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### Research Interests

Professor Babuts has been doing research in Nineteenth-Century French literature and in the field of Cognitive approaches to literature. He has studied Baudelaire in particular but also Hugo, Mallarmé, and Flaubert. He has worked toward developing a cognitive theory of literature. The new and radical move in the theory is to install memory at the center of interpretation. In this new context, interpretation is guided by the concept of dynamic patterns as units of meaning, which are represented neither by words alone nor by theoretical or perceptual categories but by sentences in their capacity to *unite* language and perception. The concept of dynamic patterns is crucial to understanding how meaning is created to represent the world in memory.

Among the courses taught:  
Nineteenth- Century French Poetry  
Realism and Naturalism  
Twentieth-Century French Theater  
Baudelaire and Racine

### Present position

Professor of French (emeritus), Syracuse University

### Education

PhD French, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor (1967)  
MA French, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor (1963)  
BA French and English, University of Toronto, Toronto (1957)  
Membership in  
Professional Societies: Modern Language Association

### Career

Assistant, Associate, and Professor of French (1967-1995),  
Syracuse University.  
Director of the Syracuse University Program Abroad  
in Poitiers, France (Spring of 1968).  
Teaching Fellow, French, University of Michigan (1963-67)

### Books

*Mimesis in a Cognitive Perspective: Mallarmé, Flaubert, and Eminescu.* New Brunswick, USA and London, UK: Transaction Publishers, 2011.  
*Memory, Metaphors, and Meaning: Reading Literary Texts.* New Brunswick, USA and London, UK: Transaction Publishers, 2009.  
*Baudelaire: At the Limits and Beyond.* Newark, USA and London, UK: University of Delaware Press--Associated University Presses, 1997.  
*The Dynamics of the Metaphoric Field: A Cognitive View of Literature.* Newark, USA and London, UK: University of Delaware Press--Associated University Presses, 1992.  
*Le Classicisme de la vision baudelairienne* (thesis, published) Ann Arbor : U of Michigan, 1967 c. 1968.

**Reviews of *Mimesis in a Cognitive Perspective: Mallarmé, Flaubert, and Eminescu*:**

Kerr, C. B. of Vassar College, in *Choice*, November 2011.

Moscovici, Claudia "literature salon" (Michigan) July 24, 2011 (see Amazon.com)

**Excerpts:**

"Displaying impeccable scholarship, Babuts sheds new light on Stéphane Mallarmé's "Hérodiade," Gustave Flaubert's "Hérodias," and Mihai Eminescu's "Luceafărul." He also takes his readers on a fascinating voyage through centuries of artistic creation, from Aristotle and Virgil to Shakespeare, Proust, Baudrillard, Ricoeur, and Tarantino." "Babuts skilfully lays the foundation for a cognitive approach to literature, proving that memory is crucial to the way humans process art. **Summing Up:** Recommended. Upper-division undergraduates and above."-- (C. B. Kerr)

"If you enjoy reading literary theory and subtle analyses of nineteenth-century fiction and theory, then "Mimesis in a Cognitive Perspective: Mallarmé, Flaubert, and Eminescu" is the book for you." "This book is a pleasure to read for any lover of the Romantic movement in literature and poetry." (Claudia Moscovici)

**Reviews of *Memory, Metaphors, and Meaning: Reading Literary Texts*:**

Bloss C. R. of Georgia Gwineth College, in *Choice* 47.5, January 2010.

Kaplan Edward K. of Brandeis University in *Symposium* 64.4 (Oct-Dec 2010): 290-92.

Nash, Suzanne of Princeton University in *Nineteenth-Century French Studies* 39.1-2 (Fall-Winter 2010-2011): 172-73.

**Excerpts:**

"In short, readers derive meaning from a literary text by recognizing the metaphors of the narrative.

**Summing Up:** Highly recommended. Upper-division undergraduates and above." (C. R. Bloss)

"Nicolae Babuts has contributed another lucid and graceful book of interpretation and theory as he advances his critique of deconstructive and formalist conceptions of literature's radical autonomy, its separation from the empirical world." "The book's turning point is Chapter 4, "The Allure of Myth" (79-99), which introduces extensive analyses of Homer and Virgil that gradually take over the book. I cannot do justice to the nuanced analyses in these chapters." "His theory of creativity as memory combining units of meaning placed in a new context becomes convincing as the reader remembers fragments of her or his own readings and experience." (Edward Kaplan)

"Nicolae Babuts's latest work on the relationship of memory to creative expression and interpretation is an invaluable addition to the current research on cognitive approaches to literature being carried out by such influential scholars as Elaine Scarry, Michael Holquist, and Jonathan Gottschall." *Memory, Metaphors, and Meaning* abounds in finely textured interpretations that demonstrate the power of literature to create meaning." "The primal figure whose world extends beyond all known limits in Hughes's "The Jaguar" is an eloquent metaphor for Babuts's passionately held position that 'poetry is freedom.'" (Suzanne Nash)

**Reviews of *Baudelaire: At the Limits and Beyond*:**

Hiddleston, J. A. of Exeter College, Oxford, in *Nineteenth-Century French Studies* 27.2-3 (Spring-Summer 1999): 424-25.

Kaplan, Edward K. of Brandeis University, in *Symposium* 53.3 (Fall 1999): 189-91

Crampton, Susan F. of University of North Carolina, Wilmington, in *French Review* 74 (Feb. 2001): 580.

McGowan, J. D. of Illinois Wesleyan University, in *Choice* (July-August 1998): 1859.

Salines, Emily of Middlesex University, in *Modern Language Review* 96.3 (July 2001): 834-35.

**Excerpts:**

--"One is impressed by the critical balance and intertextual dexterity of this eminently sane [cognitive] approach which is both modest and confident in the defense of its readings. Its strict fidelity to the texts makes it intolerant of ideologically driven interpretations originating elsewhere, and its sensitive response to the texts'

mnemonic appeal confirms that poetry, like painting, not only springs from the memory of the poet but speaks directly to that of the reader." (Hiddleston 425)

--"This is an elegant and open-minded study of Baudelaire's dynamics as poet and thinker. Applying his cognitively based theory of poetic creation and literary interpretation, convincingly demonstrated in *The Dynamics of the Metaphoric Field* (1992), Nicolae Babuts locates and interprets 'dynamic patterns' repeated in major Baudelaire texts . . ." (Kaplan 189).

--"This excellent book takes its place among the distinguished studies of Baudelaire."

"Highly readable and penetrating, *Baudelaire: At the Limits and Beyond* deserves careful study for its persuasive contributions to theory and insightful, broadly applicable, practical criticism." (Kaplan 191)

--"Babuts provides a valuable resource for Baudelairean studies. He succeeds in incorporating previous scholarly studies on this nineteenth-century poet into his own analysis of the poet's effort to transcend the limits of the self." (Crampton 580)

--"This is a challenging and satisfying study; the jargon is penetrable by upper-division undergraduates as well as researchers and faculty." (McGowan 1859)

--"Babuts's cognitive approach proves to be most relevant to the close analysis of Baudelaire's texts. It sheds a new light on the intertextual readings and interpretations which form a large part of the book and give fresh, useful, interdisciplinary readings of some of Baudelaire's key texts. The close study and comparative analyses of selected poems brings scope to Babuts's readings (particularly enlightening in this respect are the accounts of 'Une Mort héroïque' and 'Le Voyage')." (Salines 835)

## Articles

- "Leopardi's 'L'Infinito': A Cognitive View." *Symposium* 60 (Summer 2006): 67-80.
- "Reading Poetry: Metaphors as Instruments of Discovery." *Symposium* 57 (Winter 2004): 211-29.
- "Signs and Reality: The Tiger Effect." *Symposium* 56 (Winter 2003): 179-95.
- "Miorița': A Romanian Ballad in a Homeric Perspective." *Symposium* 54 (Spring 2000): 3-15.
- "Baudelaire's 'Le Voyage': The Dimension of Myth." *Nineteenth-Century French Studies* 25 (Spring-Summer 1997): 348-59.
- "Baudelaire's 'Le Mauvais vitrier' and 'Mademoiselle Bistouri.'" *Symposium* 49 (Fall 1995): 79-89.
- "Baudelaire in the Circle of Exiles: A study of 'Le Cygne.'" *Nineteenth-Century French Studies* 22 (Fall-Winter 1993-1994): 123-38.
- "Text: Origins and Reference." *PMLA* 107 (Jan. 1992): 65-77
- "Flaubert: Meaning and Counter-Meaning." *Symposium* 40 (Winter 1986-87): 247-58.
- "Hugo's La Fin de Satan: The Identity Shift." *Symposium* 35 (Summer 1981): 91-101.
- "Baudelaire et les anges de Swedenborg." *Romance Notes* 21, no. 3 (Spring 1981): 309-312.
- "Baudelaire et J. G. F." *Bulletin Baudelairien* 14 (hiver 1979): 3-6.
- "Structure and Meaning in Baudelairian Images of Immersion." *Symposium* 31 (Fall 1977): 185-95.
- "Le Coucher du soleil romantique." *Bulletin Baudelairien* 6 (August 1970): 12-17.
- "Une Réminiscence de Musset dans 'Spleen LXXVIII.'" *Bulletin Baudelairien* 3, 1 (1967): 22-23.
- "Une Réexamenation de la dette de Baudelaire envers Théophile Gautier." *Revue des Sciences humaines* 127 (juillet-septembre 1967): 351-80.

## Poetry

- "Lockerbie," "Magic," and "Mountain Lion." Forthcoming in *Stone Canoe*.
- "Sisyphus Contemplating the Way Down." *Blue Unicorn* 31, 1 (October 2007): 28.
- "Restaurant Valet Parking." *Parnassus Literary Journal* 28 (Fall-Winter 2004): 23.
- "Bridgeway." *Encore* 19 (Spring-Summer 1985): 4
- "Chercheuses d'infini." *Encore* 19 (Spring-Summer 1985): 7.
- "Leaving the Car to Be Serviced." *Windless Orchard* Issue 41 (Fall-Winter 1982-83): 45.
- "Worries of War." *Blue Unicorn* 4 (Feb. 1981): 38.
- "Along Erie Canal" and "Symphony No. 2." *Syracuse Scholar* 2 (Spring 1981): 49-51.
- "The Guest Soloist." *Poet Lore* 75 (Summer 1980): 99.
- "Symphony No. 1," "The Egg that Will Not Die," and "The Fundamental Parameter." *Poet Lore* 73 (Fall 1978): 106-110.

## Poetry Translations

Six Poems by Lucian Blaga:

"The Way of the Saint," "Eve," "The Colt," "Our Legend," "At Watershed," and "Before a Statue of Saint George." *Miorița* 7, no. 2 (1981): 93-102.

Four Poems by Lucian Blaga:

"From Your Hair," "At Dawn," "In the Great Passing," and "Paradise in Rags." *Modern Poetry in Translation* No. 36 (Spring 1979): 22-23.

As second author with W. D. Snodgrass:

"Toma Alimos" A Romanian Folk Ballad. *Oxford Quarterly Review* 1 (Summer-Autumn 1996): 59-67.

"If Boughs Tap at my Windowpane" ("Și Dacă," by Mihai Eminescu). *Tribuna* 16 (15 May 1987): 10.

"Now the Songbirds" ("Somnoroase Păsărele," by Mihai Eminescu). In *Mihai Eminescu*.

Ed. Augustin Maissen. Cristallina, Switzerland: Revista Retoromontscha, 1975.

### **Book Reviews**

- Jean-Jacques Thomas and Steven Winspur. *Poeticized Language: The Foundation of Contemporary French Poetry*. *Symposium* 56 (Summer 2002): 110-112.
- Lilian R. Furst. *All is True: The Claims and Strategies of Realist Fiction*. *Symposium* 52 (Summer 1998): 122-123.
- Claude Pichois and Jean Ziegler. *Charles Baudelaire*, nouvelle édition. *Nineteenth-Century French Studies* 26 (Fall-Winter 1997-1998): 224-225.
- Suzanne Nash, ed. *Home and its Dislocations in Nineteenth-Century France*. *Symposium* 50 (Summer 1996): 135-136.
- F. W. Leakey. *Baudelaire: Les Fleurs du mal*. *Symposium* 49 (Winter 1996): 307-309.
- Norman N. Holland. *The Critical I*. *Symposium* 49 (Winter 1996): 310-312.
- Edward K. Kaplan. *Baudelaire's Prose Poems: The Esthetic, the Ethical, and the Religious in the Parisian Prowler*. *Symposium* 47 (Spring 1993): 76-78.
- Allan H. Pasco. *Balzacian Montage: Configuring La Comédie humaine*. *Symposium* 46 (Winter 1993): 300-302.
- F. W. Leakey. *Baudelaire: Collected Essays, 1953-1988*. *Symposium* 44 (Winter 1990-1991): 310-311.
- Hayden Carruth, trans. *L'Après-midi d'un faune*. By Mallarmé. *Nineteenth-Century French Studies* 12-13 (Summer-Fall 1984): 195-97.
- Charles Chadwick. *Symbolism: The Critical Idiom*. *Symposium* 29 (Spring 1975): 184-186.
- Petre Ciureanu. *Baudelaire in Romania*. *Symposium* 27 (Summer 1973): 180-182.

### **Lectures and Papers.**

- "Baudelaire and Balzac: Echoes of L'Enfant maudit in 'L'Homme et la mer' and 'La Vie antérieure.'" 32nd Annual Nineteenth-Century French Studies Colloquium. Indiana University. Bloomington IN, 21 October, 2006.
- "Creativity, Cognition, and Poetry." Hawaii International Conference on Arts and Humanities." Honolulu, 13 January 2005.
- "Miorița: Actor and Spectator." The 23rd Convention of the American Romanian Academy of Arts and Sciences. University of Rochester. Rochester, NY, 8 August 1998.
- "Miorița." Reading of the Romanian Ballad. The 23rd Convention of the American Romanian Academy of Arts and Sciences. University of Rochester. Rochester, NY, 7 August 1998.
- "Baudelaire: A Question of Identity." Albert J. George Memorial Lecture. Syracuse University, Syracuse, 24 April 1998.
- "Dynamic Patterns as Units of Meaning: A Cognitive View." Nineteenth-Century French Studies Colloquium (Twenty-second Annual Meeting). University of Toronto, Toronto, 27 October 1996.
- "Andromache and Baudelairean Exile in 'Le Cygne.'" A Department of Romance Languages Lecture. Princeton University, Princeton, March 8, 1995.
- "Mnemonic Potentials and Textual Depth." MLA Special Session: Cognitive Approaches to Reading and Interpretation. Toronto, 30 December 1993.
- "Mnemonic Strategies and Meaning." Faculty Colloquium. Syracuse University, Syracuse, 20 November 1992.
- "Madame Bovary: A Game of Love and Identity." Tristan and Isolde: Heroes and Heroines as Lovers in Literature. State University of New York at Binghamton Conference, Binghamton, May 4, 1990.
- "Rhetoric and the Revolutionary Impulse in Musset's *Lorenzaccio*." The International Conference on Representing Revolution. West Georgia College, Atlanta, 27

October 1989.

"Word Encoding Strategies." Language and Communications V. Syracuse University, Syracuse, 9 April 1988.

"Flaubert: Meaning and Counter-Meaning." Albert J. George Memorial Lecture. Syracuse University, Syracuse, 19 March 1986.

"The Dynamics of the Literary Image." The Humanities Symposium: Approaches to the Study of Metaphor. Syracuse University, Syracuse, 12 April 1975.

"The French Decadents." A Lecture in a Series organized by students. Syracuse University, Syracuse, 1973.

"Mihai Eminescu." A Lecture on the Romanian Poet. Romance Language Honor Society, Syracuse University, Syracuse, 1969.

## References to my work:

On the article, "Text: Origins and Reference"

Brown, Marshall J. of University of Washington in his Introduction to the *Special Topic: Theory of Literary History*. *PMLA* 107 (January 1992):13-25.

--"[Babuts] combines the continuities of memory with the transgressions and the transcendence of self-expression or with the 'epiphanic moments' of metaphor" (19).

About the dissertation "Le Classicisme de la vision baudelairienne."

Pichois, Claude, ed. *Oeuvres complètes*. By Charles Baudelaire. 2 vols. Paris: Gallimard, 1975-76.

In this critical edition of Baudelaire's works, Pichois devotes a paragraph to describe Babuts's view:

"Dans sa thèse non publiée Nicolae Babuts conclut que Sonnet d'automne a été écrit par Baudelaire pour définir sa relation à Jeanne Duval. Le sonnet, comme la dédicace des Paradis artificiels, est symptomatique de la prédisposition de Baudelaire à s'identifier avec un modèle élu." 'In his unpublished dissertation, Nicolae Babuts concludes that "Sonnet d'automne" was written by Baudelaire to define his relationship with Jeanne Duval. The sonnet, like the dedication of Les Paradis artificiels, is symptomatic of Baudelaire's tendency to identify himself with a chosen model' (vol. 1, p. 946).

In connection with "Une Réexamination de la dette de Baudelaire envers Théophile Gautier."

Terrier, Philippe, ed. *Théophile Gautier: Deux études*. By Charles Baudelaire. Études baudelairienne 11. Neuchâtel: À la Baconnière, 1985.

In the Introduction to this critical edition of Baudelaire's two studies of Gautier, Philippe Terrier discusses the interpretation of Baudelaire's debt to Gautier. At the end of his summary, he writes: "Et Babuts de conclure également, sur la foi de la dédicace des Fleurs du Mal, que Baudelaire admirait sincèrement son maître en dépit des critiques formulées ça et là contre lui" 'And Babuts concludes also, on the strength of the dedication of Les Fleurs du mal [to Gautier], that Baudelaire sincerely admired his master in spite of critical remarks made from time to time against him' (p. 17).

Other references:

Acquisto, Joseph. "Digesting *Les Fleurs du mal*." *Nineteenth-Century French Studies* 37.1-2 (Fall-Winter 2008): 30-41. He refers to the analysis of "À celle qui est trop gaie" in *Baudelaire*.

Collins, Marsha Suzan. *The Soledades, Gongora's Masque of the Imagination*. U of Missouri P, 2002. Mentions Babuts's view that literary creation requires both linguistic and nonlinguistic sources.

Columbus, Claudette. "Map, Metaphor, Topos, and Toponym: Some Andean Instances." *CLAG: Yearbook* 20 (1994): 9-20. On p. 14 quotes from *The Dynamics of the Metaphoric Field*.

Donaldson-Evans, Mary. "A Pox on Love." *Symposium* 44 (Spring 1990): 25n 2. Reference to "Flaubert Meaning and Counter-Meaning."

Eisenhut, Johannes. "Kognitive Linguistik in der Literaturwissenschaft." (Lizentiatsarbeit at the University of Freiburg, 1997-98). Quotes from *Dynamics of the Metaphoric Field*, about the encoding Specificity principle. See also section "Idealized Cognitive Model" about firing patterns. <[www.grin.com/e-book110789/kognitive-linguistik](http://www.grin.com/e-book110789/kognitive-linguistik)>

Gilkison, Jean. "From Taboos to Transgressions: Textual Strategies in Woman-authored Spanish Erotic Fiction." *Modern Language Review* 94.3 (July 1999): 718-30. In notes 10 and 11, quotes from *The Dynamics of the Metaphoric Field*.

Hada, Natalia. "Metaphor in the Cognitive View." Part of her thesis at the University "1 Decembrie 1918" Alba Iulia (Romania). Analyzes concepts from *The Dynamics of the Metaphoric Field*. See her pp. 51, 55-58, 66-67.

Hamner, Robert D. *Epic of the Dispossessed, Derek Walcott's Omeros*. U of Missouri p, 1997. On p. 63n5, he quotes from "Text: Origins and Reference."

Jamison, Anne. "Anywhere Out of this Verse: Baudelaire's Prose Poetics and the Aesthetics of Transgression." *Nineteenth-Century French Studies* 29.3-4 (2001): 256-286. In notes 3 and 27, quotes from *Baudelaire* about "fragmentation" and "transgression."

- Judge, Anthony website. *Laetus in praesens*: "Social Reminders from Psychosocial Remaindering" (November 20, 2011). Under *Aesthetic remainder*, the author quotes a passage from *Memory, Metaphors, and Meaning*, pp. xv-xvi.
- Kelly, David. "Gautier et Baudelaire." In *Baudelaire, Mallarmé, Valéry*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1982. 77n 2. Reference to "Une Réexamination de la dette de Baudelaire . . ."
- Koskela, Katja. "Kieli ei ole sanasto, vaan ajatuksen ilmaisuneuvo" (Graduate work or thesis, 2001). On pp. 8-10, the author discusses Babuts's concepts in *The Dynamics*.
- Martin, Elena Garcia. "Cognition, Imagination, and Subject Construction in Don Quijote." *Symposium* 60.1 (Spring 2006): 27-39. Quotes about the role of memory from "Signs and Reality."
- Minahen, Charles D. "Irony and Violence in Baudelaire's 'À celle qui est trop gaie.'" *Symposium* 62 (Spring 2008): 3-15. On p. 14n16 he quotes from *Baudelaire* about the ending of the prose poem.
- Moroni, Mario. "Dynamics of Subjectivity." In *Avant Garde Critical Studies*, eds. W. van Reijenand W. G. Weststeijen. Rodopi, 2000? On his p. 6n1, he quotes from "Text Origins and Reference."
- Pichois, Claude and Jean Ziegler. *Baudelaire, nouvelle édition*. Fayard, 1996. 674-75n 49. In the Julliard 1987 edition, 653n33. Reference to my article on J G F.
- Porter, Laurence. "Pourquoi 'La fin de Satan' est-il resté inachevé?" *Nineteenth-Century French Studies* 18 (Spring-Summer 1990): 464. Reference to the Hugo article.
- Salines, Emily. *Alchemy and Amalgam: Translation in the Works of Charles Baudelaire*. 2004. Quotes from "Le Voyage: The Dimension of Myth."
- Scott, Maria C. *Baudelaire's Le Spleen de Paris: Shifting Perspectives*. Ashgate, 2005. On p. 11 she quotes from *Baudelaire* about the concept of correspondences. See also p. 57n16.
- Tikkanen, Jari-Pekka. "Kaikkivaltias vielä yhdesti valona." (Graduate work or thesis 2006). On p. 19 reference to *The Dynamics*.
- Wourm, Natalie. "The Smell of God: Scent trails from Ficino to Baudelaire." in *Sense and Scent*. Eds. Bronwen Martin and Felizitas Ringham (Birkbeck e Prints). Pp. 81-98. On p. 98n20 reference to "Baudelaire et les Anges de Swedenborg."
- Zalloua, Zahi. "Baudelaire and the Ethics of Demystification." *Tropos* (2000): 5-24. On p.19.n5, a quote from *Baudelaire* about the "Satanic delight."