The 4th Edition of the International Conference: Paradigms of the Ideological Discourse 2012

Vasile Voiculescu’s Literary Discourse and Ancestral Magical Practices

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Abstract

The survival of magical practices, folk superstitions and their bearers or their keepers is a fundamental theme in many of Vasile Voiculescu’s stories. In texts like Ultimul berevoi (The last berevoi) and Lacul râu (The evil lake), the magical rituals work as cultural models, as an opportunity for the human being to regain the powers and the greatness of old. Vasile Voiculescu struggles to make plausible a series of possible, yet rare or even unique events, making use of a vocabulary full of archaisms, regionalisms and infrequent words which give his writing a unique tone. The protagonists are depicted as bearers of the mysteries, with their unusual, extraordinary looks, in a space where primitive folk imagination and modern civilisation meet. The two stories propose a character type initiated in ancestral mysteries.

Keywords: Magical practices, folk superstitions, cultural models, archaisms, regionalisms, ancestral mysteries

Vasile Lovinescu, an analyst of the symbolic universe, considers that the mystery does not reveal itself unmediated, in pure forms, but indirectly, as myth and symbol. He thinks that “The art of designating ineffable truths using notions and material objects, melted by their own content, is the key to the whole symbolism. The myth has done its duty when it signifies; after that, it would better turn to ashes, for it risks becoming superstition and a stone that causes men to stumble” (my translation) [1]. By nature, symbols cannot exist without the meanings that the human society in general and the human being in particular grant to them. According to C.G. Jung, archetypes are some prototypes of symbolic sets so deeply engraved in our subconscious that they make up a kind of structure. Archetypes manifest as almost universal psychic structures, innate or inherited, as a kind of

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Available online at www.sciencedirect.com

SciVerse ScienceDirect

Procedia
Social and Behavioral Sciences

Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences 63 (2012) 288 – 295

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doi:10.1016/j.sbspro.2012.10.041
collective consciousness; they express themselves by means of the most energy laden symbols, acting as both an engine and a most important unifier in the evolution of one’s personality:

“The archetypes that pre-exist and determine consciousness reveal themselves in the role they play in the real world, that is, as antecedent structural forms of the instinctive foundation of consciousness. They are not in the least inherent to things, but rather the forms in which these are perceived and conceived of” (my translation) [2].

Despite its permanent metamorphosis, the symbol does not lose its original meaning; based on archetypal attitudes or thoughts, the symbol preserves its original significance in the background, in the deep layers of its connotation, even when it seems to have completely different meanings from one age to another or from a cultural direction to another. As Mircea Eliade argues in *Tratat de istorie a religiilor* (*Treatise on the history of religions*), the symbol connotes information related to a group’s mentalities and experience, and, respectively, encloses a language known to that group, making it cryptic for the outsider; thus it is supported by the solidarity of those having created it and by the mystery felt by those receiving it from the outside. At the same time, symbolism, in its magical and religious dimensions, has hierophanic functions, as it maintains a subtle connection with the sacred or supports an aspiration towards the divine: “The symbol is important not only for sustaining or replacing a hierophany, but because, before anything, it continues the hierophanization process and, more importantly, because sometimes it is itself a hierophany, that is, it brings to light a sacred or cosmological reality which no other ‘manifestation’ can reveal” (my translation) [3].

The symbolic world in Vasile Voiculescu’s works is a system of signs unlimitedly translatable, their lattermost layer of significance being represented by the archaic mythologies. The key to deciphering symbols and myths being originary and concealed, their interpretation raises barriers before the researcher, mainly because the contemporary man has lost connection with these primordial realities and, in order to relive them, he needs intuition, imagination, and a sight from within. Apart from that, a symbol tends to be identifiable in a significant number of objects and situations which, in time, have lost their invisible side, their symbolic meaning, either because it has been forgotten or because time has altered it adding new meanings and erasing the old ones. There is no clear demarcation between the three notions (myth, symbol, and archetype), as the vulgarised myth often ends up in archetypal images which, in turn, are to be found in many symbols: “Any symbolic-archetypal structure contains an existential value, that is to say it refers to a reality or a situation engaging the human existence” (my translation) [4]. Mythology operates with tools unsubjected to experimental examination, part of a reference system the power of which is the magical act, and its thinking system manifests through the tendency of the concrete epic forms towards abstractions as well as towards all the phenomena superior to the observation point.

Initiated in beliefs and mythologies, in esoteric practices, philosophies, religions, and folklore, Vasile Voiculescu gathers thrilling themes from everywhere and exploits them in narratives expressing the worshipping of the human being. The narrator in his fantastic stories faces the reader’s doubt, depicts the protagonists as mystery bearers, with their unusual, incredible looks, in a space in which facts rooted in the primitive folk imagination and facts of the modern civilization meet, so that the tribal mentality crosses the thinking of the present day individual. The outcome is a prose fiction in which the epic construction is dominated by returns to the genuine and profound motions of the spirit of the universe, in the sense of the analytical constructions advanced by Vasile Lovinescu.

The events in most of Vasile Voiculescu’s stories take place in a setting undetermined spatially and temporally, in an archetypal village. The magical act is all the more efficient if the setting is more isolated. These realms integrated in nature are populated with characters acting at the border between the real and the fantastic. One of Voiculescu’s characters is the medicine man, with his sacred cap and green belt, his tools necessary to perform some rituals, such as the invocation of the arch-bull, the calling of the wolves, or the creation of a magical taimen. In other stories, witches with magical powers step in in unfortunate situations. In this fantastic universe, the spirits of the dead come out of the cemeteries to meet their heirs, other spirits inhabit the lakes, wonder-working taimens show up in rivers, dogs mate with vixen, bears and women make runaway matches, a
fisherman is the offspring of a fantastic whitefish, an anchorite has hypnotic powers over the beasts etc. Many of the heroes do not have a definite identity, turning into animals, plants or objects, living outside the myth but knowing it well. In many of the stories, beings communicate with one another without words or signs, or with objects or natural elements.

Some of the fantastic stories, such as Lostrița (The taimen), Ultimul berevoi (The last berevoi), Sezon mort (Dead season), În mijlocul lupilor (Among the wolves), Pescarul Amin (Amin, the fisherman), Lacul râu (The evil lake), are centred around a less common, uncommon or strange theme, their primary substance being the preservation of the magical practices and popular superstitions, as well as of their bearers and keepers, usually the last survivors of an archaic world regressing rapidly in the confrontation with the overwhelming technical culture. Human specimens lingering from a stirp long gone, all or almost all the characters die tragically, brutally eliminated by a hostile world which rejects them as anachronic (in Lacul râu (The evil lake), Gheorghieș comes into conflict with the lake that will kill him; Amin, the protagonist of Pescarul Amin (Amin, the fisherman), and Aliman from Lostrița die in search for their ideal in the waterworld, the medicine man from Ultimul berevoi (The last berevoi) perishes tragically, unable to bring the magic ritual he has started to an end).

But the most convincing critical attitude of the storyteller manifests in respect with the ancestral beliefs, whose extinction in the modern era he narrates exceptionally in Ultimul berevoi (The last berevoi), a story with a very accessible meaning, the death of the last wizard signifying the death of magic and superstitions in the very environment that brought them to life.

In Ultimul berevoi (The last berevoi), as well as in the other stories, the storyline is prepared carefully and cautiously. The narrator starts narrating slowly and leisurely and, only after he considers the atmosphere and the setting to be ready, he begins narrating the storyline itself. The subject is the killing of a bear playing havoc in people’s courtyards. The incipit presents the quest for a solomonar (wizard), the last person who can deliver the village from evil. When he is found, we are told that he is living in solitude, just like Luparul from În mijlocul lupilor (Among the wolves), away from the crowd, like a representative of a parish long gone. Step by step, the reader witnesses a solomonie (magical ritual) in which the living fire is blown. Then a complicated ritual is described, one in which the shepherds are attacked by the bear, while the solomonar (wizard) blows the fire and “summons the spirit of the great bull of the mountain, the arch-bull, to their rescue” (my translation) [5]. But the final act of the power transfer from the man-bull to the actual bull fails. The solomonar (wizard) re-enacts the magic in his mind and concludes that he has not done anything wrong, but the powers of magic have faded, have withered away, just like the times of magic. The writer imagines a symbolic resolution, the last wizard being crushed under the hoofs of the infuriated bull, together with his failed magic.

A variety of forms of the unusual is to be found in Vasile Voiculescu’s fantastic stories, “in other words, the fantastic can be defined as the occurrence of an element disturbing the balance of a coherent and familiar world” (my translation) [6]. In most cases, the fantastic contract results from the collision between the representatives of the archaic world and the exceptional historical situation in which they appear. The fundamental theme of the author’s writings is magic. It is only by magic that the man is capable to regain his lost power and greatness. In Ultimul berevoi (The last berevoi), a medicine man is called to rescue the cattle in an area of the Carpathians. Before the downfall, the old world seeks salvation in the ancestral secrets and practices of an isolated character. It is a retrieval of magic against the restoration of natural order, an attempt at the restitution of the primordial energy.

Ultimul Berevoi (The last berevoi) presents old practices. It is an ancient world which fails in the confrontation with modernity. The story is a perfect parable with an obvious demonstrative structure. The old solomonar (wizard) commits symbolic suicide, announcing the extinction of a civilization, that of the archaic magic. Too weak to energize the animals hunted by beasts, the magical ritual brings forth the wizard’s immolation. The tragedy of the impossible communication between man and nature is revealed through magic.

Literature operates with ancestral symbols, imposing, in turn, symbols specific to a literary movement, to an era or even to the unmanifested obsessions of a writer. This is the type of symbols we are dealing with in Vasile Voiculescu’s story Ultimul berevoi (The last berevoi). Early in his life, Voiculescu’s attention was drawn towards the mystery of things, the solemnity of gestures and their esoteric nature. Ultimul berevoi (The last
berevoi) is a realist story with fantastic elements sprung from the ancestral realities of the Romanian village. The pretext is the way in which the peasants, forced by the circumstances, ask a wizard to help them get rid of some bears killing their cattle. He was leading a solitary, secluded life. At the news that he has been called on, he is transfigured: “The sprightliness had so much enkindled him that a blaze seemed to be burning him from inside out” (my translation) [7]. This wizard performs a hunting magical ritual, but it proves inefficient, either because of his lack of skill or the people’s lack of faith or the violence of the beasts. Then he tries to awake the defense mechanisms in a herd of bulls and cows getting into a bear’s skin and provoking the bull. He plays the role of the bear in order to teach the bull how to fight. Vasile Lovinescu considers the bear “a Northern polar symbol of the warriors, of Kshatriya, therefore perfectly positive in itself (my translation) [8]. The issue up for debate is the incongruence between the present day man’s mentality about life and the world and the mythical world in the ancestral village. Challenged, the bull will kill the wizard. His death is symbolic and suggests the twilight of the ancestral village. Victor Kernbach notes that the Romanian folk magic relies, as any other magic “on invocation, not on prayer, on forcing the elements and not on softening them with sacrifice or humility” (my translation) [9].

The events are arranged around and in reference to a few symbols (the solomonar, the bull, and the bear). Archetypal symbols, pertaining to the collective subconscious of humanity, or mystical and esoteric symbols are updated in the story. The textual interpretation can be made exclusively in reference with the meaning of its central symbolism, guised by thrilling and arresting events. Voiculescu’s narratives are structured so that the fantastic and symbolic element to manifest itself as real, plausible event, likely to take place at any time. Disparate signs of magic and the sacred surface from time to time in unusual situations, without altering them and likely to pass unnoticed by the reader. These are not continuous structures of the sacred and the profane, but the interference in the ways of the world of discreet manifestations of some forces, other than the ones logically accountable. The events are spectacular and unusual, meant to captivate with their mere exposition. The ability to perform the magical act by which the universe can be reorganized in Ultimul berevoi (The last berevoi) “places the conflict in the more subtle frame of the individual’s confrontation with his self” (my translation) [10].

One of the most remarkable and original figures of the Romanian folk mythology is that of the solomonar (wizard). The magical sublayer of this figure descends, in turn, from elements pertaining to the ancient Dacian practices. The solomonars are the most important wizards in the Romanian folkloric beliefs: “The solomonars’ group is some kind of popular masonry, a secret association of initiates in the magic of meteorology, claiming to be omniscient of the world’s mysteries, their name coming from the biblical king Solomon, considered [...] the wisest man on Earth” (my translation) [11]. The solomonar is an ordinary man who acquires magical powers and takes a leap from the human condition to the (semi)divine one by his contact with a certain occult science. At a thorough research, the figure of the solomonar proves to be in connection with the old practices of the Geto-Dacians, a multitude of common elements being identified (the ascetical practice, the knowledge of an esoteric practice acquired in the depths of a cave, etc.): “This character of the Romanian folklore is depicted as a syncretic product, resulted from the overlapping and merging of more cultural layers, from the Dacian magicians and priests to the realities of the magic of meteorology practised up to these days in the Romanian traditional villages” (my translation) [12]. The solomonar is either regarded as a saint, or as a man cursed by God, who sold his soul to the Devil, but this bipolarity of significance has Christian origins. There is a general belief that the solomonar is a positive being who does people good, being vengeful only with the evil ones.

In Ultimul berevoi (The last berevoi), the bull’s inability to receive the magical flow by which it would defeat its enemy – the bear, the evil in the world – is the death sign in the Mithraic cult, whose bearer was the last magus, the keeper of the Dacian cap. Mithraism has its deep roots in the ancient Persian religions, and is based on the ancient Iranian dualism of the eternal rivalry between good and evil, which carry the impress of the Persian moral strictness. Mithra’s role in the battle is that of an ally of the forces of good, being regarded as the avenger of injustice and of everything against the order of the universe. Nothing happens in the world without his knowledge, for he has ten thousand eyes and ten thousand ears. By and by, Mithra becomes the supreme deity, replacing all other deities. Engaged in the battle between good and evil, he is always triumphant. In order to secure his victory, he sacrifices the great bull, the archetype of the animal kingdom. Nature becomes fertile as a
result of this sacrifice. He is the one who fought the sun and led the sacred bull captive, and from its blood all the animals and plants useful to human beings appeared. A specific trait of the Mithraic rites is *taurobolium*, the ritual killing of bull, which re-enacts Mithra’s primordial ritual act. The initiate was baptized in the bull’s blood, thus receiving its life-creating qualities: “By means of a double symbol, the bull’s blood raining over the priest was transferring to the latter the biological animal force and, first and foremost, was granting him access to the highest level, the eternal spiritual life” (my translation) [13]. During the Mithraic rite, the initiates would eat bread and drink wine, celebrating the belief that the dying bull had created the wheat and the vine from its rib, as a symbol of nature’s fruits, “as in all sacrificial rites, Mithra and the Bull made up, essentially, one single entity and the feast that followed was a eucharistic feast” (my translation) [14]. It was a belief that this way the initiates were granted powers, immortality and strength in their fight with the evil forces. In *Ultimul berevoi (The last berevoi)* “there had been raining blood and the time was coming red and insurgent” (my translation) [15] allowing the *solomonar* to manifest himself. In the ancient iconography, Mithra wears the famous Dacian cap on his head, thus becoming obvious that he is a adaptation of Zalmoxis in these lands. There are numerous Geto-Dacian inscriptions dedicated to Mithra, whose name is actually only one of the many agnomina of Zalmoxis. The fact that the last representative of the Berevoi clan is wearing a Dacian cap only reinforces the idea that he is a member of this cult, an initiate.

Voiculescu, the storyteller, feels attracted to the odd, the mysterious, the sensational, to the unusual, in one word. The aquatic universe, dwelt with beings from primordial times, is fascinating for Vasile Voiculescu: “The symbolic meanings of the water can be reduced to three dominant themes: life source, cleansing means, rebirth centre” (my translation) [16]. The body of water represents an infinity of possibilities, everything virtual, yet unshaped, the primordial seed, all the signs of a subsequent development, but also all the threats resorbed. Unless it is a symbolic death, to dip into water and come out without being completely dissolved means to return to the origin, to trace your ancestry in an immense reservoir, drawing out new powers from there; it is a temporary stage of regression and disintegration upon which a stage of reintegration and rebirth rests. In Asia, water is the substantial form of manifestation, life source and element of rebirth of the body and soul, a symbol of fertility, as well as of purity. Water is the basic matter and the notions of primordial waters, or Original Ocean, are almost universal. It is often a means of ritual cleansing. Nonetheless, water can be regarded from two opposed perspectives: water as the source of life and of death, both creator and destroyer. Water can lay waste upon everything, and can engulf everything. Therefore, water can be evil. In this case, it punishes the sinners but never harms a hair of the righteous. The waters of death are only for the sinners, whereas for the righteous, they turn into waters of life. Rivers can be beneficent, or, on the contrary, can be the dwelling of some monsters. Torrential waters are a symbol of evil, of chaos. Water is the symbol of unconscious energies, of the obscure forces of the soul, of secret and unknown impulses.

The theme of the fisherman swallowed by waters is repeated by Voiculescu in *Lacul rău (The evil lake)*, where Gheorghies, the best fisherman in his area, is the protagonist. His skills, wits and record captures are mainly due to his perfect integration in the natural order of the aquatic environment he belongs to, to his organic harmony with the world of the lake. The narrator leaves Gheorghies’s birth to be an enigma beyond which the fantastic suggestion of his ancestry in a bloodline of aquatic beings looms. There was a legend in the village claiming that his father was “zmeul lacului” (the dragon of the lake) (my translation) itself. This mysterious father plays the part of a tutelary aquatic deity: “What the narrator is trying to reveal by the unusual ancestry of the protagonist is his inner, profound connection with nature and the age of his bloodline, going up to the interference with the original elements, factors which make him stand out from his people” (my translation) [17]. The lake has its ancient mysteries, and natural laws that the fishermen have abided strictly for generations, and this is why it becomes a being endowed with its own will. As an aquatic being, subjected completely to these laws, Gheorghies, the fisherman, is under the lake’s protection at the beginning, a lake which reveals itself to him, cooperates, and offers him the greatest captures. But one day, the best fisherman in the area comes into conflict with the lake that will kill him. The hero’s breaking off from the protective nature has external reasons: gone a soldier, the lad suffers the influence of a world morally decayed. The young fisherman, an immaculate being up to this point, living in harmony with the waterworld and the fish, has lost his purity, modesty, peace of
mind, the feeling of obedience to the laws of nature, altering this way his very essence of ancestral fisherman: “The drowning, that is, his punishment by the lake – the paternal element – is a natural consequence of his break off the nature’s game with strict rules” (my translation) [18].

The lad’s death is considered a natural event by the people in the village, a fair result of his senselessness. Paradoxically, not even Gheorghié’s mother, with the same thinking pattern as the other people in the village, revolts against the unjust death of her son, innocent after all, but only against the impossibility to bury his body into the ground, as the Christian customs require, for the evil lake will not give back the body of the punished, not even after his death. The mother, a simple and ignorant human being, only conceives the world at the level of appearance and wants the body of her son to return to clay. She asks for help and the authorities who respond are the priest, the mayor, and then the order officers, who bring the most skilled fishermen. After a few unsuccessful attempts to take the drowned body from the waters, all the human resources had been exhausted. At this point in the story the old woman Savila, an initiate in mysteries and witchcraft, appears. She comes to the shore to help people find the drowned lad, although no one has asked her to. The character is not a complex but a simple one, like all the characters in Voiculescu’s fiction. But the few traits are significant for outlining this feminine character. Savila, one hundred and twenty years old, is the matriarch of the village, the most ancient human being in the community, the arch-mother of all the families of fishermen on the shores of the lake: “then a vision, a small woman hardly keeping on her feet came to the lake, walking toilsomely in her crutch: the old woman Savila, the matriarch of the village” (my translation) [19]. “In this reduced old woman, with undecayed and powerful mind and soul, the human self-knowledge projects itself in the depths of the body, towards the mysterious origins, now forgotten by the others” (my translation) [20]. She is not a lonely, bizarre being, as witches usually are; she comes to the lake accompanied by children, grand-children and other relatives. The old woman Savila is not just any witch skilled in various witchcrafts; she has deep insight into the waters’ mysteries, into the fishermen’s world. Her magical science is described as “an adamant fisherwoman’s wisdom” (my translation) [21]. No one asked the old woman to come and help find the drowned body. She comes out of her own will, as if fetched by an occult force which gives her strength. There is a communication bridge between the lad drowned in the waters of the lake and the wise old woman, for the lad with a fantastic ancestry, bound to waters almost like an aquatic being, the most skilled fisherman, is, undoubtedly, closer to the matriarch of the village, an initiate in the waters’ mysteries: “For the unitiated, it is still a miracle in the inner connection between the witch and the fisherman endowed with the same archaic knowledge and the ability not to estrange from the human essence” (my translation) [22].

The final part of the story describes the magical ritual performed by the old woman in order to take out the drowned body from the water. The magical procedure starts with a moment of psychic preparation, of inner powers focus. The old woman narrows her sight, inside and outside, the eye being the organ of nodal knowledge with Vasile Voiculescu. She casts her eyes like some messengers over the sky and the water, the two parallel universes that circumscribe the lives of the fishermen. This look is in the same time a plunge into the soul and an organizing of the powers of knowledge. The old woman discovers the place where the body of the young fisherman drowned in “the mysterious runes the lake writes its eternal laws with” (my translation) [23], that is, somewhere in the past, in the spirit that knows the mysteries of the lake. There where civilization and its means fail, the magical practices unknown to the modern man but preserved sacredly in the old persons’ minds step in. During the ritual, she uses a few magical elements: a white wheat cake, an alder cross, the crutch with which she made the sign of the cross in the water, all of these supported by the prayers of the priest. The cake had five candles, four cross-shaped and one in the middle and, once placed on the water, it went straight to the body which the fishermen took out afterwards. Therefore, it is a woman initiated in the ancestral mysteries who does not hesitate to make use of her knowledge to help her fellows in need.

The two stories propose two hypostases of a type of character initiated in ancestral mysteries: on the one hand, a male character who fails in his attempt, and, on the other hand, a feminine character who succeeds.

Not so much in the public eye, yet regarded by some literary critics as superior to poetry in many respects, Vasile Voiculescu’s prose fiction depicts a world of significances with a miraculous cohabitation of the
real with the fantastic. It is a world difficult to place spatially and temporally, a world dominated by the millenarian laws of blood and tradition operating everywhere with the same magical power difficult to explain in the extraordinary situations the writer chooses.

Acknowledgements

This paper is supported by Project SOP HRD - TOP ACADEMIC 76822.

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[12] Evseev, I. (1997). Dictionar de magie, demonologie și mitologie românească/ A dictionary of magic, demonology and Romanian mythology. Timișoara: Amarcord, 431; original text: “Acest personaj al mitologiei populare românești ni se înființează ca un produs sincretic, rezultat din suprapunerea și amalgamarea mai multor straturi culturale, de la magicienii și preoții dac și până la realitățile magiei meteorologice, practicată până aproape de zilele noastre în satele tradiționale românești”.
[13] Chevalier, J., Gheerbrant, A. (1994). Dictionar de simboluri/ A dictionary of symbols, I-III. Bucharest: Artemis, 339; original text: “Sângele taurului ce se revârșe asupra mistului îi comunica acestia, printr-un dublu simbol, puterea biologică a animalelor și, în primul rând, îi permitea accesul, sub forma cea mai înaltă, la viața spirituală veșnică”.
[14] Lovinescu, V. (1993). Interpretarea ezoterică a unor basme și balade populare românești/ The esoteric interpretation of some Romanian folk ballads and fairytales. Bucharest: Cartea Românească, 189; original text: “Ca în toate ritualele sacrifciale, Mitra și Talur formau, în fond, o singură entitate și ospățul cu urma era o agapă euharistică”.
[15] Voiculescu, V. (1998). Integrala prozei literare/ The complete literary prose fiction. Bucharest: Anastasia, 197; original text: “plouase mult cu sânge și vremile veneau roșii și-nvorburate”.
[16] Chevalier, J., Gheerbrant, A. (1994). Dictionar de simboluri/ A dictionary of symbols, I-III. Bucharest: Artemis, 107; original text: “Semnificațiile simbolice ale apei pot fi reduse la trei tere domnitoare: origine a vieții, mijloc de purificare, centru de regeneresență”.

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[17] Zaharia-Filipaș, E. (1980). *Introducere în opera lui Vasile Voiculescu/ An introduction in Vasile Voiculescu’s works*. Bucharest: Minerva, 135; original text: “Ceea ce vrea să releve povestitorul prin originea neobișnuită a eroului este legătura lui interioară, profundă, cu natura și vechimea neamului său, urcând până la interferența cu stihiile primare, factori care îl diferențiază de ceilalți oameni”.

[18] Zaharia-Filipaș, E. (1980). *Introducere în opera lui Vasile Voiculescu/ An introduction in Vasile Voiculescu’s works*. Bucharest: Minerva, 137; original text: “Încearea, adică pedepsirea lui de către lacul-factor patern este o consecință firească a ieșirii lui din jocul cu reguli fixe al naturii”.

[19] Voiculescu, V. (1998). *Integrala prozei literare/ The complete literary prose fiction*. Bucharest: Anastasia, 131; original text: “sosi la iezer, pășind anevoios în cățără, o arătare, o mogădeană abia ținându-se pe picioare: bătrâna Savila, strămoșa satului”.

[20] Zaharia-Filipaș, E. (1980). *Introducere în opera lui Vasile Voiculescu/ An introduction in Vasile Voiculescu’s works*. Bucharest: Minerva, 139; original text: “Prin această bătrână firavă la trup, dar cu suflul și mintea intacte, puternice, cunoașterea de sine a omului de aici se projecțează în adânc, în afundul trupului, spre originile pline de taine, azi uitate de ceilalți”.

[21] Voiculescu, V. (1998). *Integrala prozei literare/ The complete literary prose fiction*. Bucharest: Anastasia, 133; original text: “o nesemnătă înțelege viu pescărească”.

[22] Bădărău, G. (2006). *Proza lui Vasile Voiculescu/ Vasile Voiculescu’s prose fiction*. Iași: Princeps Edit, 68; original text: “Pentru neinițiați rămâne un miracol stabilirea legăturilor lăuntrice dintre magicană și pescar, înestrat cu același mod de cunoaștere arhaică și cu capacitatea de a nu se înstrăina de esența umană”.

[23] Voiculescu, V. (1998). *Integrala prozei literare/ The complete literary prose fiction*. Bucharest: Anastasia, 133; original text: “tainicele rune cu care lacul își scrie legile lui veșnice”.