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**THE NOVEL OF PSYCHOLOGICAL ANALYSIS IN
THE INTERWAR PERIOD**

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Romanian literature, just out of a tumultuous period, rose spectacularly and quickly, in the nineteenth century, to another stage, feverish this time, in which it begins to outline its remarkable qualities. The beginnings of the assertion of Romanian literature are placed only in the middle of the 19th century, by the pasoptist writers and then by the great classics. Also during this period, an awakening of aesthetic consciousness emerges. The classic and romantic influences leave a substantial imprint on the beginning moments. Then, in the evolution of Romanian culture, there are explosive, providential moments of unexpected development, which, benefiting from valuable aesthetic productions, have propelled Romanian literature into the wider cultural space of European literature. Such a salutary moment, with an unprecedented dynamic in the evolution of Romanian literature, with the most notable artistic appearances, was also the literature circumscribed to the so-called interwar era. Rich in literary productions of all kinds, this literary era has enjoyed the generous attention of critics, who also seem to have rediscovered their vocation at the same time.

In a period of radical renewals, when the aesthetics of western prose gained more and more followers in Romanian literature, when the urbanization of literature became a first-rate aesthetic, there is first a radical change of perspective: from the lyrical novel, with an obvious sowingly, it moves on to the objective and analytical novel, in which the heroes are, for the most part, intellectuals with problems of conscience, people for whom immersion in themselves and exploration of the human soul become primary aesthetic concerns. The aspiration towards authenticity, the objectification of the novel and its intellectualization will lead both to an epic restructuring and to the modification of the narrative discourse. The influence of the French novel, represented by Proust and Gide, the echoes of the Russian, German and English novel direct the prose writers' attention to another type of novel. Subjected to so many renewals and influences, the interwar Romanian novel could not avoid heterogeneity, the mixture of formulas and writings, sometimes exaggerated deviations from the established epic formula, the abuse of psychologism or exaggerated intimacy. Even this exciting debate of theoretical ideas around the novel demonstrates the extraordinary metamorphosis to which this genre was subjected in the interwar era. On the other hand, the psychological novel (represented by Camil Petrescu, Hortensia Papadat-Bengescu, Garabet

Ibrăileanu, Anton Holban, M. Blecher, Mihail Sebastian and G.M. Zamfirescu) is opposed by the classic novel. Then the novel of experiences and feelings, the novel of the diary type are just as many Romanian formulas that intersect in the epoch. Narrative formulas diversify. The chronology of facts interrupted by involuntary memory, the intellectualization of language, the introduction of the essay in the narrative, the explanations at the bottom of the pages, the sophisticated ways of characterizing the characters and their reflection in parallel mirrors (*oglinzi paralele*) are just some of the new ways of narrative discourse.

Camil Petrescu, analytical and penetrating, inclined towards radical renewals and aesthetic experiments, is permanently attracted by the theorizing of the creative act, proving to be a formidable and lucid analyst. He puts the evolution of modern prose under the sign of Marcel Proust's work. Therefore, a viable, authentic work, from the Camil Petrescu's point of view, is only the one that is based on knowing the world through one's own experience.

Hortensia Papadat-Bengescu contributed to the urbanization of the Romanian novel. Through lyricism, refinement and psychology it differs a lot from sowers. To these new features is added the intellectual note of his prose. The writer went through a winding path, from lyrical to objective, the process of objectification of her prose being established first through the *Fecioarele despletite* and, even more vigorously, in *Concert din muzică de Bach*. Hortensia Papadat-Bengescu's novels follow the classic conflict of the individual with society on the side of social conventions and education. The characters are also similar, only Maxențiu and Lenora belong to another category. Lică Trubadurul and Ada Razu descend from the family of Dinu Păturică (the local upstart).

Garabet Ibrăileanu fulfills the desideratum of authenticity (so much sought after at the time), using the method of the intimate diary, with dazzling notations, with the lack of classical epic construction, with the permanent use of maxims, with the lack of event analysis. The emancipation of the novel was perceived by Lovinescu through the representation in the novel of the urban environment, which had to replace the rural space, or by the presence of the intellectual character, which was meant to lead, through its own structure, to the intellectualization of epic inspiration. However, the novel's lyricism is not limited only to the ambiance, vision or style, but also to the existence of a moralizing narrator, who sometimes made his presence felt in the text, through artificial interventions in the characters' destinies. On the one hand, the traditionalists considered that the objective novel must continue on its way until the formula is exhausted, and on the other hand, the others impetuously demanded the rapid modernization of the Romanian novel. This modernization of prose is in line with the psychological analysis and subjective technique of the epic, the inspiration from the urban

world, but also the presence in the center of the narrative text of the intellectual character, able to perceive ideas and live the dilemmas of modern existence. It is very important that both formulas coexisted at the time, and sometimes against the background of psychological and social observation specific to the objective novel, a subjectivizing narrative perspective developed, through the presence of characters who assumed the status of observers or reflectors of presented realities.

Anton Holban oscillates between aesthetics and creative literature, he also brings in the field of debates about the novel ideas that even if they do not form a solid theoretical corpus, illustrate the writer's deep concern to find the best formula for his novels. Anton Holban rejects the dynamic novel, and for him literature is not entertainment, but an act of knowledge with a deeper meaning.

M. Blecher has a sober color palette, presents ideas with a disarming and lucid sincerity. There is no note of lyricism and the writer's detachment is absolute. Nourished from biography and diary, his prose is equally claimed from surrealism, more appropriate seeming to Radu G. Țeposu the formula of gentle surrealism that Mircea Iorgulescu also attributes to him. The critic, reconsidering Blecher's prose in value, finds that this is not only a diary, a reference literature, an analysis of psychological feelings, but also something else.

Mihail Sebastian aroused the admiration of his contemporaries through his literary precocity. He was involved with absolute certainty in the theoretical discussion about the novel, finely analyzing both the species itself and the evolution of the novel of the time and its new appearance in the 30s.

G.M. Zamfirescu not only changes the comic vision of the slum, but also presents it from now on in its dramatic aspects. It imposes, on the contrary, a delimitation of what constitutes suburban psychology itself. The prose writer, who evoked the Bucharest slum, presents a geographical variety in which almost all the sectors are reflected, in a picturesque specificity of language and landscape.

The hero of the early novel, and not only, is less subject to an inner struggle, resulting from the contradictions of the soul, especially an exponent of a social environment. His acts are devoid of gratuitousness (the struggle with himself), as he is only in a permanent conflict with the environment that created him. Hence the lack of psychologism of the incipient Romanian novel, in which the social and the melodramatic replace the psychologism. Thus, the psychic and social category of the incoming character is constructed, or, when he is defeated by excessive sensitivity and passive individualism, the opposite category is developed, that of the maladapted character. The typical hero of the interwar Romanian novel

is a social symbol: invariable depending on the environment, it is his biological diagram. Inside the character, the complications of the human are not deciphered, because, (almost) a physical phenomenon, it is composed and decomposed, according to social norms, between mimicry and maladaptation. The individual does not fight with his own internal forces; the conflict with the ambience absorbs all his energy, whether he falls defeated or triumphs.

The reason for the delay of the psychological novel, in which the trembling passions appear as a pure aesthetic game, and in which the problems of conscience find their natural reflection, is the weak development of the Romanian civilization.