Network Temporalities and North American Influence in the Romanian Poetry of the Early 1980s

Teona FARMATU

Universitatea „Babeș-Bolyai" din Cluj-Napoca, Facultatea de Litere
Babeș-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca, Faculty of Letters
Personal e-mail: teonafarmatu@gmail.com

Network Temporalities and North American Influence in the Romanian Poetry of the Early 1980s

Abstract: Set within the frame of World Literature, and dwelling on the multifaceted concept of networking, this paper aims to provide a temporal pattern concerning the transfer/import of postwar North American poetic trends within the Romanian poetry of the 1980s. By relating the aestheticized model of Romanian (neo)modernism to the more direct, biographical discourse of the Beat poetry, the influence of which emerged upfront in Romanian poetry starting from the late 1970s, as well to the Confessional model the paper explores overlapping temporalities within the two literary systems, whereby the paradigms of (neo)modernism and postmodernism, respectively, clashed, due to the homogenizing effect of the communist context. Along these lines, I outline the notion of diachrony in synchrony of the Romanian poetry of the early 1980s, when several poetic patterns pertaining to different stages of North American poetry exerted a simultaneous influence during a very short time interval. The attempts made by Romanian poets to synchronize with, or borrow from Anglo-American literature, also involved relaying certain attitudes, views, and values – both aesthetic and largely ideological – that were specific to the source culture.
Keywords: diachrony in synchrony, network temporalities, North American poetic trends, literary transfer, the Romanian 1980s poetry.

Citation suggestion: Farmatu, Teona. „Network Temporalities and North American Influence in the Romanian Poetry of the Early 1980s". *Transilvania*, no. 3 (2022): 48-56.
https://doi.org/10.51391/trva.2022.03.06.

Within World Literature theories and network appliance, I want to advance a more homogeneous and coherent theoretical model of overlap of several poetic ages concerning the North American literary import among the Romanian poets from *Cenaclul de Luni* [Literary Monday Circle]. The main assumption is that the specific elements of this generation do not only come from Beat literature, but also from early and high American modernism, and also from the so-called Confessional model in poetry. Such that the exclusive import from Beat poets is an insufficient approach while the heterogeneity of the young Romanian authors of the '80s is quite due to this multifaceted and hybrid literary/cultural transfer. Firstly, according to a network theory logic which implies "a bare architecture of nodes bounded by connections,"[1] the import of Beat poets' elements as well as moral attitudes is just one of these nodes that allow Romanians a "non-standardized" manner of connectedness to a transcontinental literary/cultural geography. Secondly, this phenomenon of appropriation could be viewed through the lenses of the transnational notion of *deep time*. Stemming from this direction is the fact that the import from North American poetical ages is not just *individual*, but mostly *transversal*, thereby privileging the aesthetic hybridity of each Romanian author in whose poems it could be detected for instance both the form of Ginsberg's long-line discourse and Pound's imagism or Plath's elegiac solemnity.[2]

Likewise, I propose the versatile poetics of the Romanian young authors of the early 1980s as an area of both aesthetic and ideological negotiation, as well as exploration of more literary influences from abroad, mostly because they were

aiming to radically break up with the sixty's poets[3], through the Anglo-American background of their upbringing[4], and to self-legitimize as promoters of Postmodernism. Embracing a more theoretical approach, the poetic ages which were catalyzed in a very short time in Romanian literature of the early '80s are linked to the interconnections between American generations/poets and to the paths in which their texts got in Romania (by preferential and unsystematic translations). Taking into account a specific view of what Dimock calls "deep time,"[5] I consider that such an approach regarding this literary import highlights a more organic appropriation of these several poetry models. Whereas the Beats' influence appears simultaneously as the most significant, but less critically charged direction (regarding the bearings against capitalism for instance) among Romanian authors, there are more aesthetics that shape their debut volumes of poetry, also including an ideological component through which they engaged against totalitarianism. Starting with the globalizing perspective such as it is frameworked by Teodora Dumitru who is targeting only Beat Generation's influence, my paper is also aiming to bring into discussion the case of these national poets by a network approach regarding these overlapping and hybridized poetry models that generated new contents within a radically different national context, both ideologically (the socialist Communism) and aesthetically (the clash between neo-modernism and postmodernism, the latter having a hybrid form).[6]

Although the Romanian poets of the '80s seem to adopt a utopian image about the North-American space, "an idealistic construct quasi-synonymous with freedom, political pluralism, prosperity, and opportunity,"[7] "[lacking] a truly global perspective, let alone a critical one,"[8] their cross-breed or ambiguous poetical discourse regarding the Beat values are consonant with a larger regional perspective considering the impact that Beat literature had within borders of the Eastern Communist Bloc. In a logic of regional comparative studies, it is essential to shed light on the literature from other East European spaces under dictatorships which were influenced by Beat writers either directly (as it happened in Czechoslovakia by Ferlinghetti and Ginsberg's travelling[9]), or indirectly, through translations or original versions of North American poetry as in the case of Romania. However, despite the direct contacts that created strong nodes for spreading the radical attitudes and nonconformist types of text-making, the young authors "were unable to fully embrace" the cultural ideology of the Beats, because "it was simply impossible in a totalitarian state where secret police, informers, and the general public were offended by Beat lifestyles".[10] Even where the local underground manifestations had intense critical implications, the Beat values and ideas were constantly overseen by state apparatus.

Within the tensions of the Cold War, when Europe was divided, the dictatorships were truly different one from another. Consequently, the import from North-American poetry was as well a hybrid regarding the Beat Generation's influence whose paroxysmal expression concerning the East European writers' rebellion, non-conformism and revolt against totalitarianism was toned down in association with more reflexive and romanticized types of writing.[11] The legacy of Beat literature could be questioned in terms of resistance and opposition to various forms of state domination, on account of gaining both symbolic and political capital. For instance, the first translation of *Howl* in Hungarian was made in 1960, but it was published in Montreal and "only 100 copies of this Hungarian translation were produced, in a lithograph edition."[12] More than this clandestine translation, the György Déry's one of Jack Kerouac's *On the Road* appeared in 1966, followed by "a short anthology *Howl – Confessions about the Beat Generation*"[13] in 1967. Probably the most important Beat influence came directly from Ginsberg who, as in the case of Czechoslovakia and Poland, visited Hungry two times (1980, 1986) during the communist regime, thus reinforcing the local underground movements. Identically, Polish literature experienced quite early the Beat influence. Significantly, the hard branch of Beats (San Francisco poets) was the first one which struck the internal dynamics of culture. O'Hara, Ashbery, Koch became popular only after Ginsberg's bias: "Sommer presented Ginsberg's work as very important, influential and a forerunner of the newly translated poets on the contemporary Polish literary scene, alongside John Ashbery and Frank O'Hara."[14] As we will see in the case of Romania, the influences from the two Beat branches followed a reversed trajectory which is highly apparent in poetry: Ginsberg's impact could be seen as "a noise effect" rather than a fulfilment of his poems built up as violent and critical manifestos.

Furthermore, compared to these direct and inspirational contacts, the dealings with Beat poetry in Romania were accomplished later on through *bypass*. The young authors' endeavor to have access to another kind of poetry (quite different from the European model of poetry-making[15]) and to appropriate these, being in the age of acquisition, was delayed compared to other East countries (Czechoslovakia, Hungary, or Poland). Even if this could be considered a harmful facet of the national cultural evolution and synchronization at least with powerful underground movements in neighboring countries, it favors the strange phenomenon of *diachrony in synchrony* which seems to be an unnatural and strained process of alignment with world literature. If "literary relations are idiosyncratic relations" and "they make time idiosyncratic"[16], the relatively delayed encounter with the diversity of North American poetry set off the chronology which got to this particular phenomenon. Moreover, with an eye to providing "a new kind of poetry", the poets of the '80s have both appropriated and mixed several major defining elements, which are intertwined even at their base. To give an eloquent example, the Beat Generation was not utterly born as a reaction to a previous poetic age/model, which has repercussions both within the internal dynamics of the new group, and within the literary import. Undoubtedly, the beat poetry was considered by literary criticism as a countercultural reaction against *modernism*. In spite of this fact, I consider

that the Beat riposte was actually against the *establishment of modernism* within the American universities,[17] not necessarily against the forerunner's creative practices.

Obviously, the Beat poets were strongly connected to the so-called Lost Generation including especially Ezra Pound and T.S. Eliot. As David Steritt notes under the subtitle *Recalling the Lost Generation*, "they [the Beats] saw the earlier group as a spiritual and aesthetic forerunner of their own circle, embodying a similar belief that forward-looking literature and art was an antidote to the nightmares of the past and the anxieties of the present."[18] More than these fairly general remarks that could be countered with Ginsberg's expression "the glamour of the lost generation,"[19] Steritt underlines a more pronounced connection regarding the bohemian culture: "Also like the Lost Generation, the Beats had a romance with a foreign land, replacing cosmopolitan Paris with wild and woolly Mexico, a place that was steeped in history, rich in mythology, and sufficiently relaxed about drugs to be a sympathetic roosting place for what William S. Burroughts called *refugee hipsters*,"[20] concluding with a more nuanced perspective regarding the lost generation's bias and the step forward of the Beats.[21] At the same time, Serge Fauchereau proposes Pound and Eliot as forerunners for the interest in oriental philosophies shown by the Beat poets.[22] Additionally, the critic traces the roots of the new generation's uncensored discourse back to Pound and Cummings, as they "were not embarrassed to swear when they felt the need."[23] I retraced these lines to framework the existing connections between several main protagonists of high-modernism and Beat Generation, so that the latter was not born from a *terra deserta*. Moreover, the underlined (dis)junctions are the basis of the fact that the influences were not *purely* perpetuated, as will happen in the case of 1980s Romanian poets. The migration of Beat influences was actually the infrastructure – if not even the pretext (an alleged reason) – for aggregation of several relatively foreign[24] types of poetry-making. This is symptomatic for the powerful bookish component of Romanian poets' postmodernism, that embodied tradition as something natural from which they can assuredly show distance by irony. This phenomenon of hybrid assimilation of Anglo-American models also involves a strong theoretical (*i.e.* intellectualist) dimension, hence the blame for artificiality, sophistication and minimal engagement in reality.

Certainly, in Romania, as in other East European countries, the major impact, at least in terms of popularity among young authors, came from the revolted and radical San Francisco poets (Ginsberg, Ferlinghetti, Kerouac, and others who were already well known in underground cultural movements from the East), but the Romanian poets' texts didn't reflect the global perspective which Teodora Dumitru questioned. In defining the particularities of this literary import, I consider that it is important to make a distinction between two American Beat poetry schools (from San Francisco, the birthplace of the Beat movement, respectively from New York) which were assimilated in Romania as overlapping in a very short time. Probably the weak point of reception of North-American poetry in Romania comes from several directions: the self-legitimating discourse of the poets of the '80s as Mircea Cărtărescu, Traian T. Coșovei, Magda Cârneci, Romulus Bucur and so on, by *explicitly* referring to the Beat Generation – mainly the San Francisco wing; the massive, but preferential translations of North-American poetry – especially from Lost Generation, and, perhaps most importantly, the critical discourse that did not clear up this phenomenon of simultaneous and undifferentiated entry of elements from two poetry schools. Starting with the indistinction between the two manifestations of Beat movement – the radical side and the moderate one –, I will shed light on the specifics of each in relationship with the modulations they have been acquiring due to the import.

Although the two "parts" of this generation were connected at one point and, as a consequence, were assimilated by entering "through the same door" in Romania, the distinction is significant for the more temperate nature in terms of the '80s poets' critical spirit. Firstly, and undoubtedly, San Francisco is the birthplace of what means "Beat", gathering Allen Ginsberg, Jack Kerouac and William S. Burroughs in the beginning. To sum up their program, the radicality of visions, the paroxysmal authenticity (after Burroughs, "autobiography is the only literature"[25]), the primacy of experience and experimentalism (Buddhist practices, "the Tibetan tradition of *crazy wisdom*,"[26] drug use etc.), and the expansion of the texts – especially poems – towards a performative dimension are globally, and at least theoretically, the major traits of these writers. From an ideological point of view, the options are more nuanced. While Kerouac insists on the anarchist dimension of the Beat movement,[27] Allen Ginsberg is one of those who joined the leftist ideology, being an upholder of communist utopia. All in all, the dominant features of the movement were ones of leftist ideology, reclaiming sexual, spiritual, race liberation, and also criticizing "the new America" (as it is shaped within the tensions of the Cold War), the "military-industrial machine civilization"[28] and capitalism. In the case of migration of Beat ideology in East European countries, it is no longer a hybridization, as I pointed out about the aesthetic dimension, but rather a paradox. Indeed, this paradox is based on Kathrine Verdery's formula: "hybridization of ideology"[29] (a mixture of Marxism and nationalism, the latter becoming the main ideology since 1965), but whereas the dictatorship was of leftist essence, the eighties poets from Romania resisted and tried to undermine communist ideology as well by adopting the left principles of the Beats. The bohemian culture (an inheritance from the Americans), revitalizing the self-individuality and freedom of creation, the effervescence of poetical discourse by connecting it to realness and materiality, and the irony – both playful and tragic – are several characteristics that relay Romanians to a median area between the two lines of the Beats, keeping up the subversive intentions.

Secondly, the poets from New York illustrate the more reflexive and less violent branch of what the criticism generically called "The Beat Generation." Conforming to Ginsberg's essay, the connections with other writers were configured naturally based on affinities: "By the mid-fifties

this smaller circle, through natural affinity of modes of thought or literary style or planetary perspective, was augmented in friendship and literary endeavor by a number of writers in San Francisco, including Michael McClure, Gary Snider, Philip Whalen and a number of other powerful but lesser-known poets such as Jack Micheline, Ray Bremser, or the better-known black poet LeRoi Jones – all of whom accepted the term at one time or another, humorously or seriously, but sympathetically, and were included in a survey of beat general manners, morals, and literature by *Life* magazine."[30] Already gaining prestige via literary magazines or TV broadcasting as the *New York Post*, and ready to spread their more and more popular values, the San Francisco group meets Frank O'Hara and Kenneth Koch from New York, and "other alumni of Black Mountain"[31] as Ginsberg noted. Otherwise, there is another and fairly controversial distinction made by Brad Gooch between the new American poets emerging on the mainstream: New York School, Beat Generation (the original San Francisco group), San Francisco Renaissance, and Black Mountain.[32] Given these more or less fair differences, it is quite clear that New York is the birthplace of another powerful and quite different group of which major protagonists are O'Hara, Ashbery, and Schuyler, to which they could be added Gregory Corso and John Wieners, "two poets who later became mostly identified with the San Francisco Renaissance"[33]. These poets are more interested in scriptural techniques, the inner dimension of human being, the exploration of private life and the intimate interhuman relationships as a micro-universe unlike an invasive exterior.

Even though this distinction is announced by Mircea Cărtărescu in *Postmodernismul românesc* [Romanian Postmodernism],[34] both the Romanian poets and the critics tend to refer to the protagonists from San Francisco (Ginsberg, Kerouac, Burroughs, Ferlinghetti, then Corso, Snyder, McClure) or, much more generalized, to extended Beat Generation. As a matter of fact, the local poets were more influenced by the second group of Beats, less virulent and more meditative, more apprehensive to internalize the reality. Not by chance the most popular concept among the eighties poets is O'Hara's *personism* thorough which they are engaging in reality. However, the migration of this concept produced a fruitful misreading. While O'Hara had defined *personism* in terms of authenticity, even claiming "the death of literature"[35] in his Manifesto, some of Romanian poets took over it as what Adriana Stan calls "a true myth of the Author". In her words[36]: "It is interesting, however, that unlike other global versions of Postmodernism, the eighties writers do not disclaim the subjectivity in line with the other grand narratives. On the contrary, they reconfirm its role and position as the center of coherence, cultivating a true myth of the Author, as the only landmark on the shifting stands of textualized reality. The 'real person' that Cărtărescu and other congeners invoke on order to take literature out of the formalist impasse of modernism is therefore the Writer himself, marked by the consciousness of the conventions which frame his writing."[37] Thus, the O'Hara's *personism* is translated as an authorial fiction, which means actually the antagonistic understanding of what American poet explained: "The poem is at last between two persons instead of two pages."[38] Regarding the Romanian young poets, the *personism* incorporated a pregnant intertextual dimension, being actually a mixture between a metamorphic subjectivity and the bookish stratified materialization. Ultimately, their "personism" is consumed *within* pages. That's why the radicality, directness, linguistic violence (when it is used) are diminished because of the allusive character of intertexts most often accompanied by an Aesopian or metaphorical (*i.e.* sophisticated) language. From this point of view, the Romanians' poetical discourses are closer to Pound's imagism, e.e. cummings' formal experiments (mostly imported by Romulus Bucur), T.S. Eliot's integrative vision about tradition and high realizations of scriptural techniques, which is different from the orality and the violence of socio-political content that underlie the performative texts of the San Francisco authors. If the latter had taken over from the Lost Generation's protagonists some visions and experiences that allow to rethink literature and its means of manifestation (attraction for oriental philosophies, meditation, the idea of vagrancy, self-loss etc.) through rebellion and radicalism, the Romanians are more influenced by their techniques, actually innovating due to a prosaic-effect or "reality effect" in terms of Roland Barthes. The San Francisco poets' abovementioned specifics are imported from Lost Generation rather only at the level of poetic consciousness and axiological attitudes than at the level of textual achievements. Thus, Romanians are closer to high-modernism and to New York poets, phenomenon which Allen Verbatim defines as "exploration of the contents of present consciousness during the moment of composition,"[39] referring to "Beat poetry broadly imagined"[40].

This aesthetic eclecticism which is more or less ideologically charged against Ceaușescu's communist nationalism leads to an ambiguous reception of the '80s Romanian poets, especially in terms of the postmodernist character of their poems. A prevailing intertextuality, the relationship constantly kept up to date with both world and local literature tradition (doubled by irony or even tragic visions), as well as the desideratum of embodying within text everything that comes from the triteness of reality are several major fulfilments. Such a perspective can be grammaticalized by a kind of "wholeness" which literary criticism tends to attribute to the young authors' poetics. Ion Buduca is building his article about "new generation" starting with Mircea Cărtărescu's book *Totul* [Everything], so that "a continuum of the elements of the world passing into each other"[41] (m.t.) is the most significant for this new standpoint of poetry-making. Radu G. Țeposu locates the work of these poets at the crossroads of a confusing and unshaded conglomeration of various influences from Beat Generation, La Brèche group or other French poets (René Ménard, Edmond Jabès, Georges Badin), Romanian iconoclastic poets like Geo Dumitrescu, Dimitrie Stelaru, Constant Tonegaru, and writers from Aktionsgruppe Banat[42]. Mircea Cărtărescu also identifies as the main direction of generation in the undertone of Magda Cârneci's book title *Hipermateria* [Hypermatter], because it

suggests "the high fidelity to the referent, to the real world," which means "to say *everything*, simultaneously confession, testimony and creation."[43]

By doing so, one of their conclusions was a kind of "unity in diversity,"[44] being true to a certain extent, but I consider that it is important to associate and explain this *completeness* which characterizes the texts of most Romanian eighty's poets to and via network temporalities. By that I understand a homogenizing relation between, for instance, a metaphorical and intellectualist strand from high-modernism and a more direct, more personal discursive ways via Frank O'Hara. By crossing of these disparate elements during a very short time (about 4-5 years, in late '70s and early '80s), the diversity of aesthetics led to a half-welcoming reception of postmodernism in Romania. Also, within an "inter-literary network"[45] as the members of *Cenaclul de Luni* [Literary Monday Circle] took part in, "the exchange of ideas, information, theories, texts, and manifestos realise through transactions, whereas the symbolic value of each member of this community depends strictly on correspondence and interactions with other members."[46] Communist background is also a significant factor that forces by compulsion to a sharper connection between members of the same group as in the case of this young poets.

The popularization of the American poets either through translations or through original texts is realized in a collegial way, thereby adopting elements from different poetry models depending on their own preferences and, pragmatically, on the inopportune and restricted conditions to access these books. For instance, Mircea Cărtărescu confesses about how he could have access to e.e. cummings and Lawrence Ferlinghetti due to his friends, Romulus Bucur and Traian T. Coșovei (the latter had written a bachelor thesis about Beat poets). Magda Cârneci as well brings into discussion the unlawful manner through which she had access to Beat poetry books[47] in the original version within *Cenaclul de Luni*, a semi-underground "faction." The aesthetical heterogeneity depends on this considerable assimilation and adaptation of more poetry models or tendencies from different times. That's why the most important collective volumes of the early ninth decade which announce a major shift in Romanian poetry, *Aer cu diamante* [Air with Diamonds] and *Cinci* [Five], are composed by extremely different poetics (the second one is even more heterogeneous). Whether it was an editorial strategy, or a truly voluntary endeavor, gaining symbolic capital by collective volumes, were "tactics" denounced by Gheorghe Crăciun. His disagreement relies on the fact that the stratagem significantly reduced "the shock of the infliction of the new episteme" because of the "confusing mixture of styles and values" and of "delaying for years the individual debuts."[48] Actually, not all the protagonists were in the same situation. Regarding the collective anthology *Aer cu diamante* comprising the works of Mircea Cărtărescu, Traian T. Coșovei, Florin Iaru, and Ion Stratan, all these young authors had already published their first poetry volume. In the case of – *Cinci* –, indeed, Mariana Marin is the only one writer whose first book, *Un război de o sută de ani* [One Hundred Years War], had appeared one year before. Nevertheless, most of the poetic styles were already formed, mature, and the strategy of collective enforcement of a "new sensibility" allowed the popularization of these young authors despite their quasi-marginal and disputed status in the literary mainstream of that time.

Turning to the so-called Confessional poetry, another earlier mentioned model which local young authors imported, the aforementioned Mariana Marin is the Romanian poet who had the greatest adherence to this type of poetry-making. Not in vain Radu Călin Cristea and others remarked her striking difference among the fellow within literary circle: "*One Hundred Years War* by Mariana Marin is in many ways a resurrection of strange mixes of violence and tenderness from Sylvia Plath's poems."[49] At the same time, the pronounced reflexive character and her obvious reproaches regarding textualism brings her closer to O'Hara's poem-manifesto. While the American poet had written "Literature will now open its big face/ in the pages of this publication,"[50] Mariana Marin criticizes the literary conventions and claims the authenticity by denouncing textualism through the metaphor of "the glass bead game" (*i.e.* the textualist experiments). Also, the biographical samples of Mariana Marin's poems are minimal and used as pretexts, while Sylvia Plath builds her poems according to certain personal traumas. This is the main argument of why Marin is not a confessional poet, as Romanian criticism has legitimized her by the comparison with Plath.

There are just a few examples regarding the interchangeability of what is particular, respectively general. Whether it can be depicted as a phenomenon of "burning of stages/steps" (Ștefan Borbély) or a substantial endeavour of "synchronization with European and global literature" (Gheorgeh Craciun), from a structural angle, the network of many poetic models/ages especially from North-American space and tradition, which has been woven more or less consciously, has a shaping role for this strange phenomenon I called *diachrony in synchrony*, with the mention that their relatedness to the global literary phenomenon is much more extensive and versatile than of the previous generation. As said in the beginning, the import was not just *individual* because it is impossible to identify for each Romanian poet only one emulative American model. Due to the fact that the influences are catalyzed in a *brief time*, they were naturally and without distinction appropriated, so more organic, generating new contents, though radical manifestations were reduced.

Regarding translations from North American poetry, they are certainly important, but have also generated confusions concerning the characteristics of beat poetry, which were appropriated by Romanians, because of their non-systematization and control instrumentation. Indeed, the most significant promoter and translator of American literature is Mircea Ivănescu, also considered the major precursor of the young poets by his "everyday minimalism" and narrative character of poems. T.S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, William Carlos Williams, Sylvia Plath and others were translated by him in the second half of the 20th century. Although Ivănescu was rediscovered by the poets from the

early 1980s due to both translations and his personal poetry, Ioana Macrea-Toma argues that the translation is a major and well remunerated activity especially after 1957 in communist Romania, when the copywrite law was changed in order to "equal rights in financial terms for both producers of original literature and translators."[51] Consequently, massive translations from universal literature were made by writers who "had been neutralized by indeterminacy"[52] because of the new political regime. For instance, Vasile Nicolaescu, and Veronica Porumbacu translated much English and American literature: E. Dickinson, Ted Hughes, Ezra Pound, Sylvia Plath.[53] Therefore, the main segment of translations comes from American modernism, high modernism, and confessional poetry (Plath, Hughes). It seems that they would have been harmless authors for the ideology.

As we can see, at least the San Francisco Beat poets' volumes are not translated at all compared to other eastern countries, where these writings were easier disseminated despite the unique party. Undoubtedly, the Beat poets' ideological and existential extremism, as well the disruptive character of their performative poetry are some major elements that the conformism of Ceaușescu's party did not allow. It was not a problem of unknowing or ignorance concerning the cultural/literary movements across the Ocean, but rather of annihilating any attempt to contaminate the national literature by Beat ideological and aesthetical influence. Adrian G. Matus observes that the first Romanian article about the Beats from San Francisco dates back to 1965 and it is signed by Horia Bratu, "a freshly converted Communist"[54]. The article is entitled "Ce este The Beat Generation?" [What is the Beat Generation?] and it explicitly focuses on Ginsberg, Ferlinghetti, and Kerouac, turning against the hard manifestation of this generation. Using the well-known "wooden language", Bratu notes that the American writers come from "the middle bourgeoisie [...], had graduated at small provincial universities [...] and from an early age, they experienced the falling of their high ideals."[55] Definitely, the outcome of the article is to discredit up to the limit of censorship any supposed influence from the American movement, settling it as "fascist" in opposition to "a better system: Communism."[56] It is obvious that Beat poets, either from San Francisco or New York, are locally discovered and exploited for the first time by the Romanian young poets in the early 1980s. On top of that, the effervescence and the violent critique against capitalism, dehumanization through excessive technology and industrialization were replaced by the strong intellectualist and bookish component of the entire generation. The Beat poets' connection with Lost Generation's protagonists seems to be revisited by the Romanians, supported by earlier translations from Pound, Eliot, W.C. Williams etc.

Therefore, this uncontrolled assimilation of many North American poetic models reveals, in the terms of Christian Moraru, some "filiations"[57] (not imitations) which illustrate that, looking at it from a global perspective, this generation's project has a branched structure due to these influences, reason for which they are more "postmodern" collectively than individually. The fragmentary character or the collage technique, the integrative irony[58], the hyper-lucidity, the critical awareness of conventions, the cancellation of chronology enrolling through intertextuality in the body of "Great Text"[59] along with assimilation of the "historicized tradition"[60] are the global features which justify that this import crystalized the postmodern accomplishment of the generation.

In light of the above, it is obvious that the main trigger of the Romanian poets of the '80s is the Beat Generation, especially its hard manifestation through Ginsberg, Burroughs, Corso or Ferlinghetti (who are even translated for personal use by some local young writers, thus unofficial translations). The basic node of coagulation of the new poetry is actually the most non-conformist, explosive and radical model – San Francisco original group – around which hybrid poetics have developed: some more eclectic, others more faithful to a certain discourse. The political or existential employment also fluctuates depending on the ethical consciousness of each author. The detour to the Beat poets by original texts or translations from early and high American modernism, the development of O'Hara's *personism* on a textualist and intertextual background, and the constraints during dictatorship lead to the loss of the hard fibers of Beat movement in its violent version. At the same time, the links with underground groups in other Eastern countries were non-existent. All in all, these obstructions birthed a more organic appropriation of several poetic models, which, even if they have lost the pure/primary configuration, acclimated as a strongly postmodernist dimension due to "the introduction both of theoretical metareflection and theoretical imagery"[61] in the "fictional universe". This is why the poems of the Romanian writers of the '80s seem to encompass the reflections on their North-American readings rather than an unmediated assimilation of these poetics.

Note

1. Guido Caldarelli, Michele Catanzaro, *Networks: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 20.
2. See more for the early assimilation of such formulas in Radu Vancu, "Habeas Corpus: The Resurgence of Lyricism in the Romanian Poetry of the 1960s Generation," *Transylvanian Review* XXVIII, Supplement no. 1 (2019): 45-54.
3. On settling the specificity of previous generation, Teodora Dumitru is talking about "an older formalist doctrine known in Romania literary criticism as the autonomy of the aesthetic and that gives wight to literature's independence from economic and socio-political forces." Teodora Dumitru, "Gaming the World-System: Creativity, Politics, and Beat Influence in the Poetry of the 1980s Generation," in *Romanian Literature as World Literature*, eds. Mircea Martin, Christian Moraru, and Andrei Terian (New-York-London: Bloomsbury, 2018), 277.

4. It is for the first time in Romanian culture when the emulating and stimulating model is the Anglo-American one. Additionally, Cosmin Ciotloș pointed out that this phenomenon is revealed as a radical and expended solution in order to overcome the hesitant oscillation between the French model and the German one. See Cosmin Ciotloș, "Absolvenții: modelul american și poeții optzeciști" [The Graduates: The American Model and the Eighties Poets], *Transilvania*, no. 6 (2021): 1.
5. Wai Chee Dimock outlines this concept to represent "a set of longitudinal frames, at once projective and recessional, with input going both ways, and binding continents and millennia into many loops of relations, a densely interactive fabric." Wai Chee Dimock, *Through Other Continents: American Literature Across Deep Time* (Princeton: Princetion University Press, 2006), 4.
6. See how Andrei Terian discusses the possible discussion on Romanian "neomodernism" as "late modernism" only to arrive to the conclusion that "socialist modernism" would make for a better compromise in Andrei Terian, "Socialist Modernism as Compromise: Socialist Modernism as Compromise: A Study of the Romanian Literary System," *Primerjalna književnost* 42, no. 1 (2019): 133-147.
7. Teodora Dumitru, "Gaming the World-System," 281.
8. Ibid., 282.
9. See Harri Veivo, Petra James, and Dorota Walczak-Delanois, *Beat Literature in a Divided Europe* (Leiden-Boston: Brill Rodopi, 2019).
10. Josef Rauvolf, *Prague Connection*, in Nancy M. Grace, Jennie Skerl, *The Transnational Beat Generation*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 179.
11. See the concept of "vernacular cosmopolitism" in Doris Mironescu, "The Geolocation of Literary Dissidence: Vernacular Cosmopolitanism, Highbrow Subculture and Conviviality in the Iași Group (1975-1989)," in *Beyond the Iron Curtain: Revisiting the Literary System of Communist Romania*, eds. Ștefan Baghiu, Ovio Olaru, and Andrei Terian (Berlin: Peter Lang, 2021), 113-131.
12. Veivo, James, and Walczak-Delanois, *Beat Literature*, 206.
13. Ibid., 205.
14. Ibid., 178.
15. As we can listen to Mircea Cărtărescu during this radio interview, he is pointing out the difference he found significant in the early 1980s between the European poetry model and the American one. Whereas the first one is more sophisticated (like Enzensberger's poems), the second one is more "quick", more direct and very colloquial, thus the latter becoming more attractive for the young Romanian authors; accessible on: https://www.radioromaniacultural.ro/timpul-prezent-in-literatura-mircea-cartarescu-ferlinghetti-a-fost-un-model-de-integritate/.
16. Dimock, *American Literature*, 133.
17. As Adriana Stan observes, it is a strong relationship between the established modernism and New Criticism: "However, we find above measure the conservative significance in another interwar variant of formalism: the Anglo-American New Criticism, that was developed in both parts of the Ocean between the 20s and 60s. The doctrine has its starting point in the critical positions formulated by T.S. Eliot, seconded, in England, by T.S. Hulme and I.A. Richard, in support of the modernist canon, already threatened by a society in quickly massing and industrializing. But it originated and developed into a long-standing pedagogical practice in the American academic environment." Adriana Stan, *Bastionul lingvistic. O istorie comparată a structuralismului în România* (Bucharest: Editura Muzeul Literaturii Române, 2017), 27-28.
18. David Sterritt, *The Beats: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 9.
19. In his essay from 1981entitled *A Definition of the Beat Generation*, Allen Ginsberg reveals the origin of the name *beat*, catching up the nature of the Lost Generation by the adjective "glamour", which means a kind of preciousness or affectedness compared to the naturalness and vagrancy practiced and promoted by the Beats. Although Ginsberg is not really polemical concerning the previous generation, the expression can be read as an ironic subtext, while Kerouac quite disappointed said about them: "Ah, this is nothing but a beat generation." Allen Ginsberg, *The Essential Ginsberg*, ed. Michael Schumacher (Great Britain: Penguin Random House, 2015), 199.
20. Steritt, *The Beat*, 9.
21. "[o]nly a few of them shared the taste for extreme intricacy and fragmentation that Joyce, Pound, and Eliot cultivated in their work. More profoundly, as Holmes pointed out, the Lost Generation was occupied with the loss of faith, religious and likewise, whereas many Beats were preoccupied with the need for it." Steritt, *The Beat*, 10.
22. Serge Fauchereau, *Introducere în poezia americană modernă* (Bucharest: Tracus Arte, 2016), 128.
23. Ibid., 270.
24. I use the adjective "foreign" just for underlining the difference between the post-war Romanian poetry and the Poets' shift of the 1980s.
25. William Lawlor, "Were Jack Kerouac, Allen Ginsberg, and William S. Burroughs as a Generation?," in Steven Belletto, *The Cambridge Companion to The Beats* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 29.
26. Sterritt, *The Beat*, 12.
27. Despite John Clellon Holmes's considerations about the Beat Generation being "a revolution in the mores, values, and sexual behaviour of the children of the white middle class, who were searching for something to believe in and refusing to conform to a repressive cold war culture," Jack Kerouac maintains his desideratum according to which the Beats "were anarchists by nature and had already done jail time." Lawlor, "Were," 24.
28. Allen Ginsberg, *The Essential Ginsberg*, 202.
29. See Adrian G. Matus, "The Reception of the American Counterculture in Communist Romania (1960-1975). The Rebels with a Cause,"

Caietele Echinox, vol. 30 (2016): 290. For the Hungarian and German poets in Romania and the American influence see Imre József Balázs, "Representing Countercultures and Alternative Lifestyles: Hippies and Bohemians in Minority Literatures from Romania (1968-1983)," in *Beyond the Iron Curtain: Revisiting the Literary System of Communist Romania*, eds. Ștefan Baghiu, Ovio Olaru, and Andrei Terian (Berlin: Peter Lang, 2021), 133-148.

30. Ginsberg, *The Essential Ginsberg*, 200-201.
31. Ibid., 201.
32. Brad Gooch, *City Poet: The Life and Times of Frank O'Hara* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2014), 354.
33. Ibid., 318.
34. According to Cărtărescu, while the influences from the Beat Generation (San Francisco School) are coming through Ginsberg, Corso, Ferlinghetti, Snyder and McClure, those from New York School are coming from Ashberry, Koch and O'Hara. See Mircea Cărtărescu, *Postmodernismul românesc* (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1999), 89.
35. Frank O'Hara, "Personism: A Manifesto," in *The Collected Poems of Frank O'Hara*, ed. Donald Allen, with an introduction by John Ashbery (Barkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1995), 499.
36. In this paper, the translations from Romanian to English are mine.
37."Interesant e însă că, spre deosebire de alte variante globale ale postmodernismului, optzeciștii nu contestă și subiectivitatea în rând cu celelalte mari narațiuni. Dimpotrivă, îi reconfirmă rolul și poziția de centru al coerenței, cultivând un adevărat mit al Autorului, ca singur reper pe nisipurile mișcătoare ale realului textualizat. Persoana reală pe care Cărtărescu și alți congeneri o invocă pentru a scoate literatura din impasul formalist al modernismului este deci Scriitorul marcat de conștiința convențiilor care îi încadrează scrisul.", Adriana Stan, "Autenticitate și ideologii în literatura douămiistă," *Transilvania*, no. 8 (2020): 4.
38. O'Hara, "Personism: A Manifesto," 499.
39. See Erik Mortenson, "Allen Ginsberg and Beat Poetry," *The Cambridge Companion to The Beats*, ed. in Steven Belletto (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 78.
40. Ibid.
41. "Un continuu al elementelor lumii care trec unele în altele." Ion Buduca, "Banda lui Moebus," in *Competiția continuă: generația '80 în texte teoretice*, ed. Gheorghe Crăciun (Bucharest: Editura Vlasie, 1994), 29.
42. Radu G. Țeposu, "Biblioteca melancolică," in Crăciun, *Competiția*, 69.
43. "[s]e va spune că rareori în poezia românească discursul poetic a dovedit atâta înaltă fidelitate față de referent, de lumea 'reală'. [...] A spune totul, confesiune, mărturie și creație simultan." Mircea Cărtărescu, "Realismul poeziei tinere," in Crăciun, *Competiția*, 184.
44. „unitate în diversitate." Ion Bogdan Lefter, "Spirit critic și personalitate," in Crăciun, *Competiția*, 97.
45. Emanuel Modoc, *Internaționala periferiilor. Rețeaua avangardelor din Europa Centrală și de* (Bucharest: Muzeul Literaturii Române, 2020), 64.
46. Ibid.
47. See Ion Bogdan Lefter and Călin Vlasie, eds., *Cenaclul de Luni – 40* (Bucharest: Cartea Românească, 2017), 82.
48. "Și așa șocul impunerii noii episteme literare fusese substantial diminuat prin tactica volumelor de debut la grămadă, într-un derutant amestec de stiluri și valori, prin întârzierea ani de zilea aparițiilor individuale." Crăciun, *Competiția*, 11.
49. "*Războiul de o sută de ani* de Mariana Marin înseamnă în multe privințe o resuscitare a straniilor mixaje de violență și tandrețe din poemele Sylviei Plath." Radu Călin Cristea, "Miturile poetului tânăr," in Crăciun, *Competiția*, 118.
50. Allen, *The Collected*, 132.
51. "drepturi egale, în termini financiari, producătorilor de literatură originală și traducătorilor." Ioana Macrea-Toma, *Privilighentia. Instituții în comunismul românesc* (Cluj-Napoca: Casa Cărții de Știință, 2009), 165.
52. Ibid.
53. Ibid.
54. Matus, "The Reception."
55. Ibid.
56. Ibid.
57. Christian Moraru, "Ostentație și ironie," in Crăciun, *Competiția*, 108.
58. Radu G. Țeposu remarks that the young poets' irony "does not mean nihilism, but a compassionate-tolerant way of taking possession of reality, of looking at it." [Ironia nu e nihilism, ci un mod compasiv-tolerant de a lua în posesie realitatea, de a o privi.], Țeposu in Gheorghe Crăciun, *op.cit.*, 70-71.
59. "Marele Text", Christian Moraru, *Art. cit.*, in Gheorghe Crăciun, *op.cit.*, 107.
60. "tradiția istoricizată." Ion Bogdan Lefter, "O problemă în doi timpi," in Crăciun, *Competiția*, 328.
61. „introducerea metareflecției teoretice și a imaginarului teoretic în narațiune și în universal fictional." Mihaela Ursa, "Textualism, postmodernism," in *Enciclopedia imaginariilor din România: imaginar literar*, ed. Corin Braga (Iași: Polirom, 2020), 374.

Bibliography

Allen, Donald, ed. *The Collected Poems of Frank O'Hara*, with an introduction by John Ashbery. Barkeley-Los Angeles-London: University of California Press, 1995.

Balázs, Imre József. "Representing Countercultures and Alternative Lifestyles: Hippies and Bohemians in Minority Literatures from Romania (1968-1983)." In *Beyond the Iron Curtain: Revisiting the Literary System of Communist Romania*, edited by Ștefan Baghiu, Ovio Olaru, and Andrei Terian, 133-148. Berlin: Peter Lang, 2021.

Belletto, Steven, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to The Beats*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017.

Braga, Corin, ed. *Enciclopedia imaginariilor din România: imaginar literar* [Encyclopaedia of Romanian Imaginaries: Literary Imaginaries]. Iași: Polirom, 2020.

Caldarelli, Guido, and Michele Catanzaro. *Networks: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.

Cărtărescu, Mircea. *Postmodernismul românesc* [The Romanian Postmodernism]. Bucharest: Humanitas, 1999.

Ciotloș, Cosmin. "Absolvenții: modelul american și poeții optzeciști" [The Graduates: the American Model and the Eighties Poets]. *Transilvania Journal*, no. 6 (2021): 1-10.

Ciotloș, Cosmin. *Cenaclul de luni. Viața și opera* [The Monday Cenacle: The Life and Works]. Bucharest: Pandora M, 2021.

Crăciun, Gheorghe, ed. *Competiția continuă: generația '80 în texte teoretice* [The Competition Continues: '80s Generation in theoretical texts]. Bucharest: Editura Vlasie, 1994.

Dmock, Wai Chee. *Through Other Continents: American Literature Across Deep Time*. Princeton: Princetion University Press, 2006.

Fauchereau, Serge. *Introducere în poezia americană modernă* [Introduction to Modern American Poetry]. Bucharest: Tracus Arte, 2016.

Ginsberg, Allen. *The Essential Ginsberg*, edited by Michael Schumacher. London: Penguin Random House, 2015.

Gooch, Brad. *City Poet: The Life and Times of Frank O'Hara*. New York: Harper Perennial, 2014.

Grace, Nancy M., and Jennie Skerl, eds. *The Transnational Beat Generation*. London and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012.

Lefter, Ion Bogdan, and Călin Vlasie, eds. *Cenaclul de Luni – 40* [Monday Literary Circle – 40]. Bucharest: Cartea Românească, 2017.

Macrea-Toma, Ioana. *Privilighentia. Instituții în comunismul românesc* [Privilighentia. Institutions in Romanian Communsim]. Cluj-Napoca: Casa Cărții de Știință, 2009.

Martin, Mircea, Christian Moraru, and Andrei Terian, eds. *Romanian Literature as World Literature*. New York: Bloomsbury, 2018.

Matus, Adrian G. "The Reception of the Amercian Counterculture in Communist Romania (1960-1975). The Rebels with a Cause." *Caietele Echinox* 30 (2016): 286-302.

Mironescu, Doris. "The Geolocation of Literary Dissidence: Vernacular Cosmopolitanism, Highbrow Subculture and Conviviality in the Iași Group (1975-1989)." In *Beyond the Iron Curtain: Revisiting the Literary System of Communist Romania*, edited by Ștefan Baghiu, Ovio Olaru, and Andrei Terian, 94-113. Berlin: Peter Lang, 2021.

Modoc, Emanuel. *Internaționala periferiilor. Rețeaua avangardelor din Europa Centrală și de Est* [The International of Peripheries: Avant-Garde Networks of East-Central Europe]. Bucharest: Muzeul Literaturii Române, 2020.

Stan, Adriana. "Autenticitate și ideologii în literatura douămiistă" [Authenticity and Ideologies in the Literature of the 2000s]. *Transilvania*, no. 8 (2020): 1-6.

Stan, Adriana, *Bastionul lingvistic. O istorie comparată a structuralismului în România* [The Linguistic Bastion: A Comparative History of Structuralism in Romania]. Bucharest: Muzeul Literaturii Române, 2017.

Sterritt, David. *The Beats: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.

Terian, Andrei. "Socialist Modernism as Compromise: Socialist Modernism as Compromise: A Study of the Romanian Literary System." *Primerjalna književnost* 42, no. 1 (2019): 133-147.

Vancu, Radu. "Habeas Corpus: The Resurgence of Lyricism in the Romanian Poetry of the 1960s Generation." *Transylvanian Review* XXVIII, Supplement no. 1 (2019): 45-54.

Veivo, Harri, Petra James, and Dorota Walczak-Delanois, eds. *Beat Literature in a Divided Europe*. Leiden and Boston: Brill-Rodopi, 2019.

Verdery, Katherine. *National Ideology Under Socialism: Identity and Cultural Politics in Ceaușescu's Romania*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, and Oxford: University of California Press, 1991.