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DERRIDA „ZONA BE PRIKLAUSYMO“ IR LITERATŪRINĖ APLINKA

Derridean “Zone Without Belonging” and Literary Ambience

SUMMARY

The question about belonging to a linguistic group is an important source of Derrida’s identity. Derrida understood language as the heart of identity construction. Thinking about his own life, he analyses such notions as maternal language, mother tongue, the language of the other. The article analyzes the emotions of alienation, exile, and nostalgia highlighted by Derrida. They haunted him while he contemplated on the language. The expressions of “hiding the inner”, trauma and secret were also important for him. The colonial and post-colonial experience that placed his cultural identities under severe threat gave rise to defense mechanisms that try to defend him against a repetition of this traumatic past. This article considers such works of Derrida as *Monolingualism of the Other or the Prosthesis of Origin* (1998), *How to Avoid Speaking: Denials* (2008), *Acts of Literature* (1992), and others. As a result, Derrida’s multiple identities that were developing during his life create a paradigmatic situation: he feels that the language is more influential for him. “I have only one language and it is not mine”. For different reasons, these words as a prayer were often reiterated by those who experienced emigration and alienation from their native language. Many European writers and poets have experienced the same situation with “language as a zone without belonging”. For this reason, attention is also drawn to other famous writers – Paul Celan and Ingeborg Bachmann.

SANTRAUKA

Priklausymo kalbinei grupei klausimas yra svarbus Derrida tapatybės šaltinis. Derrida sampratoje kalba yra tapatybės kūrimo šerdis. Apmąstydamas savo paties gyvenimą, jis analizuoja sąvokas „motinos kalba“, „gimtoji kalba“, „kito kalba“. Straipsnyje analizuojamos Derrida išryškintos susvetimėjimo, tremties ir nostalgijos emocijos, kurios persekiojo jį apmąstant kalbą. Taip pat filosofui buvo svarbios „vidujybės slėpimo“, traumos ir paslapties sąvokos. Kolonijinė ir pokolonijinė patirtis, dėl kurios jo kultūrinei tapatybei iškilo rimta grėsmė, leido atsirasti gynybos mechanizmams, turėjusiems jį apsaugoti nuo šios traumuo-

RAKTAŽODŽIAI: vienakalbystė, kito kalba, kalbinė hibridizacija, nostalgija, postkolonializmas.

KEY WORDS: monolingualism, language of the other, linguistic hybridization, nostalgia, postcolonialism.

jančios praeities pasikartojimo. Šiame straipsnyje nagrinėjami Derrida tekstai „Kito vienakalbystė arba kilmės protezas“ (1998), „Kaip išvengti kalbėjimo: neigimai“ (2008), „Literatūros darbai“ (1992) ir kt. To rezultatas – daugialypė Derrida tapatybė, kuri plėtojosi visą jo gyvenimą, sukuria paradigmą – jis jaučia, kad kalba jam daro didesnę įtaką: „Aš turiu tik vieną kalbą ir ji ne mano.“ Daug Europos rašytojų ir poetų yra išgyvenę tą pačią situaciją – „kalba kaip zona be priklausymo“. Dėl šios priežasties atkreipiama dėmesys ir į kitus garsius rašytojus – Paulį Celaną ir Ingeborg Bachmann.

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, philosophy employs aesthetic practices as philosophical practices: it constructs texts poetically and creates images. Contemporary philosophers have translated questions concerning the constitution of experience into aesthetic stylized performances of philosophy. This circumstance gives philosophical biography new colors and mixes public, private, extrinsic images, and scientific results. (Buckner and Statler 2005: VII).

Derrida in “Monolingualism of the Other...” wonders: “What is identity, this concept of which the transparent identity to itself is always dogmatically presupposed by so many debates on monoculturalism or multiculturalism, nationality, citizenship, and, in general, belonging?” (Derrida 1998: 14). The question about belonging to a linguistic group is an important source of his identity. Following Wittgenstein, Derrida understood language as the heart of identity construction. Thinking about his own life, he analyses such notions as maternal language, mother tongue, the language of the other. For the intellectuals from the former colonies there has always been a danger of becoming “linguistic uninvited guests” and “linguistic troublemakers” in the country of arrival. Such emotions as alienation,

exile, nostalgia chased him when he spoke about language. Derrida’s words that he is “a sort of Marrano of French Catholic culture” can help us better understand his deconstruction identity borders and his own relations with his Jewish identity (Derrida 1993: 170). The next point of discussion addresses the problem of heritage and responsibility. Both meanings are different from their origins: heritage is a gift that we do not choose and responsibility is closely connected with our free will and wish. Following Derrida, being European means taking the responsibility for the heritage as historically gifted and, at the same time, it means the openness through its relation to the non-European Other and its heritage.

For Derrida, the expression ‘hiding the inner’ was important. As Wittgenstein points out, it is the language game. In this sense we can say that a language game that builds on the practice of cover-up has allowed Derrida to deconstruct colonial and post-colonial identification methods that create a mentally ghostly “zone of no belonging”. The case of “Judeo-Franco-Maghrebian situatedness” for many post-colonial researchers is the attempt to rethink the relations to otherness and the processes of identification that exceed a self/other

binary. Robert Young underlines the significance of such fact that “Sartre, Althusser, Derrida, and Lyotard were all

either born in Algeria or personally involved with the events of the war.” (Young 1990: 1).

TRAUMA AND SECRET

Every case which relates to an intermingling of philosophy and autobiography can tell us something new, and especially about the difficulties of post-colonial inquiry. Every biographical or partly biographical essay is an attempt to translate existential level to eventful. Derrida’s archive is a concentration of many traumas. His first trauma pertains to the nonbelonging, to any metalanguage and his ambivalence to the culture in which he was growing up. The second trauma relates to his expelling from school for an anti-Semitic reason. The third trauma, which is the result of the first two, refers to perception of own otherness and exclusiveness in a mostly negative sense.

The “Algeria Thing” involves him and his lifelong childhood friend Hélène Cixous in a reflection on their Franco-Judeo-Maghrebian identity. For both, memories of Algeria are linked to the violence of the Vichy regime, the status of Jews and anti-Semitism during World War II. When Cixous recalls their common past she writes: “We do mirror a number of precise and dated stigmata: Algeria 1940. ... Expulsions, naturalizations, de/citizenships, exclusions, black listings, doors slammed in your face ... that constitute the archives of what he calls my ‘nostalgia’ and what I call my ‘algeriance’” (Cixous 2004: 5). In her book “Stigmata” she described her own and Derrida’s trauma. She wrote: “Jews truly wanted to

love France. But it was love by force. We wanted to love Algeria. But it was too early or too late” (Cixous 2005: 133).

For Derrida, the meaning of a secret grew from his own psychological dilemma: “to tell or not to tell”. In “How to Avoid Speaking: Denials” Derrida described this as an important comment for understanding the “secret of denial and a denial of the secret”. The secret as such, as secret, separates and already institutes negativity; it is a negation that denies itself sense of secret” (Derrida 2008: 25). A secret is something that must not be spoken. However, keeping a secret includes necessity of telling the secret to myself. In this part of his secret understanding he is close to Wittgenstein’s famous aphorism: “Of that which one cannot speak, one must remain silent” (Wittgenstein 1961: §7). In Derrida’s view, the secret is always in the process: it includes such elements as retention, repetition, trace, and the name. Everyone who is the owner of secret needs action of other, for example, a trace of secret should be formatted through dividing him with somebody. In this case, we have to deal with secret declassification and negation of its common sense. As Derrida says, “there is no secret as such; I deny it. And this is what I confide in secret to whomever allies himself to me. This is the secret of the alliance” (Derrida 2008: 25). He chooses Abraham as a general actor of his own history of secrets for the reason that he stays out-

side of Jewish and Christian ethics. His own Jewish identity was demonstrated through Marrano and Abraham's otherness. He created his own law, the credo of which, thanks to Marrano's position, sounds like this: "The less you show yourself as Jewish, the more and better Jew you will be." (Derrida 2007: 13).

If we understand the secret as something that should be outside of public discourse, then "circumcision" for Derrida was his secret and trauma at the same time (Derrida 1993: 70). Emilie Kutash named Derrida as a marked man, who as Jew used to examine the numbers on his left arm that witnessed his concentration camp experience. His French Algerian experience has marked his body with circumcision, and this implied that his Jewish identity was imposed from the outside. If we understand the secret as something that should be outside of public discourse, then "circumcision" for Derrida was his secret and trauma at the same time. Circumcision becomes the placeholder for the whole Judaic archive" (Kitash 2019: 10). Following this idea, Helen Cixous explains, "To think he was a Marrano all along and didn't know it. A true Marrano. Don't tell a soul. It's a secret" and "the Jewish boy's body to an identity he has not chosen" (Cixous 2004: 86; 2005: 130).

There I recall Artur Żmijewski who is a Polish artist, a radical, and a dissident. In the short video 80064 (2004) he shows elderly Auschwitz survivor who is persuaded to refresh the faded, prison number tattooed on his arm. As the tattooist retraces the digits, with the permission of the old man, the camera reveals his anxiety and trepidation; he looks afraid.

This video actually caused a great deal of public discussion about the ethics of intruding into the memory, and evoking past trauma, as well as invading a person's innermost secrets. From one perspective, the recovery of the number can be read as a mark that reminds us of the Holocaust. Others might see it as a hackneyed lesson, which was hardly worth the price of a vulnerable old man's peace of mind? Yet, as Żmijewski explained, in this instance the artist's goal was an attempt at "opening the door of memory," although if we invoke Derrida's concept of the secret and traumatic it is more a reminder of past humiliation and virulent anti-Semitism. In my opinion, Agata Bielik-Robson's views are similar to those expressed in the video 80064, namely a psychological situation in which she writes about trauma: "I am dealing with the present, a sudden 'now' of trauma that appearing without prior a priori preparation – or with a presence that is too late" (Bielik-Robson 2004: 24). In Stigmata Hélène Cixous emphasizes that "the stigma conveys the strongest message, the most secret message, the one that is most difficult to obey: whether good or bad, the stigmatized person is signaled out for exclusion and election" (Cixous 2005: xi). The situation of this special presence in the present or presence without the present is shown to us through the alternation of trauma and actions that originate from the "past" but belong to the "now". The situation of this specific presence in the present or presence without the present is shown to us through the alternation of trauma and actions that originate from the "past" but belong to the "now".

LANGUAGE AS A ZONE WITHOUT BELONGING

Most people identify themselves through a national or family language of communication. Derrida repeatedly describes himself as having only one language. Derrida's multiple identities, which were developing during his life, create a paradigmatic situation: he feels that in addition to all categories that his identity makes up it, the language is more influential for him. For modern thinkers who experienced the past with the Marrano phenomenon (not only with Jewish – non-Jewish), the “philosophizing” means a confrontation with a previously radically another linguistic different environment. As mentioned above, friends and intellectuals Jacques Derrida and Helen Cixous both grew up as French Jews in Algeria. They shared such emotions as belonging which consisted of exclusion, non-belonging to their Jewishness, using religious terminology, which did not belong to their family belief. In their families “one never said circumcision’ but baptism, not Bar Mitzvah but communion” (Cixous 2004). This example shows how Judaism terminology mixed with Catholic one becomes the mark of identity hybridity that has a strong influence on Derrida.

The subject of monolingualism of the Other was presented in many of Derrida's texts, some of them look autobiographical. His concept of monolingualism begins from a paradox: I have only one language and it is not mine. Later this idea finds continuation in the words: “it will never be mine, this language, the only one I am thus destined to speak, as long as the speech is possible for me in

life and in death; you see, never will this language be mine. And, truth to tell, it never was” (Derrida 1998: 2). Agata Bielik-Robson notes that the list of languages Derrida doesn't speak is long enough. It includes literal French, Yiddish, Ladin, Hebrew, etc. Derrida describes that the community of his childhood was cut off from both Arabic or Maghrebian languages, from French (he calls it *Metro-pole*). French as the colonial language in Algeria, which can be his native language was equally alien to him in adult age.

At the same time, he was cut off from Jewish cultural memory, from its history and language, last of them (Hebrew) no longer was in his life. Listing all languages that did not become his own, he wrote: “I am monolingual. My monolingualism dwells, and I call it my dwelling; it feels like one to me, and I remain in it and inhabit it. It inhabits me. The monolingualism ... not a natural element, not the transparency of the other, but an absolute habitat” (Derrida 1998: 2). On the one hand, he cultivates his own monolingualism and gives it many different explanations (familial, geographical, political, and historical). On the other hand, he asked himself: how could one have only one language without having any, without any that is theirs?

Monolingualism as such gave him the great possibility to be concentrated on French languages and develop them to a high level. Derrida and Cixous considered themselves “more rooted in the French language than those with ancestral roots in this culture and this land” (Armel, Derrida, et al 2006: 7). In a dia-

logue between Derrida and Cixous, he said: “Helene’s texts are translated across the world, but they remain untranslatable. We are two French writers who cultivate a strange relationship or a strangely familiar relationship with the French language – at once more translated and more untranslatable than many a French author” (Armel, Derrida, et al 2006: 7).

Alina Sajed emphasized that such authors as Abdelkebir Khatibi and Winnifred Woodhull, looking on our world of climate change, the rise of far-right, rampant neoliberal capitalism, and *migracide*, concluded that “we need creative ways of mobilization, intervention, and action – a call for a ‘return to philology’ as a substitute for politics seems rather out of touch with the times” (Sajed 2019: 98). For her, the multiple experiences of mobility that emerged in the context of post-colonial migrations between the Maghreb (North Africa) and France “has ambivalent and ambiguous conditions illuminated through language, and through practices of hybridity” (Sajed 2010: 364).

At this place we can see fruitful looks on Balibar’s concept as a reinvestigation of borders through the view of difference, emancipation, and hybridity. Balibar’s conceptualization of Europe as a borderland gives us the possibility to interpret the Franco-Maghrebian postcolonialism as a borderland constituted by overlapping histories and experiences such as conquests, colonization, cultural exchanges, linguistic hybridizations, anti-colonial struggles, and postcolonial migrations.

The term hybridity is important to us since sometimes it is used as a synonym

to liminality. Homi K. Bhabha posits hybridity as a form of liminal or in-between space. In his book “The Location of Culture” (1994), Bhabha analyses the liminality of hybridity as a paradigm of colonial anxiety. He uses liminality, like hybridity, to refer to the moment or place of untranslatability, the limit in which the meaning of a thing consists of its alterity. For him, there is a space “in-between the designations of identity” and that “this interstitial passage between fixed identifications opens up the possibility of a cultural hybridity that entertains difference without an assumed or imposed hierarchy” (Bhabha 1994: 4).

The next discussable consideration is difference. In his work “The Pleasure of the Text”, Roland Barthes argues that “the difference is not what makes or sweetens conflict: it is achieved over and above conflict, it is beyond and alongside conflict” (Barthes 1998: 15). Barthes remarks that we can find changes in the criteria and borders of identity. These changes can be realized only with one condition: “Let difference surreptitiously replace conflict” (Ibid). For Derrida to be a Franco-Maghrebian and monolingual is the problem of identity conflict: to be a Franco-Maghrebian, one “like myself,” is not a surfeit or richness of identities, attributes, or names. For most, however, this means rather an identity disorder with negative connotations. At this point, the alienation of Derrida’s language culminates: the image of the famous philosopher is reduced to the image of a Jewish child who was cut off from both Arabic or Maghrebian language and culture, and who survived expulsion from non-Jewish

schools. As result, the internal conflict does not give way to a simple difference. During all his life Derrida chants a mantra that “I have only one language and it is not mine; my “own” language is, for me, a language that cannot be assimilated. My language, the only one I hear myself speak and agree to speak, is the language of the other” (Derrida 1998: 25).

There has always been a common space and close relation between liminality and Marrano Jew, and it has concentrated on psychological status. The disorientation between a previous identity and a new one assumed—the religious, linguistic, or cultural exteriority of the Marrano Jew which vividly highlights liminality as such. All characters of spiritual and social discomfort can be found in the liminal personality, which includes ambivalence because it does not fit into the framework of any classifications in a cultural space. In “Margins of Philosophy” Derrida explains this state of psychological liminality in such a way: “There will be no unique name, even if it were the name of Being. And we must think this without nostalgia, that is, outside the myth of a purely maternal or paternal language, a lost native country of thought” (Derrida 1982: 27). Such researchers as Birgit Mara Kaiser escaped the dichotomous self/other binary conceptualization within pluralistic differ-

ences, colonially hierarchized, and differentiated images. From her view, Derrida and Cixous rather offer theories of nonbinary and non-appropriative identification, and “their ‘Algerian’ experiences do not permit the possibility of localizing him, of claiming or reclaiming him for a post-coloniality”. (Kaiser 2015: 194). Jane Hiddleston shared the same views and reproached him in the following:

- intervention of the first person in Derrida’s works on colonialism disrupts the ordinary objective goals of the genre;
- very often using Derridean “I” in his autobiographical reflections encroach from beyond the conventional boundaries of philosophy;
- very often the use of Derrida’s “I” in his autobiographical reflections goes beyond the generally accepted boundaries of philosophy;
- this unsettled and dividual subject serves to disturb the assertive, rational voice of the philosopher. (Hiddleston 2005: 294–295)

I am mostly convinced by Derrida’s words that “with whom can we [of a triply dissociated community] still identify in order to affirm our own identity and to tell ourselves our own history?... One would have to construct oneself; one would have to be able to invent oneself without a model and without an assured addressee” (Derrida 1998: 95).

DERRIDA’S LITERARY-PHILOSOPHICAL SURROUNDINGS: PAUL CELAN AND OTHERS

The examination of nostalgia in a cultural sense gives us a wide possibility to connect the author’s personality and the

nostalgic mode of his/her heroes. Central European nostalgia is more typically characterized by a reflective mood. Our

return to the nostalgic place often means, "We have simply forgotten the fear of initial border crossing and the dreams of departure" (Boym 2001: 353).

We often hear that nostalgia is a marginal phenomenon, which is nonproductive, pessimistic, and pulling the man to "the point of no return." For art and philosophy, nevertheless, the nostalgic individual who suffers from a restless imagination looks more important and deeper than the non-nostalgic one. Derridian literature created the image of the labyrinth, which constantly turns to the past and, at the same time, tries to move ahead through the present to the unknown future.

Many European writers and poets had experienced the same situation with "language as a zone without belonging". Central European alienation from the native language was typical through such famous writers, as Joseph Kafka, Bruno Schulz, Ingeborg Bachmann, Paul Celan, Milan Kundera, and some others. Everyone from them had their own different personal reasons, which at the same time are similar and closely related to Derridean.

Derrida always remained at the intersection between literature and philosophy in fundamental questions, which did not mean replacing philosophy with literary criticism, especially with regard to poetry. Derrida many times denied accusations that he favoured literary criticism over philosophy. Jean-Michel Rabaté recalls that the first time he heard of Derrida was in 1992 when Derrida pronounced the strong statement that he did not love literature as such and did

not prefer literature to philosophy. In addition, he rejected such epithets as 'a literary thinker'. Researchers often note that there are no attempts in Derrida's works to totally work out and classify the literary discourse.

Nevertheless, the study of philosophical and literary singularity became an important challenge for Derrida: "There is no pure singularity which affirms itself as such without instantly dividing itself, and so exiling itself" (Derrida 1992: 66). Derek Attridge emphasized that "Derrida places his emphasis not on singularity as such, but on the puzzling, yet productive, relation between singularity and generality, a relation which for him is not merely a paradoxical coexistence but a structural interdependence. For if the literary text were absolutely singular each time we encountered it, it would have no access to the human world at all" (Attridge 1992: 15).

Derridian method of anthropomorphism is a way to make the poem like a human being – with human wishes and requirements. He fully anthropomorphizes the poem as a capricious human being: "I am a dictation, pronounces poetry, learn me by heart, copy me down, guard and keep me, look out for **me**" (Derrida 1991: 223). In Derrida's numerous writings on Paul Celan, he repeatedly emphasized such feelings as humility, uncertainty, and entanglements.

The poetry of Paul Celan is an example of monolingualism of Other, a person, who writes his own poetry in French but hears it in German. Anne Carson emphasizes "Paul Celan is a poet who uses language as if he was always

translating. [...] Strangeness for Celan arose out of language and went back down into language" (Carson 1999: 28). For Celan, his own language and poetry is a ciphered archive of his intimate alienation. In his Bremen speech, Paul Celan describes his choice of writing in the German language: "This thing, language, remained unlost, yes, in spite of everything... It went through and gave no words for that which had happened, yet it went through this happening. Went through and was able to come back to light enriched by it all. In this language, I have tried, during those years and the years after, to write poems..." (Celan, 1986: 33–37). While reading Paul Celan's poetry Derrida notices: "There was already in this first reading a certain experience of apophatic silence, deported memory – in short, mourning, every impossible mourning." (Derrida, 2001, 122). Each repetition is one of the acts of resistance to oblivion, it is the basis of language itself and rituals, which should be performed many times. This paradoxical, unusual relationship between the singularity of the event and its eternal repetition becomes the important literary tool of Derrida's philosophy and Celan's poetry.

Derrida's words that "oblivion is always possible", relate to every text and to poetry too. He describes different types of oblivion: the archive can always be burnt in flames; it can simply be forgotten, or left to lethargy. These reflections on oblivion can help us better understand Derrida's and Celan's view on "ciphered singularity", which includes both of the two following statements:

"Every hour is unique" and "Every hour counts its Holocaust." Ingeborg Bachmann's poetry stays at the same line of this famous name. Together with Paul Celan, they open the door for a new interpretation of trauma, murder, and alienation. Their poems became a turning point for post-war German literature that touched upon such themes as loss, isolation, fear, and escape. They both proved that the poetry after Auschwitz is possible through connecting new lyric with avant-garde forms. They both proved that poetry after Auschwitz is possible through the combination of new lyrics with avant-garde forms.

Ingeborg Bachmann in her philosophical poetry persistently repeats, "All things must enter into language and must be worn away in the language according to the degree of their guilt" (Bachmann 1990: 98). For her in every use of the Viennese vernacular is the trace of shared Austrian complicity with the Nazi regime and its participation in the Holocaust. About "the languages according to the degree of their guilt" Celan shouts loudly and almost whispers Derrida. Both of them try creating a singular event for the readers through poetic or philosophical texts. In the last interview Derrida said: "The trace I leave signifies to me at once my death, either to come or already come upon me, and the hope that this trace survives me... I live my death in writing. It's the ultimate test: one expropriates oneself without knowing exactly who is being entrusted with what is left behind. Who is going to inherit, and how? Will there even be any heirs? (Derrida 2007: 32–33).

CONCLUSION

Réda Bensmaïa in the Preface to her book "Gilles Deleuze, Postcolonial Theory, and the Philosophy of Limit" questioned "How to become a Stalker in philosophy?" or using Deleuze definition how to turn into "our becoming-other. In our view, the secret how "becoming Other" was well known for Derrida: necessary to be expelled from his past spiritual life and started to be alien at the country that he accepted. Derrida's alienation has many dimensions: from the place of his birth, the native language, the Western (Greek) philosophical tradition, and his Jewish heritage. This situation gives him the possibility to feel free to independently analyze such phenomena as the Western host culture, Algerian colonial, and post-colonial situation. For the same reason, he feels free to be outside from all the limitations of a language that is not his own, a culture that is alien

and a 'faith' free of a publicly endorsed religion. Derrida always remained at the intersection between literature and philosophy in fundamental questions, which did not imply the replacement of philosophy with literary criticism. The phenomenon of nostalgia in a cultural sense gives us a wide possibility to connect the author's personality and a nostalgic mode of his/her heroes. Derrida cultivates his own monolingualism and puts it on a long list of many other alienations: familial, religious, geographical, and political. We found similar Central European alienation from the native language in the narration of such famous writers, as Joseph Kafka, Bruno Schulz, Ingeborg Bachmann, Paul Celan, Milan Kundera, and some others. Each of them had their own different personal reasons, which at the same time are closely related to the one's expressed by Derrida.

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