

SCHOLARLY PAPERS BY
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR DR. HABILITAT
ZHORZHETA PETROVA CHOLAKOVA,
submitted with the application for the academic position “professor”
in:
Scholarly area 2. Humanities
Professional strand 2.1. Philology (Slavic literatures)
(Annotations)

Zhorzheta Cholakova. THE POETICS OF MELANCHOLY. Karel Hynek Mácha. Plovdiv: University Press, 2019, 403 p. ISBN 978-619-202-445-1

[Жоржета Чолакова. ПОЕТИКА НА МЕЛАНХОЛИЯТА. Карел Хинек Маха. Пловдив: УИ „Паисий Хилендарски“, 2019]

Melancholy has been part and parcel of human culture since Antiquity till the present and each cultural era has captured in its own way the manifestations of this disproportional dichotomy between spiritual and existential reality. Expressed through various expressive systems (verbal, pictorial, musical) and through historically specific artistic conventions, melancholy is among the most durable and at the same time multifaceted in its manifestations spiritual states of man-in-the-world. In its centuries-long usage as a religious, ethical and aesthetic concept melancholy has shaped as *an idea of the world as a world of absences* which makes it a worldview of cultural consciousness.

The idea of melancholy has travelled a long way so as to reach its peak of conceptual synthesis in the romantic philosophy of the subject and being: it has turned from a nosological into a cultural problem, while the distinctive phases it has passed through diachronically shape its manifestations in different layers of cultural mentality – religious, philosophical, artistic, social. Cultivated by the Renaissance the melancholy idea was liberated from the stigma of sin, whether original or individual, and became intrinsically linked to the creative genius, delicate sensibility and perceptive mind. In this way melancholy reached that stage which we identify with the romantic idea of the world as a palpably and painfully felt reality. The changes which Romanticism brought to our understanding of melancholy reflect the philosophical and aesthetic consequences from the establishment of a new cultural worldview

which lent melancholy not only moral gravitas but also the privileged prophetic condition of the spirit.

My desire to study *the poetics of melancholy of Karel Hynek Mácha* has been motivated by its remarkable artistic energy which opens the horizons of modern Czech poetry and by the possibility which it affords to discover an area that has not yet been illuminated by Czech literary scholarship, at least not from the perspective I adopt here. Considering Mácha in his European context and with regard to the evolution of a specific idea can elucidate his uniqueness as an organic synthesis of different cultural voices, which, in turn, calls for a complete diachronic and synchronic rendition. Along such lines, my study is an attempt to overcome the often restrictive approach which Slavic literary studies suffer from, an approach that emphasizes the particularities of Slavic literatures instead of discussing their natural participation in the common European map of the history of ideas. This rather dangerous tradition logically leads us to encounter arguments of “belated” development since such a position articulates the principles of Eurocentrism which has always ambitiously aimed to posit the so-called “big” literatures as an omnipotent measure of authority. Another dangerous consequence following from such presumptions is the formation of nationalist doctrines which emphasize uniqueness or exceptionality, understood as privilege, not as a particularity of cultural development, which, by the way, is attributable to any one national context.

With these considerations in mind, my study works on several levels simultaneously and traces developments in several different directions which are important for this synchronic parallelism:

- the genesis and evolutionary dynamics of the concept of melancholy as symptomatic of the history of ideas until the 19th century;
- the manifestations of this process in the Czech context; and
- the conceptual and image concretisation of melancholy in the artistic world of the first and foremost representative of Czech romanticism – Karel Hynek Mácha (1810 – 1836).

Thus outlined, the research field presupposes that I will be referring to authors and works from different ages and different contexts, without necessarily aiming to offer an exhaustive discussion of the phenomenon. The argument follows the logic of the dominant theme which due to its poly-functional usage calls for considering its diverse manifestations and at that not only in the literary field but also in the spheres of fine arts, philosophy and psychology.

When my discussion touches upon typological similarities and even contact reflections of reception the governing assumption is that in a given national context value weight is attributed only to those tendencies that resonate with respective cultural predispositions. The epistemological complex of melancholy is understood as the romantic philosophy of the subject and not as a behavioural disposition towards solitary dreaminess. Along such lines, my views do not follow the simplistic equivalency which is often established between melancholy and contemplative disposition or the nostalgic intoxication with the memory of a past beautiful experience – from childhood or youth, about the birthplace or of loved ones. Therefore, I introduce two terms which are usually regarded as synonymous – *меланхолен* (*melancholy*, used as an attribute) and *меланхоличен* (*melancholic*): the former derives from „melancholy” („меланхолия“), the latter from „меланхоличност“, i.e. the melancholic disposition. The tradition of using these two concepts interchangeably is indicative of the incorrect projection of equivalence between the mood, or emotional state, and the worldview.

Of relevance to this study's conceptual mapping is the existing scholarly view of melancholy as a type of imagination which holds contrary categories at par. The ambivalence entailed generates dichotomic features of the imagery by activating heterogeneous antinomies – temporal, spatial, and chromatic. My commentary on the romantic poetics of melancholy as evidenced in the artistic world of Mácha reveals multi-layered manifestations of ambivalence as an expression of a certain existential philosophy. To my mind, the dual nature of the melancholy worldview can project that hermeneutical perspective which may adequately throw light on both the intentional horizon of Mácha and the discursive characteristics of his language. This creative principle in constructing imagery is usually interpreted as the expression of the romantic inclination towards oppositioning of a personal ideal vis-a-vis reality, consequently leading to contrastive poetics. In my view, there exists a different kind of motivation which is based on by far deeper and more complex factors that are related to the evolutionary dynamics of cultural mentality. Taking such a stance can also provide for a qualitatively new conceptualisation of the zone of interliterary reflections.

Overall, Mácha's oeuvre – both poetry and prose, is rendered with a view of the cultural layers which build his artistic world but not for the purposes of gauging influences or image stereotyping. On the contrary, the adopted perspective of differentiating comparativism charts significant specificities even in the presence of common image elements (for instance, with Villon, Ronsard, the Czech literary tradition). These questions are of paramount importance for the understanding of the two literary states of melancholy – the one

thematically exposed on the plane of the object and/or the other one, i.e. the implicitly coded in the language which constructs the world of the subject.

The different diachronic and synchronic directions which the present work charts rely on the conviction that the archaeological excavations of the history of ideas illuminate the Logos of Mácha – a poet whose inner world resonates with and argues with different cultural voices which fill the space of his thoughts with questions but not with ready-made answers. This is why I have reservations about approaches which focus on intertextual traces and receptive reflections. It is useful of course to study intercultural dialogue. My study in its own way is part of this field but it posits a different understanding of it – as a field of historically dynamic ideas the protuberances of which appear in specific ways at different cultural and historical stages and in different national contexts. It is not the separate motifs or image configurations, nor the rhyming schemes and verse structures that prove the significant inspiration sources for a given poet -- because this is not where the power of poetry lies; it lies in the Word that is expressed through them.

Zhorzheta Cholakova. MILAN KUNDERA AND THE ETERNAL RETURN AS AN EXILE METAPHOR [Georgeta Tcholakova. Milan Kundera et le „retour éternel“ comme métaphore de l’exil. // *Quo vadis, Romania? Exil in/aus der Romania Beispiele aus dem 20. Jahrhundert*. Wien, 2001, N 17, 11 – 21. ISSN 1022-3169]

The paper discusses the eternal return not only as a motif but also as a philosophical problem running throughout Milan Kundera’s works. Here I have made a hermeneutical attempt to trace some of the thematic and narrative variations in *The Joke*, *The Book of Laughter and Forgetting*, *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, and *Identity* and have outlined the conceptual relation of this issue to the problematics of identity. The contours of terms such as otherness and exile are considered with a view to Kundera’s attitude to social integration on the one hand and as an unsolvable problem of existence, on the other.

Zhorzheta Cholakova. PRIMITIVISM AND THE WAY OF THINKING ABOUT ART AND LITERATURE IN THE FRENCH AND BALKAN AVANT-GARDE [Jorjeta Tcholakova. Le primitivisme et la pensée artistique et littéraire dans l’avant-garde française et balkanique. // *Études balkaniques*, 2001, 2 – 3, 232 – 245. ISSN 2534-8574]

Primitivism as an aesthetic concept of avant-gardism is considered here vis-a-vis the radical change as regards the marginalized in the previous modernist generation views on

folklore and non-European culture. The revalorisation of archaic arts envisions the achievement of the so-called internal human model through the universalisation of its immanent perceptive and imaginative capabilities. I have highlighted the conceptual emphases of primitivism in the core concepts of European avant-gardisms, such as Cubism, Expressionism, Dadaism, Futurism, and Surrealism. In parallel, I outline the specific concepts of barbarianizing language in the Southern Slavic context and the idea of the “Balkan genius-barbarian”.

Zhorzheta Cholakova. THE CZECH LITERARY BAROQUE FACING THE “NEITHER LIVING HERE NOR DEAD THERE” IDEOLOGEME [Жоржета Чолакова. Чешкият литературен барок пред идеологемата „Нито жив тук, нито мъртъв там“. // *Юбилеен славистичен сборник*. Съст. Маринела Вълчанова, Михаела Кузмова, Миглена Михайлова. Благоевград, УИ „Н. Рилски“, 2005, 688 – 696. ISBN: 954-680-359- 6]

After the defeat of Bila Hora in 1620 and the loss of national independence the Czech land turned into a world of the defeated and suffering. In the Czech literary Baroque the implication about national cause for the suffering is immersed in the ideology of Baroque dolorism, which affirms the usefulness, necessity and moral value of pain: suffering turns into a global sign of human fate, into a religious maxim about the existence in this world. Such a generalization of suffering as an existential human nature and predetermination can be found in the works of the most significant Czech poets of this period. The dominating image equivalent of all these works is the Labyrinth, in which the possible life becomes impossible, and the salvation of the soul can be achieved only in the illusive and intellectual meaning of a meditative religious journey toward God. The rrance experience of the transition from earth’s “here” to heaven’s “beyond” is realized through the opposition human-divine, which is identified as an image opposition earth labyrinth – heaven’s garden.

Zhorzheta Cholakova. VLADIMÍR HOLAN AND THE CZECH AVANT-GARDE BETWEEN THE TWO WARS [Žoržeta Čolakova. Vladimír Holan a česká meziválečná avantgarda. // *Vladimír Holan a jeho soupevníci*. Sborník příspěvků z III. kongresu světové literárněvědné bohemistiky. Sv. 2. Vratislav Farber (ed.). Ústav pro českou literaturu AV ČR, 2006, 11 – 19. ISBN 80-85778-52-1 (2. Svazek), ISBN 90-85778-50-5 (soubor)]

The paper studies the process of the formation of the poetic language of Vladimir Holan under the influence of the poetics of interwar avant-gardism. His first collection of poetry – *The Insane Fan* (1926) is an example of the chain associations that are a characteristic feature of his poetics. In the 1930s, the volumes *The Triumph of Death*, *Breezing*, and *Arc* are revealing of the ways in which the playful vitality of poetism gives way to existential anxiety which is reflected in the poetic language of Holan himself. In this period he develops his own poetics in which one can recognize the principles of image construction typical of Cubism and Expressionism.

Georgeta Tcholakova. THE PRIMITIVE AS AN AESTHETIC CONCEPT OF ZENITHISM [Жоржета Чолакова. Примитивизмът като естетически концепт на зенитизма. // *Под знака на европейските културни диалози. В памет на професор Боян Ничев*. Ред. Христина Балабанова, Борис Минков, Добромир Добрев. София: УИ „Св. Кл. Охридски“, 2007, 401 – 410. ISBN 978-954-07-2545-1]

The aesthetic proximity of zenithism to some European avant-garde movements like dadaism and expressionism naturally raises the problem of primitivism which is a basic concept of avant-garde. At the same time, South Slavic primitivism has distinctive specific features, especially in the Bulgarian and Croatian contexts. In the zenithism concept the person inhabiting the Balkans embodies the authentic human spirit, identifying himself with the ‘barbarian-genius’ who, despite being a destroyer and a suicide, pretends to possess the authentic qualities of human nature such as love and kindness. The literary language follows the rhythm of the shamanic trance, thus confronting intellectualism.

Zhorzheta Cholakova. FORMS OF DIGRESSION IN VLADIMIR HOLAN'S INTERPRETATION OF THE ORPHEUS MYTH IN *A NIGHT WITH HAMLET* [Žoržeta Čolakova. Podoby digrese v Holanově interpretaci Orfeova mythu v *Noci s Hamletem*. // *Bohemistyka*. Walbrzych: Państwowa Wyższa Szkoła Zawodowa, N 3, 2007, 220 – 226. ISSN 1642-9893]

The paper focuses on one of the most significant works of Vladimir Holan -- *A Night with Hamlet* (1962), which ranks among the most remarkable projections of existentialism. Employing the principle of the “reversed” myth of Orpheus and transposing it to Holan’s present day totalitarian society allows the poet to convey his ideas of the degradation of interpersonal relationships and the deepening crisis of personality.

Zhorzheta Cholakova. MEMORY AND OBLIVION OF THE SURREALISTIC CHARACTER "VALERIE AND HER WEEK OF WONDERS" BY VÍTĚZSLAV NEZVAL [Žoržeta Čolakova. Pamäť a „nepamäť“ surrealistickej postavy. Vítězslav Nezval: Valerie a týden divu. // *Podoby hrdinu v literatúre a v kultúrnej pamäti*. Editorky: Christina Balabanovová a Viera Prokešová. Bratislava: Ústav svetovej literatúry SAV, Slovak Academic Press, 2008, 96 – 103. ISBN 078-80-8095-026-2]

The surrealism is much concerned with the problem of memory – oblivion is due to the fundamental questions it implies: the boundaries between the conscious, unconscious and subconscious, childhood as archetypal memory, etc. Memory and oblivion have various manifestations in Nezval's "black novel" *Valerie and Her Week of Wonders* (written in 1935, published in 1945), but in tune with the problem we consider major – memory as a factor in the paradigms of characters – we emphasize two basic moments: *first*, memory of the text as a character-creating mechanism that implies mythological, folklore and literature proto-models in the characters' roles; and *second*, memory as a means of differentiation and motivation of characters' behaviour. In Nezval's novel – as in surrealism in general – the biggest concern is the unconscious and especially subconscious, as well as ontological concepts reflected in them. The artistic interpretation of the problem of memory projects the key concepts of psychoanalysis such as libido energy, the transition from childhood to puberty, aggressive subconscious instincts and their overcoming, dreaming, imagination, etc. At the same time, through volitional remembrance, memory is transposed from the realm of the unconscious into the realm of the conscious and thus motivates the initiative course of Valery toward recovery of her individual memory and finding her identity. Memory turns out to be a fundamental criterion for the axiological differentiation of characters based on their will and ability to remember: (in)voluntary memory and (in)voluntary oblivion play a crucial role in the motivation of their behaviour.

Zhorzheta Cholakova. ORPHEUS, ORPHISM AND VLADIMIR HOLAN' PHILOSOPHICAL THOUGHT [Joržeta Tcholakova. Orphée, l'orphisme et la pensée philosophique de Vladimír Holan. // *L'antre des mots*. Autour de la poésie de Vladimir Holan. Textes réunis et édités par Xavier Galmiche & Jan Rubeš. Literaria Pragensia. Studies in Literature and Culture, Vol. 19, N 37, 2009, pp. 42 – 51. ISSN 0862-8424]

The scene representing the conversation between Orpheus and Eurydice in "A Night with Hamlet" (Noc s Hamletem, 1964) by Vladimír Holan is indicative of both the philosophical and existential views of this extremely important Czech poet and his poetic

world. Holan transforms the mythical story and turns the image of the poet loved by the gods into a voice of human fear of the existing. The changes in the narrative plan eliminate the major components of the original story, the katabasis and anabasis. The dialogue between the characters, which is also a result of the narrative transformation of the myth, problematizes the ontological value of the word and also outlines some concepts, fundamental for Orphism: dualism, initiation, reincarnation, memory and oblivion

Zhorzheta Cholakova. METAMORPHOSES OF ORPHEUS IN CZECH POETRY [Georgeta Tcholakova Métamorphoses d'Orphée dans la poésie tchèque. // *Figures mythiques en Europe centrale. Aspects d'un panthéon variable*. András Kányádi (dir.). Paris: Institut d'Etudes Slaves, 2010, 31 – 38. ISSN 0079-0028, ISBN 978-2-7204-0463-4]

The essay discusses the appearance of the image of Orpheus in Czech poetry in the Revival period and traces its variations spanning into the 20th century as well. The particular renditions of the motif of doomed love and the problem of the role of poetry are considered vis-à-vis the aesthetics of Romanticism, modernism and realism. By adopting this perspective and interpreting a particular mythologeme I am able to discern the cultural and historical dynamics in understanding poetry and the role of the poet alongside the intentional differences in the rendition of the relation between love and death.

Zhorzheta Cholakova. THE GENEALOGICAL CONCEPTION OF THE AVANT-GARDE IN SLAVIC LITERATURES [Georgeta Tcholakova La conception généalogique des avant-gardes dans les littératures slaves. // *Caietele Tristan Tzara*. Sous la direction de Vasile Robciuc. Editura Priftis, Moinești – România, 2010, 49 – 53. ISSN 1584-8825]

The essay presents significant aspects of the genesis and evolution of modernity in South Slavic and Western Slavic literatures. It addresses the area of interactions between the inspirational role of the European context and the aesthetic foundations of one's own literary milieu which generate specific reflections of avant-garde aesthetics. The argument emphasizes the dominant presence of expressionism in the Slavic context and offers stipulations as to the reasons for the development of Surrealism in Serbian and Czech literature.

Zhorzheta Cholakova. JAROSLAV SEIFERT: TOWARDS A POETICS OF MELANCHOLY [Жоржета Чолакова. Ярослав Сайферт, или за поетиката на меланхолията. // *Нобеловата награда за литература – мост между културите*. Съст.

и отг. ред. Маргрета Григорова. Велико Търново: Ивис, 2013, 197 – 209. ISBN 978-954-2968-48-1]

Jaroslav Seifert was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1984. This provides grounds for reflection not only on the external circumstances that led to the award but also on the implications of this act for the promotion of a certain kind of lyrical poetry. Czechoslovakian literary criticism did not contribute in any way to the building of Seifert's literary reputation. During the communist regime in Czechoslovakia Seifert became the target of uncompromising ideological criticism on account of his negative attitude to the Communist Party, which he voluntarily left in 1929. Under these circumstances Seifert's poetry reached readers mainly through self-published copies of his work and translations into other languages. The article considers the quality of some of these translations. It further looks at Seifert's view of poetry as a means of spiritual self-preservation through isolation and internal reflection. In his poetry it is expressed through the employment of motifs of eternal return, nostalgic experience of childhood, endless waiting and irretrievable loss. In this sense, the high prize, which the poet was awarded in 1984, may be interpreted as a form of recognition of his poetics of melancholy.

Zhorzheta Cholakova. THE ONTOTHEOLOGICAL IMAGE OF DEATH IN OTOKAR BŘEZINA'S POETICS [Онтотеологичният образ на смъртта в поетиката на Отокар Бржезина. // *Научни трудове на Пловдивския университет „Паисий Хилендарски“*, Филология. Том 51, кн. 1, сб. В, 2013, 256 – 269. ISSN 0861–0029]

The problem of death – not only as an unavoidable final point of human life, but also as a transcendental sign of being – plays a key role in the metaphysical philosophy of Otokar Březina (1868-1929) – the most significant Czech symbolist poet. This paper is an attempt to rethink a popular thesis that has been dominating Czech literary criticism: the thesis about the connection between Catholicism and Březina's transcendental vision of the human soul and the universe. The research is based on the term ontotheology which, according to Heidegger, is essential for metaphysics but is not equal to theology.

Zhorzheta Cholakova. MELANCHOLIC REFLECTIONS OF WAR IN JAROSLAV SEIFERT'S POETRY [Žoržeta Čolakova. Melancholické reflexe války v poezii Jaroslava Seiferta. // *Obraz válek a konfliktů*. Vít Schmarc a kol. (eds.). V. kongresu světové literárněvědné bohemistiky, Ústav pro českou literaturu AV ČR, Praha: Akropolis, 2015, 71 – 81. 978-80-7470-114-6]

Jaroslav Seifert's development as a poet increasingly expresses melancholy perceived as a philosophy of life rather than just as an embodiment of personally experienced life events. The elegical quality of his reflexive lyrical poetry is a manifestation of his intimate and social crisis that, at the same time, he binds with universal issues related to the meaning of existence. The fact that the modern theory of melancholy commences with Freud's treatise *Trauer und Melancolie*, which the author wrote in 1915 – i.e. at the time when both his sons were at the front – underscores the presence of intentional interrelatedness between melancholy and war. Jaroslav Seifert, the poet who experienced the two World Wars and stoically opposed the totalitarian regime, produced in all his works – from the first right through to the last collection of verse – a rich palette of imagery reminiscent of the war conceived not only in its historical sense, but also as a universal characteristic of human existence. Based on his entire poetic legacy, particular motifs which express the philosophy and poetics of melancholy have been outlined, such as unpreventable loss, the inseparability of love and death, the fragmentation of the body, and the like.

Zhorzheta Cholakova. THE ROMANTIC MELANCHOLIA VERSUS THE ANTIC “BLACK BILE” (observations on the K. H. Mácha’ poetics) [Романтичката меланхолия versus античната „черна жлъчка“ (наблюдения върху поетиката на К. Х. Маха). // *Научни трудове на „Паисий Хилендарски“*, *Филология*, т. 55, кн. 1, сб. В. Пловдив: УИ „Паисий Хилендарски“, 2017, 57 – 69. ISSN 0861–0029]

Considering the historical dynamic character of the notion of melancholy, this article focuses on the innovative aspects of its treatment by the Romanticism. The concept of melancholy has gone through a fundamental transition – from clinical diagnosis to a philosophical category. The ambivalence, which Freud defines as inherent in melancholy, we consider as an essential aspect of the Romantic poetry. The paper illustrates the new semiotic function of the Romantic melancholy with some of the emblematic poetic and prose texts of K. H. Mácha.

Zhorzheta Cholakova. THE INVISIBLE LANDSCAPE IN VÍTĚZSLAV NEZVAL'S POETRY OF THE 1920S [Neviditelná krajina v Nezvalově poezii 20. let. // *Bohemistika*, Wydawca: Komisija Slawistyczna Polskiej Akademii Nauk, Oddział w Poznaniu, Rocznik XVIII, 2018, 2, 137 – 150. ISSN 1642-9893]

What is noticeable in the 1920s, when Czech modern poetry and Vítězslav Nezval in particular express their avant-garde quests through the felicitous poetic concept, is the

aesthetic distancing from the romantic melancholy and from the interpretation of landscape as an object of contemplation and a mediator between the human soul and the universe respectively. The preference of poetism for modern civilization diversity and metropolitan dynamics and its obvious disregard of nature are the reasons why this aspect of Vítězslav Nezval's poetry has remained outside the field of literary research so far. The main objective of this paper is to discover and outline the manifestations of artistic treatment of nature in Nezval's poetry even when he denies its place in modern poetry in general. The paper focuses on those transformational processes of anti-mimetic nature through which the image of the landscape is no longer perceived as a reflection of the real entities of nature but as a fictional entity based on the principle of collage.

Zhorzheta Cholakova. THE MYTHOPOETICAL GENESIS OF THE BALLAD LANDSCAPE IN WEST-SLAVIC ROMANTICISM POETRY. OBSERVATIONS ON THE LAKE IMAGE [Жоржета Чолакова. Митопоетичен генезис на баладизирания пейзаж в поезията на западнославянския романтизъм. Наблюдения върху образа на езерото. // *Славянска филология, том 26*. Доклади за Шестнадесетия международен конгрес на славистите в Белград (20 –27 август 2018 г.). София: Изд. на БАН „Проф. Марин Дринов“, 2018, 201 – 209. ISBN 978-954-322-927-7]

The landscape as a basic concept of Romanticism (including the Czech and Polish ones) reflects the axiological rehabilitation of both the folklore tradition and the mythological conscience. Taking into consideration the meaning of the idea of the cosmological unity of nature and subject in the formation of Romantic mythologism we present observations on the poetry of K. H. Mácha, K. J. Erben, A. Mickiewicz and J. Slowacki. The main focus of our work is the artistic realization of the lake as a ballad topos.

Zhorzheta Cholakova. THE BULGARIAN PRESENCE IN THE FRENCH AVANT-GARDE [Georgeta Tcholakova. Das Bulgarienbild im künstlerischen denken der französischen Avantgarde. // C. O. Mayer/M. Henzelmann (Hrsg.): *Frankreich-Bulgarien: Innereuropäischer Kulturtransfer*. (Schriften zur Kulturgeschichte, 51) übersetzt von Christoph Oliver Mayer. Hamburg: Verlag Dr. Kovač, 2018, 109 – 120. ISSN 1862-7277]

The paper focuses on the problem of identity crisis with regard to the two foremost Bulgarian avant-garde painters in the interwar period -- Julius Pincas and George Papazov. This perspective allows me to elucidate some particularities of the Bulgarian cultural milieu

which was at the time aligning with the aesthetics of avant-gardism but was at the same time rather burdened by national complexes in contradiction to the aesthetic universalism of modernity. I present the receptive reflections of Bulgarian and French criticism and this provides a dual and quite contradictory perspective on the two remarkable artists.

Zhorzheta Cholakova. RELIGIOUS MELANCHOLY. ETIOLOGICAL APPROACHES [Религиозната меланхолия етиологични ракурси. // *Авторитетът на смисъла. Теория и интерпретации*. Сборник в чест на доц. д-р Атанас Бучков. Съставителство и научна редакция: Димитър Кръстев, Ана Маринова, Яна Роуланд. Пловдив: Университетско издателство „Паисий Хилендарски“, 2019, 158 – 179. ISBN 978-619-202-426-0]

The religious type of melancholy reflects the human consciousness crisis as regards the sacral. Its first but singular instances can be found in Homer's Iliad. Dominant throughout Antiquity was the humoral treatment of melancholy as a disease, from which both the body and soul suffer. In his treatise Problema XXX Aristotle uses a new semantic emphasis, associating melancholy with genius. The Renaissance vindication of the antique philosophy of Plato and Aristotle was a prerequisite for a debate with the Christian axiology of dolourism and martyrism, which, as early as the XIV century, involved the problem of creative inspiration. In the course of historical evolution, melancholy turned from a diagnosis into an ethos. This process is illustrated in the article through the works of Petrarch, R. Burton и J. A. Komenský.'

SELF-EVALUATION OF CONTRIBUTIONS
BY ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR DR HABIL ZHORZHETA PETROVA
CHOLAKOVA

1. My scholarly production covers a wide-range of topics the focus of which is poetry as the artistic expression of a particular cultural outlook.

2. The scholarly publications combine solid background in literary theory with interpretative approaches to specific literary texts.

3. The studies are revealing of interdisciplinarity, which presupposes knowledge not only in the field of literature but also in the spheres of fine arts, philosophy, culture studies, and the history of ideas.

4. The monograph *The Poetics of Melancholy. Karel Hynek Macha* (Plovdiv, 2019) employs rich and diverse material from the Antiquity till the 19th century, which allows me to trace the evolution of a concept, namely melancholy. Such a focus requires in-depth knowledge of, besides Czech literature, common European tendencies during the specific phases of cultural development, as well as awareness of different representative works from different national cultures.

5. The book serves to charter a new research field in which the poetics of K. H. Macha is rendered with a view to the global processes in the development of cultural consciousness related to the formation of the romantic subject. This perspective allows me to illuminate in qualitatively new ways “the shared sites” in the poetry of Macha.

6. The comparative approach, which I have applied, places Czech literature in its natural relation to the European context by following the principles of differentiating comparativism which corresponds to the newest tendencies in the sphere of comparative studies.

7. The accompanying critical essays touch upon significant moments in the development of Czech poetry from the Baroque period (Kaminsky), Romanticism (Macha, Erben, Mickiewicz), Symbolism (O. Březina), as well as the development of modern prose (M. Kundera, V. Nezval) and poetry (V. Nezval, J. Seifert, V. Holan) in the 20th century.

8. Some of the critical essays offer analyses of phenomena related to the poetics of the avant-garde in South Slavic and Western Slavic contexts (Zenitism, Expressionism, Primitivism) as well as Bulgarian avant-garde artists, such as Pincas and Papazov.