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From Theology to Literature.
Allegory in Postwar Writings of Romanian Theologians

S U M M A R Y   O F   D O C T O R A L   T H E S I S

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Key-words: theology, literature, the idea of literature, allegory, allegorises, parable, allegorical structure, trans-disciplinary, reality level, third included, lecture, language, word, discourse, theological discourse, literary discourse, constituent discourse, facticity, facticity's hermeneutics, historical context, postwar, detention, dystopia, religion, Christian philosophy, theological dogmas, theological attributes, Security Archives, Nichifor Crainic, Valeriu Anania, Sandu Tudor, N. Steinhardt, Antonie Plămădeală, Constantin Virgil Gheorghiu, Savatie Baştovoi, Ioan Pintea, postmodernism, trans-modernity, trans-cultural, comparability, opponent variable, theological attribute, theological conscience, applicable, epistemological, trans-axiological.

Abstract:

Our main argument starts from the premises that theology and literature, two domains which seem and are to a certain degree heterogeneous and unchangeable, can be approached through a unitary knowledge pattern and allegory allows understanding transitivity from theology to literature, and reverse. On the other hand, our research is meant to replace an emptiness, about the express rapports between theology and literature (subsumed domains through language and most of it through the Word to a common ground) were less or not at all analyzed. There is also the premise that allegory (understandable collocation in the sense of an allegorical structure) may constitute, among others, a reflection of a common background for theology and literature. Furthermore another premise, maybe the most

important, was that of a trans-disciplinary approach of allegory, under aspects of correspondence between theology and literature, an unprecedented approach. The last premise was the pragmatic argument of research, opting in analyzing allegory as an extent time sample, more representatives, compared to postwar Romanian history, most of all to Romanian theologian writings. Thinking this study as a whole, our purpose is to develop the understanding gradually, as we went on defining methodological frame, the main notions and concepts and the evaluation grade of the results. Starting from those premises, I have developed research in several places.

In chapter **1. Prolegomena** I established the methodological frame of research. Firstly I revealed up that allegory can be studied from inter/ multi/ trans-disciplinary perspective. We opted for a trans-disciplinary approach, which we consider unprece-dented. I have showed what such an approach means and which are our intentions regarding research based on this direction, dividing it into three subclasses that could permit a trans-disciplinary approach, but in the same time a gradual understanding of the research results: a) an *applicable* frame (or of *intra-specificity*, that is the one which determines understanding the allegory from *outside of it*) [approach on chapter **2**]; b) an *epistemological* frame (or of *inter-specificity*, that is the one which determines understanding allegory from *its interior*) [approach in chapter **3**] and c) a *trans-axiological* frame (or *trans-specificity*, that is the one which determines understanding allegory *beyond it*) [approach in chapters **4** and **5**].

Furthermore, I specified the concrete methodology approach of the research, respectively one that implies more methods, but which points, especially, the study of compared literature. So, among trans-disciplinary approach, I showed other two directions to have on view, namely: an approach in terms of *constituent discourse*, concept proposed by Dominique Maingueneau and Frédéric Cossutta and an approach about philosophy, through applicability of the Heideggerian concept about *the hermeneutics of facticity* at themes specificity. This last premise implies the investigation of theologians' authors' files which were kept under surveillance by the Romanian Security in the communist period, documents that can be found at C.N.S.A.S.

At the same time I presented the actual stage of research, pointing the studies that were published until now, on two directions: one of the allegory study and the other of studying interference between theology and literature, concluding the fact that there are empty spaces in research: a) there isn't a trans-disciplinary approach of allegory, under the aspect of correspond-dence between theology and literature; and b) there isn't a study of allegory which implies the writings of postwar Romanian theologians.

In chapter **2. Correspondences between theology and literature** I moved on to presenting the main notions and operative concepts which we shall apply during research, with reference mainly at the two approached disciplines, respectively theology and literature. In prior I established that both theology (through *Word* – incarnate God) and the literature (through *word* – language) have a common ground

which derives from *logos*. Whereas theology field is a complex one, I passed at its presentation through a correspondence: respectively as an interface between religion and literature. In this direction, I briefly presented a few concepts and introductive issues: religion, literature, language, theology, theologian attributes (doxology, apologetics, kerygma and soteriology), respectively some interference between theology and literature. I passed then at problemati-zation of the idea of literature, firstly, bringing briefly, an enounce of the idea of literature on one hand, and on the other hand how and which is the origin of this idea so that finally to point some reflections upon a historic development of the idea of literature (from antiquity until today), a needed development for being able to see to what extent the concept of theology is tangible and interfere with literature.

An important subdivision of this chapter relates to defining the types of discourse, *theological* and *literary*, as well as the interference between them, preliminary presenting, briefly, the discourse from the linguistics perspective. Then I presented the discourse as a *constituent discourse*, after the collocation proposed by Dominique Maingueneau and Frédéric Cossutta, a concept which allows an interferential frame between theological and literary discourse. I presented some characteristics of theological discourse: Holy-Spirit as an intra-discursive and para-discursive mechanism, prayer as a discourse, and silence as discourse.

As long as theology and literature can develop a scientific work together, through a constituent discourse, I presented in another chapter subdivision that, no matter the secularization process of both fields,

there is a common ground of theology and literature, and this can be given, for example, by myth, but also by allegory. At the same time, for contouring the theological approach, I specified our option for including both parable and allegory in an *allegorical structure* formula. I ended the chapter with the evaluation of *applicable* frame, giving an example of *constituent discourse*, presented as a *tierce included* in a trans-disciplinary layout.

In chapter **3. Allegory in theological and literary discourse** I projected a broad vision upon what allegory means. Firstly I presented some introductory concepts. I have shown that definition of the term allegory has known through time several versions, which I have specified, at the same time specifying the dissociation between allegory and symbol, between allegory and parable, between allegory and metaphor. I defined the notion of *allegorises*, then I have shown some particularities of allegory/ allegorises. For a detailed presentation of allegory, both synchronic and diachronic, I vane analyzed this concept from a historic conceptualized perspective mainly involving a broader discussion on those two levels: the theological discourse and the literary one. A division of this chapter of same importance I dedicated to historical context of Romanian literature, by involving allegory in theologians writings. I ended up the chapter with the evaluation of *epistemological* frame, presenting a trans-disciplinary scheme of how allegory works.

Chapter **4. Postwar Romanian theologians in C.N.S.A.S. archives** represents an applicable part related to the documentation that I have done at the National Council for Studying Security Archives

(C.N.S.A.S.), where I have investigated the *files* of five authors: Valeriu Anania, Antonie Plămădeală, Nichifor Crainic, Sandu Tudor (including *Burning Pyre*) and Constantin Virgil Gheorghiu. For N. Steinhardt, also and author investigated in the present study, I used indirect sources from C.N.S.A.S. (National Council for Studying Security Archives) archives, but already *classified*. I also did a review of existing document type in C.N.S.A.S. archive, many of them with a unique character and of their interpretation possibilities. Then I presented a few tracking typologies which Security officers had used. Those structural characteristics include, beside the employed Security personnel, those so called informers. Finally I investigated how those theologians were methodically followed, pointing the implications which arose from encounters they had with Security (including detention period).

I started chapter **5. Allegorical confluents in the writings of Romanian postwar theologians. A hermeneutics of *facticity*** by explaining *facticity* and also the intention to join this collocation from the chapter title. I presented interdependence between historical context (which I named *factic*) and the literary one (which I named it *allegorical*) and that a hermeneutics on literary text cannot ignore the historical context. This hermeneutics implies an interpretation that takes into account the location of itself in history. I said that hermeneutics collocation of facticity belongs to Martin Heidegger and to highlight it we used untranslatable terms *Dasein* and *Ereignis,* which I have associated, in this order, with terms *allegory* and *allegoresis*, only to facilitate (forcing) understanding. Explaining *facticity*, I established a preliminary

premises of study: emphasizing the historical context (factic), literary (allegorical) alike, will lead the discussion to a trans-existential position, given by theological context, which implies also a theological conscience, beyond a historical and literary conscience.

Then I passed to the *pragmatic* part of the study, analyzing allegory in Romanian theologian writings, through two periods: a) the first until 1989 events which includes theologians writers detention (we refer to five authors), adding Constantin Virgil Gheorghiu's case, a different one; and b) the second, which I called it post communist, after 1989, analyzing two authors. For the first period, much more ample, the presentation of the literary context (allegorical) of the implied authors I made it based on three genres, in this order: lyric, dramatic and epic, thus:

Regarding *lyric* genre, we stopped at three authors: Nichifor Crainic (especially with the lyric volume *Hawk over the precipice*, where are gathered together poems from detention period), Valeriu Anania (with a cycle of poems entitled *Agrippa's History*, but also with o group representing akathist lyrics) and Sandu Tudor (with a discussion over *Burning Pyre*'s idea of allegory).

Regarding *dramatic* genre, we stopped at a single author, Valeriu Anania, on the one side with the play *The thief of pearls* and on the other side with o group of five plays, named by the author "a pentalogy of Romanian myth".

Regarding *epic* genre, we stopped at four authors: N. Steinhardt (referring especially at *The journal of happiness*), Antonie Plămădeală (with the novel *Three hours in Hell*), Valeriu Anania (with the

novels *Strangers from Kipukua* and *The memories of the no-wings pilgrim*) and Constantin Virgil Gheorghiu (with the novels *The 25th Hour, God receives only Sunday* and *Condottiere*).

Regarding the second period, post-communist, firstly I composed a review the *mentality of the time* (after 1989), pointing two aspects that rather influenced *the life* of literature: one is referring at the end (or decadence, or classicization) of *postmodernism* beyond Romanian borders; another implies a new entry of *trans-modernism* and *trans-modernity* concepts, starting from the *trans-disciplinary* concept, but not only. Simultaneously I did a review of other theologians writers which could constitute a part in our study, some of them having a secondary importance; others that I have not included out of objective ration of time and space. But we stopped at two authors, Savatie Baştovoi (with the novels *The Fool, Rabbits don't die, Running to crow field* and *Audience at a mute demon*) and at Ioan Pintea (known as N. Stenhardt's apprentice, with the poems volume *Carpenter's house*).

A subclass of this chapter I have dedicated *trans-culturality* (a concept theorized by Wolfgang Welsch) expressing the problem through an attempt in comparative study (of Romanian literature towards the literature *from abroad*), over universality of Romanian postwar theologians.

Finally, I ended the chapter with the evaluation of *trans-axiological* frame, also mentioning the final results of research. The first conclusion refers to the deduction of two-way engagement in lyrical or narrative structures of literary texts: on the one hand, we have allegory used as *attribute* strictly *theological,*

connotative to dogmatic valences or moral percepts, including parable as genre or paroemiological structures; on the other hand, allegory constitutes itself as an *opponent variable*, or from social realities, or against a political regime (dystopian), being invested with a polemic function, taking frequently an ironic form or pamphlet. Both directions may overlap in a same bookish approach or provide allegorical structures which can not be put in a predefined scheme. In other words, there are two clear directions to configured allegory, one as an *opponent variable* and another as a *theological attribute*.

I established then that the interpretation of the theologians' writings is not just a referential record, it is hoped to be a reflection of how they *live* the world and that they themselves channeled in their own works that way of *being in the world, living the world* involving both, hermeneutics, facticity. Implying facticity in the study of theologian's writers, I revealed that they relate to a literary context, in which allegory is implied, in the extend of which they also relate to a historical context, in which a way of *being in the world, living* the world is implied. Starting from the two configuration directions of allegory, respectively one as an *opponent variable* and another as a *theological attribute*, I merged the research results into a trans-disciplinary evaluative scheme which outlines precisely the *trans-axiological* frame established in the premises: the works of theologian writers reflects, through allegoric means, a historic context, denotative, but also the substrate of a theological referential, connotative. Through its soteriological intention, the theological context is exactly an included third, which transcends other

contexts (historic and literary, where allegory takes the form of an *opponent variable*), passing the level of reality of facticity to the reality level that can be understood through allegory (or alegoresis) as a *theological attribute*. Another research result consists in outlining the fact that postwar Romanian theologian's writer, beyond the literary and historical consciousness (specific to facticity), also imply a theological consciousness. We believe that this trans-disciplinary approach, gradual-tripartite, allowed a pertinent and objective evaluation of the complexity and relevance of the allegory as an interferential aspect of theology and literature.

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