Transculturalism in literature as reflected in the works of translingual writers from the Hungarian cultural context

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Transculturalism has been one of the defining phenomena of recent years in many areas of the humanities and social sciences. It has been widely discussed within such disciplines as, among others, cultural studies, anthropology or ethnology. The present paper aims to show how transculturalism has influenced the research conducted in the field of literary studies. The first part, which has a review character, will present the history of the concept, the creator of which is commonly believed to be Wolfgang Welsch. Although Welsch is in fact the most important theorist of transculturalism, the term was originally defined in 1940 by the Cuban anthropologist Fernardo Ortiz, who inspired many later researchers of the concept, such as the Uruguayan literary critic Ángel Rama or Mary Louise Pratt, whose findings will be both discussed in the article.

Welsch formulated the term of transculturalism in polemics with the two earlier approaches of multi- and interculturalism, which are no longer considered cutting-edge but in the 1970s were widely applied both in theoretical considerations as well as in practice. Later this line of reasoning was continued in the works of Arianna Dagnino, who is considered to be the most important contemporary researcher of the interconnections of transculturalism with literature. The second part of the paper will be, therefore, almost entirely devoted to Dagnino, who proposed a very interesting and valuable, but (for several reasons which will be mentioned in the paper) debatable definition of the so-called transcultural literature. It is questioned, among others, by the findings of such literary scholars as Hajnalka Nagy or Zoltán Németh, whose research will be also briefly presented.

Finally, the paper will pose a question about the place of so-called transcultural writers in a literary canon. The specific status of transcultural writers, who do not belong to any of the national literatures, prompts reflection on whether their works have a chance to be included in the supranational canon of literature. The context for these considerations, based on the approach to the issue of the canon by David Damrosch, will be provided by three translingual authors of Hungarian origin: Agota Kristof, Edith Bruck and Tibor Fischer.

FROM MULTICULTURALISM TO TRANSCULTURALISM

Multiculturalism is a concept which in the late 1960s and early 1970s became one of the possible answers to the "problems" of Western societies, resulting from the fact that they were inhabited by representatives of many nations, languages, and cultures. The idea became a subject of public debate when Australia and Canada, both culturally heterogeneous countries, expressed their official support for it and adopted policies that took its demands into account. In Europe, the first country to implement the idea of multiculturalism was Great Britain. In response to the influx of immigrants from former British colonies, a document was ratified in 1966, which regulated the stay of all the newcomers on the islands in the spirit of multicultural tolerance and mutual understanding (Rattansi 2011, 7).

At the heart of multiculturalism lies a society that is welcoming and open to all kinds of difference. Minority cultures can remain distinct and are not obliged to assimilate into the dominant culture. The proponents of this idea believe that this not only does not prevent the integration of immigrants into society, but supports it (Song 2020). Related to the idea of multiculturalism, although not identical to it, is the concept of interculturalism. Like multiculturalism, it speaks of a mutually respectful coexistence of cultures without the pressure to assimilate. However, interculturalism goes a step further and assumes a common understanding and mutual acceptance.[1]

Both concepts, however noble in their assumptions, have little in common with reality in the eyes of their critics. Sabrina Brancato, who called multiculturalism "a modern utopia created for the West", sees the main problem with both multiculturalism and interculturalism in the fact that both sustain differences (2004, 40–41). From a political point of view, the actions taken under their auspices (such as combating discrimination, racism, promoting respect for cultural, ethnic, and racial differences) are clearly positive. However, these are ideologies based on thinking of cultures as monoliths, existing in parallel to each other and not intermingling. In the spirit of multiculturalism and interculturalism, our task as members of society is to respect other cultures and to respect what is different, diverse, and exotic. We are to be open to otherness, change in our own thinking and exoticism of a culture that is different from our own. Such thinking, although it has laudable aims, may result in processes of segregation and even ghettoization, and may perpetuate stereotypes. From the point of view of national minorities, on the other hand, it can lead to essentialist and idealistic thinking, the aftermath of which is, among other things, the idea of authenticity, resulting from the longing for "true roots" (41).

The philosopher and art historian Wolfgang Welsch also drew attention to the limited usefulness of the concepts of multiculturalism and interculturalism, describing them as progressive ideas only in appearance and referring to the now outdated traditional concept of individual cultures. He pointed to Herder as its main creator, who described culture using three elements: "social homogenization, ethnic consolidation and intercultural delimitation" (1999, 194). According to Welsch, none of these determinants are valid today. Firstly, the claim about the homogeneity of contemporary societies is questionable. As Welsch enumerates, we differ in terms of material status, gender, or sexuality, among other things, and these characteristics influence our life-

MAGDALENA ROGUSKA-NÉMETH

styles and determine various, radically different life patterns. Even more debatable is the concept of ethnic unification of cultures. As Welsch points out, societies are not something given, but invented and often established by force. It is therefore erroneous for Herder to think of culture "as closed spheres or autonomous islands", which corresponds to the territory inhabited by a single language-speaking people (1999, 195). Neither do borders, which are intended to separate from other cultures, have any purpose today (nor did they have any purpose in the past centuries). The fact that they must be redefined and redrawn again and again to keep up with the constant process of cultural mixing proves that they are of little use. As Welsch states, Herder's concept of individual cultures is therefore useless or even harmful today. There are numerous dangers associated with it, such as separatism, leading to political and even military conflicts.

Welsch therefore completely rejects both multiculturalism and interculturalism. Instead, he proposes the concept of transculturalism. As he writes, because of globalization and migration processes, there is a constant mixing of cultures, a peculiar infiltration which leads to the emergence of new, hybrid cultural forms. At the macro level, this results in the emergence of similar problems and issues in cultures that were traditionally considered extremely different. As an example, he mentions human rights debates, feminism, and environmental movements, which are present in public discourse regardless of geographical location. At the micro level, on the other hand, multicultural connections have an impact on the formation of the individual and the development of its identity. As Welsch says, contemporary life should be understood as "a migration through different social worlds and as the successive realization of a number of possible identities" (1999, 198). Indeed, one of the basic human rights is the right to cultural formation, and if an individual is influenced by different cultures, then the fusion of all transcultural factors is one of the tasks in the process of identity formation.

Welsch's concept of transculturalism is a well-known idea and has been widely discussed in the circles of philosophers and cultural anthropologists. It should be emphasized, however, that we are not dealing here with a new concept. Its foundations were laid much earlier, namely in the 1940s by the Cuban anthropologist Fernando Ortiz. In the context of his studies on Afro-Cuban culture, Ortiz talked about the so-called transculturation, which according to him was supposed to best describe the cultural transformations that had taken place in Cuba since the discovery of the island by colonizers from the Iberian Peninsula. In Ortiz's understanding, transculturation was to be primarily a counterbalance to the phenomenon known as acculturation, which in anthropology is understood as a process consisting in the rapid transformation of one culture under the influence of another, as well as under the influence of changed social and environmental conditions. Acculturation was treated as a unilateral process, while transculturation was supposed to be a bilateral exchange, "the source of which is a dynamic, intercultural dialogue" (Gondor-Wiercioch 2009, 25).

Melville Herskovits was the founder of the concept of acculturation (together with Robert Redfield and Ralph Linton) and it was he, as a defender of his concept, who

was the main, although not the only, critic of Ortiz's ideas.[2] As Jadwiga Romanowska notes, "acculturation as defined by Herskovits is considered to be the totality of phenomena arising as a result of continuous direct contact between cultural groups, which lead to changes in the cultural patterns of both groups" (2013, 145). Transculturation, according to Ortiz, was supposed to be a more precise concept, although Romanowska cites Mario Santí as stressing that the fields of meaning of the concepts in question overlap to a considerable extent (145). What particularly interested Ortiz was to find out whether the so-called peripheral cultures, which are in contact with dominant cultures, can create cultural connections (transcultural processes) instead of simply being passively assimilated. The subject of his research was the mutual influence of African, European, and Cuban cultures. The researcher found that every cultural exchange of this kind initially suffers loss, as a culture loses part of its heritage in order to adopt new cultural values and ultimately to produce a new cultural quality. He called these two stages of the transculturation process "partial deculturation" or "exculturation" (*parcial desculturación* or *exculturación*) and "neoculturation" (*neoculturización*; 144).

Interestingly, Ortiz's model was also reflected in literary theory, thanks to the Uruguayan literary critic Ángel Rama. Taking Ortiz's transcultural scheme as a starting point, Rama created the concept of narrative transculturation (2008). In his terms, narrative transculturation is a process that refers to "three basic categories applicable to literature: language, literary structure and social imagination" (Romanowska 2013, 147). It consists of four stages: "loss", or partial deculturation (*parcial deculturación*), consisting of the displacement of certain cultural elements in order to make room for new ones; "internal selection" (*selección interna*) among both indigenous and foreign cultural elements; "rediscovery" (*redescubrimiento*) of hitherto marginal indigenous cultural elements and placing them in the center; "incorporation" (*incorporación*) of foreign cultural elements (146–147).

As Romanowska notes, Rama's scheme faced widespread criticism, which, however, was not directed at the notion of transculturation itself, but the fact that the scheme was applied to the analysis of Ibero-American literature in a postcolonial context (147). This is all the more interesting because Ortiz's concept, which so strongly inspired Rama, was criticized for the opposite reason, namely for not reflecting on the "colonial dimension" of the phenomenon and for "the researcher speaking from a nationalist stance" (Dagnino 2012, 3). Almost half a century later this gap was filled, among others, by Mary Louise Pratt, who undertook a reflection on the process of transculturation from the point of view of postcolonial relations. The researcher coined the term of the so-called "contact zones", which she understood as the spaces of imperial cultural contact, where geographically and historically distant peoples contact one another and establish relations, usually involving coercion, extreme inequality and difficult to resolve conflict (1992, 10). The key word in this concept is "contact", indicating the interactive and improvisational dimensions of the imperial encounter between cultures that have not previously been considered in accounts of conquest, conducted from the point of view of victors and dominators. Making "contact", entering a relationship, or having an encoun-

ter involves a change of perspective. The colonized and the colonizers cease to be perceived in terms of otherness, separateness, foreignness in favor of coexistence, mutual understanding, and action (10).

Pratt's concept, however valuable from the perspective of transcultural considerations, has not avoided criticism either. As Ariana Dagnino notes, Anne Holden Rønning accused her of referring to too restrictive, dichotomous divisions, in which on one side stands the colonized and on the other the colonizer. As Rønning rightly remarked, transculturation assumes a departure from such binary oppositions and is in its essence "the ability to move freely from one cultural stance to another and back again" (Dagnino 2012, 4). The question that needs to be asked here is to what extent the idealistic assumptions of the concept of transculturation created by Ortiz translate into the reality of the contemporary world. Isn't it bold, not to say naive, to claim that different cultures can exist in one time and space, intermingle, and draw from each other regardless of the power relations between them? Similar questions could also be asked of Welsch, whose proposal, although it seems more up to date than Ortiz's ideas from the contemporary European point of view, is also not without debatable elements.

Besides, Welsch was fully aware of this when he first presented his new concept of culture in the 1990s. He forewarned the critics, so to speak, and drew attention to the "weaknesses" of his concept himself. First, he explained that the potential fears of some that transculturalism is in its essence tantamount to uniformity, are misplaced. As he wrote, transculturalism not only does not mean simple uniformity, but is linked to the production of "a new type of diversity": "a new type of diversity takes shape: the diversity of different cultures and life-forms, each arising from transcultural permeations" (Welsch 1999, 204). Transculturalism has advantages over both the uniformizing concept of globalization and the particularization that emerged in response to it:

> The concept of transculturality goes beyond these seemingly hard alternatives. It can cover both global and local, universalistic, and particularistic aspects, and it does so quite naturally, from the logic of transcultural processes themselves. The globalizing tendencies as well as the desire for specificity and particularity can be fulfilled within transculturality. (1999, 205)

According to Welsch, "[t]ranscultural identities comprehend a cosmopolitan side, but also a side of local affiliation" (205) and it is precisely the combination of these two elements that is inscribed in the difficult process of identity formation that takes place through the integration of elements from different cultures.

WHAT IS TRANSCULTURAL LITERATURE?

Wolfgang Welsch's concept is an important reference point in Arianna Dagnino's reflections on transculturalism and literature in several publications.[3] In her understanding of transculturalism, the researcher, like Welsch and unlike Ortiz and Pratt, breaks with binary oppositions in which dominant cultures are contrasted with subordinated cultures and colonizing cultures with colonized cultures. She calls for a new approach within literary studies, which she describes as transcultural compar-

ativism. As she explains, this is a new kind of comparativism that is truly borderless, for which transculturalism is a kind of model and theoretical framework that aims to link literary texts that are not exclusively identified with one culture or nation. Dagnino's book *Transcultural Writers and Novels in the Age of Global Mobility* (2015) is an important contribution to transculturally oriented literature studies. Particularly valuable from the point of view of the considerations presented here are her findings in which she defines transcultural literature. She uses the concept of "creative transpatriation", which refers to the process of going beyond the borders of one culture, homeland, or region, and which is supposed to culminate in the creation of the so-called transcultural lenses, i.e. in adopting what Ellen Berry and Mikhail Epstein have called "a perspective in which all cultures look decentered in relation to all other cultures, including one's own" (2015, 2).

Importantly, Dagnino writes that the process of transpatriation can occur in physical, virtual, or imaginary senses. This means that transculturalism as a category does not only refer to those writers who have experienced "first-hand" what the coexistence (or clash) of cultures and languages is and allows for the understanding of transculturalism as a literary convention. Following this line of reasoning, the term transcultural writers may also be applied to those authors for whom transcultural journeys remain "only" in the realm of imagination. This is an interesting approach in that it makes it possible to use methodological tools specific to transculturalism to study, for example, the works of those authors who seek inspiration in past cultures and civilizations, that is, they "travel" in time rather than space.

Dagnino further explains why, in defining transculturalism, she uses the term transpatriation and not, for example, dispatriation. The prefix "trans" is intended to emphasize the importance of transgressing (physically and/or imaginatively) a given culture and "unlearning" the ways of forming identity that are associated with ethnicity, geography, culture, nationality, or religion. However, as the researcher stresses, the act of transgression is not tantamount to breaking all ties and connections. It is rather about stopping limiting oneself to one culture and opening up to new areas, languages, religions (2015, 4.).

Finally, it is significant how Dagnino justifies the fact that she uses the concept of transculturalism in her reflections on literature rather than, for example, one of the many terms frequently mentioned in similar contexts such as: cosmopolitanism, globalism, postcolonialism, trans- or postnationalism. As the researcher writes, all these and related concepts, while largely describing similar phenomena, are (to a greater or lesser extent) politically or ideologically committed, whereas transculturalism:

> should be understood neither as an ideology […] nor as a political stance, but as a mode of identity formation, as a critical tool, and as a concept for individual (and artistic) cultural resistance to the complex power dynamics expressed on the one hand by global capitalism and on the other by nation-states in this era of increasing mobility. (2015, 103)

According to Dagnino, we are therefore dealing with a concept "not yet mired by any controversial or limiting socio-political interpretations and connotations", so that there is less risk of transculturalism converting into "a new ghettoizing cat-

egory for writers and works which do not seem to adhere to nor comply with any specific national canon nor with the (im)migrant or postcolonial paradigm" (2015, 17). She defines transcultural authors as:

> mobile writers, imaginative writers who, by choice or because of life circumstances, experience cultural dislocation, follow transnational life patterns, cultivate bilingual or plurilingual proficiency, physically immerse themselves in multiple cultures, geographies, or territories, expose themselves to diversity, and nurture plural, flexible identities. (2015, 1)

At first glance, transculturalism as a category of describing literary works seems to be very broad, encompassing all writers who, for various reasons, at some point in their lives found themselves in a situation of "cultural crossroads," or, in Dagnino's words, experienced (real or imagined) transpatriation. She specifies the above definition by narrowing the circle of transcultural writers to an exclusive group of:

> early twenty-first-century authors who do not belong in one place or one culture – and usually not even one language – and who write between cultures and are interested in the complex dynamics of cultural encounters and negotiations. Namely, authors who are more connected to the transnational patterns and modes of expression of our contemporary globalized condition than to the more conventionally intended (im)migrant literature of the late twentieth century. (2015, 14)

The definition proposed by Dagnino thus encompasses, in terms of numbers, a relatively small group of writers belonging to the well-situated and educated privileged middle class, who are linked to the generations of economic and forced migrants at most by blood ties. Such an approach, although well-argued for the purposes of the abovementioned research, seems to be limiting. It excludes from transcultural research, among others, writers of migrant or refugee origin, who also describe in their works typically transcultural experiences of living in more than one culture.

Incidentally, terminological dilemmas accompany many scholars who study literature associated with more than one culture. In this context, it is worth recalling the considerations of Hajnalka Nagy, who drew attention to the discussion which has been going on for many years among German literary scholars on how to define migrant literature (Nagy 2012, 10). As the researcher argues, none of the terms used so far (including foreign literature, Gastarbeiter literature, migrant literature, or migrants' literature) can describe the true nature of texts without categorizing them based on the nationality or biography of their authors, which results in a systematically widening gap between "locals" and "strangers". To avoid such painful and unfair divisions, it should, in Nagy's opinion, be replaced with such terms as new world literature, intercultural literature or just transcultural literature. The latter is characterized by the researcher as "creating a different hybrid form by challenging earlier ideas about monolingual national culture and the power relations of a monocultural order" (11). This understanding of transcultural literature is therefore very different from the way Dagnino characterizes this phenomenon. While the Italian researcher completely excludes the authors who have had the experience of migration from the group of transcultural writers, for Nagy transcultural literature is one of the possible substitutes for the troublesome notion of migrant literature.

Zoltán Németh's work, on the other hand, demonstrates that transculturalism, as a set of methodological tools, can also be successfully applied to the study of minority literatures. In the study "A transzkulturalizmus és bilingvizmus szintjei a szlovákiai magyar irodalomban" (Transculturalism and bilingualism in Hungarian literature from Slovakia; 2019) he analyzes transculturalism in Hungarian literature from Slovakia in relation to four levels (author, text, reader, context).

Summarizing the above considerations, it should be stated that transculturalism, as a research category, is not reserved for the description of one type of text, just as there is no single definition of so-called transcultural literature that is relevant for all researchers. Transcultural writers are sometimes referred to as mobile authors who are not bound to a single place or language, but live in a transcultural space and express this in their literature (Dagnino's definition), migrant authors who, for various, often purely pragmatic reasons, write in the language of the host country, while not forgetting their roots and willingly returning to their country of origin in their works (Nagy's definition), as well as writers belonging to national minorities (Németh's definition). In the broadest possible sense, the essence of transculturalism consists in going beyond the framework of a single culture, treated as a monolith, and looking at what lies "in between", in the cultural border space, at the point of convergence or collision of (at least two) cultures, languages and literatures. So-called transcultural writers are, somehow suspended between two (or more) nations, languages, cultures. Their works are narratives that transcend cultural boundaries and literary conventions, and as such escape simple definitions, descriptions, and analyses. What is more, the vast majority of transcultural authors are translingual, that is, they write in a language other than their mother tongue. As a result, their works cannot be unambiguously classified as belonging to any of the national literatures, which in turn is often the reason why they feel marginalized. As Pascale Casanova writes, "although we do not always realize it, our literary unconscious is largely national. Our instruments of analysis and evaluation are national. Indeed, the study of literature almost everywhere in the world is organized along national lines" (2004, xi). Thus, on the one hand, the peculiar "exoticism" of transcultural writers may be literarily appealing and, at the same time, attractive from the point of view of publishing markets. On the other hand, however, as they do not fully belong to any of the national literatures, they are sometimes placed in the position of the "other" and pushed to the margins of critical literary and literary studies debate, which takes place, of course, mainly within the framework of national canons.

WAYS OF CANONIZATION

According to Anna Jarmuszkiewicz, referring to David Damrosch's findings, "a work enters the world of literature through a double process – first it is read as national, regional literature, then it goes out into a wider perspective, beyond the place of its cultural origin" (2012, 17). Transcultural authors, who are not "acknowledged" by any national literature, thus have their path into national canons closed a priori, which does not mean, however, that they are completely deprived of any chance to be included in the canon of world literature. In the canonical system of world literature

sketched by Damrosch, their works have a chance to join the ranks of the so-called *anti-canon*, which together with the *shadow canon* is on a lower level than the *hyper-canon* containing timeless masterpieces (2010, 370). Damrosch's anti-canon consists of "the subordinate" and "contesting" voices of writers writing in languages that are not widely taught and in the languages of the great powers but within smaller literatures (370). The second case refers, among others, to transcultural authors who usually write in the languages of the majority nations, but who by virtue of their origins remain connected to so-called small literatures, although they do not fully belong to them. Their status in literary scenes, depending on the language they write in, is most often defined by adjectives such as Anglophone, Francophone, Germanophone, Italophone, etc., which unambiguously classify them as writing in one of the majority languages but not belonging to the associated literature. This results in a feeling of alienation and exclusion which, as we know from interviews and conversations with transcultural authors, is inherent in the way many of them function in the public space. This is confirmed by the words of Agota Kristof, an author of Hungarian origin writing in French, who repeatedly stressed that because of her transcultural position she felt excluded from any of the three literatures (Hungarian, Swiss and French) she could claim access to. Indeed, her feelings were not unfounded in this matter, although not without some reservations. None of the major lexicons of Hungarian literature pays any attention to Kristof's literary works, including her most famous novel *Le Grand Cahier* (1986; *The Notebook*, 1997), and she is generally regarded as an author who has rather little connection with Hungarian literature. The Hungarian postmodernist author Péter Eszterházy's comments that are included in the Hungarian translation of *The Notebook*, *A nagy füzet,* are significant in this context:

> Agota Kristof is not a Hungarian author, but a Swiss or French author, because she writes in French. However, her memoirs are Hungarian, the landscape she carries in her eyes is Hungarian. This is neither a value nor a merit, but it is very interesting. That there is a non-Hungarian writer who writes Hungarian books, that someone from afar looks at the same things we look at from here. (Esterházy 1991, 124; trans. M.R.-N.)

On the other hand, although the French call Kristof a Francophone author, thus de facto limiting her access to the canon of French literature, one cannot help noticing that her work has been appreciated in France. This is clearly evidenced by the fact that *The Notebook* was included on the reading list in many French secondary schools.[4] Kristof's statement regarding the fact that none of the literature considers it "theirs", at least with regard to French literature, should therefore be treated as the author's subjective feeling rather than a fact.

The same is true of Edith Bruck, a Jewish author of Hungarian origin writing in Italian. This is noted, among others, by Philip Balma:

> Edith Bruck addressed the inherent difficulty of gaining acceptance in the Italian literary scene, describing it as a family in which a foreigner is always treated as such. […] Although she has spent more than sixty years living in Rome, publishing exclusively in Italian since the release of her autobiographical debut (*Chi ti ama cosi*) in 1959, as a translingual author to some degree Bruck still feels (and is treated) like an anomalous literary presence in her adoptive homeland. (2020, n.p.)

In his earlier monograph (the only full-length study of Bruck's work to date), Balma writes that many Italian researchers, encountering in their work only the writings of writers about whose "Italianness" there can be no doubt, find it difficult to place Bruck in the arena of world literature. After all, what to make of "a Holocaust survivor of Hungarian descent who happens to write in Italian?" (2014, 12) As Balma states, Bruck's unclear nationality led to the marginalization of her work and, as a result, to her not being accorded a proper place in the canon of Italian literature. It is worth noting that seven years after he made the above statement, Bruck's work *Il pane perduto* (2021; The lost bread) was a finalist for the Premio Strega, Italy's most prestigious literary prize, and eventually won the Premio Strega Giovani (i.e. the prize awarded by young readers). This fact can undoubtedly be seen as an important step in the process of incorporating Bruck's work into the canon of Italian literature, and perhaps even completing it, which largely invalidates the bitter words of Bruck quoted above.

Finally, the case of Tibor Fischer, perhaps the only author of Hungarian origin not writing in the Hungarian language whose work is discussed extensively in an academic textbook on Hungarian literature, provides a significant example in this context. Mihály Szegedy-Maszák devoted an entire chapter to Fischer's prose in the third volume of *A magyar irodalom történetei* (The histories of Hungarian literature; 2007), which is tantamount to classifying his work as Hungarian literature. Nevertheless, attention is drawn to the way in which the author of the chapter explains why he included an analysis of a work written in a language other than Hungarian in a textbook on Hungarian literature. From the point of view of the history of Hungarian literature, the work of Hungarian writers living abroad, including Terézia Mora, Éva Almássy and Agota Kristof, is referred to as an "appendix" to Hungarian literature, thus avoiding the explicit classification of Fischer's prose as Hungarian literature (831). This unfortunate expression, though in this case probably not uttered in bad faith, perfectly characterizes the ambivalent status of transcultural writers who, being linked to more than one literature, have little chance of becoming an integral part of any of them, remaining only a modest addition to a larger finite whole.

CONCLUSION

Transculturalism was born in Cuba and almost half a century later it was reinterpreted by Wolfgang Welsch, whose name is always mentioned in this context. The most in-depth analysis of the interpenetration of transculturalism and literature was conducted by Arianna Dagnino and it was she who formulated the most notable definition of the so-called transcultural literature. Dagnino's definition may be considered too narrow, however, as it excludes authors with a migration and postcolonial background from the category of transcultural writers. The definition of transcultural literature proposed in this article is broader and refers to all those authors, whose work, for various reasons that do not exclude migration, is "located" in the border area between (at least) two cultures, nations and languages. This specific position of transcultural authors leads to the fact that they often feel excluded from the national canons, to which they could belong to, given their origins and the languages

they write in. The case of the writers Agota Kristof and Edith Bruck, as mentioned in the final section, shows that the authors' subjective feelings in this regard do not always correspond to reality. The other example is provided by the case of Tibor Fischer, whose work has been included in the history of Hungarian literature, but gained the status of only an "appendix", what gives rather little hope for him to get included in the canon.

NOTES

[1] For more on inter- and multiculturalism see e.g. Barrett 2013.

[2] In 1916 Robert Redfield, Ralph Linton, and Melville J. Herskovits published the document *Memorandum for the Study of Acculturation*, in which they explained in detail the concept of acculturation; see Redfield, Linton, and Herskovits 1936.

[3] For more on transculturalism and literature see also Nordin, Hansen, and Ilena 2013; Wiegandt 2020; Davis et al. 2004.

[4] This fact is linked to a story known to the French public as "l'affaire d'Abbeville". In 2000, after a teacher from the town of Abbeville discussed Agota Kristof's *Notebook* with his pupils during a lesson at school, he was accused by some parents of promoting pornography and arrested. Eventually, thanks to the broad support of the French intellectual elite, the criminal case against him was dropped.

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Transculturalism in literature as reflected in the works of translingual writers from the Hungarian cultural context

Transculturalism. Transcultural literature. Translingual writers. Canon. Hungarian literature.

The aim of the paper is to show the impact of transculturalism on the research conducted in the field of literary studies. The first part presents the history of the concept and lists the most important researchers associated with it, such as Wolfgang Welsch, considered the creator of the concept, and Arianna Dagnino, who is believed to be the most important contemporary researcher of the interconnections of transculturalism with literature. Dagnino is also the author of the definition of the so-called transcultural literature, which is discussed in the paper. The third and last part contains considerations about the place of the so-called transcultural writers in the literary canon. The context for these reflections is provided by three translingual authors of Hungarian origin: Agota Kristof, Edith Bruck and Tibor Fischer.

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