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## MAPPING EMOTIONS IN THE ROMANIAN EROTIC NOVEL OF THE INTERWAR PERIOD. CANONICAL AFFECT AND POPULAR SENSIBILITY

“All happy families are alike, each unhappy family is unhappy in its own way”<sup>1</sup>. The famous novel by Tolstoy begins under the sign of unhappiness. The sentence that opens *Anna Karenina* has many functions. It primarily anticipates the novel’s tragic ending, but it also establishes from the very beginning a certain mode of reading, making the reader aware of a kind of “sword of Damocles” hanging over his/her head throughout the reading experience – a device mainly used in crime fiction. And the novel does not disappoint. What Tolstoy offers the European literary canon is a family novel weaving an intricate web of affects and sensations, the most common of which, even from a statistical standpoint, being unhappiness. Still, *Anna Karenina* is widely considered one of the most valued romance narratives in literary history.

A closer look at romance fiction that has successfully entered what David Damrosch called “the hypercanon”<sup>2</sup> reveals, quite straightforwardly, that a large number of romance novels follow the exact same pattern of unhappiness, so that *Anna Karenina* represents the norm, rather than the exception, to the rule. And yet few critics have ever sought to question this claim. *How* can it be that the relation between an erotic scenario and a negative affect becomes the key to literary success? Moreover (and more importantly), does this “recipe” enhance the aesthetic value of the narrative? The present paper seeks not so much to answer these questions definitively, but to test the validity (or lack thereof) of critical clichés that relate unhappiness (or the broader spectrum of negative affects from within erotic scenarios) to successful narratives in romance and family novels.

Employing quantitative analysis, the present research accounts for the spectrum of emotions and affects associated with erotic scenarios in Romanian novels of the interwar period, as well as the distribution of these affects and how they are interpreted in the critical discourses that approached these novels. The main criterion used for the selection of the novels analysed is canonical *versus* non-canonical<sup>3</sup>, where canonical designates that which literary criticism has deemed

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<sup>1</sup> Leo Tolstoy, *Anna Karenina*. Translated with an Introduction and Notes by Rosamund Bartlett, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2014, p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> See David Damrosch, “World Literature in a Postcanonical, Hypercanonical Age”, in Haun Saussy (ed.), *Comparative literature in the Age of Globalization*, Baltimore, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006, pp. 43-53.

<sup>3</sup> The complexity of the discussion surrounding the institution of the canon makes necessary a clear delineation between the concepts with which I intend to operate. The dichotomous positioning of the

fundamental for the history of Romanian literature, while non-canonical points to the novels that have maintained a secondary position in the literary hierarchy. For reasons that concern the scale and degree of difficulty involved in operationalizing the data gathered, my selection only includes the novels *The Last Night of Love*, *the First Night of War* by Camil Petrescu and *A Death that Proves Nothing* by Anton Holban, belonging to the main literary canon, and *Adela* by Garabet Ibrăileanu and *Donna Alba* by Gib Mihăescu, novels that belong to what I will refer to, from here on, as “the shadow canon”<sup>4</sup>. One of the premises of my paper is that the role of affects (and, consequently, the types of sensibilities they reveal) as they are used in the romance novels analysed is pivotal to their successful critical reception.

*A very close distant-reading*

In the introduction to *Graphs, Maps, Trees. Abstract Models for a Literary History*, Franco Moretti legitimizes his “distant reading” method through a few very simple assertions: “[D]istance is [...] not an obstacle, but a *specific form of knowledge*: fewer elements, hence a sharper sense of their overall interconnection. Shapes, relations, structures. Forms. Models”<sup>5</sup>. The proposed distant approach to the literary text (a method further elaborated by researchers such as Matthew L. Jockers, who also employed computational analyses<sup>6</sup>) does not intend to render useless the more traditional critical methods, such as close reading or standard hermeneutics, but to supplement, test, verify, confirm or contradict their assertions. To put it in Thomas Kuhn’s terms, distant reading is not a new paradigm, but a *paradigm tester*<sup>7</sup>. For the present research, the instruments associated with the Morettian method are necessary to the extent that they can generate networks of data usable in relation to the kind of critical and theoretical discourse that, so far, has employed an impressionist method of reading literature based solely on tenets that were imported and assimilated without being critically assessed themselves. While these critical assessments remain seminal for the Romanian literary historiography, I believe that putting some of the value judgements that have shaped the way in which we view literary tradition to the test may prove relevant, if only to provide complementary evidence to the general critical consensus.

Quantitative approaches may seem exotic in the Romanian literary space. There are many aspects that explain this relative scepticism. On the one hand, this

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two concepts is meant to employ the most elementary versions of them as they were traditionally discussed in the Romanian literary historiography.

<sup>4</sup> See David Damrosch, “World Literature”, pp. 43-53.

<sup>5</sup> Franco Moretti, *Graphs, Maps, Trees. Abstract Models for a Literary History*, London – New York, Verso, 2005, p. 1.

<sup>6</sup> See Matthew L. Jockers, *Macroanalysis: Digital Methods and Literary History*, Champaign, University of Illinois Press, 2013.

<sup>7</sup> See Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1962.

sort of approach threatens traditional value judgments that have been ingrained in literary historiography since the recovery of what is called “the autonomy of the aesthetic” in the 1960s, while, at the same time, challenging the notion of “national” specificity in Romanian literature. On the other hand, pragmatic aspects such as the lack of primary resources (bibliographies, detailed lexicographical instruments, digitised literary corpora etc.) renders difficult any exhaustive quantitative approach<sup>8</sup>. This is also the reason why my approach has to be taken with a grain of salt, as it is a first experimental attempt at implementing this specific quantitative approach in the study of Romanian literature. Also, the present “distant reading” study is built on a kind of paradox – it has been accomplished manually, without the aid of computational analysis, and *through* close reading. The data gathered from the aforementioned novels is based on the correlation between the indexed affects and the erotic scenario. The affective vocabulary of the four narratives is not homogenous, nor is it transparent or easy to “read” computationally. Literary interpretation has been involved in selecting the data, hence the close reading. My selection, although not entirely based on rigorous algorithms, can be, I believe, used effectively in the quantitative analysis of the emotional spectrum displayed in the novels.

#### *A genre-centric approach*

According to *The Chronological Dictionary of the Romanian Novel from Its Origin until 1989* (D.C.R.R. – *Dicționarul cronologic al romanului românesc de la origini până la 1989*), edited by the Romanian Academy, over eight hundred novels were published during the interwar period. Out of these, only the novels signed by Mihail Sadoveanu, Liviu Rebreanu, G. Călinescu, Camil Petrescu, Hortensia Papadat-Bengescu, Mircea Eliade, Anton Holban and Max Blecher effectively “won” the battle for literary canonicity. Moreover, one of the most relevant studies dedicated to the Romanian novel, Nicolae Manolescu’s *Noah’s Ark* (*Arca lui Noe*), has one of the most restrictive selections of authors in Romanian literary historiography (only thirteen authors are indexed; among the ones I have already mentioned, Gib Mihăescu, Garabet Ibrăileanu, Mateiu Caragiale and Urmuz are also featured). While the institution of the novel itself is quite poorly treated (in a thematically restrictive sense) in the Romanian critical discourse, alternative studies dedicated to the subgenres of the novel are even scarcer. The critical treatments of erotic plots, for instance, were rather tangential and generally built upon the premise that the erotic scenario is merely an artistic pretext used either for metadiscursive reasons or in order for the literary form to find a more permeable environment (such as Holban’s or Petrescu’s Proustianism).

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<sup>8</sup> This is also why any quantitative study applied to Romanian literary phenomena seeks to justify its methodology by pointing towards the potential handicaps of the instruments employed.

The erotic plot was never treated, however, for its thematic autonomy. The most immediate conclusion arising from this fact concerns the evident bias of the critical discourse when it comes to romance fiction which is often seen as a minor genre, a value judgment reinforced by its mass success in the sphere of popular culture. And yet, according to the aforementioned chronological dictionary of the novel, the first half of the twentieth century is dominated by social and romance novels. Over 25% of the novels published in the period are romance novels, and the descriptions provided in the dictionary cover a total of ten subgenres relevant to the Romanian novel, of which only the social novel exceeds the romance novel production (standing at approximately 28% of the total). This goes to show that the general consensus about the erotic novel as a minor genre is rather erroneous, while other subgenres, deemed as more important to the evolution of the modern Romanian novel, are quantitatively dwarfed by romance fiction. Thus, while the interwar period features over 200 erotic novels, only 70 novels are historical, and 60 are peasant novels. If we take into account the evolutionary aspect of the erotic plot, its trajectory in the interwar period follows closely that of the Romanian modernist novel – an almost perfect mirroring of a national literature through one of its subgenres, one with a seminal role in the general process of the novel's modernisation<sup>9</sup>.

*The statistics of affect in the interwar novels*

“As opposed to L. Rebreanu, Ms. Bengescu, Gib Mihăescu, what the author of *The Last Night* [of Love, the First Night of War] accomplishes is not so much the immersion into the deepest regions of consciousness, as the almost scientific accuracy in deconstructing the typical intricacies of the soul”<sup>10</sup>, Tudor Vianu notes about Camil Petrescu's famous novel. The critic's assessment is symptomatic for the monopoly of aesthetic autonomy in Romanian criticism, which focuses on literary form, not on content. The affective apparatus of *The Last Night of Love...* is thus secondary to the literary device employed. In his study on crime fiction, Franco Moretti reminds us, however, of an essential aspect<sup>11</sup>: in many cases, and more so than in those regarding narrative perspective or formula, the aspects concerning content are the ones that ensure the survival of a genre. In the case of crime novels, the “device”, as Moretti puts it, that insures this survival is the

<sup>9</sup> The data used for my argument were analysed more closely in a previous research dedicated to the evolution of erotic fiction in the Romanian literature. See Daiana Gârdan, “Evoluția romanului erotic românesc din prima jumătate a secolului al XX-lea. Între exercițiu și canonizare” (“The Evolution of the Romanian Erotic Novel from the First Half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Between Exercise and Canonization”), *Transilvania*, 2018, 7, pp. 5-10.

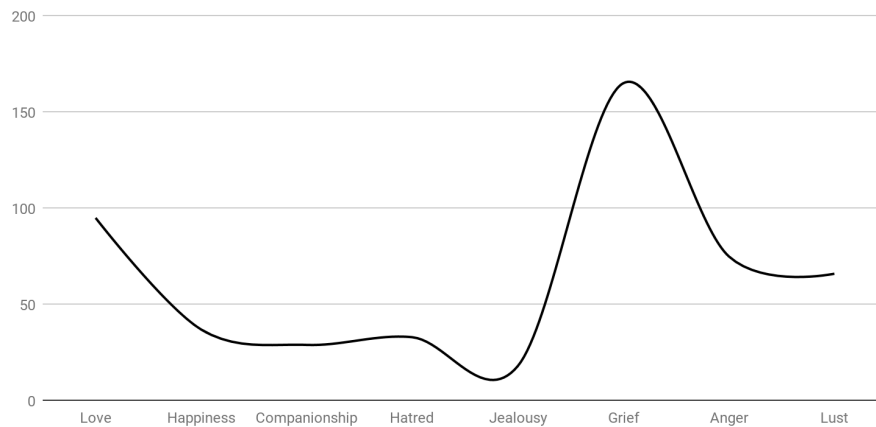
<sup>10</sup> Tudor Vianu, *Arta prozatorilor români* [*The Art of Romanian Prose Writers*], Chișinău, Hyperion, 1991, p. 314. When not specified otherwise, the English translations from Romanian are mine.

<sup>11</sup> Franco Moretti, “The Slaughterhouse of Literature”, *Modern Language Quarterly*, 61, March 2000, 1, pp. 207-227.

presence of the clue. As for romance novels, we notice that the device we are interested in is the negative affect – misery, pain, hatred, anger, jealousy, frustration, fear. However, as in the case of Doyle’s fictional adversaries, not all novelists managed to employ successfully the “recipes” that were deemed functional and that were, in turn, integrated in their fiction. The clue ensures the survival of a *policier* as long as it is integral to the narrative and not merely an ornament. Likewise, the negative affect ensures the success of an erotic novel as long as it becomes seminal to the plot and manages to establish and maintain a network that engages with the reader. The dynamics of affect and their narrative weaving are, however, harder to access than the clue device. It is then safe to assume that those erotic novels that have failed to build narratives of unhappiness successfully are also of minor importance historically.

Four novels have been selected for the following investigation, all of them with unhappy endings. Two of them feature love stories between an intellectual and a woman that is later revealed (and perceived) as inferior to her male counterpart, and two romances between a reputable male figure and an idolized, unapproachable, untouchable female figure. All four narratives end badly, in sorrow and separation. Two of them are later regarded as pivotal to the history of the Romanian novel. These novels are, of course, Camil Petrescu’s *The Last Night of Love, the First Night of War* and Anton Holban’s *A Death that Proves Nothing*. Let us see what their emotional spectrums reveal.

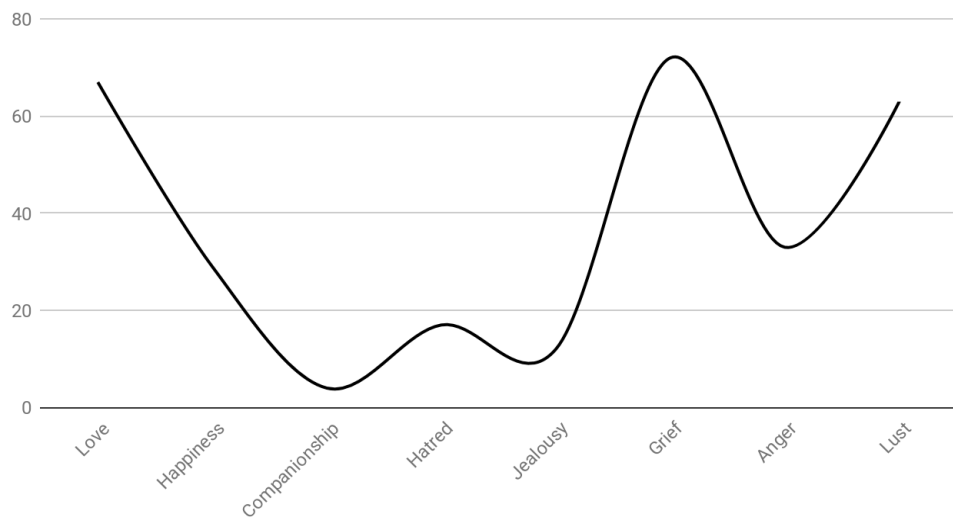
#### 1. The Last Night of Love, the First Night of War



1.1



2. A Death that Proves Nothing



2.1



In the case of Camil Petrescu, the lover seems to be suffering more than to be loving. And not only does he suffer, but the range of negative emotion dwarfs the narrow gamut of positive affects. The vocabulary of negative affects is not only complex in terms of lexical variation, but also powerfully expressive. The main character goes through “dreadful efforts”, suffers “inner torments”, endures “internal erosion”, becomes “a piano key that has no sound”, ends up ill “under the immense catastrophe that withers his soul”, all of this related exclusively not to the experience of war, but to his failing love life. The romance plot begins ominously, similar to Tolstoy’s novel: “I was married for two and a half years with a University colleague and I suspected that she was having an affair”<sup>12</sup>. The impact of the surgically precise observation of his wife’s infidelity is carefully constructed – it promises that the romance plot is under the patronage of a negative affect: jealousy. The quantitative representation of negative emotions points however to the idea that Ștefan Gheorghidiu isn’t as jealous as he is miserable in his relationship with Ela, and constantly distressed by her erotic conduct. It has generally been noted that jealousy constitutes the engine of the novel. But if that were truly the case, then what fuels this engine is the variation of negative affects (suffering, sadness, grief, pain, anger, disgust, hate, and even violent lust). Camil Petrescu understands that a plot driven by jealousy alone, without an intricate web of complex secondary feelings, is not a winning recipe. In other words, a dominant affect quickly exhausts its narrative resources when used without the aid of “backup” emotions, which is why the author is quick to appeal to these alternative

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<sup>12</sup> Camil Petrescu, *Ultima noapte de dragoste, întâia noapte de război* [*The Last Night of Love, the First Night of War*], București, Cartea Românească, 1987, p. 15.

feelings. **Figure 1** reveals this network of feelings in a way that a simple close reading would fail to do. Between the sentence that introduces the marriage-related plot and the ending of the novel (“I’ve written to her, saying that I’ll leave her everything in the house, from valuable objects to books... from personal goods to memories. Essentially all of my past”<sup>13</sup>), a whole network of affects is woven, with the greatest care, in order to charge the reader emotionally without overwhelming him/her while leading them towards the ending. The novel succeeds in doing so precisely because it delivers on its premise. The synergy between the emotions ensures the survival of the novel. **Figure 1.1** reveals more clearly the distribution of positive and negative emotions. Not only does Camil Petrescu build upon the spectrum of negative feelings governed by jealousy, but he also balances it out with positive affects. The Proustian formula helps him insofar as it offers him an appropriate tool to adjust the emotional mechanism that drives the plot. Even though the negative affect is statistically dominant, the opposition remains strong enough for the discourse to maintain equilibrium.

Holban’s novel proceeds in similar fashion. *A Death that Proves Nothing* is even more emotionally balanced, indicative of the author’s degree of control over his discourse. Anton Holban manages to deliver an almost impeccable synthesis of positive and negative affects (albeit slightly tilting towards the positive emotions). In contrast to Camil Petrescu’s novel, an aspect that makes *A Death that Proves Nothing* unique is the lack of lexical diversity in the rendering of emotions. While Petrescu is, at times, more melodramatic, the textual architecture of Holban’s novel is based on a more sterile, neological language. This is a strong argument for both of these canonical novels. Apparently, the presence of melodrama does not necessarily entail a flawed and clichéd discourse, nor does the lack of expressive creativity (in Holban’s case) hinder the progression and aesthetic value of the novel. Whether colorful or arid, language falls secondary to affective balance.

Herein lies the secret behind the “canonical code”. My statistical representation, while confirming previous critical assessments that show how Petrescu and Holban shared a penchant for skillful writing, also contradicts the idea of the inherent organicism of the Romanian literature. Our canonical novelists did more than work with an imported literary formula (be it Proustianism or Gidianism). They seem to have built upon a fertile Romanian literary terrain through what Moretti has dubbed a process of “trial and error”. The romance fictions of these novelists were preceded by a significant number of earlier attempts. This is indicative of the fact that their kind of literature was not merely local and that the network of trials and errors itself was global, rather than national in nature. In the evolutionary process that began with *Elvira or the Endless Love*.

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<sup>13</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 270.



*An Original Romance*<sup>14</sup> and culminated with Petrescu's and Holban's novels, foreign models, translations, and theoretical discourses on universal literature contributed in equal measure to the aesthetic performance of the modern Romanian novel. The foundation of Romanian literature itself rests upon a complex intercultural dialogue and the circulation of foreign literary formulas. In the case of the two novelists that I have discussed, their artful use of such devices also insured their cultural and canonical success.

At the opposite end we have two authors that also garnered the sympathy of both critics and the general population. Nicolae Manolescu notes that Gib Mihăescu, alongside Cezar Petrescu and Ionel Teodoreanu, cater to "a precise niche in the sensibility of the readers of the period: their art consists in the inventiveness they show in delivering the right kind of nourishment to these readers"<sup>15</sup>, while on Ibrăileanu's *Adela*, Șerban Cioculescu remarks without any reservations that "it is the best analytical and personal novel in all of Romanian literature. The word *masterpiece* is not used lightly in establishing the novel's outstanding value"<sup>16</sup>. However, *Adela* and *Donna Alba* lagged behind in the canonical competition. While being very well received in the period, the two novels fell through the cracks of literary history. In what follows I will attempt to explain why.

Both *Adela* and *Donna Alba* share a sensibility marginally different from the previous two novels. Nicolae Manolescu sees in Mihăescu's *Donna Alba* a romance novel *sui generis*, while Ibrăileanu's *Adela* is considered a sentimental novel, with all the inherent characteristic of the late eighteenth century genre. As we can see, the classification by subgenre itself points towards their marginal position. As far as the types of sensibility employed, the two novelists seem to prefer the chivalrous romance, as opposed to Holban or Petrescu, who operate within more modern paradigms. The heroines in Ibrăileanu's and Mihăescu's novels are virtually untouchable. The authors undermine their own formula, and Manolescu sees this clearly when he points out, in discussing *Adela*: "Codrescu's diary in *Adela* is that of an involuntary seducer"<sup>17</sup>. In trying to undermine the dominant erotic formula, Ibrăileanu's own imagination is his undoing, resulting in an underdeveloped, regressive model. Let us consider these allegations against our data:

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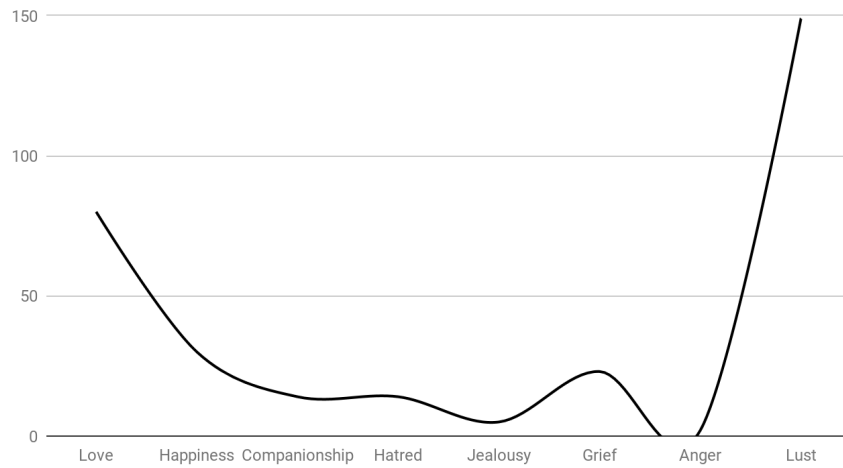
<sup>14</sup> *Elvira sau amorul fără de sfârșit. Romanț original* is the first Romanian novel indexed in *The Chronological Dictionary of the Romanian Novel from Its Origins to 1989* as a romance novel, published in 1845 and signed by D.F.B., an anonymous author that Paul Cornea believes to be D. Bolintineanu. See *Dicționarul cronologic al romanului românesc de la origini până la 1989* [*The Chronological Dictionary of the Romanian Novel from Its Origins to 1989*], București, Editura Academiei Române, 2004, p. 5.

<sup>15</sup> Nicolae Manolescu, *Arca lui Noe* [*Noah's Ark*], București, Gramar, 2003, p. 214.

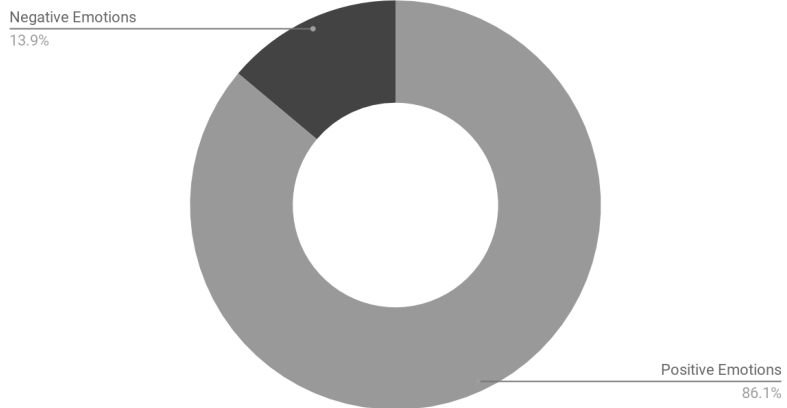
<sup>16</sup> Șerban Cioculescu, *Prozatori români. De la Mihail Kogălniceanu la Mihail Sadoveanu* [*Romanian Prose Writers. From Mihail Kogălniceanu to Mihail Sadoveanu*], București, Eminescu, 1977, p. 335.

<sup>17</sup> Nicolae Manolescu, *Arca*, p. 430.

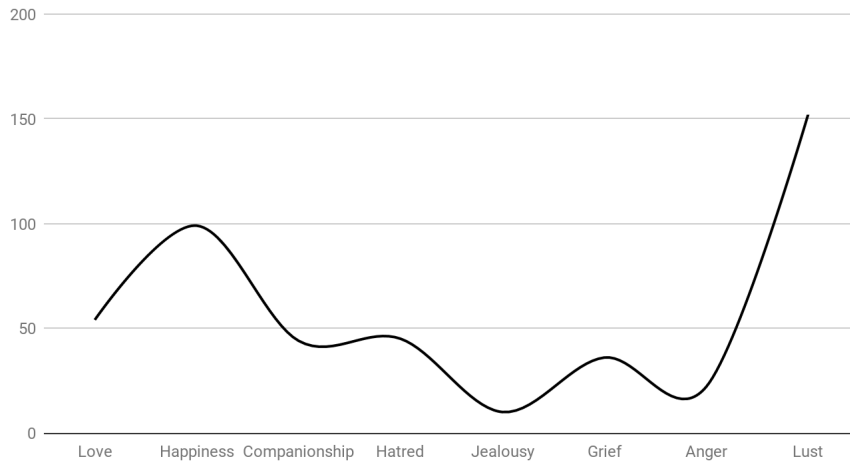
3. Adela



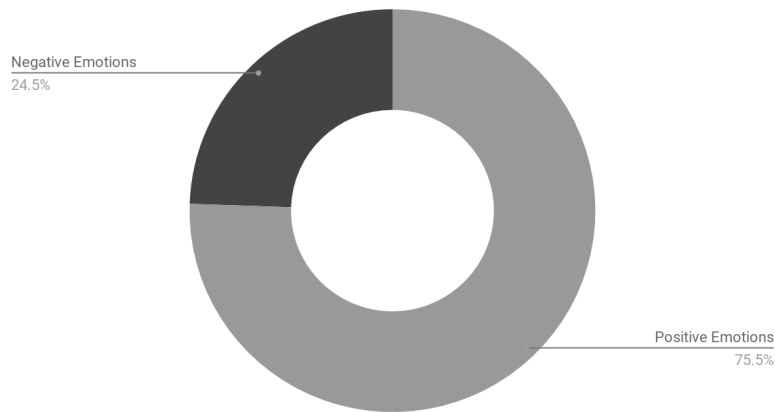
3.1



4. Donna Alba



4.1



Both novels share similar plots of unfulfilled love scenarios. *Adela* tells the story of an implacable clash between the age of the main characters, while *Donna Alba* is about the conflict opposing the social and the marital status of the heroine. The emotional gamut is however dominated by positive feelings, and more so in *Adela*, where evidence of it is overwhelming. In Ibrăileanu’s novel, lust is the chief emotion that drives the narrative, making up almost half of the emotional spectrum. The erotic imagination of the protagonist subverts the puritan appearance the novel seeks to deliver – that much is obvious (as also pointed out by Manolescu). What transpires best from the data gathered is, however, the sheer imbalance in the

affective matrix. What Petrescu and Holban accomplish in their carefully written narratives of unhappiness, Ibrăileanu and Mihăescu fail to do, by circumscribing their narratives to second-rate idyllism. Ibrăileanu follows the shallow path of forbidden love, Codrescu's inner complexities being eclipsed by passionate, carnal instincts that are, in turn, taken over by dominant positive affects. The weak psychological analysis of the character stems from the inability of the author to transcend the dominant affect and express a wider array of nuanced feelings.

The case of *Donna Alba* is even more transparent. Gib Mihăescu manages to maintain an almost fortunate balance between the three dominant affects: love, happiness and lust. The prevalence of lust in Mihăescu's novel has a rather simple explanation: the connection between the two central characters is marked by erotic tension from the beginning to the end. While Adela is constructed as a more or less unwilling participant to the act of seduction, Alba is a more consistent feminine instance. Even when contexts shift around her, Alba maintains equal levels of intensity in her reactions. Thus, Mihăescu's novel is a perfectly accessible commercial product of its age. Anger, sadness, hate and jealousy are merely narrative gimmicks designed to further the narrative in an unremarkable, but steady way. No overpowering affect consumes the narrative or monopolises the emotional gamut. When it comes to its aesthetic value, *Donna Alba* predictably fails to garner any canonical prestige. With the exception of Liviu Petrescu, critics have generally avoided any analysis of the novel, favouring the more analytical *Rusoica* (*The Russian Woman*).

### Conclusions

The present statistical data was collected strictly in relation to the erotic plot. It is worth mentioning that the same emotions were not taken into account when used in other subplots of the novels (the relationship between the protagonist and his/her parents, friends, colleagues etc.). The main figures shown above (**Figures 1, 2, 3, and 4**) were used in order to attempt a more intelligible classification of varied emotions from within each narrative. For instance, indexed under the generic term "grief" were emotions with varying degrees of intensity and nuance: pain, bitterness, sadness, frustration, sullenness, vexation, etc. Under "companionship" only sentiments such as generosity, goodwill, and benevolence were taken into account, and only in the dialogues of the characters involved in the erotic plot. The main ambition of these statistics is to enable a transparent representation of the same aspects that the critical discourse has approached ever since the novels in question were published, with a view to presenting, at a macroanalytic level, what exactly makes a novel canonical and what represents its "downfall". Last, but not least, the goal has been to showcase (by means of the auxiliary figures – **1.1, 2.1, 3.1, and 4.1**) a number of essentialised representations of the affective range of the chosen novels. Moreover, what these representations seek to provide is a broader view of the proportions and imbalances of microstructures that may not mean much

without the context of a “bigger picture”. The present research has tried to unravel precisely these bigger pictures, organise their components, make visible the networks that presuppose them, providing both a suggestion for further analyses and some answers to questions that may need to be asked (once more). And while for the time being the canonical selection remains intact, I believe its code may yet be cracked.

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### MAPPING EMOTIONS IN THE ROMANIAN EROTIC NOVEL OF THE INTERWAR PERIOD. CANONICAL AFFECT AND POPULAR SENSIBILITY (Abstract)

This proposal aims to investigate the emotions, affects and sensibilities typical to the erotic novel of the Romanian literature between the World Wars, as revealed when adopting a quantitative viewpoint. By means of a comparative type of approach, the paper addresses both novels that have

entered what we call a canonical selection and novels that are considered to belong to minor literature, but which have gained popularity over the years. The main purpose of this research is to reveal, through *big data analysis*, the successful networks of emotions that have contributed to the value of certain novels or literary formulas, but also the shortcomings of those networks that have failed to provide a functional affective pattern for the erotic narratives. As for the selection process, the paper analyzes the novels of Camil Petrescu, Anton Holban, Gib Mihăescu and Garabet Ibrăileanu, since they each successfully represent their subgenres. By analyzing them with Morettian methods, the research seeks to reveal the inner workings of the “winning” sensibilities, thereby testing the viability of the Romanian critical discourse that has placed these novels on different axiological levels.

*Keywords:* emotions, erotic novel, canonical novel, popular fiction, quantitative approach.

### PANORAMA AFECTIVĂ A ROMANULUI DE DRAGOSTE DIN INTERBELICUL ROMÂNESC. SENSIBILITATE CANONICĂ ȘI SENSIBILITATE DE CONSUM

(Rezumat)

Propunerea de față urmărește să investigheze, dintr-o perspectivă cantitativă, spectrul de afecte, emoțiile și tipul de sensibilitate circumscrise tramei erotice în romanul românesc de dragoste din perioada interbelică. Sunt vizate în interiorul cercetării de față, printr-un demers comparativ, atât volume reprezentative pentru segmentul canonic, cât și volume intrate în circuitul literaturii de consum. Miza principală a cercetării este de a revela, statistic, rețelele afective funcționale care au contribuit la succesul unor romane, dar și carențele de construcție a celor care nu au reușit să furnizeze un discurs erotic valid estetic. Selecția de romane are în vedere opere semnate de Camil Petrescu, Anton Holban, Gib Mihăiescu și Garabet Ibrăileanu, ale căror analiză, cu instrumentele cercetării cantitative, are ambiția de a prezenta, factual, tipul de sensibilitate și de construcție a dimensiunii afective a discursului erotic care a „câștigat” bătălia cu canonul literar și de a testa valabilitatea unor opinii critice generatoare de ierarhizări estetice.

*Cuvinte-cheie:* afecte, tramă erotică, canon, literatură de consum, cercetare cantitativă.