

# LUCIAN BLAGA'S FICTION. NEW STUDIES AND RESEARCH METHODS

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Bringing Lucian Bлага's work into the present and to the attention of young researchers is the self-proclaimed goal of the latest volume of the „Lucian Bлага Yearbook”, a desideratum accomplished by means of an approach based on comparatist tools, which have led to a broadening of the discussion from a writer considered canonical by Romanian literature towards other authors, such as Vasile Voiculescu, B. Fundoianu or Emil Cioran, towards Bлага's insertions into universal philosophy as manifested in the works of Riegl or Worringer, or towards feminist or imagological analyses. The tendency towards innovation brings along also a series of connections to contemporary prose, such as the analyses of the prose works of Petru Cimpoieșu, Dan Lungu, Patrick McGuinness, Ruxandra Cesereanu, Tatiana Țibuleac, Ștefan Agopian or associations to such novels as the ones of Andrei Dósa and Mateiu I. Caragiale, or argumentative discussions about fractured prose. Studies which make the new research methods functional advance subjects connected to cognitive poetics, post-humanism, postcolonialism or decoloniality. Young researchers publishing in the present volume make use of all innovative mechanisms in the domain of philology, their essays adding value to previous interpretations. Apart from the important merit of bringing Bлага's work into contemporaneity, by identifying novel approaches, the articles connect the space of literature of the previous century to the present one, through a vast area of research. From philological studies, to the ones of applied linguistics, to the ones of mother tongue being taught as a foreign language, like in the study focusing on Portuguese and Slovenian, to comparative literature, to world literature, postcolonialism, posthumanism or contemporary Romanian literature, the journey undertaken by issue XXI, year LBY - 2020 is a consistent, valuable one

for Romanian literary studies and for many other domains as well.

Mention must be made, considering the fragments elected for translation, that writing about Lucian Blaga's prose opens up discussions about a component which is rather documentary, historic, than literary. Similarly, translating equates a universal approach to the two volumes of prose published by Blaga, *Hronicul și cântecul vârstelor* and *Luntrea lui Caron* which advance a subjective positioning when faced with a condensed reality, concentrated around major historic, but also personal events. *Hronicul și cântecul vârstelor* was published in 1965, and *Luntrea lui Caron* (a title picked by Dorli Blaga-Bugnariu, Mircea Vasilescu and Mircea Zăciu) – posthumously in 1990, in the fragmented version and only in 1998 in its final version, both evincing a pronounced biographical component. In the *Translations* section fragments from the two prose texts were selected, which were then translated into English, French, German, Hungarian, Slovenian. Blaga's novel *Luntrea lui Caron* also has historical relevance, being often read as a chronicle of the epoch the author has witnessed, one during which history permanently marked the establishment of national borders, but also gave rise to ideologies which defined the past century. The threats and ultimatums generated by the political regime transform the „muteness” of childhood, exposed in *Hronicul și cântecul vârstelor* by Lucian Blaga, into the „recluse-like quietness and isolation” imposed on Olivia, one of the female characters from *Luntrea lui Caron*, „starting out from the main premise that any living being, human or animal, can be suspected under the given circumstances of collaborating with the Securitate” (*Charon's Boat/Luntrea lui Caron*, Ed. Dorli Blaga and Mircea Vasilescu, Humanitas, 1990, 76). The novel confesses to a defining reality for the post-1950 Romanian cultural landscape, which, directly or indirectly, the authors of the present volume have analysed also by means of relatively recently published texts, such as the ones by Ruxandra Cesereanu or Tatiana Tîbuleac. The book's ample metaphor is to be found in the matrix space of the volume, the alter ego character, Axente Creangă, the poet, working at the Battyaneum library, offering details even regarding Alba-Iulia's book stocks: „The old library also houses more recent books. Up until the outbreak of WW II, the library, in the service of which I am, had acquired books in various languages and even a multitude of important works of contemporary literature” (Blaga 123). Even though Blaga himself was a librarian in Cluj, the character is placed in the fictional text in another space, but which contains the same, easy to recognize data.

Another aspect which was discussed and caused uproar in the age, connected to the development of ideological directions, was the issue of the Getae, tackled by the novel, through the perspective of one of its characters, an idea obsessively encountered also in *Revolta fondului nostru nelatin* („Gândirea”, nr. 10, 1921) or in *Nova getica* („Tribuna”, nr. 10, 1975), as well as in *Spațiul mioritic*: „This in connection with Dacian mythology – or the Getae, if I were to also mention the second name of this people. This problem interested me as it was my intention ever since my youth to write a grand dramatic poem around the figure of Zamolxis” (Blaga 109). In 1921, Blaga had written his first theatre play *Zamolxe, mister păgân*, and the fact that the novel commenced in 1951 returns to this idea, proves the continuity of his vision. Leonte Pătrașcu, the other character that reminds of Blaga’s adventures, manifests his opposition towards the „Dacian’s monotheism” upheld by Vasile Pârvan: „In a small study published in a philosophy magazine I showed that, in such important matters, one cannot count on information provided by Herodotus, the historiography of whom abounds in unsubstantial phantasies and fairy tales. My syllogism was very simple: all Indo-European mythologies are polytheist. The Dacians or Getae were an Indo-European people, thus it follows that they also had to be polytheists” (Blaga 93). The same power of the word is analysed from the perspective of the philosopher „Words have a greater power on me than during seasons of lucidity”, but also a certain mysticism: „Ever since my entire being was impregnated with the chant of fire on the Feneș peak, so sweetly poisoned by the symbol of the snake, an effervescent, almost cellular lyricism broods within me. I would like to grant to my cellular a sublime advice to pull my being out of the valleys, and to guide me to the supreme peaks. Am I waiting to become the victim of divine rapture? Grădiștea, with its hallucinations of temples, is calling” (Blaga 187). From the poet’s daughter’s confessions, recalled by Mircea Vaida in *Pe urmele lui Lucian Blaga* (Turism- Sport Press, 1982) the trip to Grădiște inspired the author in the tackling of the issue related to the Dacians and the origins of the Romanian people: „During the time-span 1955-1956, the poet’s daughter notes, Lucian Blaga visited Grădiște for the first time along with Professor C. Daicoviciu and other friends” (*Lucian Blaga inedit. Excursie la Grădiște*, „Gazeta literară”, nr. 18, 1967). The frail thread of reality and fiction is traced by means of these episodes with biographical inserts, which bring to the foreground a unitary vision on Blaga’s work. The short incursions into his prose prove the interest the novels can spark and the possibility of more detailed analyses. The

demonstrations undertaken as part of the LBC prove a close connection to Blaga's prose, even by means of some contemporary novels, which are confessions about an epoch which has ultimately brought about obvious cultural mutations in contemporary society.

The studies comprised in the present volume materialize the research endeavours of teams pertaining to various university centres, both in Romania and abroad. The analyses undertaken amply prove the manner in which the critical essay has evolved within Romanian culture, as well as the overall vision on new tendencies and methods, perfectly aligned with universal thinking.