

Dudek, Anna

Introduction

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Introduction

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Comparative research, also known as comparative literature and born a few thousands years ago, investigates primarily relations between texts themselves, leaving aside outside influences and sociological perspectives on literature. The differences in reception of the same issues in different parts of the world have long been deemed interesting, perhaps cultural and linguistic diversity may account for some of them (Jost 1997: 41-65). The adjective “comparative” is derived from Latin words such as *comparare*, *comparatio*, *comparatives* that denote the act of comparing, its result and the relation between the objects of comparison (Kasperski 1998: 577). For many years, comparative studies were solely preoccupied with the study of literature; this approach was advocated by the French school, represented by Etiemble, Paul van Tieghem and Paul Hazard among others. However, this limited approach was later on overshadowed by a more open one. In 1971, a scholar of the American school described comparative literature as a study of multinational literature as well as of the relations between literature and such fields as art, philosophy, history, social sciences etc (Remak 1997: 25). This wide definition of comparative literature allowed for research of unprecedented scope, far-reaching conclusions and interrelationships between different domains of intellectual endeavour.

Mytho-poetical thought as described by Ernst Cassirer and Lucian Blaga is a comparative study that employs the concepts of these authors to analyse works of chosen poets. What is paradoxical and defiant in this study is a description of the mythopoetic practice without any reductive, naturalizing efforts. One should remember that poetry is the object of investigation and that it is often regarded as a hardly transformable incarnation of literature (of course, one could argue as to what extent it is an attitude or manner). In the forthcoming issues of our journal we hope to explore how this research approach may be accessed from other extraliterary perspectives.

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