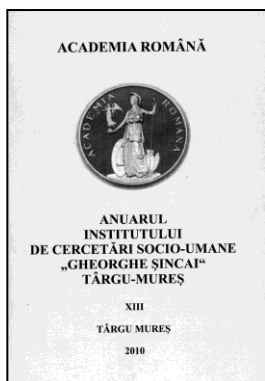




Book Reviews

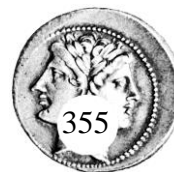




The Annual Review,
‘Gheorghe Șincai’ Institute for Social-Human Researches Romanian Academy, Târgu-Mureș, Vol. XIII, 2010

During and after reading the publication one realizes having read a high-quality book even if one failed noticing the fact that the annual is a peer-reviewed publication. This means that each and every article was evaluated by academia. Not one would have been published if it didn't succeed to obtain the high demanding standards of scientific or academic regulations. Having said this, the first page lists the editorial collegium and the editorial board, while the table of contents holds some of the previous names listed as contributors: Cornel Sigmirean (Chief editor), Nicoleta Sălcudeanu (Editorial secretary) – author of the last article in the annual, Carmen Andraș, Marian Zăloa-gă, Corina Teodor and Maria Costea.

The book starts off with an interview with academician Eugen Simion under the title “Inerția jăluitoare este o plagă națională”, in which Eugen Simion speaks about the relationship between power, politics and literature, cultural democracy, reconciliation and scientific research. Moreover, he condemns the new ways of scientific approval described by *I.S.I.* and *C.N.C.S.I.S.* The distinguished critic is quite disappointed with this new form of ‘intellectual aggression’ as he calls it, saying that this ‘isi-science’ actually makes room for promoting mediocrity. On an ironic note, the first footnote of the article mentions its approval by *C.N.C.S.I.S.*



The annual is divided into four chapters plus a short one containing reviews and reading observations: “Urban Space and Civilization: Between Reality and Imagination”, “History and Historiography”, “Identity and Alterity” and “Literary Studies”. It is easily observed that these four chapters are actually the major areas of investigation or interest. All in all, we see the same topics that are being discussed all over the globe, thus making the annual quite modern and competitive, especially when it comes to describing issues such as Identity, Self or the other. The abstracts at the beginning of each article (usually in English, with one exception – French) are well written, comprehensive and, at the same time, elucidating as they should be.

The first three articles project an image of Romania envisioned through the lens of British travelers. Some travelers speak of the backwardness and primitiveness of the places they visited, whilst others describe the landscapes as being romantic or picturesque. One can observe a continuous shift between reality and imagination, between prejudice or stereotypes and actual perceptions while describing different mentalities. The women are described as beautiful, cultivated and sophisticated. Finally, they come to the conclusion that Cluj-Napoca is a city that represents the perfect combination between conservatism and liberalism, while Bucharest is a monotonous, unimaginative town, whose exclusive model is Paris.

The second chapter treats various subjects such as Romanian journalism or the construction of national identity, while making thorough investigations into some of the pragmatic and ideological implications of such notions. It also reveals some of the main aspects regarding the beginnings of scientific investigation and the path to a professional and modern type of history. One of the essays is concentrated upon the

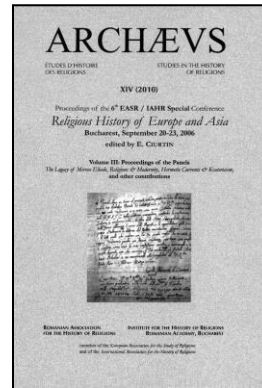


relationship of church and state in communist Romania, and what is most interesting about it is the fact the author chose to use a theoretical and comparative framework while deconstructing a narrative that usually thinks in clusters. The next one contains long and well-documented articles. They are very useful if, for example, a student needs certain information regarding one of the discussed topics or if he wants to research aspects concerning bibliography. The articles are quite interesting especially if one stops to make a solid analysis of Florina Codreanu's article – "Alterity and Blood within the biblical text".

Even if the last chapter ("Literary Studies") is not that long, it abounds in appealing articles, such as the one about the Romanian playwright I.L. Caragiale. Here, the author presents a postmodern view of Caragiale's work based upon the weird dichotomy of hazard and illusion. Unfortunately, one comes across a series of quotes which are actually too long while Daniel Cristea Enache's article about Marin Preda's first novel is just a rewriting of everything that has already been documented about the work, and a pretty bad one. It is important that an annual should leave a good impression on the reader, so that he may come back next year. Fortunately, this is what actually happens before closing the book, because Nicoleta Sălcudeanu's review about Paul Cernat's *History of Literature* is a very pretentious but precious account of the critic's new coined term – *modernism retro*.

Overall, the annual is a compelling book which does not pretend to have an exhaustive view on either of its treated subjects, making it an indispensable tool for all students or scholars who want a closer and clearer look upon one of the researched topics.

Alexandru Ciorogar



ARCHÆVS,
No. XIV,
*Religious
History of
Europe and Asia
Proceedings of
the 6th EASR/
IAHR Special
Conference,*
Bucarest, 2010

Archaeus is a periodic publication of history of religions which was founded in 1997 at Bucuresti by the Archaeus Association, later named Romanian Association for the History of Religions. After 2002, it was affiliated to the European Association for the Study of Religions and, after 2005, at the International Association for the History of Religions. The review contains publications from the field of history and study of religions. Starting with 2008, *Archaeus* became the review of the Institute of History of Religions.

No. XIV of 2010 is a volume that includes a further presentation of studies within the Sixth International Conference in Bucharest between 20-23 September 2006, organized by the Romanian Association for the History of Religions. The current number is divided into two main parts. Under the heading "The Legacy of Mircea Eliade", the first part includes studies by Norman Girardot, Mac Linscott, Horst Junginger, Radu Harald, Ionuț Daniel Băncilă, Daniela Dumbravă, Andrei Oișteanu and E. Ciurtin.

The second part – "Religions & Modernity, Hermetic Currents & Esotericism" – is consistent and is orientated towards rendering the studies of Ovidiu Victor Olar, Ileana Benga and Bogdan Neagotă, Francesco Baroni, Ezio Albrile, etc.

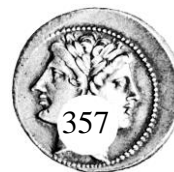
An important study of this publication may be considered that of Andrei Oișteanu,

member of the Romanian Academy in Bucharest and of the Institute of History of Religions, a study which, tries to treat narcotics issues of Mircea Eliade and Ioan Petru Culianu. The study is, in fact, a chapter on the two historians of religions, from the author's book, *Narcotics in Romanian Culture: History, Religion and Literature*, Polirom, Iasi, 2010. The author analyzes the way in which Eliade understood the „hippy” movement of the second half of the 60's and believes that it is significant for the way in which the expert in religious history influenced a generation of young people. Then Oişteanu talks about the induced dreams, the influence of hallucinogens and narcotics from the point of view of Ioan Petru Culianu. It seems that the latter had a great attraction towards this subject, being interested in psycho-creative substance, stimulants, the role they play in the magical demonstrations ritual. Culianu even makes a clear reference to a so called drug of immortality in a short prose, *Jocul de smarald*.

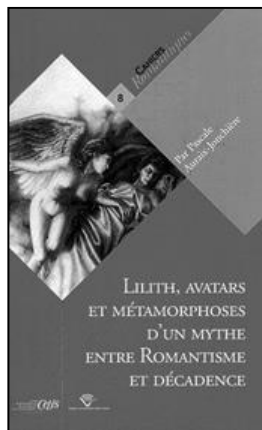
Another study which is worth being mentioned, is the contribution of E. Ciurtin, symbolically called “Ediția Critică Completă Eliade”, in which the author points out that none of the Romanian libraries owns the possession of the complete collection of Eliade, moreover, that his work has not been fully discovered and experienced yet. Referring to *Păcatele biobibliografiei* lui M. Handoca, E Ciurtin considers that this work is not necessarily a reference point because its flaws cannot be neglected. It is necessary to be reviewed and fixed in an exegesis of a very rich last decade.

Daniela Dumbravă is the one that signs the pages dedicated to the correspondence of more than 13 years between Ugo Bianchi and Ioan Petru Culianu. The author considers that this correspondence is a necessary tool to understand the way in which the identity of a new discipline as that of the history of religions appeared.

Finally, Radu Harald Dinu raises the attention upon the symbolism of the Sacrifice and the one of the Death in the religious thinking of M. Eliade. The author analyzes the period in which Eliade returns to Romania from India (after 1931), a difficult period in terms of political engagement in the life of the history of religions. Consequently, Radu Harald researches the cult of death (the symbolism of death) in the Legionnaire Movement from Romania, analyzing its impact upon the way in which Eliade was influenced to create the concept of creative death. On the other hand, some of the reactions of Eliade regarding the death of Ion Moța and Vasile Marin are presented and further on some of the applications on the legend of Meșterul Manole.



Simona Gruian



Cahier Romantique, n° 8,
Pascale Auraix-Jonchière,
Lilith, avatars et métamorphoses d'un mythe entre Romantisme et Décadence,
Clermont-Ferrand, 2002,
2^e édition 2011

Publié sous l'égide du CELIS (*Centre de Recherche sur les Littératures et la Sociopoétique*) de Clermont-Ferrand, le recueil de Pascale Auraix-Jonchière consacré à l'analyse de la figure de Lilith (la première femme d'Adam) rassemble et interprète les variations de ce mythe dans la littérature



française entre le Romantisme et la Décadence, avec les extensions inhérentes dans l'histoire.

Le mytheme lilithien a été largement exploité dans la littérature française du XIX^e siècle, mais aussi dans les variantes et les légendes beaucoup plus anciennes, qui sont le pivot des réévaluations littéraires plus tardives (comme *L'Alphabet de Ben Sira*, un important et constant point de repère, tentative de relever la souveraineté de la femme qui, dans un geste de révolte, quitte son compagnon).

Les détails paratextuels, ainsi que l'organisation de la recherche configurent une écriture extrêmement riche et bien documentée. Divisée en deux grandes parties se rapportant à la problématique du mythe (« Mythe et écriture », « Mythe et signification ») autour desquelles s'articule une démonstration complexe, l'étude puise dans un corpus formé d'une trentaine de textes littéraires (roman, poésie, théâtre), accompagné par une large gamme d'études critiques connexes.

Théorie du mythe et pratique interprétative des brouillages mythémiques dans la littérature s'imbriquent dans cette recherche. À partir d'un certain aspect du mythe émis par des théoriciens comme Gilbert Durand (avec ses analyses sur les dérivations synchroniques des mythes), Pierre Brunel (les mythes comme résultat de la conjonction d'une affirmation et d'une négation) ou Sylvie Ballestra-Puech (le mythe comme tension entre image et récit), l'auteure consigne tout un réseau de mythes transformés en littérature, des fusions mythiques et des palingénésies inédites.

La lecture extrêmement subtile des textes construits ou susceptibles d'avoir été construits sur le schéma imaginaire nourri par la figure de Lilith fait du livre de Pascale Auraix-Jonchière une étude globale qui réussit à réunir et à explorer toute une littérature maçonnée autour de cette figure.

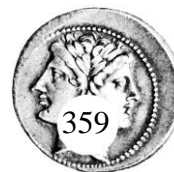
Le personnage de Lilith se prête à l'esthétique de la littérature fin de siècle et exploite la panoplie des variations, des motifs et des topos assez communs (les constantes dualités – le mal et le bien, l'enfer et le ciel, des thèmes comme la chute, l'amour, le rêve, la fuite, tout le bestiaire spécifique, la substitution de Lilith à l'ensorceleuse, etc.). L'auteure parvient à les explorer avec finesse, dans une vision comparatiste, synthétique et analytique à la fois, pour clôturer avec une invitation à entrevoir la résurgence de la figure lilithienne dans la modernité.

Iulia Diana Rusu



Claudia
Chinezu
*Elvețienii în
România.
Despre succes,
faimă și
afaceri,*
Noi Media
Print, Bucu-
rești, 2011

Elvețienii în România – Despre succes, faimă și afaceri written by Claudia Chinezu and published at Noi Media Print in Bucharest, 2011 is a book that traces through time the coordinates of the historical, cultural and, eventually, diplomatic relations between Switzerland and Romania, and was issued with the occasion of celebrating 100 year of diplomatic relations between the two countries (1911-2011). This book sets itself as the result of a research based upon the historical evidence and documents that recreate the origin, the nature and the milestones for the Swiss-Romanian diplomatic relations. It is, in its approach, among few in recent Romanian literature concerning this particular subject.



The first chapter traces the origins of their migration and the functions that Swiss immigrants first occupied in Romania in the 19th century. The first contacts between these two countries were established in the 15th century by adventure seeking travellers, catholic and protestant missionaries and auxiliaries. Later, in the 17th and 18th century, artists were drawn by the beautiful landscapes and cultural mix of Balcanism and Western influences. However, the 19th century proved itself as the milestone for this relationship. For it is in this moment that many Swiss started migrating in Romania on grounds of crisis in Switzerland and the pursuit of a so called “promised land”. Thus the author sketches several portraits of personalities that first shaped the Swiss communities in Romania. Individuals such as Leopold Bachelin, the king’s librarian, Louis Blanc, and several merchants are presented alongside their contribution and activity in Romania. Documents proved that in the late 19th century most Swiss personalities occupied liberal activities and were involved in the Romanian cultural and economic mechanisms.

Chapter II presents the first settlements and societies established by the Swiss in Romania as forms of auto-organization. The first settlement was established in 1822 in the Țaba region of today’s Republic of Moldova under the name: “The New Swizterland”. In Bucharest the first Swiss colony was established in 1839. Later they regrouped in informal institutions, due mainly to the fact that societies, small groups that shared the same interests were emerging in the middle and later 19th century. Thus the Swiss Society in Bucharest (established on two occasions: 1859 and 1861) and The Swiss Club (1911) are two of the most important. The Swiss colonies in Galați and Brăila founded in the late 19th century were also important for regions excluding Bucharest. The second part of the chapter presents

important Swiss personalities such as Roger Bolomey, chief architect of Bucharest for 13 years, or Julien Peter, a mason with an “honorable career” in public administration. The third part of the chapter deals with the Swiss financial and banking initiatives in Romania at the beginning of the 20th century. The author concisely mentions in the last part the cultural and spiritual bonds between these two countries, shaped by the connections with the Catholic Church.

The author dedicates the third chapter to the circumstances in which the Swiss inhabitants lived during different political regimes in Romania. She captured the essence of these relations by discussing their statute in the midst of the Second World War and analysed their situation during the first years of Bolshevism when a massive repatriation of the Swiss started. The author gives special attention to what the Swiss were submitted to during the communist regime, which makes this third chapter a good analysis of recent history.

Elvețienii de azi: Exemple de succes is the title of the fourth chapter in which the author dwells with what might be called a brief analysis of some of the major Swiss investments that took place here since the fall of communism. Two informal institutions which play a major role in today’s business scene are also described: The Swiss Association in Romania and The Swiss Chamber of Commerce.

The final chapter, intended as an epilogue, or “a work in progress”-end to the story of the Swiss-Romanian diplomatic relations, presents the complicated history and prolific present of the Swiss House, the architectural monument that today hosts the New Europe College.

In its approach, this book could be seen as an atlas mapping more than two geographical places, for it recreates, before our eyes, a long line of milestone-memories



concerning the human and diplomatic relations between these two countries.

Alexandra M. Şchiopu



*Dialogues
francophones*,
n° 17,
Timișoara,
Editura
Universității
de Vest,
2011

Le numéro 17 de la revue *Dialogues francophones* propose une analyse de la littérature d'expression française de la première décennie du XXI^e siècle ; il s'agit d'un regard sur une (des) littérature(s) en train de s'écrire, ainsi que sur des nouvelles notions tels l'autofiction, l'automythographie ou le néolyrisme. C'est en même temps une démarche qui s'interroge sur le destin des genres « traditionnels » (le roman, le théâtre ou la poésie).

Après une « Introduction » signée par Gaëtan Brulotte – qui met en relation la marginalité, l'exil, la langue et la littérature dans le contexte de la recherche de « sa parole propre » (p. 11) –, la section « Configurations » réunit des articles qui font référence à la littérature québécoise, maghrébine et polynésienne. Klaus-Dieter Ertler exploite l'éclatement au niveau des formes et des contenus de la littérature de Québec en ce début de la deuxième décennie de notre siècle. Plusieurs écrivains abordent la migration et l'hybridité identitaire : « Si Andrée A. Michaud met en scène la migration des québécois, Dany

Laferrière neutralise son discours romanesque en racontant les histoires de personnages avec des liens avec le Québec ou le Canada. » (p. 35). L'article de Hassan Moustir évoque l'évolution de la littérature marocaine de langue française, qui se fait remarquer à nos jours par une fraîcheur étonnante et une grande diversité d'auteurs et de problématiques. Des écrivains tels Mustapha Bouignane ou Ghita El Khayat se font remarquer par une rupture avec l'approche de la culture nationale pratiquée entre les années 50-80. Cette nouvelle génération d'écrivains transcende la problématique de l'identité nationale et cherche le sens « à travers des récits hautement subjectifs, des critiques lucides [...] de la société ou [...] des événements qui secouent la conscience collective » (p. 48). Anne-Sophie Close évoque l'œuvre de la Tahitienne Michou Chaze, représentative pour la littérature polynésienne de langue française. La littérature francophone de Polynésie ne peut être réduite à l'expression d'une nostalgie postcoloniale ; par contre, ce que l'auteur met en évidence est un désir de surmonter le trauma et de « forger une nouvelle identité polynésienne décomplexée, réconciliée avec elle-même » (p. 61).

La section « Figurations » débute par un article de Richard Saint-Gelais sur l'ouvrage *Je suis un livre* de l'écrivaine canadienne Marie Bélisle. Texte singulier, intégralement métatextuel, *Je suis un livre* incite par ses enjeux, par l'usage de l'intertexte et le rapport à la lecture, ainsi que par le sens d'une telle démarche dans le contexte de la littérature québécoise. Les articles suivants portent sur des auteurs et des thématiques aussi divers qu'intéressants : Ying Chen, écrivaine franco-chinoise, sino-québécoise, et sa vision sur la dualité de l'être et le thème du double (Julie Rodgers) ; l'image mortifère de la ville et le règne d'un érotisme épidermique chez Stéphane Lambert dans *Les couleurs de la nuit* (Bernadette Desorbay) ; le souvenir, la quête identitaire et la recherche des origines

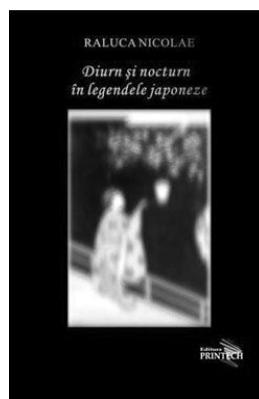
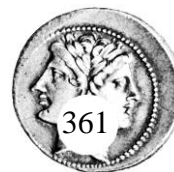
dans *Printemps* de J.M.G. Le Clézio (Dominique-Joëlle Lalo). En s'appuyant sur l'exemple des écrivaines franco-camerounaises Calixthe Beyala et Léonora Miano, Daniel S. Larangé s'interroge sur la notion d'intermédialité, sur son fonctionnement et ses résultats dans le contexte de la société postmoderne et de la mondialisation. La pratique intermédiaire est également approchée par Philip Amangoua Atcha dans son article sur *Les naufragés de l'intelligence* de Jean-Marie Adiaffi. La pratique scripturale d'Adiaffi – le roman « n'zassa » – tire profit des avantages qu'offrent les médias et les moyens de communication modernes. L'esthétique du recyclage et les transferts culturels « permet[tent] de produire du neuf avec un matériau existant » (p. 158), tout en révélant que « [l]e roman africain contemporain est en pleine mutation et [qu']une véritable révolution est en train de s'opérer sous nos yeux » (p. 158).

Les deux sections précédentes sont suivies par le texte de Georgiana Lungu-Badea, « Errances autour de soi-même. Sur l'insularité innée, assumée, imposée, individuelle, collective chez Antonio Rinaldis : *L'Isola fatale* et *Dancing Nord* ». Cet essai se propose de « mettre en valeur le rayonnement de la littérature et de la culture françaises au-delà de l'espace traditionnellement francophone » (p. 163), précisément par la plume de l'écrivain italien Antonio Rinaldis dont l'œuvre est traitée d'une perspective francophile.

Le deuxième volet de ce numéro de *Dialogues francophones* est constitué de plusieurs entretiens : celui de Dora Leontaridou avec Marc Quaghebeur, le directeur des Archives et Musée de la Littérature à Bruxelles, celui de Bernadette Desorbay avec l'écrivain belge francophone Stéphane Lambert, ainsi que les interviews avec le jeune écrivain africain Edem Awumey (Adama Coulibaly), avec Déwé Gorodé, seule femme écrivain kanak (Veronica Ntoumos) et K. Madavane, nouvelliste et dramaturge indien francophone (Vijaya Rao). Il faut aussi mentionner

l'entretien de Anca Clitan avec Anne Richter, sur la création fantastique et la thématique de la métamorphose chez la nouvelliste et essayiste belge ; de même, les propos recueillis par Ilona Balázs de Philippe Blasband, écrivain et cinéaste belge. Ces entretiens sont suivis par des pages inédites de quelques-uns des auteurs interviewés (Marc Quaghebeur, Stéphane Lambert et K. Madavane) et de plusieurs traductions inédites (Jacques Chessex, Dany Laferrière, Eric Chevillard, Jean Echenoz). Cet espace qui privilégie le dialogue est complété par la dernière section de ce numéro de la revue, qui comprend des comptes rendus de plusieurs publications récentes.

Adina-Irina Forna



Raluca Nicolae,
*Diurn și nocturn
în legendele
japoneze
(Diurnal and
Nocturnal in
Japanese
Legends)*,
Bucharest,
Printech, 2010

Raluca Nicolae's volume is a very interesting and complex inquiry into the Japanese mythology, analyzing core features of the Nippon imaginary focusing on the diurnal-nocturnal dichotomy present in a vast number of legends. As the author herself specifies in the introduction, the folkloric material has been divided into three categories around which the three chapters of the study are constructed. In the first part of her study she divides the



material into two subchapters dealing with time and, subsequently, with space. Thus, in the first subchapter she investigates the diurnal and nocturnal elements of folk tales associated with different time divisions (year, season, month, week, days and different moments of the day), while the second subchapter deals with the issue of space.

Direction is important for the Japanese mythos. For example, to quote the author, during the Heian period there were cultural taboos that pointed to North-East as a coordinate associated with a bad omen. The coordinate was to be avoided by those of a certain age or gender. The consequences of either trespassing or respecting the mythic law are exemplified by the author with references to different legends. Obviously, this is only one example, as Raluca Nicolae categorizes the folkloric material by means of the geometric axis. On the horizontal axis the role of concepts such as forward or backward, left or right and the cardinal points is analyzed, while on the vertical axis the author deals with both ascension and descent in various forms present within the context of the Japanese mythos.

However, the relevance of space to Nippon legends is not fully determined by reference to the geometric axis. In consequence, the author also investigates the topography of legends commenting on spaces traditionally associated with both the nocturnal (forest, cave, well, abyss, grave, hell and the other world) and diurnal (plain, ladder, mountain, sky and heaven).

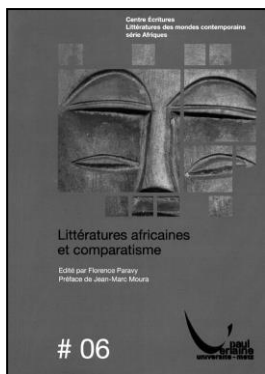
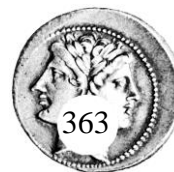
Within the frame of the second main chapter, the author explores the value of symbols to Japanese legends and their association with the aforementioned dichotomy. It is structured in five subchapters. This is the largest section of the study where nocturnal (darkness, storm, smoke, etc.) and diurnal (light, fire, gold, tree, window, etc.) attributes are minutely analyzed along with

thermal and visual components within the context of Japanese folk tales. There is also a subchapter dedicated to the situations in which diurnal and nocturnal elements are mixed together. For example, we may encounter nocturnal symbols in diurnal settings (eclipse), diurnal symbols in diurnal settings (rainbow) or diurnal symbols in nocturnal settings (lightning).

As for the characters and creatures populating Japanese legends, Raluca Nicolae splits them according to the aforementioned dichotomy in the third chapter of her work. In turn, these populations are themselves split into two categories with regard to their resemblance to either humanoid or the animal kingdom, which leaves us with four subcategories of population (nocturnal anthropomorphic, nocturnal zoomorphic, diurnal anthropomorphic and diurnal zoomorphic). The role and meaning of these populations to the Japanese mythos is again carefully investigated with reference to a large number of legends.

Overall Raluca Nicolae's study is a well prepared one, well documented and well organized with dozens of legends taken as primary sources and minutely examined in accordance to the above detailed criteria. Furthermore, the language of the book is not very complicated on a conceptual level; therefore, it may be understood easily by both the neophyte interested in Japanese mythology and culture, and by students or teachers more seriously involved in the topic. All in all, it is a very good study, packed full of interesting material, a good source for further studies in its chosen area of expertise.

Nicolae Liviu Gheran



Florence Paravy
(éd.),
*Littératures
africaines et
comparatisme*,
Préface de Jean-
Marc Moura,
Université Paul
Verlaine,
Metz, 2012

Soutenu par le Centre des Sciences de la Littérature Française (CSLF Paris X) et l'APELA (Association Pour l'Étude des Littératures Africaines), le livre *Littératures africaines et comparatisme*, édité par Florence Paravy, prend place dans un contexte très actuel de débat et d'évolution en matière de théorie littéraire. Il invite les comparatistes à mettre en parallèle des littératures ou des œuvres issues de différentes régions du monde (d'Afrique, d'Europe, d'Amérique du Sud) afin de montrer la façon dont la littérature africaine s'intègre dans « le Tout-Monde » ou « Littérature-monde » ; cette notion est définie par les écrivains de langue française, dont plusieurs venus d'Afrique, comme recombinaison des catégories littéraires qui les enferment soit dans des littératures nationales, soit dans la francophonie, soit dans un régionalisme marginalisant.

Le premier chapitre, « Quelles frontières pour les études littéraires », analyse le rôle de la littérature africaine dans le Littérature-monde; en même temps, il met en question l'avenir du comparatisme français dans les conditions du « mélange » culturel et littéraire actuel. Charles Bonn, par exemple, considère que si le comparatisme français acceptait cette position, il serait moins coupé du réel, et surtout il gagnerait un rôle privilégié pour évaluer la littérarité en général.

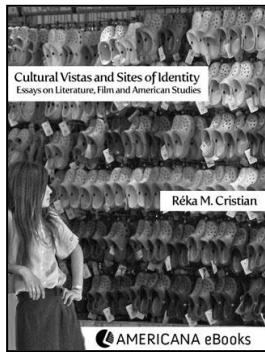
Le deuxième chapitre, « Horizons continentaux », marque l'exploration des possibles « comparatismes intra-africains », leur intérêt et leur difficulté épistémologique: littérature écrite/ littérature orale, francophonie/ anglophonie/ lusophonie, œuvres en langues africaines/ en langues européennes. Pour mieux comprendre, les comparatistes proposent des études comparatistes entre les auteurs de la même époque, mais de régions ou pays différents, ou entre auteurs de même nationalité, mais entre lesquels existe un « écart » linguistique, culturel, historique, etc.

« Littératures africaines et héritage européen », le troisième chapitre, trace les contours de la bibliothèque antique, grecque et romaine, présents dans un certain nombre d'œuvres africaines. Les auteurs présentent les usages rhétoriques et esthétiques des écrivains africains et la façon dont ils s'appuient sur la lecture des textes de l'Antiquité.

Le dernier chapitre, « Migrations et diasporas », propose un bilan sur le problème à la fois épistémologique et institutionnel qui constitue la séparation officielle entre « Littérature française » et « Littérature comparée » ; ce divorce est lourd de conséquences quant à l'intégration des littératures francophones d'Afrique noire, du Maghreb et des Antilles dans l'enseignement et la recherche universitaire française.

Pour conclure, l'étude se justifie à condition de ne pas immobiliser les littératures d'Afrique dans une indépassable problématique coloniale. À l'heure de la mondialisation, les œuvres littéraires ont plus que jamais le droit de dialoguer librement entre elles par-delà les langues et les pays, à circuler indéfiniment, sans être assignées à représenter des classes ou des catégories réductrices, voire non pertinentes.

Călina Bora



Réka M. Cristian,
*Cultural Vistas
and Sites of
Identity.
Essays on
Literature, Film
and American
Studies,*
AMERICANA
eBooks Szeged,
2011

American Studies have emerged and started to develop an academic tradition in Post-Communist countries particularly within the last decade, and Hungary makes no exception, as several institutes and universities supported this new field at the level of research and teaching. Réka M. Cristian (Associate Professor at the Department of American Studies, University of Szeged, Hungary) is one of the specialists supporting this process and promoting American Studies at all these levels. Besides being herself a researcher, author and teacher in American Studies, she also acknowledged the role of the academic dialogue and circulation of ideas. Thus, she initiated an academic journal as well as a publishing house, complementing each other (AMERICANA eBooks and AMERICANA E-journal), contributing to connect Hungarian research in American Studies with other Eastern and/or Western European, and of course U.S. specialists in the same area. The current volume is itself a result of such a dialogue between Anglo-Saxon and Eastern European research in general (including Romanian) and Hungarian in particular.

Cultural Vistas and Sites of Identity. Essays on Literature, Film and American Studies is the most recent volume signed by Réka M. Cristian (another title worth

mentioning is that co-authored with Dragon Zoltán on Film Studies, *Encounters of the Filmic Kind: Students' Guidebook to Film Theories*, Szeged, JATEPress, 2007, ISBN 978-963-482-858-7). The volume – a collection of essays in literature and Film Studies – reflects the author's interests in American drama, Modernism, the Sixties, film theories and American cinema. The author herself mentions that she aims to “reflect on several American identities assembled to new media [...] concentrating on various American cultural vistas”. The perspective offered by the volume is placed explicitly under the sign of the openness mentioned by Patricia Nelson Limerick (1997) when saying that “the joy of American Studies is precisely in its lack of firm limits and borders”. The volume is thus diverse through structure, themes and references (bringing together Western and Eastern references), but the interdisciplinary character of the volume makes it approachable both as an academic tool – by students or teachers in American Studies – and as a reading for those interested in the potential approaches to the American culture.

The volume is structured in two main sections, based on the perspective: *Literary Vistas* and respectively *Cinematic Vistas*, each containing essays applied on a series of canonical and/or contemporary examples from literature (*Getting Home Alive* by Rosario Morales and Aurora Levins Morales, *The Goat or Who Is Sylvia?* by Edward Albee, *How I Learned to Drive* by Paula Vogel) and cinema (*The Roman Spring of Mrs. Stone*, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, *Frida* and *Babel*).

Réka M. Cristian applies a series of Cultural and Film Studies tools when discussing identity and a series of typologies (*border identity*, *posthegemonic identities*), as well as processes and mechanisms taking place in American culture (i.e. *negotiating identities*). Maybe one of the most

representative and comprehensive examples chosen by the author from cinema would be Alejandro González Iñárritu's *Babel*, containing the contemporary multilayered and de-centred perspective which the volume itself reveals when approaching American studies.

Andrada Fătu-Tutoveanu



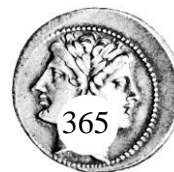
Revista română de istorie a presei (The Romanian Review of Press History), Year IV, No. 2(8), 2010

Published under the patronage of The Romanian Association of Press History (ARIP), the present publication brings together a varied set of papers, from editorials, summaries, studies and essays, to confessions, book reviews, miscellanea and updated facts mirroring the activities carried out by ARIP.

With an editorial board consisting of Ilie Rad as director, Marian Petcu as founder and editor-in-chief and Romina Surugiu as responsible for the current issue, *The Romanian Review of Press History* holds the privilege of diversity by adding up a wide range of press matters and interferences. The table of contents favours the program of the association, respectively its conferences and permanent contributors. Nevertheless, the issue is open to inedited and novel texts such as the transcription of a conference organized by the editorial board of Excelsior

in 1994 and delivered by the Romanian bishop Bartolomeu Anania (1921-2011) for an audience larger than one thousand people. The metropolitan's lecture dwells on the Romanian language as a sacred language as well as on some contemporary recurrent questions, including Malraux' well-known statement that the 21st century will be a religious century or it will not be at all. By implying the nuclear power and threat, Anania commented on this assumption with the following words: "Therefore it is all about the presence and work of religion, of life and death for the whole humanity and the whole planet. I think this was the core of Malraux' thought when he issued that famous by now formulation. Humankind will be or not be at all. It is about to be or not to be. We are returning to the Hamletian question." (p. 139)

As a matter of fact the most consistent section of the fore review remains the one dedicated to studies and essays due to its scientific presentation and specific elaboration. Amongst the themes pursued and developed herein one could mention the intoxication of the masses with pernicious information by Tatiana Slama-Cazacu, the press of the extreme left from Bukovina by Radu Florian Bruja, the evolution of the press in the city of Timișoara after the Second World War by Valerică G. Corduneanu, a monographic approach to the review entitled *Banatul* (1926-1930) from a multicultural perspective by Ioan David, a case-study investigating the activity of the Romanian journalist George Pâslaru on the Eastern field during the Second World War by Viorel Frîncu, the press of national minorities from Bessarabia by Silvia Grossu, the case of Alexandru Bujor and his periodical *Propaganda* from Venice that helped building up the Romanian-Italian relations during the 19th century by Mircea Popa and a monographic presentation of the *Altar*





journal which appeared in Australia (1972-1990) at the sustained endeavours of a Romanian priest by Ilie Rad.

The long-run presence and commitment of the Romanian press is at the same time valued in a special section consisting of book reviews, namely volumes that were published within the Romanian editorial milieu in the last ten years. For instance, books signed by Dan Ciachir (*In the World of Inter-war Press*), Ioan David (*The Romanian Press from Banat*), Emil Dumea (*Romanian Books and Catholic Reviews in Moldavia*), Valeriu Petrescu (*The Adventist Press from Romania*), Valeriu Răpeanu (*A History of Romanian Press. From Mihail Kogălniceanu to Nicolae Iorga*) represent only a partial round-up of the printed material dedicated to press and its cultivation along the recent years.

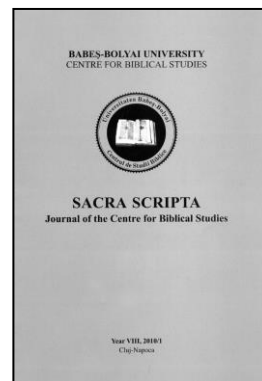
The penultimate section named Miscelanea has a celebrative purpose by aligning the anniversaries of several publicists: Nestor Ignat (b. 1918), Teodor Tanco (b. 1925), Ion Șpac (b. 1930), Cseke Péter (b. 1945) and, also, a commemorative purpose in a six-page article written by Ilie Rad in memory of the poet and publicist Adrian Păunescu (1943-2010). The author has the chance now to express his regret of not having taken an interview with Păunescu when the time was more permissive. Despite the poet's ingravescant illness, Ilie Rad has managed to interview him at the beginning of July, the interview being published afterwards in the review *Tribuna* from Cluj.

Eventually, the last section put forward a couple of events launched by the courtesy of The Romanian Association of Press History and its collaborators, such as the academic debates integrated into the international conference on the relation between culture and press in the European milieu with the subtheme of tradition and modernity in the

European press from Galați in 2009, the national and international reception of the review edited by ARIP and the third edition of the national congress on press history from Romania in 2010.

All in all *The Romanian Review of Press History* is an exceptional editorial presence, not only necessary in the press field, but also fit to open spheres of academic interest for a segment of knowledge in full expansion for the last two decades.

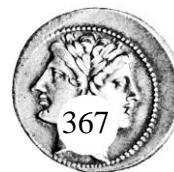
Florina Codreanu



Sacra Scripta.
Journal of the
Centre for
Biblical Studies,
Year VIII, nr. 1,
Stelian Tofană
(ed.),
Cluj-Napoca,
Romania, 2010

The Babeș-Bolyai University Centre for Biblical Studies publishes a biannual journal, *Sacra Scripta*, consisting of essays written by different religious scholars, pertaining to a certain theme within its realm of interest. The first issue of 2010 deals with questions related to the topic of Creation and the New Testament.

In a first such essay, “Die Schöpfung in der Botschaft Jesu”, Hans Klein discusses perspective on the Creation, as it appears in the discourse of Jesus Christ. Every mention of the Creation made by or around Jesus is subjected to analysis, and, more importantly, every image of the world as seen by Jesus gets filtered through an Old Testament perspective. The religious sentiment is



apparent in this work, and is made even stronger by its author's obvious passion for the subject. Klein structures his ideas and offers up a very firm conclusion, with positive outlook and a direct, honest voice.

In "Streit um Eden: Paradiesisch-schöpfungstheologisches in Mk 1,13? Eine hermeneutische Problemreflexion", Christian Schramm offers up a layered outlook on Mark 1,13, discussing the varied takes on this particular verse, and presenting a playful, immersed view of the structure into which arguments regarding it often fall. He then proceeds to analyze the social and personal influences that may interfere with the interpretation process. Finally, he approaches the verse with a personal interpretation, leaving the reader with some engaging conclusions and open ends for discussion.

Hans-Ulrich Weidemann takes up the view on Creation as presented in the Gospel of John, having only two mentions as such at hand, and not seeking to elucidate the subtext. His essay, "Sieg der Protologie über die Eschatologie? Schöpfung im Johannesevangelium", uses Hans Käsemann's image of Christology in the Gospel, the "victory of protology over eschatology", as a starting point for debate. His analysis is thorough and very well-documented, taking into account changes in terms used in the Genesis and linking the concepts present in the Gospel of John with ideas circulating at the time of its composition. Weidemann approaches the text from every angle, and builds his conclusions around the social and anthropological necessities of the period, pushing towards a more community-oriented take on religion.

Tobias Nicklas attempts in his essay, "Schöpfung und Vollendung in der Offenbarung des Johannes", to explain the Revelation of John in terms of explicit statements regarding the Creation, and their relation to the apocalypse as seen in the text. Nicklas starts by giving credit to some authors who

have dealt with this issue before, then goes on to justify the need for his particular outlook. Every scene of John's Revelation receives a separate interpretation. The conclusions, carefully sectioned and numbered, point out how the apocalyptic visions are built in relation to the Paradise of Creation, but also seek to reinforce the idea that John was, in fact, writing a polemic against the Roman state. As such, drawing the Revelation from images familiar from the Genesis would lend more credibility to the subtextual political argument the text is built around. Nicklas contextualizes and performs a thorough analysis, all the while keeping a neutral tone and a certain distance from religious sentiment itself.

In the following essay, John F. Tipei offers a humanizing view of the Apostle Paul, based largely on his Mars' Hill speech. "Paul's Areopagus Speech: A Lesson on Creation as an Evangelistic Tool" proposes, once again, historical and cultural context as a means of understanding the text, specifically given the circumstances of this speech. Creation, in this case, is used by Paul as a means of reaching his non-Jewish audience, by reminding them of mankind's common origins. Tipei builds his analysis on the spacial and social setting, and central statements of the speech, which seek to define God and explain his necessity. Paul's speech is viewed as quite skillfully construed, so as to not offend his Gentile audience, and to draw their interest to the new religion. The modern reader is invited to appreciate Paul's diplomacy in this venture, and use him as a model for missionarism.

Stelian Tofană takes up another work by the Apostle Paul, in "The Relation Between the Destiny of Human Kind and that of Creation According to Romans 8,18-23". He starts off with an overview of Creation and its reasoning, as laid out by Paul,



then goes on to explain and extrapolate upon a specific paragraph from the Epistle to the Romans. Tofană underlines the connection between the “sufferings of the present times” and Adam’s sin, using it to prove that redemption, if achieved by man, can and will be granted to all of creation. The text takes on an optimistic tone, seeming to intend not only to convince the reader of the soundness of its arguments, but to draw him into this particular positive view on humankind and its purpose.

In the last essay of the Journal, “Schöpfung und Erlösung im Christus-Hymnus des Kolosserbriefes (KOL 1,15-20)”, Zsolt Geréb strives to show how a hymn that sings the praises of Jesus Christ is relevant when discussing the theme of Creation. The main argument to his point is the fact that, while not offering a history of Jesus, this hymn can be read as a connection of the creation with the events of the salvation. Geréb offers a commentary on segments of the hymn, particularly underlining the idea that Jesus Christ was a means to and participant in the Creation, while also being the much-awaited Savior of the redemption. The conclusion constitutes a praise, in itself, to the glory of God, and a specification of His intentions pertaining to this hymn.

Overall, the journal offers quite a diversity of points and voices to argue them, but what all the essays have in common is the thorough research and well thought-out arguments that accompany them.

Andreea Sînziana Pop



Catarina
Sant’Anna
(coord.),
*Para ler Gaston
Bachelard -
ciência e arte*,
Salvador de
Bahia,
EDUFBA,
2010

Founder of the “Center Gaston Bachelard” in Salvador de Bahia, the professor Catarina Sant’Anna has brought together many contributions, from different Universities and backgrounds of research in order to transmit, translate, interpret and irradiate Gaston Bachelard’s legacy in South America. As a result of the two colloquies in Salvador/Bahia (September 2002, March 2008), namely “Interdisciplinary group of research on Gaston Bachelard – Science and Art”, the texts explore the twin peaks of Gaston Bachelard’s thought: his love of science and his love of arts. The collective volume of 17 researchers from Brazil, one French philosopher and two philosophy teachers (Italian and Portuguese), with a preface by Jean-Jacques Wunenburger, explores the possibilities and difficulties encountered while putting together reason and imagination, thought and dream, concepts and images.

Passionate about the two faces of the human spirit (poetic imagination and scientific reason), their coexistence and their permanent tension, Gaston Bachelard has developed symmetrically a scientific epistemology and literary poetics. The turn in his intellectual itinerary has generated many disputes and useful developments amongst his followers.

Centered around similar areas of expertise, the present research is gathered in four large chapters. Either focusing on the new

rationalism of Bachelard, in which imagination plays a vital role, and questioning his dialectics as a fruitful method (J.-J. Wunenburger), or investigating the possibility of a philosophical terminology for science alongside Karl Popper (Teresa Castelão-Lawless), they all prove to be insightful investigations. Elyana Barbosa is concerned with retracing Bachelard's academic trajectory; Constança Marcondes Cesar explores the conflict between his phenomenological method and those of Kant, Hegel and Husserl, developing key-concepts. Textual analysis on *The New Scientific Mind* (1938) is provided by Marcus Mota. José Ernane Carneiro Carvalho Filhóis is interested in the notion of "time" in Bachelard's epistemology, contextualized by Einstein's theory of relativity and Bergson's theory on "Durability and Simultaneity".

The second part provides interesting approaches in comparative studies. Valeria Chiore turns to Henry Corbin in order to fill the gap between the material world and the sensitive world, as a third way of achieving knowledge, transcending history and conceiving a *hierohistory*. On following François Dagognet surpassing the duality concept-image, reason-imagination, MarlyBulcão traces her essay up to contemporary art as physical provocation addressed to the spectator. Edvaldo Souza Coutois is interested in the phenomenological approach on the bourgeois private space, by both Bachelard and Walter Benjamin, while Catarina Sant'Anna follows the androgynous psyche of the author, in parallel with the Swiss literary scholar Emil Staiger and his theory about the fundamental genders of poetics, as three different types of existential relationship between the subject and the world.

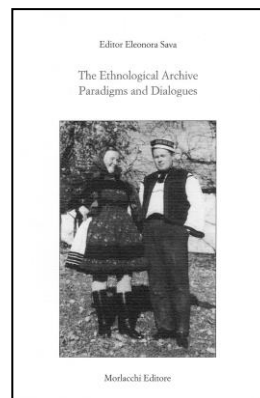
The third part addresses the subject of Brazilian reception of Bachelard's *oeuvre*, while shedding some light on particular works of literary criticism (Adonias Filho, Clarice Lispector and Judith Grossmann).

And last, but not least, anthropologist Danielle Perin Rocha-Pitta, provides an

analysis of two *candomblé* rituals (of initiation and possession of Orishas) based on Bachelard, G. Durand and M. Maffesoli, while Victor Hugo Guimarães Rodrigues advances the "oniric philosophy" as a means to get closer to the cultural utopia envisioned by Bachelard.

While managing to access universal truths of the human spirit, and opening ways of interpretation and understanding in every field of study, and in every culture, Gaston Bachelard proves to be as actual as ever. How can philosophy help us broaden day to day perception of what's real? How can sciences investigate the Real? And how does imagination perceive and work with the Real? This volume provides a useful tool for responding to all of these questions and many more.

Andreea Cerbu



Eleonora Sava
(ed.),
*The Ethnological
Archive.
Paradigms and
Dialogues,*
Morlacchi
Editore,
Perugia, 2011

Recueillant six études préfacées par Eleonora Sava (directrice du projet, coordinatrice du volume et co-auteur), le volume collectif, exceptionnellement traduit en anglais (par Carmen-Veronica Borbely et Monica Negoescu) et paru récemment à Perugia, représente la concrétisation éditoriale



du projet *Reperspectivarea documentului folcloric (La remise en perspective du document folklorique)* (financé par un grant octroyé par le Conseil National de la Recherche Scientifique Roumanie 2009-2011). Le projet exprime l'initiative de quelques jeunes ethnologues de Cluj, qui se sont proposé de valoriser le fond documentaire accumulé de 1958 à 1993 dans les Archives du Cercle de Folklore de la Faculté des Lettres de l'Université « Babes-Bolyai » de Cluj-Napoca, un fond issu de l'activité de nombreuses générations d'étudiants, coordonnés par les professeurs Dumitru Pop, Nicolae Bot, Ion Şeulean et Virgil Florea (le recueil leur est d'ailleurs dédié).

Souscrivant de façon programmatique à la vision de Pierre Nora en prenant comme point d'appui les archives envisagés comme un *lieu de mémoire*, les co-auteurs proposent par leurs efforts conjugués une « lecture réflexive » des données des Archives du Cercle de Folklore de Cluj. C'est une lecture qui fonctionne comme un mécanisme à deux temps : le premier, (méthodologique en préalable, celui du concret, qui suppose un travail important de récupération, organisation, numérisation et systématisation du matériel documentaire – un travail destiné à transformer pratiquement les Archives en une « source primaire de données pour des études et des constructions ultérieures », qui répond aux exigences archivistiques et informatiques contemporaines ; le second, celui du symbolique, qui interroge la base de données ainsi dé/re-construite de différentes perspectives théoriques, et obtient de remarquables études « de cas ».

Dans une première étude de ce genre (« The Cluj Archive of the Folklore Society: Ethnological Practices in Communist Romania »), Eleonora Sava, qui analyse dans une perspective épistémologique l'histoire des Archives en question, met en évidence la succession des paradigmes théoriques qui

ont marqué leur évolution: débutant en tant qu'étude des textes *folkloriques*, la recherche se diversifie au fur et à mesure, elle devient ethnologique, pour aboutir enfin, à la perspective holistique de *l'anthropologie culturelle*.

Dans son deuxième étude (« An Analysis of a Corpus of Archived Documents »), la chercheuse se propose d'interroger la base de données des Archives sur un tope spécifique, réalisant ainsi « une radiographie ethnologique des narrations ayant comme thème les revenants », des récits sélectionnés (sur des critères thématiques et géographiques) du matériel de terrain recueilli dans le pays de l'Oaş.

À son tour, Silvestru Petac (« On the Relation Between Folk Dance and Witty Couplets ») étudie de façon comparative et interdisciplinaire (la relation texte – musique – chorégraphie) un corpus de « strigături » recueillies dans la même zone ethnofolklorique à quelques décennies de distance (1974-1978 et 2008-2011), pour souligner l'importance de revisiter le terrain afin de se forger une perspective diachronique sur les faits de culture investigués.

Les deux études suivantes (« Ethnological Questionnaires and National Identity Construction » de Maria Candale et « Ethnographic Documents and Field Textualization » de Eleonora Sava et Maria Candale) essaient de circonscrire l'impact que les méthodes de recherche utilisées sur le terrain ont sur l'organisation conceptuelle des Archives, explorant les modalités complexes par lesquelles la méthodologie de la recherche peut structurer de façon spécifique les notes prises sur le terrain, et comment ce spécifique, à son tour, influence de façon décisive la modalité dont le phénomène culturel lui-même est dé/ ré- écrit.

Enfin, dans « On the Digital Version of the Folklore Society Archive », Liviu Pop décrit en détail les principes et les méthodes utilisés pour convertir les Archives au



format numérique (format qui assure non seulement la conservation définitive des documents, mais aussi l'accès sans les restrictions du format analogique). Finalisant la démarche promue par le volume entier, ce « discours sur la méthode » complète l'image d'un modèle possible pour aborder les valeurs culturelles – un modèle vérifié par son utilisation pratique et, par là, recommandé à tous « les spécialistes qui travaillent dans les domaines de la restauration, de la protection, de la documentation, de l'archivage et de la monitorisation du patrimoine culturel immatériel ».

Lionel D. Roșca

from the perspective of conservative philosophy. The study is based on Constantin Radulescu Motru's views on this topic, one of the most representative exponents of Romanian conservatism. Comparing and contrasting conservative and liberal philosophies, Motru's critique is aimed against the promoters of individualist-liberal views supporting a non-objective morality which is varying from individual to individual, and from one society to another. Invoking the Christian traditional values, Motru furthermore emphasizes the fact that "man has, within his spiritual life, a higher ideal to accomplish than that of liberty", stressing the importance, when speaking about individual identity, of focusing on the whole human existence.

The next study, by Cristian-Ion Popa, entitled "The Return to Community", provides a critical analysis of the conservative community-inclined ideology, focusing on the work of German sociologist Ferdinand Tönnies "Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft". The above-mentioned terms describe two different abstract types of society: the community, made of entire, total human entities, which acts as a living organism, and the association, engaging people for utilitarian purposes, modern society being the result of the gradual transition from the traditional family to the civil society, the shift from "Gemeinschaft" to "Gesellschaft".

The next article, by Gabriela Tănăsescu, focuses mainly on Michael Oakeshott's contribution to the reaffirmation of the conservative perspective on political education, while, in her paper pleading for conservatism, Oana Albescu clarifies the canons of the conservative thought, highlighted in the works of some contemporary conservatives, stressing mostly the intellectual roots of this doctrine, as described in the writings of Edmund Burke.

The next article, by Cristian Gherasim, deals with British Conservatism in the 20th



Sfera politicii,
vol. XVIII,
no. 11 (153),
Bucharest,
2010

In the area of activity of the Civil Society Foundation a special place is occupied by *Sfera Politicii*, founded in 1992, the first political theory and political science magazine published after the fall of the communist regime. Volume XVIII No 11 (153) Nov 2010, structured on a two-sectioned content, namely Conservatism and Neo-conservatism, contains a series of analyses, comments, special studies and documents in what concerns the above-mentioned doctrines.

Lorena Stuparu opens the volume with an editorial essay on the individual identity



century, identifying the moment when that which had been until then mainly a “preference of the mind” is forced towards an ideological clarification, whereas Sabin Dragulin’s paper on the theoretic roots of Romanian traditionalism consists of an analysis of the main themes of Romanian traditional thought. To this end, the author guides us through the web of a chronological description of the main conservative-related doctrines in our country, such as “Junimism”, “Semanatorism”, “Poporanism” and “Socialism”.

Andrei Stan’s article, entitled “Kogalniceanu, the traditionalist”, pinpoints one of the generally neglected aspects of the political thought of the famous Romanian liberal: the traditional, almost conservative approach of his politics, as highlighted in some of his writings, while Silvia Bocancea’s study is a praise to the coherent personality of P.P. Carp, the Romanian politician best known for promoting and supporting gradualism and pragmatism in the government plan formulated by him.

Further on, Sorin Adam Matei chooses to discuss the issue of the side-effects of globalization, comparing the era to come to a tornado, predicting that a new and agitated “meteo-historical season is about to begin”, which might even climax in the economic decline of the U.S. The question lying at the core of Iulia Joja’s study consists in establishing whether the process of the European Security and Defense Strategy militarization is necessary and welcome and, addressing the most relevant arguments against it, the author concludes that it “does not appear to be an option among others, but rather an inescapable certainty”.

Beginning with the next article, the joined work of Constantin Nica and Leonida Moise, neo-conservatism is brought to our attention. The study builds around topics like the “neo-conservatory spiritual revolution”,

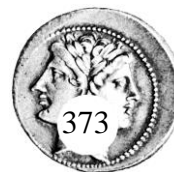
the way in which classic conservatism, as a theoretical and doctrinarian basis of neo-conservatism, has influenced the neo-conservative vision on democracy, the state and the international relations, thus explaining the expansion of the neo-conservative political power in the West-European and North-American life and culture, while the second study, analyzing North-American neo-conservatism, signed by Eugen Lungu, emphasizes the negative influence of this doctrine on the US foreign and security policy during the George W. Bush administration.

The present issue of *Sfera Politicii* also includes a striking essay on “Universalism versus Contextualization in Political Philosophy” by Bogdan Olaru who is against the contextual reading of John Rawls’s principles of justice, and is trying to prove that from a Rawlsian point of view, the laws for the basic structure of society are context-transcending.

The archive section of the magazine gathers a dossier put together by Stelian Tănase regarding Vintilă Horia, the winner of the Goncourt Prize, and his refusal to become an instrument in the communist propaganda. The dossier also contains stenograms of some official documents from the Communist Security Services, discrediting Vintilă Horia.

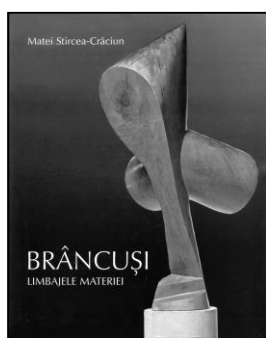
The closing of the volume is carried out on an optimistic note by Ioana Cristea Drăgulin, who signs the review of the book *Romeni. La Minoranza Comunitaria Decisiva per l’Italia di Domani* written by Alina Harja and Guido Melis. The authors of the book reveal and statistically prove that Romanians are not a people of delinquents or ex-cons, but a qualified work force that should be integrated into the Italian community, determining Drăgulin to salute the publishing of such a book that stands against the “established paradigm”.

To sum up, the present issue of *Sfera Politicii*, in spite of some grammatical



lapses, fully accomplishes its goal of highlighting the main conservative and neo-conservative perspectives in the political, social and cultural areas of Romanian and international thinking.

Elisabeta Barbur



Matei Stîrcea-Crăciun,
*Brâncuși –
Limbajele
Materiei*,
Editura Anima,
București, 2010

Brâncuși – Limbajele materiei is the title of the volume written by Matei Stîrcea-Crăciun and published by Anima in Bucharest, 2010. The author chose as a starting point for the analysis of Brâncuși's art a set of artistic innovations that took place in the artist's plastic discourse throughout a period of six years, from 1907 to 1912. The main purpose of this theoretical approach is to view Brâncuși's work through the lenses of symbolic anthropology. In this approach lies the key to understanding that the artist's corpus of works could not only be reconstructed by means of structural elements confined within the sculptural discourse, but also through the re-contextualization of his whole art by means of hermeneutic analysis instrumented by symbolic anthropology.

This critical and analytical monograph presents itself as a hybrid edition of interpretation and analysis of the artist's motifs in the first part, completed by an addendum in the end. The first part is an extended analysis of Brâncuși's most important works. The addendum contains, in the first part, six

schemes of visual hermeneutic approach dedicated to the works of art which underlie the whole of his artistic conception. They are followed by thirty hermeneutic sketches that treat the later motifs. The main aim of the addendum is to render visibility in understanding the different ways in which the plastic discourse articulates itself in art. The volume proposes a map of the artist's imaginary derived from his works of art.

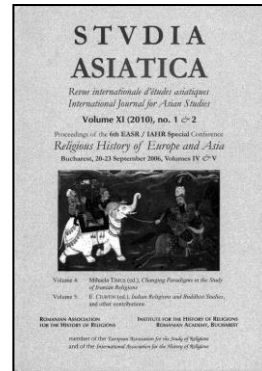
Thus, the author aims at emphasizing a cultural and axiologic evaluation of the artist's conception. It is from this point of view that several hypotheses arise and are sustained. One of them stresses that the highly intellectual dimension of Brâncuși's art is born out of the subordination of the aesthetic in detriment of the heavy substance and intensity of the artistic discourse that bestow vitality and life to the artist's works. Another argument sustaining this specific hermeneutic approach upon art, as stated by the author, is that through it one can manage responsibly the axiologic space, as in locus of modern and contemporary civilizations. Matei Stîrcea Crăciun intends to seek and find new terms for discussing the modern imaginary in arts. In this respect, the main purpose of the methodological addendum is to structurally emphasize Brâncuși's place within the wider imaginary scheme of modernism. The author's intention is to reference motifs and themes from the artist's conception to universal cultural history, to be more specific: christian symbols, Rodin's oeuvre and Mihai Eminescu's lyric imaginary, the latter being an original assumption realised by the author. The author finally concludes his study by assuming and endorsing the generic, hylesic, traditional and yet innovative natures of Brâncuși's artistic symbolism.

To summarise, this volume is a well-written and argued piece of art historical approach upgraded by the symbolist



anthropological view, an original approach in the recent research on Brâncuși. At first glance, the study might seem appropriate for understanding his oeuvre as a whole, following his artistic progress from the starting point and in analytical terms, following a chronological order. On a deeper and different level, the study might also be read as a profound and scholastic approach of the subject. It seems quite clear that the author's intentions were to explain his own perspective on understanding modern and contemporary art by means of symbolic anthropology, using Brâncuși as an infinite example. From this perspective one might see the author's whole approach as an effort to sustain "the seven theses for institutionalizing symbolic anthropology in art research" (as he calls them) and consider, to this extent, all the visual examples and analyses as evidence for his hypothesis. One might argue that this hypothesis (discussing Brâncuși's artistic conception, the works of art and reinterpreted myths as the result of an intellectual effort made fully conscious) is to some extent exaggerated, leading towards an over-interpretation, due not only to the fact that it could not be sustained by factual evidence, but also because it might, in some cases, alter the artist's original intentions. Also the author's discourse has been perhaps reft of the objectivity that some might feel the need to find when discussing Brâncuși and his Romanian roots and influences in art. Nevertheless, we can conclude by assessing the place of this exegesis as one of great relevance in the long (and especially recent) tradition of erudite interpretations on Brâncuși.

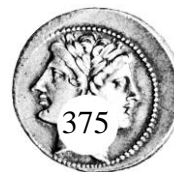
Alexandra M. Șchiopu



Studia Asiatica,
Institute for the
History of
Religions,
Romanian
Academy,
Bucharest,
Volume XI,
no. 1 & 2,
Bucharest, 2010

What appears to be a challenge for a lengthy thematic scientific journal is to achieve the addition of a sense of unity – with essays written by different scholars in different languages and writing styles – in order to give the reader the feeling of a volume both harmonious and diverse. And when the contributors are scholars – many of them prestigious religious historians and mythologists – from all over the world (the United States, Canada, India, Great Britain, France, Israel and, of course, Romania, to mention but a few), this unity is a very welcome bonus in the 2010 issue of the *International Journal for Asian Studies* and it adds to the intellectual force and valuable contributions of the volume, making it a remarkable read.

The volume is, in fact, made up of discourses presented during the International Congress of the History of Religions on the theme "Religious History of Europe and Asia", which took place in Bucharest in 2006, and it is put together through the effort of the Institute for the History of Religions of the Romanian Academy, built in 2008 with Andrei Pleșu as a founding director. The tome comprises two volumes of the journal, one edited by Mihaela Timuș and the other by Eugen Ciurtin, which take the reader through a series of studies written in English, French and German, arranged, as logical as possible, from the early days of



the Persian Empire, Zoroastrianism, Manichaeism, to medieval visions of the East and to modern day's religious beliefs and beyond, matching the Iranian studies "to the broader lines of their neighboring fields: Greek and Roman, Indian and Buddhist, Late Antiquity studies, or the study of the Abrahamic religions".

As merely an example of what the volume has to offer, Bruce Lincoln's contribution "Human Unity and Diversity in Achaemenian Myth, Ideology and Art" appears as a multilayered and pithy presentation of the complexity of early Iranian ideology and art. The scholar employs the writings of Darius to propose an image of the Persian Empire in a time when the very word that denoted his dominion was unknown to its creator, since such a vast socio-political formation encompassed under the rule of one sovereign was unprecedented. The emperor's goal, as the chosen king, elected "by the Wise Lord's will" and therefore His correspondent on earth, was to achieve the mythic primordial unity of the earth and its peoples. In this context the study goes on to present the Persian art in connection to the hierarchic psychogeography of the empire and the idiosyncrasies of the lands-and-peoples that bring their own contribution to an empire in the making in order to build a unified socio-political formation while still culturally diverse.

James Russell writes about shamanism in a study dedicated to Eliade (presented as part of the section "The scientific posterity of Mircea Eliade" of the congress), "The Science of Parting: Eliade, Iranian Shamanism and the view from Tomis", employing Eliade's model to discuss certain narratives in the Iranian sphere related to cosmology, quests and magical practices in the context of their shamanistic elements and approached to similar elements present in other cultures. Among others, he discusses the narrative of the demiurge who needs an

intermediary to create (God – Satan) in terms of a myth of Zoroastrian provenance where Ohrmazd turns to Ahriman for assistance but he refuses to aid and invades the world, the cosmic egg that lies on the bottom of the sea in the shape of a snake, a myth whose integration in the European beliefs is easily recognizable; or the influences of Iranicism in Daco-Thracian beliefs, with Eliade's theories as models, as they appear in myths, folk-tales and magical-religious practices, such as the model of Iranian männerbunde whose initiates were "hooligans" who "swilled soma and acted with the amoral abandon of werewolves", lycanthropes, a scenario present in cultures across Europe.

Silviu Lupaşcu's contribution from the Romanian space is an essay ("The Arabesques of Knowledge") which analyzes the connections between Hellenistic Gnosticism and Arabic Moslem beliefs (particularly related to Sufism), explaining them in the context of the exchange of religious beliefs between Europe and the Middle East between the 8th and 13th centuries, when numerous writings pertaining to the Greek Antiquity – which had been lost for centuries – became known once again to Europe through Arabic effort, and somewhere around this time they were reinterpreted, deconstructed and subtly integrated within Moslem religious thinking.

Further on, Corin Braga's essay on the quest for the Earthly Paradise is one of the most valuable contributions from autochthonous scholars, this time written in French. The study analyzes these fabulous journeys from an innovative perspective, explaining how the Orient became to the European psyche during the Middle Ages a sort of collective unconscious where all its phantasms were projected, and it presents these quests in the light of the formidable accounts of the time, written not only by "voyageur de cabinet" and fiction writers



but, most importantly, by famous explorers who describe an Orient full of geographical curiosities, magical objects and monstrous races.

The volume presents the history of religions enthusiasts and connoisseurs with so many notable contributions that it is difficult to mention only a few. The Bucharest Institute for the History of Religions journal provides us once again, as always from its foundation, with an illuminating excursion through the rich European and Asian religious imaginariu, a scholarly effort worthy of a larger recognition and publicity with the Romanian (and international) public, which we hope it will achieve in the near future.

Rebeca Toană



*Studia
Universitatis
"Babeş-Bolyai",
Series Historia,
Volume 55,
no. 1-2,
2010*

Studia, the academic journal of Babeş-Bolyai University from Cluj-Napoca, has several series, dedicated to the various fields of research led in its faculties. The issue 1-2 (June-December) 2010 of the Series *Historia* was coordinated by Marius Bucur and includes a number of very interesting articles and reviews of various publications. Among the authors we mention Cristian Nicolae Daniel, Liviu Malița, Artur Lakatos,

Gabriela Ghindea, Călin Morar-Vulcu, Mihai Croitor. The reviews are signed by Sever Cristian Oancea, Cristian Bartam Alexandra Tieanu.

Cristian Nicolae Daniel contributes an article dedicated to religious doctrinal experiments in Transylvania in the 16th century. The author analyzes *Coresi's First Homiliary*, which emerged between two crucial moments: the Transylvanian Diet in 1566 and the Synod from Aiud in 1569. He focuses on the context of its occurrence, marked by the ambiguity between the jurisdiction over the Eastern Church and the Transylvanian Romanians. Moreover, the focus is directed towards the importance of this publication and, in contrast, towards the lack of concern for it, as it is a creation which the author considers "unique in the topographic landscape of the 16th century". The record of the calvinist influence of the *First Homiliary* by Nicolae Cartoian in *Istoria Literaturii române vechi* (The History of the Ancient Romanian Literature) is also mentioned, but this is considered to be rather a superficial analysis of the text. The contributions of the historians (Ovidiu Ghitta, Traian Vedinaș, Ana Dumitraș) concerning the *First Homiliary* are considered to be passing remarks, or minimal analyses. Instead, the contributions of linguists or philologists (e.g. Ion Gheție or Vladimir Drimba) become research tools, relevant reference points in the research of the *Homiliary*. After reviewing the analyses of the *First Homiliary* made by different researchers or linguists, Cristian Nicolae focuses in his study on the obvious theological themes of the *Homiliary* (the good deeds as a way of identifying faith, or drafting the Christian profile).

"Transilvanismul în presa culturală românească dintre cele două războaie mondiale" ("Transylvaniam in the Interwar Romanian Cultural Media"), written by Liviu Malița, circumscribes the concept of

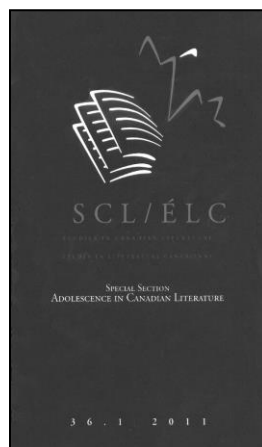
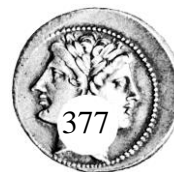
Transylvaniam from a certain national identity specific to this period. The author analyzes the two crucial moments of this period: 1928 – a transit zone of minorities – and 1933. He concludes that Transylvaniam is rather "the hidden expression of the minority individualism" which becomes a functional reality only after 1931.

In "Partidul Comunist Român din Cluj în 1945" ("The Romanian Communist Party from Cluj in 1945"), a research based on archive analyses, Artur Lakatos tries to describe the way in which The Communist Party was organized, the way in which its members were chosen, and its specific. The study is mainly based on the description of the activist party and of those who pursued a political "career". The defining characteristic of their cultural specificity was low (the communist ideology hardly entered through intellectual circles), because they were easier to manipulate.

Călin Morar-Vulcu analyzes the representations of peasantry riots and their status within the official discourse during the communist period. The author wants to present not only the specificity of these actions, but also the evolution of their official images, divided into three stages of the Romanian communism: stalinism, post-stalinism and later socialism. The violent speeches characterize particularly the first phase of assertion and enforcement of the communist party. During the first stage violence was introduced in the discourse by using semiotic or mental components that would appeal to words such as: "to kill", "to deceive", "to shed blood". During the second stage the speech was directed towards encouraging the elimination of the enemy, so that a lexical progress in the post-stalinist stage could be seen, as the urge to expose the enemy disappears and is replaced by the preference for metaphorical expressions and the obsessive resumption of the living standards theme.

Mihai Croitor highlights the debates of the international conferences in Moscow between 1957 and 1960. Through his article we gain access to the stands taken by the Soviet, Romanian and Chinese in their regular meetings in Moscow, the issues addressed being those of peace and war, and the transition from capitalism to socialism. The Soviet-Chinese differences as well as the moderate and positive position of the leader Mao Zedong, or the constant attitude of the Bucharest officials joining the Kremlin position are also mentioned.

Simona Gruian



Studies in Canadian Literature, Vol. 36, No. 1, Heather Snell, Heidi Butler, John Clement Ball, Jennifer Andrews (eds.), *Adolescence in Canadian Literature*, Fredericton, The University of New Brunswick, 2011

Studies in Canadian Literature/ Études en littérature canadienne (SCL/ÉCL) is a bi-annual refereed journal devoted to the scholarly and critical study of Canadian literature in English and French. It is indexed in the Canadian Periodical Index, the *MLA Index*, and the Humanities International Complete, and it is also available on-line. Divided into 12 articles, with an "Introduction" and a "Note on Contributors", the volume



presents a thematic survey of artistic tendencies with different approaches towards the Canadian literature, where *youth* is the chain that holds everything together. The critics take into discussions the works of important writers such as Montgomery, John Richardson, Marie-Claire Blais, or Lisa Robertson, in order to highlight the representation of the adolescent in literature.

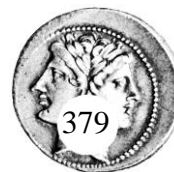
In the article "Terry Fox and the National Imaginary: Reading Eric Walters's *Run*" opening the volume, Tanis MacDonald correlates literature with contextual realities such as the case of Terry Fox, in order to determine the process of transforming a young disabled man into a hero. Turning a person into a historical figure reflects the role of literature in creating a citizenship ideology for a future generation. The following articles emphasize the reciprocal relationship between a national imaginary that influences and is being influenced by literature. Thereby, Jenn Macquarrie, Leslei Clement and Michael Buma analyse the means of literature in fictionalizing reality – perceived as an expression of social influence – by putting forward the areas that raise the adolescents' interest such as dance, fashion and sports. These domains of interest are the medium that molds the person's personality, enabling him/ her to achieve an inner identity. Preoccupied with the complex of youth, Deborah Wills and Amy Bright take into account the premise that adolescence is a "threshold" that gives the individual the possibility to pass from childhood to adulthood. Therefore, youth is not a transgression from one world to another, but a simultaneous state of being, both a child and an adult.

The following articles point out how literature's function to create role models – the readers being the targeted category – merges with the aim of forming young writers. Cheryl Cowdy, Ella Soper and Clau-

dine Gélinas-Faucher explore the works of Margaret Atwood, Miriam Toews and A.J.M. Smith from the point of view of the struggle of a young artist to create his/her own style and of the way in which this journey towards becoming self-accomplished is mirrored in literary works. Furthermore, Jennifer Hardwick focuses on the works of young aboriginal writers who attempt to become the voice of their social category. Hardwick believes that literature is the portal that facilitates the intergenerational dialogue, but also enables the individuals to overcome the collision induced by the cultural differences.

Besides the multiculturalist and modern nationalism, Cowdy and Soper assert that the process of becoming an adult is closely related to the space where the peers originate from, introducing also the motif of (im)migration. Frozen between two mentalities – tradition and modernity – the adolescent needs to choose between the preserved wild life/ rural/ past, and the luxurious city/ urban/ present. Furthermore, leaving home and moving to a new place is believed by the critics to be the detail that makes the difference between literature for children and literature for adolescents. The mind-set of the latter is that young people wish to become independent, hence regarding the place he/she once belonged to with detachment.

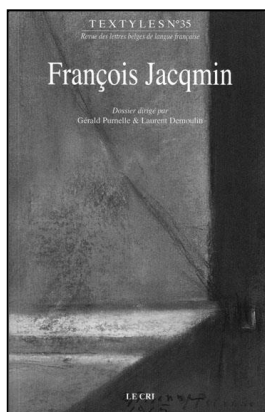
In addition, Ryan Porter, Eva Pich Ponce and Geoffrey Hilbchuck lay stress on the impact that technological developments have upon youth, with emphasis on the perpetual transformation of the settlements. The city is seen as a complex organism that lives, develops and configures its identity through the particles that assemble it. The people and the buildings – with special reference to architecture – are the elements that give shape to the place they inhabit and vice versa. By this collocation the author understands the ability of the city/ individual to simultaneously emerge and enclose within



itself/ himself/ herself.

In conclusion, the critics make use of areas such as economy, health, arts, educational or political issues, psychological researches, or resort to laws or even constitutions in order to attest that writers (unaware or consciously) were influenced by the realities they live in. Over and above, by speaking about adolescence, the analysts point out the interrelation between the yearning of creating an individual identity, the symbol of Canada that reiterates the configuration of a national identity, and the literature as a fictional world which collides and at the same time interfuses with the reality the first two symbols belong to.

Cristian Maria Daniela



Textyles,
no. 35,
*François
Jacqmin*,
dossier dirigé par
Gérald Purnelle
et Laurent
Demoulin,
Bruxelles,
Éditions Le Cri,
2009

Il semble peut-être difficile de dire la création d'un poète dont la caractéristique essentielle est d'être insaisissable et fragile. Car comment décrire, sans détruire leur transparence même, les vers suivants ?

« Il y a une manière/ d'aborder l'univers par le désert aussi, par/ des absences de chemins, par des allusions/ au néant qui sont plus directes et plus sûres/ que les avenues ». (p. 105)

Pourtant, la monographie paradoxale et

impossible consacrée à ce poète qui ne tient « la littérature en grande estime » existe. Elle constitue le trente-cinquième nombre de *Textyles*, revue des lettres belges de langue française qui paraît deux fois par an sous forme de volumes d'environ 150 pages et dont le comité de rédaction regroupe des universitaires des trois académies de la Communauté Française de Belgique, ainsi que des Archives et Musée de la Littérature. Ce dossier, œuvrant à la notoriété d'un auteur qui considérerait celle-ci comme « un manque radical d'éducation, une eau empoisonnée, et surtout une faute de goût » (p. 7), est dirigé par Gérald Purnelle et Laurent Demoulin.

Comme Laurent Demoulin nous explique dans l'introduction, « François Jacqmin n'a pas encore eu droit à des égards suffisants de la part de la critique ». À la fin de ce dossier, une bibliographie, que l'on doit aux efforts conjugués de Laurent Robert, Sabrina Parent et Gérald Purnelle, mentionne une bonne vingtaine d'articles, trois mémoires de licence et deux thèses. Le présent numéro constitue donc le premier ouvrage publié consacré tout entier au poète des *Saisons*. C'est pourquoi la page de garde de ce volume ne porte aucun sous-titre: nous n'avons donné aucune ligne directrice aux différents contributeurs. Il s'agissait de broser un tableau d'ensemble, d'aborder Jacqmin et son œuvre sous de multiples aspects. Les articles réunis ici répondent, au moins partiellement, à ce projet: études rhétorique, génétique, formaliste, thématique se succèdent et le rapport singulier de Jacqmin à la peinture n'est pas oublié. On s'étonnera peut-être de l'absence d'un point de vue purement philosophique, tant cette dimension est présente dans l'œuvre envisagée. Cette absence n'est pas volontaire et est due aux hasards de la vie académique: des contributeurs ont été sollicités à cet égard, mais ils n'ont pas répondu par



l'affirmative. A *posteriori*, toutefois, cet état de fait s'avère étrangement significatif.

Car, si certaines considérations d'ordre philosophique émaillent quelques articles, notamment l'éclairante contribution de Francis Edeline, l'on constatera que c'est le poète dans ses poèmes et non dans sa poésie qui a retenu ici les attentions critiques.

François Jacqmin est, cette fois, considéré comme un homme qui écrit et non plus seulement comme un homme qui pense. Il s'agit sans doute d'une évolution dans la glose du poète, qui avait jusqu'à présent donné surtout lieu à des analyses philosophiques.» (p. 8)

Le numéro s'ouvre sur un entretien mené par Frans De Haes, Catherine Daems et Gérard Purnelle avec Joseph Noiret, qui nous cite un petit texte drôle de Jacqmin qui se trouve dans le numéro treize de la revue *Phantomas* : « On ne m'avait jamais beaucoup aimé au bureau, mais dès que l'on sut que j'entretenais un culture clandestine de poèmes dans mes tiroirs, ce fut le signal qui leva les boucliers, l'amertume collective trouvant cette tendresse insolite, la réponse à l'absurdité quotidienne. Une passivité aussi flagrante, une solution aussi simple que scandaleuse à la déchéance du travail et aux longues heures d'hébétude déchaînait les esprits comme une injustice cuisante. [...] Comme vous le devinez, mes tiroirs avaient, de tous temps, toujours été parfaitement vides. » (p. 18)

Le recueil « Éléments de géométrie » constitue le sujet d'analyse pour les deux articles suivants. L'ami de Jacqmin, Francis Edeline, utilise les perspectives multiples des divers domaines (géométrie, optique, poésie, rhétorique, peinture, psychologie et philosophie) pour commenter avec inspiration les poèmes du poète et conclure que toute l'œuvre de celui-ci « raconte la malédiction de celui qui perçoit si intensément le monde que toute tentative pour le comprendre et même simplement le décrire lui

paraît vouée à l'échec. » (p.32)

Catherine Daems emploie la génétique pour nous révéler des questions fondamentales qui concernent la motivation créatrice de Jacqmin et la poésie du vingtième siècle, pendant que, dans « Formes de François Jacqmin », Gérard Purnelle fait une enquête minutieuse et mouvante concernant le rapport de Jacqmin au formalisme.

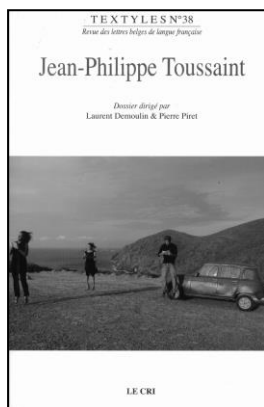
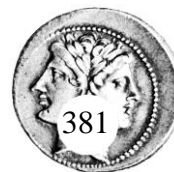
L'article suivant, écrit par Laurent Robert, traite du comique, de l'ironie, de l'auto-ironie, mais aussi du cratylisme déjoué et à l'autotélisme ambigu chez l'auteur du *Domino gris*, des *Saisons*, du *Livre de la neige* et d'*Être*.

L'article très inspiré de Sabrina Parent touche la question du lyrisme discret et doux, de l'émotion suggérée plutôt que décrite de Jacqmin : « Traquée par la nuit, la neige poussa la porte, / et avança jusqu'au cœur du logis. / Elle pénétrait / comme ces convictions douces que l'on a / en rêvant. » (p. 85)

Dans « L'écart improbable », Pierre-Yves Soucy s'interroge sur la distance entre les arts : Le déplacement de la parole vers ce malaxage de l'intuition verbale par le pinceau et la brosse désignerait une fuite quasi désespérée face à cette impossibilité d'établir, par l'intuition sensible comme par la pensée, les liens intimes où se rejoignent l'espace du texte, l'espace pictural, et un monde hors de prise. » (p. 102)

Les textes inédits des *Petites Chroniques liégeoises* de la fin du dossier suscitent la curiosité et soulèvent l'enthousiasme, en nous proposant une lecture privilégiée.

Monica Danci



Textyles,
n° 38
Laurent
Demoulin et
Pierre Piret (éd.),
*Jean-Philippe
Toussaint*,
Bruxelles,
Éditions Le Cri,
2010

Né de l'admiration pour l'écrivain belge publié par Minuit et du souhait de réparer l'injustice faite involontairement à Jean-Philippe Toussaint, privé d'être le sujet et l'objet d'un recueil de commentaires critiques, le numéro 38 de la revue *Textyles* se propose de combler ce vide par sa thématique monographique intitulée simplement : *Jean-Philippe Toussaint*. Le dossier, dirigé par Laurent Demoulin et Pierre Piret, réunit une douzaine d'articles appartenant à des chercheurs en littérature, cinématographie et photographie dont le but est de dévoiler les principales directions et caractéristiques de l'esthétique toussaintienne. À part le dossier *Jean-Philippe Toussaint*, la revue *Textyles* comporte deux autres sections : « Varia » et « Chroniques ».

Espace d'expression des éditeurs, l'introduction (p. 7-11) survole l'ouvrage et retrace l'essentiel de chaque article retenu pour la publication.

Premier signataire, Jean Dubois (p. 13-24) entreprend un exercice de déchiffrement sémiotique pour révéler d'une Marie imbibée d'eau provenant de ses larmes, de la mer ou de la pluie. Marie aquatique signifierait « expansion de soi » (p. 16) et « femme [déc]ouverte » (p. 17). Tout comme Sjeff Houppermans rapprochera plus loin Marie et Albertine, Jean Dubois identifie les deux

héroïnes par le plaisir presque érotique ressenti lors de la dégustation d'une glace. Assimilée à la mythologie, Marie est comparée à Méduse, à Venus, à une néréïde ou encore à une nymphe-créatrice de mode qui assume si bien ses vêtements que sa nudité.

Dans l'article suivant, Frank Wagner (p. 25-34) recherche dans tous les romans de l'écrivain les éléments constitutifs et récurrents de sa technique narrative. Gravitant autour du chronotope, des personnages et de l'intrigue, son analyse porte sur la poétique dont il essaie de dégager les constants. L'immobilité en serait un, alors que le changement et le mouvement représentent l'évolution. Frank Wagner passe également en revue la temporalité éclatée typique aux romans de Jean-Philippe Toussaint.

Connaissant la prédilection de Jean-Philippe Toussaint pour l'Orient, synonyme de l'Asie, Pierre Piret (p. 35-46), le directeur de la revue *Textyles* se rattache à la théorie du « Vide médian » émise par Cheng François. Son raisonnement l'amène à une identification partielle de l'écriture toussaintienne à celle chinoise. Il identifie ainsi comme dénominateur commun de la poésie chinoise et des textes de Jean-Philippe Toussaint le détail extrait de son contenu et devenu signifiant.

Dorénavant, les critiques travaillent au profit de Jean-Philippe Toussaint, écrivain créateur d'images rhétoriques et/ ou cinématographiques.

Par rapport aux films antérieurs, considère Jean-Benoît Gabriel (p. 47-56), l'innovation de Toussaint dans *Fuir* réside dans « le traitement du motif » (p.48). Le critique décèle chez l'écrivain qui fait de la cinématographie, une intention « documentarissante » (p. 48) collée à son court-métrage de fiction. C'est pourquoi celui-ci met en évidence l'effet de réel que recherche Toussaint dans le mouvement de sa caméra bifonctionnelle, rappelant la caméra de



surveillance, fixée au mur et condamnée à l'attente et la « caméra en chasse [...] poursuivant son sujet » (p. 51).

Focalisant sur *La Patinoire* de Jean-Philippe Toussaint, Mireille Raynal-Zougari (p. 57-66) se rapporte à l'écrivain converti en cinéaste. Ainsi, pour traiter du burlesque saisi dans le film précité et les romans de Toussaint, elle s'appuie sur les ouvrages de Gilles Deleuze et Peter Král. Elle découvre la présence du burlesque dans le mouvement de monde, de corps, de moi et des signes. L'auteure conclut son étude surlignant deux réseaux intertextuels qui se tissent d'une part, entre le texte de Toussaint et Samuel Beckett, Buster Keaton et d'autre part, entre son film et le cinéma de François Tati et Jean-Luc Godard.

L'Appareil-Photo et *La Télévision* ont capté l'attention de deux chercheurs, Olivier Mignon et Isabelle Ost. Avec un esprit critique, Olivier Mignon (p. 67-76), balaie du regard les images des « écrits » photographiques, cinématographiques et télévisés de Toussaint. De plusieurs critères différenciant les images cinématographiques de celles télévisées, il retient premièrement « le contre-champ », à savoir le même élément qui distingue l'image du visuel ; secondairement, le statut du spectateur de l'appareil de télévision qui, pris pour témoin, se voit convoqué et interpellé tandis qu'au cinéma, la parole ne lui est pas adressée. Pour ce qui est de l'image photographique, Olivier Mignon constate que Toussaint n'est pas intéressé par le résultat imprimé sur le papier-photo, mais plutôt par les circonstances qui précèdent cette capture de l'image. Toute compréhension du rôle des images dans la littérature de Toussaint entraîne un examen de l'image de ses protagonistes, examen soutenu par de nombreuses citations extraites par Mignon.

Isabelle Ost (p. 77-88) considère les deux œuvres littéraires mentionnées ci-

dessus du point de vue de la technique et de la temporalité que l'appareil-photo et la télévision impliquent. Elle prouve que la temporalité rapide et linéaire de la télévision s'oppose à la temporalité lente et passive du narrateur. Cependant, la télévision incite le narrateur à la réflexion. Son débat sur la technique ne s'arrête pas ici, elle introduit un troisième objet technique qui rythme le temps : le téléphone portable. Sa sonnerie retentit dans *Fuir* et préfigure une spatialité et une temporalité en mouvement. Intermédiaire d'un déplacement virtuel rapide et immédiat, le téléphone a pour effet « des coupures et raccords dans l'espace (tel un montage cinématographique), [et] produit ici un effet déstructurant » (p. 84).

Sylvie Loignon (p. 89-98) s'interroge sur la mélancolie et l'obsession de la fin dans différentes acceptions dans l'œuvre de Toussaint. Dans la fiction littéraire, soutient-elle, la fin d'une relation amoureuse ou la mort occasionnent une écriture dirigée par « le regard et la main » (p. 91). Dans la pétrification et les ruines de l'amour/ de l'écriture ainsi que dans la liquéfaction, elle réussit à décrypter la mélancolie surprise par l'écrivain

À partir d'un point de vue émis par Laurent Demoulin sur le roman célibataire, Denis Saint Amand (p. 99-108) se donne pour but de révéler les similitudes et les dissonances thématiques et contextuelles entre le roman de la fin du XIX^e siècle et *La Salle de bain*. Bien qu'espacés dans le temps, le roman décadent et *La Salle de bain* partagent l'humour, la réflexion sur la création littéraire et le statut de l'intellectuel, désinvolte du narrateur de Toussaint. Les auteurs de la fin du XIX^e siècle et Jean-Philippe Toussaint s'exercent pendant des époques de transition et s'évertuent à innover la production littéraire marquée chez les premiers, par E. Zola, chez le deuxième par S. Beckett.

Largement débattu dans ce dossier, *Fuir*, qu'il s'agisse du film ou du roman,

qu'il soit envisagé seul ou dans la trilogie de Marie, constitué de plus, l'objet de l'investigation de Sjeff Houppermans (p. 109-120). Premièrement, il confirme l'ingéniosité de Toussaint à marier le tragique et le burlesque, la violence et l'ironie. Deuxièmement, en raison de quelques analogies entre Marie et Albertine, à savoir, la fuite, les robes et les chevaux, il ressort la filiation de Toussaint à Proust.

Auteur de plusieurs entretiens et articles sur Jean-Philippe Toussaint, Laurent Demoulin (p. 121-133) salue l'initiative de l'écrivain de se forger un site et de mettre en ligne des traductions, des thèses et des articles critiques, des extraits de ses courts et longs-métrages. Sans vouloir être un blog, le site de Toussaint est pourtant « le moins littéraire et le plus « internetien » possible » (p. 122). Demoulin apprécie la nouveauté du site de Toussaint par l'ouverture envers ses lecteurs grâce à ses brouillons, mine d'or pour la génétique textuelle. Il profite des croquis, des plans, des variantes mis à sa disposition pour les confronter aux versions publiées et prouve des ajouts, des suppressions et des ellipses observés à travers deux romans, *L'Appareil-photo* et *La vérité sur Marie*.

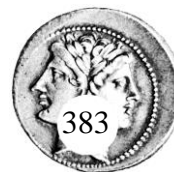
Finalement, l'écrivain Jean-Philippe Toussaint, par un texte inédit (p. 135), signe la clôture des commentaires critiques qui lui sont consacrés.

Dans la section *Varia*, une étude minutieuse de Paul Aron et Bibiane Fréché (p. 137-166) scrute « Les échanges littéraires entre la Belgique et l'Espagne au XIXe siècle [...] » (p. 137). Ceux-ci sont favorisés, d'un côté, par « l'ouverture culturelle que permet le considérable développement économique du pays » (p. 137), de l'autre, par l'image positive d'Espagne décrite par Prosper Mérimée et Théophile Gautier. Les voyages motivés par la lecture de ces deux écrivains privilégient les transferts culturels et engendrent des histoires rédigées par des ama-

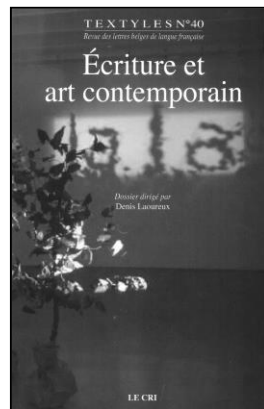
teurs et des professionnels de l'écriture longuement évoqués ici.

Sous le nom de *Chroniques*, Les Archives et Musée de la Littérature étalent les fonds Lucien Christophe. Dans la même section, des soutenances de thèses et de mémoires sont brièvement cités et des revues littéraires se recommandent aux lecteurs de *Textyles*. Des comptes rendus, signalant des parutions récentes, terminent ce numéro 38.

Soulignons, pour conclure, le mérite de ce dossier de répondre brillamment à sa valeur première, celle de rendre hommage à l'artiste Jean-Philippe Toussaint, écrivain, cinéaste et photographe. Par la rigueur et la qualité scientifiques des articles y réunis, le n° 38 de la revue *Textyles* satisfait aux exigences d'un public universitaire, friand des œuvres toussaintiennes.



Balazs Itona



Textyles,
n° 40,
*Écriture et Art
Contemporain*,
Bruxelles,
Édition Le Cri,
2011

The 40th issue of *Textyles*, a French language Belgian literary magazine, is best described by the word *eclectic*. This issue's main topic is the discussion of the link that exists between literature and various forms of art, mainly painting and music.



The texts reunited under its covers are signed by various university teachers, not only from Belgium, but also from France and USA. These texts are all directly linked to the Belgian French language speaking artists among which Rene Magritte and Henri Michaux are the most well-known.

This issue is structured in five distinctive parts that deal with a certain cultural aspect. The first part confronts the reader with the problematics of artistic border; in our case a border between painting and literature. Its author, Laurent Demoulin, tries to offer an exhaustive description of the ways in which literature inserts itself in painting and vice versa, giving the example of the well-known Magrittean painting, *The Treachery of Images*, that depicts a pipe with a note under it that reads "This is not a pipe". In this example the author says we see a blending of two arts, a painting in which the writing gives the ultimate meaning, the significance of the work of art.

Subsequent chapters further discuss Belgian contemporary art with an emphasis on mixt (altered) works. The contributions of artists such as Marcel Broodthaers or Eric Duyckaerts are acknowledged and further divided. In the case of Duyckaerts we witness the manifestation of an interesting new art form that puts new technological devices, namely the video projector, in the artist's service. The video helps the artist become a performer, an actor that conveys a different form of message to its audience in the shape of a discourse and not a text. At Duyckaerts the critic identifies a new way of using the language that can no longer transmit information, but only simulate it.

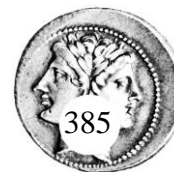
Further on the reader is confronted with a chapter that no longer deals with a specific artist. Julie Bawin tries to depict the way in which the literature of the exhibitions works and then engages in demonstra-

ting that these exhibitions can be regarded as words. From the combination of its "letters" the artist can create "words" that are new semantic structures with their own integrity.

Not only does literature interrelate with painting and music, but also with the art of photography. Jean-Philippe Toussaint is the perfect example of a literary creator that successfully integrated photography into the narrative of its novels. Toussaint can be regarded as a bivalent artist, which means that not only do his literary works integrate photography, but also, in the same way, his photography "talks" about books. This new artistic device has the peculiar advantage of being able to show the way in which a creator could reconstruct his artistic work into another form of art, pointing at how themes such as love, melancholy, death are transferred and then rendered into a new type of code.

After presenting the case of Toussaint we are confronted with other authors of photographic novels and thus introduced into a theory of genres. Marie Françoise Plissart and Benoît Peeters helped shape a new form of artistic innovation that has its roots in the French experimentalist novel of Allain Robbe-Grillet, so that we can now speak of a "Photographic Nouveau Roman" in the Belgian literature.

Another artistic blending is to be found in *Les devoirs quotidiens* by Jacques Lennep, an attempt to create a new form of art by mixing various elements from areas such as literature, photography, painting, etc. *Les devoirs quotidiens* is the perfect transposition of the postmodern intertextuality inside the field of the new art. Other interesting socio-cultural attempts include the so called *Project Pictoriana* that represent an attempt to gather in one place all the work of art belonging to a nation, and then make it available to the audience. The means for achieving that are made available by using web technologies.

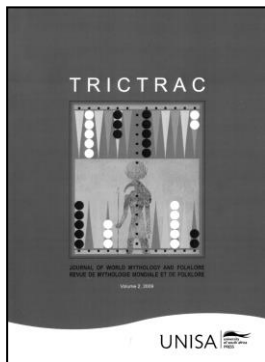


Thus, *Project Pictoriana* is accessible to everyone through a single click.

The last text discusses the relation between music, literature and painting in the works of the classic Henri Michaux. His works of art represent the perfect blending of genres, and critics agree with the statement that Michaux has found the perfect way to render musical effects through painting and literature.

As it can easily be seen, these texts are rather different from one another, being only related by a common interest in Belgian art and literature, namely in the modern blending of styles and genres. In spite of its eclecticism and somehow inconsistency, this issue appears as a solid materialization of a collective effort.

Adrian Gabor



Trictrac: Journal of World Mythology and Folklore, Volume 2, Sibusiso Hyacinth Madondo (ed.) UNISA Press, 2009

In 2008 UNISA, or the University of South Africa, began publishing its *Journal of World Mythology and Folklore* under the ingeniously suggestive name of the ancient Egyptian game of the soul's journey through the spiritual world, where the board with twelve points on each side represents the cosmos, a game inherited today as Trictrac. The annual publication is, however, a thin volume and it comprises essays written

by various scholars and translated into English. The issue of 2009, the second volume of the journal, features no more than five academic articles due to the contributions of Danièle Chauvin (University of Sorbonne), Jean Derive (University of Savoie), Gilbert Durand (University of Grenoble), Sibusiso Hyacinth Madondo (University of South Africa) and Phillippe Walter (University Stendhal-Grenoble 3).

The highlight of this issue is Gilbert Durand's "Psychoanalysis of Snow" dedicated to Bachelard and to the one natural element he excusably omits in his studies: snow. Durand's essay needs no explanation, as it praises this often overlooked element by analyzing its varied images and their meanings, from fleeting pleasure and the profane to obsession and "perfect sanctity". Danièle Chauvin writes on "Memory and Myth" in the debut of the volume, going through various theories on the nature of myths between phenomenology, structuralism and psychoanalysis, commenting on how that which was once seen as reality and historical truth is buried in the collective memory of humanity not as a defunct memory, but as a dynamic influence that cannot be occulted due to its essential relation with memory and imagination which keep it in function, thus causing myths to be reinterpreted, renewed and recreated permanently, each time shedding a new light upon themselves and upon the human psyche. "The Cosmic Gates of Memory and Oblivion: Mythology of Soul and Time" is Phillippe Walter's study of the theories on the consciousness of the soul in the afterlife of the ancient Greek tradition, its amnesia and anamnesis in relation to the geography of the spiritual world and to ritual practices of initiation into this sort of knowledge.

Another notable contribution is that of Hyacinth Madondo, also the general editor of the journal, which analyzes the Christian



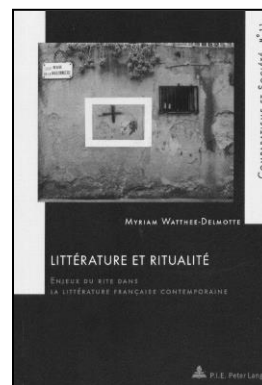
and Judaic elements in terms of epiphanies, miraculous visions, religious celebrations and their symbolism in “Liturgical Feasts and Heroic Epiphany in Chretien de Troyes’s *Perceval or the Story of the Grail*. The author presents Perceval as the knight of “religion and redemption”, bringing “a new type of chivalry” to the quest of the Grail, but unlike Galahad the chaste, Perceval appears rather as a wild “inspired” knight motivated by revelations and epiphanic religious experiences. The symbolism of light is of key importance as it binds together the aspects of revelation, heroism, transcendence, divine power, and, most importantly, spiritual illumination or initiation into the sacred, a transformation liberating to the character which the author describes as the final element that would have made Perceval the one hero worthy to receive the hallowed prize, if only the process was completed in time. And in support of this, Madondo identifies (in Chretien de Troyes’ narrative) for each step in the hero’s spiritual initiation a corresponding religious celebration, each playing an important role both for the character and for the quest itself.

The volume could not and should not have lacked at least one study on African mythology, and this is Jean Derive’s essay *Africa: Myth and Literature*. It is a rather general study, its stated aim being to demonstrate the richness of the African mythology, by glancing into the contemporary African literature which is replete with influences from myths and folklore, whether we are referring to collections of myths, or to novels set in the present day, but rich in metaphysical undertones of African spirituality. Various works of literature hold recounts of the myths and legends of different tribes, some of which are authentic and others fabricated for the sake of novelistic fiction, while still true to the African spirit, displaying either

mythical themes or forms close to those of the mythical discourse. The author describes these “invented mythologies” as proofs of how the profoundness of the African mythology surfaces today, shown at its best, still strong enough to prompt contemporary minds the ability to invent alternative myths so credible that they mingle perfectly with authentic ones, further arguing how these myths are so current that modern authors use them as models to explain the real world of their time. And so, in spite of being challenged by the clash with the Western culture, they are not lost but only buried in conscience. The only unfortunate aspect about Derive’s essay is that it is the only one in the volume, and more of the sort would be expected and welcome from future publications of the South African university.

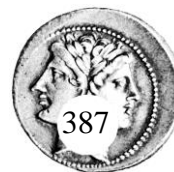
Apart from this small observation – which is rather a desire or a request and not at all a reproach – *Trictrac* is a small and nevertheless remarkable piece of successful scholarly effort and a publication for which we are looking forward with great interest to read more.

Rebeca Toană



Myriam
Watthée-
Delmotte,
*Littérature et
ritualité. Enjeux
du rite dans la
littérature
française
contemporaine*,
Peter Lang,
Bruxelles,
2010

Littérature et ritualité de Myriam



Wathée-Delmotte fait partie de la série *Comparatisme et Société*, collection interdisciplinaire qui envisage la littérature, les arts et les sciences humaines dans une interaction étroite avec l'évolution de la société et de l'histoire des idées. Le livre est une œuvre très bien documentée qui se donne pour tâche de dresser, pour la première fois de manière approfondie, une image aussi complète que possible des principes d'action et des conditions d'exécution de la littérature envisagée sous l'angle du rite. L'auteur, Myriam Wathée-Delmotte est Maître de recherches du Fond national de la recherche scientifique belge et Professeur à l'Université catholique de Louvain. Elle est spécialiste dans le domaine de la littérature française, son objet de recherche étant la dynamique des représentations littéraires contemporaines.

Structuré sur deux grandes parties, le livre aborde le problème de la rencontre du rite avec le récit littéraire et les effets que l'un a sur l'autre, en mettant en évidence la présence des perméabilités existantes entre les deux.

Tout d'abord, l'auteur analyse les moyens symboliques sur lesquelles s'appuie la ritualité, notamment l'ancrage médiologique, le dispositif textuel et la matière-émotion liée à l'action imageante. Elle explique que « le mode individuel de la lecture silencieuse d'un livre est lui-même très ritualisé », la lecture n'étant pas seulement le moment où celle-ci s'effectue, mais un ensemble, « un corps de pratiques: tout ce que la conditionne, y prépare, y conduit, la prolonge ou l'annule n'est pas périphérique à la lecture, mais en est radicalement constitutif », comme le précise Martine Poulain. Donc, la lecture repose sur un rite culturellement défini. En plus, le livre est une forme symbolique, les supports du texte n'étant « pas innocents » (le fait que le livre est un espace rectangulaire qui rappelle les points cardinaux et qui est orienté par un axe met en évidence le fait que la forme impose sur

la manière dont on intériorise le contenu).

Wathée-Delmotte

appuie ses théories sur une très riche bibliographie, dont on retient les idées de Northrop Frye, pour qui la structuration d'un texte romanesque est « toujours la trace d'un rite, lui-même manifestation d'un processus de symbolisation » et celles de Bachelard, avec son image littéraire comme « explosif », le texte littéraire « engageant dans la polysémie, dans une feuilletage des significations emboîtées ».

Plus loin, l'auteur nous présente les principes de l'action rituelle, notamment le pari, la reprise et l'hétérotypie. Le rite, dit-elle, est de l'ordre du pari: sur la forme et sur le sens. L'écrivain parie sur la « transmigration » (Barthes) qui qualifie la lecture de la façon suivante: « le livre transmigre dans notre vie – il se produit une co-existence, notre vie devient l'écriture le l'Autre ». En ce qui concerne la reprise, car aucun texte n'est lu indépendamment de l'expérience que le lecteur a d'autres textes, chaque lecture signifie la rencontre de deux imaginaires, celui de l'auteur et celui du lecteur. Donc, l'œuvre littéraire, comme tout rite, n'a de réalité que dans cette reprise. L'hétérotypie (terme qui appartient à Louis-Marie Chauvet) porte sur un rapport particulier à la temporalité, le rite visant à opérer « une forme de transmutation qui doit assurer l'affranchissement de la loi du temps » (Eliade). Wathée-Delmotte, en faisant la comparaison entre la raison mythique et celle poétique, nous fait découvrir qu'elles sont, gardant les proportions, identiques en sens, c'est-à-dire elles font preuve du même désir de maîtrise du temps, et alors toute écriture et lecture devient l'expérience intense d'un présent « hétérotypique ».

Dans le chapitre suivant, en identifiant les conditions d'exécution du rite, initié par la recherche intime d'un anxiolytique à l'égard de la confrontation à l'altérité, l'auteur



montre qu'elles « reposent sur la puissance conative de l'autorité auctoriale, d'une part, et sur la charge émotionnelle qui peut toucher le lecteur, d'autre part ».

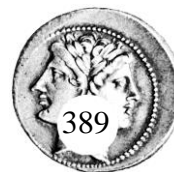
Dans la deuxième partie, qui donne la saveur de la première, plus théorique, les rites sont analysés en tant que motifs littéraires. Parmi les rites religieux, l'auteur utilise prioritairement « ceux qui engagent fortement la parole, se souvenant de l'origine liturgique et sacramentale de la littérature ». Dans ce contexte, en abordant les modèles rituels, on trouve l'exemple de la confession, l'aveu, très riche en significations. Prenant comme point de départ *Les Confessions* de Saint Augustin, qui représentent un périple entre l'aveu des fautes passées et la joie de la conversion présente et aussi les *Confessions* de Jean-Jacques Rousseau, qui seulement miment la confession au sens religieux, étant en réalité une écriture autojustificative, Watthée-Delmotte fait l'analyse pertinente de trois cas particuliers: *Le noeud de vipères* de François Mauriac, *Les Diaboliques* de Jules Barbey et *Œdipe sur la route* de Henry Bauchau, jetant une lumière nouvelle sur les textes.

Puis, l'auteur se penche sur la prière comme acte de langage qui est alors comparée à la poésie, la principale différence entre les deux étant une d'intentionnalité. L'auteur ne veut pas, comme elle le dit, « amalgamer poésie et prière, mais de constater leur commune inscription dans un fonctionnement de type rituel ». Elles ont un passé liturgique commun potentiellement réactivable. Cette théorie est illustrée dans le cas particulier de Henry Bauchau analysé comme poète plus ou moins chrétien, un poète qui réinvestit la prière en manière postmoderne, où les références chrétiennes sont l'expression d'un véritable désenchantement. Dans ce contexte, Watthée-Delmotte montre que la mention d'un rite par un écrivain doit pouvoir s'inscrire signi-

ficativement dans sa propre « sémiotique ».

Nous nous trouvons ensuite dans la présence des rites pas seulement religieux, mais aussi profanes, qui exercent une influence sur la littérature, les deux catégories de rites se constituant dans « une vaste matière, inépuisable en soi, articulée autour de trois questions essentielles qui cernent la problématique en fonction de trois paramètres fondamentaux de la ritualité: ses aspects fonctionnels, opératoires et cognitifs ». Les fonctions que l'auteur donne aux rites sont dynamogénique, visant à exprimer la malédiction de la littérature, exemplifiée dans le procédé citationniste chez le symboliste Villiers de l'Isle-Adam, et intégrative, qui doit contrer la solitude du poète moderne, illustrée dans la fascination de la parole liturgique investie du pouvoir d'apporter la communauté chez Pierre Jean Jouve. Quant à l'aspect opératoire, l'auteur mentionne l'action médiatrice, c'est-à-dire offrir un espace transitionnel à l'individu, analysée dans les récits de Jules Barbey d'Aureville reposant sur une tactique ritualisée, puis l'action ordonnatrice visant à « régler les affrontements entre pairs », les rivalités diverses qui empoisonnent le quotidien des hommes, décrite dans *Deux Cavaliers de l'Orage* de Giono, et l'action sécurisante pouvant gérer une crise identitaire exploitée dans l'œuvre littéraire de Salvador Dalí, le rite canalisant les énergies et leur octroyant une forme communicable qui contribue à l'identification identitaire.

Quant on parle de l'aspect cognitif du rite, Watthée-Delmotte constate un transfert du sacré, exemplifié dans le roman diariste de Georges Bernanos *Journal d'un curé de campagne*, où on peut parler d'un déplacement du rituel de la Parole vers la sphère profane. Puis, l'auteur nous parle de la manière contemporaine d'appropriation du champ culturel des mythes, en analysant le mythe de



Pygmalion au XIX^e siècle, le focus étant sur l'artiste envisagé comme héros tragique.

Le livre a le grand mérite de mettre en lumière les perméabilités peu explorées existantes entre ritualité et littérature, la manière innovante d'envisager et d'analyser les théories de la création et de la réception littéraires et aussi la richesse des approches dans cette direction. Une riche bibliographie, formée de textes littéraires et de textes critiques aussi, ainsi qu'une liste de remerciements clôturent cette fascinante incursion dans la complexité, à la fois interne et contextuelle, de la littérature mêlée au rite.

Elisabeta Barbur



Mihai Zamfir,
*Scurtă istorie:
panorama
alternativă a
literaturii
române,*
București,
Editura Cartea
Românească,
2011

Le livre de Mihai Zamfir, *Panorama alternatif de la littérature roumaine*, une lecture contemporaine des grands écrivains roumains du XIX^e siècle, part de l'hypothèse selon laquelle devant les textes qui ont été beaucoup analysés, parfois de manière pertinente et originale, mais le plus souvent en vertu de l'inertie, la seule option du critique littéraire actuel sera d'explorer une zone laissée dans l'ombre par la plupart de ses précurseurs, c'est-à-dire la signification de leur style. C'est ainsi que l'attention de l'historien de la littérature va se diriger vers

les particularités stylistiques, tout en essayant de voir si les écrivains appartenant à la génération de 1848, ceux du cénacle de « Junimea » ou les écrivains de la fin du XIX^e sont encore capables de transmettre quelque chose au public de notre époque, en concordance avec son horizon d'attente ou son expérience de lecture. Ce livre répond, donc, à des exigences esthétiques telles : l'écart par rapport au cliché et aux exposés exhaustifs, la renonciation aux biographies sèches et aux digressions inutiles en faveur de l'analyse d'un style particulier qui garantit, en effet, la pérennité de l'œuvre et confère, à chaque écrivain traité, son caractère unique.

Le livre est, donc, une « histoire stylistique de la littérature roumaine », le résultat d'une lecture critique au sens postmoderne du terme, car elle suppose l'ironie, le renoncement aux clichés des exégèses anciennes, en développant l'idée que la valeur d'une œuvre littéraire est donnée par le style original de l'écrivain, celui qui s'oppose au déterminisme historique, philosophique ou culturel. Par conséquent, on a devant nous un livre qui peut être lu comme « une sorte de roman (postmoderne, bien sûr !) », ce que nous propose l'auteur même, un ouvrage qui met en scène 36 personnages avec nom et prénom auxquels s'ajoute un surnom métaphorique. Pourquoi Nicolae Filimon est-il un « Balzac égaré en Bucarest », pourquoi la personnalité de Titu Maiorescu est-elle associée au « Grand Pontife », quel est le style de Vasile Alecsandri pour qu'on l'appelle « L'éternellement heureux », par quels critères nomme-t-on Slavici « Le prosateur Biedermeier », autant de questions qui trouvent leur réponse dans le chapitre dédié à chaque écrivain. Ce qui est intéressant aussi, c'est le fait que l'auteur sélectionne avec l'œil de l'entomologiste les détails suggestifs de l'œuvre des poètes, prosateurs ou critiques littéraires évoqués, et il



recourt même à l'analyse comparative (des similitudes entre Gherea, Odobescu ou Hasdeu, par exemple), tout pour montrer les aspects originaux grâce auxquels un écrivain reste toujours d'actualité.

Un grand mérite du livre est la récupération de la valeur (soit disant) purement littéraire de l'œuvre artistique de Ion Ghica, Ion Codru Drăgușanu, Dimitrie Ralet ou George Sion, le primat des valences esthétiques devant les conditions politiques, sociales et historiques. Dans le cas des textes qui appartiennent à la critique littéraire, l'interprétation de Zamfir suit la même direction : les études critiques de Maiorescu et Constantin Dobrogeanu-Gherea sont, aujourd'hui, plus expressives du point de vue stylistique qu'au niveau des idées, ce dernier étant déjà trop exploré. La critique de la critique permet, sans doute, l'innovation et la lecture active. Même s'il s'agit d'une œuvre de synthèse, le lecteur ne sera pas ennuyé par un enchaînement d'opinions critiques consacrées, surannées, et le plus souvent, incompatibles avec l'interprétation moderne des écrivains du XIX^e

siècle. Par exemple, dans le chapitre consacré à Eminescu, l'auteur renonce aux exégèses classiques de Tudor Vianu, G. Călinescu, D. Caracostea ou Rosa del Conte, en prenant comme support théorique les études critiques récentes de Ioana Em. Petrescu et de Petru Creția, qui parlent de l'inédit, de l'originalité et de la modernité de la poésie et de la prose abandonnées dans les manuscrits du grand poète. Les ironies du type : « c'est la chance qui a aidé Maiorescu dans tous ses verdicts », « Odobescu, attiré par la condition de l'écrivain vers laquelle le poussait irrésistiblement son esprit mondain et snob », sont présentes partout dans le livre. Néanmoins, le texte a un fondement théorique objectif, une structure précise, et une expression juste. En effet ce livre devient, d'une part, une référence bibliographique que le lecteur modèle ne pourra pas négliger, dans une recherche scientifique, et d'autre part, une source de documentation extrêmement importante pour tout lecteur.

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