

A FEW CONSIDERATIONS ON LUCIAN BLAGA'S PHILOSOPHICAL LANGUAGE

Lucian Blaga's intensely personalised language, with obvious literary virtues, surprised his contemporaries accustomed to the Kantian tradition – the most powerful in our culture – and receptive to phenomenology (and to Husserl's motto, *Philosophie als strenge Wissenschaft*), who were persuaded that originality in this field is reserved for ideas alone, not style, which must be notional, rigorous, and technical. They attributed the writing manner of Blaga the philosopher to the poet who coexisted in the same man, and felt prone to leave him to the literary critics.

This language, however, has a deeper explanation than the mere presence of the poet's expressive gift: it is the very foundation of the philosopher's thinking. In fact, rigour is not missing at all, either in his works as a whole (organised in trilogies – of knowledge, of culture, of values, cosmological) or in his theoretical demonstration. Blaga's work is a philosophy extended into a metaphysics whose principal theme is, in basic terms, the relation between man and the world. The world is a great mystery consisting of an infinity of mysteries the human spirit attempts to unveil without ever succeeding completely. The outcome of man's efforts to "reveal" the mysteries of the world consists of the scientific, artistic, philosophical, and religious achievements, in a word, everything we know as culture. These are all creative acts of the human spirit, to which the world does not reveal itself in its profound reality; they are – in respect to the mysteries they aim to disclose – incomplete, substitutive representations, metaphors, or myths.

The creative function of the spirit, salient in all its culture-producing acts, from scientific hypotheses to myths, and the inexhaustibility of the world's unknown it strives to comprehend are the terms that define the human condition in the universe. The integration into the cosmic mystery would change for the better man's ontological status, but Blaga (and this lies at the heart of his creative vocation), instead of mystics, prefers this "tragic and majestic" condition, which he elevates to the rank of destiny: "man's creative destiny", its theoretical demonstration and support, is the unifying idea throughout Blaga's philosophical works.

This conception also accounts for its language. Philosophical creativity, in Blaga's opinion, necessarily manifests itself in expressing ideas, in terminological inventiveness, or – when thought extends into metaphysics – in myth making. The most recurrent aspect is the recourse to metaphor, not for aesthetic goals, but because the author "feels" that metaphor is more fit to express what may be suggested rather than captured in a concept. It is true that sometimes he makes abuse of metaphor, but even when it can be substituted for a technical term, we will notice something is thus lost. Here is an example: in later works, Blaga replaced "paradisiac knowledge" and "Luciferic knowledge", metaphoric terms explained in the text in which they appeared, with "type I knowledge" and "type II knowledge". The reader will sense the change as a diminution.

A major role in the stylistic orientation of Blaga the philosopher was played, I believe, by models from his greenhorn years, mostly Nietzsche and Bergson. Seen in a larger perspective, he belongs to a line in the history of philosophy that descends from Plato to some of his contemporaries and beyond – from a stylistic point of view only, for his central reference point, as with many other Romanian philosophers, was Kant, coupled with an interest for the unconscious, the metaphysical outlook, and a melancholic sentiment of being, all of them reflected in his philosophical language.

George GANĂ

Translated by Adrian SOLOMON