

Call for Papers

Bulletin of *Transilvania* University of Braşov. Series IV – Philology. Cultural Studies,
no. 1 (2017)

Synchrony and diachrony in literary and linguistic studies

Literary studies are permanently confronted with the challenge to build their study object, whether histories of literature, or the validation and maintenance of a literary canon, or text analysis. If the literary space has to be continually modelled/configured, what theoretical fiction has a greater explanatory force and relevance? Are the homogeneous and unidirectional approaches still possible, of our days? Is the investigation of literature still possible in a predominantly diachronic manner, sequentially pursuing lineages of authors and literary currents? Can we relate to the text analysis/close reading per se, without closely looking at the historicity of the themes and artistic procedures, or at the socio-historical context in which these texts appear? Or can we dispense with the internal structure of the text and only resort to the study of the context, following the network of social phenomena and the global hierarchies, which determine a certain comprehension and valorisation of literature? Is “synchrony *eo ipso* at the same time diachronic”? (Koselleck 2002, 30) The diachronic and synchronic approaches, are they then exclusive or do they entail each other? And if both approaches must be interrelated, to what extent, with what accents, stakes and theoretical orientations, will this endeavour take place? Hence, we are interested in interrogating the methods and visions by which we operate in literary criticism and history, especially in our culture, insomuch as the dominant models, starting with Călinescu’s, do not seem to be systematically debated or challenged. Therefore, a possible opening of this theme, also considers the liberation from the dominance of authoritarian canonical models, regardless of their source (the anti-canon supposing an alternative selection of texts, sometimes equally restrictive as the canonical model).

With respect to the linguistic study, we dare say the synchronic and the diachronic approaches, defined and differentiated by Ferdinand de Saussure, by late 19th century, were two complementary approaches. For most of the 20th century, it was considered natural for the synchronic and the diachronic linguistics to be treated as different disciplines, and to be practiced by different linguists. Recently, however, the researchers have been acknowledging ever more often the interdependence between synchrony and diachrony, between variation and change, at the level of the language. Accordingly, we intend to celebrate this idea of “partnership” between the two perspectives, and to highlight a few of the latest research fields brought to the fore by the synchrony-diachrony connection in the 21st century. A vast and relatively recent field of the linguistic study – a field that combines both diachronic and synchronic linguistics – is sociolinguistics, by means of which linguistic variation and language use are investigated, depending on various factors, such as the gender of the speakers, their social class, age, ethnicity, level of education, and even geographic region of origin. All these aspects influence various aspects of language structure and use. The sociolinguistic study is often important for the diachronic researches, inasmuch as certain styles may preserve older linguistic forms, which no longer appear in common language, or due to its being capable of highlighting linguistic changes in their evolution. The obvious questions we ask ourselves, when considering these two perspectives, are:

- The synchronic and the diachronic researches, are they contrastive or complementary?
- Is there always clear for a researcher which of the two perspectives best suits his/her endeavour?

- How do we determine which of the linguistic features are better explained synchronic and which thereof are more clearly captured diachronically?

And, going even further, if we believe they should be combined, another question arises: How much should these two perspectives intertwine?

For the present issue, we welcome articles in one of the following sections:

- Literature
- Cultural studies
- Language studies
- Review articles of one of the following recommended books or other recent books about synchrony and diachrony:
 - Hartog, Francois, *Regimes of Historicity: Presentism and Experiences of Time*, transl. by Saskia Brown, Columbia University Press, 2015.
 - Gabriela Pană-Dindelegan, *The Syntax of Old Romanian*, Oxford University Press, 2016.

We encourage interdisciplinary approaches of synchronic and diachronic studies, ranging across literary and cultural studies, linguistics as well as other disciplines in the humanities. Contributors are required to write in English or French and are advised to follow the journal's submission guidelines and stylesheet. The deadline for article submissions is **14 April 2017**. Articles should be sent as an electronic copy in Word for Windows to the following e-mail addresses:

Dan Țăranu - taranu_dan@yahoo.co.uk, for Literature

Georgeta Moarcăș - getamoarcas@yahoo.com, for Cultural studies

Alice Bodoc - alice_bodoc@yahoo.com, for Language studies

All submitted articles will be blind peer-reviewed. Accepted articles will be returned for post-review revisions by **12 May 2017** and are expected back in their final version on or before **26 May 2017**.