



UNIUNEA EUROPEANĂ



Fondul Social European
POSDRU 2007-2013



Instrumente Structurale
2007-2013



MINISTERUL
EDUCAȚIEI ȘI
CERCETĂRII
ȘTIINȚIFICE

OIPOSDRU



ACADEMIA ROMÂNĂ

Drawer Literature. Daily Recordings of the Novelists of the Targoviste School

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This paper is supported by the Sectorial Operational Programme Human Resources Development (SOP HRD), financed from the European Social Fund and by the Romanian Government under the contract number SOP HRD/1599/1.5/S/136077.

Bucharest, 2015

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SUMMARY

Drawer Literature. Daily Recordings of the Novelists of the Târgoviște School

My PhD dissertation seeks to analyse the journals of Radu Petrescu, Mircea Horia Simionescu, Costache Olăreanu, Tudor Țopa and Alexandru George, established authors of the Târgoviște School. Within the project, according to the doctoral research plan, I conducted a short analysis of the Târgoviște School, as well as of Radu Petrescu and Tudor Țopa's journals. Known in literary and scholastic circles, but less familiar to readers, they initiated the second innovative direction in Romanian literature in the 1960s and 1970s, following the oneiric moment. A re-evaluation of the texts of these writers is, therefore, very important, because it is a recognition of the literary qualities present in the writings of the Târgoviște School members.

The group does not have an explicit programme, but their writings are marked by the preference for autobiography, authorial narcissism, self-criticism, the practice of journal writing, the turn towards irony and the ludic, extreme parody, the multiplicity of discourses, self-referencing, the fictionalisation of the author, etc. Opting for a fiction with a powerful autobiographical subtext, completely different than the fiction published at the time, these writers rediscover the journal, believe in the equivalence journal-novel and produce a strange self-referential literature.

Each of the five authors has a special relationship with the autobiographical genre, especially with its deviation and its nonconformities. Radu Petrescu creates a selection of states of mind, desires and fears, withdrawing himself from reality and only practicing the thematisation of existence, understanding writing as a journal of intimate experience, without making a difference between life and literature. Mircea Horia Simionescu writes a journal where important events are placed in the background. He does not wish to outline the image of an era, but rather produces a chronicle of the intimate life of a provincial young man, capturing the crystallisation of artistic consciousness, documenting lectures and projects. If in *Trei oglinzi* (*Three Mirrors*) the author denies the principles of honesty and spontaneity, which are specific to the genre, by inserting fragments of pure fiction, in *Febra* (*The Fever*), Mircea Horia Simionescu challenges the reader through irony and elucubrations, repeats records, changes dates, replaces the names of real people with invented names or introduces fictional characters in his memories.

Denying the utilitarian functions of the journal, *Ucenic la clasici* (*Apprentice to the Classics*) describes his years of apprenticeship in literature, the page reflecting the way of life of an entire generation of writers and artists. Costache Olăreanu organises his work similar to a

fictional one as well and introduces in his journal fragments of daily records of his colleagues, presenting the reader with a character which is, in some instances, different from the author. Exceeding the obsolete structures of the epic, Olăreanu writes a literature that is refined, sophisticated and calligraphic.

The scholar Alexandru George writes a journal closer to a novel, where confession is combined with exegesis by synthesizing themes and motives and cultivating the fragmentary character of the text corresponding to the fragmentary quality of existence. Like the other members of the Târgoviște School, Alexandru George presents his own development, lectures, discussions on literary topics, as well as the process of writing this journal. Similar to Radu Petrescu, this author shows a constant concern for rhythm and composition through numerous additions and rewritings.

Unlike his other colleagues, who practiced and theorised several literary genres, Tudor Țopa publishes only two volumes, structured as a whole, *Încercarea scriitorului (The Attempt of the Writer)* and *Punte (Bridge)*. Engaging himself in the same playful interaction with the conventions of the genre, Țopa introduces in the journal a narrator that is different from the one named on the cover (Teofil), thus breaking the law of identity between author, narrator and character. The journal captures the struggle of student Teofil during the war, his constant attempts to write and to develop intellectually. The author introduces in *Punte (Bridge)* the voice of the writer, but also the one of the copyist, deconstructing the conventions of the genre and disarming the reader. Although his records have the chaotic freedom of thought, the style of the journal is one that has been thoroughly edited, Țopa hiding behind a minimal fiction.

The writers of the Târgoviște School cultivate literarity in spite of the dominant genres. They borrow the techniques they use in fiction and write their journals as territories of revelation, where a narcissistic spectator can see himself.