

The Song of the Danube in Literary Creations

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Abstract: While having a look through pages of the press, one becomes aware, for so many times, of the incontestable fact that in certain regions of the Danube there are attested damages caused by the human harmful interference in the environment. It consists in the overexploitation of fish resources, in illegal hunting, etc. Another challenge consists as well in the climate changes that constitute a threat to thousands of species of plants and animals. There raises involuntary the question: what measures is it necessary to be taken in order to protect the Danube that has had a lot of sufference from the end of the last century up to nowadays after having undergone the human interference? That is, for exemple, alongside the river there have been built hydroelectric dams, dikes, turbines etc. So the problem of the environment protection has been concerning as well the writers from all periods of time.

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Nowadays the condition of the environment is far from being satisfactory. Due to our irrational consume of the natural resources the water areas, the air, the forests, the mountains, the soil have been exposed to serious damages. It is time to alert the society so that everyone contributes as much as possible to the rescue and the protection of the environment. This is one the utmost important problems, and only solving it there will be assured a healthy and safe lifestyle on the planet to the growing generation.

It is true that literary creations have a very significant role in the cultivation of a caring attitude towards the surrounding nature. Its Majesty nature has been a constant givenness in the literary creations throughout all times. It has simple explanations; we always find consolation, support, spiritual or phisical help and of course we quench thirst the best of all in the middle of nature.

In this context the verses of our great poet M. Eminescu can be reminded.

As a boy, I used to roam the forests

And often used to fall asleep beside the spring...

Or these lyrics:

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*There is the ancint Danube, free and great, it flows its way,
With a murmur it turns over its thoughtfull heavy waves,
These being drowsy move, however, towards the sea of bitterness;
This way thousands of ages full of lives and thinkings tousand,
Old and sleepy they plunge towards eternity
And behind them from springs there raise up fresh and clear times.
Memento mori*

The unique specificity of the Danube and of the Delt of the Danube is an incontestable source of inspiration for some of the most famous poets in the world. The Danube and the Delt of the Danube have been geographical attestations about which there appear many texts and maps from the very antiquity.

The latin poet Ovidiu can be included in this list. His last creations, by the way, have a documental importance for the historical proof of our nation. By his feather-pen there were created the following verses dedicated to the Danube, considered to be the second river as size in Europe. In its waters there being reflected like in the mirror the three European capitals: Vienna, Budapest, Belgrade: “*The Danube is the biggest one and less important than the Nil, it noway wants to be*”

There are also found impressive opinions referring to the Danube in literary creations of A. Russo, G. Bogza, M. Sadoveanu. V. Alecsandri, etc.

A. Russo, being a „passionate traveller, fascinated by the beauty of the mountain sceneries writes down his voyage impressions in the literary work “the Stone of the Linden”... His most important literary creattion remains to be *The Song of Praise to Romania*, a prose poem of big proportions dedicated to the country and its history, conceived in a bible manner and using a rhetoric that is characteristic of the type of texts that have the role to raise in the listeners’ hearts a purifying dignity and a noble feeling of pride” (Ghițulescu, 2005, p. 62).

The following extract will persuade us of the mentioned truth, it has been selected from his impressive literary writing with the suggestive title *The Song of Praise to Romania*: “There float along the rivers the wreckages of palaces and of churches... the blood flows and along with it there flows the independence remnant of the twenty nations... The waves strike in foam themselves, and the foam is blood-red. On the glossiness of the Danube there floats forward and then comes backwards, goes to the bottom and then rises to the surface again a sparkling yataghan...and the frightened wave throws to the terrified shores the profet’s son... “Allah! – they call... - here is the land promised to God believers!...”

It is worth paying attention also to the following lines from the same literary writing that evoke as well the past historical events of our nation: “your song is rather sad, romanian dear chid!...what do you say? Have the janizaries crossed the Danube?... “

The Danube, as a witness of the historical events, is represented as well in *The Letter the III^d* by our great genius M. Eminescu:

“After an hour the pagans look like the winnowed husk.

That steeled hail drives them towards the Danube,

But, behind them the Romanian army is gloriously spread”

Here should be remarked the following idea: while depicting the direct confrontation between the Romanian army and the ottoman one, M. Eminescu doesn't aim at the historic reconstitution of this battle, he had just the intention to render the dramatic fight between these two armies, he emphasised the heroism of the Romanian army ruled by Mircea cel Bătrân.

Whereas the nib of the bard from Mircești, Vasile Alecsandri, creates verses dedicated to the ruler Ștefan cel Mare. The Danube also becomes the witness of our nation's glorious historical events:

For, suddenly what can we see?

Who is dashing in waves there?

That's the famous Ștefan the Great,

The ruler the invincible!

He assaults bravely the enemy

And he swims heroically

He cuts a rut, cuts nine ruts

Cuts the Danube in two parts

Ștefan and the Danube

Here should be mentioned the fact that: “One of the quotidian hypostasis in which we were used to find the writer is that of a traveller. Alecsandri travels a lot, He gives way to himself to feel fascinated by the exotic and picturesque surroundings met in the Far East, in Africa or on the Mediterranean shores. These far and wide travellings which kept him far away for long periods of time from his native country, didn't calm his passion for the beauties of the native surroundings where he used to wander with a great pleasure. However, the fact that the foreigners had poor ideas and knowledge of these surroundings, who whether have never heard about Moldova, or have never been attracted by this part of Europe caused pain to the poet (Craciun, 2004, p. 183).

The literary writings of many other famous romanian writers render rich and colourful sceneries of the native country's water resources, mountains, forests, flats, plains that inspire to great realisations in all the domains and the creation of literature masterpieces as well.

As to the nature's effect on the literary art there is the following statement: "Like all other writers of the lyrical and artistic realism, A. Vlahuță has many times mentioned the literary problem relating to the description of the nature... Regarding his psychological type, Vlahuță is rather a contemplative associative, he is the one of those admirers of the nature for whom a landscape is an opportunity for a reverie, the image of real things dissolves for them into subjective sensations or into feelings related to them" (Vianu, 1991, p. 165).

In the quality of arguments for these critical appreciations there are the following extracts that have been selected from the literary creation of the above mentioned author relating to the Danube: "This place is full of very old memories. There are eighteen centuries now since the roman legions used to pour forth, having the role to create a new nation on the devastated plains of Dacia".

What about the importance of this river Vlahuță, in his creation "România pitorească" narrates us as well the following: "Along the second sector of the inferior course (carpato-bakan), there was built the bridge "Friendsheep" between Giurgiu and Ruse, that assured a direct railway and a road connection between our country and Bulgaria".

There is a similar attitude towards the nation's beauties of nature illustrated in the literary art of Geo Bogza, characterised in the following way: "The features of his creation remain the same. A rustling nature, the prose author works the reader up into a frenzy, he cultivates the "exalted" beauty (in consensus with Breton) or at least it is palpitating of excitement. His literary manner excludes lack of participation, neutrality, indifference, the impartial creation" (Micu, 2000, p. 597).

There are selected the following facts about the Danube in the literary art of G. Bogza: "The latin poet Ovidius, exiled by the Emperor Augusto to the cost of the Pontus Euxinus, left to the posterity unforgettable verses in which can be felt... and admiration of the known places"

Many centuries later other inspired nibs were attracted by the miraculous zone of the Danube and especially by its mouths, the Delt of the Danube. This way, the supreme gift that "the beautiful blue Danube" makes to the land could not remain unnoticed by the so sensitive eye of the great French writer Jules Verne.

Many romanian writers such as: A. Vlahuță, M. Sadoveanu, V. Eftimiu, O. Goga, D. Pillat and others, who focused their attention on the region of the Danube, plucked at the pallet of their talent a various gamma of colours with the reason to paint the picturesque image of the Danube.

We can include into the list among the above mentioned authors the writer and the sea-service officer Jean Bart. Here we reproduce only some extracts from his creation dedicated to the Danube: “This way finishes the old Danube, which the antiquity used to divinize, considering it to be a sacred river. The Danube is classical, eternal”.

As for Zaharia Stancu, the author of the novel “Bare-footed”, he dedicates to the Danube the following lines:

“Danube, Danube,
A dustless way,

Where do you come from and where do you go? Your spring has its origin somewhere far away, in a large piece of rock, in dark and black forests. You pick up along so many different countries springs and rivers, and run restless away towards the sunrise, in order to rush your waters undone into the great and bitter sea. The bluish-grey and yellowish skies look in a mirror in your waters and the mountains see their true reflection, so do the slopes and trees and people. You collect smiles and pick up tears, and keep running further without hesitation towards the sunrise with a view to join the great and bitter sea, to make your waters one with the great waters of the world”.

It is true, for many years the Danube – a millenary witness of the historical events has picked up not only smiles but also many tears.

The verses of the avant-garde poet Ion Minulescu are in unison with the above statement:

“There go down the Danube stream,
Hurried and without a stopover,
Sad fishermen who wear in their voice
The mark of the white hospitals...”

On the Danube

Whereas the poet Andrei Ciurunga, a former political prisoner, is connected to the Danube by awful memories, that are expressed with much talent and sincerity in the verses below:

“Here we were burning and bleeding for years,
Here we tore up with teeth into ground,
And here wedded with boulders
One of forgotten legs or one of hands.

Heated under the whip of the hot wind,
Naked and ill in snowfall and in frost,
We strewed with thousands of bones
The land between the Danube and the Sea
While working hard, starving for bread and songs,
Curse words and fist blows we received.
To make way for tomorrow ships
With shovel we Dobrogea split.
The history which now is flowing changed
Will keep in mind and will preserve on pages
This awful Danube which is still pouring
From three mouths water and from the fourths one blood”

A. Ciurunga “*The Channel*”

And it is not by chance that on the bank of the river Prut or in the Delt of the Danube the other great Romanian writer – M. Sadoveanu – had the feeling that he catches the eternal movement is going on from the beginning of life on the earth and which will continue to the infinite.

The literary critic G. Călinescu offered the following appreciations about this well-known writer: “Similarly to the poetry of Eminescu, the poetry of Sadoveanu attains the deepest resources of our specificity” (Călinescu, 1993, p. 193):

It is remarkable that nature is, in the universe of Sadoveanu, observed carefully and with much interest, wildlife is the place where a human comes across the world of the fairy tales, of the myth, of the miracle. It is enough just to flip through one of the multitude of the volumes created by him with the title “An adventure in the Danube plain”.

Otherwise, namely to this highly appreciated writer belong the following incontestable statements: “Who has not stopped on the bank of the Danube? All languages of the world have been heard here”.

A great number of tourists from the whole world who visited the Delt said that it was a unique experience A French confesses that he saw the ballad way of the Danube and he wishes that day lasts forever. A Swede exclaims: “The Delt of the Danube? It is a dream and a reality happened simultaneously”, whereas a Norwegian expresses his hope to come again to this wonderful place, where emotions revive every moment. An English journalist confesses to the reader: “The Delt? It is an immense

peace, an infinite peace. Vast water area and reed. Vast and relaxing, inspiring idel calm and quiet”.

Here the environment still preserves its ecosystem intact from the technical-scientific progress. Namely this is the place where birds come to nest in spring from various continents. It is not by chance that the Delt of the Danube is known as the paradise of birds.

On the whole, the Delt of the Danube represents a natural area with a diversity of flora and fauna, raised as on the level of terrestrial so on the level of aquatic ecosystems.

It is evident that the Delt of the Danube is special, that is why it has been included into the patrimony of UNESCO and declared as the Reservation of the Biosphere.

Alongside the Carpathian Mountains and the Black Sea the Danube represents a major component of the natural Romanian framework. With its major roles for various spheres such as: naval communications, the system of the Electrical Energy, for the system of Irrigation, for water supply of the port – cities, for the Industry of Fishing and it has a rich Touristic potential. What is more the Danube has a great importace for the inhabitants of the whole Planet.

As a conclusion I will cite the exhortation of the deceased academician and scientific researcher J. Cousteau who after having visited the Delt of the Danube declared: “The Delt of the Danube represents a strategic reservation for the science and for the european tourism, everyone has the moral duty to defend and to protect this treasure offered to the humanity by the nature”

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