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**SUMMARY OF DOCTORAL THESIS**

**STAGING DIVINITY: VALERIU ANANIA (*MIORIȚA, MEȘTERUL MANOLE*), LUCIAN BLAGA (*MEȘTERUL MANOLE*) AND MARIN SORESCU (*PARACLISIERUL, IONA*)**

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**Key words:** Spirituality, religion, theocratic history, mundane history, modernism, postmodernism, poetics, Divinity, stylistic matrix, representation,

The present PhD thesis, entitled *Staging Divinity: Valeriu Anania (Miorița, Meșterul Manole) Lucian Blaga (Meșterul Manole) and Marin Sorescu (Paraclisierul, Iona)*, focuses on decoding and interpreting the literary works of some of the most renowned playwrights of the twentieth century in Romania. It is a comparative approach to a number of canonical Romanian plays of the twentieth century. The three authors discussed in the present study have in common the dramatization of the Divine through drama, and the major differences that can be noticed in the passage from one to another can only be explained in light of the historicity of the poetics/politics of representation. Although all three make use of mythical or Biblical narratives (*The Ewe Lamb, Master Mason Manole, The Saxton, Jonah*), re-writing central myths of the national heritage, our main objective has been to shed light on their representation of God. “From God’s self-presentation to Moses in *Exodus* 3: 14 as tautological, self-sufficient identity (“I am who I am”) to the subject constructed in language (I am who says “I am”), humanity has gone a long way, giving up on a theological or natural ontogeny and allowing itself to be reborn of language, of something of its own and collective creation. Who is the subject of history, who is it that moves humanity forward? A transcendental instance? Anonymous or personal? A mundane agent? Individual or collective? Are we authors of our life narratives or actors? Are we even less than that, reduced by institutions and networks of power to a metonymic presence in the intersubjective order of our society?”. These three playwrights had struggled to answer such questions.

We applied Foucault’s philosophy of language, discourse seen in historical perspective, in mutual exchange with the real world. This thesis brings forth three Romanian playwrights, preoccupied with literature, theater, philosophy, and most importantly, theology, whom, while surviving a horrific communist regime, re-created narratives emphasizing spirituality. **Our hypothesis is that**, although having much in common, their discursive practices display significant differences. Three perspectives are announced: Valeriu Anania’s ‘Ewe Lamb’ and ‘Master Mason Manole’ render a theological image, Lucian Blaga’s ‘Master Mason Manole’ is grounded in a philosophical vision, while the last in the series, Marin Sorescu’s ‘The Saxton’ and ‘Jonah,’ brought onto the literary stage an aesthetic, self-reflexive, representation. The link

between Romanian literary works, inspired by the national heritage, yet bespeaking universal paradigms, as well as everyman's search for meaning had set the stage for **choosing this subject as our Ph.D project**. The thorough analysis of all the levels of meaning – cognitive, figurative, contextual, inter- and hyper-textual – is in keeping with the holistic epistemology of the age according to which everything is interconnected and open to permanent revision and reinterpretation. Discourse analysis is the name for this exploded hermeneutic frame of interdisciplinary study.

What was it that made these authors return to myth? To Biblical narratives? How do twentieth century Romanian theologians, philosophers and poets comprehend Divinity? Had they mixed postmodernist chaos and determinism with the Biblical “performative word”? And if so, then how? Or why would that be? Divinity is directly linked to the spiritualized existence of man, therefore, it is a category which could be best represented in communion-activation form. Since dramaturgy is best affirmed on stage, the audience can better integrate its message into their immediate reality. We start from the working hypothesis that the playwrights had been intensively affected by their chosen subject, therefore, the choice to use the dramatic genre would deliver a more accurate representation to their audience, bringing their updated myths into an immediate reality. We were also interested in tracing down the origin of the impulse nurturing the creation of these plays.

While three of the plays include elements linked to Christian Orthodox Cathedrals we begin our study with the premise that Christian Churches are part of cultural heritage, representing more than a site for religious worship. We observed if, and how such edifices are part of the collective conscience. Nevertheless, our immediate interest was to analyze howXX<sup>th</sup> century leading playwrights would emphasize this statement. *Paracliserul* and the two *Meşterul Manole* plays are narratives constructed around Christian edifices, however, not all three artists seem to have sustained a standpoint of eulogy addressed to what Churches are representative of. Places of worship are by definition constructed figures of spirituality, therefore, another objective attributed to this study was to observe the state of Romanian spirituality foregoing the contemporary era. What sort of breadcrumbs had these thinkers dropped behind for following generations? This thesis does not historically observe the relationship between the idea of Divinity and theatre. We were mostly interested to decode the symbolism included in these plays, which will further aid in decoding the representation of the

spiritual incentive provided. What sort of path is spirituality on in twentieth century Romanian theatre? Descending, ascending? Are bricks of spirituality still being manufactured out of clay-bearing soil and lime to reach their destination in a lasting state? Is the individual still preoccupied with building or with destruction? Is Romanian spirituality on the verge of doubt, confusion or agnosticism? What was its initial state and what does it pulsate now? These are some of the questions this thesis will humbly try to answer. Although we are well aware of the magnitude of such a subject, we do not begin from a standpoint of complete certainty, on the contrary, the present analysis, we consider, could serve as a mere starting point for a future, more extensive research. We do not take the liberty to state that through this analysis we have the capacity to pull the blinds, open all windows and enjoy an abundance of brightness illuminating the spiritual state of Romanian collective conscience. However, as a conclusion to this introduction, this study aims to shed a shy ray of light on the dark corners of twentieth-century Romanian spirituality, years severely overshadowed by a ruthless communist totalitarian regime.

The thesis is constructed on three main chapters, each being divided into several subchapters, introduction, conclusions and references. We have also attached six annexes, the first three being published articles, research relevant to the text of the thesis, two translated poems, also for a better exemplification of the literary analysis, as well as an appendix containing visual representations, images, from the staged play *Meşterul Manole* from during the year 2018. We begin our research with two introductory subchapters: **1. God-Made and Man-Made Worlds, or, Theocratic History versus Mundane History** and **2. A Historical Look at the Relationship between the Idea of Divinity and Theatrical Performance**

**Chapter I: The Descent of Divinity into the Historical World** analyzes the dramatic reinscription of the two national ballads by Valeriu Anania (*Miorița* and *Meşterul Manole*), re-created to serve the contemporary mind, brutalized by an atheist communist ruling. The first chapter consists of two subchapters: **I. 1. *Miorita (The Ewe Lamb)* by Valeriu Anania; I.2. *Meşterul Manole (Master Mason Manole)* by Valeriu Anania.** We inquired into the poet monk's reasons for choosing to re-write ballads, the moment he embarked on their creation and under what sort of physical and psychological conditions were they created. We also describe what is it that these original narratives stand for, what is their origin and if these two particular ones could be considered representative for the Romanian identity, according to historical tradition. Further along the chapter we analyzed the text of the plays in comparison with the

Biblical text, hence, this perspective demonstrated a theological understanding of national literary heritage. The playwright brought two of, what are known as, pre-Christian ballads into Christian reality, converting their symbolism to fit a God-believing conscience.

In *Miorița* by Valeriu Anania the evident Christian symbolism adds to the supposition that the narrative is constructed in a contemporary society, proving that although the dialoguing characters are of the least religious kind, displaying villainous traits, they give the utmost importance to a Christian tradition practiced by the Romanian society, thus deeply integrated into the collective conscience. It is interesting to observe that such behavior is similar to the XXI century society, superficially celebrating the religious holidays (Easter and Christmas) as an opportunity for gluttony, theme celebrations and profit, under the mask of a collective conscience, one which has renegaded the ritual's religious true signification. Lavru and Vrîncu's dialogue, for instance, suggests the portrayal of the superficial, modern individual, agnostic or atheist, greedy and oriented towards worldly assets, unconsciously taking into consideration Christian values and traditions, being subjects to a senseless collective thinking. According to C. Jung, one of the motifs sustaining the modern world crisis is living the myths and Christian symbols only partially (Eliade, n.d.:21). He argues that by the sole use of exterior words and empty gestures, the profound life of the psyche does not make use of the celebrated religious content.

*Meșterul Manole*, by the same poet monk, sets the stage for two perspectives, one in which man ignores the Divine commands, the Manole- Simina plot, ending up with the death of both protagonists, and the second, in which man sacrifices his own pleasures for God's commands, the Safirin – Iovanca plot, resulting in the death of the lust obsessed protagonist. The first makes use of pagan superstitions and a sort of magical realism (shadow, immuring, enchanted bricks), while the second offers the reader an alternative Christian structure. Sacrifice is mandatory for creation, however, if one takes into account the God—man relationship, then the sacrificial act becomes a salvation act, transcending death. Alternatively, if man bases his actions on his own passions, wishes and pleasures, catastrophe is inevitable. The initial inferno succeeding Creation sprung out of an individual will and materiality, aligned with the removal of Divinity, perspective confirmed by Manole when asking his wife of the nature of her love for him:

*Ți-e dragostea scânteie*

*Grăbită să-mi aprindă-n suflet iad?*<sup>1</sup>(Anania, 2007: 381)

The plays of this poet monk intertwined signifiers as death, sacrifice, beauty, art and sufferance, into a positive signified perspective. The characters of Valeriu Anania face reality and existence, transcending the fear of death. We compared the two pagan ballads with V. Anania's dramaturgy, keeping in sight the sacred text. The plays are centered on love, death, belief and sacrifice, whilst, our objective was to decode their significations in relation to contemporary society, spirituality and the Biblical Code. The so-called pagan myth, doubled by Anania's archaic imagination, demonstrates religious elements that could describe the "descent" of myth into reality, into the historical world. The playwright, thus demounted pagan elements, evidencing spiritual conquest, having as model Christ's transcendence. *The Descent of Divinity into the Historical World*, considers the way man relates to God from a theocratic perspective, that is, with mankind's history embedded within the script of a transcendent divinity. Time *Kairos* represents this trysting point where humans and divines cross paths. An erudite theologian, such as Valeriu Anania, undertakes to retrieve the spirit of earlier ages, when people believed in this encounter being real, that is, **metaphysically full**, such as Plato's world of ideas, or the Biblical God talking to Moses, in his refurbishing of two national myths: *Meșterul Manole* (Master Mason Manole) and *Miorița* (The Ewe Lamb).

**Chapter II :The Descent of Divinity into Representation** considers a more secular mode of relating to divinity, which is through representation: the image that is **symbolically full**, that is, a sign, indeed but which has some referent whose real existence can be perceived or is assumed to really exist. Lucian Blaga (*Mesterul Manole*), although focusing only on one re-created ballad, includes four subchapters, analysis focused on philosophical concepts. The philosophical analysis of a re-created Romanian ballad begins with an overview: **II.1. Lucian Blaga: the Artist's Covenant with Divinity**, followed by **II.2. The Age of Representation: Heidegger and Existentialist Phenomenology of the Artwork**, overseeing the characters of Blaga's play who posit a similar perspective to twentieth century philosophical perspectives. "How does existence exist" was one of the questions putting on an act on the twentieth century philosophical stage. The German philosopher's approach can be understood from Manole's questions. They are targeted mostly towards understanding the concept of being, of the existential essence, as a direct

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<sup>1</sup> (trans) Is your love burning  
Rushing to engulf my soul into inferno?



link to the work of art. Manole, seeing himself as an agent in the process of creation, consequently, the auto-destruction of Manole in the process of building a magnificent work of art seems to resemble the German philosopher's view. Lucian Blaga published the play *Meșterul Manole* twenty-three years before Martin Heidegger showcased his own philosophical perspective on art (1950 was the year of the publication of his *Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes*). The German philosopher's perspective: *Toată filozofia mea este una de întrebări*<sup>2</sup>(Heidegger 1995: 15) can mirror Manole's continuous wondering:

*de ce nu vrea fapta să mi-o binecuvânte?(148), Jertfa asta de neînchipuit – cine-o cere?(149), Unde-I piatra, care nu se va clătina, și unde-I Zidarul cel mare?(150), Ce înseamnă puținul că ne dăruim pe noi alături de jertfa cea mai mare, ce ni se cere? (151), De ce nu se înalță biserica? Cum mai iau lupta cu tainele? Unde e sprijinul? (157) Nu sunt și eu pătruns de această boală până la oase?(177) Uită-te la mine: mai sunt eu cel ce am fost? (216), Când El a clădit, ce a jertfit? (220), Judecata voastră cine va face-o?(220) Cine sunt eu? Cine sunteți voi? (222), and finally, Ce e munca, ce sunt mâinile mele? Ce e iubirea, suferința și moartea noastră? (231)<sup>3</sup>. (Blaga, 2008)*

The second subchapter contains other examples of possible similitudes between Master Mason Manole by Lucian Blaga and part of M. Heidegger's philosophy.

The third subchapter: **II.3. Lucian Blaga and J.-F. Lyotard: the Concept of Stylistic Matrix** discusses the concept of Stylistic Matrix, according to the two philosophers, compared to the Christian Orthodox perspective. Lucian Blaga introduces the stylistic categories as though they are a censorship in favor of humankind. Simplistically speaking, humans are simultaneously stimulated towards and blocked from uncovering the great mysteries of existence. Man's rush towards knowledge, discoveries and truth is a fundamental category. Dumitru Stăniloae (considered, amongst others, the theologian of the century on the Romanian academic stage) argues: Since the fundamental substance of man is truly the rush towards objective reality, towards truth, then religion (being defined by Blaga as the radical and passionate expression of the search for reality) must be the most central expression of man. *Religiozitate a omului este prin*

<sup>2</sup> (trans) my entire philosophy is one of questions

<sup>3</sup> (trans) why is my deed not wanted blessed? who demands this unimaginable sacrifice? where is the still rock that wouldn't crumble and where is this great Builder? is it of such little worth our selflessness in favor of the great sacrifice that is asked of us? Why is the Church not ascending? Oh but how I clash with the sacraments? Where is the sustenance? Has this disease infected my flesh and rotted my bones as well? Look at me! Am I still that what I was? What had He sacrificed when He had built? Who will be the judge of you? Who am I? Who are you? What is this work, and these hands of mine? What is love, sufferance and our death?

*urmare cauza cea mai adâncă a stilului și nu viceversa*<sup>4</sup>(Stăniloae 1992: 16). Retrieved from D. Stăniloae's analysis: If man's rush towards reality would only target science, for example, God would have no motif to insert the barrier of style, He wouldn't be endangered by man's indiscretion. If man, the theologian continues, would have no propensity towards God, or better said: if man were to have been constructed in such a way, bereft of religious impulse, style would be useless. Once this thirst for understanding the absolute (manifested through religion) vanishes, style (barring the way to absolute truth) would logically be of no use (Stăniloae 1992: 17-18). His analysis results in: *Esențialitatea românească are formă ortodoxă*<sup>5</sup>(18).

Adding to the comparative perspective, we brought forth the understanding of Christian representatives, such as Saint Maximus the Confessor, who had discussed the idea of God's hiddenness around 600 A.D. Lucian Blaga's approach to representing Divinity is influenced by philosophical perspectives which can be compared to those of Socrates, Heraclitus, Kant, Heidegger or Lyotard. Although his own philosophical system flourishes with originality and new perspectives, we analyzed how it appears to itself from the Christian Orthodox view. As in most historical theories, the philosophical truths influencing Blaga's work were "validated for a limited span of time by historical praxis and provisional regimes of knowledge (Tupan 2017:47).

The stylistic matrix is a field of intersecting interpretive energies in the individual which link out to social others and to the ecosystem in which the collective social body is located. A common code is threading the natural, the mental, and the cultural bodies. Calvin Schrag, the author of *The Resources of Rationality*, and *The Self after Postmodernity*, greeted in Lucian Blaga the forerunner of postmodernity's transversal rationality (actually, logically polyvalent, of Deleuzian energies flowing in all directions). This displacement of representation from the individual's rational self to the order of intersubjectivity which, as Jacques Lacan says, is grounded in the unconscious ("The letter in the Unconscious" - the discourse of the other) is characteristic of postmodern psychoanalysis. René Girard speaks about triangulation of desire in his celebrated *Desire and the Novel*: we appreciate what our society considers to be of some worth; Don Quixote, in the early modernity when, as Baudrillard says, the image started its separation from referent, floating freely from signifier to signifier, does not pursue his own desires but the ideals of the heroes he reads about in his favorite medieval romances which had

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<sup>4</sup>(trans) Man's religiosity is, finally, the deepest cause of style, and not vice-versa.

<sup>5</sup> (trans) The Romanian essence takes the form of Orthodoxy

no correspondent whatever in the reality of his time. In giving free rein to his *nisus formativus* (something within himself which, he says, compels him to create), Manole becomes unconscious, he remembers nothing when the work has been done, and has to be told everything. It is as if he, his conscious self, had been missing from the site. This is the metadramatic element telling us how to interpret the play: God is in hiding, but there is something connecting the individual to something higher than himself: the otherness of the unconscious (collective structures and representations) and the otherness of language which is a collective code. Mira's voice which will be heard in the smaller bell is not of divine nature, like the Spirit in the chariot, but it is sound plus the sacramental meaning of Christian sacrifice. The Spirit does not enter the world any more, but it is still present in symbolic language, in the revelatory metaphors which Blaga distinguished from the merely ornamental ones. Equally important, we can consider it important to observe the clash between reason and imagination, yet another concept analyzed by Lyotard: the sublime. We also brought forth a possible link to the prehistoric inhabitants of the Romanian territory, according to archeological findings of the Cucuteni-Trypillie culture. The cult of adoration for the mother, the woman, the female goddess could be exemplified in the dramaturgy Master Mason Manole, which could be directly linked to the cult of fertility from the Neolithic and Eneolithic cultural complex.

The final subchapter is **II.4. Lucian Blaga at the Crossroads of Modernism and Postmodernism**. Lucian Blaga questioned the Christian character of Romanian culture as we can observe throughout his play. He seemed to link the Romanian archaic ballad, unlike Valeriu Anania, to the pagan substratum of the Romanian spirituality, bringing forth the cult of feminism and Great Mother, alongside the more secular approach to an authoritative figure. The secular mode of relating to divinity, through representation, in Blaga's text, no longer refers to basic reality. The image, masking and perverting reality, the degradation of the image, the continuous process of emptying out of essence, the copy without original (the simulacrum), a creation representing only itself, no longer referring to any reality, steps forward in Master Mason Manole by Lucian Blaga: *duhul întru chipărilor s-a întărit în mine poruncitor*<sup>6</sup>(Blaga, 2008: 174). The image, the sign, is **symbolically full**. Lucian Blaga tries to retrieve a divinity form hiding, from the unconscious matrix that (he argues) generates art. As evidence of the play's secular standpoint, we brought forth the contemporary interpretation of Blaga's *Meșterul*

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<sup>6</sup> (trans)The spirit of imagination has gained power over me, commanding

*Manole*, images from a play staged in Cluj-Napoca, in 2018. The fusion of Christian symbols and motifs merge into a staged representation screeching apostasy, lays bare postmodernist anticipation. The idea of *Deus otiosus* is evidenced by Blaga's characters. They suggest that God is idle while the devil is evidently implicated in the act of creation. Blaga, thus, seems to suggest a direct connection between Romanian folklore and agnosticism.

**Chapter III: Divinity as an Act of Inscription** brings forth a more evident secular representation. It is organized in two subchapters: **III.1. *Paracliserul (The Saxton)* by Marin Sorescu** and **III.2. *Iona (Jonah)* by Marin Sorescu**. The two plays, *Iona* and *Paracliserul*, appeal to myth and Biblical narration, while concomitantly emptying them out of sacred significance. In *Iona* (Jonah), the emblematic fisherman spreading and obeying the God's word is replaced by the aesthetic self which creates itself through speech and memory. He no longer reveals God's message to mankind, he remembers his own name, he remembers his life, he reveals himself. He stands for the artist who writes his self into a textual FIGURE.

**The first subchapter** seeks to analyze *Paracliserul* (The Verger – 1970). Although published two years after *Jonah*, was the beginning of this deconstructionist trajectory whose other phases we have just summed up as deconstruction of the divine text (creation as mundane event, renewed mankind, not through God's wrath and mercy, but as succession of generations) and of the divine figure (displaced by the artist). The first demythologizing treatment of the divine idea on the stage takes the form of a descent from myth to unredeemed nature. The palimpsest painting of the edifice is reduced to simulations of reality. It is a pastiche which mimics the motifs of a religious culture. The ironic representation attacks and questions, all while mocking, with the help of double-coding. The world of the verger where he is all alone in a useless church, becomes the reality. The image Marin Sorescu highlights is that of an individual who is preoccupied with redemption, suffers in solitude, finally being annihilated by a deaf man whose only act is that of destruction. The world of the verger is a re-creation which becomes what is. It, however, cannot be realistically traced to the Christian world, identity, or the world of an actual verger. It does not correspond to Christian belief nor its reality, M. Sorescu creates a portrayal of the Christian world, with no referent. This subchapter also had as objective to uncover the postmodernist approach on understanding and representing unconsciousness and the individual, as well as the aesthetic influence. Marin Sorescu designed an image of chaos, sufferance and disintegration. The church is decomposing into nature, time being an essential

element of the play, insisted upon more than several times. The “parallel structure” aiding to process and interpret the play can be defined as a semiotic map, which, as J. Baudillard would state, is so detailed and so grand that it has covered the real significance completely. In order to preserve the real, hyperrealism takes over, impersonating the real, until one cannot tell the difference, until the simulacra becomes the initial original. Marin Sorescu mimics pre-established codes and models questioning the existence of a concrete code. He created a world which swirls into an abyss of sacred entwined with trivialities. We hypothesize that since Marin Sorescu wrote (and published) this play during full communist regime, he too was, up to a certain point, affected by this communist inflicted opposition, Christianity – Atheism, or by the agnostic direction towards which society was headed. Why was the Church designed as a significant symbol in his play? We learn from the abbot-monk of Oașa Monastery that most of the survivors of communist political jails, following their release, did not wish to integrate themselves back into society, but to remain anchored in a spiritual existence. Thus, Marin Sorescu understood that the Church signified more than a physical edifice, a place of worship for the unreachable Divinity. The Christian individual associated his own conscience, his entire existence, with the Church. Marin Sorescu was protesting against the two codes which he believed constructed the society, by creating a play molded with the postmodernism aesthetics frame. The central element of the play is, thus, the decentering of the elements which form the representation. We compared Marin Sorescu’s approach on *language*, according to *Paraclisierul* to E. Bernea and N. Steinhardt. If we accept that the verger creates his own world and reality according to his utterances (signs on a page), we can observe an attitude of resignation in the face of his own creation. Since he builds his reality, his church, out of words, his own imagined reality is subject to dissolution into temporality. Nature dissolves any sort of creation, be it even imagined, since man is biological, his imagined creations are also affected by the natural order. He admits to a void, to a lack of essence, replacing nothingness with undersized elements of nature: grass, butterflies and moss, powerful, nevertheless, *dă năvala prin zid*<sup>7</sup>. If we accept that on the second level of interpretation, the church is humanity’s consciousness and spiritual reality, we observe how the sacred is dissolved into the mundane, by “natural” causes.

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<sup>7</sup> (trans) take the wall by assault

**The second subchapter, *Iona*,** discusses the aesthetic theoretical framework, as well as the Affect theory, applied to M. Sorescu's "one man show", all while faced with Christian Orthodox concepts and beliefs. M. Sorescu made use of "absurd" theatre to frame a Christian narrative exploring the crisis of the modern spirit. The modern man is evidenced, the aesthetic of chaos, blurred line between right and wrong, the good which is measured by the intensity of the sensation (painful sensation, in our case), the aesthetic cantered around the absence of others. The same absence of the other, resulting in a chaotic cry can be observed in Kierkegaard's aesthete *par excellence*, Johannes. The present analysis does not introduce a completely distinct interpretation, since "Something new can be shown only because the 'new' can be explained with reference to something not new" (Wolfreys, 2015:4). However, it, we hope, offers a refreshed read, making sense of Marin Sorescu's message, with regard to the contemporary convention (*Homo-Deus*), to the Affect theory and to the Biblical message. Although the play has been broadly explored, we postulate that its subject has not been completely consumed. The new Jonah writes himself into existence, making use of materialized cultural forms utterances.

**In conclusion,** we found that the Romanian playwrights brought forth evident elements mirroring contemporary spirituality in relation to Romanian tradition, to theology, philosophy and aesthetic concepts. Similar to the roof of an international symbol for art, culture and Divinity, violently crashing in its interior, engulfed by flames, in a world where technology, evolution, development, science are considered pillars for humanity, revealing the undisputable allegorical, fictional tragedy becoming reality, this study aimed to observe the state of spirituality during a shattering modern era. The roof of a Christian Cathedral burns, during a time in which Christianity is engulfed by agnosticism and nihilism. The nothingness replacing the Christian symbol's roof in 2019 (Notre-Dame) is representative for certain representations by Romanian playwrights L. Blaga and Marin Sorescu, which seem to devour Christian spiritual landmarks. Although culture, art, sacredness and belief, essential elements constructing the Parisian edifice, somehow survived numerous menacing situations (World Wars, Revolution, Crusades etc.), the most developed world yet, faces their destruction. **This first representation of Divinity** offered by this thesis, we find, provides for readers with hope for restoration. Man, although struggling with tormenting flames, is capable to recover the relics in time. The consciousness and soul, Anania evidences, cannot be smoldered by material destruction, however, if one acts recklessly,

evil, inferno, awaits patiently to de-construct and destroy. The first chapter shows that a perspective based on love, consciousness and a lucid preoccupation for spirituality could minimize the effects of an absurd God-less reality. The sacrifice of the ballad shepherd mirrors the sacrifice of the Biblical “shepherd”, Jesus Christ, while Safirin, the Christian monk, contrasts pagan mason builder Manole. The monk chooses a spiritualized path, renouncing worldly self-aggrandizement, defeating the inevitable death and disintegration. **The two following secular perspectives of staging Divinity** (Marin Sorescu, Lucian Blaga), we find, anticipate the postmodernist canon, complete distrust in meta-narratives. Ambiguity, fragmentation, ethical questioning and psychological insight are part of the creation process of M. Sorescu and L. Blaga’s plays. While Blaga’s protagonist finds it impossible to reach “truth”, bringing forth phenomenological theories, Sorescu’s “heroes” resort to irony and materiality. Myths are brought into life. **The first interpretation renders an effort to display a spirituality on an ascending path, the second is an endeavor to portray a psychological and philosophical descending journey, while the third focuses on proving an aesthetic dazzle that could annul the concept of spiritualized eternity, a concept strongly emphasized by the first.** Therefore the first chapter retrieves theological elements interlaced with a mythical narrative. The second chapter displays man’s philosophical struggle in the creation process, with direct reference to religious practices, contemporary and ancestral. The third chapter is mainly preoccupied to analyze the deconstruction of the portrayal of Divine worship. The preoccupation for eternity is found within all three perspectives, however, their stand-point differs. We do not take the liberty to label the playwrights individual spiritual constructions or beliefs, we did however, aim to observe possible origins of the symbolic allusions included in their plays, in relation to religious and spiritual elements, aiming to decode, shed light and compare. If two thousand years ago, the iconostasis of the Judaic temple had split open in hours of darkness, the state of spirituality and Divine representation, in the XX<sup>th</sup> century plays by M. Sorescu and L. Blaga, could expose fissures, possibly even cracks. Valeriu Anania’s representations, however, suggest an indestructible restoration model for Romanian spirituality, bricks and lime, lasting material, in other words: unconditional love and belief.

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