

of the imaginary. The volume is a radiography of an effervescent field of study and it seeks to synchronize with the current research directions of the imaginary through transdisciplinary methodologies.



ANDRA GĂLAN

CĂLIN TEUȚIȘAN

Scenarii ale criticii: Protagonști, metode, interpretări

(Critical scenarios: Protagonists, methods, interpretations)

Cluj-Napoca: Școala Ardeleană, 2021

TAKING INTO consideration individual works belonging to literary researchers of the Cluj school, Călin Teuțișan's meta-critical approach focuses on outlining a specific network of their critical and theoretical thinking, discussing each member's methods, theories, and literary (or, more broadly, cultural) areas of development. Aiming to historicize these projects on behalf of a common cultural morphology and an academic ethos that is not limited to their shared location, Teuțișan's project comprises seven chapters: while each one of the first six is dedicated to a single author, the last one envisages the objectives and the challenges of the new methods in literary studies by referring to the "new waves" of Cluj researchers.

Besides, the project is built on two levels: firstly, there is the surface structure, which, analyzing the critical predilections of each author, also frames a trajectory of foreign influences within local criticism. From D. Popovici, "a post-Lansonist" whose critical approaches are based on "historicist analysis" and "the rhetoric of literary discourse" (19), to the younger

critics of the 2000 and post-2000 generations who have been revisiting literary history through the lens of quantitative analysis, world systems theory, and sociological approaches from the World Literature spectrum, Călin Teuțișan manages to reveal both the theoretical imports (especially French and American models) and their adaptations in the local literary field. Secondly, at a deeper level, there is an actual dialogic subtext, through which the author himself investigates, either polemically or in agreement, the methodology and the specificities of the chosen critics. As a matter of fact, the author's manner of finding convergent points due to his fine-draw analysis tends both to systematically explore these "critical scenarios" and to identify the dysfunctions of some research methodologies.

For example, in the case of Ioana Em. Petrescu, whose dialectical approach combines on the one hand rationalism as method and, on the other hand, metaphysics as telos (34), Teuțișan nuances her paradoxically and permanently questioned effort to organize that which is generally "unnamable." In the author's words, she

privileges an essentialist and rationalist vision and method of cultural and aesthetic interpretation. Her literary hermeneutics puts into practice a paradoxical methodological reconciliation between Cartesian metaphysical realism and the principles of modern science. Finally, the concept of 'configuration,' as one of the main keys to her critical interpretations, derives from an intuition of the eternal patterns underlying artistic objects. (50–51)

Along the same lines, Liviu Petrescu's critical model is the offspring of *la Nouvelle critique*, but, despite the practice of "pure

criticism,” Teuțișan reveals an ethical propensity specific to his works.

From another point of view, as I indicated earlier, Călin Teuțișan’s type of dialogue with other approaches can reveal some unconvincing points. In terms of Moretti’s neopositivist methodology, Teuțișan discusses more nuancedly the radical opinions of the Italian literary historian concerning the formal reductionism of the theories of the novel which removed, in Moretti’s terms, ‘the great unread’:

Here there is a dose of false rhetoric, through which Moretti knocks on open doors. Literary criticism and literary history have long democratized their options, and the controversies of the last decade and a half over the canon and its deconstruction are serious proof. (235)

Thus, the dynamism of this project also comes from the debatable character of international theoretical models and trends. As to Mircea Muthu’s cultural endeavor, Teuțișan summarizes it through a rigorous analytical comparison of the theories in Balkanology produced by several foreign specialists (Edward Said, Maria Todorova, Misha Glenny), hence the conclusion that Muthu is the first researcher who made a distinction between *Balkanism* and *Balkanity*.

Equally interested in delineating certain ages of local criticism, the author reshapes a dialogue between researchers from different generations. Certainly not by chance, in the first chapter, Teuțișan sheds light on D. Popovici’s work *Romanian Romanticism*, whose comparative method has its groundwork in literary sociology. At the same time, some young protagonists from contemporary literary studies such as Daiana Gârdan, Ștefan

Baghiu, Emanuel Modoc, and Ovio Olaru practice the distant reading method in relation to the socio-political contexts because of which literature changes its forms, contents, and utilizations. This parallelism opens the evolutionary path of the method that begins with D. Popovici’s considerations about the social function of art, respectively the poet as a civilizing agent (20), all the way to Modoc’s “worlding” comparative approach, which interrogates the Central and Eastern European avant-garde through socio-political and ideological interferences:

Hence the quality/referentiality of theoretical hypotheses, which do not overwrite the historical, local or continental cultural reality, but systematically interfere with it, through successive negotiations, based on the inclusion and the appropriation of a large mass of concrete data. (248)

In light of this pursuit, there are two other strong tendencies in the research coming out of Cluj: on the one hand, a “critical monographism with theoretical expansion” (211) and, on the other hand, “a critical and historical-literary synthesis” based on “heteronomous arguments incorporating extra-aesthetic, ideological criteria” (212), both represented by Adriana Stan, Cosmin Borza, Claudiu Turcuș, Adrian Mureșan, and Alex Goldiș—the latter walking in the footsteps of Sanda Cordoș’s comparative work regarding the problem of the crises of Romanian and Russian literature in the twentieth century.

There are two special cases which intertwine due to an ambivalent openness towards both critical and fictional discourse. While Ion Pop is considered both a neo-modernist poet and a literary critic, whose two pivotal concepts are the idea of *synthe-*

sis and that of *structure*, Corin Braga appears as the promoter of *psychocriticism* in Romania, while also being a singular novelist. Inspired by the practices of psychoanalysis, by theories about the archetype, the anarchetype and the eschatype (the last two proposed, according to Teuțișan, as “conceptual innovations,” 208), as well as by utopian and anti-utopian configurations, the latter expands his research concerns to (quasi)-fiction. Apart from the saga called *Noctambulii* (The night owls), Braga also wrote two dream diaries, which from the point of view of the literary movements align his fictional works with 1990s Oneirism.

To sum up, Călin Teuțișan’s greatest achievement is to find the very isomorphic features of the critical school of Cluj, seeking to identify similarities among disparities: the preference for structure, configuration, and geometrization, the tendency to consider literature as a sociological, political, even ideological vector, and the constant examination of one’s own methods.



TEONA FARMATU

DIDIER COSTE, CHRISTINA KONA, and
NICOLETTA PIREDDU, eds.

**Migrating Minds: Theories and
Practices of Cultural Cosmopolitanism**
New York–London: Routledge, 2021

MIGRATING MINDS: *Theories and Practices of Cultural Cosmopolitanism* brings together in a heterogeneous formula articles, essays, manifestos, and dialogues, which concentrate on the problem of cosmopolitan thinking in a progressively diverse and disparate society amid this diversification.

Combining as many rhetorical, ideational, and philosophical designs as possible, *Migrating Minds* is a plea for the theory and the praxis of cosmopolitanism, for an ethic of intersubjectivity and transculturality. The object of this book is to demonstrate how divergent fields—namely, philosophy, literature, politics, postcolonial studies, poetics, comparative literature, linguistics, etc.—are juxtaposed, and nonetheless subordinated to a moral principle: inhabitation in times of accelerated advanced capitalism, escalation of neo-nationalism, and migrations. However, in *Migrating Minds*, we identify four intersectional areas of grasping cosmopolitanism: conceptual, functional, visionary, and experimental.

The notion of cosmopolitanism is mapped in its diverse dimensions and in correlation with different terminologies or concepts, in the theoretical component of the volume. The description of cosmopolitanism benefits from a vast theoretical and conceptual kaleidoscope and is, therefore, heterogeneous. For Angélica Montes-Montoya, there are two types of cosmopolitanism: a normative one, approached from an ontological perspective and focusing on the transcendence of political and social barriers, through a trans-ideological ethic, and a ‘real’ cosmopolitanism, which is “more descriptive, it is passive, unconscious, and imposes itself on us” (56). In her article on Édouard Glissant’s thinking, Angélica Montes-Montoya considers the idea of creolization superimposed on cosmopolitanizing, reckoning with the inside-out, native-emigrant, national-transnational oppositions. Instead, reading the decolonial positions of the French writer, the writer concludes that the world is in perpetual motion, turning into a *Tout-Monde* or *World-as-Chaos* (using Glissant’s terminology).