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angajamentul propriu prezentat pe post de unică filosofie. Metafizicianul clujean, care întrupează o figură a gînditorului pur, solemn, dezangajat mundan dar univoc în ataşamentul faţă de suprasensibilul lumii, amintind în obstinaţia lui epifanică de Empedocle sau de Plotin, ne invită să vizităm marile arhitecturi mentale, temple ale filosofiei europene (figura templului cred că e preferabilă celei a bulevardului cultural de care părea atît de fascinat Noica), cu convingerea că nu şi-au pierdut nici sacralitatea, nici frumuseţea nici relevanţa. Statornice, edificate parcă de-o mînă invizibilă pentru a susţine ordinea lumii, ele mai au încă ceva de comunicat chiar şi atunci cînd vacarmul frivol al modernităţii noastre pretinde a fi spus totul.

Ana-Elena ILINCA

Alina Branda, Repere în antropologia culturală

Ed. Fundației pentru Studii Europene, Cluj-Napoca, 2002, 272p.

The book which I have chosen to review, *Orientations in Cultural Anthropology* by Alina Branda, has drawn my attention due to its character of novelty in the Romanian cultural context. As the author herself stated in the foreword of her book, this book stands for "an approach of diachronic and synchronic identification of the major stages" of cultural anthropology. It is also a "pleading" for establishing the study of cultural anthropology in Romania.

The author places her arguments within the framework of broader theoretical trends that one could identify in this domain. Therefore in the first chapter of the book she discusses the main

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tendencies of cultural anthropology since the time when it gained the status of a well-established science. On the one hand, this chapter is a critical comparison of the major anthropological trends and schools. On the other hand, it has a systematic dimension that introduces the inquisitive reader into a field that places humanity at the very heart of culture. Alterity is a key concept in cultural anthropology, and therefore the author pays tremendous attention to that issue, since one could assert that knowing the Other has always been the main goal of anthropological research.

The second chapter of this book analyzes the relations between cultural anthropology and other social sciences such as sociology, linguistics and philosophy. What is most interesting about cultural anthropology is its distinct feature of being an "open" science. Its character, full of paradoxes and dilemmas, is underscored, as is its propensity towards borrowing from related sciences. To researchers these attributes may be sources of great distress, but they are also a unique way of asserting a dynamic and challenging science.

An extensive sub-chapter deals with the *fieldwork* that represents a major foundation for this particular field of study. Fieldwork provides both a basis of information and a source of experiences that shape the researcher in cultural anthropology. What is noteworthy is the fact that fieldwork is carried out differently by the various anthropological schools, and as such it provides different outcomes, and produces different types of anthropological discourse.

The author continues her analysis by considering several of the most important theories corresponding to cultural anthropology. Consequently, the third chapter is dedicated to the presentation of functionalism as envisaged by Bronislaw Malinowski, of symbolic anthropology and its interpretative paradigm, and of cultural relativism. Malinowski's functionalist approach privileges the social system, especially the mechanism of human necessities. He focuses on concepts like function and structure that are considered to be at the basis of the social life. One of the main alternatives posed to this kind of approach comes from symbolic anthropology. This type of analysis views culture as a symbolic system. It articulates the importance of cultural symbols and their meanings within the framework of the social life of the group. The cultural relativism perspective values the diversity of cultures. It includes different forms and types of relativist approaches. It has positively influenced the theories and methods existing in contemporary cultural anthropology. It may also present the risk of a unilateral judgement of different cultures.

A. Branda concludes her book with an analysis of the relation between Western cultural an-



thropology and the similar researches being carried out by specialists from southeastern Europe, namely ethnography and ethnology. From the very outset of the last chapter, the author points out that one cannot speak of cultural anthropology in southeastern Europe, as, here, the main approaches have been of an ethnographical and ethnological nature. There are fundamental differences between the two traditions, both in approach and in methodology. Further on, the author identifies the complex causes of the gap between the two traditions. She also underlines the need for Southeastern European researchers to adjust themselves to the contemporary research being conducted in this field. Special attention is given to the Romanian situation.

Although this work was first written as a PhD thesis, the phrase which might best depict this book would be "a bird's eye view", as it aims at providing an integrative presentation of what cultural anthropology represents. It may very well be considered an attempt that is intended to awaken the awareness of the Romanian public to this kind of topic. The lengthy bibliography attached at the end of the book gives the reader the opportunity to become more familiar with this domain of research.

Petru Moldovan

Ioan-Vasile Leb (coord.), Biserică și multiculturalitate în Europa sfîrșitului de mileniu,

Editura Presa Universitară Clujeană, Cluj-Napoca, 2001, 461p.

Dezbaterea în jurul rolului Bisericii, la începutul noului mileniu, subliniază în mod concret modalităţile prin care această structură de origine divino-umană reuşeşte să se implice în societate cu soluţii benefice ce merită să fie luate în considerare în viitorul ce se prefigurează cu repeziciune. Autorii din acest volum reuşesc prin discursul specific fiacăruia să scoată în evidenţă, în contextul actual, problemele cu care se confruntă Biserica.

Astfel, majoritatea gînditorilor care contribuie la acest volum îşi ridică vocea împotriva procesului de globalizare, deoarece este considerat un factor de fragmentare a socialului;