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**Cultural Transfer and Translation
Romanian Glimpses**

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**CULTURAL TRANSFER AND TRANSLATION
ROMANIAN GLIMPSES**

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Introduction

This volume is the result of the readings and interrogations that accompanied our way into a university course on translation and transfer. Far from being an intentional didactic tool, the volume is, what we would call, a side effect. We have been working on Romanian translations of various writers for more than a decade and have never been able to follow the strictly philological ‘slice’ ascribed to the professional group we belong to. Even when writing on the translation of *Macbeth* in Romanian, a descriptive approach of language development reflected diachronically in the texts of the translations, we felt the need to know more about the translators’ background, with the hope of finding reliable clues that would account for their lexical choices and to understand better their role in this process of mediation between cultures. The recent body of research we have come across, focused on processes of transfer and cultural mediation, came to answer some of our questions and helped things fall into place. According to Anthony Pym, “intellectual work meant to have a more significant purpose than mere aesthetic contemplation, must aim to answer questions of importance that are relatively close to our lives” (Pym, 24) and the present volume is an attempt to fulfill this aim.

At the end of his article on the ballad *Meșterul Manole*, Eric Tappe (1984) gives an anecdotal account of Queen Elisabeth of Roumania's visit to United Kingdom, in 1890, touching upon the queen's literary interests materialised mainly in prose and poetry written in German, under the pen-name Carmen Sylva. The focal point of Tappe's account is the queen's impromptu translation of her play, entitled *Meister Manole*, from German to English, "for two hours on end, with no hesitations", in front of two actors, Sir Henry Irving and Dame Ellen Terry. Diplomatically avoiding the writer's implicit suggestion of a future collaboration, Henry Irving replies that "such play deserves an Ober-Ammergau audience", which Tappe(1984: 119) calls the triumph of diplomacy. This short anecdote is revealing, for two key aspects of my research interest, the importance of cultural mediators and the idea that transfer happens in continuity, with the cultural mediators or transmitters as vital links. Roig-Sanz and Meylaerts (2018:6) underline the increasing attention to the role of such mediators in intercultural interaction, pointing out, at the same time, the one-sided perspective that scholars usually adopt:

Cultural mediators combine several interdependent roles across linguistic, artistic and geographical borders: they can be writers, and translators, and art and literary critics, and publishers, and cultural animators, and journalists, and art dealers, and university professors, and diplomats, and literary agents. Crucially, to understand their role as a writer, one needs to understand their other roles as well (*ibidem*).

As far as transfer is concerned, we see it as a generational continuum, which does not necessarily have a diachronic directionality, that makes culture (in its broadest sense) available to subsequent users, on condition that they manifest readiness to become receptors in that interactional process. Our views are certainly influenced by Even-Zohar's concept of 'cultural repertoire', although this might not be explicitly stated in the chapters of this volume. 'Cultural repertoire', in Even-Zohar's words, is "the aggregate of options utilized by a group of people, and by the individual members of the group, for the organization of life"(1997:355). Although the members of the group take this repertoire for granted, this is something that individuals make, learn and adopt, even if the process is not always deliberate: "This making is continuous, although with shifting intensity and volume. On the one hand, it may be made inadvertently (1) by anonymous contributors, whose names and fortune may never be known, but also deliberately, (2) by known members who are openly and dedicatedly engaged in this activity"(357).

Tappe's anecdote, mentioned above, brings to mind another strong example of the continuity of the transfer process, the long history of the Passion Play in the picturesque Bavarian village of Oberammergau. Struck by the Plague, in 1632, despite all the efforts to keep it out of the village, the villagers made a bargain with God, whom they thought angry at their sins, and "vowed to present the Passion every ten years if they were spared the horrors of the Plague"(Loney,

1991:204). Passion Play performances have been staged regularly, beginning with 1634 (when the Plague pandemic allegedly ended) with several recorded changes of frequency, and attract millions of tourists annually:

After 1674, it was decided that the play should be done in decadal years, so 1680 was the next performance. By the mid-nineteenth century, the Oberammergau Passion Play was already widely known. Despite difficulties in travelling then, some 100,000 people saw the play in the last century - while in this century, the current count is four million (Loney, 205).

What is fascinating, and in tune with Even-Zohar's repertoire makers, is that none of those involved in the play production is professionally trained. As Loney remarks, the performance is an entirely local production, with lay participants in all stages, musicians, singers, actors, directors and even playwrights, "the changing texts being shaped by ecclesiastics, who are also not professionals" (*ibidem*). This is an example of transgenerational and intracommunal transfer, even if intercommunal instances can be identified, as the Oberammergau event has inspired similar performances.

The Cultural Transfer Approach we deal with in the chapter *Culture and Transfer*, is not, however, a theory on intercultural relations, as Sørsgensen and Lüsebrink (2021:2) clearly point out, but rather an attempt to conceptualise such forms of intercultural processes as the circulation and reception of texts or cultural practices and forms of knowledge between different cultural areas. By cultural area, Sørsgensen and

Lüsebrink define “a geographical space having in common one or several languages of communication, a specific communication system and specific values and rituals” (ibidem). This is reminiscent of the definition of linguistic areas, also referred to as ‘convergence area’, ‘diffusion areas’ or Sprachbund that are the research topic of the chapter *Linguistic areas of transfer. Urban, Regional, and Continental Diffusion Areas*, which focuses on the urban linguistic space researched by William Labov, the European convergence area (dwelling on Johan van der Auwera’s concept of Standard Average European) and the Balkan Sprachbund. The third, the fourth and the fifth chapters dwell on the theoretical premises outlined in the first two chapters, and are organised to reflect the areas defined in chapter two, analysing the transfer of cultural objects inside the limiting national area, the larger regional area of the Balkans and the world, respectively.

In the third chapter we analyse the Romanian ballad Miorita as a cultural feature, its diffusion in all the Romanian regions and its later transformation into national treasure prompted by the need of legitimising the cultural and national identity of the people living in the area. Petra Broomans (2021:66), mentions the attempts of the comparatists to go beyond traditional national frames, towards a broader literary history across borders. She uses the concepts ‘translational history’ and ‘histoire croisée’, coined by scholars “who were critical of the fixation on and confinement within state borders in nationalism studies” and whose perspective contributed to the emergence of Cultural

Transfer Studies(*ibidem*). The two Romanian ballads, *Miorița* and *Meșterul Manole* are suitable examples of these two different perspectives on culture. While the diffusion area of the pastoral ballad *Miorița* remained within the cloistered national space, *Meșterul Manole* was transferred to the wider Balkan region, possibly because it dwells on the theme of sacrifice, more widely present in European folklore. I use the syntagm Balkan Kulturbund to refer to the diffusion area of the elements of the ballad, borrowing from Tomic's research in areal linguistics on the Balkan Sprachbund, in an attempt to map the diffusion territory of the ballad. Even-Zohar defines transfer as "the process whereby imported goods are integrated into a home repertoire, and the consequences generated by this integration (359)". The import of ballad *Miorița* (if there ever was such a process, denied by some Romanian theorists) resulted in its complete appropriation. This was not possible in the case of *Meșterul Manole*, as the ballad is vividly present in the national consciousness of many Balkan states. However, folklorist Alan Dundes argues against the 'parochial nationalism' that inspires the critical reception of the text, obstructing the truly scientific and objective research experience.

Chapter five dwells on the global diffusion of Eve Ensler's play, *The Vagina Monologues*. Although the play deals with a topic that has been a taboo issue, the instant success of Ensler's book must have been related to women's ability to identify, in their immediate living environment, situational and cultural norms, similar to those that prompted the writing, publication and

production of the play *The Vagina Monologues*, that required the breaking of silence, and consequently, of the taboo. Even-Zohar argues that “when a successful transfer occurs, it is not only the goods themselves which become domesticated, but rather the need for those goods” (359). This is endorsed especially by the fact that Ensler’s play and her subsequent campaign were successfully transferred in less welcoming cultures. I identified three patterns in the transfer of this cultural product: by *dispersion*, when the host community was ready to receive it or even invited it, by *subversion*, when Ensler were contested and harshly criticised, through parodic texts or rewritings, and, finally, by *diversion*, especially in highly traditional cultures, where performances went underground or under disguise.

The next three chapters deal with matters more closely related to translation and transfer, although they also tackle some of the issues dealt with in the first chapters. Chapter six provides a theoretical frame based on Jakobson’s triadic model of intralinguistic, interlinguistic and intersemiotic translation that is either criticised or remodelled to meet the needs of the present day world.

The analyses in chapters seven and eight leave aside interlingual translation, focusing on intralingual and intersemiotic translation respectively. Chapter seven dwells on Gotlieb’s pentamorous typology of intralingual translation (diachronic, diaphasic, paraphrasing, transliteration and diamesic) and exemplifies three of these categories, using examples

form the Romanian language and literature. The last chapter, touching upon intersemiotic translation as a peripheric category, dwells on the growing importance of the research in the field of intermedial translation. The critical attention received by literary texts along the centuries is disproportionate when compared to the little attention received by ways in which translators deal with literary works that combine multiple modes (Tomalin, 2020:136).

Far from being the convergent result of the readings and interrogations that brought it to life, this volume is rather a glasshouse that shelters future research topics in the bud. Such an approach to the research process can prove dangerous, keeping the researcher trapped within the same theoretical frameworks. A case in which the glasshouse metaphor stands, with the unfortunate degeneration of meaning.¹ However, the various fields and directions of research that were revealed in the process of writing this book exert a magnetism that will compensate generously for one's getting lost in translation.

¹ glasshouse - British slang for 'prison'.

1.Culture and Transfer

The definition of the concept of culture must be regarded contextually, depending on the research area that set it to work. According to some theorists, in order to understand the different meanings that have been given to “culture”, we need to examine “some of the contexts in which these have been developed and deployed”(Hammersley, 2019:2) On the same note, Chris Jenks remarks that, while the concept of culture was not invented in the second half of the twentieth century, the “upsurge in interest in the idea of culture must surely tell us something about the times we are living through”(Jenks, 1993:2)

Earlier definitions presented “culture” as the sum of all things that defined humanity and distinguished it from nature. For Ernst Cassirer, specialist in the philosophy of humanity, human activities, such as work, are Man’s distinguishing characteristics and they should be seen as an organic whole: “Language, art, myth, religion, are not isolated, random creations. They are held together by a common bond”(Cassirer, 1944:93).

This bond, according to Jenks, (8-9), is the set of symbolic representations that transform, and shape, the human world. As a consequence, “the very idea of culture (...) generates a concept which, at one level, provides a principle of unification for the peoples of the world; including those who once have and also those who continue to populate the world through time and across space. Culture then, for early anthropology, was the common domain of the human”. The concept underwent shifts of meaning, proving difficult to pin down by researchers in various fields. Chris Jenks (1993:11-12) summarises a plethora of views on culture and includes them in four large categories. The first one dealing with the idea of superiority of humankind, with Coleridge, Carlyle and Mathew Arnold as representative theorists, sees “culture as a cerebral, or certainly a cognitive category: culture becomes intelligible as a general state of mind. It carries with it the idea of perfection, a goal or an aspiration of individual human achievement or emancipation”. The second type, linking culture with the idea of civilisation, informed by Charles Darwin’s evolutionary theories, depicts culture as a “collective category: culture invokes a state of intellectual and/or moral development in society”. The third category views culture as “as the collective body of arts and intellectual work within any one society”, a meaning similar to the everyday usage of the term, that “carries along with it senses of particularity, exclusivity, elitism, specialist knowledge and training or socialization”. Finally, the last set of theories, belonging to the fields of sociology, anthropology and cultural

studies, regard “culture as a social category, (...), as the whole way of life of a people”.

Our research is mostly focused in the third and fourth categories in Chris Jenk’s typology, that are closer to a pluralist sense of the concept suitable for an analysis on transfer. Hammersly (2019:4) points out that there is a tension attached to the meaning of the word “culture” in terms of its being singular or plural. Although nineteenth century scholars preferred its singular form, “even in the eighteenth century, Herder had argued for the plurality of cultures and suggested that each must be understood in its own terms (see Wells 1959; Forster 2010). Herder’s ideas were subsequently taken up in the Romantic Movement, sometimes encouraging an emphasis on the value of ‘folk culture’ and of distinctive national cultures.”

In a chapter entitled “Cultural Linguistics”, Faraz Sharifian(2017:38) employs the concept of “cultural cognition”, which is the “cultural knowledge that emerges from the interactions between members of a cultural group across time and space”. According to Sharifian, the system of cognition, which is more than the sum of the individual cognitions of the group members, is dynamic and prone to change, subjected to constant negotiations, not only within and across generations in that specific community, but also as a result of the contact between the members of that group with other languages and cultures. Sharifian cites Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o’s concept of language, seen as a “collective memory bank” of the cultural cognition of a group, pointing out the fact that “language acts both as a

memory bank and a fluid vehicle for the (re)transmission of cultural cognition and its component parts”(ibidem). This view reverberates the language theory issued by Saussure, who saw language “as a a storehouse filled by the members of a given community through their active use of speaking, a grammatical system that has a potential existence in each brain, or more specifically, in the brains of a group of individuals”(Saussure, 2011:13). Using the same metaphor, Cahoon sees culture as a storehouse of interpretive networks or traditions that will act “to bind society together through compulsory norms from the past” (Cahoon, 2005:95). However, Cahoon’s storehouse is not immutable, like Saussure’s. Much like Thiong'o’s memory bank, it is dynamic and it can be affected by change. In this respect it resembles Eugen Coşeriu’s definition of the system of language. In Coşeriu’s view, language is a system of possibilities, functioning both as a set of constraints, but also as a set of opportunities, having more of an advisory role than an imperative one. Coşeriu draws a parallel between the system of language and painting. He gives the example of painters whose only constraints are the easel and the paint, beyond which they have an absolute freedom of expression. In a similar manner, as Cahoon envisages it,

“modern culture is a culture of individualism, where persons are both granted a degree of liberty from inherited custom and encouraged to “question authority” and create novelty, and progressivism, where for the first time in human history the past is officially denied its normativity and the future is supposed to diverge from it. Modern culture then presents us

with an antitraditional tradition, a generationally transmitted message not to conform to generationally transmitted messages, an authoritative command to question authority, a collective commitment to the individual's right to violate collective commitments, a call from the (recent) past to ignore the past (Cahoon, *ibidem*).

In a slightly paradoxical way, the mechanism of transgenerational transfer of “the net of interpretive products [...] connected to socially normative ends”(Cahoon, 2005:54) has ingrained inside it the very seeds of self denial, allowing the individual to choose, from what the “storehouse” has to offer, the means of self expression.

The same impulse to create novelty and progress govern the modern theories that focus on *cultural transfer*, a concept meant “to replace more traditional and unprecise concepts like ‘cultural relations’, ‘cultural exchanges’, ‘literary influences’ and ‘cultural circulations’ (Jørgensen and Lüsebrink, 2021:1). The methodological and theoretical framework that accompany the concept of cultural transfer came to be known as The Cultural Transfer (henceforth CTA) approach and was promoted by Michel Espagne and Michael Werner, who wanted a closer connection between the theory of linguistic contacts, the theory of intertextuality and the literary reception theory developed by Hans-Robert Jauss and Wolfgang Iser in the 70s and 80, on the one hand, and Translation Studies on the other hand. This closer connection was possible through the notion of cultural translation, apparently coined by a group of anthropologists to

“describe what happens in cultural encounters when each side tries to make sense of the actions of the other”(Burke and Hsia, 2007:8). Two years later According to Peter Burke (2009:60),

‘Cultural translation’ is a metaphor which, like other metaphors, is both illuminating and misleading. It forms part of a package of metaphors, associated as it is with the idea of cultures as texts that may be read by anthropologists, archaeologists or historians. If we are tempted by this metaphor, we need to stop and ask ourselves in what ways a culture differs from a text.

Petra Broomans argues that the young discipline of CTA came into being on the background of significant changes or “turns”, such as the crisis in literary historiography and the “cultural” turn in translation studies at the end of the twentieth century”(Broomans, 2021:64). The theoretical framework of CTA critically challenged the traditional concepts of ‘cultural relations’, ‘cultural exchanges’, ‘cultural mobility’ or “influence” and questioned the evaluation of an original text in relation to its appropriations and reinterpretations. The guiding hypothesis of CTA is that any cultural object subjected to transfer from one cultural space to another, or from one cultural area to another, undergoes a process of transformation, re-interpretation or re-reading (Jørgensen and Lüsebrink, 2021:1). Petra Broomans (2021:81) identifies three groups of scholars, among the ones who focus on cultural transfer:

1. Translation studies scholars such as Venuti and Pym, and sociologists oriented towards translation studies such as Heilbron and Sapiro.

2. Scholars related to cultural studies who are also concerned with transfer, such as Burke and Espagne.

3. The early comparatists: the forgotten cultural transfer scholars such as Van Tieghem.

Broomans underlines the fact that the first two groups speak neither about each other, nor about the work of Van Tieghem, an early comparatist she included in the third group. She brings to light Van Tieghem's concept of 'mésologie' (mesology), "the study of how a culture receives literary works, ideas and forms that belong to another culture" and also his idea that we need to have access to information regarding the translators' biographies, literary careers and social position, also underlined much later by other theorists such as Espagne and Sapiro (Brooman, 81- 82). Translators are seen as agents of cultural transfer or mediators between cultures. Broomans uses the term *cultural transmitter* to designate the role of translator or other roles in the process of cultural transfer, and gives the following definition:

A cultural transmitter or mediator basically works within a particular language and cultural area. She/he often takes on various roles in the field of cultural transfer: translator, reviewer, critic, journalist, (literary) historian, scholar, teacher, librarian, bookseller, collector, literary agent, scout, publisher, editor of a journal, writer, travel writer, counsellor, or even businessman. Transmitting another national literature and culture, and its cultural context to one's own national literature and cultural context is the central issue in the work of a cultural transmitter. Transmission often reflects a bilateral situation. Even the transmission of one's own literature and culture

takes place. The motivation can be aesthetically, ideologically, politically and/or economically based (Broomans, 2021:79)

The manifold perspective of a polyphonic transmitter is, without a doubt, reflected in the process and in the product of transfer.

Daniela Hăisan speaking about Newmark's volume *The Translator as Writer*, signals the potential conflict between the two hypostases of writer and translator, but also the advantages:

As for the book, it lets translators take the floor and have their say on a number of fascinating issues such as the politics of writing translations, retranslation, somatics, rewriting children's literature, creativity in/metaphoricity of translation. As a matter of fact, uncoincidentally, most contributors are translators and writers, besides being writers in their capacity as translators. The fact that writing translations and writing their own poetry are, to them, intertwining, mutually beneficial experience, further adduces the congeni(t)al relationship between writing and translating (Hăisan, 2016:31)

While the work of a cultural transmitter generally involves translation, in the past translators performed other roles as well, such as that of publisher, reviewer, or literary historian (Broomans, 2006:399). A clear example in this respect, in Romanian culture, is Vasile Demetrius (1878-1942), translator of Macbeth, who was a writer himself, and who was in charge of the oldest book collections in Romania, *Biblioteca pentru toți* (The Library for All), for almost twenty years, beginning with 1923 (Marțole, 2019:180). The collection was initiated at the end of the 19th century, following the German model of a similar enterprise. Stefanie Stockhorst discusses the evolution of the German book market, as a result of

increasing literacy in the 18th century, pointing out that, according to book fair catalogues of the time, a third of the books on offer were translations (Stockhorst, 2010:12).

Peter Burke argues for the centrality of translation in the process of cultural transfer, emphasising its twofold advantage. On the one hand, translation points out “the work that needs to be done by individuals and groups to domesticate the alien, and the strategies and the tactics that they employ” and, on the other hand, its gain lies in its “neutrality, with associations of cultural relativism”(Burke, 2009:58). Michel Espagne underscores the connection between research on cultural transfer and translation, on condition that “the latter turns away from simple linguistic transpositions to tackle the question of contexts in the broadest sense of the term”. To support the idea that the tradition of translation is crucial for understanding a foreign culture, Espagne gives the example of the German troops in France, who searched the French archives to see what parts of German history were kept there and to make an exhaustive inventory of all the translations from German into French the archives contained. He goes on to conclude that translation is mainly the passage from one cultural context to another, with the crucial participation of translators as cultural mediators (Espagne, 2021:25-26).

According to Broomans, “a Cultural Transfer Studies perspective is crucial to the study and compilation of a transnational history, as it requires a

different approach to traditional “world literary history”, demanding greater focus on mediation and the cultural transmitters, more attention to material and, as Espagne points out, more focus on the space(s) in which cultural transfer takes place” (Espagne, 2006, pp. 28–32, q. in Broomans, 2021:70). Roig-Sanz and Meylaerts (2018:1-2) also underline the significant role of translation in what became “the transnational turn” in the field of literary studies but remark the scarcity of comparative studies, mainly due to the highly specialised linguistic and literary skills that are needed for the study of translation. When it comes to languages that are considered small, peripheral or less translated, the lack of thorough research becomes more apparent. The following chapters, far from claiming to provide the mentioned expertise in the field of translation, or Cultural Transfer Studies, attempt at giving some insight into the transfer of several Romanian cultural objects inside and outside Romanian culture.

2. Linguistic areas of transfer. Urban, Regional, and Continental Diffusion Areas

According to theorists, all social changes are contingent upon two phenomena: the discovery of something new and the spread of culture through social contact (Miller, 2017:347). While the two are obviously interconnected, as newly discovered objects or new ideas are prone to travel to other cultural spaces, the spreading of culture or cultural diffusion can take place in at least three ways: through mutual borrowing, as transfer from a dominant culture to a less powerful one or as transfer from an oppressed, or less powerful culture, to the dominant one. Such changes can occur by force, sometimes leading to the annihilation or engulfment of one culture, usually the minor one, which is completely assimilated or deculturated, or they can happen more subtly, through educational or economic processes that pave the way for the gradual assimilation of new ideas or practices. As Miller observes, “These processes parallel degrees of language change resulting from contact with dominating cultures and languages”

(348) and in the following section I will draw upon this parallel between linguistic and cultural contact.

There are many ways of investigating convergence areas in terms of features affected by linguistic change. In the present chapter we intend to focus on three types of such areas: the urban linguistic space researched by William Labov, the European convergence area (dwelling on Johan van der Auwera's concept of Standard Average European) and the Balkan Sprachbund.

Founding his research on the local vernacular in some major English speaking cities in USA, Canada and Australia, William Labov studies, in an impressive three volume work (a massive trilogy, as Peter Trudgill calls it in the preface of the third volume), the social, internal and cultural factors that underlie the process of linguistic change. Labov considers that cities have always had a fundamental role in linguistic innovation, rural dialects being "relics of developments that began in the cities and spread to progressively smaller speech communities until they reached the countryside (Labov, 1999:23) However, he considers that, as far as American dialects are concerned, rural communities cannot characterise the major linguistic trends due to the decline in agriculture that resulted in the decrease of the local population. The spread of linguistic changes is followed, therefore, horizontally, in a particular

geographically limited urban community, but also, more importantly, vertically, transgenerationally, from parents to children, or as a phenomenon of transclass mobility. The linguistic changes Labov archives and studies are not confined to a single generation, they are followed across three, four or more generations of speakers, under the general condition that Labov formulates as follows: *Children must learn to talk differently from their mothers, and these differences must be in the same direction in each succeeding generation* (Labov, 2001:416). What's more, Labov's research identifies working class women as the promoters of the linguistic changes targeted by the study:

That search has been reasonably successful, and we can say with some assurance that the diffusion of systematic linguistic change in large cities is promoted by women who combine upward mobility with a consistent rejection of the constraining norms of polite society (Labov, 2001:415)

Peter Trudgill uses Labov's terminology to speak about changes which take place above the level of conscious awareness, when speakers are aware of the changes they make, which he names 'changes from above'. Such changes are, in Trudgill and Labov's words, those that are

made as a result of the influence of prestigious dialects with which the community is in contact, and the

consequent stigmatisation of local dialect features. Changes from above therefore typically occur in the first instance in more closely monitored styles, and thus lead to style stratification” (Trudgill, 2003: 20).

However, linguistic diffusion has more frequently been researched across geographically identifiable regions, it is generally the result of language contact and is the object of study of areal linguistics. More conventionally, the geographical regions where languages come to share structural features, due to language contact and borrowing, are called “linguistic areas”, but other terms, such as “diffusion area”, “adstratum relationship”, “convergence area”, and “Sprachbund” may also be used for the same concept. Some researchers, who argue against the use of such terms as Sprachbund, suggest the employment of the term “language union” instead. According to B. Heine, linguistic areas have in common several characteristics: the languages that are spoken in the same area share a set of common linguistic features that cannot be accounted for by genetic relationship, drift, universal constraints on language structure or language development, or by chance (Brown&Ogilvie 2009:4). Tomić refines the conditions, reducing them to two: “a typological language feature has been assumed to be areal if (a) shared by at least three languages of the area, at least two of which belong to different genetic families,

but (b) not present in all the languages of the genetic family to which the language of the area belongs (if it belongs to a language family, at all) (Tomić, 2006:2).

Johan van der Auwera (2011:291-300) analyses the concept of Standard Average European (henceforth, SAE), used by Benjamin Lee Whorf to underline the stark difference between the bulk of European languages and the native American ones, that came to refer to a convergence area seen as an example of Sprachbund. According to Hapelmath (1998:271), “Whorf was writing at a time when the radical otherness of ‘exotic’ languages was being emphasized by many linguists and attempts were being made to understand each language ‘from within’, without recourse to comparison with other languages”. However, modern linguistic research benefited from various studies that had under scrutiny various such convergence areas around the world, allowing for a more insightful contrastive perspective. The term SAE gained prominence in the early 1990s, when a group of linguists working on EUROTYP, a project founded by The European Science Foundation, fueled an interest in areal typology. Auwera demonstrates that the entire Europe is a convergence area by simply analysing the adverbial expressions of the phases of states, the ones for which English uses *not yet*, *already*, *still* and *no longer*. Bernd Kortmann, focusing on adverbial

subordination in modern European languages, identifies a linguistic core containing West and Central European languages (Romance, including Romanian, West Germanic, North Germanic/mainland Scandinavian, Slavic, Hungarian, Albanian and Greek) and a linguistic periphery, containing languages located at the geographical margins of Europe (Basque, Celtic, North Germanic/insular Scandinavian, Baltic, Uralic (except for Hungarian), Altaic, Caucasian, Indo-Iranian, Armenian, Semitic) (Kortmann, 1998:507). Kortmann's map (508) shows continuity of contact among the languages inside each of the said groups that are separated, on the map, by a clear demarcation line.

“As with other linguistic areas, the boundaries of this Sprachbund are not clear-cut, and there are more or less central members of the Sprachbund. But its extension and its defining features are clear enough to use "Standard Average European" (abbreviated "SAE") as a technical term for the idealized language type that is manifested in the individual languages of the Sprachbund” (Haspelmath and Buchholz, 282)

Restricting the geographical area under scrutiny to a smaller region, we focus on the Balkan Sprachbund, one of the most widely recognised linguistic areas, that, according to Campbell (q. in Brown&Ogilvie, 2009:62), covers shared characteristics of Greek, Albanian, Serbo-Croatian, Bulgarian, Macedonian, and Romanian. Some scholars also add to this list Romani and Turkish, while

others include other Romanian dialects, such as Aromanian and Megleno-Romanian². Following the same core-periphery pattern that made the distinction between core and peripheral European languages, Bernd Kortmann, citing Solta, divides the areal group constituted by the Balkan languages “into a core consisting of Albanian, Bulgarian, Macedonian, Rumanian and Greek, and a periphery including Serbian/Croatian, Turkish and Hungarian (Solta 1980: 7)” (Kortmann, 1998:497). The typological similarities shared by the languages spoken in this area were first pointed out in 1829, by Jernej Kopitar, who underlined the fact that “the languages spoken south of the Danube have analogous forms expressed through ‘different language material’” (Tomić, 2011:306). Even if different studies point out different linguistic features of the Balkan *Sprachbund* or Union, researchers seem to agree on seven defining traits of the researched area, one phonological feature, the presence of schwa (the central vowel /ə/), and the following six grammatical features: 1. the syncretism of genitive and dative forms, 2. enclitic definite articles, 3. periphrastic future, 4. periphrastic perfect, 5. the loss of the infinitive, replaced by the subjunctive and 6. the pronominal doubling of objects (Cf. Tomic, 2006, 2011; Campbell, 2009).

² For a more detailed discussion on the language distribution in the Balkan Sprachbund, see Olga Mišesca Tomić’s detailed study.

Such features are not displayed evenly in all the languages of the Balkan Sprachbund, as differences in areal contact result in differences in language structure but also in the divergent representation of a particular feature. The attempts to scientifically identify the common thread that keeps the Balkanic region together seem to be oblivious of former images promoted by travellers and writers at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the 20th century. For instance, in 1921, in a book entitled *Balkanized Europe. A Study in political Analysis and Reconstruction*, Paul Scott Mowrer gives the following definition to the term *balkanization*: “the creation, in a region of hopelessly mixed races, of a medley of small states, with more or less backward populations, economically and financially weak, covetous, intriguing, afraid, a continual prey to the machinations of the great powers and to the violent prompting of their own passions”(cited in Leersen, 2007:105-106). It appears it is precisely this medley of small states and the permanent region mobility and insecurity of borders that kept process of diffusion alive and allowed for linguistic (and cultural) (ex)change. The stability of borders will have the opposite effect, as Tomic argues, citing Simeonov and Asenova:

The creation of nation states with standard languages has put an end to active Balkan multilingualism and marked the start of divergent developments, which also explains nationalist hostilities (cf. Simeonov

(1977:53- 54). As a result of “linguistic patriotism”, some common features, developed in mutual contact, were abolished, and strong de-balkanizing normative tendencies showed up (cf. Asenova 1977:29-30; 1989:14)(Tomic, 2006:3)

Standardisation at the level of national languages began, as a the newly formed nation states at the end of the 19th century became more and more centralised. Woolhiser (2011:508) identifies the process of linguistic polarisation that occurs as a consequence of “hard political borders, where cross-border interaction is reduced to a minimum and relations between neighbouring states are characterized by competition and conflict. At the same time, it is important to bear in mind that even in the case of border regimes such as that obtaining between the former GDR and FRG, patterns of dialect divergence and convergence in border regions are intimately bound up with attitudinal factors, i.e. political and regional identities” (ibidem). Woolhiser gives the example oo the Austrian-German borders and underlines the fact that the desintegration of a multinational empire resulted in a contradictory sense of identity and and cites Leersen who identifies the root of the Austrians’ xenophobia in their desire “be in every way different from a multitude of counterparts in the heritage of a multi-ethnic Habsburg monarchy” (Leersen, 2007:100)

Sometimes, language standardisation took a different turn, as a result of political forces that acted for a de-nationalising process. Woolhiser gives the example of “planned” linguistic divergence in the case of Romanian and the so called Moldavian language. Even

if, according to some linguists (and politicians), Moldova is considered a separate language from Romanian, the return to the Latin script, in the aftermath of the disintegration of the Soviet Union, cast in doubt the Moldovan project. While researchers have identified a series of changes in the spoken Romanian language in urban areas of the Republic of Moldova, Woolhsier concludes that “further empirical research along the border is required to determine whether rural dialects on the two sides of the Romanian-Moldovan border have diverged in a similar fashion, and to what extent basilectal dialect varieties affect spoken standard Romanian/Moldovan on the two sides of the border” (Woolshier, 2011:513.) The study of the two varieties will result in some interesting conclusions, as can be seen in the chapter dedicated to intralinguistic translation.

3.Enclosing cultures: Miorita as marker of national identity.

The diffusion of a cultural material object is more visible than the one of a phonetic feature and the study of such an object is more easily accessible as it can be acknowledged and preserved by ordinary people and also passed on to future generations. Sometimes, the diffusion areas of such objects/values/texts are clearly delimited and the specific cultural products are used as markers of identity. The diffusion of the Romanian ballad Miorita is illustrative in this respect. If we were to apply the linguistic theories of language diffusion to the study of the cultural phenomenon of ballad Miorița on Romanian grounds, we would turn to Surtervant's suggestion, cited by Labov (2001:191), according to which linguistic change is brought about by the association of two competing linguistic forms. On the same note, Labov cites Le Page and Tabouret-Keller (1985), who see the adoption of new linguistic forms as "acts of identity," used by members of the speaking community to improve their social position. Consequently, language change is attributed to:

(1) the association of positively regarded traits and social privileges with membership in a given social group, and (2) the association of a linguistic form with membership in that social group. If such attitudes are to

be used to account for linguistic diffusion, it is necessary to posit a covert belief structure: that speakers feel that their adoption of the linguistic form will lead others to attribute to them the positive traits of the given group and allow them to share in the privileges of that group.” (Labov *ibidem*)

If we consider Miorita a cultural feature, the diffusion of this feature in all the Romanian regions and its later transformation in national treasure can be seen to be prompted by the same need of legitimising the cultural and national identity of the people living in the area.

The ballad Miorita surfaced the Romanian national consciousness in a moment when Europe was boiling with the political and social movements for national independence and unity. According to Baycroft, “nations are conceptual, emotional, abstract entities which may be associated with a state, but can only be grasped through their representations, symbols and the understanding of those who consider themselves to belong to the nation”(2012 :3). Given their abstract nature, the characteristics of nations are subjected to diachronic and diatopic variation and to the subjective perception of individuals that are either inside or outside that national community. That is why, Baycroft argues, nations acquire a fundamentally mythical quality, in the sense that they rely on the symbolism of two key elements, the imagined community and *the invented tradition* (dwelling on the

concept developed by Eric Hobsbawm and Terrence Ranger in the volume with the same title). The community is imagined, as given individuals, in spite of not being able to identify each member of the group they belong to, picture the nation as an extended community, while the invented tradition is generally related to the efforts of an elite to attach national symbolic meanings to elements of culture which, in turn, will aggregate the group of individuals by giving them a sense of tradition and shared values.

The subject of Miorita is derived from the process of transhumant pastoralism and the ballad is often placed, in collections of popular literature, under the heading 'pastoral'. This is explicit even from the title of this most famous version of the ballad, Miorita, which is a diminutive of the noun *mioară*, "ewe". Three shepherds belonging to three different Romanian regions, Moldova, Wallahia and Transylvania, take their sheep into the mountains. There, the shepherd from Moldova is told by a magic ewe in his flock that the other two shepherds are planning to kill him and take his sheep. The Moldovan shepherd does not think of escaping or saving his life, he leaves instructions (referred to by critics as "the shepherd's will") to the ewe regarding his funeral and the story his mother should be told to spare her the grief of losing her child. The ballad was identified in several areas of the country, such as

Moldova, Muntenia, Oltenia, Dobrogea, while in Transylvania, Miorita is known as a Christmas carol or as a work song, sung in moments of communal labour. Eliade suggests that women would not have had access to Miorița, had it only been employed as a Christmas carol, as generally women were not allowed to be part of the groups of carolers. They must have sung it together with the entire village, transferring it from the communal spaces into their own homes, in the form of a lullaby (Eliade, 1995:252). The Carpathians acted as a natural border between the two main forms, the ballad and the carol, prolonging the stability of both.

If we consider the spread of linguistic elements throughout the entire Balkanic area and the fact that more than one thousand versions have been discovered in Romania alone, it is highly unlikely that the themes and symbols of the ballad should have developed exclusively on Romanian territory. However, there is little information about similar songs in neighbouring cultures. Romanian researchers discuss various potential cultural origins, from the Macedonian, Egyptian or Iranian, to different smaller regions of Romania (Fochi, 1964, Ștef, 2005). The fact that the diffusion area of such an important cultural element as the ballad Miorita, viewed by some researchers as one of the foundation myths of the Romanian people, is confined within the borders of a nation state, serves the

purpose of the nation's widespread recognition of national legitimacy. Bordering the existence of the ballad and its symbolism inside the Romanian space, despite its alleged wider distribution area in Southeastern Europe, the conventional exegetic discourse, with few exceptions, links the text to the diachronic evolution of the Romanian people. Dwelling on ancestor cult, anthropologist G. Geană (2005:358), underlines the three functions of history: as identity marker, “which means that past experiences are assimilated within the configuration of a human entity, either individual or collective”, as a critical interpreter of the past, and as archive, fulfilling people’s need to remember. The paratext that surrounds and completes the Romanian history of the impressive number of regional variants of the ballad *Miorita* plays each of the aforementioned historical roles, with one of them taking precedence over the others under specific circumstances.

The history of the ballad on Romanian ground is complex and complicated, and researchers have not reached a conclusion regarding the original version. The oldest one seems to have been discovered in Bistrița Năsăud by officer Ioan Șincai, Gheorghe Șincai³’s brother, at the end of the 18th century. Unfortunately,

³ Gheorghe Șincai (1754-1816) was an important Romanian intellectual, member of the Transylvanian School.

the manuscript has only recently been found in the Târgu Mureș Archives (Ștef, 2005:7), and consequently the conventional history of the ballad starts in 1846, when Alecu Russo came across it in Soveja (Vrancea county, the former principality of Moldova)(Amzulescu, 2001:55). Russo gave it to Vasile Alecsandri, who published it six years later, in February 1850, in the journal “Bucovina”, from Cernăuți, in the section “Romanian Folk Songs”, with the title “The ewe”. Then, six months later, in August 1850, unhindered by the reader’ little interest in the ballad, he published it in Iași, Moldova’s capital, in the biweekly journal “Zimbrul”[The Bison]. Alecsandri only published the text after an “upgrading” process (Ștef, 2005:8) that “refined the original version without spoiling it”(Amzulescu, 2001: 56).

Much in line with the dominant attitude on collective-anonymous authorship of popular literature that traced a clear relationship between value and anonymous originality, the Romanian critical posterity of the ballad agreed on the idea that folk songs and poems should reach future generations unaltered, as authentic vestiges of popular culture, because they alone encapsulate the essence of the Romanian spirit. However, at the same time, it seemed to overlook, with few exceptions, Vasile Alecsandri’s interference in the text of the ballad, recognizing his contribution to the

creation of national literature. There is a conflictual perspective on the role played by Alecsandri in the dissemination of the ballad, because he was a talented poet, creator of original literature, one of those who gave a voice to the collective spiritual values of the Romanian community but, at the same time, according to Fochi (1964:124-125) he left posterity in complete darkness in what regards the origin and authenticity of the text, giving opposing or confusing answers under different circumstances. For instance, pressed twice to confess to what extent he had modified the text of the ballad, “Alecsandri gives answers beside the point”. Not only had Alecsandri been a prominent figure in the revolutionary process of the 1848 and a well known poet, but, by including the ballad in his collection of folk songs, he had also participated significantly in the process of spiritual unification of Greater Romania. Leersen (2012:11) underlines the contradictory effects of Romanticism on the notion of authorship: the individualisation of the author, “who creates out of a spontaneous overflow of powerful feeling, rather than by correctly and cleverly applying the approved thematic, poetical and rhetorical conventions” and the de-individualisation of the author, who “loses himself in an inspiration that is collective or spiritual rather than personal” and acts as an “articulator of a collective consciousness”.

In the volume *The Making of Modern Romanian Culture. Literacy and the Development of National Identity*, Alex Drace-Francis (2006) cites a series of studies that record the complete lack of information regarding Romanian territories in the Western countries in the first half of the nineteenth century. The Romanian principalities first attracted the attention of the Western public due to newspaper articles that reported on the Crimean war. Because “the average educated Western European gentleman would have been at a loss in 1848 to comprehend the situation of any East European peoples beyond Poland and Hungary (Namier 1955: 109, cited in Drace-Francis, 2006:161)”, efforts were made to provide the Western readership with some cultural hints at the Romanian life. These efforts took the shape of a series of publications, such as Grenville Murray's *Doïne or The National Songs and Legends of Romania* (London, 1854), Hon. Henry Stanley's *Rouman Anthology, or Selection of Rouman Poetry Ancient and Modern*, (Hertford 1856), Henri Erlich's *Airs nationaux roumaines*(Vienna, 1850); and, in Paris, Vasile Alecsandri's *Les Doïnas*(1853) and his *Ballades and chants populaires de la Roumanie* (1855), as well as Carol Mikuli's *Douze aires nationaux roumains*(1855). The internationalisation of popular literature from southeastern European regions through translation was common in 19th century Europe.

Leersen gives the example of *Hasanaginica*, a ballad from the Slavic Balkan territories that had an impressive transfer to other European cultures, being first translated in French and German and then in other languages, such as English, in a process that Leersen calls “telescoping translations-based-on-other-translations”(Leersen, 2012:16). It was included in famous volumes such as Herder’s *Volkslieder* anthology (1778), in Goethe’s verse collections where he published it under his own name and in the volume of Bosnian Serb Vuk Stefanović Karadžić that caught Jacob Grimm’s attention to such an extent that he learned Serbian to have better access to Vuk’s work (*idem*). The ballad *Miorita* had, by comparison, much less exposure, but, as Alex Drace-Francis points out,

the cultural significance of such apparently minor publications increases if one considers how little known the ethnonym ‘Romanian’ was in Western Europe before the 1840s; and their symbolic significance in the political sphere is equally apparent, as is witnessed by the fact that Lord Palmerston had a copy of Stanley’s anthology on his drawing-room table at the height of the diplomatic negotiations over the future of the Principalities in 1856 (Tappe 1956: 405; Tappe 1983) (Drace-Francis, 2006:161).

The national and aggregating valencies of the ballad were, therefore, crucial in diplomatic external contexts, but they were soon activated in the political agenda of the internal nationalist discourse, to uphold

Romania's claims to independence and unity. Concurrent with the political unrest in the three historical principalities, the work of Romanian intellectuals focused on the unity and the Latin character of the Romanian language, initiating a process that will continue, through the latter half of the nineteenth century, to the beginning decades of the 20th century, given the fact, as expressed by Hobsbawm, that "ethnicity and language became the central, increasingly the decisive or even the only criteria of potential nationhood" (Hobsbawm, 2000: 102).

The large number of the ballad versions that covered the vast territory, then fragmented into units that belonged to various administrative bodies (principalities or even empires), would hardly make a coherent argument for the collective consciousness that produced an element of culture with such a heavy national load. However, analysing the relationship between the Carpathian folk fairs⁴ and the origins of

⁴ Carpathian folk fairs were mainly economic but also socio-cultural events that gathered participants from the three Romanian principalities. Geană claims that such fairs, where the people from the three regions discovered they shared similar or identical values and the same language and religious beliefs, were the locus that generated the awakening of the Romanian national consciousness: "Besides being peasant markets and entertainment, the Carpathian folk fairs fulfilled an ethnic function: throughout the centuries, they acted to reinforce the primordial ties among the native inhabitants widespread over the territory of ancient Dacia. Although latent at first, the ethnic function grew in importance over the centuries" (Geană, 2006:97).

national consciousness among Romanians, Gheorghiu Geană (2006) contradicts Gellner's claim that the lack of mobility of the isolated and rural communities encourages the diversification of dialects. Bringing forth the views of Romanian linguists such as Eugen Coseriu or Marius Sala, Geană underlines the lack of dialectal fragmentation of Daco Romanian, with the exception of the slight variation among the sub-dialects that are spoken in the three historical principalities where "differentiation is superficial and does not affect the structural functional unity of the language". He cites Jacques Ancel (1926:24), who notes in his volume, *Peuples et Nations des Balkans*: "All over the Balkans, no mass of people is more compact and less scattered than the 14 millions of peasants of Romanian language, assembled like on the slopes of a fortress—the Carpathians—until the trenches of Dniester, Danube, and Tisza", concluding that such folk fairs, combined with other factors, such as transhumance, maintained "this outstanding homogeneity". Embracing John Hutchinson's concept of "moral innovators", Geana argues against the idea of "invented tradition", pointing that, while the role of Romanian intellectuals was decisive for the pinning down of the objective traits of the community, they merely acted as "moral innovators" or discoverers of the hidden networks at the foundation

of the Romanian ethnic community, and not as its inventors (Geană 101-102).

When it comes to Miorița, the thesis about the intellectuals uncovering the symbolic meanings linked to the idea of nation or ethnic community rings true, but Gellner, as cited by Geană, refers more to nationalism, rather than nation or nationhood. Discussing the ballad revival in relation to national literature, David Atkinson points out that the textual authority vested in individual ballad versions comes with a potential to trace back the sources of tradition in the past and to use them as molds for ‘traditional’ practices in the present. He goes on to argue that tradition (as theorized by Hobsbawm and Ranger), “is also amenable to artificial invention, often for ideological purposes, through the establishment of practices (‘invented traditions’) that embody an ostensible continuity with the past which is actually largely factitious”(Atkinson, 2012:297). While the communal consciousness of Romanian ethnic unity might have lain there dormant for centuries on the country’s highlands, the idea of investing Miorița with the defining traits of the Romanian people emerged only after the third printing of the ballad by Alecsandri, and not before. As Gellner notes, “it is nationalism which engenders nations, and not the other way round,” insofar as “nationalism is, essentially, the general imposition of a high culture on society” (1990, pp. 55,

57)(cited by Geană, 2006:101). That is why, commenting on the influence of Alecsandri's version of the ballad, one of the monographers of the ballad, Adrian Fochi, emphasises the fact that it was *imposed* on the masses by the prestige form of written literature in print (Amzulescu, 2001:9). On the same note, Lucian Boia identifies the uses of references to the ballad to motivate the nationalist discourse at the beginning of the 20th century:

The most elaborated form of the discourse of Romanianism is provided by the nationalist Right of the 1930s. In the course of an indisputably seductive demonstration, Lucian Blaga, in *The Mioritic Space* (1936), defines the characteristics of the Romanian soul, which correspond to a well-defined geographical framework, the central element of which is the *plai* ("a high, open land, on the green mane of the mountains, descending gently into the valley"). According to Blaga, there is "an inalienable stylistic matrix of our ethnic spirit". The Romanian appears more profound and more open to cosmic essences than the Westerner: "In the West, tradition is a matter of the pedantic acquisition of a past, from the ancestral gallery, from the chronicle of deeds, from the roll call of ancestors. [...I Our tradition is by its nature more invisible; it only permits a metaphorical or metaphysical formulation. Our tradition is more atemporal; it blends with stylistic potencies which are creative, untiring, as magnificent as in the first day. [...I Sometimes smoldering but always alive, it manifests itself in time, although, measured by

our ephemeral horizon, it is above time” (Boia, 2001b:146)

The mountainous area Blaga evokes as Mioritic Space appears in the first two lines of the Romanian ballad:

Pe-un <i>picior de plai</i>, Pe-o <i>gură de rai</i>, Iată vin în cale, Se cobor la vale Trei turme de miei Cu trei ciobănei. Unu-i moldovan, Unu-i ungurean Și unu-i vrâncean. (Vasile Alecsandri's version published in the collection <i>Poezii populare ale romanilor</i> [Romanian popular poems], 1886)	Near a low foothill At heaven's doorsill, Where the trail's descending To the plain and ending. here three shepherds keep their three flocks of sheep, One, Moldavian One, Transylvanian⁵ And one, Vrancean. (translated by W.D Snotgrass)
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Apart from the spatial coordinates of the ballad that he expands to the entire Romanian territory, Blaga also identifies a spiritual network of Christian Orthodox meanings related in particular to the shepherd's passive

⁵ William D. Snotgrass is a Pulitzer Prize winning poet who translated Miorița successfully into English, in collaboration with Professors Simona Drăghici and Ioan Popa (Latham, 1999:11).

submission to the imminent death, rejecting interpretations that focused on the lay, pre Christian elements of the text. Blaga's ideas, carrying a controversial political load, are harshly criticised by contemporary theorists. Among these, Constantin Brăiloiu, a reputed composer and ethnomusicologist, concerned that the euphoric paratext generated by the ballad had long ignored the set of traditional practices and beliefs that normally make the object of ethnographic study, writes about Blaga: "a prominent thinker is not afraid to derive, by means of a common suffix, the most awkward of the vocables and to imagine 'the mioritic space' as some sort of a chosen place for the soul of the race" (Brăiloiu, q. in Eliade, 1995:245; Ștef, 2005:13).

In an attempt to revert the critical lens to to what he considered to be the appropriately scientific ethnographic study of the ballad, Constantin Brăiloiu synthesises his critical view on the theoretical posterity of the ballad in the ironic coinage *Miorița-forschung*, "Miorițology". Despite the fact that his opinions are seen, by some researchers, as patronising and deliberately offensive (Amzulescu, 63), Brăiloiu is the initiator of the anti-mystical and anti-metaphysical approaches to the ballad (Ștef, 62), arguing against the 'pessimistic' interpretations of the shepherd's death, viewed as resignation and submissive acceptance and

focusing instead on peasant rituals and symbols. According to the Romanian ethnographer Simion Florea Marian, who, in the latter half of the nineteenth century, authored an impressive four volume monograph on Romanians' rites of passage, the funeral ceremony, in various regions, contains elements related to the wedding ceremony. For instance, in several areas in Bukovina and Transilvania, when young, unmarried people die, the burial ceremony is infused with nuptial elements⁶, as a consequence of the belief that they will marry in the afterlife (1892:101). Much as the death - marriage allegory is used as an identifying Romanian element, the idea is not new. This theme can be identified in the folklore of more than one European people and it is enrooted in the belief that true self-fulfillment can only be accomplished through marriage. On the same note, according to Brăiloiu, the nuptial symbolism, in Miorita, merges with the ritual of the funeral wedding for the purpose of pacifying the dead in order to keep them away from the world of the living (Eliade, 1995:247).

Mircea Eliade, who considers that Miorița is an authentic popular creation that does not owe its prominence in the Romanian cultural space to “the

⁶ One example is the fir-tree symbolism, used heavily in both funeral and nuptial practices. Simion Florea Marian traces the funeral usage of the fir-tree back to the Roman usage of the cypress or other coniferous trees in similar situations (1982:111).

literary perfection” of Alecsandri’s revised version (Eliade, 1995:249) and who cites Brăiloiu’s study in detail, interprets the ballad from the perspective of the concept of ‘cosmic Christianity’. In Eliade’s view, the ‘cosmic Christianity’ is a new form of religious creation, typical to rural societies in Romania and southeastern Europe, that teems with archaic pagan elements, on the one hand, projecting the Christologic mystery on nature as a whole and, on the other hand, neglecting the historical elements of Christianity. The ballad, therefore, reveals a mystic solidarity between man and nature that is no longer accessible to modern consciousness (Eliade, 1995:259). Eliade understands the position of the ethnologist and the folklorist in the debate related to the shepherd’s attitude towards his imminent death, but, at the same time, pleads for an open minded perspective on other potential interpretations of the ballad that may discover new meanings and add personal values to the spiritually archaic universe. Eliade hints at Alecsandri’s analogous creative process that brought Miorita into the spotlight that had the same altering effects on its primordially ritual essence, endowing it with new and more ‘elevated’ significance (Eliade, 245).

However, even if the ‘moral innovator’ of the 19th century received an unreserved support, subsequent interpretation and critique was, in the best of cases,

ignored. This is what happened to playwright Victor Eftimiu's claim for the ballad to be removed from all primary school textbooks⁷, as it promoted a distorted image of the Romanian people by the "monumental lesson of cowardice and renunciation"(Stef, 2005:61).

The fatalist perspective on the ballad emerged at the same time with the ballad's rise to fame. In 1854, Jule Michelet published that first translation of the ballad in the volume *Légendes démocratiques du Nord*, with the help of the 1848 Romanian revolutionaries that lived in Paris at the time (Stef, 10). Michelet highly appreciated the ballad, considering it a thing "so sacred that it broke your heart", but at the same time wondered if the shepherds passivity before death is nothing but a national characteristic of the Romanian people. This turned into what Silvia Chițimia (2017), in an article entitled "Miorița. Prejudecăți și Enigme" [Miorița. Prejudice and Enigmas], calls "a prejudiced interpretation kit" that was transmitted from generation to generation and kept the text of the ballad "captive in hermeneutical stereotypes and prejudice, that later infested, with their squeaking tediousness, the literary commentaries in textbooks"⁸. Romanian researchers

⁷ The ballad had been included in textbooks for gymnasium ever since 1861 (Stef, 2005:10).

⁸ Translation mine. In Romanian : "ținută prizonieră(...)în chingile unor prejudecăți și stereotipii hermeneutice, legănate apoi, scîrțîit și plicticos, de comentariile manualelor școlare" (Chitimia, 2017; np).

(cited in Deletant, 2007:224) register the foreign observers' clichéic view of Romanians's indolence as early as the beginning of the 19th century. Other traits singled out in the same period by foreign travellers to Romania are apathy and resignation and a tendency to self denigration that is structural to Romanians' self image. Emil Cioran, the Romanian-born philosopher, dwells on Romanian passivity, which is an umbrella term for all the Romanian negative qualities: "their wisdom is an indulgence, their tolerance comes from their good-natured lack of the spirit of contradiction, while their celebrated *dor* (like the Portuguese *saudade* it expresses a longing leavened by a mixture of nostalgia, sadness, pain, happiness and love) is mere laziness" (*ibidem*).

Ernest H. Latham, cultural attaché at the US Embassy in Romania between 1983 and 1987, recounts his personal experience, as editor and translator of Miorita in the introductory notes to a picture book entitled *Miorița. An Icon of Romanian Culture*. The diplomatic mission had prompted Latham into searching for Romanian cultural landmarks that would help him understand the host culture better and *Miorița* was top of the list, followed by the legend of the Walled-up-Wife and the poem *Luceafărul*, by Mihai Eminescu. Latham was soon able to conclude that, despite its potential presence in the cultures of neighbouring

country, “the ballad is preeminently a Romanian cultural creation and [that] it would be difficult to exaggerate the degree that it has penetrated the Romanian life and thought”(Latham, 1999:8). The editor’s ample introductory notes give details concerning the editor’s personal history of his becoming acquainted with the text, as well as a short history of the ballad on national and international grounds. In 1985, Latham came across a series of photographs taken by Laurence Salzmänn in 1981, in Poiana Sibiului, a Romanian village of transhumance shepherds in Sibiu county, where, while on an IREX⁹ scholarship, the photographer had spent some time as part of his research. The photos brought ballad *Miorița* to mind, together with the hope that an American exhibit, displaying photos that could relate to such a landmark would pass more easily through the “irksome” “totalitarian regimes’s arbitrary policy on American exhibits” that were accepted or rejected for no clear, obvious reason (9). Latham’s hidden agenda was to use this treasured Romanian text to create a bridge between Romanians and American culture, to employ their interest in a major cultural element as a token of goodwill that would foster intercultural relations and mutual respect, especially because the exhibit was meant to go on a national tour. Unfortunately, although

⁹ International Research and Exchange Commission.

the opening night, on April 7, 1986, “was a success by all standards”, the exhibit did not live to see another night, at least not in the communist era, and it certainly never went on tour. More than that, some of the visitors at the vernissage were harassed by the Romanian political police. The only other display of the exhibit was at the request of “the communist Ministry of Education and Council of Culture, which asked [...] permission to hang it in the dormitory for foreign students at the summer school at the University of Bucharest in 1986”(10). Latham draws the bitter conclusion that “a regime and its Council of Culture which deny their people access to their own national cultural patrimony has severed all ties with the nation and lost any claim to cultural authority”(ibidem). Latham’s experience focalises an instance of the way in which the nationalist discourse was confiscated because of political reasons.

The cultural and geographical territory that accommodated one of the strongest Romanian identifying cultural items kept the ballad secluded inside national borders. Once it had fulfilled its function as a national identity marker at the end of the 19th century, the ballad was kept hostage by the communist political discourse as a legitimising element of Romanian unity and perennality. Historian Lucian Boia considers that, sometimes, Romanians feel overwhelmed by foreign models and, consequently,

“turn to the preservation of their indigenous identity, as a means of self-defence. Some Romanians look towards Europe, while others do not want to look outside at all. This tension between Europeanism and autochthonism illustrates an intellectual polarisation that is typical of Romanian society. The confrontation between these two opposing tendencies has accompanied the process of modernisation over the last two centuries(Boia, 2001a.:14)”

4. The Ballad of the Walled-up Wife and the Balkanic Kulturbund

Another myth that is considered to transfer its foundational powers on the Romanian nation, to almost the same degree as *Miorita*, is the legend of the Walled-up wife. What triggered my interest in the legend is the fact that, despite having a similar trajectory to that of the ballad *Miorita* in Romanian culture, as far as the transfer from the level of folklore to the level of national literature is concerned, and in contrast with the local energies that kept *Miorita* cloistered in the Romanian national space, the legend of the Walled-up wife received world recognition, being considered one of the most famous poetic texts in the world. It first came to be known, outside national ‘limits’¹⁰, because of Jakob Grimm’s translation into German of one of the Serbian versions collected by the Serbian folklorist Vuk Karadžić.

In a chapter focusing on the relationship between identity and folklore, Alan Dundes cites Erokson’s

¹⁰I am using the term ‘national’, because, in 1824, when Grimm translated the Serbian text, the Principality of Serbia had already gained some sort of independence from the Ottoman Empire (which, however, approved Serbia’s constitution almost fifty years later). At the time, the region was affected by political and social unrest, in the process of achieving national unity.

definition: “the conscious feeling of having a personal identity is based on two simultaneous observations: the perception of selfsameness and continuity of one’s existence in time and space and the perception of the fact that others recognize one’s sameness and continuity” (Erikson, 1968:50, cited in Dundes, 1983:238) and other theorists who underline the idea that identity is only shaped in relation with others. Despite the etymology of the term, enrooted in the Latin pronoun *idem*, which means “same”, this perspective on culture resembles the Saussurian view on language, which claims that the network of meanings in a language relies on the difference between terms. Dundes goes on to remark: “it is absolutely essential to understand that it is impossible to speak of sameness without reference to differences, for, if all the members of a given set were identical, and the set was equal to the universe, then sameness would be virtually meaningless” (*ibidem*). That is why, identity is defined, on the one hand, by the way in which we are seen by others, but, as Margaret Mead points out, also by the way we define others: “The commonest illustration one can bring up, is, of course, the question of how do you define a man if you do not mention a woman and how do you define a woman if you do not mention a man?”(Mead, 1958:12, cited in Dundes,1983:239). Dundes goes on to delineate his structuralist view on the pair minority-majority culture: “It is this oppositional principle which constitutes one of the

common threads in both personal and group identity. As there can be no self or concept of self without other, there can be no sense of group without some other group. Moreover, since minorities experience opposition more than majorities, it is perfectly reasonable that minorities have more of a stake in defining identity (especially their own) than do members of majority cultures”(Dundes, 239).

Dundes considers folklore one of the most important vehicles that help transfer, transgenerationally, a series of cultural elements, seen as the symbols of the group. He cites Spicer, according to whom identity systems are constituted of land and language, but also of music, dances and heroes which, without necessarily being kept together by a logical relationship, have meanings that “fit into a complex that is significant to the people concerned”(240).

According to Eric Hobsbawm, however, in large territorial nation-states people cannot pretend to share a common ethnicity because they are too heterogeneous. He gives the example of southeastern states, with a special reference to the Romanian space: “the precise mixture of pre-Roman Illyrians, Romans, Greeks, immigrant Slavs of various kinds and various waves of central Asian invaders from the Avars to the Ottoman Turks, which make up the ethnicity of any people of southeastern Europe, is an eternal matter of debate especially in Romania)” (Hobsbawm, 1997:64). The situation is even more confusing when it comes to larger

territories such as the Balkanic area, that is a region marked, at least historically, by disunity and conflict. In a volume focusing on various (mis)representations of the region in Western countries, entitled *In The Wake of the Balkan Myth*, Davis Norris considers the term Balkan has become a reference for the more extreme sense of Otherness to the West, that “the myth of 'Balkanization' is a product of the West's fears of the cultural Other”. This is mirrored, linguistically, in the adoption of the forms ‘Balkanize’ and ‘Balkanization’:

‘Balkanize’, according to The Oxford English Dictionary, is a verb which means ‘to divide (a region) into a number of smaller and often mutually hostile units, as was done in the Balkan Peninsula in the late 19th and early 20th centuries’. The first recorded use of the term was after the First World War in 1920, but it has remained in British political vocabulary ever since. So pervasive has the level of connotation of political instability, fragmentation and aggression become that The Oxford English Dictionary now defines Balkan geographic space with a specific metaphoric addition as ‘pertaining to the peninsula bounded by the Adriatic, Aegean, and Black Seas or to the countries or peoples of this region; spec, with allusion to the relations (often characterized by threatening hostilities) of the Balkan states to each other or to the rest of Europe’ (Norris, 1999:10-11)

Norris reads “the Balkan myth” in the key offered by Edward Said’s work on Orientalism, finding similarities in the constructed identity of the Balkans and that of the

Orient. He considers that many of Said's formulations about Orientalism and the Orient can function identically for the Balkanic area, which was also created as a cultural sign meaning hostility and also contributed to the shaping of the West as progressive, modern and rational. While the Balkanic area is characterised by lack and ambiguity, "the West is a full signifier, replete with positive meaning which has created and requires its cultural other, the Balkans" (12-13).

The demand for the exoticism of the East and the need for authentic national poetry encouraged by European Romanticism shaped the modern view of the Balkan cultural space where folk poetry and oral ballads seemed to have a longer living tradition than in the West, mainly due to centuries of Turkish occupation that had stifled the development of written culture. The reception of this ballad focusing on a foundation myth inside the various groups that form the Balkanic area is obviously influenced by this perceived group identity, clearly defined by such cultural objects. If we move concentrically in the larger European area, legends regarding animal or human sacrifice by immurement are present throughout the entire European territory. Ballads containing the motif of the Walled-up wife, focusing on the sacrifice of a woman, however, are limited to a smaller area. They are spread over the entire Balkanic area and even beyond it, therefore, dwelling on

the theory of areal linguistics and the concept of Sprachbund that we discussed in a previous section, we used the concept of Kulturbund in an attempt to map a definite diffusion territory of the ballad, or rather, to define a space that is marked by a common cultural feature, despite the theories that picture the fragmentation and disunity of the region. According to Tomic (2006:2), "a typological language feature has been assumed to be areal if (a) shared by at least three languages of the area, at least two of which belong to different genetic families, but (b) not present in all the languages of the genetic family to which the language of the area belongs (if it belongs to a language family, at all) (Tomić, 2006:2). If we replace the typological linguistic feature with the main set of motifs of the ballad that are recurrent in several cultures in the Balkanic area, we will be able to identify a region marked by unity at both the linguistic and wider cultural levels. The motifs common to the southeastern European ballads on the theme of immurement are as follows: 1. Masons are engaged on an important building project. 2. The building continually collapses. 3. The suggestion is made that a woman be sacrificed, as this will give stability to the edifice. 4. It is decided that whichever mason's wife arrives first on the following day with her husband's midday meal shall be immured. 5. The hero of the poem sees his wife in the distance and prays for miracles to

stop her. 6. The miracles are performed, but she struggles on against all obstacles. 7. When she arrives, she is told that she will be immured, and thinks it is a game. 8. As she is built in, she realises the truth and pleads in vain for her life.(Talos, 43, Constantinescu, 190-191; Tappe, 113). It is not, therefore, surprising, that the Romanian historian Lucian Boia remarks: “Romania is in many ways a Balkan country. The Danube unites more than it separates(Boia, 2001:11).

According to Alan Dundes, reputed anthropologist and folklorist, one common feature to Balkan variants is that the theme of immurement is centered around a female figure:

“Emphasizing the key symbolic role of the woman in this narrative, Dundes typified the narrative as the “Walled-Up Wife,” but it is known in different countries by a host of different names. Serbian folklorists have concentrated on “the Building of Skadar,” while Hungarians have been primarily concerned with “Clement Mason.” In Romania, “Meşterul Manole” holds sway (280 variants in the study by Ion Talos [1997]), and Greek folklorists have given attention to “The Bridge of Arta” (328 variants, according to Georgios A. Megas [1976])(Dundes&Broner, 2007:108).

Dundes (1996), edited a volume that includes eighteen scholarly articles on the legend of the Walled-Up Wife, two of these being authored by Mircea Eliade and Șerban Anghelescu, who analyse the legend of the Walled-Up Wife on Romanian grounds. A third one, written by Sharon King, is entitled *Beyond the Pale: Boundaries in the Monastirea Argeșului*” considers that artistic skills represent the first boundary in the poem, a metaphysical one, that only the master builder Manole can cross despite the fact that all the other nine builders are highly skilled themselves (King, 2011:95-101). According to folklore researcher Claudia Costin, the number of the master builders (“nine great masters/apprentices and masons.”) in the ballad is of tremendous importance. She gives Lazăr Șăineanu’s view, according to which numbers, and their magical value found in folklore, play an important role in the mythologies of all the Roman, Slavic, and Germanic peoples. Costin goes on to remark:

“The number nine, a multiple of three (in the Pythagorean system, three is the symbol of perfect harmony), suggests perfection, the end and the beginning, “in other words, a dislocation to another plane. This is where the idea of rebirth and germination, as well as that of death, can be found,” in the opinion of Jean Chevalier and Alain Gheerbrant, the authors of *The Dictionary of Symbols*. Without doubt, this number confers the ballad a ritualistic character and expresses a standpoint on the subject of

life. Through their creative activity, the masons partake in the “cosmic rhythms” and the building of the church, which is a symbolic centre of the Romanian world” (Costin, 2018:103).

However, building such a center results in death for both the nine builders and their master. Tricked by the commissioner to confess that they are able to build an even more astonishing edifice, they are left to die literally at the peak of their creation and they find their death attempting to fly from the roof of the monastery. King considers the builders’ Icarus deaths are “emblems of their fatal, overweening pride”(King, 99). Manole falls to his death when he hears Ana’s wailing cry inside the wall and turns into a calm and shallow spring, running with salty tears, from the grief of sacrificing his wife.

King shares the opinion of some Romanian researchers whose work she uses as secondary sources (Ecaterina Comișel, Mircea Eliade, Leon Levițchi, Gheorghe Vrabie, Ioan Taloș), that the ballad deals with the theme of sacrifice for one’s art: “ What the ballad deals with (...) is the very complex interrelation between human ambition or will and human endeavour, an interaction fraught with shadings of intense horror, as well as superb artistry. For surely another theme- perhaps the primary one- of this ballad is the conception of art: what its limits and limitations are, and what they

should be” (King, 100). This is, however, a literary analysis.

The American folklorist gives his own interpretation of the ballad, underlining the fact that his is not the only plausible metaphorical reading (Dundes, 1996:198-199). According to him, the ballad “The walled-up Wife” is a metaphor for married life, seen as a trap for women, who are figuratively immured by entering the marriage: “the fact that a man is willing to sacrifice his wife in order to build a bigger and better castle, bridge, water-tank status of women in such societies. In that male chauvinist world, women’s role is to stay protected from the outside world and to concentrate upon nurturing her infants (...) (*ibidem*).

In the same volume, Ruth Mandel analyses the balance of power in the ballad, and she concludes that “the man exercise power and control over the woman’s sexuality and fertility in the world of the living at the same time recognize their vulnerability in the world of the dead. It is her implicit and primary liminality between (...) nature and culture and as the mediator between the worlds of the living and the dead that is magnified in the song and around which its many symbols are made meaningful” (Mandel, 1996:166). In the Romanian version the mediating role is not that obvious as in the Greek version Mandel focuses on, but there is a hint at the walled-up woman’s posthumous

power. Master Builder Manole does not get to even try to escape from the roof because he hears his wife's voice and falls before having a chance to fly.

From an ethnologist perspective, the theme of sacrificial immurement is materialised, in Romania, in three dominant epic text types: on the one hand, as ballad and carroll (sung in verse) and as legend (in prose) (Constantinescu, 2008:192). According to Ioan Taloş (1973:40-45), the presence of some elements of the ballad is signaled in the 18th century by Sulzer, a German intellectual, who mentions the legend of the foundation of a mosque on the Mihai Vodă hill in Bucharest, the walls of which fall down due to dissatisfied spirits of the earth. Another mention is an entry in the diary of a young Russian, Struve, travelling from Vienna to Crimea, presents the construction legend of the monastery *Trei Ierarhi* [Three Hierarchs], in Iaşi, commissioned by the Moldavian ruler Vasile Lupu. The diary, published in 1801, contains fragments of the legend, in which eighty master builders manage to build the edifice after the long effort of fifty years' work, the commissioner harshly punishing the architect who confessed his ability to erect a similar building elsewhere. Although incomplete, these two sources are, according to Taloş, evidence that at least some of the elements of the legend were circulating in the area at the time. In 1842, the construction legend of the Three

Hierarchs Church was published in Iași, by Mihail Kogălniceanu, in *Almanahul de învățătură și petrecere* [The Almanac of Learning and Entertainment]. Published anonymously, this is the first Romanian text that contains the theme of sacrifice by immurement. The Romanian poet, Cezar Bolliac publishes, in 1847, a poem entitled *Meșterul Manole* [Manole the Master Builder], an adaptation of the folk text that includes the main motifs of the ballad and some others, that can help localise the origin of the source folk text (Talos, 44). In 1853, Vasile Alecsandri includes the first folk version in one of his collections of Romanian ballads, under the title *Negru Vodă și Manoli sau Mănăstirea Argeșului* (Negru Voyvod and Manoli or The Argeș Monastery). Eric Tappe (1984), a British diplomat who spent in Bucharest some years in the mid 1940s, records the anectodic competitive relationship between these two first transmitters of the text:

Alecsandri, writing from Paris to his friend Ion Ghica in 1852, immediately after completing the second part of his collection of folk-ballads, the part which includes *Monastirea Argeșului*, said: 'Of course you know that the celebrated Bolliac has treated-or rather, maltreated-the legend of Manole. Poor chap! He will be flattened by the folk ballad. Let's sing him a *De Profundis* and leave it at that.' Alecsandri's contempt for the Bolliac *Mesterul Manole* is justified; it is a very pedestrian piece of verse (Tappe, 115).

Pedestrian or not, Bolliac's input in the Romanian history of the ballad is not without merit. What Talos finds altogether remarkable is the title of his adaptation, *Mesterul Manole*, reflected in many other later collections, as well as the motto that accompanies it:

Manole, Manole! Meştere Manole! Zidu rău mă strînge, Țîţişoara-mi curge Copilaşu-mi plînge. (Bolliac's motto, in Taloş, 44. ¹¹)	Manole Manole Constructor Manole! Thy wall is crushing me, My breastmilk is leaking, My baby is shrieking. (My back translation)	Manoli, Manoli! Meştere Manoli! Zidu rău mă strînge, Țîţişoara- mi plînge Copilaşu-mi frînge. ¹²	Manoli, Manoli! Constructor Manoli! The wall is crushing me, My small breast is crying, My baby is dying. (My back translation)
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The motto is important as it seems to be the first published original fragment of the ballad. Moreover, as Taloş remarks, it can be used as a *secundum*

¹¹ The fragment is identical with the one in G.Dem. Teodorescu's collection, published in 1883

¹² Fragment from Alecsandri's version of the ballad in *Balade populare româneşti*, 1967:63

comparationis when trying to estimate the degree of alteration that Alecsandri performed on the text of the folk ballad. The fragment is almost identical to Alecsandri's version and identical to other versions published after 1853, therefore it may be right to assume that Alecsandri's interventions in the original text were not invasive. The destiny of this ballad on Romanian territory mirrors, to a significant extent, the one ballad Miorita had, sometimes including the critical opinions regarding the value of the consecrated version. The same concern with the unaltered anonymous originality prompted foreign researchers to dismiss *Meșterul Manole* as literary forgery and to cast the shadow of doubt on the authenticity of all the Romanian versions of the ballad (Taloș, 45-46). In his monograph, Taloș gives detailed information regarding scientific or anecdotal evidence of different versions and concludes that Alecsandri's interventions in the text do not affect the structure of the ballad, the motifs and their organisation and whatever changes the poet made do not distort the meanings of the text. According to Constantinescu, it was Alecsandri who brought the ballad to light and made it accessible to the Romanian reader when he published it in 1853 (in the volume *Balade (cântice bătrânești)* Ballads.Elderly Songs) and 1866 (in the volume *Poesii populare ale românilor* Romanian Folk Poems, when the ballad is entitled

Monastirea Argeşului (The Argeş Monastery)“ In the second volume the editor includes a series of interest comments related to Negru Voivod, the ruler of the country, the church and the master builder Manole, “a legendary figure who is considered traditionally the builder of all monasteries around the country” or related to the presence of the ballad in Serbian folklore. Constantinescu Considers that Alecsandri’s notes influenced, up to a point, the subsequent directions of the Romanian research on the ballad (Constantinescu, 2008;186).

The Crimean war provided for the ballad the same European context that would place *Miorita* under the international spotlight. The rising public interest in the southeastern European regions led to the spread of versions of the ballad, as examples of Balkan tradition, which appeared widely in English publications. As a result, some of the versions were used in literary adaptations, as is the case of an 1862 text entitled “Manoli: A Moldo-Wallachian Legend” by the English poet W. M. W. Call. Eric Tappe tried to trace the origin of Call’s text, which proved to be a mixture of elements from Cezar Bolliac’s own adaptation of the ballad and Alecsandri’s text, to which other elements, the origin of which, according to Tappe, was more difficult to trace, such as Manoli, the name of the male protagonist, were added. Although well informed, relying largely on data

from Ioan Taloş's monograph, Tappe seemed to be ignorant of the nineteenth century Romanian collections of legends that included the ballad, or he would have known about Vasile Alecsandri's second volume of ballads, published in 1853.¹³ One interesting fact about this adaptation is that, from the very title, *Call* identifies the diffusion area of the ballad in the extra Carpathian territories of the former historical principalities of Wallachia and Moldova, the places of origin of Cezar Bolliac and Vasile Alecsandri, respectively. Tappe mentions another adaptation of the ballad in prose, written in English by E.B.Mawer, the wife of an English doctor resident in Bucharest, in 1881, in a book entitled *Romanian Fairy Tales and Legends*, published by H.K.Lewis, the bookshop adjoining the University College, London (Tappe, 119).

Other studies claim the oldest form of the legend is the carol, that preserves the most archaic stage of both Miorița and Meșterul Manole. The epic element is reduced to its essence, due to the carol's specific features which only exploits its significance, what goes beyond the story, the plot and the unfolding of events being subsumed to this aim at revealing the meaning of the song, in opposition to the ballad, also concerned with

¹³ In Tappe's bibliographical notes, Ioan Taloş's monograph is only cited with pages 40-43. He might only have had access to this short fragment, because the information about Alecsandri's volume can be found in the same volume at page 45.

the narrative elements. (Ovidiu Bârlea cited in Ștef, 2006:233). The carol form was passed from generation to generation inside the Car[pathians, while the ballad developed varieties in the Eastern and southern regions of Romania.

Not only is the ballad present in different south eastern regions of Europe, but it is the object of interest of many a critical and historical study in different languages of the Balkanic area. As a result, the natural dilemma in the 20th century was the ballad's place of origin and Dundes pointed out that even for comparativists, the ballad had been associated with the Balkans, and was often presumed to originate there, although he found evidence for an Indic origin because of the relation of "A Feast for the Well" (Keregehara) to the foundation sacrifice motif. Other theories of origin hold that it has a classical source, in Greek myths of the passage over a bridge from life to death, or a Biblical connection to the story of Jephthah's sacrifice of his daughter for victory in battle (Judges 11:30–40)"(Dundes&Broner, 2007:108).

Through a modified form of the comparative method, folklorists have sought to "prove" that the ballad originated in one locale rather than another. Zihni Sako ends his discussion of Albanian versions with the unequivocal statement: "it seems to us that the original source of the ballad is Illyria, that is, Albania" (1984:165). Similarly, Georgios Megas ended one of his

several essays on the ballad this way: “I hope that it is clearly demonstrated from the publication of my full-edged investigation that Greece must be considered as the cradle and homeland of our ballad” (1969:54, my translation). Megas reiterated this position at the very end of his 1976 monograph on the ballad when he (rightly) rejected the idea that polygenesis could be responsible for the different versions of the ballad found throughout the Balkans, and (wrongly) concluded that the single origin of the ballad must have been the Greek territory in early Byzantine times (1976:179). (Dundes&Broner, 2007:112)

One of the questions that concerned the history scholarship on the ballad was the diffusion mechanism that took it across borders even if it was not a national treasure, possession or creation as was Miorita’s case. One of the possible explanations provided by Dundee was the influence provided by the Gipsies. In his volume *The Walled-up Wife*, he records a gipsy story, in order to give evidence that the ballad might have Indic origins, he publishes a text reprinted from Gypsologist Francis Hindes Groome’s book *Gypsy Folk Tales*, which he introduces as follows:

“If one wished to make a case for a possible Indic origin of “*The Walled-up Wife*”, one might ponder how the ballad diffused all the way from India to the Balkans. An obvious means of such a path of diffusion would be the Gypsies, a people which originated in India but which has spread in its diaspora to Europe

and beyond. In this context, a Turkish-Gypsy version of our story reported by famed Gypsologist Francis Hindes Groome in 1899 is of considerable importance. Groome's note to the tale suggests he almost did not publish the tale because he considered it fragmentary and confused. However, he does correctly note the parallel to the Balkans' version of the ballad. Manole, for example, is the name of the central character in many Romanian versions, a name clearly cognate with the character of Manoli in this Turkish-Gypsy text" (Dundes, 1996:25).

As far as the spreading of the ballad beyond the European limits, folklorist Paul Brewster has suggested that the ballad got to the American territory, more exactly to the American playgrounds, in the children's nursery rhymes London Bridge is falling Down, "with its lines about a falling bridge and a trapped "fair lady" (1971) (Dundes, 1997:50-51; Dundes&Broner, 2007:108)

Mihai Pop, cited in Ștef Dorin(2006:234), considers that Master Manole is nothing else but the poetic form of sacrificial rite aimed at the erection of a building that was, at some point, spread worldwide(...)What we can read today is the poetico-metaphorical form of a sacrifice ritual that later turned into a myth. The spread of this poetico-metaphorical form inside the Balkan region was possible because of the fluidity and mobility of the political borders.

On the other hand, unlike Miorita, which apparently acted as an identity marker only for Romanians, according to Dundes, the ballad of the Waled-up Wife sparked the nationalist discourse all over the Balkans. For instance, Romanian researchers criticised other national versions for their aesthetic shortcomings. Dundes argues that “it is the height of ethnocentric subjectivity to claim that one national version of a cross-culturally distributed folksong is more ‘beautiful’ or ‘esthetically pleasing’ than that of another nation”(1996:195). However, not only Romanians suffer from this ethnocentric subjectivity, the same nationalist stance is present among Greek, Serbian or Hungarian or even Indian researchers, each of them only doing research on their national versions of the ballad.

Dundes harshly criticized such attitudes that, in his opinion, are ‘the pitfalls of parochial nationalism’(194-195) that hinder true progress and objective research that can shed light on many aspects of folklore. Nicolae Constantinescu (2008:206) argues that even Dundes falls in the trap of ethnocentric nationalism, as his work is published at the peak of the Yugoslavian crisis and, therefore, it might be affected by ideological and circumstantial elements. However, Constantinescu agrees with Dundes’ plea against monolithic hypothesizing and in favor of multiple interpretations especially because the texts under

scrutiny have more than one version. Just as linguistic features, cultural items travelled better when political borders were not tight and allowed for the free circulation of language and culture. Dundes's book is an invitation to a polyphonic reading of the ballad: "as variation is a hallmark of folklore texts, so is it also to be found in folklore interpretations" (1996:199).

In this chapter we tried to demonstrate an opinion we share with Steen Bille Jørgensen and Hans-Jürgen Lüsebrink (2021:7), who consider that the term "culture" should not be understood within the limits of national spaces, but as as an open and dynamic concept, "multiscaled and fluid, with changing and permeable borders". Cultural areas, much like the Balkan Kulturbund we wanted to sketch, "– similar to nations, regions or other historical subcategories –cannot be modelled as autonomous or hermetic entities, but as dynamic interrelated systems", as noted by Lemke Duque and Gasimov (2015: 8, cited in Jørgensen and Lüsebrink, *ibidem*).

5.Transfer and Taboo. Eve Ensler's *The Vagina Monologues*

The Vagina Monologues (henceforth, TVM), written by playwright, poet and activist Eve Ensler in 1996, is a play that focuses on women's experience and knowledge of their own bodies, in an attempt to raise awareness of violence against women. The series of monologues included in the play, written after the writer interviewed about two hundred women, deal with sensitive topics such as sexual abuse, menstruation, genital mutilation, with the purpose to challenge "the social construction of secrecy surrounding the word vagina, which she refers to as an "invisible word that stirs up anxiety, awkwardness, contempt, and disgust" (p. xx)(Carelli, 1999:254).

The play's success was instantaneous and had a fast global diffusion, despite its controversial main concern. However, although 'the women of TVM consistently narrate and understand themselves in and through their intersubjective experiences, revealing others to be an inescapable aspect of self (Renshaw, 2004:318), theorists have confessed that writing about the vagina, and generally, researching taboo or private topics, raises the question of credibility:

Many feminist (and other) researchers have found that researching 'taboo', 'private' or 'sensitive' topics can be problematic. As Lee and Renzetti (1993: 5) noted, researchers 'may find themselves stigmatized by colleagues and others for having studied particular topics'. Research on sex is a prime example, and sexology has 'suffer[ed] the slings and arrows of ridicule and delegitimation because of its risqué subject matter' (Tiefer, 1995: 192). But research on any topic considered 'private' could pose difficulties for the researcher. Oakley (1984: 74), for example, reported that she 'had to insist on the seriousness of [her] aim in the face of a lot of patronising jocularity about the academic absurdity of such a topic. The idea of doing a Ph.D. on housework in Britain in 1969 was laughable.' Topics such as these disturb the constructed division between 'public' and 'private'. The label 'private' has often been used to perpetuate oppressions (Beveridge and Mullally, 1995), and feminists have succeeded in making the personal political by bringing so-called private issues into public discourse – housework (e.g. Oakley, 1974), child sexual abuse (e.g. Russell, 1986) and domestic violence (e.g. Yllö and Bograd, 1988), for example. (Brown, 1999:367-368)

One of the renowned personalities interested in the concept of *taboo*, Sigmund Freud, links the meaning of the word in the original Polynesian culture to that of the counterparts in the major European cultures:

'Taboo' a Polynesian word. It is difficult for us to find a translation for it, since the concept connoted by it is

one which we no longer possess. It was still current among the ancient Romans, whose 'sacer' was the same as the Polynesian 'taboo'. So, too, the 'ἅγιος' of the Greeks and the 'kadesh' of the Hebrews must have had the same meaning as is expressed in 'taboo' by the Polynesians and in analogous terms by many other races in America, Africa (Madagascar) and North and Central Asia. The meaning of 'taboo', as we see it, diverges in two contrary directions. To us it means, on the one hand, 'sacred', 'consecrated', and on the other 'uncanny', 'dangerous', 'for-bidden', 'unclean'. The converse of 'taboo' in Polynesian is 'noa', which means 'common' or 'generally accessible'. Thus 'taboo' has about it a sense of something unapproachable, and it is principally expressed in prohibitions and restrictions(Freud, 2001:31).

Following into Freud's steps, while analysing the concept in relation to the translation of sacred texts, Douglas Robinson notes that one does not need an explicit prohibition, as parents or other adults "have drummed into you an ideosomatic dread of certain kinds of their own anxieties", therefore, on propitious circumstances, the body will "transfer that ideosomatic avoidance behavior to new taboos whenever some authority figure's body language signals that a similar danger exists"(Robinson, 1999:25).

Jim O'Driscoll discusses the notion of *taboo* as it is reflected in linguistic theories. Although some of the

theories relate taboos to words that can cause offence to “certain listeners in certain contexts’, O’Driscoll insists that a particular instance of language behaviour should be considered taboo if it violates a generally perceived rule: “so, when seen as potential, a definition of taboo language must be expressed in terms of norms.” O’Driscoll dwells on Culpepper’s distinction between *situational* and *cultural* norms, seen as “the totality of [his/her] experiences of a particular situation in a particular culture” and as “the totality of [his/her] experiences of a particular culture”, respectively, to frame his concept of taboo language, seen as “any (string of) words whose production is transgressive of polite social norms.”(O’Driscoll, 2020:40) These social norms influence a person’s perception upon what is normal in a particular situation in a certain culture. The instant success of Ensler’s book must have been related to women’s ability to identify, in their immediate living environment, situational and cultural norms, similar to those that prompted the writing, publication and production of the play *The Vagina Monologues*, that required the breaking of silence, and consequently, of the taboo. The private/public binarism kept certain aspects related to domestic violence, sexual assault and reproductive rights out of the public discourse, and consequently women remained trapped inside their own individualities, being denied the advantage of sharing

common group interests(Hammers, 2006:225). Michele Hammers, citing Fraser (1992) and Cohen(1995), considers that domestic and economic discourses of privacy exclude state interventions in the lives of subordinated groups, generally standing up for social groups that are already in power (*ibidem*).

The writer of the monologues opposes and exposes this culture of silence in which women are brought up that makes women more vulnerable to various forms of abuse.

In 1998, Eve Ensler and Feminist.org, a group of activists, decided to start a movement under the name V-Day, “to end violence against women and girls’,[which] promotes stagings of TVM around Valentine’s Day in order to raise awareness and funds for anti-violence groups and projects. Launched via a New York production featuring (among others) Whoopi Goldberg, Susan Sarandon, Glenn Close, Margaret Cho, and Gloria Steinem, this initiative has continued to enjoy the support of innumerable female “A-list” celebrities from all fields. Nevertheless, much of its success is due to its wide and enthusiastic uptake by colleges and women’s groups, initially in the United States, but rapidly spreading elsewhere.”(Harris, 2019:29). By 2009, the movement had become influential in about one hundred and twenty countries, with Ensler’s play being performed more than five

thousand times and translated into forty-eight languages around the globe by 2013. Moreover, during the same period, VD had raised over \$100 million, used to fund a plethora of support programs for women.

“In TVM, the power is in the performance itself, the process of the doing in public rather than the privacy of reading, and the focus is sexuality not anatomical parts”(Bell&Reverby, 2005:434) According to Bell and Reverby, the fascination of the play resides precisely in its ability to promise its audience to talk openly about sexuality and personal desire, creating a place of shared knowledge. Peterfeso writes about the “participatory forum” created by theater, a place where people can share ideas and imagine possibilities. In Della Pollock ‘s terms, “performance is a promissory act . . . because it catches participants—often by surprise—in a contract with possibility: with imagining what might be, could be, should be” (Pollock cited in Peterfeso, 2011:36) Apart from the agglutinating and commissive power of the play, the movement diverted the consumerist and rather empty aim of Valentine's Day, previously the monopoly of greeting card, flower and chocolate industries, to the nobler mission of promoting “victory, valentines, and vaginas, and (in 2004), voting ”(433). The worldwide appeal of both the play and the movement ensured their long lasting success.

Despite portraying experiences of many groups of women around the world, an upsurge in criticism against Ensler's play soon followed its success. The fact "In short, as a playwright, Ensler has edited, synthesized, and creatively interpreted this material in a fashion, which for Cooper and Srimati Basu constitutes a form of "ventriloquism," which reduces the interviewees' heterogeneous identities to versions of Ensler's same (Harris, 2019:33)". One of the theorists' main concerns was the fact that, in its process of global transmission, the play reproduced the core-periphery pattern so closely resembling colonisation patterns:

"From the viewpoint of transnational feminism, TVM is criticized by some scholars as a hegemonic text produced by middle-class white women in developed countries. Therefore, the globalization of the play has reproduced a core-periphery relationship in its global transmission (Cheng, 2009; Oyewumi, 2002). In this sense, the opposing views toward TVM in developing countries could be understood as resistance against the Western hegemony"(Huang, 2016:468)

Bell and Reverby (440) analyzed the relationship between student college productions of the play with the original text and performance, and concluded that directors of such productions were not allowed to contextualise or culturally appropriate the play by paraphrasing or reorganising the monologues, or by inserting more explanatory text, thus discouraging

community participation in the process of translation and adaptatio. Consequently, while Ensler subjected the play to constant revisioning and rewriting, the risk, according to Bell and Reverby is to place “power to establish the feminist practice of border crossing mostly (if not exclusively) in the hands of Eve Ensler” (*ibidem*).

This idea is also supported by Basu (2010:54), who touches upon the association of the V-Day project with “uneasy moments of feminist global politics”. In her opinion, instead of giving precedence to the different approaches of people involved in organizations around the globe, “the project tends to shape its targeted issues in terms of its own rhetoric and public relations. This creates a further erasure of voices and emphasizes Ensler’s text and vision as the primary salient discourse”

In an article entitled “Vagina Dentata – a kabarett: re-Imagining The Vagina Monologues”, published in the *South African Theatre Journal*, Roxanne Bains speaks about the experience she had with two student colleagues (Kelly-Eve Koopman and Pascal Pienaar) while producing a *kabarett* performance, the function of which is not to entertain (that would be the function of *cabaret*), but to maintain an adversarial stance in order to change society’ (Senelick 1993, p. xiii, cited in Bains, 2012:49). The three based their performance on three of Ensler’s monologues, with the explicit intention to subvert

Ensler's style, as they had become "increasingly concerned about the fact that this play dealing with a myriad of arguably superficial issues in a largely problematic manner is often still considered to be the go-to feminist play of our time, supposedly speaking for all women, all over the world, including South Africans" (Bains, 50). However, while satirising Ensler's text and underlining its manifold shortcomings, the production of the three college students, just as Ensler's, is also aimed at raising awareness about the need to combat violence against women.

Other rewritings of Ensler's text were also produced, as showcased by the following example of TVM adaptations presented at Sunstone Symposium, Salt Lake City, in August, 2001. Although it was inspired by Ensler's play, the production was atypical, having no costumes, no lighting and no props, and was designed as a conference session, entitled *Sacred Spaces:Mormon Women's Faith and Sexuality*, for fear that they would offend the symposium attendees. In Paterfeso's words, the title was "sanitized", preserving the taboo, to respect the cultural norms. On the other hand, the situational norms were disobeyed, as "the[eighteen] Mormon Vagina Monologues used a theatrical medium—and Ensler's play's rowdy reputation—to allow female contributors a decidedly public forum to express extremely private experiences"(Peterfeso, 2011:33).

While not all of the eighteen panelists wrote monologues deliberately discomfiting, Holly Welker “poignantly push[ed] the bounds of common Mormon decency”(ibidem).

Most of the times, the propagation of Ensler’s play and ideas underwent a process of transfer by *dispersion*, with the host cultures’ total readiness to embrace and promote the playwright’s voice and approach in their fight to combat violence against women around the world. Other times, when Ensler’s high handed attitude sparked anger and resentment, her ideas were still propagated, albeit a process of *subversion* of the original text and performance, as Bain’s rewriting mentioned above clearly shows. A third way in which Ensler’s readership managed to succeed in their journey of taboo diffusion and breaking the silence, especially in highly traditional communities, was by a process of *diversion* (in the British sense given the Cambridge online dictionary: “a different route that is used because a road is closed”), as exemplified by *The Mormon Vagina Monologues*, or by the “highly furtive private performances in order to avoid public ire” in Islamabad and Cairo(Basu:38) .

6. Translation and transfer

In an article concerning the Romanian translational tradition, Magda Jeanrenaud quotes Henry Jacquier, who argues against modern linguistic theories, claiming that, “‘instead of encouraging’ the work of translators, these theories only ‘condemn them to silence’, as if they only wanted the man to ‘remain trapped in the solitude of self-limiting individual, a designated victim of the fear of inexpressible’”(Jacquier, 1965:155, q. in Jeanrenaud, 2017:26). Fifty years later, with the field of Translation Studies heavily informed and legitimised by a plethora of theories from various perspectives, Anthony Pym identifies samples of the translation process in every instance of language:

Once you decide that translation is a process rather than a product, you can find evidence of that process virtually everywhere. Any use of language (or semiotic system) that rewords or reworks any other piece of language (or semiotic system) can be seen as the result of a translational process. And since languages are based precisely on the repetition of utterances in different situations, producing different but related meanings, just as all texts are made meaningful by intertextuality, all language use can be seen as translation”(Pym, 2014: 146)

This view resembles the one of Peter Burke, who, driven by “August Schlegel through Franz Rosenzweig to Benvenuto Terracini, Octavio Paz and George Steiner”, claims that understanding is itself a sort of

translation process, through which we find equivalents, in our own mental lexicon, for other people's concepts and practices (Burke and Hsia, 2007:8). These perspectives are certainly very broad and in order to create a theoretical foundation for this chapter, we might need to resort to a set of definitions which are, as Kaindl argues, a necessary evil when it comes to scholarly research, because they are restrictive, trying to "discipline' an object of research, which is always guided by particular interests"(2020:53). We will focus, therefore, on the one hand, on the relationship on translation and transfer, and, on the other hand, on the famous tripartite classification Roman Jakobson focused on in his seminal paper, "On Linguistic Aspects of Translation" (1959), as he was one of the first theorists to establish a typology that went beyond language.

According to the Cultural Transfer Approach, there is a close connection between cultural transfer and translation. In her volume, *Cultural Transfer through Translation*, Stefanie Stockhorst (2010:24) argues that language is not all that changes in the process of translation. The most important thing that texts change is, in fact, their cultural frame of reference:

Thus, significant transformations inevitably occur in the course of their de- and re-contextualisation, be it through the material or structural changes that go with the linguistic border-crossing, or through semantic shifts due to a different interpretative access. For this reason it seems not only legitimate but virtually indispensable to conceive of textual transfer through translation as a subset of cultural transfer.

Stockhorst's ideas of decontextualisation and recontextualisation are also found in Peter Burke's theorising on cultural translation, achieved, in his opinion, through a process of appropriation of something alien that will undergo a subsequent process of domestication. An instance of such a process is interlingual translation, that acts, according to Burke, like a kind of litmus paper, making it "unusually visible - or audible"(Burke and Hsia, 2007:8). Burke pleads for the usage of a twofold perspective on cultural translation, from both the receiver's point of view and from the donor's. While cultural translation, through skillful adaptation, enriches the host culture, for the donor, translation is a form of loss that results in misunderstanding and violence towards the original (*ibidem*). However, Burke identifies, in this loss, the very characteristics that differentiate the cultures involved in transfer:

Whether translators follow the strategy of domestication or that of foreignizing, whether they understand or misunderstand the text they are turning into another language, the activity of translation necessarily involves both decontextualizing and recontextualizing. Something is always 'lost in translation'. However, the close examination of what is lost is one of the most effective ways of identifying differences between cultures. For this reason, the study of translation is or should be central to the practice of cultural history (Burke and Hsia, 2007:38)

Burke's concept of cultural translation revolves around the translation between two languages, which is only one of the three types included in Jakobson's classification under the name of interlingual translation

or “translation proper” (the interpretation of some verbal signs by means of another language). The other two are intralingual translation, or *rewording* (an interpretation of verbal signs by means of other signs of the same language), and intersemiotic translation or *transmutation* (an interpretation of verbal signs by means of nonverbal signs of other semiotic systems) (Jakobson, 1959:233). Kaindl remarks that Jakobson’s typology that acknowledged the possibility of communication through means other than verbal found resonance in translation studies at a much later point, and gives the example of the integration of audiovisual translation in translation studies in the 1990s (Kaindl, 2020:53). Jakobson’s classification was subjected to scrutiny and revision.

Petrili (2012:232-233) summarises Derrida’s criticism against the lack of an interpretant in the case of interlingual translation (similar to ‘rewording’ and ‘transmutation’ for intralingual and intersemiotic translations) which would deem difficult the translation of the term ‘translation’. The *definiendum* and *definiens* are almost identical, resulting in a circular definition : “interlingual translation is translation (proper)”. Rymael (2010:15) predicts that, after so many “turns”, the 21st century will witness the advent of an “audiovisual turn” in translation studies. She considers Jakobson’s terminology relegated the terms to translation’s periphery and the tripartition outdated and insufficiently equipped to meet the challenges of modern texts :

The current inundation of text production modes and the ubiquity of image and/or sound in texts have made it virtually

impossible to adhere to such a limited concept of translation. This also brings translation and other forms of text production closer together, as well as propelling aspects of AVT into other translation types or leading to incorporation of AVT modes (subtitling, subbing, AD, SDH, etc.) into other communication settings, such as website localisation (*ibidem*).

Along the same lines, while acknowledging the influence exerted by Jakobson's classification in the field of translation, Klaus Kaindl also points out that it remains restrictively tributary to the linguistic paradigm, leaving the intersemiotic translation outside the core area of research. More than that, Jakobson's triad uses inconsistent terminology, as interlingual translation should also be called intersemiotic, for the simple reason that language is a semiotic system itself. Kaindl gives the solution proposed by Gideon Toury (1994:1114, cited in Kaindl, 2020:60), who "avoids this problem by defining Jakobson's interlingual translation as *intrasemiotic* translation, which can be divided into *intrasystemic* (i.e., intralingual) and *intersystemic* translation." Toury's definition of intersystemic translation is similar to Jakobson's interlingual one. However, Kaindl argues that "other modalities would also be conceivable here" (*ibidem*).

As noted by Stecconi (2020:315), "although Toury's arguments do not move explicitly from interpretive semiotics, he stresses the semiotic nature of translation and his conclusions are largely compatible with it." Kaindl (59-60), on the other hand, contests the use of semioticity as the basis for a taxonomy of

translation, “due to the all-encompassing variety of meanings of the term”. Instead, he proposes that “texts and their transfers should no longer primarily be examined based on language aspects, but through the lens of mode, medium, and genre”. Consequently, Kindl’s model would succinctly look as follows:

- At modal level
 - intramodal translation (within a modality: e.g. verbal-verbal or image-image transfer)
 - intermodal translation (exceeds modality level: e.g. translation of a verbal instruction manual into a pictorial representation to the translation of bible text into a comic)
- At medial level
 - intramedial translation (the medium remains unchanged)
 - intermedial translation (the medium changes: e.g. novel to script to film)
- At generic level
 - intrageneric (e.g. the translation of an Argentine tango into a Finnish tango)
 - intergeneric (e.g. the transfer of an American rock ‘n’ rol song into a German Schlager-or into a Romanian one, for that matter).

Kaindl points out the necessity to understand the inextricable interconnectedness among the three elements of the model, as a slight change in one will immediately alter the other two:

it is impossible to examine mode, medium, and genre independently from each other in the context of

translation. Nevertheless, the differentiation makes sense for translation studies in that all three components can each pose their own translation problems. These range from modal A multimodal conception of translation 61 communicative-functional aspects through medial technical-social implications to generic text-conventional issues (Kaindl, 60-61).

In terms of intralingual translation, an article focused on subtitling, Jorje

Díaz Cintas (2010:347) gives the example of intralingual translations aimed at audiences with hearing impairment, widely known as subtitling for the deaf and the hard-of-hearing, or SDH, which he considers “a step forward in guaranteeing greater democratic access to audiovisual programming”. Díaz Cintas’ assertion tackles an important problem related to the everyday reality of the present world, the complexity of which is difficult to cover by taxonomies of the past century. According to Díaz Cintas, SDH are similar to standard subtitling but they also use unique features:

Crucially, not only do they reproduce the speaker’s dialogue, but they also incorporate paralinguistic information that deaf people cannot access from the soundtrack, such as the revving of an engine, steps on a staircase, indications concerning music, laughter, or whispering. Their positioning is also important and they can be left or right justified so that speakers can be easily identified or to indicate where a given sound is coming from” (ibidem).

Díaz Cintas’ example is just another plea for a more complex understanding of translation in order to include areas that so far have been considered peripheral or specialised and offers substantial food for

thought in terms of the Kaindl's expanded model. Kaindl urges that disciplines that involve modal, medial and generic transfer processes should expand the interdisciplinary network, finding practical applications in social and cultural contexts rather than acting as abstract and static units (Kaindl, 64).

An immediate relationship between translation and transfer at metalinguistic level is exemplified in Susanne Göpferich's adaptation of Jakobson's model for a triadic representation of transfer processes, seen as interlingual, intralingual and intersemiotic (2010:374-375). Göpferich proposes a functional approach to the concept of transfer, which only includes translation in its narrower sense:

transfer concepts include, apart from translations in a narrower sense, transformations of texts and other media produced with a functionalist objective, i.e., with the intention of obtaining a target text or medium that fulfils specific functions for its audience in the target culture, rather than the criterion of invariance in relation to the source material. The results of transfer also include target texts or media whose functions differ from those of their source material.

Despite the fact that Göpferich's examples still rely heavily on patterns of language, which is always one of the sides involved in the transfer process, the classification provides a useful link between the prior work on translation and contemporary theories on transfer and has the advantage of removing Jakobson's annoying circularity in the interlingual category.

Regina Shoher emphasises the undeniable importance of Jakobson's innovative triadic model,

which was crucial in the 6th decade of the twentieth century, despite its flawed reflection in the current world:

Even though Jakobson's 'intersemiotic translation' is somehow restricted in that the source medium is always a written text, we owe it to him that the concept of translation is extended from its strictly linguistic to a broader semiotic context, including transformations and intersections not only between different languages but, more generally, between any different sign systems. (Schober, 2010:166)

Jakobson's typology classification opened the way to the plethora of theoretical papers that infused the translation research field and facilitated the development of the modern perspectives, some of which we tackled upon in this study. In the spirit of innovation that marks Lawrence Cahoon's "antitraditional tradition"(Cahoon, 2005:95), Jakobson broke away from the monolithic language paradigm in translation and offered future generations of critics a foundation to build on, albeit by means of subversion and criticism.

The following two sections focus on the lesser trodden paths of intralingual and intersemiotic translation, without falling too far, however, from the Jakobsonian old block.

7. Glimpses of intralingual translation

Intralingual translation is one of the least studied of the three types included in Jakobson's classification. Defined by Jakobson as an interpretation of verbal signs by means of other signs of the same language (1959:114), intralingual translation generally fulfills the role of transferring culture transgenerationally, creating the necessary continuum for national cultures to survive. As shown in the previous chapters, cultural survival is closely dependent on the process of transfer, generally performed by mediators, negotiators, intermediaries or contesters (that keep the cultural object alive by the mere act of subversion), roles assumed by translators and adaptors. Functioning to make culture accessible to new generations, intralingual translations will naturally compete with retranslations that are usually produced when the time span of a translation's life approaches the end, or when it no longer serves the purpose it was done for.

Ana-Magdalena Petrariu cites Mona Baker, who comments on the general scarcity of the research: "interlingual translation is not such a minor issue as the existing literature on translation might suggest...I know of no research that looks specifically at the phenomena of intralingual and intersemiotic translation. We do have classifications such as Jakobson's, which alert us of

the possibility of such things as intersemiotic and interlingual translation but we do not make any genuine use of such classifications in our research” (Baker, 1998:xvii, cited in Petrariu, 2005:31). Some researchers do not use the classification because they do not resonate with it. Newmark identifies intralingual translation with the free translation which “reproduces the matter without the manner, or the content without the form of the original. Usually it is a paraphrase much longer than the original, a so-called 'intralingual translation', often prolix and pretentious, and not translation at all”(Newmark,2003:47) Newmark is not alone in his views against such a concept as intralingual translation. In fact, Aage Hills-Madsen gives an entire list of translation scholars, with Newmark among them, who disapprove of the treatment of intralingual translation as a true translational category and also of the extension of the concept of translation beyond the limits of interlingual translation: Newmark (1991: 69), Mossop (1998: 252; 2016), Schubert (2005: 126), Eco (2003: 127-30) and Trivedi (2007: 285-86) (Hills-Madsen, 539). Eco, for instance, places the term translation between inverted commas to refer to other forms of semiotic conversion than Jakobson’s “translation proper” (ibidem). As seen in the previous chapter, other classifications are also available, such as Gottlieb’s typology, that contains five sub-categories: “1)

diachronic; 2) dialectal (termed diglossic in Petrilli (2003b: 19); 3) paraphrasing (termed diaphasic in Petrilli 2003b: 19); 4) transliteration and 5) diamesic (same term in Petrilli 2003b: 19). Only the third category (paraphrasing/ diaphasic) is not represented in Gottlieb (2007). The typology is to be seen as a continuation of Jakobson's (1959: 233) primary, tripartite subdivision of the translation concept, "taking the first level of the taxonomy to the next step in granularity" (Hill-Madsen, 2019:541)

Petrariu gives a summary of the Romanian academic research on intralingual translation before and after the collapse of the communist regime, that is also scarce and closely linked to Jakobson's perspective on it, and analyses the case in point of Petru Comarnescu's three versions of Robinson Crusoe, "a particular case of intralingual translation, the 1943 edition destined to young readers being (mildly) modified to suit a communist ideology (1961) and more strongly for adult readers (1964), especially at paratextual level" (Petrariu, 2005:36). This is an example of diaphasic intralingual translation, in Petrilli's terms, a translation across language registers, meant to alter a text in order to satisfy a particular type of audience. In the second version, targeted at adult readers, which is closer to Defoe's style, Comarnescu uses longer sentences and more specialised vocabulary

instead of “the paraphrases and borrowings that were a peculiarity of the 1943 edition”(Petrariu, 36).

The following example can be included in the diachronic category in Gotlieb’s classification. It is an infelicitous case of intralingual translation, with a disappointing effect on a readership that has to be specialised, or it would not be interested in a 19th century translation of *Macbeth*. In 2005, the publishing house Cartex 2000 issued a revised edition of PP. Carp¹⁴’s second translation of the play, published in 1886. This was already a renewed version, an example of intralingual translation performed by the translator twenty years after the publication of the first version, in 1864, with the purpose to correct the misunderstandings and the graphic peculiarities the first edition had been criticised for. The copyright page of the Cartex edition warns the reader that the respective version contains modifications concurrent with the established norms of the Romanian Academy. Unfortunately, the lack of a coherent principle to govern the changes, as well as the fact that the editors failed to provide a short Preface that might have justified the alterations of Carp’s text simply revokes any potential advantages that an intralingual translation might

¹⁴ P.P. Carp(1837-1919) was a Romanian intellectual and politician. He was the second to translate *Macbeth* into Romanian and the first to use an English source text.

provide for the contemporary reader. Some of the changes, such as the replacement of some older spelling forms, bridge the one hundred year language gap between the translator and the reader and are meant to facilitate an easier access to Carp's text. The confusion hits when other similar older forms remain unchanged, thus only partly fulfilling the aim declared at the beginning of the book. Other textual alterations are even more objectionable, such as lexical replacements operated directly in the text of the translation, and not in explanatory (foot)notes, that occur with the same careless and unjustified inconsistency. For instance, prompted by a prudish impulse, the editors change the noun phrase *a rebelului curvă* "the rebel's whore" in the sergeant's line in I.2 with *a rebelului amantă* "the rebel's mistress", which is less offensive in Romanian. However, they preserve the line *mână de prunc de-o curvă născut* "the arm of a baby born of a whore", the translation for the third witch's lines in IV.1.30-31 "Finger of birth-strangled babe/ Ditch-delivered by a drab" unaltered, as it belongs to one of the witches' spells, rendered by Shakespeare in rhymed couplets, which probably did not allow for an easy replacement with a synonym. Another example is the replacement of the word *lei* (plural noun denoting local money used as a translation of noun *dollars*), which, in Carp's text is an ingenious example of cultural adaptation, with *galbeni*

(noun denoting foreign gold coins of variable value used in Romanian principalities in the Middle Ages), justified, perhaps, by the intention of adding some antique flavour to the text of the translation. This intention is annihilated when the editors replace the slang term *pișat* (literally, “pissing”), in the porter’s lines, with the neologism *urinat*, “urinating”, to be closer to the source text.

Above all these, the editors not only reduplicate some typos from Carp’s text, but they also add their own, making the new edition completely futile for professional users and downright detrimental for the non-specialised readers, for whom the Cartex edition might be the first, or even the only version of the play *Macbeth* they have access to. Re-editions of older translations should provide some biographical information that can place the translation in appropriate historical and sociocultural contexts. Carp’s version of *Macbeth* published in 1886 is not one of the best translations in Romanian, but, apart from a series of orthographic peculiarities and lexical choices, it is in no way inaccessible to the contemporary reader. Malcolm’s answer to Macduff at the end of act IV can give us a glimpse into Carp’s translation skills.

This tune goes manly! Come go we to the King, our power is ready, Our lack is nothing but our leave. Macbeth Is ripe for shaking, and the powers above Put on their instruments: receive what cheer you may, The night is long that never finds the day.(IV.3.92)	Mai bărbătește sună așa cuventul teu Aidem acum la rege, oștirea este gata S'așteaptă, ca să plece, înalta invoie. Iar Macbeth este copt și bun de secerat. Puterile cerești au pregătit cuțitul, Înfrângeți deci durerea, fii vesel de se poate, Căci tot la zi ajunge și cea mai lungă noapte.(PPC, 120)	More manly sounds this way your word Let's go now to the king the army is ready An'waits, to go, for royal consent And Macbeth is ripe and ready to reap The heavenly powers have prepared the knife, Overcome your sorrow, be marry if you may Because even the longest night reaches the day. (our back translation)
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The example above is only a failed attempt at an intralingual translation but Shakespeare's

retranslations are successful stories. One such case is illustrated in Aage Hills-Madsen analysis of a Sparknotes prose translation of Hamlet (550-554), from the perspective of degree of transfer and translation, lexical shifts and grammatical shifts.

If diaphasic intralingual translation can have , as Hills-Madsen notes, a “‘downward’ transformation from a highly specialized to a non-specialized register” but also “a converse ‘upward’ movement, namely in cases where non-expert utterances are translated into the expert’s field specific terminology”, this is also the case for diachronic intralingual translation, which can translate an older text into a more modern language state , but also the other way round, as it can be seen in the following examples.

In an essay entitled *Cum traducem?* (“How do we translate?”), Mircea Vaida (1978:73), poet and literary historian, cites a fragment from the diary of Ion Vinea, a renowned poet and Shakespeare translator, who claims that Shakespeare should have been translated in Froissart’s French, and not in Racine’s.¹⁵ Such an experiment, in Vinea’s modernist spirit, could be classified as a process of “translation for translation’s sake”, as the main function of translation, that of intermediating between the source text and the

¹⁵ Jean Froissart was a medieval poet and chronicler, whose work Vinea was reading at the time when he translated *Macbeth*.

contemporary reader of the translation, would be denied. Jean Michel Déprats (2004:69), one of the French translators of the play *Macbeth*, describes such an experiment that, in France, was brought to life by the “pseudo-archaic” translation of the play *Hamlet* by Michel Vittoz. Déprats argues that such a translation, in fictitious French, tries to mimic the relationship between the contemporary speaker of English and a literary work written four centuries ago, and to act as a channel of communication with the distant past (*ibidem*, 71-72). In practice, such an endeavour seems futile if we think that despite the successive rewritings, or intralingual translations, in so many different diachronic stages, as well as the vast critical and theoretical paratext of Shakespeare’s work, the ordinary English reader still considers the bard’s text difficult to understand, and the numerous prosaic translations stand proof in this respect.

The process of translation is subjected to historical conditioning, each translation product being, in a way, a diachronic version of the source text. Extreme attitudes, such as those purposefully archaising or modernising at all costs, alienate the reader or restrict a work’s readership to an elite that understands and cherishes experiments of this kind. Another example of such an elitist approach to translation comes from Jakobson himself and his intralingual translation of one

of Vladimir Majakovski's poems. Majakovsky was against the bourgeois conditioning of the literary canon that was reflected in the approaches to translations, subjected to the same hierarchical organisation as literary texts in Russian. According to Brian James Baer (2011:178), "Majakovsky's disdain for the "bourgeois" literary canon would be reflected in a view of translation that saw it as a means of producing texts in a horizontal rather than a vertical – or hierarchical – relationship to the original. The radical, bohemian atmosphere of the time encouraged collaborative artistic projects and granted a certain prominence to translation." Jakobson's views on translation and on the widest cultural perspectives, in general, were clearly influenced by this radical artistic circle in which he spent his young years. Prompted by Majakovsky's daring advertisement for one of their literary soirees, that said "Brilliant translators will read brilliant translations of my brilliant poems" (Jakobson, cited in Baer, 178), Jakobson translated one of Majakovsky's poems, "Nichego ne ponimaiut" (They don't understand anything) in Old Church Slavonic, the language used by the Russian Orthodox Church, that was only partly accessible to the average educated Russian. He read the poem in 1918, at the Cafe of Poets in Moscow. According to Baer, "the translation represents an interesting act of recoding, for by dismissing the transparent, denotative function of

translation, Jakobson explores what we might call in the spirit of the time “perevod kak takovoi,” (translation as such), or translation as an end in itself.”(*ibidem*). By using an older language state in translation, Jakobson serves the formalist purpose of *ostranenie*, defamiliarization, “making the stone stoner”, and heightening the audience’s perception of the poem’s meaning.

Beside bridging the lexical gaps and giving in to the seductiveness of experimental transfer, intralingual translation can also refer to the process of transliteration, one of the categories identified by Gotlieb, that consist, according to Hills-Madsen, of “completely predictable translation strategies (545), that is the simple transfer of the text from one graphic system to another. However, historical examples of this subcategory can offer rewarding perspectives. For instance, in an article dealing with the inventory of the translations made in the Republic of Moldova between the 1950s and the 1980s, during the Soviet period, Irina Devderea (2019:260) included a section entitled “Traduceri cu haină schimbată” [Translations in new attire]. She identifies, in 1958, four translations done by Romanian translators, who probably had published them in Latin script in Romania, issued by two publishing houses in Chișinău, in Cyrillic script. Devderea considers that the publication of four

Romanian translations in one year can hardly be accounted for, as the main target of the Soviet regime was Moldova's complete separation from Romania, both politically and culturally speaking. Ten years later, in 1968, another Romanian translation was published in Cyrillic script, Dante's *Divine Comedy*, in the translation of Romanian poet George Coșbuc. Devderea reveals that the editor of this edition was the Moldovan Italianist scholar, Nicanor Rusu, who, having studied in Iași (Romania) and then in Rome, was subjected to humiliation and hardship on his return in the country but despite that, put in a lot of effort to see the intralingual translation come to light, to make it accessible to Moldovan readers. On the other hand, all translations published in Moldova in Cyrillic script before 1990 are inaccessible to both Romanian readers but also to Moldovan contemporary readers as a result of Moldova's return to the Latin script beginning with 1989.

A transfer between Romanian and the so-called Moldovan Language is a critical scientific discussion in itself. Donald Dyer comments upon the heavy influence of the Russian language on the Romanian spoken in the Republic of Moldova which "was normalised as to be 'different' from dialects [...] spoken outside the Soviet Union"(1999:86). While the speakers living on the territory became bilingual, their Romanian lexic became

augmented, or even replaced, by Russian vocabulary, and the sound system and syntax were also altered by the Slavic influence. Moldovan linguists were politically intimidated to promote Moldovan as a language that was independent from Romanian. The regime overemphasized the presence of the Slavic linguistic elements (that sometimes had historical causes, enrooted in the natural evolution of the Romanian language) to prove that Moldovan was a distinct language (87). The newer lexical terms, just as the phonetic and syntactic differences, some of which Dyer analyses in his study, are a natural consequence of the fifty years of Russian domination that created a communication gap between the speakers of the Romanian language on the two territories separated by closed borders, especially at spoken level. Written language, not being used extensively for political or cultural purposes, was less exposed to alterations. The political manipulation reverberated far beyond the Soviet grip, and consequently, in 2003, in Chişinău, Vasile Stati publishes *Dicţionar Moldovenesc-Romanesc* (Moldovan-Romanian Dictionary), met with harsh waves of criticism by researchers in both countries. In an article published in Revista 22 [22 Magazine] immediately after the publication of the dictionary, Andra Şerbănescu, linguist and reader at the Faculty of Letters in Bucharest, gives an extended

warning against a “ludicrous ‘lexicographical work’ and a stupid attempt to manipulate an audience that is presupposed to be insufficiently educated to identify correctly the reality masked under sentences that are either pathetically flag-waving or written in an offensive language by an author with an anachronistic and anti European mentality”¹⁶. The title of Șerbanescu’s article, “*Se spărie gândul*” (literally “The thought becomes afraid”) is a syntagm borrowed from the work of chronicler Miron Costin(1633-1691), *De neamul moldovenilor. Din ce țară au ieșit strămoșii lor* (*About Moldavians’ Descent. The country their ancestors came from*), that focuses, among other things, with the Latin origin of the people living on either side of the Carpathians and their language. Șerbănescu places the two authors in an antithetical relationship, criticising Stati for the use of the ideologised and politicised syntagm “limba moldovenească” coined by Stalin “to serve a totalitarian discourse meant to build and legitimate an artificial identity created through the violent supression of historical identity”¹⁷. In 1999,

¹⁶ Our translation. In original: “lucrare ‘lexicografică’ penibilă,(...) și o stupidă încercare de a manipula un public presupus suficient de incult pentru a nu cunoaște realitatea mascată prin fraze, unele patetic-patriotarde, altele scrise într-un limbaj suburban, de un autor cu mentalități anacronice, antieuropene” (Șerbănescu:Revista 22).

¹⁷ My translation. In original: Sintagma, ideologizată și politizată, a fost impusă de Stalin în mod dictatorial, pentru a servi unui discurs totalitar, prin care s-a dorit construirea și legitimarea unei identități

Donald Dyer (94) identified two opposing groups among the people of Moldova. On the one hand, “intellectuals, many politicians and most educated Moldovans who recognised that Moldovan is a regional dialect of Romanian”, much like the regional variety spoken in the Romanian region of Moldova with which it shares many features. On the other hand, “nationalists in the government and many ‘common’ folk prefer the separate language argument”. The debate, while not as inflamed as twenty years ago, is still unquenched. In 2011 Stati issued a second edition of the dictionary. It is the only lexicographic attempt of this kind. The transfer between Moldovan and Romanian is, at best, a case of diglossic translation, the one between a national language and a dialect.

artificial create, prin negarea violenta a identității istorice(Șerbănescu:Revista 22).

8. Glimpses of intersemiotic translation

This section¹⁸ focuses on the relationship between *text* and *image* in Ernest Latham's translation of ballad Miorița, published in the volume *Miorița. An Icon of Romanian Culture* that also contains photos of transhumance shepherds taken by Laurence Salzmann. As seen at the end of the third chapter, the picturebook was born under interesting (and inauspicious) circumstances, but the introductory notes fail to shed light on how it came into being, apart from the fact that Kiki Munshi, Latham's assistant and director of the American Library, was encouraged to take the exhibit with her when she ended her diplomatic mission, "as it would never be displayed in Romania" (Latham, 10). The book contains the thirty-eight photos taken by Salzmann, the Editor's (Latham's) notes and an essay by Alexandru Husar. Page 96, the last page, contains the Photographer's remarks, a heartfelt memoir on Salzmann's own experience in Poiana Sibiului. The thirty-eight photos are accompanied by the Romanian text of the ballad and its English translation, authored by Ernest Latham and Kiki Skagen Munshi, who had

¹⁸ The research on Latham's picture book was previously published in 2022, under the title "Transfer and Transgression in Ernest H. Latham's *Miorița* Picture Book" in the journal "Concordia Discors vs. Discordia Concors" *Intermediality: Translation, Adaptation, Performance* (II), nr.18/2022, pp. 143-156.

also provided Latham with Salzmann's photos. Just as the American exhibit in 1999, the book is not widely known, despite its still being advertised on book selling sites such as Amazon, consequently, the cumulative effort of three Americans to bring to public attention their own interpretation of a Romanian cultural product is intriguing. Bilingual and bimedial and somewhat anachronistic, the picturebook insists on telling Miorița's story in an innovative way. The exhibit might have not been allowed to create a cultural bridge between Romanians and Americans, but the picture book manages to bridge two languages and two different media. A bridge, in Elleström's definition (2010:12), is the crucial 'inter' of intermediality, "but what does it bridge over? If all media were fundamentally different, it would be hard to find any interrelations at all; if they were fundamentally similar, it would be equally hard to find something that is not already interrelated. Media, however, are both different and similar, and intermediality must be understood as a bridge between medial differences that is founded on medial similarities." One of the similarities between the two modes of communication in the book is founded on the reaction of both the translator and the photographer to the field, in Halliday's terms, to the subject matter that drew their attention, their fascination with Romanian folk culture.

When Latham, Skagen Munshi and Salzmänn came across the ballad, during the communist regime, their first surprise was that “almost every Romanian [could] recite the poem by heart or at least parts of it. It [was] a kind of national folk treasure in the heart of every Romanian”, as Salzmänn writes in the memoir at the end of the book. Miorița had emerged in the national consciousness at the same time with the notion of ‘nation’, at the middle of the nineteenth century, it had had a significant role in the process of construction of Romanian nationhood. It also acted as cultural ambassador, giving Western countries an idea about the Romanian territories at a time when little was known about them. As Norris remarks, “European Romanticism encouraged a thirst for the contradictory mixture of the exotic and the authentic which created urgent demands.[...]Folk poetry and oral ballads were considered to represent an original picture of the soul of the nation. They were thought of as the oldest surviving projections of a communal spirit lost to modern man. It was then discovered that such songs and a whole oral culture had survived as a living tradition in the Balkans far longer than in the West. The stagnation caused by centuries of occupation by the Turks who gave no value to the Christian culture of the local population had created an environment which stunted the development of written culture”(Norris, 1999:18). The communist

regime, by severing the Romanian ties with Europe and the rest of the world, continued the process of stagnation and, in some ways, the fascination for the traditional, authentic culture was still exercised upon foreign visitors more than a century after Alecsandri's publication of the ballad in 1853, when Miorița became "enshrined in the Romanian mind as a preeminent expression of national feelings"(Latham, 1999:10).

However, for most of the people inside the country, especially because they did not have access to different models, the everyday reality they lived was nothing out of the ordinary. The pictures that Laurence Salzmänn took in Poiana Sibiului portray the rural community of transhumant shepherds and documented their life cycle for one year. It was only Latham's previous knowledge of ballad Miorița that added to the meaning Salzmänn's documentary initially captured. Bateman analyses the relationship between text and image and the way they connect to create meaning from the perspective of Barth's notions of *anchorage* and *relay*. According to Barthes, anchorage occurs when texts contribute to pinning down the interpretation of images. It is, therefore, "a text-image relationship in which a particular denotation is selected out of the interpretations possible for an image. In Barthes' words: "The text replies – in a more or less direct, more or less partial manner – to the question: what is it? " (Barthes

1977 [1964]: 39)”(Bateman, 2014:34). A typical example of anchorage would be, according to Bateman, the newspaper captions without which the meaning of the image would be difficult or impossible to grasp. Latham himself considers the lines of the ballad in his translation as nothing more than captions for Salzmann’s photographs. The two-page spread of the book has the text on the left, with the Romanian text in the top left corner of the page and the English translation in the bottom right corner, while the photo was placed on the right. Each page that contains text is embellished with the same calligraphic flourish design.



In the image above, which is the twenty-fourth two-page spread, the image on the right portrays two newly weds walking arm in arm in the village street. The caption says “the world’s own bride”, referring, in fact, to the fictitious bride in the ballads’ death-marriage allegory. This spread, and many others in the book, reflects

Barthes' opinion that anchorage exhibits an imbalance between text and image, being a relationship of control in which image is submitted to the power of the text (Bateman, 2014:35).

The relay, on the other hand, deals with situations in which the relationship between text and image is more balanced. There is still an interdependence between the two, but they are two separate parts of a single whole. In this case, “the meanings created in the combination stand as complementary elements of a “more general syntagm” (Barthes 1977 [1964]: 41), in which the meaning of the whole combination is located. ‘Syntagm’ is a term derived from linguistics referring to some demarcated unit of analysis. By using this term, Barthes suggests that certain combinations of text and image are themselves legitimate units of analysis – that is, they need to be seen together as parts of a single whole”(Bateman, 2014:35).



For instance, the fourth two-page spread portraying the shepherds has as only link the number three, as the caption says “One a Moldavian/One Transylvanian/ And one a Vrancean”. Three shepherds and their three flocks of sheep appear in the opening lines of the ballad and the photo does not fail to deliver a complementary message. However, the identical dressing style of all three would probably betray, for a trained eye, the fact that they all belong to the same geographical area. Bateman considers that the double-page spread, by simply juxtaposing text and image, allows them both to have a separate existence, despite the fact that they mirror each other, somehow, on the spread:

They are only loosely coordinated, often at the level of entire episodes. There may also be finer-grained resonances across parts of the text, for example, words and phrases, and the visual material that may be intended to be picked up during reading, but not necessarily. When this does occur, the effect is like a caption – more information is provided anchoring the visual information; however, unlike a caption, the text is not signalled particularly by its layout position as being a caption – the relationship is created dynamically during reading. The text and the image are therefore offered independently for the reader to relate and

it is very much up to the reader to make that connection (Bateman, 2014:79).

An interesting connection can be made, for instance, between the women's portraits that accompany the lines referring to the shepherd's mother and the different hypostasis of womanhood immortalised in the photos. In the ballad, the mother is an old woman, wearing a woolen waistband, who keeps asking around to find out the whereabouts of her son. The photographer provides a photo of four old women sitting together, in black attire, while, in a different spread, the waistband is metonymically portrayed by the image of a distaff.

Other photos show middle-aged women at work, a young bride and a young mother with a baby in her arms.



Photo p. 28



Photo p. 31



Photo p.32



Photo p. 33

The reader/viewer can easily connect the photos to the narrative line of the ballad, even if the immediate meaning of both the pictures and the text cannot always be closely similar. Borrowing the term “meaning multiplication” from the socio-functional semiotician Jay Lemke, Bateman argues that in such a multimodal product, “text ‘multiplied by’ images is more than text simply occurring with or alongside images”. Under propitious circumstances, the value of combination of different modes of meaning is greater than the one of those modes taken separately (Bateman, 2014:6).

For the right recipient, Bateman’s multiplication of meaning is even more obvious as the picturebook encloses text in two languages and two types of media, or modes. Gunther Kress makes the distinction between translation as transfer between different modes and translation as transfer within the same mode: “these distinct transferences deserve a more fine-grained analytical vocabulary. *Transduction* could be used to refer to the moving of meaning from one mode to another (e.g., a painting based on a poem), for example, while *transformation* could denote the transfer of meaning within the same mode (e.g., an English version of a French poem) (Kress, cited in Boria and Tomlin, 2020: 6). Latham’s volume illustrates both transduction and transformation. In both cases, apart from the type of transfer and mode, another important

thing is the tenor. Although both confess endearing feelings and bonding intentions, Latham and Salzmann's interference with a cultural icon was looked upon with suspicion by the communist authorities of the time. Even American officials were skeptical about displaying Romanian shepherds in the American library (Latham, 10). This process of *transducere*, of carrying the meaning from one mode to another was seen as an act of transgression, especially because the initiative of the exhibit was foreign, and the foreigner had long been used as an inflammatory element of the nationalist discourse even before the installation of the communist regime.

When it comes to *transformation*, the editor's introduction dwells on the labour of translation that resulted in the English version of the ballad included in the picturebook. The short translation history is loaded with transgressive energies, as the translator/editor confesses a determination to give the English reader a new opportunity to read the Romanian text, which means that previous translations/readings, although done well, should be disregarded. Latham gives several details regarding the decision to translate Alecsandri's consecrated version ("not to confuse the Romanian visitor for whom the exhibit was intended") that had already been "expertly translated in 1972 by the Pulitzer Prize winning poet William D. Snotgrass"(Latham, 11).

In choosing to translate in free verse, and not in the rhyming couplets of Alecsandri and Snodgrass' texts, employing a preponderantly Anglo-Saxon vocabulary, rather than a Latin one, Latham confesses the hope to "place the English reader in the context of early English poetry and thus to convey some sense of the Miorița's primitive strength"(11).

Snotgrass's version (just as Alecsandri's) is indeed more musical, and it seems this is precisely what Latham tried to avoid, a recollection of romantic verse to the English speaking reader. In the translator's notes he writes for the translation of Ioana Malanciou's poem *Road*, Snotgrass confesses that he was so impressed with the history of the folk ballad and with its sound, that he wanted to translate it to be able to sing it (Malancioiu, 2006:45). In his seminal work *Image-Music-Text*, Barthes (1977) considers that images and sounds are the two broad categories that are worth taking into consideration in multimodal meaning production, along with language (Dicerto, 2018:17). Snotgrass would have paired his translation with sound, whereas Latham did it with image. Latham's transgression of expected guiding translation principles resulted in a text that the translator himself considered 'foredoomed to the failure implied by any translation of a great poem" (12).

Michael Tomalin considers the critical attention received by literary texts along the centuries is disproportionate when compared to the little attention received by ways in which translators deal with literary works that combine multiple modes (Tomalin, 2020:136). In the case of Latham's volume, it is not the source text, but the translation that combines two different modes of meaning creation, in a symbiotic product, an instance of successful intermediality/mediation.

According to Kaindl, multimodal awareness is beneficial for both translation studies and translators. Apart from the classic translation skills, which include linguistic and cultural competence, research competence and transfer skills, the latter needs media and genre awareness: "in concrete terms, this means that translators must be able to classify semiotic resources, analyse their meaning and functioning, and understand their functional links with other modes (Kaindl, 2020: 64-65).

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