

Rhetoric of Metafemininity. From Colette to Hortensia Papadat-Bengescu

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Abstract

*An effect of the interwar cultural modernity, the visibility of the women-writers in the space of Romanian literature was also possible through the assimilation of the patterns of feminine writing, already outlined in Western literatures. French writer Sidonie-Gabrielle Colette influenced the Romanian feminine prose of the interwar period with her meta-feminine writings, freed from prejudice and canons, in which the depth of introspection is combined with the incandescence of sensations. Similar features may be traced in the subjective-lyrical prose that characterizes Hortensia Papadat-Bengescu's literary debut, which determines a certain stylistic and thematic resemblance between the two congeneric writers, beyond their inherent discontinuities. However, Hortensia Papadat-Bengescu intertextually reveals her dialogue with "the great Colette" only in her last novel, *Străina*, a work considered lost for a long time, recently recovered and published.*

Keywords: modernity, Colette, metafemininity, mirror, intertextuality

An effect of the interwar cultural modernity, the visibility of the women-writers in the space of Romanian literature was also possible through the assimilation of the patterns of feminine writing, already outlined in Western literatures. In the diaries or memoirs of the women-authors, in the press, but also in some literary works (intertextually), one finds names of women-writers already acknowledged in European literature, whose books were available in our space either in the original, or in translation: Anaïs Nin, Virginia Woolf, Sidonie-Gabrielle Colette, Katherine Mansfield, George Sand, Marguerite Yourcenar, the Brontës, Jane Austen, George Eliot, etc. Thus, in the article *Notă la un roman feminin/ Notes to a feminine novel*, dedicated to Lucia Demetrius's novel, *Tinerete/ Youth*, Mihail Sebastian (1936: 402-405) speaks of the "psychological family" of the women-writers in English (George Eliot, Jane Austen, the Brontës, Virginia Woolf, Rosamond Lehman, Katherine Mansfield, Mary Webb) and French literature (Généviève Fauconnier,

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Louise de Vilmorin, Colette), characterised by sobriety of the spirit, want of “humour” and the pathetic accents of their writing. In another “note” to a Romanian feminine novel, namely *Călător din noaptea de Ajun/ Traveller on Christmas’ Eve*, by Anișoara Odeanu, Camil Petrescu (1937: 400-402) remarks the effective competition –at the world’s level– between women-writers and men (he mentions the Brontës, George Eliot, Virginia Woolf, Katherine Mansfield, M. Kennedy, Rosamonde Lehman, Pearl Buck, Marie Webb and Anita Loos). The writing patterns of these European writers were practised by the Romanian prose writers either in the direction of self-confession subjectivity, marked by lyricism and sensuality, following in the footsteps of Anaïs Nin or Colette (traceable in Cella Serghi’s works, but also in the short stories by Hortensia Papadat Bengescu), or in that of revealing a cold, objective vision of the self and the world, inspired by Katherine Mansfield (traceable in the prose of Lucia Demetrius, Anișoara Odeanu, Ioana Postelnicu or Sorana Gurian). These literary contiguities between the Romanian women-writers during the interwar period and famous women-writers in the European cultural space allowed the critics to grasp some thematic and stylistic affinities, encouraging in the efforts to make the Romanian literary contribution more visible.

Sidonie-Gabrielle Colette (1873-1954) has become, by way of her tumultuous biography open to all kinds of life experiences, a symbolic character for the transformations that the social mentality of her time records in what the condition of women is concerned. The life of this writer best expresses the frenzy of the 1920s (*les années folles*): at the age of 20, Collette gets married to Henry Gauthier-Villars, also known as Willy, an artist who will take advantage of his wife’s naïveté to exploit her literary talent: her first novels are published under the penname Willy (the novels in Claudine series: *Claudine à l’école* – 1900, *Claudine à Paris* – 1901, *Claudine en ménage* – 1902, *Claudine s’en va* – 1903). With Willy, Collette enters the worldly literary and musical salons of Paris and gets acquainted with the boisterous world of theatre, acting in plays written by her husband. Apart from acting and artistic writing, Collette publishes journalistic articles in *Le matin*, *Le Figaro*, *Le Quotidien*, etc., but makes a living from fashion and cosmetics (especially after divorcing Willy, in 1910). In 1912, she marries Henry de Jouvenel and becomes notorious for her incestuous relationship with his son, Bertrand de Jouvenel, 20 years younger. Sidonie Gabrielle Colette’s sexual exhibition verges on libertinage, also due to her Sapphic love experience with marchioness of Belbeuf (“Missi”), but not only.

Collette is rewarded with important titles for her literary activity: in 1920 she is appointed Knight, in 1928, Officer, and in 1936 Commander of the Legion of Honour. It is also in 1936 when Collette becomes a member of the Royal Academy of French Language and Literature from Belgium, as Anna de Noilles's successor. In 1945, she becomes a member of the Goncourt Academy, and in 1949 she becomes its president. Prolific writer, Collette published successful novels, such as: *La Vagabonde/ The Vagabond* (1911), *Chéri* - 1920, *La Femme cachée* (The Hidden Woman) - 1924, *La Naissance du jour* (translated as *The Break of Day*) - 1928, *Paradis terrestres* (Earthly Paradises) - 1932, *La Chatte* (The Cat) - 1933, *Duo* - 1934, *Splendeur des papillons/ The Splendour of the Butterflies* - 1937, *Le Toutounier* - 1939, *Chambre d'hôtel/ The Hotel Room* - 1940, *Flore et Pomone* - 1943, *Belles Saisons/ Beautiful Seasons* - 1945, *Pour un herbier* - 1948, *Le Fanal bleu* (translated as *The Blue Lantern*) - 1949. [1]

Collette is highly praised in France up to these days: French Post dedicated an exhibition with items collected by the writer in her journeys (1898-1952) to Switzerland, Germany, Romania, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Italy, Belgium, Denmark, and the United States (letters, postcards, notes sent by Collette to her many friends). A stamp with the portrait of the writer has been issued for collectors. Meetings presided by Julia Kristeva, Michel de Castillo, Régine Deforges or Christine de Rivoire, with readings and thematic spectacles, have been held at the Post Museum. One may assert, therefore, that France displays a genuine manifestation of the acknowledgement of the personality of this writer. [2]

Collette was well-known in the Romanian interwar literary space. In an issue from 1925 of the journal *Adevărul literar și artistic*, one reads an article published after a lecture held by Constant Ionescu at *Fundația Universitară Carol I*, entitled "Colette, și opera sa literară" / "Collette and her literary work." On this occasion, the artistic profile of the French woman-writer is present as the greatest writer of present-day France, together with Anatole France and Countess of Noilles. The speaker had met Collette in person and had gathered an impressive amount of documentary materials. He identifies three large themes of her prose: "poezia naturii și a reacțiunii scriitoarei față de natură" [poetry of nature and the writer's reaction to nature], "poezia conflictului de simțuri dintre bărbat și femeie" [poetry of the conflict of senses between man and woman] and "poezia vieții animalelor, plantelor, găngăniilor" [poetry of the life of animals, plants and insects]. Constant Ionescu appreciates Sidonie-Gabrielle Colette's limitation to the exclusive area of femininity, her refusal to imitate the masculine style,

unlike other French women-writers. He points out many unhackneyed confessions of the French writer about feminine specificity, about the relationship between men and women. Worth mentioning is a fine, modern (postmodern, even) assertion on the verbalization, discoursivisation of femininity: "(...) Femeia este totdeodată simplă și complexă... femeia este o limbă străină: câtă vreme n'o poți vorbi, te simți stingherit, micșorat: quand on la parle tout en devient naturel..." [Woman is simple and complicated in the same time... woman is a foreign language: if you can't speak it, you feel awkward, belittled, when you speak it, everything becomes natural]

Constant Ionescu notes the originality of Colette's stylistic formula, with precision and brevity:

(...) rămânând o voluptoasă integrală și exclusivă, nu încetează de a fi un spectator lucid, minuțios, aș spune chiar, printr'un paradox, indiferent parțial, un chirurg care zgândărește, disecă, extirpează. Nici o intenție de lubricitate, de obscenitate, de întărâtare sexuală a cititorului... (Ionescu 1925: 6).

[while she remains an integral and exclusive voluptuous, she never ceases to be a lucid spectator, even thorough, I'd say, through a paradox, partially indifferent, a surgeon who rips, dissects, and excises. Not the slightest intention of lubricity, obscenity, sexual arousal of the reader.]

French writer Gabrielle-Sidonie Colette visited Romania in 1929, according to Henriette Yvonne-Stahl's memoirs: "*Pe Aristide Blanc (...) l-am cunoscut cu ocazia unui banchet dat la «Cina» în onoarea scriitoarei franceze Colette, care fusese invitată de țara noastră. Era cam prin 1929*" [I met Aristide Blanc at a banquet at Cina Restaurant, in honour of the French writer Colette, who had been invited to our country. It was around 1929] (in Cristea 1926: 57).

A poetic presentation of the French writer is to be found in the memoirs of Anna de Noilles, which we will present *in extenso* here, due to its relevance:

Nu voi înfățișa aici geniul Colettei; îngăduiți-i folosirea unui întreg dicționar, și în el își va scobi geoda, va produce prin jerbe de lumini și strădanie, spune ea, o operă succulentă, sangvină, vegetală, în care toate vocabulele vor părea prădate și împrăștiate fără ca totuși cel mai mic adaos să îngreuneze o narațiune care se reclamă de la viață și necesitate. Nu-i îngăduiți decât folosirea câtorva adjective, și Colette le va aranja cu o mână atât de abilă în a construi, că în ele va veni să se răsfrângă lumea, instalându-și acolo cu nedezmințită îndemânare opulentele-i bogății imense ori minuscule. De îndată ce se așterne scrisului, aplecându-și deasupra lucrului masa ușoară a părului scurt, de un blond-mov, asemenea unei

tufe de violete de Parma, Colette știe să pună temelii unui tărâm, să ridice orașe, să învie mări și ceruri variate. Aidoma Nilului divinizat, ea dă fertilitate și viață foii aride de hârtie, înalță valul unor povestiri invadatoare, ispititoare și redutabile prin prezența lor activă. Dar fie și numai două rânduri, semnate de ea într-un jurnal efemer, au puterea de a descrie o reprezentație cu Hamlet sau piramida stoicilor și neliniștiților echilibriști, ai căror mușchi împlânziți se încordează sub proiectoarele orbitoare ale circului, ca în faimoasele tablouri ale unui Toulouse-Lautrec ori Degas (Noilles 1986: 93).

[I won't present Collette's genius here; allow her to use of an entire dictionary, in which she'll carve her geode, will produce, through showers of light and effort, as she says, a succulent, sanguine, vegetal oeuvre, in which all the word will seem preyed and spread, without the slightest addition to hinder a narrative which claims to pertain to life and necessity. Allow her to use of just a few adjectives and Collette will arrange them with a hand so skilled to build, that the world will come to reflect onto them, installing there, with its undoubted ability, her opulent riches, either huge or minuscule. As soon as she starts writing, leaning her short hair, blonde-mauve, like a bush of Parma Violets, over the table, Collette knows how to lay the foundation of a world, to erect cities, to bring seas and various skies back to life. Just like the worshipped Nile, she gives fertility and life to the barren sheet of paper, raises the wave of invading, alluring stories, powerful through their active presence. Even two lines with her signature, in an ephemeral diary, have the power to describe a *Hamlet* performance or the Stoics' pyramid, or that of the restless acrobats whose tamed muscles strain under the glaring lights of the circus, like in the famous paintings of Toulouse-Lautrec or Degas.]

Hortensia Papadat Bengescu's early intimacy of Colette was, of course, a result of her readings. Colette's novels used to be very popular in Romania after the First World War, mostly preferred by a feminine audience, due to their erotic-sentimental dimension, which neared them to consumer literature. Hortensia Papadat Bengescu prizes Sidonie-Gabrielle Colette and, in an article in *Sburătorul* (1926), mentions "*stilul minunatei Colette*" [the style of wonderful Colette] (Papadat-Bengescu, 1926: 72). Later, in an interview in the newspaper *Vremea*, Hortensia Papadat-Bengescu lists the name of the French writer among her literary preferences, mentioning "*savoarea dramatică a lui Colette*" [Colette's dramatic savour] (in Sasu, Vartic, II, 1986: 640).

The opposing destinies and biographies of the two women-writers in focus – Colette and Hortensia Papadat-Bengescu – may deem futile any attempt to find any resemblance in their works. But the above mentioned statements of the Romanian novelist have determined us to attempt an

intertextual reading, in Gérard Genette's acception of the term: "*une relation de coprésence entre deux ou plusieurs textes, c'est-à-dire, idétiqument et le plus souvent, par la présence effective d'un texte dans un autre*" [the co-presence of two or more texts, that is, essentially and most often, the actual presence of a text within another] (Genette 1982: 8). Nevertheless, both writers open yet unexplored paths in the French, and respectively, Romanian feminine prose, which should be sufficient to allow for a comparison, intended to point out the continuity of their writings. In this respect, Mircea Anghelescu identifies in the works of the two writers the common traits at thematic level, but also at the level of artistic vision: the importance of women and their superiority over men, the conflictual, if not competitive, state between the representatives of the two genders:

Războiul tenace și fără răgaz care separă și care unește în același timp cele două sexe în romanele lui Colette și ale Hortensiei Papadat-Bengescu se arată o dată mai mult a fi un conflict fără câștigători și fără miză adevărată. O explicație posibilă ar fi aceea că războiul nici nu este purtat pentru a izbândi asupra celuilalt sex și pentru a-i sustrage din privilegii, și nici nu este vorba de un adevărat război, ci mai degrabă de un efort de afirmare a propriei personalități și a propriului potențial în ochii celuilalt și mai ales chiar în ochii săi (Anghelescu, 2007: 167-168).

The tenacious, restless war that separates and unites, at the same time, the two genders in the novels of Collette and those of Hortensia Papadat-Bengescu seems to be, once again, a conflict without winners and without a real stake. O possible explanation may be that the war is not pursued for a victory against the other sex or for withdrawing some of their privileges, nor is it a true war, after all, but sooner an effort of affirmation of one's own personality and potential in the eyes of the other and, especially, in their own eyes.

The critic proposes a psychoanalytical interpretation of the mirror motif, recurrent in the works of both writers, as a reflection of the other gender, beyond which an image of the self is actually concealed. This aspect permits, in Hortensia Papadat-Bengescu's works, "*Marcian, Drăgănescu, Rim și chiar neobositul Lică, lăsând la o parte existența lor profesională și socială, să nu fie decât o sumă, o adunare de detalii contrare celor ale femeilor cu care se află în conflict (...)*" [Marcian, Drăgănescu, Rim and even the restless Lică, apart from their social and professional existence, to be but a sum, an amount of details opposing those of women with whom they are in conflict] (Anghelescu, 2007: 168). The mirror is also a recurrent image in the short stories by Hortensia Papadat-Bengescu, in which it assimilates the meaning of a topos which reflects and occults, at the

same time, in subtle writing games, the incandescent sensorium that dominates her early texts. Thus, in *Lui Don Juan, în eternitate, îi scrie Bianca Porporata* / Bianca Porporata writes to Don Juan in eternity (1920), the mirror allows the heroine a rhetoric of self-contemplation:

Juan, Mâna mea!... E întuneric și am văzut brațul meu luminând în întuneric. E alb, Juan, închipuiește-ți că e alb. Trage o curbă vie, un mister ciudat în umbră. Nu e nimic aprins în odaie, și în oglindă el se vede clar luminat din el singur, ca o torță. Seamănă cu brațele de statui de prin lume, în gesturile lor eterne (Papadat-Bengescu, 1972: 141).

Juan! My hand!... It is darkness and I saw my arm glaring in the dark. It's white, Juan, imagine that it's white! It draws a vivid curve, an odd mystery in the shadow. There is nothing lit in the room and it's clearly visible in the mirror, lighted from itself, like a torch. It looks like the arms of the statues all over the world, in their eternal gestures.

The narcissistic ecstasy of Bianca Porporata becomes the threshold between the aspiration to chastity and the assumption of an abundant sensuality, a threshold struck in the mirror. Consequently, with Hortensia Papadat-Bengescu, as is the case with Collette, the writing becomes corporeal: both novelists invent, in their own way, an alphabet of voluptuousness, grounded in the discursive specificity of feminine identity [3]. Julia Kristeva's assertions on Collette's writings may be also valid for the Romanian novelist: "*l'écriture de Colette défie les dichotomies vie/œuvre, fond/forme, en travaillant la littéralité du langage non pas pour l'isoler dans son autonomie formelle, ni pour l'«oublier» dans on ne sait quel déni naturaliste, mais afin de l'immerger dans la chair de son désir de femme et dans la chair du monde*" [Collette's writing defies the dichotomies life/ work, background/form, processing the literariness of language not in view of isolating it into a formal autonomy, or to 'forget' it in a naturalist denial, but to sink it in the sensuality of her womanly desire and in the sensuality of the world] (Kristeva 2002: 43). As a matter of fact, one may also find similar critical observations made about Hortensia Papadat-Bengescu:

Autoarea își ascultă atent trupul, îi pândește reacțiile, îi trăiește cu intensitate satisfacțiile. Din asemenea atitudini de dăruire înașnește o exaltare lirică a fiziologicului. Sunt cântate mângâierile mării (...); sărutul nisipului (...); îmbrățișarea copacilor (...). Apare aici și un soi de panteism primar, intuit tot pe cale feminină, adică în primul rând senzorial. Autoarea își descoperă ritmuri ale sângelui, pe care le simte acordându-se cu întreaga pulsație cosmică. Stabilește astfel corespondențe simbolice, tulburătoare. (Crohmălniceanu, I, 2003: 255-256)

The authoress closely listens to her body, watches for its reactions, and

lives its satisfactions intensely. From such devoted attitudes springs a lyrical exaltation of the physiological. She glamorizes the caresses of the sea, (...) the kiss of the sand (...), the embrace of the trees. It is here a form of primary pantheism, femininely inferred, that is to say, sensorial. The authoress discovers rhythms of her blood, which she feels by attuning herself to the whole cosmic pulsation. Thus, she establishes thrilling symbolic correspondences.

The hermeneutics of the mirror (as an object specific to femininity) in Hortensia Papadat-Bengescu's short stories acquires other interpretative hypostases. In *Femeia în fața oglinzei / The Woman in the Mirror* (1921), "*traectoria complicată a privirii nu oferă decât sugestia înstrăinării de sine*" (emphasis in the original.) [the trajectory of **the glance** only provides the suggestion of alienation from the self] (Rădulescu 1996: 69). Manuela, the protagonist of this short story gets ready for a soirée and puts on make-up in the mirror, although she is not an adept of the complicated rituals of coquetry. At the end of the operation, she is no longer able to recompose the identitary puzzle reflected in the mirror:

Cu cât fixa mai mult oglinda, cu atât se recunoștea mai puțin. Părea o evocare din trecut, întoarsă cu uimire gravă pe locuri înstrăinate și regăsindu-și, cu aceeași uimire, propria înfățișare. Din ce timp?... Din ce loc?... Nu se vedea decât capul și bustul gol. Ce draperii, ce costum determinau un cadru acelei apariții de acolo, din adâncul cristalului? Străina aceea ciudată, cu o expresie de viață moartă – cine era? (Papadat-Bengescu, 1972: 320).

The more she was staring in the mirror, the harder it was for her to recognize herself. She seemed like an evocation from the past, returned with grave astonishment to alienated spaces, regaining, in the same astonishment, her own look. From what time? From what place? Only the head and the naked chest were visible. What curtains, what suit determined the frame for that apparition from the depths of the crystal? That odd stranger, with a dead life expression – who was she?

The rejection of the image of her own femininity, compromised by the make-up artifice, suggests a similar moment in the novel *La Vagabonde* by Sidonie-Gabrielle Colette. Renée, the protagonist, is a music hall actress, and she is, as such, daily subjected to the necessity to wear make-up and to the confrontation of an aliened auto-image, as in Manuela's case: "*am să rămân singură cu mine însămi, față-n față cu sfetnica suliminită care se uită la mine din oglindă cu niște ochi adânci pe sub pleoapele unse cu o pomadă grasă, liliachie. Cu pomeții îmbujorați, de culoarea brumărelelor din grădină, cu buzele de un roșu-închis, strălucitoare și parcă*

lăcuite... Se uită la mine lung și știu că peste puțin o să-mi vorbească..." [I'll remain by myself, face to face with the raddled advisor who looks at me from the mirror with deep eyes under the eyelids dabbed with grease lily pomade. With red cheekbones, like the chrysanthemums in the garden, shiny and seemingly varnished. She looks at me insistently and I know she'll talk to me soon] (Colette 1969: 23). Analysing the scenes in the mirror in the case of Colette's character, Christina Angelfors notes that the idea of the double is supported at the level of grammatical discursivity: "*Il est de noter que dans ces scènes de dédoublement il y a des structures grammaticales, comme le passage à la troisième personne (...) ainsi que l'emploi de démonstratifs (...), qui accentuent l'impression d'un véritable clivage du personnage en deux moi opposés*" [one should note that in these scenes of doubling there are certain grammatical structures, like the turn to the third person (...) and the use of demonstrative pronouns (...) which emphasise the sensation of a genuine cleavage of the character between two distinct selves] (1989: 87).

As is the case with the feminine characters in the early prose of Hortensia Papadat Bengescu, Renée is possessed by "*mania filigranelor sentimentale*" [the mania of sentimental filigrees] (Colette 1969: 180) and is in the habit of hiding in "*camera obscură a sufletului*" [the dark room of the soul] (258), to elaborate true metafemininity studies:

Câte femei n-au cunoscut acea adâncire în sine, acea reculegere răbdătoare, după ce lacrimile de revoltă s-au zvântat? Trebuie să recunosc spre lauda lor, măgulindu-mă totodată și pe mine: numai prin suferință o femeie este în stare să depășească propria ei mediocritate. Capacitatea sa de rezistență este nemărginită; te poți folosi, ba chiar poți abuza de ea, fără teamă c-ar putea să-i pricinuiască moartea, cu condiția ca nu știu ce puerilă lașitate fizică, sau nu știu ce cucernică speranță să-i abată gândul de la sinuciderea care ar simplifica lucrurile (Colette 1969: 55).

How many women haven't known that falling into self and that patient introspection, after their tears of revolt dried out? I have to admit, to their praise, flattering myself at the same time: only through suffering is a woman able to overcome her own mediocrity. Her ability to resist is endless; you can use, and even abuse her, with no fear that you may cause her death, on condition that some puerile physical cowardice or some devout hope turns her minds away from the suicide that would simplify everything.

Hortensia Papadat-Bengescu refers intertextually to the French novelist only with an allusion in the pages of her last novel, *Străina/ The Stranger*, recently recovered and recomposed, where the eponymous character

reminds of the “*amarnica cunoaștere a bărbaților pe care o avea marea Colette*” [the bitter knowledge of men which the great Colette possessed] (Papadat-Bengescu 2012: 178-179), thus exposing a possible connexion between the Romanian and the French women writers.

The intertextual reading of the works written by Hortensia Papadat-Bengescu, in rapport with Colette’s novels, enables Smaranda Vultur to interrogate this kind of reception:

Poate fi sau nu util să citim un text în relație cu altul? Ni se facilitează sau ni se îngreunează, dimpotrivă, drumul de acces spre el dacă ținem cont de dimensiunea sa intertextuală? Este aceasta implicată doar ca apel la un orizont de norme și coduri necesare pentru a asigura comunicării acea bază minimă, (...) de la care transgresările pot oricând reîncepe și dialogul autorului cu cititorul poate fi oricând repus în alți termeni? Totul în text este intertextualitate sau doar acolo unde «trimiterile» sunt certe, vizibile, intenționate, putem vorbi de acest fenomen? (1992: 5).

Is it useful or not to read a text in relation to another? Does it facilitate or, on the contrary, complicate our access to it to consider its intertextual dimension? Is it involved just as an appeal to a horizon of norms and codes, necessary to ensure that base of communication (...) from which transgressions may recommence at any moment and from which the author’s dialogue with the reader may be deemed in other terms? Is there anything in a text intertextual or can we speak of this phenomenon only where the references are clear, visible, and deliberate?

The model of Sidonie-Gabrielle Colette may have “haunted”, at least at the subconscious level, the writing of our ‘great European of the 1930s’, considering the findings above, and Hortensia Papadat Bengescu’s direct confessions. It is, nevertheless, difficult to grasp the extent to which this model actually influenced the writing of the Romanian novelist, all the more as she is representative for the “feminine genius” in the space of Romanian literature, being a novelist capable to impose an original and solid prose, emblematic for the modernity of the interwar period.

Notes

*The paper has been translated from Romanian by Oana Gheorghiu

[1] Sidonie-Gabrielle Colette’s bio-bibliography has been compiled after *Biographie et catalogue des œuvres de Colette*, in Dormann, Geneviève, *Amoureuse Colette*, Éditions Albin Michel, Paris, 1985, pp. 239-249.

[2] See Simone Arous, *Agenda*, in Magazine littéraire, nr. 409, May 2002, p. 4.

[3] See also Doinița Milea, *Récit et construction de l’identité féminine*, în *Communication interculturelle et littérature*, nr. 1 / January, February, March 2009, Galați: Europlus, 2009, pp. 57-63.

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