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**Book Review. Carmen Popescu, *Intertextualitatea și
paradigma dialogică a comparatismului*, 2016, Romania,
Craiova: Universitaria. [Intertextuality and the dialogic
paradigm of the comparativism], 294 pp.**

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Usually, globalization is understood as a sort of conquest, of domination, as assimilation. Frequently, globalization is followed by the concept of multiculturalism; it is sustained by a terminological paradigm emerging from diversity and tolerance. Both concepts – globalization and multiculturalism – have the same source, the idea of opening. This opening paradigm brings together concepts such as availability, dialog, and comprehension.

I have found this idea in this work of Carmen Popescu, a Romanian researcher, preoccupied of intertextuality and communication. In fact, this book is a logic stage, after her book on parodic intertextuality (2006). For this new study, the researcher has got the same starting point, and this is intertextuality;

but it isn't studied through the paradigmatic route of bearing, of mimesis, of cropping, but it is viewed through the opening paradigm, e.g. the dialogic and the dialogism paradigm. The roots of dialogism come from Bahtin's work, of course. But Carmen Popescu's results are quite different. Even the practical examples came from literature, from the fictional discourse; the findings are very useful for a better understanding of concepts such as mentality, Zeigeist, circumstance or context.

The first chapter, "Contemporary literary comparativism between 'epistemic violence' and authentic dialog. Newly processes in comparative and universal literature" determines the concepts of this theory. Of course, the comparativism is the main concept. And the most important idea of this chapter is this specificity of the comparatist method which leads to a dialog closing, not to the textual recovery.

It can be said that comparativism and intertextuality show that the borders are artificial, the spaces between cultures/literatures/discourses are artificial, at least that is said. But the comparatist researches have more like a protective attitude, more like an identification and an exposure of the differences, of the worlds specificities that are confronted and compared. So, the intertextuality can be considered as a basis for comparison and it opens a way for unicity, for singularity. This way is the "reduction to the universality" (33), ambivalently named "universalization" in specialized theories.

A solution proposed by this researcher is that the dialog and the communication can be “key-words”. From this perspective, intertextuality can be part of what we could name “the dialogic or dialogal paradigm of comparativism” (9). The dialogism (in the bakhtinian meaning) along with planetary meaning open “beneficial” paradigms (40) for comparativism. This fact will suppose a discussion of the cases/types of discourse/mentalities, without creating any ontological hierarchies.

The one who creates the circumstance of the dialog is the mediator-critic (cf. Sell 2001). This solution would solve, the researcher says, the perpetual crisis of comparisons and the new anxiety generated by revealing the “violent” implications of the comparison. The dialogue-communication paradigm - as Carmen Popescu calls it - can relaunch the comparative discussions within the planarity paradigm.

Of course, this isn't a replacement of a term with another term, but a change of perspective, a mutation of the circumstance, I think, a change of the types of results pursued. This idea recalls the “epistemic dialogue”, in words of David Cowart in *Literary Symbiosis: The Reconfigured Text in Twentieth-Century Writing* (1993) when he spoke about the symbiosis of the rewritings and intertexts.

This conversational symbiosis is done by the recipient / receiver. The connection of the two concepts, comparisons and dialogism, means, on the one hand, the affirmation of the subjectivities involved in the dialogue (preservation of the incomprehensible), but also the protected cultural differences (those that can not be measured or compared).

The second chapter, “Intertextuality in the context of literary comparisons”, refers to intertextuality as an epiphenomenon of dialogue. Thus, the dialogical and comparative theory of the intertext will emphasize the mental

consciousness, as well as the diachronically, paradigmatically and socially cultivated differences. The dialogue produces meaning, the comparison produces differences. Dialogue puts in relation the idiostyles, the comparison puts them in adversity.

This theory is proposed in the context in which the comparative method and the intertextual method are understood to be compatible. In fact, an “inclusion” relationship must be accepted between them (73), in the sense that intertextuality can also be understood as a method of comparing, which is also a specification of the comparison, which Carmen Popescu calls “intertextual comparison”. (73).

Intertextuality is an argument for abandoning the illusion of the autonomy of the text and for the idea of textual independence. This concept shows the ontological condition of the text reception, the comprehension of the texts, which is the dialogue side. The logic of dialogism revealed through intertextuality can be understood as an argument of planarity, of communicative opening, also immanent. Alterity in the text is not an intruder, but a sign of connection, sociability, communication.

These two theoretical chapters, extremely dense, but also tendered for new exploration paths, are followed by four applicative chapters. The scholar stops on Michel de Montaigne's essays, on Thornton Wilder's novel “The Woman of Andros”, on Medea, becoming a mental and cultural destiny *per se*, and, of course, on Shakespeare, in a context and with a, let's say, exotic co-text. What I want to emphasize is the classical culture of the researcher. This allows her to follow the dialogical evolution of an interface from antiquity to postmodernity (where appropriate). Undoubtedly, this is a prolific and useful

perspective for a more accurate understanding of theoretical issues, but also a pragmatic argument for the theory of dialogue.

The examples, illustrations and models studied and exposed reveal a discursive world that enriches itself, shades with every spatial-temporal circumstance in which it is projected. The logic of dialogue, which I understand from Carmen Popescu's demos, makes the ideologies globalization, tolerance, multiculturalism, not conditions, but axiological discursive essences.

The third chapter, "Subjectivity and Intertextual Dialogue in Michel de Montaigne's essays", highlights this immanence of dialogue. Intertextual dialogue, as the researcher sees, leads Montaigne to alterity, even though, as Todorov notices, "at Montaigne, the path of wisdom is devoid of any specific reference to the other" and "his ethical thinking is not put to the service of good, but of happiness (Todorov 2002: 194)" (99). The other one is self-evident, it is immanent, it is a good gain, a gained meaning.

A chapter with an almost didactic load, I would say, is the fourth chapter, "The Second Degree Writing in Thornton Wilder's novel 'The Woman of Andros'". Here, the researcher refers insistently to the reflex, I would say, of appropriation, of assimilation of antiquity as "essence" (179), as immanence, I would add. Following the logic that "in a way, every age has built an ideal Greece or Rome (or, anyway, different) more or less verisimilar: Antiquity has always been invested with new meanings, according to ideals, anguish, and the phantasms of each epoch" (179), Carmen Popescu puts in dialogue, on the one hand, Greek antiquity with Latin, starting from the works of Plaut and Terentius, and, on the other hand, analyzes the dialogue between contemporaneity and antiquity through the lens of Thornton Wilder's work.

A relevant chapter for the transparadigmatic discursive mix is the fifth chapter, "Medea - a complicated literary destiny". Of course, the model is not

chosen by chance, because we know Medea is from the family of those characters who very quickly overcome the conventional boundaries of the discourse so-called fictional and become a mentality sign. Medea is a type of transcultural sign, a sign of planarity. Her “puzzle” (183) identity, as Carmen Popescu calls it, we understand as a model of dialogue-communication discursivity, as it is defined by the author herself.

Challenging is the sixth chapter, “Eugène Ionesco and Marin Sorescu in intertextual dialogue with Shakespeare”. The three playwrights are faced with their appetite for subversiveness. Thus, Eugène Ionesco’s “Macbett” and “Cousin Shakespeare” by Marin Sorescu are built with intertextual bricks not only from the Shakespearean theater, but also from the metatexts accumulated over time, the two, Ionesco and Sorescu, approaching one another with existentialism, for starters, under the sign of absurdity, and ending with the cultivation of the notion of “cultural resistance”. This is one of the important observations of the chapter. It is a good opportunity to lead the discussion on intertextual dialogism and the communication of the text from the monolithic transparadigmatic level to the conceptual one. The rewrites and the adaptations are “the surest way to activate the latent Shakespearean subversion” (222), as Carmen Popescu observed. Cultural resistance and subversion - which is much more than a simple exercise of language from Aesop’s elusive concepts that supported the aesthetic act under oppression (communist or otherwise). These are concepts build on the current aesthetic paradigm.

The dialogue is proposed by the virtue of globalization, and Carmen Popescu’s theory can be used as a negotiation solution, a wise understanding of the circumstance of meetings between works, e.g. between cultures and civilizations. This theory of dialogue does not exclude, but includes worlds and mentalities.

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