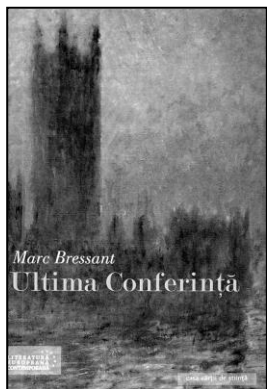




Book Reviews





Marc Bressant,
Ultima conferință
(*The Last Conference*),
Casa Cărții de Știință,
Cluj-Napoca,
2014

Europe of the year 1989 passes through a terrible situation. “Segregated in two”, it harbors what proves to be the last conference of the world enclosed by the Cold War. an unpleasant obligation for all those present at the conference, this meeting has the purpose of establishing the freedom of movement of the journalists between the two worlds segregated by the Berlin Wall.

In truth the conference never took place. It was only an invention of the author Marc Bressant (by his real name Patrick Imhaus), but an invention so well done that it brought him the great Award of the French Academy for novels (2008). Nevertheless, the French writer is familiar with the political turmoil that marked the second half of the 20th century. By the end of this century, he was part of the diplomatic corps of the French Embassy in Tokyo, Tunis and Stockholm, filling the position of director of the Francophone television station TV5, for a period of 8 years.

Other than using bafflegab, “The Last Conference” reveals Marc Bressant as an author full of verve, humor and, of course, acute irony. It is appropriate to remember the effort of Rodica Baconsky and Alina Pelea, who, six years after the publication of this novel (2008), made possible its translation into Romanian (Cluj-Napoca, “Casa Cărții de Știință”, 2014).

The plot of the 246 pages is built in the form of a diary and is based on an

international conference held in London. Jean-Pierre Tromelin, the head of the French delegation, although annoyed for having been sent to attend several boring meetings, is inspired enough to start a diary upon his arrival to the conference. His entire account seems to be marked by the words of his boss, who shares with him the secret of success in his profession: “with one eye be always asleep, but with the other never cease to catalogue the weaknesses of the colleagues”.

Thus, we find numerous humorous radiograms of the other participants in the conference. Tromelin classifies them into pathological dipsomaniacs and irrecoverable yawners. Among the ruthless portraits, the author also builds a love story between the sexagenarian Tromelin and the Yugoslavian Zorica Belavic. It should be mentioned as well that the Romanian reader might encounter various ...surprises, due to the fact that the Romanian delegation, namely Milescu (nicknamed Monsieur Non, because of his refusal of any possibility to reach a mutual agreement within the conference) is the main target of the sarcasm of the colleagues attending the conference.

Reading the diary files, we cannot help remembering the famous book by David Lodge *Small World*, being unceasingly informed about “who hates whom and who sleeps with whom”.

Apart from humor and unforgiving irony, the author reveals the drama of this international meeting. It is presented as a dialogue between the deaf, or as a set of perpetual monologues, lashing left and right while the world is being separated by the Iron Curtain. The Berlin Wall becomes thus not only an outer reality crossing the frontier between the two blocks, Eastern and Western, but it is also transcribed especially as an inner reality, which does not allow inter-human communication.



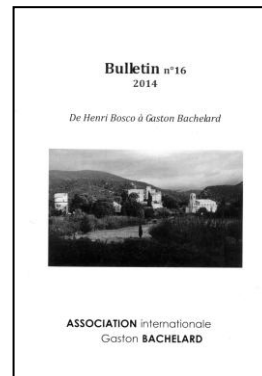


This dialogue of the deaf comes down with the Wall. The demolition of the symbol of the communist world transforms the conference into a sort of Noah's Ark. The conference hall - similar to a white packet boat, even though initially a prison for the passengers – becomes the shelter and the birth place of the founding document of the new (freer) world.

If in the Biblical account of the Flood, the uncontrollable waves destroyed the world fallen into decadence, in the Europe of 1989 the revolutionary waves break down the world enveloped in dictatorship. The new world is presented under the sign of an uncertain future.

As Coriolis, the representative of the non-governmental organization proves in the play staged at the end of the conference, with the demolition of The Wall on November 9, all are on a pile of ruins. Everyone will have to try to build a world embedded now in the hope of a unified Europe.

Iulia Vlad



*Bulletin de
l'Association
Internationale
Gaston
Bachelard,
no. 16,
De Henri Bosco
à Gaston
Bachelard,
2014*

Dans un premier article du présent numéro du *Bulletin de l'Association Internationale Gaston Bachelard*, Christian Morzewski, professeur de littérature française contemporaine à l'Université d'Artois, essaie d'analyser la nature d'une *sympathie* qui s'établit entre deux écrivains, Henri Bosco et Gaston Bachelard, à travers un échange épistolaire assez riche qui met au jour leurs affinités littéraires et philosophiques mais aussi de possibles rapprochements au niveau des sensibilités et des intuitions artistiques. « En vous lisant, je croyais m'entendre parler », dit le romancier dans une lettre datée de la nuit de Saint-Sylvestre en 1957, affirmation qui fait pendant à la définition de la *sympathie* telle que Bosco la décrit et qui s'appuie sur une interprétation étymologique du terme. Pour lui, être en sympathie signifie « éprouver (voire souffrir) ensemble », c'est-à-dire éprouver les mêmes états d'âme, avoir accès aux mêmes visions artistiques. En fait cette intensité de la rencontre dans un espace imaginaire semblable fait que le romancier devienne à son tour le commentateur de celui qui a réussi à percer ou à révéler l'essence de son œuvre par une démarche interprétative qui acquiert elle aussi une dimension poétique : « C'est ce fond que vous réussissez [...] à amener à la lumière, mais à une lumière qui, tout en éclairant tel



mot, tel geste – suggère que cet éclaircissement réserve encore la part de pénombre nécessaire à la vie mêmes des âmes » (Lettre de Henri Bosco à Gaston Bachelard, 15 mai 1957). Le philosophe-poète conçoit par l'interprétation phénoménologique un espace où les traces du mystère surgissent à la surface sans être étouffées. À la différence d'un psychanalyste qui s'éloigne de son objet d'art pour atteindre les couches de la psyché humaine, le phénoménologue conçoit une analyse de l'image poétique à partir de l'imagination productrice, faculté dominante dans l'œuvre d'art, et dont le sujet acquiert une fonction de l'irréel, de l'invécu. L'analyse dans ce cas suit les règles d'un *retentissement* ou d'une *trans-subjectivité* de l'image, éléments qui traduisent pour Bachelard une *sympathie* des résonances créatives qui fait que le lecteur s'approprie l'image et qu'il devienne à son tour créateur d'image. C'est à partir de cet échange créatif que l'article se demande sur la paternité des écritures et sur l'influence exercée de l'un sur l'autre dans l'espace de leur œuvre. D'ailleurs les lettres de Bachelard répondent toutes à cet enchantement induit par la lecture des romans de Bosco qui devient pour lui un remède contre la solitude, mais aussi une matière pour son écriture, pour sa réflexion. « Je voudrais vivre sans fin dans le monde d'Henri Bosco », « Là je respire, là je puis être moi-même. », écrit-il à un ami à la fin de sa lecture de *Bargabot* et de *Pascalet*.

Michele Pichon, agrégée et docteur en philosophie suit dans son article les rapports qui se tissent entre l'écriture de Bosco et celle de Bachelard pour forger ainsi la notion de la *métaphysique de la nuit* à appliquer dans le cas des deux écrivains. Ainsi, à part une *poétique de la nuit* où il s'agit de la nuit phénoménale qui engendre des rêveries, dans l'œuvre de Bosco et de Bachelard on retrouve aussi une nuit métaphysique dont la substance n'est pas

matérielle, mais uniquement onirique et dont l'être participe au changement de l'être rêveur. C'est une nuit des profondeurs qui crée un pont avec la nuit intérieure, avec l'inconscient de celui qui la voit. Si Bachelard trace une frontière précise entre la rêverie qui garde un *cogito* du sujet rêveur et le rêve de la nuit profonde qui fait le sujet descendre dans l'espace d'un *ante-sujet*, Bosco, dans ses romans, efface cette frontière et donne à l'ante-sujet l'identité des aïeux qui viennent habiter les âmes de ses héros. Ces entités sont en fait des porteurs d'un message essentiel pour l'avènement, dans l'état d'éveil, de l'être total et de son essence singulière (le séjour de Martial à la Redousse où il trouve par un rêve profond l'appel de Malicroix ou le séjour de Frederic Meyrel à Loselée où il retrouve par un songe mi-conscient Bernard, l'ancien propriétaire de Loselée).

Fanny Dechet-Plats prolonge encore le débat sur les ressemblances et les dissemblances qui apparaissent entre le deux écrivains au niveau de la vision sur le rêve et la rêverie et leurs interférences. Si on a vu que pour Bachelard les frontières sont très bien tracées, pour l'univers du romancier rêve et rêverie font partie du même onirisme éveillé, mi-conscient, mi-inconscient dans l'espace duquel s'opère une ouverture « à la communion du rêveur avec des puissances qui le dépassent », à une altérité indéfinissable et magnétisante, descente qui couvre toute la trame de l'univers romanesque boscoïen. Toujours dans la direction des différences, Valeria Chiore suggère l'existence dans l'œuvre de Bosco d'un Paysage différent de celui entièrement élémentaire de Bachelard. Faisant référence à une œuvre inachevée de Bosco, *L'Étranger*, écrit à Naples en 1924, elle voit dans le tissu textuel de la description de la Villa Lucia une Nature vivante, traversée par l'âme cosmique, un « paysage anthropique humanisé,



divinisé, démonisé » dû en grande partie à la formation grecque et latine de son imaginaire. À la différence de celui-ci, le Paysage bachelardien est conçu par le besoin d'une réduction phénoménologique où l'on atteint des images poétiques éthérées, élémentaires. D'ailleurs c'est à ce *muthos* infligé à tous les niveaux de l'univers romanesque d'Henri Bosco que Benoit Neiss fait référence dans son article, un *muthos* qui ne surgit pas par la forme d'une allégorie, mais qui se tisse dans la profondeur du texte, dans son Logos, en faisant « hausser le regard » et « monter la réflexion un étage plus haut ». De son côté, Jean Libis attire l'attention du lecteur sur le dernier ouvrage publié par Henri Bosco de son vivant, *La flamme d'une chandelle* qui, par un changement de tonalité, se dirige vers un espace qu'on peut nommer mystique et qui témoigne d'un « infléchissement » de la réflexion bachelardienne, dû peut-être au retentissement et à l'attachement à l'œuvre d'Henri Bosco. Restant à la table d'écriture éclairée par la flamme d'une chandelle, l'écrivain est saisi non pas d'un sentiment qui s'inscrit dans la dialectique de l'élévation et de la chute liés à l'état de la rêverie, mais par la « hantise de l'extinction vitale », écho de l'image du sacrifice du papillon brûlé, intuition de la synthèse entre Eros et Thanatos.

Dans le deuxième volet de la revue, Viviana Reda essaie de réaliser un rapprochement stylistique et intellectuel entre Gabriele d'Annunzio et Bachelard par l'intermédiaire de plusieurs éléments comme la lampe, la solitude ou la feuille blanche. Elle met l'accent aussi sur une manière similaire des deux auteurs de comprendre la poétique, la création de l'œuvre d'art qui est liée à l'image du feu, de son étincelle première vue comme « la fleur interne du feu ». Mais pour que le feu de la poésie brûle, l'écriture doit trouver son dimension

dialogique, redécouvrir dans le « *tu* sa raison, l'élément aérien qui offre au feu le lieu où il peut brûler. »

Dans un autre registre Etienne Klein, physicien et philosophe déplore le fait que les sciences ont été exclues du savoir commun, qu'ils gardent dans la société seulement leurs effets utilitaires, d'usage immédiat. Cet état des choses a comme cause principale un apprentissage qui élimine de ses grilles la « poétique » et le processus d'invention inhérent à l'apparition de ces sciences. Bachelard a soutenu des affirmations analogues au nom de l'éthique et de la rigueur du savoir scientifique. Jacques Mandelbrojt poursuit cette direction en exposant les principes qui sont à la base du *Matérialisme rationnel* de Bachelard où il explique la division entre un *matérialisme imaginaire* et un *matérialisme instruit* (ceux-ci ayant d'ailleurs une base intuitive commune, liée au surgissement des images). Mais tandis que l'art creuse ces archétypes, la science doit les écarter en faveur d'une construction rationnelle du réel.

Dans une dernière étude consacrée à l'analyse de la mémoire dans l'œuvre de Bergson, *Matière et Mémoire*, Robert Gorin étale cette conception si rigoureuse du philosophe concernant la mémoire en forme de cône inversé et son fonctionnement, qui ne saurait pourtant exclure cette mémoire traumatisée par les syncopes et les réminiscences des souvenirs. C'est dans ce processus antagoniste de refoulement et de résurgence du passé que l'homme perd sa sécurité existentielle et plonge dans des états où mémoire et imagination deviennent une seule matière indissociable.

Alexandra Borod



Rodica Gabriela Chira,
Autres mondes. Approches SF,
Iași,
Ars Longa,
2015

The book of Rodica Gabriela Chira is a journey into the fascinating sphere of science-fiction literature. Or several, different sphere/worlds, as the title says it itself. The volume is an anthology of fifteen texts published by the author in several academic magazines over the course of eight years. Written with a personal touch, it focuses on science-fiction literature meant to unravel the mysteries of the Universe

The recurrent element in five of her works is the name of the 17th-century French writer Cyrano de Bergerac. Also, the largest study in the book is dedicated to his science-fiction novels. Another four works involve the name of the contemporary writer Serge Lehman. The author puts into words an ample vision of what science-fiction literature means and what it has to offer, proving that placing it outside the space of “great literature” may be a little bit unfair. She explores the themes and images that surround the authors she studies and at the same time she analyzes concepts, theories and literary instruments (science-fantasy, the theory of relativity, intertextuality, fiction vs. reality, Bakhtin’s theory of the chronotope). The book takes us through different times and places where we can meet legendary characters and their creators, provides us with a better

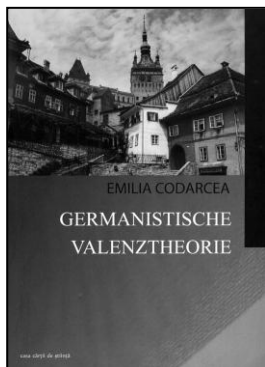
understanding of the Universe’s uncertainty and allows us to meditate on the issues it brings up.

What the author wanted to do with this book was to show us, by different examples, the complexity and the capacities of science-fiction literature, which is somehow ignored or marginalized. Along with her analyses, we are impressed by the number of themes, dilemmas or events that come into question: the importance of literature, the existence of the fourth dimension, religiosity, feminism, the supreme truth, pure happiness, the development of technology, to name just a few. Moreover, she explores science-fiction literature from various perspectives. In the articles dedicated to Cyrano de Bergerac, the burlesque and the comic appear as instruments of science-fiction meant to lead to a serious questioning of the Self and of the World. *Du cantique des cantiques au Cantique de cantiques* is a very interesting outlook on the transposition of a poem from the Bible into the contemporary world of science-fiction and the way in which it is connected with the discoveries of quantum physics. Here, as in many other articles, the connection made with other fields of research, mostly physics, is extremely pertinent and gives the reader a wider view and a sense of understanding. They are, at the same time, open up to reinterpretations and personal, contrasting opinions. In *Flatland -vers une approche interdisciplinaire* the author observes how societies and governments are unlike in different epochs and how mathematical language is used to explain the world.

The Romanian author Rodica Gabriela Chira moves back and forth in time, goes beyond spatial and temporal boundaries and overlaps worlds without confusing the reader. Her ambition of showing how science-fiction literature can help us



fulfilled.



Emilia Codarcea,
*Germanistische
Valenztheorie*,
Cluj-Napoca,
Casa Cărții de
Știință,
2014

With a background of research in the linguistics domain, Professor Emilia Codarcea brings into discussion a detailed study focusing on the importance of dependency grammar to the study of language. The *Germanistische Valenztheorie* can be integrated, to this end, in in-depth German studies. However, the demonstration brings to the reader's attention that some of its final purposes will be text production, reception, translation and research. Altogether, these can be easily extrapolated to a more general understanding.

The book is mostly relevant to those who study the German language. However, it highlights a few aspects which represent an interest to the entire community of linguists. To sustain this idea, the author highlights the contrastive technique, using it as the basis for a comparison between German grammar and Romanian grammar.

From the beginning of the book, one of the most disputed concepts is the difference

understand the world, its evolution and further development is successfully

Ștefana Popa

between generative grammar and dependency grammar. The author does not focus on structuring a ranking, although the approach inclines to the dependency theory. In order to sustain the argument, the concept of “valence” is brought into discussion. The author presents many of her ideas by appealing to this term – derived from chemistry. In terms of linguistics, the valence of an element will be determined by the number of arguments that are under its control in each particular speech structure. The dependency theory proposes the verbal predicate as the central structure of the sentence. In other words, the predicate has the ability of determining other elements, either directly or indirectly.

The book reflects a detailed history of the preceding theories, with a presentation of the main ideas and particular examples. Each of them is documented, partly chronologically, with an emphasis laid on the contribution made by Lucien Tesnière on the theories based on dependency relations. Subsequently, an analysis attempts to overview the development of the valence concept, with the specifics and particularities given to the term by every linguist.

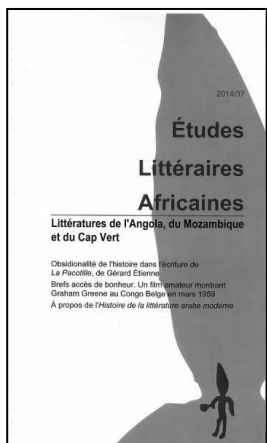
In this form, dependency grammar develops a graphical aspect and can be easily represented through schematics and practical examples. Moreover, the author proves throughout her research that the concepts can and should be applied in more than one language at a time. Therefore, a subchapter explains the theory with Romanian definitions, structures and examples, highlighting also the fact that little importance is given to this approach in Romanian linguistics. The demonstration emphasizes that languages can be easily approached at the level of valence and dependency grammar and their semantic and syntactic differences can also be easier to spot. In order to bring more arguments into discussion, the study proposes a description of the sentence parts



which can be correlated to the valence concept. A further subchapter presents the dictionaries developed on the basis of the above-mentioned theories, thus underlining the existing preoccupation of the linguists in this area.

Needless to say, the predilection for dependency grammar is systematized once again in the conclusion. The reader can observe that the approach of the thesis is well-documented, and it also highlights the areas of development which were identified. As clearly proven throughout the thesis, the theory can be better approached with the proper examples. Speech is in a continuous movement and is not universal. But the study of its components by comparison between languages and through determinations that exist in the structures might offer a better understanding to anyone interested.

Elena Rusu



*Études Littéraires
Africaines,*
no. 37,
Nathalie Carré
(éd.), *Littératures
de l'Angola, du
Mozambique et
du Cap Vert,*
2014

The international magazine of *African Literary Studies* manages to anthologize an impressive number of articles and reviews with the purpose of seducing the reader into

the exotic, little-known and yet unexplored world of African literatures.

As we expect from the subtitle, the consistency of the book is given by a file of articles dedicated to the literatures of three Portuguese-speaking African countries, namely Angola, Mozambique and Cape Verde. The file reunites eight texts originally written in English or Portuguese by different scholars and edited by Maria – Benedita Basto. Different in their approaches, most of them touching the transnational and trans-cultural perspective, the contributions manage to emphasize the complexity, diversity and richness of these literatures.

In the first article, Laura Padilha shows how, during colonial times, the Angolan writers mapped differently the cultural, symbolic and physic spatialization of their home place, refusing an occidental artistic-linguistic matrix. Philip Rothwell is interested in the new tendencies in Angolan literature by analyzing the novel *O Terrorista de Berkely* written by Pepetela. In order to get to know the Angolan society, history and dynamics, Innocentia Mata sees literature as a compulsory instrument. She analyzes the social – political dimension of the Angolan literary space and its influence on the fight for liberation and independence. Maria-Benedita Basto's study seeks to reveal how the Mozambican literature has fought what she calls “the war of epistemes” and helped to the reconstruction of what colonization has destroyed. Another two texts are put in writing in order to shade light on the Mozambican literature. Francisco Noa gives his attention to the deep connection between literature and nature, and particularly to the Indian Ocean and its transnational dimension. The Mozambican author Mia Couto is the object of study for Agnes Levecot, in her attempt to show how the differential otherness is reflected in Couto's works. The final two articles



explore Cape Verde's poetry and feminist writings. The file ends with a list of works from the three countries translated into French.

Another important part in the magazine is concerned with three different literatures. Firstly, we are introduced to the writings of Gérard Étienne, a Quebec author with Haitian origins. The next article is an ample presentation and analysis of a film recorded by the novelist Graham Greene in the Belgian Congo of the 1959.

What may seem strange to the readers is the publication of a study regarding the Arabian literature. *L'Histoire de la littérature arabe moderne* is an ample anthology published in two volumes throughout seven years. The editors felt the need to make visible the efforts that led to such a study and its major importance in the literary field.

A great number of reviews related to African literatures complete the book. To conclude, the journal offers the reader complete, solid studies that not simply display some emblematic names for literatures under discussion, but also provoke the reader to further research in that direction.

Ștefana Popa



Euresis, Cahiers roumains d'études littéraires et culturelles / Romanian Journal of Literary and Cultural Studies, "Cultural Studies. Is Culture Really Everywhere?", 2014

The present volume gathers a series of papers articulated around the concept of "cultural studies" (CS), with an argument and a final article regarding the field by Mircea Martin. It contains a few papers presented during the colloquium of 16-18 June 2012 in *Constanța* and others from a public conference that took place in Bucharest with the support of *Cuvântul* magazine, but most of these are new contributions to the field. The cultural studies collection opens with a paper of Wolfgang Iser, namely his analysis of culture as a "recursive looping". This first paper ambitiously brings to the forefront the issue of culture as a problem of continuous adaptation and interconnection with the environment as a whole. Culture is a tool that enables the human being, the "unfinished animal", to fill the gap, the "vacuum" between the body and the environment (the knowledge we need in order to function). Consequently, there is a thorny problem of what we define as culture and cultural studies, since there is great diversity ranged under the umbrella of this concept.

The volume is organized in two sections: the first one is assigned to different



contributors who speak about cultural studies from different perspectives, viewing it as a pluralized discipline that encompasses the crisis of culture and the politics of image, postcolonial studies and the political concept of nationalism and “anti-modern deprovincializations” (referring to the late modern generation of Romanian authors in the 1930s). The second section highlights a series of book reviews. These cross-disciplinary articles analyse different issues in the field of cultural studies (such as *Civilizations of Glass. Utopia, Dystopia, Urbanism* by Ștefan Borbély a book review by Paul Cernat).

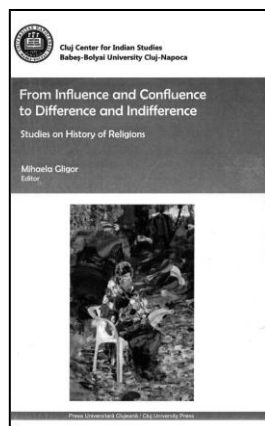
Here is an attempt to group the articles in the first section linked to each other by their subthematic perspective. The following two articles (“Cultural studies goes global” by Christian Moraru and “Unpacking knowledge” by Călin-Andrei Mihăilescu) are placed after Iser’s paper. The first one deals with the main concept of cultural studies as a global field that connects comparative studies and rethinks, as shown by the very concept of “cultural turn”, the whole scheme of culture, tradition and history. The second article sees CS as “repackaging knowledge”, which should be discussed under different circumstances “at the speed of changes in fashion” (with the ironically rhetorical question of the author if the speed necessarily means enlightenment). The articles (“Letter to Jane. Around a Politics of Image” by Aura Poenar and “Image-scandal: The place of the woman in the Economy of the visible. Irene Adler in *A scandal in Bohemia*” by Horea Poenar) are implying that the reader has a function of the utmost importance in terms of communication between the receiver and the visibility regime. An image is a text that should be read and it works as a process of truth by deconstructing the mechanisms of political art within the visibility regime. One paper (“Here, there, and everywhere: how

far to the East should the postcolonial travel” by Anca Băicoianu) deals with postcolonial studies, drawing a line between postcolonialism and postcommunism and tries to recontextualize postcolonial studies from this perspective, outlining an evolution of the term. The other articles try to capture the main connections between different cultural spaces and CS, as a tension between intergenerational conflict and the autonomy of art (as Ilinca Ilian analyses Mario Varga Llosa’s *The civilization of spectacle*, 2012 in her article “The crisis of culture in the Hispanic Space”).

Of the three texts about Romanian culture, the one about the interwar generation (“Anti-modern deprovincialization. The case of the interwar ‘Young generation’” by Paul Cernat) focuses on politics and ethics in this generational concept. The positions adopted by the “young generation” in politics and generally in literature talk about the end of provincial culture, by speculating an “antimodern attitude”. Being of topical interest in the 1930s, this attitude is consistent with the revaluation of values in those messianic times.

Most of the papers here are cutting-edge articles raising the question of how the field of contemporary cultural studies should be conceived. The volume charts many branches of CS, organising the collection of articles so as to bring about further clarification of this research field.

Andreea Heller-Ivancenکو



Mihaela Gligor
(ed.), *From
Influences and
Confluences to
Difference and
Indifference.
Studies on
History of
Religion*, Cluj
University Press,
2015

“The 21st century will be religious or will not be”, said André Malraux. The rather harsh statement of the French scholar has anticipated, to a certain degree, the religion issue, its status and importance in the context of contemporary society, of a modern, globalised world, a world of diversity.

The studies that speak about the history of religion, gathered by Mihaela Gligor under the title *From Influences and Confluences to Difference and Indifference. Studies on History of Religion* (Cluj University Press, 2015) take the reader into the fascinating and intriguing universe of religious beliefs, ideas, controversies and dilemmas. The authors of the essays, well-known scholars and professors, suggest a variety of topics, different perspectives in their presentation, providing precise data and arguments.

Starting with Jeremy Biles’ essay “The sacrifice of Domestication: Theorizing Religion” and ending with Maria Daniela Pomohaci’s study on the women’s condition in India, the main theme, the core of the volume is represented by the way people relate to faith, to religious principles and, especially, the impact that religion has on

humanity and its evolution. In a time when a mere discussion on religion can cause ardent debates, in a time when religious extremism and fanaticism lead to inhuman, violent acts, these essays clarify some uncertainties, answer some questions and create the basis for a further analysis. The studies include relevant information in order to understand the topics, the volume being characterised by a clear approach to ideas and a plurality of visions.

According to Mihaela Gligor, the volume “was born from our intention to show that there is a common ground for all beliefs and religious manifestations: the presence of the sacred beyond the Influence and Confluence or Difference and Indifference.”

Jeremy Biles’s well-documented and structured essay presents both the objective, scientific and the subjective, experimental approach to religion, expressing a fundamental idea i.e. the theorization of religion should be separated from the existential experience of it. The analysis of Mircea Eliade, Jonathan J. Smith and Geroge Bataille’s works underlines the pluriperspectivism of the presentation, the attempt to bring together multiple interpretations and opinions.

Carl Olson’s comparative study of Mircea Eliade’s *Hermeneutics* and Gilles Deleuze’s *Differences* emphasizes the idea that sameness and difference should be kept in creative tension with each other within an historical context. Mircea Eliade’s prediction regarding the “birth” of a new humanism out of the “cross-cultural encounters of postcolonial societies” is to be found in Maria-Daniela Pomohaci’s work “Between Colonial Laws and Religious Tradition. Hindus Women in the 19th century India.” The intervention of the British government in Indian legislation rarely had the desired outcome, especially as regards the issue of women’s status, the Hindu woman being considered an inferior individual, with no



right to an opinion. The Sati ritual, the widow's immolation, has been intensively debated and only after the intervention of the Indian elite, was its abolition approved. A lasting and fierce struggle took place between the partisans of Western ideas and the partisans of Indian religious traditions, highly respected along centuries. Therefore historical, social and religious circumstances had a great influence on woman's situation, who, unfortunately, "on no account is she to enjoy autonomy." Nevertheless the Indian postcolonial society has reconsidered its view under the Western, modern influence.

Melanie Barbato analyses another aspect of Indian culture i.e Jainism, a religion that promotes nonviolence and vegetarianism. The main goal is to reach the supreme purity. The writing abounds in very precise data, in statistics regarding the Jainist diaspora, the activities and meeting points of its members, details that overwhelm the reader and that seem well-nigh useless in this context.

An intriguing perspective on the relation human being – divinity is to be found in Jeremy Cullum's essay "History of Religious and Cultural Fashions Revisited." The idea, actually, belongs to Yuval Noah Harari, who states that man's evolution led to "a creature who stands on the verge of becoming a god, poised to acquire not only eternal youth, but also the divine abilities of creation and destruction." (*Sapiens- a brief History of Humankind*) The identification of man with god may seem a blasphemy, but in the contemporary context of technological development, of medical innovations, of the discoveries in such fields as genetics, robotics or biology, the statement makes sense. People consider themselves stronger and stronger everyday, capable of going beyond new frontiers over and over again, as the character of a TV series says "to boldly go where no one has gone before" (*Star Trek*).

"Our beliefs are an essential part of

who we are and how we relate" says Mihaela Gligor, insisting on the social importance of religion, which is defined as "a social and institutional entity with a set of values and codes of conduct." Mihaela Gligor's work, "Perspectives on Religion (In)Difference and (In)Tolerance", speaks about the love and tolerance that all the confessions state, but which cannot be seen or felt within society. Love and forgiveness, selflessness and gratitude, we all recognize them as reference points in public discourse, but still, each and every time we keep returning to our little worlds, remaining faithful to the individualism and egocentrism that have always defined us. Moralizing discourses about unconditional love, selflessness or compassion have invaded the public space, but a close analysis of the contemporary society would reveal just the opposite, meaning a brutal individualism and egocentrism.

As a conclusion, I would quote one of the author's questions "Does our indifference unite or divide us and, worse, does it make us hate each other?", expressing one of our deepest fears.

Livia Alb



Graphè,
no. 24,
*Les Noces de
Cana*,
Artois Presses
Université,
2015

Les douze études présentées par le numéro le plus récent de la revue *Graphè* proposent au lecteur une perspective inédite sur le texte/miracle des Noces de Cana. Ainsi, l'épisode biblique y est interprété d'une manière remarquable, qui se détache évidemment de la simple perspective dogmatique. En valorisant un imaginaire extrêmement complexe, les études marquent des directions hétérogènes, comme l'éloge du contenu biblique conformément au sens théologique, la problématisation presque blasphématoire des détails, des éléments et de la cohérence narrative et, enfin, l'illustration et la transposition de cette séquence dans l'architecture, la peinture ou la littérature.

Dans ce contexte, si les Noces de Cana montrent, en accord avec la tradition biblique, le commencement de la vie publique du Sauveur par le miracle du changement de l'eau en vin, les études proposées par la revue *Graphè* sélectionnent et analysent d'une manière ingénieuse des thématiques qui quittent la dimension strictement narrative et symbolique du miracle. Cet « ars combinatorica » que les travaux proposent est évident au niveau même de leur assemblage formel dans la revue, en créant pour le lecteur un véritable trajet d'initiation dans le

mystère des Noces de Cana. Ainsi, l'étude de Régis Burnet ouvre le volume avec une présentation polémique des éléments ambivalents qui composent l'histoire des Noces, en anticipant et en formulant l'hypothèse des lectures multiples et, implicitement, des réécritures de cette séquence. Dans ce contexte, l'analyse symbolique du motif/signe de l'abondance dans le travail d'Élodie Verdun, ainsi que celle du cadre symbolique commun pour les miracles dont Jésus-Christ est l'auteur, anticipe la discussion sur la polémique gnostique d'Irénée de Lyon et sur l'herméneutique augustinienne que Marie-Laure Chaieb et Yves Meessen proposent dans leurs études. Ainsi, l'image de l'eau changée en vin n'évoque pas simplement un miracle chrétien interprété comme un signe messianique, mais suggère aussi un transfert de significations, une communion qui dépasse la dimension simple des contenus matériels, humains, pour refléter l'union entre l'Église et Jésus-Christ ou entre Dieu et l'âme humaine, selon l'analyse eckhartienne de Marie-Anne Vannier. En plus, le transfert de sens est envisagé aussi comme une « traduction » parce que l'eau qui devient vin exprime, en effet, l'essence même de l'acte interprétatif, compris comme transformation et attribution de significations. D'ailleurs, entre mystère dionysiaque et miracle chrétien – selon l'analyse de Christophe Cusset – les Noces de Cana rejoignent deux traditions qui ont des finalités formelles différentes et dans lesquelles le vin consacre l'existence du point de vue du rituel et marque la « catharsis » et le passage vers une autre dimension ontologique, en anticipant, par l'abondance, l'Apocalypse et le banquet messianique.

Les auteurs des études sont également intéressés par les diverses réécritures de la narration des Noces de Cana : les *Paraphrases* de Nonnos de Panopolis (dans l'étude de Christophe Cusset), les versions qui appartiennent à Jean Michel et Arnould



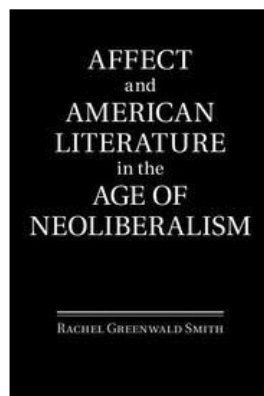
Gréban (dans l'article de Marie-Madeleine Castellani), l'interprétation de Jean Grosjean (prise en considération par Evelyne Frank), mais aussi les transposition de cet épisode dans l'économie narrative du roman dostoïevskien *Les Frères Karamazov* (analysée par Anne Pinot) ou des romans de Michel Tournier (Benedetta Carnali) prouvent une richesse symbolique et une complexité culturelle incontestable. La manière dont les Noces de Cana interfèrent avec l'image du vampire dans la culture occidentale et avec la purification par le vin de l'Eucharistie, devenu sang totémique, mais aussi la manière dont elles expriment l'idée de la communion par amour influencent les réécritures de cette séquence biblique, susceptibles de produire de nouvelles significations, extrêmement complexes. Quant à lui, le travail de Jean-Paul Deremble attire l'attention sur la valorisation des Noces de Cana au niveau plastique et architectural, en mettant l'accent sur les différentes mutations qui évoquent, en effet, les mutations du regard, illustrant la multiplicité des idéologies ou des perceptions culturelles qui soulignent chaque fois un autre détail symbolique.

Finalement, le point polémique maximal est assumé par l'analyse d'Étienne Leterrier qui met en discussion la relation entre miraculeux et « charlatanesque », non pas par rapport au discours biblique, mais en ce qui concerne sa manipulation discursive au XVIII^e siècle au niveau de l'exégèse et des représentations littéraires, tout comme au niveau de la scène sociale et des acteurs qui jouaient le rôle imaginaire des témoins du premier miracle de Christ. Par conséquent, le réinvestissement permanent avec de nouvelles interprétations de cet épisode construit un discours très hétérogène de la réception où c'est la dimension rituelle du changement de l'eau en vin qui explique la transformation répétée, également rituelle, du texte biblique, comme effet

d'une permanente relecture et réécriture.

Le 24^e numéro de la revue *Graphè* réussit ainsi à reconstruire pour le lecteur intéressé l'histoire des Noces de Cana et à lui offrir une série d'études ingénieuses, minutieuses, dont la créativité naît de l'érudition et de la capacité de voir et de lire un texte classique par une autre lentille que celle déjà consacrée.

Gianina Druță



Rachel
Greenwald
Smith,
*Affect and
American
Literature in the
Age of
Neoliberalism*,
Cambridge
University Press,
2015

In the last twenty years or so, there has been an ongoing debate in the humanities and other social sciences on emotions, feelings, affects and non-affective emotions. Increasingly complex studies focus on ideas such as vulnerability (Nussbaum 1995, Gateau 2015), new sincerity (Wallace 1991, Kelly 2010), emotions in literary theory (Terada 2001), or non-subjective affects and new forms of writing (Vermeulen 2015), forming a grey area where literary studies collide.

In *Affect and American Literature in the Age of Neoliberalism* (2015), Rachel Greenwald Smith examines several American literary texts from the twentieth and twenty-first century, focusing on the way



emotions trigger a change in narrative forms, but also in society and politics. The book goes against the frequent reading of contemporary literature through the lens of the “affective hypothesis”, meaning the private experience of the individual. Smith counter moves the perspective providing a surrogate approach for “personal feelings” (2). In the context of literary affects, the counterpart of personal feelings would be the impersonal feelings that attune themselves better in the broader nexus of the global market. Instantaneously, the “impersonal feelings” provoke a neutralization and a perfect adaptation to the extensive field of literary studies. Exactly, what are they? Generally speaking, they are affects produced by the texts that remain difficult to squeeze in rigid templates, as their meaning remains rather undetermined and chaotic.

In the introduction of the book, the author marks the hot spots of impersonal feelings from Brecht’s “estrangement effect”, Deleuze’s affect produced by works of art, up to more recent theories like Ngai’s “ugly feelings” (and the taxonomies that mark our cultural debate), or Massumi’s “virtual affects” (which are not subjective feelings).

The author perceives the change in narratives as a direct effect of the neoliberal society, and not necessarily as a historical consequence of the development and change of literature itself. In the first chapter, *Personal and Impersonal: Two Forms of the Neoliberal Novel*, Smith points out the differences between the contemporary novel and the postmodern novel while discussing Tom McCarthy’s *The Road* and Paul Auster’s *The Book of Illusion*. According to her, the recent novels are interested in community, rather than individual, and in narratives whose core is assembled by impersonal feelings that are not expressed directly.

Chapter 2, *Affect and Aesthetic in 9/11*

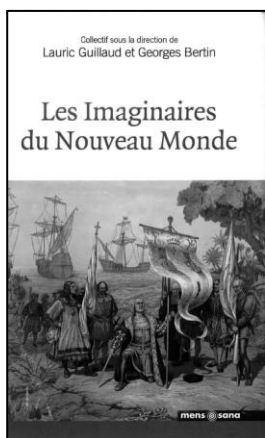
Fiction, explores pieces of writing published after 9/11, in particular, Jonathan Safran Foer’s *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close* and Don DeLillo’s *Falling Man* “transmitting to others the subjective fracturing constitutive of traumatic experience” (63) and their sentimental innovation and artificiality (71).

In the following section of the book, *Reading Like an Entrepreneur: Neoliberal Agency and Textual Systems*, Smith discusses the aesthetic of authenticity in novels like *A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius* and Ben Marcus’s *The Age of Wire and String*. While the first novel urges the reader not to impose her personal emotions or expression upon the characters, the latter collection of short stories warns the reader that she will never fully grasp the entirety of its fictional worlds.

In Chapter 4, *Ecology, Feeling, and Form in Neoliberal Literature*, Smith questions the presupposition of interconnected ecosystems and the assumption that literature can truthfully comprehend and represent the human and nonhuman world. Therefore, literature as awareness, not just human awareness connected to ethics, but to different ecosystems does not bring forth empathy, but rather alerts her of the possibly and vast range of feelings out there. We find out in the *Epilogue* of the book that the contemporary narrative landscape can be more turbulent that we might have thought (128).

As a conclusion, impersonal feelings as literary affects can still surprise and baffle the reader. As there is invariably a presence, even a neutral one to keep in mind, it often happens that they overcome our expectations, thus not matching unflinchingly our frame of mind.

Lavinia Rogojină



Lauric Guillaud,
Georges Bertin
(éds.),
*Les Imaginaires
du Nouveau
Monde*,
Mens Sana,
2011

Le thème du Nouveau Monde a été abordé dans de nombreux ouvrages de spécialité, mais aussi dans la littérature dans la cinématographie ou même dans le domaine de l'art, les gens devenant de plus en plus intéressés par l'Occident, même plus que par l'Orient. Les Européens des XVII^e-XVIII^e siècles étaient impatients de conquérir le Nouveau Monde et d'y trouver le Paradis Terrestre, celui-ci étant une sorte de leitmotiv littéraire, à côté du motif du voyage. Le concept de *Nouveau Monde* est apparu au moment où l'Amérique a été découverte et il a à la base des mythes fondateurs, des désirs du Monde Ancien et des rêves collectifs.

L'ouvrage *Les Imaginaires du Nouveau Monde* a paru en 2011 chez Mens Sana, sous la direction de Lauric Guillaud (professeur de littérature et civilisation américaine à l'Université d'Angers, président du Centre de recherches sur les Littératures de l'Imaginaire et auteur de nombreux ouvrages) et de Georges Bertin (socio-anthropologue, directeur de la revue *Esprit Critique* et président du Cercle d'Études Nouvelles d'Anthropologie). Sous ce titre sont réunies quelques études interdisciplinaires, qui traitent du sujet de la conquête du Nouveau Monde au carrefour de la littérature et de la

philosophie des XV^e et XVI^e siècles, mais aussi du mouvement New Age et de l'art mural mexicain après la révolution. La collection comprend huit travaux scientifiques, chacun abordant la problématique du Nouveau Monde d'un point de vue différent : « Le Nouveau Monde entre prodiges et impostures » (Lauric Guillaud), « L'Atlantide et le Nouveau Monde » (Jean-Pierre Sanchez), « Mythes américains : Fables des Antipodes et géographie mythique dans *La Découverte du Nouveau Monde par Christophe Colomb de Lope de Vega* » (Maria Aranda), « L'Amérique et le mythe du paradis chez les essayistes de langue espagnole » (Ricardo Tejada), « La verticalité de l'imaginaire politique dans l'art mural mexicain » (Ana Cecilia Hornedo Marín), « Nouveau Monde, Nouvel Âge (New Age) » (Georges Bertin), « Santa Evita de Tomás Eloy Martínez ou l'Histoire d'un mythe argentin » (Cécile Marchand) et « Dystopies chinoises » (Gilles Susong). Pour le début, Lauric Guillaud se propose de montrer que le Nouveau Monde n'était pas seulement un pays ruisselant de lait et de miel mais qu'il avait, lui aussi, ses inconvénients. La découverte de l'Amérique est liée au désir brûlant des Européens de trouver le Paradis terrestre. À partir de ce moment-là, un nouvel espace s'ouvre et un nouveau temps commence. Les problèmes sont apparus quand les Européens se sont proposés de coloniser les nouveaux territoires. Les Indigènes n'acceptaient point les habitudes, les traditions, les coutumes et, surtout, la religion des Blancs. Le meilleur exemple est l'essai de coloniser l'île de Virginie, qui n'a pas vraiment représenté un succès. Il semble que, pour accéder au Nouveau Monde, on ait eu besoin de parcourir un chemin sanglant, vu que l'Amérique n'est pas un Nouveau Monde mais, en effet, un pseudo-monde ; or les Européens voulaient maîtriser par la force des territoires



qui étaient déjà habités par des civilisations ayant leurs propres règles et leur propre rythme de vie. La deuxième étude s'intéresse à l'Atlantide, qui est vue comme un pont entre l'Ancien et le Nouveau Monde. L'origine de cette île est plutôt obscure. On la rencontre chez Platon, dans ses dialogues, mais on ne sait pas exactement si elle a vraiment existé. En outre, il y a des auteurs qui soutiennent que l'Atlantide n'est qu'un rêve enfantin de Platon.

Le chapitre suivant constitue une analyse des mythes des Antipodes chez Lope de Vega. Puisque les Antipodes représentent un monde si différent du nôtre, l'auteur a été accusé d'in vraisemblance. Vega peint un Nouveau Monde, qui est maîtrisé par des gens à quatre pieds, une autre sorte d'Amérique. Par la suite, on voit que l'Amérique n'est pas comprise seulement comme un monde idéal. Même si, au début, on l'avait associée à l'idée de Paradis, l'Amérique telle qu'on la retrouve sous la plume de plusieurs écrivains espagnols est très loin d'être un monde idéal. C'est précisément le but de la présente étude : de voir comment, en arrivant au XXI^e siècle, le Paradis est peu à peu détruit. Quant à l'art mural mexicain des années 1920-1940, il représente une manière de fortifier l'esprit nationaliste, parce qu'il est vu comme révolutionnaire, surtout dans le domaine politique. De plus, ce type d'art s'inspire de la vie quotidienne occidentale. Le concept de Nouvel Âge est une sorte de mélange entre des éléments religieux, culturels, d'astrologie et d'écologie. Ce mouvement américain met l'accent sur la médecine traditionnelle, le physique et le psychique humain, de même que sur la protection de la nature. Un rôle très important y est joué par Annie Besant, qui soutient que « La vérité est en nous », et par Paulo Coelho, qui introduit, dans ses romans, des thèmes comme la Quête de l'Absolu ou l'Ailleurs.

Le roman *Santa Evita* reprend le mythe de la *difunta Correa*, qui parle du sacrifice d'une mère pour ses enfants à travers l'image d'Eva Perón. Elle sera un modèle pour toutes les filles et les adolescentes des années 50, devenant, en même temps, un personnage inépuisable. Une question demeure pourtant : est-ce que l'homme est toujours dans une quête de l'Autre Monde ou non ?

Raluca Bocanci



Littératures classiques,
no. 83,
A. Cayuela, F. Decroisette, B. Louvat-Molozay, M. Vuillermoz (éds.), *Préface et critique. Le paratexte théâtral en France, en Italie et en Espagne (XVI^e-XVIII^e siècles)*, Paris, A. Colin, 2014

Le texte théâtral avec sa double destination, la scène et la lecture, demande qu'on lui accorde une attention particulière, qu'on n'y réfléchit pas seulement dans les traités « d'inspiration aristotélicienne », mais aussi et surtout dans les petits textes qui l'escortent.

Avec l'essor du théâtre moderne à partir du XVI^e siècle en Italie, en Espagne et en France, le paratexte théâtral connaît des formes diverses et de plus en plus complexes en réponse au besoin des auteurs de se délimiter des théoriciens, et de s'adresser directement au public (spectateur ou lecteur). Remarquable espace de dialogue, le paratexte est envisagé par les études de cette



revue à partir de trois perspectives : du point de vue de ses formes, enjeux et stratégies, du point de vue des objets du discours et, enfin, de celui de ses relations avec le texte dramatique.

Dans le chapitre dédié aux « Formes, enjeux et stratégies », Véronique Lochert étudie l'essor que prennent les préfaces et les prologues dans la proximité directe du texte théâtral des XVI^e et XVII^e siècles, tandis qu'Anne Teulade, dans une étude comparative, constate la forte portée théorique des préfaces françaises par rapport aux préfaces de théâtre espagnoles qui préfèrent défendre l'autorité du dramaturge.

Hélène Baby s'arrête sur les « années Richelieu » dont la diversité du texte théâtral a pour but de dissoudre le discours savant dans la conversation mondaine et, par cela, légitimer la fiction théâtrale aux yeux d'un public qui en sort enrichi.

La polémique théâtrale et anti-cultiste trouve un lieu privilégié dans la dédicace à Marino de *Virtud, pobreza y mujer* de Lope de Vega, selon Fausta Antonucci et Florence d'Artois. Quant à Corneille, le paratexte est à l'honneur, et Bénédicte Louvat-Molozay nous parle de son double geste critique: le vaste hypertexte qu'est le *Discours* qui ouvre chacun de ses trois volumes et l'*Examen* qu'il propose pour chacune de ses pièces. Le paratexte des comédies milanaises de Carlo Maria Maggi propose une « poétique du rire contrôlé », un espace d'accueil de diverses réflexions sur le rire, anciennes ou contemporaines (S. Miglierina).

Dans la section dédiée aux « Objets du discours critique », Lise Michel poursuit l'évolution du genre paratextuel dans les pièces françaises: le discours théorique laisse place à la réception faisant la distinction entre différentes communautés de spectateurs, tandis que Françoise Decroissette se penche sur l'opposition aristotélicienne entre le *vrai* et l'*inventé*, telle qu'elle apparaît dans le paratexte théâtral italien du XVII^e siècle.

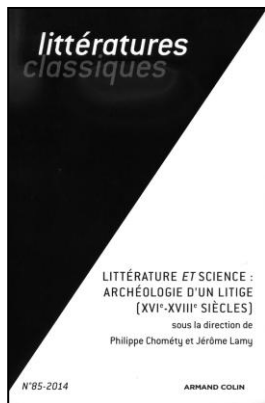
L'étude des paratextes français du XVI^e siècle fait resurgir une permanente référence aux Anciens dont on recommande l'imitation. La tragédie doit rester un avertissement pour les puissants, la division des actes et les unités de temps et d'action doivent être soigneusement observées. Mais, il y en a aussi de ceux qui rejettent le chœur et refusent d'écrire à l'antique pour offrir la place d'honneur à Dieu. (J.-C. Ternaux)

Les paratextes espagnols offrent un riche terrain d'étude pour les chercheurs, soit qu'il s'agit du concept de *tragicomedia*, cette notion mouvante recouvrant des combinaisons différentes de tragique et de comique (C. Couderc), soit pour ce qu'il y a des changements que l'ouverture des *corrales* avait provoqués en Espagne à la fin du XVI^e siècle (T. Ferrer Valls).

Finalement, dans la section « Paratexte et texte dramatique », Marzia Pieri s'arrête sur les premières éditions d'œuvres théâtrales siennoises et vénitiennes qui offrent, dans un style très imaginaire, les premiers paratextes des œuvres théâtrales, tandis que Marcela Trambaioli met l'accent sur les rapports de contamination entre texte et paratexte qu'un auteur brillant et érudit comme Lope de Vega emploie comme stratégie d'autopromotion.

L'originalité des paratextes des tragédies italiennes (de 1540 à 1640) est mise en évidence par l'étude de Enrica Zanin. Le paratexte apparaît très tôt et représente moins le commentaire que la présentation de l'action dramatique pour passer, à partir de 1610, à la tendance européenne de laisser place au débat théorique. Enfin, Philippe Gardy passe sous la loupe les vingt-quatre pièces du Théâtre de Beziers (1600-1660) dont les prologues fixent les règles du jeu théâtral, tout en prenant les spectateurs à témoins quant au sens d'une représentation unique.

Simona Marica (Ilieș)



*Littératures
Classiques,*
n° 85,
Philippe
Chométy et
Jérôme Lamy
(éds.), *Littérature
et science:
archéologie d'un
litige (XVI^e –
XVIII^e siècles),*
Paris, A. Colin,
2014

The third installment of 2014, numbered 85, carries the title *Littérature et science: archéologie d'un litige (XVI^e – XVIII^e siècles)* and battles the controversial and well-documented sociocultural dichotomy of the two discursive practices, namely literature and science. The challenge here, explicitly, lies in the narrative of modernism, this time period of three centuries that has seen the relationship between the two alter and reconfigure itself, shifting from contiguity to duality, from inclusion to scission, a dynamic that makes for a thought-provoking read. Philippe Chométy and Jérôme Lamy, the directors of the issue, argue that the separation of identities and their progressive empowerment are, in fact, the vital criteria for an authentic exchange and for the possibility of dialogue itself. On a similar note, Frédérique Aït-Touati briefly maps the shared history between literature and science and explains the birth of various hybrid studies (such as cultural history) while bringing forth both the limitations and the convergences that derive from what has now become, for us, a deeply ingrained “binary education”.

The first section in the issue, aptly

titled *La cité des savants*, focuses on the weight of science and its correlated arguments that permeate the literary discourse. Nicolas Correard writes about skepticism as a „spiritual exercise” in the English and French poetry of the 16th and 17th centuries, a turning point from the naturalistic and antiscientific views of the time towards an approach marked by scholarly curiosity and knowledge. A good example of literature that integrates the emerging mathematical and cosmological discourse while at the same time maintaining the boundaries of the literary discourse is Cyrano de Bergerac’s work, as analyzed by Andreas Gipper; there is an imagination – reason dialectic dance that brings a legitimation and a new status to fictional worlds. Richard Goodkin compares two different unity of knowledge types (mathematical and scientific truths) to the notion of literary unity, subjected to similar internal relations and structures, while Mickaël Popelard studies the multiple identities of the scholar in Shakespeare’s plays only to discover his final dehumanization. Florent Libral brings forth the concept of *merveille* (or wonder) meant to unify and mediate between opposing views regarding divinity. Examining modern science and the practice of writing such books, Dinah Ribard discovers an inseparable contribution of poetry.

The second part, *Exercices d’écriture*, shifts the weight from science to literature. Magali Brunel reveals the importance of the scientific discourse in Molière’s theatrical works, which not only marks a newfound autonomy of the discipline, but also enriches the philosophical experience. Joël Castonguay-Bélanger explains four different approaches for understanding the fictional representations of science; Fabrice Chassot talks about the necessary vulgarization and socialization of the scientific dialogue without regarding it as an inferior version of the activity itself; Alexandre Wenger fo-



cuses, instead, on the transposition of the scientific theories in fiction, disguising it as experience, which changes the perception of the reader. Gilles Chabaud brings forth „mathematical recreations” as a public representation of science, studying their evolution, and Alain Guyot compares two different accounts of travels, magnifying how much an author’s personal views and preferences (science versus literature) can modify the outcome.

The reconciliation between the two discourses comes in the form of the final section, *Agents doubles*, which states that there are certain notions or images or that act as an interface between ideas and representations, or fiction and theories; a debate or an interrogation on such matters would only reveal that one cannot isolate them – they are part of both the scientific and the literary world, and it serves to show the complexity of this relationship.

Ioana Crăciun



Matari'i.
La revue du ciel,
No. 38-41,
2012, the year of
Venus,
2012

Launched in 2007, *Matari'i* is a yearly journal of C.I.E.L. (Local Ethnoastronomy Investigation Center), whose subject deals with the research, dissemination and promotion of ancient Polynesian astronomy. The present issue bears the title *2012, the*

year of Venus, after the June 2012 transit of Venus (the transits of Venus occur in pairs, eight years apart, and are separated by gaps of 121 and 105 years), when the planet appeared as a small, dark disk moving across the face of the Sun; the next transit will occur in December 2117.

The present volume presents nine articles, each containing an enormous stream of Polynesian words, and sufficient black and white pictures for a better grasping of the subject. It may interest the common reader with a passion for myths, comparative analogies, designs, or a simple curiosity concerning the night sky; but it also reaches passionate investigators by carefully exploring different aspects of the topic, and moreover, by offering a substantial bibliography. The reader can also encounter reviews of books or articles on the same subject area, or synopses of previous *Matari'i* journals. The articles are grouped under four study categories: Stars and Culture, Ethnoastronomy, Archeoastronomy and Astronomy.

The first article, under Stars and Culture, is called “Rite of passage: initiatory journey, *Pipiri mā* or the first fruits of *Matarii*” (the Constellation of Pleiades, so called in Polynesia. *Matari'I* in Tahitian, *Mataiki* in Marquesan), and promises to unravel the *Pipiri mā* legend, the meaning behind the characters and their connection with the Scorpius constellation. The article presents the legend, such as it was published by Gilbert Cuzent in 1860; a short text, dotted about with Tahitian words like *rama*, *umu*, *fare moe*, *mahu*. It tells the story of two children, *Pipiri* and *Rehua*, who ascended to heaven from a mountain by clinging to the tail of a kite, after their parents refused them to partake the fish supper caught by torchlight.

All the names have a multivalent meaning. *Pipiri* can mean avaricious, mean,



but also the closeness between one another. His image is tightly connected with that of his sister, together representing a male-female duality (procreation, the cycle of life). They offer their life to the gods in order to ensure fruitfulness on the following season. His sister's name, *Rehua*, is linked with color red, the guiding star of the Polynesians (Antares). It is also described the name of the character who helped them escape, a spirit named *mahu* (or *tahu*), which means fog; on the other hand *mahū* is an androgynous character, one of his functions being that of initiating the youth in the act of love.

Their ascent on the mountain is a metaphor of the sexual act. The kite's tail is considered a fishhook; his undulation renders an image of the sexual act, as one gripping of a coconut tree. White, color of the clouds, is associated with ejaculation, sperm. This latter is further associated with blood, bone and milk. It is said that the father gives the child blood through his sperm, while his mother gives him matter, the bones. The same concept of bone and blood can also be found among Toltecs and Aztecs. The place where their parents go fishing is a metaphor of the Milky Way, a source of living water from the mouth of gods.

The author concludes by offering a link between the Andean culture and the Marquesas. Inside Pauma valley is found a recumbent statue of a woman, by the name of *Tauà te pepe*, underneath which women used to lie for a better childbirth. A carving on the statue which resembles a lama makes for the bridge between the above mentioned cultures.

"Art and cosmology: the stars through the Marquesan tattoo" gives the title of the second article. It is in the Marquesas that the Pacific reached its climax in terms of the amount of tattoos on the body. The inhab-

itants paint their entire body with images containing religious symbolism, objects, fauna or flora which surrounds them, mainly inherited from their ancestors. In order to be able to read them one must first understand the Polynesian universe.

The inhabitants of the archipelago share, with various nuances, the common perception of a spherical universe which is seen as a coconut, or egg. *Ipu*, a generic term in Marquesan language, denotes a spherical object. With these in mind, there is *ipu 'ehi* (coconut shell) and *ipu mam'i* (egg-shell). Legend has it that the universe broke, thus giving shape to three tiered platforms. The *ipu* image, which diagrams these platforms, is often found in their tattoos (under their armpits, on the inner arm or the forearm).

The *ipu* pattern, along with anthropomorphic figures, can evolve giving shape to a smiling countenance. The author presents here the stages of such a transformation. What is important is that on the Marquesan islands these anthropomorphic figures can depict equally both the human and the divine: *'enana* (human beings), *tau'a* (priests), *haka'iki* (chieftains), or *'etua* (divinities, genii or spirits).

At the end the author presents briefly his bilingual dictionary on Polynesian tattoos.

"Art and constellation: the dancing of the bird", the title of the third article, offers a general view of the bird's symbolic role in the Polynesian sky, and a closer look on that of Marquesas.

Both on Marquesas and on the Easter Island the motif of the bird is considered a symbol of power, her dance a voyage in the Afterlife. In Tahiti, the Overworld is symbolized by white birds (*pi-vai-anoa*), an emanation of the gods. There is a close connection between king, feather and color of the sky and sun. For example, in *Taputapuatea*, the words addressed to the



king show the link which unites him with his feather girdle of the color 'ura, the color of the sky: "It's the force of your red girdle. Oh, my king! The sky and the red girdle!"

At Kapingamarangi the bird finds her place in the sky, under the name *manu*, a constellation out of the stars Procyon, Sirius (Sirius and Beta) and Canopus. There, the tribe chief, after succeeding in a rite, is called *tangata manu*. This does not mean "birdman" but "god-man" or "fortunate man", *manu* is but the power attributed to a ting or to man. The pigeon symbolizes Orion; the green pigeon (*u'upa*) is the fetish animal of the lunar goddess Hina. In Marquesas, Ursa Major is symbolized by the constellation called *Te manukaki'oa*, or "Bird with long neck".

The author presents also the legend of the bird's dance, *hakamanu*, the myth of *hakamanu* and the Pleiades, and details about the Kiukiu point. Of the latter it is said that is the departing point of the spirits. The Marquesan people distinguish the body from the spirit; they don't know where this latter comes from, but they know where his going: toward a north-west direction, on top of point Kiukiu.

"If Venus could recount, the perception of the planet in Polynesia and elsewhere" is the first article under Ethnoastronomy. It proposes a study of astronomy on the names and personifications of Venus, perceived in Polynesia and in different astronomical cultures.

A table is presented with around forty aspects concerning Venus. From this one can deduce for example that, in what concerns Venus's age, it's almost always a matter of youthfulness: she is young or old in North America, old in Ukraine, but almost everywhere else (China, at the Jews from the Middle Ages) she is young. In what concerns gender, she is more feminine than masculine. In Africa, at the Kirundi, she is "the one who appears", "morning star", "eve-

ning star" (feminine) or "goats star" (masculine). In Europe she is personified by the love goddess Aphrodite-Venus, but in Central America she is represented by Quetzalcoatl and Tlaloc (both masculine).

Venus is strongly connected with fecundity, sexuality, blood, circumcision. There are mentioned some aspects among the Bambara people, the Dogon, Quechua, the indigenous people of the Great Plains. The latter tribe associates de morning star with virility, as a leader of people. A bloody sacrifice of a young girl symbolizes the triumph of the morning star (masculine) over the evening star (young girl).

The bestiary of Venus is very heterogeneous. Her avatar can be both anthropomorphic (especially focused on eyes and face) and zoomorphic. Of the latter, she is often connected with diurnal birds or animals (cock, phoenix, pigeon) but also with nocturnal animals (dog, snake, jaguar).

She often has a bipolar aspect, since she's at the same time the morning and the evening star. Concerning the cycle of life and death she is symbolized by a tree representing the cycle of the vegetal life, because Venus, which shares a connection with the World Tree, symbolizes death and the annual vegetal resurrection. She can also bridge between the living and the dead. In Polynesia, as well as in other parts of the globe, the Overworld and the communication between worlds stand as a recurring theme in the perception of Venus.

In the Oriental World she is associated with musical instruments, while in Europe with certain esthetical objects (girdle, mirror, shell). On both continents she is symbolized by color white, or a flower (the rose). She always draws up triads, for example together with the Sun and a planet, never dyads.

The article also provides a short Venusian mythology, that of her masculine power



and of love and marriage, and a series of bilingual tables regarding the aspects of Venus in different regions of Polynesia.

“The World Tree in Polynesia and elsewhere” is a study on the association of the Pleiades with the World Tree in pre-Columbian culture and those of pre-European Polynesia.

Allover Central America can be found associations between snake, bird, tree, Pleiades and Venus. Among the Mayas, for example, the Pleiades form, along with Perseus, the tail of a rattlesnake. The World Tree is represented by a cross, whether the Southern Cross, the Northern Cross or a cross in the Sagittarius.

Concerning the relation between the World Tree and the snake/bird, the Aztecs honor the god Quetzalcoatl or “Snake-Bird”, which has climbed the World Tree. In North America, the tortoise is a prevalent symbol in the Amerindian totem, evoking the World Axis and the assimilation of Pleiades with seven brothers or sisters. It symbolizes Mother Earth and the cosmogonic myth.

The Moon, Venus and the Pleiades together with Orion play an important role in Amazonia. The theme of starving children prevails, and the theme of the tree is omnipresent, the author mentioning a series of examples taken from Levi-Strauss. One legend has it that long ago the Indians used to mount a tree to climb to heaven, where they found honey and fish in abundance. One day an old woman asked them for some food, but they refused her. Then the lady transformed the ones which remained in the tree into stars; thus the origin of Pleiades.

In Tahiti, unlike in Polynesia, there is a connection between the World Tree and the stars, the Pleiades, and the eel in guise of a snake. The trunk of the World Tree is symbolized by the coconut palm (*haari*) and the breadfruit (*uru*), whose mythological origins are detailed in this study.

The author also expounds the link between the Moon, Pleiades, the fertility rites and the passage rites, makes a comparative study with Chinese folklore, and details on invariants like the seven stars of Pleiades, Orion’s myth and the mytheme of head-Moon. This latter appears in a birth myth of the coconut tree and the breadfruit which are personified by the head. An extract from Levi-Strauss describes an Amazonian myth among the Kuniba where the Moon originates from a head.

The author concludes his research from an ethnoastronomic and an archeological point of view. One can say that the Pleiades were used both by agrarian and non-agrarian societies. The mytheme of the World Tree is practically universal, with constant references to the axis formed by Pleiades/Orion/Sirius, the Milky Way and the Southern Cross.

The study named “The tortoise of Hermes: an ancestral image” brings together the myth of the celestial messenger, the kithara, the celestial tortoise and the caduceus.

The myth of Hermes shows explicitly that his name and image are the symbol of the solemn announcement of entering in a new multiannual cycle; a cycle of four years, or fifty months. It is said that when he invented the musical instrument with cords he gave it to Apollo to compensate for the fifty cows which he stole at the time of his birth.

The image of a human head with bovine horns seems to be, before the invention of writing, a common symbol of lunar power and of the religious lunar month in her three phases: waxing (left horn) – full moon (the face) – waning (right horn). Therefore the fifty cows represent fifty moons. It is not a random number, but half of a cycle of one hundred moons which, under a period of eight years, readjust the cycles of the moon and the sun.



The image of Hermes as a celestial messenger is inseparable coupled with his winged staff, the caduceus. A ligature of cycles, of intertwined places, an image of aerial salvation, caduceus is also linked with Asclepius or with Moses. The latter, following Gods word, made a bronze snake and placed it on a pole, so that anyone bitten by the snake and gazing at it would preserve his life.

Etymologically, from the Latin *caducus* (fallen), the caduceus can be related to a fallen token, like Hermes himself, namely to the Flying tortoise. If one takes the “perch of the bright serpent”, that is the diagonal which passes Sirius, The Three Kings belt and Aldebaran, and translates Orion’s silhouette as a tortoise, then The flying tortoise is balanced on a big celestial axis.

The image of the flying tortoise could have traversed, over millennia, the two oceans, being carried by the first Americans then by the Maoris to eventually settle in the astronomical nomenclature of the Southern Hemisphere.

The studies under Archeoastronomy open with the title *Cook and Tupaia’s map: elaboration of an astronomical knowledge?*, an article written around a map, product of a Tahitian and an occidental mind, that of Tupaia, a Polynesian navigator, and the British explorer James Cook. Tupaia joined Cook on board the *Endeavor* and, at the request of the naturalist Sir Joseph Bank, joined also the 1769 expedition. The map is a hybrid document, an occidental map with cardinal points, meridian, parallels, and outlines of the islands, with a dose of Polynesian cartographic ontology, which can only be read having a familiarity with Oceanian concepts of islands compass and stars compass.

The stars compass consists of a circular or rectangular diagram on which each quarter indicates the positions of the guiding stars (rising, setting). The horizon is thus

marked from 16 to 32 quarters. In fact, each guiding star is followed by numerous others which seem to describe an arc of a circle or “stars path”, more or less above the horizon, rising from the east and setting symmetrically westward. But is a burden for navigators to memorize the name of the guiding stars, that of the stars which follow the same trail, but also the islands found on their quarters. We come then to islands compass. On each voyage, the bow of the pirogue points to the direction of the guiding star (and the stars to follow). Unlike a map *stricto sensu*, where the islands have an absolute position, the central point (the departing island) of an islands or stars compass has subjective coordinates; the islands compass reorients mentally according to the subjects position.

The Tupaia map reveals some knowledge of Polynesian navigation, where one senses the tight relations between geography and one’s own manner of situating in the world, between astronomy and cosmology, between navigation and a state of receptivity.

The following article, “A reference source for knowing the starting point of the year in Tahiti”, promises to explain the steps which must be taken into consideration when searching for the beginning of the year. The calendar is strongly connected with the stars, of which the European navigators left but a scant number of Tahitian star names. It needed the nineteenth century to find that Antares corresponds with Réhoua in the Society Islands.

According to a legend after Jacques-Antoine Moerenhout (explorer and ethnologist, who spread the culture of Polynesia during his three voyages, in the beginning of the ninetieth century), the birth of the celestial bodies, including Venus, Antares, the Pleiades, was done in the same way as the Russian dolls. At some point, the star



Tauroua (Venus), who gives laws to the night and the day, to the other stars, to the moon, the sun, and serves as a guide to mariners, sailed northward where he slept with his wife, giving thus birth to the Red Star (*rehua*, Antares), a star which announces the beginning of the year.

The same author identifies four periodical celebrations: at the beginning of October (spring), around December and January (summer, the season of first fruits), around March-April (fall) and in June (winter, the season of mourning or the departure of gods). Out of these, the two most important ones are the celebration of the first fruits and the season of fertility (in June). The last one is also called *the end of the closing of the year*, or *the goodbyes to divinities and spirits*.

In oriental Polynesia no archipelago situates the beginning of the year in October. For example, in New Zealand the year begins in May-June along with the emergence of the Pleiades. In Tahiti, after Moerenhout, the year begins when Antares marks the evening (around October). As regards to the evening, it can be the heliacal setting or the acronyical rising. Between the last visibility of Antares and the vesperal rising of the Pleiades (around the twentieth of November), there are some twenty days to adjust the lunar calendar.

At the end of the article it is provided, by the linguist Jean-Claude Teriierooterai, indications in adjusting the Tahitian lunar calendar, and a catalog comprising the names of Antares and their correspondence with the lunar months.

The last article bears the name "Astronomy and rongorongong". It revolves around a tablet called *Mamari* (in the Rapanui language *mamari* means egg), which contains a system of glyphs discovered in the ninetieth century, called *rongorongong*. The tablet is one out of two

dozen wooden tablets remaining from the ancient writing of Easter Island.

The central zone of the tablet is fully carved with a script depicting moons (time unit), months and years. At a first examination one can say that it represents a lunar calendar, but it is more than that. It *represents* the writing of an enormous star, visible for a long period, during both nighttime, when the bird sleeps, and daytime, when Polynesians go fishing. Eventually the star diminished in magnitude and disappeared.

On further research, it was discovered that a supernova erupted on the forth of July 1054 (this represents the birth of Crab Nebula) visible during twenty four days. It was as bright as Venus, a remarkable phenomenon on the sky stage. The astronomers of the *Rapanui* language wanted to preserve the event for future generations. They had a possibility, that of woodcarving, on a time when Easter Island abounded in trees. *Mamari* tablet dates from that time.

The objective in deciphering the tablet was to relate it to navigation. Further elucidations were made, not on a scale as the tablet to be read as a lecture, but on a basic level. The *Rapanui* language is very difficult to grasp; besides, one must possess some knowledge of sailing or of the Southern hemisphere sky before emerging in deciphering. The morphological elucidations remain though local, which means that they cannot be transported systematically to other tablets. Out of ten signs presented and deciphered in the article two were not studied. One sign, for example, depicting a crescent moon, called *marama*, symbolize a month of navigation. *Mango-mango*, a depiction of two sharks, means plural, large quantities (this indicates warmer waters), or the direction N-V (the rapidity on Maori navigation). *Nga-ha-peka*, a sign in the shape of an X with a circle at each end, could indicate a group of four stars in a cross formation, the Southern Cross, or danger (a difficult mari-

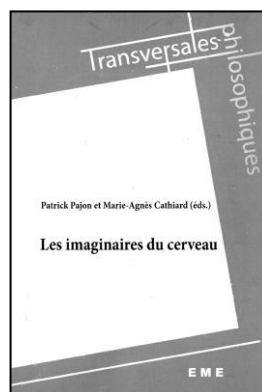
time route; in the ancient Marquesan language that could be the cold waters of the Pacific).

As a proof that the *Mamari* tablet could be read as a mean of navigation stands the fact that in Polynesia, when a migration reached destination, it noted on stones the sky chart, as a way to retrace their route back.

The journal finishes with three bilingual tables informing on the Tahitian name of the abovementioned asterisms, stars and planets. Often the Tahitian counterpart has more translations, due to their different source.

Matari'i, taken as a whole, is a comparative study whose borders go beyond that of the Polynesian triangle, to reaching other astronomical cultures as far as the American continents, or Africa. This collection of articles, although it has a constellation at its core, or minimum a star, can reach different readers by relating it to colorful pallet of subjects like the World Tree, rites of passage, or tattoos. Its contribution is significant because it unites up-to-date researches on the above mention fields under a logical stream and also offers the reader new ways of approaching the area.

Ciprian Căilă



Patrick Pajon,
Marie-Agnès
Cathiard (éds.),
*Les imaginaires
du cerveau*,
Centre de
recherche sur
l'imaginaire,
Université
Stendhal,
Grenoble, 2015

Les imaginaires du cerveau (Patrick Pajon, Marie-Agnès Cathiard, editors) is part of the collection “Transversales philosophiques”, coordinated by Jean-Jaques Wunenburger and Valentina Tirloni and was published under the auspice of the *Centre de recherche sur l'imaginaire* (Université Stendhal de Grenoble). The articles in this volume all study themes that relate to the idea of an imaginary of the brain –making the brain an object of myths and tales.

Because of the vast quantity of material that the analysis relies on, the method had to use three main approaches: cultural representations of the brain, fictions of the brain, and the latest sci-fi imaginary of the brain-machine. Insofar as the first category is concerned – the brain and the cultural representations it has generated, a fascinating example is the one put forward by Marie-Agnès Cathiard and Fabio Armand's article “BRAIN CUBUS: Vers un modèle anthropologique neurocognitif transculturel pour les ‘fantomes’ de l'imaginaire”, in which the meeting point of cerebral activity and the accounts that belong to the field of folklore is justly made evident. The perspective that views imaginary ontologies as being created on a cerebral level due to cortical activity (sleep paralysis, the R.E.M. state of the brain during the sleep cycle,



etc.) open a space for further discussion about these products of our neurology that swiftly enter the area of universal cultural legacy (e.g. dreams and other representations that have come to crystalize into patterns and widely accepted concepts).

The fictions of the brain include products that speculate upon this strange and fascinating organ, by creating narrative and philosophical scenarios that expand current views and organize ideas. In this respect, the volume includes analyses of matters such as the metaphors of the brain in *Ghost in the shell* (article written by Jérôme Goffette) or Sylvie Allouche's paper on Simon Wright (a cartoon character from the *Captain Future* series, which materializes the idea of the brain as intellect surviving severed from the rest of the body and preserved for the sake of its brilliant knowledge.)

What characterizes the current period of Western culture in the respect of the cerebral imaginary is the growing fertility of this object and the enthusiasm with which it is faced both by generators and consumers of culture. The philosophical speculations that are permitted by this field are extremely wide – what is consciousness and where does it reside? What is the relation between the human entity and the soul? How and by which means is the human identity essentially determined? The volume offers a brief history of the moments in our contemporary culture in which attention has been enthusiastically focused upon the brain and its cerebral corollary (articles that analyze subjects such as the part the image of the brain played in revolutionary cultural movements such as the counter culture – Rémi Sussan, the brain viewed as a network and the imaginary of the internet – Jean Paul Baquiast and Paul Mathias).

Alexandra Rațiu



Adrian G. Romila, *Pirați și corăbii. Incursiune într-un posibil imaginar al mării (Pirates and Ships. An Incursion into the Imaginary of the Sea)*, București, Cartea Românească, 2015

Piracy and the idea of using something with no rights became familiar terms and expanded their use in various domains (literature, film industry). The purpose of this book is to thoroughly analyze the image of the pirate in the last centuries and the way it was developed from an empiric structure to an imaginary one. Pirates and their iconic figures, reiterated in the artistic imaginary, are a sort of distortion from the real sense of the concept. Here are several comparisons between what it means to be a pirate in the real world (Bartholomew Sharp, Francis Drake) and what it means to be a pirate in artistic representations (Captain Hook, Blackbeard).

First of all, the so-called pirates, sailors who act against the law and plunder the other maritime space participants, are divided into a wider typology than we can imagine. They really existed between 16th and 19th centuries, as documented in recorded history, and their activity was related with the historical context of the time. There were various types of pirates: corsairs, buccaneers and all of them merged into an archetype, the modern world pirate with all its characteristic features: a peg leg, a hook hand, scars, treasure hunts, maps etc. Some of them are veridical facts, some are brought

just for the readers' delight.

In relation with the condition of the pirate, the entire maritime space is depicted and a major part is assigned to ships used in those specific times. The boundaries between reality and fiction are well marked. A specialized vocabulary is used in order to be realistic and to take into consideration all the details which can make distinctions between ships in a technical way. Historical events and geographical contents sustain or deny the use of some specific ships in writings. Some of the features which are related with pirates have a realistic support, even if they are not mixed logically.

The Golden Age of Piracy, which is documented to have taken place between the 17th and the 18th centuries, was a root for many authors attracted by the sea adventures and a source for a further development of what is now known as a specific type of artistic imaginary. This type of fiction is analyzed in Robert Louis Stevenson's creations. It is rather a structural and thematic approach to the texts than a symbolic or aesthetic one and it manages to reveal the nuances and interpretations which piracy has in artistic structures.

In Romanian literature, Radu Tudoran and his novel, *Toate pânzele sus*, is analyzed in order to make a comparison between the Western and the Eastern influences of piracy. There is a real distinction in the aesthetic and thematic structures of the Eastern and Western writings. The variations reveal the epistemological structures in which the texts were written and how the authors handled maritime space, adventures and pirates themselves.

To conclude, at the end of the book, a short review of what maritime space, ships and piracy mean and how they are interconnected provides a mapping of piracy's journey from real space to its romanticized figure in the arts.

Marius Pușcaș



Valentina
Sandu-Dediu,
Octave paralele,
București,
Humanitas,
2014

Valentina Sandu Dediu's book, *Octave paralele* [*Parallel octaves*] is a wonderful composition that strings, first, eight musical stories called "inventiuni", focused on the relationship of music and literature and mostly on the significant similarities between the two, then follows other consecutive octaves as eight little rhapsodies dedicated to musical studies and to musicians according to a certain historical, ideological or biographical background and, in the end, provides eleven portraits of contemporary musicians, teachers and friends reunited under the headline: "solouri" (solos). The scientific background of its author – a Professor at the Department of Musicology and Education at the National University of Music from Bucharest and a Permanent Fellow at New Europe College, founder and director of the online magazine *Musicology Today*, who studied the piano at Weimar and had a scholarship at the Alban Berg Foundation in Vienna – recommends the book without the need of any other confirmations. The musical texture of the book could be felt from the very first sentences, the literary, and most of all, the comparative interpretations come to the fore, or sit wisely in the background, reflecting the same accuracy and ease of someone who masters both of them equally



well. After all, it is no surprise that, as a result of the New Europe College scholarship program in 2008, the author of this book and the writer Ioana Pârvolescu held together the courses of literature and music.

The first part of the book opens with the analysis of the literary influences of the composer Robert Schumann's works *Genevieve*, *Manfred* and *Scenes from Goethe's Faust*. Therefore, Schumann was a musician who loved music and literature equally and who was highly influenced by Goethe's work, by E.T.A. Hofmann's fantastic writings, by Gerard de Nerval, by Ludwig Tieck. He wrote essays, poems, and even few fragments of a novel in different pen names, and especially composed the librettos for the three vocal-symphonic works mentioned above. Also author of a book about Schumann, published in 2011, here, Valentina Sandu-Dediu's interpretations moves freely from the consideration of the literary motives and themes that make the fabric of librettos to a depth interpretation of the musical works of the German composer. The investigation of the close relationship between music and literature goes forward in the next essay on Viennese composer Alban Berg's *Wozzeck*, resuming a refined interpretation growing from the text to the libretto and beyond, tracing the resemblances and the differences between Georg Büchner's text and Berg's opera. The third study resumes the influence of Clément Marot's poetry upon George Enescu's early musical composition from the French period, as a student of Gabriel Fauré and a great admirer of César Franck's compositions.

In the following sections of the book, the analysis focuses on the musical appetite of the two writers and leaders of the Literary Circle of Sibiu Fellowship: I. Negoitescu and Radu Stanca. As previously shown in an

article published in *Secolul XX* magazine, in a special issue dedicated to Sibiu European Cultural Capital and centered chiefly on the musical remarks noted in the Negoitescu-Stanca correspondence, this essay manages to illustrate the elaborate musical knowledge of the two writers far from any shadow of dilettantism. One might add that Negoitescu's passion for music has older roots. Most of young Negoitescu's notes from *Ora Oglinzilor* let us see clearly not only his love for music, but also his steady concern to accomplish a reliable musical education. Enumerating the musical auditions mentioned in the written dialogue of the two writers, Valentina Sandu-Dediu discovers at least 30 titles and as many composers' and contemporary interpreters' names. The situation is not so surprising if we remember that the cultural education that the two had received in interwar Romania still involved the aspiration for a complete model based on the closed dialogue between fellow arts. Even their master and professor Lucian Blaga – besides the episode with the representation of *Parsifal*, mentioned here by the author – had manifested a special interest in contemporary music as long as one of his representative examples for illustrating his theory of style begins with the music of the Transylvanian composer Béla Bartók.

The next three studies, substantiated on the high importance of rhetoric in classical music, on the expository parameters and the musical shapes of classical music rhetoric, all lead to the ultimate conclusion that, regardless of the different historical times, often disguised and masked, in the art of musical speech and communication, rhetoric returns as a leitmotif, as a major axis and as the main concern for the composers, performers and musical theorists of all times. Consequently, the analysis follows the close relationship between dance and music, and then gradually approaches today's music by mentioning first the psychedelic movements



of the 60s and then, the *Bric à brac* beginnings of electronic music.

The first part of the book, the *maestoso* timber of the first studies conceived as if they were polyphonic instrumental fantasies, is counterpoised by the extensive and harmonic composition of the second part of Valentina Sandu Dediu's book, an octet structure called *Rhapsodies*, which displays a series of studies dedicated to the object and to the history of musicology. The specialist view is now accompanied by a clearly defined historical and terminological background as by an orchestra. The dialogue between Romanian music and the European models and also the acknowledgment of a national identity substantiated on the old Romanian folkloric patterns seems to permeate this second collection of studies. Beginning with the Liszt's visit in Romania, the analysis traces through the gaze of the foreign traveler the differences and the similarities of interpretation between the Hungarian and the Romanian rhapsody. Then, gradually, examining first the musical life in Bucharest, around 1900, and then the foundation of the Romanian Conservatories, Athenaeums and Philharmonics in the most important Romanian cities, and afterwards, as a consequence, the author traces the history of Romanian public acknowledgement with the foreign music: the unfailing love for the Italian Opera, the intricate history of staging Wagner in Romania, the subtle and strange conflict between Schönberg's serial and dodecaphonic music and the communist ideology, suited by some notes on Shostakovich, the other self and the musical irony and ending with some considerations on the soviet influences, the nationalism and structuralism of the Romanian music after the Second World War. Therefore, this second part of the book's investigations is not focused on music itself but mainly on the long process of its broadcasting in the

Romanian professional institutions.

This being said, Valentina Sandu-Dediu's collection of essays, intelligently mixed together in a musicological symphony, closes with the melancholic timber of the third part. The *Sòlos* express in a very personal manner few musical portraits some key figures of Romanian and international musicologists, whom the author's memory skillfully depicts, with hindsight. Now the interpretation is *libero*, without any limitations imposed by style or by terminology, besides, this last part seems to be an *a capella* performance.

Conceived as a harmonic symphony with a prelude and three main chapters, Valentina Sandu Dediu's book, *Octave paralele* shows once again that the road between music and literature is never too hard to cross for the one who best disposes of the proper equipment.

Iulia Micu



As it is stated at the beginning of the book, the first sixteen chapters pay a tribute to the one that went to great lengths in order to achieve the prestige of *Secolul XXI* journal. Therefore, the issue *Dan Hăulică – in memoriam* serves not only as a gateway to years of editorial history in the making of the journal itself, but also as a beloved souvenir of the conductor who, as George Banu notes, “paved the way”. The first 165 pages depict Dan Hăulică both as the ambassador of Romania at UNESCO, honorary president of the International Association of Art Critics and as the mentor from *The Monteoru House*, who worked during nights from 10p.m till 5a.m (Viorel Mărginean) and was once seen in the Union’s Library with “a cowboy hat which he was wearing, tied with an ordinary cord, then a bust tailored shirt, tight pants, light-colored and in stripes and – of course – the loafers which he was wearing” (Cristian-Robert Velescu). Nevertheless, the first part of the book succeeds in outlining the fact that Dan Hăulică “raised more than few artists, which he contemplated from a European perspective” (Sandra Vișan).

After this, the book carries out its initial purpose of mirroring medical principles in Romanian society. Starting with Ion Vianu’s work on psychiatric utopias – a

Secolul 21,
No. 7-12,
Scholars.
Medicine and
Society,
Bucharest,
Fundăția
Secolul XXI,
2014

study on Philippe Pirel’s *The Medical Philosophical Treatise on Mental Alienation* and human connection between patients and doctors –, the reader follows in the footsteps of Romanian medical members of the Academic Society (Mina Minovici, Nicolae Kretzulescu, Iacob Felix etc.) in the 19th century as they aimed to modernize Romania through *therapeutic injections*: “with a solid institutional culture and an Occidental value system”(Octavian Buda). *Medicine and Society* ends with Eugen Ionescu’s play in one act *Alegoric 14 and viruses*.

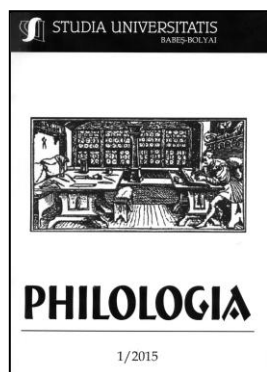
For an Archive of the Literary Circle from Sibiu uncovers pages of mid-20th century Romanian literature that open a new perspective into the cultural understanding of how the artistic message went through a paradigm shift during the totalitarian regime. The reader can witness firsthand the behind-the-scenes of this complex artistic movement which was the Literary Circle from Sibiu, through Ștefan Augustin Doinaș’s interview with Cleopatra Lorențiu. Ștefan Aug. Doinaș, one of the members, sheds light on the difficulties imposed by political censorship, on the time spent in prison and on the influence which L. Blaga’s philosophy had over the young students. At the end of the interview, the “refined translator of Faust” (Cleopatra Lorențiu) concludes with his own Aristotelian reflection over the matter of mimesis theories: “even an occasional poem, which was written under some circumstances, has to overcome that certain circumstance and say what it has to say for itself. Poetry mustn’t ever be a life documentary”.

As the book is an absolute time capsule that covers the hard work of scholars (men of letters, intellectuals, scientists) as they assumed the role of cultural enhancers, it can be recommended to all who desire to step on “a craftsmanship of bridges, between the Western World and the Orient,



between poetry and intelligence, between criticism and artistic creation.” (Dan Hăulică)

Raluca Bălan



*Studia
Universitatis
Babeş-Bolyai,
series
Philologia,
No. 1,
Cluj-Napoca,
2015*

In the 60th issue of the *Studia Universitatis* series *Philologia*, several important themes are taken into consideration, mostly regarding gender roles, but also containing different topics concerning relevant studies that present new views on literature.

The first part of the journal discusses important matters regarding feminine perspectives and struggles of female writers in their life and in the portrayals of their characters and it addresses different issues that were influenced by different times and situations, politically, socially and personally.

Bianca Doris Bretan's article on "Zionism and Gender Awareness: A case study of Jewish woman in pre-war Romania" focuses on the relationship between women and the Zionist movement and how it influenced their status. Bretan analyzes the way the movement provided a direction that reshaped a new type of woman and helped feminism take a step forward. The next article, written by Liza Caraivan – presents Nadine Gordimer's perception regarding the way the Apartheid era affected South Africa, and how the country started its

reorientation after the abolition of their laws and the new focus on social, rather than political issues. *Gender influences in Doris Lessing's The Golden Notebook*, an article written by Elisabeta Simona Catana presents the important changes postmodernist brought to literature and how a feminine author influenced the changes with a unique voice that gave a new level of importance to the feminine consciousness and to a symbolic representation of the world. In the next article "Polish Female Writers and their influence on women's public activity. The cases of Józefa Kisielnicka and Eliza Orzeszkow", Malgorzata Dajnowicz compares the two female writers and presents how they both influenced the way public activity for women was perceived from two different perspectives at the end of the 19th Century. María Jesús Lorenzo-Modia's article keeps the feminine perspective topic, but it analyzes it mirroring the 18th century, presenting how female writers portrayed the emancipation of women in their literary works, providing an in-depth study of the struggles that they had to face.

The battle-ground, a novel written by Ellen Glasgow is discussed by Iulia Andreea Milică, who offers an interesting view of how the author managed to characterize the issues and different distinctions of her region, offering a wide and detailed view of all sides of the matter. Tarek Musleh, in the following article, compares the differences between Western society and Arab culture regarding feminine writers and literature, pointing out the limitations of the Arabian women writers as a result of their oppression. The first part of the journal is concluded with an article written by Amelia Precup regarding the libertine behavior of the English Restoration, providing a complex analysis and overwhelming evidence with examples found in the poetry of Aphra



Behn and John Wilmont, Earl of Rochester, which offer much needed new perspectives on sexuality.

The second part of the journal *Texts and Ideas* presents a hybrid combination and debates on different topics regarding literature. Some of the articles are related thematically with the ones in the first part. For example, the first article, signed by Anamaria Ciobanu, discusses the theme of the human condition comparing Ibsen and Beckett, following the thematic line of the female role in their works. Another example is an article written by Roxana Cruceanu that analyses the complex theme of transvestism in Lord Byron's *Don Juan*, presenting some of the blurred lines that sometimes separate men and women.

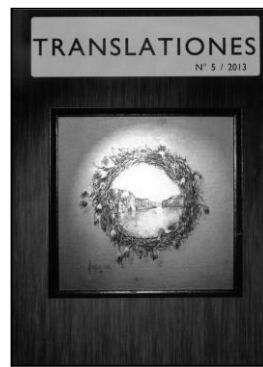
The next article written by Octavian More, veers away from the gender-themed studies with a look into the work of Wallace Stevens and his poetry, offering a complex analysis in four parts on themes like absence, on the basis of quotes that corroborate the theoretical premises that are discussed. Mihaela Mudure presents in the next chapter two Anglophone writers who decided to live in Romania and write about it, Richard Proctor and Philip O Ceallaigh, and she describes how their views as outsiders and insiders at the same time offered a comprehensive view on postcommunist Romania.

Claudia Novosivschei presents a new perspective on Peter Carey's novel *Illywhacker* in the next article, followed by Oana-Meda Păloșanu who analyses the Japanese immigrants' issue in North America, the study being based on five novels. The last article "From experience to contemplation in Mircea Eliade's Essays" written by Magna Wächter analyses Eliade's journalistic work before his exile.

The 60th issue of *Studia Universitatis* is important and relevant for the contemporary

philology studies, offering new perspectives regarding gender issues and a collection of articles that treat important subjects related to Romanian culture and not only.

Kadar Szonja



Translationes,
No. 5,
*Translations and
Literary
Transfers – A
Virtuous Circle*,
Centre d'Études
ISTTRAROM-
TRANSLATIONES,
2013

The fifth issue of the *Translationes* journal – *Translations and literary transfers* came out in 2013 under the supervision of Alina Pelea, Diana Moțoc and Olivia Petrescu and it was edited mainly by members of the Centre d'Études ISTTRAROM-TRANSLATIONES, pertaining to the Université de l'Ouest from Timisoara. The journal represents the combined effort of over 40 academic professionals, gathered from 14 different universities, aiming to provide answers, reveal new translation techniques and portray current challenges in the fields of translations and literary transfers.

The hard copy of the journal is printed in A4 format, has 197 pages and is structured into 6 different sections: The theoretical section, The practice, didactics and critiques of translation, Homage to translators and traductologists, Unpublished translations, Interviews and Reviews. The articles and scientific research found in issue no 5 of *Translationes* are written in French, Spanish and Portuguese, with English abstracts revised by Rodica Ieta.



The journal begins with an introduction written by the aforementioned coordinators which is destined to summarize the main purposes and goals of the journal, while also providing a concise view of the contemporary struggles and challenges that literary translators now face. Multiculturalism and globalization would only make it seem fitting that the art of translations should now become the concerted work of professionals from different cultures and backgrounds, as is the case with the *Translationes* series. The fifth issue contains articles, interviews and ideas from French, Spanish, Catalan, Lusitan, Hungarian, Arab and Romanian researchers.

The theoretical section of the fifth issue is represented by Laura Folica's "Los Estudios de Traducción desde una perspectiva sociológica o la 'caja de herramientas' bourdieusiana" an article which aims to present the notions and theoretical concepts that can be extracted from Pierre Bourdieu's "Translation Studies". These notions are then put to a test in a specific research about translation developed by the Canadian traductologist Jean-Marc Goavnic, who analyses the reception of science-fiction in postwar France.

The next section entitled "The practice, didactics and critiques of translation" is comprised of seven articles, each focusing on different contemporary translation challenges ranging from the importance of literary translations in Romanian-Portuguese cultural relations, the inequality of languages and cultures and the laws of literary interference, modern and contemporary French to Hungarian poetry translations with a special focus on the issue of the long verse, the challenges faced by the translator of potential literature, the *Per entre els dies* Catalan translation of the study about Marin Sorescu's poem volume, a flow analysis of Arabic-French translations and its cultural implications or the introduction of inter-

semiotic translations.

Tudor Ionescu provides us with an enlightening Homage to translators and traductologists in the next section of the journal, outlining the main characteristics, personality traits and methodological difficulties the contemporary translator has to overcome in order to perfect his skills and knowledge. The author believes "courage" is one of the defining qualities of a professional translator and states that "a single small mistake in an ocean of success is sufficient" to compromise his status and entire life work. He defines the translator as being a true "hermit" arguing that the amount of research and knowledge one must gain in order to master this art can only be achieved through continuous improvement and the ability to quickly adapt to changes in literary and linguistic trends.

The fourth section gifts us with ten yet unpublished translations of Romanian and Italian poems through the effort of Rodica Baconsky and Antonio Rinaldis from authors Lucian Blaga and Ioan Lascu. The fifth section of this edition entitled "Face-to-face with the actors of literary translations" provides the reader with the opportunity to hear the opinions of Jana Balacciu Matei, Rodica Lascu-Pop, Horia Lazăr, Georgiana Lungu Badea, Irina Petraș, Simona Sora, Ioan Pop Curșeu on various translation and literary transfers subtopics or issues such as the evolution of the translator profession in regard to recent political changes, the impact of modern technology on the act of translating, the way in which the relationship between two cultures influences translations and the main competences and abilities of the translator.

The last section is comprised of 6 reviews on scientific works specialized on the study of translations and literary transfers, one review of a bilingual poetry anthology and one review of book on



elaborating scientific research papers. The authors offer valuable advice to beginner and professional traductologists alike in an attempt to outline the core information of the books and journals they review.

In its entirety, the fifth issue of the *Translationes* journal strives to maintain its reputation as one of the leading portals of scientific information exchange between professionals dealing with a wide array of common issues and challenges that transla-

tors must overcome. The structure of the journal provides a bit of everything, from theoretical research to personal interviews and opinions, and thus it would be a valuable resource for any reader interested in what is new and valuable in the field of translations. This combined effort of professionals from different countries and cultures stands out as a much needed tool in the process of understanding and benefiting globalization and multiculturalism.

Adrian Puha