

**MÁRCIA VALÉRIA ZAMBONI GOBBI.**

***A ficcionalização da história—Mito e paródia na narrativa portuguesa contemporânea.***

São Paulo: Editora UNESP, 2011.

A *ficcionalização da história* is much more than an impressive work proposing to analyze an extensive corpus of Portuguese contemporary fiction. It is also an erudite study that highlights a key theme in the country's literature, beginning with Camões and continuing to this day. Márcia Valéria Zamboni Gobbi's work becomes even more interesting if one places Portugal in the context of the European Union, taking into consideration its social, political, economic, and cultural issues. Gobbi sets out to validate the mechanisms that turn history into myth (and parody) in our times, as the title suggests, even though her perspective cannot benefit from the distance of time. This is a task that requires not only careful analysis but also detachment. Writing from Brazil, however, Gobbi does take advantage of her *geographical* distance, enabling her to follow the Portuguese historical and literary path, which, as she notes, is still "under construction." She realizes the difficult goal of promoting an "insider's" viewpoint while remaining on the "outside" through her clever use of the concept of otherness. In this way she is able to insert Portugal into the broader context of the European Union by using its differentiating characteristics: "a identidade não é o oposto da diferença: a identidade depende da diferença" (identity is not the opposite of difference: identity depends on difference; 22).

The book is divided into three long chapters that together showcase the perpetuation of myth, which can be seen as the process of transforming history into culture, and the subsequent formation of Portuguese identity. There is a theoretical and methodological introduction, in which the author crafts an argument so strong that the reader marvels at the impossibility of forming a counterargument. She begins with the evolution of the concept of history in philosophical studies, continues by delineating Roland Barthes's idea of myth, and finally discusses the concept of parody as defined by Linda Hutcheon. Gobbi does not forget, however, to revisit other authors relevant to contemporary stud-

ies, such as Foucault, Jameson, Benjamin, Gadamer, and also Nietzsche, as opposed to Carlo Guinzburg. She also develops a study of the imaginary and the real in which she makes use of historical, anthropological, and philosophical texts. This addition not only broadens the scope of her study of literature and linguistics but also cultivates an interdisciplinary viewpoint.

The second chapter deals with Portuguese myths found in contemporary literature—for instance, Afonso Henriques, Inês de Castro, and Dom Pedro, the Portuguese sea, Dom Sebastião, and some elements originating in the colonial war. Gobbi persuasively analyzes the presence of these myths in novels by Agustina Bessa-Luís, Almeida Faria, Helder Macedo, João de Melo, Jorge de Sena, Lúcia Jorge, Lobo Antunes, Mário Cláudio, and Saramago, and also in two short stories, Mário de Carvalho's "A inaudita guerra da Avenida Gago Coutinho" and Herberto Helder's "Teorema." Finally, in the last chapter, she focuses on the formation of a Portuguese national identity, using Eduardo Lourenço's works as a basis for her conclusions. Gobbi also revisits Camões, the first Portuguese translator of history into fiction.

A *ficionalização da história* is revealing not only in its manner of exposing the presence of historical myths in Portuguese literature today but also in its proposing a path by which a Portuguese cultural identity based on these myths can be affirmed. This is an exceedingly important contribution, especially when Portugal is contextualized in a rather vast European Union, requiring "um reposicionamento histórico, geográfico, político e ideológico que confronta as bases míticas da identidade portuguesa e a própria soberania e autonomia dessa imagem de si, sustentada por séculos" (a historic, geographical, political, and ideological repositioning that addresses the mythical basis of Portuguese identity as well as its own image of a sovereignty and autonomy that has been sustained for centuries; 246). It is worth reading.

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