Vinereanu, 2009) or unknown etymologies and more than 10000 words with 'obscure or unsatisfactory etymological explanations' (Paliga, 1991, p. 101) may be considered, while some articles and dictionaries of Slavic languages (especially Bulgarian and Serbian) started considering the Romanian terms in relation with their etymologies. Almost nobody has taken the wider path of etymology research following the first records of the term in a language, its evolution and meaning development in the languages it was borrowed from, eventually its geographical, metaphorical and style distribution. Reckoned as widely spread within archaic, colloquial and popular registers of Romanian the words of Slavic origins belong in fact to a shared heritage and have circulated from ancient to modern languages changing their meaning either by extensions, metaphorization or limitation. An example in this regard is a word recorded in all Romanian dictionaries with either Albanian *mlašk* (Philippide, 2010, p. 724), Ruthenian (Ciorănescu, 2002, p. 516) or Old Slavic, Bulgarian and Serbian origins (*mlaka*, Scriban, 1939, p. 822) and regional distribution: Rom. *mlacă* 'swamp, marsh, slough, muddy pool, warm spring' (DEX, p. 662; DLRM, p. 508), which has quite recently been reintegrated into a stratigraphic meaning analysis and reconnected to Greek μέλκιου 'source, nymphs, playful, spring' (Beekes, 2010, p. 926). Suspected of having connections with Balto-Slavic words (Russ. *moloko* 'milk', Lit. *malkas* 'draught') the term of apparently unclear meaning was related to Gothic *milhma* 'cloud' (Snoj, 2002), Latin sources and is to be found in Romanian, Croatian, Serbian, Slovenian (Bezlaj et al., 1976), with very similar conceptual meaning interwoven at metaphorical level. What unifies the semantic matrix of the word may be found in my opinion in the different aggregation states of the water (clouds, marsh, spring), which sometimes may receive a foamy white color similar to the one of milk. As a term denominating primordial elements, it was supposed to have moved from a concrete to an abstract meaning. At least in idioms and phrases the symbolism of colors was related in the case of other words from the lexical family like Rom. *baltă* 'pool, puddle, plash, fish pond'< Alb. *baltë*, Sl. *blato* (DEX, p. 87) of possible Illyrian origins (Giuglea, 1988, p. 42), actually Indo-European (Derksen, 2008, p. 64), *mlaştină* 'marsh, swamp, slough', *mocirlă* < Bg. *močilo* (DEX, p. 664), *smârc* 'muddy

pool') or other term for mud like *mâzgă* 'slime' < Sl. *mězga*, Bg. *măzga* (DEX, p. 635), *noroi* 'mud, mire, ooze, slash, dirt, filth' < Bg. *naroj* (DEX, p. 721) or even *cocină* 'pigsty' < Bg, *kočina* (DEX, p. 201) which have received in collocations, idioms and phrases either positive (*a prinde mâzgă,* lit. 'to catch some slime', metaphorically 'to become rich/wealth' (Scriban, 1939, p. 822) or negative and pejorative *a trăi (ca) în cocină, mocirlă, mlaştină, noroi* 'to live an immoral, low, miserable, unworthy life'. Belonging to Balkan and South Slavic linguistic area and not being found in Eastern and Western Slavic (Russian, Ukrainian, Czech, Polish, Slovak) I suppose that all these terms actually have Indo-European etymologies and due to their ancestry have received different concrete and metaphorical meanings.

It is of a common knowledge that body parts and existential objects around house, greetings and tools have very different lexical and semantic representations and there is an alike and a very different way of evolution, divergences and complementarity among the term belonging to the same lexical family or synonymic series. A rich group of lexical items are comprised in this field and denote either a semantic congruence or a straight divergence in meaning evolution. Apparently very different as evolving from various Indo-European roots, the body parts display a common zone of meaning and a similar stylistic distribution in the dialectal and spoken registers of Romanian and Slavic languages. Although the majority of the items are significantly different (*mână - ruka* 'hand, arm, palm', *picior - nog* 'leg', *cap - golova* 'head', *inimă - serce* 'heart', *creier - mosg* 'brain', *plămân - lehk* 'lung'), there are some common words reflecting sometimes synonymy or semantic divergences. Among them *copită - kopyta* 'claw, hoof' was original to this cognate set and that meanings such as Slav *noga* 'foot, leg' developed, via several transitional steps, from 'claw, hoof'. However, Romanian and Slavic languages have a specific term for 'hoof', *kopyto* (*koph₂ uto-*) with Baltic, Indo-Iranian and Germanic cognates, which prevents us from positing simply 'nail' > 'hoof' > leg'. On the other hand, a simple derivation leg' > 'foot' (or 'leg/foot') > 'finger/toe' > 'nail' does not work either because *PIE *ped* - 'foot' is a standalone concept attested in all the key branches, including Anatolian and Romanian. It is not derived from 'leg' and does not spawn forms with meaning 'finger/toe' or 'nail'. One possible explanation is that *PIE *ped* - 'leg' referred exclusively to 'sole of foot' as a body part doing the stepping. 'Foot' as a 'collective of toes and toenails' may have been lexicalized differently, grouped with 'ankle' and 'calf' and labelled by a form similar to *dHmog^wh-/*dHnog^wh-/*dHlog^wh*. In this case, Romanian *picior* 'leg' marked a Romanic evolution of Proto-Indo-European reconstructed *root * ped-*: Latin *petioles* > Rom. *picior* (de casă, de munte) 'leg', (abutement, bottom/foot of the mountain' and *peţiol* 'petiole, leaf stalk', Fr. *pied* 'leg', Eng. *pedestrian* while Romanian and Slavic *copită, kopyta* 'claw, hoof' and *glezna*, 'ankle'

marked a different process of assimilation, a stylistic distribution (popular/standard) and may represent a semantic archaism.

Maybe a Latin relict in Romanian and Slavic languages or the result of Indo-European root evolution the pair Rom. *coastă* 'rib' - Slavic *kôstь* 'bone' (Derksen, 2008, p. 239) reflects a sort of meaning extension or restrain. Although the Latin term remained otherwise isolated in Romance area nobody has considered its influence as important as it may be in a different view of terms inherited within Balkan context. The second hypothesis of Indo-European roots evolution marked by the loss of initial prefix is also feasible for the meaning restraint. Limited to colloquial spoken or sometimes called popular style in Romanian *icra* (piciorului) or widely spread in neutral Russian language - *ikra* (noga) 'ankle' display a different distribution within language usage registers, which apply to some other categories of words like nouns, verb interjections, which created etymological doublets, triplets or quadruplets from terms of different origins, mainly Indo-European or Turkic (*timp - vreme* 'time', *port - liman* 'harbour', *poftim - na!* 'Here you go').

Two main words with regional distribution reflecting a specific geography of Slavic loan in Romanian designate the groom men: first is *staroste*, the second one is *vornicel* both denominated initially medieval boyar ranks either as chiefs of regions, fortress being in charge with administrative, judge and military attribution, leading craftsmanship or merchants' associations or being mayor (MDA, 4, p. 589; MDA, 4, p. 1309). Both terms have pan-Slavic origins with etymons in Old Slavonic. First word *starosta* (OS *starosta*, Ukr. *starosta* 'the oldest and best groom's adviser') has roots in Indo-European *stāros* (Pokorny, 2007, pp. 1004-1008) and passed into Proto-Slavic as *star'* (Brückner, 1985, p. 515; Vasmer, 1987, p. 747); the second one originating in Old Slavic *дворьинкъ* 'administrator of the castle' (Starchevskij, 1899, p. 162), 'civil servant, who takes care of court and all its belongings, responsible for fairs and trade organization' (STSRJ, 1, p. 311) and it has correspondents in Romanian and all modern Slavic languages: Bg. *дворник* 'witness of marriage', Srb. and Ukr. *dvornik* 'courtier' (Skok, 1973, pp. 465-467; Rudnicky, 1982, p. 17), Pol. *dworzanin* (Brückner, 1985, p. 105), *dvorjanin* 'the chief of the servants' (Vasmer, 1986, p. 489).

The meaning in Romanian and Macedonian is closer to the Bulgarian one as the character plays a key role in different moments of marital ceremonial spanning from wooing where he acts as a matchmaker to post-nuptial activities. As the groom's representative, he analyses the prospective bride, performs prenuptial songs in front of her parents, invites villagers to the coronation and feast, leads the suit to the church, brings the ritual bread in the feast meal, announces and collects the gifts. Chosen by the groom among close friends, he wears a distinctive sign of their ranks, a flag made up of a stick which has tied on the top a scarf sewed by groom's maids.

The central character of the wedding ritual *nevesta* 'bride, wife' allows interesting meaning extensions and philosophical speculations. The term designates the social status of a woman in the prenuptial stages like being engaged to the married one, either wife or daughter-in-law. The word originating in Old Slavic *невѣста* 'virgin or widow engaged, daughter-in-law/ *невѣстка* 'son's or brother's wife' (STSRJ, 2, p. 429; Starchevskij, 1899, p. 447) and has analogous variants in Southern Romanian dialects (Ar. *neveastă*, Mgl. *niveastă*).

Generally accepted as a word with Slavic origins (Anikin et al., 2001, p. 33; Anikin et al., 2001, p. 143; Miklosich, 1861, p. 32; Cihac, 1900, p. 216; Uzenjova, 2010, pp. 62-66), it occurs in almost all Slavic languages in comparable forms: Bg. *невеста/невяста* 'bride, daughter-in-law, young wife' (Georgiev et al., 1995, pp. 587-589), Srb. *nevesta/nevjesta* 'bride, young and faithful wife, daughter-in-law, sister-in-law (Skok, 1973, p. 515), Pol. *niewiasta* (Brückner, 1985, p. 362), Russ: *nevesta*, Ukr. *nevista* (Rudnicky, 1982, p. 855). While covering in Slavic languages the meanings 'young woman, bride' in Romanian the word expresses all meanings from bride to married woman and alongside with the highly quoted *soție* 'spose', *nevastă* 'wife' remains the colloquial, but very affective and popular correspondent. Moreover, North of Danube some other significations were added to the word following the allegoric patterns in Slavic: the female friend of bride who helps with administrative works during the wedding, a folk dance and the melody used together (MDA, 3, p. 743) and the euphemistic term *nevăstuică* < Bg. *nevestulka* 'common/beech marten, weasel'.

Following the term in relation to other Slavic cultures and languages, a German lexicographer (Vasmer, 1987, 3, p. 55) enriched word's semantic and metaphorical matrix by adding to etymology the Old Church Slavonic variant *невеста*, Slo *nevesta*, and relating the term with the primordial ancient meaning *неизвестна* as derived with the prefix *ne-* from the verb *ведать* 'to know' and generating a new meaning: 'the unknown' (Gimbutas, 1971, p. 139; Uzenjova, 2010, p. 75). Staying in the middle of some Slavic verbs denoting a kind of specific knowledge and understanding like perceiving deeper the things. This approach opens the possibility to interpret the word in a philosophical manner starting from its initial and taboo imagery, which refers to protecting the young girl who passes to a new condition and an alien space for her against the bad spirits. This interpretation is supported by a ritualistic gesture encountered in Romanian and Slavic marriage scenario, namely covering the bride at the end of the feast as marking the passing to the new status of wife. Some other meaning derived from Slavic languages may be related to some verbs like Lit. *vdati* or Russ. *выйти за муж* 'following the husband, get married (applying to a maid) 'or even to the ceremony of coronation (Mac. *венча/се венча* - Rom. *cunună/ a (se) cununa* 'to wear a

crown in the day of the wedding', 'to get religiously married', probably related somehow to the Alb. *nun* - Mac. reg. *нун*, Rom. *nun* 'God father in the day of the wedding').

Some other etymological incursions have been started following other two etymological tracks like Greek and Turkic/Turkish that have influenced both Romanian and Macedonian languages in ancient times, Middle Ages or even in the contemporary process of language standardization and semantic development (Stanciu, 2020).

Grammar and Semantics in the Balkan Sprachbund

Not only etymological, lexical similarities can be noticed as common features of the Balkan Linguistic League (Friedman, 2000) but also some relevant grammatical and semantical patterns like those that have been noticed and enumerated over the time as *explicit analytism of argument marking* (Linstedt, 2014, p. 169): enclitic articles, object reduplication, prepositions instead of cases, recipient/possession merger, goal/location merger, finite complementation, analytic future made of verb *volo* 'want', the past future used as conditional, *habeo* perfect tense (a form of past in the future working together with subjunctive, analytic comparison of adjectives.

The Balkan clitic doubling patterns have raised important issues that have challenged even the most basic assumptions about the phenomenon of clitic doubling. However, in spite of the substantial body of literature and important new empirical evidence, there exists to date no study that details the distinguishing peculiarities of this prevailing Balkan Sprachbund phenomenon across Albanian, Macedonian and Romanian languages, which would naturally lead to a better understanding of it. Despite of similar functional-cognitive inventories of clitics some nuances differentiate our target languages in this complex field: in Macedonian the clitic doubling is correlated with the deictic value of definite article, while in Romanian there are a lot of semantic (+ Animated) and pragmatical rules like known in the context, the occurrence of feminine clitic (o, ja) takes either a pre-verbal position (*о сünosc, ja испратиß пораката*) or only in Romanian a post-verbal one (*am ajutat-o, întâlnind-o*).

Conclusions

At one moment in their evolution the languages as a result of social and ethnic interaction reflect specific communicative and symbolic competences as abilities of the speakers/users to encode historical/human and natural realities in words, phrases, paragraphs and texts. Found in functional contacts that might have favored convergent and divergent development both Macedonian and Romanian languages display common and similar Balkan lexis and grammatical patterns possibly created in etymological confluences and showing *borrowability hierarchies* in the cultural history of the Balkans.

Romance (Speaking) Balkans and Balkan Sprachbund have become cultural constructs including folklore traditions, literature, language and mentalities. As a carrier of culture, the language(s), has been created by the time in the peninsula or even in the extended space of imaginary Balkans. Assimilated lexis from Classical Vulgar Latin, Medieval Latin adapted the words to the morphology, syntax and phraseology. Mirroring ancient, medieval and (post) modern realities, the words of Latin and Romance, Slavic and Turkic/Ottoman Turkish origins might be organized in an evolutive continuum: those borrowed due to the existence of the Romance in the Balkans, who have conquered, controlled and dominated the realm since the first century BC by sixth century AD, when the Proto-Romance was splinted by the Slavic plundering, Old Church Slavonic, numerous Romance and Turkish items borrowed in modern times in the period of national language formation.

Different etymological layers found sometimes in continuity and interference allow to any researcher passionate about the Balkans to create a rich stock of lexical items (collocations and phrases) and grammatical patterns that can be used for comprehension, code-switching and increasing cultural motivation in second language acquisition. Common to Balkan Sprachbund grammatical phenomena like clitic doubling, interchangeable structures like habeo pro sum, sum pro habeo and even syntactic patterns like those of simple or complex sentences have generated a rich stock of similarities that bridge knowledge and help the students and teachers in learning and teaching Romanian in North Macedonia.

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THE USING OF OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES (OER) IN THE EVALUATION PROCESS

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Abstract

The present paper focuses on how Open Educational Resources can facilitate the evaluation process during online teaching. Assessments are an integral part of the entire didactic process and they have a great impact upon the desired behavior of the students. Consequently, it is highly recommended that teachers use new methods and strategies in order to stimulate the students. Online means represent a great tool when it comes to evaluation. In this study, I will provide examples of apps and sites that can get the students' interest and attention in the didactic process, without making them feel uncomfortable or even anxious.

Keywords: *evaluation, strategy, techniques, OER, advantages, disadvantages*

Rezumat

Prezenta lucrare se concentrează asupra Resurselor Educaționale Deschise care pot facilita procesul de evaluare în predarea online. Evaluările sunt o parte integrantă a întregului proces didactic și au un impact major asupra comportamentului dezirabil al studenților. Astfel, este recomandat ca profesorii să utilizeze noi metode și strategii în vederea stimulării elevilor. Mijloacele online reprezintă un instrument excelent de evaluare. În acest studiu, voi oferi exemple de aplicații și site-uri care pot atrage interesul și atenția elevilor în cadrul procesului didactic, fără să îi facă să se simtă inconfortabil sau anxioși.

Cuvinte-cheie: *evaluare, strategie, tehnici, RED, avantaje, dezavantaje*

The Concept of Evaluation

The teaching and learning activity materialize into obtained results. There are some findings that support the importance of evaluation, such as the teaching act implies some objectives and the students' performances show if the objectives have been successfully accomplished, the results allow the teacher to adapt the didactic process and the assessments are 40% of the teachers' work (Chiş, 2001, p. 205).

Cristian Stan and Adriana D. Manea state that "the designing of a better educational reality in the absence of a suitable theoretical approach, centered on the issue of studying the integrative manner of self-assessment and educational assessment is unlikely" (Stan & Manea, 2015, p. 497). Consequently, it is very important that the teacher has theoretical knowledge in order to create an appropriate means through which the students should be evaluated.

However, according to V.K. Maheshwari, we also have to keep in mind that the terms *evaluation* and *measurement* are often used interchangeably. He states that evaluation is somehow confused with testing and/or measure-

ment. Testing, as he says, is only a way of collecting evidence with regards to a pupil's behaviour. The other one, measurement, has the role of providing a quantitative description of the pupil's behaviour. Evaluation includes both testing and measurement and even a qualitative description of the behaviour. Evaluation also includes some value judgment regarding the behaviour measured. Its main objective is the qualitative development of pupils (Maheshwari, 2017).

The process of evaluation focuses on the efficiency of the educational system. The teachers prepare the students for the real world, for all the requirements of it and they must take into consideration what the expectances of the society are. The students' needs and the society's needs must be brought together by the curriculum and by the teacher in order for the latter to assure the delivery of young men and women into the labour market. The society is the superior system and the educational system is the subordinate one (Vasile & Ene, 2017, p. 77).

Open Educational Resources

According to Dominic Orr, Michele Rimini and Dirk Van Damme, digital technologies are mandatory in our daily life, but it seems that they became a part of the education as well. They facilitate the change and improvement in education. For them, education has the social function of fostering the next generation's development and prosperity on an individual and societal level. Education changes how people carry out their lives now and in the future (Orr et al., 2015, p. 16).

The OER help education systems, as the three authors claim, to become dynamic and it develops the teaching and learning process. They state that "digital technologies have the potential to improve education and enhance teaching and learning processes" (*ibidem*). However, all the improvements, all the resources that are used and all the innovative practices must be developed in a relevant educational environment (*ibidem*).

There are some reasons or some stimuli responsible for the occurrence of the OER. We will enumerate them, according to Jan Hylén. There are technological, economic, social and legal drivers that helped the expansion of OER. Teachers and researchers are given the chance to exploit new capabilities and new technologies through which they can create and share content. The cost of this type of technologies is dropping low, so everyone who wants to teach or learn in an interactive way can use them (Hylén, 2012, p. 19). Another important thing is that through OER people learn that sharing knowledge as a public good is very important for the development of society (Hylén, 2012, p. 19).

According to Dominic Orr, Michele Rimini and Dirk Van Damme, the Open Educational Resources (OER) are defined as being at the same time teaching, learning and searching for appropriate materials and tools ("open

licensing, to permit their free reuse, continuous improvement and repurposing by others for educational purposes") (Orr et al., 2015, p. 17). We might understand that the OER are a cumulation of online texts, images, videos, applications, platforms and games which have an educative purpose and which are free of charge.

In the paper "Open Educational Resources: Analysis of Responses to the OECD Country Questionnaire" Jan Hylén defines the OER as it follows: "Open Educational Resources are digital learning resources offered online (although sometimes in print) freely and openly to teachers, educators, students, and independent learners in order to be used, shared, combined, adapted, and expanded in teaching, learning and research. They include learning content, software tools to develop, use and distribute, and implementation resources such as open licenses" (Hylén, 2012, p. 18).

As we can see in the definition given above, it is very important to keep in mind that the OER are mostly used online and they should be free and accessible for the teachers, but they can also be accessible to students and independent learners. Of course, the resources need to be adapted to the level of the class/student and they have to be placed somewhere in the educational process, to be relevant for a specific type of activity, for achieving the objectives.

If we take a look on the UNESCO's website, we see the following definition of OER: "Open Educational Resources (OER) are teaching, learning and research materials in any medium – digital or otherwise – that reside in the public domain or have been released under an open license that permits no-cost access, use, adaptation and redistribution by others with no or limited restrictions. OER form part of 'Open Solutions', alongside *Free and Open Source software* (FOSS), *Open Access* (OA), *Open Data* (OD) and crowdsourcing platforms" (*Open Educational Resources* (OER) (unesco.org)). We can see that it is always brought into attention that these OER are used for the teaching-learning process, be it digital or not, and that they allow free access, use and share of them, as long as they were released under an open license.

According to Jan Hylén, these resources are open and flexible when it comes to provide learning opportunities. They facilitate both formal and informal learning, which can take place on an unlimited period of time. Of course, it is easier to access the high-quality materials that should help both the teacher and the student in the educational process (Hylén, 2012, p. 19).

Another important advantage is the fact that the OER are not restricted to online education (e-learning or distance education), since they can be used in a classroom as well, with the help maybe of printers, sheets, projector, audios, laptops, connection to the Internet and so on. Finding a place for the OER in the more traditional environment should enrich the learning experience (*ibidem*).

Jan Hylén also states that "OER also has a strong social purpose since they can bring learning opportunities to hitherto disadvantaged and excluded groups of learners while they also help to mitigate the isolation of the diaspora of scholars" (*ibidem*). As the author says, these OER can help the students to feel safer, to feel included and to feel that they are integrated into the educational process.

Due to the OER, there is an increased efficiency and quality of learning resources. People from all over the world (teachers, educators, researchers, students) can upload different materials, courses or programs which may be of help to others. It is also important that, through technology, even the costs are reduced, because there may not be the case to duplicate papers (*ibidem*). The OER can be continuously adapted, revised, updated and transformed. The users have become active participants in the educative process by constructing what is learned. Even the relationship between teachers and students may develop since both parts contribute to the process of teaching and learning. The entire activity is interactive so the boundaries between the parts are at least blurred (*idem*, p. 20). It is also possible that the students who prepare to become teachers contribute to this field by adding original resources as a part of their training.

Jan Hylén argues that using, producing and sharing OER constitute a great benefit for individual learners, teachers and the global community. He sees this activity as a "systemic transformation in itself since it affects all parts of the educational system" (*ibidem*). The researcher sees the advantages for all the people that use the OER, such as individual learners who gain open and flexible learning opportunities, teachers that may increase their professional recognition, quality and efficiency in the creation of new materials, educational institutions that can attract new students, countries that may increase their support for OER in regular education and the global community, because the OER offer the chance to share knowledge and expertise on global issues (*ibidem*).

There are, as we have already seen, a lot of advantages when using Open Educational Resources. We would like to present next a list of advantages that was created by the University of Maryland and that can be found on their webpage (https://umd.edu/), taking into consideration the fact that was stated above, specifically that the universities or schools can take advantage of these OER and attract more and more students.

The institution claims that through OER there is an expanded access to learning, since students all over the world can access resources at any time. Furthermore, they bring into attention the scalability of the OER, since they can be easily distributed at mostly no cost. The adjustment of the class materials to better align with the learning outcomes or the augmentation of class materials are, again, advantages. It is also more interesting to bring a text

which is accompanied by images or videos that help the students to learn easily. Of course, since everyone can upload, modify and distribute this kind of resources, it is obvious that the students can directly interact with them, through creating new ones or improving the already existing ones. The students can also be in touch with the institution they are part of through these resources and can continue with a lifelong program of learning (https://libguides.umgc.edu/c.php?g=23404&p=138771#:~:text=Advantages%20 of%20using%20OERs%20include:%20expanded%20access%20to,time,%20and%20 they%20can%20access%20the%20material%20repeatedly).

First of all, it is very important that the teacher is instructed on how to choose appropriate and relevant digital resources for the teaching-learning-evaluation activities, in order to facilitate and improve the entire educational process. Also, the teachers should be able to create by themselves open resources for achieving the objectives, in different pedagogical contexts. (CRED, 2014-2020).

When using OER for creating assessment for the students, the teacher should discover and use high-quality resources to determine the level of the students' progress. There should be used concrete data which can offer a better support and which can be personalized for each student, according to their strengths and weaknesses, needs and interests (https://practices. learningaccelerator.org/problem-of-practice/how-can-i-leverage-open-edu cational-resources-when-planning-lessons-and-assessments-to-meet-my-stu dents-needs-in-my-personalized-learning-classroom).

The open resources are dynamic and can be personalized at any time for didactic activities. Educators now tend to use them, in order to create student-centred lessons and assessments, which offer a more active and deeper engagement of the students (https://practices.learningaccelerator.org/ problem-of-practice/how-can-i-leverage-open-educational-resources-when-planning-lessons-and-assessments-to-meet-my-students-needs-in-my-perso nalized-learning-classroom). This can be done through different means, such as videos, support for language learning, simulations, webinars, comics, games, applications and so on.

When the teacher wants to evaluate the students with the help of open resources, he/she needs to ask himself/herself the following questions for which we will also try to provide answers (https://practices. learningaccel-erator.org/problem-of-practice/how-can-i-leverage-open-educational-re sources-when-planning-lessons-and-assessments-to-meet-my-students-needs-in-my-personalized-learning-classroom). On which standards do you want to assess your students?; How do you plan to use the assessment data?; Can any of your current open resources meet your and students' needs?; How do you determine the alignment and rigor of the assessment?

It is known that, first of all, the teacher has to know exactly what he/she is evaluating and on which standards he/she plans to assess the students.

The educator should take a close look to the content he/she provided for the students and at the general and specific objectives of the discipline. The teacher has to find relevant and interesting open resources that are adapted to the students' level and interests, so that the evaluation is realized not on the principle of equality, but on the principle of equity. Some students may prefer writing to speaking or some may prefer to record themselves talking about a given topic, or to make projects and so on.

The teacher also needs to take into account the fact that the after-assessment collected data must be used in order to find solutions for the improvement of the students' abilities, capacities, knowledge or behaviour. Of course, he/she needs to make sure that the open resources are appropriate for the educative process and that they have relevance for what it is evaluated. Furthermore, the educator needs to know how to make the difference between a good resource and a bad one or between a relevant and a not so relevant one for a specific objective.

We would like to provide some examples of the OER that can be found online. We will just enumerate them and we will provide links and some explanations where possible (https://libraryguides.lib.iup.edu/c.php?g=660341&p=4636709).

1. *OpenCourseWare (OCW)* – this is a free and online publication of different educational materials, organized as courses; the courses can be found on YouTube - https://youtu.be/ZfvxfkBVLqQ;
2. *Learning modules* – these modules are created with the help of Power-Point and have a great impact upon the students because they can bring together texts, images, videos, charts and so on. https://youtu.be/eQRF4EsdxMU – this is a YouTube video about how to create learning modules;
3. *Open textbooks* – typically they belong to the universities, but are published online, so people can have free access;
4. *Streaming video* – the content is sent over the Internet and people can view it in real time - https://youtu.be/AeJzoqtuf-o;
5. *Open access journals* – provide free, immediate and online availability of articles in the digital environment - https://youtu.be/L5rVH1KGBCY;
6. *Online tutorials* – provide a self study activity designed to teach a specific learning outcome - https://youtu.be/BdliEq_0qeQ;
7. *Digital learning objects* – can include a lesson, an activity and an assessment; the teacher can use the assessment part, in order to provide a digital type of evaluation - https://youtu.be/E6jf71MYDII;
8. *Ted Talks* – they can be also used even when evaluating students; the teacher can ask them to write down 10 important ideas presented in the video or to make a summary of the discussion; also, the teacher

can ask the students to debate the same topic that was presented in the video;
9. https://www.merlot.org/merlot/index.htm – where you can find a great amount of materials;
10. https://www.curriki.org/ - again, a place where you can find materials, blogs, articles;
11. https://cnx.org/ - both teachers and students can find here materials for many disciplines;
12. https://www.oercommons.org/ - this site provides help for teachers; the materials here can easily be used for creating an assessment.

Furthermore, we would like to introduce some platforms and applications that can be used for the creation of assessments. The first one that we will talk about is Google Forms (https://www.google.com/forms/about/). This platform is very simple to use. You can either choose to create a form for personal or business purpose. After choosing the purpose for which you plan to create a form, you can select the type of form you like: Blank, Blank Quiz, Course evaluation, Assessment or Exit Ticket. The teacher can easily evaluate students using the Blank Quiz type of form and then adding questions that can have short or long answers, that can have multiple choice, checkboxes or dropdown. You can select for every question the type of answer you desire to receive.

Another platform that can be easily used for assessments is Microsoft Teams. Firstly, here you can add as many classes as you wish and as many students as needed. This platform is relevant for the evaluation activity, since it gives you the opportunity to create assignments that must be returned at a specific time. The students can also see their grade directly on the platform.

Google Classroom is another platform that can be used in order to provide digital means of evaluation and it is interesting to use. You can create assessments as well, you can insert comments and grades directly on the platform, as was the case of Microsoft Teams. As a teacher, you can always see the progress, the ones who uploaded their assignments and you can always change the grade or add new comments if it is the case.

Google Jamboard is also relevant for assessing, since the teacher can ask the students to create Jams with their observations, ideas, answers and so on. The teacher can observe the comprehension of a text or oral discourse (for example), how the students write in English and how developed their digital skills are.

As we have already seen, there are lots of advantages when using Open Educational Resource for creating assessments. We consider that these OER facilitate the didactic activity, because there is no need to print papers anymore, there are no limits of downloading or using the materials, there are

low costs or even no costs at all. The students are happier and more interested to use digital and open resources, because they bring together the education and the real life. They are free to express themselves through different means and to have different types of support, such as videos, images, texts or audios.

But there may be some disadvantages as well. It is known that the teacher should do a lot of research before choosing and using an open resource, since not all resources are relevant or even appropriate for a type of activity or for some students. There can also be some quality issues. The teacher will have to put some effort into adapting some of the existing resources to the classes' needs. Also, some of the resources are created in such a way that they will not need the intervention of a teacher, so there will be a lack of human interaction (https://libguides.umgc.edu/c.php?g=23404&p=138771#:~:text=Advantages%20of%20using%20OERs%20include:%20expanded%20access%20to,time,%20and%20they%20can%20access%20the%20material%20repeatedly. Of course, when using digital resources, there can appear some technological issues, such as having a bad connection to the Internet or no connection at all. Also, some students and some parents may see these open resources as being something not relevant or something synthetic. They may believe that the students will not be able to assimilate information or to develop skills through these resources. And, if they have this opinion about digital and open resources, they will certainly not agree with assessments based on them.

Conclusions

We defined the Open Educational Resources and presented the advantages and disadvantages of using them in the educational process, especially in the evaluation part. We also brought some examples of OER that helped us to argue the fact that using OER is relevant for creating different types of assessments that can focus on the students' needs and skills.

We strongly believe that students are more likely to participate actively and to pay attention when the teacher uses OER. Through those, the student can trace a line between what he learns in school and what he does or wants to do in real life. The students can choose from a variety of resources or may even create new ones, which make the students feel included in the process as active participants.

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