

na obra de Valdomiro Silveira. O personagem, sem a intervenção subjetiva do autor, deve aparecer bastante reduzido, determinado e limitado nas suas atitudes pelo meio e pela origem, sem exaltações heróicas, chegando até o anti-herói deformado de Monteiro Lobato. A imparcialidade do documento científico é rara na ficção regionalista do Brasil que quase nunca escapa à intervenção subjetiva do autor, que é intermediário entre a realidade e a obra artística, seja no aspecto de ufanismo ou de crítica mordaz. Valdomiro Silveira é um caso pouco freqüente de equilíbrio no realismo descritivo, porém, sem maior importância na evolução da literatura do Brasil. Simões Lopes Neto, quem criou o tipo do narrador do povo, identificado com o espírito da região, ultrapassou neste aspecto a sua geração. Já com Euclides da Cunha e Graça Aranha, eleva-se o ambiente esmagador, mais forte do que o homem, para marcar, na obra de Américo de Almeida, a mudança de rumos. *A Bagaceira* mostra o peso tanto da natureza, como da sociedade rural por cima do homem que é vencido. O romanticismo, porém, não entregou logo as suas posições nas letras do Brasil, e desta maneira, não faltou nem no realismo de crítica social dos anos trinta. Os personagens aparecem limitados pelas condições ecológicas, sociais, psíquicas, mas sempre existe um escape, ou na forma de nostalgia pelo passado (Lins do Rêgo), ou na simpatia para com o passado heroizado (Amado), ou pela visão ideal do futuro (Amado). O autor entra na estrutura da obra com a sua solução (nostálgica, revolucionária); tenta copiar, nos diálogos, a fala do povo, para dar maior autenticidade ao texto, e — para variar a monotonia da descrição documental — cria enredos de paixões românticas. Graciliano Ramos, por seu lado, conseguiu expressar, em *Vidas Secas*, a região, sem separar paisagem e gente, numa lúcida simbiose.

Enquanto que na ficção urbana estão no centro de atenção as relações entre as pessoas (rodeadas de coisas), na ficção rural ou regionalista são ressaltadas as relações dos homens para com o mundo circundante, isto é, para com a natureza. A ficção regionalista, quer queira quer não, procura a colocação do homem dentro da ordem do universo vivo. O antropocentrismo cede lugar, sucessivamente, à avaliação das forças da natureza e da ordem do campo, acabando com a glorificação do conquistador e com a tragédia do esmagado, para poder apreciar o papel real da consciência humana naquela ordem. Mais tarde, João Guimarães Rosa chegou à identificação da ordem de uma certa região (o sertão) com o mundo exterior e interior do homem. Representando o compromisso entre o velho e o novo, a obra de João Guimarães Rosa pode ser um exemplo atual da literatura de um país em desenvolvimento, forte na consciência das raízes e na adesão à problemática contemporânea — conhecer o homem e os motivos da sua conduta. Na sua revitalização da ficção regionalista, Guimarães Rosa voltou às fontes da ficção (aos mitos, à epopeia, aos romances de Cavalaria, à literatura oral sertaneja) e às raízes da criação lingüística, abrindo novas perspectivas para a ficção regionalista contemporânea, as quais outros escritores brasileiros vão ampliando, sendo um exemplo entre todos Ariano Suassuna.

PROFESSOR BOHUMIL TRNKA OCTOGENARIAN

Jiří Nosek (*Prague*)

On June 3, 1975, Professor B. Trnka reached the age of eighty years in his customary strength and vigour. He was born on June 3, 1895 at Kletečná near Humpolec. Until the age of 75 he was full-time professor of English language and early English literature at Charles University, Prague. As emeritus professor he still lectures at the University. The period from his 75th to 80th birthday may be called a scholarly completion, a time of scientific synthesis of various earlier, primarily linguistic problems and issues. Within his area of interest we may note, for instance, psychological and sociological views on language as a reflection of national values, set out in a lecture delivered in the Czechoslovak Circle of Modern Philology, Prague in 1971 (a short summary was published in *Jazykovědné aktuality*, 8). In his article 'On the Frequency and Distribution of Consonant Clusters in Czech' (*Prague Studies in Mathematical Linguistics*, 3, 1974), Prof. Trnka continues in his earlier investigation of the linguistic statistics of phonemes. This is complemented by Trnka's refining and re-editing of earlier articles: 'A Few Remarks on Homonymy and Neutralization' (in vol. 1 of the newly founded journal *Poetica*, Tokyo 1974, devoted to problems of linguo-stylistics), the re-issue of his mimeographed university lectures introducing English prosody (1973), the grammar of contemporary English (morphology), and the history of English literature, medieval and Renaissance.

The international reputation of Professor Trnka's linguistic thought is also underlined by the inclusion of some of his earlier general linguistic studies into foreign and Czechoslovak linguistic readers, miscellanies and journals. They are: 'Conversion in English' published 1970 by Hiroshima University, its first appearance being in *Brno Studies in English* 8, 1969. An anthology *El Círculo de Praga*, edited by Joan A. Argente (Barcelona 1972) contains the Spanish translation of his articles 'Prague Structural Linguistics' and 'Some Thoughts on Structural Morphology'.

Professor Trnka embodies the ideal university professor untiringly devoted to the building and development of his scholarly domain, a man who has subordinated all his energies to that aim. The fact that Prof. Trnka has always been unselfishly ready to share his vast knowledge and allot enough time to the tuition and guidance of his students, explains why several younger and (now) middle-aged Czech scholars in English and adjacent fields have emerged. All these gratefully avow him as their respected teacher. Prof. Trnka is still the leading spirit in the discussions of the group for functional linguistics within the Czechoslovak Circle of Modern Philology in Prague, over which he presides.

His many years of wide, thought-provoking and stimulating activity show Prof. Trnka as a scholar who has much to say to the international linguistic community, in which he is respected as a linguist of a viable and influential theory.¹

¹ Previous articles evaluating the scholarly work of Prof. B. Trnka have been published on the occasion of his earlier anniversaries:

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ABBREVIATIONS: *ČMF* Časopis pro moderní filologii, *PP* Philologica Pragensia.
Books and textbooks (mimeographed university lectures) are printed in capital letters. Review articles are printed in small type.
Note: Earlier bibliographies of Prof. B. Trnka's work have been published as follows: 1955 in *ČMF* 37. 105–13, 1965 in *PP* 8. 117–19 and in *Prague Studies in English* 11. 69–83, in 1971 in *Prague Studies in English* 14. 143–45.

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