

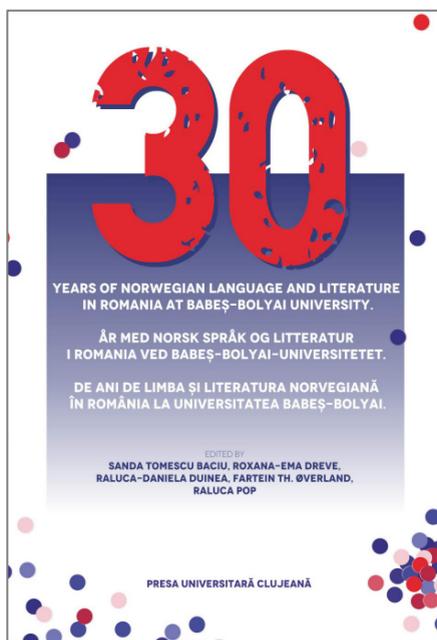
BOOKS

Sanda Tomescu Baciu, Roxana-Ema Dreve, Raluca-Daniela Duinea, Fartein Th. Øverland, Raluca Pop (eds.), *30 Years of Norwegian Language and Literature in Romania at Babeş-Bolyai University*, Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2021, 255 p.

Published in 2021 with a trilingual title, the collective volume *30 Years of Norwegian Language and Literature in Romania at Babeş-Bolyai University* serves as a celebration of three decades of Norwegian studies at BBU's Faculty of Letters. It incorporates official anniversary greetings from several Norwegian and Romanian institutions, personal messages from collaborators and alumni, as well as academic papers on a variety of topics revolving around Scandinavian linguistic and literary studies.

The volume is divided into six chapters, to which a foreword written by the editors and a gallery of pictures are added.

The first chapter comprises messages from the rector of BBU, the dean of the Faculty of Letters in Cluj-Napoca, the Norwegian Ambassador to Romania,



Direktoratet for høyre utdanning og kompetanse, NORLA, Senter for norskstudier i utlandet, and, last but not least, the Norwegian Summer Schools the Department has collaborated with over the years.

The second chapter, "Institutional Construction", consists of an in-depth description of the formation of the Norwegian Language and Literature Bachelor Programme and its development, starting from 1991, the year when the first group of students had the possibility to choose Norwegian as a minor specialization for their bachelor's degree. Sanda Tomescu Baciu, founder of the Bachelor Programme and – until recently – head of the Department of Scandinavian Languages and Literature, reminisces the beginnings and the ongoing process of further developing the specialization, whose number of students grew con-

stantly from just twelve in 1991, to hundreds in recent years, as the possibility to choose it as both a major and a minor was introduced. The spread of the Norwegian culture and literature was achieved through numerous projects, study or research mobilities for students, and translations done by the members of the department and by outstanding alumni – all of this with help from Norwegian institutions like NORLA (Norwegian Literature Abroad) or Diku, the Norwegian Embassy in Romania, the Center for Ibsen studies and BBU. Gratitude is expressed for their support and collaboration in projects like the *Henrik Ibsen Centenary* (2006) or the *Knut Hamsun Conference* (2009), when important academic figures like film critic Jan Erik Holst, the late literary historian and critic Asbjørn Aarseth or the Ambassador Leif Arne Ulland were present. Book launches of the Romanian translations of Norwegian literary works were often done in the presence of the authors and with the support of NORLA, for example Lars Saabye Christensen, who came to Cluj-Napoca in 1996 for the release of *Beatles* and in 2014 for the novels *Halvbroren* (*The Half Brother*) and *Visning*. Moreover, the *Nordica* collection, established and coordinated by Sanda Tomescu Baciu since 2015, at the Casa Cărții de Știință publishing house, has welcomed translations and PhD studies on Scandinavian subjects from the department's professors and alumni.

The third chapter comprises studies on canonical Norwegian literature written by both Norwegian and Romanian researchers. Eivind Tjønneland and Adriana Diana Urian both contribute with two studies about Henrik Ibsen. The first sets out a chronological synthesis of the reception of French symbolism in Norway in the late 19th century and how its

unclear understanding affected critics' perception of Ibsen's *Lille Eyolf*, as they could not agree on whether the work was symbolistic or not. The other examines the main character of Ibsen's best-known play, *A Doll's House*, from the personal point of view of an author who strives to understand how Nora's various identities – mother, wife, woman, and doll – are connected. Lisbeth P. Wærp and Diana Lățug choose to examine the famous, but controversial Knut Hamsun from two different perspectives: in the first contribution his attitude is debated with the help of references to *Marken's grøde* and Johan Turi's *En bog om lappernes liv i Verdens Gang*, while the other article focuses on explaining the epilogue of *Pan*. Steinar Gimnes tackles Tarjei Vesaas's *Fuglane* in a dichotomous analysis (biocentrism vs. anthropocentrism), while Ioana Hodârău talks about the reception of Scandinavian culture and literature in France in the first half of the 20th century.

In the fourth section the thematics vary from linguistic and philological aspects to more practical aspects like translations, pedagogy and didactic methods. Gudleiv Bø writes about the creation of Nynorsk and Ivar Aasen's poetry; while an interesting article by Ingmar Söhrman presents the Norwegian characteristics that were preserved in the Swedish dialect spoken in the Bohusän region; Cristina Vișovan focuses her research on how virtual and interactive didactic methods and tools can be used in teaching Norwegian, while also presenting their limitations; Roxana-Ema Dreve examines the reception of Johan Bojer in Romania from a double perspective by analysing both the author's presence in press articles between 1935 and 1993 and the quality of the translations of his work. Another

quantitative contribution comes from Raluca Duinea, whose paper's focal point is the amount of translations of Norwegian and Danish children's literature in the 20th century. Fartein Th. Øverland presents an introduction to dependency analysis of Old Norwegian as it is used in the Menotec project, with the aim of employing it as a practical didactic tool and Raluca Pop debates the traits of an ideal translator while also providing an overview of the challenges and implications of culturally appropriate translations.

In the fifth chapter the articles revolve around contemporary Norwegian literature and films. Unni Langås contributes with an analysis of the terror motive in *Due og Drone*, with references to Anders Breivik's terrorist attack from 2011 and World War II. Henning H. Wærp questions whether *Dinas bok* is an emancipatory novel or a depiction of a monstrous woman and Jan Erik Holst presents a collection of biographical films about several Norwegian cultural icons, arguing that biographical works have undergone a surge in popularity over the past decade. The following article, written by Ioana-Andreea Mureşan, highlights how the childhood stories of Hoem integrate in the migration literature, which is often more focused on statistics than on personal histories. Studies on ecocriticism are present as well in this volume: Georgiana Bozîntan analyses Maja Lunde's *The End of The Ocean*, while Călina-Maria Moldovan writes about the portrayal of impending ecological and geological disasters in films and TV series, as well as about how the "eco-anxiety" felt by the characters is conveyed to the viewers in an attempt to create awareness. Ecaterina-Miruna Dumitraşcu brings a geocritical study on the relation between place and

social belonging (or social alienation – as the conclusions suggest) in Per Pettersson's bildungsromane, while Paul-Daniel Golban introduces the reader to the concept of Neo-Naivism and an unprecedented representation of men and masculinity in Erlend Loe's writings. Adriana-Narcisa Bărlădean puts forth an article that dives into the crossover phenomenon in literature, exemplified through Simon Stranger's trilogy, which presents thought-provoking subjects. The last academic article of this section, written by Ana Suărăşan, examines Lotta Elstad's novel, *I Refuse to Think*, in relation to the portrayal of the concept of happiness in contemporary Norwegian literature.

The wide variety of topics addressed in the three parts dedicated to research papers and their complexity emphasizes not only the superior education and guidance offered to the students and graduates of the Norwegian specialization, but also the exceptional partnerships with competent foreign researchers and their expertise – which adds value not only to this volume, but also the Department in general, which is able to keep up with the international academic environment and offer its students the opportunity to be part of it.

The next section of the book comprises personal greetings and congratulatory messages from Sven Hakon Rossel from the University of Vienna, author and biographer Robert Ferguson, Maria Sibińska from the University of Gdańsk, Marthe Berg Andresen Reffhaug, the first Norwegian foreign lector at BBU, as well as a group of alumni.

Finally, the last pages are filled with pictures from different conferences, ceremonies, extracurricular activities, book launches, translation seminars and other

events that the department has coordinated or participated in from 1991 until now.

To sum up, this anniversary volume offers a synthetization of the history of the Department of Scandinavian Languages and Literature and its huge contribution to the dissemination and popularization of the Norwegian culture in Romania. It shows the collaborations and international network the department has, in addition to the diversity of topics which the alumni of the Norwegian Language and Literature specialization are prepared to research and write about:

canonical and contemporary Norwegian literature, Old Norse philology, linguistics, translations and methods of teaching Norwegian. The number of greetings and congratulatory messages from the representatives of important Norwegian institutions highlights the appreciation the department receives for its work in further strengthening the intercultural relations between Norway and Romania.

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