

Georges DIDI-HUBERMAN. *În fața imaginii: Întrebare despre finalitatea unei istorii a artei*. Translated from the French by Laura Marin. Cluj-Napoca: Tact, 2019. Print. 346 p. [*Devant l'image : Question posée aux fins d'une histoire de l'art*. Paris : Minuit, 1990]

Writing a review for a book published thirty years before can hardly be considered a timely or, indeed, a useful gesture. All the more so if, in the meantime, the title has earned a reputation in its field. However, it sometimes happens that the effects of novelty kindled by the work resurge in a sort of afterlife brought to the fore with every published translation. Georges Didi-Huberman's *Devant l'image*, recently translated for the first time into Romanian by Laura Marin, is one such case and, for this reason, the following review is less concerned with the contents of the book itself and more with its translation, in context.

While it is true that the significant temporal gap between this 2019 edition and the 1990 original could make a case for the proverbial delay with which the Romanian cultural landscape generally receives its epistemological imports, seeing it in international perspective gives a less grim picture. The French art historian and philosopher, whose body of work counts 60 titles since 1982, only began to be translated with significant impact in the past two decades. Tact's publishing of *În fața imaginii* comes after a first translation into German (*Vor einem Bild*) in 2000, a second one into English (*Confronting Images*) in 2005, a third one into Spanish (*Ante la imagen*) in 2010, as well as after Japanese (2012) and Chinese (2015) translations which, surprisingly, precede the Italian (*Davanti all'immagine*) published only in 2016. Although toned down by the comparison, the delay with which Didi-Huberman's work becomes accessible to Romanian readers remains the unfortunate sign of an interrupted engagement with contemporary theory that will, hopefully, find a remedy in the years to come.

Like the six other translators working on this book before her, Laura Marin had to tackle several not negligible challenges. Firstly, the text dwells on a convoluted network of classical references, engaging time and again in comparative close-reading exercises and dissecting theoretically charged terms of ancient roots, but recent formulation, such as "figurability." It also elaborates on instances of re-semantization of certain terms (the symptom, Barthes's *punctum*) and seeks to clarify a series of dichotomies (the visible vs. the visual, detail vs. *pan*, figurative vs. figural) that destabilize long-standing theories of representation. If for a translator working in a well-resourced target culture cross-referencing is a punctilious and time-consuming endeavour but not a problem in itself, things are different when translating into Romanian—a language in which even essential art history texts, including Leon Battista Alberti's *De pictura*, Giorgio Vasari's *Le vite...*, or Erwin Panofsky's *Studies in Iconology* suffer from mistranslations, inaccuracies, and important *lacunae*. The footnotes duly draw attention to some of these problems—see, for instance, note 2 on page 20, note 10 on 74, note 48 on page 95, page 173, etc. Other canonical, 19th- or 20th-century references, including often-cited essays by Alois Riegl, Aby Warburg, Ernst Gombrich, or indeed any of the works of Hubert Damisch or Louis Marin have not been translated into Romanian at all. Similar deficiencies come across very transparently in the sections of the book dealing with

theology, philosophy (mostly Kantian and Heideggerian scholarship) or psychoanalytic theory (Freud, Lacan, Fédida). With this in mind, Laura Marin's researched rendering of the critical apparatus of the book doubles as a competent and discrete cartography of historical, critical, and theoretical absences in the corpus of localized literature. Although she does not formulate it explicitly, the translator's approach, as well as her personal attempts to compensate for this lack, seem to be an urgent call for new translations and re-translations.

A second difficulty in "domesticating" this particular text, to use Lawrence Venuti's terminology from *The Translator's Invisibility*, is the fact that it relies on traces of foreignness to begin with and, in doing so, it acknowledges and preserves the untranslatability of certain terms, already in its original version. Although undoubtedly very French in style, *Devant l'image* is one of those heavily italicized works that draw from and add to a European lexicon specialized in reflections on the means, the history, and the hermeneutics of visual arts. Therefore, the source language of the book is, in this sense, a highly intellectual jargon combining Greek, Latin, Italian, German, and English, dipped in the flawless readability of elegant and, at times, literary French prose. While adding another layer of complexity to the multilingual puzzle, Laura Marin's translation into Romanian manages to gracefully (although not effortlessly) maintain the delicate balance between language-specific accuracy and general intelligibility—a balance to which the author himself had to attend by providing necessary explanations or the occasional original terminology in brackets. A good example of this double effort in translation is the clarifications they both bring (one descriptively, the other, etymologically and terminologically) to illuminate the concept of *pan* and its functioning as an event that unfolds within the image (25-26). These two acts of translation, the intra- and the inter-linguistic, often go hand in hand throughout the volume, especially when a key concept—the figural, the visual, the virtual, etc.—is introduced with the intention for it to carry the full weight of its cultural history. Most times, however, the translator is left alone to clear out instances of semantic fogginess: see the necessary explanation Laura Marin provides for the polysemous use of the French *fins* in the subtitle of the book (10). Later, in the afterword, she will render more explicit the stakes of this play with ambiguity and its centrality to Didi-Huberman's entire work of provocation against a reified, self-conditioned discipline of art history. Advocating the necessity to replace art history's discourse on *objects* with an interdisciplinary study of *images*, his demonstration already forges strategic alliances outside the discipline, focusing on four main moments in the chronology of Western humanities: Vasari, Kant, Panofsky, and Freud. Secondary, but not less influential sources he draws from are Zuccari's metaphysics, Riegl's work around the notion of *Kunstwollen*, Warburg's efforts toward a *Kulturwissenschaft*, Benjamin's famous *aura*, and Ernst Cassirer's theory of symbolic forms, among others.

One of the signature features of the French historian's writing is the intricate, playful rhetorical machinery he sets in motion. His texts overflow with wordplay, metaphor and allegory, but these do not serve simply as ornate flourishes, as an innocent reader may mistakenly assume. Following Didi-Huberman's strategy closely (who in turn follows Bataille's theory of *not-knowledge*¹), Laura Marin attends to the subtleties of figurative

language as instruments of real epistemic value, able to decondition positivist frameworks and mindsets that sooner or later bring visual interpretation to a standstill. This is a third difficulty in translating *Devant l'image*: namely, to faithfully render the author's poetic circling of the subject matter in its wondrous attempt to clarify without pretending to be exact, to define without circumscribing, and to compare without decontextualizing. The surprising efficacy of this approach, as well as the improbable fluency of its translation, are perhaps most visible in the several commentaries on Vermeer's painting that conclude the book.

Good translation is invisible and, simply by virtue of its elusiveness, it is the hardest to review. Particularly when the original already sounds like a translation of a disciplinary discourse into an interdisciplinary one or, if one looks at it differently, like a translation of immaterial pictorial forces (*puissances*) into the figural potential of language. In translating this twofold original *translatio*, Laura Marin brings to the Romanian readership much more than *Devant l'image* itself. She also lays the ground for a wider epistemic import prone to compensate for the missing pieces in the art history and visual theory written in this language. *În fața imaginii* is not Laura Marin's first translation from Georges Didi-Huberman, as her familiarity with his intellectual "dialect," acquired through ongoing correspondence and previous translations of his essays², clearly shows. It is, however, his first book-length work ever published into Romanian. Fortunately, it will not be the last: a second manuscript is currently in preparation.

NOTES

¹ One of the two epigraphs that open *Devant l'image* is precisely a fragment on *not-knowledge* taken from Georges Bataille's 1943 *L'Expérience intérieure* that testifies to this intellectual lineage: « *Le non-savoir dénude*. Cette proposition est le sommet, mais doit être entendue ainsi : dénude, donc je vois ce que le savoir cachait jusque-là, mais si je vois *je sais*. En effet, je sais, mais ce que j'ai su, le non-savoir le dénude encore. » (*Euvres complètes*. Tome 5. Paris : Gallimard, 1973, 66, author's emphasis).

In the English edition (Pennsylvania State University Press, 2005), the fragment appears in John Goodman's translation: "*Not-knowledge strips bare*. This proposition is the summit, but should be understood as follows: it strips bare, hence I see what knowledge previously had hidden; but if I see, *I know*. In effect, I know, but what I knew, not-knowledge strips it barer still."

² Two of which have been published in *Images, Imagini, Images: Journal of Visual and Cultural Studies* 5 (2015): Georges Didi-Huberman: *Déplier l'image*. Iași: Institutul European. See "Încântător de alb" (19-30) ["Une ravissante blancheur." *Phasmes : Essais sur l'apparition*. Paris : Minuit, 1998, 76-98] and "Imaginea arde" (179-207) ["L'image brûle." *Phalènes : Essais sur l'apparition*, 2. Paris : Minuit, 2013, 340-372].

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François CUSSET. *French Theory: How Foucault, Derrida, Deleuze, & Co. Transformed the Intellectual Life of the United States*. Translated from the French by Jeff Fort. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 2008. Print. 408 p.

Almost twenty years after it first appeared in print, in 2003, François Cusset's book manages to stay just as relevant, not only on account of its being a well-grounded inquiry into the theoretical avatars of French post-structuralism, but also because the problems it deals with seem to be as significant today as they were in the nineties. The concerns of the American University with matters of power, ideology and canonical relevance have not abated in the meantime and they are still rooted in some of the key concepts of the theoretical sixties. The series of moral panics that have flared in US colleges over the last few years and the renewed conservative attacks against the "neo-marxist" left have again brought the old French names to the forefront of the culture wars, and Cusset's history, the only general history on the topic to date, is a good starting point for understanding the generally badly understood historical context of this lasting French influence.

Although in much of the academic world Foucault, Derrida, Deleuze, Baudrillard and co. are still thought of as a "team" or are believed to have written a more or less coherent philosophical corpus in between themselves, in France they were often on opposite sides of debates and part of a discordant culture of ideas. We see them as a corpus, Cusset claims, not on account of their perfect mutual intelligibility. The inventory of works and names that has gradually come to be associated with French Theory and that has proven so influential in literature departments throughout the world is an American invention. Or, to be more explicit, these works were indeed written by French philosophers in France, but their ideas were gradually Americanized by the nineties. In the eighties and nineties, when their American influence was at its peak, their fame in France had already waned and they were ousted by a new generation of thinkers, one less willing to defend left-wing ideology, but also less engaging on an intellectual level.

This philosophical transfer from France to the United States did not happen overnight. The canon had to be "invented." The relocation of theory from Europe to North America took place gradually and was made possible by a prehistory of its own. Overall, Cusset shows that although there had been a previous French influence on the American arts especially, French Theory is an *ex nihilo* creation of the American university (26). In the sixties, very little was known in the US of the *en vogue* philosophers of France; some of Lévi-Strauss's writings were all but ignored, even after being translated. A (now famous) seminar in 1966, at Johns Hopkins, brought the future celebrities together, giving some the opportunity to meet there for the first time (Derrida, Paul de Man and Lacan had never met previously). This is the approximate date of birth of this particular French influence on the American academe; around that time, prestigious American universities established ties with institutions of higher education in France and it is on this institutional basis that the transfer occurred.

What is particularly interesting in the relocation of continental philosophy is the fact that it was the literary departments that made it possible. American philosophy in the sixties was mainly analytic—philosophy departments were highly skeptical of the

seemingly paradoxical nature of continental philosophy, which they mistrusted, if not downright disparaged. So it was the new literary magazines coming out in the sixties and seventies that proved more welcoming to the new French philosophy—Cusset shows that more than half of the articles published about Foucault, Derrida, Deleuze, Baudrillard and the others appeared in such literary magazines, some of which had originated in the counter-culture communities of the sixties growing around the “academic phalanstery” that was the American university. Because the university was the centre of American academic life, the new theories, once translated and retooled, became instruments for rethinking the canon and the university itself. This happened, paradoxically, despite the fact that the French post-structuralist critique of power (especially in Foucault) was not in itself concerned with the canon or the university. In Europe, the university as such was less relevant to the intellectual landscape than in the US. It is this supercilious centrality of the university in the United States that explains why French theorists became influential academic figures in the country, while having by comparison little academic influence at home. The most interesting aspect of this transfer is that it was so very American; by contrast, the French intellectual scene outgrew its own infatuation with the so-called “la pensée ’68” quite early.

The general picture Cusset leaves us with is not, however, that of a domination of the American intellectual community by French theoretical imports; *French Theory* is in fact the very well-researched story of the way in which the American academia misread, reinterpreted and finally betrayed French post-structuralism. Cusset is convinced of the virtues of this kind of fertile cultural betrayal and has the patience to follow it through all its stages and places of influence, from English departments and artistic movements, up to the beginning of the technological revolution (he even talks about the DJs and the hackers who were obliquely influenced by Baudrillard and Deleuze). It is this eagerness with which it tries to cover everything that is the book’s only fault, since at times it loses focus as a result of the sheer agglomerations of facts it deals with. But the author may have been compelled to shuffle through all this material because of the diversity of impact that French Theory has shown. The ability to change shape and be retooled for local concerns is what made theory such a powerful instrument, “the most valuable commodity on the academic market, or the only approach that breaks down the walls of the humanities; recruitment strategy or science of the text; sectarian seal worn on the lapel, or critical force without equal; or all of this at once” (Cusset 106).

French Theory’s critique of truth and hermeneutics of disbelief gave theoretical support in various guises to feminism, identity studies, textual interpretation and to the reconsideration of the canon. After undergoing a process of selection, misinterpretation and fragmentation, after being subjected, that is, to what Cusset calls “the ancestral prostitution of texts,” the French Theory reading list has become an ubiquitous accessory in English departments not only in the US, but the world, although French cultural influence in the US has decreased to an all-time low and French academics themselves have played little part in this internationalization, because “they struggle with foreign languages more than their European counterparts, they are institutionally cut off, owing to the rarity of exchange programs and sabbaticals, sidelined in France by

public intellectuals, and they have shifted abruptly from a generally accepted academic agreement on Marxism to a vehement anti-Marxist stance today” (Cusset 293).

As a narrative about the repercussions of a very lively European debate in the sixties on the American intellectual landscape, Cusset’s book is encyclopedic in scope, although not always in depth, and impartial and clarifying in its scrutiny of what otherwise is a nebulous chapter of twentieth-century intellectual history.

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Nathalie HEINICH. *Des valeurs : Une approche sociologique*. Paris : Éditions Gallimard, 2017. Epub file.

While Bourdieusian sociology has garnered considerable interest from Romanian intellectuals in the humanities over the last few decades, not the same holds true for other branches of contemporary sociology. Pragmatic sociology—one of the main contenders of Bourdieusian critical sociology—has received comparatively little attention from the local academia, even though its foundations were laid as early as the 1980s (leading to what in France is known as the “pragmatic turn” in the social sciences). Luc Boltanski, one of its initiators, was only translated into Romanian in 2016, with *Le nouvel esprit du capitalisme* (co-authored with Ève Chiapello, first French edition: 1999), in which he expands a typology he first elaborated in *De la justification* (co-authored with Laurent Thévenot, 1991), as yet untranslated. *Le nouvel esprit du capitalisme* is a telling choice, because it indicates that what guided the decision to publish it in Romanian was not so much an interest in the approach, as an interest in the topic.

However, there is a lot pragmatic sociology has to offer to literary and cultural studies, and this is particularly salient in Nathalie Heinich’s book *Des valeurs*. Just like Bourdieu made the literary world one of the focal points of his analysis, building his theory of the field of cultural production around it, Nathalie Heinich (a former student of his) has also focused on the sociology of arts and, more generally, the sociology of elites, dealing with issues such as reputation, prestige and the professional identity of writers and artists. Her interest in the question of values is a natural outcome of her research on the sociology of arts and the author herself called *Des valeurs*, shortly after its publication, “the guiding thread” of her entire work to that date (“Présentation du livre *Des valeurs. Une approche sociologique* par Nathalie Heinich”. *YouTube*, uploaded by CRAL, 4 April 2017, 1:22–1:25). However, the book does not concern itself strictly with aesthetic value, but with values in general, and, what is more, with the question of defining the best sociological approach to deal with an issue as elusive as value.

Indeed, *Des valeurs* is as much about sociology as it is about values. Highly polemical in its theoretical and methodological claims, the book places considerable focus on the approaches that Nathalie Heinich sees as *not* suitable for addressing the question of value, be they philosophical, economic, or otherwise. When it comes to sociological schools, Heinich mostly takes issue with Bourdieu, stressing that values should not be understood as a means to conceal private interests and that seeing them as a mere instrument for domination is a “simplistic politicization of the question of values” (“Introduction : La guerre des valeurs”; my translation; all subsequent translations are mine). Pragmatic sociology acknowledges more diverse causes for the agents’ behaviour (referred to as “regimes of engagement”) and refuses to derive them from the agents’ habitus or position within a field—an approach it considers overly deterministic and excessively rationalistic. In the spirit of pragmatic sociology, Nathalie Heinich takes the agents’ own accounts of their motivations seriously, and points out that values are not “illusions,” since they are active, effective forces operating within society: “Between the actor asserting his values and the sociologist criticising them in the name of their lack of objectivity or

universality, the more naïve of the two is not always the one we think” (“Introduction : La guerre des valeurs”). Which is not to say that agents always give an accurate account of what they do; but the way they justify what they do *is also part of* what they do and therefore deserves attention. The main focus of pragmatic sociology is precisely on the way agents engage with their environment and with collective conceptions of the common good through practices such as criticism, justification, and evaluation. The fact that values are effective forces within society is what qualifies them as legitimate objects of sociological inquiry.

To draw axiology from its traditional philosophical framework into the social sciences, Nathalie Heinich thinks that one must abandon all attempts to determine the origin of values. To the sociologist, the ontology of values is a moot point. Heinich professes agnosticism in this respect and stresses that the only thing the sociologist should concern himself with is what can be observed, namely value-assigning practices. Her non-metaphysical stance is accompanied by a rejection of “the postmodern doxa” that “anything goes” (“Appendice : Humanités et sciences sociales à l’épreuve des valeurs”): values are not arbitrary, because the social world creates constraints just as much as the natural world. Heinich is also careful to distance herself from social constructionism: values are understood as collective representations, but the attribution of value to an object must take into account the actual properties of the object. She calls these attributes “affordances” (with James J. Gibson’s term) and defines them as the meeting point between the properties of the object, on the one hand, and the axiological resources and perceptual competence of the evaluating subject, on the other (ch. 10).

Heinich identifies three forms of assigning value: measurement (price, awards, number of stars for a film review, etc.), attachment (which points to the lesser-explored relation between values and emotions), and value judgments. She chooses to discuss only the third, value judgments, which she observes in conflictual situations, because these are the circumstances in which the agents are most likely to make their values explicit. Analysing cases of disagreement is in line with the methodological tenets of pragmatic sociology, which emphasize fieldwork and the empirical investigation of actions in context. However, in the first part of the book, Heinich brings an addition to this framework by resorting to speech act theory, as she attempts to distinguish utterances conveying value judgments from those expressing judgments of taste or empirical judgments. The application of speech act theory does not lead to a very clearly delineated profile for this particular subset of utterances, but it does give Heinich numerous insights into the complexity and contextual variability of value judgments—for instance, the observation that the identity of the speaker can play an important part in deciding whether to interpret an utterance as a judgment of taste or as a value judgment; coming from a critic or an expert, the sentence “I liked it very much” is more than a mere expression of personal preference (although critics and experts tend to avoid expressive illocutionary acts altogether).

One reason why Heinich chooses speech act theory over traditional sociological instruments such as opinion polls—frequently used in the sociology of valuation and evaluation, as she herself points out—is because the only context that an opinion poll

takes into account is that of the poll itself. Not only do opinion polls fail to capture the speaker's attachment to a particular value in other, less controlled environments, but they also risk manipulating the results, because they may solicit opinions on issues that bear no actual significance to the respondents. Moreover, according to Heinich, the surveys conducted within the sociology of valuation usually limit themselves to trying to determine what people value. Heinich does not exclude this aspect of value-assigning practices from her inquiry; she deals with it in the second part of the book, where she outlines the three meanings of the word "value": the worth of an object, the object to which we ascribe worth, and the principles that govern the attribution of value to an object. Her main interest, nevertheless, is not in objects, but in values as principles of evaluation. This is the focus of the third and last part of the book, which moves from the situational level of analysis to the structural one in an attempt to build what Heinich calls an "axiological grammar"—a repertoire of axiological principles available to all agents within a given culture.

Heinich's axiological grammar is made up of six levels, moving from the more concrete and likely to be verbalized to the more abstract and unconscious: affordances, criteria, values, groups of values (clusters of values based on affinities), value amplifiers, and finally, qualification regimes (commonality and singularity, which attribute value to things pertaining to collective experiences and to individual experiences respectively). Conflicts occur when heterogenous criteria, values or groups of values coexist in the same evaluative context, producing a phenomenon which Heinich dubs "axiological dissonance" (ch. 11). As we move to the upper levels of the axiological grammar, disagreements grow deeper and become harder, if not impossible, to settle.

The fact that Heinich draws almost all her case studies from the field of arts and cultural heritage casts a doubt over the validity of the general picture she gives of values. It sometimes leads to unwarranted claims, such as the assumption that "without the prospect of a debate with others, a subject would hardly have any reason to strain himself to 'form an opinion' on such or such a matter" (ch. 2). This view on opinions might be able to explain a lot when it comes to controversies in contemporary art, but in the case of moral values, for instance, the urgency of having to choose a course of action can often be a more important incentive to form an opinion than the prospect of debating one's choice with others.

Granted, these kinds of isolated statements do not affect the weight of the main arguments of the book, but they do point to a more important problem, which Nathalie Heinich's endeavour shares with pragmatic sociology studies in general and with any attempt to proceed from specific situations to the underlying structures by incomplete induction: how does the researcher know when the corpus is varied enough to cast a light on the entire structure? Boltanski and Thévenot extended their own typology of orders of worth in 1999, and Heinich herself cautions that, although she believes she offered a comprehensive account of the value clusters operating in Western culture, she does not exclude the possibility that other researchers might add new clusters to the sixteen groups she identified. As a result, the levels of Heinich's axiological grammar tend to be more convincing than the actual description of their content. However, the

pragmatic sociologist's awareness of the inherent incompleteness of her endeavour involves an unusual combination of ambition and modesty which seems to be the only possible stance in the face of issues as complex as value. Heinich's elaborate, extremely dense, yet clear account of values and the way they become manifest is a valuable contribution to axiology and sociology alike, and, through its focus on aesthetic values, offers a stimulating alternative to the Bourdieusian model still prevalent in the Romanian sociology of literature.

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Corin BRAGA. *Archétypologie postmoderne : D'Œdipe à Umberto Eco*. Paris : Honoré Champion, 2019. Print. 444 p.

Corin Braga's recent *Archétypologie postmoderne* [*Postmodern Archetypology*] continues other projects united by similar perspectives or methodologies already successfully put to use in the author's research so far. In other words, the volume expands on some ideas or theories announced in his previous books (*10 studii de arhetipologie* [*10 Studies on Archetypology*], *De la arhetip la anarhetip* [*From the Archetype to the Anarchetype*]) or simply applies the same hermeneutical approach to more complex discussions.

The first, theoretical, chapter is followed by eight studies based on erudite investigations that emphasize archetypal and psychoanalytic aspects of literary texts. The introduction starts from the major semantic levels of the word "archetype" (metaphysical/ ontological, psychological/ anthropological and cultural/ philological) that are used in studies as methodological instruments. Beyond this unifying concept, the chapter provides an overview of the historical evolution of the "archetypocritical" method, including views of historians of religion and theorists such as Bachelard, Durand, Jung, Eliade, Spengler, Frobenius, Worringer, Arnheim or Marino—to name just a few. Besides other concepts invoked here, some of which are related even to neuroscience, this interdisciplinary hermeneutics brings into play very precise connections to the historical, cultural and political context.

From this point of view, the (re)readings are centred around some of the texts which are considered representative for the main European cultural epistemes. In this sense, the Oedipus complex and scenario are situated between "mythanalysis" and "psychocritics", and thus, are investigated from two different perspectives: the religious one, namely classical Greek polytheism superimposed on the pre-Indo-European cult of the Great Goddess, and the psychoanalytic one. The next study resorts to a similar demonstration that identifies different levels in Greek religion starting with legends from the Theban Cycle interpolated in Euripides' theatre (*The Bacchae* and *The Phoenician Women*).

Moving the focus to other areas of interest, the part dedicated to *fisi* and Irish ecstatic travels in the afterlife emphasises the acculturation phenomena from Celtic religion to Christianity, taking into consideration the legend of St. Patrick and other Irish medieval stories. Some theological and philosophical concepts such as destiny and free will in Calderón de la Barca's work are discussed in the context of the Baroque era, seen as a consequence of the cultural conflict between Renaissance Neoplatonism and occult philosophy, on the one hand, and the ideology of the Counter-Reformation, on the other.

Moreover, the sixth chapter analyses three representations of the double (*Doppelgänger*) during the nineteenth century. Thus, the shadow (in Adelbert von Chamisso's *Peter Schlemihl's Miraculous Story*), the mirror (Guy de Maupassant's *The Horla* or E. A. Poe's *William Wilson*) and the picture (Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*) are seen as occurrences of *eidola* in the imagery of this period, when Renaissance magical thinking re-emerged in Romantic anthropology. The chapter dealing with Robert Musil's *The Man Without Qualities* analyses the themes of the androgyne

and the hermaphrodite in the novel from two different points of view: Decadence and Freud's psychoanalysis.

The eighth chapter presents an overview of the Romanian psychological novel during the interwar period. By discussing different authors' works—such as Camil Petrescu's *Ultima noapte de dragoste, întâia noapte de război* [*The Last Night of Love, the First Night of War*] and *Patul lui Procrust* [*The Bed of Procrustes*], Anton Holban's *O moarte care nu dovedește nimic* [*A Death that Proves Nothing*], Ioana or *Jocurile Daniei* [*Dania's Games*], G. M. Zamfirescu's *Idolul și Ion Anapoda* [*The Idol and Ion Anapoda*], Mihail Sebastian's *Ultima oră* [*The Last Hour*], *Steaua fără nume* [*A Nameless Star*] and *Jocul de-a vacanța* [*Holiday Game*], Gib Mihăescu's *Rusoaica* [*The Russian Woman*] and *Donna Alba*—this study tackles the sublimation of the image of the woman and, at the same time, the phenomenological psychology of love forms (jealousy, discord, hatred, etc.) in Romanian literary modernism. The last chapter reconstructs the geography of Umberto Eco's novel *The Island of the Day Before* through the same “mythocritical” method of analysis. In the author's reading, the novel relates the *Weltanschauung* of the Age of Discovery to the archetypal symbolism in Jung's work, being, at the same time, a postmodern adaptation of Messianism.

Therefore, beyond the erudite close readings of these literary works in a quasi-chronological order, the recent volume published by Corin Braga confirms once again his concern with archetypology and represents a mandatory reference work for researchers interested in the same method of archetypal criticism or simply in new rereadings of the aforementioned texts.

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