INHERITANCE OF A RIGOROUS POETESSE IN ROMANIAN LITERARY EXILE: DOINA URICARIU

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Argument: The present article is a brief assay of the literary evolution of one of the youngest poets in Romanian literary exile, Doina Uricariu, whose work is mainly consisted from a deep research that the she made during the communism regime, starting from her intelectual inheritance and family experience, to some of the finest detailes in the reality of the monarchy, being somehow „adopted" by the Royal Romanian House al a young journalist developing interesting interviews especially with Queen Anne and then with Qing Michael. The study creates the portrait of a rigurous, cerebral, exquisite feminity reflected all over her work, both as a writer (throughout poetry and memories) and literary referent, following her lifeline from a modern but at the same time strict perspective, Doina Uricariu being a poetess who chose to write only what her rationalily considered to be correct ethicaly, mostly respecting all the rules of the world's functionaity.

Key-words: Uricariu, exile, poetry, feminine, literature, rigorous

Doina Uricariu is a rigorous and sofisticated poetess of Romanian literature, whose poetry methods are quite modern and considered to represent great theoretical studies, even if we talk about her memories from exile, where she describes real facts but only after a deep research over all, but also in her poetry, where the reader starts a scientifical adventure in different areas, from medicine, royalty, army etc. Beyound her poetry, Doina Uricariu's memories are written surprisingly detailed, with feminine involvement and an unusual force of self conversion with the characters that the royal members seem to become in her stories. Reality and its cause are the base of her pages, the poetess lives to descover the truth in every page of her life and we find grace and elegance in every presentation she writes about the reality.

Compared to other writers in communism, Doina Uricariu creates her memories volumes more like an intense research rather than her own stories and experiences, therefore the title – *The inferior maxillary* becomes a symbol of the basic issue that determined her whole life, using original elements which present a new face of the political, social, literary reality of those years. In both of the volumes, she reframes the hidden actions of the monarchy but not only, also hundreds of stories about people who, despite of the communism threat, were not broken down from their integrity and ethical view, starting with her father, a simple military who lost his inferior maxillary in a war bomb attack, to king Michael of Romania, who saved her mother from beeing deported by taking her to marry that soldier, who later bacame the poetess' father.

Instead of writing down about her inside feelings, Doina Uricariu is the intelectual who decides clearly that there are people who's facts are a lot more important for one generation, for one society, therefore they have to be mentioned and known, so she starts to study the history behind their actions in order to understand everything that happened and to explain so deeply, that sometimes the reader gets lost in theory unless he pays a lot of attention lecturing her memories.

Marius Ghilezan called her memories "a memorialistic jewel" written with a new modern literary style, professionaly dedicated to everyone. Most of the literary reviews dedicated to her work mention the elegance in her writing, while the words come out as from a mentally settled soul, not from an overwhelmed by memories heart, but as a result of a rational analyze over the facts that caused the specific emotions. The poetess is appreciated as a disciplinary and exact theoretician, her character being inherited both from her patriot mother and her formal educated father in the military schools, being raised in a such called idyllic family athmosphere, where she heared only what was meant to be heard by a child to grow psychologicaly healthy.

Therefore, she mentions the protective way of education she received from her parents frequently using expressions like: "I've never heard the forbidden song", "I've never thought when we were talking about war from its theory", "he hasn't event old me he had left home for a war that day", "he imagined I coudn't understand" or "I found out later". Her cold and objective attitude gives the memories certain value, since it underlines the superiour respect that the writer had for her parents, but moreover for what family means and for the institutions of the State in general.

The poetess' vocabulary often includes conditional theoretical phrases, as a tendence to analize the deep in every situation, not only what people lived, but the way that facts could have been different, the consequences of certain moments, the issues that a particular distortion of the reality could cause at that time and in different circumstances.

The author not only explains her work to prove that everything written is reality, but she also brings from the beginning arguments for any decisions: „I regret not having been able to transmit at that certain moment what the monarchy represented in my life, just as in other people's life, who refused the manipulation of their lies" (Uricariu 2010, 14).

The political support that her family received from king Michael was nor singular, there were many such forms of support that the monarchy offered to people during the communism atrocities, becoming savers in their life.

Doina Uricariu becomes an expert in the study of maxillary, from scientific point of view, and that does not happen because of her father complains or explanaitions, but thanks to her research in the field, she confesses: „I read the anatomy of the inferior maxillary just as if I caressed my father" (Uricariu 2010, 30).

Love, sacrifice, devotion, gratitude, compassion, respect, bravery, altruism, honesty, integrity and modesty are few of the treasures that Doina Uricariu inherited from the whole experience of her family, and she was able to promote, therefore, an ethical literature starting from her past to the maturity.

Perfection and rigor in poetry

Having strong influences of dignity, the poetess character pushes her to the highest level in her work, she has immaculate requirements from every result and accepts no declination from perfection. That is why her poems have also a strong theory behind a correct reality exposed in a cerebral artistical manner. Her verse is not allowed to dream or to create something that does not exist, which would mean an offense to the rules of human living.

The poems are written from a mental order, planned, starting from very clear causes to precise effects, always respecting the elementary conduct. When it comes to her literary creations, Doina Uricariu makes no compromise, we have as an example her waiting for seven years in order to see her poems volume, *Healings*, published, refusing to change the title: „They didn't like the title and I refused to change it", she confesses (Uricariu 2019, Interview).

Her poems have been from the beginning appreciated by all critics and her texts had been often commented on *Free Europe* Radio, which was definitely when the communists started to follow her as one of their enemies.

The state of sensibility is seen in her poetry in a very feminine but discreet manner, they are spreaded out within calculated expressions, programatic messages. We also can discover her searching for a protecttive area or for a heavenly state of mind, which is analyzed by a literary reviwer, Alexandru Cistelecan, in the following way: „Working with factors that are almost impossible to estimate and inside a regime of self fluency, her poetry, apparently shy and delicate, has got actually the pride of a coherent visionary programme and it resides into a continuous challenge of the lyrism, tender and intimate, with graceful and into a climate of cerebral exultation" (Cistelecan 1987, 134).

Other literary critics believe that her poems are just like a game of states of psychological tensions which step by step get dissolved, unless they don't stop to a balance only. Many times we identify poetical functions that provide contrary ones, the opposite images have a precise role which is to create stability, the poetess being a professional theoretician and respecting each poetry function, especially in modern poetry, with realistic visions and a strong lexical disciplined.

Doina Uricariu is both the knowing and the thinking, the elegance and the strenght, the gentle and the force, the bravery and the grace, she is herself a combination of opposite characters that provide her a complexity of abilities which in poetry have a deep result, the reader is needed to be smart enough to can get beyond the word etymology ans senses.

One element which she declared not to exist in her life was fear, in her confessions saying that she lives eveny moment in life as a new lesson, not as a weight or a hardship.

She mantains her mind clear in order to get through it, but moreover to use it for the future, in her character evolution. She wanted to transmit the force to go on to receive the pain and get far with it, without leaving her discreet feminity and rigor, of transforming them in theory. A bad experience is not bad, in fact it can be analyzed and used to build a new science of life, of understanding and approaching reality, as a preparation for future.

This is how she succeeds in New York as a respected editorialist, being herself first of all, a respectfull person, with a respect for the life she has got and which she lives under the meaning

of *must*. The human being, as it comes out from her poetry, is a rational person who *must* do whatever *must* be done, in ways they *must* be done and at the precise time they *must* be done. Human nature is defined by the verb *must*, this is the key for succes.

At a maturity age, Doina Uricariu suffers a difficult open heart surgery and 10 years later she writes an emblematic poem that presents the episode with great scientific suggestions: „The chest cavity opened like a window/ and under the ribs is struggling the bell of that church/ tinier then a fist./ All the tools of the body continue their humble job,/ but only the main artery, like a cardinal crutch, is banned from its way./ And for the stick not to get lonely in its halt/ even the heart in its continuous drive stops./ The church that holds its bell between the ribs/ frozens its pray. Only God is still talking,/ in His mind, over the opened window,/ He silently touches the skin of the harsh bell/ and his clappers until few moments ago deafening,/ and all there rivers throughout the blood/ effuses and gets back in the sea" (Doina Uricariu – *Heart Institute*).

This poem is a complex circle of attitudes, starting from science to the human feelings in front of one's indefensibility, when the divine entity becomes the only force able to restaurate the human body. The poetess reflects the originary state of human body, where it returs completely out of life, in a break that can lead it to death without the interference of God's love for the soul carried inside the body. The diminutive attributed to the noun *church* establishes the inferiority of human in front of God's overall power, He, The Creator of human soul and body, is the only one that the body now obeys. If God's order is for the blood to flow, it starts flowing again.

The poetess' attitude is even in this situation cold enough to be considered cerebral, rigorous, she doesn't uncover her feelings, nor a normal vulnerabilty, but she premeditates a cold language, with calculated expressions and scientific messages, not emotional or depressive.

The sensitivity is a state that can cover the body, but not the brain, the mind is always in a reflexive state, thinking, judging, demanding proper behaviours and correct words. We observe in her poetry that there is a tendency on the description of feminine elements as suggestions of a persoan copnception which is shown with high discretion in sensuality, but also a mistified feminine emotion. She writes a poetry of perfect aparences, deep suggestions, indirect expressions, concrete images but hiding different enigmatic feelings.

Talking about the Universe in its entire complexity, Doina Uricariu builds up a sofisticated and exigent way of describing it, using technical terms. She is also followed by the theory of morality as regards the creation act, as Petru Poantă described her: "an active consciousness, suple inteligence, with fast touching the value, tempted even by the posibility of creating literary aliances to favorize the morality in the creation act, but not necesarilly of a estethical programme, she somehow uplifted her poem" (Poantă 1982, 35).

Doina Uricariu is described as an inteligent poetess, able to create a complicated poem, but at the same time her sobriety inhibits her freedom of expressing her feelings, her emotions. The coherence of her rational objective verses leaded to descriptions that present her as a formal poetess, who loves rules, respecting the rules and living the entire life upon the rules.

As a figure in Romanian literary exile, Doina Uricariu represents the ideal woman, according to society rules, she is serious, fragile, delicate, elegant, stylish, like an interior melancoly woman, so being described by Alexandru Cistelecan: "Her state of grace, or simply her favourite

state, is related to intelectuality, which makes her poems coagulate under the incidence of a critical view, by freezing the excitement. Tending to seem out of spontaneity, her poems are overviwed by a cold court which fixes their game, measuring almost indiscernible, as in a farmacy, each substance meant to disobey the text" (Cistelecan 1982, 2).

The critic says that even the confession becomes an objective one in her poetry, which is dominated by a stability that leads to a perfectly framed message compared to the text: "Those nights in which we don't exist/ They are the first measure of the late sleeping/ with their dreams gathering just as a pyramid/ squird of life around the mummy,/ to saturate its solitude,/ to fulfill it with braceless and ivory combs./ Those nights in which the darkness is deep/ those are the first colour mantle for the full blackness…" (Doina Uricariu – *The nights we do not exist in*)

The visual sense is an important resource in the poetry of Doina Uricariu, it is the main character in a game where each sense has a different role in observing the correct functionality of the universe, of the world, of the human in the middle of this world. Death, as a normal physiological phenomenon, is compared to a boxing glove which turns any person from light to dark. Obviously, since death is naturally asociated with dark, we have the black for death and the light for life, just as it is supposed to be, nothing has to be out of normal or out of order.

The poetry is for Doina Uricariu the art of defining life as it is, but most of all, as it should be, in an idyllic vision. She writes not what she wants, but whats she is supposed to, in order to accomplish her role as a poet.

Her poetry is almost mathematically calculated, precise, each element has a duty to fulfill, a purpose to accomplish and the whole scene with its all actors act as it requires the result.

Maternity – the element at the top of feminity

Not a common theme for the exile literature, maternity has an important space in Doina Uricariu's poetry. Giving birth is a great step in a woman's growing up to maturity, within the emotional evolution and a certain perfection of the feeling of love. Being herself also a mother, Doina Uricariu dedicates an entire volume to this specific aspect of women's life, *Happy creatures*. The title is suggestive not only for the new-born, but also as a strong feeling of the mother which gets to know the absolute happiness when she sees her child out in this world, since a child is the cause for the absolute love and absolute happiness of a mother.

Dumitru Mureșan explains this connection between living the maternity and describing it precisely by the birth of happiness: „Having a modern tenderness, Doina Uricariu understands to consider maternity a feeling and an experience. Birth, as a cosmical event, brings a feeling of relief, of reopening the perspective to the big cosmos, suggested here in a romantic manner, by the blue trumpets used to shout out the victory of the sea. We are communicated a strange sensation of happiness" (Mureșan 1981, 2).

Birth cam also be interpreted here as an act of exilation, reflecting a process of getting to a state of a reborn, both of them short, painful, but full of hope, with optimistic echoes in the future.

Doina Uricariu puts these two terms together in more poems: ”naive exile, proud exile/ on the mouth that starts to give birth” (*On the top, the smiling was coming...)*, or ”Exile this question/ I throw myself and save myself in,/ ignoring myself actually,/ naive exile” (*Voracious holyness*).

The act itself of giving birth and then the child, as its result, are miracles, which the poetess also tries to perceive within science theory and rationality, even if we can identify a deep emotion in the poems dedicated to maternity, when the woman touches perfection, she finally navigated through all the theoretical steps a woman can pass in her terestral living.

Giving birth is like taking part in the action of creation, which belongs only to God, the Superior Creator, Who choses the woman as a part of His plan to mantain the continuity of the life on Earth.

Seeing is the permanent sense, never missing at the border between light and dark, life and death, fear and release, even if the eye sees or can’t see. The images involving this human sense are so diverse, that the reader never gets tired of them. In many poems, Doina Uricariu creates opposite images, she puts face to face eyes that can see with closed eyes, images that stimulte the human sense in most powerfull ways, in contrast with ignored ones, that are not even observed.

The mother who gets to see her child, even if she had felt him inside her body all over the pregnancy, is enlighted simultaneously with her child getting to real light. We believe that this is mainly the universal mistery for our poetess, the science where she found a blank in her research, where something, a part of the phenomenon keeps in a mistery.

The artistic creation we find at Doina Uricariu is an excelent proof that poetry becomes an act of knowledge, a constant state of researching over everything that human and universal existance mean. The poetess adds to the knowledge a deep meditation, which allowes her to articulate some of the strictest rules inside some of the most misterious symbols that create life.

We underline here also the lofty exigent language she uses to create those representative images to describe the results of her researches.

Another literary critic presented her as being in a continuous searching for the deepest elements that compose this world: ”Insatiable with World’s confessions, for the thirsty insight of its signs, Doina Urticariu’s poem is perpetually looking for certitudes, staying out, although, of the common procedure used in feminine poetry and without transforming her whisper into a lyrical shout” (Vlad 1978, 2).

Therefore, Doina Uricariu is a poetess of a rigorous verse, by creating an ideal functionallity, her creation becomes a guide of a correct, moral, ethical living, in an imperfect space on Earth. The main lesson is that in terestral living, in order to get to what is wanted, you must firstly do what needed, and respecting the rules to assure the best results. Man is a measure for the living and time is a measure for the man living on Earth.

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