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**STRATEGIES OF SUBVERSION IN THE WORK OF  
GELLU NAUM**

**SUMMARY**

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## STRATEGIES OF SUBVERSION IN THE WORK OF GELLU NAUM

### Summary

Although Gellu Naum's work represents the apogee of Romanian surrealism, his creation seems insufficiently explored, despite the long period of time in which the writer was active. Thus, we can observe some reservations of literary criticism towards the violent, hermetic style of the author, doubled by an increased attention from the communist censorship, aspects that led to a diminished interest of literary critics for the work of the poet.

In his works is found one of the main keys to interpreting the avant-garde, subversion, the author himself acknowledging his affiliation with the "revolt" against literature, which manifests itself acutely in his texts. The insurgency, the radicalization of the lyrical voice, the abolition of all the rules that limit artistic creation, are conjugated in the clearest way with the desire to release the imagination, the dream and the unknown in the depths of the unconscious.

The approach of the poetic dimension and of the resulting texts is made from a unique perspective, which will expose the poet's known desire to find himself through his love for Lygia Naum, his wife.

In the analysis of the discourse of eros, we take into account the general perspective of surrealism, introduced by André Breton in the text *Mad Love*, and the fresh, personal, individualistic vision of the feeling of love, which Gellu Naum highlights through his unusual way of life, but also by the manifestation of existential reflexes at the level of the work, there being a close connection between the text and the intimate, biographical framework.

The research is carried out mainly from the angle of exploring the subversion of erotic discourse in Gellu Naum's work, an interpretation that includes his poems, prose works and dramatic texts, so that a wide and varied opening of interpretive possibilities can be revealed. It is excluded, in the analysis, the textual elements specific to children's literature and the work, renounced even by the author, which bears the signs of ideological compromise.

Our approach follows common paths with literary criticism, but also brings new elements, which propose a unique perspective on the literary text, understood in a generic way under the species of experiment. The broad structural organization allows the subject to be approached in depth and the writer's work to be understood at an appropriate level, in order to facilitate the textual interpretation and to follow a correct direction during the textual approach. The support in illustrating ideas and hypotheses is represented by a dense material of critical reception, whose main purpose is guidance, orientation in exploring the dimensions of literary discourse.

The first chapter is dedicated to avant-garde and surrealism analyzed both in a general way, seen as global currents (emergence, development, representatives) and in an in-depth manner, customized on the Romanian avant-garde and surrealism with the formation and its development, but also the representatives of the current, in order to be able to go further to the most important representative of Romanian surrealism, Gellu Naum.

The second chapter focuses on the poet Gellu Naum, starting from a literary-biographical and autobiographical perspective which, based on interviews, suggests the way of thinking and perceiving the world of man Gellu Naum, in parallel with the perception of the surrealist poet, fixing here an innate duality.

Otherness, summarizing the dual character of being, is not accepted by the poet, his dream being to become one, a union that can be achieved in the rare moments when the being is on the border between dream and reality and the two distinct parts are homogenized.

The third chapter will make a gradual foray and will start from the work that belongs to the coryphaeus of surrealism, André Breton, *Mad Love*. Based on the concept of love and the way it is presented, a parallel will be drawn between two complementary ways of seeing the world: one that will include mad love and the second one that will include a fresh, personal vision, detached from surrealism, but innovative, belonging to Gellu Naum.

The poet's stage of maturity is characterized by coherence and refinement that were not found in previous volumes, so that it is clear what the poet wants to convey through his poems. In spite of the gradual maturity of the works, it can still be recognized the revolt behind the coded words that creates an invisible network, which can help the reader create a story with extraordinary, shocking characters depicted through irony, humor and the unusual.

At the same time, we aimed to particularize the discourse, through a path of exegesis that leads to an analysis of the work from the perspective of the central motif, eros. The poems included in this category transfigure love, the beloved and the couple in various poses. The discourse is frequently ironic, love is framed in absurd landscapes, loaded with elements that should rather be found in poems with a magical and dreamlike substratum. The appearance of bizarre, deformed characters, of unusual origin and with uncertain role, is explained by approaching the texts from a surreal perspective, but also by the fact that the dominant love discourse in poetry meets the dreamy, the occult or the parodic.

The feeling of love is thus manifested from various perspectives, as an emotional reverberation or from a psychological angle, through the appeal to memory, in order to fracture the emotion, to dismantle the experience and understand it, or from a liberating perspective, which involves direct experience used as a threshold or way of access to a higher area of reality,

an opening from the physical world to the other side, to the universe of a barely glimpsed transcendence.

The fourth chapter aims to depict the diverse personality of Gellu Naum from the perspective of the epic universe by highlighting the peculiarities of a prose with a strong poetic imprint, the demarcation lines between the writer's texts representing, rather, an artificial separation for methodological or didactic reasons. The epic creations are analyzed in this chapter, insisting on the most important writings, among which can be found the novel *Zenobia*.

The elements with iridescence of the real in the novel, including newspaper clippings or events from the author's past, are transfigured, the text gradually moving away from reality by presenting fragments of real in absurd, bizarre, unusual and ironic ways, resulting images and events characterized by a humorous, ironic and self-ironic touch. One of the elements that surprises the reader is the use of the recap as an epic technique through which the author configures a wide literary universe, an universe in expansion, thus achieving a continuous exchange of characters, facts or ideas at intertextual level, through repetitions, replays and inventories.

The fifth chapter highlights the manifestation of the surrealist spirit in the field of theater, located at the border with the absurd. The theater field was contested by surrealists because of the rigorous structure and multiple mimetic possibilities of performing arts. The play *Rameau's Nephew*, fundamental for the theatrical beginnings of the author, but whose interpretive valences are insufficient, will be excluded from this chapter, the text being an adaptation, a remake after Diderot's play, translated by Gellu Naum.

The last chapter presents the involvement of the poet, prose writer and essayist Gellu Naum in the sphere of literary translations, not only from the perspective of the "translated", but also from the perspective of the "translator". The work of the writer materialized in a number of, more or less, thirty literary works in various languages (Russian, French, Serbian etc.), belonging to writers such as Balzac, Samuel Beckett, Diderot, Alexandre Dumas, Jean Henri Fabre, Victor Hugo, Kafka, Stendhal, Jules Verne etc.

Another aspect that we analyze is the double perspective from which the text can be seen. On the one hand we have the reader's perception when he comes in contact with the literary work, but, on the other hand, we also have the horizon of waiting outlined by the creator to his readers.

Gellu Naum's texts are, as we have observed, at the antipode of literature marked by traditional, realistic standards. The surrealist poet offers, through his works, numerous forms and strategies of writing, many of them surprising and unpredictable, resulting from pure play

of imagination, usage dreamworld but, also, and the hypothetical chance. This only underlines that Gellu Naum's texts are not addressed to a common reader, but to an informed reader, initiated in the surrealist imaginary, able to decode the meanings and symbols in the complex architecture of a creation that captures the retina and shocks through complexity, refinement and radicalism.