

ION CREANGĂ’S ORIGINALITY

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ABSTRACT: *THE LIFE AND THE WORK OF ION CREANGĂ OCCUPY A SPECIAL PLACE IN ROMANIAN LITERARY HISTORY AND IN THE WORLD LITERATURE IT IS THE FIRST MONOGRAPHY OF HIGH SCIENTIFIC LEVEL AND AT THE SAME TIME IS A COMPARATIVE RESEARCH INTENDED TO MAKE KNOWN AND UNDERSTOOD THE ROMANIAN VALUES IN THE WORLD LITERATURE. EXPRESSING THE VIEW OVER THE ORIGINALITY OF ION CREANGĂ AND HIS PLACE AMONG EUROPEAN STORYTELLERS, JEAN BOTIERE THINKS ABOUT THE WORK OF ION CREANGA THAT IS A CHARACTERISTIC OF ROMANIAN CLASSICAL GENIUS.*

KEY WORDS: *FOLK MOTIFS, RURAL AUTHENTICITY, JOVIALITY, NARRATIVE WRITER, MEMORIES.*

Ion Creangă was presented by criticism as a singular personality for the Romanian literature. On the one hand his enthusiasm is distinguished by an exceptional claim to literary verve as the same as the great writer Eminescu, at the urging to which the stories are written, and then they were published in the Junimists stories who sustain this literary style. On the other hand there is an unusually long delay to analyze and promote the work of Ion Creangă.

Except for a few occasions in the history of the Romanian language and literature, Creangă's lifetime has not a benefit over the Romanian literary critics, unlike Eminescu and Caragiale. Even Titu Maiorescu, who had helped and promoted them has brought little comments, sometimes interspersed without balance in articles devoted to literature or other creations less valuable. Maiorescu calls Caragiale as a "playful vigor" and established his place in the Junimea society, or he consider him as the Moldavian peasant, a model for speech (Brătescu-Voinești's novels). As a significant observation, Creanga it ranks among the most interesting folk-inspired example from the realist novelists (Romanian Literature and foreign countries), who was named with the epithet "the priceless Creangă".

At the end of the nineteenth century were translated into German and French a series of stories from the work of Ion Creangă and because of this, the Romanian writer has become widely known abroad. The writer Mite Kremnitz includes a collection of tales that were explained to German Romanian, published in Leipzig (1882): *Purse with two coins, Ivan Turbincă, Old woman and old man's daughter*, Jules Brown translates into "Magasin going littéraire", *Pig story* prefaced by Leo Bachelin and an anthology of

Romanian fairy tales, Sept. contes OVR, the same two French researchers, is the pig story and *Stan Worldly Wise* (1894). Weigand translates *White Moor* (Leipzig, 1910), and only in 1912 in Lemberg the magazine published an interpretation of *Father Wit* and in 1921, *The Rumanian stories* was translated by Lucy Bying, along with other stories and story is *Old Nichifor Coțcariul*.

In most of these translations is put the emphasis on folk motifs which have the headwaters in stories. Comments of the criticism writers over the work of Creangă were missing at that time almost entirely in Romania and the success they enjoyed meant nothing more than indefinite appreciation made soon as in account of popular genius.

An interesting study is that of Vladimir Streinu, that remembers Grigore Alexandrescu in *Contemporary memories* where he thinks that the work in the first part of the twentieth century is almost all written by Ion Creangă. Boutiere in his 1930 writings lack interpretative senses with awe about the great classic. The introduction of the critical bibliography, in chapter 4, *Creangă and criticism*, French researcher stops at the two existing monograph: Emil Precup - *Life and work of Ion Creangă* (1921) and Leca Morariu - *Schoolmaster Creangă* (1925).

The first book contains a long but incomplete biography with multiple errors, the work is overshadowed, and the second despite pertinent remarks about Creangă's contribution to the textbooks, addresses a restricted area of existence of the writer and not the actual creative work. According to Boutiere, Ibrăileanu remaining when the originator of Creangă and his work most accurate appreciates *Creangă's stories* (Notes and Impressions, 1920) and *I. Creanga - peasants and townsmen* (Romanian and foreign Writers, 1926). Studies are investigating a road opening Creangă's creation. But Creangă's prose and accurate classification of the fundamental features such as synthesis of popular element and classical literary consciousness, realism and influences of Homer's work are summarized in a few pages Ibrăileanu carrying only sketch the work of the great classic characters.

The life and the work of Ion Creangă deals a special place in Romanian literary history and in the world literature, as it is the first monography of high scientific level and at the same time. comparative research intended to make known and understood Romanian values in the world literature because „the development of a self-consciously national literature also contributed to the nation-building process”. [1] Jean Botiere develop in his first work that aims thorough literary activity of Ion Creangă. The author shows modestly in the preface that he is aware of the double purpose of his work: "Let this work that worked as good will to further increase in Romania enjoyed exceptional favor branch's work and to make known and loved abroad that which is simultaneously one of the most original writers Moldovan and one of the best popular storytellers of Europe ". [2]

Botiere's work can be considered as a cultural phenomenon and a very important event in the development of our literary history and universal literature and compared. Published in French in 1930 in Paris, the paper contains an introduction entitled Bibliography critical two major sections: the life and the work of the great writer.

Life author includes several sequences:

- 1) Childhood and adolescence;
- 2) Professional education;

- 3) Years of testing;
- 4) Literary activity;
- 5) Last years.

Ion Creangă's work has three coordinates:

- 1) Overview of subsections: a) Teaching works staff b) stories, anecdotes, memories, c) Creangă, comic author, d) Various works.
- 2) Stories with subsections: a) poems and folk tales before Creangă b) Creangă's stories.
- 3) Anecdotes and memories subsections: a) Old Nichifor Coțcariul b) Old Ion Roată c) Father Wit d) Childhood memories.
- 4) Language and style with subsections: a) language, b) style.

Conclusions of the paper are followed by a glossary and an alphabetical index. Boutiere collects and analyzed meticulously and methodically biographical data, collecting and comparing documents, providing a record of the life of the writer, clear and precise.

Not so thorough biographical research is the great contribution of the French scholar, but fixing coordinates Creanga's aesthetic work. He performs primarily a deep and thorough analysis of the sources and the reasons folk in Creangă's stories. Boutiere start by drawing up a precise picture of Romanian folk literature up to Creangă, listing various collections published and following the evolution of folk conception of creation. He then classified according to the criteria of Aarne topic stories. Aarne's study, *Verzeichnis der Märchentypen (Index of types of tales)*, appeared at the beginning (1911), mark a turning universal folklore as a „real protection principle of universality”[3].

One of the most important folklorists of the Russian school, V. Propp, considered in 1928, two years before the publication of the monography of Boutiere that Finnish folk school work "represents a pinnacle moment in the study of fairy tale.".[4]

This paper aims first classification of animal fables stories in theory of human stupidity, fantastic stories and religious stories, and then the author focuses on the theme of each story and confrontation folk coming, initial versions of the Romanian foreign then setting each area spread. Such appeals to European folklore collections, not insisting too much on the Russian language poverty are felt especially *Ivan Turbincă* tale. In this chapter indicate extensive and erudite folk sources of Creangă's stories and their variants in other countries.

For the story of Adventure Stan source not found a similar option in other literatures. Specifying has the need for a tangible starting point existing in developing. Creangă's work was important not only to highlight how to report Creangă's popular prose to a model and therefore to understand the specifics of his art, but also as extending this feature to the entire work by other scholars, beeing a clearer definition of the creative process and realistic method of the writer (*Old Ion Roată, Childhood memories*).

One of the unfinished tales is *Prince Charming, the grand son*. Studying carefully the manuscript, he notes: "This story differs deeply from all others: it contains an unusual amount of expressions, phrases, stereotyped dialogues while moldavian words, so numerous in all other parts are very rare (...) Creangă began to write the story as a

tradition received from the first impulse of his pen, were not anything higher variants of the same topics published by other storytellers in Romanian. After that, change the first draft in two ways: on the one hand he cut or change those formal elements that did not like either they were too naive or too dull (eg. initial formulas) and sometimes substituted or added to the original text some familiar words or phrases (usually Moldovan), which seemed to go well, the other, ever have the opportunity, put the moldavian actors in their situation and gave them life, sketching portraits physical and moral Finally, sprinkle here and there comments and funny thoughts ".[5]

The multitude of the motives is taken from Creangă's folklore as the main concern of the writer is followed by analysis of the relationship between the story and its source of popular issues that give substance and form in the text. „Everything is exaggerated, the emotions, as well as the body's game”.[6] The researcher insists on what constitutes personal contribution of Romanian writer.

Botiere is the first person who discusses with relevant examples about Creangă's originality and he has given an interesting introduction of sweeping tale of popular life in the scheme with colors of Humulești village, the critic express the rural authenticity with scenes and characters, the compositional art with humor and the savory of storyteller. Boutiere notes: " Creangă liked to paint really on some of the people with whom he lived so long and, before you do to relive the memories, he entered into fairy tales. *Mother and three daughters in law, The goat with her kids, Danila, Adventure Stan, Ivan Turbincă, Old woman and old man's daughter*, wonderful companions traditional characters themselves are not lacking individuality are ploughmen Neamț county, Creangă 's contemporaries, farmers from Moldova not only by character their playful and often witty, with their language savory, rich in familiar terms and expressions in sayings and proverbs and sometimes by their prolixity , but also by the nature of life, the beliefs and customs ".[7]

The author then notes the joviality of Creangă, which was subsequently deepened by G. Calinescu: "Thanks to his original stile a good provision occurs in all his stories (it is still prevalent in *Childhood memories*), Creangă's stories are marked by a very personal touch, unique in Romania".[8]

Expressing the view over the originality of Creangă and his place among European storytellers, Botiere support complexity Romanian classical genius. Boutiere considers that exists excessive dialogues in *White Moor* and generally do not taste, the mood of cheerful of Creanga's heroes can be as one of the specific characters of the narrative writer when a character can be satirized by his own aspect not only from his behaviour. But „the freedom and human dignity”[9] is a form of fight without hesitation when the charge of confusion brings the humor of the story as appreciate Lazar Șăineanu, as a compositional rigor of Creangă's prose.

Botiere positions Creangă's stories in the European circuit, concluding: "Making the popular story a real masterpiece is a fact that it does not appeal to many narratives. To write popular fiction, as the brothers Grimm, often polished stories that they picked and reconstructed were often the ideal choice, constructed into one or more incomplete

versions (...) But rare are those who have had such as Creangă his talent is to enliven and rejuvenate old popular themes. Therefore, the most numerous collections of stories were published a century since in all countries where are not read today than specialists. The number of those who knew and know still considerable public success are very limited. We can cite chronologically only the Perrault's collections, the Brothers Grimm and the Andersen Schmid".[10]

Botiere continues with the same certitude: " Creangă is neither a moralist as Schmid, no poet or a philosopher like Andersen . He unwittingly, as the brothers Grimm, a folklorist . But above all is an artist like Charles Perrault . It is the work of the two narrators same old faithful reproduction of popular fiction and simple language, the same life, the same evocation of the common people of a certain age, the same spirit healthy. Branch does not differ from its predecessor only by a realism sometimes something more daring, especially through a rich collection of expressions, sayings and proverbs popular they offer readers collection whose equivalent does not exist, to our knowledge, in any another European author . Creangă not for glory than to be put together Perrault, whose collection , so close to perfection is still a feast for the finest men of letters ."[11]

In the Romanian literature we can mention other authors have written about childhood: Costache Negruzzi, A. Russo, Vasile Alexandri etc. Each of these wrote in different ways. First wanted to show how was learned the Romanian language in his childhood, the second wanted to remember of his early years and the third tells that his childhood was full of friendship with a gypsy child despite gypsy ideas and concepts of the time. Ion Creangă wrote a comprehensive work about his childhood, the first great work of childhood in Romanian literature.

Land of childhood is a wonderful land, fabulous land of bliss in the middle of which is Nica, a child "cheerful and childish", which is the center of the universe and around which exists everything. The events were narrated express the light restlessness, inventiveness and curiosity of a child who, like all children, "since was born this world and earth" is a form of play or a happiness and is the most natural way of expression of any child. Ingenuity and imagination of children knows no bounds: the stick means a horse, and the priestly clothing can parody and imitate the clerical occasion.

By playing the children acquires a life experience, a community fall of the same age with him or go in relation with adults who relating to facts or patiently punished them with stern words. Through these stories the children form an image of the world, they learn more than from all the books and the lessons learned are useful for later. The Creangă's great art presented in this literary work consists in his orality style, because he creates the impression that he does not write his memories but it tells to an imaginary audience which he directly addresses

Any reader can notice the researcher's particular human structure over the object of his research, in the vision in that presents the characters like the old man Ion Roată or Nica's Stefan of Petrii, where the false naivety and funny words are left in the shadows, the writer looks and discusses other features. For the *Perfect Memories* the critic declares firmly that their analysis is limited to eight-page without critical depth. but with analysis

and insights fair with sharp observations, with humor that we can find only in the popular realism of Creangă.

It is interesting the parallelism between fairytale's heroes and those memories (Nică Oșlobanu and White Moor's friends) which will be developed later by other researchers. Among such remarks would be that he should identify the influences of Rabelais's work in the narrative fragments as scene with the catechists from School in Fălticeni. Creangă's art is similar with that of Rabelais, it was founded by Boutiere and then will be resumed and expanded in the Romanian literary history beginning from Iorga to the G. Călinescu, and from it to Zoe Dumitrescu-Bușulenga.

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