

A Journey to the Self: The Quest for Identity in Clarice Lispector's Fiction

Rodica Grigore¹

One of the best representatives of Latin American literature, Clarice Lispector has always fascinated her readers. Her novels bring into question some major aesthetic and ideological issues, sometimes under the mask of elaborated textual games implying innovative narrative strategies and a new way of understanding fiction. *The Hour of the Star* (*A hora da estrela*, 1977) addresses the problem of identity and storytelling, as well as the complex relationships established among author, narrator, character and reader. The violence which the novel's protagonist has to face and endure is also an expression of the force of literature. Therefore, the heroine's death stands for the symbolic birth of fiction, her personal life being permanently mirrored by the metaphorical level of this extraordinary text. The novel progressively turns into an intricate and symbolic journey to the self, Lispector analysing the quest for personal (and artistic) identity and its hidden meanings. [Article copies available for a fee from The Transformative Studies Institute. E-mail address: journal@transformativestudies.org Website: <http://www.transformativestudies.org> ©2023 by The Transformative Studies Institute. All rights reserved.]

KEYWORDS: Latin American literature, Narrator, Author, Character, Quest, Identity.

¹ **Rodica Grigore**, Ph.D., is Associate Professor at "Lucian Blaga" University of Sibiu, Romania, where she teaches Comparative Literature. She is the author of several critical studies, such as: *Despre cărți și alți demoni* [*Of Books and Other Demons*, 2002], *Retorica măștilor în proza interbelică românească* [*The Rhetoric of Masks in Romanian Modern Fiction*, 2005], *Lecturi în labirint* [*Readings in the Labyrinth*, 2007], *În oglinda literaturii* [*In the Mirror of Literature*, 2011], *Meridianele prozei* [*Fiction's Meridians*, 2013], *Realismul magic în proza latino-americană a secolului XX* [*Magical Realism in Latin-American Fiction of the 20th Century*, 2015], *Călătorii în bibliotecă. Eseuri* [*Journeys in the Library. Essays*, 2016], *Cărți, vise și identități în mișcare. Eseuri despre literatura contemporană* [*Books, Dreams and Changing Identities. Essays on the Contemporary Literature*, 2018], *Tigrul și steaua. Violență și exil în proza latino-americană a secolului XX* [*The Tiger and the Star. Violence and Exile in Latin American Fiction of the 20th Century*, 2021]. She also translated into Romanian the essays of Octavio Paz, *Children of the Mire*, (2003/2017). She has published numerous essays and critical studies especially on modern literature in Romania and abroad. Senior Editor of the journal "Theory in Action". Address correspondence to: Rodica Grigore; e-mail: rodica.grigore@gmail.com.