

mocedades de Rodrigo, conocido también como *Rodrigo o Rodrigo y el rey Fernando* -ambos incompletos-, *El Cantar de Roncesvalles* -fragmentario- y el Fernán González. ¿Son éstos los "muchos otros héroes"? La pobreza de la épica castellana frente a la de su vecina francesa, por ejemplo, dista mucho de estar explicada satisfactoriamente. Es cierto, sin embargo, que los cronistas medievales utilizaron a veces estos poemas como fuentes para sus escritos, con lo que ya entramos, de nuevo, en el terreno que nos interesa: la prosa medieval. Estas prosificaciones han dado lugar a reconstrucciones de poemas épicos de la pluma de eruditos de la talla de Menéndez Pidal (*Los siete infantes de Lara* -o de Salas-) y sirven para decorar la manera de trabajar de los cronistas y el concepto de *originalidad* desde la perspectiva medieval. De ahí que hubiera sido importante conceder más espacio a la prosa de las crónicas -incluso a las redactadas en latín.

Hay alguna que otra inexactitud, quizá causada únicamente por posibles erratas de imprenta: uno de los editores de la obra de del Padrón es Antonio Paz y Meliá -no Mallá (p. 42)-; Santander es la capital de Cantabria, pero ya no es ninguna provincia (p. 9); en Cogull -que no en Cógul- hay unas pinturas prehistóricas de gran importancia (p. 9). Pocos descuidos más se podría enumerar.

En definitiva, este libro cumple una función nada desdeñable: presentar esta literatura al lector polaco, con orientaciones que sin duda le serán útiles. Si se le pudiera hacer algún reproche sería que, para ser una introducción, deja de lado algunos aspectos importantes, que hemos señalado más arriba, y permite la pervivencia de

ideas que ya deberían haber quedado olvidadas.

Nada sería tan deseable como que esta obra fuera sólo el comienzo del despertar de un nuevo y renovado interés por las letras hispánicas medievales en Polonia.

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JÓZSEF SZILI:

AZ IRODALOMFOGALMAK RENDSZERE (The System of Literature Concepts), Budapest, Academy Publishing House, 1993, 227 pp.

The book has won the title "The Monography of 1993" from BUKSZ- (Budapest Magazine of Book Reviews) in the category of literary scholarship.

Though a systematic treatment of the problem of literature concepts (with an emphasis on their plurality), there is no attempt to conclude with a taxative or axiomatic system. In an analytical discussion of typical instances it presents a large historical and theoretical variety of actual and potential literature concepts. Their nature is explained in descriptive chapters dealing with their existential bases. Case-histories from various periods and cultures illustrate that their differentiation and integration interact with textual formations to which, regardless of their named or nameless status, the term "literature" or one of its associates is attachable. The stock-taking does not narrow down to the term "literature": it extends to synonymous, overlapping or interrelated terms like "letters" and "literature", "literature" and "poetry",

field terms like "literacy" and "orality", indirect terms like terms denoting disciplines concerned with literature phenomena (like "poetics" and "rhetorics"), and their semantic interference. Methodological considerations focus on how the obsession of theorizers with "pure" or "absolute" concepts (the concept of "literature as such") or the semblance that there is or there should be "a single and unified concept of literature" effects the process of ideation. For such reasons "literature concepts", unless the products of mere deduction, prove to lack strict logical identity; they are at best "literature ideas" or "literature images", and their being *fuzzy terms* goes unnoticed at times even in scholarly discussions.

The author disagrees with René Wellek's position that a history of the term conceptualized primarily as imaginative literature would support the idea of the genuine identity of the concept ever since the rise of literacy. The findings of Robert Escarpit and his research team at the University of Bordeaux are quoted to disclose its variegated and highly problematic past. The "modern" concept of literature (with a relatively recent attribution of meaning to the Latin word *litteratura* and its derivatives or substitutes in modern languages) is an *aesthetic* concept but it emerged as late as the 18th century. (A sampling from Voltaire and Goldsmith exemplifies the semantic disintegration of the broad Renaissance term *litterae* and the integration of the aesthetic concepts of literature.)

The section entitled "Antecedents of Aesthetic Literature Concepts" hypothesizes that the polarities of *litteratura* and *litterae* appeared in latent forms in *primaeval orality* (prior to any kind of literacy). The treatment of the

problem integrates approaches by Károly Marót, Franz Boas, Claude Lévi-Strauss, Paul Zumthor, Walter J. Ong and Jacques Derrida. Interpretations of studies in ancient Sumerian, Chinese, Egyptian, Greek, Sanskrit and Tamil cultural history underline the presence of verbally sustained "literary" qualities, or even a type of "*litteratura* versus *litterae*" differentiation in partially or totally oral communities. The section is closed by a chapter on ideative differences between European and Asian literacy.

The section on "The Integration of Aesthetic Literature Concepts" describes the phases of the disintegration of the Renaissance *litterae* concept, the rise of the triadic concept of the kinds of poetry (with Antonio Minturno's admission of lyrical poetry to the canonic Aristotelian poetics of tragedy and epic), the adaptation of the poetic quality to Romantic sensibility, and the recognition of the leading modern prose form, the novel, as poetry. Thus "literature" (*litteratura*) was conceived as a (written?) form of verbal art, or as poetry including poetic genres (centred around the triadic notion of kinds) in prose and verse alike. This took place at a time when, with Hegel to conclude the process, prose and the prosaic quality became negative terms (with philosophical reference to "an age of prose").

As deconstructionist approaches seem to pass by the "aesthetic concepts" of literature (for an early apology René Wellek's criticism of the French *Nouvelle Critique* is quoted), the section on "A Generative System of Literature Concepts" outlines a network capable to cope also with the logic of such developments. It is an algorithm of the contexts in which lit-

erature concepts are generated. At its base lies the "dominoes method" of Władysław Tatarkiewicz: terms may integrate objects of partially identical criteria, like a game of dominoes creates contiguity by adjacent equal parts of the pieces. But here the "game" is multidimensional. The actual and potential literature concepts line up with their ingredients along phenomenologically discernible axes on which further multidimensional axes are hinged. The structuration of literature concepts along the axis of acoustic and visual representation of linguistic communication involves the differentiation or integration of oral and literate traditions (e.g. the denial or the affirmation of the place of oral or folklore poetry in literature: the neglect or accentuation of pictorial elements, calligraphy etc., etc.). An axiological axis (with *descriptive* modifications) connects the broad Renaissance term *litterae* (a class or body of any text of intellectual interest) and *litteratura* (a class or body of texts of poetical aspiration). Along the axis of conceptual representation differentiation takes place according to the conceptual means of ideation ("literature" as class or collective term, or as abstract substance, as *literariness*). The institutional axis extends to socio-historical dimensions e.g. by the functioning of canonizing, interpretative or identifying communities. On the axis of formal linguistic organization such ultimate modes of verbal communication are hinged as prose and verse. The dimension of semantic worlds and attitudes comprises the structuration of literature concepts by their relations to poetic kinds (e.g. their dependence on, or independence from, the triadic concept of kinds) and to the continuum of *literariness* (its

various definitions as textuality, or verbal reflexivity, fictionality, mimesis, expression etc., etc.).

Consequently this study is not manoeuvring for a theory of the substance of "literature as such". What it arrives at is the threshold of a field theory. Its synoptical systematization may serve as a key to literary theories concerned with this or that aspect (eventually this or that concept) of the plethora of phenomena referred to customarily in the singular by a single term, "literature".

Hopp Lajos

GRAŻYNA GRUDZIŃSKA:
[RE]ESCRITURA DE LA HISTORIA.
LA NOVELA HISTÓRICA HISPANOAMERICANA EN EL SIGLO XIX.

Cátedra de Estudios Ibéricos, Universidad de Varsovia, Monografias: 1, Varsovia 1994, ss. 211.

Dorobek naukowy polskiego środowiska hispanistycznego z ostatniego dziesięciolecia dorównuje już chyba – pod względem ilości publikacji i ich tematycznego zróżnicowania – dokonaniom naszych poprzedników, pionierów „zaniedbanej dziedziny hispanistyki” (jak nazwał w 1928 r. prof. Wędkiewicz polską „iberologię”). Jest on wszakże ogromnie rozproszony, wobec braku wyspecjalizowanych serii wydawniczych i czasopism; jedynie latynoamerykanistyka ma swoje własne organa ekspresji, z „Estudios Latinoamericanos” na czele. Dlatego też tak wielkie nadzieje budzą reaktywowane ostatnio