

Foreword

The volume *Ovid, Myth and (Literary) Exile* represents the proceedings of the conference with this topic held in September 10-12, 2009 at Ovidius University, Constanța. Its purpose is to reflect the manner in which the conference explored the avatars of Publius Ovidius Naso, from whose exilic journey we marked two millennia in 2009. The Latin poet's legacy throughout the centuries has been myth and exile, key concepts for the understanding of his life and work that have acquired enriched and urgent meanings in today's (literary) world. The conference offered space for papers and debates on the broader implications of the two concepts from an interdisciplinary perspective (literature, history, anthropology, sociology, cultural history, cultural studies, geography, politics, and other associated fields and disciplines), illustrated by the articles in the volume. Contributors to the proceedings (re)analyze writings by the Latin poet exiled to the city of Tomis (Constanța today), (re)visit literature inspired by Ovid's exile and his specific use of myth and tackle the concepts of exile and myth from larger cross-/ inter-/ intra-disciplinary paradigms.

The four sections in the volume, *Revisiting the Classical Tradition: Exile, Myth and Ovid's Legacy*, *Representations of Exile and Myth in British and Postcolonial Studies*, *Exilic and Mythic Journeys in American Literature and Culture*, *Romanian Exiles and Transfers of Myths to Romanian Culture*, reflect the variety of questions raised by the contributors and the rich answers they offer. The essence of these contributions is comprised in Professor Stephen Prickett's keynote title "Exile as an Existential Condition". Professor Prickett analyzes the experience of exile and its effects on the art and artists who have been exiled, starting from what may be considered the epitome of the artist's experience in exile, Ovid at Tomis. For some artists, such as Robert and Elizabeth Browning, T.S. Eliot, Rudyard Kipling, Joseph Conrad and Henry James, exile has been artistically productive. Hence, the necessity of exile for our sense of place and the understanding of exile as an existential condition. The article extends the metaphor of exile, the conclusion being that the condition of the writer is one of exile in itself.

A closer look at Ovid's work, in the *Revisiting the Classical Tradition: Exile, Myth and Ovid's Legacy* section, is offered by Doina Filimon Doroftei's article "*Fessae Date Serta Carinae (Rem., 813) – The Image of the Ship in Ovid's Poetry*", which examines the lexical and stylistic occurrences of the recurrent image of the ship in Ovid's poems and the evolution of their meaning from the first poems to the works of his exile, this image eventually becoming a symbol of love and poetic creation. António

Moniz adds to the discussion of the theme of exile, in his essay, references to Camões, the Portuguese poet, chosen as a perfect example of the exilic experience in the sixteenth century. His production, especially in some *Canções* and *Elegias*, reflects the atmosphere, tone and message of Ovid's elegiac chant. In her turn Maria Stefania Montecalvo revisits the theme of exile in the Classical and the Ciceronian tradition, choosing to discuss the dialogue between Philiscus and Cicero in the *Roman History of Cassius Dio* (3rd c. A.D.), in which exile is shown to be a good occasion to reflect upon oneself and, according to the historiographical tradition, to write history.

The second section in the volume, *Representations of Exile and Myth in British and Postcolonial Studies*, focuses on aspects of exile in writing that encompasses both the modernist canon, James Joyce, or D. H. Lawrence, and contemporary fiction, as represented by David Lodge, Ian McEwan and Kazuo Ishiguro, both incursions in postcolonial concerns with Taslima Nasreen, or Jhumpa Lahiri and film studies. Thus, Camelia Anghel's study considers the exilic dimensions of D.H. Lawrence's work, starting from external determinism, reaching identity issues read against the background of modernism and underlining key-elements such as 'self-exile', 'exile as alienation or estrangement', 'exile as closure', 'inner exile'.

Two contributions reread Ovid through James Joyce's lenses. First, Gülден Hatipoğlu looks at *Metamorphoses* as one of the major subtexts of James Joyce's writing, especially *A Portrait* and *Ulysses*, demonstrating that Stephen's – and Joyce's – search for a reshaping iconoclastic form of art and existence is not merely an artistic concern, for this individual transformation coincides with Ireland's metamorphosis from a colonized nation into a free state in the first decades of the twentieth century. According to Hatipoğlu, the use of myth in *Ulysses* finally turns into a tool for a demythologizing act that transforms and liberates the static perceptions of history, identity and language specific of the Irish context. Second, Nicoleta Stanca further explores the theme in her article "Ovid, Myth and Exile in Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*". The epigraph in *A Portrait* taken from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* pays homage to Daedalus, Joyce masterfully impregnating his entire narrative with references to the story of the labyrinth and the Daedalian figure. A new perspective on Ovid is offered by Corina Lungu's analysis of Timberlake Wertenbaker's *The Love of the Nightingale* and Christa Wolf's *Medea. Voices* as reinterpretations of ancient myths crystallized in classical literature. For the three main female figures of the myths – Philomele and Procne in Wertenbaker's work, Medea in Wolf's – exile is experienced first and foremost as initial silence, quest for truth and final empowerment through regaining their "voices" and telling their stories from their own feminine perspective.

Nuances of exile are further explored in contemporary fiction, with David Lodge, Ian McEwan and Kazuo Ishiguro. Among the innumerable

journeys to be encountered throughout David Lodge's fiction the first categories that come to mind range from the quest for meaning and personal identity to the pilgrimage, the voyage of discovery and even the considerably less glorious package tour. Lucia Opreanu's article focuses on the less frequently employed image of exile, starting from Morris Zapp's self-induced temporary displacement to Rumridge and Howard Ringbaum's forced movement to Canada. The aim of Alina Buzarna-Tihenea's contribution is to analyse representations of exile in Ian McEwan's fiction. She dwells upon the ways in which the legacy of World War II horrors, the dominant political ideologies of twentieth century Britain and the fall of the Berlin Wall act upon individual identity, changing, corrupting and inducing individuals to experience a state of inner exile. Starting from the common assumption which considers Ishiguro a spokesman of the literature of displacement and de-territorialization, the article "Multiple Facets of Displacement in the Work of Kazuo Ishiguro" by Irina Toma aims at deciphering those types of human exile materialized in the person of the orphan bereaved of childhood and deprived of connection and community. Focussing on Ishiguro's latest novels, *When We Were Orphans* and *Never Let Me Go*, the study analyzes the way in which Ishiguro's consciousness of exile is transformed into the tragedies of those who are not at home in a world that breeds exploitation, aggression and alienation as dark, dystopian images.

Exilic connections represent the undercurrent issue throughout the rest of the papers in the section. Laura Elena Savu's contribution focuses on David Malouf's novel *An Imaginary Life* as a symbolic representation of spiritual and linguistic exile, a moving recreation of the modern quality of Ovid's poetic texts, especially the ones in *Tristia*, a portrait of his personality at the dawn of the Christian era, and a compelling meditation on our own age, marked by skepticism and haunted by modernity's "others." Dedicated to controversial feminist Bangladeshi writer Taslima Nasreen, Ioana Mitrea's article analyzes the way in which exile offers a new experience, that of (re)writing and reclaiming 'home', in the writer's autobiographical novel, *Meyebela: My Bengali Girlhood*. It is through literature that many of the contemporary writers try to come to terms with their immigrant condition, the migrant having become one of the emblematic figures of the contemporary world. Jhumpa Lahiri's collection of stories *Interpreter of Maladies* is the result of the writer's desire to force the East and West to fuse their irreconcilable cultural boundaries. The writer's literary endeavor is to provide a journey of initiation into the major adaptation problems of the exiled subject. According to Anca Dobrinescu, Lahiri's stories, set across national as well as generational frontiers, contribute to the writer's finally finding an identity of her own. The issue of exile in connection to the Indian background is further tackled by Ileana Chiru-Jitaru's case study on Danny

Boyle's *Slumdog Millionaire* (2008), which offers an insight into the field of contemporary film studies. The analysis identifies the elements that have been negotiated for an Eastern formula film and that have the potential to become a success in Western terms.

The section entitled *Exilic and Mythic Journeys in American Literature and Culture* sets out to explore quintessentially New World themes, by encompassing studies on famous exile writers who created myths in their time, such as Henry James and T. S. Eliot, as well as studies that occasion (re)discoveries in point of genre, subject matter and aesthetic orientation: Richard Wright and Leslie Marmon Silko. Discussing the representation of Europe in the works of Henry James and Saul Bellow, Roxana Oltean interrogates subversions and inversions of former models of colonialism, America becoming "an imperial metropolis" and Europe – "an outpost of imposed or voluntary isolation". Her contribution to the volume analyzes the extent to which Europe is a land of exile in the American imaginary. In re-examining *The Waste Land*, Alina Popescu is interested to demonstrate that all the major voices in this fundamentally modernist work are seen as a manifest of exile in space or in time. The exploration of exile at the symbolic level is pointed out as the crux of the poetic text, since T.S. Eliot develops unprecedented visions of the impact and implications of spiritual exile.

In this same section, Marius Jucan's "Racial Exiles in Twentieth Century African American Autobiography and Fiction: Langston Hughes, Richard Wright and Ralph Ellison" reviews the tradition of autobiography in African American culture, focusing on the black hero as portrayed in works by the three writers. The study underlines the various modes of describing the victimization of the black individual in the segregated America between the two world wars, tracing (dis)continuities with the Harlem Renaissance. The autobiography of another emblematic African American figure is presented in Adelina Vartolomei's essay, "The Theme of Exile in *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*", which looks both at the text and the feature film inspired by Malcolm X's life. Revisiting Foucauldian thought, the analysis emphasizes the types of imprisonment that Malcolm X faced, and struggled with, while liberating himself from prejudice. Imprisonment within oneself, yet of a different sort, is the main concern of Petru Iamandi's "On *Solaris*: Exile the SF Way", in which he comments on this prominent work of science fiction. Even if not an American, Stanislaw captured American imagination with his masterpiece *Solaris*, as he portrayed human beings in an attempt to grapple with the reality of a strange planet by the same name. Among the articles that propose innovative readings of the American canon, Anca Peiu's work challenges the stereotype of the American South as the land of ladylike *belles*, by reconsidering such characters as Mitchell's Scarlett O'Hara, Faulkner's Joanna Burden and McMurtry's Aurora

Greenway. It is the last who is not just a leading figure of both novel and film, *Terms of Endearment*, but also the focus of Peiu's critical endeavor in "Nothing like The South: Aurora Greenway – A *Belle* in Exile". American Indian Literature also features in the section as Cornelia Vlaicu's article is dedicated to Leslie Marmon Silko's novel *Ceremony*, in which exile represents a space of resistance and rebirth. According to the author who approaches the primary source in ethnocritical terms, Tayo's identity quest progresses from an alienating exile into mainstream culture to the redemptive return to his American Indian homeland, thus tracing a journey of symbolic significance. American Indian poetry is discussed in Ludmila Martanovschi's essay which analyzes the acceptations of myth in the works of Paula Gunn Allen and Wendy Rose.

With *Romanian Exiles and Transfers of Myths to Romanian Culture*, the volume opens the debate towards the multidirectional exchange that points to the influences which Romanian exiles had on other cultures and the impact of other myth-generating spaces, such as the American one, on Romanian culture. The section starts from reconsiderations of Mircea Eliade and Virgil Ierunca, proceeds to a most illuminating introduction to Saviana Stănescu's recent dramatic texts and concludes with investigations of the ways in which American myths and icons have been transplanted to the Romanian context.

A notable critical voice in this section is Professor Rodica Mihăilă who, in her "Saviana Stănescu and a Postcolonial Reading of Ovid's Exile", explains that, throughout her plays, the young writer investigates in her work the interstitial space inhabited by the East-European exiled selves, the intersections of cultural, racial, ethnic, religious and linguistic borders and the relation between memory and history. The study felicitously delves into a discussion of Stănescu's recent play *For a Barbarian Woman* (2009), where Ovid's exile is set within the force-field of a power discourse. Other remarkable exiled authors are the foci of Mihaela Paraschivescu and Mihaela Albu's essays: the former demonstrates in "Mircea Eliade's Creative Exile as Form of Anti-Communist Resistance" that, while myth occupied a large portion of Mircea Eliade's scholarship, his self-exile defined a condition that nurtured the writer's ambition to build a space of anti-communist resistance through cultural creation; the latter brings Virgil Ierunca's literary work to contemporary readers in "Virgil Ierunca – A Prestigious Voice of the (Literary) Romanian Exile", given the fact that he is one of the exiled Romanian intellectuals who continued publishing abroad, reconnecting the Romanian literature with the interbellum generation.

The four articles that follow are part of a larger research project funded by CNCSIS on translations of American myths, icons and brands in post-communist Romanian culture. In her essay "The Dracula Myth: Exile and Homecoming", Adina Ciugureanu develops a new facet of the well-

known popular character, Dracula, by presenting him as self-exiled, an immigrant to America, who adopts the demystified behavior of “a next door neighbor” in a society in which he proliferates into a multitude of characters. Though Americanized and globalized, Dracula returns to his “homeland” where he is still to be accepted as an iconic image of the mysterious and pre-Christian traditions. Adding the perspective of socio-linguistics to the volume, Diana Hornoiu’s article analyzes the transfer of the highly formulaic type of discourse promoted by the McDonald’s iconized franchised system into post-communist Romania. The analysis of the empirical data leads to the conclusion that when routine actions are accompanied by routine speech, such speech is largely formulaic, its functions being cognitive and socio-interactive. Further on, in the context of media reception studies, Raluca Petre focuses on the specificity of various audiences and their reception to American pop culture myths, noticing that, from the socio-demographic point of view, the major differentiation line is the characteristic of living in the countryside. The author believes that while some of the technological aspects have become obsolete as terms of differentiation, symbolic ones can still account for major differences. Otilia Pacea’s research hypothesis is that the promise of a new life which is embedded in the American myth of the frontier has been recycled in the electronic discourse of the expatriate blogger. In focus is the expatriate identity as reconstructed online through language use, on the basis of linguistic co-occurrences patterned on the dichotomy immediacy vs. remoteness.

Finally, Sorin Gadeanu’s “Collective Representations in Voluntary Exile: A Case Study on the Patterns of Self-Assertive Migration Discourses within the German Minority in the Banat Area” shows that the minority under consideration displays a unique development of identity patterns: the first one was connected to the submersion programme, which was a Hungarian-friendly, political and cultural movement, and later on a Bucharest-oriented one; the second – to the Vienna-oriented pro-Austrian immersion programme arising after 1867; the third – to the highly conservative Berlin-oriented autarchy programme, claiming a German-only identity for the minority.

Having embarked upon journeys to the classical tradition, British and American literatures, postcolonial studies and Romanian culture, the volume invites its readers to a thorough engagement with the myriad connotations of exile and myth, from revisiting Ovid’s exilic heritage to perusing cross-cultural and interdisciplinary mythic transfers. While aiming to constitute a comprehensive instrument to be used in academic contexts, the present collection of essays may easily become of broader interest to a wider readership.

Adina Ciugureanu, Ludmila Martanovschi, Nicoleta Stanca