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**ROMANIAN WOMEN WRITERS AND THE LITERARY PROFESSION
DURING THE FIRST HALF OF THE 20TH CENTURY: EXCLUSION,
FEMINISATION AND PROFESSIONALISATION OF WRITING**

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Abstract: The present paper aims to analyse the evolution of the writing profession in case of women writers during the first half of the 20th century and especially during the inter-war period. In this respect, the present research mobilises three main methodological frameworks mainly consecrated by Pierre Bourdieu and his later followers: the sociology of professions, the sociology of gender, and field theory. The professionalisation of the literary occupation is also analysed from three main perspectives in front of the backdrop against which it occurred: firstly, the evolution of the literary profession is related to the feminisation of the literary field that allowed a wide insertion of women therein; the practices of exclusion, insofar as the literary occupation remained capitalised by male dominants; and, finally, the professionalisation of writing in the case of women is correlated to the development of the literary infrastructure during the inter-war period that contributed to the dislocation of the established criteria of the co-optation of newcomers.

Keywords: feminisation of the literary field, professionalisation of writing, sociology of gender, field theory, sociology of professions.

The structure of the literary field and the positioning of agents are directly influenced by the position of the field itself within the social system and within the wider intellectual and cultural field. The literary occupation in Romania had been devaluated as a legitimate occupation. This fact is determined by the lack of a rigorous methodology and a tradition that can legitimise it, along with the import of “Western Fiction of Boehme”, a posture that works as a recruitment model, without requiring specific competences (Tudurachi 69) – here taken to refer to formalised sets of skills or otherwise specialised knowledge in the field of literary studies and practical writing, obtained via educational or academic means.

Moreover, the attempt of Cezar Bolliac to establish a pure literary society, that would have been served as an important institutional platform for professionalisation of writers and a professional homogenisation, will be turned into public accusations towards Bolliac as a dilettante, a superficial literate, as well as an impostor, his portrait being included within a pamphlet signed by I.H. Rădulescu. It can be added that Rădulescu’s belligerent gesture reveals rather a generational competition than a real literary profile of Bolliac (Tudurachi 66). But, as an effect of the lack of a literary tradition in the local cultural awareness that can legitimise literary writing as a culturally and intellectually viable discipline, as well as a rigorous methodology that can mobilise the local literary production during the 19th century, the community of writers and the writing occupation remain in a weak position within the intellectual field. Because of those traits, along with the status of writing as a symbolic profession without the potential to ensure a steady income, the status of writers is frequently restricted to a postural representation of a bohemian intellectual figure (Tudurachi 67) without any specific competences or knowledge.

The main issue that arises at the beginning of the history of the literary occupation in Romania can be related to Pierre Bourdieu’s definition of the literary and artistic professions of which volatile borders are given by the lack of requirements of educational or cultural capital, or even a specific formation (Bourdieu 15). From this standpoint, the assumption of the figural representation of Boehme creates a literary disposition for agents predicated on a devaluated status of the intellectual, devoid of both resources and competences. The wide circulation and assumption of the concept of Boehme reveals the uncertain platform of constructing literary field and its insertion

into the Romanian cultural system as a fraction and discipline located at the periphery of society, without a methodology and tradition of writing practices (Tudurachi 69). During the evolution of the literary occupation and of the domestic literary system, the professionalisation of writing occurs without dispensing of the figural representation of community through the posture of Boehme. Given this status of writing, a question arises: whether social, ethnic, and especially gender criteria can represent a restrictive condition regarding the access to writing and literary professionalisation.

Thus, the present paper endeavours to demonstrate how the rules of masculine domination worked in terms of excluding women writers from the structure of the restricted-scale production consecrated to the legitimised authors, to the masculine elites. Thus, we will measure the access of women to the literary field comparing that with the position of the literary field itself and its degree of feminisation related to the access of women and to the loss of prestige of occupation. Paradoxically, the feminisation of the literary profession through the wide absorption of female writers in the literary field and the conceiving as a minor intellectual occupation (Cacouault-Bitaud 91) contribute, despite the restriction of women writer's assertion by the male dominants, to the democratisation of access to writing. A wide permeation of the access to the literary career involves a mobilisation of a number of strategies for autonomisation and professionalisation of women writing through the forms that are contributing to the specialisation of the women writing during the inter-war period.

The access to writing: statutory reproduction, literary sociability, and exclusion

In the case of the first women writers from Romania, the access to the literary profession mainly occurs against the background of a statutory reproduction (Bourdieu 87). The transfer of power between generations follows the logic of patrimonial reproduction in its state involving a principle of "the inheritance inherits their heirs, unless, by the mediation notably of those who are provisionally responsible for it and who must assure their succession 'the dead (that is, property) seizes the quick (that is, the proprietor disposed and able to inherit)" (Bourdieu 11). In other words, the occupation of writing remains tributary to the acceptance of the father's heritage and his literary capital. In this way, they reproduce the cultural and social capital gained by the

writer/intellectual – fathers or male relatives – without homologating their dominant position due to restrictions imposed by their gender identity. So, during the 19th century and the first decades of the 20th century, many important women from the Romanian literary field accede to the literary (liberal) professions through the status of their fathers', relatives', or husbands' intellectual affiliation, mobilising either paternal inherited capital or their relational capital.

Thus, all those female authors and literary women such as Ermonia Asachi, Martha Bibesco, Anna de Noailles, Adela Xenopol, Iulia Hasdeu, Elena Văcărescu (Cornis-Pope 2004, 231-232), or Sofia Nădejde, Matilda Poni, Natalia Negru, Sanda Movilă, Agatha Grigorescu or Bebs Delavrancea who contributed to the Romanian literary patrimonial heritage, were mostly introduced in the literary field due to the inherited educational and cultural capital, as well as the access had become realistic and favourable because of their bourgeois and upper-middle class origin. Writing is either an act of acceptance of the father's heritage, or it is regulated by the male relatives, mainly partners, and, as such, the access to writing and women's writing tradition remain mainly a bourgeois and urban calling (Pârvulescu and Boatcă 3). As a consequence, the plots of many women's literary works are largely inspired from the bourgeois, middle-class or upper middle-class lifestyle. The initial insertion of women as literary agents through a preponderantly masculine vision predicts right from the beginning a statutory predicament that will continuously affect women's literary careers. As an effect, the institutionalisation of masculine domination and women's exclusion from the hierarchical structure of the field becomes immanent and foretells a challenging struggle for women as it regards the acquisition literary legitimacy.

The act of the literary writing also occurs against the background of the global and local women's movements (revolving around associations, magazines, groups) as many egalitarian feminist movements are being articulated in the public space during the inter-war period under the tutelage of figures such as Alexandrina Cantacuzino, Elena C. Meissner, Calypso Botez or Sofia Nădejde (Mihăilescu). Egalitarian claims notwithstanding, the patriarchal laws remained a fundamental and *general* (Wittig) mechanism guiding and organising the activity and the structure of the field. In this respect, the phenomenon of the rise of feminist movements can also be put in a transnational context. Thus, the rising of egalitarian ethos (that mobilised the women's

movements which are rather very partially social accepted) is a clear symptom of enlisting new-formed Romanian society into the Western spirit of modernity where already the figure of the *New Woman* is emergent (Pârvulescu and Boatcă). The *New Woman* “makes her appearance in urban literary settings” and renders the modern female artist who is the opposite representation of Victorian mother and obviously embeds the white European women (Pârvulescu and Boatcă 4). Turning to the Romanian women writers, it raises the question of where the bounds of professionalisation of writing is situated? Where it can be identified as stuck in tradition and reinforcing the dominant patterns of masculinity and a clear denying of this predicament? Is being “stuck in the masculine judgements” an effect of the symbolic violence or of the framing of gendered silence attached to the women’s writing and female writers in general?

Worth noting is the fact that the restricted access to education marks a very low degree of the potential holders, education is, in turn, limited to a statutory reproduction despite of the supposedly “democratic” and “Bohemian” character of the literary field and activities at this time. At the same time, it remains an apanage of the upper-middle class, bourgeoisie, and aristocracy during the entirety of the 19th and the first decades of the 20th century. In this respect, against the background of circulating within a narrow community coagulated after social criteria and prestige, writing is established as largely accessible only to the upper classes, a fact that underlies not a true democratisation, but one largely reserved for privileged members of certain classes, most women and other marginal categories being certainly excluded. Hence, the bohemian character of the writing that allows a wide democratisation through an uncontrolled absorption of agents (Heinich 27) is denied when considering the women writers’ community, as their access to the profession of writing does not require a specific competence, but rather a strong inherited cultural, social, and educational capital. Needless to say, it is then clearly not possible to talk about this in terms of the Bohemian artist on the margins of society or the unemployed, starving artist (Tudurachi 69).

The lack of specific competences in the case of Romanian writers in general must be related to the lack of a tradition of literary studies in Romania. Until the inter-war period, many professors had taught general notions such as languages (mainly Latin or Ancient Greek and French), without there being registered a rigorous research activity

or creative writing programs for training aspirants to literary careers (Bocai 258-260). Thus, unlike the many male aspirants (Bocai 258-260), early women writers could not aspire to the status of writers without a solid social and cultural condition. Writing circulates then as a prestigious occupation, and although its high symbolic status, as well as lack of requirements of the specific competences marks its peripheral status within the social and cultural systems, writing could not assure social mobility, being devoid of any material gain, in this way being meant to complement the status of already wealthy agents.

Therefore, the narrow access to writing for women is conditioned by the male figures' literary occupation. So, a wide correlation between parents' or male relatives' literary position and female writers can be noticed especially among those female authors who were born between 1850 and 1870. Thereafter, especially regarding female authors who had established themselves during the inter-war period, some changes in terms of women's access to the literary occupation and to the professionalisation occurs against the background of the reshaping of the literary field and the developing of the literary infrastructure. Even though, socially, the status of the literary occupation has undergone the same precarisation, an access of a wide number of women occurs between 1920-1938, with an especially noteworthy modification in the social composition of the women's fraction also being apparent as can be seen in Figure 1.

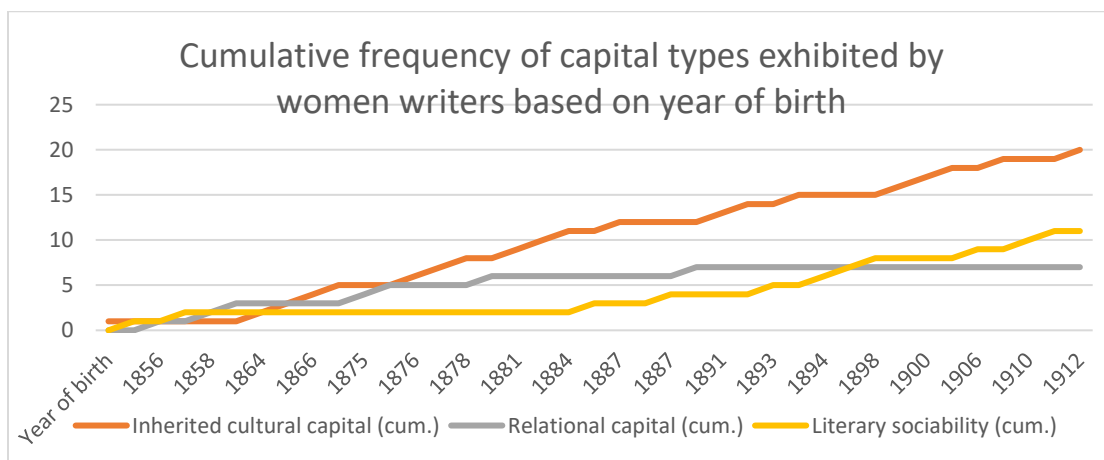


Figure 1

Some methodological notes are in order: the figure illustrates a cumulative frequency applied to 50 cases of female authors who published novels between 1918-1838. We determined the type of capital as it follows: inherited cultural capital, designating a

statutory transfer, and held by those authors whose parents (father) or close relatives (such as uncles, grandfathers) are legitimised writers. As we can notice, this type of capital will remain the main condition for accessing the literary profession in case of women writers and had served as the only way of accessing it during the latter half of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century. Relational capital pertains to those kinds of linkages that involve a domestic relationship between agents. More precisely, here the term is operated with a quite narrow sense, so being targeted those women writers whose partners or husbands are themselves established writers. In this way, writing occupation works in women's case as a feminised activity meant to confirm and reinforce the symbolic capital of their male partners (Bourdieu 69-73). Lastly, the literary sociability is in accordance with the development of the literary infrastructure by establishing specific spaces dedicated to the professionalisation and sociability between writers such as literary clubs ("cenaclu"), editorships of publishing or literary magazines, reading groups, etc. These spaces contribute to the dislocation of the required social composition of literary agents. All those spaces that occasion the developing relational capital constitute places of literary sociability that can honour the inertia of new-comers or peripheral fractions who come from the margins of the field, being devoid of a specific disposition. For instance, Aida Vrioni is one of the most important figures of Women Writer's Society, without an inherited cultural capital, from a petit-bourgeois family, her target being to occupy an editor's position at "Adevărul" in 1903, her intention being initially declined, only to accede to the position in 1904 at the same magazine. The space of editorship will contribute to the development of her network in this way, being quickly inserted in the literary field, ultimately contacting writers who will later constitute her guild around the Women Writer's Society. Then, during the inter-war period, the literary events embedded as an important part of the bourgeois intellectual's lifestyle, as well as literary magazines, publishing houses, foundations such as the Royal Foundation "Carol I" or *cenacles* such as Sburătorul will serve together as important platforms of literary mobility by assured literary sociability that those spaces involve. Source: *Chronological Dictionary of the Romanian Writers* (1995, 1998, 2001), author's own study.

The mechanisms of professionalisation of writing are articulated after the First World War through the institutional mobilisation of writers and the establishment of

consecration institutions such as literary prizes starting with 1922. Thus, the first attempt of coagulation of writers under an institutional entity had revealed an ethos guided after exclusionist and male-centred rules. The establishment of the Writers' Society 1909 (Ianoși 233) will lead gradually, as the number of women increases in the literary field, to an abolishment on women's part of the exclusionary practices. Therefore, in 1925, the Women Writers' Society from Romania is established with the goal of promoting women's writing. Moreover, since in 1926 a literary magazine that becomes an officious of women's society and one of the most important steps regarding the professionalisation of writing among women, is also established, the literary magazine's space is entirely dedicated to publishing only women's manuscripts, either established authors or debutants. The setting up of the Women Writers' becomes the most important act of autonomisation in the evolution of female writing that will cease its activity in 1943, and an equivalent movement during the post-war period does not occur.

The paramount contribution to the autonomisation over the establishing of a parallel literary institution merely consists in the act of withdrawing their writing under the jurisdictions imposed by the masculine elites. As such, Adela Xenopol and her peers found their own platform for women's literary affirmation and a much more favourable place for the professionalisation of the fraction's writing. Among many journals and magazines that were set up at that moment and had hosted women's socially and politically equalitarian ethos and discourses were *Women's Magazine* [Gazeta femeilor], *Worker Women* [Femeia muncitoare] or *Our Magazine* [Ziarul nostru] (Mihăilescu), while the *Women Writers Journal* [Revista Scriitoarelor] remains the most literary relevant.

The process of autonomisation of women's literature through the mobilisation of women writers within a specific institutional entity is followed by the mobilisation of women writers around the E. Lovinescu's *cenacle*, *Sburătorul*, where the positioning of women's writing on a secondary degree is officially postulated (Lovinescu 241, 604). Nevertheless, many women writers and the most important ones from the inter-war period were belonging to the group of *Sburătorul*. From this point, a social and cultural delimitation between female writers can be traced. The Women Writers' Society was established and mainly frequented by those authors who were holding a significant

inherited symbolic capital and cultural prestige such as Adela Xenopol or Natalia Negru, as well as Sofia Nădejde or Alexandrina Cantacuzino and Lucia Demetrius. From the most important figures that were organising the whole activity of the Women Writers Society, Aida Vrioni is among those very few female writers who does not present a relational capital and her career and entrance in the writing profession could not be related to the literary capital held by her male relatives. While the Women Writers' Society is meant to recover the women's rights for an equal access to the literary field, the patriarchal ethos around *Sburătorul* counteract the Society's agenda. Moreover, the writers' meetings from E. Lovinescu' house in the context of cenacle readings gather many writers, among them many female aspirants, in this way representing a favourable space for literary sociability, and, as an effect, neutralizing the mechanism of the emergence of inherited capital in order of literary assertion. Thus, inherited cultural capital is exceeded by relational capital (Serghi 233). Consequently, if the insertion of women in the literary field at the beginning of the 20th century is conditioned by a logic of elitist reproduction, reversely, under the cultural frame during the inter-war period had taken place a literary mobility regarding women's fraction. This mobility occurs through the displacing over both of Women Writers' Society and *Sburătorul* – a neutralisation of the importance of inherited prestige.

In other words, we can delimit two forms of mobilisation of female writing in order of its access to the literary field and professionalisation during the inter-war period: democratisation through autonomisation of women's access to the literary occupation under the Women Writers' Society, withdrawing women's literature under the jurisdiction of male dominants. And, secondly, another way of professionalisation occurs through the democratisation of access, abolishing inherited dispositions' conditions and replacing it with literary sociability that can offer the opportunity of insertion through the relational capital and specific competences.

The wide insertion of women within the literary field without a social or cultural inherited power's restriction marks the first major split between male and female writers through mobilisation of those strategies meant to exclude women writers as a viable literary goods producer. The establishment of the concept of feminine literature (*literatură feminină*) that defines women's writing is meant to organise and orient women's production into a low-brow literature, being instrumentalised as a tool of

qualification of their production as a minor one comparing with men's literary discourse. In this way, women writers are expelled from the literary infrastructure of legitimised works.

The phenomenon of exclusion works towards defending masculine domination and their position in the field establishing these forms of symbolic violence through the naturalisation of the social gender construct, that is accepted and practiced by dominated fraction (Bourdieu) within the field of literature over the setting up a concept meant to exclude female fraction. Therefore, women are the main victim of symbolic violence, and, according to Gisèle Sapiro's theoretical extension on Bourdieu's concept, it turns out that the symbolic violence is meant to cover the dominants' ideology, insofar as it is related to those symbolic forms that define literature and, in fact, are meant to conceal the ideology of dominants while legitimising it (Sapiro 2007). Thereby, framing women's writing into a lower category due to the established male dominants' judgements about the woman "natural limitation" cannot allow a specialisation of writing in the case of women. This fact can be read as an act of what P. Bourdieu calls symbolic violence. In this order, the question arises whether the misrepresentation and marginalisation of women are an effect of disguising the ideological judges of masculine domination into moral judges that impose a certain postural representation of women in terms of weakness, naïveté, and sentimentality.

Following the same logic of justification, exclusion underpinned on an ideological judge turned out to be a moral judge. For instance, in France, Henry de Montherland, whose novel *Les jeunes filles* is considered one of the most misogynist works of French literary production from 20th century (de Beauvoir). He had published an article in *La NRF* in 1941 where he deplores "chivalrous morality as an expression of martial civilisation founded on a virile order which was perverted by women [...] «gallantry having substituted by a morality of bimbos [...] by emasculating and distancing it from the real, has done so much harm for our France»" (Sapiro 2014, 338), instilling a return to that order under the umbrella of morality. In the same vein, in the local context, the bourgeois projection on male domination and women's minor status is reiterated under the frame of establishing the concept of feminine literature, that covers the dominants' ideological judgement regarding bourgeois projection of the weakness of women. Concordantly to the contextual [bourgeois] vision promoted among the members of the

Sburătorul cenacle, the meaning of women is to reinforce the masculine capital and prestige (Bourdieu 73), and this is entirely embedded within the practices of women's exclusion from the literary field during the whole inter-war period.

This fact had resulted in a complicity through women's participation in this male-centred system, which made them inevitably victims of symbolic violence. However, from this standpoint, during this period the effects of exclusion are articulated in two ways: on the one hand, it appears as a self-exclusion over ratification of dominant paradigm of *feminine* and acceptance of the generic masculine, and on the other, an insularisation of women's writing and their community had taken place, through the power of institutional delimitation under the Women Writers' Society. How this delimitation influences the professionalisation and marks the wider access to the specialisation of both categories depending on these two criteria remains an open hypothesis that will be argued for in the following section.

Feminisation of writing profession during the inter-war period

As a frequented concept in the sociology of profession, the process of *feminisation* mainly defines the relation between certain professional fields and the level of women's insertion within those professions (Bourdieu, Zaidman, Cacouault-Bitaud). More recent approaches, derived from the Bourdieusian theoretical apparatus, oppose to the concept of feminine and masculine two forms of gender capital, masculine or feminine capital, neither of which can be conflated with femaleness or manliness. Rather, these forms of capital designate specific advantages, dispositions, and skill sets (Skegs, Huppatz). According to Claude Zaidman, the concept of feminisation must be delimited. There are three main ways of utilisation of the notion: firstly, it is related to a dynamic of equalisation that alleviates a harmful historical delay, then the concept is also used for designating, in a continuation of Bourdieu's perspective, a symbolic pauperisation of a profession, as an effect being left vacant by men, thereby those professions opening their gates for peripheral social fractions such as ethnically undesirable minorities, women or other marginalised categories. Lastly, Claude Zaidman identifies feminisation as occurring in those mainly masculinised domains where women are narrowly inserted at a certain moment (Zaidman 229). Bourdieu pointed out how, historically, the endurance of prestige and the resistance of professions in front of downgrading were measured

through the capacity of defending these professions in front of female applicants. Thus, the insertion of women in a profession inherently marks its loss of prestige. Once the entrance of women in a domain occurred, the only way of conserving one's position comes from only appointing men in highest positions of professional structure, especially in the spheres of political and economic power (Cacouault-Bitaud 90).

Regarding the Romanian literary field and its feminisation during the inter-war period, many forms of this process had been articulated that marked the evolution of the local literary phenomenon until the Second World War. First, between 1918-1939, the *Chronological Dictionary of the Romanian Novel* records 60 women prose writers who published novels, among them a significant proportion being newcomers. In this respect, the feminisation of the field had taken place during this period against the background of narrow absorption of women within literary occupations, that remain consecrated professions for men, as E. Lovinescu will say to one of the female aspirants to a literary career: "literature is not a female vocation, but eminently a masculine one" (Lovinescu 604). Although women are well represented at the degree of the production of literary goods, the literary field as well as the means of legitimation and consecration remain capitalised by male dominants, in this way remaining a favourable space for reproduction of symbolic capital of the masculine elites. So, even though the occupation of writing had taken narrowly up to admit women, the feminisation could not assure an equal access to writing and recognition, moreover, the entrance of women will exacerbate the competition for defending the dominant position by the male elites.

Nevertheless, the methodological specialisation of other disciplines such as philosophy (Lazăr 199) or others that could have assured a social and economic ascension to areas such as politics, law or medical specialisations led to a feminisation of humanities in general. As an effect, according to the Romanian Statistical Yearbook, starting from 1920, the Faculty of Letters records 431 male students and 323 female students, the number of women gradually increasing, such that between in 1927 – 1928 there will be 2.646 male and 3.676 female students attending humanities, while between 1930 and 1931 1.310 men and 1.847 women are enrolled to the Faculty of Letters. Comparing these numbers with the students of Law, the masculinisation of the discipline can be noticed, as well as the higher prestige of the discipline after the number of candidates for a lawyer's professional position. Thus, in 1920, the Faculty of

Law records 4.209 male students, and a mere 148 females; in 1927 there are 7.059 male and 965 females, and finally in 1931, the gender composition of the faculty does not change, there studying 5.904 male candidates and 912 female students.

The same masculinisation occurs in other disciplines such as the sciences (Statistical Yearbook of Romania 362). As among humanities, literary studies took up to be mainly feminised during the inter-war period, that reverberates also as it regards the literary practices, insofar as many women start to practice writing, and the gendered dichotomy between rationality and emotions, between philosophy, sciences, or especially law (rigorous disciplines) and letters, between high-brow and low-brow literature is homologating in the literary practices the dichotomic dispositions between hard, rational (male) writing and “literary unsubstantial”, feminine literature which are directly determined by the gender identity of agents. As stated previously, the aspirations of women for occupying key positions are restricted by the reproduction of male dominants position despite of the feminine composition of the literary field. So, the women’s specialisation in a domain and their ascensions in a dominant position are severely conditioned, something that occurs both in the literary field or academic field and in many other ones. In this respect, among PhD students and postgraduates there are only 226 women, comparing with 1123 male students in Romania in 1927, and between 1931-1932 women remain underrepresented on the map of high-education and academisation, being only 822 women comparing with their male peer, who constitute the major part of the academic scene – 2429 (Statistical Yearbook of Romania 364).

Thus, the large access to education for women becomes a prominent phenomenon during the inter-war. For instance, between 1930-1931, there were recorded 79 secondary schools for girls, while between 1904-1905 there were barely 11 secondary schools offering education for 1.563 girls, while the schools for men comprising 61 schools that have offered education for approximately 15.224 people, ten times more comparing with the number of women. So, against the backdrop of access to education, a fact that marked a wide absorption of women in rank of higher education and the access to obtaining a bachelor’s degree, the Faculty of Letters will serve as a platform for specialisation and academisation of women in Romania. The large insertion within programs of literary formation homologates the insertion of women in the field of literary occupations. For its turn, this fact reveals the weak

position of the literary field within the large cultural, intellectual, and professional scene from inter-war era. The main element that marks peripheral character of the literary profession must be related to the meagre resources of the field, as writing could not assure a social or economic ascension, and not even a stable income for writers, remaining only a symbolic profession, as P. Bourdieu suggests. In other words, the pauperism of the literary field marks its susceptibility to feminisation.

According to Liviu Rebreanu's testimony, the literary, as well as artistic professions were related to a very precarious condition. So, in 1928, when he is appointed as technical counsellor and sub-secretary in the Ministry of Arts and Culture (Rebreanu 63), he complains about the financial situation of the Society of Romanian Writers – "Liviu Rebreanu had always deplored the situation of writers, marked by poverty and inferiority status" (Ianoși 235), and that determine him to become secretary in the Ministry of Arts and Culture (Rebreanu 64). Thus, the success of Rebreanu as a main literary figure in the political field and as a highly appreciated president of the Society of Romanian Writers is assured by his victory of obtaining important financial support for the Society of Writers (for instance, in 1928, he had obtained 100.000 lei for the Society that he led). In this sense, financially significant literary prizes were awarded to the most prestigious authors such as Camil Petrescu, Eugeniu Speranția, Al.I. Stamatiad, Ion Petrovici or Tudor Vianu. During its entire existence, the Society of Romanian Writers awarded prizes to 120 writers, only 7 of whom were women, among female prose writers being awarded Henriette Yvonne-Stahl and Hortensia Papadat-Bengescu (Macrea Toma 199).

From this standpoint, Rebreanu had played the same important role in the literary field as Sadoveanu did during the post-war period, establishing "Sadoveanu's law" leading to writers being generously paid for copyrights. Then, the economic crisis which hit the financial situation of the local cultural field, will constitute other reason for a material marginalisation of the literary profession. The financial crisis led to the bankruptcy of Marmorosch Blank & Comp. Bank where the Society of Writers had deposited its funds, in this way marking a financial bankruptcy of Society too (Ianoși 235-236). Therefore, throughout this period, writing remains a symbolic profession practiced by those agents who either had a strong economic and social capital, or they practiced a secondary profession that could earn them their main wages. Nevertheless,

regarding women writers' fraction, this condition marks a contraction of the field, allowing the access over the positional heritage (from close male relatives such as father/ uncle – to daughter/ niece etc.), the relational capital (the inertia of female unpublished writers is honoured their male writer close peers or even their writer partners/ husbands) and those literary platforms that assure a literary sociability (assured by the literary professions within publishing houses, literary magazines or over attendance to the cenacle life).

Literary mobility: mechanisms of professionalisation of women's writing

The main strategy of professionalisation of writers' community and their activity during the inter-war period had taken place through professional homogenisation over the establishing of the Society of Romanian Writers, as well as setting up a whole literary infrastructure for disseminating and publishing literary materials. Offering a proper space for professionalisation to writers by establishing "Princeps Carol I" Royal Cultural Foundation aimed for supporting and promoting writers, as well as the Royal Cultural Foundation Literary Magazine, and the Royal Cultural Foundation Publishing Houses. It is worth noting that the articulation of a real literary infrastructure which had created the proper condition for professionalisation is neutralised by the necessity of a secondary profession. As such, the temporal capital that should have been invested in creative activity is wasted through the provision of a secondary occupation, in this way the access to a real professionalisation being significantly narrowed.

Leading us back to the case of women writers, the first step of professionalisation of women's writing in the Romanian literary system occurred over the delimitation of the fraction from male dominants' doxa concentrated around the Society of Writers, through their channels of assertion, legitimation, and consecration. The setting up of the Women Writer's Society and Woman Writer's Literary Magazine marked the most important female writers' project in terms of their literary mobility and recovering. From this standpoint, the literary professionalisation might be measured over the distances taken from the pole of masculinised doxa around the Society of Writers, as well as around *Sburătorul* group. To a certain extent, this is true, as the exclusion of women from the field, especially from the literary infrastructure, is an established practice within those male dominated institutions. Resuming the question of women's

professionalisation in writing only through this single explanation would involve a risk, as it could mean the exclusion from discussion of a significant number of female writers who attended both to the Society of Writers and E. Lovinescu's cenacle, and who were, in fact, the most visible literary goods producers during the inter-war period. Thus, the delimitation of different degrees of women writers' professionalisation is required.

The literary professionalisation in the case women writers mainly emerges on two ways during this period. Firstly, it occurs through the cohesion of women writing under an institutional platform meant to abolish the masculine dominant doxa. It comes as no surprise that many female writers who were proposing a feminist imagery and topics through their writing, such as Sofia Nădejde, Eugenia Ianculescu, Adela Xenopol or Aida Vrioni and Natalia Negru, delimit themselves and their writing from the male dominated literary doxa. These authors had never been mentioned within activity reports such as *Sburătorul*. On the contrary, the aim of their effort consists of establishing an alternative literary infrastructure that can assure the autonomisation of women's writing in the local literary field. At the same time, there has been established a favourable space for the local debates about feminist subjects hosted and developed within movement such as Women Writers' Society and their magazines. Therefore, the project of setting up a parallel space for professionalisation and affirmation for women aspirants to the literary career attempt to counterparts the consecrated discourses on women's writing vehiculated by doxa, dominant institutions and agents. Secondly, the professionalisation is also taken place among those female writers who had ratified the moral masculine judge of feminine creative method.

Thus, the professionalisation of the last category had occurred especially through the creative affiliation to the E. Lovinescu's cenacle and to the movement around *Sburătorul*. Even though, paradoxically, in the given context, the autonomisation of women writing took place exclusively over the distances by the pole of male dominants and their judge, a professionalisation among those female writers whose writing is engaged regarding the perspective of masculine elites on women's writing. The increases of the production of the literary goods involves a necessity of its hierarchical distribution. Thus, a strategy of women exclusion from the pole of legitimated authors mobilises the co-optation of women in a large-scale production of literary materials over relating to them weak competences in writing. The high production of sentimental novel

and literature for children, eminently gendered genres, reveal the role of women in the field responding to an ethos of productivism and the local necessity of enlarging and popularising the production of popular novels. Therefore, a pale professionalisation of women writing among those co-opted fraction by the dominant pole occurs against the backdrop of maintaining their marginal position by establishing for women's fraction a weak category of writing and over capitalising by male dominants of high-brow literary infrastructure (Baghiu 12).

In addition to the developing of publishing and literary sociability infrastructures for all literary agents, including women, such as publishing houses, associations/foundations, literary magazines, cenacles, all these together mobilising essential tools for specialisation of writing occupation. The meagre resources redistributed to the literary fund at that time will lead to a reinforcing of the institution of literary prizes as well. For only 7 women from a total of 120 writers were allocated prizes by the Society of Romanian Writers, a fact that makes very clear that the mechanism of legitimation by the institution of the literary prizes is also monopolised by the male dominants, as well as their principles and judgements. In this given literary frame, there is no wonder why authors from the autonomous pole such as Sofia Nădejde, Natalia Negru, and Eugenia Ianculescu or even Adela Xenopol are completely eluded from the map of instances of legitimation by awarding.

On the other hand, among few female literary figures who were absorbed by the infrastructure of [the temporally] consecration, such as Henriette Yvonne Stahl or Hortensia Papadat-Bengescu, both authors were fellows of Lovinescu's group. Furthermore, it arises the question: would literary prizes serve as a measurement of professionalisation or not? Both mentioned authors are undeniably prestigious for the list of important authors from the inter-war period, nevertheless there are many differences between their literary rhetoric comparing it with the engaged discourse of Nădejde's fraction around the Women Writers' Society in terms of its engagement aimed to recover women's equal access to the profession of writing and to the literary field, in general. From this standpoint, it can be said that the literary prizes in their case do not represent a sign of professionalisation, but rather a recognition on dominant's part for their subjection to a system that reinforces masculine literary prestige and settles criteria for awarding, in other words, being awarded with a prize shaped by the

judgements of masculine literary elites prove their complicit participation to the reproduction of dichotomic structure of the field and its masculine domination, as well as the its relational infrastructure defined in terms of the symbolic violence (Bourdieu 73).

Conclusions

As a last reflection on feminisation of literary profession, it can be added how the using of the notion assuming a referential relation to the generic masculine and its norms. That is also proved inclusively by the way of operating the concept in many sociological approaches over the linking the term to that phenomenon such as de-evaluation, or loss of prestige. A very exhaustive and plausible argument can be deduced from Bourdieu's theoretical explanations by relating the term to the phenomenon of the symbolic violence. In this way, women's routes in the literary or any professional and artistic/cultural field being predestined to a peripheral presence aimed to reinforce the symbolic prestige of the masculine elites, as it occurred undeniably in the local literature during the '20s and the '30s, if we consider how the access of women to the writing profession was conditioned by relational capital held with men [writers] who are either close relatives, partners, or peers.

Thus, in the domestic literary system during the inter-war period, a feminisation had just occurred against the background of poverty and lack of resources of the literary field. Nevertheless, literary occupation will remain a favourable scene for reproduction the symbolic capital of masculine elites. However, the wide absorption of women and the developing literary infrastructure will mark inevitably a pale professionalisation of women's writing, even against their exclusion from the restricted scale production and their peripheral position. Further, it remains open the question whether the political, social, and cultural dislocation that had taken place in the Eastern Bloc during the post-war period, will contribute to the rehabilitation of the condition women writers' fraction, and whether, or how, the professionalisation of female writing during the post-war era will be an even more complex process. The expansion of women's literary production from inter-war period certainly marked for that moment the most important evolution of women writers' fraction in terms of its autonomisation, although the access for coveted position and for legitimation was restricted to them. From this point, it can also

certainly be said that the cultural changes from inter-war period reverberated beyond the community of female writers, at least, into a literary mobility by the assertion of women (despite their social and cultural portfolio, as well as inherited prestige) in the literary field and writing profession.

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