

Book Reviews

Ruxandra Cesereanu,
*Călătorie spre
 centrul infernului.*
*Memorialistica și
 literatura închisorilor
 și lagărelor comuniste,*
 ediția a treia revăzută
 și adăugită, Pitești,
 Manuscris, 2018



Avent'anni dalla prima pubblicazione, è apparso in una terza, rinnovata edizione, grazie alla casa editrice Manuscris, il pluripremiato saggio di Ruxandra Cesereanu: *Călătorie spre centrul infernului*.

Spaccato dell'universo concentrazionario romeno e delle letture che i sopravvissuti al regime ne hanno dato all'interno delle loro opere, il volume cattura l'attenzione già a partire dal titolo fortemente evocativo, immaginifico. Riconduce, infatti, all'idea della discesa *ad inferos*, declinando e adattando alla realtà concentrazionaria romena un'immagine cara già alla letteratura classica, quella del viaggio agli inferi intrapreso dall'eroe epico. Tuttavia, il viaggio di cui Ruxandra Cesereanu si fa portavoce, è un viaggio di tutt'altra natura. È il sottotitolo dal sapore giornalistico, nella sua sinteticità, a offrire la cifra di lettura di questo saggio spaventosamente accattivante: *Memorialistica și literatura închisorilor și lagărelor comuniste*. La scrittrice infatti affronta una realtà emersa in tutto il suo orrore solo all'indomani della caduta del regime comunista romeno, grazie alla massiccia produzione editoriale di memorie apparse a partire dal 1990.

Spinta da quella che lei stessa definisce "un'intenzione etica", la saggista di Cluj analizza un percorso catabasico in cui il

protagonista si allontana inevitabilmente dall'idea di eroe letterario; a raccontare il viaggio intrapreso forzatamente sono voci, uomini, che attraverso la mediazione della scrittura hanno scelto di denunciare l'indicibile, un passato oscuro, ossessionante, infernale.

In questo saggio dal sapore amaro, Ruxandra Cesereanu si è proposta di focalizzare l'attenzione sul "martirio anticomunista", fondando la sua analisi *in primis* su testi che, pur non avendo l'oggettività di un documento, dato il loro carattere ibrido, possiedono una duplice dimensione, laddove storia e letteratura inevitabilmente e inestricabilmente si intrecciano all'interno della produzione memorialistica.

Privo del capitolo introduttivo dedicato al sistema dei gulag sovietici, in questa nuova edizione di *Călătorie spre centrul infernului*, l'autrice ha cercato di porre maggiormente l'accento sulla situazione specifica romena, mostrando ancora una volta come le sue riflessioni ed analisi si fondino su solide e attuali basi bibliografiche, unendo a dati e informazioni di carattere storico elementi esperienziali che emergono da romanzi e memorie ampiamente citati.

Il saggio, arricchito da fotografie in bianco e nero dei principali penitenziari comunisti romeni, *memento* della storia recente e delle pene sofferte durante il periodo comunista, è suddiviso in due parti distinte e interconnesse: uno studio "comportamentale e di mentalità" come viene definito dall'autrice, in cui l'aspetto letterario-estetico, complementare a quello etico, è almeno in parte messo in secondo piano e un'analisi della prosa sul gulag romeno.

Il primo capitolo del saggio è strutturato in sub-capitoli costruiti in modo

da tratteggiare la realtà del gulag così come appare nei volumi di memorialistica, ponendo particolare attenzione alle sue condizioni storiche di sviluppo, alla figura del detenuto e dell'inquirente/torturatore, così come alle dinamiche che regolavano i rapporti all'interno delle strutture detentive. Si tratta inevitabilmente di uno studio dal carattere interdisciplinare, in cui si annullano e si confondono i confini tra letteratura, storia, ideologia, antropologia e psicologia. Protagonisti dell'analisi sono il gulag, microcosmo umano il cui abitante ideale è il detenuto, creta nella mani di un torturatore-demiurgo, su cui viene applicata una pedagogia punitiva al fine di rieducarlo e reintrodurlo nel macrosocismo comunista come uomo-nuovo, espressione dell'ideologia di partito.

Nell'affrontare questo percorso la saggista si trova a confrontarsi con due tempi, due dimensioni che si intersecano; un passato fattuale e un presente selettivo, affettivo, stilizzante. Il suo è un tentativo di ricostruzione in cui etica e estetica non si escludono mai a vicenda, ma piuttosto, come appare evidente dal secondo capitolo del saggio, si completano. Il recupero dell'esperienza, in ogni sua forma scritta, sia non-fiction, realista o allegorica, ha in sé il carattere della scrittura partecipata, è infatti il frutto di una più o meno inconsapevole selezione, inevitabile nella costruzione di un intrigo. Nella comunicazione, nella dimensione narrativa, emerge l'io offeso, il trauma, la voce di chi scrive, la realtà. Nella seconda parte del volume la scrittrice ha quindi presentato tre diversi paradigmi: il realismo di Paul Goma, la letteratura dell'*obsedant deceniu* e le distopie.

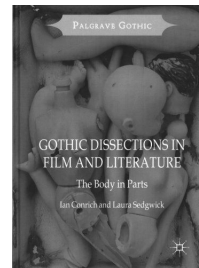
Il 1989, anno di cesura, fine della dittatura rossa, rappresenta quindi una chiave d'accesso, il momento zero di questa

produzione letteraria etica estetizzante, uno specchio attraverso cui recuperare ricordi taciuti che rischiavano di essere perduti. Questo elaborato, per quanto ricco, non si propone come definitorio o esaustivo, non offre risposte o certezza, ma vuole essere uno spunto di riflessione, perché il passato non venga dimenticato, mitizzato, demonizzato o ripetuto.

Concludo con le parole dell'autrice: "Intenția mea a fost ca prin acest eseu (pe care îl public, iată, pentru a treia oară, într-o ediție revăzută) să încerc o exorcizare a terorii comuniste din România și, într-un fel, a secolului XX, numit al ororilor".

Jessica Andreoli

Ian Conrich, Laura Sedgwick, *Gothic Dissections in Film and Literature: The Body in Parts*, London, Palgrave Macmillan, 2017



Collaborating with Laura Sedgwick, a professor at the University of Sterling's Department of English Literature and Linguistics, Ian Conrich is a writer, theorist and historian whose work envelops multiple aspects of art and popular culture. The authors' ambitious and original project aims to compile a taxonomy of the fragmented Gothic Body by highlighting its multifarious parts as they are acted upon or become actors themselves within various Gothic artforms. One must note that the researched topics exceed the bounds established in the title by including dramatic performances and visual art,

such as Rembrandt van Rijn's *The Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Joan Deijman*, among the referential profusion of literary and cinematic artworks.

This medley of detailed grotesque descriptions and analyses is, as the authors themselves state in the introduction, less interested in the symbolic, expressive or functional elements of the isolated body part and more concerned with the solid anatomical features it exhibits. Such is the nature of the study, then, that "associated fluid, sense or expression" (p. 2) are treated as fringe subjects to which raw matter is preferred.

A result of this penchant for materialism is an abundance of descriptive segments and assiduous expositions of the narrative, where none of the gruesome, blood-curdling details are spared. This can prove to be problematic as lengthy stretches of text are relegated to covering facts that may already be known to aficionados of the Gothic, yet is somewhat mitigated by the wild variation and vast amounts of material that the authors choose to cover alongside the heterogenous theoretical apparatus that is employed. Another effect of this choice is that it provides both the critic and the reader with a seemingly static, immutable snapshot of organs and body parts which contrasts powerfully with the eventual dynamic of changes to which the Gothic organ or limb is subjected, a wide range of uncanny replacements and grotesque mutations being described and observed throughout the text.

At the same time, however, the previous point vis-à-vis the descriptions' prominence does not entail a rigid undertaking of a one-dimensional, restricted or impoverished scope of study, the book's eclectic

and graphic approach being adapted to an extensive selection of literature, screen adaptations, standalone films, plays, paintings and even sculptures such as Alberto Giacometti's *Disagreeable Object* (1931). Analyses of scenes, narrative elements or complete plots are subsumed under chapters divided in terms of the highlighted body part, titles such as "The Brain", "Head and Face", "The Heart", "The Uterus" ominously hovering over an introductory body of text that consistently leads to three or more sub-headings, followed by a short bibliography.

One of the most striking features of this study is the lack of any definite value hierarchy that structures the catalogue of case studies. Indeed, the authors make an argument in favor of grafting the traditionally dismissed 'horror film' onto their own Gothic body of references, distancing themselves from the usual *modus operandi* within cinematographical Gothic Studies, where approaches revolve around film adaptations of classic works such as Bram Stoker's *Dracula* or Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*. In its open, free-spirited manner, the text effaces the boundaries between low and high culture by brazenly juxtaposing works as artistically alienated as Edgar Allan Poe's short stories and the *Friday the 13th* series. Chronological criteria are similarly flexible, with Pierre Gautier's early 18th-century treatise on a severed head's consciousness residing comfortably next to references to Tim Burton's *Sleepy Hollow*.

The theoretical framing too is a supple, undulating contour, presenting us with a wealth of concepts and ideas such as speculations of Darwin's impact on 19th century Gothic fiction, Freud's *femme castratrice*, David Punter's opinions on horror

cinema, the mask's significance as viewed by Catherine Spooner, all of which enter a dialectic with the authors' own plethora of viewpoints. It is also of high interest that this book can be considered an exquisite example of that which Alastair Fowler calls 'The Gothic Mode'. Thus, not only in the subject matter does this text's Gothic quality reside, but also in its form. The very criterion for the organization of the body-text evokes the macabre and the *unheimlich*, this being humorously addressed in the introduction's apology to 'the man in the café at the National Gallery', who was seemingly startled by overhearing the two writers' enthusiastic divvying up of body parts.

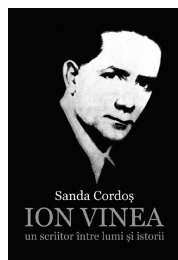
Furthermore, the exercised style is uncompromising with regards to the horrific or gory aspects of the narratives it engages with, expounding on them with no euphemistic detours and adding suspenseful, brooding chapter finales, an example being the concluding phrase of the seventh chapter: "This moment of the uncanny, of his father being made unfamiliar through the discovery of ventriloquism mechanisms within his corpse, is enough to provoke Jamie's final scream." (p. 109). Such passages are interwoven with a plain voice that turns the human body parts uncanny by chilly, scientific descriptions that evince the mechanical and the plastic in that which is supposed to be a vital element or process in the functioning of the human body.

Finally, an aspect demanding emphasis is the subject matter's many intersections with significant contemporary topics, referencing events of international interest such as Valery Spiridonov's highly publicized potential head transplant (which of 2017 has been postponed), recent scientific

developments, gender power dynamics and the distorted imaginary of feminine sexuality as represented by the *vagina dentata*, lexical associations of the female genitalia and depictions of the uterus, along with states of ethnic, racial and even human/animal/mechanical liminality.

All of these considerations form the basis of what is a splendidly good read that is both pleasurable and scholarly, offering an as-yet unique approach to the Gothic Body by underscoring the mode's proclivity to fragmentation and rearrangement.

Vlad Răznicănu



Sanda Cordoș, *Ion Vinea – Un scriitor între lumi și istorii*, Cluj-Napoca, Ed. Școala Ardeleană, 2017

L'auteure témoigne de l'intérêt envers la recherche littéraire en publiant cette fois-ci un ouvrage revu et augmenté qui vise une personnalité roumaine de l'époque de l'entre-deux-guerres. D'autres livres publiés concernent la littérature de l'après-guerre et contemporaine (*Literatura între revoluție și reacțiune. Problema crizei în literatura română și rusă a secolului XX*, 1999 et 2002; *Lumi din cuvinte. Reprezentări și identități în literatura română postbelică*, 2012). L'attention est maintenant centrée sur Ion Vinea (1895-1964), journaliste, poète et prosateur, qui a débuté avec Tristan Tzara en 1912 dans la revue *Simbolul*. En outre, Sanda Cordoș a dirigé des travaux collectifs (*Spiritul critic la Cercul literar de la Sibiu*, 2009), et a aussi collaboré

auprès des revues culturelles (*Caietele Echinon*, *Dilema veche*, *Steaua*, *Apostrof*, *Vatra*, *Observator cultural*).

Les thèses principales du livre sont incluses dans la préface intitulée « Pourquoi Ion Vinea ? ». Le livre comprend en tout neuf chapitres, six d'entre eux concernant la biographie de l'écrivain, tandis que les trois autres s'intéressent à la « démarche de la recherche de l'histoire littéraire agençant celle de la méthode analytique [m. trad.] ». En conséquence, la recherche a comme enjeux de définir une position critique et renouvelée qui va au-delà les critiques précédents (Elena Zaharia-Filipaș et Simion Mioc qui ont publié leurs études en 1972 et auxquels on a imposé des limites idéologiques pendant le régime communiste), afin de mettre en évidence l'«européanité et la dimension occidentale» de Ion Vinea, mais aussi d'accomplir une nouvelle synthèse critique issue de l'enrichissement du matériau et de son accessibilité à présent. Comme méthode de recherche, l'auteure témoigne avoir eu en considération le principe des « vases communicants » qui élude la méthode « standard » de la monographie qui « reconstitue séparément la vie et l'œuvre ».

La perspective biographique est visible dans « La biographie littéraire d'un écrivain occidental en Roumanie du XX^e siècle », « "Reportage amoureux" de Ion Vinea », « À combien de révolutions a cru Ion Vinea ? », « Ion Vinea pendant l'époque des totalitarismes », « "Le choyé malheureux" » et « Addenda. Allô, Ion Vinea ». Dans ces chapitres, l'auteure présente en détail des informations à l'égard de cette personnalité culturelle qui a développé des manières propres d'écriture, en alternant « entre les deux mondes scripturaux », la fiction et le journalisme (culturel et politique). Les

épisodes envisagés couvrent autant la période de son adolescence en Roumanie, vécue « à la française », et la « "réunion des années '20 de l'état-major surréaliste" chez Tristan Tzara à Paris » que l'époque de la revue artistique avant-gardiste *Contimporanul* (1922-1932), du périodique socio-culturel *Facla* (1930-1940) et du *Evenimentul zilei* (1941-1945), quotidien de droite par lequel le journaliste critique les actions de l'Union Soviétique. D'autres épisodes concernent l'histoire d'amour (1930-1944) entre Vinea et Henriette Yvonne Stahl (1900-1984), écrivaine de la période de l'entre-deux-guerres et de l'après-guerre, mais aussi l'écriture du roman *Lunatecii* (1965), signé par Vinea, et *Drum de foc* (1981) de Stahl.

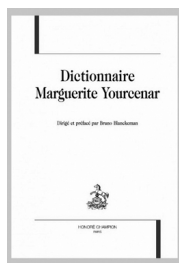
La démarche critique des chapitres « La prose anthume de Ion Vinea », « *Lunatecii* – un grand roman à redécouvrir » et « La poésie de Ion Vinea » a pour but la reconsidération de certains préjugés afin d'atteindre une analyse et une interprétation nouvelles. En conséquence, les textes brefs de *Descântecete și Flori de lampă* (1925) et *Paradisul suspinelor* (1930) « renouvellent les techniques narratives (...) » et montrent un intérêt pour « les profondeurs de la psychologie ». *Lunatecii* est un texte avec une genèse complexe à cause de facteurs défavorables (le romancier Petru Dumitriu, sympathisé par le régime communiste de l'époque jusqu'en 1960 lorsqu'il fuit les autorités, a introduit en 1957 des fragments appartenant à Vinea dans son propre roman, *Cronică de familie*) ainsi que grâce aux circonstances positives (en 1961 Ion Vinea redécouvre le roman de Fitzgerald, *Tender is the Night*, à l'aide duquel il restructure sa prose). À travers « sa richesse autobiographique » *Lunatecii* est apprécié en tant que « roman de la génération roumaine perdue » (« si ce n'est pas perdue, alors

sûrement disséminée ») grâce à la récupération de l'« image d'une génération (...) des grands accomplissements » de l'entre-deux-guerres, du « portrait du perdant doué » et du « vainqueur vaincu ». En plus, la poésie de Vinea est désormais appréciée sans les clichés « avant-gardistes », de la « lyrique de la transcendance » ou « d'un lyrisme cosmique, métaphysique » afin qu'elle soit remarquée comme « une poésie de l'intériorité et de la vulnérabilité humaine, du transitoire et de l'instabilité ».

Le livre met en évidence l'histoire d'une personnalité littéraire qui a passé sa vie parmi « des mondes et des histoires », depuis la synchronisation de la culture roumaine face à l'Europe de l'entre-deux-guerres et jusqu'à l'époque du réalisme socialiste. Cette recherche atteint ses buts, c'est-à-dire celui d'être critique, pertinent, de respecter les arguments annoncés au début de l'ouvrage. À part un index et une bibliographie qui manquent à la fin du livre, ce volume reste une réussite pour l'histoire littéraire roumaine.

Iulian-Emil Coțofană

Dictionnaire Marguerite Yourcenar, dirigé et préfacé par Bruno Blanckeman, Paris, Honoré Champion, 2017



L'année 2017 marque la commémoration de trente ans de la disparition de Marguerite Yourcenar. Depuis trois décennies, son œuvre est examinée, explorée et interrogée, donnant lieu à de nombreuses études critiques, tout comme à des colloques et à des débats; les multiples valences

de sa création offrant à chaque lecture de nouvelles perspectives. Somme de l'écriture yourcenarienne, le *Dictionnaire Marguerite Yourcenar* [Dirigé et préfacé par Bruno Blanckeman, Paris, Honoré Champion, 2017] se présente comme une image en miroir de la poétique cosmopolite de l'écrivaine ; comme le dit le professeur Bruno Blanckeman, cet ouvrage « rassemble les contributions de plus de 41 chercheurs et chercheuses appartenant à 10 nationalités différentes et à plusieurs générations. » (p. 11). Dense et varié, ce dictionnaire, qui est le résultat d'une érudition multiple, refait en filigrane le portrait littéraire de la première femme élue par l'Académie Française.

Très riche, l'ouvrage offre, dans ses plus de trois cents entrées, des points de repère dans l'approche des œuvres de Marguerite Yourcenar. L'objectif principal de ce projet est de rendre les lecteurs plus proches de l'œuvre yourcenarienne, impressionnante par l'ampleur et la diversité ; aussi le dictionnaire affirme-t-il « le désir d'orienter le lecteur et la lectrice de bonne volonté dans le labyrinthe captivant de l'œuvre. » (p. 11).

La composition de cet ouvrage monumental témoigne d'une volonté d'exhaustivité : chaque entrée renvoie à des références bibliographiques fondamentales ; de plus, pour élargir la perspective et pour montrer la cohésion de l'écriture yourcenarienne, à la fin de chaque entrée, on mentionne un réseau thématique de concepts liés au sujet traité. Pour donner une image de cette approche, on pourrait s'arrêter sur l'article « labyrinthe » qui est rattaché à des notions comme « existence, initiation, *Le Labyrinthe du monde*, symbole ».

Ce dictionnaire recouvre toutes les productions littéraires – poésie, théâtre,

romans, essais, correspondance, articles non recueillis en volume, entretiens, conférences – et propose des analyses monographiques de chaque texte et de chaque personnage yourcenarien emblématiques. Le trajet littéraire de Marguerite Yourcenar apparaît à travers les articles du dictionnaire ; depuis les premières œuvres romanesques, *Alexis ou le Traité du Vain Combat*, jusqu'aux grands romans qui lui ont apporté la gloire, *Mémoires d'Hadrien* et *Un Homme obscur*, depuis les premières ébauches poétiques, *Le Jardin des Chimères*, jusqu'aux œuvres poétiques de la maturité, *Les Trente-Trois noms de Dieu*, chaque texte yourcenarien est attentivement présenté et examiné ; complexe, comme le parcours littéraire de Marguerite Yourcenar, le dictionnaire propose à la fois une démarche concentrique et centrifuge ; chaque entrée définit une notion significative pour la pensée yourcenarienne et en même temps essaie de la rapprocher, de la mettre en dialogue, avec les autres concepts-clés de la vision de l'écrivaine (par exemple, le « détachement » est analysé en rapport avec sa passion pour le voyage et son goût pour les voyages ; l'attention accordée à la « maladie » est expliquée par le soin que l'écrivaine a pour le corps).

De plus, une analyse thématique y est envisagée ; les principaux thèmes et motifs sont soigneusement examinés et exemplifiés : l'âme, l'astrologie, le corps, le cosmopolitisme, l'eau, la terre, le vide etc. Les données biographies ne sont pas érudées ; les figures de la mère et du père sont analysées à la fois comme présences concrètes dans la vie de l'écrivaine et comme rôles joués par certains de ses personnages. Le lecteur peut refaire l'itinéraire de l'écrivaine à travers des entrées comme « Belgique »,

« Chine », « États-Unis », « France », « Grèce » ou « Japon ». L'article « Apostrophes » rédigée par Andrei Lazar se focalise sur la présence de l'écrivaine dans les deux émissions littéraires télévisées réalisées par Bernard Pivot. Les médias ont accordé beaucoup d'attention à l'écrivaine surtout à partir du moment où son œuvre a joui d'un rayonnement universel et d'une reconnaissance institutionnelle ; Bruno Blanckeman synthétise admirablement, dans l'article « médias », le parcours médiatique de l'écrivaine – qui va « des articles et entretiens publiés dans les magazines ou journaux de large audience » (p. 348) jusqu'à « une légende dorée médiatique » (p. 348). Claude Benoît relate dans son article « Académie » l'entrée majestueuse de la première femme sous la Coupole : « Les rapports de Marguerite Yourcenar avec les Académies commencent en 1970 lorsqu'elle est élue comme membre étranger à l'Académie Royale de Langue et de Littérature Françaises de Belgique. » (p. 16) ; dix ans plus tard par l'Académie Française.

D'autre part, l'étude de la poétique et de la rhétorique yourcenariennes met en scène l'attention de l'écrivaine pour les techniques d'écriture ; l'analogie, l'ellipse, l'ironie ponctuent les stratégies d'écriture de Marguerite Yourcenar. Enfin, l'écriture engagée de l'auteure impose une analyse idéologique ; les prises de position, l'engagement pour la cause écologique et les problèmes interculturels font l'objet des entrées synthétiques.

L'originalité du dictionnaire consiste dans la mise en relief de la spécificité yourcenarienne ; ainsi parmi les entrées trouvons-nous des références à la langue, notion problématique dans l'univers yourcenarien ; « la langue paternelle, apprise en

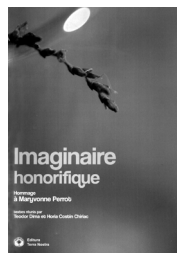
dehors de l'institution scolaire. » (p. 319) constitue la base académique de sa langue littéraire ; la fidélité à la langue française traduit, malgré le cosmopolitisme et les multiples pays d'attache de Marguerite Yourcenar, une volonté de bien s'exprimer afin d'être bien comprise. La langue française est choisie par l'académicienne parce qu'elle lui offre la précision et la clarté qu'elle chérissait tant ; d'ailleurs, cette préoccupation pour une bonne réception du message amène Marguerite Yourcenar à pratiquer constamment la réécriture qui devient « structurante dans [son] projet littéraire » (p. 516).

Les pistes de réflexion ouvertes par ce dictionnaire approfondissent les recherches menées par les exégètes yourcenariens ; cet ouvrage collectif nous présente le réseau conceptuel et thématique qui anime l'écriture yourcenarienne. Œuvre-processus, les écrits de Marguerite Yourcenar affirment la dynamique de toute une vie et une vision du monde.

Œuvre synthèse, le *Dictionnaire de Marguerite Yourcenar* rapproche les écrits de l'écrivaine des lecteurs du troisième millénaire ; par les vues d'ensemble offertes à chaque entrée, cet ouvrage exhaustif redonne voix à l'écriture yourcenarienne. Il offre un regard d'ensemble sur la complexité de l'œuvre, de la personnalité de Marguerite Yourcenar et du contexte socio-culturel ; l'invitation qu'il nous lance est d'aller nous plonger plus profondément dans la lecture d'une création en dehors du temps.

Anamaria Lupan

Teodor Dima & Horia Costin Chiriac (éds.),
Imaginaire honorifique. Hommage à Maryvonne Perrot, Iași, Terra Nostra, 2015



L'ouvrage *Imaginaire honorifique* réunit des textes qui rendent hommage à Maryvonne Perrot, professeur émérite de philosophie et esthétique à l'Université de Bourgogne de Dijon. Connue pour ses contributions thématiques concernant l'écriture et la communication, la dirigeante du Centre Bachelard destiné à l'étude de l'imaginaire et de la rationalité apparaît dans cet ouvrage collectif comme l'esprit philosophique de référence.

La section dédiée aux sciences humaines du volume débute par une digression sociologique. Dans son article, « Concepts des sciences sociales », Ioan Biriș vérifie le rôle et l'efficacité des concepts classifiés selon leur relation. L'approche de l'analyse et le parcours fonctionnel choisi offrent une vision très efficace des principes et des normes de l'imaginaire cognitif et de la réalité socio-humaine.

La section suivante, dédiée aux méditations littéraires, se penche sur l'imaginaire symbolique (Ionel Bușe), onirique dans l'essai de Margareta Gyurcsik, ou bien esthétique et métaphysique, comme dans le cas d'Antonela Corban. Les recherches sur les rapports entre sujet et identité ne manquent pas : Liliana Foșalău nous porte dans le monde chaotique de l'homme approximatif de Tristan Tzara, Marius Dobrescu propose une étude synoptique de l'homme baroque, tandis que Gheorghe Danișor cherche à conjuguer le terme de l'identité.

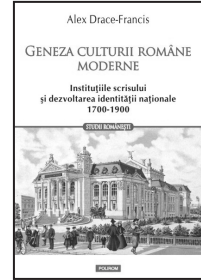
Du point de vue théorique, on retiendra plusieurs études philosophiques incitantes, comme celle de Mircea Dumitru, sur la logique du second ordre – sous la forme d’une argumentation, ou bien celle de Dorin Ciontescu Samfireag sur le fonctionnement du référent poétique.

Dans un volet consacré à l’interdisciplinarité juridique, une étude signée par Dan Claudiu Danişor examine la structure et les limites du droit à l’identité selon la Constitution roumaine, tandis que Geneviva Vrabie investigate le rapport entre l’institution présidentielle de Roumanie et le gouvernement, par le biais des textes constitutionnels. Elle met un accent particulier sur les effets qu’une telle relation puisse engendrer au niveau pratique.

Dans le volet suivant, Ion Ceapraz s’attache à jeter des ponts entre les sciences socio-humaines et les sciences naturelles. G. C. Constandache tente de surprendre la vocation humaniste d’Alice Voinescu – une figure culturelle marquante de la philosophie roumaine de l’entre-deux-guerres. De son côté, Marina Mureşanu Ionescu refait le chemin fonctionnel et formel des congruences intertextuelles entre Eminescu et Nerval, tandis que Felicia Dumas cartographie l’imaginaire linguistique du vocabulaire orthodoxe français, marqué du point de vue terminologique par le paradigme lexical catholique. En se penchant sur la sémantique lexicale des premiers dictionnaires bilingues français-roumain et roumain-français, Oana-Aurelia Gencărău et Ştefan Gencărău délimitent et classifient les aspects d’intérêt de la modernisation du lexique roumain.

Ion Piţoiu

Alex Drace-Francis, *The Making of the Modern Romanian Culture*, London, I. B. Tauris, 2006



In his work *The Making of Modern Romanian Culture*, Alex Drace-Francis provides a panoramic perspective on the importance of cultural institutions in the process of defining Romania’s national identity. Despite the study focusing mainly on Wallachia and Moldavia, the cultural movements of Transylvania are linked to the events taking place in the Romanian Countries. The author covers the time period between 1700 and 1900, which is crucial for establishing the cultural meaning of terms such as “national character” and “literature.” This historical period is also the one of the great social and political events which anticipated Romania’s Independence and Unification. However, the study does not strictly follow the political currents of thought that led to those deeply transformative events (such as Tudor Vladimirescu’s 1821 Revolution against the Ottoman Empire or Alexandru Ioan Cuza’s 1959 Unification), but the link between the written material and the cultural transformations which guided Romania towards modernity.

The author clearly demonstrates how, for Romania, the idea of national consciousness and that of modernity are inseparable. Modernity is not only an economic and industrial goal, but, most importantly, a well-articulated national consciousness in relation to the rest of Europe. On the

path towards modernity, Romania tried to form an identity which would both integrate it in the “Grande European Family” as an active member that could speak for itself, but also as a culturally autonomous entity. In other words, Romania tried to mimic the European view of the world, while searching for its own specificities. However, this process was made possible through typography (written culture), mass education (alphabetization) and a taste for national literature.

How is a national literature born and how are the ideas of the intellectual groups broadcast to the masses? By no means does the author provide a cliché or an optimistic answer to those questions. The changes in the Romanian mentality rarely mirrored the process of internalizing Western values. The struggle for defining a national identity was real, but it belonged to the intellectuals, not to the common people. Revolutionary and enlightened ideas circulated, but only in the groups that had the means for higher education abroad. It was by studying abroad that Romanians first came into contact with the ideas that would coagulate Romania’s cultural identity.

During the early eighteenth century, the Romanian space was known by the rest of Europe largely through non-Romanian articles and memoirs. The study provides relevant samples of such texts. The general idea of the western public towards the Romanian space was less than reverential. The Romanians were uncultivated, superstitious, savage and indolent; even the ones who could afford tutors or studying abroad would remain rather obscure and complacent. Almost every boyar could speak French, but their knowledge would be rooted in memorizing words and

phrases. Romanian boyars were indeed polyglots; they were fluent in Greek and Turkish, but this was not a sign of literacy. The administration’s languages were Greek and Turkish and they had to adapt and integrate. Publishing was scarce and consisted of religious and theological works, administrative documents and pedagogical almanacs. The few books that were published in Romanian contained an unstandardized language, which was closer to a dialect than to an independent language. Alex Drace-Francis repeatedly underlines the role of typographies in early language and literature development. The lack of typographic activity and the fact that Romanian language was considered inferior to Greek delayed cultural achievement.

In this light, the author argues that the cultural efforts of early Romanian intellectuals were marked by the need to “restore the national dignity” through works of literature and culture, even though the idea of a nation was relatively new. The author points out that, in general, Romanian cultural movements were influenced by the idea that a nation is as great as its culture. However, eighteenth-century literature consisted of religious and historical writings. At this point, “literature” defined the idea of literacy, the idea of standardizing Romanian language and print. Moreover, the secularization of typographies was crucial for modernization. Despite a general growing trend in favor of written material, the author notes that publishing books did not mean that the population was becoming more educated. The book had only a symbolic value for the masses. It was an object which reaffirmed the status of the owner: it had religious and magic value and it was respected as an object which would

concentrate “enlightenment.” The ideas of the Enlightenment circulated inside the circles of intellectuals, but were received by common people, on a more or less intuitive level.

Ion Heliade Rădulescu associated literature with the idea of a cultural community. Literature was knowledge in its total form, as a philological process, as grammatical and orthographical norms and pedagogy. Culture had to be a general tendency; cohesion between the intellectuals and the common people had to be made possible through mass education and extensive typography. These objectives were introduced on a higher scale during the Russian Occupation in the first half of the nineteenth century. Education in the Romanian language was encouraged. Its effect would be empowering the “national sentiment.” However, national and liberal ideas were rapidly discouraged by the authorities as soon as they started to strengthen. The author underlines that the vigorous intellectual class that was forming lacked the mechanical means to affirm itself: there were not enough typographies.

However, the publishing and writing business was slowly growing. The existence of satirical and clandestine poetry proves that literature was representing and influencing public opinion. Private typographies became commercial due to foreign language translations, even though the “national” production of literature was scarce. Also, the press had a tremendous effect on shaping public thinking. It was estimated that daily publishing and reading standardized the language and enhanced the common people’s vocabulary with terms such as “protest,” “protocol,” etc., which were crucial for the modernization of the public space.

At the same time, a group of intellectuals, *Dacia Literară*, was promoting national literature as a political force. It was high time for national literature to form, a literature inspired by national sentiment. Translations from foreign literatures had to subside in favor of an autochthonous production. In spite of this cultural achievement, there was still progress to be made in educating the people: the elites were applauding higher education, while commoners could hardly read. One example that the author gives is the mobile typography that the revolutionaries carried during the 1848 revolution: not all people could read the Revolution’s program, but the written material had a symbolic value.

In 1864 the Law for Public Education provided for mass alphabetization, even though the project may have been rather ambitious for its time. Public education was neither efficient, nor realistic when taking into consideration the actual cultural state of the nation. It was regarded both as an attempt of forced modernization and as a beneficent process. On the other hand, the author points out that public education gave, in time, the occasion for peasants to come into contact with higher culture and vice versa. This gave birth to the “peasant’s typology” which was advocated by one of the most influential literary movements of the end of the nineteenth century: *Junimea*. By promoting the peasants, Romanian literature would give citizens the ability to reflect upon their national identity and, at the same time, it would become part of European literature. Through the peasants, Romanian literature would develop the strength of expressing its specificities and national realities. Having a cultural identity which is depicted in a powerful

autochthonous literature is the sign that a nation has reached cultural modernity. However, as the author has shown, for Romania cultural modernity meant importing western values and practices while pursuing its own goal of defining a national identity. Putting education and publications at the center of public affairs would not change mentalities immediately, despite what some would optimistically hope.

Alex Drace-Francis succeeds in creating an unbiased, realistic image of the cultural process that shaped Romania's modern cultural identity. He gives pertinent reasons and explanations concerning the historical facts that link Romania to the rest of Europe and those that isolate it. His study is not only conclusive and erudite, but also provides new opportunities for debate concerning the role of cultural production and education in constructing and reflecting a nation's mentality.

Maria Crăciun

Thomas Franck, *Lecture phénoménologique du discours romanesque*, Limoges, Lambert-Lucas, 2017



Le volume signé par Thomas Franck avance une série de réflexions originales – non seulement du point de vue de la thématique abordée, mais aussi de l'instrumentaire herméneutique – sur l'influence que la phénoménologie (par ses voix fondamentales, à partir d'Edmund Husserl et jusqu'à Maurice Merleau-Ponty) a exercée sur les stratégies discursives du roman du XX^e

siècle. L'auteur s'interroge, en essence, sur les mécanismes par lesquels le roman existentieliste et le Nouveau Roman – paradigmes symptomatiques de l'évolution du genre au siècle passé – reconfigurent leur identité, dans un sens rhétorique, sous l'impact de la pensée philosophique de l'époque, centrée sur le rapport entre « une réalité phénoménale, une conscience individuelle et un corps positionné à la croisée de ces deux pôles ».

L'auteur part de la prémisse que le roman – formule de création privilégiée des écrivains du XX^e siècle – parvient à sortir de la crise à laquelle l'épistème réaliste du siècle précédent l'avait amené grâce à quelques solutions esthétiques dérivées de la phénoménologie. De plus, selon Thomas Franck, cette orientation philosophique conditionne et restructure l'architecture du genre romanesque et, en même temps, intègre des ressources nécessaires à l'exégèse des œuvres, tout en se transformant – à travers certains principes du courant – en instrumentaire de l'acte critique. Or, l'auteur justifie une telle proximité – du discours philosophique et du discours littéraire – en faisant appel à l'idée que, en fait, les deux configurations textuelles « s'inscrivent dans un même interdiscours ». Dans la perspective de ce que Thomas Franck appelle « le corps phénoménologique », les deux territoires majeurs que le volume essaye de radiographier – le roman existentieliste et le Nouveau Roman – se construisent dans une opposition en fonction de laquelle toutes les analyses proposées dans l'ouvrage vont s'articuler. Cependant, malgré les distinctions radicales entre les deux paradigmes – qui, à première vue, semblent irréconciliables –, ils peuvent être comparés, selon le chercheur français, « à l'aune d'une lecture phénoménologique du corps ».

Ainsi, la première section du livre, *Philosophie et littérature de conscience : approche socio-historique*, se propose de retracer – évoquant l'autorité de Merleau-Ponty, par exemple, ou de Bergson – l'histoire d'une influence que la phénoménologie et la philosophie de la conscience ont assumée dans leur dialogue avec l'histoire littéraire française du début du XX^e siècle. En investissant l'intervalle 1900-1940, le chercheur découpe trois échantillons nodaux pour la compréhension de l'évolution d'un tel dialogue : le roman proustien (considéré – grâce aux « artifices » de la représentation du corps d'Albertine – comme un représentant d'une étape pré-phénoménologique), le roman de Paul Valéry (qui marque, dans l'histoire littéraire, une transgression du simple dualisme corps-esprit) et le roman de Jules Romains (vu comme un précurseur du simultanésisme, puisque Romains « élabore en quelque sorte une psychologie de groupe »). Ensuite, Thomas Franck délimitera, avec des arguments des plus pertinents, les lignes générales qui pourraient rassembler – dans un sens phénoménologique – différents auteurs autour des deux courants que nous annonçons « apparemment opposés » : le roman existentialiste et le Nouveau Roman.

Rhétoriques romanesques du corps phénoménologique : analyse du corpus, après avoir passé en revue l'opposition entre Sartre et Robbe-Grillet, deux auteurs qui « abordent différemment le rapport entre la conscience dirigée et les phénomènes appréhendés », propose une taxonomie du concept d'épochè – compris en fonction de ses conséquences rhétoriques –, classifié comme épochè extra-diégétique (dans les romans existentialistes, qui se situent dans la connaissance du monde) et épochè

intra-diégétique (interne à l'action, dans le Nouveau Roman, qui est en « désaccord » avec la connaissance du monde). Une autre taxonomie avancée par ce volume est celle du *corps intentionnel* et du *corps charnel* : si le *corps existentialiste* reste « un relais d'une conscience intentionnelle dégradée face au monde magique » (comme le confirmera l'analyse des hypostases qu'il emprunte dans la vision de Camus, entre autres, ou de Sartre), le *corps du Nouveau Roman* se distingue par sa colorature érotique, charnelle, réifiée (comme en témoigne le cas emblématique de Robbe-Grillet). Il faut également mentionner l'option de Thomas Franck d'analyser l'œuvre de Le Clézio, un écrivain qui constitue une figure distinctive par la manière dont il conjugue, en même temps, les réminiscences de l'existentialisme et du Nouveau Roman.

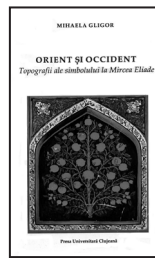
Les deux dernières sections traitent des implications discursives propres à l'influence de la phénoménologie sur le littéraire : *La chair du langage : perspectives théoriques* étudie – dans un sens merleau-pontien – la capacité des gestes corporels de représenter une expression poétique (dans le sillage du philosophe français, l'auteur évoque la capacité des expressions corporelles de s'instituer comme des objectivations de la parole singulière), tout en abordant, dans le même ordre d'idées, les artifices créateurs « générés » par la *chair existentialiste* et par la *chair néo-romanesque* (avec des exemples suggestifs de Sartre, entre autres, ou de Robbe-Grillet). À partir des contributions du célèbre phénoménologue, Merleau-Ponty, *rhétoricien et analyste du discours : perspectives méthodologiques* énoncera une série de procédés d'interrogation du texte, en revenant – avec de nouvelles perspectives – aux grands

débats liés aux problématiques du discours (par exemple, dans *(Re) motivation émotive du signe*, où le chercheur français repense, dans la même ligne merleau-pontienne, les principes de la linguistique saussurienne).

Richement documenté, avançant des pistes interprétatives des plus prometteuses et des arguments méritoires, le volume de Thomas Franck propose une vision originale et convaincante sur le discours romanesc du XX^e siècle, doublée par des solutions herméneutiques qui ont toutes les chances de faire carrière.

Marius Popa

Mihaela Gligor, *Orient și Occident. Topografii ale simbolului la Mircea Eliade*, Cluj-Napoca, Editura Universității Babeș-Bolyai, 2016



“Symbolic thinking ‘breaks’ the immediate reality without subduing it or depreciating it; in its perspective, the universe is not closed. No object can remain isolated in its own existentiality: they all bind to one another through a close system of correspondences and assimilations,” writes Mircea Eliade in *Images and Symbols*. Eliade’s essay on magic-religious symbolism succeeded in fictionally transcribing a valid truth, not only at the level of his cultural fascination, his studies and work, but also at the level of his entire personality; young Eliade had a dream, an ardent desire to know the East, especially India, and was caught in this karmic chain of the universe that guided his way towards becoming the scholarly admired, world-renewed Eliade.

This path of formation is also the ground of Mihaela Gligor’s book – *East and West. Topographies of the symbol in Mircea Eliade’s Works*, published in 2016 at Cluj University Press. Mihaela Gligor speaks about Mircea Eliade as being a trailblazer, a personality that has influenced many, in the paper being presented dozens of quotations and mentions of such people marked by Eliade’s personality, among which is the author herself: “I was in high school when I first read *Maitreyi* and thanks to this reading, my life has changed radically. I chose to study Philosophy because Mircea Eliade, in his turn, had studied Philosophy.” This profound admiration of the author takes the form of several studies and researches: her doctoral thesis is titled *Mircea Eliade and the Far Right*, and from the desire to share this fascination with India, the author has even founded and leads the Indian Cultural Center in Cluj-Napoca.

The 2016 volume by Mihaela Gligor is written in the same vein, aiming to make Mircea Eliade known to the audience, starting from the “short-sighted adolescent,” the young writer, to the recognized, respected researcher and school creator. The transformation of Mircea Eliade is mapped and loaded with significance, the road being a union between the bookish and the existential level, in correspondence with the evolution of the symbol in his works on the history and philosophy of religions. Mihaela Gligor wants to facilitate the best understanding of the “Eliade myth,” but also, beyond myth, his human side.

The topographies described in the 5 chapters of the book are: Calcutta, Bucharest, Lisbon, Paris and Chicago. If we were to look at this route as the hero’s initial

journey, we would say that in Calcutta there was a change within our main character, Eliade, “and it put in him the seed of the scholar that he became many years later, after a meeting with the West,” followed by the accumulation of knowledge and the training, the initiation being completed in Chicago, where he had the freedom to fully write and follow his interests, where he understood what his responsibility was as the initiator of the history of religions discipline.

In the first section, titled *At the Gates of the East. Mircea Eliade in India*, we are witnesses to the first formative experiences of the Westerner who is passionate about the Orient: the mysterious initiatory meeting with India, which has become a space of training. Mihaela Gligor follows with sensitivity all of Eliade’s interactions with Surendranath Dasgupta, poet Rabindranath Tagore, Claude Henri Rocquet, Dr. Stella Kramrisch and other of his teachers, portraying their figures and their influence alike.

The meeting with Maitreyi Devi becomes a special moment, presented in a romantic light together with the fictional testimonies. This is also the point where, in the mind of the scientist, there are born the concepts that will later on be developed: *homo religiosus*, archetypes, the nostalgia for paradise and many others.

The second chapter, *Myths of Inter-war Bucharest*, surprises Eliade outside the sacred geography and spiritual circle of India, but rather inside the city so special for him: Bucharest, the geography of the native place. India’s planted seed began to bear fruit in the early years, in the form of several published fictional or scientific books, an interest in the history of religions,

the crystallization of his conception of the symbol and the sacred, the first steps in his academic activity, and other consequential meetings with people such as Emil Cioran, Constantin Noica, and Mihail Sebastian within the Criterion project, a society that had a beneficial effect on the epoch – “existentialism was spoken about here for the first time” (Mircea Eliade – *The Labyrinth Test*). Other isolated moments are related to Professor Nae Ionescu, an idealized personality who was a mentor and good friend to Eliade, the episode of the Preface to Mihail Sebastian’s novel, *For Two Thousand Years...* and the moment of the Zalmoxis magazine, which, although short, laid the bases of his plan for the *Traite d’histoire des religions*.

Being a chapter with a diachronic character, Mihaela Gligor presents us the Capital as encompassing two types of geography and it should be read in this key: “a mythical, symbolic one, which has to be analyzed with hermeneutical instruments [...] and a real one that coincides with the authentic topography of interwar Bucharest.”

Os Romenos, Latinos de Oriente. And other lusitos symbols, the third chapter, captures the period Eliade spent in Portugal, combining pictures of his intimate life with Nina, and his diplomatic life. This time, he had significant meetings with Jose Ortega i Gasset, Eugenio d’Ors and Salazar, interspersed with on-going work on various papers, especially around the idea of hierophany. Although this was a thriving professional period, Portugal became a “space of mourning.” “Here remains Nina, the eighth part of my life and many sufferings,” the author authentically captures these experiences of Eliade’s.

His departure to France, captured in the chapter called *Yoga in Paris. Eliade, the spoiled of the West*, opens up a career in the West. Under the influence and care of his teacher, Dumézil, Eliade's list of scientific papers grows; his curiosities about yoga and the morphology of religions take concrete forms, eventually impeccably illustrated in the *Traite d'histoire des religions*.

In the last phase of his life and his career, illustrated in the last chapter – *Chicago Encyclopedia* – we find Eliade in America, Chicago, along with professors and students at Divinity School. Mihaela Gligor identifies a correspondence between his academic activity and his interests, a harmonious blend of the objective and the subjective, as Eliade always knew to balance his personal life with his career as a scholar. The apogee of his creation, this period was marked by the publication of the volumes of *Histoire des croyances et des idées religieuses* and *Traite d'histoire des religions*, his friendship with Paul Ricoeur and the centering of *homo religiosus*.

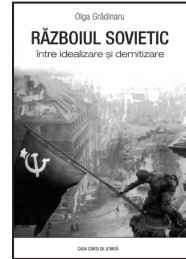
The whole work is sprinkled with quotes and testimonies, stories and criticisms of Mircea Eliade by others, whether students, critics, friends, people who knew him or not, but which he left an impression on or whom he influenced. “In one way or another, the meeting with Eliade changed everyone” – Mihaela Gligor. By doing this work, the author validates her passion for Eliade's heritage.

Mihaela Gligor succeeds in achieving her goal of making others see the “Eliade myth” and thus creates not only an itinerary of Eliade's journey, but also a travel journal in which a reader can find himself. The change that took place inside Eliade's

life becomes the change that can take place in each of us.

Mălina Coșan

Olga Grădinaru, *Războiul sovietic între idealizare și demitizare*, Cluj-Napoca, Casa Cărții de Știință, 2018



An outstanding insight of the Soviet literature from early 1920s to the post-Stalin Era of the previous century, centred upon World War II, *The Soviet War between Idealization and Demystification* offers a panoramic view of the war as an object of ideology. It tackles the concept of education through literature in a specific way (the ideal of fighting a battle, the war hero), the characters being models whose behavior, ideas and sacrifice are supposed to teach young generations a manner of being.

Literature in History or History in Literature? Or Both? History through Literature written to illustrate *The War* – as if it was useful, necessary and compulsory – tends to be the main theme of the novels chosen for analysis. The book covers a wide approach to literature phenomena, pointing, describing and illustrating the soviet socialist realism as a literary trend and all the implications regarding narration, descriptive passages in stories, character features, role-models, an attitude of duty and sacrifice for a cause: to protect the country. War is that heroic act where tragedy, sorrow makes human nature transcend frontiers to the ideal, to the ultimate sacrifice.

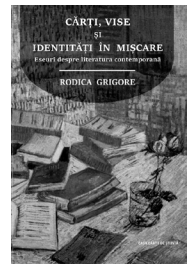
Literature through History appears to be a major factor of propaganda for important political and social movements, in a century challenged by oppression, Marxism and socialist ideology. War literature is conceived to transform squalor, misery, hideous and abominable features into heroism, an act of duty that the individual performs for the country. The materials chosen for analysis illustrate several perspectives on war: the revolutionary one – specific to the transition period, the First World War, the Russian Civil War; the heroic-romantic perspective – specific to the Second World War and the next wave of prose in the Stalinist period; the psychological perspective – particularly illustrated during the post-Stalinist era by the generation of combatants; the philosophical perspective – that refers to the post-Stalinist period. Names like Alexandr Fadeev, Boris Polevoi, Leonid Leonov, Iuri Bondarev are brought into our attention. The first author describes war as a generator of heroes, the second transforms it into an idealized trauma, the third one makes the war a metaphor and the last one illustrates demystification. The trajectory of descriptions is relevant for the image of war and for that of the universal soldier – they invite next generation to participate in war, rather than make peace. The soldier is a perfect example to be followed, in *The Great War to Protect the Country*.

A passionate reader, fascinated by the image of war, society and History in Russian literature and films, appreciated for her studies and approaches on different topics related to these, Olga Grădinaru reveals the context, the motivation, the facts of the stories, but also the limits of literary criticism in an era dominated by social

movements and political changes. Well organized and documented, *The Soviet War between Idealization and Demystification* gathers information, makes a statement in the title and brings arguments that support it. Above all, the book is a unique source for further research as the references in Russian are not usually accessible due to language barriers.

Anamaria Moldovan

Rodica Grigore, *Cărți, vise și identități în mișcare, Eseuri despre literatura contemporană*, Cluj-Napoca, Casa Cărții de Știință, 2018



In the context of world literature, it is barely impossible for the contemporary reader to settle down to a specific literary genre or culture. Beginning with this premise, Rodica Grigore's collection of essays, reunited under the title *Cărți, vise și identități în mișcare* (*Books, dreams and identities in motion*), becomes an invitation to reading, to the discovery of contemporary literature and its substantial relationship with the past. As announced in the preface, written by the author herself, the book is centered on the intersection between memory and imagination. Separated into two well balanced segments, which are entitled: *Lectură și Literatură* (*Reading and Literature*) and respectively *Istorie vs. Rememberare* (*History vs. Remembrance*), this work undertakes an authentic analysis on a few representative novels from different cultural coordinates. The purpose of this

selection is to help readers understand the role played by identities in motion, in order to comprehend their own existence and place in the world (p.5).

The essay that opens the book is dedicated to Octavio Paz, the Nobel Prize (1990) and Cervantes Prize (1982) award-ee, who is considered the Latin-American writer who has changed the face of the Mexican literature forever. Here Rodica Grigore begins an analysis on the connection between poetry, tradition and modernity, based on Pez's essay *Los hijos del limo: del romanticismo a la vanguardia* (*Children of the Mire: Modern Poetry from Romanticism to the Avant-Garde*, 1974), where the author talks about a true tradition of skipping generations. The Avant-Garde being always positioned against the central element that characterize the works of their immediate predecessors (p. 11). The specific feature of modernity is represented by this violent schism, which allows the artist to initiate a more profound search for his roots. The conclusion drawn by the author is that modern art is modern exactly because it is critique (p. 19) and the poem is the result of the rhythm given by the obsessions and beliefs of the poet and society (p. 11).

Shakespeare, Marlowe & Burgess is the title of another essay included in this book, which, is concerned with the oppositions that occur during the process of reinterpreting a subject that belongs to the domain of history rather than literature. The author of the 1962 dystopian novel, *A Clockwork Orange*, has a specific interest in the enigmas that surround the fragmentary biographies of the two most emblematic authors in the Elizabethan era and Western Civilization. William Shakespeare and

Christopher Marlowe become the protagonists of Anthony Burgess' later novels *Nothing Like the Sun* (1964) and *A Dead Man in Deptford* (1993). The two novels, as we find out from the essay, are written based on the fundamental oppositions that arise between reality and fiction. Moreover, the author is interested in the way in which art, understood as fiction, manages to restore a historical subject that belongs to a specific time period (p. 29). The role of the artist, as Burgess affirms, is to give sense to a world dominated by chaos (p. 30) and, because of this, his novels becomes the expression of a world which is suffocated by irreconcilable contrasts (p. 36).

Another novel treated by the author is *La figlia del papa* (*The Pope's Daughter*, 2014) by the emblematic Dario Fo, a text which, as we learn while reading about it, hardly harmonizes with the rules of the literary genre (p. 116). The book is centered on the figure of Lucrezia Borgia, the archetypal image of a seductress who lacks any common sense (p. 117). Lucrezia is believed to be modeled after Franca Rame, the wife of the author and due to this aspect, she is analyzed lucidly but empathically, the focus lining on her intelligence and culture, rather than on her Machiavellian performance. There are numerous affiliations with the dramatical art, because while treating a subject from the past the author manages to address problematics that concern the present of Italy, while achieving a recontextualization of the *el gran teatro del mundo* (p. 119).

Even though an endeavor to convene so many emblematic titles under a single cover means a hazardous work, Rodica Grigore manages to accomplish such a tedious task. This book is an eye-opener

when it comes to choosing what to read and how to approach contemporary literature. A hermeneutic guide for contemporary writings where fiction becomes the best way to learn the truth about the world (p. 119), while the lesson of the great literature, as the author says, is essential for the formation and evolution of modern literary creation.

Diana Capotă

Incursiuni in imaginar, no. 6, *Myth, Fairy Tale, Legend. Mutations of the Narrative Core*, Alba-Iulia, Universitatea 1 Decembrie 1918, 2015



The members of the Speculum Research Centre from the “1 December 1918” University of Alba-Iulia return in 2015 with the sixth volume of the contemporary literature journal *Incursiuni in imaginar*, choosing the theme for this number: *Myth, Fairy Tale, Legend. Mutations of the Narrative Core*. The motivation for this theme is found in the desire to prove the continuity of mythical structures, occurrences, characters, symbols through a new type of fiction. Mythology, while it is inevitably connected to society and the moment of its occurrence and it cannot be segregated from culture and environment, will still undergo changes. These changes never happen to its structure, but rather to its complementary elements. Thus, in contemporary times, we witness a process of deconstructing these myths and rebuilding them within the new realms of actuality.

The magazine contains a significant number of lectures, case studies and

commentaries showcasing multiple perspectives on the mythical text that becomes literature in the 20th century. The topics vary from the characters, narrative perspectives and religion to cultural or geographical places and even if the research puts in contrast old texts with new ones, it also seeks a mutual basis at a structural level. A series of questions emerge while doing this type of analysis. Is there an autonomy of myths? Can we talk about originality in the postmodern era?

“Myths are not timeless narratives of universal value, but historical constructions” is something that Maria-Ana Tupan says in her essay “Orphic Instances at the Antipodes of Europe.” The analyzed character, Orpheus, goes through the palimpsestic overlapping of values: from the ridiculous image of Ancient Greece and the sacerdotal image of the Balkan civilization, to the image of the medieval king estranged from the nature of Sir Orfeo. Although the mythical character has a well-established identity in the consciousness of the Antiquity, throughout history he circulates fragmentarily and altered, capturing in his image the development of the society.

Gabriela Chiciudean shows a new perspective to the mythical hero in contemporary times. The 20th century is marked by the influence of Greek-Latin myths, and even rewritten, they still succeed in integrating themselves in modern days, fascinating through this display of adaptability. But what are the changes that occur? By using three examples (Sisyphus, Icarus and Midas), Gabriela Chiciudean show how these classical characters brought into post-modernism suffer a form of alienation, and their initiatory journey turns into a journey of adapting or escaping from our world. The heroes start wandering in a desolate

landscape, surrounded by a society marked by the communist totalitarian era, as we will find in the work of Milan Kundera, *L'ignorance*. Sonia Elvireanu mirrors the Homeric myth with Kundera's rewriting of the *Odyssey*: the image of the emigrant is overlapped with the exiles of the ancient myth. Kundera himself, an emigrant to France in 1975, translates his own experiences into these new nuances added to Homer's story. Thus, the glorious exile from which Ulysses returns triumphantly becomes the trauma of the contemporary character, for which time changes the familiar landscape, estranging it.

Another feature that is present in post-modern rewritings is not only the desacralization of the characters, but also a rupture within rites of passage such as funeral, marriage. Liliana Floria discusses the state of rite and symbol in the postmodernism of Cărtărescu in *Travesti*. The text envisions the role of myth and ceremonial in contemporary society in the context of an erotic initiation modelled after the specificity of the one in Greek Antiquity. The purpose of this process is the acquirement of self-knowledge, maturation and mystical comprehension of the individual's place in the universe, triggered by the young man's acknowledgement of his androgyny. The main character of the novel, Victor, becomes a Narcissus aware of the mirror's trap and the necessity of loving an alterity, but he can only "exorcise the demon of loneliness" by descending into the inner abyss of the self. Liliana Floria tells us that such a ritual of recognizing and validating the androgynous state is also practiced in some areas in Romania, somewhere in Banat.

Another argument framed by the Romanian landscape is *Transformations of the Fantastic Fairy Tale* of Mihaela Bal. Based on folkloric research focusing on the structure

of the funeral ceremonies and the wailing process in some villages in Făget (Banat), it captures the condition of contemporary fairy tales. While talking with the villagers, Bal concludes that entities such as ghouls have gone through a change of values: the ghoul becomes in the tales of the villagers a mysterious white woman who brings bad luck. There is a shift from representing the supranatural towards a preference for the strange, a fact caused by the contamination of folk imagery through the intrusion of the modern. Movies like *Dracula*, adapting Bram Stoker's novel, interfere with popular narration and change it, giving birth to kitsch. Not every rewriting and reinvention brings a tribute to the aesthetic depth of the original, often ridiculing and ironically putting down legends or folk customs.

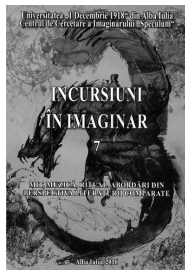
Parading through a variety of other titles, such as *The Magic Toyshop – A Feminist Interpretation of Myths*, Sorin Titel – *Landmarks on the Geography of the Imaginary or the Dialects of the Circle*, *The Demythisation of Folklore in Ioan Slavici's Short Stories* or *Of 2 Enoch to the Book of Revelation. Two Authors, One novel*, one in particular, or more exactly the question it poses, is chiefly of interest: *Octavian Paler – Why does the modern world no longer create myths?* (Mariana-Simona Vîrtan). In *Mythological Slander*, Paler affirms that modernity is no longer capable of creating myths as powerful as those of Antiquity or characters as strong and memorable as Don Juan, Don Quixote, Faust or Hamlet. The modern narratorial voice is found lacking when compared to its previous counterparts, unable to extract any more unaltered meaning from sources once sacred and now tainted by the irony of the present times.

If an explanation were to be given for the fascination that exists for all the mysteries

and chimeras of the ancient myths, it could be called the “Saint George syndrome” – we are all caught in the image of a hero fighting the darkness. As Leszek Kolakowski, who was quoted in the pages of this magazine, says: “images exist in us and we are in our pictures.” But as modernity reached a saturation of the mythological archetypes, new ways to reintroduce the myth into literature had to be found, using elements of the ironic and invoking the effect of the surprise. Literature is no longer written for the winners; it belongs to the frustrated and neurotic. Time is no longer siding with the heroes; it works in their absence to leave unrecognizable traces. The modern narrator becomes a new demiurge of relative, marginal values in an attempt to rectify the whole. Even if the mirror of Antiquity is now broken, its fragments still continue to be reassembled and give birth to new forms that eventually will materialize in another reality.

Mălina Coșan

Incursiuni in imaginar,
no. 7, Mit, muzică, ritual.
Abordări din perspectiva
literaturii comparate,
Universitatea 1
Decembrie 1918, Alba-
Iulia, 2016



Under the tutelage of the Center for Studies of the Imaginary at the University “1 Decembrie 1918” of Alba-Iulia, the 7th volume of *Incursiuni în imaginar* (Inursions into the Imaginary), coordinated by Gabriela Chiciudean, brings together a collection of studies which disseminates the myth-music-ritual trichotomy and the

forms it takes depending on the types of discourse. Thus, the literary, theatrical, anthropological and dogmatic perspectives are only a few of them. Through Rodica G. Chira’s foreword, the reader is given a short insight into the concept of myth, as understood by Bidermann and Scharfstein, Barthes and Bultman, and synthesized as a method to interpret the reality through a narratological way, as well as a “camouflaged political message” and “a metamorphosis of themes which are not limited by cultural and historical boundaries”.

The first essay, written by Alina Bako, bearing the title *Muzicalitate narativă în romanul românesc* (Narrative Musicality in the Romanian Novel), offers an enthralling transposition of the musical speech onto the literary one, operating with Jean-Louis Backès’s concept of narrative musicality: the repetitiousness of the characters’ structures can be seen as the recurrence of some themes in music. Aude Locatelli’s theory on the “semiotic exchange” between music and literature and the “adoption” of the interpretative strategies that Frédérique Arroyas discusses about are also major assumptions that Alina Bako will speculate when analyzing two Romanian novels from the 20th century: *Lumea în două zile* by George Bălăiță and *Zadarnică e arta de a fugi* by Dumitru Țepeneag. This phenomenon of merging the two elements has grown in such a way that made Steve Brown conceptualize it even more by naming it as “musilanguage”.

In *Recreating Fairytale Context Through the Imaginary*, Cristina Raluca Barna unmasks the mechanisms through which a myth can be rewritten by giving as a main example the fascinating case of King Ludwig II of Bavaria, who tried in the 19th

century to revive the forgotten time of chivalry. This late Don Quixote reshaped his reality based on codes that were no longer compatible with the period he lived in, which did not stop him in the preposterous attempt to embody those principles. The metamorphosis and reification of the myth is preceded by the emptying of its formal meaning so the transformation can take place. "The Arthurian signifiers are slipping under the signified of ancient German mythology, refurbished by Wagner" as Raluca Barna states, continuing her study with a look upon the way Disney movies also reiterate myths, oppositely to the previous case.

Gabriela Chiciudean draws a brief history of one of the most exploited narrative structures starting from the Greeks, reaching the modern French adaptations and ending with 2010's reinterpretations in *Electra's Myth in Theatre Representations*, demonstrating the fertility of myths and their viability no matter the culture or the time. The study elaborates in-depth descriptions of the theatrical representations based on Electra's myth, providing a better understanding of the interconnection between ritual, music and dance and how this relationship is shaped on stage at different times. This tripartite dependency became the fascination of Lucian Pintilie, who directed Aurel Stroe's *Choeforele* (The Libation Bearers), searching for their perfect alignment when staged at Avignon Festival in 1979.

Another essay, *Between Cantation and Incantation. The Architecture of the Magical Poetics* discusses the mythical elements in Mircea Eliade's short story, *În curtea la Dionis* (In the courtyard of Dionis), regarded by the author, Liliana Floria Danciu, as a

pursuit to recreate the fractured primordial androgyny as well as the poet-muse, now-separated couple. Leana and Adrian are "the symbol-characters who send to the primary prototypes of the Sun and the Moon, the Star and the Savior, or the couples Dionysus-Apollo, Gebeleizis-Zalmoxis". Following the Gnostic pattern, Leana would be the "celestial Sophia" waiting to be freed from the material imprisonment, but Liliana Danciu joins also with the Kabbalistic scheme of the Sephirothic tree and the orphic cosmogony, which leads to a curious spiral of coded name associations, and a musicality which ritually must be quested and restored.

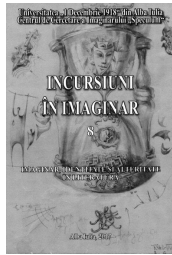
Ovidiu Ivancu questions in *Myth, utopia, modernity* the legitimacy and most importantly, the benefits of the existence of myths in the 21st century's society, starting from the coordinates given by Barthes (the transformation of a meaning into form and the language-robbery) and those given by Jung (the unlimited manifestations of the archetype whose resources are infinite). He follows throughout this inquiry the mythological bases upon which a society is formed and its (im)possibility to eradicate those reminiscences in time, even in the utopian context, on the account of this architectural volatility. Among other issues, the author examines the mutations Hesiod's Golden Age has suffered and the probability of mythological structures withstanding the so-called crises of images in a post-culture era.

These are only a few of the solid, well-documented studies the publication congregates around a provoking volume which investigates the relevance of myths, not only through an isolated and restrictive social perspective, but with the help of

interdisciplinary instruments and inseparable from music and ritual. Ovidiu Ivan-cu provokes the reader to further research with a long-standing debate starting from the question “Are there any new myths or just reenactments of the old ones?” to which the authors are struggling to give an answer.

Anda Duman

Incursiuni în imaginar, no. 8, *Imaginar, identitate și alteritate în literatură*, Alba-Iulia, Universitatea 1 Decembrie 1918, 2017



Incursiuni în imaginar (*Insights into the Imaginary*) is an annual magazine of comparative literature dedicated to the exploration of social, historic, religious, literary and imaginative studies. This issue is centred on the rather broad theme of “Imaginary, identity and alterity in literature”, a theme that, as the volume shows, was treated from various points of view. Our own nature is based on the concepts of “identity” and “alterity”, which shape the way in which we integrate ourselves in the world and relate to the others, and history itself has multiple proofs to underline the importance of the fact that all centuries have gone through the process of learning through interaction with the alterity. Nowadays, globalization has also brought together a multitude of different cultures, religions and lifestyles, therefore such words as “acceptance”, “diversity” or “integration” have never been as popular in the artistic spheres as they are now. Through

the invaluable contributions of various researchers, this volume gives the readers a couple of original and diversified views on the relationship between oneself and the rest of the world, with the noble purpose of bringing them all closer to each other through art.

Although all essayists (with just one exception) are Romanian and therefore chose to write about Romanian prose, they all look at alterity from a different angle, which makes the volume a comprehensive map of the various representations that this theme has had in Romania. Alina Bako opens the book by analysing the alterity in the contemporary feminine prose. By looking at Doina Ruști’s novel, “Mâța Vinerii”, she points out the ability with which the author portrays the alterity of the Balkan-Oriental atmosphere: everything happens in a Phanariot Bucharest where several characters, representing several cultures (the Greeks, the Turks, the Romanians), coexist, thus transforming the city into a multicultural space where the alterity is at home. Dominated by a strong accent on the sensorial sphere, where the senses mix under the patronage of oriental culture, the narrative shows the evolution of the characters, who start by behaving in complete accordance with the general stereotypes about them, but who end by understanding the importance of adapting and of identifying themselves with the others, who represent, in the end, just another form of their own alterity.

The second essay focuses on some life histories from the Greek Civil War (1946-1949), namely the stories of the Greek children brought in Romania with the help of the Red Cross, who were thus saved from the war and successfully

integrated into Romanian communities. Although their strong sense of identity made their living in this new country harder and sometimes influenced their life decisions in important ways, the Romanian hospitality helped them adapt and drop the cultural barriers between them and their new families. By choosing to see the good surrounding them too, rather than thinking only about their lost country, they focused less on their identity of being Greek and more on the one of simply being human, which was deeply shared by the Romanians as well.

The volume continues with Liliana Danciu's study about "the stages of consciousness in reaching the ideal of alterity at Mircea Eliade". By analysing the ideas he explored in the short-story entitled "The secret of Dr. Honigberger", she mentions the yoga practices that are able to help humanity leave the material world behind and unite with the soul of the universe. According to Eliade, everything can be subsumed to the distinction between the sacred and the profane, and the individual understood as identity is always captive in the latter, dominated by physical needs and desires. In order to reach the sacred and free themselves from the constraints of this life while they are still alive, people have to identify themselves with the alterity, in order to become one with the Universal Divinity. However, this process of transforming your profane self into a sacred "other" is extremely dangerous: as the protagonist of the story learns, there are certain forces which can end up controlling you, if your initiation is not done under strict supervision of an already initiated yogi.

There is also an essay that discusses a specific figure of alterity from the

Romanian fairytales, namely that of the ophidian. This character is presented as an intruder in all the existential plans of the fairytale – as he violates "spatial and intimate delimitations" of the female characters, "virgins (profane) and fairies (sacred) alike". In the sacred-profane key of interpretation, the virgin stands for the soul captive in the profane temporality, but also open to the sacred, which is touched by it through being kidnapped by the ophidian. The prince who comes to rescue her is a human with messianic virtues, filled with sacred energies with the scope of rebalancing the world's equilibrium through the supernatural act of saving the princess and killing the ophidian. His interference with the profane world generates destiny's reaction of sending a hero; the story begins by the need of the sacred not be forgotten and ends by it being reminded of its place within the creation.

Furthermore, the works of two other Romanian writers are analysed: Dumitru Țepeneag and Octavian Paler. On the one hand, the first one's writings are centred on his split identity (between the Romanian and the French culture): like him, his characters are alienated, they lack ontological consistency and they behave like wandering shadows. His main idea is that all exiles have a hybrid identity: although the inherited one is included in the one that people receive throughout their existence through the contact with the others, the latter seems to prevail anyway, as the characters gradually lose their initial condition and become grotesque masks of what they once were, vulnerable now from the contact with alterity. On the other hand, Paler insists on permanently confronting his past with his present, convinced that

only in this way can the present be better understood. However, this dooms him to loneliness and also to the realization of the fact that one can feel lonely even when surrounded by thousands of other people. Still, this is the feeling that dominates the modern man in general, so through the very condition of feeling alone among the others can everyone actually identify themselves with every other member of the alterity as well.

With yet another perspective, Aritina Micu-Otelea underlines the importance of the spatial dimension as well, when it comes to what alterity means. By writing about the outskirts and their varied connections with the centrality of the city, she points out their diversified nature and thus their relevance in making each city unique and memorable in literature. The outskirts make the transition between the city and the village and are the place where any type of human being can be found. However, despite the general negative outlook that is cast upon these places, there should be no moral judgment from the readers, because what actually makes the outskirts different and thus part of the alterity is a simple difference of cultural codes and values.

Last but not least, Silviu Mihăilă chooses to present Zoe Dumitrescu-Buşulenga's view about Mihai Eminescu's poetry, by referring to his religious identity as it is perceived in connection with his poetical imaginary. She identifies three parts of this identity - the poet is seen as atheist, religious and romantic - and analyses certain poems that prove the validity of each of these three ways of seeing Eminescu's work. Through his desire of seeking truth, faith and knowledge, he seems to go

through a continuous pilgrimage with ups and downs, namely a never-ending spiritual journey towards God and the elevation of the soul.

All things considered, this issue of *Insights into the imaginary* offers a multitude of perspectives on the theme of alterity in literature: whether it is about our relationships with the others or the things that differentiate us but also make us special, we should understand that we all have multiple identities (local, familial, national, religious etc.) and that everything we experience throughout this life will shape our personality in a way or another. But the volume also has a warning for the contemporary reader: if in the previous decades people have had a strong sense of identity and were hardly accepting the existence of alterity near them, nowadays the situation has been reversed. With the help of the power of consumerism and artificiality that dominate our technological era, the society has become so good in manipulating people that they no longer know who they are. "The others" are everywhere now and almost everybody shapes their life in accordance to what the social media says. However, people are lonelier than ever and any real connection between people begins to disappear. But to the question about whether the relation between "identity" and "alterity" will change or will remain the same, only time has the answer.

Maria Barbu

Simona Jișa, Bianca-Livia Bartoș, Yvonne Goga (coord.), *Réécrire les mythes*, Cluj-Napoca, Editura Casa Cărții de Știință, 2017



Les analyses réunies dans ce volume *Réécrire les mythes*, dirigé par Simona Jișa, Bianca Bartoș et Yvonne Goga, et qui recueille les communications présentées dans le cadre de la Journée d'études doctorales organisée par le Centre d'Étude du Roman Français Actuel (CERFA) de la Faculté des Lettres de Cluj-Napoca en juin 2017, donnent des réponses spécifiques à la problématique des mythes littéraires et de leur réécriture. Les contributeurs visent les procédés par lesquels différents mythèmes réorganisent autant la structure externe du récit, que celle interne de la signification romanesque. Dans ce contexte, les mythes traditionnels ne deviennent pas seulement un prétexte de « réécriture », mais ils constituent aussi un matériel-archétype qui, projeté dans l'espace fictionnel, donne naissance, par un processus imaginaire dynamique, à de nouveaux mythes.

Dans le cadre de ce débat, Bianca-Livia Bartoș montre comment les motifs décelés dans une structure latente de l'imaginaire mythique de quelques romans baziniens, à savoir la révolte, la punition, le combat pour l'humanité, s'attachent à la figure de Prométhée et à celle de Sisyphe et arrivent, par une sorte de contamination avec « le mythe négatif de la mère persécutrice », à réinvestir symboliquement la construction romanesque et à créer « le mythe du révolté chez Hervé Bazin ». Dans un autre article, dédié au roman *L'enfant*

Méduse, Roxana Maximilean révèle au début, par l'analyse de quelques interviews, le fait que, pour Sylvie Germain, la fiction n'est pas une simple adaptation d'un mythe ancestral, « un choix esthétique », mais une façon d'y intégrer, par une certaine intentionnalité fictionnelle, des mythèmes qui correspondent aux thèmes, motifs, décors des mythes archaïques. Ces mythèmes, dit l'écrivaine elle-même, « conviennent au contexte », « sont pertinents », puisqu'ils ont une dimension transhistorique qui leur donne une disponibilité novatrice. Concernant Michel Tournier, Laura-Codruța Turcu explique que « la réécriture de l'histoire des rois mages » dans le roman *Gaspard, Melchior & Balthasar*, procède par « un excès de précision concernant le côté mythique » qui définit non pas une dimension fantastique, mais comme dit Michel Tournier dans *Le vent Paraquet*, « un hyperréalisme, un hyperrationalisme ». Une remarque intéressante, faite par l'auteure de l'article, vise le concept de Pierre Ourlet, de la « métaphorisation visuelle », considéré comme étant un principe ordonnateur qui « engendre et structure » l'univers romanesque de Michel Tournier, mais qui répond aussi, dans un contexte mythique de la Genèse et de l'Incarnation, à la transformation de *la vue en vision* capable de percer les rapports de similitude d'un monde créé selon « le modèle de la ressemblance » où « l'humain reflète indéfiniment la même image de Dieu ».

Si les mythes traditionnels rencontrent un nouveau contexte de réception, il semble que parfois leur « accomplissement » symbolique ne fonctionne plus. Dora Mănăstire nous montre comment, dans le cas d'un écrivain tel Michel Houellebecq, le mythe de Sisyphe, le mythe de l'Atlantide

ou celui de l'androgynisme ne représentent que des prétextes ou des cadres pour la création d'un mythe complémentaire qui est celui de l'écriture où l'avènement de la figure de l'écrivain correspond à l'« exploit » de créer un univers qui se veut un modèle universel.

D'autres démarches interprétatives mettent en évidence la création d'un « mythe du vêtement » dans le roman *La Curée* d'Émile Zola, mais aussi une réactualisation herméneutique du mythe de Médée à travers les essais de Pascal Quignard. Ainsi, la manière dont est saisi le regard de Médée dans différentes fresques pompéiennes, mais aussi la manière dont est décrit l'épisode d'avant la folie meurtrière dans les hypotextes antiques, influencent les re-sémantisations opérées sur ce mythe. En plus, la création des « mythes familiaux » dans le roman *Vies minuscules* de Pierre Michon part, selon Alina Pintican, du désir de l'écrivain de « ranimer la mémoire familiale », mais aussi de créer une « identité propre à l'homme et à l'écrivain Michon ».

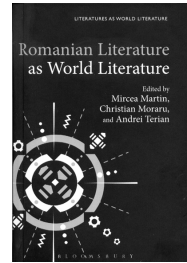
Pas en dernier lieu il faut mentionner que le recours aux mythes dans l'espace des romans postcoloniaux revêt, selon Analyse Kimpolo, plusieurs rôles qui visent autant un niveau social où il s'agit de la dénonciation du dogmatisme chrétien et des systèmes dictatoriaux (dans les romans *Moi, Tituba, sorcière noire de Salem* et *Une vie et demie*), qu'un niveau littéraire où il s'agit de créer un espace hétérogène, « de dialogue entre le centre et la périphérie », mais aussi de définir, à l'intérieur d'un « imaginaire hybride », une « identité littéraire indépendante ».

Dans l'ensemble, les dix articles réunis dans ce volume semblent rendre compte d'une réalité déjà consacrée par les études

récentes de l'imaginaire mytho-poétique. Par conséquent, nous y lisons l'idée que l'espace littéraire, comme cadre de survie, mais aussi de recombinaison continue du matériel mythique, ne reflète pas une dégradation du mythe traditionnel, mais tout au contraire, maintient la possibilité de saisir le *vivant* de ce que composait autrefois le rituel du récit ou mieux dire de la récitation du mythe primitif.

Alexandra Borod

Mircea Martin, Christian Moraru, Andrei Terian (eds.), *Romanian Literature as World Literature*, New York, Bloomsbury Academic, 2018



The collective volume *Romanian Literature as World literature* includes fifteen essays (preceded by an introductory study which provides a succinct contextualization), all tackling a vast array of topics related to emerging literary theory, postcolonial studies and their emphasis on marginal literature and microliterature, and also to the dismantlement of established, structurally monolithic theorizations regarding “national literature”. As, of course, the title posits, Romanian literature is the focal point of the present volume, it being but a link in a chain which promises to yield similarly fascinating results in regards to the literature of other countries.

In the introductory essay (“The Worlds of Romanian Literature and the Geopolitics of Reading”, by Christian Moraru and Andrei Terian), a passage quoted from F. Nietzsche heralds the tone and the overarching

scope of the remainder of the volume: “We live in the age of atoms, of atomistic chaos”, a state of affairs which inexorably leads to isolationism and a strain of generalized solipsism, the new idols of nationalist ideology arising in the wake of the old, now subdued ones. The cultural aftershock produced by the transition from the Middle Ages into modernity is stressed by Nietzsche through a metaphor of ice-floes piling on incessantly, following the thawing of a great stream. In the world of literary criticism, the theories of many “sacrosanct” figures (such as George Călinescu, in the case of Romanian literature) coalesce around a unifying tendency that seeks to bind literature to the language that produced it, within the confines of the well defined borders of a nation, populated by a culture that is perceived as static and essentially distinct from any other that surrounds it.

In the authors’ view, literary (but also political) theories of this particular inclination are not only outdated, in the light of recent paradigmatic shifts, but also fail to account for the entire sum of influences that serve to direct the modulations of a given literature. Cultures, and implicitly literatures produced by said cultures, are far from static, nor are they self-sufficient and closed-off foci of individuality. The essays of the volume all emphasize the crucial role played by cultural syncretism and interaction in the formation of new literary directions, trends and stylistic obsessions. “Communicating vessels” is a term that is employed a number of times throughout the volume in order to stress this point of view. In its plasticity, it manages to accurately describe the dynamic core of the authors’ theoretical approach to Romanian literature, as it is perceived and researched

along with more of its newly unearthed facets.

The first part of the volume mainly addresses the issue of cultural interaction and its reflection in Romanian literature. In their respective essays, authors Andrei Terian, Bogdan Crețu, Caius Dobrescu, Alex Goldiș and Carmen Mușat tackle a series of specialized subjects, all pertaining to the generalized theme of imitation and assimilation of foreign stylistic constituents by Romanian literature and culture, ranging from an examination of the philosophical and mythological “imports” that aided the maturing of Mihai Eminescu’s later works, to a closer inspection of the direct influence various encroaching empires had on the formation of the early medieval literature of Moldavia and Wallachia.

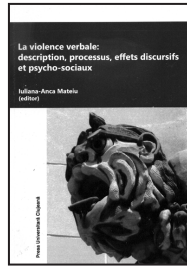
The second part is generally preoccupied with the analysis of the microliteratures of Romania, as the authors (Mircea A. Diaconu, Imre Jozsef Balázs, Ovidiu Morar and Paul Cernat) specifically address subjects such as the current status of the literature of Bessarabia, Romania’s Hungarian literature as well as the literature of Romanian Jews during the avant-garde of the 1920s and 1930s (Tristan Tzara serving as the most recognizable figure).

The third and final part of the volume is primarily concerned with the intermingling of Romanian and foreign literary themes and interpretations across broad stretches of spatial and temporal contexts. The essays of this closing segment, authored by Mihai Iovănel, Mircea Martin, Bogdan Ștefănescu, Teodora Dumitru, Doris Mironescu and Mihaela Ursa provide a foray into a variety of interlocked yet distant literary phenomena. Romanian authors who managed to achieve global

recognition, the impact of Socialist Realism on the literatures of Eastern Europe, vacuity and its centrality in Romanian Modernism, inverted-symmetries and structural similarities between Beat poetry and the Romanian poets of the 80s, contemporary Romanian émigré literature and musings on the intrinsic value of translations both into and from Romanian are the subjects with which the volume concludes, not without tacitly promising equally enticing future theoretical prospects.

Andrei Zamfirescu

Iuliana-Anca Mateiu (éd.), *La violence verbale : description, processus, effets discursifs et psycho-sociaux*, Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2017



L'ouvrage *La violence verbale : description, processus, effets discursifs et psycho-sociaux* est paru en 2017 sous la direction de Iuliana-Anca Mateiu, en tant qu'éditeur. Le livre reprend en les développant les réflexions du colloque tenu à Cluj-Napoca entre les 21-22 octobre 2016, dans le cadre d'un projet placé sous l'égide du Centre de Recherches en Linguistique, en vue de rallier l'espace roumain aux débats sociolinguistiques européens les plus récents sur la violence.

Plusieurs dimensions révèlent la complexité du phénomène. La linguistique, la vision socioculturelle et l'approche psychologique du domaine constituent les axes principaux visés par les contributeurs. On peut remarquer dans le volume une

prédilection des auteurs pour l'identification du processus de certains effets sociaux particuliers et leurs items pragmatiques. Les moyens d'identification ainsi que le déroulement fonctionnel légitime et entraînent dans l'ouvrage une approche conflictuelle dans le milieu scolaire, universitaire et surtout dans les réseaux virtuels tels que Facebook ou Twitter.

Du point de vue du contenu, les études peuvent être regroupées en plusieurs volets selon leurs tendances thématiques. Concernant l'interaction conflictuelle à l'école, l'étude signée par Anamaria Curea, Alexandra Stanciu et Georgiana Todoran sur les marqueurs discursifs représente un examen minutieux mené avec une grande précision. Leur élaboration analytique sur la manifestation de la violence verbale en Roumanie déconstruit certains mythes liés aux interactions professeur-élèves et offre également une vision pédagogique du sujet. Les descriptions et le caractère des observations placent ce travail dans la collection des essais pionniers de la pragmatique concernant la scolarité du pays.

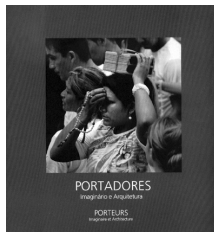
D'autre part, les perspectives sociologiques et juridiques recourent un grand intérêt herméneutique. Joseph Godofroy et François le Lièvre traitent les paradoxes du rap français, ainsi que les univers codés de la sexualisation hybride. Ana-Maria Cozma et Sophie Anquetil proposent une incursion dans les actes de reproche. Sherin Rizk plaide pour une incursion sur les stratégies d'offenses auprès des internautes égyptiens, tandis que Dieudonné Akpo vise les dénominations controversées du discours polémique. De leur côté, Christina Romain et Claudiu Moise proposent une analyse du pathos agressif dans les échanges de mails entre des universités.

La perspective sur les réseaux sociaux débute par une recherche consacrée à une page Facebook, placée sous le collimateur édifiant de Iuliana-Anca Mateiu et Radu Cernuță. Plusieurs approches littéraires extrêmement intéressantes nous sont proposées par Ligia Stela Florea, Béatrice Godart-Wendling et Layla Raïd. Notons aussi le travail passionnant d'Étienne Beldayrou sur l'agressivité et le sommeil.

Les conclusions auxquels cet ouvrage nous amène recomposent deux perspectives. Premièrement, le volume sert à édifier d'une manière accessible aussi bien les spécialistes des sciences du langage et sociales, que les chercheurs pluridisciplinaires de la pragmatique linguistique. Deuxièmement, ce type d'analyse collective du phénomène de la violence pourrait concerner aussi la réflexion éducative en Roumanie pour ce qui est tant du côté des précarités signalées, que des modèles de reconfiguration par le biais de la pragmatique appliquée.

Ion Pițoiu

Portadores –
Imaginatio e
Arquitetura/Porteurs
– imaginaire et
architecture, Sao
Paulo, Annablume
Editora, 2015



Fruit d'un projet interdisciplinaire de la Faculté d'Architecture et d'Urbanisme de l'Université de Sao Paulo (FAUUSP), le volume *Porteurs – imaginaire et architecture* constitue un résultat synthétique du groupe de recherche gouvernemental sur le domaine de l'imaginaire : « *Représentations : imaginaire et technologique* ». Sous

la forme d'un album photographique, le volume inclut également le développement au long de l'histoire de deux rites religieux ainsi que les des étapes d'urbanisation.

Les photographies proposent une vision culturelle multiculturelle. Conçue pour la pluralité des perspectives (linguistique et visuelle), l'approche qu'on rencontre au premier plan implique l'analyse du cycle de célébration du Cirio de Nazare et du rite « folguedo » de « Guerreiro », à Alagoas.

Dans le cœur du sujet de cette édition bilingue (portugaise et française) on retrouve le phénomène des *porteurs*. Les « promesseiros » du cycle Cirio de Nazareth a lieu à Belém do Pará, en Brésil. Depuis 1793, ces personnages représentent les figurants des scénettes à caractère religieux qui attachent sur leur tête un édifice ou d'autres dérivés de l'imaginaire architectural. Les porteurs vont en procession dans le village le matin du premier dimanche d'octobre. Pour rendre hommage à la Vierge Marie, « la reine d'Amazonie », ils portent sur la tête des briques ou des objets en forme de maison, fabriqués en polystyrène d'Amazonie (appelé *miriti*) ou en bois.

Le deuxième rite festif est nocturne et s'intitule « le folguedo du Guerreiro de Alagoas ». Dans le livre, la fête est examinée par le biais des images et des spéculations communautaires qui concerne la naissance de Jésus Christ au milieu de la culture brésilienne, à Maceió. Le « Guerreiro » marque, premièrement, la rupture entre la période du travail et celle dédiée au Jésus Christ. Deuxièmement, ce terme accentue la confrontation d'un groupe collectif qui démarre cette performance théâtrale entre le bien et le mal. Afin de protéger l'enfant Jésus de l'obscurité des esprits malveillants,

les « briquant » (les performeurs du rite) se servent dans leur allégorie théâtrale des cathédrales ou d'autres objets ornementaux. Les édifices religieux ornés particularisent le rituel par leur implication et font preuve également d'une dévotion publique au sein de la communauté si dynamisée.

Dans les deux cas, le profil de la maison répand de multiples significations. En vue de découvrir les racines historiques de ce symbole-hybride, on fait appel à la diachronie socio-politique. Tout d'abord, la relation avec la construction qui s'avère très attachée au contexte architectural de Belém, surtout dans la région métropolitaine où l'urbanisation des années '70 a été très accélérée. À présent, il existe un déficit des logements anciens, or ce genre de manifestations confronte l'essor capitaliste par le rôle visiblement préservatif et récupératif des cérémonies comme celle de Cirio, entretenue par l'atmosphère de porteurs. Grâce à la fonction spirituelle une nouvelle direction identitaire qui enrichit sur axe architecturale symbolique.

Quant à la tradition du rite de la Vierge Marie, « Guerreiro » dévoile les influences provenant du monde occidental. L'objet votif accentue tantôt le caractère universel traditionnel par l'église à tourelle et les clowns portant des chapeaux-zigourats, tantôt l'impact que les civilisations archaïques orientales et africaines qui ont eu au niveau de l'imaginaire de la maison.

D'autre part, la particularité de la perspective visuelle portant sur la tradition des « porteurs » ouvre un contraste existentiel inédit. Tout d'abord, grâce à l'héritage des éléments liées au phénomène de l'urbanisation (églises, habitations lacustres, édifices architecturaux) et à l'incursion d'interdisciplinaire. Pour un exemple plus

appliqué on doit faire attention à l'angle des photos qui ne se positionne presque jamais frontalement. L'image encadre ainsi le contre-champ de profondeur qui se remarque dès le premier impact visuel. De plus, le contraste des photos positionne l'homme entre et la nature de l'environnement devant une nostalgie déjà atteinte par couches multiples du modernisme. Enfin, les traits de primitivisme et le capitalisme fugitif de certaines images éveille aussi une attention pour les traits onirique de ces captures.

Du point de vue structurel, l'ouvrage ne se consacre pas à l'analyse de l'écriture, bien qu'elle soit assez robuste grâce à l'acuité de l'analyse. Dès la préface, Jean-Jacques Wunenburger fait un examen de l'imaginaire symbolique de la maison en traitant les maquettes pour un redoublement symbolique du propre corps et un espace de fécondité. Par ailleurs, le professeur Artur Rozenstraten clôt le livre avec son enquête sur la diachronie de la construction. Entre ces deux directions textuelles, l'ouvrage se dévoile comme un album photographique en noir et blanc. La documentation sur l'image place les tableaux des festivités qui ont lieu aux cycles de Cirio de Nazare, à Belém du Para et au Guerreiro d'Alagoano, à Maceió.

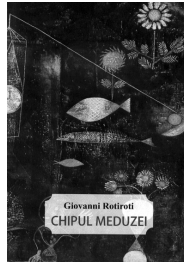
Pour en conclure, plusieurs aspects traversent cet album. D'abord, le caractère synchronique du travail des agents impliqués dans l'interdisciplinarité du projet architectural qui est parvenu à exposer une perspective pleine d'expression. D'autant plus le fait que les

Pour en conclure, plusieurs aspects traversent cet album. D'abord, c'est la perspective comparatiste du projet architectural. En outre, l'humanisme et l'esthétique

qui émerge de ces manifestations religieuses, en tout, même la plasticité herméneutique qu'une telle approche a proposé.

Ion Pițoiu

Giovanni Rotiroti, *Chipul Meduzei*, Cluj-Napoca, Napoca Star, 2017



Giovanni Rotiroti is a professor of Romanian language and literature at the “Oriental” University in Napoli, as well as the translator and author of several books about the Romanian literature. One of them is *Chipul Meduzei*, published in 2017, which explores the way in which totalitarian ideologies, which gained popularity in Romania after the First World War, fascinated the young generation of thinkers.

The book contains seven chapters that describe both the right and the left movements that marked the interwar period in Romania, known as the legionnaire movement and the communist movement, each of them being devoted three chapters which present the aspects that made these movements so appealing to Romanian intellectuals such as: Mircea Eliade, Emil Cioran, Gherasim Luca, Paul Celan.

Giovanni Rotiroti dedicates the first chapter to Eugen Ionescu, as he believes Ionescu was one of the few that were all for democracy and that was not attracted to these ideologies. The author quotes some parts from Ionescu’s “Fragmente dintr-un jurnal intim”, where he speaks about the Iron Guard. He confessed that he could

not live in Romania anymore as it had become a hell since it was dominated by the Iron Guard. He also mentioned the figure of Corneliu Zelea Codreanu, who was the leader of the Iron Guard, perceiving him as a vampire, a living dead that was haunting him. This comparison of Ionescu is related to something that Rotiroti would explore in the next three chapters, focused on the extreme right and its “cult of death”.

Emil Cioran and Mircea Eliade were some of the Romanian intellectuals who sympathised with the ideas of the extreme right. Rotiroti analyses some of the aspects about the legionnaire movement that seemed to have fascinated these thinkers. What was appealing to Cioran was not the doctrine of the Iron Guard, as he confessed years later, but their motivation, their anger, their will that would have no limit, as the end would probably be their own death. The cult of death which was promoted by The Iron Guard is seen from different directions. One of them compares it with the Romanian pastoral ballad of Miorița, where the acceptance of death could be seen as self-sacrifice. This self-sacrifice would be the principle on which the legionnaire movement’s cult of death was based. It would be also compared to the legend of Master Manole, where the sacrifice of a human being is necessary for the construction of the most beautiful monastery. From this perspective, the Iron Guard would see the death of its members as a sacrifice needed for the birth of a new nation closer to God. In spite of their determination, Cioran changed his views years later and regretted being attracted to them.

As for Eliade, he saw the legionnaire movement as more than a political movement, a spiritual one. The religious aspect

which was the fundament of their doctrine fascinated Eliade, who would frequently speak in good terms about the Iron Guard and its promise.

Set against that were the avant-garde poets Gherasim Luca and Paul Celan, who were attracted to the left wing. Rotiroti presents the way in which they saw the extreme right, which was a subject of ridicule to them. They wished to constantly shock the bourgeoisie. Their liberalism and non-conformity made these poets sympathise with the extreme left.

Giovanni Rotiroti notices that some of these avant-garde poets found themselves with no other options but to accept the left wing, as they had no support after their imprisonment, due to their scandalous behaviour. They replaced the cult of death with eroticism, given its power to shock, to break down taboos.

Sofia Vlad

Ion Simuț, *Literaturile române postbelice*, Cluj-Napoca, Școala Ardeleană, 2017



Between 1945 and 1989, like all the other states which have entered the Soviet sphere of influence, Romania lies under the sign of a “socialist dictatorship” in the terms of Ion Simuț. Socialism is built according to the Stalinist model and imposed on all areas of social life. The state is controlled by the sole party and the power is concentrated in the hands of a General Secretary.

Consequently, the control belongs entirely to the Communist Party. Caught in the whirl of these forced changes, the society either revolts or obeys. The first years are those of Stalinization, also known as “the obsessive decade” (*obsedantul deceniu*). They are followed by Ceaușescu’s leadership, initiated in 1965 and marked by two different attitudes regarding fundamental human rights: the first stage of ideological “thaw”, followed by a new series of restrictions and constraints (inaugurated by the *July Theses* of 1971). The Romanian communist regime ends in 1989, due to a Revolution. Some of the best-known references in the Western area on this subject are Anneli Ute Gabanyi’s studies.

In the context of the totalitarian regime the freedom of creation is also limited, so that literature must find its own attitudes and responses. In his book, *Literaturile române postbelice*, Ion Simuț identifies four types of literary discourse which face the regime’s exigencies. His research is based on political and historical considerations meant to prove the coexistence of these “parallel literatures”. The author builds his demonstration on the assumption that the Romanian writers of the post-war period relate differently to the requirements of the dictatorial political regime. Simuț proposes a resumption of the ‘four literatures’ he discussed and analyzed in a previous paper (*Incursiuni în literatura actuală*, Cogito Publishing house). His intention is to theorize and interrogate these types of writings, using essential political history information as background.

According to Ion Simuț, Romanian writers’ responses to the constraints of the dictatorial regime produce four different types of literary discourse, as follows: *the*

opportunist literature (which supports the political regime and its ideology through propagandistic works), *the evasive literature* (withdrawing from the actuality, refusing to engage in the political sphere), *the subversive literature* (directed against the system but using a metaphorical and parabolic discourse), *the dissident and the exile literature* (which show a radical opposition to the regime). This study treats each of the four categories separately, providing concepts and concrete examples of authors and texts for each one of them. The research proves the plurality of the Romanian post-war literature discussed in terms of political power, so the book includes important sections focused on the political history of post-war Romania.

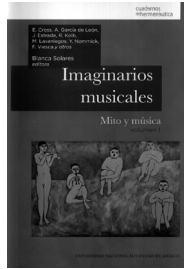
Some particular aspects of the dictatorial regime in Romania – which are interrogated by the author –, the brief description of the “four literatures”, the multiple possibilities of periodization of the Romanian post-war literature and a review of the three institutions which played a role in the limitation of creation (the Single Party, the Security and the Censorship) are the preconditions of this study. The next section provides information organized in the form of chronologies: the first one focuses on the nodal points of the official policy history while the second one traces the stages of the post-war Romanian literature. Only after this circumscription of the phenomenon the “parallel literatures” are defined, described and exemplified. Each of the four subdivisions includes a list of subjects that can be questioned as well as the names of those authors whose texts were analyzed in the 1994 paper. Towards the end of his study, Simuț talks about the features of the literature after 1989, trying

to achieve a global vision of the post-war Romanian literature.

Generally, Romanian literary history assumes two attitudes regarding post-war literature: on one hand, the nihilism according to which nothing can be saved; on the other hand, the rigid periodization of a series of successive literatures without considering their survival in time or the difficulty of precise framing. Through information that prove a thorough documentation and reconstruct the political and historical context, Ion Simuț provides a different point of view. His incursion in the post-war Romanian literature takes as reference points the studies of his predecessors, focusing both on history and on literary criticism. The bibliography at the end of each chapter integrates best-known Romanian and foreign experts' names. Examples illustrating the cases of some writers relevant to the four types of literature discussed include extracts from official documents (Security files, Censorship files, selections from official speeches). The study is written in accessible language and is based on solid argumentation, being able to highlight the various forms in which post-war literature is shaped as a response to the constraints of the totalitarian political regime.

Christinne Schmidt

Blanca Solares (ed.),
Imaginarios musicales,
Itaca, Mexico, CRI-
UNAM, 2015



It is acknowledged that the world we are living in today is a world of the image. We look at things only to take photos of them, we turn on the TV to see images, we go outside and cannot help but observe the big, shiny billboards. These images have lost their aura and have become not only accessible, but also violent. Moreover, in a world of speed, the collection *Colección Cuadernos de Hermenéutica (Estudios de lo imaginario)* of Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Mexico approaches different disciplines in order to try to understand the most recent mutations of our civilisation. Having previously tackled subjects as the hermeneutics of the medieval imaginary, myth and Romanticism, Gaston Bachelard and the life of images, the 2015 collection averts from the idea of the image, in general, and image as a way to access the invisible, in particular. Both volumes have an interdisciplinary approach on music, the first one, *Imaginarios musicales. Mito y música* (Musical Imaginary, Myth and music) revolving around the relations with myths, and the second one, *Música – Filosofía y estética* (Music – Philosophy and aesthetics) drawing attention to music in relation with disciplines such as philosophy and aesthetics. Hereafter, my review will be focused on the first volume.

This first volume starts with a presentation written by the editor, Blanca Solares,

offering details on the collection and symbolic language, followed by an overview which brings into discussion the idea of symbol, the origin and force of myths and a few general references to myths that embed music. Also, Blanca Solares and Manuel Lavaniegos talk about the way music as a way of human knowledge has been banned beginning with the 13th century and the emerging science and rational knowledge. The contempt for forms of knowledge that engage imagination, intuition and musical perception has divided human knowledge and music was exiled either in concerts halls, either in entertainment. Nowadays, this form of getting to know the world is being redeemed and transformed through an interdisciplinary approach. Even though music is present in the postmodern world through media, it has almost lost its sacred connotations and the authors suggest that we should educate our musical perception. Moving towards the overlap between myths and music, the primary example given is the Greek myth of the Muses, which is the origin of other myths regarding the power of music and the provenance of certain musical instruments. Moreover, different cultures chain the notion of human musical creativity to that of a god and of greater cosmic forces.

Analysing from various perspectives, all 12 pieces of work discuss the idea of myth (but not in the derogatory sense spread by Western Rationalism) in association with music, showing how myths recreate themselves ever since the origins of culture and until contemporary times. This constant reshaping on themes as love, death, destiny or rebellion points out archetypes of human condition that people

have always confronted, but are still applicable today. The work of Blanca Solares analyzes the conception mystical and musical of the universe, following the work of Marius Schneider, who believes in a *homo symbolicus a natura*, in a creation process that the intellect as well as the affect.

An interesting approach of the desecration of the music is the one written by Antonio García de León, who explores the connection between music and the sacred that dissolves time and create a new dimension. Also, we can find works that review the impact that music has on human beings and its value as means of communication. Moving closer to myths, the next pieces of writing are centred on the myth of Orpheus, getting into authors such as Nietzsche with its Apollonian and Dionysiac concepts or Rilke with his *Sonnets to Orpheus*, even drawing parallels between this myth and Mallarmé's poem, *La Sainte*.

Beginning with the fifth text, the articles become more consistent and applied either on different writings, such as Julio Estrada's *El Sonido en Rulfo: "el ruido ese"* pointing out ideas as the evocation of sound and silence and the silence of music and carrying out a syntactical and grammatical analysis of the dialogue, either on pieces of music. The latter ones revolve around composer such as Igor Stravinsky and Arnold Schönberg and their ability to reframe classical myths as well as Debussy with his *Pelléas et Mélisande*. The book closes with short pieces on Mann's *Doctor Faustus* and *Atlantida* of Manuel de Falla, leaving the reader with an overview on the conjunction between music, myth and image and the possibility of creating new connections and maybe, taking a look at the second volume, that broadens the horizon even more,

bringing into discussion philosophy and aesthetics.

Ilinca Mare

Symbolon no. 12, Ionel Bușe, Jean-Jacques Wunenburger (éds.), *Mircea Eliade et le sacré dans le monde contemporain*, Éditions Universitaires de Lyon III, 2016



In June 2016, the University of Craiova dedicated a new international conference to Mircea Eliade, a thinker whose echo can be witnessed in the diversity of scholars and researchers who were present at this meeting, celebrating the impact of Eliade, the comparatist, in the light of the contemporary culture. Specialists from Italy, Portugal, Brazil, Mexico, France and Romania gathered under the patronage of the Centre for Imaginary and Rational Research "Mircea Eliade" and the Institute for Philosophical Research Lyon to emphasize once more the profound heritage left by the Romanian philosopher, historic and writer through his work. The conferences held at Craiova touched upon his literary work in relation to the philosophical and historical one, focusing on their relevance in a world which is marked by a poignant loss of its sacred component.

The volume opens with a lecture given by Sorin Alexandrescu, CESI director and representative of University of Bucharest, on Eliade's first book, *The Novel of a Short-Sighted Adolescent*, considered by the literary critic to be a "vanity fair" narrative, which exposes the inflated images carefully

crafted by the characters, in opposition with their real identity. The conflict between authenticity and fiction is visible through the eyes of the narrator, who tries to find his personality and his place in the world while being hesitant and achingly self-aware of his “weakness”. However, his fear of being regarded as a fragile, short-sighted individual does not affect the amplitude and the accuracy of his observations on a period of transition that captures a new Romania reunited after the First World War, struggling to find its identity. Alexandrescu brings to light Eliade’s mastery in creating the bildungsroman of a writer and of a nation and catching the internal oscillation of the writer’s youth while underling the fascinating netting of autobiographical elements and fiction. It is the search of the inner authentic self that sets Eliade apart, concludes the Romanian specialist.

Another remarkable study of the thinker and its understanding of the world is captured by Blanca Solares from National Autonomous University of Mexico, whose discourse concentrates on the relationship between Constantin Brâncuși and Mircea Eliade. Although the author discusses Brancusi in more detail, her final thesis highlights the similarities between the sculptor and the philosopher through the myth-poetic dimension of their work and the expression of their languages, united by the common ambition to attain the sacred component of an authentic creation. Solares beautifully illustrates how Brâncuși plunges in the profoundness of the stone, the very symbol of the material world, and completely transforms it through his attempt of achieving a spiritual, mysterious reality. His process is compared with a Buddhist experience of reconversion, in

which all the adjacent details must be removed, in order for it to reveal the purity of form, a concept which bestows unique new valences to a symbol. His sobriety reveals an abysmal understanding of the essence, through which the sculpture rediscovers the true value of the Romanian traditions. This discovery is achieved, as Solares repeatedly affirms, as a result of an in-depth mechanism of exploring his interior, which incorporates the universe of traditional art in his own existence, a sort of pulse of life.

Mircea Eliade was profoundly impressed by Brâncuși and his work, an admiration which can be acknowledged in his play, *The Endless Column*. The sacred dimension shared by these two artists is subsequently developed in Catarina Sant’Anna’s exploration of the “philosophical drama”, which can be seen as a complementing piece to the above mentioned one. The emphasis of this analysis falls, however, on the inquiry undertaken by the writer to discover the possible reasons behind the silence described as a “phase of sterility” in the sculptor’s life, after he finished *The Endless Column*. The professor from the Federal University of Bahia begins with two beautifully chosen quotations by Kandinski and Bachelard, (whose theories and concepts will be used skillfully through the lecture) referring to the internal process on which the artists embark in search of the metaphysical dimension that elevates a “spiritual pyramid” or an “infinite tree” in their inner self, a journey which must had been undertaken by both Brâncuși and Eliade. The question posed on this research addresses possible explanations to why Eliade ultimately chose the sculpture to be his subject of this particular writing, expressed not in a study, but rather

in a play. Sant'Anna tries to reach a final conclusion by dividing her arguments in three areas of examination: metalanguage, the problems of the sacred and the aesthetics personalized the "sacred theatre" in the philosopher's conception. The outcome? This is not a ladder.

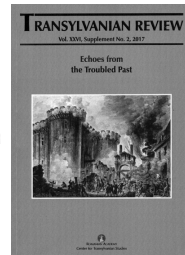
Another lecture worth paying attention to would be the one delivered by Ana Taís Martins Portanova Barros, a professor and researcher from the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil, whose approach on Eliade's contemporaneity focuses on forms of expression taken by the sacred in media culture, especially Instagram photos tagged "sagrado" (sacred). The research is based on the studies of the imaginary performed by the Romanian comparatist, applying his theories on the survival of myths through the ages in relation to the abundance of information and photography experienced in our times. The sacred has always been one of the most important constructs of imagination, with a powerful symbolic meaning behind the rituals and projections of human experience. But how does its relevance change in a profane world, where a photography, another symbolic means able to convey significance through a form easily attained, seeks to compensate and replace some of the images and motifs previously held by the sacred? In order to answer this question, the analysis concentrates on the frequent images used by Instagram users in regard to spiritual connotations, which range from representations of Christ figures to family pictures. Barros also employs Durand's theory on "the trajectory" of sense, whose variation depends on two poles: the archetypes sheltered in anthropology and the social forces. Her conclusion is not a

clean-cut one, leaving the reader to examine and determine a preferred outcome.

This international meeting can be considered one of the most fertile grounds for the exchange of ideas and perspectives on subjects which still excites plenty of debates and studies. The diversity of environments collected through the shared passion conferred by Eliade and his work can be easily taken as a sufficient sign for his relevance nowadays, despite technical advances and prominent desacralization. Moreover, the present volume serves as a testimony to the efficiency and vastness demonstrated in the comparative studies, which produces refined analysis that bring together literature, sculpture, painting, cinematography and photography, to mention only a few.

Alexandra Cengher

Transylvanian Review,
Vol. XXVI, Supplement
No. 2, *Echoes from the
Troubled Past*, Romanian
Academy Center for
Transylvanian Studies,
2017



Echoes From the Troubled Past, the latest volume written as the next link in a lengthy chain comprising the *Transylvanian Review*, represents the most recent issue of a journal that seeks to revitalize and perpetuate the tradition of the much earlier *Revue de Transylvanie*, founded by Silviu Dragomir and published between 1934 and 1944. Being a compilation of essays pertaining to not only historical topics, *Echoes from the Troubled Past* comes

into contact with the reader as a triptych of scholarly work, its larger sections being delineated and placed under an approximately overarching theme.

Thus, the first section (“La nazione immaginata. Concetti e tappe nella costruzione dell’identità nazionale Europea”) addresses the most arguably fitting topic of Romanian and, more precisely, Transylvanian history. The time periods in which the reader finds himself, perusing the essays, range from the more archaic decades of Michael the Brave and the First Unification to eras closer to modernity. In any case, the reader’s familiarity with Romanian history will be of great assistance in the assimilation of any new information provided by this first section. However, it need not be an impediment if said familiarity is mostly absent, as each author contextualizes and provides a backdrop (of both historical and theoretical nature) for his or her specific subject of choice. Constituting the bulk of the book, the first section also presents the reader with the greatest number of authors. Needless to say, not only they, but also the authors of the following sections assert themselves as veritable authorities, unanimously emerging from various academic backgrounds. Authored by Ioan-Aurel Pop, Federico Donatiello, Florin Dobrei, Sorin Sipoș, Francesco Magno, Ion Gumenăi, Gabriel Moisa, Liliana Rotaru, Ion Eremia, Gurie Georgiu and Dana-Maria Feurdean, the historical essays of the first section do require a thorough knowledge of three languages (namely, English, French and Italian) in order to be completely capable of being comprehended and assimilated. This potentially discouraging revelation is tempered by the presence of brief abstracts

which conclude each essay with a laconic summary of its contents, in English.

At a glance, the second section appears to boast a divergent theme. “Utopia-Dystopia and the Global Order of the Image” is the overarching and inter-accomodative title of the segment, featuring articles by Corin Braga, Sami Ludwig, David Howard, Anamaria Schwab, Ana-Karina Schneider, Adriana-Cecilia Neagu and Amelia Precup. The lens through which the authors observe the dynamics and social implications of Utopian and Dystopian literature upon the modern world is one that is constructed with no a priori affirmations or axioms in view. Rather, the essays all seek to explore and theorize to some degree, while maintaining a neutral position in regard to what the consequences of Dystopian/Utopian fiction might entail, while also analyzing the typologies of the cultures that spawned their various iterations. The chronology of the subject matter is one of relative linearity, the first essay being a theoretical foray into the etymological and stylistic forefather of Utopian fiction, namely Thomas More’s *Utopia*, while the final essay provides the reader with an analysis of contemporary satirical Dystopian literature, an exemplary sample of this sub-genre constituting the core around which the author gravitates (Karen Tei Yamashita’s *Anime Wong*). In between, a selection of similar case studies or slightly wider, generalized interpretations of Utopian/Dystopian manifestations (fictional and historical alike) is tackled.

The third and final section of the book, laconically titled “Varia”, features a smaller set of miscellaneous (but by no means auxiliary or less scholarly) essays which find common ground in their more

general tendency towards the inclusion of statistical data and analysis in their discourse and interpretations. Mostly written through the collaborative effort of multiple authors (Marius Eppel, Andreea Dăncilă Ineoan, Anna Laura Sanfilippo, Laura Bacali, Elena-Simina Lakatos, Mihai-Octavian Naghiu, Constantin Bungău, Alexandru-Sabin Nicula, Mihnea Simion Stoica and Oana-Ramona Ilovan), these concluding essays of the volume recalibrate the overall tone to better complement the first section, through their penchant for the empirical and the non-fictional.

Overall, *Echoes from the Troubled Past* offers a variety of approaches and views, both descriptive and speculative in relation to an even greater panoply of specialized topics, ensuring that any reader at least minimally interested in its fields of study will not be left wanting, and will be bound to discover multiple palatable fonts of intellectual stimulation and fascination.

Andrei-Călin Zamfirescu

Studia in honorem : Lelia Trocan, Craiova, Editura Sitech, 2016



Comme l'indique son titre, l'ouvrage *Studia in honorem : Lelia Trocan*, est un volume collectif à l'honneur d'une universitaire distinguée, le professeur Lelia Trocan. Des universitaires du monde entier se sont réunis pour offrir un éventail d'études de qualité en hommage à leur collègue et amie pour la remercier pour ses travaux

et sa présence constante dans les lettres françaises et francophones. Universitaire infatigable, Lelia Trocan a œuvré tout au long de sa vie pour honorer la littérature française qu'elle a tant aimée. Lelia Trocan s'est spécialisée au fur des années sur plusieurs domaines et écrivains littéraires. Auteur de 21 ouvrages et de plus de cent quarante articles, elle laisse derrière elle une œuvre immense qui a nourri et nourrira encore des générations d'étudiants en Roumanie, son pays natal, comme dans le monde francophone.

Spécialiste de littérature française, d'histoire et de théorie littéraire, passionnée de littératures francophones, de poésie et de littérature comparée, allant dans ses intérêts de la littérature médiévale jusqu'aux littératures modernes et contemporaines en passant par le baroque, Lelia Trocan est également auteur d'un roman, *Les Années de plomb*, publié chez L'Harmattan (2007), un roman sur les violences politiques et les horreurs du régime communiste, du totalitarisme et du goulag roumain.

Les qualités de Lelia Trocan sont innombrables, comme ses amis. Dans ce volume consacré à l'imaginaire, une thématique que le professeur a privilégiée durant sa carrière universitaire, on a affaire à un florilège d'études inestimables pour une universitaire de taille. L'ouvrage *Studia in honorem de Lelia Trocan* est un ouvrage scientifique impressionnant, tissé autour d'une problématique plurielle et se penchant sur une variété d'écrivains, français et roumains.

Ainsi, Michel Beniamino, professeur à l'Université de Limoges, évoque dans son étude « La Francophonie et le GPS » plusieurs écrivains parmi lesquels Gautier, Flaubert, Blaise Cendrars ou Le Clézio afin

de montrer sa révolte contre les doctrines et les théories de la « littérature-monde » et contre une orientation des études post-coloniales qui rattache la langue à une nation et à un territoire. Magda Ciopraga, de l'Université de Iasi, explore les fragments de l'imaginaire botanique de la princesse et poétesse roumaine Marthe Bibesco. Âme romantique de grande sensibilité, Bibesco fait des fleurs, des jardins et des bois des symboles individuels et des emblèmes culturels. La nature vierge de ses propriétés de Posada et de Mogoșoaia que la poétesse privilégie dans ses textes, mettent en valeur sa maîtrise tout en lui servant de repère salvateur dans sa solitude de l'exil.

C'est dans un registre très différent que s'inscrit l'étude de Felicia Dumas, professeur à l'Université Al. I. Cuza de Iasi, une étude consacrée à l'imaginaire linguistique et à la construction identitaire d'un enfant bilingue franco-roumain scolarisé en milieu monolingue roumain, mais élevé dans un milieu familial biculturel. Dumas conclut que les langues maternelles rattachent l'individu à une communauté et à un territoire.

Après avoir passé des années à travailler sur l'origine des mythes et l'évolution des mythes littéraires, Georges Fréris de l'Université Aristote de Thessalonique était ici ses constats sur l'intérêt de l'imaginaire des mythes. D'après Georges Fréris, l'homme devient un fabricant de dieux qui crée une imagerie, un système de symboles, d'archétypes et de mythes qui apparaissent dans toutes les formes de discours, textuel et artistique.

Dans une longue étude de seize pages, Marc Gontard, de l'Université de Rennes 2, développe une nouvelle thèse à partir du texte d'*Aurélien* de Louis Aragon.

Plus que l'investissement politique de ce récit engagé, Marc Gontard démontre que la véritable profondeur du texte n'est pas l'amour-passion entre Bérénice et Aurélien, mais celle de l'imaginaire.

Tugrul Inal, de l'Université Ufuk, en Turquie, spécialiste de Baudelaire, offre deux études à Lelia Trocan. Dans la première, il part des *Fleurs du Mal* et du *Spleen de Paris*, pour poursuivre son exploration des principes fondamentaux de la philosophie baudelairienne selon la méthode empathique qu'il a lui-même élaborée. Mettant à profit ses théories, Tugrul Inal étudie le premier texte *Poésie symphonique* et le texte paradigme *Un essai emphatique*, pour arriver à la conclusion que le texte paradigme fournit un exemple de création commune à la réalité et la fiction, la fantaisie et le mythe. Dans sa deuxième étude, Tugrul Inal s'appuie sur l'approche empathique comme méthode de lecture pour analyser les *Fleurs du Mal*.

Dans une belle étude critique, Eileen Lohka, de l'Université de Calgary, analyse les espaces réels et les lieux imaginaires dans le roman *Les Années de Plomb* de Lelia Trocan. Sous les apparences d'un roman historique, Eileen Lohka démontre qu'il y a pleins d'éléments qui prouvent que l'œuvre bénéficie d'un fort ancrage imaginaire : les lieux deviennent imaginaires, les personnages tragiques, la structure du récit s'éclate tout comme sa chronologie.

Dans une étude générique consacrée à la Roumanie et au Château des Carpathes, Efstratia Oktapoda, de Paris Sorbonne Université, analyse les figures du double et le lieu de l'imaginaire dans *Le Château des Carpathes* de Jules Verne, roman qui se caractérise par une grande ambiguïté générique. *Le Château des Carpathes* est un

livre fascinant construit autour d'un tissu d'énigmes et d'une obsession extraordinaire où le rêve et la fiction se mélangent et où la science-fiction offre à l'auteur un modèle véridique.

Dans l'étude suivante, Andrea Perazzo, de l'Université de Brasilia, présente les mouvements de l'imaginaire dans la poétique d'Henri Michaux. Dans son analyse sémiotique Perazzo étudie les traits de récurrence dans le discours et des sujets de l'énonciation. De son côté, Gérard Peylet, de l'Université de Bordeaux 3, consacre une étude sur le monstrueux et l'humain dans *La part de l'autre* d'Éric-Emmanuel Schmitt, une œuvre teintée d'imagination et d'humanisme. Peylet essaie de mettre en lumière le mystère du monstrueux et de l'humain en argumentant que celui-ci n'est rien d'autre que l'imaginaire et le mode poétique de l'intuition. Dans une étude envoûtante, Ioan Panzaru, de l'Université de Bucarest, traite la méta-médialité de la narration. Pour ce faire, il esquisse l'histoire du concept de médium en sociologie et en communication pour avancer que la généralisation du concept de médium est possible dans certaines conditions, en prenant comme exemple la narration en tant que médium spécifique.

Anda Radulescu, de l'Université de Craiova, démystifie dans son étude le beau roman de Lelia Trocan, *Les Années de plomb*, envisagé à travers le prisme de l'imaginaire entre le cauchemar et l'absurde. Imprégné de l'imaginaire de son auteur et chargé d'un style évocateur et d'une narration ensorceleuse, le roman s'attaque à travers la beauté de ses métaphores au totalitarisme communiste de la Roumanie des années 1950, mais aussi à une vie bousculée, celle de la narratrice, « pleine de tensions » (201).

C'est à l'imaginaire musical que Gabriela Scurtu, professeur à l'Université de Craiova, consacre son étude. Dans son étude, Scurtu met à l'avant l'imaginaire musical en opposition à l'imaginaire littéraire. En s'appuyant sur différents textes littéraires (Diderot, Proust, mais aussi Stendhal et Hugo), Scurtu parvient à démontrer que la musique est pour le romancier « l'art le plus subtil », « le plus universel », ainsi que le « principe de convergence de tous les thèmes traités dans son œuvre romanesque » (211).

Antony Soron, de l'ESPE Paris Sorbonne, présente une étude sur *Neige*, le premier roman de l'écrivain français Maxence Ferminé, publié en 1999. Antony Soron aborde le roman à partir d'un angle d'approche plutôt original, celui de l'influence de l'écriture du haïku et de l'intérêt que l'écrivain porte pour le pays du soleil levant.

Signée par Alain Vuillemin, de l'Université Paris-Est, la dernière étude qui clôt le volume est consacrée à la légende brésilienne de Catarina Paraguasçu et de Diogo Álvares Caramurú. La légende « a pris corps au Brésil, dans la région de Bahia, dès le milieu du XVI^e siècle », précise Alain Vuillemin (236). Vuillemin rappelle les sources premières de la légende avant de transcrire les réappropriations ultérieures, aux XIX^e, XX^e et XXI^e siècles afin de démontrer qu'en deux siècles, l'histoire légendaire de Catarina Paraguasçu et de Diogo Álvares Caramurú est devenue un mythe littéraire important.

Le volet des études est suivi par trois rubriques annexes. La première rubrique, intitulée « Livres », présente les illustrations des couvertures des livres écrits par Lelia Trocan (roman, recueils poétiques, ouvrages personnels et ouvrages collectifs

- vingt-et-un livres au total). Intitulée « Prix, Médailles, Diplômes », la deuxième rubrique réunit les distinctions reçues par Lelia Trocan tout au long de sa carrière (sept pages au total avec 3 prix et médailles). La troisième présentée sous le nom « Documents » réunit les lettres de recommandation rédigées pour la Professeure Trocan (six lettres de recommandation).

Ainsi finit le beau volume *Studia in honorem* consacré au thème de l'imaginaire. Ainsi finit l'hommage au distingué, fin et infatigable professeur des universités, Lelia Trocan. Un bel hommage de ses pairs et

collègues à travers le monde et un souvenir de cœur pour une femme des lettres d'exception et une personnalité interculturelle qui a œuvré sa vie entière pour la langue et la littérature françaises.

Mais si rendre hommage, c'est rendre vivant, l'ouvrage se distingue d'ores et déjà par sa qualité scientifique et par la diversité des disciplines, des écrivains et des cultures qu'il traite. Un véritable outil didactique, mais aussi linguistique, littéraire et musical pour étudiants et enseignants.

Efstratia Oktapoda