



THE MALE-FEMALE RELATIONSHIP VIEWED THROUGH THE BOOK OF GENESIS IN LIDIA VIANU'S 21ST- CENTURY PROSE POETRY

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ABSTRACT

The paper exemplifies the persistence of the biblical mandate given by God to Adam's Eve in the Book of Genesis (3:16) right to the 21st century. The discussion is based on the novel and three prose poetry books written by Lidia Vianu in the third decade of the 21st century. The touchstone for the validity of God's perlocutionary utterance to the prelapsarian woman is the trauma of separation of the author of the prose poetry when she was a student of English—but ultimately herself a Professor of English at the University of Bucharest—from her Professor of English at the University of Bucharest at the time. The reason for the separation was the author's Professor leaving the country not to return any longer because of the communist regime in Romania. Lidia Vianu's 21st-century prose poetry focuses on the power of a relationship which reminds one of the prelapsarian relationship between the first biblical man and the first biblical woman.

Keywords: Faith; Truth; Reunion; Soul; Union;

INTRODUCTION

Between the years of 2022 and 2024, Lidia Vianu, Professor Emerita of the University of Bucharest, published four English-Romanian bilingual books which form a consistent series of works of literature. In the order of appearance, the books are: *Vântul și Pescărușul/ The Wind and the Seagull/ La Mouette et le Vent . . .* (2022), *Καλειδοσκόπιο/ Kaleidoscope/ Caleidoscop* (2023), *Bumble-Bea. A tiny book about a huge heart/ Buburuză-Bea. O carte mică despre o inimă mare* (2024), and *Ființe Stranii/ Strange Beings* (2024).

At the core of these works is the novel *Καλειδοσκόπιο/ Kaleidoscope/ Caleidoscop*—an autobiographical fiction novel written over a period of thirty years. Consequently, the book depicts “the communism and post-communism of an intellectual who has been studying English”¹ as the author herself stated in an interview. Particularly detached from the novel is the author's relationship with her University Professor Constantin George Săndulescu during her student years and the subsequent handicap caused by the national politics at the time.

About her Professor, Lidia Vianu said in her interview given to Professor Sorin Ivan in 2023 that George Săndulescu, who defended a thesis on *Ulysses* by James Joyce in

¹ Vianu, Lidia. Interview by Bogdan Radu Stănescu, PhD. TVR Cultural, *Jurnal cultural*, 14th November 2023. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Ku7YQEVlWM>. Accessed: 16th November 2023. (In Romanian. Translation mine.)



England and “whose unparalleled intelligence could not possibly accept a mediocre destiny”, left the country ever since 1969 and finally settled in Monaco.² On the other hand, the author wrote clearly that she was to stay in the country of her birth when she contrasted her Professor’s thought about her: “You run away sometimes” with her own decision to remain in the country: “No. I did not run. I am here. *He* ran”.³

Indeed, the author is profoundly involved with the country of her birth, and we learn this on more than one occasion. *Καλειδοσκόπιο/ Kaleidoscope/ Caleidoscop*, the novel, tells us first that, despite of a sometimes Balkan atmosphere in the country, the author loves her language:

Palm Sunday. Children were selling willow twigs in front of our block today. Anything can become a business in this Balkanic part of the world. But this is where I want to be: this flat on the ninth floor, in one of the innumerable concrete blocks, all alike. It is my home, *my language*, my piece of sky. My books, my laptop [. . .]⁴ (Emphasis added.)

Of course, the whole declaration covers many more aspects than the language, but language seems to take the central place. The reason for such a consideration comes from another of the author’s statements when she relates her decision to follow a faculty of languages rather than one concerned with engineering or medicine:

I chose languages in the end, because this is all I care about.⁵

The author continues to unveil her utmost goal when she declares the reason why she chose the faculty of languages—

Because I want to write. Nobody knows that.⁶

Moreover, her determination with regard to the language of her writing, Lidia Vianu said that a poet should be read and appreciated by his or her compatriots.⁷

This short but compelling story of the separate paths taken in life by two revered Professors of the English Department of the University of Bucharest reveals the trauma of separation which people had to endure during the years of communism.

Lidia Vianu’s prose poetry highlights the status quo of the echoes of such trauma which are perceptible even throughout the 21st century.

Therefore, the other three books—the poem in prose *The Wind and the Seagull*, the lyrical anthropomorphism *Bumble-Bea. A tiny book about a huge heart*, and *Ființe Stranii/ Strange Beings* in which Δύο and Li, two characters in the book, are two strange beings who come from a universe situated beyond where and when and from where they draw their spiritual roots—come together as a tapestry of the author’s poetically expressed feelings towards her professor.

² Vianu, Lidia. „Între Profesie și Literatură/ Between Profession and Literature”, interview by Sorin Ivan. *Contemporary Literature Press. The Online Publishing House of the University of Bucharest*, 2023. <https://editura.mttlc.ro/sorin-ivan-interviu-vianu.html>. Accessed: 3rd January 2025.

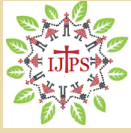
³ Vianu, Lidia. *Καλειδοσκόπιο/ Kaleidoscope/ Caleidoscop—Parallel Texts. Ediție bilingvă* (Advisor for the series: Anne Stewart). București, Editura EIKON, 2023. ISBN 978–606–49–0939–8, p. 454.

⁴ Vianu, Lidia. *Καλειδοσκόπιο/ Kaleidoscope/ Caleidoscop*, p. 322.

⁵ Vianu, Lidia. *Καλειδοσκόπιο/ Kaleidoscope/ Caleidoscop*, p. 432.

⁶ Vianu, Lidia. *Καλειδοσκόπιο/ Kaleidoscope/ Caleidoscop*, p. 432.

⁷ Vianu, Lidia. „Textul își are ascunzișurile lui. Teodora Vasilescu în dialog cu Lidia Vianu”. *Revista Cafeneaua literară*, decembrie 2023, 22–25. https://archive.org/details/cafeneaua_literara-Pitesti/2023-12/page/22/mode/2up?view=theater. Accessed: 3rd January 2025, p. 25.



1. METHODOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF THE INTERPRETATION

The ideas put forth by Jean-Louis Lyotard with reference to the legitimation of knowledge might serve as a valid justification for the recourse to theology in interpreting the parallel texts. Although Lyotard uses his rationale to construct a mode of legitimation of knowledge—even of scientific knowledge—, his idea can be appropriated with a certain level of eloquence even in the case of the parallel texts.

Drawing on the thinking and no less on the work of a score of philosophers, Lyotard distinguishes between what he names scientific knowledge and narrative knowledge.⁸ Stating that scientific knowledge is hardly able to stand at the same level of perception as narrative knowledge, he presupposes that scientific knowledge needs legitimation. Lyotard draws a parallel between legitimating the law by legislators and legitimating a scientific statement by certain operators. In the latter case, the validity of a scientific statement is established by a legislator who or which is a scientific equivalent of a court of law, and, in reverse, the legitimacy of this legislator for the scientific knowledge needs itself legitimating.⁹ The reason for the latter legitimation is dictated by the default relation of science and technology in recent times with politics and power. Therefore, there needs to be someone or some institution saying that a scientific statement is knowledge and, vice versa, there needs to exist certain conditions able to avow that a scientific statement is valid for consideration as knowledge because of the role of power and politics in the use of knowledge.¹⁰

Borrowing what Wittgenstein has conceived by language-games, Lyotard exposes his perspective on the legitimation of knowledge by means of language-games.¹¹ He distinguishes further between language-games of narrative knowledge and those of scientific knowledge. Narrative knowledge encompasses a wide spectrum of human aptitudes, manifests itself in a wide variety of language-games, sets the framework of human competences, includes tradition, and can be validated without argumentation or proof.¹² Scientific statements do not become valid *per se* and can even be challenged in the case there are pertinent arguments and proofs for challenging them—which ultimately makes science intrinsically diachronic. Lyotard recognizes that these two types of knowledge cannot prove valid one another, and their irrefutable distinction leads to scientific knowledge needing legitimation.¹³

Not having the qualification to legitimise itself, scientific knowledge uses the narrative to make itself popular, and Lyotard views this as an objective of the State which makes use of science and needs to be credible in view of the conditions of power and politics. Another example given by Lyotard is the legitimation of scientific knowledge in the case of The Humboldt University of Berlin at the time of its inception. The scientific knowledge was supposed to lead to scientific activity, the University was supposed to develop ethical traits in students, and these two objectives were supposed to intertwine. Lyotard views this as a form of legitimation of knowledge.¹⁴

⁸ Lyotard, Jean-François. *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*. (Translation from the French by Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi). Manchester, Manchester University Press, [1979] 1984, p. 7.

⁹ Lyotard, Jean-François. *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, p. 8.

¹⁰ Lyotard, Jean-François. *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, p. 27–28.

¹¹ Lyotard, Jean-François. *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, p. 39.

¹² Lyotard, Jean-François. *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, p. 18–23.

¹³ Lyotard, Jean-François. *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, p. 23–27.

¹⁴ Lyotard, Jean-François. *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, p. 31–33.



The latter rationale of legitimising scientific knowledge seems to be an epitome of legitimising an interpretation of a work of literature. Therefore, taking Lidia Vianu's parallel texts to stand for the «scientific» knowledge and the Scripture and other patristic texts as material to inspire ethical traits in readers, an intertwining of the two would hopefully lead to legitimising a theological interpretation of Lidia Vianu's parallel texts.

2. THE MALE-FEMALE RELATIONSHIP AS IN THE BOOK OF GENESIS

The meaning of the verse “If you left on a crusade against the chosen people, I would follow you even if I were a Jew myself”¹⁵ rejects reason with a poetic argument—an oxymoron. The middle of the verse obscures something pertaining to the soul. This idea might be made a bit clearer by employing an analogy with Giorgio Agamben's unuttered, yet presupposed, «presence» between the signifier and the signified.¹⁶ From the first to the second part of the verse, there is the same kind of somersault as from the signifier to the signified, which has been propounded and rigorously explained by Agamben. With Agamben, it is grounded in something impossible to name or utter (it has been said that it may be painted, but this is altogether something else). In *The Wind*, it is something coming from the soul and denoting its nature—which is its uniqueness and its indivisibility. It is also its reason, the reason of the soul, which is Light with a capital «L» because it sees all without analysing, or separating, or dividing, or comparing, or judging anything. The verse sounds as if it were a supplication. It is like the invocation made to God during the epiclesis¹⁷ with the words “take not thy holy spirit from me” from the 51st Davidic psalm—only in reverse (*Psalms* 51:11).¹⁸

«Epiclesis» comes from Greek, ἐπίκλησις, and denotes a calling (Pavlinciuc, “Rugăciunea Liturgică”). In the Orthodox Church, epiclesis is an invocation of the Holy Spirit for the making of the precious Gifts into the Body and Blood of the Lord, for the Holy Communion. In the Romanian Orthodox Church, the priest who performs the office asks the Lord to send His Holy Spirit just as He sent Him over the Apostles “at the third hour” during the Descent of the Holy Spirit. The purpose of the «Prayer of the third hour» is to bless the «precious Gifts» brought by the faithful to the altar, as well as the priest and the faithful. The priest beseeches God to cleanse him and recites the «Prayer of the third hour» three times, interspersed with two verses from David's *Psalms* 51. The first: “Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me” (*Psalms* 51:10)—the second: “Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me” (*Psalms* 51:11).¹⁹

¹⁵ Vianu, Lidia. *Vântul și Pescărușul/ The Wind and the Seagull/ La Mouette et le Vent . . .* (Advisor for the series: Anne Stewart). București, Editura EIKON, 2022. ISBN 978-606-49-0817-9, p. 16.

¹⁶ Agamben, Giorgio. *Stanzas: Word and Phantasm in Western Culture*. (Translated by Ronald L. Martinez). Minneapolis and London, University of Minnesota Press, 1993; *Stanze: La Parola e il fantasma nella cultura occidentale*. Giulio Einaudi, Turin, 1977, p. 136–137.

¹⁷ epiclesis or epiclesis—(in Christian Church) A prayer, or part of a prayer, in which the presence of the Holy Spirit is invoked, *spec.* to bless the Eucharistic elements, or the communicants, or both. OED | *Oxford English Dictionary*. https://www.oed.com/dictionary/epiclesis_n?tab=meaning_and_use. Accessed: 12th December 2024.

¹⁸ All Bible references in the paper are from the *King James Version* at BibleGateway. *BibleGateway King James Version (KJV)*. <https://www.biblegateway.com/versions/King-James-Version-KJV-Bible/>. Accessed: 12th December 2024.

¹⁹ Pavlinciuc, Iosif, ieromonah. „Rugăciunea liturgică, o necesitate fundamentală. Epicleza în liturgiile ortodoxe ale Sfinților Ioan Gură de Aur și Vasile cel Mare”. <https://www.ortodoxmd.eu/francais-la-priere-liturgique-une-necessite-fondamentale-lepiclese-dans-les-liturgies-orthodoxes-des-saints-jean-chrysostome-et-basile-le->



The soul in the verse in *The Wind* sees its salvation in the union with the Wind. But as the Lord, through the Holy Gospels, says about souls that beyond the earthly life “*they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven*” (Matthew 22:30, and also in *Mark* 12:25 and *Luke* 20:35), then a question that can be asked is this: how might a longing for a union beyond the body can be understood here—in time—in the world. There are at least two answers to the question.

(i) An answer might be found in the Edenic, prelapsarian memory of the congruence of man with woman, of the replication of woman from the constitution of man (*Genesis* 2:18–24). This is the material aspect. It could also be found in the perlocutionary utterance of the divinity, who traced the fundamental psychological profile of the woman after the act of disobedience was committed: “*I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee*” (*Genesis* 3:16, emphasis added). Or, it could be seen as a springboard from life on Earth to the one beyond this life. Here, there is an aspiration towards God, which can be reached through perfection.

There is a passage in *Bumble-Bea* where the poem shows perfection as illustrated by the supernatural powers of the soul after its departure from life on Earth. Voicing the author’s thought, Bea imagines what it would be like to be beyond life on Earth:

“What does it feel like when you can no longer drown in Water?”²¹

She imagines that the author might take a look from somewhere—from so high that it cannot even be imagined:

“When the air takes you high, high up, higher up — I can’t see where.”²²

She also imagines that the author might look at the place in Snagov, where, while on Earth, she experienced a metaphysical state that could be compared to what is commonly thought to be nirvana:

“You watch an old wooden pier and wonder: what can that be? That spot in the immensity of freedom?”²³

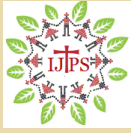
That is the place where, in her earthly life, the writer had the feeling of perfect union with that soul who could be considered her soulmate. Or, considering an interpretation springing from *Genesis*, it could be a union with the one from whose rib (*Genesis* 2:22) the author has appeared. Bumble-Bea testifies, on behalf of the author, that «HE» is the one who animates her or fills her with “*breath of life*” (*Genesis* 2:7):

“And you do not remember that it was the exact place where HE had been so close that you felt you had found your life.”²⁴

²¹ Vianu, Lidia. *Bumble-Bea/ Buburuză-Bea. A tiny book about a huge heart/ O carte mică despre o inimă mare* (Advisor for the series: Anne Stewart). *Contemporary Literature Press*, The online Publishing House of the University of Bucharest, ISBN 978-606-760-194-7, 2022. <https://editura.mttlc.ro/vianu-bumble-bea.html>. Accessed: 25th November 2024. București, Editura EIKON, 2024. ISBN 978-606-49-1079-0, p. 184.

²² Vianu, Lidia. *Bumble-Bea/ Buburuză-Bea*, p. 184–186.

²³ Vianu, Lidia. *Bumble-Bea/ Buburuză-Bea*, p. 186.



Then, reflecting the author's thought as if in a mirror, or as an echo to strengthen it, Bea assures her that when life is no longer life in an earthly body:

“But when life can no longer drown in water”,²⁵

one enters a time without time: “moments no longer go away”²⁶, the being appears to be ubiquitous:

“Whether a pier near Dracula's Church, or a bench in the Garden of Icons,”²⁷

and the perpetual transformation of matter is replaced by a state imagined as a kind of freedom:

“your feelings have forgotten loss, and you are not a slowly disintegrating body — you are a naked soul.”²⁸

This «naked soul» is a metaphorical construction. Instead of a metaphor proper we have a construction because one can hardly sublimate the afterlife to a metaphor. The epithet «naked» suggests a disembodied soul. However, there is an understanding that «naked soul» can mean transparency or non-concealment of thought or feeling.

By giving freedom of metaphysical expression to Bumble-Bea—an eminently speechless being—, the author manages, through anthropomorphism, to convey a profession of faith under the cover of a story tale. It is the deep belief in the existence of life after life as we know it here.

During his «Basement Tapes» years, Bob Dylan wrote the lyrics for the “I Shall Be Released” out of a deep preoccupation with the notion of prison—both physically and spiritually. According to Clinton Heylin, when writing the lyrics he is—

characteristically careful not to confuse simplicity of construction with a commensurate simplicity of meaning. The release he is singing about is not from mere prison but rather from the cage of physical existence [. . .].²⁹

Heylin finds Dylan feeling the same way when he tells Phillip Fleishman:

The whole world is a prison. Life is a prison, we're all inside the body . . . Only knowledge of either yourself or the ultimate power can get you out of it . . . Most people are

²⁴ Vianu, Lidia. *Bumble-Bea/ Buburuză-Bea*, p. 186.

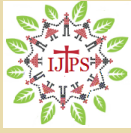
²⁵ Vianu, Lidia. *Bumble-Bea/ Buburuză-Bea*, p. 186.

²⁶ Vianu, Lidia. *Bumble-Bea/ Buburuză-Bea*, p. 186.

²⁷ Vianu, Lidia. *Bumble-Bea/ Buburuză-Bea*, p. 186.

²⁸ Vianu, Lidia. *Bumble-Bea/ Buburuză-Bea*, p. 186.

²⁹ Heylin, Clinton. *Revolution in the Air: The songs of Bob Dylan, Vol. 1: 1957–73*. London, Constable, [2009] 2010, p. 425.



working toward being one with God, trying to find him. They want to be one with the supreme power, they want to go Home, you know. From the minute they're born, they want to know what they're doing here. I don't think there's anybody who doesn't feel that way.³⁰

This is another profession of faith—that the human being is more than the physical body, that, in general, at some point, every human being has this intuition—that he belongs to something different to the body to which he is confined. That they yearn for a release—for going back Home—another home than the place they live in. That everyone seeks to find a purpose for their life on Earth—that the Earth fails to convince anyone that it can be a purpose in itself. The common denominator of Lidia's and Bob's professions of faith is the belief in a form of existence beyond the body.

When Lord Jesus goes to Bethany to raise Lazarus who had been dead for four days, He is met by Martha, his sister, who doubts the Lord's words that Lazarus will rise, although she owns to her belief in the Resurrection: "*I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day*" (John 11:24). The answer given to her by Lord Jesus is His testament for man's eternal life, because He answers her with the words:

25 [. . .] I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live (John 11:25)

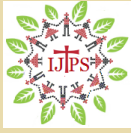
Not long after these words—which were spoken not long before His Passion, Crucifixion, and Resurrection—the Gospel according to John reinforces the Lord's testament of eternal life. Before His prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane, the Lord enjoined the Apostles to trust in Him:

*1 Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.
2 In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.
3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. (John 14:1–3)*

These passages testify to the existence of life beyond life on Earth. The most important aspect, however, is the fact that they contain a clearly formulated condition, a *sine qua non*. This is belief in Lord Jesus Christ. This is rendered and reinforced with the words: "*he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:/ 26. And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?*" (John 11:25–26). The Gospel according to John also contains a testimony about God the Father:

*7 If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him.
8 Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us.
9 Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?*

³⁰ Heylin, Clinton. *Revolution in the Air: The songs of Bob Dylan, Vol. 1: 1957–73*, p. 425–426.



10 Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.

11 Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake. (John 14:7–11)

The speech acts which emphasise the necessity of a *sine qua non* of belief in Lord Jesus Christ for eternal life are hardly perlocutionary, although they contain an explicit consequence. However, the explicit consequence is neither a punishment as in *Genesis* 3:14–19, nor a reward, i.e., a good consequence which comes automatically, by simply saying it. The receptive subject is the one who, through his receptive attitude, perceives the speech acts as being either illocutionary or perlocutionary—the positioning to the words of the Gospel is what defines the locutionary force of the words.

An entirely other story—written like a fairy-tale, with the purpose of bringing up the wonderful parity which can exist between two earthly beings—is the passage in *Strange Beings* where Δύ communicates with Δύu beyond normal mediums of communication and saves his life as a result. The fragment detaches itself from the rest of the book as a transcendent metaphor. It suggests Δύu's superhuman aspiration for an attempt which would potentially lead him to destruction, but which Δύu resolutely chooses. Concretely, Δύu decides to cross Lake Snagov despite not knowing how to swim. There is a transgression of reality, nevertheless, as he starts crossing the lake.³¹

For now, we would refrain from finding a reason for Δύu's attempt to cross the lake despite being unable to swim. As a character in the story, Δύu embodies both the four-year old girl's father and Den-Disco, the author's Professor at the University—both as portrayed in *Kaleidoscope*—or as the Wind in *The Wind and the Seagull*. Even without deciphering Δύu's motivation to cross the lake, his swimming story has a key—a transcendent one.

Δύu and Δύ come from a world where there is no *when* or *where*, which belongs to a land called “Σε, the mystery”.³² They can communicate rather strangely, and this becomes obvious when Δύ senses the danger in which Δύu is, although she is home and only four years old.³³ Then Δύ spiritually restores Δύu's breath, and saves him from drowning:

Δύ looks up. She sees a lake border. A house with a cross on top. She feels an emptiness deep down in the water. She finds Δύu. She smiles. She knows that he cannot breathe. She steals inside his chest. They breathe in together. She feels safe there. They rise to the surface together.³⁴

This spiritual path is the one which will validate the mutual recognition of the two characters when time is right and life brings them together:

³¹ Vianu, Lidia. *Ființe Stranii/ Strange Beings* (Advisor for the series: Anne Stewart). Editura EIKON, București, 2024. ISBN 978-606-49-1266-4, p. 7–11.

³² Vianu, Lidia. *Ființe Stranii/ Strange Beings*, p. 7.

³³ Vianu, Lidia. *Ființe Stranii/ Strange Beings*, p. 9.

³⁴ Vianu, Lidia. *Ființe Stranii/ Strange Beings*, p. 11.



Having surfaced, Δύ's first moment with Λύ vanishes from his memory: it ascends to that when-less, where-less world. But the moment did happen. When the time comes, this will help them recognise each other.³⁵

The above quotation is the denouement of the story as reproduced up to here, and is intended to emphasise in an original way the nature of the union between man and woman in Genesis. It reverberates the fusion woman tends to seek—as per God's perlocutionary statement: "[. . .] *thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee*" (Genesis 3:16). Irrespective of any other divine commandment—as, for example, multiplying the talents as in the Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14–30)—the woman has this indelible imprint—of obedience to her man. Here is a reminder of the biblical word in a form which is as original as it is beautiful. As for how easy this biblical word is believed, it depends. There is, however, a verse which pleads for the righteousness of the biblical word: "*For the word of the Lord is right; and all his works are done in truth*" (Psalm 33:4).

(ii) Another answer to the question could be the Latin Phrase *Ad astra per aspera*—with its connotation of attaining perfection by the narrow path. The narrow path that leads to life is also mentioned in Matthew 7:13–14—

13 Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:

14 Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

Or, in *The Wind and the Seagull* and in *Kaleidoscope*, the constant and acute lack of union perceived by the soul of the author—the lack of union in the constancy, stability, and fulfilment of a life together with the Wind or Professor Den-Disco—could be a narrow path indeed. The «Light» at the end of both *The Wind and the Seagull* and *Kaleidoscope* could be the asymptote that guides the soul to live "*in spirit and in truth*":

²³ *But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.*

²⁴ *God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.* (John 4:23–24)

It could be the identification and recognition of the end of the narrow path through the lack of union with the other in an earthly life. Another interpretation is that «Light» removes the vicissitude of the narrow path, and the proof is the «book»—the writing, «[i]n English». Both *The Wind and the Seagull* and *Kaleidoscope* testify to this:

When the Flame burns this night, there will be no you, and there will be no me — just this book and the Light.³⁶

³⁵ Vianu, Lidia. *Ființe Stranii/ Strange Beings*, p. 11.

³⁶ Vianu, Lidia. *Vântul și Pescărușul/ The Wind and the Seagull/ La Mouette et le Vent . . .*, p. 156.



I do not wait in breathless anticipation. I know there is no such a thing as chance. Moments never come or go. Moments just are. The Kaleidoscope teaches us to release Light inside us. We are Light, both of us, and unto Light we shall return.³⁷

3. THE MOMENTS IN SNAGOV AND THE GARDEN OF THE ICON SHARED BY THE TWO

The point of origin of the whole chant in the author's heart, as rendered by the two encounters—in Snagov and in the Garden of the Icon—remains hidden throughout the search for fulfilment. The expected fulfilment would entail an essential union that exudes spirituality, harmony, constancy, protection, and trust. It is hidden—but it is like a seed waiting to germinate—navigating the soul in search of a good substrate that will allow it to sprout. Many years after the two encounters—the first, accidental or dictated by destiny; the other, the result of a call which will keep echoing throughout the author's life—the author briefly but convincingly renders them with that unexpected “I knew without knowing”:

After that accidental evening at the Lakes, we had our first and last date.
I knew without knowing.
The Garden of Icons. We sat on a bench. He talked.
About his father again. Who loved Conrad's *Victory*.
When we parted, he said:
“I had the feeling that, if I did not call you today, I would never see you again.”
Then he went abroad and stayed there.
It had all been — just a loop in time.³⁸

The succinct recollection in *Kaleidoscope* has a convincing reinforcement in an eschatological verse in *The Wind and the Seagull*. The author expresses the transition from the unexpected encounter in Snagov, when, at “midnight”, the Professor, with candour and soul warmth, enables her returning back home from the international conference, to the call for the get-together in the Garden of the Icon—the one that planted the hope of a reunion through the Professor's words (“if I did not call you today, I would never see you again”). In the verse in *The Wind and the Seagull* under discussion, the Professor's utterance takes a new form in the author's soul: “hoping your hand would reach me”, and the initial transition reaches the desired present of a getting together in place and in time (“— here — today —”). This “— here — today —” is, of course, a perpetuation of the echo of the Professor's utterance. However, it seems, above all, to pass beyond the post-Edenic space and time. It becomes a place and time in a “a land which ignored both *where* and *when*”, as in the story in *Strange Beings*.³⁹ Here is how the verse not only makes a sublime transition from *Kaleidoscope* to *The Wind and the Seagull* to *Strange Beings*, but is also the expression of an eschatological vision—of an absolute present—eternal:

Keep waving your hand to me, as you did when midnight was light, and I flew above your soul, hoping your hand would reach me — here — today —⁴⁰

³⁷ Vianu, Lidia. *Καλειδοσκόπιο/ Kaleidoscope/ Caleidoscop*, p. 528.

³⁸ Vianu, Lidia. *Καλειδοσκόπιο/ Kaleidoscope/ Caleidoscop*, p. 310, 312.

³⁹ Vianu, Lidia. *Ființe Stranii/ Strange Beings*, p. 7.

⁴⁰ Vianu, Lidia. *Vântul și Pescărușul/ The Wind and the Seagull/ La Mouette et le Vent . . .*, p. 150.



With a clearer description, this verse sounds like a call for Den-Disco, the author's teacher when she was a student. And it has an echo. The story behind the call is as follows. The author—a university student in English at the time—is asked whether she accepts to go to an international conference in Snagov to help with translations. She has a few more exams to sit and she needs the highest grades since she wants to become a university assistant. However, she accepts the offer against her better judgement. At the conference, her university Professor Den-Disco saves her from the all-night wine, music, and dance festivity, and helps her get home before daylight. Den-Disco sends her home in a “Party official's car”.⁴¹ At the car's departure, the Professor waves her good-bye with a long, caressing gesture of his hand. The verse poetically transcribes the author's feeling when she sees her teacher's considerate warmth:

[. . .] I flew above your soul [. . .]⁴²

In the poet's metaphorical imagination, the image of a seagull tenderly and softly carried by the saving wind is instantly born. Why should the wind be a saviour? Because the teacher's care in saving the poet when she was a student from failing her exams or doing bad in them is perceived as true light:

That summer, I dreamt of flying. Unafraid, happy, hopeful. To this day I remember that blue sea, and my wings in perfect balance. A seagull in the wind.⁴³

The echo of the call goes on until “— here — today —”⁴⁴, and marks a first sign—an indication that a friendship of two souls could arise there.

The moment's salvation, the chance offered and gladly received to be able to return home to prepare for her exams, could hardly be singled out as the source of inspiration for the previously quoted passage.⁴⁵ Although it appears in a novel, the lyricism which inspires it is of poetic nature. The clause “I dreamed that I was flying” has an inner momentum given by the word structure and their positioning in the context, and connotes a stage declamation and the youth of the soul. It could just as easily be the imagination of a soul to whom the horizon of life has just opened. In fact, the very choice of metaphors «the wind» and «the seagull» appears and accompanies the student's thoughts from the moment her soul is touched by the teacher's protective tenderness. Even without finding out what he thinks, the teacher's selfless attitude, sincerely concerned about the student's performance in study, the courage to have asked for the car of a Party official in full communism era to take the student home, and the familial gesture waved behind the car betray his parental qualities. This twinning of qualities—sometimes father, sometimes friend—must have led to the creation of the personality of the male character in *Strange Beings*.

Then, the getting together in the Garden of the Icon sparks the Professor's intuition to utter a sign meant to last over time. The sign contains a condition which implies an answer, a reaction—either early, or late on the part of the author student at the time:

⁴¹ Vianu, Lidia. *Καλειδοσκόπιο/ Kaleidoscope/ Caleidoscop*, p. 268.

⁴² Vianu, Lidia. *Vântul și Pescărușul/ The Wind and the Seagull/ La Mouette et le Vent . . .*, p. 150.

⁴³ Vianu, Lidia. *Καλειδοσκόπιο/ Kaleidoscope/ Caleidoscop*, p. 380.

⁴⁴ Vianu, Lidia. *Vântul și Pescărușul/ The Wind and the Seagull/ La Mouette et le Vent . . .*, p. 150.

⁴⁵ Vianu, Lidia. *Καλειδοσκόπιο/ Kaleidoscope/ Caleidoscop*, p. 380.



“I had the feeling that, if I did not call you today, I would never see you again.”⁴⁶

However, the author’s hesitation leaves the call without any answer:

You called half a century ago. I sensed it well, I grasped it badly.⁴⁷

The Wind—Professor Den-Disco—is an enigmatic personality. He seems to be looking only ahead. But he openly admits that he perceives a desire that has a connection with what he was and what he is now—to be with Lidia. However, it eludes an active engagement, but only expresses an emotional participation. This is how the conditional was born from his utterance to the author student Lidia. The poem *The Wind and the Seagull* shows how the poet senses the position of the Wind:

He knew that all the Seagull wanted was not to fly, but to be held by the Wind.⁴⁸

As flying is a recurring theme in the parallel texts of Professor Lidia Vianu, we stop here to the image of Professor Den-Disco in one of the author’s depictions—without interpretation. This restraint, in this context, is related to the point of view from which the poet has written the above verse. Basically, the poetic lyricism in the expression does not even exclude an existential self-definition of the poet. The poet might be making a psychological projection onto the Professor. This might be right because the novel *Kaleidoscope* does not record any exchange of ideas between the Professor and his student—at any rate, no more than the parallel texts record, either poetically or lyrically.

Another image of the Professor in the poem *The Wind and the Seagull* is the following:

The Wind had blamed the Seagull for imagining the wall in the first place.⁴⁹

With the wall being another recurring metaphor in the text of the prose poem *The Wind and the Seagull*, we would stop here without interpreting the wall metaphor in the above verse. Whereas the Professor appears to be mentally oriented towards the future in all the poetic and lyrical images in the parallel texts, the lady Professor—alias the Seagull—appears to internalise within the depth of her soul the faithful memory of the Professor’s utterance when parting from their get together in the Garden of the Icon. For the Seagull, however, the belief in that sign, in the possibility for her to truly live it, remains deeply inculcated in her heart:

[. . .] The much earlier memory of my first kiss still burns. I will never forget Den-Disco whispering in the Garden of Icons:

“I had the feeling that, if I did not call you today, I would never see you again.”⁵⁰

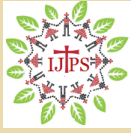
⁴⁶ Vianu, Lidia. *Vântul și Pescărușul/ The Wind and the Seagull/ La Mouette et le Vent . . .*, p. 22 and 80; and *Καλειδοσκόπιο/ Kaleidoscope/ Caleidoscop*, p. 288, 312, 350, 402, 452, 504, and 526.

⁴⁷ Vianu, Lidia. *Vântul și Pescărușul/ The Wind and the Seagull/ La Mouette et le Vent . . .*, p. 72.

⁴⁸ Vianu, Lidia. *Vântul și Pescărușul/ The Wind and the Seagull/ La Mouette et le Vent . . .*, p. 78.

⁴⁹ Vianu, Lidia. *Vântul și Pescărușul/ The Wind and the Seagull/ La Mouette et le Vent . . .*, p. 100.

⁵⁰ Vianu, Lidia. *Καλειδοσκόπιο/ Kaleidoscope/ Caleidoscop*, p. 288.



The intuition of the temporal gap between them, which the Wind anticipates by saying “[. . .] if I did not call you today, I would never see you again”, reverberates in the Seagull’s memory so strongly that it appears twice in *The Wind and the Seagull*⁵¹ and seven times in *Kaleidoscope*⁵². There is a similarity between this belief reverberated in memory and the belief shown by the two main characters in the 2001 American film *Serendipity*.⁵³

The film’s title denotes a beautiful coincidence—Sara, the main heroine, and Jonathan, the main male character, simultaneously choose the same pair of gloves, unique in the store, as a Christmas gift—but also the victory over a third character in the film, who was almost ready to purchase the pair of gloves, due to the indecision of the couple of main characters about which of them to keep the pair of gloves. The two decide to celebrate the victory at a confectionery in the city, by the name of Serendipity. This choice philologically strengthens the central thread of the script through the nominal connotation. A second coincidence, which occurs when the two return to retrieve some items forgotten there, causes the characters to exchange contact details. As a gust of wind tears the paper with Sara’s data from Jonathan’s hand, Sara suddenly has qualms about an immediate onset of relationship with Jonathan. Sara’s reaction is the same as the reaction of the author of *The Wind and the Seagull*, when she was a student, to the sign given by Professor Den-Disco in the Garden of the Icon. She also has qualms about an immediate beginning of relationship, otherwise very promising and apparently very desirable:

The moment was short. The stars flickering. The wooden bench perched on a metal frame above the tall grass. Floating on waves of night. The lake cradling the revelation of a water monastery. Which I had postponed for later. Soon. So I thought.⁵⁴

However, in the film, Sara initiates a series of signs so that in the case they materialise in the future, their materialization might validate the relationship. Of these, two will persist, facilitate the encounter, and validate the relationship. They are: Gabriel Garcia Marquez’s book *Love in the Time of Cholera* with Sara’s name and phone number on the flyleaf, and a five-dollar bill with Jonathan’s name and number on the back. Both clues, with the contact details of the two characters, released into the consumer circuit—at an antique book dealer and at a kiosk—, will be able to confirm, as a blessing, the friendship between the two characters provided that at least one of them finds, also through a happy coincidence, the sign to allow him or her to contact the other.

The passage of time as neither of the two characters in the film find the clue they need to contact the other—despite the vigilance of looking for the signs, particularly on the part of Jonathan, who can’t stop himself from opening antiquarian copies of Marquez’s book in hopes of finding out Sara’s phone number—is equivalent to the conditional in Professor Den-Disco’s utterance. The Professor—the Wind—launched a sign which would endure for nearly five decades in the author’s memory. However, the Professor’s utterance is neither a promise nor a declaration:

⁵¹ Vianu, Lidia. *Vântul și Pescărușul/ The Wind and the Seagull/ La Mouette et le Vent . . .*, p. 22 and 80.

⁵² Vianu, Lidia. *Καλειδοσκόπιο/ Kaleidoscope/ Caleidoscop*, p. 288, 312, 350, 402, 452, 504, and 526.

⁵³ *Serendipity*. Directed by Peter Chelsom, written by Marc Klein, performance by Jack Cusack, Kate Beckinsale, and Jeremy Piven, Miramax Films, 2001.

⁵⁴ Vianu, Lidia. *Καλειδοσκόπιο/ Kaleidoscope/ Caleidoscop*, p. 354.



I had not heard from Den-Disco again after the evening in the Garden of Icons. He had not said he would call again.⁵⁵

And nor a proactive manifestation:

I was waiting for Den-Disco to call me after we had met at the Lakes. He didn't. For a while.⁵⁶

The Professor's utterance presents a conditional which, if something were to happen in the unspecified future, the Professor and his former student might find themselves:

I had the feeling that, if I did not call you today, I would never see you again.⁵⁷

The Professor's conditional bears a resemblance to the conditional in the film. Exactly this conditional is the guarantor of the investment of an unwavering faith in a long-awaited future. Like Sara, the heroine in the film *Serendipity*—but also Jonathan, the hero—will constantly follow with renewed faith the appearance or, in fact the materialisation of the sign which will help them find each other, the heroine in *The Wind and the Seagull* will keep the warmth of the initial sign in her soul until she meets the Professor again.

The first fruit of receiving the sign from the Professor is the question. First, a question thought for herself:

Where are you, Den-Disco, this summer Sunday afternoon, while I watch the seagulls circling the blocks? There were no seagulls in Bucharest back then. They only lived by the sea. Like you, now.⁵⁸

Then, an active search begins: a question addressed to the colleagues:

Talking about Den-Disco
is — has always been —
impossible.

I never knew where he was. After he had defected. The few people I dared ask about him invariably replied:

“Why do you want to know?”

Then they found some pretext to leave the room.⁵⁹

The lyrical style separates the main sentence “I never knew where he was” and the adverbial clause “After he had defected” by an unusual punctuation mark for this relationship: a period. It is a stylistic artifice meant to emphasise the main sentence more strongly. This is, in fact, what matters to the author. An interference of the adverbial clause within the main sentence would have reduced the dramatic effect of the latter. All word

⁵⁵ Vianu, Lidia. *Καλειδοσκόπιο/ Kaleidoscope/ Caleidoscop*, p. 464.

⁵⁶ Vianu, Lidia. *Καλειδοσκόπιο/ Kaleidoscope/ Caleidoscop*, p. 378.

⁵⁷ Vianu, Lidia. *Vântul și Pescărușul/ The Wind and the Seagull/ La Mouette et le Vent . . .*, p. 22 and 8; and *Καλειδοσκόπιο/ Kaleidoscope/ Caleidoscop*, p. 288, 312, 350, 402, 452, 504, and 526.

⁵⁸ Vianu, Lidia. *Καλειδοσκόπιο/ Kaleidoscope/ Caleidoscop*, p. 104.

⁵⁹ Vianu, Lidia. *Καλειδοσκόπιο/ Kaleidoscope/ Caleidoscop*, p. 286.



grouping under Chapter 102 centres around finding Den-Disco. This is the locus in the novel which concentrates the series of moments connected with the reunion of the two, and also the ultimate horizon of their getting together.

Five are the key points of the chapter. The first appears in the paragraph quoted above. There, apart from the mentioned lyricism, the author resorts to a poetic arrangement of the words in the first three lines—a kind of free-verse arrangement—to individualise the desired and sought-after name: Den-Disco, but also to express her own emotion in the face of the challenge posed to her by the enterprise to which she reaches out.

The second moment is the lyrical one already mentioned, from which we learn that the author knows nothing about Den-Disco after his stay outside the country. The third—after at least two decades and the change of communism—brings the discovery of the Professor's address on the occasion of the opening of the country's borders for organising international conferences:

When the regime changed, there was a conference in Romania, with specialists in Modernism all over the world.

I asked an American who specialised in Joyce if he had ever met Den-Disco, who was also a Joycean.

Bingo. He produced the address.⁶⁰

The exchange of letters that followed, and marked the third moment in the passage, emerges from the account of the content, but also from the emotional breadth of the Professor's response to the author. The Professor appears eager to resume the relationship—perhaps with the author . . . —perhaps with the country . . . —perhaps with himself . . . —in a dialogue with someone he trusted—someone from his youth:

My name in his handwriting. For the second time... He wrote breathlessly. Eager to turn the clock backwards. His childhood, youth, divorce and defection. Everything I had not known in my early twenties.⁶¹

For Professor Vianu, communication with Professor Den-Disco is like air, for her who had already reached an oxygen-deprived, high, very high, and much-awaited peak of waiting. It is a balm for her soul since it represents a deeper knowledge of the person she was searching for, and a chance of communication.

The fourth moment brings a clarification of the author's emotional relationships and expresses her sincere loyalty:

It took me a few years to forget Estephan. The much earlier memory of my first kiss still burns. I will never forget Den-Disco whispering in the Garden of Icons:

"I had the feeling that, if I did not call you today, I would never see you again."⁶²

Or, the iteration here for the first time—out of seven in all which exist in the novel—of the sign given by the Professor in the Garden of the Icon ("I had the feeling . . .")

⁶⁰ Vianu, Lidia. *Καλειδοσκόπιο/ Kaleidoscope/ Caleidoscop*, p. 286.

⁶¹ Vianu, Lidia. *Καλειδοσκόπιο/ Kaleidoscope/ Caleidoscop*, p. 286, 288.

⁶² Vianu, Lidia. *Καλειδοσκόπιο/ Kaleidoscope/ Caleidoscop*, p. 288.



is not only necessary as an indication of finding each other, but, above all, as an organic link with the account of the getting together in the end:

He called me. And he did see me again — in our old age. His body was growing smaller and smaller, and he desperately wanted me to be by his side when —⁶³

The joy of their finding and seeing each other again after a hiatus of “forty-nine years and a month later”⁶⁴ appears as a fairy-tale poem in *The Wind and the Seagull*. There—rather surprisingly, perhaps—, there are the same words from the novel which make up the sign launched by the Professor before his definitive departure from the country, which, moreover, is also the psychological dance of the author with her Professor:

And, again, just once upon a time, this Wind told a Seagull: “I had the feeling that, if I didn’t call you today, I would never see you again.”

The Wind called late. He almost danced with the Seagull. He almost forgot. But he had called, so there was something to remember, if ever they came together again.⁶⁵

It is an enigmatic yet poetic getting again—

[. . .] I felt what was not to be. Seven hours in all. One every seven years.⁶⁶

after a blanket of time which got to “forty-nine years and a month”.⁶⁷ The time elapsed from the Professor’s departure in the communist years, in 1969,⁶⁸ until the last moments of his life in Monte Carlo, in 2018, is concealed by the author. It is not laid out, but it can be inferred.

In the summer when the author turned 22, on the 7th of July 1969,⁶⁹ she was finishing her fourth year of university studies⁷⁰. Chapter number 112 in the novel shows that, before the “last summer vacation as a student”, that is, after finishing the fourth year of study, the author spent two events which would leave a mark on her soul. First, the unexpected encounter with Professor Den-Disco “at the Lakes”, followed very shortly by “our first and last date” in the Garden of the Icon.⁷¹ Then, the Professor leads the author student home and utters the magic words:

“I had the feeling that, if I did not call you today, I would never see you again.”⁷²

Later, long before the late getting together again with the Professor—which was to take place at the Professor’s residence on the Mediterranean shore—, the author writes a memory which depicts the Professor right before he was to remain abroad:

⁶³ Vianu, Lidia. *Καλειδοσκόπιο/ Kaleidoscope/ Caleidoscop*, p. 288.

⁶⁴ Vianu, Lidia. *Vântul și Pescărușul/ The Wind and the Seagull/ La Mouette et le Vent . . .*, p. 150.

⁶⁵ Vianu, Lidia. *Vântul și Pescărușul/ The Wind and the Seagull/ La Mouette et le Vent . . .*, p. 180.

⁶⁶ Vianu, Lidia. *Vântul și Pescărușul/ The Wind and the Seagull/ La Mouette et le Vent . . .*, p. 144.

⁶⁷ Vianu, Lidia. *Vântul și Pescărușul/ The Wind and the Seagull/ La Mouette et le Vent . . .*, p. 150.

⁶⁸ Vianu, Lidia. *Καλειδοσκόπιο/ Kaleidoscope/ Caleidoscop*, p. 350–351, 452–454.

⁶⁹ Vianu, Lidia. *Καλειδοσκόπιο/ Kaleidoscope/ Caleidoscop*, p. 340.

⁷⁰ Vianu, Lidia. *Καλειδοσκόπιο/ Kaleidoscope/ Caleidoscop*, p. 172.

⁷¹ Vianu, Lidia. *Καλειδοσκόπιο/ Kaleidoscope/ Caleidoscop*, p. 310.

⁷² Vianu, Lidia. *Καλειδοσκόπιο/ Kaleidoscope/ Caleidoscop*, p. 312.



I remember Den-Disco's back as he was leaving, after he had brought me home late. The last time I ever saw him.⁷³

Then, Professor Den-Disco remains abroad for the rest of his life:

I have not seen him since he defected.⁷⁴

The Professor's words uttered after his getting together with the author student in the Garden of the Icon have the power of a spiritual testament. Testament—once because they are followed by his remaining abroad, and then because they do not end something without leaving a trace—actually, they left deep traces in the author's life. Referencing this aspect by quoting a single paragraph would denote a superficial treatment of Lidia Vianu's series of parallel texts. In truth, all volumes in the series (*Kaleidoscope*, *The Wind and the Seagull*, *Bumble-Bea*, and *Strange Beings*) spring and get their strength from the «astral» moments which left a mark on the two Professors of English—both being, each in his or her time, a reputed Professor of the English Department.

Returning to the comparison of the faith in Lidia Vianu's parallel texts and the story in *Serendipity*, a difference becomes obvious. In the film, the materialisation of the signs able to confirm a happy ending for the couple takes ten years. In a “serendipitous” way, each of the two characters finds the corresponding sign in an «astral» moment. The moments when the clues appear can be called «astral». The epithet is inspired by the title of the Romanian version of Stefan Zweig's book *Sternstunden der Menschheit*. As Zweig says in the preface of the original,⁷⁵ the astral moments are just like the crucial moments in history: they happen without human intervention *per se*. History itself makes them come alive. The final, «*face to face*» (1 *Corinthians* 13:12) getting together of the Professor and his former student—the author of the series of parallel texts—asks for the sign to take no less than “forty-nine years and a month”.⁷⁶ However, that very sign—which was launched by the Professor at their last meeting in the Garden of the Icon, when the author was a student—was the guarantor of faith in the reunion. The farewell takes place at the end of the Professor's life, but it was made possible by the very sign the Professor gave the author in order to avoid the inevitable «never».

This faith is the basis for a spiritual interpretation. It brings us back to the call at the heart of the Holy Orthodox Liturgy—as it is carried out in Romania—; it is about the invocation of the Holy Spirit through the «Prayer of the third hour» which prepares the moment of the epiclesis. Just as the King, Prophet, and Psalmist David prayed to God not to be separated from the Holy Spirit, in the same way, before the epiclesis, through the «Prayer of the third hour», the priest raises a triple prayer to God so that the Holy Spirit not be taken from the celebrant and the co-ministering priests, from the community in prayer, and from all of us in the world. Likewise, the heart of the writer swells with the hope of reunion like a speechless prayer.

When the reunion takes place on the Mediterranean shore, where the Professor spent most of his life, *The Wind and the Seagull* reveals the trans-figurative merging of the Professor in the poet's psyche:

⁷³ Vianu, Lidia. *Καλειδοσκόπιο/ Kaleidoscope/ Caleidoscop*, p. 94.

⁷⁴ Vianu, Lidia. *Καλειδοσκόπιο/ Kaleidoscope/ Caleidoscop*, p. 116.

⁷⁵ Zweig, Stefan. *Sternstunden der Menschheit*. S. Fischer Verlag, 1962, p. 5–6.

⁷⁶ Vianu, Lidia. *Vântul și Pescărușul/ The Wind and the Seagull/ La Mouette et le Vent . . .*, p. 150.



And yet, not one second passes when I do not feel you breathing in my lungs, smiling in my brain, speaking in my blood vessels, calling in my memories, angry at our helplessness, impatient with this life, happy with what you can get, postponing us —⁷⁷

This mental-spiritual psychic fusion is all the more penetrating in the poet's soul, the shorter the «*face to face*» reunion of the two is.

123 ∞ 7 breaths is what it took to climb the Monte. The harmony of *Il Monaco's* ascended soul, the pity for that breathing body, farther and farther away, till the drop of blood is the tunnel, into ∞⁷⁸

We have seen here how the Professor's utterance "I had the feeling that, if I did not call you today, I would never see you again" stands out as a leap of faith not only for the poem *The Wind and the Seagull*, but also for the novel *Kaleidoscope*, and also for the follow-up books *Bumble-Bea* and *Strange Beings*.

CONCLUSION

Professor Vianu's writing is unpretentious, sincere, lyrical, with words and phrases more often than not flowing from the bottom of her heart. With such a kind of writing, faring quite far away from modernism, or postmodernism, an approach from the theological perspective is thought to be appropriate. The interpretation stays apart from any pretence of general acceptance. However, two points of view should stand as starting points in such a choice. Firstly, the very authenticity of the author's writing with its springing from a sincere and profound thinking shows it to feature confessional traits. Secondly, a common fundamental similitude to certain quotations from the scripture, or some of the writings of the Church Fathers, or even of some of the present theology professors are appropriate for the interpretation of the parallel texts.

⁷⁷ Vianu, Lidia. *Vântul și Pescărușul/ The Wind and the Seagull/ La Mouette et le Vent . . .*, p. 144.

⁷⁸ Vianu, Lidia. *Vântul și Pescărușul/ The Wind and the Seagull/ La Mouette et le Vent . . .*, p. 144.



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