

Paradoxism's Offensive

Ion Soare

...Therefore, the literary histories are put in front of an event- a literary one, certainly! - that they will have, *volens-nolens*, to mention, in the worst case, if not to analyze at an equal level with the other movements from the so large and complex field of the letters: *the paradoxism*.

In spite of the fact that some literary critics and theorists pretend to ignore the new movement and its main founder -¹⁾ Florentin Smarandache, it is a reality that compels recognition more and more, such a child not just waited, but full of health and originality, which asks for his rights!

“Demonstrated” and imposed, first of all, through poetry (especially in the volumes **Le sens du Non-Sens** -1984, **Collection of poetical exercises** -1982, republished in 1994 with the title **I am against myself**, and **Nonpoems**-1992), the paradoxist literary adventure, as an epiphenomenon of the existential one of Florentin Smarandache, continues in prose especially with **Non-Roman** (1993), then in drama with **MetaHistory** -1993. The chronology of the appearance of these paradoxist creations is certainly relative, their elaboration in manuscript being simultaneously or not with the year of publishing. We will not insist too much upon these works, published until 1994, they being the object of many previous studies²⁾.

The application of the paradoxist manifestoes on the three literary genres, the pouring of the linguistic “material” into the smarandachian theory and conceptions pattern, abundantly proved the adequation of the new system paradigm to the Romanian language (or non-language!). If it were updated the list of Romanian and foreign writers which joined the movement (with “Diploma” of paradoxist writer released by the prodigious poet, or without it!) would be long enough. That one published by J. M. Levenard, I. Rotaru and A. Skemer in the well-known **Anthology of the paradoxist literary movement** (Los Angeles, 1993, p. 169-170) and republished by us (with some completions) in the mentioned monography, impressed already through the spreading “geographical area” of this new, non-endemic literary ”disease”. The 27 mentioned countries and the 154 adherents and followers of the movement would have been increased until now, because the ennergetic and passionate paradoxism’s founder takes care in order that his child, as extraordinary as his “father”, reach all over the world!

Carefully and with love watched, the smarandachian paradoxist tree grows out and its bright darkness (paradoxistically talking) overruns more and more geographical and literary, of course, spaces.

Not just once was raised the problem if the *whole* smarandachian work could be” crowded within the paradoxism’s accolade”. The idea seems to us partly tendentiously and its eventual “implementation” would be redundant. An even fugitive research of the work of any founder in the literary field, would prove that an artistic current have never existed in a pure state, the interferences and the influences of other contemporary or previous movements being detectable, as a rule. We maintain our assertion expressed with years ago, that for a genuine artist the girths of single literary currents are “too tight”³⁾. The examples in the history of the world’s literatures are too many to insist on this matter. Titu Popescu subtly noticed that Smarandache “always goes out from paradoxism without leaving it entirely and forever; he allows himself freedoms for independence, that lead him to outline himself as a writer with a relative independence of the movement he thought.”. With an inspired word and image of Al. Cioranescu (talking about Ion Barbu}, the paradoxist “poison” exists in different proportions, however, in the smarandachian creations.

Otherwise, at a methodical and applied analyze of Florentin Smarandache's work it can easily come out an almost "dialectical" development of the paradoxism, all the more as the founder of the movement wants (and succeeds) to reach the truth of life and art through ...(hard!) contradictions and without neglecting or giving up to them. After feverish seeking that last almost two years the paradoxism has born and then had an ascending development (1980- 1994, the upper limit is relative), both literary and ...geographical, the propagation waves of this literary seism knowing ...paradoxical lengths, forms and oscillations, therefore going out from the known scientific schemes, in accordance with the author's programme or aleatoric ways. Anyway, in this period was manifested -good for the movement- that "permanent fury of freedom" about Titu Popescu has talked.

It can come out after the half of this decade a certain stabilization of the movement. It is not about an "exhaustion of the resources"(Constantin M. Popa), of course, but a true victory of the paradoxism, in fact, an entire mastership of a new territory that the conqueror -Florentin Smarandache- colonizes now at leisure. "The drillings" are less, the arrangements and buildings are made much "horizontally", and this action is developed on two complementary fronts/directions: on the one hand are consolidated some gained areas, on the other hand it is tried (successfully) the occupation of new territories from other (literary, of course!) species and their conversion into the new religion of paradoxism.

1. The consolidation of the gained paradoxist areas.

We couldn't agree but in a little measure with the essayist Marian Barbu -a professional of drama critics, that Smarandache would be "obsessed to madness by the word paradox, by its spiritual infiltrations in the highest or the oddest fields of the existence" and he "would believe like the ancient Midas that anything could enter the area of the paradox"⁴⁾. The appreciation includes/supposes a certain smarandachian casuistry, a hard to accepting thing for a gifted work, subsequent or simultaneous with a coherent and believable programme and with a high degree of assimilation. Otherwise, it wouldn't be possible other interpretation criteria as the postmodernity is abundant in paradoxes and the literature and art have although their main source in reality. The contemplative artist with the entire complexity of his being is, too, a unit of the big existential crowd.. Much more, the paradoxism is able to absorb other tendencies and doctrines. Titu Popescu, for instance, has the opinion that "the Manicheism is a still undeveloped form of the paradoxism"⁷⁾. It is significant the fact that whole paragraphs from the cited book of this exceptional aesthetician are written in the most genuine paradoxist style (see for details our essay **Paradoxism and postmodernism**).

The search for a chronological criterion for analyzing the smarandachian creation is both risky and useless: older works have been republished many years after their republishing and have often been revised and added; and, as a rule, the energetic, prolific and feverish author has forgotten to date his manuscripts. Therefore is difficult enough to follow the sinuous and intricate way of the paradoxism's evolution in its practical side. *The ballad of Ermizeu*, for instance, studied in manuscript by us, seems to have been written in the first years after graduating the Faculty of Mathematics in Craiova, when the new mathematician still has had his memory full of formula, algorithms, functions and ... mathematicians. The mentioned creation seems a kind of a parody (an often used specie in postmodernism) of the mathematical language, a writing with a sober physiognomy and a serious tone, but behind which gurgles the laugh. The humor stays in the obvious contradictions between the technically-scientific significant and the personified signified, the "actions" of the latter being a source of funny: "Ermizeu, the old synus / burning like a dual thought/ in the Hamilton mechanics/ with residual spectrum/ from the loxodromic siege/ had pull out the hart inverter / and in a Riemann geometry / had put the Brocard's point". Through the absurd of the situations, tone and prosody, *The ballad* ... reminds strikingly (and not

accidentally) of the famous *Chroniclers* of Urmuz and of the futurists too. The association is confirmed by the paradoxologist Constantin M. Popa : "The moral of his fable (Urmuz's fable "The pelican or the pelican", *n.n*) can constitute the paradoxist movement's emblem"(C. M. Popa, *cited work*, p.13).

In *Suffering and politics* , subtitled "Lyrical semicollages" (undated, too), the "doses" of paradoxism are unequally distributed. At the beginning the paradoxist appears as we know him - ingenious and original: "A chap threw the grenade on the water/ And he pull out some two fishes/ And four- five divers". The conclusion drops with a terrible irony, the grimace is tragic: "Everyone has the right to dye/There where he doesn't wish"! Another verses recall the famous "Smarandache paradoxes" from the bright debut of the movement: "Nothing we repair/ Not even the repairable". Then follow simple reports, arranged in form of poetry and joining only through content to the absurd and the paradoxism of the previous verses. The warning from subtitle ("Lyrical collages") saves partly their inadequation. A certain prose-ism unmasks the "soldering", reminding of some pages from **Nonroman** ("They are the product of the original education which faces the reality of the new regime"; "Oh! Politics of three coins/Which goes us out through nose" etc.) or of textualistic joinings. These ones are interrupted from place to place with philosophical commentaries, directly enunciated ("knowing other ones, you know yourself); some tautological distich appears: "we haven't time to not having time"(two negations make an affirmation, so... *we have time for having time!*). The poem ends with a nice paradox: "As if this world is from other worlds", based, evidently, on a *hard contradiction*(Fl. Sm.).

We have insisted on this poem in order to advance an idea that worth to be developed: the input and the output of the paradoxist scene of the histrionic (in the best sense of the word) Florentin Smarandache, are deliberate, with a subtle art. The director, the scriptwriter and the actor meet each other in a show- man in that the multiplication can be taken as a prolongation and vice versa, and the contradiction tends towards solution, but never reaching it, in a ceaseless process. Because the *illusion of equilibrium* permanently turns itself into its opposite. The axiomatic conception after what the author (the writer, the artist etc.) finds himself again in his work, with a reciprocal validity, suits no one better than Florentin Smarandache. He has a contradictory personality himself, in which the wish for equilibrium and the possibility to reach it alternate all the time with the non-equilibrium, as an artist on wire whose on the left and on the right oscillation may bring him sometimes on the string, but other times ... *under* it (like a "poet with the dot under *i*", as Florin Vasiliu would say). The paradox is that the equilibrist never falls down, because the two extremes permanently attract and sustain themselves." I am all the time an unbalanced man and that makes me to stay in equilibrium" says Smarandache with Eschyl's voice⁸). Otherwise, the paradoxism's founder felt with his artistic intelligence permanently on the look-out for the new, the danger of "dictatorship" on the behalf of the discovered literary movement, and then, the man who has never endured any compulsion of his freedom of thinking and action, will early react with a normal logic of the ... non-logic! There is that "concomitance of the contraries"(Titu Popescu) able to create (at least in intention) "harmony among multiple elements of science and art" (Marian Barbu)."Une harmonie en inharmonie" - says Smarandache.

No exit and **The earth's blood** are one-act drama, fantastic-allegorical or allegoric-fantastical that seem to belong to an older period of smarandachian creation. The characters-symbols take part in debates of absolutely good or evil ideas, and their manicheist dichotomy has nothing from the artistic complexity of some "classic" characters. Thus, the "negative" hero from the first play symbolizing the totalitarian evil is the *militian*, traditionally presented and therefore caricatural, that is fool, dogmatic and automated, defending an oppressive regime from a pretended Valley of Happiness. The peasant from "The earth's blood", shouted by another militian, arrives on the beyond world; finding out that he isn't able to recovering himself,

concludes finally that there is his place, the place of the protestants. The final conception and the viewpoint are fully anti-melancholic, because the peasant Maria hits the govern while it is asking for "Mercy!"

A little dramatic jewel is **Antique Tragedy**, in what the three sacred monsters of the Greek theatre, Eschyl, Eurypide and Sofocle are brought in the same period and put to speak each other. The paradoxism of the play is realized not in structure and form, but in ideation and language. The author proves an excellent knowledge of the antique Greek theatre and reality and of the socratian heuristic method and, most of all, of the human and the artistic personalities of the three playwrights. He puts them to talk in a complex style in what the excellence of the speeches is given by the vast culture of the three ones, by a deep ... philosophical wisdom (in order to make a paradoxist tautology!) and by the paradoxism of many speeches.

ESCHYL: Why do you tell me to sit down? Had you enough of seeing me high?

...-In cold blood I destroy the cold-blooded reptiles.

SOFOCLES: How many times have you beaten in restlessness the head and the body?

ESCHYL: One moon and one sun.

...-With what have you move yourself away?

...-With patience.

Some speeches of the philosophers-playwrights recall our popular "nonsenses", where, in similar dialogues, popular characters give "topsy-turvy" answers to normal questions. The apparent inadequation and their comicality arise from the different meanings of the "pilot" word from interrogations or from other causes.(We think that it would be interesting and useful a comparative research as concerns the popular origin of some ideas and paradoxist motifs, with adequate lecture criteria, in some smarandachian creations)!

It is noticed on the other hand the aspect of "one (paradoxist)- verse poems" of many speeches, or the poems with two verses (distichs):"Only after dying , it comes to you the undying", "The grass took over the fields/The wind blows away on the waves, far-away", "The tumultuous cascades beat the air", "I don't love the poetry, but the poetry of poetry"(reminding us of the famous pleonasm from *The singing of the singings*:" Kiss me with the kisses of your mouth") etc.

In one of the Sofocle's speeches Smarandache reiterates the paradoxism's foundation: "Denying too much a thing, you have just asserted it"- what reflects, in fact, the essence of his art: The *anti/ non-literature* with significance of *literature*.

"You are anti-playwrights!"- finds out (only!) Eschyl, because it is said without a sign of "reproach". That would be, projected on the literary disputes' scene from the antique world, the smarandachian tendency and conception to renewing the literary art and, at the same time, to position it in the prolongation of two millenaries and a half of quarrel between old and new, being known the innovations brought by Sofocle and Euripide in the antique theatre.

Spontaneous and brilliant, the speeches of this drama are full of concision and fluency. The author exposes his idea easily and believable, in a permanent interference with the conceptions and the mentalities of his famous precursors. Thus, he slinks himself subtly as a fourth character in play, succeeding to make a little/ big bridge between the postmodern paradoxist sensitiveness and the "modernity" of the antics, especially that of Euripide. (To the summit of the morale sublimity in the antique drama and, first of all, that of Eschyl, he will oppose/present the lower summit of human nature in **Metahistory** - monstrous reflection of our contemporanity).

"The intrusion" of the Romanian-American playwright, without having claims to destroying myths, has unexpected consequences, as the result is almost a tragicomedy, in what the antique stateliness and ideals live together with, or seem to dissolve/lose themselves in the

postmodernist relativity. At the same time Sofocle and, especially, Euripide appear as literary dissidents opposing themselves to the previous play conventions and traditions which had the aura of Eschyl's genius. "You are writing mathematical tragedies -finds out he. Too much logic is bad!" "Where are the Hellenic tragedy's laws? -answers to him Euripide. Let's break them! (What they just have done, in fact! n.n). We use the religion of the poetical science". The three ones -two different orientations, the tradition and the renewal, in fact, - are joined by a single fact -the tragedy; that is the literature, because -allegorically says Smarandache -the innovations brought by non-literature have in common with the literature just... the literature. The same as in the case of an equation, if were reduced the similar terms, would result *non = yes*, what had to be demonstrated and what brilliantly did Adrian Marino, theoretically, in his monumental work **Dictionary of literary ideas**, and then, as regards the smarandachian work, Constantin M.Popa, Titu Popescu, Florin Vasiliu, Marian Barbu and others.

Smarandache considers the renewal of the literature as an essential condition for its survival. The end of the play "Antique tragedy" is significant in this way: Eschyl descends in eternity, but not before to declaring the two ones as his successors. "... the olive trees stopped from budding" -says Sofocle... "The earth sleeps. The poetry breaths!". The ambiguity obtained by author is remarkable because we don't know if the poetry of Eschyl sleeps, in other words, if the traditional poetry has died, or, on the contrary, if only after its disappearance the poetry becomes able to breath. The last speech, of Euripide, of course, seems equivocal too: "It is the Victory of our defeat!..." If we read it in a paradoxist way, in what the negation becomes assertion, the sense is obvious: *The literature has died, long live the (non)literature!* It is decoded also by the fact that from the beginning Eschyl is put to speak in ...paradoxist terms! The text discloses author's sympathy for Euripide, the most modern among the poets of the Greek tragedy, "forerunner of the new art of all the times"(N.Carandino).

Undated, the play seems contemporary with the "manifestoes" from the beginning of the movement, it being itself as a genuine manifesto, (but) an artistic one, disclosing not at all the later exceptional playwright. This task belongs to the creation **Destiny** that announces the subsequent **Metahistory**. This is a "play without actors, without decor and without dialogue", in what the noises of the audience are part of the show proper. The birth - suggested by the whimper from the beginning- is followed, of course, by life - the light is gradually blurred, during the entire play (7 minutes and a half) till dark - the end, completed with some "vague wails". The monotonous, mediocre and eventually comfortable life of the anonymous/symbolic protagonist is reproduced with a maximal concision in two words : "Absolute silence". With a subtle irony the playwright hardly lets to discern "a light *encore*", while the whistles - which disapprove such a dull existence -are normally and... numerous.

The play has an exquisite power of suggestion. It is maybe the only one among the dramatic creations of Smarandache that could stand near those from **Metahistory**, they contrasting only through the registers of expression: to the sarcastic virulence and humoristic verve in trilogy, correspond the lyrical-philosophic wave that traverses the little play **Destiny**. Moreover, we assist here to a certain essentiality of the dramatic art. To be able to say such many things in less than one page is, we have to recognize, a true performance that could be equalized only by ...the poet Florentin Smarandache in a few of his little "novels" in verses: *Roman d'amour, Old age without youth age* etc. At the same time, the dramatism in **Destiny** does not dissolve itself, does not disappear, the play could be performed at any time. As in a genuine literature's alchemy, it shows itself to us as an extreme compression of a whole, as a maximally concentrated drop, that still keeps the quasi-totality of its qualities!

Tens of little and big studies and articles or even books (or only chapters) have been written about these models of the genre- the drama from the mentioned cycle⁹⁾ The quality and

the novelty of these dramatic creations are proved by their relatively many performances in different places in the world (Smolensk, Glasgow, Strasbourg, Chisinau, Timisoara, Karlsruhe etc.), but especially by those which have highly appreciated these drama and have strongly wished to stage them. Neaga Munteanu, a Romanian established in California, considers that the smarandachian theatre “ outruns the borders of the literary genres, got out of shape and tanned by contemporaries” and appreciates it as a “proof for the century that will disappear through fire, water and earthquake; it is not for the libraries which will burn, but has to be hermetically shut into lead boxes for the researchers of the next generations: so disappeared an epoch”¹⁰.

“You are an excellent playwright and poet, with a fantasy and culture out of common- writes the author Victor Voinicescu Sotski, actor and poet in Paris, in a letter dated march 30, 1995 -the drama have sink me into a world that cannot let you indifferent and passive”. Doru Motoc, well-known playwright from Valcea, who found the drama “absolutely exceptional”¹¹, has recently told me that was intensely preoccupied to find the possibilities for staging on a Romanian theatre the play **The country of animals**, from the famous trilogy. Paraphrasing the paradoxist playwright, the examples could be multiplied *n* times.

The way in what the three dramas follow their destiny that begun seven years ago, justifies the critic Marian Barbu to be convinced that they “will serve as a bridge head for the third millennium”¹².

With “Vagrant verses”, that we have studied in manuscript, Florentin Smarandache imposes the “popular” side of his paradoxism, on the line of the language’s democratization -one of the postmodernism’s features but often recalling the **Flowers of mould** of Arghezi or **Gypsy songs** of Marin Radu Paraschivescu. The trueborn popular vocabulary (from the region of *Nea Marin*, himself also recognized here and there) is full of charm and taste. Out of this aspect the paradoxism is present through “daily, naive sentences”(in accordance with the manifesto), contradictions, puns etc:

He sleeps like a log!
 He wakes up in the night and smokes.
 Won’t get fired the devil...
 So that the salesman gives him two portions,
 Pulls after him
 A wonder- child
 But stupid

(**Turcaibes**)

Doarme de-l gasesc toti dracii!
 Noaptea se scoala si fumeaza,
 N-o lua necuratu foc...
 Ca sa-i dea vinzatoarea doua portii,
 Tine dupa el
 Si-un copil minune-
 De prost.

(**Turcaibes**)

or:

What have they understood from all these things, none can understand

(**Parents and children**) etc.

Ce-au inteles din toate astea, nu se-ntelege

(**Parinti si copii**)

The imitation of the popular speech becomes accurate copy, including the pronunciation, as well as in the linguistic questionnaires:

After I looked for him
Till I broke the earth
(I had also such a desire...
That I couldn't tell you!)
(The Tomcat uncle Alecu)

Dupa ce-l cautai
De sparsai pamantul
(Avusai si-o poftaaa...
Ce sa-ti povestesc!)
(Motanu de Nea Alecu)

As if to prove that everything is deliberate, the high cultivated poet, who has passed through the entire poetry of the world, insinuates himself now and then with some elevated metaphor: "I had settled on the upper step/ Of the soul's stair"(M-asezai pe treapta de sus/ A scarii sufletului).

In the substance of the volume we find their place and become poetry jokes and puns picked up from daily life: When you come again / -Over a week. / -With files sewn? / With the proof.(*Audience*)(Kent mai vii/ -Peste o saptamina./-Cu dosare cusute?/ Cu dovadra. *Audienta*) . Bawdy expressions are found everywhere.(In comparison, Arghezi appears like a puritan!). The identification of the nude reality with the literature is present everywhere too: "How little the fishes/ From Africa, and colored, like/The people./A carp big, as a pig,/ Lives 150 years.../The sturgeon reaches a/ Tone, as far as cow!" (The aquarium from Constanta). There are present also from the paradoxist arsenal the puns: "-Gheorghe and George are/ Unmentionable(s)/...And Vasile and Vasilache/ Are drawers.(*The country of Papura-Voda*)(-Gheorghe si George sunt/ Indispensabili/...Iar Vasile si Vasilache/ Sunt izmene. *Tara lui Papura-Voda*), or "What vocabulary has the ass..."(Uncle Purrcell)("Ce vocalimbar are magarul..."Nea Purrcell); expressions and repetitions recalling the children's folk: "Pizza, pizza/Prepelita/Pentru Mamamare Ghita"etc.

In other place an interjectional dialogue reminding of a pre-ancient times of the human language, is presented as an "onomatopoeic play": Ohhh / Whaaat?/ Mmmm?! / Heee? / Nooo! / Aaaa! / Yaap".(Conversation). As it looks like, the "drama" seems a genre of an "transitory stage" before the disappearance of the language, to which Smarandache has always returned. Undeliberately, maybe, nostalgically or on his bent knees, he is however conscious that the literature means, though, sentences, words and not in the last time - *littera*, from what it inherits its own name. He recognizes openly this thing, joking...seriously, in his well-known style : "The poet is a feeble, weak being, but in the whole power of word. The poet *keeps his word*". Strong arguments in this sense brings the paradoxist himself through the series of volumes published on the second half of this decade.

Emigrant toward infinity (MACARIE publishing house, Targoviste, 1996) is one of the most representatives volumes of Smarandache's paradoxism, with an unwonted title that seemed to confirm/continue an idea of the undersigned: "The last year of Smarandache's life is plus infinite"¹³). "The hymn of the Oltenian-American", published by the author on the forth cover, is the most suited motto/postface for this volume, because the writer that in America " (I) eat(s) leek and drink(s) with the tzoii" and at Craiova is a cowboy, it means that, in fact, he is neither of these two ones! The "American verses" from the subtitle could as well be named "Romanian/Oltenian verses". In this way, the lyrico-epic character of the volume is, paradoxistly talking, a man without country , who still has roots, or a Romanian adapted under stress of

circumstances to the realities of the country of the cowboys and of the impossible ... possibilities, a contradictory “emigrant”, the greatest and the deepest among his paradoxes!

The verses are “American” only because the author lives in the USA. Many of them are Romanian (as concerns the language, in any case) or universal verses, it been given the omnipresence of the contemporary realities. The style itself is genuinely paradoxist, the one that has been invented when Smarandache has still lived in Romania. The juiciness and the truculence of this show of words recall the channel Pann - Arghezi- Sorescu - Anca.

“Traversed of a tragic wave” (Cezar Ivanescu), the volume proves that the author “lives in his country, that is the Romanian language”¹⁴). As well as in all other books- we would add. In fact, Smarandache has not emigrated in a definite place, but where he could apply without hindrances (spiritual and ideological, not merely material) his unconformist literary programme. The book’s title seems to be at the same time a *sui generis* translation of the ancient *Non omnis moriar* (I will not entirely dye) and not less a statement of the absolute freedom that the author has always desired, has struggle grimly for it and has expressed it artistically in literature and other fields. For Gabriela Haja the poetry of this volume “becomes the expression of the eternal nostalgia, (...) when it is not a linguistic game”¹⁵).

Although nowhere is mentioned, **I am against myself** (AIUS, Craiova, 1997 and Zamolxis Publishing House, Phoenix, Arizona, USA, 1997) is, in fact, the second edition- bilingual, of the volume **Exist impotriva mea** (MACARIE, Targoviste, 1994). Unfortunately the author had not available the Romanian original at that time and he had to remake it after the English version, resulting here and there an English/Romanian-English version! For instance- *Geoge Diabolicu* (*George Devil* in the english version), in place of *Gheorghe Dracu*, the original title.

I have told, at the respective time, that this volume (republication of the book **Laws of internal composition**, Fez- Maroc, 1982), represented a turning point in the writer’s creation because it has been written in the purest paradoxist style. Compared with the subsequent volumes (**Le sens du non-sens** -1983- the French edition and 1984- the Romanian edition; **Antichambres et antipoesies ou bizarreries**- verses paradoxaux- 1984 and 1989, but, especially with **Nonpoems** - 1992, a volume in what the author aspires for, after an expression of Manolescu, “a poetry without borders”), this volume seems to be of a temperate nuance, with a certain equilibrium, but also with some interferences of the “classicism’s tyranny”: ”The trees takes off their shoes in grass/In grapes night is setting in./October ...”(*Sad joys*) (Copacii se descalta in iarba,/In struguri incepe sa se innopteze,/ Octombrie...” *Triste bucurii*. There are entire poems that are not written in paradoxist style, reminding of the creations from the first period of activity, what means that the poet has not entirely disowned this manner of writing, when there is something to say: “Come home, my pet children,-/ I shout the eyes, the ears/ and the pavement stone and the bricks/ I shout the stray thoughts” (*Still life*) (Veniti, puii mamei, in casa-/ Le strig ochilor, urechilor/ si pietrelor de pavaj si caramizilor/ le strig gindurilor ratacite” *Natura moarta*). As regards the translation art, it is easy to notice that the subtleties of Romanian language and of paradoxism alike, cannot always be expressed in other language.(**traduttore - traditore!**). There is an illustrating example: “...si sa te bat... Nu sau da?/ -Nu da!”(Unsuited suited words), where the homonymy of the words from the last verse couldn’t be adequately translated (No, yes! No bit!”), losing from the original charm. The lamented Gheorghe Tomozei, whose preface from 1994 is resumed here, although he wrote appreciating words about Smarandache, did not understand his whole message, remarking especially “ the grave humor of the vanguard (stylistic trifles), but not the importance of its products”¹⁶). Because of the pleasant aspect of the language he noticed more the juggler(to read “virtuoso”) of words, but not the tragic clown; he did not distinguish the inner weeping of the hidden string. The characterization made by Smarandache in

the EPILOGUE of this volume could be available for all his creation: “it (the volume, n.n) is a shanty outside / and maybe a castle inside-/ a volume that keeps my touch/ with the earth”.

The advised researchers of the smarandachian work have not mistaken to read and analyze the poet only from the paradoxism’s viewpoint. Moreover some of them -known names as Ion Rotaru, Gheorghe Tomozei, Doru Motoc etc.- have seen in Smarandache the talented writer (the poet, the prose writer and the playwright) first of all and only afterwards, the paradoxist. This is a very important thing for the poet receiving and for his future, because a fundamental criterion/principle of axiology taught us for quite a long time, that beyond currents and fashions, there are two features of a writer which last :the gift and the originality. The intelligent mathematician- poet has early understood this thing and the finding/ acceptance of this idea determined him, from the beginning, not to deny or avoid *in corpore* the literary achievements of his precursors. “Florentin Smarandache- said Ovidiu Ghidirmic- is a great poet too, that has not to be seen only from the theory viewpoint, but also before and beyond the paradoxism”¹⁷⁾. The same critic, talking (as well as Titu Popescu) about “the classicization process of the paradoxism”, subtly notices that the one-verse poems volume **Through tunnels of words** (HAIKU, Bucharest, 1997) ”is desired a retort at the older cycle *Poems without any verse*, representing a dialectic of negation, ... an inner dispute in smarandachian work”¹⁸⁾. The concise and pertinent analysis of the one-verse smarandachian poems, made by the poet-essayist Ovidiu Ghidirmic seizes the art essence of these poems, in comparison with those “classics” of Ion Pillat: to the appolinic aesthetism of the last, is opposed the dyonisiac anti-aesthetism of the Romanian- American paradoxist, who stakes here again -as in his other creations- on paradox, “ the datum point of Florentin Smarandache’s thinking and literature¹⁹⁾. His capacity of essentiality proved in **The silence bell** (Haiku, edition in three languages, 1993), but also in other paradoxist creations -in verses, prose or drama, is important also in these poems. The “dispute” as regards the paradoxism’s “classicization” had been solved before by Titu Popescu: “If a current doesn’t enter the history- told the well-known aesthetician- that means that it has not enough matured itself. But a youth age without old age is possible only in the paradox that suspends the history”²⁰⁾.

We insisted on this aspect because Ovidiu Ghidirmic tends to consider this volume as ...unparadoxist, “ excepting the paradox”! But right here it is the essence of the matter: the paradox is not a smarandachian invention, indeed, but its transformation in poetry and system- it is! The strong, hard sometimes and always shocking metaphors in the smarandachian poems appear like this just because they are based on paradoxes- these notions converted in figures of speech forming a great part in the originality of this gifted writer.

The title of the volume is as shocking as these of the other smarandachian creations. What would have meant the author with these “tunnels of words”? An insidious interpretation hovers about us: maybe the “tunnels” are the “black holes” of the literature, that the poet during a creative *relache*, filled them up with a linguistic and artistic substance, deeper rooted in our literary history? Or in the traditional “forms” of the one-verse poems, he would have poured the anti-literary “mortar” of the paradoxes? Or maybe they mean “ the unidirectional trend of the poetic speech, through the tunnel of the one -verse poems? (O. Ghidirmic).”Everything is possible...”!

The volume **Defective writings** (AIUS, Craiova, 1997) equalizes, in our opinion, in “antiliteraturization” and, of course, in... paradoxism, the famous “Nonpoems”, its only “handicap” being the time of appearance- five years later (1995), although the author has dated the majority poems in the volume before 1990.

Seeming that he didn’t want to forget the actual politico- social conditions that generated the movement, the author begins the volume with an essay (in fact a postmodernist hybrid formed

from essay, prose, poem!), significantly named *Introduction in the empire of error*. It refers to the volume itself, including these “defective” creations but also the anomalies of a society full of contradictions and hostile the author.” From the society’s viewpoint- explains the author- they (these writings n.n.) appear as being deformed (on contemporary mirrors), wry”. This “introduction” completes fortunately the other paradoxist manifestoes of Smarandache, because this time he establishes a new notion: the nonexistentialism/ nonexistence, what means “the way of not to be, of the inhabitants from the Empire of Evil, to not exist, although they exist”. This is the highest point (or the lowest, it is the same thing) of human alienation- that is, to feel strange in front of yourself, to have the sensation to be removed beyond time and space, beyond life, although you live.

On the other hand, the notion of nonexistentialism, that is nonexistence (because the author doesn’t seem to refer to the philosophic doctrine of the existentialism), outlines better the correspondence/ parallelism between (anti-, non) literature and (non) reality/ existence, an idea, symptomatically, very seldom underlined in the last time. With objectivity and common sense, the appreciate literary critic, the essayist Andreea Deciu, talking about the social constructivism, drew attention on the fact that, however, “we are beings anchored in history and, therefore, in social practices”²¹⁾.

Another interesting idea that results from this essay and, also, from the whole book, is the author’s recognition of the fact that he does not deny (but, on the contrary, he admits) his adherence to the literary (new)vanguardism of the century. He recognizes his “multistylistic style” that includes different “baroque, surrealistic, impressionistic, expressionistic...and other...ist procedures” (pag. 11).This is a paradox too, because reading the book there is no sensation of eclectism, although the surrealism and the unliterature live together with the realism, and the last being present, for instance, in “Memories which I do not wish to remember again!” (title in the style of the movement).

Intelligent creator, Florentin Smarandache has accumulated in the while enough self-conviction in matters of paradoxism and enough (non)life (literary and publishing inclusive) experience in order to create a coherent volume, where nothing (or almost) is put/let at random. After *Introduction in the empire of error* (a manifesto of the paradoxism too, but covered with another... linguistic packing), the volume continues with a “short resume” about the ... terror/theory’s features of Smarandache’s (non)existence/existentialism. Then in the shape of prose texts or verses (it is risky to name them *prose* or *poetry*!) we learn essential data and information about the “becoming” of this (almost) exile in his own country...Palillula. As another Villon, in full postmodernism he lets his testament of a man who lives, confessing his ideological and literary “crimes”, but, especially giving nonliterary declarations about his murderers, which ground their existence on his nonexistence! Also among his memories we met -true nightmares of the author- the caricatural portraits of the previous leaders, lampoons worthy of an Arghezi.

As well as before in **Nonroman**, the author presents in detail in an “essay short prose” the quasitotality of the methods whom he used in volume:”...jargon... lack of comprehension/ character’s disappearance... *laboratory* of text... pedlary/ experimental function/ transdisciplinarity/ textuallists... hallucinations... ellipsis novel, the short prose in expansion.../ the generation ‘80.../upside down things.../ automatic diction.../ postmodernism... fable.../ bookish...”etc. There are listed numerous writers of generation ‘80(less Cartarescu, who maybe naturally has to be included at “postmodernism”!), among them... Florentin Smarandache! Then follows an impressive, fascinating, even, saraband of the author’s inexhaustible proceedings. These “pieces”(we couldn’t name them in other way, because the mixture of genres and species is omnipresent in volume) appear as some author’s personal creations, well individualized , although they are written after another vanguard styles, in accordance with his avowal.

Sometimes they remind of some “original parodies”, genre mentioned by the author among his proceedings. The paradoxes, puns, antonymies and other paradoxist figures of speech are met everywhere, they seeming to be like a glue of the different styles used. There are also (corresponding to the known *grapho-poems*) grapho-proses and blank pages of “very short pages”. Moreover -poems in “bird”-language, in what the words are found after the removal of some syllabus that repeat themselves., like in the (relative) former children games.

More than in anyone of his other creations, in **Defective writings** Florentin Smarandache seems to aspire for the achievement of a synthesis of the all vanguard and neo vanguard experiences of the 20th century, reduced to the common denominator of the paradoxism. At the same time he aspires for a creative assimilation of different orientations and directions of the postmodernist literature, an ambitious undertaking that seems very possible! In no way, “un mixtum compositum”(Ion Rotaru)!

In **Happenings with Pacala -Theatre for children**(TEMPUS, Bucharest, 1997), the publication of some drama written many years ago, the paradoxism is detectable in the attempt to join the science (here -the astrobiology) with the popular literature. Pacala, well-known character in the Romanian stories, meets not only the dragon, but also an extra-terrestrial being, therefore- the contemporary popular imagination’s product;...nowadays, at the end of the superscientific 20th century- an unforeseeable meeting, full of...fun...and suggestions²²).

“The Moroccan diary” entitled **Professor in Africa** , published in 1996 at Chisinau under the auspices of Moldavian State University, was written, in fact, between 1982- 1984, the period when the author worked as a teacher of mathematics at Lyceum Sidi el Hassan Lyoussi from Sefrou- Morocco, as a result of the Romanian- Moroccan agreements. The direct, familiar style, with a great dose of orallity, forms at a great extent the charm of this diary, besides the absolute frankness and the true- born popular language- features used for quite a long time by Florentin Smarandache. The humor of the book , that creates an impression of freshness, is tempestuously, unexpectedly, of a paradoxistic structure and its first source are the contradictions: The children from Sefrou liked us...when I passed by them, they told me: Bonjour, Madame! Other times they threw some stones at us”(page 40).”For a month I was in straitened circumstances: between The Mediterranean Sea and The Atlantic Ocean, at Tanger” (page 41); or : “ A pupil has known a group of Romanians...And has learnt a few expressions, that he tells me proudly: ”Go to the hell!...Fu.. you!...”etc.

The in-formative capacity of the book is important: in less than 50 pages the attentive and subtle observer that is Florentin Smarandache gives us so many information about Morocco, about the civilization where he has lived for almost two years, that the reading of this book could be a revenge or a compensation, at least, for the impossibility to see those places. And everything it is expressed in an attractive speech with an extraordinary liveliness of the images and the sentiments. At the same time, the volume “constitutes- thinks the writer Al. Florin Tene - an open window towards the cruel realities the Romanians had to pass through to obtain a working visa abroad”²³).

At least as interesting are the *Fragments of journal* published with the title **How I discovered America** (ANOTIMP publishing house and ABADDABA publishing house, Oradea, 2000), that could be taken as a continuation or a completion at **America- the devil’s paradise** (1st ed.-1992, 2nd ed.1992, 3rd ed.1994, 4th ed.1999).

The book is not a journal proper, the information being undated; very seldom is mentioned some year, only when some event is evoked. As results from the author’s laconic preface, its content consists of ”sporadic, daily notes... transcribed in between, on plain, on the board of the car, while driving...A kind of advises and impressions for amateurs. They are not grouped on subjects... (page 5).

As well as the other smarandachian journals, the volume is read at once. From the content's point of view, its attractiveness is given by the unwonted information, a valid situation for those who do not know America. The impact of a different world and civilization is shocking and pleasant, because the novelty calls our attention by itself. Author's commentaries alternate everywhere with the information proper. Also, author's common-sense and honesty are absolute, as usually. The criticism is unmerciful and generalized, ranging from ordinary, even handicapped people, till the former president Bush, considered a war criminal (because of the war from Vietnam); from the onerous post charges, until the granting of Noble prizes on politic criteria; from the daily food, the cars and the roads from the States, until the big buildings of the American firms and cities. Nothing escapes to the acid observations and critical eye of the author: beings and things, daily incidents and great events- politic and cultural ones, famous personalities and anonymous people - everything coexists in this original journal, in an impressive psycho-social and literary democracy and in an absolutely aleatory order. Moreover, Smarandache is unforgiving against himself." I am a good-for-nothing fellow- said he at a moment- who gads about the world, dissatisfied with his fate" (page 78). Striving with the time (available for writing), Smarandache has found out this quasioriginal solution of the fugitive notes: from hardly sketched lines and rough copies, sometimes from elliptic sentences result an enough substantial reality, as many colorless and trifling drops gathered in same place give, after a calinescian comparison, "the rumble and the color of the sea".

The courage of a perpetual rebel, who is in an almost permanent contradiction and opposition with everything and everyone around him, is present in an absolute degree: ...I write what I can see and what I can hear- draws him our attention categorically- without any on the left or on the right indoctrination" (page 9). The ego is present too, as a motivation for creation: "Better to be cursed than to pass unobserved!"

In the second part of book (unnamed as such), the memorial information begin gradually to be replaced by a kind of "inner" journal, something as a substitute for the notes, "a kind of metanotes". The reader is somehow invited/stimulated/forced to deduct a hidden reality at different levels of existence or understanding: "The car goes straight as a canon ball "; "With the sword of Damocles above the head = to be got out"; "The guy had been airy"; "You take the devil some money!"; "You can bring mother's expert" etc. This way to express a reality recalls the surrealism of George Anca, at who the remarkable spontaneity of the imagination and also of the metaphor created a certain incoherence of expression, close to irrationalism, given by the elusion of some parts of sentence (the technique of the fragmentarium). At Smarandache the sentences are complete, as a rule; they need only to be joined in a whole, important operation that the author leaves in charge of the reader. This fragmentation and disjunction is a typical feature of the postmodernism and on that insists Mihaela Constantinescu in her recent work about that movement²⁴). The critic Daniel Cristea-Enache compares the proceeding with a Lego game in what the pieces are joined and separated without a pre-established logic²⁵). The notes of Smarandache from the second half of his journal could also be combined or grouped after certain criteria: thematical, chronological etc., in function of the presupposed reader's connotations (detectable, however, with a minimum error after the reading of the first half of book).

Moreover: a considerable part of texts from the end of book seem without "subtext", resembling to some stylistic simple exercises interpenetrated with paremiologic groups: "Sitting wryly and thinking rightly", "I haven't had it on my tongue", "They went under", "I've drunk and you've got drunk" etc. This original approach could be put in touch with writer's effort to improve his Romanian (to read "not to forget Romanian language"), living among anglophiles. The informative insertions appear more rare ("They've butchered the Indians. They have no school in their language. They've forced them to become Christians". Only at the last two-three

pages the author seems to come back to the memorialistic (a relative one, too), as to end “in a circle”. Anyway the journal even like that, *en miettes*, is a new surprise that the always unforeseeable paradoxist has done to us.

With the volume **Time for joke** (ABADDABA, Oradea, 2000) the humor, that is present in the entire smarandachian work, suddenly succeeds its more serious (and “worse”!) sister- the satire. It reaches even the par(ad)oxysm, because it is met in every “ fable, parody, epigram, quatrain, distich (the subtitle of the book written together with Gheorghe Niculescu).It could be supposed that the latter belongs the insistences towards an improvement at the formal level of some stanzas or entire “pieces”, because at a global research of the smarandachian work, it is observed that this aspect is not among the paradoxism’s cares or aims; although because of the wish to release from the “tyranny of the classicism”.(On the contrary, it appears as a non-concern of the author!). The humor arises from every stanza, distich, verse. The authors seem momentarily tired to be some serious/solemn creators and as in a kind of “the seventh day”, they allow themselves a few hours/ pages of *relache*, of joking.

The book begins with a preface in verses in what the paradoxism, as a producer of fun, is at home, using the proceedings known from the countless manifestoes of the movement: contradictions, antitheses, oxymoron, puns, vocables and expressions used at a figurative meaning and vice-versa etc.: “Admitting that we’d admit”/ The abnormal as normal,/ Involuntarily we’ll commit/ The voluntary paradox(...)”. The examples can go on:” The white black-he and the good evil-she(...) Warm ice, square circle,/ White blood, clean mud/ long-haired bald-headed, drowned fish ...”etc. Is met even the “clean dirty” of Caragiale, as a new recognition of the paradoxes’ oldness. The end of the “preface” is not without significance; in it the reader is invited to carry on the list. And as if we heard, only partly saved by evanescence, the poet’s urge of two decades ago: “Read(and discover!, n.n.), friends, our daily paradoxes!”

“The microfables”- as such named by the authors, are at the same time some well-done epigrams: ”Croaking in hedge- hopping,/A crow sprinkled on my head;/ I said nervously but resignedly:/ Good thing that the cow can’t fly!”. “The moral” is of a “inclusive” type and it is realized, as well as the humor, with every of the means mentioned above and not only. Another cycle is formed from longer fables with the moral classically put in the end (after the ”tyrannical” pattern!).

The following epigrams are hardly distinguished from “microfables”. Among the three parodies, call attention the first and the last. ”Odd” reminds us of the conception/ prejudgment that Eminescu must not and cannot be parodied (as if the “products” of Eminescu’s epigones would be something else!).The paradoxist Smarandache, supported by Gheorghe Niculescu, proves again that this thing is also possible! The over thirty comparisons addressed to the Moon recall the known “Crow” of Toparceanu. The writer Ion Rotaru who had so vehemently criticized the “**Nonpoems**”²⁶⁾, can be satisfied: here Smarandache raised himself at least “till the ankles” of Toparceanu!

The epitaphs are written in the known, traditional style. They prove once again, as well as the *Quatrains* and the *Paradoxistic quintes*, that the puns, the oxymorons, the antithesis etc., as literary proceedings, are not invented things, but “uncovered” ones (Fl.Sm.). In the remarkable, sometimes, lexical inventivity we recognize especially the paradoxist (his name is not important!):”Acacia-she and poplar-she/ Are not fruits as the olive ,/ And not verbs as noun,/ But I like to cultivate them”(*Unnouns*) (“Salcama si cu plopina/ Nu sunt fructe ca maslina/ Nici verbe ca substantiv,/ Da-mi place sa le cultiv ” *Nesubstantive*). The poems from the cycle *A bit of love* also create the impression of parodies- after Minulescu, Toparceanu, Iosif, Goga, or after the entire traditional Romanian poetry.

The popular source, in the line of Pann - Creanga - Sorescu, we consider one of the smarandachian paradoxism features (to be forgiven the pleonastic dose!). The orality of the style, form of protest against the mannerism pushed until “academism” of the classic and modern literature- is detectable everywhere in the creation of Smarandache. This “subtle orality” (Mircea Cartarescu), demanded from the masters of the past is not less, a feature of postmodernism, after the taxonomic try of Ihab Hassan²⁷⁾.

2. The conquest of new literary fields

With the last two cycles of volume- *Proverbial distichs* and *Rhymed paradoxistic dialogues*, is opening, in fact, a new “front” in the paradoxistic offensive of the Romanian-American insurgent: the foundation of some new literary species- paradoxist, of course. The tendency to innovation is not new at Florentin Smarandache: as early as 1982 he published the cycle *Poems in no verse* appeared in the volumes **Laws of internal composition** and **Le Sens de Non-Sens** (Morrocco, 1982, 1983, 1984).(It is true that the idea wasn't exactly new, because blank pages- at Smarandache appear even black ones!- were already met at the vanguards from the beginning of the century and moreover earlier!). The graphopoems had been invented (with some distinctions, however) by Apollinaire, and the replacement of words by letters or syllabi remembers the stutters of Gherasim Luca. Partly at least “what he proposes is not without fail new...the historic vanguard's experiences are although assumed from a postmodernist viewpoint”²⁸⁾. Taking the risk of our own conviction, we appreciate that the essence of the paradoxism does not seems subservient, at all costs, to some old or new vanguard (excepting some periodical plunges on their strange and somehow dim waters!), but it is particularized by a specific style, with an original language, in a good part distinguished of the majority of literary experiences from the 20th century.

As if he was unsatisfied with the “(noe)vanguard” label, applied him by a part of paradoxism's exegetes, among the first ones and the most categorical(if not grim!) being the literary critic and historian Ion Rotaru, Smarandache accepts finally this name, but striving on his own way. After this period he will create new types of poetry with fixed form: *the paradoxist distich*, *the tautological distich*, *the dualistic distich*, *the paradoxist tertian*, *the tautological tertian*, *the paradoxist quatrain*, *the tautological quatrain* etc.; in prose: *the short syllogistical story and the circular short story (Infinite story, 1997)*, *the combinatory play* etc. This new paradoxist experiments were not elaborated in special periods, but in many years, since 1993, and parallel with the application (conversion to literature) of the firsts literary manifestoes.

For an analysis of all the new literary species and notions invented by Florentin Smarandache, it would be necessary a whole book. We will confine ourselves to short descriptions of the most important ones and frequently “applied” by the writer.

The tautological distich consists of two apparently redundant verses, which together give profoundness and comprehensiveness to the whole, defining (or making a connection with) the title. The two verses have in common a notion expressed with the same word or an only synonym. For instance: ”When I wish something,/ Certainly I wish (Ambition) or “ At least I'm trying/ To try”(Attempt), or the well- known “*Mutatis - Mutandis*” (Change). We think that the respective “patterns” and the species itself could be taken/received as puns or puzzles alike. The traditional metaphor is replaced by a new genre of metaphor- the paradoxist one, that is no more based on a comparison without one of the terms, but it has a larger sense, close by the Greek etymology of original, in what is included the idea of transformation/change, rendered through a partly false tautology.

The paradoxist distich is considered by his creator as a “fourth paradoxist manifesto”. This appreciation is motivated, in the first time, by the studies of Smarandache concerning the origin

of the paradoxism: (“I have not invented the paradoxism- said he- but I uncovered it. It has been before the... paradoxists. The popular wisdom and also a part of the cultivated creation, fit closely on the paradoxist stencil.”). And, in the second time, it is the challenging presentation of the “inventor” of this new literary species, that recalls (but only that) the dadaist’s method/ style: “take a linguistic phrases and expressions, proverbs, sayings, examples, aphorisms, riddles, quips, adages or some famous thoughts from a dictionary of personalities and contradict them merciless, tear them!...”

The *paradoxist distich* consists mainly of two antithetic verses, which put together merge themselves in a whole, defining the title or making a connection to it. As a rule, the second verse denies the first one. According to the appreciation of the founder, the *paradoxist distich* is “a new lyric formula with an opening towards essence”. The possibilities to create paradoxist distichs are actually unlimited. There are a few decades of proceedings, which create as many types of this species:

- paraphrases of clichés: “The right man/ in the wrong place”(Offender; but also *Impostor*, n.n.)
- parodies: “Talk of the wolf and the pig is sure to appear”(Coincidence), through the ironic substitution operated in the second part of the known popular proverb;
- acknowledged formulae reversed: ”Any exception/ Admits rules”(after ” Any rule/ admits exceptions”;
- double negation: “War/ Against the war”(*Peace*);
- double assertion that gives a negation:” Saints’/Sanctification (*Ordaining*);
- putting on the wrong track: ”With one glass eye / With the other about cat”(The *motorcycle*);
- hyperbolas: ”From four employees/ Five are chiefs”(Aristocracy);
- pseudoparadoxes: ”Guilty people/Not guilty people”(Innocent people);
- tautologies: ”Closely/ Closeness “(*Proximity*);
- pleonasm: ”Invent something/After the invented”(Plagiarist) etc., etc.

The “prescription” presented by author for this new paradoxist literary species is impressive through diversity, overflow fantasy and the apparent exhaustivity. Not a single possibility to create these distichs seems to be neglected.

On the other hand it is interesting (and even paradoxical!) that the extravagant writer-otherwise made for the nonconformism of any kind, appeal to the fixed literary species; however , he takes care to reverse them, changing again “yes” in “no” , the assertion in negation, for the renewal of the literary language- his noble and useful obsession.

This new literary species, a product (especially) of Smarandache’s brain is among his most convincing “inventions”, a proof being also the volume **Paradoxist distichs** published in 1998 at the University of New Mexico, Gallup Campus -Electronic Publishing. The “fore- and the past-”word of the book is considered by Dan Topa, author of the book’s afterword, as a true “theory and literary history article”. The volume is considered by the known director ”entirely different, as form and content, from everything that has been written until now”. Also, in a journal from Bucharest this kind of distich was considered “a unitary parabola, hyperbole, geometrical ellipse at the frontiers between art, philosophy, puzzle and mathematics” (*Romania Libera*, Bucharest, nr.2725/march, 15, 1999, pag.2).

Noticing the concision and, at the same time, the abundance of ideas in the paradoxist distichs, Gh. Bajenaru considers them “ a poetic experiment full of the hope of the survival”²⁹⁾. These kind of examples- says Ion Rotaru in his recent **History of the Romanian literature** (NICULESCU, Bucharest, 2000, pag.587), in what he dedicates the paradoxist Smarandache

more than seven pages- there are by thousands, here interfering the principle of antinomy: it is no *yes* without *no*...". It is certainly simple as Columbus' egg!

This original book has obvious informative and formative valences. Beyond its literary attributes, it appears as a little wisdom and human intelligence thesaurus, at "a moment of maximal expansion"(G. Calinescu) of the author.

At about same time when he begun to "gather" paradoxist distichs and to "prepare" the fourth paradoxist manifesto, appeared the theatre volume of Florin Smarandache, *METAHISTORY (DORIS, Bucuresti, 1993)*; he will consider the play *An upside down world a combinatory play*, through the combination of scenes of the same category and of the categories themselves, the playwright is able to create an infinity of drama.

Another fixed form species is the *dualistic distich*, described by the founder as "a two line poem such that the second line is the dualistic of the first and together they define (or make connection with) the title: "To live for dying/ And dye for living"(*Creation*); "History of art/ Or the art of history"(*Multidisciplinarity*).

After this short introduction of Florentin Smarandache as founder of new terms, notions and literary species, we will not be so surprised of those *Proverbial distichs* from the volume **Time for joke (Timp de saga)**, having the aspect of proverbs in verses, after the model "What you don't like/ To other don't make!". The paradoxism proper is evidently found to those ones created on the basis of contradictions, antitheses and puns: "I got out of ox and plough,/ But I can't get out of yoke"("Am scapat de boi si plug/ Dar nu pot scapa de jug"); "Some lose fortunes,/ Others- only summers" ("Unii pierd averi/ Altii- numai veri"); "You can't put the ox/ To hatch the egg" ("Nu poti pune boul/ Sa cloceasca oul"); "I take notice of him,/ He takes me down"("Eu il bag in seama/ El ma baga-n mama") etc. Many of these distichs of Smarandache could become even proverbs through their concision and fluency, alike to the popular ones that they have as a model and sometimes as a source. Through their origin they remind of the antonpannescian "From the people gathered and given back to the people"("De la lume adunate si-napoi la lume date"), especially *Paradoxist rhymed dialogues*, the last cycle of the volume, strikingly alike with *The story of talk (Povestea vorbei)*, adapted as content to our technical time:

- Why do you always say that grandma is devil's woman?
- You'll understand, my son, when you'll have a mother-in-law.
(-De ce zici despre bunica, mereu, ca e poama acra?)
- Ai sa intelegi, copile, numai cand o sa ai soacra.)
or
- With the computer even an idiot can calculate!
- Please, let me try. I think that I'll be able too!
(-Cu calculatorul poate socoti si-un idiot!
- Te rog, lasa-ma sa-ncerc. Cred ca si eu o sa pot!0
or
- How were they dried up when there was water on water- cart?
- They didn't know what was there, it was written H₂O on it!
(-Cum de au murit de sete cind era apa-n saca?
- N-au stiut ce e acolo, scria H₂O pe ea!)

The anesthetization (literaturization) of daily life, as a feature of the postmodernism is obvious. In a "saying" from "How I arrived in America" ("Cum am ajuns in America"), we find that the author "has remained a peasant" in his soul. This thing could be seen in the two mentioned cycles, in which shine nuggets of popular wisdom, intelligence and healthy humor.

The paradoxes of a popular structure are recognized as such by author (see **The fourth paradoxist manifesto**) and brilliantly used. From this viewpoint it could rightly consider that the smarandachian work represent beyond or beside its innovative valences, a little monument dedicated to the Romanian language.

The **Third international anthology on paradoxism** (ANOTIMP& ABADDABA, Oradea, 2000) has recently been published by Florentin Smarandache. The book contains a concise but dense introduction in paradoxism (definition, history, examples of paradoxist creations, new literary terms etc.) and it is insisted on distich. Then follows an impressive “parade” of the three subspecies of distich: paradoxist, tautologic and dualist. Their display is made on countries, in an alphabetic order. Among the 15 countries presented in anthology, Romania appears represented by Ada Carstoiu, Ion Carstoiu’s daughter, the known linguist from Balcesti Valcea. The chosen “pieces” are convincing, proving the success of the three new subspecies created by Smarandache and demonstrating again the vitality of this movement.

With a title in the spirit of the paradoxistic movement, **Ask me to ask you(Intreaba-ma sa te intreba)**- the interviews book published in 1999 at Macarie Publishing House, Targoviste, reproduces the texts from the volume **Interviews with Florentin Smarandache**, by Veronica Balaj and Mihail I. Vlad, appeared one year before at the same publishing house.

The relation of this volume with the movement is very close not just stylistically (with some exceptions: ”I was lucky of ill-luck!...Blessed are the unblessed poets!; sometimes the Oltenians are their own colony”(“Am avut noroc de ghinion!...Ferice de poetii nefericitii!; Uneori oltenii sunt o colonie a lor insisi”) etc.), but from an informative viewpoint. There are exposed in a different order and in other forms of expression, important information regarding the appearance and the essence of the paradoxism, the relation between the smarandachian literature, mathematics and computers, and not finally, his avatars of an emigrant to America and ... to infinite. Many of the ideas exposed by author at different interviews are original and reach essential problems of the contemporary social life and literature. Thus, to Adrian Dinu Rachieru’s question according to the politicization of the contemporary culture is nothing else but ”the proletarian cult’s prescription upturned”, Florentin Smarandache agrees that ”there is committed the communists’ sin(...) In occident were granted Nobel prizes for literature on political reasons.”(p.46); or “ The American culture has declined to the advantage of the science, technics and informational revolution”(p.47).

The expression of political ideas and conceptions is unostentatious and without a vindictive spirit, met, for instance, at Paul Goma. The moderation and the common sense trebled by an absolute frankness are characteristic features, always present in this challenging book, in what the author and the character Smarandache permanently change their places to each other. His answers are firm but not radicalist; his acute sense of justice makes room, paradoxically, for a wise tolerance that seems an intrinsic feature of him. Having strong formative qualities certain ideas are worth reading with attention and responsibility by some literary creators, they aiming at essential matters as regards the poetry’s role and future: “Some poems- says the founder of paradoxism- would reduce ...at a single key metaphor or idea, the rest being ballast. Then what would be the sense of an extensive surface, a carpet of letters?” This is an interesting idea, although it is not entirely new and Smarandache himself has not always respected it. The author asked himself one day if it would be possible a poem with less than zero verses, what, we have to recognize, would be nor poetry, neither literature in the established sense of these notions. No writer who want to be an author will make a volume from... flowers, rockets taking off, people crossing the street etc.; all these could be drawn or only imagined. A certain *bon (not non) sens* compels us to leave the drawings in painters’ or drawers’ charge and if the imagination (or the contemplation) substitutes the writing, then there would be on the world over six billions poets!

Otherwise the author himself asserts that he does not want to restrain the literature, but to extend it through non-literature (p. 49, interview with Ada Carstoiu), even though in other place the paradoxist *number 1* in the world pleads for an “unaltered literature, directly taken from nature”(p.39), that seems to us a literary ...nonsense!

Well-inspired it is also the cover, made by Olimpiu Eli Petre: a devouring and, at the same time, devoured face (in what is not hard to recognize Smarandache himself!) looks at us with big, restless and attentive eyes, in which a kind of consuming fever reflects the whole inner work's drama.

We especially let at last the translations from different languages of the polyglot Smarandache (he knows French, English, Spanish, Portuguese). **Affinities**, volume of translations from the universal poetry, was published in 1998 at *D* publishing house and includes 42 poets from 23 countries. The author himself brings different reasons to his approach as a translator: "I have translated out of necessity (...) out of pleasure (...) the criterion being: diversity as much as possible, curious to see how people write elsewhere on the globe, in the least known places"(page V- VI). It would be useless to approach the quality of translations and we will also avoid *paradoxisticomania*- the search with any price in the present poems of some characteristics of the movement. But however! The prolific writer Al. Florin Tene, reviewing the volume, thinks that among the poems of the anthologized authors it could be detectable "a common line: The original attitude of the poets which write a poem and they seem wishing to conquer it running away from it, there where the metaphor lives in peace with the parabola and the anecdote"(in "Curierul", Cluj- Napoca, 5th year, no 230/1999). The "secret" of criterion for selection is hidden precisely in volume's title: many from the included poems "suffer" from a certain nonconformist, not only at the ideation level, but often in the imaginative sphere. We really discover in volume paradoxist repetitions and absurd situations in Raymond Bettonville's (Belgium) poems, contradictions and antitheses at Li Zhi (China), direct style, almost prosaic- at Yoy Beaudette Cripps (Australia), the dadaism of Tzara etc. We meet even a true-born paradoxist- Denis Kann (USA). His poem- *Short history of the evolution*, could pleased any reader;"1.Clay 2.Monkey 3. Spaceman 4.Extinction"(p.140).

However, the abundance of the metaphors in the anthologized/translated creations, partly seems to show a nostalgia after an infernal paradise, deliberately left in favor of a paradisiacal "hell"- that of the paradoxes of life and the literary paradoxism. And no less, a sublimation...

There could be written a lot of things about the offensive of the paradoxism, not only related to the movement's discoverer. A considerable part from the poets and prose writers- from us and abroad- in this time belong unconsciously to paradoxism, because they are just like Smarandache, the product of the same paradoxical contemporary reality. The founder of the current has only become aware of this reality and has changed it into an artistic system, into literature. "Lord, everything is new, I'm disgusted of such a new/ I'm disgusted of the beginning without end, of such a death without death"("Doamne, totul este nou, mi-e sila de atita nou/ mi-e sila de inceput fara sfirsit, de atita moarte fara moarte")- writes Angela Marinescu in "Facla Literara"(no 5- 6, Bucharest, 1999, p.1). And from the volume of Sorin Smarandescu **Talking with the subject** (EUBEEA, Timisoara, 2000), some verses can be "asked" by paradoxism: "the time is old and senile/ it always asks what's the time/ it can't hear what you say/ and if you shout it tell you not to talk smut/ and laments itself/ that better it would dye..."("timpul e batrin si s-a senilizat/ intreaba mereu cit e ceasul/ n-aude ce-i spui/ iar daca strigi iti spune sa nu vorbesti urit/ si se vaita/ ca mai bine l-ar lua moartea...") (p.41)or: "I told her to shut her mouth at once/ she told me that you are too individual/ and at once doesn't write atonce(...)/and so on until we got married/ after that was easy to dye (eu i-am spus sa taca o data/ ea mi-a spus ca esti prea

personal/ si odata nu se scrie o data (...) tot asa pana cand ne-am casatorit/ dupa aia a fost simplu de murit) (p.31).

The examples could increase, but it is not the place and the case. Moreover to the majority of these ...pseudo- paradoxists lack the...”obsession of paradoxes”.

Among the fewer, Smarandescu seems to go the same way as ...Smarandache: ”it bothers me/ it boothers me/ it bobobothers me badly badly...” (“ ma sacaie/ ma saaacaie/ sasasacaie rau rau/ rau de tot de toate...” (D.C.).

The mentioned poets, especially the last, could be record to the (artistic-)literary movement of postmodernism and their comparison (subjective, of course) with the *smarandachism* is due to the countless and complex interferences of the two literary movements. About the writer’s varied humor, present in all his creations, indifferent of genre or species, it could write many pages. His healthy, “blue”, or bitter laugh has helped Smarandache to change the existential drama into a serious comedy played with gift and intelligence by a postmodernist tragic histrion- aspect that also would be worth a separate study.