INTRODUCTION

In the context of capitalist globalisation and time-space compression (as defined by David Harvey), several socio-spatial theorists have analysed the relationship between the local and the global, as well as how certain regional representations are the product of cultural interferences and hybridisations. From this point of view, our special issue, *Uneven Worlds. Beyond the Canons of Cultural Representations*, investigates the role played by regional and (semi-)peripheral cultures within world-systems and geographies of uneven development, and explores how they resist the false homogenisation implied by globalisation.

Whether or not we are drawn to global fictions that have emerged from postcolonial literary studies and have employed tropes such as "hybridity, diaspora, transculturation, subaltern, hegemony, deterritorialisation, rhizome, mestizo, Eurocentrism and othering" (O'Brien and Szeman 2001, 605), in relation to world literature or to the "one, and unequal" world-literary system (Moretti 2004, WReC), a certain reminiscence of the Iron Curtain, an impossible translation, and a lack of porosity characterise the circulation of peripheral literatures towards the centre. While writers such as Abdulrazak Gurnah, Shehan Karunatilaka and Mohamed Mbougar Sarr are recuperated in the central circuit of the Nobel, Booker and Goncourt prizes, but still living and producing in the centre, we chose to explore the mechanisms of resistance, the impossibility of translation and the subversive strategies of "cultural management" that export various models of the periphery.

Is it through identification, deviation, exoticism or rather through a widespread critique of capitalism that they manage to impose their models? The authors' contributions to this issue explore the reconciliation but also the crisis models of the Global Novel, proposing new strategies of "cultural translation" in this unequal dialogue. From this point of view, the included articles investigate various forms of cultural hybridity, by involving a strong geographical imagination, aimed at mapping polymorphous models of identity-ideological transgressions.

Using *anarchetypes,* as defined by Corin Braga (2022), and other figures of a possible renegotiation, this issue proposes several theoretical strategies through which periphery becomes "exportable" and genres become evanescent. Within world literature, an important area is the investigation of literary forms hitherto considered peripheral, undermining the hegemony of high-brow literature that marked literary systems in the past.

In "Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*. The Archetypal Initiation Pattern," Corin Braga applies the core concept that the author has coined – *the anarchetype* – to the ancient Greek and Latin novel. Projected into an organising pattern (the initiation journey) and various mystery cults (Dea Syria, Dionysos, Isis, Medio-Platonism), the tension between archetypal and anarchetypical tendencies is highlighted specifically by placing the popular narrative *Onos* in contrast with the well-known novel *The Golden Ass*.

Cultural hybridisation, present since ancient times, pervades the text written by Laura T. Ilea, *"*The Secret Memory. How the Goncourt 2021, Mohamed Mbougar Sarr, Rewrites the Story of the 'Black Rimbaud'*,"* especially through extended discussions on "plagiarism," in regard to Western relations to Africa, to its cultures and its storytelling. Different forms of marginality are explored through voices of Senegalese, Haitian, Argentinian writers and poets, through an apocryphal rewriting of the literary history of the twentieth century, as well as through detective journalism. The marginal and the minor appear as an alternative literary history of the twentieth and the early twenty-first centuries, subverting the established power relations between centre and periphery through an "incalculable supplement."

In her article "Listening and Legibility: Urban Surfaces against 'Overarching Meanings' in Lispector's *The Besieged City*," Călina Părău focuses on Brazilian writer Clarice Lispector's novel, opposing the term of "geographies of reason" to the untranslatability of the self. "Geographies of reason" are not countered through introspection or subjectivity, but through a world-making *poiesis*. By opposing *opaqueness* to *legibility*, Lispector maps a territory that defies the logic of the colonial gaze, designing a hybrid global memory, tensed between Euro-American literature and the Global South.

Alex Văsieș, in his article "Global Threads, Unveiling Unevenness: Contemporary Maximalist Projects Interrogating Cultural Hybridisation and Marginality," highlights the interconnections between migration, periphery, and marginality, in maximalist novels such as Zadie Smith's *White Teeth*, Arundhati Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*, or Bernardine Evaristo's *Girl, Woman, Other*, in order to emphasise the excess of storytelling, the forced meaning and the tendency to narratively mapping the whole world.

In the context of geocritical studies, a relevant contribution is represented by Maria Barbu's article, "A(n) (Anarche)Typical Journey through New York: Don Delillo's *Cosmopolis* as an American Postmodern Odyssey," which identifies the specificity of the postmodern subject through two types of geographical narratives (internalising utopian tendencies), namely the search for a better life and for bigger opportunities *versus* journeys out of the "sheer pleasure of travelling."

Constantin Tonu explores the field of cultural translation through his take on "Andreï Makine – From Anonymity to Literary Fame," by analysing three strategies employed by the author: the pseudo-translation (Makine had to create fictitious translators in order to get his texts published, because French editors did not believe that a non-French writer could master the language to such a degree), the creation of a personal mythology and the exploitation of an image of Russia that would be pleasing to Western eyes. The final outcome is the creation of a hybrid identity, which consists in a strategy of negotiation between two almost irreconcilable models, and especially an art of performing the narrative self.

In the same vein of performativity, Simona Locic's text, "Avatars of the Storyteller in *Le Petit Chaperon Uf* by Jean-Claude Grumberg," puts together aesthetics and ethics trough the re-staging of Perrault's canonical tale. The aim of this performative approach is a different narration of the Shoah and the possibility of finding alternatives to the recurrence of evil. The storyteller splits into two: the wolf-storyteller and the heroine-storyteller, which represent the terrifying and the peaceful faces of Great History.

Focusing both on language and performativity, Bettina Ene explores, in the article "Language as a Tool of Influence: Discourse Analysis of Daenerys Targaryen's Speeches in Dothraki and High Valyrian in *Game of Thrones*," the popular culture through the strategies of cultural adaptation, examining the multilingual discourse and diplomatic techniques instrumented by Daenerys Targaryen in the "Game of Thrones" television series, by using the Dothraki and High Valyrian languages, designed by linguist David Peterson.

In the context of the pandemic global crisis, the contribution of Gabriela Glăvan, "Pandemic Biopolitics in Romanian Literature," uses a theoretical frame related to posthumanism, medical humanities, and ethics to explore the conjunction between pandemic effects and fictional narratives in contemporary Romanian literature: Florina Ilis' *Pandemia veselă și tristă* [The Happy and Sad Pandemic, 2020], Teodor Hossu-Longin's *Măștile din spatele măștii* [The Masks behind the Mask, 2022], and collective volumes such as *Izolare* [*Isolation*, 2020] and *Jurnal din vremea pandemiei. Proză de grup* [Journal from the Times of the Pandemic, 2021, edited by Marius Cosmeanu].

Using concepts such as frontier Orientalism, the article of Andreea Mîrţ, "Romanian and Hungarian Otherness. A World-System Perspective on the Event Novel," investigates the dynamics between the Romanian and Hungarian literary systems in the context of the First World War. By analysing the novels *Moartea unei Republici Roșii* [The Death of a Red Republic] by Felix Aderca and *Anna Édes* by Dezső Kosztolányi, the author highlights the tensions regarding the imaginary patterns of otherness and the inequalities within the global system.

Iulian Coțofană, in his text "Ionescu-Ionesco, Voice of an Exile? Proposal for a Theoretical Rereading," proposes a different reading of Eugène Ionesco's exile, by focusing on a selection of texts following the 1930s, in an attempt to show that the author's own reflexive work and the research made on it are deeply interconnected. The main aim of this article is to reopen a central issue in the migration studies, especially regarding the exile or expatriate status of this well-known French playwright of Romanian origin.

Bogdan Contea and Iulia Pietraru reflect on the categories and genres of post-communist literature in the article "The Post-Communist Novel of Transition as Realism of Transition. Thematic Precedents in Romanian and East-Central European Literature," by instrumenting the most relevant theories on the combined and uneven development systems (WReC). In novels such as Bogdan Coșa's *How Close the Cold Rains Are* (2020) and Mihai Duțescu's *Beech Sponges* (2021), the authors speculate on the nature of "the realism of transition" in Romanian post-communism.

The last text of the issue addresses identity-ideological transgressions through Gabriel Girigan's "Voices of Rudari Women from Filiași (Romania) in the Context of Conversion to Pentecostalism," by implying notions of cultural transformation and gender in a specific ethnographic context, namely the conversion to Pentecostalism among Rudari women in post-socialist Eastern Europe. Reacting to local cultural practices and the conversion phenomenon among men, women challenge the traditional notions of masculinity through visions, dreams, ecstatic phenomena and mediation, assuming a translating and therapeutical role, which is placed between the past and the future of the Rudari Pentecostal community.

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