

RECENZII / COMPTES RENDUS / REVIEWS

Multiculturalismo e multilinguismo / Multiculturalisme et multilinguisme,
a cura di Gisèle Vanhese, Università della Calabria, Dipartimento di Linguistica,
2010, 290 p.

The volume *Multiculturalismo e multilinguismo* (2010) edited by Professor Gisèle Vanhese is the 25th issue of the series *Quaderni del Dipartimento di Linguistica* of the University of Calabria. It belongs to a vast array of research papers and scientific manifestations coordinated by Professor Vanhese with the aim to examine the facets of multiculturalism in the contemporary society, especially in connection to literature. Multiculturalism is viewed as interaction between cultures, especially in regard to the individual's formation and identity. The present volume comprises thirteen contributions, which - with one exception - explore manifestations of "migrant literature" showing that literary analysis need to take into account contemporary phenomena such as migration and culture clash.

The contributions included may be grouped in four main categories, according to the topics investigated and the perspective chosen. Some studies highlight sources of inspiration and traces of one or more cultures in the works of migrant writers. The study signed by Gisèle Vanhese draws attention to a myth with a wide circulation in the popular culture of many East European nations: the sacrifice for creation. The paper focuses especially on the Romanian version of the myth, the ballad *Meşterul Manole*, which, unlike other East European versions, explains the creation of a work of art, the monastery Curtea de Argeş, not of a common edifice. Vanhese identifies components of the myth in poems by Benjamin Fondane and Paul Celan and at the same time underlines the innovations brought by the two authors, who convert the ritual sacrifice in a metaphor for poetic creation. For Fondane, the poet becomes the victim instead of the creator's wife and the sacrifice is not connected with death, but with life, as blood acquires a positive, life-giving value in his poems. Paul Celan too associates the man with the sacrifice instead of the woman. The difference is that in his poems the victims are the Jews assassinated during the Second World War. Celan thus borrows the symbols of the ballad *Meşterul Manole* in order to express the bond between his poetry and the memory of the victims of the Holocaust.

Chantal Chevallier-Chambet analyzes the poetry of the Senegalese writer Cheikh Tidiane Gaye, identifying two major themes in his poems, connected with the two countries that are significant for the poet's life. Africa and Italy represent not only a geographical, but also an emotional route and the encounter of the two different cultures is seen as a key principle in the creations of Tidiane Gaye, who chooses to assert their complementarity and reconciliation instead of the divergences. Roberta De Felici discusses the importance of the cultural clash in Benjamin Fondane's formation as a writer and the original manner in which Fondane has taken in the clash between the Romanian and the French culture. De Felici focuses on the strong influence of the French culture and literature in his work. Danilo De Salazar analyzes Aglaja Veteranyi's novel in its Italian translation, *Perché il bambino cuoce nella polenta*, by applying the phenomenological interpretations advanced by Gaston Bachelard. The meanings of the spaces and of the water in Veteranyi's novel are discussed in detail. De Salazar draws attention to the autobiographical trait of the text and to the alienation characterizing both the protagonist and Veteranyi herself. In her analysis of Fondane's elegies, grouped under the title *Au temps du poème*, Monique Jutrin

outlines similarities to classic elegies and also the marks of the writer's original style, for example his disagreement with Baudelaire and Mallarmé's opinions regarding the poet's ability to eternize the instant. Discussing such motifs as calling forth personalities of the past and lost love, Monique Jutrin underlines the poet's connections to the Romanian space which he has left. Particularly interesting is the perspective advanced by the researcher, that the poem *Lettre non-envoyée* may be addressed to Maria Rudich, whom Fondane names Marior in other poems.

Other studies investigate the writers' representation of their own identity in the context of emigration. Richard Kidder examines some of Andrei Codrescu's texts and stresses the characteristics forming the writer's complex identity as a Hebrew, a Romanian, an exiled man and a modernist writer, his connections to Tristan Tzara's poetry and also to North-American poetry, especially that of Frank O'Hara. The evolution of the writer's identity is marked by the fluctuation of linguistic and cultural borders, as the writer is facing a collision between his mother tongue and the English language. Raluca Lazarovici Mihalcu discusses the evolution of Dumitru Țepeneag, an author who is representative for the literary movement "aesthetic onyrim": his exile from Romania to France and the difficulties encountered in adjusting to the new culture, which lead to Țepeneag's depiction of himself as a "barbarian". The conclusion is that, instead of completely giving up his native culture in order to embrace the new one, Țepeneag found a hybrid solution by incorporating both Romanian and French culture in his works. Laura Pavel discusses the identity of British characters in the works of Eugène Ionescu and draws attention to the playwright's compound identity as a marginal (Romanian and Hebrew) and at the same time a cosmopolitan person (French and British). Pavel outlines how Ionescu chose and developed a fictive "British" identity as a way to conciliate the varied ethnical and cultural dimensions composing his own individuality. The choice of the British identity appears in a series of plays and Pavel stresses out the fact the British characters in Ionescu's plays represent an artificial ethnic group, created by means of intertextuality and pastiche and identity pamphlet.

Two studies are particularly concerned with the difficulties raised by the translations of the works of migrant writers. Yannick Preumont's study focuses on varied modes of translating literature, especially texts on the topic of family. The researcher discusses texts by Panait Istrati and Felicia Mihali and compares them to French, Italian and German literature such as *Buddenbrooks* by Thomas Mann. The results show that translations of Istrati's works are closer to the original than translations of Thomas Mann or Giovanni Verga. Maria Ricciolini discusses a particular type of translation, the self-translation, analyzing the works of Samuel Beckett. The outcomes of the study show that Beckett's self-translations into English are more ample than his original French texts and the conclusion is that only the mother language allows the writer to fully express his ideas.

A fourth topic of research is connected to the linguistic or the stylistic dimension of the works examined. Régine Laugier studies the manifestation of plurilinguism in the discourse of advertising, highlighting the formulae based on the use of heterogeneous codes which have become a commonplace nowadays and often pass unnoticed. The author advances a categorization of advertising texts by distinguishing intertextual utterances, utterances based on linguistic code switching and utterances that are recognized as an "universal" symbol of the brand. Annafrancesca Naccarato's study traces the interpretation of the metaphors in Benjamin Fondane's *Ulysse*. The definition of metaphor applied in this study is different from the perspective of ancient rhetoric and takes into account the studies of Paul Ricoeur and Michele Prandi: metaphors which are not based on well-defined analogies but on the overlapping of two notions that are apparently contradictory. The outcome is that the use of such metaphors allows Fondane to overcome the limits of "common" language. Anna Carmen Sorrenti brings into attention the Franco-Lebanese writer Nadia Tuéni, whose poetry, though triggered by a personal drama, succeeds in overcoming the differences between the Arabian and the French culture. While the first sections include a general overview of the major features of the poems, the last two sections include an analysis of metaphors "in praesentia", which are considered to be typical for Nadia Tuéni's verses.

The volume *Multiculturalismo e multilinguismo* provides a very good overview of the complexity of migrant literature. The studies show that the works of e(i)migrant writers should be analyzed by taking into account both the broad political and social context in the background and the individual dramas and identity crises lying behind the texts. Besides in-depth analysis, research should be conducted from an interdisciplinary perspective, which connects literary, cultural and linguistic or stylistic studies. The book is particularly useful for research on Romanian literature, as most contributions included refer to emigrant Romanian writers: Benjamin Fondane, Andrei Codrescu, Dumitru Țepeneag, Eugène Ionescu, Panait Istrati, Felicia Mihali. As Gisèle Vanhese explains in the introduction, quoting Eugen Simion, the ultimate objective of this approach is to be “une contribution à « la réunification spirituelle de la littérature roumaine »”.

RALUCA LEVONIAN
Faculty of Letters, University of Bucharest