INTRODUCTION

In an increasingly globalized and interconnected world, the topic of intercultural travels takes on a special significance. Travels of this type are not limited to physical movement from one place to another, but involve a profound interaction between cultures, with an impact on perceptions, understanding and relationships between individuals and communities. In this issue of *Interstudia*, we aim to explore various facets of intercultural travels, taking into account both classical theories and models, as well as new emerging perspectives.

Intercultural travels constitute a mobility experience that brings to the fore direct or indirect encounters between different cultures, with the aim of better understanding other ways of life and thinking. It can involve temporary or permanent relocations, educational trips, professional or youth exchanges, cultural tourism and much more. The concept of "intercultural travel" implies not only geographical mobility, but also an openness to mutual learning, exchange of ideas and cultural adaptability. In this sense, intercultural travels are fundamental in the process of building a global dialogue, based on respect and mutual understanding.

Dounia Boutirna's article examines the stereotypical depiction of Indigenous Algerian culture in Eugène Fromentin's *Un été dans le Sahara* (1857). It explores how European preconceived ideas and cultural stereotypes shaped nineteenth-century perceptions of colonized peoples, arguing that such representations served as hidden instruments of colonial power and contributed to the natives' alienation.

Drawing on Roland Barthes's ideological critique, the study analyzes Fromentin's discourse to reveal the pejorative nature and ideological function of these stereotypes. It contends that they operate as "myths," forming a doxic discourse that limits independent thought and obstructs access to true knowledge. Ultimately, the article shows how imperial ideology permeates Fromentin's text, embedding itself in language and reinforcing dominant colonial structures.

Anamaria Fălăuș explores migration as a visual language of memory through a comparative study of Shaun Tan's *The Arrival* (2006) and Thi Bui's *The Best We Could Do* (2017). Both texts use graphic narration to express experiences of displacement, generational trauma, and cultural transmission that are difficult to articulate verbally. Tan relies on wordless imagery, allegory, and surreal scenes to universalize the migrant experience, while Bui uses documentary-style visuals and layered timelines to depict the intergenerational impact of the Vietnam War and refugee flight. The article argues that these works show how visual storytelling mediates personal and collective memory, using silence, fragmentation, and imagination as forms of remembrance, and how graphic literature can reshape archives of trauma and resilience within migration narratives.

Raluca Galița's article, *Mobility as Personal Development. The Case of Language Autobiography,* extends ongoing research on language

autobiographies, including self-expression, meaning-making in language learning, the language of emotion, critical thinking—especially intellectual perseverance—and the factors that cause demotivation in learning or using a foreign language. It focuses on mobility as a lens for analysis, understood as a form of personal development. Mobility refers not only to moving between life stages or places, but also to embracing change, facing challenges, and acquiring new knowledge. Such mobility requires physical and mental flexibility, self-awareness, and an adaptable mindset, ultimately fostering cognitive, emotional, and behavioural growth. The study argues that language autobiographies—personal narratives of one's linguistic journey—serve as a valuable research tool within a hybrid methodological framework combining thematic narrative inquiry with elements of discourse analysis.

Flavius Ghender's article, *Connected by Fear: Populism, Social Media and the Construction of the Foreign "Other",* analyzes how contemporary populism reshapes political communication by dividing society into "us," the true people, and "them," the alleged enemies. This exclusionary logic commonly produces hostility toward foreigners and, consequently, toward migration. Through a comparative examination of populist leaders from Western and Eastern Europe, the study shows how their rhetoric consistently frames migration as a crisis and a threat to national identity, security, or well-being. It also highlights the role of digital media in amplifying these narratives, allowing populist actors to construct enemies and depict migrants in emotionally charged, negative terms. The findings suggest that opposition to migration is a structural component of populist discourse, recurring whenever migration becomes a salient political issue.

Alexandra Moraru and Gabriela Andrioai-Grigoraş' paper, *American Identity Conceptual Metaphors in the Discourse of President Trump,* examines how the conceptual metaphors WAR IS A GAME and AMERICAN IDENTITY IS AUTHORITY appear in Donald Trump's discourse during his heated Oval Office exchange with Volodymyr Zelenskyy on March 1, 2025. Drawing on cognitive metaphor theory, it shows how cognitive processes shape identity construction in political language. The study highlights how word choice reveals self-representation, drives social action, and contributes to national identity formation, while also demonstrating how certain political discourses—particularly American discourse—are heavily influenced by cultural hegemony.

Raluca-Andreea Nechifor's paper, *Representations of Intercultural Identity in Screen Adaptations: A Comparative Critique Of Interview With The Vampire,* examines how intercultural identity is reflected in film criticism, focusing on reviews of two adaptations of Anne Rice's *Interview with the Vampire*: the 1994 film directed by Neil Jordan and AMC's 2022 television series. Using reviews from digital platforms and professional criticism sites, the study compares how evaluative and descriptive language differs between film and series reviews, given their contrasting narrative structures, stylistic features, and thematic approaches.

The analysis shows that critics interpret the two adaptations in distinct ways, especially regarding the intercultural identities of characters such as Louis and Claudia, whose appearance and cultural background are assessed differently across contexts. The findings suggest that series reviews, by linking vampiric

immortality with marginalized and isolated identities, offer a lens through which the story becomes a reflection on cultural exchange, moral responsibility, and the search for identity—topics only briefly addressed in traditional film reviews, in line with the constraints of the medium.

Zamfira Petrescu's article, *Domestication and Foreignization in Translating Puns: Insights from Murdoch Mysteries,* examines key challenges in translation studies, focusing on the recurrence of puns and double entendre in audiovisual translation. It analyzes how various translation procedures shape the viewer's interpretive experience. Using criterion sampling, the study extracts instances of wordplay from over 500 *Murdoch Mysteries* episodes and identifies their Romanian equivalents. The analysis highlights the use of both Foreignization strategies—such as borrowing, exoticism, addition, literal translation, and transliteration—and Domestication strategies, including cultural adaptation, discourse transfer, simplification, and situational equivalence.

Eriola Qafzezi's paper, *Voicing the Self in Transition: Discursive Constructions of Freedom and Memory in Lea Ypi's "Free"*, analyzes how Lea Ypi's *Free* (2021) constructs ideas of freedom, ideology, and identity through its discourse and narrative voice. Using insights from discourse analysis, memory studies, and narrative theory, it shows how the memoir exposes the ideological contradictions of socialist and post-socialist Albania, while using memory and irony to reinterpret personal experience. Through its double-voiced narration and shifting language of freedom, *Free* presents liberty as a contested, continually reshaped concept rather than a fixed political condition.

Olga Roebuck paper examines how Hugh Thomson's *The Green Road into the Trees* documents the restoration of his local identity through engagement with the British countryside. While familiar with distant lands, Thomson had become alienated from his native region; the study explores how slow travel and immersion in the natural environment help him reconnect with its historical and social layers. It argues that this process, though anthropocentrically motivated, challenges the human-nature divide and frames the landscape as "the engagement of people in place" (David and Wilson, 2002). More broadly, the analysis considers how this approach to travel contributes to the genre of nature writing, focusing on identity construction rather than environmental issues.

Codruța-Diana Simionescu and Daniel-Darius Onețiu's paper, *Communicating and Translating the Roman Heritage Across The Roman Limes Cultural Route*, examines how migration, demographic change, postmodern shifts, and rising populism can distance individuals from their cultural heritage, prompting initiatives by organizations like UNESCO to encourage reconnection with cultural roots. Cultural heritage is approached as a social process through which communities construct meaning and identity. Focusing on the Roman Limes cultural route, the study analyzes how Roman heritage is communicated and translated, using qualitative analysis of official documents, digital communication mapping, and a literature review. The Roman Limes illustrates how historical borders, originally defensive, acquire new significance by linking contemporary communities. Digital tools enhance accessibility, allowing

audiences to engage with remote sites and reflect on past cultural memory, thereby reshaping identity in relation to space and time.

In Jonela Spaho and Eris Rusi's article, *The Role of Albanian Folklore as a Bridge Between National Culture and Globalization,* Albanian folklore is portrayed as a dynamic, evolving cultural tradition that links national identity with global cultural exchange. Through forms like epic tales, ritual songs, and oral poetry, it both preserves core values and facilitates intercultural communication. Sustained by oral transmission, scholarly work, and modern reinterpretations, folklore maintains its authenticity while adapting to contemporary contexts. In a globalized world, it functions as a cultural bridge, demonstrating resilience and showing that tradition and modernity can coexist. Ultimately, Albanian folklore both protects national identity and enriches global cultural diversity.

Ayşegül Takkaç Tulgar's paper examines how digital technologies have transformed mobility and connectivity, shaping individual identities through global physical and virtual interactions. Platforms such as online communities, digital diasporas, and international social networks enable users to engage in "glocal" interactions, blending local identity with global perspectives. The study analyzes how these technologies allow individuals to renegotiate social and cultural identities across physical and temporal boundaries. It also considers the benefits and challenges of digital networking and offers recommendations for fostering inclusive, respectful, and immersive intercultural interactions in a connected world.

Georgiana Văsâi (Ruff) article explores how marginalisation and identity are constructed in Ali Smith's *Spring*, considering the influence of the post-Brexit political context. Using qualitative methods that combine close textual reading with cultural and linguistic analysis, it examines how central characters negotiate exclusion and belonging. The study finds that the novel depicts marginalisation not only for migrants and outsiders but also as a symptom of fractured national identity in contemporary England. Through linguistic experimentation, cultural references, and shifting narrative perspectives, *Spring* shows how language and social norms shape individual identity, while also suggesting the possibility of renewal and transformation. The text ultimately highlights the potential for individuals to assert agency even within divided cultural landscapes.

This issue of *Interstudia* aims to explore multiple aspects of intercultural travel, considering both established theories and models alongside emerging perspectives.

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