

**THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, RESEARCH, YOUTH  
AND SPORTS  
„1 DECEMBRIE 1918” UNIVERSITY, ALBA IULIA  
THE FACULTY OF HISTORY AND PHILOLOGY**

**DOCTORAL THESIS**  
**(summary)**

**Scientific coordinator  
Prof. univ. dr. MIRCEA POPA**

**PhD  
COMAN (ARDELEAN) CARMEN GEORGETA**

**ALBA IULIA  
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**HORTENSIA PAPADAT-BENGESCU IN THE CONTEXT  
OF THE EUROPEAN NOVEL**

**Scientific coordinator  
Prof. univ. dr. MIRCEA POPA**

**PhD STUDENT  
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**Key-words: Hortensia Papadat Bengescu, European novel, feminine prose, reflexivity, selfreferentiality , biography, ,”spiritual body”, ,”indubitable body”, narrative architecture, chronotop, dandy , picaro, *The Stranger*.**

**Motivation for choosing the subject.** Considered by the literary criticism as one of the most important novelists for the beginnings of the 20th century Romanian literature, perceived as the author of a dense, eclectic novel, totally different from what the Romanian novel had represented and had brought to stage until her or blamed for the ” excesses ”of lyrism, pornography or pathology, Hortensia Papadat Bengescu is, in spite of a biography that constantly served her literary preoccupations and the need of her contact with the great European literature, perfectly synchronized with the interwar spirit, maybe more than some of her privileged peers were, but not superior to her in any way, like Martha Bibescu, Elena Vacarescu, Ana de Noailles.

”The beginning of the century catches the Romanians ready to face properly the renewals that are to be happening. More and more young Romanians do their studies in the capital of France, more and more artists, writers, lovers of art and literature could be seen in Paris’cafes looking for that spirit of the century that can bring them into prominence and make them more noticeable in their country but also abroad.”, considered Mirecea Popa , synthesizing the tendency he found at the majority of the Romanian youngs who understood the importance of the contact with the western world and culture.Unfortunately,at that time, for Hortensia Papadat- Bengescu the games had already been made. Her wish to free herself of parental guardianship will make her, in 1896, take a decision that will mark her entire existence: marriage, at the age of 20, to a judge, that will implacably tie her to a numerous family, without any preoccupations or understanding for literature, with a route that marked, year in year out, provincial towns, without any literary and cultural life.

Marriage would not be, as she wished,”the open door to lavishness”, but ,” the narrow door to the prevalent life”, poor in marital romanticism and suffocated by her position of mother of five children. It would be hard for her ,but not impossible to turn the scale towards the world of letters ,in a subsequent stage of her life, and the doors that had been open to her at ” Viata Romaneasca” and at ”Sburatorul” had been the alternatives for the possibilities that direct contact with the European literature could have offered her.

Our action is wanted to be ,one of the recovering type but also of rehabilitation of Bengescu’s work in a 21st century to which Hortensia Papadat-Bengescu belongs to, from the point of view of students’ access to her work, in an undeserved ”barn” of literature, and on a second shelf from the point of view of literary criticism, on a shelf called ” already read and discussed”. Preceded by two previous attempts- a paper degree and a dissertation which concerned Hortensia Papadat-Bengescu’s literature, the present PhD thesis initially wanted to be a closer paper, through the specific methods, to the comparative literature, setting as goals the identifications of the conjoint characteristics of three great European novelists: Hortansia Papadat-Bengescu, Virginia W., Simone de Beauvoir.

At the suggestion of univ. Dr. Professor Mircea Popa, to whom we can only thank, we decided to open the perspective and quit the action which would have been restrictive, right from the beginning, and, obviously unfair and detrimental to the Romanian novelist.

An impulse was also given by misses Gabriela Omat, the researcher from the Romanian Cultural Institute, who presently deals with the manuscripts' publishing of the novel "Straina", who supported and appreciated our attempt of approaching our great writer's work in a period in which, she said, Hortensia Papadat-Bengescu fell under a truly undeserved shadowed area.

We cannot know what the work of Hortensia Papadat-Bengescu could have become in the context of direct contact with the great European literatures, or under what auspices would Bengescu's novels have evolved in the absence of the interferences of such as Ibraileanu or Lovinescu (interferences which we do not consider appropriate at all, as from our point of view, they had estranged her from "the spirit of the century" and had rescored her tendencies). Even less, we cannot know what her literary destiny would have been if she had expressed herself in an international language, as the expatriated writers did, and who found through this way the access, the recipe to public success. But it hadn't been the case. Hortensia Papadat-Bengescu didn't make any compromises and concessions to the European public, because she knew from the beginning that her work is characterized by "universality", just as she herself admitted. "The biographical claustration" of which Andreia Roman was talking, was not, fortunately, doubled by a literary one. Our novelist's readings, which compensated the direct contact with the European literary world, and her "more intuitive receptivity, but unusually intense towards the phenomena of modernity" offered her the opening of a world which had been previously cancelled by circumstances.

**Objectives and research methods.** Therefore, in this PhD thesis, we intend to demonstrate that Hortensia Papadat-Bengescu's modernity does not find itself in the origins or along the line of Romanian modernity but rather on the directions of European interwar literary spirits. Not the image of the province, nor the the image of the bourgeoisie come from the Romanian prose writers, rather the less the narrative instrumentation, as the European dimension of her work consists mainly in "avoiding the national character" and the promotion of some European humanity constants: the province is not anymore "the place where nothing happened" or the source of cheap romanticism, but the place of those who compensate the shortage of their existence with meditation, introspection. Also, Bengescu's bourgeoisie gets rid of character prototypes already played out, evolving (or regressing?) to a capital dominated by society, but also by obsessions and anxieties that, many times, change the narration into an introspection or retrospection.

Hence, we aim at a resurrection of the perspective on the novel of Hortensia Papadat – Bengescu, and, at the same time, of the approaching modalities of this, an initiative generated by the way in which a great part of the monographs and the studies dedicated to her work were conceived, frequently "sinning" by isolating the creation from the biography, abolishing repeatedly the psychoanalytical methods and limitating themselves, according to Rene Wellek, to "an intrinsic approach of the work", to an approach concerned with the creation itself, neglecting factors such as the environment where it had occurred, the family background and the socio-cultural context where it had developed. A use of the methods belonging to the sociological criticism, where necessary, will permit us, to view the literary fact as "a sociological fact", trying to establish to what extent is the work the result of the presence of the writer in a certain family and social environment, the role and the influence of the collective mentality, the consequences of the writer's background..

We do not aim to mention some simple parallelisms of the creation with some of the European prose writers (as they appear in the classical studies), but we will try to exemplify and analyze, in detail, the elective affinities, as well as the existing



concordances between the components of “her creation laboratory” and those of the great European interwar prose writers, in order to establish what the comparative literature calls “genus proximus”.

For exemplification, we could mention only the possibility of explaining the theme of the bastard through a biographical detail: the parents’ marriage two years after having conceived the writer, also the identification of some biographical realities in the construction and the temper of her characters or the existence of some relatively identical evolving stages in the case of the women writers: Hortensia Papadat-Bengescu, Virginia Woolf and Simone de Beauvoir ( the affiliation to a literary circle / famous magazine, the correspondence with a “ spiritual mentor”, the interest in the new feminine ideology ).

While outlining “ the psychological profile” we will have in mind concepts and theories specific for sciences that are collateral to literature, corroborated to those of existentialistic, psychoanalytical, psychological criticism , due to the fact that the psychological factor, in the case of the feminine prose, had been ,if not contested ,regarded with reserve by the criticism of that time.(George Calinescu, Mihai Ralea).

Therefore, the demonstration of the depth of the novel and the preoccupation for the investigation of the most profound areas of the human psychic will be accomplished not only by treating some psychological prototypes, very significant for the writer’s creation and for the other prose writers concerned, but also by a support of these through frequent confessions that make up the true biography of the work. We will try to enlighten the memorialistic fiction or that “ of frontier”, of journalism and that of the interviews, just to exactly demonstrate the author’s preoccupation for the creation act and to spoil the legend according to which, unlike Camil Petrescu or Liviu Rebreanu ,Hortensia Papadat-Bengescu had not been preoccupied by the publishing of a creation journal or a by the synthesizing of the views concerning literature.

We consider that, even though not linked under the same volume, the autobiography requested by George Calinescu , the interviews given to Felix Aderca, Dan Petrasincu, I. Valerian or the correspondence with the two great critics of that period, Garabet Ibraileanu and Eugen Lovinescu, together with the published articles, they not only represent a psychological and social document , but also a way to rebuild her route of becoming a prose writer and to settle her conception about fiction ,in general, and about the novel, especially. Actually, the interest for “ spiritual deeds”, the decoding of some parameters belonging to the feminine psychology concur with the attempt of self-knowledge, the preference for the feminine psychic study being well known, more interesting than the masculine one, as she confessed in a famous interview , correspond, as Eugen Lovinescu said, with the “ pure lyricism and the incisive self-analysis phase “.

We aim, as well, the clear and demonstrated delimitation of the creation’s framework’s peculiarities which, going beyond the feminine romantic sentimentalism, creatively includes as much traditional elements and as modernist, innovator too : starting with themes and motifs ,peculiarities of the chronotop, going to narrative techniques ,novel framework, psychological analyses , polyphonic composition ,character typology, ,as a response to the numerous consecrated theories which mentioned the “ composition imbalance”, “the inconsequence of a formula” or the “ work belonging rather to an archaeologist than to an architect”.

We considered necessary to eliminate from our study what we considered to be “common places” of Bengescu’s exegesis and we mean by that the themes, motifs, such as illness, death, a falling-off aristocracy but also the correspondence between the short prose of the author and that of such as Virginia Woolf and Katherine Mansfield, especially after the appearance, in 2007, of the volume coordinated by Andreia Roman which supplemented this deficient compartment of the Bengescu’s work analysis.

We have not given proof of hypotheses launched by the literary criticism and we have in our mind the European references taken in relation with our writer's work (mentioned, in detail, the 3<sup>rd</sup> subheading of the first chapter), but we have tried to establish new directions which, somewhat original and bold, have permitted us a speech completely freed from previous criticism.

Finally, we have as a purpose to bring forward for discussion again one piece of work that had not been through the expected exhilaration in the '90-ies, after the "severe quarantine" which the whole creation of the author had suffered after 1950, due to the bourgeoisie world that she had analysed, and which would stop only after 1970 when critics like Constantin Ciopraga, Ovid. S. Crohmalniceanu, Viola Vancea, Nicolae Manolescu, Vasile Popovici, sau Bogdan Lefter, together with the one who handled the attendance of the work's complete edition, Eugenia Tudor-Anton, would as a recovering act, put the Romanian novelist's work on the well deserved pedestal. Lately only few studies have concerned the work of Hortensia Papadat-Bengescu, mostly aiming at a single defining aspect. Actually, these are mentioned in the present study. We consider that they all have in common not necessarily the refusal of answering to a question, but the fragile attempt of demonstrating a hypothesis which we interrogatively lay down below.

Is, nevertheless, Hortensia Papadat-Bengescu a writer of European value? In fact, this is the main objective of this paper. That she had "the consciousness of universality" we found out right from a letter addressed to Camil Baltazar in 1929 where she stated: "my universality characterizes me", referring to the "indifference", the lack of interest of the translators for her work due to the absence of the elements with national features.

But the supreme argument is the literary manifest of her generation fellows, appeared a year after the writer's confession, in "Tiparnita Literara" (1930, nr.2-3), under a more than significant heading: "Marturie pentru marea europeana: Hortensia Papadat-Bengescu", signed by Camil Petrescu, Liviu Rebreanu, Mihail Sebastian, Ticu Archip, Felix Aderca, I. Peltz, Camil Baltazar. The recognition of the European value and, more than that, of its amplitude, by great prose writers doubled by literary phenomena theorists of the time, is a complete argument taking in consideration the author's pride.

**The novelty** of the research is backed up, first of all, by the pluriperspectivistic approach of Bengescu's work, by avoiding the classical canon of analysis, which was overused by the authors of the monographic studies, and then by the proposal of a new algorithm, of a new vision of the work, emphasizing especially those narrative theories that have remained untouched. We have set as a goal a clear articulation of those elements that integrate the modernity of Hortensia Papadat-Bengescu's work into the European modernity and the reference to such novels and authors that have been less mentioned in relation with "the great Europeaness", but who, we considered, show obvious similarities with the author with whose work this paper is concerned with. Also, the analysis of the excerpts of the lost novel, "Straina", represent, we believe, another element that supports the novelty of our thesis.

We mention the fact that the names which we have considered necessary to add to that of Hortensia Papadat-Bengescu are definitely only a few from a long list which we desire to complete also after this action will reach its end, in an attempt to abolish certain geographical borders which Hortensia Papadat-Bengescu has never physically gone beyond, but which we have the duty to annihilate through the prominence of Europeanism without any frontiers of her creation.

In what concerns the difficulty of the scientific research, it must be said that it arises from the impossibility of clearly tracing a delimitation between this and the analysis process. Moreover, I have encountered difficulties at the level of literary

concepts, since the ambiguity and tolerance of some narrative terms and intersection of some character types have led, in some cases, to some unfortunate overlappings, which have hardly borne a strict separation.

**The structure of the thesis.** The present thesis is made up of five chapters preceded by an argument and followed by conclusions and bibliography.

The first chapter, entitled "*The twenty-century European novel-unity in diversity*", mostly a theoretical one, is meant to draw both a portrait of the early novel and vectors of the critical voices of the early twenty century novel, with a view to value, direction and meaning, three significant aspects that a vector involves. Facing a crisis, easily explained through the modern individual's torments and two aspects which generate crisis situations: "to get into a crisis means, on the one hand, to be submitted to a contradictory internal force, and, on the other hand, to get to the limit, at the end of your potential"), the novel is under the consideration of the literary criticism which makes use of instruments either specific to thematic, stylistic criticism or structuralist one, which analyses the novel from the exterior. In this sense, the studies here observed, were conducted by foreign authors such as Rene-Marill Alberes, Georg Luckas, Erich Auerbach, Marthe Robert, Victor Sklovski, Philippe van Tieghem, Salvatore Battaglia, but also Romanian ones like Romul Munteanu, Liviu Petrescu, Tudor Olteanu sau Toma Pavel.

The subchapter "*The novel- a book for mind, soul or literature?*" is an attempt of a comparative approach of the two existing studies in Romania in 2008, namely "The art of the novel" by Milan Kundera and "The consideration of the novel" by Toma Pavel. Both of the mentioned studies seem to reflect and complete one another through the deep meanings contained, seemingly unconsciously passing the significant issues from one to another (similar to a novel in which the characters gradually show up), thus, proving that the novel, regardless of definitions and taxonomies, is indeed a quite moving and indispensable book for mind and soul, therefore... literature.

The subchapters "*The European modern novel under the psychoanalyst's view*" and "*From the European modern novel to the great European novelist*" set up the characteristics of the European and Romanian novel at the beginning of the twenty century, placing great emphasis on the context of the Papadat Bengescu's novels. More than that, there has been a focus on the achievement of the so-called "radiography" of the Bengescu's exegesis, which has had as the starting point the famous comments attributed to the authoress by the contemporaries, and thus, reminding those voices, which, in a more or less justified way, have associated Papadat Bengescu with the greatest European writers, taking into account her attempt to build a critical mosaic of confluences and possible influences.

The last subchapter "*The feminine fiction in front of the mirror*" marks out the ground of the feminine prose, its significant moments of evolution and characteristics, in spite of various critics who deny its existence.

In fact, this subchapter lays the ground for the next chapter, one of literary analysis, of which title embraces two of the most common concepts attributed to the feminine fiction, namely reflexivity and selfreferentiality. Even though critics claimed that there was not a genuine Hortensia Papadat Bengescu prose, the issue I have relied on was the obvious concern of the authoress for the process of literary creation, though not materialised in genre studies. A detailed observation of the authoress's interviews, autobiography and personal correspondence has showed that we witness a real puzzle, of which pieces, once appropriately arranged, reflect a clear artistic creed and the creation process altogether.

The next three subchapters” *the sweet burden of biography*”, “*The flowers of the inner life*” or “*The voluptuousness of selfmeditation*” and “*From the spiritual body to the undoubtful one*”. Explain what has been called “*The Confession Temptation*”, as it appears in the autobiographical passages under the title “*The arabesque of memories*”, in the novel “*The Dragon*” or “*The Hallipii series*”. Including the already mentioned novels, the analysis, of a comparative type, aims at literary pieces belonging to European novelists, such as “*The Memories of an obedient girl*” by Simone de Beauvoir, “*To the lighthouse*” and “*The Waves*” by Virginia Woolf. I took a particular interest in the way biographical elements could be found in the literary text, and the strategies adopted by the authoress to achieve a more or less perceptible, autobiographical transfer to her literary character, the fictive venture that holds the real inquisitive mind or the view of the world and the link with the narrative voice of the novel.

I have tried to prove that the reflector- characters are of a real narrative value, since they are both archeologists and creators, searching, interpreting, analysing types of human personalities and conflicts, and generously offering the narrative perspective, suggesting and rebuilding, beyond events and characters` development, the idea of life even when they are certain to be in the presence of the “dead souls”.

The third chapter”*the novelistic architecture*” consists of a critical and comparative analysis of the elements of structure and and composition that support the modernity of the Papadat Bengescu`s prose, the technique being that already used in the previous chapters: the identification of the significant phases the European novel had been thorough, the recognition of its particularities in the Bengescu`s fiction and the illustration of the concept through relevent situations in the fiction under study.

In support of our view, the subchapter “*From the pictoresque chronical novel to...the savoury of the picaresque one*”`s emerges with the pluricapacities of the existing typologies of the age, successfully or not defined in the European literature, and continues with relevent examples for each of them, taken from the Bengescu`s novel. It has been noticed that, by giving up upon the almost impossible chronological order and the insignificant cause- effect process, and creating instead an almost musical symbolical composition in which the laitmotif is dominant, Hortensia Papadat Bengescu manages to create an authentic poliphonic masterpiece, placing an increased emphasis on music: on the one hand the narrative plot emerges with a poliphonic construction, and, on the other hand, music seems to be a good narrative excuse and stylistic feature, for the musicality attributed to words, the continuous intermingle of the musical rhythms and the rythmatic shift from the static plot to the dynamism of the characters.

Beside the already famous human types, closely associated with the Halipii saga, I also considered a necessity the connection with the picaresque novel, for the existance of some characters that, as we consider, are not just classical upstarts, but also local picaro or picara. Similar to this, there is the fictional bestiary, in a baroque style, whom we may come across as a quite timid and introvert one, in Proust`s novel. In spite of the fact that the interwar autoress`s novels are not, according to a dictionary definition, fable and alegorical stories antologies, this subchapter deeply outlines an ignored aspect of Bengescu`s novels, namely the frequent use of nicknames or metaphors borrowd from the semantic related to animal nature. All of these are signs of the grotesque, suggesting imperfecion, monstrosity or the animalic drive within an individual.

The subchapter “*The fifty eye-paired narrator or the temptation of the polyhedric*” centres upon another significant narrative feature: the point of view. Once mentioning the main points of view within the European context and the most important narrative methods which Bengescu approached and adopted, I tried to support a personal hypothesis. Therefore we start out by assuming that the narrator, in the Hallipii` saga, is

not just a mere “information deliverer” and the narrative discourse is free of the pressure of the exact accounting of the omniscient narrator. The voices around, with the exception of the novel *Fecioarele despletite*, almost imperceptibly replace each other or leave room to a neutral narrator.

However, there is still persistent a narrator who, paradoxically, keeps ironizing the other narrators or arguing with them, and this way borrowing from or lending to the others the vocabulary and the names in use. In each of the interwar authoress' s, the alteration or multiplication of the narrative perspectives together with the multiple point of view are analysed as they progress. The fluctuation of the narrative perspective determined us to approach this aspect in terms of phenomenology, and to compare the two types identified by Husserl with the emblematic reflector- characters: Mini and Nory. What makes the noesis is the act of knowledge and of the synthesis accomplishment, whilst noema comprises the knowledge content of the object in view. It is all about a plus or minus of knowledge, known in terms of Luciferic, respectively paradisiacal knowledge as found in Blaga' s paradigm.

The subchapter “*The paradoxical chronotop*” approaches the problem of space in Bengescu' s novels, since we consider that the town, the place so much used by the authoress under the direct influence of Lovinescu and Ibraileanu, becomes a metacharacter indeed. There are two main characteristics that can be attributed to the Bengescu' s town: on the one hand, a supreme metropolis, as regarded by Mini, a kind of Eden that serves for personal purpose, and, on the other hand, an unnatural decline of the capital, caused by a necessary return to a fictional Ithaca, which, in this case, is represented by the Baldovinsti' s place or other provincial alternatives such as Braila and Vaslui. The decline is partly brought about by a home perception like Alma Mater does first, and later on some other characters such as Costel Petrescu, Aneta Pascu and Nory Baldovin, for whom, home seems what it is called “pied-a-terre”. Their perspectives on space have led to the defector-characters of the town as met in the novels” the *Charmed Mountain*” by Thomas Mann or “*The Town and the Mountain*” by Eca de Queoroz.

A subchapter of the thesis has been dedicated to the interior close space. Evidently, Bengescu' s novels suggest an urban area that narrows and closes progressively, and this phenomenon is generated by either the characters' incapacity to find their own place in the social context of the capital, or a gradual process of interiorization caused by various external factors. Regardless of the factors' nature (domestic spaces that offer the illusion of secure intimacy or mere shelter-like spaces, symbols of a sedentarism which ultimately prove to be malefic or destructive), the interior space definitely stands out as a decisive element in the narrative construction of this period novel.

Though, in Bengescu' s novels, the dominant interior spaces are not extremely diverse, there is a remarkable gradual significance that can be attributed to them. In this way, it can be noted outstanding places like: The Baldovin Castle, that of Barodin or Maxentiu, the manor in Garla, the house in Izvor, Walter' s sanatorium, Elena Draganescu' s saloon, the Rimi' s living-room, Coca-Aimee' s room, the laboratory, Caro' s office, Lina' s consultance room, Lica' s flat, Mari' s up floor and her basement, the Viennese café, the basement of Costel Petrescu or of the college where the twins Hallipa were doing “experiments”, the boarding school in Vaslui, the Law Courts, the bed, the wagon, or the car.

Another subchapter is dedicated to the idea of time. When dealing with Hortensia Papadat Bengescu, there are some aspects that temporality involves: the illusion of time precision, the absence of chronology, the eterogeneity of the subjective time, the play with

the time beads, and time as subject for the characters' meditation. We set out from the Pouillon's idea, that the novels *'The dragon'*, and *'The Fiancee'* can be regarded as novels of fate, since, from a temporal reason, they are much more related to the XIX<sup>th</sup> century novel, whilst the other four volumes of the Halipii saga are certainly novels of duration, in which the importance of chronological narration is inferior to the correlation time –conscience, which plays a decisive role. Each of the Bengescu's novels' features has been exemplified in details, closely related to the novels of Thomas Mann, Mauriac, Proust, Huxley, Virginia Woolf.

The fourth chapter, "*European Interferences and Pseudointerferences: genus proximus and the specific difference*" is intended to launch and dismantle comparative hypotheses related to Bengescu's novels, which have been more or less analysed. The first subchapter- "*Bengescu's Novel- Symposium of Arts and Refined Coquetry with science*" outlines a feature that has been slightly remaked in connection with Bengescu's novels, namely the perfect harmonization between literature and the filosofy or psychology of the age.

Thus, in Bengescu's novels, one may come across literary and musical references, scientific theories, thoughts on fundamental existential issues, ethetic, psychological or even parapsychological elements, all of these perfectly integrated in what can be called "the spirit of the age". Moreover, it is remarkable the interaction between various domains such as music, painting, literature or subtle flirts with science like esthetics (especially the esthetics of the ugly), filosofy, physics, anthropology, psychology. There are also present theories on space and time, of a second superior conscience, of human capability to take a sight inside us, issues related to spiritual body, or nations submitted to hereditary factors or Freud concepts that are revealed by characters.

The subchapter "*Art, Psychology or Literature*" is a comparative study that brings face to face two strong characters: Elena Draganescu and Clarissa Dalloway.

The subchapter "*The Physiological Pressure: Primum vivere, deinde philosophari*" enlarges upon a literary motif that has been superficially approached"- starvation- through the means of two significant characters: Aneta Pascu and the main character of the novel "*Starvation*", by Knut Hamsun. Though extremely different, with distinct aspirations, level of education and intellect, the two of them share the same physiological feeling, brought about by the precarious material condition and its immediate results that are reflected in their behaviour, attitude and interhuman relationships. Anyway, the consequences generated by this advanced state of inanition are differently dealt with in each case. While Hamsun's character is entitled to confess through the means of narration, in Aneta's situation, her feelings and emotions are transmitted through the presence of the observer characters.

"*One Hypothesis, few conclusions: Hortensia Papadat Bengescu and Colette*" is the title of a subchapter which compares two authoresses who, though contemporary, have taken quite distinct biografical and literary courses, in spite of some evident resemblances that arouse from the fact that both of them find compensation in literature, are ardent readers in their childhood and adolescence, get married prematurely to much elder men for financial reasons, and are endowed with talent and passion for epistle. Nevertheless, there are still few elements that converge in the case of two of them: the important role played by women in novels and their presence in several other novels, the state of dispute between men and women conveyed by an ackward competition in which the two genders are involved, then, the issue of the youth who, in spite of all their chances to be the future winners, turn into losers because of their own wickness, and last but not least, the authoresses' relation with the existing space, the portrayal of some

characters, the emancipation of the young girls but also of the adult ladies who financially support their lovers.

A last correlation with the European literature has been achieved in the subchapter "*The Dandy- characteristic to modernity or mundanity?*" After a brief identification of the origins of the dandy- I tried a portrayal of the dandy as he appears in Bengescu`s novels, who seems to be dominated by elements of bovarism and androgyny. We assumed that, in the case of Bengescu`s novels, we couldn`t refer to a genuine dandy, since he seems to lack essential features that allow him to be considered so. A modest version of this human type might be the character of Lica Trubadurul and Walter from the novel "*The Fiancee*". Passing through a period of crisis, and barely leading their existence, the three of them hardly reflect the image of a real dandy in the reader`s eye, for they show no interest in their physical aspect, social life, and, at the same time they lack the specific culture of the self, elements which might entitle us to subscribe them into this category.

Unlike the male character, the feminine characters are displayed as very skillful in the art of flirt and coquetry, at least in the late part of their lives. Thus, Lenora, Elena and Coca-Aimee perfectly embrace features of bovarism and those specific to the Dandy type, unequally shared. In what concerns the illustration of these features, I have portrayed one of the most representative feminine characters, Coca-Aimee.

The last chapter "*In Search of the lost novel: the stranger, in periodicals*", was meant to constitute the analysis of a lost novel and...then recovered, according to the researcher Gabriela Omat. Unfortunately, her goal, that of publishing the novel at the end of 2011, has not been carried out so far. Therefore, we thought to offer, as a way of compassion for this minus, an analysis, without precedent (at least as far as we know), of the novel excerpts included in periodicals, during and after the authoress`s life. Taking into account the incomplete, fragmentary pieces of information, after a brief consideration of the genesis and diegesis of the novel, symbolically entitled "*The theory of the probabilities*", I tried to identify the main narrative discourses used in the twelve passages published during the authoress`s life and eight after, techniques which might offer us a real support in the accomplishment of a coherent analysis. Therefore, the titles of the subchapters are suggestive of the main characters or the direction adopted by the authoress in her novel: "Nory: rediviva or mortua est?", "Ina - a new narrative nucleus, "The Unsuspected ways of marriage".

Respecting the authoress`s perception of the novel, this thesis is not meant to be "a close circle of an action, seen under multiple points of view", but a challenging "open circle", a deviation of the geometrical figure, after the pattern "opera aperta".