

## BOOK REVIEW

# THE FRIENDSHIP OF A MOUNTAIN

by Pascal BRUCKNER

**ANA SCALCĂU**

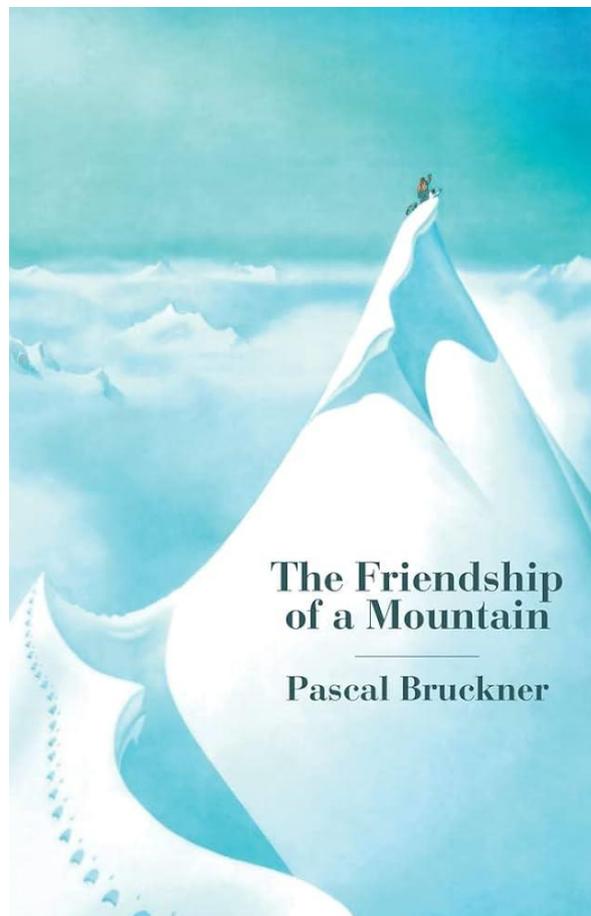
*Colegiul Național Bănățean, Timișoara, Romania*  
*anascalcau@yahoo.com*

Pascal Bruckner is a French novelist and essayist, whose best-selling books include: *Evil Angels*, *The Beauty Stealers*, *The Temptation of Innocence*, *The Tears of the White Man*, *The Tyranny of Guilt* and *An Imaginary Racism: Islamophobia and Guilt*.

His latest work, *The Friendship of a Mountain*, was published by Grasset in 2022, translated by Doru Mareș and available to the Romanian readers in 2023.

The book begins as an autobiography and contains a lot of stories from Bruckner's life, but it is actually an essay, in which the author meditates on the nature of mountains, some of their history, their attraction as well as their dangers and also on the reasons for which people like to climb them. The autobiographical details keep appearing

throughout the book and there are plenty of anecdotes, but they are merely a pretext for Bruckner to raise those questions which interest him. Why are people drawn to the mountains? Why do they keep climbing them in spite of the dangers? What mistakes have people made in recent years regarding their



**Scalcău A.**

BOOK REVIEW: THE FRIENDSHIP OF A MOUNTAIN by Pascal BRUCKNER

---

understanding of the environment? How has tourism changed over time and how does that affect the natural world?

What I particularly like about this book is the fact that it appeals to all the senses of the readers. It appeals to their sight in all the passages filled with splendid figures of speech that create a magnificent, yet frightening image of the mountains. It appeals to their hearing through the bird songs, the howling of the wolves as well as through the gentle mooing or the sound of the cowbells. It appeals to their smell in an anecdote about the freezing of the toilet pipe and the accident which followed as well as in the mentioning of the fresh grass and all the flowers in the glades. It appeals to their taste in the story about the milk, which Bruckner refers to as “the liquid sibling of snow” and also in the one about his ritual of drinking hot chocolate whenever he visits Switzerland. It appears to their touch in the stories about the hard surface of the mountain or the soft snow which saved the life of a climber who had fallen from a great height, but also in those about the pain and blisters that come from climbing. The book reads easily and the anecdotes make it entertaining. All in all, it is a highly original declaration of love for the mountains.