



**Title:** Time of the Gypsies and Space for the Voice of a Roma Woman: Reading Olga Mariano's *Pedaços de Mim* (2021)

### **Abstract**

The publication of Olga Mariano's *Pedaços de Mim* in 2021 signals the presence of a voice that has systematically been absent from the Portuguese literary field: that of the Portuguese Roma. Within the European context, the almost non-existence of Portuguese Roma literature contrasts significantly with the constitution of substantial corpora of Roma authors published in Eastern European countries, in the former Soviet Union, and even in Western European countries, where these literary corpora have been less expressive but still present in their respective literary markets. The almost non-existence of Portuguese Roma literature strengthens the prevailing idea that Portuguese literature is the expression of a taintless Portuguese cultural homogeneity. This essay argues that the publication of *Pedaços de Mim* is opportune at a time when several Portuguese writers of African descent have also emerged and widened the scope of the discussion on the legacy of Portuguese colonialism as a history of Portuguese exclusion and segregation of ethnic minorities; segregation is also the history of the Roma in Portugal. Mariano's poetry deconstructs literary stereotypes associated with the Roma as explored by non-racialized Portuguese writers. The visibility and encouragement given to ethnic-minority authorship show the extent to which literature can be a privileged space for the acceptance of their humanity and take the shape of reparation of the historical wrongs of exclusion.

**Keywords:** Women's Literature; Roma Poetry; Olga Mariano; Polyphonic Space; Reparation