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CAN THE FOREIGNER SPEAK?
REFLECTING THE WORLD IN THE ROMANIAN NOVEL
1844-1947

Abstract: The following article will attempt a partly quantitative analysis of the Romanian novel from 1844 to 1947, drawing on the archive of the Digital Museum of the Romanian Novel. I will try to deliver an insight into how a South-East European literature, the Romanian one, has "reflected" the world – in several of its possible instances – over the span of little more than a century, thereby revealing its symbolic position in the European "world-system." Its status will be indirectly quantified by looking at three different distances: to the West, to itself and its surrounding geographical setting, and to exotic, non-European geographies, by looking not at geography per se, but at representations of "the foreign," i.e., of foreign nationals. These three perspectives are meant to pin the Romanian novelistic production on the map of European literature in conjunction to three fundamentally different and crucially influential cultural markers: the influence of the West as aspirational hub for the Romanian intelligentsia during the century of novelistic production, the manner in which the "interimperial" (in the sense given to this term by Manuela Boatcă and Anca Pârvulescu (Pârvulescu and Boatcă) drawing on Laura Doyle) position has determined different facets of self-representation, and lastly the depiction of exotic and foreign spaces and nationals, and how Romanian novelistic voices, otherwise self-deprecating in regard to the European core, adopted – to a certain degree – a European voice, Orientalizing the foreign.

Keywords: Romanian novel, The Digital Archive of the Romanian Novel, inter-imperiality

Admittedly, the title of the present article is slightly misleading, as it would entail the existence of the same colonial gaze discussed in Spivak's text. However, my argument is that, for the Romanian premodern and modern period, the issue of attaining national unity was so stringent as to prevent the foreigner – whatever his origin might have been – from speaking, for his presence was never gratuitous, but fulfilled a narrative function *filtered* through a Romanian voice. Whenever the foreigner spoke, his voice was staged. When he was present, he was either an unnuanced feign, a stereotype, or a pretext. I hope to shed light on this claim in the following.

But first, why a "partly quantitative" survey instead of a downright quantitative one? First of all, an undertaking of this ambition is both hardly achievable from a technical point of view in the present state of Romanian DH – such a search should ideally be conducted through topic modeling, in order to assess what kind of word clusters and semantic nuances are associated with each rendition of the foreign –,[1] and additionally entails a theoretical confirmation bias – any (ever so slightly) expected representational pattern will be a self-fulfilling prophecy. I will therefore build on the conclusions formulated by the articles that have been dedicated to the different temporal segments of the archive (Baghiu et al. 2019, 2020, 2021 "Geografia: Arealul național", 2021 "Geografia: Străinătatea") and conduct my searches from there. Another error is understandably caused by the evolution of the Romanian alphabet during the early history of the Romanian novel – going back to the technical backwardness mentioned before –, but the overwhelming imbalance in favor of novels which are readable by normal search engines makes this error easily dismissible.

The justifying principle is simple: During the century of novelistic production under scrutiny, the representation of "the foreign" has varied greatly, as has the very notion of "Romanian nation" itself. At the beginning of this period, Romania's three

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[1] This lengthy debate has precipitated its fair share of sarcastic replies across Romanian humanities, but in short: despite the archive being an invaluable resource for everyone trying to study the evolution of the Romanian novel, two shortcomings are stopping it from reaching its full potential: 1. First, the scholars who seem to possess some degree of technical knowhow seem reluctant to ask the corpus the right questions, focusing instead on highly specific particularities and/or subgenres; and 2. The scholars who are eager to engage with the corpus wholly face the reality of their technical impotence, as they do not master the tools, software, or the art of convincing skilled experts to engage with projects of this type.

separate principalities were each in a different position of political and cultural subordination: to the Austro-Hungarian Empire, to Tsarist Russia, and to the Ottoman Empire, respectively; state cohesion was only achieved in 1918; the greatest expansion of Romanian territories took place during the interwar period; ultimately, 1947 marks a year in which the Romanian state had not only been already born, but had already developed a distinct culture and literary identity. The main argument is that, whereas the different articles dedicated to the existing sections of the Archive have compellingly shown that representations of Western geography follow a deeply aspirational pattern in trying to portray the Romanian social body as part and parcel of European identity – first through the proliferation of imitative sensationalist literature of French descent and the romantic projection of a Paris-like, deeply criminalized, and infinite Bucharest, and then through the inclusion of European and world geographies as class marker and symbol for the narrative voices' cultural fluidity, financial access to travel, and intellectual adaptability, there was little debate on various representations of foreigners and what these convey, since the act of introducing a geography is not the same as taking a stance and an ideological position in regard to that geography, and says more about the voice integrating the space in the works than it says about the space itself. In other words, there is a clear difference between the representation of global geography in the novelistic production and the relation to the subjects inhabiting or originating in certain geographies. For instance, integrating America is not the same as having an opinion about the United States as a nation, nor about Americans, and Romanian characters visiting Paris does not necessarily translate into a love for the French. But let us look at what the Archive has to say.

There are two possible strategies for proceeding. The first one entails pursuing the different representations of the foreign Other – hence from a typological standpoint –, and the second would allow for the chronological evolution of this representation while sacrificing the greater picture. Due to the rather modest novelistic production for the archive's first section, 1844 to 1899, I consider a general rundown of foreign representation for this temporal segment sufficient, while a typological approach is more suitable for the latter two periods, covering 1900 to 1947.

Hic sunt leones: 1844-1899

As shown by David Morariu in an article discussing the depiction of foreigners in the first temporal section, they are mostly negatively connoted: this, he argues, owes to the fact that the majority of foreigners coming into contact with Romanian culture in the premodern period had historically been hostile to the Romanian nation-building process or were "brought into view by the accidents of war and politics," as argued by Alex Drace-Francis (117). Foreignness, when becoming present, hence depicted *as foreignness*, is tantamount to imperial oppression: the strong romantic underpinning of the latter half of the 19th century, expressed in historical and outlaw novels, as shown by Roxana Patraş (2019), meant that foreignness is universally and un-nuancedly dreaded, contributing to

> the exclusively negative and defining portrayal of characters from other ethnic communities; thus, the relationship with foreignness is reproduced based on a few ethnic stereotypes, generated and amplified by historical events, the status of the Romanian people throughout its existence and that of the Romanian Principalities being faced with enemy attacks from outside their borders. (Morariu 2022, 128)

However, Morariu argues further, social novels or the so-called "novels of manners" feature a relatively small number of references to foreigners, despite their more cosmopolitan and "global" nature, thereby confirming the novels' already substantiated "bovarism" and international aspirations lacking a real foundation. Clearly, during the late 19th century, the historical distance from the premodern period made it so that the Ottoman rule and Turkish influence were assessed not without clear nationalist tones in a sort of historical reckoning: the oppressors, "those criminal Phanariotes," (Macri 66)[2] these "infernal beings [...] escaped from the slums of Constantinople, in whose souls one could not find a single sacred and good thing" (Macri 100),[3] are now justly "brought to justice." This can be observed in several of the period's novels, but preponderantly in the so-called hajduk novels:

> In the year 1819, Romania and Moldova were in a state of the greatest turmoil and disorder, because of the changing rulers to the throne and because of the Turks, the

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[2] "acei nelegiuiţi defanarioţi."
[3] "fiinţe infernale; acelor fanarioţi renegaţi, emigraţi de prin mahalalele Constanlinopolulul şi în a căror suflet nu puteai găsi nimic sacru, nimic bun."

> Phanariot Greeks, and the Albanian mercenaries, who devastated and robbed the country blind, without once thinking that God will one day punish them for their awful deeds. (Macri 5)[4]

Phanariot/Ottoman		Relative occurrence frequency
1844-1899		
768 occurrences	66 novels	**11.6**
1900-1932		
319 occurrences	93 novels	**3.4**
1933-1947		
439 occurrences	154 novels	**2.8**

Being featured in 66 novels with a total of 768 occurrences, the Phanariotes and Ottomans appear an average of 11.6 times in each novel for the first period, 1844 to 1899. This frequency changes radically during the second period – 3.4 per novel – and drops even further to 2.8 during the third period, thus showing that these quintessential *others* lose their grip on the imagology of Romanian novelistic production. During the early 20th century, the Tatars and Ottomans become rather a distant, historically disengaged cultural reference, ceasing to be the historical menace they once represented, and return either as rhetorical artifice ("Turkish coffee," "to sit 'turkishly'," "Are you a Turk?" – meaning "can't you understand what I'm saying?," and so on) or as racial arguments for Romanian European belonging (Faresova and Stan 141).[5] In renegading Oriental heritage, the role played by racial theory in Romanian throughout cultural debates of the late 1920s and early 1930s[6] is illustrative of this shift towards the West – given that most experts in racial anthropology were inspired by German scientists and were intent on providing "the [Romanian] nation with a corresponding racial narrative" (Turda 2007b, 364), a narrative bearing strong nationalist points. Slowly, but surely, foreigners cease to

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[4] "În anul 1819 România și Moldova, se aflau intr'o ferbere și într'o învălmășală din cele mai mari, din causa schimbării Domnilor la tron, și din causa turcilor, grecilor fanarioți, și a arnăuților, care devastau și jefuiaú țara fără crutare, fára ca să se gândéscâ că D-zeu odată va trimite urgia lui pentru a pedepsi faptele lor cele urâte."

[5] "Your grandmother traces her ancestors back to the Crimean Tatars. [...] You're a half-breed, Galia. Two different races left their traces in you. [...]"

"[b]unica ta se trage din tătarii crimeoți. Uite-te la trăsăturile pe care ascendențele ți le-au săpat pe față. Pomeții, tăietura ochilor, nările lagi, sunt cea mai bună dovadă. Ești o corcitură, Galia. Două rase diferite și-au lăsat în tine moștenirile. Din păcate ai moștenit mai mult delà tatăl tău decât delà mine..."

[6] Thoroughly investigated by Marius Turda in his "The nation as object: Race, blood, and biopolitics in interwar Romania." (2007a).

evoke the indefinite mistrust they were met with throughout the 19th century and acquire new, more nuanced significance.

1900-1947

For the first half of the 20th century, the articles dedicated to the geographical representation throughout the Romanian novel insist on the characters' international mobility, the mentioning of foreign, oftentimes exotic destinations, and the consolidation of cosmopolitan perspectives. But *adding* geography is not the same as including it seamlessly and is therefore never an innocent task, because for the most part, the difference between the *featured* and the *mentioned* geographical setting is quite clear. For instance, Paris is mentioned in 50% of the novels published between 1900 and 1931 (Baghiu et al. 2020, 5), albeit only 28 novels out of a total of 370 take place in France; between 1844 and 1900, only 8 of a total of 157 novels are set in Paris, albeit the French capital is mentioned a total of 43 times in the temporal section (Baghiu et al. 2019, 33). This clearly has to do with the fact that the mere presence of *location* cannot create a convincing narrative *space,* nor the illusion thereof. This is why, in an article dedicated to affective geography in the 19th century Romanian novel, the same David Morariu, in attempting a conduct a sentiment analysis of Paris in the Archive's first temporal section, remarked that "among the approximately 500 passages that contain 'Paris,' only around 70 passages include mentions to which a certain emotion could be assigned – be it positive or negative. This means that only less than 15% (a percentage similar to that of the Stanford Literary Lab experiment) of the selected fragments can be taken into account when developing the affective image of Paris." (Morariu 2020, 137). In other words, foreign – and especially French – geography tends to be musealized, admired *in absentia*, and *mentioned* rather than *featured* through the telltale signs of actual familiarization with the space.
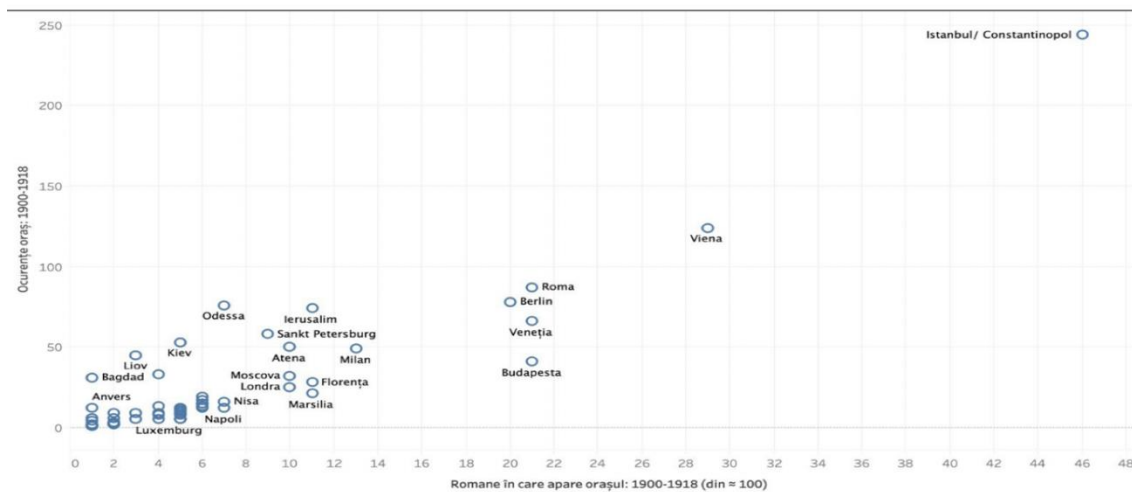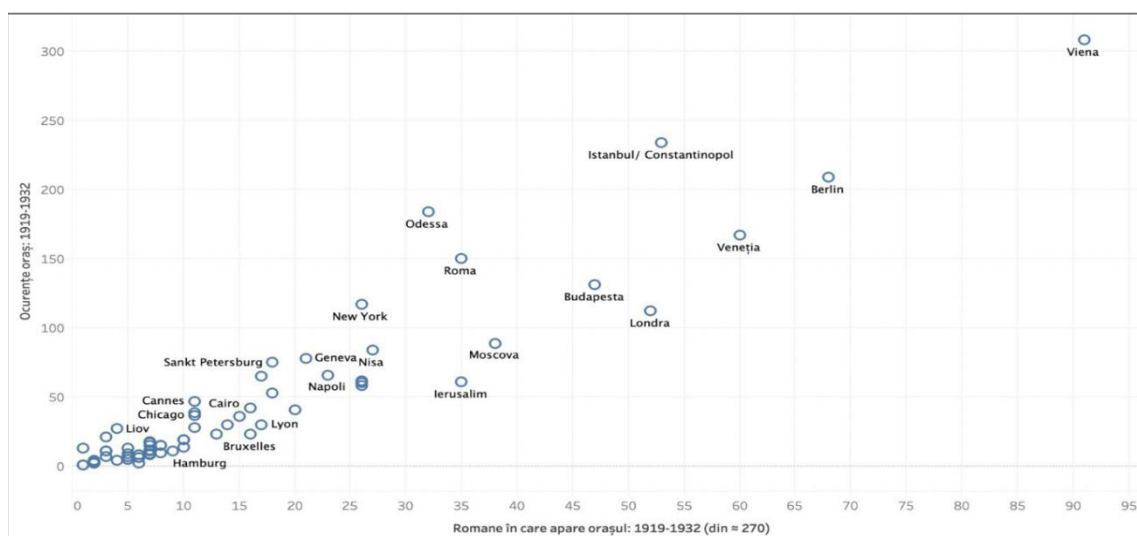
Diagrama 3. Ocurențe vs. recurențe (1901-1918)

Diagrama 4. Ocurențe vs. recurențe (1919-1932)

(Baghiu et al., "Geografia: Străinătatea", 3)

Another important milestone for the symbolic geographies of the Romanian novel is World War I: this threshold is very well represented in the Archive via the two graphs above – correlating the number of occurrences with that of recurrences for the cities featured in the period's two sections –, in the sense of virtually replacing Istanbul as the dominating city in the Romanian novel; Paris was manually eliminated from both graphs from the very start, for its presence was so overbearing that it would have made the other cities hurdle together indistinguishably at the bottom left corner of the graphs. For the Romanian novel, the long 19th century seems to end in 1918, as Constantinople is replaced by Vienna, thus finally signaling a shift from the Orient to the Western world. And this change in the optics of foreign spaces is visible from a quantitative point of view as well, becoming painfully clear in the following maps:

Harta 2.1.: Oraşe în care se petrece acţiunea în romanul românesc (1844-1900). Cadrul planetar

(Baghiu et al. 2019, 37)

Harta 2: *Locurile acţiunii în romanul românesc (1933-1947).*

(Baghiu et al. "Geografia: Străinătatea", 2).

A repeated emphasis throughout the articles dedicated to the geography was laid on precisely the aspirational namedropping of foreign cities in evoking a sort of cosmopolitan cultural fluidity. What we would thus expect would be a mild, if not downright explicit sympathy and admiration for the civilized world just west of Romania's borders. Additionally, it is worth questioning which are the most representative renditions of foreignness we should pursue. In this regard, my choice fell first on Germans, in following through with the argument laid forth by Andrei Terian, namely that the import of German culture in the latter half of the 19th century was a conscious undertaking meant to suppress the influence of French culture (Terian 11). The debate itself outgrew the mere balancing act of two different cultural influences in the Romanian periphery, becoming the stage for a broader civilizational

conflict. Another argument for the inclusion of Germans is their role in the creation of Transylvanian identity within the interimperial context, as discussed by Anca Pârvulescu and Manuela Boatcă in their book dedicated to *Ion*.

The interest in the German owes to the longstanding Romanian philo-Germanism, the kinship of the Transylvanian cultural elite – consisting of Romanians and Hungarians alike – with the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and the convoluted and problematic history of Romanian fascist collaboration, alliance, and sympathy, given that "[b]y the end of World War II, approximately 54,000 ethnic Germans from Romania (Saxons and Swabians alike) had joined the Third Reich's military force, the *Waffen*-SS." (Koranyi and Wittlinger 101). But searching through the archive, it becomes clear that this sympathy coexists with a very clear mockery/ condescendence both with regard to the surrounding Balkan space and – weirdly enough – to the West itself, despite the imitative capitalism cultivated in Romania and the cosmopolitan aspirations of the Romanian intelligentsia.

> I totally understand why someone from Vlaho-Clisura would feel bad not being able to call himself English, French, German, essentially the subject of a superior nation, but that a Romanian from Vlaho-Clisura would want to crawl into a shack from Mocrina or any other miserable Bulgarian village, this I cannot understand (Brun and Papahagi 73).[7]

And precisely this ambivalence begs the question of whether there is a clear sympathy to begin with or if did not seep into the literary production altogether. In staying true to the semi-quantitative approach, a simple search after "German," "Germany," "Fritz/Jerry," and versions thereof[8] yields interesting results:

"German," "Germanic," "Germany," or versions thereof		Relative occurrence frequency
1844-1900		
326 occurrences	80 novels	**4**
1901-1932		
1527 occurrences	195 novels	**7.8**

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[7] "înţeleg foarte bine ca unui locuitor din să-i pară rău de ce nu poate să-şi zică englez, francez, german, în sfârşit cetăţean al unei naţiuni superioare, dar ca un român din Vlaho-Clisura să aspire a se vârî într'o colibă din Mocrina sau din cutare alt mizerabil sat bulgăresc, asta nu o înţeleg."

[8] With the caveat that the term for both "Jerry" and "Fritz," Neamţ, is also the name of a Romanian county. The passages indicating the place instead of the slightly demeaning term for German were not taken into consideration.

1933-1947		
3336 occurrences	420 novels	**7.9**

In other words, for the first period, the search queries designating the Germans found a total of 326 occurrences throughout 80 novels, with a relative occurrence frequency of 4, meaning that each novel mentioning either Germany or a German foreigner, product, or habit generally did so an average of 4 times. For the second period, covering 1901 to 1932, the relative occurrence frequency is 7.8, whereas for the latter period it is a mere 0.1 more at 7.9. Whereas the first period is understandably poorer in representations of the foreign due to the generally lower novelistic production, and given Morariu's contention that the foreigner was generally negatively connoted, the first half of the 20th century is under the sign of the Great War and European interwar fascism, which are bound to yield numerous mentions to Germans. Admittedly, the search itself is far from perfect; ideally, we should be able to distinguish between "German-as-person" and "German-as-object," i.e., between a foreign subject as representative of a different ethnic body and an object, custom, or saying of foreign origin. But the designation itself postulates a cognitive distinction and creates the category of the Foreign. A cannon, for instance, ceases to be a military object when mentioned as "a German cannon," i.e., the mere fact that it is indicated as being of German production aims to convey something about its quality, drawing on common, inherited preconceptions about the excellence of German steelmaking.

There are two discernible stances in regard to the Germans, none of which align with the unnuanced sympathy one would expect to find when considering the internationalist ambitions of many protagonists. On the one hand, they are portrayed as idiosyncratic, dull, obnoxious, slow, obstinate, generally unlikeable, and ridiculous in their mannerisms within the conventions of social satire and lowbrow adventure novels. Examples abound, but during the early 20th century, the general representation of Germans is riddled with contempt and stereotyping sarcasm:

> "Judge, Sir, a tall, lean Fritz came forward and said, putting his pipe away and taking his earflaps off his head – I am a Maschinist at the millhouse … and I 'reglement' the electric lights as well. I'm fear that it may have 'electrical circuited' …

whatchamacallit … […] The Fritz scratched the tip of his nose, a tad red, perchance because of the honest habit of drinking too much […].” (Rădulescu-Niger 335)[9]

“Stupid Fritz! … said Berta while laughing and squeezing Comăneşteanu’s hand. I too have German origins, but I don’t live like this, as if I’d swallowed a pole.” (Zamfirescu 32)[10]

“Dear Papa, I would like to present to you Mr. Pelz, electrical engineer, he’s a German, he does not Romanian at all and … dear papa, he is … my fiancée …! – What, this Fritz?! Are you out of your mind, are you both out of your mind?! – Dear papa, you’ll like him once you get to know him…! – Let the Devil know him! I don’t want to get to know none of his kind!” (Olteo 32)[11]

On the other hand, starting with the 1920s, there are not few novels discussing, in near philosophical terms, the nature, advantages, historical destiny of the Germanic people and “race.” Satire turns to conceptual lucidity, and the import of racial(ised) discourse in the novels is always contrived so as to create a contrast or a conceptual dichotomy between Germanic and Latin peoples and cultures; not unlike the historical reckoning with the Ottoman heritage and its influence on the Romanian nation-building process, the Germans are used as a discursive platform whereon the underlying political tensions of that time are given full expression within the conventions of (genre) fiction: philo-Germanism, antisemitism, but also anti-imperialism and a generalized discourse about German wrongdoings during the war all find expression in the period’s novels. Political commentary is woven into the plot, a mere pretext for staging cultural debates about the siege conducted by the “Teutonic barbarians” against the European world order and against the Latin heritage, nobility, and genius – traits which, of course, extend to the Romanian racial profile as well:

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[9] “Domn judecător, îşi făcu loc un neamţ lung şi slab, şi rosti, scoţându’şi luleaua dintre dinţi şi şapca cu urechi, de'pe cap, — euu sunt maşinister la mora... şi «regulamentez» şi lumina electric... Eu tem la mine se nu fi.. «ţircuitum electric»... cum se zice... Procurorul privi lung la neamţ. — Dar circuitul acesta, domnule, din ce cauză poate proveni? întrebă. Neamţul îşi scărpina vârful nasului, cam roşu, poate din pricina cinstitului obiceiu de-a bea prea mult, şi se cam codi...”

[10] “Neamţ prost!... zise Berta râzând şi strângând pe Comăneşteanu de mană. Şi eu sunt germană de origină, dar nu trăesc aşa, par’că aş fi înghiţit un baston...”

[11] “Dragă tata, îţi prezint pe D-l Pelz, inginer electrician, e German, nu cunoaşte limba romînă şi...tata dragă, e...logodnicul meu....! – Ce, Neamţul acesta?!Ai înnebunit, aţi înnebunit se vede, amîndouă?! – Dragă tata, cînd ai să-l cunoşti, are să-ţi placă...! – Să-l cunoască toaca! Aşa soi de neam nu voi să cunosc!”

– France will perish, for it is destined to perish. I read Gobineau. Both in his 'La lutte des races' and in 'Sur l'inegalité des races,' he argues for the same thing: the French race will end up defeated by the Germans and will vanish. The German genius and force will triumph one day. Germany of today will take its revenge. – The genius of the Latin race will always be victorious, and France will always be a beacon of enlightenment and civilization! The bankruptcy of brute force is right before your eyes. France represents moral power. (Cosmin 95)[12]

Similarly, characters can be heard arguing that "Teutonic culture [...] is closed, artificial, lacking generosity, lacking flavour, lacking possibilities for germination," (Theodorescu 19),[13] that "Wagner is the clearest embodiment of the grotesque, of inelegance and the German's barbaric nature," (Theodorescu 61)[14] but also that "Fritz doesn't care about money! ... He offers his entire purse if you know when to approach him... I, for one, get along with the Germans better than with anybody else." (Theodorescu 107)[15] V. Demetrius' 1920 *Domnul colonel,* dealing with the First World War, belongs to the novels whose plots clumsily hide the narrator's/author's attempt to philosophize on recent events. More than being a historical novel, it is nearly essayistic in cultivating the political/military metacommentary: "Carol, a Hohenzolern, a German who would have left the throne while grinding his teeth rather than to pull out his sword against the interests of his original fatherland" (Demetrius 27).[16] Again, the Civilization to which Romanian culture aspires to belong revolts against another type of barbary, this time from the West, as the West itself collapses under its own weight in the terms and patterns made famous during the interwar period by Oswald Spengler's *Der Untergang des Abendlandes*. Generally, however, the period's novels range from militaristic (oftentimes with antisemitic

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[12] "Franţa va pieri, căci e sortită pieirii. Eu am citit pe Gobineau. În amândouă cărţile *La lutte des races* şi *Sur l'inegalité des races,* susţine acelaş lucru: rasa franceză va sfârşi prin a fi învinsă de germani şi desfiinţată. Geniul şi forţa germană vor triumfa într'o zi. Germania de azi îşi va lua „revanşa". — Geniul rasei latine va fi totdeauna biruitor, iar Franţa, vecinică torţă de lumină şi civilizaţie! Falimentul forţei brute îl ai înaintea ochilor. Franţa e forţa morală."

[13] "— Cultura teutonă, zicea el potrivindu-şi ochelarii, e închisă, artificială, fără dărnicie, fără parfum, fără daruri germinatoare. E, aş putea spune, inexistentă. Are cateva culmi, e drept. Dar ele sunt aşa de mari şi aşa de puţin germanice, că nu fac parte din patrimoniul teuton."

[14] "Wagner e cea mai caracteristică infăţişare a grotescului, ineleganţei şi firii barbare a Neamţului."

[15] "Neamţul nu se uită la ban !... Dă tot ce are cand ştii să-1 iei... Eu una mă'mpac- cu Nemţii mai bine ca cu oricine."

[16] "Carol, un Hohenzolern, un German, care mai de grabă ar fi părăsit tronul scrâşnind din măsele, decât să scoată sabia împotriva intereselor patriei sale originare."

undertones) sympathy and fearful admiration for the Germans (Barnoschi 73-74),[17] coupled with a mystical fascination for their technical prowess and potential (Serdaru 27),[18] to a hateful critique of their recent past – and increasingly clearer present imperialistic ambitions ("German imperialism, this forever bloodthirsty hydra, is to blame for the ruin of many of today's nations" (Vrioni 33)[19]). Again, examples abound, but the general tendency is clear: the Germans are either portrayed as derided stereotypes or are discussed from afar in general terms, as part of a political body lending itself to admiration and criticism alike, allowing for self-identification with the Latin roots or contributing to the entrenchment of nationalist race theory. Nowhere does their voice seem to break through and reach us.

While the representation of Germans follows a more or less predictable pattern, considering the history of Romanian-German relations, the British should ideally deliver a neutral rendition of foreignness, illustrating the stance taken towards a cultural sphere that had no direct influence on the Romanian principalities, and whose cultural representation presumably emerged organically. The following table shows the distribution of mentions to the English subjects and to all things English:

"English," "England," "Britain," "British," or versions thereof		Relative occurrence frequency
1844-1900		
166 occurrences	42 novels	**3.9**
1901-1932		
995 occurrences	187 novels	**5.3**
1933-1947		
2733 occurrences	409 novels	**6.7**

[17] "The victory against Germany means a victory of the Jews on all of us. And if this happens, we lose all hope, for Jewish exploitation is even less humane than that of the Czars, through their abusive governors, for their exploitation was somewhat paternal as well."
"Victoria asupra Germaniei înseamnă a Evreilor asupra noastră. Iar în acest caz avem de pierdut orice speranţă, căci exploatarea evreiască ar fi şi mai neomenoasă decât a ţarilor, prin gubernatorii lor abuzivi, care era întru câtva şi părintească."
[18] "this mysterious, silent presence of the Zeppelin had something mystical in it, a mysticism enveloping all things supernatural … It was as if the German people showed the crowd through this Zeppelin that Germany's power has to be first destroyed in order to achieve the dream of Greater Romania."
"Această apariţie misterioasă, fără zgomot a Zeppelllinului, avea ceva mistic în ea, misticism din acela ce învălueşte toate lucrurile supranaturale… Parcă poporul german arăta grupului de oameni, prin acest Zeppellin că trebue distrusă întâi puterea Germaniei, pentru ca să se împlinească aevea o Românie Mare."
[19] "Imperialismului german, această hidră veşnic nesătulă, se datoreşte ruina de azi a popoarelor."

The chronological evolution in terms of quantity is unsurprising: the novelistic production simply started to include more nationals/national denominators. Even if the number of occurrences is lower than with the Germans, it is still large enough to provide relevant patterns. Not unlike the Germans (or Ottomans, or any other ethnic group, for that matter), it is nearly impossible to pursue characters who acquire a name in the beginning and are mentioned by it throughout the novel; however, precisely because foreigners tend to be stereotyped, the national denominator is still used: the German, the Frenchman, the Englishman in lieu of Johann, Jacques, or John. It is seemingly easier for narrators/ authors to use these generous monikers instead of providing their characters with real names, a detail which betrays a superficial knowledge of the cultures in question and makes it so that foreigners never acquire a voice but are always spoken for:

> God dam I am very fourious, dumneata ai pus posteriorul dumnitale pe okiul meu - yes asta este schoking, că cer dumnitale setisfekshon. – Bukuros, milord God dam, bukuros; - dar acum lasămă 'n pace să urmez danțul, pe urmă ne vom întâlni. (Ghica 135)

When the British are given a voice, they are only declaratively British: Miss Mary, the nanny featured in Ioacob Negruzzi's novel *Mihai Vereanu* (1873) which whom the eponymous protagonist falls deeply in love, is only formally British, as she is constantly referred to as *the Englishwoman*. The author resolves any hypothetical language barrier that would render the narrative unrealistic by claiming the character learned Romanian so well as to perfectly blend in, and that in the span of only two years(!). Her English origin is only a narrative gimmick meant to show the financial wellbeing of the family affording to employ her for their daughter.

For this is the channel through which the British have entered the Romanian Weltanschauung: lifestyle, expressed through fashion and interior design, as well as business (Alecsandri 420)[20] and technology. We encounter references to English

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[20] "What a sad city London is! What a mechanical nation, how different the customs from ours! Here, joy seems a foreign import, for the only people talking and laughing on the streets are the French. The English don't walk around but are always chasing business, thinking about money, following their favorite precept, 'Time is money.' The English have monetized time itself."
„Ce oraș trist e Londra! Ce nație mașinală, ce obiceiuri diferite de-ale noastre! Aici veselia pare o importație străină, căci singurii oameni care se aud grăind și rîzind pe strade sînt francezii. Englezii nu se primblă, ci toți alerg după trebi, cu gîndul la bani și urmînd preceptul lor favorit, Time is money, căci englezii au monetizat chiar și timpul."

haircuts, English lawns, English comfort, English overcoats, English-style pomaded moustaches, English correctness, etc., English lords and gentlemen – again, related to fashion and to the fashionable markers of nobility –, and English "experts."[21] Generally, representations of the British are delegated to lifestyle and the cosmopolitan imagery in trying to convey a sense of cultural and intellectual fluidity. Moreover, the British are depicted as joyless and money-oriented, dealing not in science, technology, and imperialism, but in business and down-to-earth pragmatics.

Lastly, for the non-European geographies and imageries, for instance the Far East, the Wild West, or continental Africa, the gaze is unsurprisingly European, hence colonial, combining pseudo-scientific observation with racist tropes and crass generalizations.

"Africa," "African" or versions thereof		Relative occurrence frequency
1844-1900		
39 occurrences	19 novels	**2**
1901-1932		
151 occurrences	64 novels	**2.3**
1933-1947		
552 occurrences	166 novels	**3.3**

Unsurprisingly, the number of occurrences to African subjects does nothing but increase over time, as the novel assimilates more and more of the world. Nowhere, however, does the number encounter a spike indicative of a special interest paid to this particular part of the world geography. But when talking about Orientalism, one is met with a form of internal exoticization concerning the Roma, who are equated with the Orient and with various degrees of lighthearted vitality, for whom "life is happiness and song, without concern and turmoil," (Tulliu 51)[22] and with the Jews, who are pitied when not explicitly despised, are compared to "wild beasts," and are said to have "brought with themselves, from their dark corner of Russia, [...] a deep horror inscribed in their sickly eyes, a hastiness in their dim gestures, a burden

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[21] Which explains the generous references to Darwin and the evolutionary theory, scattered here and there in conversation.

[22] "Curios popor! Zise Bociari. Cîntă şi joacă! Pentru ţigani, viaţa e o fericire şi un cîntec, fără grijă şi sbucium! Iată concepţia şi psihologia rasei lor! De unde au venit aceşti copii ai soarelui? Din India, zic unii; din Egipet susţin alţii. Din punct de vedere filologic, „ghift", cum îi numesc Grecii şi Macedonenii, ar însemna că ţiganii ar fi de origine egipteană; tot astfel ar reeşi din denumirea Englezilor: Gypsies. Ungurii îi numesc Pharaoh nepek, adică poporul lui Faraon. Turcii îi numesc Cenghene."

under their coats and shirts, hunching their bodies and weighing down their souls."
(Peltz 13)[23]

But one of the most compelling instances in which foreign subjects are spoken for and demoted to the status of narrative functions substantiating the author's ideology is encountered in plots staging interethnic or interracial conflicts the authors rarely have something to do with:

> We, the blacks, are a powerful, healthy, virile race, with an outstanding capacity for assimilation, but precisely because of this, without any personality. Because we are not backed up by any civilization, culture, or past. Our spirit is undeveloped, anemic, atrophied like an organ out of use, useless. What can we do to overcome this intellectual deficit which is to blame for all our misfortunes? Nothing but to appeal to the benefits of the Jews' exaggerated cerebrality, the oldest and most advanced nation on the globe. By crossing these two extremes, we will establish a balance from which both races will benefit equally. We will relieve the surplus of our physical vigor [...] which is detrimental to our spirit; them, their excess of cerebrality, which is detrimental to their physical development. And then, this closeness is advocated by that amazing convergence of social and political positions, about which I have spoken so many times. (Ludo 195)[24]

The 1935 novel from which I just quoted is titled *Miss Africa* and does not actually discuss the African continent or even take place there. Miss Africa is an Afro-American woman living in New York; the author, Isac Ludo, albeit being of Jewish origin, stages numerous self-deprecating dialogues in trying to compare the two types of oppressed and discriminated groups, all while placing the action in a third cultural space, the American one, and hinting at interwar European antisemitism.

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[23] "De-acolo din Rusia lor întunecată, de unde au sosit, au adus, odată cu perechea de ochelari, și o spaimă adâncă în ochii bolnavi, o pripire în gesturi ferite de lumină, o greutate sub haină și cămașă, care le încovoia trupul, le împovăra sufletul. Din Germania traiului domol și riguros au sosit cu teama zilei de mâine, cu foamea mai mult presupusă decât autentică într'înșii, cu o mare spaimă de sgomot, de chiot, de strigăt în aer liber. [...] Într'un fel au fost și ei, printre popoare, viețăți sălbatece."

[24] "Noi, negrii, suntem o rassă puternică, sănătoasă, virilă, de o incomparabilă capacitate de asimilare, dar tocmai de aceea lipsită de personalitate. Fiindcă n'avem în spatele nostru nici o civilizație, nici o cultură, nici un trecut. Spiritul nostru este nedesvoltat, anemic, închircit ca un organ scos din funcție, devenit inutil. Ce-i de făcut ca să acoperim deficitul acesta intelectual, care este cauza tuturor nenorocirilor noastre? Nimic altceva decât să apelăm la binefacerile cerebralității exagerate a evreilor, națiunea cea mai veche și mai avansată de pe glob. Prin încrucișarea acestor două extreme, vom stabili un echilibru de pe urma căruia vor beneficia ambele rasse deopotrivă. Noi vom descongestiona surplusul nostru de vigoare fizică [...] care e în detrimentul spiritului nostru; ei, excesul lor de cerebralitate, care e în detrimentul desvoltării lor fizice. Și apoi, la această apropiere mai pledează și acea uimitoare identitate de poziții sociale și politice, despre care am vorbit de atâtea ori."

This comparison helps us come full circle to Spivak's rhetorical question and her contention that "in the First World, [...] the oppressed, if given the chance (the problem of representation cannot be bypassed here), and on the way to solidarity through alliance politics (a Marxist thematic is at work here) *can speak and know their conditions*" (Spivak 67). Despite its casual racial rhetoric, the novel has the merit of imagining the possibility of intersectional solidarity, of "alliance politics" against the common threat of racial politics, and would therefore deserve a more extended reading. But even if all the aforementioned positions aim against orientalism and antisemitism, the mere fact that they find expression in the novels entails they were pervasive enough to seep into the vocabulary and Weltanschauung of the authors and their contemporaries.

Conclusions

During the early history of the Romanian novel, the Foreigner represented this anonymized, hostile Other, whose presence hindered Romanian identity from thriving, and the tensions it created were part of the shift from feudalism to capitalism in Wallachia and Moldova. As Transylvania became part of Romania, the novelistic world effectively integrated the West, renouncing Constantinople for Vienna and replacing the ambiguous Other with very distinct functional stereotypes, each playing a conscious or unconscious role in contriving Romanian narratives. The German, despite the countercultural function he possessed in the late 19th century as a counterbalance to French cultural colonialism, is now ridiculed and despised as an agent of barbary and as a threat to the "genius" of Latin heritage. This stereotyping mockery coexists with an anxious admiration for the "soulless" technical knack he displays, as well as with the selective affinity of antisemitism. In both cases, the German subject serves as excuse for the narrators to express their – sometimes controversial – opinions on contemporary political topics. On the other hand, the British, whose insertion pursues no discernible ideological agenda, seem to have entered Romanian novelistic imaginary organically, through a series of recognizable cultural tropes: entrepreneurship, manners, and a very formalized worldview dictated by strict social norms. All things considered, one thing is clear: in most Romanian novels of the early 20th century,[25] the representatives of foreign countries

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[25] Albeit there are understandably more stereotypes in genre fiction – such as the hajduk novels mentioned in the opening pages of this text –, the total Romanian novelistic output is so modest that

are not actually depicted,[26] meaning the places they presumably inhabit, *mentioned* intensely throughout the archive, are, in fact, empty and musealized. So even if the Romanian novel finally takes the world into possession during the final period covered by the archive, consolidating existing spaces and accommodating others, representations of foreign citizens remain stereotypical: they either "add color" to otherwise banal or easily recognizable narratives or are meant to impose an inherently condescending European gaze. Instead of being featured, foreigners are being voiced, and foreign subjects only speak when the narrative voice itself belongs to their ranks and is part of the exoticized "other."

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the borders between highbrow and middlebrow or between hypercanon and shadow canon, to borrow Damrosch's concepts, are hard to trace, and novels that have meanwhile achieved canonical status did so not because they didn't feature stereotypes but regardless of whether or not they did.

[26] And when they are, their staged interaction, their compromise, or lack thereof is precisely one of the novel's main themes, as is the case in Ioan Slavici's *Mara.*

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