

## **Moosbrugger's Smile**

### **1. The Smile and the Language**

In its autumnal asthenia (preceding its disappearance that was about to come along with the First World War), Kakania is darted by an event which, as well as being the counterpoint of the novel, ensures the coherence of the whole atmosphere. A situation “of the hour” – for the chaos of impressions and disbelief in which its citizens were dwelling – which accumulates the tensions and the antinomies not only of the Kakanians, but also of that age, in order to render them through one single character. Through one single person. If the emperor Franz Josef keeps himself somewhere in his chimerical shell, if the Parallel Action always staggers in carcinogenic crabwalk, and if the Kakanian state itself remains in doubt of its own existence, the event of the pathological murder draws itself clearer than all the rest. What happens in this utopia – and manages to attract the limelight – is Moosbrugger.

Not only that he offers coherence to, but he actually is the product of the Kakanian atmosphere. The failure of the consciousness and the perplexity of the European civilization are embodied in this inversed Redeemer of the utopia (his first name – Christian – and his occupation – carpenter – are by no means a fortuity, the Christian allusion being obvious, and, moreover, sustained by the way in which the character presents and builds himself. For, truly, through his actions and through each of his assertions about himself, he tries to consolidate his existence). For the state that leisurely chews on its own decline – without being fully aware that what it lives is a decline – Moosbrugger appears as the most appropriate candidate for the role of Antichrist. However, all that he does is to simply wear the aura of an apocalyptical knight: he does not destroy, but rather signalizes, unwillingly, the destruction; and through him, Musil does not mock an Antichrist, but rather proposes the one who pertains to Kakania. Not the fulminatory evil (that one described by expressionism, and which will be brought only after the war) – but the Antichrist of human banality. In this sense, Moosbrugger is placed beyond any parody. In the same way in which the

revolutionary gang from Dostoievsky's Demons – made up of halves of human beings and, rather, of tricksters – perfectly incarnates the malign valence of human kind, and not some parody of it. Still, since the age of Kakania is constituted from a trick of historic proportions, Moosbrugger as well goes in the same line – and this is, actually, a line of tragedy.

An agonizing trick in which we can see the end. The ideas and the waves of the age show a deadline in front of history (determinism, relativism, the bankruptcy of language, expressionism, the denial of tradition characterizing the avant-gardes). From the midst of all these, the pathological criminal springs out as their discharge – the break out of the abyss. Let's just take a look at the first lines which describe him: "His face expressed an amiable force and the desire to do what is right"<sup>1</sup>, lines which remind us of the famous words of Mephisto who declares himself: "A part of that force/Which wishes evil/ And always does what is good"<sup>2</sup>. Only that – in what Moosbrugger is concerned, the sign is reversed in an ironical way: he is no longer an agent of evil from a manichaeistic universe (like Goethe's Mephisto), but, as I said, an anti-Messiah of a world in which evil (under its latent shape) becomes the state of things, which germinates as something already accomplished while his intention of doing "what is right" remains only a dissolved possibility. From Goethe's play, where the appearance of the demon as evil masks its capacity of being a catalyst for Faust's transformation, in Musil's novel, the Austrian author places his specter on the same frequency with Kakania's mentality – just like the utopia, Moosbrugger illustrates, at a first glimpse, the desire towards what is right and good – although these right and good are perceived (by him and by the utopia) in an improper manner. In the so-called Paradise lingers a defective state – similarly, under the disguise of the Eumenide lingers an Eriny. The barbarian which exerts a hysteria equal to the dead culture in which he appeared.

In the same manner in which the citizens of Kakania are unable to put a precise diagnosis for their utopia, they also find this difficulty in front of Moosbrugger – they are unable to realize

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<sup>1</sup> Robert Musil, *Omul fără însușiri (The Man without Qualities)*, Vol I. In Romanian by Mircea Ivănescu. Edited by Monica-Maria Aldea. Iași: Polirom, 2008, p.83;

<sup>2</sup> Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Faust: partea întâi și a doua a tragediei (Faust: the First and the Second Part of the Tragedy)*. In Romanian and introduction by Ștefan Aug. Doinaș. București: Editura pentru Grai și suflet – cultură națională, 1996, p.32;

what triggers him to murder. They stare bewilderedly, just as the journalists from the court, at the smile of this murderer: “It could have been a confused smile or a shrewd one, an ironical one, a hypocritical, painful, alienated, bloody, unnatural smile”<sup>3</sup>. On the whole, the “enigma” of this smile proves the same perplex and baffled attitude of the European civilization from the beginning of the XXth century, which poses a (false) mystery on any aspect that it doesn’t understand. And this here is not a matter of caricaturizing the famous Mona Lisa smile – through this detail of his character, Musil speculates on the enigma of Da Vinci’s painting in an interpretation which forecloses its senses. Ultimately, no one can say what crimes or abusive principals are waiting behind Gioconda. What transpires from her face is a canon of an esthetics which, in the cultural crisis of the XXth century, hijacks from Beauty and Sublime. And Musil intercepts this very aspect – the transition from the once aerial representation of Da Vinci towards its mockery from the representation of Marcel Duchamp – that Mona Lisa who wears a mustache. The reference of the Austrian autor is targeted exactly towards an esthetics which had been discarded, towards the metastasis of values. Here, Musil adopts neither the demystifying apology of Duchamp, nor does he reinstall the iconic image proposed by Leonardo. His intention is directed mainly towards his time and its mentality. Consequently, just as the painting of Leonardo is one of the eternally-recognizable emblems of the European culture, in the same way the smile of Moosbrugger becomes emblematical for the degradation of this culture. Once the hierophanies were dismissed, the contingency in its failed version has been promoted in the position of mystery. Once Mona Lisa was transformed into a ready-made by Duchamp, Musil shows (and sanctions!) the way in which the civilization marvels intrigued at caricature smile attributed to a murderer whose “whole life had been only a struggle, a ridiculous and terrifyingly helpless struggle, in order to fetch a justification for itself”<sup>4</sup> and who “pretended actually that the murder committed by him to be considered a political murder and made the impression that he

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<sup>3</sup> Robert Musil, *op.cit.*, Vol I, p.83;

<sup>4</sup> *Ibidem*, Vol I, p.87;

was not at all fighting for himself, but for such an interpretation of facts”<sup>5</sup>. This is what Jacques Bouveresse observes:

L’affaire Moosbrugger (...) est exemplaire parce qu’elle illustre de façon spectaculaire le contraste total qu’il y a entre le succès étonnant qu’a connu l’effort de précision que la science a réussi à imposer dans le traitement des choses secondaires et les résultats lamentables auxquels il a abouti lorsqu’on a essayé de l’appliquer aux choses importantes.<sup>6</sup>

Thus, it does not seem to me exaggerated to consider that in this detail of Moosbrugger’s face resides a superb and acid metaphor for the decline of the West. A metaphor and a grotesque stigmata, reduced from the “duty” which – through the painting of Leonardo – the esthetics imposed on the European culture. Specific to any premonition of the abyss is to translate the force of the stigmata with which it was invested – from the reiteration of the Christical sufferance, everything decays into vain endurance and into the infinitely helpless struggle of Moosbrugger. This stigmata no longer suggests an “incubation through the Redeemer”<sup>7</sup>, in the sense Jung noted this, but a misuse of this – the absence of the sublime. The dismissal of the esthetical level (that Mona Lisa smile) directs everything to the dismissal of the sacral level.

And once the mystery is dismantled and can no longer express itself, the stigmata of this smile seals the silence. Yet, an ill silence – a demonical one, pertaining to an inform world. On each side of these smiling and enigmatical lips of the Kakanian murderer, the language is sealed. Time which – through tradition, through the constant vitalizing of the esthetical canon – used to establish the communication with being (with the super-rational) has now massacred its shapes and its idols, and thus it repeats itself in vain. Instead of talking, the time of this historic period applies to stammering. Instead of a style, the primate of logics is constituted – the scientifically saturated speeches of Moosbrugger’s psychiatrists (“who believed that they could dispose of his

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<sup>5</sup>Ibidem, Vol I, p.92 ;

<sup>6</sup> Jacques Bouveresse, *Robert Musil. L’homme Probable, le hasard, la moyenne et l’escargot de l’histoire*. Paris : Editions de l’Eclat, 2004, p.75;

<sup>7</sup> Carl Gustav Jung, *Eroul și arhetipul mamei (The Hero and the Archetype of the Mother)*. In Romanian by Maria-Magdalena Angheliescu. București: Teora, 1999, p.136;

so complex person only with some neologisms, as if for them the matter in question was only a common case”<sup>8</sup>) or the inner speeches of the murderer himself, embittered not only to defend his position, but also to transform it into a categorical imperative for the whole world. In this way, Musil introduces into his novel the hot issue of the XXth century – the language. Moosbrugger is its champion, even more than that Lord Chandos, from Hofmannstahl fiction, who wrote to the philosopher Francis Bacon: “In brief, this is my case: I have completely lost the ability to think or speak coherently about anything at all. (...) I felt an inexplicable uneasiness in even pronouncing the word ‘spirit’, ‘soul’, or ‘body’”<sup>9</sup>. For Chandos, the language weakens its flashing and blocks itself in cakes of nominalism; its preceding fluidity is dried; the intellectual horn of plenty becomes nauseous (just like the Russian historicist Mihail Gerschenson used to say in his correspondence with the poet Viaceslav Ivanov: “I would give all my knowledge and all the thoughts I gathered from books (...) for the joy of gaining – I, personally, from my own experience – at least one sole primitive piece of knowledge, no matter how simple, fresh as a summer morning”<sup>10</sup>). However, before Lord Chandos, there still glitters some hope, some redemptive valve – the mystical way of reuniting with being, mentioned at the end of the letter. For Moosbrugger, nonetheless, nothing of these applies: from the intellectual contempt for a barren language, Musil takes things in the sphere and inside the mind of a murderer (declared insane) with the only dowry that of the mediocrity which continuously tries to get through for its own ego. On the contrast to elites, Moosbrugger wants to learn all sorts of expressions and terms, “French and Latin bit, which he used in the most inappropriate places in his speech, ever since he had understood that the possession of these languages was that which gave to his masters the right to discuss his fate”<sup>11</sup>. Moreover, “he envied all those who had learned from a very early

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<sup>8</sup> Robert Musil, *op.cit.*, Vol I, p.89;

<sup>9</sup> Hugo von Hofmannstahl, *A Letter*,  
<[http://depts.washington.edu/vienna/documents/Hofmannsthal/Hofmannsthal\\_Chandos.htm](http://depts.washington.edu/vienna/documents/Hofmannsthal/Hofmannsthal_Chandos.htm)>;

<sup>10</sup> Mihail Gerschenson, Viaceslav Ivanov, *Correspondență de la un colț la altul (Correspondence from one corner to another)*. In Romanian and introduction by Mihnea Moroioanu and Ciprian Nitisor. Edited by Liliana Corobca. Oradea: Ratio et Revelatio, 2013, p.45;

<sup>11</sup> Robert Musil, *op.cit.*, Vol I, p.88;

stage to speak easily; the words spited him”<sup>12</sup>. Inside the silence in which he is shrunk by his own smile, Moosbrugger realizes that the only path to the world is the control upon words – their taming and, of course, the glory of using them. Just that for him – who is infected with his own senzualism – this use of words either becomes prolix, or is completely annulated, reduced to a hysterical silence and to murder. The murder replaces the path of man towards the being which offered him the language, and the possession of some intelligent expressions replaces the obedience to being. In the way Bouveresse stated this in the quotation I gave above, these “orientations” that have no horizon illustrate the excessive preoccupation of the age for matters of secondary importance. It is them the ones which are transformed into priorities of the human psyche (since we cannot talk of spirit in the case of Moosbrugger).

This time, the noble savage enters the scene from the midst of Europe – from these hot tropics of Kakania. For him, in his Musilian formula, the Logos is dying, the consciousness lacks or disseminates itself into certain moments in which Moosbrugger launches his ego. Of course, it could be said that for the mystical person who has reached the peaks of spirit, the Logo is more difficult to be perceived than to anyone else – but this thing is possible only due to the fact that in that moment, the man and the super-rational become identical and thus the latter cannot be objectified any longer (or consciously perceived) by the man. However, the ecstasy of Moosbrugger in front of his own individuality avoids the objectivity as well as the sacred identity or rebirth – it is only a blank ecstasy, a relapse of chaos. That is why, the man of this ecstasy is also constituted from all sorts of expressions and fictitious revelation of his own ego, from which he bounces infinitely, hunting for the supreme self-apology. “Only where the word for the thing has been found is the thing a thing”<sup>13</sup> states Heidegger, and Moosbrugger would probably subscribe to this idea adopting it, however, to his own needs: only where the word was found, I can be I and the world can be like me. In this way, he would most likely reduce all poetry to the most infamous necessity. After all, for the barbarian the poetry is futile – but, here too, Moosbrugger strikes a false not: if for the classical savage the reality shrinks to the necessity of

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<sup>12</sup> Ibidem, Vol I, p.306;

<sup>13</sup> Martin Heidegger, *On the Way to Language*. In English by Peter D.Hertz. New York: Harper&Row Publishers, 1982, p.62;

food and survival, for the savage of Musil the immanent necessity is the one of proving what he is.

If Moosbrugger had had a big sword, he would have now taken it and beheaded the chair. He would have beheaded the table and the window and the bucket from the cell and the door. Then, to all these beheaded objects he would have put his own head, for in the whole cell there was only his head, and this was a beautiful head.<sup>14</sup>

This sequence of such a radical lyrical force reveals quite clearly the instincts of Moosbrugger, promoted to an existential rank. His violence aspires firstly to found the whole world of objects, situations and people according to his own “head”, according to his own hysterical reason fledged by Logos. And the European civilization to become the institution of its barbarian instructed with French and Latin expressions. And perhaps those barbarians of Kavafy would have been a “solution”<sup>15</sup> – they would have truly meant a medicine, a quack remedy of history for an ill culture. Furthermore, they would have been adapted to the words of Mephisto: they would have been a force which wants evil but which, eventually, balances the scales of losses of values through a tabula rasa from which everything can start up as new (although this version is an extreme one). However, the effect of Moosbrugger differs considerably: through his self-apologies, through his self-proclaiming, there would occur only a tabula rasa of an individuality which is impossible to fertilize. At the opposite pole from Horatio’s poet which is “like a leech which would not get off, until full of blood”<sup>16</sup> (a being who, without any doubt, has also the attribute of curing through his word and speech), the pathological murderer brings forth only the leech of his own ego which eats up the language with his ill silence. When the moustache is annexed by Duchamp, the Mona Lisa smile is mummified and the being is mummified as well.

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<sup>14</sup> Robert Musil, *op.cit.*, Vol I, p.509;

<sup>15</sup> Konstantinos Kavafis, *Așteptându-i pe barbari (Waiting for the Barbarians)*, from *Opera poetică (The Complete Poetical Work)*. In Romanian by Elena Lazăr. Introduction by Dimitrie Daskalopoulos. București: Omonia, 1993, p.48;

<sup>16</sup> Quintus Horatius Flaccus, *Arta poetică (Ars Poetica)*. In Romanian and introduction by David Popescu. București: Cartea Românească, 1936, p.28;

## 2. Kakania's Golem

A world without poetry is, surely, a world in which the language has transformed into a pest, in which it infests. A speech without gesture or moving with mechanical gestures. Already, for the barbarian, they no longer contain the magical value – inherent and essential for waking them to life.

The Words he had were: Hmhm, yeah.

The table was Moosbrugger.

The chair was Moosbrugger.

The grated window and the locked door were himself.<sup>17</sup>

Here, Musil not only continues the idea from the fragment quoted earlier, but he also offers to this idea a crystallization, a new sense. The objects into which the head, and thus the reason, of Moosbrugger was thread become equal and identical to him. An identification up to dissolution, up to a level of the unrecognizable. And the reversed assertion is valid as well: the arch-apologized ego of Moosbrugger, that vain individuality, is actually a grated window, and is every object of the cell and the cell on the whole. From this cul-de-sac of the ego one cannot escape. It is this the faded dead-end fallen from grace of the European civilization which, in front of the First World War, probably stammers the same “Hmhm” and “yeah” – words or, well, interjections, which neither approve nor contradict. The only thing they do is to accept – but without a shade of receptivity. They accept in an inertial way the state of things, aspect which attests the human dismembering from language, and also from history. From them, any conception or obedience to the being has been denied. What stays is the invective upon the matter which no longer rises to a vital breath. Those invectives also mentioned by another famous barbarian of the European culture – Caliban. “You taught me language and my profit on't/ Is I know how to curse. The red plague rid you/ For learning me your language”<sup>18</sup>, addresses the monster of Shakespeare to his “teacher”, Prospero. For, Caliban does not have the power (and,

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<sup>17</sup> Robert Musil, *op.cit.*, Vol I, p.510;

<sup>18</sup> William Shakespeare, *The Tempest*. New York: Pocket Books, Washington Square Press, 1974, p.19;



perhaps, he wouldn't even want to exert it) to invoke the things to existence. Consequently, we cannot talk here of invoking the being in its mystery. Nothing is recalled anymore, the time – with its past, present and future – is abandoned. Given that Caliban lacks the capacity (the gift) to communicate or to animate the objects, his threat towards Prospero is also emptied of force. It is not a proper curse. Or, more likely, its curse – that “red pest” – is just one belonging to a stiff silence. On the same frequency, Moosbrugger “animates” cell's objects with his reason – he animates them in order to turn them opaque. From the tentacles of this silence, the Logos cannot erupt any longer.

Nervertheless, the facets of silence are multiple: it forms and guards the mystery of life, it conserves the possibilities and re-orders the ontological cycle. What is more, it in itself presupposes a mystery. But, in these mourning cloths of it, in its negative version, the silence denounces man's dead-end. A (historic) void to which man cannot get close and which he cannot peel – it caves in the consciousness, it disarticulates, it disunites. In a certain way, through the prism of literature (let aside the actual myth), this type of nodule-silence comes from Nimrod, placed by Dante in the Giant's Pit. From there, the hunter-king shouts in the language (spoken only by him) from before the event of the Babel Tower: “*Raphel may arrech zabi almi*”<sup>19</sup> (of course, here, Dante could only invent some words without any translation). But it seems shattering to imagine the silence behind this explosion of dead and impossible to be understood language of Nimrod!... For, this silence belongs no more to language, nor to the Word – it had evaded from its sphere, it had rebelled against the Logos and, after the mixing of languages, it hovers as a pledge and as a seal for the dissociation of tribes. That is, for the impossibility of communication and understanding between people (or, for the calcification of each of us in his or her own subjectivism). Moreover, it continues to circulate through the corners of history in each human being, stigmatizing him (the way I mentioned earlier in reference to Moosbrugger's mile). While the language recorded a fight – a competition, a test of man with his own self – in front of death, this silence defies both instances: the fight as well as death. One cannot die without a soul and a spirit – death no longer proposes that impulse that valorizes existence. The only thing that

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<sup>19</sup> Dante Alighieri, *Divina comedia (The Divine Comedy)*. In Romanian by Eta Boeriu. Notes by Alexandru Balaci. Pitești: Paralela 45, 2005, p.164;

happens is the infinite proliferation of matter, in a space against time. A “vast” space – just like the one from the cell that carries in each of its objects the head of Moosbrugger, his stuffed reason as trophy. (Undoubtedly, this scene of beheading the objects overtakes in itself the beheading of John the Baptist, that is of the one who gives the name. The Biblical episode is revisited and gains a new significance, admitting the inclusion of Musil’s scene in one of the main mythemes formulated by Durand in reference to the beginning of the XXth century: the mytheme of “morbid exaltation and in special the theme of death through beheading”<sup>20</sup>).

Just like Caliban, Dante’s Nimrod shouts and throws curses: what these curses have in view remains unknown, as if the objects to which and the people to whom they are oriented would not bear anymore the same appearance – since Nimrod’s language had been dashed along with the Tower of Babel. Also, the mystery of these objects had disappeared because their angle of shadow and silence was replaced with an ill silence. Filtered by the separation of tribes, the language of Adam was mutilated and reduced to the sin of Adam – to the Fall without redemption. Thus, not time, not history, but historicism. In other words, the Kakanian utopia and its specter – the pathological murderer. Even before the authorities of Kakania had taken any measure against him, Moosbrugger has been imprisoned – in his own ego. An individuality which betrays its consciousness and dynamites even the unconsciousness (drowsy, without the energy of language which is mandatory for the revival of the unconsciousness and of reveries, the man lives through a historic crises and through a “mnemonic crisis”<sup>21</sup>, the way Ricoeur named it. When the memory loses its sense – the human being can only wander around – spacially – in a cell where the roots of the unconsciousness are refused). Still, the obstruction of the unconsciousness does not target only Moosbrugger – but also his fellow countrymen, as Ulrich’s observation suggests: “Ulrich could not refrain from thinking that if the humankind had been able to dream collectively, the result would have been Moosbrugger”<sup>22</sup>. This collective dream

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<sup>20</sup> Gilbert Durand, *Arte și arhetipuri: religia artei (Arts and Archetypes: the Religion of Art)*. In Romanian by Andrei Niculescu. București: Meridiane, 2003, p.157;

<sup>21</sup> Paul Ricoeur, *Memoria, istoria, uitarea (Memory, History, Forgetting)*. In Romanian by Ilie Gyurcsik and Margareta Gyurcsik. Timișoara: Amarcord, 2001, p.275;

<sup>22</sup> Robert Musil, *op.cit.*, Vol I, p.94;

becomes a nightmare, a napping of the human imaginary. A degradation of the unconsciousness that, here, is no longer equivalent to an inform earth from which the images germinate, but with a chaos impossible to be coagulated into shapes. From the blinding reality directly to the most sluggish darknes. (In some way, this moment of relating Moosbrugger with Kakania reminds us of another similar one from literature: the marriage proposal made by Leopold Bloom and its acceptance from Molly – the woman which evolves into an authentic Behemoth throughout her monologue – at the end of *Ulysses*. That “yes I will Yes”<sup>23</sup> seals a wedding between man and the chaos of banality, between man and the amorphous – alternatively, between the Kakanian state and the pathological murderer there exists a similar pact. However, in Musil’s novel, both parts wear the destructive pigment of Molly...)

Now, the clock of the unconsciousness has broken, it has gone astray from his path back and forth inside the human being. In the collective dream of the Kakanians, the jetsam of humanity is combined and juxtaposed, that *raison d’etre* of people who stuck their head on every object, and from them the murderer is incarnated – the murderer about which it cannot be said whether he is himself guilty of his murder, whether he is just insane and thus irresponsible, or whether he is just a collateral victim of history, as Bouveresse wonders as well: “si d’autres circonstances et un autre contexte auraient pu lui éviter de devenir un criminel?”<sup>24</sup>. Actually, through Ulrich’s observation which I mentioned earlier, Musil maintains the ambiguity in respect to this fact – instead, he prefers to exploit the source of forces and wills (of utopia and of its murderer) which crash and fuel one another like in a trophic chain with an Ouroboros snake appearance. The humankind dreams of Moosbrugger and he appears and lives up to the exigencies of this nightmare. Just like – and here Musil allows himself to drop a direct hint – jut like the Golem from Meyrink’s novel appears from the dream of the people from the ghetto: “the crowded thoughts, always the same, unvented, rusted in the air of the ghetto, discharge at once unexpectedly – a soul explosion whipping the consciousness of this dream to come forth (...) I’ve read this unmistakably on his face, on his cloths and on his walk that he is the symbol of the

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<sup>23</sup> James Joyce, *Ulysses*. Introduction by Morris L. Ernst. New York: Vintage Books, Random House, 1961, p.783;

<sup>24</sup> Jacques Bouveresse, *op.cit.*, p.72;

collective soul”<sup>25</sup>. Through the electrical conductivity of the (always awake) dream, the clay creature gains reality and then haunts those who made it.

Nevertheless, according to Gershom Scholem assertions from *Cabbala and its symbolism*, Meyrink gambles on a certain version of Golem’s myth, which he manipulates in a rather negative direction. In my interpretation – in relating Moosbrugger with the idea of the Golem – I shall examine, besides the literary myth proposed by Meyrink, also the myth per se. Its origin is found in the Bible:

At a certain level of his apparition, Adam was called Golem. Golem is a Hebrew word which appears nowhere else in the Bible except for one place, in the 138:16 Psalm (...) Golem means here, of course, that which is unembodied, without shape. Nothing pleads for what it is something asserted that it would mean embryo. The medieval philosophical literature uses it as a Hebrew term for the matter that has no shape (hyle).<sup>26</sup>

Therefore, the presence of the Golem marks a stage in the Adamic venture to existence. He is not yet the man, but an unfinished part of his in which his potential – and here we have in view also the creative potential of man, owing to the divine spirit – waits for its call from God. Only that, before becoming that Adam Kadmon, that primordial man spread by Cabbala, who embeds inside him everything (the world and the tribes and the history), this piece of matter is chained in its own self. The world stays suspended inside it – and, in the case in which, like in Musil’s age, man would want once again to reach that tabula rasa, to wash away all the history from himself up to the Adamic primitivism, he risks to regress to the stage of that Golem in which the world remains in suspension – without any movement. “For the judge, Moosbrugger was a special case, but for himself he was a world and it is very difficult to say something pertinent about a whole world”<sup>27</sup>. Despite the fact that he is discharged by the collective dream (blotting out the unconsciousness of Kakania through his own person), Moosbrugger also puts on the air of

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<sup>25</sup> Gustav Meyrink, *Golem*. In Romanian by Gina Argintescu-Amza. București : Cartea Românească, 1989, p.48;

<sup>26</sup> Gerschom Scholem, *Cabala și simbolistica ei (Cabbala and its symbolism)*. In Romanian by Nora Iuga. București: Humanitas, 1996, p.179;

<sup>27</sup> Robert Musil, *op.cit.*, Vol I, p.93;

universalism. A universalism, nonetheless, belonging to a universe derogated from a cosmogony. Since death has been turned relative – under the ferment of Nimrod’s silence – the beginning as well, the cosmic ritual of generation from nothing and the first impulse were erased from the memory. Moosbrugger illustrates a world which neither gets born nor dies – it lingers. An amorphous matter about which nothing “pertinent” can be said – for, at this level, the arguments have waned, the reason and the science cannot give any testimonies, they just crack. The beatified chaos locked in its own canon. “While all the other lives existed for a hundred times – seen in the same way by those who lived them and by those who confirmed them – his true life existed only for himself”<sup>28</sup>. This Kakanian Golem does not exist except for himself and inside himself, for his “true life” comes no longer from Truth or Logos, but from a minor instance: the personal truth, the subjectivism. On hi being, that “*emet*”<sup>29</sup> inscribed by God on the Golem’ body balks from the universal truth. On the other hand, we could speculate that Moosbrugger would not even want for his life to be multiple – in his own eyes and in the others’ eyes – but, rather, he would prefer this insularism, as a sign of his uniqueness. His life as world, as sole possible universe – as difficult to be perceived as the supreme reality of mysticism, only that, of course, under a qualitative difference.

Thus, to this chaos, to this hyle which his possessor adorns with absurd attributes and prerogatives, the title of “theoretical anarchist”<sup>30</sup>, as Moosbrugger proclaims himself, fits perfectly. The self-apology of his own life implements its law upon the inert matter – and what else can this prove if not nihilism tinted in the shades of the European civilization which would want to destroy but to keep itself intact! “The theories” of this anarchy circle and smother the vital breath and the language. After all, the Golem – the one from the myth – cannot talk, he does not have the gift of expression. His fate is silence – and, in Musil’s novel, the silence behind the Tower of Babel. In his book about the Golem, Moshe Idel stresses: “The silence of the Golem was interpreted not only as a consequence of the incapacity to create a speaking being, but rather

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<sup>28</sup> Ibidem, Vol I, p.93;

<sup>29</sup> Gerschom Scholem, *op.cit.*, p.196;

<sup>30</sup> Robert Musil, *op.cit.*, Vol I, p.88;

as the incapacity to create a rational being”<sup>31</sup>. Even by writing that *emet* on his forehead or behind the teeth of this clay creature, man manages to only partially concentrate the cosmic forces and the Truth. That is why, the Logos laid on this clay statue made by man does not intervene with all its qualities and gifts. The trait of reason, of language, lacks from here – thus, since it is the most important, the Golem too is a “man without qualities”. Still, Scholem’s version upon this detail is more nuanced: “the beings without sin are capable of giving forth, even to such a Golem, the breath of life which has language. That is why the Golem is not unable to speak due to his own nature, but due to the existing conditions in which the soul of the believers is no longer pure”<sup>32</sup>. Under this interpretation we can find the hints of the relation and of the marriage between Kakanian and Moosbrugger – these two depend on one another; the tumor of collective consciousness is transferred, through the inheritance of dream, in the murderer, inside whom it proliferates. The soul of the utopia – maculated by its European identity – can no longer infuse Logos in its artifex.

As a result, we get the mute and deaf dialogues (which foreshadow the theater of the absurd) between the psychiatrists and the judges – the science and the authority of the state on one hand – and the grumbling of Moosbrugger. Without any gain for none of them – Doctor Faust of the age is crucified on the cross of the specter. What floats in the stuffed atmosphere of the utopia is the entanglement in circumstances – they distribute equally, through the same implacable subjectivism, for the state and for the murderer. Moreover, they mask the events, they determine them to run off from the evidence of the crises. (And it would not be wrong to consider that, through declaring Moosbrugger insane, the Kakanian state uses a method of survival and self-assurance: it is not the state the one responsible for what the individual has become!). From the world, there remain towards man only echoes which scratch: Moosbrugger “heard voices or music or a roar and a buzz or another zing or shoots, thunders, laughters, shouts, slipslop and whispers (...) When he was working, these talked mostly in broken words and in short

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<sup>31</sup> Moshe Idel, *Golem*. In Romanian by Rola Mahler-Beilis. București: Hasefer, 2003, p.406;

<sup>32</sup> Gerschom Scholem, *op.cit.*, p.208;

sentences, they mocked him and criticized him”<sup>33</sup>. For the one who has no relation with language, the universe does not utter anything – but it forms this (avant-garde and infernal) collage of sound which envelop the silence, the fact that there is nothing “pertinent” to be uttered, not one cosmogonic gesture to be articulated. (The objects cursed by Caliban would eventually curse him back). The hustle and bustle of language reminiscences is a reference and a warning to the First World War (the shoots and the thunders mentioned above) – but also to the crowd gathered on the path to Golgotha – the deafening flock with its mockery – of course, with a reversed sign for the anti-messianic Moosbrugger. Now, the music of being breaks into pieces – it spreads in the voices of the people without qualities who each of them proclaims their ego. Moosbrugger’s murder, man’s murder to kill Adam and to turn him back into a Golem, into an amorphous substance.

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<sup>33</sup> Robert Musil, *op.cit.*, Vol I, p.307;

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