Anatolida. An Epic in the Pursuit of Totality

Anatolida or The Man Fighting the Forces by Ion Heliade Rădulescu is an epic too often blamed for its lack of coherence and lexical peculiar forms. It is true that in several passages, poetry gets suffocated by ideological or scientific entrances. It is also a fact that at a hasty lecture, the text proves rather intricate and unintelligible, as biblical references, the writer’s own literary or non-literary previous works, European scholar or mythological influences, contemporary utopian socialism merge in what is intended to be a complete history of mankind, from the Genesis up to the latest historical events. This is to be seen as a description of what is characteristic, still universal, in the evolution / involution of man’s mentality, morality, knowledge of the phisical or metaphisical world, by means of science, love or religion. The paper aims to rehabilitate Heliade’ poem, by proving the coherence of his entire work and the connections that one may identify between his poetry, prose, critical, philosophical and historic studies. As a conclusion, Anatolida may be considered the epitomy of Heliade-Rădulescu’s writing, and, if disregarding some lexical choices, Italian or Latin-like, one of the most ambitious poems of the Romanian literature prior to Eminescu.