

THE SECTION BLACK WITHIN THE DICTIONARY OF CHROMATIC POETIC LANGUAGE (MIRCEA CĂRTĂRESCU, NICHITA DANILOV, FLORIN IARU, BOGDAN GHIU, ION STRATAN)

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<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.10514973>*

Abstract

The present study concerns a dictionary section, entitled *BLACK*, within the *Dictionary of Chromatic Poetic Language*, which is the result of an extensive study (published in some specialized journals) focusing on the poetic chromatic phenomenon based on the poetry of the Monday Cenacle members, led by Nicolae Manolescu.

The dictionary section entitled *BLACK* aims at investigating the values and poetic meanings of the chromonym “black” and the lexemes belonging to its semantic-poetic field (articles based on the authors: Mircea Cărtărescu, Nichita Danilov, Florin Iaru, Bogdan Ghiu, Ion Stratan that make up the Section *Black* (the Interpretation and Analysis part).

The investigation has an inter-and transdisciplinary character, encompassing linguistics (poetic lexicography), literature, psychology, visual arts, computer science. The metalanguage used shall be within the scope of interdisciplinarity, being circumscribed to several related theoretical fields: the theory of the imaginary, literary semiotics, stylistics, poetics, hermeneutics, reception theory, visual arts, ethnography, psychocriticism etc.

Keywords: Black, chromatic, Dictionary of Chromatic Poetic Language, poetic meanings

The possibility of elaborating a Dictionary of Chromatic Poetic Language, is based on the correlation between color, on the one hand, and the author’s imagination, sensitivity and vision, on the other. The author’s consciousness and unconsciousness, his/her instinct and spiritual forces, feelings, exercises of reverie (in bachelardian terms) are found in his/her undertaking the universe of colour through the act of creation [20, p.37].

In this context, it is necessary to point out the theoretical framework of our lexicographic enterprise as stated in other studies: the tradition and experience of developing poetic dictionaries in Romanian culture (everything that means development methodology, analysis grids, research tracks, etc.) registers a crucial moment in Romanian poetic lexicography through the contribution of IT specialists who, in 1999, through an automatic lemmatization program within the „Babeş-Bolyai” University of Cluj, created under the coordination of Marian Papahagi the *Concordance of B. Fundoianu’s poetry*. Later, the same model served as basis of the *Dictionary of Eminescu’s Poetic Language – The concordances of anonymous poetry* (2002), Botoşani, Axa Publishing House, 2 volumes, developed within the Faculty of Letters of the University Al. Ioan Cuza from Iasi under the guidance of professor D. Irimia. The second component of the *Dictionary of Eminescu’s Poetic Language*, which, in fact, represents the object of our main interest, is the *Dictionary of Signs and Poetic Meanings*. vol. I. Arts (2005), vol. II. *Primordial elements* (2007). Highly acclaimed in the experts’ metalexicographical reflections as a modern work for its interdisciplinary openness and for its structure (Ioana Vasileoiu), the Dictionary under discussion offers a lexicographical vision, “closer in conception to the Dictionnaire des symboles, done in coordination with Jean Chevalier and Alain Gheerbrant” [8, p. 5].

The macrostructure of the *Dictionary of chromatic poetic language*, built on the model of the *Dictionary of Eminescu’s Poetic Language* (Iasi), contains 2 main components (The *Concordances* and the *Dictionary of Signs and Poetic Meanings. Interpretation and Analysis*) and some secondary headings (**Encyclopedic Appendix: a) A medallion (the author’s photo)**, then b) **Brief biobibliographic data**; c) **Ethnographic information regarding the respective color**; **Illustration**).

The nomenclature of the respective Dictionary has been extensively developed in another study; here we will only reiterate that the overall architecture begins with the *Black* color and ends with the *White color*, and between the two are the fundamental primary colors (*Blue, Red, Yellow*) and the secondary ones (*Green, Orange, Purple*). The entries are not organized alphabetically (an already established criterion), the methodological criterion is used. Therefore, each volume will interpret not only the poetic meanings of the chromonyms per se (which will stand as titles of the volumes) – the *primary core*, but also other signs integrating into the semantic-poetic field of the corresponding color, constituting sub-addresses or sub-entries – *secondary core*. At this stage, we cannot estimate the exact number of *entries* in the dictionary, the literary reality will determine the extension, taking into account the possibility of a possible asymmetry (one volume can contain a large number of entries, while another on the contrary – each volume will have its own design).

The necessity and possibility of developing a dictionary of chromatic poetic language is substantiated by:

- *common reasons for research*: it is directed, as a rule, to variability, intrinsic quality of the way of existence and functioning of the language, and, in particular, to stylistic (diaphasic) variability manifested in the subjective level of speech; it develops knowledge of stylistic resources of chromonyms; allows the **automatic**

processing of texts in order to develop *Color Concordances*,

• *specific reasons for research*: it configures the literary phenomenon (imagination, author's vision, aesthetic sensibility) mediating one of the relevant components for the perception of the world - chromatics (the relevance of color in literature); thanks to the *Concordances* component, the dictionary can serve as a base-support for new applications in linguistic research in general. Thus, the dictionary will become a source of information that facilitates the understanding and interpretation of the literary phenomenon and linguistic research.

• *didactic reasons*: an effective working tool in ensuring the acquisition by undergraduates and master's degree philology students of the competences **to understand the mechanism of the language functioning in its entirety; a useful tool in substantiating and deepening the knowledge of the literary phenome-**

non, of the author's creativity and of the stylistic potential of an important lexical area for profiling the author's vision, fancy and sensibility, or literature creators go beyond the color itself, looking for its "inner" beauty;

• *motivational reasons*: **the idea of such a dictionary presents a challenge to specialists because of the complex problems it poses, requiring interdisciplinary research;**

• *reasons for synchronization and innovation*: **connection with the priority trends in modern lexicographic culture abroad, homologation of research and the contribution to the development of the field of poetic lexicography.**

Below, we present the lexicographic articles based on the authors: Mircea Cărtărescu, Nichita Danilov, Florin Iaru, Bogdan Ghiu, Ion Stratan that make up the **Section Black (the Interpretation and Analysis part)** in the Romanian and English versions:

Black

Mircea Cărtărescu



Sourcing photo: <https://ploiestitv.ro/2023/04/23/solenoid-de-mircea-cartarescu-premiat-de-los-angeles-times/>

b. June 1, 1956

Volumes of poetry:

- Headlights, Shop Windows, Photographs (1980);
- Air with Diamonds (collective volume, 1982);
- Love Poems (1983);
- Everything (1985);
- The Levant (epic, 1990);
- Love (1994);
- Double CD (anthology volume, 1998);
- Pluriverse (2 volumes, anthology, 2003);
- 50 Sonnets by Mircea Cărtărescu with Fifty Drawings

by Tudor Jebeleanu (2003);

- Double Album (2009);
- An Evening at the Opera (2009);
- Nothing. Poems (1988-1992) - (2010);
- Never ask for Help" (2020).

„Black is the color of sadness, sorrow, evil heart. Black is the grim hell of the other world, black is the devil and black are all the evil spirits. Only the dog, the cat and the black

A poetic sign that develops two directions of meaning in Cărtărescu's poetics: (I) Cărtărescu's black, assimilating the projection of the opaque archaic black (valences of fecundity, fertility); it builds up in an intimate color of maternal femininity that accompanies the embryonic vision and defines love as the equivalent of creation; (II) a reflex eminently of the funeral, the macabre, expression of death.

I. Black is strongly valued by M. Cărtărescu, being the essential chromonym around which the entire vision of the poem *Love* is built, where we are dealing with a hyper-representation of black, a true display of black, which we can say "spills over", returning 24 times within the limits of the same text and confirming once more the anarchic spirit proper to postmodernism. Black appears in association with a recurring motif in the author's work - the rainbow - the black rainbow (a black rainbow had risen above the mother). It is a black colour with effects of saturation and vibration – *it was a black rainbow and because of so much sparkling black/ the chamomile had darkened in the field.*

Totally absent from the spectrum, black becomes an invading color in Cărtărescu's rainbow, suppressing the other ones: red, orange, yellow, blue and indigo, except for the purple: *the red of the rainbow was black / and its orange was black / and its yellow was black / and its green was black / and its blue was black / and its indigo was black.* The colors here merge "like Cărtărescian lovers, passing into each other" [3, p. 281]. This cancellation of the chromatic barriers of the rainbow refers to the idea of an orgy, but here it is an orgy of black. Thus, the black rainbow, de-canonized, with modified definitional chromatic parameters, reduced to black and purple (a new order of the rainbow!), becomes for Mircea Cărtărescu a metaphorical equivalence of love as creation, understood in the initiatory sense, as a "ritual orgy" implying the elimination of

birds are kept at the man's house, which "the Evil one" cannot approach.

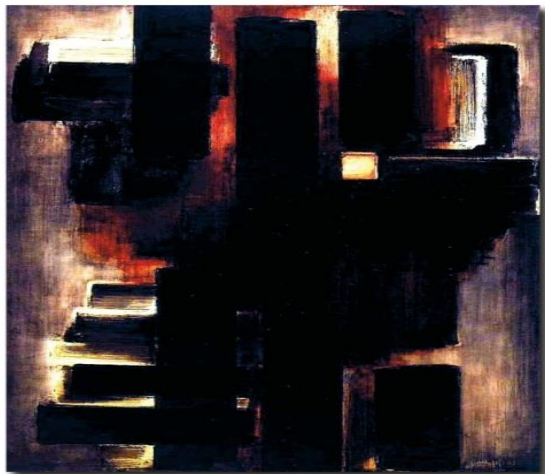
Black eyes, however, cause special love and sympathy among Romanians. He says that For eyes like blackberries/I bypass the woods! Black hair, whiskers and eyebrows are an ornament: His mustache, /is like the plume of a crow...The dark complexion is not unpleasant either, on the contrary, it is quite often pleasant, because "the black earth bears the best fruits!"

However, Romanians do not like black clothes and we meet entire counties where, apart from a black cap or hat, nothing black is worn. And if we meet this color in fabrics for the home, it only makes up the field on which there are various designs, colored in different facets.

When someone dies in a house, the remaining members don't put on "bright" clothes, but "dark" ones, with red and black background. "The dyeing of the soul" cannot be shown in the black robe, which is commonly missing" [18, p. 162].

"The Romanian women make the black color with bark and grains of black alder, with bark of plum and walnut, with walnut shells, with oregano, with branches of sorghum and mulberry, with bean pods, with dandelion flower, with cinnamon, with sour stone, sea salt, green vitriol and with the rust of the streams and stagnant water." [idem, p. 38].

Paintings



Pierre Soulages, juillet 1953. Sourcing image : dépliant "Les sujets de ... vertetplume.com

all borders, complete merging up to the "return to the primordial, chaotic state" from which creation arises. Mircea Cărtărescu's orgies tend to acquire fabulous proportions, engaging everything in their mechanics - time, space, ontological registers, also contaminating the register of the inanimate ontological referential, the banal world of the everyday concrete, the surrounding objects, etc.: love! the radiators roared/- love! the curtains/- love! the auto parts stores/- love! the rats.

The chromatic austerity of the Cărtărescuian rainbow, pushed to the level of monochrome (the purple finding its archaic sub-black meanings) descends to serious accents of meaning and primordial symbolism of black. Understood in this way, the black rainbow becomes a profound symbol in the economy of the poem, through which the author restores the archaic, dulled resonances of blackness. Loaded with the prestige of origin, black, in the equation of the poem, refers to its primordial, fertile and fruitful valences. It is precisely this dimension that is essential and relevant in Cărtărescu's concept of Eros. The black rainbow outlines the fertilizing idea of Eros, in the sense that its finality is fruition, creation, metamorphosis (change of the initial state). In their seeming incompatibility, the elements of the association rainbow + black (the black rainbow), oppose and evoke each other, at the same time, if we place ourselves in a register of the symbolic understanding of things. Black is seen in direct relation with a certain feminine spirit, with maternal femininity. The black rainbow imagined with "soft, organ-like pipes" symbolically sums up a form of maternal femininity, related to that of spaces - natural cavities, sui generis wombs that portends the embryonic vision. In this line of ideas, black denotes the intimate color of maternal femininity. There is also a game of labyrinthine forms present here: the "soft, organ-like pipes" of the black rainbow leave impressions of labyrinthine gorges, configuring a geometry of sexuality. Black here appears as an adjective that involves the intimacy of the "subject" [1, p. 73]. Following Bachelard's line of thinking, we may say that black, denoting a quality by definition, in the poem, is not so much a "state" as a becoming.

Black "has all the colors", all the powers, sums them all up and refers to the inner powers of matter. The prodigious image of the black rainbow is built on a paradox, on opposite values (on a deep discord!) that boosts anarchic effects. The black color, in this dialectic of things, would be "the intimate abode of colors" [ibidem., p. 26]:

and all the black objects cast colored shadows

and the shadow of mother, father, cast a colored shadow

It would be interesting, in this order of thought, to reveal Gilbert Durand's opinion, according to which, in general, the color "always refers us [...] to some substantial femininity"



Kazimir Malevich, *Black Square* (1915).

Sourcing image: <https://artfilemagazine.com/black-square-by-kazimir-malevich/>



Vassily Kandinsky, *Pointy black* (1931).

Sourcing image: <https://artvee.com/dl/pointy-black#00>

[10, p. 275], "multi-coloration being directly linked [...] to the engram of maternal femininity, to the positive worth of women, of nature, of the center, of fertility" [*ibidem.*].

Cărtărescu's Eros takes on ritual forms, being spectacular and fabulous through the hyper accumulation of descriptive elements, overwhelming due to the viscosity of the macroscopies and microscopies of a delirious fantasy (there was a ship made of cobwebs / traveling on the edge of the black rainbow / like on the edge of a border trimmed handkerchief).

The poem reveals a framework that assimilates the values of a fertilization ritual in which the black color plays a primary role, individualizing the "objects of worship": the "black plate", associated with the symbolism of the "vessel", the container, through the symbolic representation of the place where miracles take place, the womb in which a new birth is conceived, the reservoir of life [6, p., 429]; the milk ("a thread of black milk"), "the primordial food, the food archetype" [11, p. 320], becomes the vehicle of the black color, implicitly, of fertility/maternity. "The black woman" suggests the cult of the Great Mother, the primordial mother, the prima materia (in specialized literature the kinship between mater and materia is highlighted), and in the verse a tram driver enters a black depot, a euphemism for sexuality/fertility is outlined, a postmodernist foreshadowing of the fulfillment of sexuality:

a cat opened its eyes and saw a black plate

in which a black woman poured him a bit of black milk.

a tram driver entered a black depot.

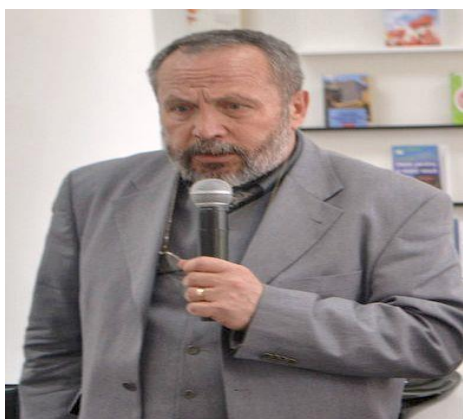
a butterfly sat on a black wall.

only the rainbow still sparkled

throwing black flames

II. Correlative of death, the black color updates the eerie, mournful, tragic register: *death will come. highlights will be black. the photos will still retain a black breath.*

What makes the lyrical selftragically feel the imminence of the end is the fact that death confiscates the possibility of loving in a telluric (corporeal) way by dematerializing the being: crystal eyes, how about doing without a place to make love (...); We will laugh blackly between our fingers full of lips/when they will tear the needle and the skin of our cheeks/and we will not be able to love, separated by the blanket with bars; the photographs will slowly unfold the petals/in the wind that scatters on the tram tracks/snow and organs (Elegy. After Catullus). Black reflects the attitude of the poet, imbued with a bitter taste in the face of this fatality. At the same time, we notice the evanescence of the metaphysical dimension of Eros.

Black**Nichita DANILOV**

Sourcing photo:

https://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nichita_Danilov

b. April 7, 1952

Volumes of poetry:

- *Cartesian Wells* (1980);
- *Black Field* (1982);
- *Harlequins by the Edge of the Field* (1985);
- *Poems* (1987);
- *Over Things, Nothingness* (1990);
- *Ragged Ear* (1992);
- *The Blind Bridegroom* (1995)
- *Over Things, Nothingness/ Au dessus des choses, le néant* (1997, bilingual edition translated by Emanoil Marcu);
- *Nine Variations for Organ* (1999);
- *Scene with walls and doors* (2000, Romanian - English bilingual edition (translated by prof. Sean Cotter, University from Michigan, USA);
- *Souls from Second Hand* (2000);
- *In the desert and on the waters* (2000);
- *The Golden Shadow, Melancholy* (2000);
- *THE CENTURY* (Junimea Publishing House, 2003);
- *Second Hand Souls* (2000);
- *Nouă variațiuni pentru orgă/ Nine Variations for Organ* (2004);
- *The Black Angel* (2003, translated in Russian by Elena Loghinovski);
- *Ferapont* (2005);
- *Chastity Belt* (2007)

A poetic sign that reveals its own duality, (I) interfering mainly with the paradigms of death, fratricide sin, loneliness, pessimism, deformity, as well as with (II) the paradigm of birth.

Characterized by a picturesque and a remarkable visual expressiveness ("la qualité maîtresse"), becoming a veritable "poetry of the eye", Nichita Danilov's poetry privileges a particular chromatic dominant - *black* - which the poet accepts in the form of a "concentrate of inner tension" through which he manages to obtain maximum expressiveness and meaning with an obvious economy of means. Although the poet cultivates a pictorial poetry (a poetry of the eye), all the force of the black in this case, lies "beyond the eye", in the imaginative force, in the "labyrinths" of the connotative field of the black, which in N. Danilov's work becomes "a color from which one cannot escape". The poetic paradigm of black interferes here with the paradigms of death, fratricide sin, loneliness, pessimism, deformity, etc.

The poem *Cain*, for example, evoking the biblical scene of fratricide, records 12 occurrences of the black chromonym. Thus, the *black* color in *Cain* is a more meaningful black, "a blacker black" than in other poems in which we find it, as it also offers a "visual show": it is a subtle transformation of the reader's / "viewer's" perspective: the pulsation from the inside of the black.

(*Cain*, Cain, /why are you so **black**, /Cain? (*Cain*) penetrates outward, resonating chromatically (the evoked scenery/phenomena become "blackened" (the snow is black and wet (*Cain*); the rain is **black** and cold (*Cain*). The black associated with rain and snow gives the feeling of flow, fluidity, saturation, it becomes visual, penetrating, tactile, hiding in its substantial concentrate the feeling of deep evil. The black in the poem *Cain* becomes a semantic, "tentacular" key point, with an extension throughout the text – "center of ideational and aesthetic irradiation".

The concentration of the entire biblical episode and its drama in an aesthetic formula of a chromatic nature - black - a preliminary formula of sin - this is the author's original stylistic solution, demonstrating another way of capitalizing on the poetic resources of the given chromonym. The autonomous value of black is weighty in itself (in the collective cultural mindset), but also its combinative force in the oxymoronic constructions "black snow", "black rain" is impressive – "the meeting of opposing things".

The reader thus becomes a "witness to/participant in" the fratricide through the sensation that this particular black provides. The recurrence of black and the unusual associations impose a certain kind of vibration on black, amplifying the desolate atmosphere,



Brudermord, Cain and Abel (1919).

Sourcing image: <https://artvee.com/dl/cain-and-abel-brudermord-2#00>



Odilon Redon, La Mort – mon ironie dépasse toutes les autres!(1889)

Sourcing image: <https://artvee.com/dl/la-mort-mon-ironie-depasse-toutes-les-autres-death-my-iron-surpasses-all-others#00>

which makes you feel these “precipitates” of black in the depths of the flesh, the biblical character Cain himself dissolves in this spectacle of black. Thus, black in N. Danilov’s poetry becomes a dominant, about which we can say that here “the black embraces you and by embracing you, you can no longer look at it, it is the black that looks at you”, recalling Malevich and his square, of which you cannot escape, it holds you captive to its color. If we try an exercise of intersemiotic translation (Umberto Eco), the entire poem could be translated into the language of painting through Malevich’s black square.

The index system is also a marker of the synergy of the given poetic text. The synergistic potential of the index (in fact, this is an indexical cumulation: the disjunctive conjunction OR + the adverb MAYBE) of textualized poetic paradigms manifests itself in the tendency to semantically homogenize the heterogeneity of the textualized poetic paradigm (“what semantics distinguishes the index unifies”, i.e. establishes a higher level semantic homogeneity, establishing interparadigmatic relations within parallel textualizations)

It’s snowing OR MAYBE it’s raining
Through snow OR MAYBE through rain
The man is white OR MAYBE *black*
Red OR MAYBE *black* birds
It’s snowing OR MAYBE it’s raining
It’s raining on the field OR MAYBE it’s snowing
It’s snowing OR MAYBE it’s raining
Through snow OR MAYBE through rain
His hair is blonde OR MAYBE *black*
It’s snowing on him OR MAYBE it’s raining

We notice the paradigmatic index OR, without the adverb MAYBE in 2 occurrences towards the end of the poem, which attests to the definitive semantic homogenization, the total contextual equivalence of the associated elements (white=black, blue=black).

His face is white OR black
His eyes are blue OR black

Textualized poetic paradigms are extremely contradictory, or, as Crisu Dascălu stated in his work *Dialectic of Poetic Language*, it is contradiction that is the “sufficient condition for the existence of the paradigm as a whole” [7, p.32].

The poem also involves other levels of meaning through the recurrence of symbols related to the biblical episode of Cain’s fratricide (the lamb...) which also acquires artistic force due to its obsessive character and the combination with chromatic lexemes (the red lamb). The associations structured with the help of given chromonyms fully articulate the semantic sphere of fratricide in the text. The construction “field of corpses”, with 7 recurrences in



Vassily Kandinsky, Landscape with a trumpet-blowing (1909).

Sourcing photo: <https://artvee.com/dl/landscape-with-a-trumpet-blowing-rider#00>



William Blake, Cain flees (1825)

Sourcing photo: <https://www.artbible.info/art/large/624.html>

the text, also participates in the global process of signification: the plural here can implicitly mean the murder of all the descendants of Abel - an entire tribe, but also the "living corpse" of Cain in addition to Abel's. Thus, black is the color of Cain, the color of lack of faith, sin, disobedience, etc.

The analysis of the occurrences of the poetic sign *black* in N. Danilov's poetry reveals the fact that it is found, essentially, in the following poetic paradigms:

Death - the **Black** Angel (*The Black Angel*) - the **black** bell (*The Black Angel*) - the **black** shadows of crosses and churches (*The clay is disturbed and mixed again*) - Since then we fall into a **black** halo (*Poem of the Gates*) - A **shadow** falls over my father (*Son of Man*) - I lie under the ground and listen to the **black** song of the night birds (*April Month*) - **Black** sun, sun of the end, light up my song (*April Month*) - The **Black** sun (*Lullaby*) - A **black** bird is screaming, floating above the barren landscape (*The Season Clock: coming out of winter*), etc.

Birth - A kind of luminous **black** or a cool, bright gray (*Twilight*)

The human being: The man is white or maybe *black* (*Cain*)

Mythical/biblical beings: _ Cain, Cain, /why are you so **black**, /Cain? (*Cain*)

Parts of the human body: face - His face is white or *black* (*Cain*); **eyes**: his eyes are blue or **black** (*Cain*); **hair**: his hair is blonde or maybe **black** (*Cain*); His hands were big, /his locks were **black** and his eyes were of deep blue (*The Sacrifice*)

The natural animal ontology: And while he is thinking/ a procession/drawn by four **black** horses comes out of the city (*The Man with A Pipe*)

Inner states: The anguish/the remorse: Red or maybe black birds/ circle over his crest and scream (*Cain*)

Sin/evil: Tens of times raised to the **blackest** power!

(*Universe in balance*) - An increasingly **black** wind was blowing through the streets (*The 20th Century*)

Sadness/Loneliness: Just a great and endless restlessness. The **black** restlessness of solitude (*The Poem of the Gates*) - A sad Wednesday, a **gray** day (*A Sad and Grey Wednesday*) - Like two calm and pale lotuses as **black** as black waters. Ah! (*Poem O*) - Accompanied by a **black** flock (*Serene*)

Refuge: I'm looking for a nook, a black hole, a canal mouth in the azure / to hide like a terrified rat, forever, forever (*Arpeggios*)

The natural cosmic meteorological ontology: The snow is **black** and wet (*Cain*); the rain is **black** and cold (*Cain*)

In an effort to conceptualize the key moments of existence (death and birth), the *black*



Picasso, The musician (1972)

Sourcing image: <https://artchive.ru/pablocicasso/works/487488~Muzykant>

reveals its own duality: in the poet's vision, both death and birth "come out from under the same chromatic garment" - death (*black angel; black sun*) - birth (*light black*).

In conclusion, **black** in N. Danilov's poems is large ly overlaid with the paradigms of death, fratricide sin, loneliness, pessimism, deformity, etc. The semantic-poetic vectors of black in N. Danilov's work, although they identify with nuances/stylizations and aesthetic refinements, still are not far from the matrix of the Romanian collective mindset in which "*The black color stands for sadness, grief, sad heart. The black is the grim hell of the other world, the devil is black and all the evil spirits are black*" [18, p. 162].

BLACK
Bogdan GHIU



b. July 5, 1958

Volumes of poetry:

- The Poetic Work (2017);
- (The Cardboard Poem) Traces of destruction on Mars (2006);
- The Author's Manual (2004);
- Pants and Shirt (2000);
- Archipelagos (1997);
- The Art of Consumption (1996)
- The One-Meter Side Poem (1996);
- The Author's Manual (1989)



Vassily Kandinsky, Trente (1937).

Sourcing image: <https://www.centrepompidou.fr/en/ressources/oeuvre/ca9ELe>

A poetic sign that participates substantially in structuring the imaginary in Bogdan Ghiu's poetry, namely by referring to the chromonym white. Thus, the black color, through symmetry, postulates the existence of white and vice versa, configuring a poetic imaginary in the colors of the chess game – black and white: *The white dot (which already exists)/and the **black** dot (which I put down) (Two dots (Poem))*. Decisive for Bogdan Ghiu's imagination, the black and white chromatic opposition refers to charcoal drawing or engraving, and sometimes to graffiti art. The poet, as a true engraver, who uses the fundamental signs – the dash and the dot – to obtain complex images, capitalizes on the dot, the simple fundamental and extremely economical sign (white dot, black dot) to express profound visions. In this context, it is appropriate to evoke the symbolism of the dot: “The geometrical definition of a dot is that of an abstract quantity that does not consist of parts, and, therefore, it is invisible and immeasurable. The dot gives rise to and also marks the extremity of a line, but it also constitutes the “boundary condition of the abstraction of a volume” and has a complex symbolic meaning: that of the center, origins, fire, the principle of emanation and its duration return; moreover, it indicates the creative power and the end of all things” [4, p. 209].

In general, the chromatic opposition of black and white is associated with elements-concepts of writing: the page, the period, the letter, etc. The chromatic spectrum attributed to the concepts mentioned above is extremely poor: in addition to black and white (in a chromatic duet as a semantic-poetic duet), we also record serene (1 occurrence), red (3 occurrences), green (3 occurrences), gray (1 occurrence).

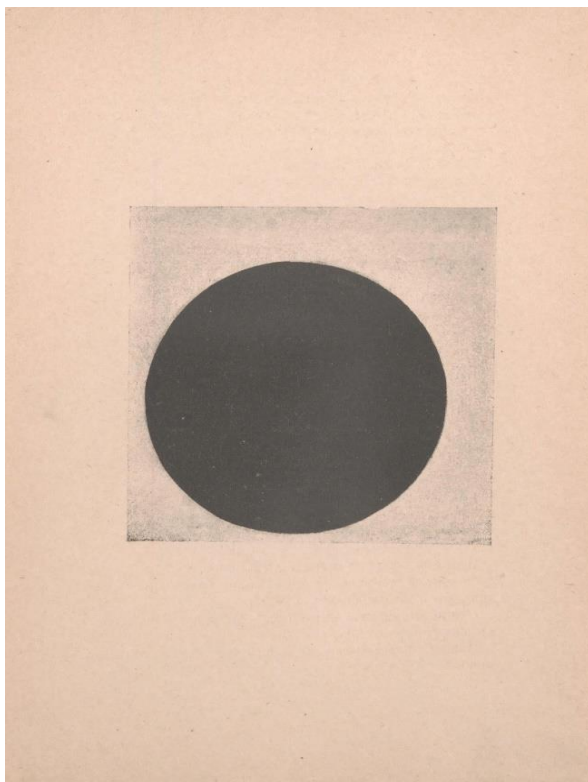
In the poem *The Mission and the Poet's Destiny*, we explicitly find the image of the dot as the world (or the world as a dot): *To show us how far we can go and from what distance, looking back, over the shoulder, the world becomes a dot, which is already a letter, large, empty, with which something else begins (the promised text)*

Bogdan Ghiu tends to explain some of his poetic concepts himself, probably out of concern for the way his writing is received by the lecturer. Thus, the poem *Daniel, Virgil (a celebration and an explanation)* illustrates this fact: *The poets line up not one above the other, but side by side, like two letters placed to promise meaning. They are buried where meaning lies, close at hand, near, below, here. From a living, **blackletter**, with the prisoner's blood, which alone fills the page and makes the word, the text, everything, they gradually become a **white**, empty **page**, which we are given to write on [...] The poets' mission is to become a **white**,*



Johannes Molzahn, Roar of Space (1919).

Sourcing image: <https://artvee.com/dl/roar-of-space#00>



Kazimir Malevich, Black Circle (1919), Sourcing image: <https://artvee.com/dl/black-circle/#00>

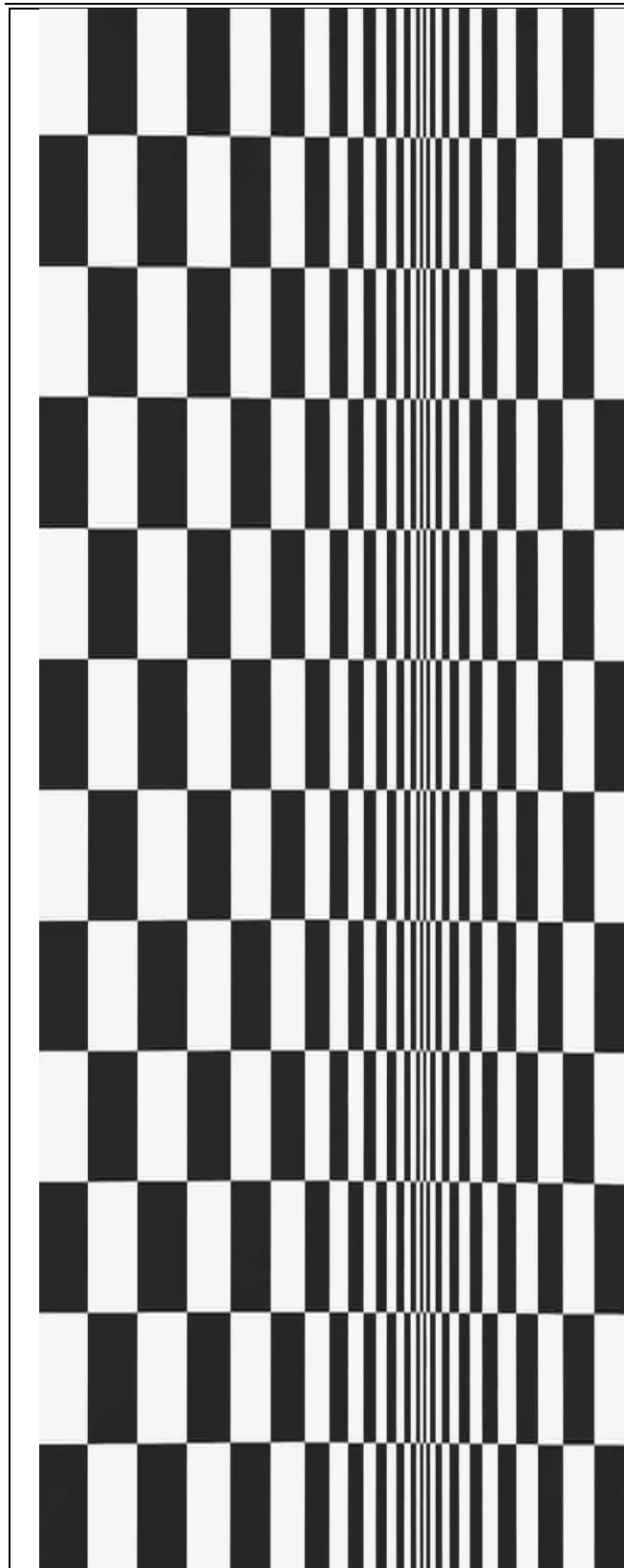
living, dazzling **page**, in which the meaning of future writings is buried. Their words are a writing table. A page that already turned into word, that cannot be read, because it was not written. He who has ever sat in front of a white page (...) cannot go(...) beyond it. He won't be able to stay here. No matter how hard he tries to just write, to glide, to be able to get back with the black, his pen tip will tear the paper, come out (descend) into the world. He, who, the only one, has ever stood above, has felt how many times his being has become the starry sky of this place.

From a semiotic point of view, the black and white chromonyms constitute a system¹ in the poetic code called Bogdan Ghiu in which the white dot is the expression of the creation of the world/divine, and the black dot - of the creation of the poet. Just as each element of a semiotic system/code structures its units of signification due to correspondences with the other element or according to the relations it maintains with it, the question arises whether the white dot and the black dot (the white and the black) are polar opposites, if they are irreconcilable, mutually exclusive?(With my writing, which is getting smaller, more closed, like cacti in the desert, trying to fill the large, cold, already written pages of the world/ Me, to write between the lines of others, over them. To turn the black page, written with heavy pressure, into a white, light page again. I do not write to fill pages, but to clean the only ones that exist, to provide white, clean pages (Fragment). Ultimately, what does this game of black-white opposition (regardless of the nature of the determinate) imply? There are poets who do not even write, who only prepare the future blank pages of poetry (Daniel, Virgil (a celebration and an explanation) or You write and write, the text goes on the page, covers the page with text, with more and more pages of text, which are no longer pages, but text, little by little you become a page, white, empty, threatening, unbearable. You yourself are reduced to the white page within you. You become a simple, clear sentence. Against the clause that is the world. The only one. (Poem. To Mircea Ivănescu)

They made us sensitive to emptiness! Their writing spreads like a black page over the face of the world, black over her black eyes

I write with a period. I write with the period and I can't stop. I will cross-hatch the page! I will divide it and then color it black; "The Murder of Babies" "The Murder of Cockroaches". I give up writing. I cross-hatch and color.

White dot – black dot; white page – black page; simple sentence – clause; "The Murder of babies" – "The Murder of cockroaches" - all



Bridget Riley (1961), Movement in Squares

Sourcing image:

<https://artsandculture.google.com/asset/movement-in-squares-bridget-riley/dwGpQ5o3Dc4FrQ>

these are images of two worlds: The world of divine creation - the world of poetic creation(writing). It is similar to the same principle as in the game of chess, where “the very fact of putting two values in opposition gives the black or white their meaning. In this perspective, neither the white nor the black pre-exist opposition. These oppositions are purely negative: the value of black is not to be white and vice versa” [17, p.120]. The black here develops the meanings of creation, through black the poet-writer becomes the “emitter”/ “creator” of black semantic worlds on the white page, these two dot worlds obviously having common valences. You don't have to write much, write just to signpost: there is no smoke (black, negativity, shadow) without fire, but let the fire be heavenly (the “origins” already gone, essentially evanescent: alive through black traces) (Non-poetry). This symbolic black-and-white register enters into a fascinating chromatic alchemy *sui generis* reversible in the sense that the white becomes black and vice versa in Bogdan Ghiu's crucible of writing: *To turn the black page, written with heavy pressure, into a white, light page again* (Fragment); There's only one page for/ everyone when it's over I get back/till it becomes **black**, corpulent (*How to escape, in the end*); Their writing spreads like a black page over the face of the world, black over its black eyes (Hașurăm și colorăm. O aventură a cunoașterii). The white dot is thus the graphic representation of the world, and the black dot is the representation of one's own creation.

Another poem *On the way [to Sighisoara]* reveals another chromatic occurrence – the **black blood** - metaphor of a medieval past: *With another letter, that of light/hiding the darkness, / with a consonant - medieval object/obstructing breathing, /with the black dry blood. /The breath is the road. /The wind is the light of the night.* The black chromonym here is involved in anticipating the idea of the past of Sighisoara, in general, the road induces an introspective state, activating the most important emotions and ideas in a person, a road to Sighisoara - a place, a core of authenticity, of the root equivalent to it is a reminder of oneself, of the part of me which is related to a certain sense of kinship, of mystery, of fullness.

In conclusion, the chromatic opposition of black and white in Bogdan Ghiu's writing responds to the statement of Heraclitus from Ephesus: “What tends to separate unites from the most different tones, the most beautiful harmony is composed and everything is born from discord” (*apud.* 13, p.8).

BLACK FLORIN IARU



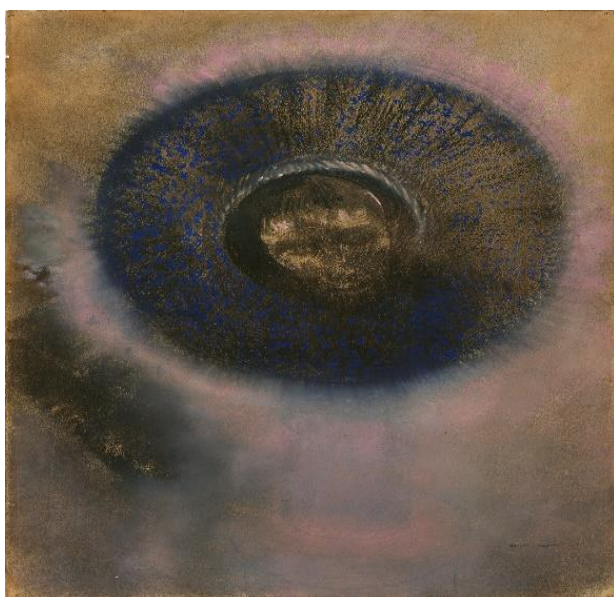
Sourcing photo:

<https://www.revistadepovestiri.ro/interviu-cu-florin-iaru/>

b. May 24, 1954

Poetry volumes:

- Songs for Crossing the Street (1981);
- Air with Diamonds (1982);
- At the Highest Fiction (1984);
- I'm going crazy and I regret it (1990);
- Selected Poems (2002);
- The Loser of Bucharest (2011);
- Stories with Changed Endings (2013);
- The Green Breasts (2017)



Odilon Redon, Head within an Aureole (about 1894-1895)

Sourcing image: <https://artvee.com/dl/head-within-an-aureole#00>

A poetic sign that admirably illustrates the idea of creation, the matrix black, fecund and fertile.

The poem *Song to Pass the Time* develops the image of a *black sea* which, in fact, is a metaphor for the uncreated, the primordial chaos pre-existing the creation of the world, outlined by playful effects: *There was a **black sea** - ah -and there was a **black**/ salty island there tra la la... We can't help but notice that this playful tra-la-la brings with it an absolutely charming flair.*

The associative networks in this poem are formed in centers emanating from the following groups of related images and words:

Black: *black sea – black cave – black woman – darkness–coffee dregs*

The Uncreated / Primordial Chaos: *black sea – darkness – damn the sea – black woman – black cave*

Life/ the pulsation of life/ creation of the world: *a salty island - my chest swelled with longing bouncing from the ribs - damned rally - soaking the sand with the blood from my body brought by the tides, in the dark, towards the upper island - let's come up like grass to green nature - in the dark, life stripped itself even more – and my heart, gloved, was pumping - Come on, heart! push atom after atom through the trombone transformed sometimes in a tuba sometimes in a trombone - a hearty pump*

Matter: *chest, ribs, sternum, head, heart, atom*

Death: *and the other - damned one slowly sang – paddles of motionless death - the upper island - climbs hurriedly to the sky - the dead sea was an unmoved gate - they were erased – to hurl to the fish*

Sea: *island–very vast waves - tide – whaleboat - clauses - ships - moving ships*

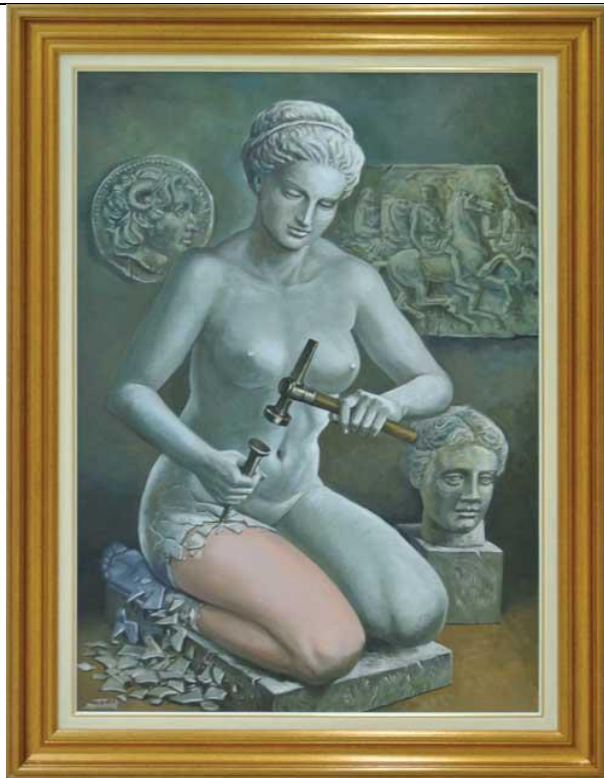
Woman: *black woman - mother*

As we can easily see, the poem presents an extremely complex and subtle associative network, organized around the following ideas: *black, eternal, matter, life, death, sea*. The resulting network outlines serious, fundamental ideas of existence rendered in a mixture of playful effects and voluptuous aggressiveness – their obsessive quality, evidenced by the overlay of the second text *La negre*. Associative networks have a serious affective charge.

The poem *La negre*, develops the image of the irreversible flow of time, in turn, generating the following associative networks:

The flow of time: *how do white-dwarfs die–how do the monstrous stars fade away - how I fell idly from 23/into 24/into 25 years ago and so on - a falling drop - the monstrous stars are fading - the century is coming*

Human diversity: *white race – black race – yellow race*



Valentin Tănase,
Cercul Militar Național | Expoziția de pictură a artistului
plastic Valentin Tănase (cmn.ro)



Valentin Tănase, Între alb și negru, Cercul Militar
Național | Expoziția de pictură a artistului plastic Valentin
Tănase (cmn.ro)

The chromatic: white – black (black: black race – black brothel – black - a flood of black)

– yellow – indigo – pink –candy-pink – maroon

The universe/everything: the universe is the insane fancy of a potato

Life: a whore lying colourfully

The downfall: whore – decadent – brothel – melancholy disease - nervous - sadness – suffer

Creation: sings - chirps - poetry - has me on a bed of paper - the reader – a flood of black

Existential routine: arms full of receipts – candy pink or maroon event background.

Psychocritical work involves the overlapping of texts and the search for obsessive elements [idem, p. 66]. Thus, the overlapping of the texts and the establishment of the associative networks reveal differences between the subject and the network, the points of coincidence reaffirming themselves in the chromatic aspect (black). In general, we must mention that associative networks structure fantasies, they are nothing more than the superficial “weave of fantasy figures” [idem, p. 108].

The associative network in the first poem is linked to an unconscious female image - the female, maternal, germinating figure of the black sea. Here the archetypal features of the myth of the Great Mother stand out - a metaphor that structures the poem and enhances the idea of creation (the transformation of primordial chaos into the cosmos). And in the second poem, the associative network juxtaposes both a latent female figure under the semblance of life, plasticized through metaphor: *Beautiful is this intensely colored whore who makes love to me on a paper bed*, and an unconscious male figure - the myth of the creator, valuing creation as an act of triumph over the passage of time and, implicitly, over death, or “Creation remains something else [...]. It affirms the absurd, the miracle of a time flowing in the opposite direction to entropic time, the positive victory over death” [idem, 233]. Ultimately, an inventory of a female network marked by an aggressive, degrading drive is coagulated.

Thus, in both poems, we witness a sometimes intense, sometimes diffuse feminine presence in an aquatic form (*black sea* - a maternal, fluid nebula) or spiritual form (*women with names of decadent poetry*). For Florin Iaru, the woman and the sea are images (avatars) of creation, or, in other words, they correspond to a feminine essence, which is considered “closest to origins, to genesis” [12, 27]. This is how the female presence is explained, in various forms, in both poems. We can say that what Ch. Mauron claimed regarding Mallarmé is also true for Florin Iaru, namely that “the female figure represents an internal object,



Aubrey Vincent Beardsley, Oriental dancer (1898)

Sourcing image: https://artchive.ru/aubreybeardsley/works/548326~Vostochnaja_tantsovschitsa



Aubrey Vincent Beardsley, Virgilius the Sorcerer (1893).

Sourcing image: <https://artvee.com/dl/virgilius-the-sorcerer#00>

therefore a part of the writer's personality" [19, p. 368].

Comparing the associative networks highlights the fact that in both poems *theblack* develops archetypal meanings (valences of matrix, germination, creation), only that in the poem *Song toPast the Time*, *black* foreshadows the idea of creation at the level of the macrocosm, and in the poem *La negre* the chromonym *black* suggests the act of creation at the microcosm level:

No no noand no
nothing else butblack

a flood of black

on the **candy pink or maroon**

event background

A conflict is projected between the creative self and the social self:

And yet

I wish I didn't suffer from the disease of melancholy

of having loved a woman with the name of decadent poetry

to have left with arms full of bills and indigo

when the century comes to me

against the candy-pink or maroon event background

In this poem, Florin Iaru mentions the so-called "forced prostitutes" à la Baudelaire: *Beautiful is this intensely colored whore who makes love to me on a paper bed*. These metaphorical structures project the equivalence creation = love. Creation/the creative act seduces through "the mixture of voluptuousness, fecundity and energy that love produces" [23, p. 64]. In the economy of human existence, the creator represents, as Florin Iaru suggests in the poem *La negre*, a distinct human variety – a *sui generis* race comparable to the white, the black or the yellow (which he not accidentally evokes in the text).

Consequently, in the analyzed texts, *black* admirably illustrates the idea of creation, the matrix black, fecund and fertile. The "*flood of black*" is "aquality" that shapes one part of the self - the creative self, the other, marked by *pink-candy or maroon events*, representing the social self, the relationship with the world/the Universe - the beloved - the reader.

CHOCOLATE SECONDARY CORE

Ion STRATAN



Photo source: <https://humanitas.ro/autori/ion-stratan>
b. October 1, 1955 – d. October 19 2005

Volumes of verses:

- *Five Songs for the Civilizing Heroes* (1983);
- *Light from the Fire* (1990);
- *Luxury* (1992);
- *The Russian Roulette* (1993);
- *The Undoing* (1994);
- *A Good Day to Die* (1995);
- *Sing, Goddess, the Wrath* (1996);
- *More than Death* (1997);
- *On the Side of the Dead* (1998);
- *The Coffee with Salt* (1998);
- *Soft Water* (1998);
- *The Verb Cross* ([2000);
- *Snow in the night* (2000);
- *A World of Words* (2001)

Chocolate – the secondary core of the chromonym black (at I. Stratan) – I. Poetic sign illustrating the aesthetics of the concept of time.

The poet outlines a key coordinate – the aspect of time that he understands and expresses artistically in the form of chocolate. Thus, in an expressive form, the time takes the “face” of chocolate, in which the sense of taste is dominant, although the chromatic allusion is also preserved, capturing the dynamics of black and the vibrations of brown. I. Stratan imagines time as a synesthetic representation, the chocolate being the syncretic core of taste, flavor, color, and shapes. In the poem *The chocolate roof*, it edifies itself into an excellent existential metaphor of a playful nature - a metaphor of time/of human existence throughout history and civilization. Beyond the classical rigor, which situates our daily bread as an expression of human existence in the plane of historical existence, the author uses a reason that evokes a non-essential product, secondary from a vital point of view, the prerogative of sufficiency, comfort, consumerism. The chocolate motif amplifies the playfulness, also induces notes of sarcasm. The essential cognitive mechanism through which the conceptual scheme of I. Stratan's poetry works is based on the frustration of the reader's expectation, who expecting to find certain semantic representations that refer to essential realities, vital for the human condition, becomes frustrated by the fact that these expectations are overturned (And we'll see how the world exists/For the dark chocolate).

The juxtaposition of chocolate, a less conventional image for the aesthetic expression of the idea of existence in time, reveals its protean poetic potential. The poet marks the stages of the evolution of human society - historical time in relation to cosmic time - through a fan of chocolate of all colours (“gustatory and visual incantations sui generis”) and consistencies.

The network of associations that emerges from the poem is as follows:

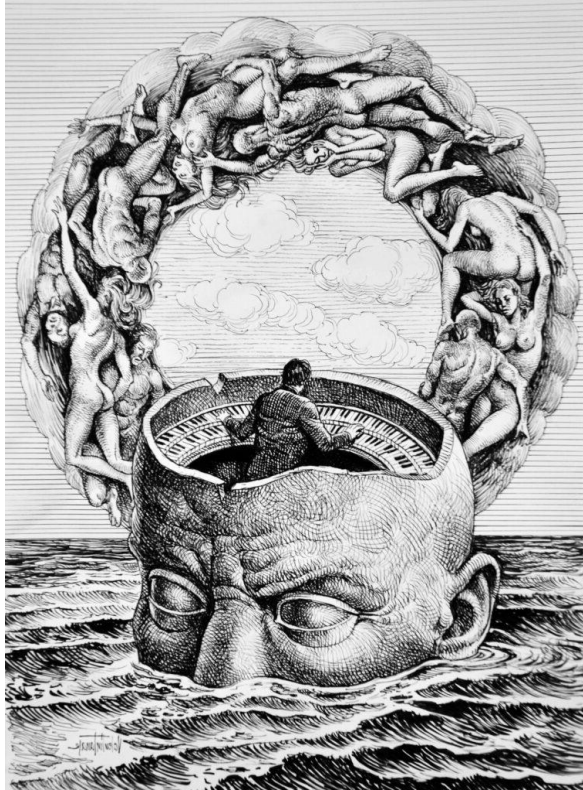
Cosmic Time/Universe: roof (the chocolate roof) – the world – stars

Existence in historical time: the black chocolate – slightly bitter chocolate–milk chocolate - Chinese chocolate – peanut chocolate – cream chocolate – a chocolate bar – marzipans -

Historical time: slavery - Middle Ages - heretics - class struggle - state taste of history - sword fighting - cannons - timeless histories

Chromatic: dark - milk chocolate – cream chocolate – chocolates

Chocolate, the gustatory and chromatic “receiver” of temporal patterns, through its varied range offers an assumption about a historical time (concrete historical epochs), which, however, allows itself to be recreated in



Valentin Năstase, Muzica gândurilor (2022), Expoziția Între alb și negru (2022).



Alvaro Castagnet, Ciudad Vieja Series
Sourcing image: <https://alvarocastagnet.net/artwork/>

the readers' minds, thus engaging them in a dialogic game of imagination with the text. *We'll go up on the chocolate roof one evening/To see if the world is long or/the world is wide-* The roof is here an expression of the permanence of cosmic time over historical time, and historical time is not outside the cosmic. The "*chocolate roof*" represents the expression of cosmic time, which encapsulates models, forms, paradigmatic, archetypal frameworks of experience, and has the value of a symbolic centre ("The centre ensures endowing any act with meaning and prestige" [2, p.17]).

The chocolate roof is, par excellence, the repository of the world, the placenta that preserves the pulsation of paradigmatic myths, of archetypes. The chocolate roof symbolically reproduces the essence of the universe. The "becoming chocolate" at the end of the poem *And as we became chocolates /In the middle of the night/ Telling timeless stories/ Beneath the ripe stars* is tantamount to an act of return/ of participation in this symbolic centre, a return to the self, to the cosmic time that guards historical time - *a sui generis recovery of the centre*. We observe that historical time, with the forms it takes, "endures" the "fractal gaze" [22, p. 14], respecting the internal principle of fractals by increasing complexity from one stage of development to another.

Chocolate → dark chocolate → slightly bitter chocolate → peanut chocolate → cream chocolate → chocolate bars (sophisticated shapes)

Historical time has a pronounced stratified, eminently fractal character. Although seemingly linear, historical time is essentially not entirely linear. A certain form of historical time (epoch) implicitly contains heterogeneous "nooks" of time. Epochs are nothing but fractal hypostases of historical time ("The world is a universe of fractals" [*apud*. 22, p. 26]).

The generative mechanism of fractal time - the multidimensional temporality of history can be illustrated as follows:

Cosmic time - the chocolate roof

Historical time - slavery –the dark chocolate;

Historical time - Middle Ages –slightly bitter chocolate (heretics) –peanut chocolate;

Historical time - Class struggle - cream chocolate

Historical time - scheme –chocolate bars;

Historical time - taste of state - Chinese chocolate

The aesthetics of the fragment, invoking the motif of the bitter chocolate is sufficient to imagine the era as a whole and its spirit, or "in such kind of aesthetics, the detail is no longer a sign of barochism, redundant mannerism, noise, etc., but subtle and essential infor-



Marc Shagall, Creation (1960)

Sourcing image:

<https://www.wikiart.org/en/marc-chagall/creation-1960>

mation” [22, p. 102]. The chocolate and its various forms contain the idea of a certain segment of historical time.

If we take the model of fractal dynamics as a premise, we identify in I. Stratan’s poem the fractal architecture of historical time - chocolate fractals. The fractal model of historical time - a fractal complex that shapes the configuration of time and the quality of existence. “The principle of fractals enters the “cosmoid of the work” (L. Blaga) in the form of themes which, on the figurative and structural level, specifically reconstruct the meaning of the work” [idem, p. 99].

The imaginary of the poem offers a post-modernist picture of the time in which the author-artist uses chocolate (dark chocolate, milk chocolate, etc.) as pencil, watercolors, etc.

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