



UNIVERSITATEA BABEȘ-BOLYAI
BABEȘ-BOLYAI TUDOMÁNYEGYETEM
BABEȘ-BOLYAI UNIVERSITÄT
BABEȘ-BOLYAI UNIVERSITY
TRADITIO ET EXCELLENTIA



PN-III-P4-IDPCE-2020-2006

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE:

Worlding (*semi*)peripheral literatures

**KEYNOTE
SPEAKER**

Galin Tihanov

Queen Mary
University of
London, UK,
Institute for
World
Literature

4-5
nov
2022

Centrul UBB
de Industree Creative,
Cluj Innovation Park

Tiberiu
Popoviciu 2-4,
Cluj-Napoca

Starting time:

10:00 AM

Main venue: The Regional Centre of Excellence for Creative Industries (CREIC)
address: 2-4 Tiberiu Popoviciu St., Cluj-Napoca

Worlding (Semi)Peripheral Literatures

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

TIME		FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 4	
10:00 AM	PARTICIPANTS ARRIVAL AND REGISTRATION		
10:15 AM	Introductory addresses		
10:30 AM	Keynote address		
10:30 AM	Galın Tihanov, Queen Mary University of London, <i>Two Types of Cosmopolitanism: Pathways Away From Marginality</i>		
11:10 AM	DISCUSSIONS		
11:30 AM	COFFEE BREAK		
11:40 AM	PANEL 1 - chaired by Paul Paraschiv	PANEL 2 - chaired by Maria Chiorean	
11:40 AM	Adriana Stan, Babeş-Bolyai University, <i>Uneven Modernisms. The Cases of Max Blecher and Bruno Schulz</i>	Petronia Petrar, Babeş-Bolyai University, <i>Internationalizing Scotland: the Case of Muriel Spark</i>	
12:00 PM	Ştefan Baghiu, Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu, <i>The National Discovery of the World: Planetary Networks of the Modern Novel in the European Periphery</i>	Daiana Gârdan, Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu, Babeş-Bolyai University, <i>From Library to Lab: How Digital and Systems Analyses Shape Literary Scholarship</i>	
12:20 PM	Erika Mihalycsa, Babeş-Bolyai University, <i>Critical Late Modernism in Irish Gaelic: Máirtín Ó Cadhain, Myles nag Copaleen</i>	Emanuel Modoc, Babeş-Bolyai University, <i>Worlding Literature through Translational Canons. The Case of Romanian Periodical Culture (1919-1944)</i>	
12:40 PM	DISCUSSIONS	DISCUSSIONS	
1:00 PM	LUNCH BREAK		
2:20 PM	PANEL 3 - chaired by Daiana Gârdan	PANEL 4 - chaired by Petronia Petrar	
2:20 PM	Jun Mita, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Kitasato University, <i>Portrait of a Border City. Maribor in the Novels by Drago Jančar</i>	Maria Chiorean, Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu, <i>Racialised Modernity in Late Nineteenth-Century Romanian Literature</i>	
2:40 PM	Snejana Ung, Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu, <i>Peripheral Routes: The Circulation of the Novel in Post-Imperial East Europe (1918-1989)</i>	Alex Goldiş, Babeş-Bolyai University, <i>The Competition between "Core Literatures" within the Romanian Literary Market</i>	
3:00 PM	Mihaela Ursa, Babeş-Bolyai University, <i>Spreadable Narratives beyond Literary Margins. The Illiterate and "the Great Books"</i>	Cosmin Borza, Babeş-Bolyai University, <i>Naming the East. The Romanian Interwar Debates on the Regional Approach to Literature</i>	
3:20 PM	DISCUSSIONS		
4:00 PM	PANEL 5 - chaired by Ştefan Baghiu	PANEL 6 - chaired by Erika Mihalycsa	
4:00 PM	Adrian Tătăran, Babeş-Bolyai University, <i>Being "Minor" at the Margins. Classical Anarchism and Literature in Romania</i>	Anca Socaci, Babeş-Bolyai University, <i>How to do Things with (First) Translations: the Case of Mircea Cărtărescu</i>	
4:20 PM	Mihai Ţapu, Babeş-Bolyai University, <i>Travelling Theory-Fiction</i>	Dragoş Bucur, Babeş-Bolyai University, <i>Jewish Romanian Interwar Literature & World Literature</i>	
4:40 PM	Teona Farmatu, Babeş-Bolyai University, <i>The Double Marginality of Romanian Feminist Poetry. Edginess, Theoretical Gaps, and Neoliberal Absorption</i>	Paul Paraschiv, Babeş-Bolyai University, <i>Literary Animals: War, Necropolitics and the Transgression of Fictional Boundaries in Ceridwen Dovey's "Only the Animals"</i>	
5:00 PM	DISCUSSIONS	DISCUSSIONS	
5:30 PM	END OF FIRST CONFERENCE DAY		
5:30 PM	MEET AND GREET		

STARTING TIME

11:00 AM

Main venue: The Regional Centre of Excellence for Creative Industries (CREIC)
address: 2-4 Tiberiu Popoviciu St., Cluj-Napoca

TIME		SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 5	
10:40 AM	STARTING COFFEE		
11:00 AM	Plenary - chaired by Ovio Olaru		
11:00 AM	Thomas J. Cousineau, Washington College USA, <i>Oedipus – Manole -- Exekias: Covert Models for Literary Prehistory</i>		
11:20 AM	Laura T. Ilea, Babes-Bolyai University, <i>Metasporic Canons</i>		
11:40 AM	DISCUSSIONS		DISCUSSIONS
12:00 PM	PANEL 7 - chaired by Adrian Tătăran		PANEL 8 - chaired by Dragoş Bucur
12:00 PM	Ovio Olaru, Babes-Bolyai University, <i>Translating the North. From Norientalism to Interperipherality</i>	Andreea Mîrţ, Babes-Bolyai University, <i>The Representation of the Tatars in the Polish and Romanian Historical Novel: a Case Study on Mihail Sadoveanu and Henryk Sienkiewicz</i>	
12:20 PM	Larisa Prodan, Babes-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca, <i>Women Migrants in Italy: A Double Peripherality</i>	Emanuel Lupaşcu, Babes-Bolyai University, <i>Asynchronous Instantaneity. The "Posthuman Turn" in the Romanian Literary System</i>	
12:40 PM	DISCUSSIONS		DISCUSSIONS
1:00 PM	FINAL REMARKS. PUBLICATION PLANS		
1:00 PM	END CONFERENCE LUNCH		

Keynote speaker



KEYNOTE ADDRESS:
Friday, November 4, 2022

George Steiner Professor of Comparative Literature at Queen Mary University of London, having previously held teaching positions at the University of Manchester and visiting appointments at Yale University, Peking University and the Higher School of Economics (Moscow), among others. He is the author and (co)editor of sixteen books, having widely published on comparative literature and cultural history, with a focus on Russian, German, and Central- and East-European literature and intellectual history. Currently, his research is centered around world literature, cosmopolitanism, and exile. His recent publications include *The Birth and Death of Literary Theory: Regimes of Relevance in Russia and Beyond* (Stanford University Press, 2019) and *A Companion to the Works of Hermann Broch* (Camden House, 2019). He was awarded, along with Evgeny Dobrenko, the Efim Etkind Prize for Best Book on Russian Culture

**GALIN
TIHANOV**

(2012), for their co-edited *A History of Russian Literary Theory and Criticism: The Soviet Age and Beyond* (University of Pittsburgh Press, 2011). Tihanov is Honorary President of the ICLA Committee on Literary Theory and member of the Advisory Board and the Executive Committee of the Institute for World Literature at Harvard

University. He has just completed a monograph titled *Cosmopolitanism: A Very Short Introduction* for Oxford University Press.

Two Types of Cosmopolitanism: Pathways Away From Marginality

In this lecture, I insist that cosmopolitanism is not a homogeneous concept. In fact, there are two different types of cosmopolitanism which I identify as cultural and political cosmopolitanism. They do not coincide, and there is an underlying distance between them. Cultural cosmopolitanism (let me for convenience sake call it Herderian cosmopolitanism) has at its core the appreciation of difference, and language is central to this understanding of the world as the site of interaction between distinctive cultures which can be translated into one another but can never be entirely reduced to a denominator of commonality. The other type of cosmopolitanism, which I call political cosmopolitanism (or, for convenience sake, Kantian cosmopolitanism) rests on a different assumption: it is usually language-neutral and sees the world as a place that evolves towards some measure of homogeneity; while not neglecting difference, this version of cosmopolitanism believes that commonality, attained through various procedures of equivalence and reciprocity (think of Kant's imperative of hospitality towards the foreigner by any state, whose citizen s/he is not), ought to be the ultimate goal of history, the horizon that should navigate all nations' journeys through it. While discussing this fundamental difference, I also consider the common ground between these two types of cosmopolitanism and then examine their intersection through a number of concrete examples drawn from cultural philosophy and literature. I offer an analysis of various engagements with cosmopolitanism in Eastern and Central Europe as a way of resisting (not always successfully) marginality.

Participants

Ștefan Baghiu is Assistant Professor of Romanian Literature and Literary Theory with the Department of Romance Studies at Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu. He is currently finishing his postdoctoral research on the translation of foreign novels in Romania between 1794 and 1947. He has authored several articles on Romanian literature, such as “The Functions of Socialist Realism: Translation of Genre Fiction in Communist Romania” (*Primerjalna književnost*, 2019), “Translating Hemispheres: Eastern Europe and the Global South Connection through Translationscapes of Poverty” (*Comparative Literature Studies*, 2019), and “Quantitative translationscapes and chronological constellations: French, Soviet, and American novels in communist Romania” (*World Literature Studies*, 2021). He co-edited *The Culture of Translation in Romania* (Peter Lang, 2018), *Ruralism and Literature in Romania* (Peter Lang, 2019), and *Beyond the Iron Curtain: Revisiting the Literary System of Communist Romania* (Peter Lang, 2021). He is one of the coordinators of *The Digital Museum of the Romanian Novel: The 19th Century*, *The Digital Museum of the Romanian Novel: 1901-1932*, and *The Digital Museum of the Romanian Novel: 1933-1947*.

Cosmin Borza is senior researcher at Sextil Pușcariu Institute of Linguistics and Literary History, Romanian Academy, Cluj-Napoca branch, and also member of the research project *Worlding (Semi)Peripheral Literatures. A Systems Analysis* (PN-III-P4-IDPCE-2020-2006), hosted by Babeș-Bolyai University. His main areas of research are twentieth- and twenty-first-century Romanian literature, Post-Communist East-Central European Culture, critical theory, and the relationships between literature and ideology. He is the author of two books of criticism (*Marin Sorescu. Alone among the Canonical Writers* – 2014 and *Canonical Debate Today. The Case of Romanian Postwar Literature* – 2016).

Dragoș Bucur holds an MA in Romanian Literary Studies from Babeș-Bolyai University, currently working on a doctoral thesis about Jewish-Romanian literature from the interwar period. His research interests revolve around Jewish-Romanian literature, but also the avant-garde(s). He is the author of several articles, published in academic journals or in edited volumes.

Maria Chiorean holds a BA in Comparative and Romanian Literature from Babeș-Bolyai University and an MLitt in Postcolonial and World Literatures from the University of St Andrews, Scotland. She is currently a PhD candidate of the Lucian Blaga University, researching the depiction of ethno-racial minorities in the modern Romanian novel. She has published in academic journals (*Transilvania*, *Metacritic Journal*, and *Transylvanian Review*). She also works as a translator and an editor for *Metacritic Journal for Comparative Studies and Theory* and *Echinox* cultural magazine.

Thomas J. Cousineau is a Professor of English (Emeritus) at Washington College (USA), Fulbright Scholar at the University of Bucharest, and Fulbright Specialist at Lucian Blaga University in Sibiu. He has edited the newsletter of the Samuel Beckett Society for several years and co-directed the “Présence de Samuel Beckett” celebration of the Beckett centenary at Cerisy la Salle in Normandy. He is the author of *After the Final No: Samuel Beckett’s Trilogy*, *Waiting for Godot: Form in Movement*, *Ritual Unbound: Reading Sacrifice in Modernist Fiction*, *Three-Part Inventions: The Novels of Thomas Bernhard*, *An Unwritten Novel: Fernando Pessoa’s The Book of Disquiet*, and *The Séance of Reading: Uncanny Designs in Modernist Writing*.

Teona Farmatu is currently completing her MA in Romanian Literary Studies at Babeș-Bolyai University. She is deputy editor-in-chief at *Echinox* magazine, and has published cultural journalism and academic articles in *Transilvania*, *Metacritic Journal for Comparative Studies and Theory*, mainly on female poets and Romanian poetry. She is the multiple recipient of a Star UBB fellowship for excellent student research.

Daiana Gârdan is assistant researcher with Lucian Blaga University, and a postdoctoral fellow with Babeș-Bolyai University, Faculty of Letters, in Cluj-Napoca. She obtained her PhD from the Faculty of Letters, Babeș-Bolyai University in 2022 with a dissertation titled *A Reevaluation of Romanian Literary Modernity: The Novel as Quantitative Data*. Her current research interests include modern and comparative literature, digital humanities, and transnational studies.

Alex Goldiș is an Assistant Professor and Vice Dean of the Faculty of Letters, Babeș-Bolyai University, and the director of the Metacritic Center for Advanced Literary Studies. His work deals with twentieth- and twenty-first-century Romanian literature, digital humanities, and quantitative cultural history. He has published in academic journals and essay collections published in Romania, the United States of America, Germany, Spain, Slovakia, and the Czech Republic. He is the author of two monographs: *The Entrenchments of Literary Criticism: From Socialist Realism to Aesthetic Autonomy* (2011) and *Methodological Updates in the Romanian Criticism of the 1970s and 1980s: Theories, Methods, Critics* (2013) and he has contributed to edited volumes for Bloomsbury Academic and Peter Lang: “Between Transnationalism and Nation Building: Literary History as Geolocation”, in M. Martin, C. Moraru, A. Terian (eds.), *Romanian Literature as World Literature* (2018); “Literary Interferences in Subversive East-European Cultures”, in M. Sass, Ș. Baghiu, V. Pojoga (eds.), *The Culture of Translation in Romania*, 2018; “The Ideology of Ruralism in the Thaw Prose”, in Ș. Baghiu, V. Pojoga, M. Sass (eds.), *Ruralism and Literature in Romania*, 2019.

Laura T. Ilea is a writer of novels (*Cartographies of the Other World*, 2018, *The Western Women Have no Honor*, 2015), short stories (*East*, 2008), literary studies (*The Canadian Literature in Infrared. On Feminine Nihilism*, 2015) *Littérature et scénarios d'aveuglement – Orban Pamuk, Ernesto Sabato, José Saramago*, 2013), and philosophy on Martin Heidegger (*Life and Its Shadow. The Existential Foundation of Knowledge*, 2007). She teaches comparative literature at Babeş-Bolyai University, is associate researcher at SenseLab, Concordia, and member of the Center of Research on Literary and Cultural Studies on Planerarity, Université de Montréal. Her most recent essay is *Politics of Desire. For a Relational Condition* (Milano, 2021).

Emanuel Lupaşcu is completing his MA in literary studies at Babeş-Bolyai University and is the recipient of a Star UBB fellowship for excellent student research. He has published in academic journals (*Transilvania, Transylvanian Review, Studia Philologia*) and in literary magazines and in Romanian edited volumes of cultural journalism.

Erika Mihálycsa is Lecturer in the Department of English Language and Literature at the Faculty of Letters, Babeş-Bolyai University. A member of the editorial board of *European Joyce Studies* (Rodopi/Brill), she has published mainly in the field of Joyce and Beckett studies (linguistic poetics, bilingualism, Joyce/Beckett and/in translation), and read at a number of Joyce symposia and summer schools (Trieste, Dublin). She edits the literary and art journal *HYPERION – For the Future of Aesthetics*, issued by Contra Mundum Press, and has translated into Hungarian works by Samuel Beckett, Flann O'Brien, Patrick McCabe, George Orwell, Anne Carson, Jeanette Winterson.

Andreea Mîrţ is a PhD student in Literary Studies at Babeş-Bolyai University. Her dissertation focuses on the representation of the „East” in the Romanian novel. She is an editor of the *Echinox* magazine. Her interests include modern and comparative literature, translation studies, and contemporary Romanian literature, on which she has published academic articles and chapters.

Jun Mita is Associate Professor at Kitasato University College of Liberal Arts and Sciences in Japan. His recent publications include: Mita, J. (2021). 'The Mechanism of the Uncanny in Vilhelm Hammershøi's Interior Paintings'. In Manuela D'Amore (ed.), *THE UNCANNY AND THE AFTERLIFE OF THE GOTHIC*, Interdisciplinary Discourses, 2021, 79-100; Mita, J. (2021). "L'Unheimliche en tant que source du fantastique. Autour de la traduction des notions de l'« étrange » todorovien et de l'« inquiétante étrangeté » freudienne". *Pitannâ literaturoznavstva*, no. 103, Sept. 2021, pp. 169-83; and Mita, J. (2018). *Imagined "North". On Geopoetics of Symbolism in Belgium*. Kyoto: Shoraisha.

Emanuel Modoc obtained his PhD in comparative and world literature at Babeş-Bolyai University, with a thesis on the networks of East-Central European avant-gardes. He is an assistant editor for the *Metacritic Journal for Comparative Studies and Theory* and a research assistant at the "Sextil Puşcariu" Institute of Linguistics and Literary History", of the Romanian Academy. He authored the volume *Internaționala periferiilor. Rețeaua avangardelor din Europa Centrală și de Est/ The International of Peripheries. Avant-Garde Networks of East-Central Europe* (2020) and edited the writings of Surrealist poet Paul Păun (2020). His research interests include transnational literary networks, computational analysis, network theory and quantitative approaches to the study of world literatures.

Ovio Olaru is Assistant Professor of German Language and Literature with the Department of Anglo-American and German Studies at Lucian Blaga University and Research Assistant at Babeş-Bolyai University. His fields of research include German, Romanian, and Scandinavian studies, as well as Digital Humanities. He is also a translator of Scandinavian literature. He co-edited *Beyond the Iron Curtain. Revisiting the Literary System of Communist Romania* (Berlin: Peter Lang, 2021).

Paul Mihai Paraschiv is a PhD student at the Faculty of Letters, Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca. He holds a Master's degree in Irish Studies and, as of 2020, he is an affiliate of the Centre for the Study of the Modern Anglophone Novel. His research interests include posthumanism, animal studies, ecocriticism and literary theory. He has recently published a translation into Romanian of Cary Wolfe's "Human, All Too Human: 'Animal Studies' and the Humanities" in *Post/h/um Journal* and articles or reviews in *Studia Philologia*, *Caietele Echinox* and *Metacritic Journal for Comparative Studies and Theory*.

Petronia Popa Petrar is a lecturer with the English Department of the Babeş-Bolyai University. Her research interests include twentieth century and contemporary fiction, the Scottish novel, and narrative ethics. She has published papers on the modernist, postmodernist and the contemporary novel, and she has edited several collections of essays, including a special issue of the journal *American, British and Canadian Studies* on "World and Nation: Tropes of Representation in Contemporary Scottish Writing." She is the director of the Centre for the Study of the Modern Anglophone Novel, affiliated with her home university. She is the author of *Spatial Representations in Contemporary British Fiction* (2012), and, with Carmen-Veronica Borbély, of *Our Heteromorphic Future: Encoding the Posthuman in Contemporary British Fiction* (2014).

Larisa Prodan is a PhD student at the Faculty of Letters, Babeş-Bolyai University. She has a MA degree in comparative literature with a thesis on the literary and cinematographic representations of the banning of abortion during the communist regime. She has authored articles in national and international publications such as *Revista Vatra* or *Studia Philologia*. Her research interests include literary theory, migration, exile and representations of trauma.

Anca Socaci is a PhD student at the Faculty of Letters, Babeş-Bolyai University. Her research focuses on Romanian literature translation policies. Her interests include the figure of the Romanian writer in an international context, as well as the role of translation in the formation of the literary canon. She has published articles in *Transylvania* and *Studia UBB Philologia*. Her latest publication in this area is “L'écrivain face au monde : la conduite de Mircea Cărtărescu dans les entretiens pour un public anglophone” (*Dacoromania Litteraria*, 2021).

Adriana Stan is Assistant Professor at the “Babeş-Bolyai” University of Cluj-Napoca, where she teaches Comparative Literature at the Faculty of Letters. Her main areas of research relate to the history of critical ideas, the history of literary ideologies, the history of Central and Eastern European literatures. Her recent work concerns interwar modernism, postmodernism, the literary reflections of anticommunism, the evolution of the novel in (semi)peripheral literatures, topics of migration in post-communist literature. She is the author of the volumes *Tudor Vianu's Posterity. The Alternatives of Postwar Romanian Criticism* (2015), and *The Linguistic Bastion. A Comparative History of Structuralism in Romania* (2017).

Adrian Tătăran is a PhD candidate in comparative literature at the Faculty of Letters, Babeş-Bolyai University, Romania. He is a member of *Metacritic Journal for Comparative Studies and Theory* and *Ekphrasis – Images, Cinema, Theory, Media* editorial teams. His research interests include the history of social movements, cultural history, comparative literature, and anarchist studies.

Mihai Țapu is a PhD student at the Faculty of Letters, Babeş-Bolyai University. B.A. studies in Comparative and Universal Literature and MA studies in Digital Humanities. Current research interests range over “theory-fiction”, speculative realism and accelerationism. Involved in different projects with the Bucharest-based multidisciplinary artistic research group wundrkam.

Snejana Ung is Research Assistant at Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu. Her main research interests are post-Yugoslav literature and the inter-peripheral circulation of the novel in Eastern Europe between 1918 and 1989, with emphasis on the Romanian and Yugoslav cultures. Her PhD dissertation investigated the literature written about the Yugoslav wars as a world literary phenomenon. She has published articles in *Transylvania* and *Metacritic Journal for Comparative Studies and Theory*, and contributed with an essay to the volume *Ruralism and Literature in Romania* (2019).

Mihaela Ursa is a comparative literature professor and a Vice Dean of the Faculty of Letters, Babeş-Bolyai University. Editor-in-chief of *Metacritic Journal for Comparative Studies and Theory*. Author of eight books in Romanian on comparatism, critical theory, fictionality, gender studies, and erotic literature (latest – *Indisciplina ficțiunii. Viața de după carte a literaturii* [The Indiscipline of Fiction. The Life of Literature after the Book], 2022). Editor of volumes on feminism, comparative literature (latest - *Comparatismul clujean. Instantaneu în mișcare* [Cluj Comparatism. Still frame of a Movement]), co-author of edited volumes, author of academic articles on cultural studies, literary theory and criticism, and of cultural journalism. Contributor to *Migrating Minds. Theories and Practices of Cultural Cosmopolitanism*, edited by Didier Coste, Christina Kkona and Nicoletta Pireddu (Routledge, 2022), *Romanian Literature as World Literature*, edited by M. Martin, Chr. Moraru, and Andrei Terian (2018).

Abstracts

Ștefan Baghiu, Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu, *The National Discovery of the World: Planetary Networks of the Modern Novel in the European Periphery*

The “discovery of the world” – meaning the creation of an imagined planetary network within the cultural understanding of a particular culture – has always been delayed in the peripheries. While core cultures explore the world due to the inertia of the colonial era by translating and discussing the cultures of the semiperipheries and the peripheries, semiperipheries and peripheries are more often “discovered” or “colonized.” This often results in what I discuss as “unequal discoveries of the world,” meaning that from the modern point of view of smaller national cultures, the world is to be discovered through alternative routes, not by direct contact with world literatures. As Franco Moretti once famously argued, “unequal means [that] the destiny of a culture (. . .) is intersected and altered by another culture (from the core) that ‘completely ignores it’.” However, as the quantitative analysis of the Romanian novel shows, between 1845 and 1947 – the century of the “rise” of the Romanian novel – the world was fully present in the narrative universe in the writings of Romanian writers, while translations were heavily Eurocentric. This points out the fact that modernity was often culturally built *via proxy*, through a mediated understanding of any “otherness.” This paper draws on Andrei Terian’s concept of “cultural triangulation” and discusses the semiperipheral and peripheral discovery of the world through translations and national production.

Keywords: cultural triangulation, translations, core culture, semi-peripheral culture, Franco Moretti

Cosmin Borza, Babeș-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca, *Naming the East. The Romanian Interwar Debates on the Regional Approach to Literature*

Abstract: The paper aims to assess the role played by the cultural image of the East within the interwar endeavours to define Romanian literary modernity. More precisely, the main issue this presentation tries to explore is whether – alongside a period when the intellectual pleas for “catching-up”/synchronizing with West European societies and cultures predominated – the Romanian interest in local or regional contexts established a viable alternative approach to national literature. The case studies the paper focuses on include both influential literary historians or critics (such as E. Lovinescu, G. Călinescu, Nicolae Iorga, and Dimitrie Caracostea), and a whole plethora of specialists in East-Central European literatures who contributed to magazines that supported a wide range of cultural ideologies.

Keywords: Eastern Europe, interwar modernity, Romanian literature, regionalism, synchronization

Dragoș Bucur, Babeș-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca, *Jewish Romanian Interwar Literature & World Literature*

Abstract: The present paper proposes an investigation of the concept of Jewish literature in its relation with world literature studies within an analysis of the first generation of Jewish writers who became part of the Romanian literary life following the 1923 emancipation. Born approximatively between 1890 and 1910, those authors do not form a homogenous group, representing different political orientations and relationships with their Jewish identity. One of the premises of the study is that the adherence of those writers to radical ideologies and their usage of Jewish themes were not simple choices, but rather forms of resistance, articulating an entire network of tensions which often generated the writing. Bearing that in mind, I will try to ponder upon the way in which various forms influenced the inclusion of those Jewish writers in the Romanian literary canon, as well as their further reception within the larger field of world literature.

Keywords: avant-garde, literature of the ghetto, antisemitism, vernacularity, Jewish-Romanian literature

Maria Chiorean, Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu, *Racialised Modernity in Late Nineteenth-Century Romanian Literature*

Abstract: My paper aims to discuss the imperative of combining ethno-racial and World Literature studies when analysing the worlding of a semiperipheral literature. More precisely, it looks at the connection between modernity and racialisation in Romanian literature in the second half of the nineteenth century, drawing on the postcolonial critique of hegemonic modernity (Quijano, Mignolo, Boatcă & Parvulescu) and showing that, although Romania is not traditionally included in historical accounts of colonialism and enslavement, the formation of a national identity and literature in the late nineteenth century went hand in hand with the orientalist depiction and radical othering of internal ethnic minorities. With this in mind, I focus on a few texts by three canonical writers: short stories by I.L. Caragiale, prose by Ioan Slavici and political essays by Mihai Eminescu, arguing that their perception of cultural and racial difference is not only symptomatic of the social attitudes in nineteenth-century Romania, but also of the contemporaneous position of Romanian literature in the world literary system.

Keywords: modernity, racialisation, ethnic minorities, Romanian canon, internal othering

Thomas J. Cousineau, Washington College USA, *Oedipus – Manole – Exekias: Covert Models for Literary Prehistory*

Abstract: This talk will present an overview of a project with which I have been engaged since encountering several years ago the American cultural-critic Kenneth Burke's assertion that the perfecting of a literary work depends on the perfecting its "victim." Having in mind Sigmund Freud's claim that "The Oedipus Complex" was both covert and universal led me to begin thinking of literary works as similarly inhabited by an equally covert and universal "complex" based, however, not on incest but on the ritual sacrifice of their protagonists. I named the first phase of this project after the Daedalus Legend (with Icarus and the Minotaur as the victims of Daedalus's art) and proposed a covert sacrificial "complex" formed by the *designing* author, his *designated* victim, and the *formal design* of the work. The Greek builder Daedalus was subsequently replaced, – following my late-in-life discovery of *Legenda Mesterului Manole* – by the Romanian builder Manole. "The Daedalus Complex" then became the "Manole Complex" (formed by Manole, his wife Ana, and the monastery at Curtea de Arges), which served as the introduction to my most recent book, *The Séance of Reading: Uncanny Designs in Modernist Writing* (Editura ULBS 2022) in which I claim for the Manole Legend the covert but nonetheless universal presence that Freud did for the Oedipus Legend. The third and perhaps final phase of this unearthing of covert models has begun with my even more recent discovery of "Achilles and Ajax Playing

a Board Game," a vase-painting crafted by the 6th century Greek potter Exekias which makes overt the covert geometrical design of Homer's *Iliad* and which will eventually lead to a book entitled *Perfecting The Work of Nature: The Symmetrical Imperative of Writing*.

Keywords: perfecting, universal, incest motive, ritual sacrifice, symmetrical imperative

Teona Farmatu, Babeş-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca, *The Double Marginality of Romanian Feminist Poetry. Edginess, Theoretical Gaps, and Neoliberal Absorption*

Abstract In the light of the advance of international feminist studies, as well as in the context of local and global cases of violence against women, contemporary Romanian literature is experiencing the consolidation of the feminist poetry phenomenon. However, there is a noteworthy gap between the poetry of Romanian feminists and the import of foreign feminist theory. As a (semi)peripheral space dominated by a still deeply patriarchal and sexist culture, feminist poetic discourse, increasingly assertive in the last few years, has become an uncomfortable, vehement and disruptive pole in the local literary field. My article aims to analyse the paradox of this phenomenon: the double marginality of Romanian feminist poetry (first, because it belongs to a cultural field on the margins of the world system; second, because within it, it is still a fringe phenomenon) does not guarantee an intersectional, socially engaged perspective. Rather, the battle addresses the misogyny of Romanian culture, which local feminists are trying to dislocate, so as to make their voices heard. In addition, the article also considers a comparative perspective with French white feminism, seen as "litmus paper" for the crisis of Romanian feminism today and the loss of its edginess (the case of Miruna Vlăda). Born on strong theoretical foundations (from Simone de Beauvoir to Hélène Cixous and so on), this lay and universalist French feminism becomes more liberal once it is absorbed by the centre, being naturalised in the mainstream. Hence the rise of another, more radical and inclusive feminist direction in France. Similarly, contemporary Romanian feminist poetry, while attempting to integrate into world feminism, is altered by the neoliberal ideology, hence the barely tangential approach to issues such as poverty, migration or abuse in the workplace. The main local figures I have in mind are the poets Elena Vlădăreanu, Medeea Iancu, Ileana Negrea and Cătălina Stanislav, both as authors and as online activists, whose poetry is torn between conformity with (global) trends and a socio-political arsenal meant to have a large-scale social impact.

Keywords: double marginality, Romanian contemporary feminist poetry, theoretical gaps, French white feminism, (neo)liberalism, conformism vs. edginess.

Daiana Gârdan, Babeş-Bolyai University, *From Library to Lab: How Digital and Systems Analyses Shape Literary Scholarship*

Systems analysis, be it employed in comparative or in national studies of literary phenomena, grows more and more dependent of statistical models and computational scholarship. As we move forward in the field of literary studies, the principles of transparency of data and the reproducibility of results become central to every research project that situates itself in the array of digital humanities. Starting from such premises, I will discuss how three essential principles and practices in digital humanities are actively shaping literary scholarship as we knew it: openness, replicability, and collaboration. These are not just core-principles for computational and systems analyses, they are also changing the way we understand the role of the literary critic and literary studies and challenging their „traditional” tasks. Furthermore, my presentation will also illustrate how quantitative and systems analysis change the dominant narrative in a (semi)peripheral literary system by presenting a systematization of 19th century Romanian novel's subgenres that aims to provide a different and updated perspective on the evolution of the Romanian modern novel in its themes, forms, and social functions.

Keywords: open science, digital humanities, literary history, Romanian novel, 19th century novel

Alex Goldiș, Babeş-Bolyai University, *The Competition between "Core Literatures" within the Romanian Literary Market*
By employing both statistical and hermeneutical methods, the presentation looks at the case of Romanian literature as a semi-peripheral context where two "core" literatures – French literature and Russian literature – collide, while also providing the most important devices for the innovation of local forms. The study builds the general argument that the hegemonial equations established at worldwide scale are of crucial importance for the shaping of (semi)peripheral literary environments.

Keywords: core literature, semi-peripheral literature, Russian literature, French literature, literary market

Laura T. Ilea, Babes-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca, *Metasporic Canon*

Abstract: When talking about the literature of the diaspora or the exile, we must inevitably consider important distinctions: forced political exile, cultural exile, cultural dualities, the connection or the lack of connection with the land of adoption or the homeland, building personal myths at the crossroads between autobiography and fiction, *rebranding games* (see *Romanian Literature as World Literature*, 2017), the ways in which authors are accepted or expelled from the canon of national circuits, their hybridizations, etc. Under these circumstances, I would propose the term *metasporic canon*, compared to a canon of diaspora and exile, which is impregnated with nostalgia for what has been lost. The term *metasporic* is taken from Joël Des Rosiers' volume, *Métaspora. Essays on Intimate Homelands* (2013). Of course, the *metasporic canon* is constantly seconded by the exile or diasporic canon: if there are writers entirely devoted to trauma, such as Herta Müller, or writers who regard exile as a long wandering (including Benjamin Fondane), there are, instead, writers who coexist extraordinarily with the language and their position in the adopted homeland (Virgil Nemoianu, Bogdan Suceavă, Călin-Andrei Mihăilescu, Saviana Stănescu, Cătălin-Dorian Florescu. etc). The *metasporic canon* integrates thus planetary cultural elements instead of elements negotiated on the local-universal Manichaean map.

Keywords: metasporic canon, trauma, hybridization, cultural exile, wandering

Emanuel Lupașcu, Babes-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca, *Asynchronous Instantaneity. The "Posthuman Turn" in the Romanian Literary System*

Abstract: Cultural globalisation, made possible by the enhancement of digital infrastructure, has led some scholars to reconsider the dynamics of core-periphery transfers, stressing the immediacy with which popular culture crosses national and linguistic borders. This is the case of *Theory in the 'Post' Era: A Vocabulary for the 21st-Century Conceptual Commons*, which proposes in its preface an epidemiological model of the transfer of cultural capital. In my paper, I want to relate 'the contagion theory' to the import of *Posthumanism* theory in Eastern Europe and contemporary Romanian literature. The links between Posthumanism and contemporary literature have provoked local debates, sometimes productive, sometimes controversial. The way in which this philosophy/theory is acclimatised calls into question the instantaneity with which ideas circulate since there are cases in which its core meanings are hijacked in Romanian culture. This cultural dysmorphia (along with other 'cultural products' considered self-colonial) demonstrates how the unequal relations between centre and periphery are not completely dissolved by the digital turn, but generate a new *paradox of asymmetrical instantaneity*.

Keywords: posthumanism, contemporary literature, world-system, postcommunism, self-colonialism.

Erika Mihálycsa, Babeș-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca, *Critical late modernism in Irish Gaelic: Máirtín Ó Cadhain, Myles na gCopaleen*

Abstract: Official culture in post-Independence Ireland in the 1930s-40s has often been described as "a bland brand of post-colonial cosiness" (K. Hopper, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Post-modernist*), favouring traditionalist modes of realism with a derivative Revival ideology; this culture projected a sense of Irishness anchored in the rural and in Catholicism, its nativism being enmeshed with a sanctimonious social conservatism (cf. Clair Wills, *This Neutral Island*). As a reaction against the conservatism of the new state, whose first official language was Irish, bilingual experimental writers – Flann O'Brien/Myles na gCopaleen (Brian O'Nolan), Máirtín Ó Cadhain, but also Brendan Behan – created self-interrogative forms of (ironic/critical, cf. Patrick Bixby) late modernism or avant-la-lettre postmodernism in both fiction and theatre. Their subversive texts target not only an Irish-language literary tradition appropriated and recast by the Irish Free State (including Gaeltacht autobiographies, works of ethnography, as well as a series of canonical translations of Irish mythological legendry) but they also represent strong critical responses to the (English-language) high modernist model offered by Joyce. I will argue that these Irish-language texts assume a semi-peripheral position (with respect to the global visibility of English), but at the same time they also harness modes of (English-language/European) high modernism and (pseudo-)translation in their opposition to the state-sanctioned Irish Gaelic writing and book production in the Irish Free State. Crucially, these texts are ironic responses to centrepieces of English-language and European modernist literature – most importantly, Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* and *Ulysses*, two novels that put Dublin – a semi-peripheral colonial capital – on the literary map of Europe, but thereby also appropriated the city. Their work nettles the perceived authority of the Irish master grown into an icon of international modernism. Their post-joycean experimentation is a strong creative response to the former and a unique, subversive form of late modernism; with the translation of *Cré na Cille (Graveyard Clay/The Dirty Dust)* and *An Béal Bocht (The Poor Mouth)* into English, these novels have substantially coloured our understanding of (European/planetary) modernism.

Keywords: modernism, James Joyce, Irish Gaelic, translation.

Andreea Mîrț, Babeș-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca, *The representation of the Tatars in the Polish and Romanian historical novel: a case study on Mihail Sadoveanu and Henryk Sienkiewicz*

Abstract: The article proposes an analysis of the representations of the Tatars in two Polish and Romanian canonical historical novels from the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. First of all, the case study on Sienkiewicz's *With Fire and Sword* and Mihail Sadoveanu's *Neamul Șoimăreștilor* [The Șoimărești Clan] discusses how this ethnic minority is described and what is its function in the ideological discourse behind the novels. The paper follows how the representation of the Tatars preserves some symptoms of the "Orientalization" process (Said), but they eventually become a pretext for "the creation of transnational communities" (Terian). Secondly, the article discusses the history of Sienkiewicz's reception in the Romanian literary field and interrogates the possible interferences between two (semi)peripheral literatures (Romanian and Polish), as symptoms of the polysystem (Even-Zohar) of the Central and Eastern European literary field. Therefore, the aim of this paper is to identify the ideological stakes behind the representation of the Tatars, as well as to discuss the intersections between Sienkiewicz and Sadoveanu and their effect on the historical novel's evolution.

Keywords: representation of Tatars, historical novel, orientalizacion, Romanian and Polish Literature, polysystem

Jun Mita, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Kitasato University, *Portrait of a Border City. Maribor in the novels by Drago Jančar*

Abstract: Peripheral areas have historically experienced numerous border transitions, stamped by their multilingual, multicultural characteristics. This paper addresses the representation of the city Maribor by Drago Jančar (1948-), one of Slovenia's most important writers. Jančar was born and studied during former Yugoslavia in Maribor, which is today the second largest city in Slovenia. Even though he admits that he is deeply connected with Maribor, he has not directly depicted his homeland. His novel *In ljubezen tudi* (2017; EN: *And Love Itself*, 2022) was the first time he focused on the city itself as a symbolical main character. The novel is set during the Second World War, when Maribor was occupied by the Nazis and forced into Germanisation. Jančar shows the fate of a border city, from the multinational Habsburg monarchy through the Kingdom of Yugoslavia and German occupation to the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. By comparing other novels by Jančar, I shall analyse how the relationship with Maribor of the protagonists often represents each period as well as political and social aspects of this city. Maribor appears as a border area between German and Slovenian-speaking worlds and as a multicultural city where both cultures once coexisted. In doing so, I will attempt to show how the voiceless city is brought to life through the narratives of different protagonists, depicting it as a borderland that is tossed amidst the grey, stormy waves of history.

Emanuel Modoc, Babeş-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca, *Worlding Literature through Translational Canons. The Case of Romanian Periodical Culture (1919-1944)*

Abstract: Drawing profusely from network theory and recent developments in the field of World Literature, my proposal aims to investigate the translational networks established between the Romanian periodical culture of the interwar period and foreign literatures. By looking at the statistics regarding literary translation by different categories such as genre, author gender, and country, my presentation will attempt to gauge the extent to which authors' international prestige stemming from a source culture determines the literary movements that emerge in a target culture (i.e., Romanian literature). Thus, through the analysis of the use of foreign cultural capital in the accumulation of a wider readership, my presentation intends to outline the morphology of the Romanian periodicals' translationscape. Following this line of inquiry, the presentation will attempt to shed light on what I call the "translational canon", which concerns the complete corpus of translated works and its role in Romanian literary canon formation.

Keywords: translationscape, periodical culture, Romanian literature, translational canon, distant reading

Ovio Olaru, Babeş-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca, *Translating the North. From Norientalism to Interperipherality*

Abstract: My presentation will investigate a series of aspects in the history of the Romanian renditions of Scandinavian literature and atng on several intertwining aspects, the study will pursue three types of literary transfer: the direct literary transfer, designating translations prior to and during communism, partly owing to philo-German identity policies, and partly owing to socialist cosmopolitanism and the cultivation of cultural contact with remote and exotic spaces; the mediated/indirect literary transfer, owing to the catalytic effect of Western book markets, which attract peripheral works and through their authority compel other peripheries to import them as well, sometimes even bypassing the vernacular in which they were conceived; and third, structural cş 2018) displayed by Scandinavia and Romania, such as postmodern nostalgia or autobiographical ultrarealism.

Keywords: hypercanon, shadow canon, countercanon, interperipherality, world-systems analysis

Paul Mihai Paraschiv, Babeş-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca, *Literary Animals: War, Necropolitics and the Transgression of Fictional Boundaries in Ceridwen Dovey's "Only the Animals"*

Abstract: If ecological themes are bound to migrate the marginal into a central subject, the borders and hierarchies that separate humans and animals - as established by the anthropological machine - are seen to be dismantled by a the literary model of animal writing (viewed as being peripheral) that redirects the attention towards the celebration of the vital force of all life. As a backdrop for the exploration of kinship, I will be reading Ceridwen Dovey's collection of short stories *Only the Animals* with an emphasis on the politics of war in the Anthropocene. Within the contextual framing of necropolitics (Mbembe), the onset of the Necrocene (McBrien), and also engaging with the advent of the Thanatocene (Bonneuil and Fressoz), I will try to ascertain how a politics of death reifies the need for a fictional figuration that can be read for the possible prevention of animal ecocide, as well as deconstructing the real potentiality of fiction to display and discuss the spaces of interaction between species.

Petronia Petrar, Babeş-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca, *Internationalizing Scotland: the Case of Muriel Spark*

Abstract: While "peripherality" has often been invoked in Scottish writing in order to affirm a distance from "English" literature, its connotations are often ambiguous, marked simultaneously by a sense of dispossession and consequent failure, and by a proud recognition of difference and an embracing of the opportunities for innovation that not subscribing to a central tradition may afford. For Cairns Craig (1996), Scotland finds itself "out of history" (including the literary kind) for reasons that have to do with both its expulsion from the main forces driving political, technological and economic change, and with its refusal to accept the pernicious narrative of progress these forces have projected. However, perhaps more subversively, this refusal has also been performed from slyly post-nationalistic positions, through the self-conscious manipulation of sources, fictional conventions, genres, margins and centres, spaces and histories. As I will show, part of Muriel Spark's legacy to contemporary Scottish fiction consists also of this nonchalant examination of all kinds of belongings, which internationalizes it without erasing the question of its Scottishness.

Keywords: (semi)peripherality, centrality, Scottish fiction, postnationalism, Muriel Spark

Larisa Prodan, Babeş-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca, *Women Migrants in Italy: A Double Peripherality*

Abstract: After the fall of the communist regime, the *economic migration* significantly increased within the Romanian society, as people were seeking higher conditions of life in western countries. Being a massive social phenomenon, as Sanda Cordoş notices, migration became a substantial literary theme in the post-communist literature. Fictions or autobiographical writings, the literary works concerning migration depict the multiple identity traumas that the emigrant subject generally suffers. By originating from a peripheral country and culture of the eastern Europe, Romanian migrants experience multiples *affects* such as *trauma* or *nostalgia*, due to the hard conditions of adaptation in a foreign country or because of the departure from the beloved ones. Thus, the present paper aims to outline the double peripheral status of women emigrants in Italy, by analysing three contemporary novels depicting the subject, namely Dan Lungu's *The Little Girl Who Was Playing God* [*Fetița care se juca de-a Dumnezeu*], Liliana Corobca's *Kinderland* and *Bitter Cherries* [*Cireșe amare*], by Liliana Nechita. All these literary works emphasize the difficulties that women – as mothers – encounter in a completely foreign western culture and also the multiple traumas that children suffer by remaining in a peripheral space with lack of possibilities and continually waiting the return of the protective mother.

Keywords: migration, affect, trauma, nostalgia, women emigrants

Anca Socaci, Babeş-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca, *How to do things with (first) translations: the case of Mircea Cărtărescu*

Abstract: Following Tiphaine Samoyault's definition of translation as "négativité active", this paper aims to analyse the impact of the ambivalent discourse surrounding Mircea Cărtărescu's first foreign edition on the author's transnational presence and reception. Published in France in 1992, *Le rêve* invites a more nuanced approach of translation as a form of (productive) symbolic violence, given that although the author and several literary critics have come to deplore the poor quality of the translator's work, this edition has been and is still regarded as a potential breakthrough on the transnational literary market due to its contribution as a primary source to other translations (Spain) or to the Prix Médicis étranger nomination. In fact, *Le rêve* is still cited as a turning point in the author's biography even after a supposedly "better" French translation of the same work was published (P.O.L., 2017), suggesting therefore that each literary institution that participates in the process of mediation uses this (failed?) translational event in forging a certain image of the translated author.

Keywords: translation, reception, symbolic violence, transnational literary market, Mircea Cărtărescu.

Adriana Stan, Babeş-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca, *Uneven modernisms. The cases of Max Blecher and Bruno Schulz*

Abstract: The paper engages with world literature readings of the (semi)peripheral modern fiction which claim that generic discontinuities and "irrealist" registers particularly encode, within those subaltern sites of the world-system, the uneven developments of modernity. Such readings usually concern the (post)colonial outposts of European modernity, but their findings can be tested on locations with similar socioeconomic dependencies from Eastern Europe. To that extent, I discuss some of the region's peaks of high modernist fiction which display a thwarted experience of the everyday banality, which is specifically perceived as the everyday of capitalist commodification, in the works of the Romanian-Jewish M. Blecher, the Czech-Jewish Franz Kafka, and the Polish-Jewish Bruno Schulz. Their shared ethnic background of Jewishness complicates their experimentalist intervention within European modernism, by adding another marker of marginality to their home sites' dependent socioeconomic compositions. This might also explain the shranked geographies of their fiction and the distinctly enclosed spaces they imagine, which dislocates in modernist fashion the larger geographies still projected by novels from their national literatures, in an age of post-imperial national construction. To further denaturalize the connection, still in use, between modernist fiction and its euro-metropolitan contexts, and, additionally, between the nation-state and its literary traditions, I emphasize, especially in the case of Blecher, the disconnection of its brand of modernism from the national line of psychological realism which was forged in close contact with the French novel.

Keywords: modernism, ethnicity, post-imperial nationalism, irrealism, geography

Adrian Tătăran, Babeş-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca, *Being "minor" at the margins. Classical anarchism and literature in Romania*

Abstract: Inspired by Călin Cotoi's study of the complex role played by narodniks and anarchists in the emergence "of a progressive local social", I propose an overview of the emergence of anarchism in Romania from a cultural and literary point of view. I approach classical anarchism not as a political movement, but rather as a particular political culture, in which literary production, as well as the question of influence, transfer and hierarchy played a significant role. I thus aim to explore the sources and ramifications of "the anarchist cultural turn" at the end of the 19th century in Romania. Following Jesse Cohn's assessment that classical anarchism should be regarded as a "reflection on language", I argue that anarchists in Romania integrated specific literary practices into their own political culture, while consistently reflecting on the role, means and scope of literature in general.

Keywords: anarchism, anarchist studies, literature, political culture, Romania

Mihai Tapu, Babeş-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca, *Travelling Theory-Fiction*

Abstract: The present text analyzes two Romanian case-studies of what we term “travelling theory-fiction”, namely those of performance artists and authors Alina Popa and Florin Flueraş. The main difference between “travelling theory-fiction” and “travelling theory” is the nature of the primary texts from which their concepts are sourced. On one hand, “travelling theory” assumes that the ideas put into circulation derive mainly from theoretical texts, whereas “travelling theory-fiction” starts mostly from the genre-bending texts of the CCRU (Cybernetic Culture Research Unit). In order to clarify the adherence of Alina Popa and Florin Flueraş’s cultural products (texts and performances) to this category of “travelling theory-fiction”, we will, firstly, provide a brief sketch of “theory-fiction” and its characteristics. Then, we will emphasize Popa and Flueraş’s links to “theory-fiction” by discussing some notable concepts borrowed by them, such as “hyperstition” and “geotrauma”, and, finally, we shall address the particularities of this transplant of “theory-fiction” into Romanian culture.

Keywords: travelling theory, theory-fiction, performance art, hyperstition, geotrauma.

Snejana Ung, Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu, *Peripheral Routes: The Circulation of the Novel in Post-Imperial East Europe (1918-1989)*

Abstract: This paper addresses the inter-peripheral circulation of the novel in post-imperial East Europe, more precisely between Romanian and Yugoslav culture during 1918-1989. The quantitative distribution of the novel is divided into three periods: 1918-1946, 1947-1964, 1965-1989. Building on Laura Doyle’s concept of ‘inter-imperiality’ as well as on Warwick Research Collective’s ‘peripheral realism’, my aim is to show how the inter-imperial legacies and the shifting cores influenced the circulation of the novel between two (semi-)peripheral literatures. In this regard, I will use a quantitative approach to highlight that the post-imperial context influenced both the quantity and the type of novels that were translated. Subsequently, the corpora of translations will showcase 1) an uneven distribution during the three sub-periods and 2) a predilection towards novels – many of them canonical – that thematically explore the inter-imperial and (semi-)peripheral position of the countries rather than genre fiction.

Keywords: post-imperial, Yugoslav literature, Romanian literature, novel, translation.

Mihaela Ursa, Babeş-Bolyai University, *Spreadable Narratives beyond Literary Margins. The Illiterate and “the Great Books”*

Abstract: This paper addresses the symmetry between contemporary, postliterary culture, and the pre-literary, illiterate culture from the perspective of spreadable narratives. Framed as transmedial, some narrative systems go beyond literary margins, becoming both an alternative to the literary, and sometimes a trigger of literary and cultural literacy. I argue that, by means of their active colportation between different media, the main narratives of the so-called „great books” act as highly spreadable macro-structures, incorporating alterations depending on the order in which they are approached and read or consumed.

Keywords: narrative, transmediality, marginal narratives, novel, translation.

The Metacritic Centre for Advanced Literary Studies is a platform bringing together several departments belonging to the Faculty of Letters at Babeş Bolyai University. It emerged from the Metacritic Circle (established in 2010 by Mihaela Ursa and Alex Goldiş) and began exploring new disciplinary fields and opening up towards an international research audience through the 2015 launch of *Metacritic Journal for Comparative Studies and Theory*, which is currently indexed in Web of Science (ESCI), SCOPUS, ProQuest, and Erih+ and as of 2020 it is classified A (highest distinction) in the Romanian CNCSIS ranking as of 2020.

The journal's scientific committee, consisting of internationally renowned members such as Toma Pavel, Christian Moraru, Steven Tötösy de Zepetnek, or Mads Rosendahl Thomsen led to the creation of a dynamic network of collaborators from all corners of the academic world.

Metacritic Journal has until now hosted contributions authored by researchers from Europe, America, Asia, Africa, including prestigious names such as Bertrand Westphal, Christian Moraru, Peter Arnds, Martine Delvaux, Henry Sussman, or Călin-Andrei Mihăilescu.

The themed or non-themed issues published throughout these past 6 years explored the most relevant directions of contemporary international criticism, from translation studies, transnationalism, and feminism to subversive art, geocriticism, and distant reading. The meta reflection (metaliterary, metacritical, metatheoretical), which has become essential in cultural studies during past decades, represents one of the journal's main objectives, ranking among the centre's top priorities as well, promoting self-reflection, critical thinking, and the critical engagement with the methodologies employed by current academic discourse.

Taking all of these factors into consideration, a broader platform for further exploring these research interests outside of the journal's confines was put in place. *Metacritic Center for Advanced Literary Studies* aims to become a hotbed for individual and collaborative research in accordance to the most innovative international academic research and pursues the establishment of an interdisciplinary collective that brings together a wide array of research fields, from modern comparative literature studies to *World Literature* studies.

The Center's mission is that of furthering the new literary research directions that had previously been hosted by the *Metacritic Journal*, but also that of reconfiguring the relationship between theoretical research and practical applications, as well as between individual and collaborative work. The Center aims to stimulate, through the recently initiated inter- and transdisciplinary research projects contracted through UEFISCDI – *Worlding (Semi)Peripheral Literatures. A Systems Analysis* (2020-2023) and *The Role of the Translated Novel in the Romanian Literary System. A Quantitative Approach* (2020-2022) – new models of critical analysis based on the most innovative international theories in the humanities. Interdisciplinarity and intermedial junctures open up promising new developments for 21st century humanities. This is why one of the main objectives of the Metacritic Center is the systematic engaging of metacritical analysis with both the established critical literature as well as with the latest topics, approaches, and projects of the field. A particular objective of the center is the stimulation of research in the Digital Humanities, through perfecting computational methodologies (statistics, big data, macroanalysis) in accordance with work conducted in similar centers spread across several European and American universities. To this end, our prospects include a series of partnerships with other centers and departments from the Babeş-Bolyai University that could help our center acquire and master the necessary instruments (software, technical expertise) for such an analysis.

The center's research priorities are the following:

- Digital Humanities
- World Literature Studies
- Translation Studies
- Geocultural Research
- Transmedial Studies