THE HERMETIC SEAL OF POETRY AND ITS ANALOGICAL ROOT

Violeta Bercaru Oneata
PhD, „I. L. Caragiale" National College, Ploiești

Abstract: It is a research building a hermeneutics that tries to find an episteme for two abstract ontological entities- one ancient the other modern, gathered in a formal frame called analogical root and focusing on analysis of three modern poets under this grid.

Keywords: occultation hermetic seal poetical language

The study is an attempt to unify in an analogical root the genuine sense of the mysticism in his original Jewish assumption rooted in the *kabbalah* with the aspiration of certain poets to read and thus to recognize their Self into their Spirit located in the neighborhood of the Great Universal together with a response in the very fabric of their poetical utterance. Having in mind in *kabbalah* encompassing the occultation phenomenon is in relation not identical with the genuine mysticism itself. Going side by side with the search of the super sensibility as highly immutable quintessence, the occultation phenomenon appears alongside with mysticism being the Sacred itself in both revelation and hidden variability. Is there a link between a primary intuition impulse kept from the realm if the ineffable and an alchemy of the verb subsequent process ? P. Valéry[1] noticed that in a construction of the poem autonomous universe there is an appearance of a twilight zone of an *inné don/ given* verse translatable into the poet's modeling will. That is why one could envisage there is an inner impulse of those thirsting poets to perceive the vivid Absolute, to travel up to the gate of the mystery and to enter some hermetic spaces probable aftermath to be unlocked through the poetical language half uttered half kept in the hermetic seal. Therefore the study is a proposal of a hermeneutics of three poets in the light of the kabbalah genuine pattern focusing on their aspiration to connect a metaphysical pencil of the unseen perfect source. Is it seems a continuous flow of a probable revelation imprinted in the poetical utterance such a kind of metaphysical pencil could bring ? In Vasile Voiculescu's vision the vivid Absolute is a crystal palace located in the ineffable realm, in that of Ion Barbu it is the Great Universal in the latency of which exists the sleep of an eternal regeneration, whereas in Stéphane Mallarmé one it is the mysterious way of the non-uttered towards the poetical utterance endowed with significance. Are these two abstract ontological entities and cardinal milestones in history of the ideas compatible? At first glance a skeptical reflection in front of a belief that is meant in any research to become a justified belief appeared, but the endeavor to bring an episteme to this so called hermeneutics found in a classical verified causality the way to undertake the task. The firm shape of this hermeneutics was achieved looking through Aristotle's lens of a difference in a completion Potentiality not necessary generating but sharing an Activity. Aristotle in *MetaphysicsZ,* makes a distinction between Potentiality (*dunamis*) Actuality (*entelecheia*) and Activity (*energeia*) The first sense of a *dunamis* is the power that a thing has to produce a change : A thing has a *dunamis* in this sense when it

[1] Parvan,Gabriel., *Poètes Français du XXe siècle*, deuxème édition remaniée, with an introduction of the author,coll.Universitaria, Series Foreign Languages, Pitesti, 2004, p.40 – 42 about P. Valéry, *Introduction ã la poétique*, 1938

has within it *a starting point of changing in another thing or in itsef insofar as it is another* (Θ.1,1046a 12; cf.Λ.12). The exercise of such a power is a *kinesis*- a movement or process. An example is the builder's craft to process a house building and at the same time the generally known as basic causality in the scientific experimentalism. But there is another sense of *dunamis* – and that is one Aristotle is mainly interested. For Aristotle tells us in this sense *dunamis* is not related to movement (*kinesis*) but to Activity (*energeia*) (Θ.6,1048a 25) A *dunamis* in this sense is not a thing's power to produce a change but rather its capacity to be in a different and completed estate. Activity is to Potentiality Aristotle tells us *what is awake to what is asleep, and what is seeing is in relation to what it has its eyes closed but has sight, and what has been shaped out of the matter is in relation with the matter* (1048b 1 – 3) [Aristotle's *Metaphysics* (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy *http*:// plato.stanford.edu/entries/Aristotle – metaphysics/#ActuPote)] Here we found an understanding conducive to a knowledge and hereafter a configuration as it follows : The Potentiality frame causal link has a comprehension for the above mentioned aspiration of the Sacred dimension of the Self defining the mysticism in Jewish *kabbalah* together with its derivative : the occultation as phenomenon that displays a revelation though closed into a hidden variable of the Sacred. The Activity frame causal link has a comprehension for an embodiment of both aspiration of the Sacred and of the occultation in configuring the poetical utterance in certain areas of modern poetry. Particularly the occultation phenomenon in *kabbalah* terms accordingly to the second sense of Aristotle's *dunamis*, the occultation Potentiality if not a direct kinetic influence on the highly transfiguration poetical Activity is to be found as an energetic completion across millennia, a different pattern as compared with the primordial matter however wearing its memory. The well-known highly metaphorical and orphic transfiguration generally designated in the history of literature as hermetic with its subtle rhythm, alchemy of the verb and inward musicality integrated into the content, thus appears in a new light, and poets like Baudelaire, E.A Poe to a certain extent, St.Mallarmé, T.S.Eliott, P.Valéry and their disciples, cultivating the resources of the mystery and aiming to utter the unutterable are considered in this study in an analogical root with this ancestral spiritual realm of the original *kabbalah* rather than with early medieval rise of the western hermetic seal that throughout centuries developed in a larger different span.

If mysticism in *kabbalah* is a sight the ancient human condition sent to the universal super-sensibility in a desire to touch its margins with the sacred core of his heart, the occultation phenomenon is the response of the Sacred in a twilight zone of the revelation doubled however by its withdrawal in the mystery. The occultation in *kabbalah* is an actualization of the super-sensibility and of the vivid Absolute into terrestrial life through the existence of the miracles or, we consider, through the oracular language, triumph of the transfiguration poetry based on the alchemy of the verb and on Baudelaire's *Correspondences.* Therefore the *linguistic zone* appears as an actualization (*enteleheia*) of the super-sensibility and ineffable as abstract ontological entity Potentiality (*dunamis*) into the language as concrete ontological entity subsequently translatable into a poetical language as abstract ontological entity Activity (*energeia*). In this construction the key - figure is generally considered the metaphor as this formal linguistic stylistic frame is conducive to the rise of the transfiguration degree of a poetical text due particularly to its *kinship in a difference function* (T.Vianu, 1978), and a basis for the autotelism of the poetical language in modernity that number of theorists have developed in state of the art works. Mention should be made the terms super sensibility and vivid Absolute belong to Evelyn Underhill[2] and became a kind of

[2] Evelyn Underhill, *Mysticism*: *The Preeminent Study in the Nature and Development of Spiritual Consciousness*, second edition with a foreword by Ira Progoff, New York : Image-Doubleday, 1990, p.72-73, 95-96 cf. Felicia Waldman, idem, p.25

a pragmatic grid for a linguistic/ stylistic release explanation. Under these items of argumentation of this study, the transfiguration marker in the above mentioned poets works is rather a mystical personal experience through occultation and is to be analyzed in the light of the main concern of Mallarmé actualizing in an iconic emblem of weaving the immaterial into highly refined images, of V.Voiculescu in his specific orphic explanation of the world and of I. Barbu with his hermetic seal folded on the sensible core of the given verse.

The Spiritual Receptacle : One can envisage mysticism as core of a soul inner light possibility to connect himself to the Source of lights embodied in a fluent vivid diamond, that of a power spread from an ever invisible universal deepness, in fact an important milestone of what the *Kabbalah* brilliant inheritance brought to the spiritual hub of mankind. This is a general idea only, perceived after reading the book of Professor Felicia Waldman *The Occultation Phenomenon in Jewish Mysticism* (2002). The author points that roughly speaking and quoting Moshe Idel[3] a great stuff of original kabbalah writings remained unstructured, not translated, others are even today preserved in manuscripts, some are lost, anyhow their Middle Age period of circulation operated either through oral taking over by the western European elites or in certain manuscripts, a blooming long lasting in the intellectual European milieu appeared up to the occurring of a turning point starting with the XVII th Century when as Gershom Scholem[4] underlines the interest for the original texst is completely lost instead flourishing the framework of the hermetic and of the spiritual alchemy, developing itself independently under a western European tradition.Coming back to the genuine idea of mysticism in Kabbalah insight we consider it as first stem of an analogical root alongside with the second stem represented by certain poets propensity to explore the timeless immaculate realm, different but the same in a completion in the above mentioned Aristotle's second sense of the Potentiality, a kinship in a difference capable to build the analogy. This common aspiration to connect to the Source spring in a balance of contemplation is a mystical emotion subsequently turned into living experience through an indirect link defined by Felicia Waldman after deep consultation of works on the subject, as occultation. At first sight it seems difficult to define the process due to its highly spiritual character on one hand, on the other because of a certain taking over by some dialectical philosophical or theological nature approaches. Because generally speaking the idea of mysticism, occultation and hermetic are taken together in a confusion due to the historical evolving, mention should be made specialists mark a distinction between mysticism as aspiration of the human mind to enter the universal spiritual realm, an awareness of the Self of his possible connection to his spiritual Source, occultation is the human mind endeavor to perceive the Sacred with a dual revealed/ hidden capability whereas the hermetic is the western assimilation of the two phenomena of the kabbalah blooming in an as rich and complex tradition as this new spiritual landmark could keep up the step with the former however forging its own path. There is also a contribution - like a bird's eye view influence from above- of the magic and mysticism on the scientific development as this phenomenon - the kabbalah - with its open window of the revelation process let the human mind develop its intuition freely, which represented an indirect opposition to the dark compulsions exerted by the Catholic Church. In fact, out of the dogma status the Medieval man's Self aspiration to come closer to his Spirit was a consciousness awareness configured out of the Church yard that blazed the trail of man's achieving an experience by using his abilities as a Divine gift which in turn, with the following centuries lapse of the time, entailed the new horizons of the

[3] Moshe Idel, *Cabbala,Nuove prospettive*, Editrice La Giunta ,Firenze,1996 cf. Felicia Waldman, *Ocultarea in mistica iudaica*, Paideia, Bucuresti, 2002, p.21

[4] Gershom Scholem, *Studii de mistica iudaica*, Editura Hssefer, Bucuresti, 2000, idem,p.22

large scale scientific developments, from far announcing the Enlightenment and the discoveries in Physics and Astronomy.

The Metaphysical Pencil Receptacle : Matei Calinescu in *Conceptul modern de poezie de la romantism la avangarda* makes a distinction between an uncontrolled extension of an overflowing lyricism specific for the romantic poetry and Mallarmé's vision folded on the apprehension of the art as an *immaculate appearance* (2002 :69). The poet approaches and at the same time moves away the Parnassian paradigm. He gets closer the Parnassus sphere through an ideal of a tough carving of he verse, through an impersonal objectivity also, this influence however being translatable towards the immaterial boundless musical arabesque. The Parnassus poets brought therefore their contribution to put an end to that Romantic feature overflowing of sentimental confessions through their *ut pictura poesis* principle alongside with the form cult – Théophile Gautier considered even the verse as a brilliant and tough matter similar to a piece of Carara marble. After Matei Calinescu Mallarmé gets close to a certain extent to the formal Parnassian cult though detaching himself from it through some distinctions : the modern taste shared at the same time with Baudelaire which cleans any propensity towards the Antiquity models and which inaugurates the short essentialised poem as to a certain extent did also E.A, Poe, on one hand, and on the other he emphasizes the mysterious link with the music, capable to make room to the burst of the words free chaining. The poem is an arabesque in the structure of which the words hit each other creating a musical coherence imprinted with a new poetical significance. If the Parnassians rely on formal perfection quite artificial, Mallarmé throws the idea of affirmation as generative of poetical constructions mystery free. The mystery is in his poetical encompassing a contemplation capable to create the image which in turn is winged and gone with the light allusion then taken over by the dream. Matei Calinescu defines Mallarmé's Poetics by the *suggestive harmonies* (2002 :73) obteained through an exploiting of the polysemantic resources of the language. He says Mallarmé encompasses *painting in the limits of a musical comprehension* (idem : 73) Mallarmé observes the double status of the language, common and he dissociates it of the poetical one, the latter enabled with significance. In his vision the poetical significance is highly reflexive pushed to an extreme even, that we have defined in other studies as an intransitive function, as compared with the transitive one. Under these circumstances the intransitive hermetic metaphor guides the non-uttered towards the poetical utterance endowed with significance. Because the poetical accomplishment of this writer and theorist is the metaphor of the nothingness. Ex.: in original : *Brouillards montez ! /Versez vos cendres monotones/ Avec de longs haillons de brume dans les cieux/ Que noieront le marais livide des automnes/ Et bâtissez un grand plafond silencieux//* (the poem *l'Azur*) In this fragment one can perceive a metaphorical image the musical architecture of which goes alongside with some lines drawn by some celestial frost traces, an image translating the sacred immaculacy of nature. It is a metaphor hatching the non-utterance into an utterance endowed with significance.

In the Romanian literature there is also poets whose vision alongside with other features encapsulates an orphic explanation of the world. Considered as rooted into ancient poetical tradition and integrated in the continuity level forged around *The Thinking* review, Vasile Voiculescu reveals himself however as a poet of synthesis. It is about a lyricism based on the energy and the direct description of a space ancestry that undertakes an ascendant towards the universal balance and harmony. From a discourse discovery through direct representation up to an introspection cultivating high reflexivity metaphor frequently present in his masterpiece the *Sonnets*, one can notice a metamorphosis path where the actants of the significance articulate themselves either on the mimesis explanation, either on the orphic explanation of the world as well as on an ascetic aspiration. The word takes shape into the idyllic and equally in the images of the real, but across time a filter of the real appears

discovering the new worlds of the sensible and immutable essences. Accomplishing the ideal synthesis between the word and the mystery wealth in germination of the poetical thinking, rendering a suitable form to the sensible and immutable image coming from the non-utterance therefore building the fading materiality of the word that great linguists as F. de Saussure, R. Barthes, L. Wittgenstein also defined as fight with arbitrary of the linguistic sign, the poets confronted themselves with the difficulty of representing the conceptual inspiration into the writing, into the word capsule. It is an achievement of this *faire poétique* that lays the framework of a language science - *poïetica* – after Paul Valéry, the interior of which the verse as twilight appearance and must be refined up to the *fabrication du poème comme univers autonome* (1938). The way from a content capture kept as an amorphous space up to the brilliancy balance of its configuration, the poets confronted themselves with this distance between *given* and e*ncapsulated.* For most of them, the metaphor or, on the contrary the demetaphorisation became an accomplishment instrument of the *poïen* actualization. The poet becomes a receptacle who receives a verse or a word entering in a contemplation thereafter he works on it carving and refining it like an artist rather a carver, or he carries a mirror along the way, in fact a receptacle of a disorder of all senses in order to draw the ugliness of the human condition. In this context V.Voiculescu defines himself plastically, he conceives himself as blacksmith worker at words. These ones tough ineffable material require the fire nourishing, and overwhelmed by flames they are to be subsequently put into the thinking ties then touched by the emotion depths this way only being suitable to be arranged in the poetical page frame. The formal perfection in the poet's vision seems to go accordingly with the genuine divine but as not to lose the golden core of the word, the poet in his industrious jeweler quality fixes *a golden horseshoe at the ankle of the verse.* - a metaphor of a balance between the purity of inspiration and its equivalent formal measure. This way the poet receives an entry permission card for the *crystal palace* located in the ineffable realm, wherefrom the given verse had been come.

In the poem *Elan* the poet Ion Barbu imagines the human condition as travelling in time juggling between life, death and rebirth integrated in the construction of a popple, a hermetic metaphor with a philosophical and scientific coat, pointing both the fragility of the perishable human condition and the regenerative capacity of the great vitality chain. The wave could be a light materialization or philosophically the human condition expressed in the poem *Elan* is an embodiment of *fortuna labilis* principle – versatile fate – on the other hand *life is a dream* which in Eminescu's vision influenced by certain Schopenhauer concepts *vis al mortii eterne e viata lumii intregi* (*a dream of the death is the whole world life)* and for Barbu as well as for L. Blaga it is a break conducive to fragmentism, broken fulguration from the Great Universal in the latency of which exists the sleep of regeneration. There is a metaphor closed in the brevity of a single word, revelatory – wave – wearing this philosophical sense at the same time with the scientific one, having in mind the poet's inclination for the polyhedral perfections, and his temptation to imprint his poetry with the spirit of equivalences inspired from certain mathematical fictions. *I am only a link from the great bending /Fragile, my unity is perishable; but/ a bunch of new existences from my death come to burst/ And my true name is : folding//.* The fascination of the perfect entities inspired by the perfection of the mathematical fictions embraced by a philosophical frame is one of the pinpoint concerns of this poet, also a mathematician. Therefore he envisages the human condition under the shape of a *link* from the great *wave*. This link is a small grain of sand as compared with the great wave as concerns his physical estate as well as his fate on earth. Man is fulguration of the Great Universal in the latency of which exists the sleep of a regeneration. That's why his spiritual name is *folding*, a metaphor of a possible identification of his Self with his Spirit located in the neighborhood of the Great Universal. Man is through the metaphor *link* a quantic number, wearing in his pattern a quantic spin namely the whirlwind of some vital

energies of his destinee, placed therefore in the great *universal folding*, a folding of the eternal flow. The unity of the poem consists in the hermetic brevity encapsulated in the triad *link- wave- folding*.[Man is a link= a perishable grain in a wave= the destine but at the same time he can enter the folding = an identification of the Self with his Spirit.] One can read the eternal flow in a double hermetic sense the first is in connection with the scientific assumption that defines *the Plank Constant*, a multiplied energy measured in time-space The quantic measurement implies the idea of finitude as well of a confined core placed in the universal immensity, namely Man and Universe. The second sense of the folding in the eternal flow is a knocking at the door of the mystery to enter certain hermetic spaces and to uncover a hidden knowledge lying in the a area of sensible and immutable ideas- spaces probable to be unlocked through the revelatory metaphor as things do happen also in L. Blaga's poetry . The poem *Elan* is not only a poetical art in which the symbols crystalize feelings and emotions but also the human being becoming into the life and death mystery. There are two cardinal points : Man, a link as particle of the wave space, integrated in turn in the great universal flow and the *High Balance* as metaphorical space of the Divinity, of the immutable justice and immaculacy the poet tries to touch through the poetical language, but also through his constant pattern endowed with the duality birth and re- birth. His endeavor is not similar to a romantic demiurge but to a connoisseur of the elefsina mysteries, an equally faber and sapiens researcher, a seeker and sometimes finder of jewelries and of the philosophical stone who is coming back, subsequently of his raids from mysterious terrestrial caves or from elevations towards ineffable celestial purities, with a rich burden presented as an offering to the universe divine power, that owning the life and death keys : *I dare taking from the moving wave/ an embodiment of the mortal garment/ Thus renewed I run – subtle vibration- / Passing through proud halls or humid caves../ I step the earth blazing the trail of unconceivable gates/ With a human mind unfathomable rhythm/ I bring in front of High Balance a rich burden/ Many existences and just as many deaths//* The brevity shape of the verse goes shoulder to shoulder with the hermetic sealing sense, the poet not wanting to change the alchemic melting of his thinking with the common language.

We consider the hermetic seal of the poetical utterance of these writers does function as an abstract ontological entity encoding its upper ontological abstract entity in an analogical root formation.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Aristotle., *MetaphysicsZ,* Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy *http*:// plato.stanford.edu/entries/Aristotle – metaphysics/#ActuPote)]

Calinescu, Matei., *Conceptul modern de poezie, de la romantism la avangarda*, editia I-a, cu un argument al autorului si postfata de I.B. Lefter, Editura Paralela 45,col.60 eseu, Pitesti, 2002

Vianu,Tudor.,*Opere, Problemele metaforei*, Editura Minerva, Bucuresti, 1978

Waldman,Felicia.,*Ocultarea in mistica iudaica*, *ocultismul kabalei,*cu o prefata de prof.dr. Moshe Idel, Universitatea Ebraica din Ierusalim colectia de studii si eseuri, Editura Paideia, Bucuresti, 2002