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A PROJECT OF INTER-PERIPHERAL HISTORY OF THE ROMANIAN NOVEL: THE POLISH CASE

The Romanian Novel as a Mode of Inter-peripheral Literary Exchange

Our study announces a series of research studies on the Romanian novel in Polish translation. Thus, our project covers nearly a century of literary import from one peripheral culture to another and aims to create a set of useful tools for the transnational history of the foreign novel in Poland or for analysing Romanian and Polish literary polysystems¹. Moreover, our research aspires to contribute to the debate over the place and importance of the Romanian cultural system from a World Literature perspective seen as a “mode of reading” of all the texts that circulate beyond their culture of origin².

In our research, we will discuss how we can use statistical and computational methods to conduct a sociological study of literature, providing a new perspective on the reception of Romanian literature in Poland and the complex dynamics of cultural exchange between these two (semi)peripheral cultures. Thus, we will examine issues such as: how the reception and translation of the Romanian novel into Polish have developed over a century and what factors have influenced this evolution? How can we track changes in the translation of the Romanian novel into Poland? What is the place and importance of translations into Polish in the global context of the reception of the Romanian novel? Additionally, we will attempt to characterize the agencies of this intercultural phenomenon (i.e., writers and translators).

Although the reception of the Romanian novel in Poland has lasted for almost a century (the first complete translation into Polish of a Romanian novel dating back to 1931), this is a specific scientific issue that has not been extensively studied so far. Our study will focus on 95 complete modern direct³ translations,

¹ Itamar Even-Zohar, “Polysystem Studies”, *Poetics Today*, 11, 1990, 1, pp. 1-268.

² David Damrosch, *What Is World Literature?*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2003.

³ In accordance with the criteria proposed in a previous research, our study concerns the whole Romanian novelistic production (including novels from the Republic of Moldova), but excludes authors translated through another language: Panait Istrati (translated from French) and Ion Druță (translated through Russian) – see Olga Bartosiewicz-Nikolaev, Tomasz Krupa, “Bibliografia

providing an extremely rare opportunity to propose a holistic and comprehensive perspective on a complex issue such as an inter-peripheral literary exchange.

Therefore, our study aims to highlight the partial premises of our research project, the complete database digitized needed to create the corpus of the Romanian novel translated into Polish, and the research methods and philological tools used in the ongoing project.

Despite the fact that the Polish reception of the Romanian novel has been going on for almost a hundred years, this is a relatively unexplored area of research: although Polish- and Romanian-language writers, researchers, and translators have contributed in the last fifty years to different special issues dedicated to Romanian culture⁴, and even though there are a few Polish monographs⁵, a dictionary⁶, and chapters on the history of Romanian literature (besides prefaces to Polish translations, or anthologies)⁷, the problem of Polish translations has been rarely discussed⁸. Moreover, there has been no up-to-date bibliography of Polish translations of Romanian literature until recently⁹.

romanului în limba română tradus în limba polonă până în 2023” [“Bibliography of the Romanian-language Novel Translated into Polish until 2023”], *Dacoromania litteraria*, 2023, 10, pp. 279-292.

⁴ Constantin Geambașu, Sabra Daici (eds.), “Literatura rumuńska” [“Romanian Literature”], *Dekada Literacka*, CLXIX, 2000, 11; Jacek Purchala (ed.), “Rumunia – Romania – România”, *Herito*, 2013, 12; Jakub Kornhauser, Olga Bartosiewicz-Nikolaev, Joanna Kornaś-Warwas (eds.), “Rumunia. Mały realizm / apologia codzienności” [“Romania. Micro-realism/Apologia for Everyday Life”], *Nowa Dekada Krakowska*, XLIII/XLIV, 2019, 5-6.

⁵ Zdzisław Hryhorowicz, *Demetru Demetrescu-Urmuz. Między dadaizmem a surrealizmem* [*Demetru Demetrescu-Urmuz. Between Dadaism and Surrealism*], Poznań, Wydawnictwo Naukowe UAM, 1995; Kazimierz Jurczak, *Dylematy zmiany. Pisarze rumuńscy XIX wieku wobec ideologii zachowawczej: studium przypadku* [*Dilemmas of a Change: Romanian 19th-century Writers Facing the Conservative Ideology: A Case Study*], Kraków, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, 2011; Olga Bartosiewicz, *Tożsamość niejednoznaczna: historyczne, filozoficzne i literackie konteksty twórczości B. Fundoianu – Benjamine’a Fondane’a (1898–1944)* [*Reconstructing Identity: Historical, Literary and Philosophical Contexts of B. Fundoianu – Benjamin Fondane’s Works (1898–1944)*], Kraków, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, 2018.

⁶ Halina Mińska-Lasota, *Mały słownik pisarzy rumuńskich* [*A Small Dictionary of Romanian Writers*], Warsaw, Wiedza Powszechna, 1975.

⁷ Danuta Bieńkowska, “Literatura rumuńska” [“Romanian Literature”], in Władysław Floryan (ed.), *Dzieje literatur europejskich* [*History of European Literatures*], I, Warsaw, Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1977, pp. 1089-1139; Justyna Teodorowicz, “Literatura rumuńska” [“Romanian Literature”], in Tadeusz Skoczek (ed.), *Historia literatury światowej* [*History of World Literature*], III, Warsaw, SMS, 2004, pp. 141-156; Justyna Teodorowicz, “Literatura rumuńska” [“Romanian Literature”], in Tadeusz Skoczek (ed.), *Historia literatury światowej* [*History of World Literature*], IV, Warsaw, SMS, 2004, pp. 107-116.

⁸ Anna Kaźmierczak, “Literatura rumuńska w Polsce” [“Romanian Literature in Poland”], *Dekada Literacka*, CLXIX, 2000, 11, pp. 20-21; Jakub Kornhauser, „Piszą Rumuni” [Romanians Are Writing], *Dwutygodnik*, 2023, 351, <https://www.dwutygodnik.com/arttykul/10509-pisza-rumuni.html>. Accessed April 26, 2024.

⁹ See Bartosiewicz-Nikolaev, Krupa, „Bibliografia romanului”.

Our project fills an important gap in the existing scholarship and also in the translation history of European fiction in Poland. Besides, no quantitative research of the Romanian novel in translation has ever been proposed.

Meanwhile, the transnational and digital turns in literary research have given rise in the past thirty years to a new kind of literary criticism that views national literatures as world literatures and employs statistical and computational methods in the sociology of literature. This approach is particularly relevant to the novel, which is considered the “first truly planetary literary form”¹⁰. Not only does this genre reflect and catalyse local and regional socio-economic, political, and cultural changes in Europe since the 19th century, thus regaining its social significance, but it has also become the primary mode of literary exchange, shaping the core-periphery relationship in both European and global modern contexts.

In the midst of worldwide importation and exportation of literary forms where central (“core”) cultures have an advantage over (semi)peripheral ones, scholars who study “small”¹¹ or “minor”¹² literatures, such as Romanian-language literature, focus their efforts on the production of novels, both originally written in Romanian (i.e. DCRR-1, DCRR-2, Astra Data Mining & MDRR)¹³ or translated into Romanian (i.e. DCRT-1, DCRT-2, TRANOV)¹⁴. Due to the profound need for external legitimation and the lack of original literary pieces until the interwar period, cultures such as the Romanian one have projected their national literature as a competitive homologue of several external models, which confirms the Western (mainly French and German) monopoly from the very beginnings of the modern local cultural institutions¹⁵.

However, while external influences have been always considered important for the formation of Romanian literature¹⁶, national literary histories such as George

¹⁰ Franco Moretti, “On the Novel”, in *The Novel*, Princeton and Oxford, Princeton University Press, 2006, p. IX.

¹¹ See Pascale Casanova, *La République mondiale des Lettres*, Paris, Seuil, 1999.

¹² See Sean Cotter, *Literary Translation and the Idea of a Minor Romania*, Rochester, University of Rochester Press, 2014.

¹³ See Ștefan Baghiu, Ovio Olaru, Andrei Terian (eds.), *Beyond the Iron Curtain. Revisiting the Literary System of Communist Romania*, Berlin, Peter Lang, 2021; Alex Goldiș, Ștefan Baghiu (eds.), *Translations and Semi-Peripheral Cultures. Worlding the Romanian Novel in the Modern Literary System*, Berlin, Peter Lang, 2022; Daiana Gârdan, *Între lumi. Romanul românesc în sistemul literar modern [Between Worlds. The Romanian Novel in the Modern Literary System]*, Cluj-Napoca, Casa Cărții de Știință, 2023.

¹⁴ See Maria Sass, Ștefan Baghiu, Vlad Pojoga (eds.), *The Culture of Translation in Romania/Übersetzungskultur und Literaturübersetzen in Rumänien*, Berlin, Peter Lang, 2018.

¹⁵ Andrei Terian, “Translating the World, Building the Nation: Microtheories of Translation in Romanian Cultural Criticism (1829–1948)”, in Sass et al. (eds.), *The Culture of Translation*, pp. 19-30.

¹⁶ Mircea Martin, Christian Moraru, Andrei Terian (eds.), *Romanian Literature as World Literature*, New York, Bloomsbury, 2018; Sass et al. (eds.), *The Culture of Translation*.

Călinescu's¹⁷ or Nicolae Manolescu's¹⁸ have often hidden foreign influences to highlight the originality of the local production. In fact, from a quantitative point of view, the Romanian autochthonous novel struggled to gain momentum until 1932, when the number of Romanian novels being published exceeded, for the first time, that of translations¹⁹. Labelled as a „golden age” of the Romanian original novel, the interwar period is simultaneously marked by a desire to synchronise with the European modernist production of fiction.

What is intriguing is that the same period is also the time of the first full translations of the Romanian novel into European languages, whether global (English, French), regional (German, Italian), or local (Czech, Hungarian, Polish)²⁰. These attempts at cultural export from a peripheral literature, especially to the last group, seem to be accelerated by a geopolitical reconfiguration in Central and Eastern Europe (the collapse of Austria-Hungary, the foundation of modern Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Yugoslavia and Greater Romania, etc.). Although we are dealing with the nation-building discourse and the (re)birth of national identities in this region at that time, transnational literary interactions in the first half of the 20th century witnessed a recalibration of centre-periphery and West-East relationships. For example, Liviu Rebreanu's *Ion* (1920), considered the first Romanian truly modern novel, has been translated first into Czech (1929) and Polish (1932 – it is the second Romanian novel ever translated into Polish), much earlier than in German (1941) or French (1946).

Paradoxically, the hegemonic position of the Soviet social realist culture has led, since the end of the 1940s, to the creation of a highly ideologized and monophonic, yet multi-ethnic and pluralistic literary network that promoted peripheral literatures through the Eastern Bloc. Despite the isolationist and autarkic politics of Nicolae Ceaușescu's Romania, the Romanian contemporary novel remained accessible to Eastern European readers through translation. However, the post-communist socio-economic, political, and cultural transformations in the region virtually banished Romanian novels from the Polish

¹⁷ G. Călinescu, *Istoria literaturii române de la origini până în prezent* [*History of Romanian Literature from its Origins to the Present*], București, Fundația pentru Literatură și Artă „Regele Carol II”, 1941.

¹⁸ Nicolae Manolescu, *Istoria critică a literaturii române. Cinci secole de literatură* [*The Critical History of Romanian Literature. Five Centuries of Literature*], Pitești, Paralela 45, 2008.

¹⁹ Andrei Terian, “Big Numbers: A Quantitative Analysis of the Development of the Novel in Romania”, *Transylvanian Review*, XXVIII, 2019, suppl. 1, pp. 55-74; Ștefan Baghiu, “Translations of Novels in the Romanian Culture During the Long Nineteenth Century (1794–1914): A Quantitative Perspective”, *Metacritic Journal for Comparative Studies and Theory*, 6, 2020, 2, pp. 87-106.

²⁰ Apart from the novels that were first published in a foreign language (French or German) and then in Romanian, only three Romanian novels had been ever translated by the First World War: *Elena Taceanu* by Iuliu Bettelheim (1884; 1890 in German), Ion Pop-Florantin's *Avram Iancu, regele Carpaților, continuatorul operei lui Horia* (1891; in American English) and Duiliu Zamfirescu's *În război* ([1897]1902; 1900 in French) – see DCRR-1.

book market for 14 years, with no Romanian novel being translated into Polish between 1988 and 2002. The European integration and international recognition of other arts in Romania, such as the cinema, have since re-established this cultural exchange. As a result, a third of all Polish translations of Romanian novels date from the last 15 years. By complementing the records of the DCRR-1 and DCRR-2 with our own findings²¹, we identified 95 Polish translations of 92 Romanian novels, translations published in Poland between 1931 and 2023. Is this a lot or a little?

The Modern Romanian Novel (Un)translated

Taking into account the whole Romanian production in the Romanian language until 2000, catalogued by the authors of the DCRR-1 and DCRR-2, approximately 6,500 titles, the number of 65 novels available in Polish translation is not impressive at all, constituting just one percent. This number appears even more disappointing when we realize that we are talking about only nineteen percent of the 359 Romanian titles dating from the 19th and 20th centuries that have been fully translated. Indeed, we do not have such data for other national literatures, not even for Polish literature, which would allow us to estimate the dimensions of Romanian literary exports in relation to other publishing markets in Central and Eastern Europe. Instead, thanks to the DCRR-1 and DCRR-2, we are able to place the Polish imports of Romanian novels of the 20th century on the world map, in relation to the 51 other languages into which the 19th and 20th century Romanian novel has ever been fully translated.

The data collected, based on the DCRR-1 and DCRR-2, turned out to be incomplete at least for the Polish language: out of 65 Romanian novels of the 20th century, only 28 novels were listed. Therefore, in order to more accurately position the Polish translation in the context of the global mapping of Romanian novels, it was necessary to verify and supplement the data for other cultures as well. The gathered results are far from complete: we realized this ourselves, as a few months after the bibliography was published (in 2023), we identified 10 additional translations. Nevertheless, at this early stage, we are able to make certain acknowledgements in the hope of expanding the results in the future.

²¹ Our bibliography was created based on the *Polska Bibliografia Literacka* [Polish Literary Bibliography], <https://pbl.ibl.poznan.pl/dostep/> (Accessed April 26, 2024) and the library queries in Poland (at the Jagiellonian Library in Kraków and the National Library in Warsaw).

Language	Complete	Unique	Autonomy
Russian*	65	17	26%
German*	65	9	14%
Polish	65	12	18%
Hungarian*	58	9	16%
French*	50	6	12%
Bulgarian	50	6	12%
Italian	35	2	6%
Czech	35	1	3%
Slovak	27	0	0%
Spanish	26	0	0%
Ukrainian	25	5	20%
English*	19	1	5%

*Romanian internal editions excluded

Fig. 1. The Romanian novel in world translation (1863–2000): the top 12

Before commenting on the collected data, we owe an explanation: in order to investigate the phenomenon of the import of literary novels into a foreign culture and, therefore, the characteristics of a publishing market open to Romanian literature, we calculated only the complete publications from abroad (222 novels), thus rejecting approximately 140 Hungarian editions, 70 German editions, and 40 French editions, as well as cca. 20 each in Russian, English, and Serbian, which were printed only by various Romanian publishers (especially Kriterion before 1989), and whose circulation outside Romania and impact on the reception of Romanian novels in target cultures are difficult to determine.

However, even if we were to consider these internal editions, the position of Polish translations, which have a completely external character compared to Romania's editorial production, would remain the same, as we are still talking about the six largest importing cultures (with the exception of the Serbian language). Each of them (see **Fig. 1**) – in this group, we can also include Bulgarian translations, with at least 50 novels – achieves the most surprising score, considering the smaller population compared to other countries, having its own internal translation for at most one percent of all Romanian novels from the 19th and 20th centuries.

This suggests the heterogeneity or „autonomy”²² of each foreign selection of Romanian texts: on one hand, we can identify a small group of texts considered canonical at a certain period and available through translation (see below **Fig. 2**).

²² See Terian, “Big Numbers”, p. 59.

We will deal with globally significant interwar or postwar novels such as Mihai Sadoveanu's *Baltagul* [*The Hatchet*] or *Mitrea Cocor*, translated both into major European languages and into languages of the Global South, mostly Asian languages spoken in Soviet-influenced areas but not limited to them, such as Turkmen, Tajik, Kazakh, Korean, Chinese, Vietnamese, Urdu, Hindi, and others. Among these languages into which internationally significant novels have been translated, almost none of the six quantitatively major languages are missing.

Author	Title	First Romanian edition	Complete foreign translations
SADOVEANU, Mihail	<i>Mitrea Cocor</i>	1949	36
SADOVEANU, Mihail	<i>Baltagul</i>	1930	25
STANCU, Zaharia	<i>Desculț</i>	1948	24
ELIADE, Mircea	<i>Maitreyi</i>	1933	22
REBREANU, Liviu	<i>Ion</i>	1920	20
REBREANU, Liviu	<i>Răscoala</i>	1932	18
REBREANU, Liviu	<i>Pădurea spânzuraților</i>	1922	18
PETRESCU, Cezar	<i>Fram, ursul polar</i>	1932	13
STANCU, Zaharia	<i>Jocul cu moartea</i>	1962	13
ADAMEȘTEANU, Gabriela	<i>Dimineață pierdută</i>	1983	13
SADOVEANU, Mihail	<i>Nada Florilor. Amintirile unui pescar cu undița</i>	1950	12

Fig. 2. The most translated 20th-century Romanian novels before 1989

The fact that only 14 out of 222 novels have been translated into at least 10 languages confirms a high degree of autonomy in the editorial markets that did not import the same titles, even though we know of the existence of lists of novels accepted by Romanian censorship and suggested to foreign ministries for translation. This also applies to Eastern Bloc countries such as the Soviet Union, East Germany, Hungary, Poland, Bulgaria, or Czechoslovakia. Indeed, 77 out of the 222 novels have only one translation, while more than half (117) have at most two translations.

For all major target cultures (Soviet/Russian, German, Polish, Hungarian, French, and Bulgarian), the number of unique translations (“autonomy”) equals to at least 10% of all translated Romanian novels into a specific language, whereas among the five consecutive receiving cultures (Italian, Czech, Slovak, Spanish, Ukrainian, and English), only one (Ukrainian) achieves a score higher than 10% and this underlines the prestige of the Soviet publishing market (Fig. 1).

Additionally, for each target language, we can talk about the “great untranslated” – we do not mean the 95% of all Romanian novels that remain inaccessible to any non-Romanian reader, but rather what has not been translated into a language despite being available in other languages.

Towards a Polish Kind of Specificity

Author	Title	First Romanian Edition	First Polish Edition
GHEORGHIU, Mihnea	<i>Două ambasade (A venit un om din răsărit)</i>	1955	1976
GHILIA, Alecu Ivan	<i>Îngeri biciuiți</i>	1967	1969
CHIRIȚĂ, Constantin	<i>Aripi de zăpadă</i>	1968	1977
POPESCU, Petru	<i>Prins</i>	1969	1973
STANCU, Horia	<i>Întoarcerea în deșert</i>	1969	1974
CRISTESCU, Maria-Luiza	<i>Nu ucideți femeile</i>	1970	1974
BENIUC, Mihai	<i>Explozie înăbușită</i>	1971	1974
MICU, Mircea	<i>Patima</i>	1972	1975
IVASIUC, Alexandru	<i>Apa</i>	1973	1978
CUBLEȘAN, Constantin	<i>Iarba cerului</i>	1974	1981
IACOBAN, Mircea Radu	<i>Depart</i>	1975	1980
TOTT, Rodica	<i>Cumințenia pământului</i>	1975	1985
DUMITRIU, Dana	<i>Duminica mironosițelor</i>	1977	1988

Fig. 3. 20th Century Romanian novels translated only into Polish

In the case of Polish translations, only one globally significant novel promoted before 1989 does not appear on this list (Zaharia Stancu’s *Jocul cu moartea* [A Gamble with Death]), which means that Polish readers actually had access to almost all the texts considered representative for Romanian culture at that time. In parallel, until 1989, we have 13 novels translated only into Polish, and another 24 translations are the first ones in the whole world, rivalling or even overtaking other publishing markets (Fig. 3). In other words, more than half (37) of the 65 novels until 2000 translated into Polish were an original choice made by Polish translators who, based on their own tastes and knowledge and independently of foreign trends, shaped the image of the Romanian novel in their country.

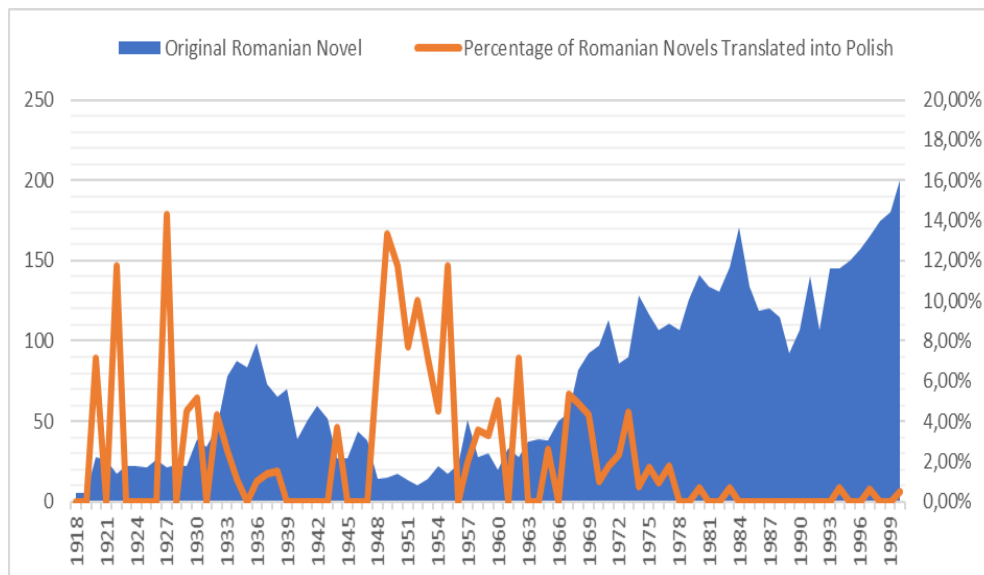


Fig. 4. The 20th-Century Romanian novel and its Polish translation

Fig. 4 shows to what extent the Polish representation of the Romanian novel is a discontinuous phenomenon, determined by several socio-economic and geo-cultural conditions. Considering the entire novelistic production in Romania, we can see how much has been translated into Polish in different years.

Over the period between 1918 and 2000, again, approximately one percent of Romanian novels have a Polish translation. What we immediately notice in the interwar period is that the first decade is better known to the Polish reader than the 1930s, and this is not only due to the rapid increase in the number of novels after 1932, but also to fewer translations, even though in the 21st century, all of Max Blecher's novels have been translated, the author becoming one of the most well-represented Romanian-language writers in Poland in just a few years.

In parallel, the so-called 'Obsessive Decade' seems overrepresented, because, for example, 13% of all novels published in 1949 have a Polish translation. Of course, we are talking about the period when only about 15 novels are published annually, mostly socialist-realist, which explains this sudden increase. Nevertheless, these literary exports from Romania settle in the 1960s and 1970s at a level of 3-5%, and thus this proportion of Polish imports comes close to the ratio between all translations in the world and all novelistic production in Romania.

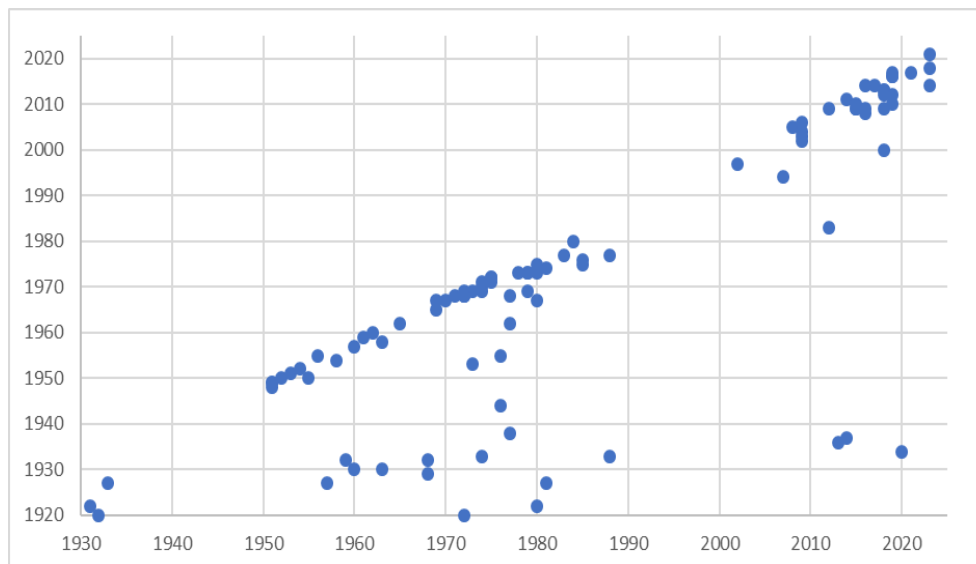


Fig. 5. The “chronological constellation”²³ of the Romanian novel (1920–2021) in Polish translation (1931–2023)

Concerning the publication of Polish translations of Romanian novels during the 20th and 21st centuries, two significant crises can be observed, the first during the Second World War, lasting until the 1950s (which does not require further explanation), and the second one in the late 1980s, lasting until the mid-2000s (**Fig. 5**). After 1989, both Poland and Romania faced their own economic and political crises, which, of course, also affected the publishing market: we are dealing with, among other things, the abolition of censorship, the decentralization of the publishing policy, the privatization of publishing houses, the abundance of translations from western countries, the hyperpresence of English in the linguistic hierarchy of translations, the consequences of the massification of culture, which led to the creation of a cultural industry submitted to the rules of competition on the internal market. In addition, Polish literature was preoccupied in the 1990s with its own complexes, the introduction of a new literary order, and the desire to find its position in “world literature”²⁴; therefore, neither Romanian literature nor Romanian culture was an important point of reference at that time. It was also during this period that Romania began to be negatively stereotyped in Poland (a situation influenced on the one hand by the scene of the execution of the

²³ Ștefan Baghiu, “Quantitative Translationscapes and Chronological Constellations: French, Soviet, and American Novels in Communist Romania”, *World Literature Studies*, 13, 2021, 3, pp. 117-129. See also Baghiu, “Translations of Novels”.

²⁴ See Przemysław Czapliński, *Powrót centrali. Literatura w nowej rzeczywistości* [*The Return of the Central: Literature in the New Reality*], Kraków, Wydawnictwo Literackie, 2007.

Ceaușescu couple, the recording of which went around the world, and on the other by the emergence of the beggar network phenomenon associated with the Roma in Romania). All this did not help create and maintain cultural relations between the two countries.

Moreover, in 1992 Danuta Bienkowska – the first “pillar” of the bridge between Romanian and Polish literature during communism – passed away; it was then clear that in a symbolic way a certain era had ended, and that Poland needed a new generation of translators who could end the stagnation after the fall of communism.

However, it should be mentioned that in the 1990s the great Romanian names of the interwar period, notably Mircea Eliade, Emil Cioran and Constantin Noica, were translated on the Polish market, in correspondence to the publishing proposals in Romania after 1990 and following the tendency to acknowledge the work of authors recognized in the West. Thus, between 1993 and 1999, 8 works by Cioran appeared in Polish, 7 of which were translated from French²⁵; between 1990 and 1999, 24 texts by Eliade appeared, none of which was translated directly from Romanian, and in 1997 Ireneusz Kania translated from Romanian *Șase maladii ale spiritului contemporan* [*Six Maladies of the Contemporary Spirit*] by Noica. The above-mentioned translator has also made a significant contribution to the reception of Eliade and Cioran’s works in Poland – Kania has published a total of 31 volumes by these authors (including reprints).

Fig. 5 clearly shows that the situation begins to change in the mid-2000s, which corresponds to the accession, first of Poland (in 2004), and then of Romania (in 2007), to the European Union. This landmark event was preceded by many smaller but equally important steps: in 1999 the tradition of scientific conferences in Suceava was initiated as part of the “Days of Polish Culture” organized by the Union of Poles in Romania, which helped to establish relations between Polish and Romanian researchers, and in 2001 the Polish-Romanian Society in Kraków was founded.

Things were also starting to move at the national institutional level: in the pre-accession period, the Polish Institute in Bucharest was established in 2001, and in 2006 the Romanian Cultural Institute opened in Warsaw. In the same year, the first edition of the Translation and Publication Support Program was launched, and in 2007 the National Book Centre initiated the Publishing Romania program, a funding program for publishing projects aimed at promoting Romanian culture abroad.

²⁵ All data in this paragraph come from the resource-based corpus of the National Library of Poland, collected by the *Ukryta kolekcja* [*Hidden Collection*] project led by Magda Heydel and Agnieszka Podpora at the Jagiellonian University of Kraków and to which we are collaborators (See <https://przekladoznawstwo.polonistyka.uj.edu.pl/ukryta-kolekcja>. Accessed April 29, 2024).

Indeed, around 2007/2008, there is a significant increase in the number of translations, reaching a peak (i.e. 6 novels translated) in 2018. At that time, there were already 5 publishing houses on the Polish market known for publishing Romanian novels, and most of the books were published with the financial support of the Romanian Cultural Institute.

What is significant is that the first Romanian novel translated into Polish after Romania became an EU member, the one that started this “rising tide” of translations from Romanian literature, is Cărtărescu’s *Travesti*. However, even though one of the most internationally recognized Romanian writers, he will paradoxically remain “a great untranslated” on the Polish literary market, his most important novels being not available in Polish (only an excerpt from *Orbitor. Aripa Stângă* [*Blinding. The Left Wing*] was published in the Romanian edition of *Literatura na Świecie* in translation by Joanna Kornaś-Warwas²⁶).

	Author	Title	Number of translations	First Romanian Edition	Polish Edition	Notes
1	BLECHER, Max	<i>Întâmplări în irealitatea imediată</i>	8	1936	2013	
2	BLECHER, Max	<i>Inimi cicatrizate</i>	5	1937	2014	
3	SEBASTIAN, Mihail	<i>De două mii de ani</i>	6	1934	2020	
4	ADAMEȘTEANU, Gabriela	<i>Dimineața pierdută</i>	13	1983	2012	
5	CĂRTĂRESCU, Mircea	<i>Travesti</i>	10	1994	2007	
6	POPESCU, Simona	<i>Exuvii</i>	3	1997	2002	First Polish
7	IUGA, Nora	<i>Sexagenara și tânărul</i>	7	2000	2018	
8	ȘTEFĂNESCU, Cecilia	<i>Legături bolnăvicioase</i>	3	2003	2009	
9	MANEA, Norman	<i>Întoarcerea huliganului</i>	17	2004	2009	
10	LUNGU, Dan	<i>Sînt o babă comunistă!</i>	14	2005	2009	

²⁶ Mircea Cărtărescu, “Olśniewający. Lewe skrzydło” [“Blinding. The Left Wing”], transl. Joanna Kornaś-Warwas, *Literatura na Świecie*, 2008, 5-6, pp. 37-57.

11	FLORIAN, Filip	<i>Degete mici</i>	12	2006	2008	The same year: Hungarian, and German
12	FLORIAN, Filip, FLORIAN, Matei	<i>Băiuțeii</i>	4	2008	2009	First Polish
13	FLORIAN, Filip	<i>Zilele regelui</i>	6	2009	2016	
14	MANEA, Norman	<i>Vizuina</i>	5	2009	2012	The same year: Spanish, Arabic, German, Chinese, and Czech
15	PÂRVULESCU, Ioana	<i>Viața începe vineri</i>	10	2009	2016	
16	TEODORESCU, Cristian	<i>Medgidia, orașul de apoi</i>	2	2009	2015	
17	TEODOROVICI, Lucian Dan	<i>Celelalte povești de dragoste</i>	6	2009	2018	
18	VOSGANIAN, Varujan	<i>Cartea șoaptelor</i>	18	2010	2015	
19	MĂLAICU- HONDRARI, Marin	<i>Apropierea</i>	2	2010	2015	The same year: Polish and Spanish
20	VIȘNIEC, Matei	<i>Domnul K. eliberat</i>	3	2011	2019	
21	TEODOROVICI, Lucian Dan	<i>Matei Brunul</i>	6	2012	2014	
22	COMAN, Dan	<i>Parohia</i>	1	2012	2019	The only translation
23	FLORIAN, Filip	<i>Toate bufnițele</i>	2	2013	2018	
24	SCHIOP, Adrian	<i>Soldații. Poveste din Ferentari</i>	3	2013	2018	
25	VIȘNIEC, Matei	<i>Negustorul de începuturi de roman</i>	3	2014	2018	
26	MIHULEAC, Cătălin	<i>America de peste pogrom</i>	3	2014	2023	
27	LUNGU, Dan	<i>Fetița care se juca de-a Dumnezeu</i>	3	2014	2017	
28	LUNGU, Doina	<i>Simfonia unui criminal</i>	1	2016	2016	The only translation

29	BRANIȘTE, Lavinia	<i>Interior zero</i>	3	2016	2019	
30	PĂRVULESCU, Ioana	<i>Inocenții</i>	3	2016	2019	
31	ȚÎBULEAC, Tatiana	<i>Vara în care mama a avut ochii verzi</i>	6	2017	2021	
32	TEODORESCU, Cristian	<i>Cartea pisicii</i>	1	2017	2019	The only translation
33	ȚÎBULEAC, Tatiana	<i>Grădina de sticlă</i>	5	2018	2023	
34	SEREBRIAN, Oleg	<i>Pe contrasens</i>	1	2021	2023	The only translation

Fig. 6. The Romanian novel in Polish translation in the 21st century

As we can see above (Fig. 6), out of all 34 novels translated after 2000, 4 remain novels translated only into Polish, while the other 5 are the first translations in the world, either appearing for the first time or in the same year as translations from other countries. Thus, after 2000 we are still dealing with a high degree of autonomy of Polish translations and translators – a trend that is noticeable in each of the periods we have analysed.

The Polish Quantitative Translationscape

Most of the novels translated after 1989 (the first chronological cluster from the right in the Polish „chronological constellation” – see Fig. 5) are contemporary novels, the distance between the first edition in Romania and the first translation into Polish being no more than 10 years (in most cases – 23 novels translated). We can then note a tendency towards synchronization with what is happening on the literary market in Romania, and with what is translated in Western Europe. We can assume that the crisis during the transition period, which interrupted the continuity of intercultural exchanges for almost 15 years, has determined the need to fill this gap and present the current Romanian literary scene. The best proof of such a tendency is the most prolific editorial series so far, titled *Rumunia dzisiaj* [*Romania Today*], in which 10 titles were published between 2018 and 2019.

The second cluster highlighted in the same graph represents the translations during communism. The shortest distance (2 years on average) can be noticed in the 1950s, when socialist-realist novels (that were in line with the ideology promoted in both countries) were translated, 9 novels in total (e.g. *Mitrea Cocor* by Sadoveanu, *Negura* [*The Mist*] by Eusebiu Camilar, *Dulăii* [*The Dogs*] by Zaharia Stancu).

43 novels published between 1948 and 1980 were translated in line with the trends on the Romanian market during the communist period (in only two cases are we dealing with a distance of 20 and 21 years, respectively: *Bietul Ioanide* [*Poor Ioanide*] by George Călinescu, 1953–1973, and *Două ambasade* [*A venit un om din răsărit*] [*Two Embassies (A Man from the East has Come)*] by Gheorghe Mihnea, 1955–1976). Among the translations of that period, a wide variety of literary genres is noticeable, as well as the presence of names that have belonged to the Romanian canon to this day (e.g. Eugen Barbu, Marin Preda, Alexandru Ivasiuc), and of names less known nowadays, but which enjoyed wide popularity during the communist period (e.g. Ion Grecea, Dana Dumitriu, Vintilă Corbul). On the list of translated novels we also find a significant number of books belonging to the so-called youth literature – this was most probably due to Danuta Bieńkowska herself, who was also a well-known author of Polish-language youth novels – in 1978 she even received the Prize of the President of the Council of Ministers of the Polish People’s Republic for this part of her literary work.

In the case of communist literature, our future research requires an in-depth study of the archives of both countries so that we can answer at least two fundamental questions: 1) to what extent the choices of translators depended on the cultural policy of the Romanian Socialist Republic; 2) did they enjoy a “margin of freedom” within the policy established by the regime? From Bieńkowska’s memories we learn that she was on very good terms with the Romanian Writers’ Union (she even received a special prize for translations and dissemination of Romanian culture²⁷), she used to meet Romanian writers and critics in Bucharest from whom she received various book recommendations, and if something interested her, she proposed it to Polish publishers²⁸. Therefore, her opinion was crucial to Polish-Romanian literary exchanges during the communist period.

The third cluster that we can highlight is that containing the first translations of Romanian novels into Polish (all by Stanisław Łukasik). Here we have the 1931 *Pădurea spânzuraților* [*Forest of the Hanged*] by Liviu Rebreanu, the 1932 translation of the novel *Ion* and the 1933 publication of *Întunecare* [*Gathering Clouds*] by Cezar Petrescu. During the interwar period, contemporary Romanian literature was also present in Polish magazines, arousing more and more interest among literary critics and the public, with support by the cultural policy of the two neighbouring countries under authoritarian regimes. What should be mentioned

²⁷ Danuta Bieńkowska, *Zwyciężyłam* [*I Won*], Warsaw, Dabor, 2000, p. 85.

²⁸ It is also worth mentioning that six of Bieńkowska’s novels have been translated into Romanian (5 before 1989, one in 1991), which confirms her strong position in the Romanian literary world, her connections with translators and her awareness of publishing realities during communism. See: Constantin Geambașu (ed.), *Bibliografia traducerilor din literaturile slave (1945–2011)* [*Bibliography of Translations from Slavic Literatures (1945–2011)*], București, Editura Universității din București, 2011, p. 46.

here is the fact that the first Romanian novels translated into Polish will also be the only novels retranslated in 1957 (the novel *Întunecare*, translated by Rajmund Florans), 1972 (*Ion*, translated by Bieńkowska)²⁹ and 1980 (*Pădurea spânzuraților*, translated by Stanisław Bik). This practice of retranslation, present and well received in the case of literature written in languages such as English, French, German or Russian, is practically non-existent in the case of literature written in Romanian, firstly because of the small number of translators, and secondly because there is no such need among readers or researchers, the reception of Romanian literature in Poland being rather hermetic and restricted.

We also notice another trend in the evolution of Polish translations of Romanian literature. The starting point for both tendencies is the modern interwar novel, whose representation in Polish will increase over the years, thus redeeming its limited presence so far, compared to its canonicity in the Romanian environment. This literature reappears on the Polish market in 1957 after a series of socialist-realist novels, and with the Khrushchev thaw, the retranslation of Cezar Petrescu's novel *Întunecare* contributes to its presence on the Polish market, a presence that will steadily increase until 1988, the year of the thirteenth translation of interwar literature, namely that of Mircea Eliade's *Maitreyi*.

After 2010, we find three translations as the most isolated from the others on the graph. The two texts by Max Blecher – *Întâmplări din irealitatea imediată* [*Adventures in Immediate Irreality*] and *Inimi cicatrizate* [*Scarred Hearts*]³⁰, as well as *De două mii de ani* [*For Two Thousand Years*] by Mihail Sebastian, have been published in Poland in the last eleven years. On one hand, this fits into an international trend, as these authors, along with Eliade, are the most frequently translated after 1989 in terms of the interwar period. On the other hand, this corresponds to trends in the Polish culture where, especially after 2000, there is a growing interest in the Jewish heritage of Central and Eastern European cultures and the contribution of Jewish authors to the development of modernist literature.

However, unlike the communist period, this recovery attributes an elitist character to translated Romanian literature, aimed at a narrow audience, whereas translations from the 1960s and 1970s were much more diverse in terms of period (each decade of post-WW1 Romanian novel until then being represented by at

²⁹ Our 2023–2024 undergraduate seminar produced a paper juxtaposing these two translations. See: Aleksander Podgórný, “Când timpul nu există: strategii de traducere folosite în transpunerea timpului *mai mult ca perfect* românesc în limba polonă pe exemplul romanului *Ion* de Liviu Rebreanu” [“When Time Does Not Exist: Translation Strategies Used in Transferring the Romanian Tense *mai mult ca perfectul* Into Polish in the Example of Liviu Rebreanu's Novel *Ion*”], *Transilvania*, 2024, 6–7, pp. 60–75.

³⁰ It is worth recalling that the third text by Max Blecher, *Vizuina luminată* [*The Lighted Burrow*], was also translated into Polish in the 2010s.

least one translation) or genre, and democratic, as they included adventure novels, historical novels, social, psychological, and detective novels.

A Sociology of the Romanian novel translated into Polish

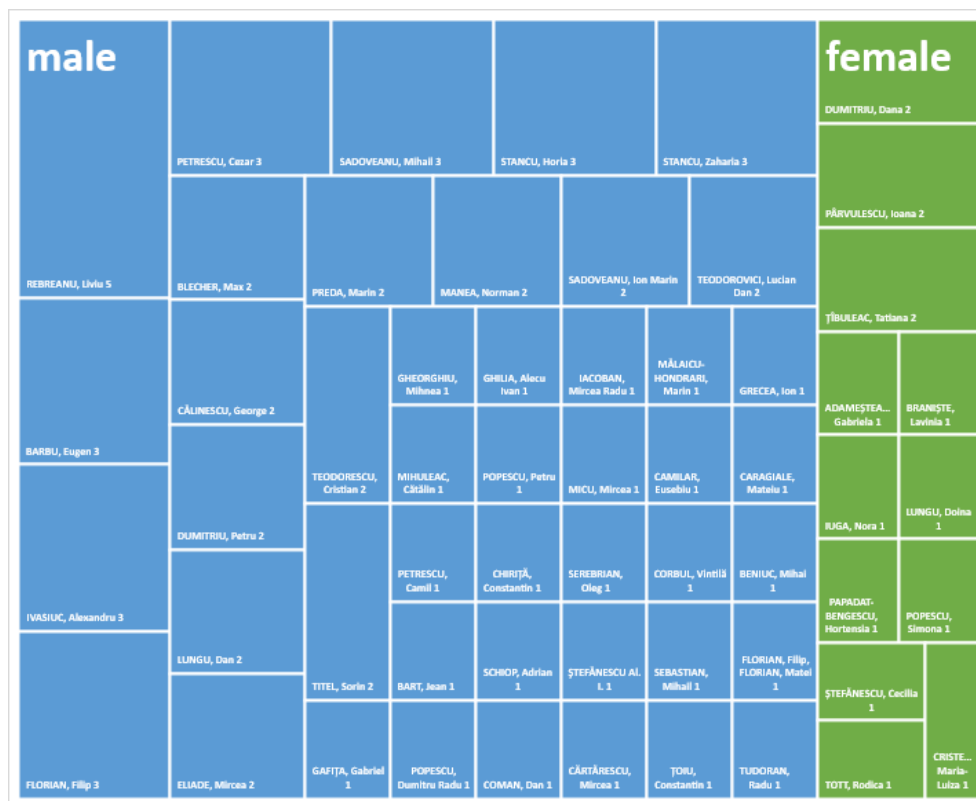


Fig. 7. Male and female authors of Romanian novels and their Polish translations (1931–2023)

Among the metadata we have collected so far, in addition to the publication dates in Romania and Poland and the number of translations into all languages, it is worth analysing the number of Polish translations for each writer and the gender identity of both the author and the translator.

In **Fig. 7**, we propose a complete overview of Romanian authors translated into Polish and the ratio between women and men, with female authors constituting 20% of the total number of authors. However, their share is smaller when we look at the number of novels: the proportion of texts written by women is lower, at 16%, which is less than the overall Romanian production in Romania, as the percentage of novels written by women over the period in question approximates

20%³¹. This is surprising because of the predominance of women in the import of Romanian novels in Poland.

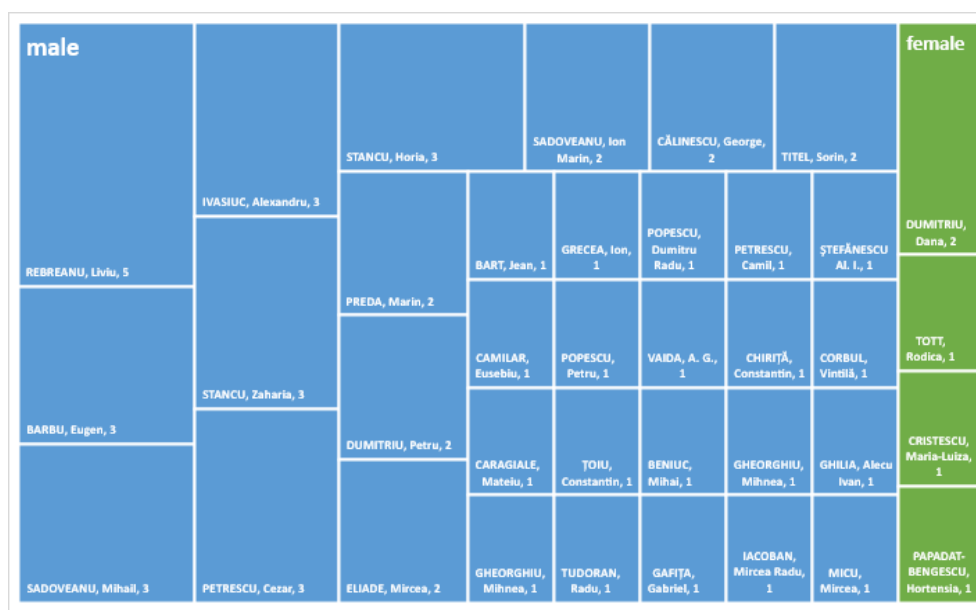


Fig. 8. Male and female authors of Romanian novels before 1989 and their Polish translations

However, this underrepresentation of female writers is even more alarming when we look at the novels translated before 1989 (Fig. 8). Only 5 out of the 60 novels, then only 8%, are written by women. Romanian literature written by women in the period before 1989 is reduced to four names: Dana Dumitriu, with two translations, and Rodica Tott, Maria-Luiza Cristescu, and Hortensia Papadat-Bengescu with only one each, which is intriguing in the last case (2 Slovak translations, 3 German, 3 Hungarian). The title of the most important Romanian female writer, Dana Dumitriu, is quite shocking and exceptional. Two of her novels – *Masa zarafului* [*Usurer’s Feast*] from 1972, translated into Bulgarian, and *Duminica mironosițelor* [*The Myrrhbearers’ Sunday*] from 1977, translated only into Polish – were translated by two different translators, and a third rendition was planned. We know that she was friends with Irena Harasimowicz, her translator: did the translators have so much freedom in choosing the novels? They certainly were in a much better financial situation in a publishing market that was centralized, providing translators with economic and professional security, and

³¹ Vlad Pojoga et al., “Diversitate identitară în romanul românesc (1844–1932)” [“Identitarian Diversity in the Romanian Novel (1844–1932)”], *Transilvania*, 2022, 10, p. 34.

where their cultural capital played an extremely important role in the literary import from Romania.

If we look at male authors, we realize the gap between the idea of a canon then and now, revealed by the almost immediate character of Polish translations. Firstly, we cannot be surprised by the presence of authors of socialist-realist novels as Eusebiu Camilar, A. Vaida, Alexandru Ștefănescu, Dumitru Radu Popescu. Secondly, we are struck by the disappointing score of classics such as Sadoveanu (only 3 out of the 15 novels ever translated), or Marin Preda (2 novels out of 5).

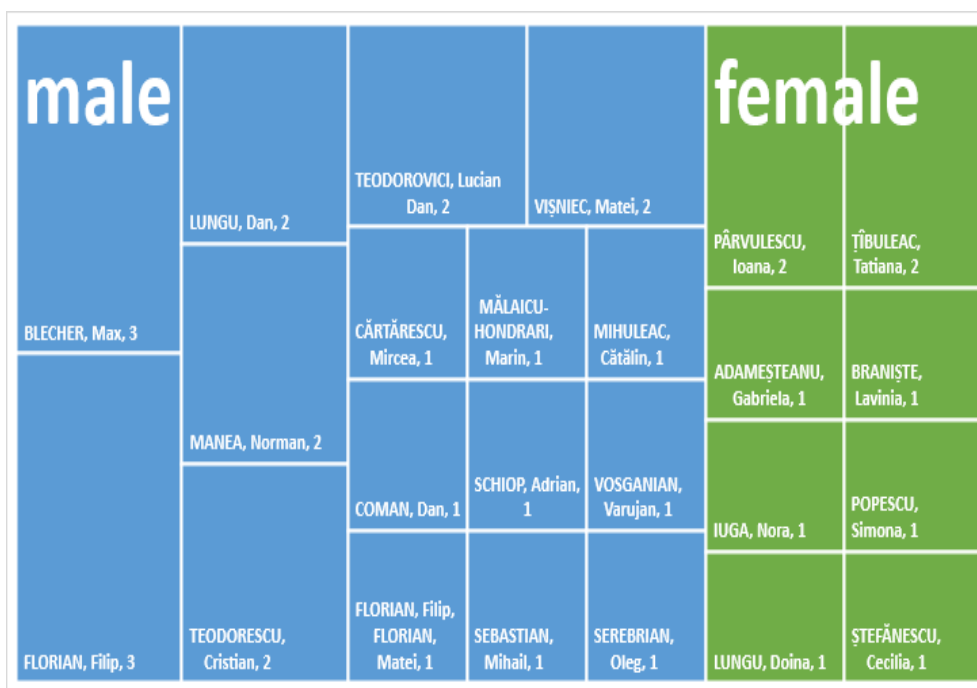


Fig. 9. Male and female authors of Romanian novels after 1989 and their Polish translations

The above graphic (**Fig. 9**), which presents the male and female writers translated into Polish between 2002–2023, shows us that the gender gap is starting to decrease; however, the disproportion is still visible – we have 16 male writers and only 8 female writers. This disparity indicates a still significant problem in the contemporary literary world (both Polish and Romanian): the underrepresentation of female writers conditioned by numerous social factors, so that their careers often develop in a less spectacular way in both the domestic and the foreign literary market.

Poles of Production

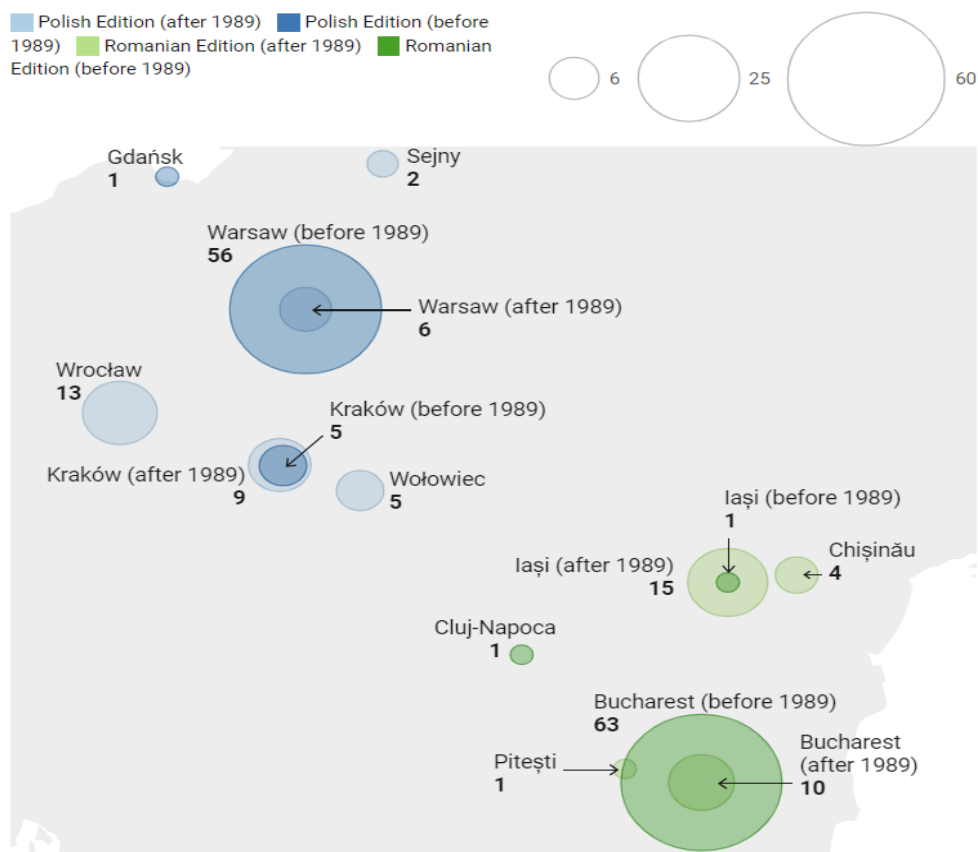


Fig. 10. The geography of the Romanian novel in Polish (1931–2023)

The above image (Fig. 10) represents the editorial geography of the Romanian novel translated into Polish. Before 1989, the centralization mechanisms on the publishing market are very clear: most translations come from Bucharest publishing houses and are published in Warsaw, by the largest and most important Polish state publishing houses (e.g. Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, Czytelnik, Nasza Księgarnia).

The situation changes after 1989: here we can notice a real decentralization of the publishing market in Poland, while in Romania, Bucharest and Iași remain the two main publishing centres. In Poland, private publishing houses are beginning to be set up, specializing in the publication of books in certain cultural, linguistic, and thematic areas. This is why on the map we can see two places that could be considered provincial, but in fact they are important centres for the promotion of the culture of South-East European countries: Sejny and Wołowiec.

In May 1990, Krzysztof Czyżewski, Małgorzata Sporek-Czyżewska, Bożena and Wojciech Szroeder, founded Sejny Fundacja Pogranicze [The Borderland Foundation], whose program of activities is entirely devoted to the promotion of the ethos of the border areas and the presentation of the regions and cultures of Central and Eastern Europe in particular. It was there that the first translations of Norman Manea's novels were published (in 2000 and 2003), as well as Mihai Sebastian's *Journal. 1935–1944* (in 2006). Thus, this new and small publishing house became the first to overcome the crisis of the lack of Romanian literature in the Polish literary world after 1989. The second one is Czarne Publishing House, founded in 1996 in Wołowiec, a small village in southern Poland, by the writer Andrzej Stasiuk and his wife (also a writer) Monika Sznajderman. It specializes in publishing contemporary essays and prose, both from Poland and from all over the world (but especially from Central and Eastern Europe). Czarne is best known for its series of literary reportage and has a remarkable symbolic capital owing to Stasiuk's position in the Polish literary field. It published the first four Romanian novels after 2007 in an editorial series entitled *Inna Europa, Inna Literatura* [*Another Europe, Another Literature*]. This is a significant title, which shows the context in which Romanian literature appears in the 2000s and how it is promoted: as something exotic, far away and in need of discovery, as if the long tradition of Romanian-Polish intercultural relations had never existed.

In 2013, in Wrocław, the publishing house Książkowe Klimaty was established, as the founders themselves confess, "out of a passion for exploring the unknown"³². They publish contemporary European prose mainly focused on the South. Each series is dedicated to a different country or region. There are books from the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Greece, Bulgaria and Romania. Thus, we are dealing here with a similar pattern, meaning that literature written in less widely spoken languages is considered "unknown" and "exotic", even though we are talking here about other Slavic languages, countries neighbouring Poland, or countries that Poles visited in large numbers during the communist period (like Bulgaria or Romania).

The important position of Wrocław as a centre of production of Romanian literature in Polish translation was consolidated in 2014, when Amaltea Publishing House was founded, at the initiative of the translator Radosława Janowska-Lascar. The first translated novel published there, *Matei Brunul* by Lucian Dan Teodorovici, received the Readers' Prize at the ANGELUS Central European Literary Award, already a great success for a newly established publishing house, which strengthened its position on the book market.

Kraków is second in terms of the number of translations thanks to a publishing series established in 2018 at the Universitas Publishing House, one of the largest

³² See <https://ksiazkoveklimaty.pl/>. Accessed April 30, 2024.

publishing houses in Poland. The series *Romania Today* was intended to be dedicated to contemporary Romanian literature (fiction and non-fiction), and it aimed to publish 4-5 books a year and draw the attention of the publishing market. The editor-in-chief of the series was Jakub Kornhauser, himself a translator of poetry from Romanian, Serbian, Croatian, French and a poet in his own right. The series had only two editions (in 2018 and 2019), in which 10 books were published. The above-mentioned editorial initiative explains why 2018 became the most successful year since 1989 in terms of the number of translations.

Polish Translators

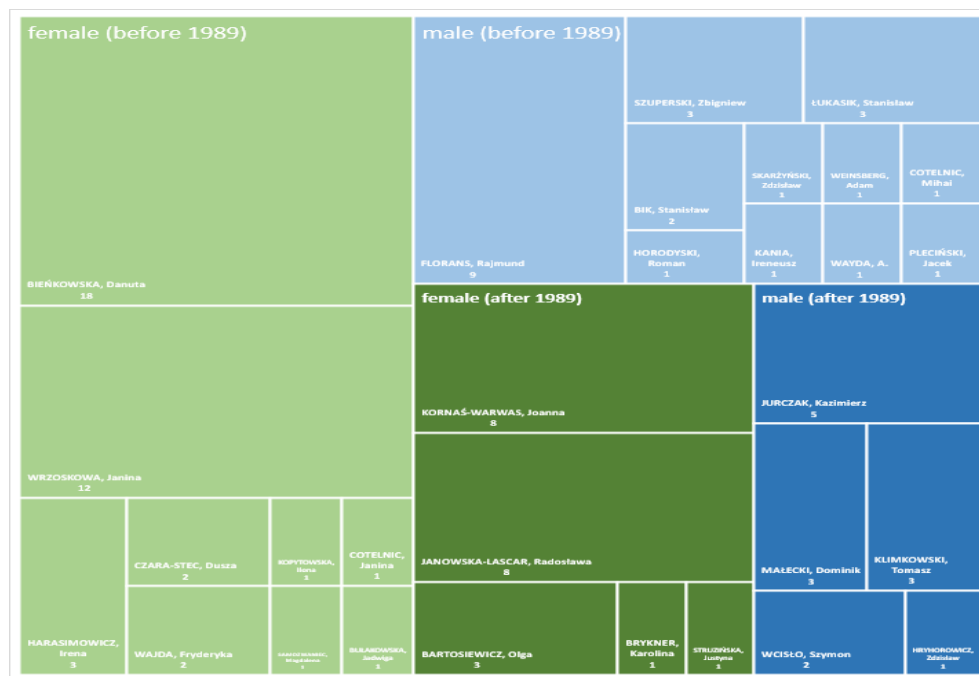


Fig. 11. Polish Male and Female Translators of the Romanian Novel Before and After 1989

In the context of importing and adapting a literary text into another cultural background, translators deserve our attention, as by rewriting the original text, they become its co-authors. Out of the 30 translators, there are 14 women and 16 men (**Fig. 11**). However, the proportion of women in the production of translations, although they themselves are fewer in number, is much higher: 61 translations are signed by women and only 39 by men. This disparity – compared to the male dominance in the author category – reveals gender conditions that hinder women’s access to the publishing market as authors, especially to a foreign publishing market, but grant them the role of intermediaries. This also suggests a

higher level of professionalism among women, each of them translating an average of 4 novels, while men only translate about two.

The pioneer of Polish translations is Stanisław Łukasik (1897–1962), a Romanian language professor and linguist at Jagiellonian University. Regarding translators from the communist era, in most cases we are talking about the generation of those who, after Poland was invaded in September 1939 by Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union, sought refuge in Romania, where they learned the language. Perhaps this also explains why interwar literature became popular among them starting in the late 1950s, in the period corresponding to the typical global trend of the thaw era. The contribution of translators such as Danuta Bieńkowska, appointed by the ministry to monitor trends in Romanian literature, Janina Wrzosek, and Rajmund Florans, remains the most visible to date.

Regarding the educational identity of translators in the Polish literary landscape after 1989, all of them graduated in Romanian philology either from the Jagiellonian University in Kraków or from the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, so we can speak here of a “new wave” of translators due to the development of Romanian studies in Poland. Thus, we can outline the existence of two “translation circles”. The first one includes Kazimierz Jurczak from the Department of Romanian Language and Literature in Kraków and his students who became either researchers or translators – Radosława Janowska-Lascar, Szymon Wcisło, Joanna Kornaś-Warwas, Olga Bartosiewicz-Nikolaev, and the second one was formed around Zdzisław Hryhorowicz from Poznań and his students Justyna Teodorowicz (b. Strużińska), Tomasz Klimkowski, Dominik Małecki, Karolina Brykner.

Concerning Romanian literature, it is very often the translator who selects the author/book that deserves to be translated and presents it to the publisher; the translators are also in many cases asked for an expert opinion on the quality of a particular book proposed for publication. Hence, he or she also plays the role of a literary agent. As our research suggests, based on the memoirs of translators³³, discussions with translators currently active in the literary market and observation of their professional activity (e.g. the case of the Amaltea publishing house, established on the initiative of, among others, translator Radosława Janowska-Lascar, who thus gained editorial control over the process of publishing and promoting Romanian literature in Poland), as well as reference to the professional experience of one of the authors of the article, an active translator, the translator’s role remains constant regardless of the political regime. The translator needs to know the literary market of the target culture very well and to be aware of what might appeal to the Polish reader. This is why Dan Lungu (2 novels), Filip Florian (4), Lucian Dan Teodorovici (2) and Cristian Teodorescu (2) are among the most

³³ See Bieńkowska, *Zwyciężyłam*.

translated authors: in their prose, the communist past, memory and history are important as major themes that Poles like and with which they can identify. It should not be forgotten that they are writers who are often translated abroad, which contributes to their symbolic capital in Poland (for example, the novel *Sînt o babă comunistă* [*I Am an Old Communist Hag*] is translated into at least 14 languages). Smaller publishers often rely for their existence precisely on personal contacts, sympathies, the translators' knowledge and their literary taste; the decision to publish is also influenced by international awards and the fact that the proposed text has been translated into the language of a country that has a more established position in the world literature system (e.g. Tatiana Țibuleac's international success in recent years has led to the translation of her two novels in Poland).

The translator therefore claims a certain position of power not only in the literary field of the target culture but also in that of the source culture (e.g. translators' participation in international literary festivals in Romania, their personal contacts with writers or publishers).

Conclusions

A thorough analysis of the quantitative data we have been able to collect so far has led us to the following conclusions:

1. Compared to other countries in the region, Poland appears as a culture with a rich reception of Romanian literature, but at the same time is characterized by a high level of autonomy when it comes to selecting novels for translation. The latter is mainly due to translators whose role in this process, despite the many political and economic difficulties in the Polish publishing market in the last century, remains fundamental and indicates their strong position in the intercultural transfer between (semi)peripheral countries, despite the fact that this position has not been noticed or appreciated either by literary critics or by readers for a long time.

2. The presence and quantity of translations of Romanian literature in Poland depend mainly on the political and economic situation of both countries. This is evident during the World War II crisis and the post-1989 transition, and it is visible in the rising number of translations from the communist period and the significant increase in translations after Romania's accession to the European Union. The last few years, which have been characterized by a decline in translation production, have been marked by the pandemic crisis, the Romanian state's failure to provide sufficient funding for translation initiatives, and the deteriorating situation of small, niche publishers on the Polish publishing market (which are nowadays the main suppliers of so-called "minor" literature).

3. Translations of novels from the communist period are characterized by much richer genre and thematic diversity than post-1989 translations, which, as might be expected, are much more sensitive to the needs of the market and the

reader and are also dependent on external funding sources and the international symbolic capital of individual authors.

4. The gender disparity we noticed (more Romanian male writers, but more Polish female translators) reveals the still existing inequality between the position of men and women in the literary field. It is mainly literature written by men that gets translated, although it is mainly introduced into the canon by qualified women. However, by practising a profession whose status has been unclear for a long time, the translators are considered invisible and ignored in reviews or publishing promotional strategies, and their financial situation is much less favourable (although here both the above-mentioned professions may qualify as precarious work). In Poland, only recently have the translators begun to function as co-authors of a book. It is officially agreed that they should have their name printed on the cover, and their cooperation with publishers has been officially professionalized³⁴.

5. Among the 92 translated novels, the Polish reader can find both titles considered canonical by Romanian literary history and titles that have appeared on the Polish publishing market only due to the literary taste of the translators. However, we can treat the whole as a representative and diverse enough corpus for the average Polish reader to form a general opinion about Romanian novelistic production in the 20th and 21st centuries.

6. Given the limited data set to which we applied the computational method, we admit that within the scope of the three main topics we address – namely, the political history, geography, and gender identity of Romanian translations on the Polish literary market – the strength of our methodological approach lies not so much in generating entirely new knowledge, but rather in confirming our presuppositions and research intuitions derived from traditional work with the corpus of literary texts and critical studies. Since our research is pioneering in this area, we believe that validating hypotheses on the functioning of Romanian translations within the Polish literary field in this way is useful, significant, and valuable from a scientific perspective. This research represents a preliminary step towards constructing a social and cultural history of the Romanian novel in Polish translation. In the subsequent phase of our project, which will involve direct analysis of the entire corpus of 95 translations of 92 novels, we anticipate uncovering new and previously inaccessible insights. This analysis will shed light on the portrayal of Romania in Polish literature and public consciousness, the divergences between the original texts and their translations, and the prevailing themes in the Romanian literature available in Polish.

³⁴ See *Konwencja Krakowska 2022* [*The Kraków Convention 2022*], <https://konwencjakrakowska.pl/>. Accessed April 30, 2024.

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A PROJECT OF INTER-PERIPHERAL HISTORY OF THE ROMANIAN
NOVEL: THE POLISH CASE*(Abstract)*

The main purpose of the article is to identify the most important tendencies in the reception of the Romanian novel in Poland in the 20th and 21st century, thus proposing an original and innovative analysis of the process of the cultural transfer between these two (semi)peripheral cultures. The study focuses on a complete corpus of 95 novels written in Romanian (also by authors from the Republic of Moldova) and translated into Polish between 1931 and 2023, providing a new and comprehensive perspective on a complex issue such as an interperipheral literary exchange. The paper uses statistical and computational methods to conduct a sociological study of literature, thus exploring the social, political, and cultural circumstances that influenced the evolution of the reception of the Romanian novel in Poland, also characterizing the agencies of this phenomenon (writers and translators). Moreover, it attempts to situate the regional Polish case into a broader, global context of the reception of the Romanian novel during the last century.

Keywords: Romanian literature, Polish literary translation, novel, cultural exchange, reception.

UN PROIECT AL ISTORIEI INTERPERIFERICE A ROMANULUI
ROMÂNESC: CAZUL POLONEZ*(Rezumat)*

Scopul principal al articolului este de a identifica cele mai importante tendințe ale receptării romanului românesc în Polonia secolele al XX-lea și al XXI-lea, propunând astfel o analiză originală și inovatoare a procesului de transfer cultural între aceste două culturi (semi)periferice. Studiul abordează un corpus de 95 de romane scrise în limba română (inclusiv cele aparținând autorilor din Republica Moldova) și traduse în poloneză între 1931 și 2023, oferind o perspectivă nouă și cuprinzătoare asupra unei probleme complexe, anume schimbul literar interperiferic. Lucrarea utilizează metode statistice și computaționale pentru a realiza un studiu sociologic al literaturii atât prin explorarea circumstanțelor sociale, politice și culturale care au influențat evoluția receptării romanului românesc în Polonia, cât și prin caracterizarea agenților acestui fenomen (scriitori și traducători). În plus, studiul contribuie la situarea cazului regional polonez într-un context mai larg, global, al receptării romanului românesc în secolul al XX-lea.

Cuvinte-cheie: literatură română, traducerea literară poloneză, roman, schimb cultural, receptare.