
THE MAGNIFICENT UNIVERSE OF THE MOUNTAIN LANDS

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Abstract: *IN ADDITION TO THE ATTRACTION FOR THE NATURAL SETTING, THE ARTISTIC EXPRESSIVENESS, THE STRONG AND DETAILED VISION OF THINGS THAT STRIKES AT FIRST SIGHT, ARE SOME OF THE MOST IMPORTANT AND PERSONAL ACCENTS OF GALA GALACTION'S WRITINGS. ADMIRABLE NARRATOR OF MOUNTAIN LANDS, LOVER OF PURE AND WILD NATURE, GALA GALACTION, MANAGE TO TRANSPOSE US INTO A NON-ANTHROPIC SETTING WITH TASTY RUSTIC CONDITIONS. THE ACTUAL CHAIN OF EVENTS IN HISTORY, OR BETTER SAID, THE UNFOLDING OF HISTORY ITSELF, SERVED AS INSPIRATION FOR THE WRITINGS IN OUR LITERATURE, GALA GALACTION BEING ONE OF THE AUTHORS WHO CAPTURE IN THEIR WRITINGS, EPISODES FROM THE HISTORY OF OUR COUNTRY.*

Keywords: SHORT STORIES, MOUNTAIN LANDS, GALA GALACTION, LYRICISM, ROMANIAN LITERATURE

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INTRODUCTION

The image of Gala Galaction in Romanian literature acquired different shades, the fundamental feature of his short stories being lyricism. The originality of his art comes precisely from these specific, particular notes, which intervene through the intimate, affective participation of the author. Eugen Simion affirms: „A good narrator of enigmatic, fabulous events, with a rich demonological figuration, is Gala Galaction, claimed by newer criticism for his realism, when, who reads his short stories that go beyond the realistic framework and exact notation.” (Simion, 1969).

Gala Galaction appears in the sphere of literary creations with multiple nuances contradictory to each other, producing, in a certain sense, a synthesis between fideism and pagan nuances. Let's begin, for example, with Califar's Mill, in which his narrative subtly and ingeniously alternates the real plan with the fantastic one.

The introduction of the dream factor is achieved with a perfect compositional balance, the experiences from the dream of his character, Stoicea, being described in totally believable images and scenes.

THE INTERWEAVING OF THE REAL WITH THE FANTASTIC

Galaction is a bookish spirit whose stories go beyond the realistic framework and exact notation, slipping into the imaginative, even fantastic, by fusing enigmatic events with the realities of everyday life. The writer is aware of the duality of his personality, a fact captured in the sketch of the Rose, about which he himself states that, „*summarized, clarifies, and symbolizes, surprisingly, all my feeling and all my literature*” (Galaction, 1942, p. 503) being probably tempted to explain it.

In the short story with the metaphorical and suggestive title, *To eagles*, Galaction captures a significant and shocking episode of our people and the suffering endured during the Turkish invasion, which succeeded Tudor Vladimirescu’s revolution. The author paints a picture of life and death, made with an impeccable artistic craft.

The contrast between various elements of the global image of the relief rendered with the help of expressive metaphors, „*The peaks of the Scripete were visible on this sunny day, after the many rains until here, angular and clear like a crown of oaks*”, „*In one part, the wood-clad wall crumbled, to leave, among the crushed slabs and among the beech trees always cut to the roots, the steely waves of the Iablanicioara. Its source was in the mountain, under a rock*”, „*several other streams gushed below from among the stones*”, „*descended, tormented, the only path more faint to the few houses of men founded in this nest of eagles.*” and of the verbs chosen with a special sens of suggestion: they were stirring, they were cutting, they were running!, they were floating, they pierced, they were digging, they were boiling.

Amazingly weaves the extreme violence staged with the help of Agripina’s thoughts, “*If the Turks reach her, they mock her and maybe leave her alive, but they crush the children rocks!*” (Galaction, 1998: 98) and the love of nature, nature that she paints in the most personal way, deeply infused with her own feelings of the soul, „*Agripina could see, through the open door, a few barn houses, something from old man Danila’s garden, the village road and the hollow of the Iablanicioara, and beyond the black wings of the fir forest, casting deep shadows on the flowering meadows and the hatchet mounths of the Pulley, biting from the blue sky.*” (Galaction, 1998, p. 96)

The tumultuous atmosphere from the period of Tudor Vladimirescu’s revolution and the descriptive picture of pastoral life unfolding in an idyllic setting at the foot of mountains, near Iablanicioara, exposes a picture with divergent shades that lead, paradoxically, to a perfect harmonization and build an esemble with a special profile, full of originality and which can only be understood by integrating all its component elements.

The attention to details that outline the entire narrative structure of Galaction’s works and the depth he tries to plant in each writing, support his love and passion for nature. Gala Galaction is essentially a realist writer doubled as a romantic. On the one hand, we observe his predominant attraction for consuming inner passions and soul dramas, and on the other, artistic transfiguration.

Galaction’s humanism is the fundamental trait that harmonizes the contradictory elements of human individuality. His work is permeated by a vibrant love of people, by a deep understanding of human sorrows and dramas, the author always remaining faithful to some noble feelings of humanity.

The static picture outlined mainly by plastic images and by using the contrast between the component elements, focuses attention on the lives of people animated by the hope of fulfilling the ideals of freedom and justice.

The two plans for the unfolding of the action in time, homogenize the short story through the two heroes, representative characters for the sufferings and hopes of the whole community. In the



foreground we have an action of historical time, which punctuates the time of the direct action taking place in the eagle's nest, with Agripina in the center of attention, the mother of three children, a wife who sacrifices her family life for the good of her people. „*It had been a long time since Ozun's departure. Agripina, as a woman, did not have his heart. When she was doing the household chores and especially when she was putting Păunaș on her chest, the thought of her husband, the worry, the fear of his fate surrounded her and saddened her.*” (Galaction, 1998, p. 95). At the same time, the dramatic destiny of old man Dănilă, „the elder of the local shepherds”, „a man who had gone through many sufferings and tried many fords of bitterness. He was of his kind from beyond Olt, he had made three times his fortune in his youth and three times had been wiped out by foreign invasions.” which the writer builds in such a way, precisely to support the strength of the character, which comes from the attachment to the country and people. The character is significant because of his unwavering will to defeat the misfortunes of fate, supporting the fight of Tudor Vladimirescu and even sending Păun Ozun, „*towering Romanian, brave body and soul*”, his beloved son-in-law, to battle.

Through his characters, the prose writer presents his attachment to the ideals of national freedom and social justice, revealing yet another fundamental coordinate of his work, in addition to that of humanity, namely democracy.

The author applies the same strong contrasts to his characters. The drama of Agripina's experiences, the strong and brave woman who is capable of the ultimate sacrifice to save her children, flees in despair to her father to give him the strength to continue, and old man Dănilă, the chief shepherd of the shepherd, who has passed through his burn three times and found the strength to get up again, he cried, „*and went up into the mountains so that he would never come down again, and never again see the plague and violence on him.*” (Galaction, 1998, p. 94)

Gala Galaction cultivates a literature of popular inspiration and combines traditional and modern language elements, merged in artistic expressions and biblical formulas. The lyrical outpourings are worked discreetly by highlighting the most subtle nuances of the words, for the production of a significant aesthetic effect.

Without stylizing reality, it exposes details that depict the exhausting road that Agripina takes in the fight to save the lives of the three children. „*The whole forest burning in her chest and her heartbeats where hot boulders, which jumped out of place and hit her in the ribs. He stopped sometimes, with his hands clasped by a root or a hanging branch, and his chest growled like some foals. He put Vlad down, knotted his shirt around his waist and poked his eyes in his head with his fists. He was thirsty! He was thirsty! He cooled his tongue and left again. But the veins of his legs were trembling, his breast had swollen and slung terribly.*” (Galaction, 1998, p. 99)

The end of the short story brings back to the fore, the desire to win and release from the shackles of terror and the suffering to which Galaction's characters are subjected. The bucolic pictures with a strong emotional impact that he paints at the end of short story masterfully surprising, in an idyllic nature. „*It was imperial silence. All that could be heard was the bleating, more and more distant, of the herds above. Thoughts-thoughts-clouds and deer- passed through Dănilă's mind*” (Galaction, 1998: 102), „*the collapse of Agripina after the exhausting flight with the three children. Agripina had fallen into the fold, silent like a goat torn by wolves.*” (Galaction, 1998, p. 102) „*Peacock from the tumult of crying, from the pangs of hunger and from all the wailing and torment of a human life, in the midst of a wretched people and slaves for a long time!*

Dănilă cried for the second time in his life. A shiver of foreboding stabbed him in the heart. Looking to the east (and there was the Târgoviște), looking to the south (and there were the Drăgănași), the old man, with the cup in his hand, cried to the sky:



-Put a limit, Lord, on our misfortunes! Enough for Your Holiness so much sacrifice. Enough for so much waste, so much robbery for the eagles! From the hand of the poor country and from our flesh!” (Galaction, 1998, p. 102)

We observe, as we are used to, to conclude in his own, specific style, in a religious manner, introduced discreetly into the sphere of social reality, homogenizing everything through the affective and effective participation in the experiences of the characters created. The beauty of Galaction’s writings comes precisely from the mixture of subjectivity and realism, from the love of people and nature, from the extreme violence of the devastating passion of the soul.

CONCLUSIONS

Gala Galaction as a human being and as a creative personality, fails to calm his inner turmoil caused by the confrontation between the feeling of deep understanding of real, ordinary life and the impulse to assign meanings to it in the religious, ascetic direction. As a man, the writer was not an abstinent, even if his own person embodied an Orthodox cleric, but, on the contrary, the drank from everything that is wordly; on the one hand, he deeply experiences purely human feelings and participates affectively in the passionate life of his heroes, feeling their flames and consuming inner energies, and on the other hand, he struggles to rise above these stormy impulses, to direct them in an area of soul purity, pushed towards the ethical ideal of Christianity.

Galaction’s theological formation had pronounced consequences in literary writings, but Galaction adapts through art, with the help of authentically human facts of life and characteristic social circumstances, capable of long echoes in the reader’s sensibility, the moralizing-Christian intentions and premises of to which it starts.



2/2022

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