

Details jedes Kapitels kann den Text überhäufen; ein Grund für diese Auswahl der Autorin soll der folgende sein: Die Studie ist in Deutschland (d. h. für ein deutsches Publikum) erschienen und deshalb enthielt es zu viele Informationen besonders im Bezug auf der Geschichte Rumäniens. Der Ton ist sachlich und die Wortwahl geeignet, aber die Dichte der Angaben beschwert die Lektüre der Demonstration. Der Autorin ist es gelungen so eine breite Darlegung der Argumente bis am Ende zu führen und für den Leser neue Auskünfte zu herausbringen.



SANDRA HIRSCH

RODICA ILIE

**Revoluția codurilor culturale.
Identitate și spirit european în literatura
română a sec. XX**

(The Revolution of cultural codes: European spirit and identity in 20th-century Romanian literature)

Bucharest: Ed. Muzeul Național al Literaturii Române, 2013

THE REVOLUTION of Cultural Codes: *European Spirit and Identity in 20th-Century Romanian Literature*, a book signed by Rodica Ilie, professor at Transylvania University of Brașov (Romania), is the outcome of extended research work conducted within the project “Reevaluating Cultural Identities in Global Processes,” co-financed by the European Social Fund through the Sectoral Programme Human Resources Development 2007–2013, under the aegis of the Romanian Academy. The central idea of the author’s approach is to (re)define the Romanian cultural relationships

with other cultures considered to be marginal, in order to identify what is representative of Romanian literature and culture today, in keeping with the standards of the European market of symbolic goods. Therefore, acknowledging and including several key issues derived from cutting-edge research on different approaches to post-totalitarian culture (Peter Gay, Peter Bürger, Peter Sloterdijk, Antoine Compagnon, Octavio Paz, Reinhart Koselleck, Marcel Cornis-Pope, John Neubauer and others), the book is intended to be “an approach centered upon the need for a more active participation of our literature in the European dialogue, through a careful analysis, studies focused on European parallels, embodiments of the subtle relationships of spiritual affinity with other marginal European cultures (such as the South-Eastern and Central European, or the Portuguese culture, for example) so as to provide in-depth knowledge of the mechanisms of literature in totalitarian regimes and its ways of survival by transgressive codes” (p. 9). A prominent position is held by the analysis of the imaginary and by aesthetic theories that have underpinned a steady renewal of both artistic codes as well as historical and political circumstances (political interference, resistance through culture, the establishment of rhetorical strategies, etc.) that determined the existence of some features specific to the codes adopted.

The idea of a *revolution of codes* is tracked along two dimensions: in literature and at the level of ideological representations of the 20th century. The process by which literature becomes a challenging reaction to codes, understood in terms of deviation from ideology, subversion in relation to political power, is thus pinpointed. The author analyses different ways of representing power, of expressing truth and lib-

erty, as well as the existence of euphemistic, subversive, allegorical language codes, and the translation from *orthos logos* to *loxos logos*, from transparency and transitivity to ambiguity, metaphor, or experimentalism of avant-gardist, hermetic, ludicrous-paradoxical nature. The methodology specific to hermeneutics, literary theory and criticism contributes to the identification of ways to promote Romanian literary codes among the European models through excellent comparative observations.

In an initial sequence of her book, the author studies the status of literary history as both a source of models and concepts in the revolution of codes, and a mirror of their alteration during various periods. The attention shifts towards some “patterns and practices of literary history and criticism” illustrated by Nicolae Manolescu, Eugen Negrici and Cornel Ungureanu, prominent Romanian literary critics and historians, but also towards the Romanian avant-garde, constantly regarded in relation to its European counterpart. What strikes you instantly about the author’s discourse is a very good grasp of references with quick transitions from one cultural area to another, while maintaining a balance between the theoretical and the practical side. Confining the investigation to the avant-garde and innovative movements in Romanian literature up to the middle of the 20th century, Rodica Ilie identifies authors and phenomena which have caused a radical shift in the national literary landscape. Subversive codes and transgressive poetics are the subject of a chapter on authors and phenomena of the second half of the twentieth century.

The idea of creating a modern image of Romanian literature is an important quality of the research. Hence the author’s permanent attention focused on identifying

nuclei, groups, models, magazines, representatives of 20th-century Romanian literature, meant to illustrate the fertile dialogue between the Romanian and European literary experiences. There was a time when, though some personalities such as Tristan Tzara, Marcel Janco, Benjamin Fondane, Constantin Brancusi, Victor Brauner, Ilarie Voronca, D. Trost and others, Romanian literature proved that it is capable of renewal and can maintain a genuine and profound cultural dialogue with the European values.



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