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**TEHNICI NARATIVE ȘI ASPECTE ALE
SUBVERSIVITĂȚII LA GENERAȚIA '60: PROZA LUI
ALEXANDRU IVASIUC**

**(NARRATIVE TECHNIQUES AND ASPECTS OF
SUBVERSIVENESS WITH THE GENERATION OF THE 60S:
THE PROSE FICTION OF ALEXANDRU IVASIUC)**

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Key words: generation, concrete instance, abstract instance, official requirements, subversiveness, narrator, narratee, focalization, character, history, story.

SUMMARY

The doctoral thesis *Narrative Techniques and Aspects of Subversiveness with the Generation of the 60s: the Prose Fiction of Alexandru Ivasiuc* focuses on the generation of the 60s in Romanian literature, which is considered the promoter of the revolutionary dissociation from the literary paradigm of socialist realism and which is known to have had an essential role in restoring the connection with European modernism. However, in the context of post '89 revisions, of the confrontation between ethic and aesthetic criteria, this generation of literary creators has not always benefited from a cold-headed analysis, but rather from heated negative criticism which outlines some writers' weaknesses in front of the communist regime and which seems to overlook the merits of the generation of the 60s.

Having as background the special creative climate of the epoch, the existing limits and the few openings allowed by the regime, the present thesis circumscribes its interest to the epic genre and brings forward some of the techniques through which the 60s writers have not only placed themselves apart from their forerunners, reaffirming the primacy of the aesthetic in literature, but also eluded the recommendations of cultural activists in a period when literature was officially reduced to its social dimension. Thus they introduced new polemic ideas against the official discourse, building a subversive literature. The present analysis departs from Ion Simuț's concept of "subversive literature", that literature written during the communist regime which was characterized by "a deviation from the official line, one hidden behind metaphors and parables, a sort of barely sketched protest, a half or even quarter dissidence, as much as censure would allow"¹. Consequently, subversiveness should not be read as an attempt at delegitimizing the political system, which was really problematic as it was too risky and radical for most writers at the time.

The main goal of this research has been to demonstrate that the narrative techniques used by the 60s generation writers (the choice of narrative voice, the relation between narrator and narratee, aspects related to character construction, the narrative perspective and the representation of diegesis), with their obvious implications at the level of the content, have become, along with other artistic techniques, means of subverting the literary canon of socialist realism, focusing the

¹ Ion Simuț, *Cele patru literaturi*, în *România literară*, nr. 29/ 1993;

readers' attention on the subtext, on bitter truths about man's condition under communism.

To support this thesis, a vast bibliographic corpus has been required, belonging to representatives of schools of formalist and narratological criticism (Russian Formalism, the Chicago School, French Structuralism, the Tel Aviv School), reader-response criticism (the Konstanz School), or to contemporary critics who are not necessarily part of one specific school: Mieke Bal, Jaap Lintvelt, Jonathan Culler, Nicolae Manolescu. In order to put the literary creation of the generation of the 60s into historical and social perspective, the present thesis has also used bibliographic materials ranging from important works of foreign and Romanian historians, to official Romanian Communist Party documents (as published at the time or subsequently commented by Marin Radu Mocanu, Paul Caravia, Bogdan Ficeac, Liviu Malița), entries from books and articles on the epoch (Marin Preda, Augustin Buzura, Marin Nițescu, Dumitru Țepeneag, Paul Goma, Nicolae Breban, Matei Călinescu, Ion Vianu, Radu Petrescu, Ovid S. Crohmălniceanu, Monica Lovinescu, Anneli Ute Gabanyi), information provided by interviews with the above, books of criticism published after 1989 by literary critics and historians (Ana Selejan, Constantin Pricop, Eugen Negrici, Nicolae Manolescu, Florin Mihăilescu, Ioana Macrea-Toma), books which document the social climate during communist nationalism (Norman Manea, Călin-Andrei Mihăilescu, Ion Manolescu, Paul Cernat, Angelo Mitchievici, Ioan Stanomir), and investigations about the reading habits in communist Romania (Simona Sora, Maria Bucur, Sanda Cordoș).

Due to the vast amount of materials belonging to the writers of this generation and acknowledging the impossibility of an exhaustive study, the present thesis has applied the above-mentioned theories on the prose fiction of a single author, being aware that such an undertaking can, at any time, be the starting point for a larger analysis of other authors of the same generation.

The choice of Alexandru Ivasiuc's prose fiction was motivated first by the fact that this writer was unanimously perceived by critics before and after 1989 as a leading figure of the movement which sought to move away from socialist realism, because of the dissonant aspects that his first novels (*Vestibul*, *Interval*, *Cunoaștere de noapte*) introduced in comparison with the officially agreed literature. In addition, the analyses of Ivasiuc's fiction made abroad during radio programmes broadcasted by "Free Europe" or in studies which dealt with the relation between literature and

politics in Romania revealed the audacity of the messages that the author sent in the subtext, even in *Păsărilor, Apa* or *Iuminări*, which were often labelled as opportunistic in Romania.

Secondly, the choice of Ivasiuc's prose fiction was supported by the fact that the author was recognized as a pioneer in restoring the connection with the introspective fiction represented by Camil Petrescu, Anton Holban, Hortensia Papadat-Bengescu, Max Blecher, as well as a supporter of synchronizing Romanian literature with the European and the American modernism of writers such as James Joyce, Virginia Woolf or William Faulkner, primarily known as innovators at the narrative level. In addition, Ivasiuc's fiction offers a diversity of creative forms, literary critics often speaking of a transition from reflexive fiction to the traditional and then parabolic ones, which, in our view, allows for a clear comparison with other writers of the generation and for a comparative analysis of the meanings these narrative techniques entail.

As far as Ivasiuc's life and work are concerned, the present thesis relied on information provided by literary historians (Nicolae Manolescu, Eugen Negrici, Eugen Simion), books belonging to literary critics dealing with Ivasiuc's work (Cristian Moraru, Ion Bogdan Lefter, Ion Vitner, Sanda Cordoș), books of memoirs by close friends (Florin Constantin Pavlovici, Nicolae Carandino, Nicolae Manolescu, Fănuș Neagu, Tita Chiper-Ivasiuc), and interviews with and essays by the author himself.

The first chapter of the thesis, *The 1960s in Romanian literature. The Portrait of a Generation* offers a panoramic view of the historical, social, economic and cultural context of the 1960s, outlining the requirements of the authorities as far as literary production was concerned, the coercive means which these ones used, but also the efforts of young writers at the time to produce a different kind of literature, to revive authentic literary creation. The first subchapter focuses on defining the concept of generation as discussed by critics, literary historians, philosophers and sociologists in the inter-war period or in contemporary times, and on introducing the characteristic features of each generation of writers. Expanding on these features and introducing the periodisations proposed by literary critics and historians, this subchapter shows that the 60s are marked by a group movement, by the affirmation of a new literary generation made up of writers and literary critics. Also, the usefulness of the concept in the analysis of the post-war Romanian literature is underlined.

The following five subchapters deal with the analysis of the essential features of the distinct periods of time which marked the formation of the 60s writers (the post-war transition period, the period dominated by socialist realism, the liberalization period after 1965, the re-dogmatization period and, finally, the period after 1989), with an emphasis, in the case of the pre-1989 period, on the pressures coming from cultural politics, on the party's political fluctuations and on the openings that the writers took advantage of. In the context of the ideological dogmatism of socialist realism, of the inauthentic fiction which abdicated the elementary criteria of artistic creation, young writers such as Fănuș Neagu, D.R. Popescu, Nicolae Velea, Ion Băieșu, Teodor Mazilu, Vasile Rebreanu, Nicuță Tănase, Radu Cosașu managed to escape the conformism which dominated the dawn of the 1960s and, giving up clichés and festivism, silently brought forward real social and moral issues, enlarging the area of realism through a discourse founded on myth and symbol, through rediscovering the individual's inner self, through new narrative forms, satire and humour.

The prose fiction at the beginning of the 1960s represents the preamble to a much more important movement that occurred in Romanian literature after 1964. The concessions and openings initiated by Gheorghiu-Dej that year also characterized the first years of Ceausescu's leadership, elected as prime-secretary of the Communist Party in July 1965. After the 9th Congress of the Party in July 1965, the general atmosphere was one of political, ideological and economic opening and relaxation. During this period, liberalization is to be felt in the literary area as well. Nicolae Ceaușescu's speech at the 9th Congress of the Communist Party outlined a new attitude of the party towards literature. Art creators were encouraged to preserve socialist themes, to serve "the grand goal of forging a happier life for the people", but at the same time it stressed the importance of "the diversity of styles" and of "the artists' individuality", which contradicted the uniformity of the socialist realism theses. The rehabilitation of some key-figures of the inter-war literature, the enlarging of the theatrical and cinematographic repertoire, the explosion of translations from world literature, the multitude of literary and cultural reviews which outlined the aesthetic element (*Gazeta literară*, *România literară*, *Luceafărul*, *Steaua*, *Tribuna*, *Iașul literar*, *Cronica*, *Viața românească*, *Ramuri*, *Secolul 20*, *Flacăra*), all fuelled the writers' hopes and courage.

In the second half of the 1960s, along with writers who had initiated the desideologization of literature and who were now perfecting their techniques, new

names began to emerge: Nicolae Breban, Alexandru Ivasiuc, Constantin Țoiu, George Bălăiță, Augustin Buzura, Petre Sălcudeanu. Seizing the moment, these either birthed a literature of justice which, by exposing the errors of the communist past aimed at fostering some uncomfortable aspects of Ceausescu's regime, or steered their creations towards a fiction which thrived on fantastic and dream-like elements, on myths and symbols, the defining features of anti-realistic and anti-mimetic literature.

The stimulating climate of creation was to be disturbed, though, by the publication of the July theses in 1971, which threw an anathema on all artistic creation that moved away from the realities of "socialist construction" or displayed interest in any element that could be linked to the "bourgeois or decadent lifestyle" of the West. These requirements, backed by a censure which, although officially dissolved, was growingly harsh, did not manage to determine the 1960s writers renounce the publication of perfectly valid works of fiction. They perfected the strategies through which the forms and contents imposed by the authorities were eluded and practically continued the directions of the second half of the 1960s, avoiding the official requirements and preserving the core of literature, refusing to accept the theoretical status which literature came back to in 1971: that of a propagandistic weapon.

The second chapter of the thesis, *Exterior Instances of the Literary Narrative Text*, represents the logical sequel of the previous chapter as it analyses, in separate subchapters, the concepts of "concrete author", "abstract author", "concrete reader", "abstract reader", all of them essential in dealing with how a work of fiction moves from a historically engaged concrete author to a historically engaged concrete reader. Bringing to discussion the theory of the multiple self in psychology, which underlines the coexistence and importance of several selves (the authentic self, the social self, the ideal self, the reflected self, the actual self), and the concept of "ketman" introduced by Czeslaw Milosz with direct reference to life under totalitarian regimes, the present thesis lays emphasis on the coexistence of the individual's authentic self (left unaffected by the environment) with a superficial self (a mask, a protection). The inherent duplicity in the context of "the global prison" of communism, the assumption of a certain behaviour which would be socially desirable became even more complicated, in the case of these writers, as they were insidiously lured by the need of belonging to a group, the financial security and advantages regular citizens would not have access to.

Under these circumstances, in the subchapter entitled *The Histrionic Ivasiuc* we have referred to the concrete author Ivasiuc. Alexandru Ivasiuc was born on July 12, 1933, at Sighetu Marmatiei, Maramureş county, originating maternally in a family of traditional Maramureş aristocrats and paternally having Bukovinian roots. After finishing the high school of Sighet, starting from 1951 he attended the courses of the Faculty of Philosophy of Bucharest, being expelled after two years for ideological reasons. After working for a short time as an under-plumber on a site in order to be re-educated, in 1953 he enrolled for the courses of the Faculty of Medicine within the Medico-Pharmaceutical Institute of Bucharest, being expelled three years later and arrested for his participation in the movements of the students in Bucharest, as a sign of solidarity with the Hungarian revolution. Judged in the group bearing his name, he was sentenced to five years' imprisonment, executed in the prisons of Jilava, Gherla and in the forced labour camps of Periprava, Stoeneşti and Salcia. After being set free in 1961, he got further on a compulsory residence in the village Rubla-Calamăţui of Brăila county. Coming back to Bucharest in 1963, he was employed first as a chemist worker at Sintofarm, and then as an office worker at the Embassy of the United States in Bucharest.

Ivasiuc began his activity as a writer on July 9, 1964 with the short story entitled *Timbrul*, published in *Revista literară*, then he contributed to newspapers like *Contemporanul*, *România literară*, *Viaţa Românească*, *Luceafărul* etc. Until 1977, when he died under the walls of the Scala building in Bucharest, during the earthquake of March 4, he had published seven novels: *Vestibul* (1967), *Interval* (1968), *Cunoaştere de noapte* (1969), *Păsările* (1970), *Apa* (1973), *Iluminări* (1975) *Racul* (1976), a volume of short stories: *Corn de vânătoare* (1972) and an important number of essays issued in the *Romania literară* (from 1969 to 1976, with the heading *Pro domo*), subsequently put together into two volumes: *Radicalitate şi valoare* (1972) and *Pro domo* (1974).

After presenting a short biography of this prose writer, we have insisted on the elements that led to his being considered an ally or a protégé of the political power, but also on those aspects representing a counter-weight. The blame of being “a friend of the regime” started first of all from the political attachment Ivasiuc would have shown by joining the Romanian Communist Party in August 1968, after the surprisingly critical speech made by Ceausescu after the invasion of Czechoslovakia by the Russians. Suspicions that appeared were generated by the important prizes he

was awarded (two prizes of the Writers' Union, in 1967 and 1970, the Prize for Prose of the magazine *România literară* in 1968, the Prize of the Council of Culture and Socialist Education and that of the Academy of Romania, both in 1970), as well as the positions he held (employee at the Embassy of the United States of America starting 1963, editor-in-chief and deputy manager of the *Cartea Românească* Publishing House from 1970 to 1973, secretary of the Writers' Union between 1970-1972, director of the Movie House No. 1 between 1972 and 1974). Then, there were his visits abroad (the scholarship got to Iowa-City University, U.S.A. in 1968, the visits to several European and Asian countries) and the "top" positions held in the cultural administration, which used to allow access only to those the regime relied on. In the same category we could include the enormous number of copies printed for some of his books, the republications, the essays he had written under the influence of the Marxist ideology.

On the other hand, there is the evidence given by his close friends and the writer's Securitate file, which demonstrate clearly that Alexandru Ivasiuc did not cooperate with the Political Police, but was pursued for hostile manifestations regarding the policy of the party. In this subchapter we have shown that he was not a conformist in his essays either, his meeting the authorities' requirements being only apparent. His unorthodox approach arises both from the statements made by his acquaintances and from the ideas promoted in his work. After dealing with some of the ideas Ivasiuc introduced in his essays, we have shown that, under the mask of a fighter for the fulfilment of the strategy of the party, demonstrating his good grounding in Marxism-Leninism, he was loyal to a Marxism to which the officials gave a totally different interpretation. From our perspective, in the chapter entitled *Marxism and Literature* he wanted to point out exactly this contradiction between what Marxism could be and what it looked like in our country, Ivasiuc undermining in this manner the official doctrine with its own weapons. This vision seems to be confirmed by the general appreciation his essays received at the "Free Europe" Radio Station, where they were considered "a kind of intellectual heroism"².

Therefore, we consider that one cannot talk about the concrete writer Ivasiuc's sincere adhesion to the requirements of his time, about his being in the service of the

² Anneli Maier, *Trends in Rumanian Literature*, 16.10. 1969 (din materialele Postului de Radio Europa Liberă), p. 8;

party, but about a compromise through which he paid a tribute for the literary work he published and for the comforts he had.

In fact, the analysis of the concrete and abstract instance of the author, both in the case of Alexandru Ivăsiuc, and of the writers of the 60s, in general, lead to the conclusion that there is a cleavage within the writer's concrete personality which is to be identified at the level of the abstract author as well. This occurs because the abstract author had to encompass the requirements of the communist censure, therefore a form and content that would conform, but also address the audience which looked for a confirmation of the everyday realities television and the radio would normally beautify. Last but not least, willing to preserve their artistic integrity, the 60s writers wrote for professional readers as well, for literary critics with an acute aesthetic sense who were eager to support a cliché-free literature.

Amongst those ingenious techniques used by these writers in order to subvert the official discourse, this thesis discusses the emphasis laid on representing the characters' inner self and on desocializing the conflict, the Aesopian discourse and that centred on myth, symbol and parable, the satirical and "obsedantist" fiction, the charm and colour of the language.

Analysing the literary work from its creation to its publication, we have pointed out in our research that the symmetrical pole of subversiveness, without which it would remain only a potentiality, is represented by the readers of the moment. The conclusion we have come to after investigating the evidence given by those who lived in that period of time and of the studies that have been carried out so far as regards the reading behaviour in communist Romania is that the writers of the 60s relied on a hypertrophy of the readers' role, who, because of the marked lack of alternatives to spending spare time, specialized in transgressing the first textual level, thus applying reading grids which would allow daring ideas to appear and completing truths that could be only half uttered by the writers. Thus, by their abstract position, readers became partners in creating the sense, in giving meaning to the prestructures included by the abstract author, filling in the blanks of indeterminacy of the author.

Based on the work of Alexandru Ivăsiuc, in the subchapter dedicated to the mechanism of building the sense by the reader we have also dwelled upon the paratextual and intratextual elements, those landmarks which, in Paul Cornea's opinion, guide the reader's understanding of the profound message of the text. Therefore, we have referred to "rumour", i.e. to the mediation of the reader's contact

with the text through the opinions of other readers, amateurs or professionals, to the place occupied by the texts among other similar units of the moment, to elements related to title, to the “escort discourses” and the reviews. The analysis of the work of Ivasiuc has clearly shown first the fact that his books were extremely wanted by the public, a proof being represented by the great number of editions of his books, some of them printed in an impressive number of copies. Second, we have shown that the titles chosen by the writer are different from those characterizing the literature of socialist realism, being based on a symbolic dimension and encompassing a complex significance, revealing the dominant idea of the text. Regarding the interpretation based on the discourses of the professional readers, the literary critics, we have pointed out that the great number of reviews which were issued after the publication of Ivasiuc’s books, as well as the extensive forewords and afterwords accompanying some of his republications, underlined, besides the inevitable connections to the present moment, the novelty brought by Ivasiuc’s themes and technique, the writer’s position and his favourable image in the reader’s eyes.

As far as the paratextual elements are concerned, we have shown that, based on the works of the writers of the 60s, the conformist, fact-based reading was not very much spread among readers, their tendency being that of going to the deeper layers of the text. Thus, a largely spread type of reading was that pointing to the “political derealization”, through which the readers would fly to other spaces, building their own compensatory universes in which daily problems and restraints would disappear, and the “projective reading” in which the allocation of the meaning took place as a result of the fact that the reader established certain connections with the real world, especially that of the present, extending associatively, under the influence of the subjective elements, the meanings set forth in the text.

The major conclusion of this chapter is that the author-reader dynamics, both at the concrete and abstract level, is the one which, especially during periods with special historical, political and ideological characteristics, as totalitarianism was, can precisely explain and clear up the determinisms that gave birth to the writers’ works, demonstrating that subversiveness belonged not only to the authors or texts, but also to the readers.

Drawing on reader-response and narratological criticism, on memoirs and literary criticism before and after ’89, beginning with the third chapter, the research focuses on the analysis of the narrative techniques used by Alexandu Ivasiuc in his

writing and on the subversive aspects their use involves. The emphasis given to both the formal characteristics and their reverberations at a semantic level was made possible by the approach of the analysis from the perspective of post-structuralist theories, which go beyond the structuralist discipline, surpassing the strictly objective study of the form and offering a great opening at the level of content by connecting rhetorical means with the general significance of the literary work.

The third chapter of the thesis, entitled *Intratextual Instances*, deals with the narrator, narratee and character in distinct subchapters.

In the theoretic presentation of the narrative voice we have shown that the narrator is the instance mediating between the diegesis and the reader, being always placed at the same level with the narratee, the instance he addresses. Therefore, the narrator is always a fictional instance, created by the author, just like the characters, in order to tell the events of the story either from within, or from without³. In spite of the strict differentiation made between the different narrative instances and of the clear definition given to the narrator, as the producer of the story through the act of narration many confusions arose even among researchers, between the narrator and the author, as well as between *who speaks* and *who sees* in the story, distinctions which we have dwelled upon in our work.

As far as the classification of the narrators is concerned, drawing on the types of narrators identified by his predecessors, Gérard Genette proposed a complex typology which became the reference point for all research in narratology. Depending on the degree of participation in the story, Genette established two categories of narrators⁴: *homodiegetic* and *heterodiegetic*, and depending on the narrative level, he differentiated between *extradiegetic* and *intradiegetic* narrators. The metadiegetic universe evoked by the latter may include, in its turn, a third degree narrator, which Gérard Genette calls *metadiegetic*.

Other classifications had in view the differentiation of the narrators based on the degree of visibility in the text (*overt* and *covert* narrators⁵) or of reliability (reliable and unreliable narrators⁶). In addition, there are typologies of narrative which

³ Jaap Lintvelt, *Încercare de tipologie narativă. Punctul de vedere. Teorie și analiză*, Editura Univers, București, 1994, pp. 25-35;

⁴ Gérard Genette, *Narrative Discourse. An Essay in Method*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York, 1980, pp. 227-235, 245-254;

⁵ Seymour Chatman, *Story and Discourse*, New York, Cornell University Press, 1978, pp. 97-101, 220-252;

⁶ Wayne Booth, *Retorica romanului*, Editura Univers, București, 1976, p. 204;

integrate elements involving both narrator and focalization (Jaap Lintvelt⁷ talks about five types of narrative: heterodiegetic auctorial, heterodiegetic actorial, heterodiegetic neutral, homodiegetic auctorial and homodiegetic actorial).

In Romania, Nicolae Manolescu made a rigorous classification of narrative departing from the narrator. Identifying fundamental differences between narrator, characters and author, as well as a certain interplay existing among the three instances, Manolescu proposes the well-known tripartite typology: Doric, Ionic and Corinthian, one of these three types being always dominant in a certain type of fiction. Another typology which starts from the relation narrator-characters is that belonging to Radu G. Țeposu⁸ in *Viața și opiniile personajelor*, who distinguishes between *transitive fiction*, *reflexive fiction* and *metafiction*.

The subchapter dedicated to the theoretical presentation of the author also deals with the narrator's functions identified by Gérard Genette and Jaap Lintvelt: the narrative/ representation function, the control function, the communication function, the testimonial function, the ideological function. We have also referred to the modalities of rendering the verbal and non-verbal events, the last part of the subchapter proposing a synthesis of the terminology used by the major researchers of the problems at an international level.

As far as the narrating voice in Ivasiuc's work is concerned, dealt with in the subchapter entitled *From narrator-character identity to the character's domination by the narrator*, our analysis emphasized the presence of all narrative types signalled in narratology works. *Vestibul*, the writer's first novel, was regarded as a novelty from the perspective of the narrative technique, being immediately connected to the psychological analysis fiction of the interwar period, to the revival of the tradition of the Ionic fiction, interrupted by the Doric of the socialist realism. The type of narrative characterizing this novel is the homodiegetic one, as the voice which narrates is that of the character, with permanent transitions from the narrator's intradiegetic position to the extradiegetic one, from the focalization on the present of the experience and writing to the recall of past events, where the position of the narrating self is superior to that of the narrated self. Using Jaap Lintvelt's typology, it is about a homodiegetic actorial narrative which encloses a homodiegetic auctorial

⁷ Op.cit., pp. 46-49;

⁸ Radu.G. Țeposu, *Viața și opiniile personajelor*, Editura Cartea Românească, București, 1983, pp. 193-195;

narrative. The choice of this type of narrator, an obvious proof of the importance given to the subjectivity of the individual and to his inner space, implies a profound undermining of the objective narrative, and by extension, of the socialist realism which had credited it without hesitation.

In his next novels, the writer seems to change position by introducing the heterodiegetic narrative, which will characterize his prose to the end. Still, the writer abandoning the homodiegetic narrative does not trigger a syncope, as he renounces the character's voice but keeps his subjective perspective. Therefore, the narrative becomes extra-heterodiegetic, with the specification that the actorial narrative type proposed by Lintvelt needs to be introduced at this point. This type of narrative dominates the novels *Interval* and *Cunoaştere de noapte* and one part of *Păsărilor*, but it also characterizes some fragments from the other part of *Păsărilor* (describing the life in a factory), as well as *Apa*, *Iuminari* or *Racul*. In the above-mentioned cases the narrator tells only what the characters themselves hear, see, feel, thus operating a profoundly subjective selection on reality.

We have considered that in the novels characterized by this narrative type it is necessary to make a difference based on the narrator's degree of visibility. Thus, in *Interval* the narrator is a slightly overt one, who does not intervene in the text with commentaries, assuming only the narrative act, while in *Cunoaştere de noapte* the narrator guides the reader permanently through the explanations he gives parenthetically; these explanations of the mature character come to complete the situations in the past presented by the narrator through the eyes of the character's younger self. Consequently, a supplementary function of the narrator appears in the novel, that of interpretation, which is meant to offer the reader a better orientation.

Another interesting aspect we have found in the heterodiegetic actorial narratives refers to the fact that the narrator's voice, although unique, is undermined by the idiolect of the character-focalizer, who "colours" it, making it lose part of its uniqueness and objectivity.

The heterodiegetic actorial narrative represents an area of transition to the extra-heterodiegetic narrative in the auctorial version in the novels *Apa*, *Iuminări* and *Racul*, where the central place is held by the voice and perspective of the narrator placed outside the diegetic space. The narrator becomes omniscient, mastering the past, present and future; however, even here we have found a certain gradation of

omniscience, from the discourse characterized by the epistemic modality⁹, in which elements that exclude the presence of an omniscient narrator in a classical sense appear, to the narrative in which the narrator's unlimited knowledge is seen in the specification he makes of the information no character has and in the proliferation of auctorial comments.

This type of narrative was considered by critics as not complying with the autodiegetic narrative in *Vestibul* or with that internally focalized in the next novels, but our analysis of the works has demonstrated the fact that Ivăsiuc did not use it in the most orthodox manner. Firstly, it represented the means by which the abstract author could express his irony towards situations and characters that ought to have behaved exemplarily; in this situation, the nuances the author aimed at undoubtedly requested the existence of a model reader. Secondly, we have considered that the narrator's intrusions in the text can be interpreted as an expression of the desire of the narrating instance to explicitly show its presence in the text, thus underlining the authority and control it possesses.

Besides birthing irony, with Ivăsiuc the auctorial comments have three other functions: generalization, interpretation or judgement, by means of which the abstract author polarises the reader's sympathy, expresses his own ideology or marks the distance between him and the narrator or between the latter and the characters.

Referring to the narrative modalities, we have remarked their diversity in Ivăsiuc's fiction and the fact that they change simultaneously with the movement from the individual's inner world in the first novels towards the social conflict in the last ones. Thus, the concentration on the "ontological phenomena" Liviu Petrescu¹⁰ identified in Ivăsiuc's first novels entails a proliferation of the interior monologue, an important place occupied by the free indirect style and an almost total lack of the verbalized discourse. The works belonging to the second period of creation, more preoccupied with the external environment, are characterized by a natural increase in the weight of the exterior discourse and by the writer's preference for dialogue. Apart from the scene, there are also excerpts transposed by means of the indirect discourse or of the narrated one.

⁹ Paul Simpson, *Language, Ideology and Point of view*, Routledge, New York, 1994, pp. 50-69;

¹⁰ Liviu Petrescu, *Studii transilvane. Epic și etic în proza transilvăneană*, Editura Viitorul Românesc, București, 1997, p. 63;

In the final part of the subchapter, departing from the axis proposed by Leech and Short¹¹ to indicate the narrator's control over the narrated facts and from Cristian Moraru's finding that "the narrator *sees* and *knows* more and more, and, therefore, is *able* to do more in the world of the discourse"¹², we have made a correlation between the principle of power, control and the narrator's authority in Ivasiuc's work, as well as between his authority in the fictional universe and the political authority in the real universe. The conclusion we have come to is that there is a gradual transition from the absolute freedom offered by the narrator to the character's voice in *Vestibul*, from the complicity between narrator and characters in *Interval*, *Cunoaștere de noapte*, *Păsărilor*, by introducing the personal filter of the characters, to an ever stricter control of the narrating voice over the main character by the unique voice of the narrator outside the diegetic universe, who masters both the inner and the outer world of the characters, becoming a correlative of the communist oppressive tyranny.

The second intratextual instance dealt with in the second chapter of the present thesis is the narratee. The term was first mentioned by Roland Barthes¹³ in his 1966 study, but was left without a definition, being only introduced as the counterpart of the narrator in the reception of the text. The author who drew attention to the term was Gérard Genette¹⁴ in his *Discours du récit*, where he defined it as "the instance which is addressed by the narrator", placing it thus at the same diegetic level and emphasizing its importance in the narrative discourse. Starting from the typology coined in *Discours du récit*, several authors such as Gerald Prince, Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan, James Phelan developed the concept. The major novelty that their studies bring is that related to the difference that has to be operated between concrete author, abstract author and narrator on the one hand, and concrete reader, abstract reader and narratee, on the other hand.

Like Genette¹⁵, Prince¹⁶ draws attention to the fact that the presence of the narratee has to be accepted even in those cases when the narrator seems to address no one in particular. To clarify this aspect, Prince puts forward a general portrait of the

¹¹ Geoffrey N. Leech; Michael H. Short, *Style in Fiction. A Linguistic Introduction to English Fictional Prose*, Longman, London & New York, 1981, p. 324;

¹² Cristian Moraru, *Proza lui Alexandru Ivasiuc*, Editura Minerva, București, 1988, p. 200;

¹³ Roland Barthes, *Introduction à l'analyse structurale des récits*, în *Communications*, nr. 8, 1966, p. 10;

¹⁴ Gérard Genette, *Narrative Discourse...*, op.cit., pp. 259-262;

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 260;

¹⁶ Gerald Prince, *Introduction to the study of the narratee*, in Jane P. Tompkins (Ed.), op.cit., pp. 10-17;

“zero degree narratee”, any deviation from which should particularize narratees. Thus, we can speak of a progression from a “zero degree narratee”, who is apparently absent, to a barely sketched narratee and, finally, to a narratee who benefits from an extended characterization, achieved through text specifications which Pierce calls “signals of the narratee”. From the distribution of these signals and the relation between narrator and narratee a diversity of narrates emerges, which is best explained by Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan¹⁷. Thus, depending on the narrative level, there are extradiegetic and intradiegetic narratees, according to their visibility in the text there are overt or covert narratees, according to their participation in the story, there are active and passive narratees and finally, depending on their credibility, there are reliable and unreliable narratees.

The last aspect this thesis discusses in the theoretical presentation of the narratee is the one related with the narratee’s main function, that of establishing the connection between narrator and readers or author and readers, especially with reference to the possible identification of the reader with the narratee.

Applying the above to Ivasiuc’s prose fiction, we have concluded that, on the first narrative level, the number of extra-heterodiegetic narratees is dominant. This situation can be explained by the fact that, with the exception of *Vestibul*, where the narrator addresses one of the characters, all the other novels address a narratee which is neither the reader, nor an eavesdropper of the narrator, but “a faceless instance”¹⁸ with uncertain identity, which does not participate in the narrated events and can only be revealed by a minute analysis of the signals sent by the narrator. In some fragments, the narratee’s presence is easily detected, through the narrator’s interventions which, although never addresses directly the narratee, either uses the inclusive plural (as it happens in *O alta vedere* and *Corn de vanatoare*), or launches questions about the narratee (*Apa* or *Iluminări*) or interferes through explanatory, generalizing, meaning-orienting comments (*Cunoaștere de noapte*, *Păsările*, *Apa*, *Iluminări*, *Racul*). Some other times, the narratee is close to Prince’s “zero degree narratee”, by being apparently absent.

As for those narratees which are addressed in the narratives framed by the main story (the Interludes in *Cunoaștere de noapte*, the Prologue in *Pasarile*, but also

¹⁷ Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan, *Narrative Fiction: Contemporary Poetics*, Routledge, New York, 2003, p. 105;

¹⁸ Jean Rousset, *Le lecteur intime*, Librairie Jose Corti, 1986, p. 26;

the metadiegetic stories in *Interval*, *Păsărilor* and *Apa*), they are all intradiegetic narratees just like the one in *Vestibul*, but unlike him, they are second degree or third degree narratees. In most of the cases mentioned above, the presence of the narratee is well marked in the text through direct addresses of the intradiegetic narrators, narrators-characters who pass messages to other characters.

In *Vestibul*, the narratee is the addressee of the letters, the medical student whom Dr. Ilea recurrently addresses in the text using second person pronouns, so the narratee is very much visible in the text. In this case, the game which Ivasiuc introduces is very interesting, with letters never to be sent, a technique which effaces the narrator's communicative function and stresses its testimonial function, so that its receptive role stands out as the most important. We can speak of the same narrator-narratee identity in the case of Olga's monologue as well as those of Ilie Chindriș in *Interval*, of Liviu Dunca in *Pasarile*, of Ștefania in *Cunoaștere de noapte* or of Miguel in *Racul*, as these characters are, in turns, producers and receivers of their own thoughts which they weigh, but do not estrange.

In addition, we have referred to the cases in which the narrator and the narratee are different stances. Real communication can sometimes be detected between them (Liviu Dunca-Iulia, în *Păsărilor*, Petru-Olga în *Interval*), but there are also cases in which the impression conveyed is that of elements placed in totally parallel positions, lacking any real connection (Liviu Dunca-Margareta in *Păsărilor*, Olga-Ilie Chindriș in *Interval*).

What we have considered particularly worth mentioning in the case of the relation narrator-narratee at the intradiegetic level was the intimate, secret connection which arises between the intradiegetic narrator and the abstract reader, especially given the imperfect communication narrator-narratee. This is because even though the narratee does not receive or perceive the message of the narrator, the reader does. Thus, because of the readers' wider knowledge as compared to that of the intradiegetic narratees and considering the common experiences they have with the narrators-characters, the reader empathises with the issues the narratees present, becoming a sort of sympathetic confessor and compensating the natural interpersonal connection which remains only a wish in the fictional world, mirror of the real one.

The next subchapter of the third chapter of the thesis deals with another intratextual instance, the character. Within the theoretical part, which defines the concept, we have focused on the important works that discussed the character and on

the two main directions existing in the research field: the analysis of the character from a semiotic perspective, which fosters the character's dependence on the context, on the elements which bring about its existence, and the mimetic-realist perspective, which considers the character as a representation of the human being, an entity which can always be studied independently, bearing characteristics which make possible a psychological, sociological, moral or philosophical analysis. Furthermore, we have referred to the typologies of the character as proposed by E.M. Forster (*flat* and *round* characters), Joseph Ewen (classification according to the characters' *complexity, development, inner life*), Vasile Popovici (*monological, dialogical* and *trialogical characters*), Vladimir Propp (establishing the correspondence between characters and actions, the number of characters in fairytales and the number of functions), Julien Greimas (referring to the categories of actants and the degree to which modalities are accomplished), Jaap Lintvelt (characters are classified according to the functions they fulfil).

As regards the place of the character within narratology, we have first presented Gérard Genette's perspective, who states that the analysis of the character should not be part of the narratological analysis, given that the character is but "a text effect", entirely depending on the discourse. Genette's conclusion is that a right approach of the issue of the character in narratology should only consider the means of characterisation¹⁹.

Then we moved towards the contributions of post-structuralist narratologists (Bal, Rimmon-Kenan), who initiated the study of the character starting both from the level of the history and from that of the story. They underlined that characters, even though they are not human beings, can be modelled by authors and readers according to their own views on the people in the world. Drawing on Gérard Genette and Seymour Chatman, Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan²⁰ considers the character a construct which can be described in terms of a network of features, which are defined as relatively stable qualities signalled in the text by means of different "indicators", decoded by readers in accordance with a code of reference. This code of reference is the one which connects the text and the context, since it relies on the knowledge the reader has about the situation presented in the narrative, about that type of character, and on the reader's personal experience, all of this being automatically applied with a

¹⁹ Gérard Genette, *Nouveau discours du récit*, op.cit., p. 94;

²⁰ op.cit., pp. 59-71;

view to decoding the meaning. The indicators Rimmon-Kenan brings forward are divided into “direct definitions” and “indirect presentations”. The former category refers to the most obvious technique of characterization: the direct mention of the character’s feature by the narrator, by another character or by the character himself/herself (self-characterization). Among those indicators which do not mention the feature, but expose or exemplify it indirectly, letting the reader make the connection with a particular feature, Rimmon-Kenan refers to: actions, speech, appearance and environment. To these categories the researcher adds analogy, which she does not consider as a separate indicator of characterization, but a way to strengthen it, able to foster the character’s features both through similitude and contrast, implicitly or explicitly.

The reader’s task is to detect these indicators, to see which type of characterization prevails in a text or for a particular character, so as to subsequently establish connections between these findings and the character involved, the theme of the literary work and the traits of the literary period it belongs to.

In the first subchapter dedicated to analysing characters in Alexandru Ivasiuc’s prose fiction, *The public image: a bunch of winners*, we have emphasized the fact that the writer makes the characters’ portrayal by means of socium. Thus he depicts characters boasting a significant social success; the characters are intellectuals, not people from the proletarian layer, the favourite environment of the realist/socialist fiction, still strongly valorized by the Party ideology at the time when Ivasiuc’s works were published. With just few exceptions, the main characters are also representatives of the social elite, with a well established reputation and position. Thus, dr. Ilea from *Vestibul* is a neurologist of repute, specialized in morphology, but also a university professor, Ilie Chindriș, the main character in *Interval* is a historian and university lecturer, Ion Marina from *Cunoaștere de noapte* is “an important magistrate in a key ministry”, Dumitru Vinea from *Păsărilor* is the general manager of the plant in a town from Transylvania, Paul Achim from *Iluminări* is a researcher, just like Ilea, also being a member of the Academy and a deputy, holding the most important managing position in a Research Institute, Paul Dunca is an appreciated lawyer in his native town from Northern Transylvania, Miguel from *Racul* is the personal assistant of the mighty governor of a state in Latin America.

Prosopography, sometimes extensively used in the text, completes the characters’ portrayal. But none of the characters are given a complete physical

portrayal, but one based on significant details. Characters such as Ion Marina (*Cunoaştere de noapte*), Paul Achim (*Iluminări*), Dumitru Vinea (*Păsărilor*) are presented by means of a superlative prosopography, alluding to their strong personality and important position. A different category is represented by those characters whose presentation is marked by the signs of a slightly flawed perfection. This the case of Liviu Dunca (*Păsărilor*), Ilie Chindriş (*Interval*), Paul Dunca (*Apa*). But there are also physical portrayals which touch caricature, especially in the case of those perfectly loyal to the party authority, people without vocation, always ready to renounce their own principles to keep positions. This category includes Dinoiu and Niculaie Gheorghe from *Iluminări*, Valeriu Troţuşanu from *Cunoaştere de noapte*, Octavian Grigorescu from *Apa*.

An interesting fact we have noticed as far as characters are concerned regards the way names are used. In Ivăsiuc's fiction, characters are called in perfect compliance with the identity the author wants to build for them at the exterior level. Thus, they are identified and then called by means of the surname most of the times accompanied by the first name or preceded by a title; as a consequence, the references always sound extremely official: comrade Ion Marina, comrade Paul Achim, dr. Stroescu, professor Ghimuş etc. The exceptions are extremely few and, from our perspective, they are used to give characters a human dimension, to place them outside conventions or family connections or to caricature them.

In the subchapter *The revelation of the exiled self through the discovery of the inner self* we have emphasized the characters' social portrayal we have referred to in the previous subchapter is but the starting point in the analysis Alexandru Ivăsiuc makes at the level of the character's deep structure by depicting him beyond the surface and automatisms of daily life.

The technique Alexandru Ivăsiuc places the stake on in all the novels is that of the contrast, of the obvious opposition between appearance and essence, given that the characters presented by means of prosopography and socium as real winners are exactly the contrary. The characters' apparent balance is disturbed by the apparition in their life of something unexpected, which deters them from their habits, endangering their control over reality: dr. Ilea (*Vestibul*) falls in love with a student thirty years his senior, Ilie Chindriş (*Interval*) meets his former girl friend, Olga, after twelve years, to whose expellment from the faculty (on the grounds of ideological reasons) he had himself contributed, Ion Marina (*Cunoaştere de noapte*) find out about his wife's

imminent death, Dumitru Vinea (*Păsărule*) feels responsible for the death of a worker in the factory, Liviu Dunca (*Păsărule*) enters the crisis when he is pressured to support an accusation he does not believe in, Paul Achim (*Iluminări*) is attracted by a young researcher in the institute, Nora Munteanu, but he also discovers an ironic hint behind a seemingly innocent question he is asked at an important congress, Paul Dunca (*Apa*) revolts against the order represented by the traditional family and the bourgeois way of living, entering the reach of Piticu's group, Miguel's inner balance (*Racul*) is strongly affected when he accepts the Don Athanasios's diabolic plan and becomes aware of the absolute control this one holds.

These situations mark deep changes in the characters' lives. Their actions and thoughts rendered either from the perspective of an outsider or from that of the character himself prove the lack of the will they once had and, consequently, their inability to act and react in the manner they used to. The characters' existential crisis begins by what Karl Jaspers²¹ called "the astonishment stage", the characters becoming aware of the rigid norms and of the inner struggle following the discovery of the diversity of life.

This important moment in the characters' lives is used by the author to focus on the characters' inner life, as he progressively abandons the depiction of exterior signs. The characters' inner discourse encompasses the description of their feelings when discovering the new reality, but also the evocation of the past and its retrospective interpretation.

The extraordinary intuition Ivasiuc had, in our opinion, was that of building the main characters (dr. Ilea, Ilie Chindriș, Ion Marina, Liviu Dunca, Dumitru Vinea, Paul Achim) retrospectively by means of revealing their past, by what Virginia Woolf called the "tunnelling process"²². The characters reach to move on the dialectical trajectory evoking present – evoked past, so that they attempt at explaining attitudes and feelings from the present by re-interpreting past events full of symbolic significance. Cristian Moraru states that the characters tell their past not to analyse their feelings, but to look for that alienating something in the past that could illuminate their present²³.

²¹ Karl Jaspers, *Texte filosofice*, Editura Politică, București, 1986, pp. 5-11;

²² Virginia Woolf, *A Writer's Diary*, *A Writer's Diary*, The Hogarth Press, London, 1959, p. 160;

²³ Op.cit., p. 41;

What the characters discover after pendulating between past and present is the fact that their past actions, those “acts of commission” Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan spoke about were, at the same time, but from a different perspective, “acts of omission”, being given that they realize they had constantly acted in a way which erased their genuine being, consolidating their artificial identity. The grasp of the deep identity does not involve, as expected, the reconsideration of their view on the world, the renunciation of what Anton Cosma²⁴ called “personality”, i.e. the identity the individual builds under the pressure of the external environment.

At the end of the life span the author chooses for depicting his characters two situations emerge. On the one hand, there are characters such as dr. Ilea, Liviu Dunca, who, as Radu G. Țeposu²⁵ pointed out, no longer act, but problematize, brooding on the recently revealed truth, i.e. the fact that the choice of the individual’s way of being and living is entirely his own. Cristian Moraru²⁶ remarked that the characters’ capacity to act is a hypothetical one, as they do not touch the “voluntary area of *to do*”, staying within Greimas’s syntactical itinerary (to want – to know – to be able to) at the second stage. As a result, their wish to evade the constraints of existence, to redefine themselves is obvious, but their thought, incapable to be implemented into facts, places the characters at the stage of the contemplative acts identified by Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan.

On the other hand, there are Ion Marina, Paul Achim, who continue to act in the same way which had perverted their individuality. These characters keep on distancing from actions they would like to perform in compliance with their genuine identity, favouring again old automatisms. The interference between the actions characters would like to perform or those readers would expect from them, but which remain unfulfilled (“acts of omission”), and the conventional ones (“acts of commission”), accomplished in the same strictly logical and rational way peculiar to the period before the crisis encloses the characters’ behaviour in a sort of “failed acts”. This does not happen in the sense pointed out in psychoanalysis, where the intention prevails²⁷, but from a different perspective, that of submitting the disturbed tendency, expression of the unconscious, of the inner truth, by the disturbing

²⁴ Anton Cosma, *Romanul românesc și problematica omului contemporan*, Editura Dacia, Cluj, 1977, p. 129;

²⁵ Radu G. Țeposu, *Viața și opiniile personajelor*, op.cit., p. 134;

²⁶ Op.cit., p. 46;

²⁷ Paul Popescu-Neveanu, *Dicționar de psihologie*, Editura Albatros, 1978, p. 15;

tendency, of conscious origin, which defensively blocks emotional impulses. The sensation at the end of the novels is that of a purely exterior balance, the reader inferring that characters will keep living, consciously or not, a fight between the inner and the outer voices, or in Jaspers's terms, between the centripetal force given by the impulse to stay prisoner of a familiar world and the centrifugal one of flying towards new horizons.

The subchapter *Communist heroes à rebours* clearly points out those elements connected to characters that might have had a subversive potential in the 1960-1970. We have considered that the greatest advantages Ivasiuc's work presents for revealing these elements and the abstract author's ideology was that, by gathering data which present similarities in point of the characters' inner structure and of the narrative progress, an intertextual analogy is created, a semantic network highlighting characters. In our opinion, the author's attributing characters analogous features cannot be neutral from the semantic point of view, as it emphasizes their features also contributing to their exponentiality for the society they belonged to.

The author chooses to present only one fragment from the characters' life, that covering the period from realizing their weak balance to the revelation of their deep genuine structure and the moment they have to decide their future. From this perspective the solutions chosen are quasi-identical. Of particular relevance within the same intertextuality are the connections established by way of contrast, nor only by introducing foil characters²⁸, but especially by opposing, at the level of the entire work, constitutional structures or attitudes, which strengthens the differences between characters. Thus, the author polarizes the sympathy of the readers, who project images on the real framework of reference, valorizing those characters they perceive as authentic and as bringing forth truth naturalness. One can suppose that readers, having had enough of the clichés of realist socialist fiction sympathised with those characters that lived a different life than that of "heroes", characters who are not correctly employed or do not accept the traditional family principles, thus belonging to somehow liminal areas. This is the case of Liviu Dunca, Margareta Vinea, Olga or Ștefania (*Păsărule*).

²⁸ Stefanie Lethbridge, Jarmila Mildorf, *Basics of English Studies: An introductory course for students of literary studies in English*, Developed at the English departments of the Universities of Tübingen, Stuttgart and Freiburg, p. 53;

The analysis on the character also revealed the fact that Ivasiuc proposes a demistification of the happy life under communism, polemizing with the official idealized view on the society of the time, fostering its problems: the characters, although socially successful, fail as regards their private life, become aware of their solitude and of the incapacity to have genuine human feelings, go through crises which sometimes end tragically, live in a world in which fear prevails, become estranged within their own family, find their comfort in imaginary travels.

As far as the end of the novels is concerned, we considered that the limitation of the evolution of characters can be connected to the confinement in a universe which offers no chances for escape and which subjects everybody. Starting from the typology of the character coined by Vasile Popovici, we have assimilated this law to the “third character”, which is present *in absentia*, dominating everything from a higher position, acting insidiously and imposing particular conducts to the characters. Knowing they are permanently under survey, fearing not to make mistakes, the characters no longer act in accordance with their own temperament or consciousness, but with the “particular requirements of the situation”²⁹. This kind of conduct is progressively internalized and produces deep changes within the characters, depriving them from their authentic self.

From our point of view, the most important issue underlined by Alexandru Ivasiuc at the characters’ level was that of building subversiveness starting from the “complicated mirror game” including author, reader and hero underlined by Mircea Tomuș³⁰. This is because the transfer process which operates between the three facilitates the fostering of aspects which were meant to be kept silent, the reader’s task being that of rebuilding the author’s intention.

The last idea we have underlined as far as the character is concerned was that the abstract author Ivasiuc enclosed his own life in the texts, including his obvious social successes and especially the impossibility, given by the social pressure, to voice his revolt against conformism. However, differently from his characters, which remain captured in a defined destiny, Ivasiuc, by producing his work, oversteps his fears and weaknesses, emphasizing the existence of possible non-conformist solutions even within the boundaries of absolutist thought. In this respect, complying with the

²⁹ Vasile Popovici, *Eu, personajul*, Editura Cartea Românească, București, 1988, pp. 23, 36;

³⁰ Mircea Tomuș, *Romanul romanului românesc. În căutarea personajului*, Editura 100+1 Gramar, București, 1999, p. 11;

power of transgression given by the “production of scriptural figures”³¹ as indicated by Miraux, paraphrasing one of Ivasiuc’s statements on his prison experience³², we have considered that the author, understanding things, became free.

The fourth chapter of the thesis entitled *Focalization* deals with the perspective from which the diegesis is presented to readers by the narrator and with the “focalized object”, represented by an object, character, event or situation.

In the theoretical part of this chapter, we have remarked that Gérard Genette was the first theoretician who used the term “focalization” in his studies to refer to the perspective which mediates the verbalization of the story. He replaced the terms and phrases such as “point of view”, “narrative perspective” or “vision” previously used especially in the Anglo-Saxon theory and criticism. After Genette, other well known researchers in the field of narratology (Seymour Chatman, Jaap Lintvelt, Gerald Prince, Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan, Mieke Bal) tackled the issue, but they all started from the fundamental distinction operated by Gérard Genette³³ between the three types of focalization and the relations he discussed between these categories and the typologies which had previously existed.

Drawing on the typologies of Jean Pouillon and Tzvetan Todorov, Genette speaks of three types of focalization: zero focalization (the perspective belongs to the extradiegetic narrator; Jean Pouillon calls it “vision from behind”, while Todorov symbolizes it as *narrator > character*), external focalization (called by Pouillon “vision from outside” and known as “behaviourist technique” in the Anglo-Saxon theory and criticism, symbolized by Todorov as *narrator < character*) and internal focalization (the perspective belongs to the character, in Pouillon’s terms “vision along with” and symbolized by Todorov as *narrator = character*). Within the internal focalization, Genette further distinguishes between “fix”, “variable” (“monoscopic perspective” in Lintvelt’s terms³⁴) and “multiple” (“polyscopic perspective” according to Lintvelt) focalization according to the number of focalizers.

Based on Genette’s typology, post-structuralist narratologists insisted on the study of the focalized object, showing that just like the focalizer can be external or

³¹ Jean-Philippe Miraux, op.cit., p. 9;

³² *Romanul românesc în interviuri, O istorie autobiografică*, Antologie, text îngrijit, sinteze bibliografice și indici de Aurel Sasu și Mariana Vartic, vol. II, partea I, Editura Minerva, București, 1985, p. 253;

³³ Gérard Genette, *Narrative Discourse...*, op.cit., pp. 187-194;

³⁴ Op.cit., p. 82;

internal, the focalized can be perceived from within and/ or from without³⁵, the amount of information provided on the focalized object varying according to the type of narrative perspective and the focalizer.

The theoretical part also refers to the facets of focalization as indicated by Rimmon-Kenan (the perceptive, psychological and ideological facets), to the issue of “distance” coined by Wayne Booth and to the connection Mark Currie set between the ideological apparatuses which control the individual (as presented by Louis Althusser in *Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses*) and the manipulation of the reader by means of the narrative techniques linked to focalization.

In the subchapter *From the limited perspective of the focalizer to the panoramic perspective of the omniscient narrator* we have underlined that, just like in the case of the narrator, the dominance of the auctorial control is a progressive one. In the first novels Ivasiuc wrote, *Vestibul*, *Interval*, *Cunoaștere de noapte*, focalization is internal, whereas in the last ones it belongs more and more to the all-embracing and dominant position of the external narrator. In this respect, *Păsărilor*, considered by many critics as a proof of the author’s change of creative modality, represents a mediating space between the first creations and the ones which were subsequently published. Nevertheless, the segments of internal focalization do not totally disappear from the novels, strengthening the hypothesis of the existence of an attempt to preserve the internal perspective and the character’s voice in the clash with a superior and almighty stance.

The second element we have highlighted in connection with focalization was the fact that the narrative perspective is a deeply subjective one, set in a clear opposition with the objective perspective given by the zero or external focalization in the realist-socialist fiction, which was supposed to offer a unique and clear orientation over facts. Polemizing with this one, Ivasiuc introduces various points of view, the perspective becoming monoscopic or polyscopic, stressing the subjective character of the perspective and the impossibility to establish a definite truth. In *Interval*, by means of the two main characters, Ilie Chindriș and Olga, the reader faces divergent variants of the same realities which he has to weigh and assess on his own from the point of view of their reliability. In the next novel, *Cunoaștere de noapte*, the number of focalizers increases. The prevailing point of view is that of Ion Marina, but there are

³⁵ Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan, op.cit., pp. 77-78;

sequences in which the events are told through Ștefania's eyes (in *Interludii* but also in the other parts of the text), the doctor's, from the perspective of the employees of the ministry or of the omniscient narrator, which trigger what Mircea Martin called "information unevenness"³⁶. This technique of stripping characters of information and of facilitating the reader's access to the characters' intimate space is similar to that in *Interval*, with the difference that, multiplying perspectives, the discrepancy between what each character knows and what the reader knows is more significant.

Another important aspect we have highlighted was that the fundamental preoccupation of the characters-focalizers in the first novels of Ivasiuc was to go into the deep layers of the characters' being, to investigate their inner life. Nevertheless, what sets these first novels apart is not the emphasis laid on the issues of inner life, which Ivasiuc, together with Marin Preda and Nicolae Breban succeeded in bringing forward in the 60s, but the writer's preference for the reflexive discourse. Consequently, Ivasiuc's aim was not to make a psychological analysis of the characters, but to go beyond that, towards the idea that can be grasped from the characters' introspection, who are eager to find the origin of their emotions and feelings.

The preoccupation for the characters' inner space strikes a shade over external reality, which is subjected to a double subjectivization process, that of the selection and perception of the characters, which leads to its strong alteration, to an image only vaguely connected to the reality the authorities would have liked to discover in fiction. The weight of the events which concern exteriority increases in the following novels, once the conflict is socialized, when focus is given to the environment in a factory, a research institute or within the political life. Ivasiuc's return to the traditional prose fiction in *Păsărilor*, after the absolute novelty of the perspective in the first three novels should not be regarded as a renunciation of the modern techniques and the adoption of a more convenient creative modality, but as tailoring means to content, as an attempt to double the social issues by the objectiveness of the narrative perspective.

In what concern the focalized object, discussed in the subchapter *A fiction of "acute issues"*, we started from the idea expressed by Tobias Klauk and Tilmann

³⁶ Mircea Martin, *Generație și creație*, Editura pentru Literatură, București, 1969, p. 156;

Koppe³⁷, that the relation focalizer – focalized is an intentional one, able to explain the deep structure of the text. Even though the two researchers only concentrated on internal focalization, regarded as the most complex, we have considered that extending the remark over the other types of focalization would benefit the analysis of narratives in general. This is because the semantic structure of the literary work, its message, is the result of the abstract author's intention, who does not reproduce reality, but represents it, operating a selection of facts and phenomena by means of focalization, a selection which should be given a sense.

With Alexandru Ivăsiuc, the essential conclusion is that his fiction is entirely one of ideas, which aims at generalization. In our opinion, one needs to look for ideas even beyond the situations depicted in novels which could be considered with a thesis at first sight, but which may reveal numerous elements which used to come against the political and ideological requirements of the time. In our analysis, we have underlined the recurrent themes in Ivăsiuc's fiction, which bring forward the real existential, social and historical reality the author and his contemporaries lived: the abuses in the period of Gheorghiu-Dej, with trials, abusive imprisonments and exposures, the topic of political authority in the 1960s, with the typical opportunism and careerism, the presence of a repressive mechanism which annihilates individuality and subjectivity, the constant feeling of fear, the permanent self-control, the lack of internal freedom and the incapacity to communicate with the others. Given the permanent restrictions imposed to literary themes at the time and the criticisms targeted towards any form of negativism and scepticism, the focalization on a side of communism which should have been kept secret should be interpreted as a way of delegitimizing the official discourse, of imposing the perspective of an ideology which fought the official one.

The last chapter of the thesis, *Constructing Narrative Discourse*, focuses on analysing the temporal relations between events, as they could have happened in the real world (history/ diegesis/ fabula) and the way they are presented in the story (story/ subject/ text). In the theoretical part of this chapter, we have made a synthesis of the terms used by the most important researchers in narratology with respect to history-order and story-order, stressing Genette's contribution.

³⁷ Tobias Klauk, Tilmann Köppe, Discussion: *Puzzles and Problems for the Theory of Focalization*, in Hühn, Peter et al. (eds.), *The Living Handbook of Narratology*, Hamburg: Hamburg University Press

As regards order, the way events in the history are presented in the story, we have referred to the types of anachronies (analepses and prolepses) Genette identified starting, first of all, from the two essential elements characterizing them: the reach and the extent. In point of reach, Genette distinguishes between three categories of anachronies: external, internal and mixed, and in point of extent he identifies partial and complete analepses, whereas prolepses are, in his opinion, partial only. In addition, he mentions the distinction between “homodiegetic analepses” (which offer information on the characters and events which belong to the first narrative) and “heterodiegetic analepses” (which focus on other characters and events), as well as between completing and repeating anachronies.

As regards the order, we have also referred to theoreticians who devised classifications starting from the definition of the narrative sequence. In this respect, Jean-Michel Adam and Françoise Revaz³⁸ offer an overview of the possible combinations between narrative sequences: *alternating assemblage*, *embedding - insertion*, *addition* and the mixed type.

From the point of view of the comparative analysis of the duration of events in the fabula and the time allocated to their presentation in the story, Genette identifies cases of isochrony, which supposes the identity between the duration of history and of the story, and anisochronies, for which he introduces the notion of *rhythm*. Within anisochronies, he identifies four basic forms of narrative movement: ellipsis, descriptive pause, scene and summary, to which he later adds the reflexive digression.

The third issue related to the analysis of temporal relations between story and history, hardly investigated before Genette, regards frequency. Genette³⁹ defines it as the relation between the number of times an event occurred in the diegesis and the number of times it occurs in the story, and he establishes the following forms: the *singulative* narrative, with a sub-type (“narrating once what happened once” and “narrating n times what happened n times”), the repetition (“narrating n times what happened once”) and iteration (“narrating one time what happened n times”).

In the subchapter entitled *An order grounded in obsessional syllepses*, we have highlighted that Alexandru Ivasiuc’s first novels are characterized by a dissociation from the chronology in the history, triggered especially by the recall of the past moments. Given that the recollections always call for other recollections, the result is

³⁸ Jean-Michel Adam, Françoise Revaz, *Analiza povestirii*, Institutul European, Iași, 1999, pp. 80-81;

³⁹ Gérard Genette, *Narrative Discourse...*, p. 113;

represented by a proliferation of analepses, which take a great variety of forms with this writer.

Synthesizing extensive analepses from the point of view of their form shows that Ivasiuc's fiction is characterized by the wide use of completing external homodiegetic analepses, followed by the completing external heterodiegetic ones. They both have the unique function to complete the first narrative, to enlighten the reader regarding previous events, but they also meet the author's intention to highlight the characters' personality and destiny through their past. In this subchapter we have also referred to short analepses (usually punctual ones, external, internal or mixed, which create the sensation of a concentration of details, some of them evanescent, not always easy to place in the narrative scheme), to the cases of repeating analepses and of completing analepses taking the form of the iterative ellipsis/ paralipsis. Besides this, we have also remarked the isolated role prolepses play in Ivasiuc's fiction.

Using Genette's terms, we have also showed that the principle the writer used in grouping analepses was that of the obsessional syllepses, which allow the construction of a narrative tissue in which the points represented by the events in the life of the character himself or in that of the others' (which he considers relevant) are all interconnected by the same ideas, which give semantic coherence to the text. The lack of chronology surely had subversive connotations in itself, since fiction was required at the time to have a form which did not impinge on the reception of the message. Furthermore, the anachronological order should be regarded as a plea for the existence of the complexity of the world, of the heterogeneous and discontinuous character of life, for the existence of a subjective consciousness and of an inner time which is no longer the same for everybody.

The second subchapter, *From the subjective time to the time of facts*, analysing Ivasiuc's fiction from the point of view of the duration, reveals that in most of the writer's works the short duration of the history is allotted a long text, which points to the existence of an anisochrony in the sense of slowing down events in the history. The essential characteristic of Ivasiuc's first works is represented by the characters' reflexive digressions, following the internalization of extrospections, the subjectivization of the data of the objective reality and the characters' tendency to always express their view on past happenings, which are submitted to reinterpretation. This subchapter also mentions the role of the scene, of the description and of the ellipsis.

The conclusions of the thesis give emphasis to the novel elements brought about by the introduction of the concepts of concrete author, abstract author, concrete reader, abstract reader and ketman in the study of the fiction of the 60s generation, and about the analysis of creating subversiveness through narrative techniques.

This final part of the paper also resumes the main conclusions we have reached by applying the concepts from narratology in Alexandru Ivăsiuc's fiction, highlighting the advantages entailed by studying "the historic time", "the writer's time" and "the reader's time", as well as by the tools offered by post-structuralist narratology, which contribute to clarifying the context in which the writers of the 60s created, to explaining the compromises they made and the double meaning of the message they envisaged.

In addition, we have underlined the difficulty related to the retrospective construction of the shades of meaning encompassed by the writer's fiction and the risk of over-interpretation. We have also expressed our belief that the extension of the study on the fiction of other writers of the 60's generation would complete the meanings we have underlined and would contribute to the creation of an overview of this period in the Romanian literature from the point of view of the narrative techniques. This would definitely offer an excellent opening for a comparative approach with other literary generations or, synchronously, with tendencies existing in other literatures belonging to the former communist bloc.

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