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Pessin, Alain and Mimmo Pucciarelli, eds
Les incendiaires de l'imaginaire.
Atelier de création libertaire. Lyon, 2000. p.
337.

This volume presents the proceedings of the international colloquium held in Grenoble in 1998 on the mechanisms of the imagination. Or, as the editors describe it, the "activity through which societies construct themselves, then question themselves and are shaken by their own intuitions and by the artistic, literary, philosophical and political forms they discover within themselves." Even though the focus of the conference was not exclusively literary, many participants have dealt with literary authors whose "incendiary" qualities are by now universally acknowledged: Kafka, Sade, Buñuel and Julio Cortazar, not to mention the compulsory detour by Jules Verne's works. However, the eternal question "was Verne an anarchist" is answered here very much in the same way it was answered by Chesneaux a few decades ago, and that's somewhat disappointing. At first glance, there would not appear to be much to recommend this book to the attention of readers interested in popular literature and media culture. But there is an exception, and a considerable one: Alain Pessin's article ""Dynamique de la rêverie politique"".

Continuing the reflection begun in his book *La rêverie anarchiste* and pursued since in several other works, proposes a series of relationships between myth, ideology and "rêverie", which he understands as a state where the individual is open to "a poetic wandering of the mind". The closest English translations for "rêverie" would be "day-dreaming", or "fancy". 's concept, however, is devoid of the passive, purely reactive meaning of these terms. The author places "rêverie" "half-way between night dreaming and myth" and attributes to it a role of perception, and in a way also of distortion. "Rêverie" becomes a means of perceiving within ourself the echo of some powerful images of a poetic nature, and of letting them resonate in our mind independently from their context (and at times even in opposition to it). understands ideology as a complex whole traversed by powerful images which demand agreement in an irrational or supra-rational fashion. Within this context, "rêverie" acts as a filter, able to extract from ideology a certain number of images that can be shared with others. In spite of his mostly sociological emphasis, notes that "rêverie" is "that which leaves behind conventional meaning, and first of all rationalized meaning, in order to open up to poetic adventure. This whether we are speaking of the literary, the artistic or the political field."

It would appear that such an understanding of the concept of "rêverie" may be just what is needed to effectively reopen the debate on the role and importance of the imagination in the creation and the reading of popular literature. This would allow us to leave behind the old, negative and restrictive interpretations of the term "rêverie", which made it a synonym of alienation, and to understand it as a specific way of assimilating images on the part of the author as well as of the public.

"Rêverie" would thus be distanced from "fancy" as it was theorized by Elémire Zolla, and would become the detector of a certain truth - poetic and strictly personal in its origin, but nonetheless primordial. It may be enough to replace the concept of ideology with the concept of genre to be able to apply to the study of popular literature this brilliant intuition. The author's ability to present these views in a simple and direct style makes the article a pleasure to read.