‘Selection’ and ‘Mutation’: Two Key Concepts in Literary Criticism

This paper offers a parallel insight into two key concepts of two pre-eminent, though antagonised Romanian literary critics from the first half of the 20th century: the literary selection, used by G. Ibrăileanu, and E. Lovinescu's theory concerning the mutation of aesthetic values. Both derived from post-Darwinian biology, the concepts mentioned above imply different yet complementary coherent methodological approaches, whose systemic similarities and differences have been currently missed or misinterpreted.