

THE LANDSCAPE IN THE ROMANIAN SPHERE. A CULTURAL HISTORY APPROACH

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Abstract The landscape, as a cultural history theme or as a theme of the history of representations, belongs to a certain “sensory anthropology”, which is a complex endeavour of signification, developed by people on nature and on the world in which they live. The developments of the definition of the landscape in its interpretive alignments contain a variety of themes delivered to a group of readings. Thus, the first group focuses on the history of the *knowledge of nature* and of the surrounding environment as an epistemologically outlined itinerary. A second alignment is represented by the philosophical-ethical perspective on nature from the 18th century, the third group is centred on the *literary thematic* of nature. The fourth group focuses on the *physiocratic*, fruitful approaches on nature, dominated by the economic thought and practices of the 18th century and the fifth direction is represented by the *monographic* direction.

Keywords Landscape, space, geographicity, metaphor, representation, perception, physiocracy, utopia

The landscape as a perception and sensibility of nature is part of the larger issue of the relation between man-nature-history. The notion of landscape gained its significances and conceptual articulation at the intersection between the historical and the cultural geography, namely the one that places man within the physical-geographic space throughout time¹ and, secondly, the one that places man within nature, in a sensory communion with it through perceptions and representations – the depths of the relation between the form of nature and its human

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¹ Jean Brown Mitchell, *Historical Geography* (London: The English Universities Press, 1965), 2-3.

design². The two interferential fields assume a common denominator, a “sense of place, a sense of time”³.

A particularly important impulse that circumscribes the interests in the natural landscape came from the “spacial turn” or the “geographic turn” as a non-epistemological reading of the past reality, starting with the final decades of the 20th century⁴ and it feverously continued after 2000, when the concept of “geographicity” was built. On the one hand, the concept involves the “human territoriality” and, on the other hand, it involves the subjective, lived dimension of the “experiences of the spaces and places”, a true phenomenology of the human presence in the world⁵. Detached from the reality of life, the relation man-nature imposes in the 18th century a natural sentiment of admiration towards the beautiful and fruitful nature. This natural sentiment outlines the life models and the cultural projections that illustrate the tendency of reinserting the pre-modern and modern man into the lost paradise of nature. From the viewpoint of the representation of nature and landscape, the *refuge in nature* is primarily a *discursive refuge*.

The landscape, as a cultural history theme or as a theme of the history of representations, belongs to a certain “sensory anthropology”, which is a complex endeavour of signification, developed by people on nature and on the world in which they live⁶. The objective of the perception of the landscape as a chapter of the history of sensibilities is to describe and analyse the way in which the space of changes, significances and emotions is represented in relation to it. It is a cultural approach to the space and landscape, based on the system of faith, scientific beliefs and aesthetic codes. Within the same approach, the landscape is a means of “seeing and thinking” the physical-natural word⁷, materialised into a social and cultural product of our relation with nature⁸. Essentially, the visual prevails in defining the landscape as a découpage of a frame from nature upon which sensibilities, visions, imaginations and expressivities are projected. This complexity of significances and interpretations of nature is transferred into an act of language, since the notion of landscape etymologically assumes the place of birth, the vernacular space that combines the “place” with “its inhabitation by man”, with the deeper meaning of the “genetic space” (landschaft, in German and landschap in Dutch)⁹.

² Simon Schama, *Landscape and Memory* (London: Harper Press, 2004), 15.

³ John Brinckerhoff Jackson, *A Sense of Place, A Sense of Time* (New Haven, London: Yale University Press 1994), VIII.

⁴ Bernard Lepetit, *Carnets de croquis* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1999), 129.

⁵ See *Ecoscapes*, G. Backhaus, J. Murungi eds. (Oxford: Lexington Books, 2007) and J.M. Besse, “Remarques sur géographicité,” in Charles Delacroix, Fr. Dosse, P. Garcia, *Historicités* (Paris: La Découverte, 2009), 288.

⁶ Alain Corbin, *L'homme dans le paysage* (Paris: Textuel, 2001), 11-27.

⁷ Matthew Johnson, *Ideas of Landscape* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006), 3.

⁸ Denis Cosgrove, *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape* (London: Croom Helm, 1982), 1.

⁹ Anne Whiston Spirn, *The Language of Landscape* (New Haven, London: Yale University press, 1998), 16-17.

Besides place and habitation, the notion of *paysage* is also generated by sight and by the perspective on a part of nature that presents itself to an “observer”, or that is seen from a single place (*pays*, *paysage* in French, *paesi*, *paesagi* in Italian)¹⁰.

The developments of the definition of the landscape in its interpretive alignments contain a variety of themes delivered to a group of readings. Thus, the first group focuses on *the history of the knowledge of nature* and of the surrounding environment as an epistemologically outlined itinerary, in which the history of nature is conjugated with the natural history from the paradigms of the scientific knowledge of the 17th-18th centuries¹¹. A second alignment is represented by the *philosophical-ethical* perspective on nature from the 18th century, approached by J. Erhard [1994] and G. Gusdorf [1972]¹². The third group is centred on the *literary thematic* of nature approached by P. Van Tieghem [1960]¹³, D. Mornet [1907]¹⁴. The fourth group focuses on the *physiocratic*, fruitful approaches on nature, dominated by the economic thought and practices of the 18th century¹⁵ [E. Fox-Genovese, 1976]. The fifth direction, somewhat detached from the paradigm of cultural history is represented by the *monographic direction* and it is similar to the works developed by the standpoints promoted by the “Landeskunde” from the end of the 17th century and from the 18th century. These approaches focus on economic, demographic, urban and housing components, on agricultural facilities, “industrial order” and the tourism exploits that reverberate in the landscape. In this sense, J. R. Pitte’s work [1994]¹⁶ is important, since it analyses the French landscape from the antiquity to the contemporary age and notes the complex action process undertaken by man upon the surrounding nature, based on a pragmatic project of transforming the landscape. The second work belongs to M. Reed [1990]¹⁷, who, in the spirit of the same pragmatic project of approaching the landscape, beginning from the antiquity to the present time, focuses on the ideas, thoughts and actions made by man in relation with nature. We must note the chapters dedicated to the early modern time and the Georgian and Victorian ages.

The five alignments configure an epistemological and discursively amplified complex field on nature and landscape, which illustrates the acquisitions in the field of knowledge and perspective on the world, poignantly launched starting with the 18th century. This is when man’s first attempt to harmoniously place himself in relation with nature occurred, and a “euphoric” conceptual field is developed, represented by “law, reason, sentiment, virtue,

¹⁰ Alain Roger (dir.), *La théorie du paysage en France* (Paris: Seuil, 1995), 196-200.

¹¹ See John Lyon, Phillip R. Sloan, *From Natural History to the History of Nature* (Notre Dame: University Press of Notre Dame, 1981).

¹² Georges Gusdorf, *Dieu, la nature, l'homme* (Paris: Payot, 1972).

¹³ Paul Van Tieghem, *Le sentiment de la nature dans le préromantisme européen* (Paris: Nizet, 1960).

¹⁴ Daniel Mornet, *Le sentiment de la nature en France* (Paris: Hachette, 1907).

¹⁵ E. Fox Genovese, *The Origins of Physiocracy* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1976).

¹⁶ Jean-Robert Pitte, *Histoire du paysage français*, vol. I, II (Paris: Tallandier, 1994).

¹⁷ Michael Reed, *The Landscape of Britain* (London: Routledge, 1990).

happiness, innocence, society, necessity, providence, order, freedom.¹⁸ For the first time, there is an optimistic, encouraging and melioristic tone of the dialogue between man, nature and landscape and, starting with the 18th century, there is a convergence between the reality of nature and landscape and their perception and representation.

In the proximity of these five alignments in the reading of the landscape there are several innovative themes from the past decades, beginning with the emergence of the ecological debate, of the preservation of nature and landscape from the 20th century. These themes include the preoccupations regarding “the theories and practices of the landscape”, preoccupations that have been inventoried and synthesised in unitary approaches, such as the ones made by A. Roger (1995) and Tiberghien (1998)¹⁹. These studies led to a re-evaluation of the relation man-nature-landscape, bringing forth several innovative subjects and several correlative methodological projections. Starting from the hypothesis that the landscape cannot be reduced to a strictly theoretical and scientific view, it has been noted that it is subjected to certain transformations that are “inscribed in the reality history”. The landscape can be the object of certain morphological and functional analyses, but it can equally be a “social interpretation of the terrestrial interference”. Another thematic reference point is the one illustrated by the relation between *landscape* and *power*, in the sense that the landscape (the gardens, the estates) reflects the taste and management of the owner and it suggests “la matrise du territoire”, as a subjective ownership and processing (arranging) of the natural environment. Emperor Hadrian’s gardens from Tivoli was the place where the sovereign, during his walks, had the landscape representation of the countries that formed the Roman Empire, so that the territory of the landscape laid out through “the symbol of representation” became a “tenant de l’autre”²⁰. The landscape thus laid out symbolically composes the dimension and dynamics of power²¹.

The mark of *the ethnic identity of the landscape* is another theme articulated in the cultural and historical geography. The ethnically and cultural-historically assumed landscape transitions to the discovered landscape, the ones revealed through the journeys partake of the “scholarly practices” of the 18th century. The assumed, vernacular, ethnic landscape and the space revealed through knowledge-journeys transition to the *invented landscape* and space. In this sense, the exemplary case is that of the Mont Blanc Massif²², since, if the mountain used to be “chaotically habited, with no aesthetic interest”, even more so as something frightening, later, starting with the 18th century, it was admired due to its majesty, and, through a process of “artialization”, it was internalised and reproduced through etchings, photographs and

¹⁸ Jean Ehrard, *L'idée de nature en France dans la première moitié du XVII^e siècle* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1994), 790.

¹⁹ Doru Radosav, “Istorie și peisaj în Transilvania secolului al XVIII-lea: sensibilități, percepții și reprezentări,” in *Caiete de antropologie istorică* (XI, 1-2/2012), 12.

²⁰ Gilles A. Tiberghien, “Théorie et pratique du paysage,” in *Critique* (LIV, Juin - Juillet, 1998), 292.

²¹ See W. J. T. Mitchell, *Landscape and Power* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1994).

²² Philippe Joutard, *L'invention du Mont Blanc* (Paris: Gallimard, 1986), 73-78.

paintings. They are the expression of a new sensibility towards nature and landscape. The mountain, the “secularised” and humanised landscape impose a change in sensibility and in the perceptions regarding the conquering modernity of the 18th-19th centuries that do not reject the Romantic *passeisme* or the legendary relay of the perception and narrate nature of the landscape.

The subjective landscape is delimited by its aesthetic, literary translations of the arts and can be explained through a “cosmographic and ontological misalignment” of man, of self-consciousness, a liberation from under the pressure of nature’s fatality and of theocracy and its placement into a perspective and reproductive stance on the nature transposed into words, images and artefacts. Starting from the aesthetic relation between man and nature, the phenomenon of landscape architecture sets off under the sign of a beautiful arrangement of the surrounding space and, moreover, bearing the significances of *place of memory* within the “built” landscape. The laid out garden and park impose a heterotopic concentration of nature, namely a cultivation of certain densities of plants, trees, flowers, lakes, fountains, cliffs into a single place. They internalise and fixate into man’s perception and memory²³ an orderly microcosm, a place of a happy and universalised utopia that gathers, as Noah’s Ark, the entire diversity and the memory of the diversity of the world and of nature.

In the literary field, the landscape is subjectively transfigured from two directions – the first, the landscape-subject of the literary language and the second, in which the landscape is a world internalised as a psycho-analytical assumption²⁴. Essentially, the landscape as a culture / cultivation of nature continuously extracts its resources from the immanent dynamics of the confrontation between the natural and the cultural spheres, between the real and the imaginary, between the sensitive and the symbolic, the visible and the invisible, the finite and the infinite²⁵. Therefore, from the viewpoint of ordering nature in a landscape, as perception and representation, as well as the process of the “artialisation” of the landscape, there is a duality of reciprocal challenges “in situ” (landscape, gardens, park) and “de visu” (art, image, imagery)²⁶.

Considering these conceptual and methodological priors, a cultural reading of the landscape can regroup the precepts, sensibility and representation of the landscape into the following typologies of analyses and reconstructions: *the metaphor-landscape, the observation-landscape, the patrimony-landscape, the physiocratic-landscape, the utopian-landscape*.

1. The metaphor-landscape focuses on the nature and landscape incorporated into the religious and biblical texts, which, through the so-called landscaping metaphor, transfigure within the religious sensibility a certain incipient feeling of nature. Thus, nature and the

²³ See Monique Mosser, Philippe Nys, *Les jardins, art et lieu de mémoire* (Besançon: Editions de l'Imprimeur, 1995).

²⁴ Tiberghien, *Théorie et pratique du paysage...*, 341.

²⁵ Michel Collot, *Les enjeux du paysage* (Bruxelles: Ed. Ousia, 1998), 343.

²⁶ Radosav, “Istorie și peisaj în Transilvania...” 14.

landscape per se are only perceived as far as their physical-geographical expressions are part of the all-ruling reflection of the divinity, in which the “pulchritude” beauty belongs to this divinity, and the “venustas” charm belongs to the earthly world. The “aesthetic” duality of the world described by Dionysius Carthusianus in the 15th century, between beauty and charm, also distributed nature into a metaphysical type (supernatural) and a physical type (mundane) that implies both somatism and cosmism, a duality conceived as nature-spirit, vitality-potentiality.

Nature and landscape are perceived at the level of a metaphor that transfigures the discourse and the religious feeling. The landscape and nature are circumstantial and contrasting to the religious feelings through the introduction of the metaphoric foreshortening with aesthetic, intellectual, moral resonances. Therefore, the natural sentiment is a religious sentiment, and the aesthetic emotion is a becoming of religion²⁷. The polarity of the aesthetic sentiment, from a religious viewpoint, as well as from the viewpoint of nature and landscape, is the expression of a descriptive search for the terrestrial and celestial world, in a theocratic universe as the medieval and pre-modern one; the searches try to remove or separate the two components. Gradually, the two polarities, the world as charm and the divinity as beauty, become separate, in the manner of a gradual and reciprocal transfer of valences – the world becomes beautiful or beautified through its discovery, starting with the Renaissance, just as, later, the divinity is redistributed at the level of the terrestrial world through the deisms and religion of nature from the 17th and 18th centuries. This long road to *nature through religion* and to *religion through nature* outlines the complexity of the birth of nature sensibility and of its perception through the landscape in the 18th century.

The association between nature and the religious sentiment, expressed through the metaphor-landscape, can be identified in the succinct, fuliginous and impressive notes on the edges of the religious manuscripts written in the Romanian space beginning with the 18th century. The metaphor-landscape is expressed at the level of a varied transcription, which is characteristic to the manuscript and to the stylistics of the metaphor. Thus, the manuscript copyist, at the end of his copying labour, seen as a “requirement” of writing, invokes either the explanatory-aesthetic metaphor: “precum nu poate fi ceriul fără nori, nici scrisoarea fără greșală” (1780) [as the sky cannot be devoid of clouds, the text cannot be devoid of mistakes], or the affective-impressive metaphor: “precum dorește cerbul la izvoarele apelor așa am dorit și eu să ajung la sfârșitul acestei cărți” (1788) [as the stag desires to reach the fountains of waters, so too have I desired to reach the end of this book]²⁸.

One can also list *the flower-metaphor*, *the garden-metaphor*, *the orchard-metaphor* that counterpoint the texts that bear religious sentiments. Filtering the perception of the landscapes through these three metaphors adds and, in a way, reproduces the metaphoric and allegoric patrimony from the biblical text, but it equally expresses the sharing of an ascending

²⁷ See Johan Huizinga, *The Autumn of the Middle Ages* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004).

²⁸ Radosav, 18.

religious sensibility accompanied by the summoning of the beautiful, friendly, hedonic nature as a circumstantial and synaesthetic fulfilment of the faith.

The symbolism of the flowers is detectable in the association between man's life cycle and nature's blooming cycle: "Să se știe când am scris eu cel cu mâna de țărâna pământului de carele călcând pre dânsul și astfel ziua sfârșitului vieții mele și o florică de pe câmp fiind veselă care dacă răsare soarele peste zi dă căldură și să veștejește așa și noi cei muritori suntem" [Let it be known what I wrote with my earthly hand of those that roam upon the land, pondering the final day of my life to come, just as a flower on the field is joyful when the sun shines during the day and then it withers, so too are we mortals]. Inspired by the text of the Psalms, these notes that are dedicated to the feeling of life's finitude also simultaneously produce a lyrical "extrication" of the copyist's invocation, which allows for the religious sentiment to be expressed more freely into the natural sentiment. Man's life cycle, in connection with the cycle of the vegetation, combines life's shortness with the ephemeral nature of flowers, in a world that seeks its lost paradise through an incipient perception of the landscape and of nature.

Another thematic set from the composition of the metaphor-landscape is represented by the connection of nature and landscape not to the impermanence of life and of the floral cycle, but to the perenniality and the resistance over time of the beauty of the principles and of the moral-religious values. These values expressed and transmitted through religious texts and books are illustrated through the "filter-metaphor" that generates the *nature-book*, the *orchard-book*, the *flower-book*. The all contain landscape sequences that are emphasised through the rhetoric and stylistic universe of the metaphor. It is also a known fact that the metaphor is the place of an intersection where, by modifying (replacing) the comparing element (nature, flower, orchard), the contents of the intersection also change. One of the books that transmit landscape images is "Melissa, carte de învățătură" (1780) [Melissa, teaching handbook], in its title, comprises the metaphor of the flower-book, the melliferous-book. In its contents, the volume is a guidebook of moral-religious teachings compared to the sweetness of honey and it contains an apicultural passage: "Că precum înfloresc câmpii cu tot felul de flori, așa și albinele culeg dintrânsele multe feluri de dulțețuri, ... așadară și cei ce vor ceti la această carte plină de trandafiri înfloriți vor culege roadă duhovnicească" [As the fields bloom with all kinds of flowers, so do the bees gather from them many kinds of sweets,... therefore may those who will read this book filled with blooming roses gather spiritual fruitage]²⁹.

The Edenic landscape accompanies the spiritual relevance of the book and it transfers them into the description of certain sequences depicting the beautiful natural landscape. Within the data of a nature formalised by biblical clichés there is an adaptation from the "lived" history of reading religious books and the blooming, fruitful natural landscape in which the lost paradise can be found in the garden or in the orchard (exp. The "Limarion" book or "Livada duhovnicească" [The spiritual orchard] 1774). The orchard and the garden in their

²⁹ Ibid., 20.

metaphoric transcriptions become terrestrial places where man meets the divinity, under the sign of a regained hedonism.

Another descriptive benchmark of the metaphor-landscape is represented by the foundational phenomenon. In this case, the perception of the landscape and of nature in the transposition of the religious discourse is organised around the metaphor of the place that has sacred valences in the circumstances of the foundational act. The enshrined, sanctified, foundational place where a monastery is built connects the settling place with the divine; it is a place of meeting with the divine and a place subsequent to Paradise, a place of awaiting the “Edenic reunification”³⁰. For instance, a monastery is built where “locul mai frumos” [the place is beautiful] and “unde apa zidu-i bate” [where the water knocks at its walls], and the “majestic” monastery built in such a natural environment loans or transfers the miracle of the divine power to this Edenic landscape, since when the bells ring (when “harangele sonorele se trag”), “stă și apa a merge” [even the water stands still]. Therefore, the sacred dimension of the landscape as an expression of sovereignty of the *beauty of the divine grace* (symbolised by the bell) is set above, it dominates *the physical-terrestrial beauty* (symbolised by the flowing waters). The materiality of the place, of the (beautiful) landscape is associated with the beauty of the (majestic) monastery. The beautiful place is doubled by the natural sounds of the waters and by the sounds made by the bells. Essentially, the foundation, in its placement and exploitation of the natural beauty and of the iconic imaginary suggests the determining mechanism of the role played by the imaginary in the religious hierophanies.

The experience of nature and landscape sometimes becomes convergent with man’s moods. The summoning of nature as a witness and participant to man’s feelings, through the narrative-lyrical relay, reconstructs living images of a moving landscape. For instance, in Princess Ileana’s lamentation (the daughter of the Voivode, chased by the Tatar Khan’s men), she asks for help from the “răchițele împupite” [the blooming wickers], “florile preaiubite” [the beloved flowers], “sâlcii înalte” [the tall willows], “izvoare prealucitoare” [the sparkling fountains], “ape curgătoare” [the flowing waters]³¹. Nature as a witness and participant is reactive to the mioritic topos in man’s dramatic situations. The landscape sequence is transmitted by this imaginative-poetic unfolding of the princess’ lamentation. The pain caused by a punctual dramatic situation determines a perforation of the tense and eerie atmosphere by the landscape described imaginatively, an aspect which starts to establish a new sensibility of nature and landscape.

2. The observation-landscape. The visual turn made by the real landscape in iconic representations (etchings, lithographs, paintings) leads from the *metaphor-landscape* to the *observation-landscape*. In an intermediary stage, it refers to the insertion of a realist landscape into the religious, conventional iconography of the Byzantine interpretation. An example in this sense is a xylograph from the book “Vota apprecatio”, from 1760, which is a Latin “plaudit”, an homage work dedicated to Bishop Petru Pavel Aron. This xylograph is composed of three parts:

³⁰ Anca Manolescu, *Locul călătorului. Simbolistica spațiului în Răsăritul creștin* (Bucharest: Paidea, 2002), 96.

³¹ Radosav, 26.

the isomorphic representation of the Holy Trinity, Bishop Petru Pavel Aron's crest and the "naïve" panorama of Blaj. This panorama comprises in a visual, frontal view the cathedral surrounded by the Blaj schools, the town square surrounded by different buildings and, on the right, the Episcopal castle. In the background, on the left side of the image lies a hill depicted through the lines of flight of the perspective, which creates a high degree of real reproduction of the *urban landscape* of Blaj in the mid-18th century. In another iconographic representation, in Saint Nicholas' icon from the Orthodox Church of Lipova (18th century), a realist urban landscape is introduced: the Lipova fortress, the Mureş River, houses, the fortress tower, a Turkish minaret, all unravelled on a natural, landscaping frame that depicts their precise physical-geographical locations. In both cases, the landscaping cliché ever more present in Christian iconography introduces *geography* (the place) and *history* (the narrative chronotop), since the landscaping reduction and particularisation dislocates the universalist and hierarchical ubiquity of nature and of the biblical landscape³².

The emergence and development of the observation-landscape is with a true revolution of the visual in the perception of the world and of nature in the 18th century. From the "*man-knower, man-traveller*" type, the "honnête-homme" of this century, the transition is towards the *man-spectator* type (A. I. Addison's famous magazine is published in England under the title "Spectator"). This new human type has the characteristics of a modest man who travelled the world, who is serene and quiet. He has a constant and often used sensibility towards nature; he is the beneficiary of a form of hedonism felt with a balanced and quiet savour: he loves shade and solitude, he roams the forests and the springs, the meadows and the grasslands, in which he finds what he needs³³. This human type also experiences a taste for beauty, a new aesthetic sensibility that belongs to the sublime and the beautiful and in which the faculty of sight resides in "*elegans formarum spectator*"³⁴. In the Romanian space, the discovery of the visual directed towards nature and the surrounding world coincides with the discovery of sight and the perspective through which a visual and narrative unravelling is produced and is thus materialised in the landscape. A sensitive and imaginative projection on the nature and on the surrounding world is thus established. Staring from these considerations on the visual celebration of nature as a landscape, a series of applications can be found in the Romanian space, beginning with the 18th century, as part of the Baroque paradigm that associates the visual with decorativism – a form of Baroque in which the praises for the visual are connected to decorativism and which is detectable in the Romanian ecclesiastic and secular architecture.

The amenability towards the landscape is primarily encouraged by the exploitation of the traditional porch, as a place of opening and on-looking, in the ecclesiastic and secular architecture, in the form of the *pridvor* [Romanian term for porch/veranda]. It re-launches the

³² Ibid., 3.

³³ See Paul Hazard, *Criza conștiinței europene. 1685 - 1750* (Bucharest: Univers, 1973), 330-332.

³⁴ Edmund Burke, *Despre sublim și frumos* [On the Sublime and Beautiful], transl. Anda Teodorescu (Bucharest: Meridiane, 1981), 55.

dialogue between the sacred space and the outside world and, implicitly, nature and landscape, as an expression of a new apologetic programme promoted by the church. The porch is a “liberated” space, open towards the world and open to one’s sight, so that the “iconography of the porch” leads to an “unsuspected recreation of shapes and colours” and “an Orthodox joy to the eye”³⁵.

Nature and the landscape accessed through one’s sight are also facilitated by the porch that delimitates a delighting space, “a place of beautiful on-looking”. The Brancovan porch (Mogoșoaia, Horezu) and the porches of the noble houses (Banffy, Teleky, Brukenthal) of Transylvania are an example in this sense. The “on-looking” [in original: “priveala”], as an opening of the physically and naturally beautiful, determines another type of perceptions and sensibilities upon the surrounding world³⁶.

“Priveala” [the on-looking] and “zăbava” [the dalliance] as aesthetic and hedonic propensities populate the cultural and social Romanian world, or, more precisely, the “Romanian way of seeing”, in which the placement of the civilian and ecclesiastic constructions in nature reflects a new sensibility towards it. Gazebos, kiosks placed in nature, surrounded by forests, waters and gardens belong to an innovative stage design of the sensitive and hedonic, contextualised naturally in a landscaping manner. The observation-landscape is materialised in the garden of delights as a laid out natural environment, summoning an endless perspective sight from the porches of the religious and noble edifices.

From the viewpoint of the transition from the metaphor-landscape to the observation-landscape, in the field of the collective imaginative, an intermediary stage in the larger process of transitioning from the religious to the secular must not be overlooked. Thus, from a theological perspective, the observation-landscape transposes the “lucidity of the gaze” and the “eye’s curiosity” in the Christian field³⁷, which denotes a new impulse in the field of prayer and meditation. There is thus a transferability that expresses deep mutations in the dialogue with the divinity and with the surrounding world, from a recitative, reproductive chant from the field of the biblical metaphor, to a visual and interpretive one. The dialogue with the invisible is replaced by an admiring, visual dialogue given by the gaze’s fascination and by the visual disenchantment of the theme of divinity.

The religious iconographic discourse continues to introduce realist natural or urban landscaping sequences, as is the case of certain religious paintings from Maramureș or from the Transylvanian cities (Cluj, Brașov, Sibiu)³⁸, that bear the mark of a provincial, local Baroque. Another channel of transmitting the observation-landscape can be found in the so-called *portrait landscape*, in which the portrait-like composition gives way to sequences containing

³⁵ Radosav, 40.

³⁶ See Alexandru Horia, *Vorbirea în șoaptă* (Bucharest: Anastasia, 1995), 26 and Răzvan Theodorescu, *Civilizația românilor între medieval și modern. Orizontul imaginii (1550-1800)* (Bucharest: Meridiane, 1987), 122.

³⁷ Horia, *Vorbirea în șoaptă...*, 93.

³⁸ Radosav, 43-45.

true landscapes, as is the case of the Bran Fortress reproduced in the portrait of Royal Judge Lucas Hirscher from the 16th century, or the noble portraits of Adam Batthyany and Ioan Haller (18th century)³⁹. These “biographical” particularisations of the landscape provide the dimensions of a realist landscape, as well as those of a vernacular and emblematic delimitation. This is an interval-stage towards the realist-landscape that outlines an individual identity, and through the emblematic suggestions (the Bran Fortress), towards a collective human and landscaping identity.

Another version of the observation-landscape is the topographic-landscape, represented by the so-called “vedute” [views] that iconically transpose fortresses and cities from today’s Romanian territories. They can constitute an imagistic inventory of a conscriptionalist landscape, an inventory of an architectural and habitation landscape from the 18th century: the Castel from Criș, the Castle from Jibou, the Castle from Uioara. The insistent “capturing” of the castles and fortresses was encouraged by the temptations of the pre-romanticism. Gathered into a series of “vedute” entitled “Privești excepționale din Principatul Transilvaniei” [Exceptional views from the Principality of Transylvania], they are sequenced of the observation-landscape with concealed intentions of intensely narrative compositions: nature, castles, characters, an “epic rendition of the theme”⁴⁰ that also have obvious documentary-historical values.

One of the top accomplishments from the field of the observation-landscape, detectable in the typological distributions of the Transylvanian paintings of the 18th century, is represented by the *cinematic-landscape*. This type of landscape can be exemplified through two of painter Fr. Neuhauser’s works, namely “Peisaj de iarnă – intrarea unui preot sas în parohia sa” [Winter landscape – a Saxon priest enters his parish] and “Intrarea unui preot sas în parohia sa, vara” [A Saxon priest enters his parish, summer]. These works contain a “de plano” dynamic of the landscape due to the astronomical temporal succession, winter-summer, and, secondly, there is an immanent dynamic, through the “entrance of the priest’s retinue”. This dynamic shifts the gaze from within the landscape and accompanies a narration on the theme of motion in a painting as a genre of the observation-landscape. The theme of the cinematic landscape can also be found in the 19th century, in the plastic compositions in which the observation-landscape is narrativised, as well as in the lithograph from 1860 entitled “Sosirea domnitorului Alexandru Ioan Cuza la solemnitatea deschiderii Adunării Țării Românești” [The arrival of Ruler Alexandru Ioan Cuza at the solemnity of the opening of the Elective Assembly], in which the dynamic of the royal retinue unravels on the background of a realist urban landscape of Bucharest (buildings, churches).

A different version of the observation-landscape is the *panorama-landscape* that puts forth a sovereign view focused on the landscape-horizon. This type of observation-landscape, or landscape-observation stood out as an artistic and transfiguration experiment of a binary but convergent entity, namely the *city* and the *landscape*. The two components were

³⁹ Nicolae Sabău, *Metamorfozele barocului transilvănean II* (Cluj-Napoca: Mega, 2005), 392.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 397-400.

established into a “unitary visual complex”⁴¹ in which the closed space, the city, is combined with an open space, the landscape. A mutual loan thus takes place between the two components when they are allocated to the panorama, to the sovereign gaze and when they are ambivalently distributed – *the city within the landscape and the landscape within the city*. In the case of the former, an example could be an etching dedicated to Sibiu from the 18th century, which depicts the city within the landscape dominated by the characteristic natural scenery (trees, hilly terrain, mountains on the horizon). A different plane depicts four people that reproduce human typologies belonging to the urban environment of that time and whose role is to open and guide the viewer towards the second compositional register, the suburbs and the city, represented by buildings, walls and religious edifices. The second example, namely that of the landscape within the city, is represented by a painting of the city of Cluj from the 18th century, which contains well outlined semantics – the image of a market day in the central square, depicting people, terraces, animals, a sequence that is penetrated by the image of the surrounding hills, a perspective created through a visual channel that brings out the physical-natural environment, the landscape within the city. Both cases depict meta-spacialities – urban and landscaping, natural and one that communicates from the common point in which we can identify the city within the landscape and the landscape within the city. The convergence of the two meta-spacialities is created through the panorama, whose object is the “space that stands for more than space”⁴². Other examples like the ones above are two etchings from the 18th-19th centuries: “Vedere generală a oraşului Râmnicu-Vâlcea” [General view of the city of Râmnicu-Vâlcea] and the one depicting “Un bâlci din Țara Românească pe la 1820” [A fair from Wallachia around 1820]. In all cases, the panorama-landscape holds the dialogue between the physical-natural landscape and the architectonic, urban landscape, both of which are under the sign of a proximity determined by the gaze that configures the ontological trajectory of the idea of landscape. Another type of proximity is emphasised by the phenomenon of the landscape in its development as an expression of modernity, namely the bond between man and the beautiful, hedonic, amicable, fruitful nature and the discovery of a path, a progressive, redeemable sphere of humanity.

3. ***The patrimony-landscape*** is the landscape that, beyond its discourse, representation, gaze, description and visualisation, imposes its identity and patrimonial characterisation and classification. The community, the nation, the people, the state are delimitations with respect to their placement within a physical-geographical frame. The landscape thus classified builds a perception and a symbolic geography, but especially a perspective on the natural environment⁴³. From the viewpoint of the semantics of the interpretation, the landscape can be connected to the larger phenomenon of the heritagisation, of assuming it as a genetic, identity, vernacular space-frame in which the sense

⁴¹ Rosario Assunto, *Peisajul și estetica*, transl. Olga Mărculescu (Bucharest: Meridiane, 1986), 72.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 82.

⁴³ Sorin Mitu, *Europa centrală, Răsăritul, Balcanii. Geografii simbolice comparate* (Cluj: International Book Acces, 2007).

of belonging also implies affectivity. Therefore, all communities, societies and nations have a symbolic landscape and patrimony that, in its turn, assumes the memory and sentiments that bind and form a people⁴⁴.

A field of studies and approaches was developed regarding the so-called “landscape figures of the nation”⁴⁵, in which the irreducible characteristics of the nation through the landscape suggest, first and foremost, a historical and cultural process in which the collective identity is anchored in the metonymical construction motherland-nation that corresponds with the relations landscape-territory and landscape-motherland. Secondly, through the territory and the natural environment, certain cultural readings circumscribed to the landscapes emphasise the corporeality of a nation by the organicist metaphor. The *ethnic-nation* also incarnates the *landscape-nature* and, through their unification, a sovereign body of a territory-nation is thus formed⁴⁶. The organicity of the nation’s territory-body is sought and identified in the architecture of the landscape and of the natural environment. For instance, in the case of Transylvania, the monographs of the 18th century associate the metaphor of the physical-geographical body with one that transmits affection and a sense of belonging to the motherland-landscape. The region of Transylvania is surrounded on all sides by mountains that perfectly outline the shape of a heart (*forma cordis*). The shape of the region expresses “a very beautiful heart” and in it “many veins swell and it is an animal’s fountain of life.” The landscaping shape of Transylvania is configured by “când prin înălțimile munților, când prin păduri și pășuni umede, când prin modul în care apele despărțite se intersectează” [the mountain heights, the forests and the damp grasslands, by the way in which the flowing waters intersect]⁴⁷. This lively image of Transylvania and the association between the natural landscape and the metaphor of the heart contribute to the construction of the affective and sensitive individuality of the province. The natural sentiment depicted metaphorically consolidates the heritagisation process for the landscape and the geographic space. Such a particularised description of the Transylvanian landscape was inspired by the physiognomic and geognostic projects of the 18th century⁴⁸, used in the describing the landscapes of different countries and ethnotypes. They artistically reconstruct a landscape and they topographically and cartographically outline a collective identity. The landscape of France is similar to the metaphoric transcription of the Transylvanian landscape and the Transylvanian cartographic profile in the “shape of a heart”. In 1790, a description of this country is made by appealing to the shape and physiology of the human body: “limitele departamentelor trasează musculatura, munții reprezintă oasele, principalele râuri arterele sanguine, râurile mici vene, cele patru puncte cardinale membrele” [the outer limits of the departments trace the musculature, the mountains represent the bones, the main rivers the arteries, the small rivers the veins, the four cardinal points the limbs]

⁴⁴ Schama, *Landscape and Memory...*, 3-23.

⁴⁵ François Walter, *Les Figures paysagères de la Nation* (Paris: Éditions de l'École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, 2004), 51-52.

⁴⁶ Antoine de Baecque, *Les Corps de l'histoire* (Paris: Calmann Lévy, 1993), 111-129.

⁴⁷ József Benkő, *Transilvania* (Vienna, 1778), 44.

⁴⁸ Walter, *Les Figures paysagères de la Nation...*, 86-89.

mountains represent the bones, the main rivers are the blood arteries, the smaller rivers are the veins, the four cardinal points are the members]⁴⁹. In the case of Switzerland, the Alps are referred to as “Europe’s water castle”⁵⁰.

Generally, the projection made on the Transylvanian landscape is idealised, embellished, a type of projection that is characteristic to the 18th century and falls on the lines of the optimistic view of a man of that time. The descriptive retouches, together with the observations and analyses that pertain to the rigours of the scientific monograph, display a positive Transylvanian territory and landscape. The variety of the landscapes, the fertile land, the fish-filled waters, the resources of minerals that cannot be found elsewhere in Europe characterise a landscape transferred from its physical-natural facts to its subjective and patriotic approaches. These perceptions equally depict a general European mood, moulded by uplifting ideas, as are the ones of Voltairean inspiration, centred on the relation between man-nature-happiness and focused on the verdict “le paradis terrestre est où je suis”.

Beginning with the 18th century, the patrimony-landscape received new descriptions and interpretations that aim to capture the individuality of a territory, a country or a nation. For the patrimony-landscape, these new descriptions create components and typologies that lead to new readings from one era to the next. The *metaphor-landscape* of a Baroque inspiration transfers aspects and characters from the ancient mythology to the phenomenon of bestowing the patrimony-landscape. For instance, the Titaness Phoebe, the daughter of Uranus, through her seven labours, she creates the seven Dacian hills, which represent and structure the Transylvanian landscape, also known as Dacia Septi-Collis, similar to the septennial paradigm of ancient Rome⁵¹.

The *mythological-landscape* inspired by descriptive and epic exercises of the metaphoric-landscape guides an ancient, mythological universe towards one that is connected to the building tendencies of the patrimony-landscape. The romantic and post-romantic era cultivate such a discourse of mythologizing the national landscape in which the physical-geographical descriptions coexist with the legendary foundations of a vernacular, ethnic landscape. Thus, during the first half of the 19th century, Gh. Asachi, through his lithography workshop, offers the public space a series of illustrations and etchings that compile a national imagery in which history and fiction are associated and instrumented as an efficient means for building the national imaginary of historicist and romantic inspiration, whether by the retouched portraits of the Voivodes (Stephen the Great, Michael the Brave) of the national heroism pantheon, or by the historical battle scenes (Baia, Dumbrava Roşie, Valea Albă), but especially by the images of the Moldavian landscape containing symbolic places and landforms with ancient mythology insertions. For instance, the etching entitled “Pionul sau Ceahlăul” [the Pion or Ceahlău Mountain] represents a juxtaposition or a transposition of a mountain from ancient Greece to the Moldavian space, symbolising the permanence and endurance of the

⁴⁹ de Baecque, *Les Corps de l'histoire...*, 135.

⁵⁰ Walter, 157.

⁵¹ *Metamorphosis Septi-Collis Dacia* (Koložsvár, 1741), 4-6.

Moldavian state. Two etchings, “Veduta ruinelor Cetății Neamțului” (1841) [View of the ruins of the Neamț Fortress] and “Cetatea Neamț” (1845) [The Neamț Fortress] contain the same symbolism, but they depict the laid out, fortified landscape. In the context of romanticism, of Volney’s “Ruins”, the Neamț Fortress is the symbol of the military and political resistance of Moldavia’s statehood, the emblem of heroism and of the glorious past. The semantic similarities between the symbol of the Ceahlău Mountains, that transfer or imprint their greatness on an entire vernacular landscape (*terra*), and the Neamț Fortress, that symbolises the heroic lives of a people (*ethos*), bestow the “figure of the nation” from a physiognomic and geognostic landscaping viewpoint.

The legendary relay, as a cultural substrate of the historical discourse, focuses on the two axes (terra-ethos) in an epic with powerful symbolic values. The *landscape* (the Ceahlău Mountain) and the *history* (Dochia) are overlap a legendary narration that points to the mythological ethnogenesis in which the fairy Dochia, or Decebal’s daughter, chased by the Roman conqueror Trajan, transforms into an element of nature, part of the mountain landscape, into a cliff. The legend unfolds at the foot of the Pion Mountain (Ceahlău)⁵², and the mark the mythical genesis lends the mountain landscape of Moldova the demonstrative foundations of the national landscape. the transfer from an ancient mythological landscape (Pion) to a national mythological landscape is made by adapting the legendary epic tale in which the myth of Dochia, extracted from the thesaurus of folklore epic, confers the construction of the national-territorial identity the necessary elements.

Romanticism’s appeal to the folklore traditions and their exploitations in the discourse regarding the construction of the nation illustrates the potential of the 20th century romantic reading of the landscape. The context of the mythological landscape also includes the so-called myth-geographical components that equally combine the legendary aspects and the historical-geographical realities. Ancient, Dacian themes are readdressed, such as the Dacians’ habitat and religious universe that contains the mountain character of this ancient people’s habitation. Thus, the same Ceahlău Mountain, as well as the Orăștie Mountains, are identified with the Kogaionon, the Dacians’ sacred mountain. Another aspect regarding the mythological landscape is represented by the megalithic “buildings” that take different anthropomorphic and zoomorphic appearances – the different versions of the Sphinx from the Bucegi Mountains, from the Banat Mountains, from Bratocea, from Solomon’s Stones, from Stânișoara etc. The same megalithic constructions can be identified in human forms in the Bucegi Mountains, known as the Babele Plateau, or the “12 Apostles”, or the “Moșii de Călimani” in the Călimani Mountains⁵³. Inspired by the legendary, traditional narratives, all of these mythological transcriptions of the mountain landscape of the Romanian space were made in the 19th century, as part of the modern construction of the national identity from the romantic and post-romantic period.

⁵² George Sorescu, *Gh. Asachi* (Bucharest: Minerva, 1970), 174-179.

⁵³ See Nicolae Densușianu, *Dacia preistorică* (Bucharest: Ed. Enciclopedică, 1987) and Sorin Paliga, *Mitologia tracilor* (Bucharest: Meteor Press, 2008).

The national landscape, another version of the patrimony-landscape, is configured during the period of the edification of the modern state, pursuing the major political and institutional projects of the national unity and statehood. The delineations of the national landscape through a retouched rhetoric of ethnicity in the cultural and political discourse related to the formation and consolidation of the modern state can be revealed through several examples from the sphere of the literary report, of the construction and iconic dissemination of the ethnical landscape. In 1901, Al. Vlahuță, in his work “România pitorească” [The picturesque Romania], conducts a geographical-historical report on the Romanian land, structured into three main components of the architecture of the national-landscape: The Danube, The Black Sea and the Carpathian Mountains. The landscaping description is counterpointed by facts, events and historical figures. “Dunărea, Marea, Carpații și Prutul, iată cele patru hotare care îngrădesc pământul Țării Românești” [The Danube, The Sea, The Carpathians and the Prut, these are the four borders that surround the land of Romania]. The lyrical “portrait” of the Romanian landscape is part of the travel literature genre, as well as the cultural geography in which the iconic depiction of the landscape becomes part of the patriotic national education strategies. The physical-geographical image of the Romanian land turned into literature aims to outline the “new country” of “today’s proud Romania”. The patrimony-landscape is thus transposed into a patriotic-landscape in which the affectivity ingredients that are characteristic to the travel literature focus on an emblematic landscape of the Romanian state from around 1900, on establishing a representative state entity from Eastern Europe. The figure of the patrimony-landscape and the landscaping figure of the nation also use the organic metaphor of the living body. Moreover, the landscape approached from the perspective of a “visu” description is assembled in its geographical forms and in their unfolding as incantations that assume the land, the people, the natural sentiment. It points to the landscape’s view from within, in which the journey and the description is doubled by the poetically transmitted affectivity: “Din strașina munților ce-nalță marginea țării, de la Severin până la Dorohoi; râuri frumoase, dătătoare de viață și nenumărate pâraie se despletesc în cărări de argint peste-ntinsele șesuri ale Valahiei și printre dealurile blânde ale Moldovei. Singură câmpia Ialomiței se așterne tăcută, netedă, uscată, vast ostrov însetat, în mijlocul atâtor ape ce împodobesc pământul României; Doarme sub șuierul vânturilor deșertul larg, nemărginit al Bălgradului” [From the eaves of the mountains that elevate the edges of the country, from Severin to Dorohoi; beautiful life-giving rivers and countless streams part into silver pathways across the outstretched lowlands of Wallachia and between the gentle hills of Moldavia. Alone the field of Ialomița lies quietly, smooth, dry, as a vast parched islet, between so many waters that adorn the land of Romania; It sleeps under the whoosh of Bălgrad’s large, unending desert’s winds]⁵⁴. Besides the literary report of the patrimony-landscape, its particularisation and ethnical-state assumption can be analysed by several benchmarks that transpose the iconic component of the images that reproduce the landscapes of Romania in illustrations and photographs. The *iconic-landscape*, as a means of heritagization or imaginative establishment of the ethnic

⁵⁴ Alexandru Vlahuță, *România pitorească* (Bucharest: Ed. Erc Press, 2009), 134-135.

territory, can be identified in the photograph and illustration albums whose editing coincided with the chronological benchmarks of the “greater history”. Thus, in 1848, A. Billecocque edited the French “Album Moldo-Valaque ou guide politique et pittoresque à travers les Principautés du Danube”. This album predominantly contains the cultural landscape which depicts images and descriptions regarding the legendary traditions of Wallachia and Moldavia, with connections to the myth of the Latin origins, to the Orthodox tradition, with images of the Romanian spirituality, notes on the relation between the East and the West as a characteristic of the Romanian collective identity. The mythological landscape of the mountains (Trajan and Dochia, Panaghia, the Bucegi Mountains), urban images, images of secular and monastic monuments and human figures are the main iconic themes present in this album, in which the goal of knowing a territory and certain historical-geographical realities is doubled by the geopolitical goal, namely that in which the Romanian land plays a major role in the confrontations between the great European powers. The cultural and political interests thus encouraged the publication of such an album in 1848, an important chronological benchmark in European history. Thus, the album offers an image of cultural synthesis, in which the characteristics of the natural landscape are presented to the European public opinion.

At a chronological interval that marks another event that is part of the greater history, namely in 1919, 10 years after the Great Union, the album “La Grande Roumanie” is published, edited by “L'illustration”. The album celebrated the profile of the Romanian state and it sets up the political emblems of the state, namely the dynastic figures, portraits and symbols, the events of the royal family’s history, the natural landscape that characterises the Romanian territory (The Carpathians, the Danube, the images from rural towns from each region), the monastic ecclesiastic landscape (Curtea de Argeş, Arnota, Horezu, Suceviţa), the castles (Bran, Hunedoara, Suceava), the laid out landscapes (Cişmigiu, Carol Park), several reproductions of Romanian plastic arts⁵⁵. Thus, it outlines a landscape connected to the Romanian state and royalty, at the level of a synthesis with strong advertising and legitimising valences. The album bears the mark of a solemn discourse on the true harmony between *man*, *nature* and *history*. Another example of state-landscape with the same valences is an album published at the same 10 year interval, in 1939, entitled “La Roumanie Nouvelle”, dedicated to a state royal project promoted by King Carol II of Romania. The album exclusively portrays political and triumphalist instances, part of the Carlist propaganda, with political rituals and scenographies dedicated to Carol II, in which the economic progress (the image of grain fields and oil scaffoldings) represents a novelty among the priorities of the time regarding the recording of the national-state landscape. The image of the Arc de Triomphe from the country’s capital became emblematic to the support of the ideology of the Voivodal state established by Carol II. The heritage body of the national landscape focuses on the totalitarian synecdoche of Carol’s regime. Therefore, the landscape serves an ideological endeavour and the historical-

⁵⁵ Laurențiu Vlad, “Regards français sur la société roumaine,” in *Modelul francez și experiențele modernizării* (Bucharest: Institutul Cultural Român, 2006), 195.

geographical and physical-natural themes of the landscape become secondary issues, overlapped by the phenomenon of celebrating the king's cult of personality.

The third approach to reading the patrimony landscape is anthropo-geographical, related to cultural geography and ethnography. It focuses on capturing the ethnic spirit of the Romanian landscape. This type of landscape, from an anthropological and ethnological perspective, emphasises “raportul dintre pământ și popor în Carpați și spațiul înconjurător, de-a lungul Dunării și nord-vestul Mării Negre” [the relation between the land of the people in the Carpathians and in the surrounding space, along the Danube and north-west of the Black Sea]⁵⁶. The Romanian ethnotype is placed into a direct relation with the spacial and landscaping architecture of the country, in which two areas of habitat meet – civilisation and one of anthropo-geographical nature, namely “una era aria Carpaților și a regiunilor deluroase, cealaltă valea largă și mlăștinoasă, dar cu grinduri svântate ale Dunării” [one was the area of the Carpathians of the hilly regions, the other was the wide and swampy valley, with the windy banks of the Danube], between which “the semi-gaps of the steppe plains are interposed”. This type of reading the cultural geography and the anthropo-geography implies a series of political, cultural, ethnographic dominant ideas, all of which are classifiable in the landscaping and geographic determinism, or in the “geographic fatality”, according to G. Vâlsan. In the geographer's opinion, the ethnic and national physiognomy is due this anthropo-geographic reading of the landscape and it can be noted in several themes of G. Vâlsan's geographical remarks, namely the national consciousness and geography, the physical outer environment and the national biological funds, the evolution of the Romanian state in its geographic environment, Transylvania in the unitary frame of the land and the Romanian state. He remains connected to the greater debate of the convergence between the landscape/territory and the nation, between landscape and history, between landscape and memory. Inspired by the suggestions of the folkloric mythology, the ethnographic and folkloric archetypes of the ritual order and of the transfigurations from the artistic symbolism, G. Vâlsan concedes to a synthetic description of the physical-natural and geographic profile that can be associated with the *hora-landscape* (the image of a hora) type, an essential characteristic of the Romanian territory: “Dacă rechemăți în minte o imagine a hărții României, de la început apar evidente câteva caractere dominante: în primul rând o formă de hotare aproape ovală, subliniată pe trei părți de ape: Nistrul, Marea Neagră și Dunărea. Spre Apus, Tisa ar împlini cercul desăvârșit, dar aici hotarul politic e mai retras și mai agitat, deși urmărește la distanță egală cursul acestui râu” [If you were to remember a map of Romania, from the start several obvious dominant characteristics stand out: firstly, an almost oval shape of the land, outlined on three sides by waters: Nistru, The Black Sea and the Danube. Towards the west, Tisa would complete the perfect circle, but here the political border is more cloistered and agitated, although it follows the course of this river at an equal distance]⁵⁷.

⁵⁶ George Vâlsan, *Studii antropogeografice, etnografice și geopolitice* (Cluj-Napoca: EFES, 2001), 434.

⁵⁷ Idem, *Pământul românesc și frumusețile lui* (Iași: Edict, 2008), 8.

4. *The physiocratic-landscape* became a particular field of the landscaping discourse, beginning with the 18th century. The modern physiocratic view re-centres the place and role of the land and of agriculture in the field of the productive and economic life and it brings the earth, the soil, the substratum and the landscape at a maximum level of focus and visibility. Nature is rediscovered as the “alma mater”, as a reassessment of the ancient theme of Lucretius in modern configurations. The projection of nature and of the land, with *fruiting* and *metalliferous* valences, entered the public debate and analysis and fuelled an emancipating, progressive and melioristic discourse from the royal, official, elitist emitter towards the social body. The economic and physiocratic edification literature issued by the Court of Vienna in the 18th century and received in Transylvania had taken root in the agricultural activity, in the mining activity and in the manufacturing industry. All these aspects reverberated in the reconfiguration or “manufacturing” of the landscape. First and foremost, in this physiocratic landscape, we must note the *sovereign gaze* on the Transylvanian landscape and nature established by the Imperial Court. This sovereign gaze can first be identified in the journey reports made by Joseph II in Transylvania, particularly the one from 1773. The “*Altissima spectatio*” of the empire on this region combines the narration and the landscape description with the evaluations regarding the productivity and the physiocratic exploitation of the land. The text of the journey report alternates the descriptive passages with the analytical passages through these physiocratic economic policies, the happiness of its subjects. This sovereign gaze on the landscape is external but not distant, rational but not cold, it reverberates in the landscape text of Joseph II’s report. The emperor is the author of an exercise of acute observation, reassessed and amended depending on the objectives of the imperial economic policies: “Am descris în anii anteriori această țară și acum o privesc cu alți ochi. Munții mari înconjoară această țară, sunt dotați cu văi bune și au lemn din belșug care se exploatează atât de mult încât se risipește foarte mult.” [In the previous years, I described this country and now I see it in a different light. The great mountains that surround this country are equipped with good valleys and they have plenty of wood that is exploited so much that much of it is wasted]. Therefore, there is a self-censorship of the hedonic gaze upon the landscape; there is a guidance of this gaze by virtue of the physiocratic project and the responsible onlooker who is preoccupied not by the journey per se, as a journey for pleasure, but by the evaluation and pragmatic inventory of a region of the empire.

The text contains a relevant descriptive-morphological view on the landscape and an aesthetic gaze on/sentiment of the natural environment: “Puținii munți cu excepția Făgărașului sunt aspri și stâncoși. Țara este împărțită în văi cu împăduriri frumoase unde există stejari și fagi. Mijlocul țării, așa-numita Câmpie a Transilvaniei, are dealuri, dar foarte puține împăduriri. Diferitele văi, mai largi sau mai restrânse, formează în mijlocul lor Ardealul. Aceste văi cele mai multe sunt frumoase și roditoare. Văile ce se varsă în Mureș sunt foarte frumoase și roditoare” [Few mountains, with the exception of the Făgăraș Mountains are harsh and rocky. The country is divided into valleys with beautiful forests of oak and beech trees. The middle of the country, the so-called Transylvanian Plain, has hills, but few forests. The different, larger or smaller valleys form Transylvania in the middle. Most of these valleys are beautiful and fruitful.

The valleys that flow into the Mureș River are very beautiful and fruitful]. The sovereign's recount is dominated by the physiocratic analysis in which the providentialism of the natural environment obviously points to economic and productive exploitations: "Transilvania este în special o țară frumoasă. Înzestrată în special de divinitate cu toate produsele speciale ale unui loc sau ale unei țări. Are suprafețe destinate agriculturii și cerealelor, cu producție de vin, minerale și toate produsele naturii sunt deseori de găsit aici. În zona Trei Scaune și în Țara Bârsei sunt cultivate atâtea fructe încât și părțile din afară sunt aprovizionate" [Transylvania is a particularly beautiful country. It is especially endowed by the divinity with all the special goods of a place or a country. It has surfaces destined for agriculture and grains, for the production of wine, minerals and all of nature's goods are often found here. In the Trei Scaune region and in the Bârsa Land, so much fruit is cultivated that the outer regions are also supplied]⁵⁸.

Besides this "sovereign gaze" and physiocratic view on the landscape, there is also a physiocratic radiography of Transylvania contained in the Conscription of 1750. It is structured in the following descriptive sequences: the geographic locations of the towns and villages, the agrarian landscape evaluated in accordance with the soil's level of fertility, the structure of the landscaping patrimony (cultivated lands, forest lands, vineyard lands and orchards). These sequences can outline the landscaping, agricultural and rural characteristics that are similar to the rural landscapes of England, France or Holland. The physiocratic project carried out by the Court of Vienna was finalised by a landscaping that was similar to other regions of the empire. For instance, the overall Illuminist and physiocratic landscaping of the territory of Lombardy focused on a landscape that combined beauty and usefulness: with rivers, canals, gullies, with fluvial vegetation, with tended and orderly canals that flow between rows of poplars⁵⁹. This landscape of Lombardy is a *theresian landscape*, configured during the time of Marie Therese. In the case of Transylvania, the landscaping project aimed to lay out a space structured by rivers, roads built along the river valleys, rationally exploited forests, fruitful plains, valleys and depressions. Thus, we can define a *josephinian landscape* that is characteristic to Transylvania.

5. The utopian-landscape, first and foremost, implies a recovery and a heterotopic landscaping of the natural environment carried out in parks, gardens, by virtue of a microcosmic but universalised project⁶⁰. Secondly, the laid out parks and gardens reflect the power, the tastes and the aesthetic options of a modern world that is increasingly dominated by the natural sentiment. Thirdly, the gardens and parks represent places of memory or "commemorative" spaces, by virtue of a microcosm arranged through statues, petrified places (arrangements of rocks and mineral stratigraphies) that signify the geological or mineral memory of the earth, of a past or lost world.

⁵⁸ Ileana Bozac, Teodor Pavel, *Călătoria împăratului Iosif al II-lea în Transilvania* (Cluj-Napoca: Centrul de studii transilvane, 2006), 2.

⁵⁹ Rosario Assunto, *Scieri despre artă* (Bucharest: Meridiane, 1988), 55-59.

⁶⁰ C.S. Spary, *Le jardin d'utopie* (Paris: Museum National d'Histoire naturelle, 2005), 37.

The end of the 17th century and the beginning of the 19th century bring to Transylvania and Wallachia the debut of a phenomenon of great intensity in the building of parks and gardens that imitated the French and English models of gardening art and technique. These parks and gardens are laid out around the castles, the curiae, the aristocratic mansions or within the urban settlements. The ideal structure of such a garden contains: *the floristic area* (flowers, trees, plants, greenhouses), *the microcosm landscaping area* that comprises the landscape of the world (rocks, waters, fountains, lakes, springs and artificial waterfalls, microforms of relief, biotopes) and *the artistic and architectural area* (statues, gloriettas, pavilions). An ideal image in this sense is given by the park of the Teleky Castle in Gornești (Mureș County) from the mid-18th century that comprises a concentric structure of the landscaping areas: the castle, the bridge, the moat, the statues, the trees and the plants.

Within the landscaping panorama of Transylvania, represented by parks and gardens, one could identify a transversal axis of this landscaping architecture, namely the axis of the Mureș River, from the north-east to the south-west, along which the castle-parks had been built. This landscaping axis represents a true Transylvanian “Loire Valley”. Along several hundred kilometres that represent the Mureș Valley and the tributary valleys, from the north-eastern extremity (Brâncovenesti) to the south-western extremity (Săvârșin), 37 parks and gardens were built. They first and foremost represent an *aristocratic-landscape* of the Mureș Valley and, alternatively, they form the benchmark of example of a Transylvanian culture of *jardinage*⁶¹, as well as the synchronisation with the history of the European landscape. From an interpretive viewpoint developed by the geography school of Cluj from the interwar period, the cultural and social significance of the landscape of the Mureș Valley is transferred to an ethnic, legitimising significance, namely that the Mureș Valley represent a Romanian “ethnic axis” of Transylvania. In the extra-Carpathian area, the predominant features are the public, urban parks as utopian-landscapes, as the ones from Bucharest (Cișmigiu, Mogoșoaia), Râmnicu Vâlcea (Zăvoi) Craiova (The Romanescu Park), or the parks laid out in royal residences⁶².

The landscape as a background of the identity and patrimonial discourse, the physiocratic landscape, the utopian-landscape of the parks and gardens create the possible components of an analysis of the relation between man-nature-history which stands out in the collective perceptions and representations.

Translated from the Romanian by Anca Chiorean

⁶¹ Albert Fekete, *Transylvanian Garden History* (Kolozsvár: Művelődés, 2007).

⁶² Rica Marcus, *Parcuri și grădini în România* (Bucharest: Editura Tehnică, 1958).