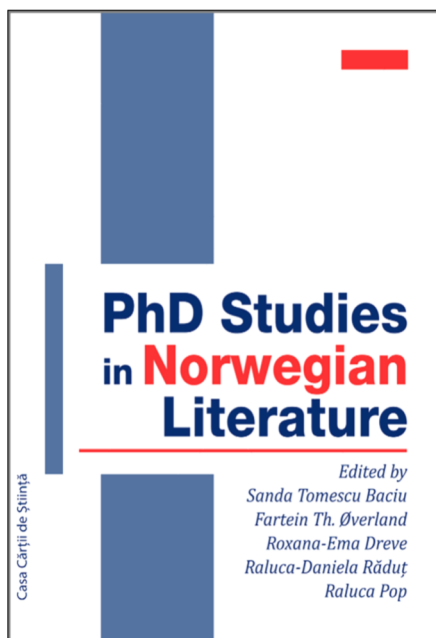


BOOKS

Sanda Tomescu-Baciu, Fartein Th. Øverland, Roxana-Ema Dreve, Raluca-Daniela Răduț, Raluca Pop (eds.), *PhD Studies In Norwegian Literature*, Cluj-Napoca: Casa Cărții de Știință, 2020, 190 p.

The present book is a collection of articles which summarises the doctoral papers conducted by Sanda Tomescu Baciu at the Doctoral School of Linguistic and Literary Studies of the Faculty of Letters and the Department of Scandinavian Languages and Literature during the ten years which preceded the book's release (the period between 2010 and 2020). The expressed intention of this compendium was "to reunite [...] the Norwegian academic community established in Romania, in Cluj-Napoca: both doctoral students and the present team of teaching staff at the department" (7). The compendium shows how much the interest in Norwegian philology has increased in the Romanian humanities' sphere in a relatively short period of time and, also, what a wide range of subjects it did manage to discuss in the process.



The literary topics range from the reception and reinterpretation of the Norwegian classics which have transcended the realm of national literature, having entered the universal canon, such as the books written by Ibsen or Hamsun, to the various meanings that can be found in ultra-contemporary literature, in the works of writers like Lars Saabye Christensen or Stieg Larsson. We can

therefore see that not only the soon-to-be-canonised fiction is analysed by the Romanian PhD researchers: the most popular Scandinavian books in today's Norway and in the rest of the world belong to the Scandinavian Noir genre, which is Ovio Olaru's study topic, the researcher being interested in an ideological reading.

Besides the above mentioned, subjects like "Multicultural Rewritings of

the Norse Mythology in Contemporary Norwegian Literature”, an analysis of the staging of Ibsen’s plays in Romanian theatres, or an exploration of immigrant identity represent topics that are interesting and thought-provoking for researchers of literature, beyond the borders that are represented by the subjects’ affiliations to a national language and culture. Because of this, the articles contained in this book are relevant to both researchers of Scandinavian literary subjects and philologists coming from different backgrounds, who desire to expand their cultural horizon.

Andra Rus comes with an analysis of the sensorial images associated with the concept of place in Lars Saabye Christensen’s novel *Beatles*, putting emphasis on the olfactory sense. The memory and the meaning of the external urban elements given by the *flâneur* walking around Oslo are important aspects of this researcher’s paper. The research follows, therefore, the trail created by memory and the senses in an almost Proustian way, in which the past and the present merge into each other and create new *senses* (the word with a double meaning in English perfectly captures this).

Ștefana Popa contributes to the book with an article about the representations of the father figure in Norwegian contemporary prose, studying the way in which the father-son/daughter relationship has evolved after 2000 in the works of writers Karl Ove Knausgård, Nikolaj Frobenius, Thomas Espedal, and Vigis Hjorth. The researcher analyses this tendency under the name „father literature”, defines "to what extent this goes hand in hand with another tendency of the past decades, namely that of writing autobiographical fiction" (p. 147) and looks

for interferences in the aforementioned prose writers, trying to see how much their novels communicate with each other regarding the theme of paternity.

Ovio Olaru is interested in another tendency in Norwegian contemporary fiction: the emergence of the Scandinavian Noir and its international success, comparing Scandinavian crime fiction with previous subgenres within global crime fiction.

Anamaria Babiaș-Ciobanu presents a close reading of Jon Fosse’s "Og aldri skal vi skiljast" ("And We’ll Never Be Parted"), a play written in 1993, focusing on time, space, and the communication between the figures of the play.

Cristina Vișovan presents the very complex topic of multicultural rewritings after the turn of the century of the Norse mythology in contemporary Norwegian Literature, and is interested to show how this tendency has come to light under the present social circumstances, wanting "to present reality from a different perspective, that of the often misunderstood and misjudges Other" (p. 97). The authors she is basing her study on are Andreas-Bull Hansen and Siri Pettersen.

Ioana-Andreea Mureșan explores in her paper the contradictory sense of belonging that is felt by immigrants. The researcher analyses the complex identity that results from the clash between cultures following the person’s process of acculturation. The study also reflects on the feeling of rootlessness experienced by the migrants.

Raluca-Daniela Răduț studies the way in which the concept of *nyenkelhet* (*new simplicity*) is reflected in Jan Erik Vold’s poem "Bo på Briskeby Blues", selected from his popular volume *Mor Godhjertas glade versjon. Ja* (*Mother Goodhearted’s Happy Version. Yes*), from 1968.

The paper explores how Norwegian poetry changed between the 1950s and the 1960s, the latter being a decade of lyrical innovation, and how Jan Erik Vold fits within this context, with his tendency towards simplicity and everyday realism.

The next two papers innovate the field of literary and theatre studies, respectively, due to the fact that their authors are interested in showing how the books written by canonical Norwegian novelists or dramatists have been re-accepted in the Romanian cultural sphere, up until the contemporary period. Diana Lățug analyses Knut Hamsun's reception in the Romanian Cultural Printed Press from 1895 until 2016, with its fluctuations and its intermediations with the help of other languages, finding the inter-war period prolific in this sense. Gianina Druță studies the ways in which the stag-

ing of Henrik Ibsen's plays at the National Theatre of Iași, in the period 1870-1920, contributed to the modernization of the Romanian theatre. Druță "employs a theatre historiographical approach framed by a Digital Humanities approach displayed in the use of the IbsenStage Performance Database" (p. 119). Plays like *An Enemy of the People*, *Ghosts*, *A Doll's House*, and *Pillars of Society* helped to change the acting style, in the sense that they introduced "a new perspective based on a strong philosophical insight into the roles" (p. 119).

The compendium is, therefore, a reference title for the researchers interested in Scandinavian or, more precisely, Norwegian literature, but also for the large academic public, should they want to familiarise themselves with the themes and tendencies of the Nordic literature, be it canonical or contemporary.

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