



KILLING COMMENDATORE **IN-BETWEENⁱ**

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Abstract:

We live in Post-Truth Era largely with metaphors. Moreover intertextuality became an important component of the artistic creativity. Therefore, being an independent individual and to reach the truth became even more important. In this context, the *Killing Commendatore* novel of Haruki Murakami (1949) was chosen as an example and the in-between situation of the post-modern individual was discussed by using descriptive method. In *Killing Commendatore* novel (2018), a thirty-six years old portrait painter who had been betrayed by his wife, moved to Odawara, from Tokyo and settled there in a mansion that once was the house and studio of famous painter named Tomohiko Amada. One day, in the attic, our painter, also narrator of the novel discovered by accident, an unknown painting of Amada in classical Japanese style. In this painting, the Killing Commendatore scene of Mozart's Don Giovanni was depicted. Then, he found himself in a mysterious world full of enigmatic people and supernatural incidents. In the meantime, Idea and Metaphor jumped into life from the painting and they were joined the adventure in person as Idea and Metaphor. *Killing Commendatore* is also a Dasein story in which the main character accomplished many existential struggles and survived between shifting worlds.

Keywords: *Killing Commendatore*, Haruki Murakami, metaphor, intertextuality, Dasein

Methodology

Post-Truth Era, evidently Cyber Post-Truth Era displays a chronic problematic within information production and communication possibilities in conventional media and social media. This problematic can be defined in two context: 1-Manipulation; 2-Transparency.

ⁱ This article was presented in part, at The International Conference 'Spaces in Between' organized by Sapientia Hungarian University, 26-27 April 2019, Miercurea Ciuc, Romania.

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Manipulation includes not only the actuality, but also historical past from time to time. Manipulation is an attempt to monopolize the truth (Lavrov as cited in Atay, 2016:4). Thus, the different ideologies which have a very different historical background, could be equalized by liberal hypocrite approach or Orwellian metonymies could be arranged or freedom of the press could become a device of social and political repression in democracy simulacrum or for temporary political interests, discourses that distort historical realities can be produced. Public opinion can be misled by using cultural codes that are not relevant to current conditions but were recorded in collective memory. Manipulation is often to build a mind-holding maze using metaphors and metonymies. But Manipulation, as is often the case, is not just a conspiracy theory claim, it is a method of social engineering. In simple terms, manipulation is the production of indirect, fake and psychologically reflective expressions.

On the other hand where law and justice do not exist or manipulated, transparency becomes a relativity discourse. Moreover transparency is not a guarantee of parrhesia or vice versa. Moreover, *"hundred percent parrhesia"* is already utopian as determined already by Foucault (2011:63) for Athenian democracy: *"Real parrhesia, in its positive, critical sense, does not exist where democracy exists"*.

The relationship of the individual to cultural reality is a complex process. In this process, the perception of truth and understanding of the truth are often identified, but sometimes the real remains in the perception stage; in this case, the individual does not necessarily define the truth, but in the context of meaninglessness, uncertainty and ambiguity, the process continues. But conventionally, the definition of truth is, as a notion, the ideal of mankind.

However, according to Foucault (2001: 13-14): *"There are two types of parrhesia which we must distinguish. First, there is a pejorative sense...which consists in saying any- or everything one has in mind without qualification...however, parrhesia does not have this pejorative meaning in the classical texts, but rather a positive one. Parrhesiazesthai means "to tell the truth"...To my mind, the parrhesiastes says what is true because he knows that it is true; and he knows that it is true because it is really true"*.

On the other hand, in Cyber Era, transparency is a freedom environment as well as a control mechanism. At the same time, political transparency policies create often problematic, almost a noisy polyphony; in this context, the truth becomes an ordinary issue of ordinary discourses. Transparency is no longer an idealized utopian environment. Moreover, according to Byung- Chul Han (2018: 107): *"the characteristic of today's transparency society is the intertwining of pornographic display and panoptic control"*.

However, whatever the situation is, in social practice, corporate transparency and data sharing democratically are valid for at least common, quotidian and valid criterion for any truth.

We live with metaphors. We communicate with metaphors, more and more intense; interestingly, as the transparency increases, the production of metaphor is proportionally increasing. Because metaphor is not just a literary figure of speech or a rhetorical performance but a cultural phenomenon that exists in all our lives. *"Our*

everyday concept system is inherently metaphoric... Our conceptual system plays a central role in defining our everyday realities" (Lakoff& Johnson, 2015:27). On the other hand, production of metaphor or metaphorization process is a creative performance. Thus, metaphors create different, multiple but simultaneous layers of meaning and this situation provides an endless mental mobility. As Aristotle (2018:169; 1405 a-5-10) underlined: *"Metaphor, moreover, gives style clearness, charm, and distinction as nothing else can: and it is not a thing whose use can be taught by one man to another"*.

Sometimes, for any reason, metaphors protect us when we can't talk frankly. This is a linguistic surfing. Because *"Language works by passing from one type of reality to another type of reality, so it is essentially metaphorical"* (Sarup, 2017: 81).

Metaphor represents the adventure of meaning. According to Aristotle(2018:184; 1410 b-10-15) again: *"We will begin by remarking that we all naturally find it agreeable to get hold of new ideas easily: words express ideas, and therefore those words are the most agreeable that enable us to get hold of new ideas. Now strange words simply puzzle us; ordinary words convey only what we know already; it is from metaphor that we can best get hold of something fresh"*. Therefore, making a metaphor or understanding a metaphor is a sign of intellectual quality and intelligence.

Metaphors are not only temporary but they express also a desire of mnemonic appropriation in the sense of historical taking-side. Metaphor is an integral element of Murakami's style.

Let's give an example of dialogue from another novel of Haruki Murakami (2014: 411) titled Kafka on the Shore:

Oshima: *"I want to go to Spain one day,"*

Kafka Tamura: *"Why Spain?"*

Oshima: *"I will join the Spanish Civil War."*

Kafka Tamura: *"That war is over long ago."*

Oshima: *"I know. Lorca died, Hemingway survived," ... "I still have the right to go to Spain and join the Civil War."*

Kafka Tamura: *"As a metaphor?"*

Oshima: *"Of course"*.

On the other hand, metaphor is also one of the fundamental elements of the formation of an infinite intertextuality network in the deconstructionist research (Sarup, 2017:84). On the other hand, intertextuality became one of the more important components of the artistic creativity. As already stated by Bakhtin and Kristeva, every word and every utterance has literary, historical and cultural adventure. *"Bakhtin was one of the first to replace the static hewing of texts with a model where literary structure does not simply exist but is generated in relation to another structure"* (Kristeva as cited in Landwehr, 2002:3). Intertextuality is available in many fields of art such as literature, cinema, photography, painting and visual arts. Intertextuality, there is not only an interaction between literary texts, but also intertextual fusion between all branches of art. Intertextual artistic strategies such as citation, allusion, appropriation sometimes create also metaphors. *"Intertextuality is a linguistic network connecting the existing text with other preexisting or future, potential texts"* (Riffaterre, 1994:786).

Moreover literature, painting, opera, classical music, and jazz elements provide an interactive intertextuality performance creating sometimes metaphors, as usual in Murakami's novels.

We give again another example from Haruki Murakami's novel 'After Dark' (2004) which takes place at a love hotel called Alphaville Hotel. This milieu- noir associates directly the famous movie 'Alphaville' (1965) of Jean-Luc Godard. Novel's protagonist Mari makes explanations about the movie in this context: Alphaville is one of her favorite movies, science-fiction but in conceptual way, black & white, too much dialogue, etc. and *"In Alphaville, people are not allowed to have deep feelings. So there is no love. There is no contradiction or irony. Everything is done using numerical formulas"* (Murakami, 2017: 57).

The music plays great role within intertextual design of Murakami' style. In his another novel 'In Hard-Boiled Wonderland and the End of the World' (1985), the hero of the novel listens to Johann Sebastian Bach's Brandenburg concerto. He and 'the girl' talk about various Brandenburg records like the record of Karl Richter, the record of Trevor Pinnock, the record of Pablo Casals... (Murakami, 2013:496-498). Hence, Bach and each virtuoso, Bach and Murakami, Music and Literature, Brandenburg concerto and the novel multiply each other mutually. This is a rhizome! As underlined by Deleuze & Guattari, (2005:8): *"When Glenn Gould speeds up the performance of a piece, he is not just displaying virtuosity, he is transforming the musical points into lines, and he is making the whole piece proliferate"*.

Every era creates its own people. So what's the status of the Post-Truth people? Then we ask the question;

- So, what will the individual do in these cultural conditions, to be independent?

- He or she may try to research the meaning of his/her own authentic existence in Dasein and this research process would be an adventure of becoming in the pursuit of truth but dis-covering truth in Heideggerian sense that means Aletheia.

Haruki Murakami (1949) is one of the most important authors- in Caius Dobrescu's (personal communication, April 26, 2019) term, one of the stars of Contemporary Literature. In his novels, protagonists usually survive in spite of many physical and metaphysical coincidences, uncertain and ambiguous situations. This is a kind of happy-end that means Dasein as human being realizes his/her existential mission and Dasein as environment is re-designed as a world of harmony. As Heidegger (2018:98-99) underlined: *"Existence- in- the world is the structure of the essence of Dasein... Dasein's existential spatiality is based on a metaphysical motivation. Dasein has been spread to all man's actions and initiatives for its own facticity"*.

Killing Commendatore

For publication of his novel 1Q84 (2009), Haruki Murakami (as cited in Kubota, 2009:1) made the following statements in the context of Tokyo subway gas attack (1995), Post-Cold War Era and 9/11 attacks (2001) : *"I think people are gradually starting to understand and accept the realness of unreal things... To me, 9/11 does not feel like an incident that took*

place in the real world. Somewhere, there must be a world in which this didn't happen... "While it is necessary to write about the post-Cold War ways of the world, no matter how realistically it may be written, it can't be expressed sufficiently. The only way it could be written about is through metaphors".

Killing Commendatore (2018) evidently could be considered in this way, a theoretical text about metaphor, just as Milan Kundera's *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* is also a Kitsch theory.

In this context, one of the factors that make the novel important: the idea is no longer a philosophical element. Likewise, metaphor is no longer a literary expression. Both exist in the novel as anthropomorphic, personified elements. Metaphor is called as 'Long Face' by our hero. There is also Donna Anna, another figure who jumped into life from the same painting. The scene of Killing Commendatore of Mozart's opera 'Don Giovanni' (1787) is the subject of picture where Don Giovanni killed father of Donna Anna., Il Commendatore. Moreover, the idea and Commendatore are the same being. This work of Amada is a Heideggerian rift-design (Schufreider, 2010: 355) to keep the mystery of Amada's life and the truth about his style. Because he abruptly turned from traditional Western painting to traditional Japanese painting, probably due to his Anschluss trauma.

Besides, we could that Killing Commendatore displays an intertextual articulation between Anatole France's *The Garden of Epicurus* (1894) and Jacques Derrida's *White Mythology: Metaphor in the Text of Philosophy* (1971) and text of the Novel (2018), in context of metaphor. All three texts are related to metaphor.

In one point, our painter killed Commendatore - but he is also Idea- then he captured the metaphor who was also the part of the painting. When our painter asked to Metaphor to take him where he came from, he explains that: *"The way I come here is the way of metaphor. The route varies depending on the person. There's no single way. That's why I can't show you the way"* (Murakami, 2018:686). Then he disappears after making a few recommendations on the metaphor way -dark, underground, with a metaphor-river/ Lethe-to the protagonist of novel. In this point, there is an interesting expression: *"The disappearance of Metaphor is like the smoke blown by the wind"*. This smoke analogy is similar to the appearance/disappearance of Cadmos of Anatole France. While Anatole France working in his library, a man comes out of the smoke of his cigarette. This ghost is the inventor of the alphabet, Cadmos. France and Cadmos begin to speak, until the next morning. Cadmos, as a mythological and historical figure, tells him all his life, his works, his mistakes and his personal reasons, then France (1947:70) thanks Cadmos as follows: *"The alphabet is an invaluable gift to us. Without alphabet, it would not have been possible to keep words, to adopt a style in expressions and to make philosophy"*.

There is also a dialog titled *Ariste and Polyphile or Language of Metaphysics* in the same book of Anatole France. *Ariste*, as name evokes eventually Aristotle; *Polyphile* evokes also *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* (1499) but, in general sense this name-*Polyphile*- is an interesting choice because it means *"who likes many things"* (Grove, 2000:136). *Polyphile* looks like layman of Cusanus. In this Platonian dialogue, *Polyphile* explains: *"The expression of each abstract idea can only be a metaphor. Metaphysicians are*

constantly constrained to live in metaphors. They are some kind of poet who collected old tales and offered us with the changed colors" (France, 1947:103). France (1947: 92), explains the metaphor issue by doing metaphor again: Metaphysicians use their own language. In this context, a metaphysician is similar to a knife-grinder. When the knife-grinder removes the marks on a coin, this coin gains value beyond its belonging to time and space. Similarly, the metaphysician passes the words through a similar process. This process is metaphorization of the words. Thus, the words gain unlimited meanings beyond their own meaning. Derrida (1974:9) who interprets these ideas and examples of France, makes the following determination: *"On this view, philosophy would be a self-eliminating process of generating metaphor"*. Moreover, *"Metaphor, then, always has its own death within it. And this death, no doubt, is also the death of philosophy... for reaching its fulfillment or never finding itself"* (Derrida, 1974, 74).

As for the novel of Murakami; while our painter was trying to survive underground, Donna Anna made the following statement: *"No problem! The gap flows through that river between being and nothing. And a wonderful metaphor can reveal the possibility that is hidden in everything. As a talented poet reveals a new landscape through a landscape, the best poems emerge from the best metaphors. You must keep an eye on the new landscape... The painter thinks about these words in this way: Tomohiko Amada's picture 'Killing Commendatore' was one of those new landscapes. That painting probably was transformed into the best metaphor like a talented poet did in words, and revealed another reality in this world"* (Murakami, 2018:716).

Killing Commendatore is a Dasein story. But, what isn't that anyway?

Dasein is multifaceted. The environment of existence is the environment of multiple and variable possibilities. On the other hand, "Painting of Killing Commentatore" has a fantastic interface function.

The fact that the protagonist of the novel finds the painting is a turning point. After that our hero begins to experience the supernatural environments beyond everyday life. For example: He became friend with Idea, personified as Commendatore who jumped into life from painting; His wife who lives in Tokyo, gets pregnant but this pregnancy is a cosmic conception event; Two people help him when he lost in the darkness of the underworld, tunnel, cave then well: His dead sister, Komi and Donna Anna and this darkness is a true darkness or it is darkness of our painter's heart? Moreover it's Hades and there, our painter drank also the water of a river- of course the water of Lethe!-. *"Being itself is essentially finite and reveals itself only in the transcendence of Dasein which is held out into the nothing"* (Heidegger as cited in Priest, 2001:243).

The world in which the main character of the novel lived, accomplished many existential struggles and survived was an in-between world between being and nothingness, presence and absence, Nanking Massacre (1937) and Anschluss (1938), reality and metaphor, real space and metaphysical area, remembering and oblivion, art and life. All these diachronic elements metaphorize each other. *"Truths are illusions of which one has forgotten that they are illusions"* (Derrida, 1974:15).

The painter of this painting, Tomohiko Amada was a Fine Arts Academy student in Vienna when happened Anschluss that means the annexation of Austria by III Reich

in 1938. Amada took the side of students opposing Anschluss, but lost his girlfriend in this political chaos and was forced to return to Japan. Tsuguhiko who is Amada's brother, on the other hand, joined as a soldier the Nanking massacre (1937) of Japan Army, in China but he was traumatized and committed suicide. Our painter, narrator of Novel appropriated all these memory-records of Amada. Because, in one point, he killed Idea/ Commendatore just as Don Giovanni had killed Commendatore in Mozart's Opera and after this murder he asks himself: "*Who is this? A Nazi officer, a Japanese officer or evil?*" (Murakami, 2018:676).

On the other hand: "*The word Idea (from the Greek eido, to see) has the same meaning as image, but relative to objects seen by the mind; and relative to the mind which sees, the same meaning as sight or perception*" (Derrida, 1974:56).

This painting as a composition and as source of affect represents the ambiguous and relative dimensions of existence but it represents at the same time how art- art of painting in this case- overcomes the chaos as Deleuze & Guattari (1996: 176) point out: "*Art wants to create the finite that gives the infinite again*".

History belongs to the past, but it is also present in a process of existence that extends to the future. So the past, the present and the future are in interaction. Murakami's Anschluss and Nanking discourse is a historical self-criticism against Japan's, fascist, totalitarian, militarist, Nazi collaborator past. In fact, Amada and his brother were two victims in different but symmetrical historical conditions. The first one was condemned to perpetual silence about Anschluss atrocities and the second one committed suicide and joined the Chinese victims of Nanking.

Epilogue

As result, the protagonist of Killing Commendatore, our young painter, has reached consensus with everyone - dead and alive- and most importantly with himself after he struggled in physical and metaphysical environments for the truth that he believes in.

Our young painter transformed his throwness into the world in a humanist and courageous research to find a personal and independent way, despite loneliness, death, enigma and oblivion. These some components of nothing cannot stop him; on the contrary, they encourage him an existential challenge. "*Only on the ground of the original revelation of the nothing can human existence approach and penetrate beings....Dasein means: being held out into the nothing*" (Heidegger, 1929:6-7). Then he returns to his normal life as before. This is a happy end. Because he didn't share the same fate as Don Giovanni; he has freed himself.

Haruki Murakami as an author represents contemporary Zeitgeist. The story of Killing Commendatore may be an answer to the anxiety of the Post-Truth Era. In this novel and often in his novels the protagonists survive, but silently! This is an original and unconventional happy end that is unique to Murakami who use conceptual strategies. These heroes are not obsessed with any subject. They do not have fixed beliefs.

The truth for them is relative, variable, and multitude. They have sophisticated artistic gusto. These characters affect us not only as heroes of an extraordinary story, but also as people who share with us common esthetic pleasures-jazz, classical music, cinema etc.-, common cultural codes and historical sensibilities.

According again to Heidegger (2002:49): "*The origin of the artwork- of, that is, creators and preservers, which is to say, the historical existence of a people - is art. This is so because, in its essence, art is an origin: a distinctive way in which truth comes into being, becomes, that is, historical...Art is history in the essential sense: it is the ground of history... Art allows truth to arise*".

So, "*The world is a metaphor*" (Murakami, 2014:648); History is real; Truth is an assemblage and existence of human-being is mythological.

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