

# The Last Bastion of European Romanticism: A Quantitative Analysis of Poetry in the Romanian Literary Magazine *Convorbiri literare* (1867–1916)

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*The article presents a quantitative analysis of poetry published in the most popular literary periodical of modern Romania, Convorbiri literare (CL), from its founding in 1867 to 1916, when Romania entered World War I. Often seen as the last major magazine of European Romanticism, CL appeared at a time when poetry was a privileged genre in Romanian literature, and it hosted in its pages both the national poet Mihai Eminescu and nineteenth-century's most prominent Romanian literary critic Titu Maiorescu. Arguing that the publication and theorization of poetry was an integral part of one of the last nation-building processes in Europe, the article indexes and quantitatively analyzes all forms of poetry and of what can be viewed as poetic networks in CL. By using ARCANUM's digital archive of more than 66,000 pages of CL, three strata of poetry-related metadata are extracted and examined: the local production of poetry (who published in CL and when, and how much did they publish); poetry imports (whose poetry was translated into Romanian in CL and when, and what were the authors' origins); and networks of influence (which foreigners were most often mentioned in relation to the two most talked-about Romanian Romantic poets of the century, Eminescu and Vasile Alecsandri). Thus, the article aims to chart the national regime of relevance that applies to Romanian modern poetry by uncovering the international network of authors who were at the center of literary debates in CL.*

Keywords: Romanian poetry / European Romanticism / poetry translation / Eminescu, Mihai / Alecsandri, Vasile / Maiorescu, Titu / quantitative analysis

## Romanian literary studies go digital

If ten years ago anyone told Romanian scholars and even more so Romanian literary critics that they would be able to access, read (or go through), and analyze tens of thousands of pages, millions of words of curated corpora of literary or non-literary texts in a heartbeat, they would have shrugged it off at best, and laughed it off at worst.<sup>1</sup> What are the tenets that would guarantee such a reaction a decade or so ago? To begin with, the quasi-unanimous view of literary criticism in Romania was (and to some extent still remains) that every critical endeavor ought to be based in an aesthetic judgment formulated by a cultured individual's personal reading experience and history. Therefore, a clearly hierarchical view of the literary system was still taught, learned, and perpetuated. Such a view was in a direct relationship with the idea of the canon and the notion of literary relevance viewed as correlated with the position that these individual aesthetic judgements conferred (or not) on actual texts, and in direct opposition to the demand of the post-1990 local book market. It is no wonder then that a symptom of this exaggerated focus on high-brow literature, along with the fresh liberalization of the book industry, led to a steep increase in translated literature (see Terian, "Big Numbers" 67, for a statistic of the local versus translated novels published in Romania between 1990 and 2000). At the time, most Romanian writers sought canonization for themselves and therefore tended to write for the critics who they thought could help them achieve that, whereas casual readers turned more and more to imported commercial fiction. Consequently, as literature was approached as a way of imposing personal verdicts and as a vehicle of entering the canon, even scholars who were remotely interested in exploring "the great unread" (Cohen 23) of Romanian literature would not know where to start. Granted, this was in part because digital versions (either as scanned or as textual material) were both scarce and scattered, and corpora were either incomplete or reduced in size. And although "distant reading" (Moretti) was becoming a quite popular way of looking at literature, its actual implementation was much more difficult than in more technologically advanced countries where coherent digital resources were more readily available.

In 2015, few analytical attempts existed that used the resources of digital humanities, and even those were focused on English literature

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(Nicolaeescu and Mihai; Mihai), whereas the emerging debates were centered around questions of applying digital humanities in Romania (Ursa) and using quantitative tools in literary studies (Anon.). In fact, the major breakthroughs were not analytic at first, but rather concerned corpus and archive building, because there were no comprehensive digital primary sources to work on. The release of the Romanian ELTeC corpus by Roxana Patraş and her team (<https://github.com/COST-ELTeC/ELTeC-rom>), consisting of around 100 novels, and the parallel three-stage release of The Digital Museum of the Romanian Novel (<https://revistatransilvania.ro/mdrr>), consisting of around 1,300 novels, ushered in a new stage of digital humanities in Romania. For the first time, in 2019, there was a corpus comprehensive enough for large scale analysis. The same year, but prior to the project, Ovio Olaru (Olaru) and Patras and her team (Patras et al.) published valuable overviews of the use of digital tools in Romanian humanities research. Just a few months later, the first results of the Digital Museum of the Romanian Novel project were published. In that first dossier, my colleagues and I (Pojoga et al.) provided a brief discussion of possible ways of analyzing the newly-build archive, and the two studies on the genres (Terian et al.) and the internal geography (Baghiu et al., “Geografia internă”) of nineteenth-century Romanian novel set the stage for more detailed analyses by the same extended team (these were published in various Romanian and international journals, by various combinations of authors). Most of these contributions were focused on prose, since the main available corpora were novel corpora. We explored space (fictional and historical), time, subgenres, and character identities, among other topics. We extracted metadata, compiled maps, and built graphs. And at the end, when we reached the year 1947 and entered dangerous copyright territory, we started to wonder: what about other literary genres?

## **The digital museum of Romanian poetry**

The choice was natural, given our previous preoccupation with the genre (see Vancu; Pojoga, “A Survey”): poetry. Thus, we tried to figure out how to build a Digital Museum of Romanian Poetry to mirror its twin, The Digital Museum of the Romanian Novel, but with the experience of archive building and cleaning (where we manually rewrote text that was not entirely recognized by OCR software) that enabled us to look at the process in a completely new way. At first, we surveyed the existing digital poetry archives, and, after moving past the

usual websites that can sometimes be great poetry archives but are often limited to English and American works, we found a few possibly noteworthy models for our venture. In terms of corpora, the ELTE Poetry Corpus (<https://github.com/ELTE-DH/poetry-corpus>), for instance, indexes poems authored by 50 Hungarian canonical poets, for a total of around 13,000 poems; A Gutenberg Poetry Corpus—extracted by Allison Parrish from the literary archive of Project Gutenberg (<https://github.com/aparrish/gutenberg-poetry-corpus>)—includes about 3 million lines of poetry; and the Finnish Folk Poetry Corpus brings together Finnish folk poetry from the sixteenth century to the 1930s (<https://www.kielipankki.fi/corpora/skvr/>). But all of these are restrictive one way or another, and we wanted more. We did not want to index and analyze canonical poets alone (like ELTE), or work with an eclectic corpus (like Gutenberg), or work on folk poetry, but rather we wanted to include all poetry written in Romanian until World War I.

A quite ambitious feat, as we are still finding out. Because all poetry written in Romanian until World War I meant volumes, brochures, pamphlets, composite volumes (prose and poems), but also poetry published in literary magazines and newspapers. Moreover, we were also interested in the post-archive building phase, namely the digital analysis of the extracted metadata and poems. In this regard, likely the most comprehensive project that goes beyond archive building is Poetry Standardization and Linked Open Data (POSTDATA) (<https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/679528>), a European Research Council project coordinated by Elena González-Blanco. POSTDATA is “focused on poetry analysis, classification and publication, applying Digital Humanities methods of academic analysis—such as XML-TEI encoding [...] in order to look for standardization, as well as innovation by using semantic web technologies [...] to link and publish literary datasets in a structured way in the linked data cloud” (Gonzalez-Blanco et al.). Our *modus operandi* for the novel project involved, during the scanning phase, the manual extraction of certain metadata that were meant to provide either a basis for later digital analyses (country or city names providing a starting point for a series of studies that culminated with Baghiu et al., “*Geografia romanului*”) or insights that at that point seemed difficult to extract automatically (main characters’ occupation or social origin, time and space, etc.). Therefore, we needed to make important decisions about, say, what and how to extract, and we came up with a preliminary model. This model includes identification metadata (place of publication, author, translator, title), sizing metadata (number of stanzas, lines, words, characters without spaces), subgenre classification, main and secondary themes, space

and time metadata, and subject metadata. But since we wanted to test the process before applying it to the full archive we intended to build, we agreed that we would do a pilot run on a full archive of a magazine, before moving to full volumes.

In this article, I will thus work with the pilot identification and sizing metadata<sup>2</sup> for about 3,000 poems in The Digital Museum of Romanian Poetry, published between 1867 and 1916 in *Convorbiri literare* (Literary Conversations, henceforth *CL*), which is one of the most relevant Romanian literary magazines, and chart local production of poetry, poetry translations, and the two respective networks of influence for probably the most referenced Romanian poets of the nineteenth century, Mihai Eminescu and Vasile Alecsandri.

## **The last bastion of European Romanticism**

The question that seems to arise now is why *CL* and not some other Romanian magazine? The short answer would stress the sheer impact *CL* had on the development of Romanian literary culture, but that is not necessarily a quantifiable and coherent marker. I will try to formulate a more elaborate answer in this section.

When attempting to delineate the precise epoch(s) of Romanticism across Europe, one invariably grapples with a nebula of years, volumes, and theoretical frameworks encompassing production, definitions of the movement, and its main features. For instance, the volume titled *A Companion to European Romanticism* is presented on the publisher's website as covering the national literatures of France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Russia and Spain. Even more confusing are assumptions such as "An era when millions of people flock to see *The Lord of the Rings* might forgivably be called Romantic still" (Ferber 8), which seems to merge cultural trends with artistic movements in a rather gratuitous manner. Duncan Wu, in another companion volume, situates the (English) Romantic movement broadly between 1790 and 1830, as the section "Contexts and Perspectives" shows (Wu 1–108). On the other hand, Virgil Nemoianu, an Eastern European critic, talks in his book *The Taming of Romanticism* about commenting on "some specific items of European literature between 1815 and 1848" (vii) and "these

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<sup>2</sup> The project metadata (and subsequently the metadata for this article) were extracted by a project team based at the Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu, consisting of Geanina Giuhat, Ana-Maria Stoica, Hanna Han, Bogdan Contea, Andreea Popescu, Teodora Susarenco, Daniel Coman, and Crina Neacșu.

later stages” of Romanticism that go until 1848 (1). It has already been shown that the case of Central and Eastern European Romantic movements is quite different than their Western counterparts:

The literatures of the region have often been concerned with their belatedness in relation to the Western literary cultures, and they occasionally measured their lag also in relation to neighboring cultures. Romanian literature, for example, experienced its “will to modernity” in the nineteenth century not only with an acute sense of belatedness but also with an “unhappy consciousness” about its need to choose “imitation” [...] to recover the lost ground. (Neubauer 321)

Moreover, for most of Central and Eastern European literatures, Romanticism and its partial overlap with nineteenth-century nation-building processes were an opportunity to elevate one of their emerging poets to the status of the national poet; hence “the typical pattern in east-central Europe [...]: picking a (Romantic) poet from the first half of the nineteenth century or mid-nineteenth century and canonizing him in the following decades” (Dović and Helgason, 63–64). In Romania, there were Romantic writers who published in the first half of the nineteenth century as well, and they founded several magazines, most notably *Dacia literară* (*The Literary Dacia*) by Mihail Kogălniceanu in 1840 and *România literară* (*The Literary Romania*) by Alecsandri in 1855, with both ending within a year, after only a few issues. The real Romantic boom does not happen until after 1864, when the Junimea literary society was founded in the city of Iași by Titu Maiorescu, P. P. Carp, Vasile Pogor, Iacob Negruzzi, and Theodor Rosetti. Sometime later, Maiorescu, the leading ideological and literary figure of the society, suggested “it would be wonderful to start a small literary magazine to print the writings read and approved by the Society,” to which “everyone agreed without much debate” (Negruzzi 89–90; my translation). As a result, the inaugural issue of *CL* came out in 1867, and it was going to be published continuously (with the exception of the war years of 1916–1918) until its hiatus in 1944. Its importance to Romanian canonical literature and Romanian Romanticism is so great that, instead of seeing a continuity in his influential literary history, Nicolae Manolescu chooses a dual, parallel periodization, outlining Romanticism as a movement between 1840 and 1899, and Junimism as a period between 1867, when *CL* starts, and 1889, when Eminescu dies (see Manolescu 141–434). But rather than demonstrate further the national relevance of *CL* and the Junimea society, we should assume its local relevance and try to place it in an international landscape.

In lieu of a more refined metric, I propose a visual approach to situate *CL* within the broader timeline of European Romanticism. In Figure 1, I chart the birth and death years of 22 prominent Romantic poets hailing from 21 European countries spanning the geographical expanse from Western to Eastern Europe, encompassing spaces from England and France to Russia and Ukraine as well as from Denmark to Bulgaria. This visual representation serves as a comprehensive panorama of the Romantic literary timeline, encapsulating a diverse group of poets whose activity almost invariably starts in the first third of the nineteenth century.

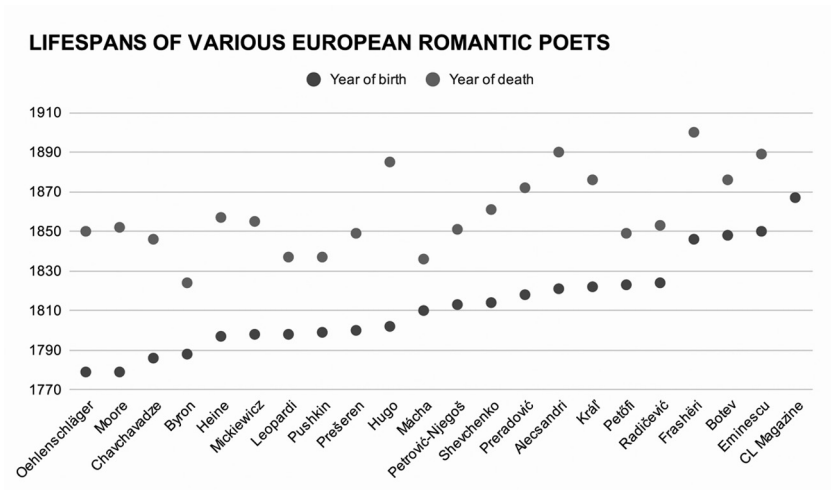


Figure 1: Lifespans of various European Romantic poets and the publication year of the first *Convorbiri literare* issue.

Within this chart, I added two Romanian representatives: Alecsandri, regarded as the original Romanian Romantic poet, and Eminescu, the so-called younger Romantic destined to usurp Alecsandri's potential position as Romania's national poet (Terian, "Mihai Eminescu"). As it can easily be seen, by the time of Eminescu's debut in 1866, most European Romantics were already dead. The same can be said about *CL*, the Romanian literary magazine that will be the main focus of this study, and whose first issue appears in 1867. But, as we have seen (and will see in more detail below), *CL*, as an appendix to and a popularization tool of the Junimea society, was the most important proponent of Romanian Romanticism, and the (chronologically) last bastion of European Romanticism.



## An overview of poetry publishing in *Convorbiri literare*

Figures 2, 3, and 4 chart all poetry published in *CL* between 1867 and 1916; Figures 2 and 3 use the number of words as a metric, and Figure 4 uses lines. At first, I intended to simply count the number of words published as poetry every year in *CL*, but then I thought that trends would emerge more clearly if I looked at a five-year average (average number of words per five years, changing constantly) and a rolling average (average number of words per year from the beginning up to that year). This is shown in Figure 2. Besides the general trend, which is clearly downward, Figure 2 indicates that, after an initial rise (and peak), poetry publication drops in 1877—most likely because of the Romanian War of Independence in 1877–1878; the drop continues until the late 1880s when there seems to be a brief resurgence, and then returns until the twentieth century brings another rise. This calls for some explanation, which is what Figure 3 tries to achieve. Here, rather than focusing on the sheer number of words, I chose to split the number of words into three categories: local production (poetry written by Romanian poets, in Romanian), folk poetry (defined simply as authorless poetry), and translations (poetry written by non-Romanian poets, translated into Romanian). In the landscape of poetry published in *CL*, local production covers 53%, translations account for 36%, and folk poetry represents 11%. The data in Figure 2 led to possible explanations for all three peaks: the first and highest peak is mainly driven by local production (seconded by translations) and the need for the magazine to establish its direction and promote the authors associated with the Junimea society; the second peak, quite strangely given the generally low percentage of words attributed to the category (only 11%), seems to be driven by folk poetry (seconded by local production), due to a large number of folk poems collected by Alesiu V. (Alexiu Viciu) that are published between 1888 and 1890, mostly a type of traditional Romanian poetry called *doină*; and the third peak is clearly driven by translations, with the main culprit being the translation of Homer's *The Iliad*, translated by George Murnu over a six-year period (1900–1905). In spite of these peaks, the rolling average shows a clear image: *CL* gradually loses interest in poetry. But how does this change if, instead of looking just at numbers of words, we concentrate on the space occupied by poetry? By that I mean the percentage of lines (as the best metric to measure occupation, because words might be misleading in this case—for instance, one can have poems with very short verses, which means that less words occupy much more magazine pages than the much wordier prose) occupied by



poetry in each year of *CL*. The trend in Figure 4—which uses a formula that takes into account the number of lines per page, the number of columns per page, the number of pages per issue, and the number of issues per year—looks even harsher for poetry publication, going from an average of over 10% of total space prior to 1877, to a little over 5% prior to 1905, and less than 5% after 1905. But how and why does this happen? I will try to answer this question by analyzing local poetry production and poetry translations in the next two sections.

#### ALL POETRY (WORDS)

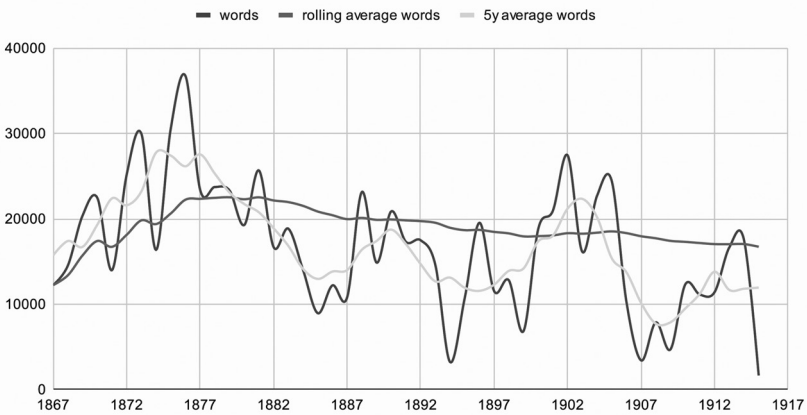


Figure 2: All poetry published in *Convorbiri literare* by yearly number of words (a).

#### ALL POETRY: WORDS/YEAR

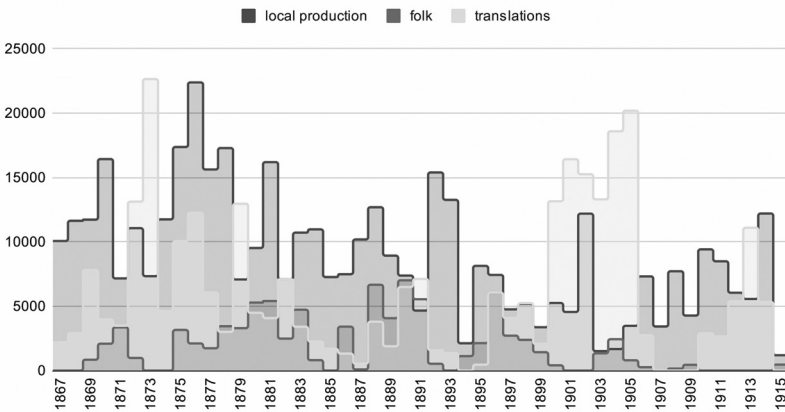


Figure 3: All poetry published in *Convorbiri literare* by yearly number of words (b)—local production, folk poetry, translations.

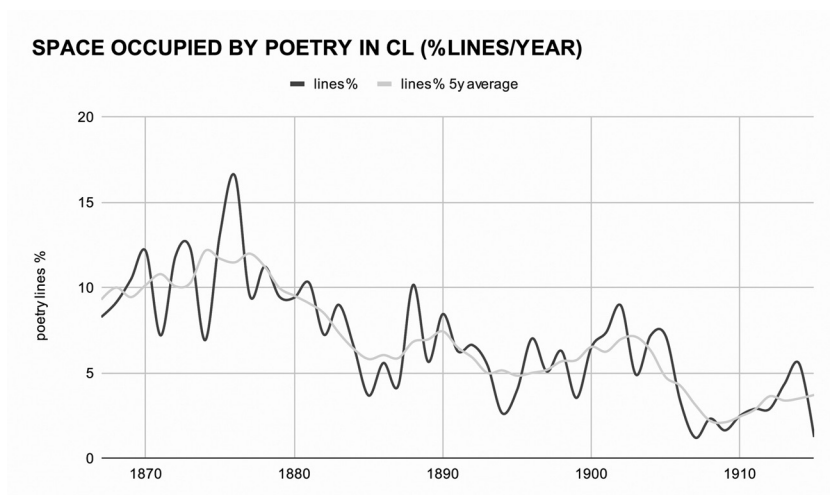


Figure 4: Space occupied by poetry in *Convorbiri literare* as percentage of all lines in the magazine per year.

### Local production of poetry in *Convorbiri literare*

The slow start of the novel in Romania (see Terian, “Big Numbers”) meant that there was an open creative space that was filled with other literary forms. Or at least that is what it meant in theory. For there was another gap between Romania and Western countries, a literacy gap. For instance, at the 1899 census, only 22% of the Romanian adult population (over the age of 15) was literate (Colescu 122). This low number suggests that the lack of original literary production in Romania may not have been a matter of literary genres, but rather a matter of the number of people who knew how to read and write. Indeed, based on the data that we have for both novels (Terian, “Big Numbers”) and poetry, at least until World War I, novels and poetry seem to grow together on average, rather than any of them falling out. Nonetheless, as shown in the previous section, poetry publication in *CL* seems to get periodically lower, just as the poetry market grows.

In Figure 5, which only includes poems by Romanian authors, excluding translation and folk poetry, there are no other peaks above the rolling average after the starting surge, only two falls—one in 1877, and one after 1894, when Iacob Negruzzi leaves the magazine—slowly picking up again after 1907, when Simion Medehinți takes editorial control of the magazine. The totals in Figure 5 are corresponding to

80% of all poems and 89% of all words in poems published in *CL* with a Romanian origin. The rest is folk poetry, and from the extracted data, two stylistic characteristics specific to folk poetry (compared to poetry attributable to individuals) come to surface: folk poems have very few stanzas per poem (an average of two vs an average of seven for male-authored poems, and four for female-authored poems), and they have many more lines per stanza (an average of 16 vs an average of seven for male-authored poems, and four for female-authored poems). Of course, this is a rather expected result, given the nature of folk poetry and its predominant structure, but it nonetheless offers us a quantified confirmation. In the same vein, also expected is the gender imbalance, with 83% of all Romanian poets being male, and only 6% being female (almost half as many as the unidentified poets—signing with a pseudonym or initials—who make up 11% of the total number of Romanian poets). The disparity is even greater in terms of word totals, with 97% of all Romanian poetry words published by male poets, and only 2% by female poets (1% remaining for the unknown poets—because most of them only published a maximum of one or two poems). Hence, women publish less, but even when they do, their poems are much shorter than those of their male counterparts (the paradigmatic form seems to be stanzas of four lines each, for an average of four stanzas per poem).

In fact, the quatrain seems to be the paradigmatic stanza form for the whole corpus, with more than 40% of all poems authored by Romanian writers having four lines per stanza. This is the case even though, as mentioned above, the averages for male poets are seven stanzas per seven lines each, which is mostly due to the exceptionally long poems that they authored (all of the ca. 120 poems over 100 lines are authored by male poets, and only 3% of all poems over 50 lines are authored by female poets).

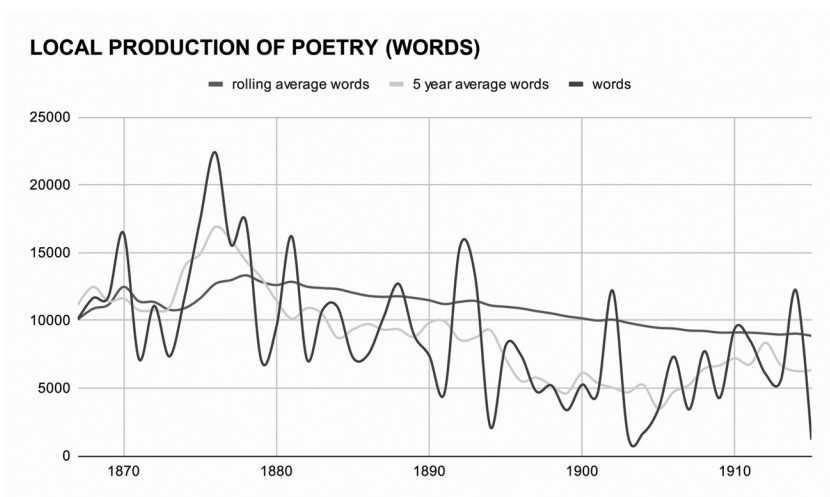


Figure 5: Local production of poetry (words/year) in *Convorbiri literare*.

In terms of best represented poets, our corpus includes 22 poets with over 20 poems, three of which are women. Yet these three female poets, namely Matilda Cugler, Veronica Micle, and Ana Conta-Kernbach, have authored 80% of all poems published by women in *CL* prior to World War I, with Matilda Cugler even being the fourth author overall, with 79 published poems. She is also the only woman to be included in the list of six put forward by Maiorescu in the aforementioned programmatic study, alongside Alecsandri, Eminescu, Samson Bodnărescu, Theodor Șerbănescu, and Dimitrie Petrino. Again, the data supports the notion that Maiorescu's direction is in fact *CL*'s direction (or the other way around), since, with the exception of Dimitrie Petrino, the other five authors also represent the top five in terms of the most poems published in the magazine. If we use a different metric, and look at the number of words instead of poems, only Alecsandri and Eminescu remain in the top five, alongside Iacob Negruzzi, Anton Naum, and Dimitrie C. Ascanio-Ollanescu. Needless to say, Alecsandri easily tops both categories.

One and a half centuries later, *CL* and Junimea seem to have achieved most of their goals, with the most important one probably being the elevation of Eminescu to the status of the national poet. In the process, however, they seem to have lost interest in other kinds of poetry and to have been unable to overcome Junimism, which in poetry meant a sort of combination of Classicism and Romanticism. Of their nineteenth-century poetry bets, only Eminescu has survived in

the high-school canon, although admittedly he also is the lone nineteenth-century poet on the list. After him, *CL* seems to begin to marginalize poetry, much as France (Sapiro 25) and Germany do in the late nineteenth century, but against the Romanian tide of poetry production.

### Translations of poetry in *Convorbiri literare*

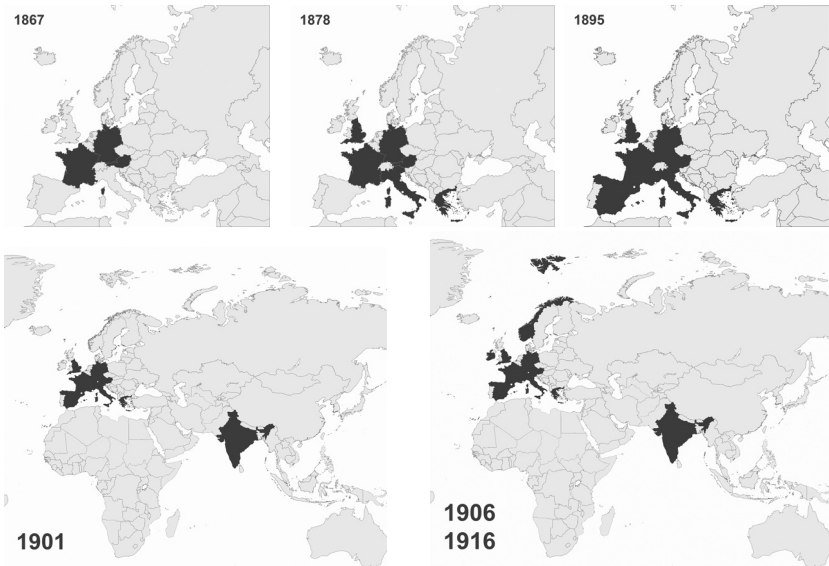


Figure 6: Composite landscape of five maps with the countries of origin for the poets translated in *Convorbiri literare* in 1867, 1878, 1895, 1901, 1906, and 1916 (the last two are the same because no changes occur).

36% of all poetry words in *CL* are translated. They belong to over 70 poets from 11 countries, plus Ancient Greece and the Roman Empire. The maps in Figure 6 chart the periods when *CL* puts a pin on a country, that is, when a poet from that country is translated into Romanian in its pages. I have not included the two state forms I mentioned—Ancient Greece and the Roman Empire—for historical reasons, and also because they would have overlapped with nineteenth-century Italy and Greece. Due to technical limitations, I had to use current borders of the countries, which I can defend by noting that the purpose of these maps is not to accurately represent historical borders, but rather to represent the translation reach of *CL*. In the first year, only the two continental

powerhouses, France and Germany, are represented, alongside a wandering Austria (through a single poem by Heinrich von Levitschnigg). Ten years later, England, Italy, and Greece appear on the map, and by 1895 Spain also joins the group. In 1901, the first (and only) non-European country, India (through several translations by George Coşbug) appears, alongside Switzerland, and by 1906 they are joined by Norway and Ireland. The maps are relevant more because of what cannot be seen than of what can be seen. For while we could expect France, Germany, England, Italy, and Spain to emerge on the map, we should have expected to find more than just one non-European country. The absence of Romania's neighbors is unexpected as well, as is the status of Austria as the sole European country to the east of Germany.

At this point, some depth should be added to the maps; besides the geographical space targeted by translations, quantities are also relevant. Figure 7 shows the total number of poems translated from each country. I chose the number of poems for this graph rather than the number of words because the number of poems also plays a part in terms of how many times a certain poet appears in the magazine. Two clear frontrunners emerge here, and, without much surprise, they are France and Germany. Nonetheless, given that the general view of the era was that *CL* is decisively oriented toward German poetry and literature, it is quite remarkable to see both go head-to-head until the early 1900s, when France moves on top. This translation duo should be explored further; for instance, its fruit is one of the most peculiar events of literary translation in the so-called long nineteenth century. In 1871, *CL* published a poem signed by Gablitz, a supposedly German poet translated into Romanian by an unknown translator. In fact, "Gablitz is a poet who never existed, and by inventing this German name, I had in mind *CL*'s predilection for everything that comes from Berlin" (Hasdeu; my translation): this is the confession of Bogdan Petriceicu Hasdeu, one of the main opponents of Titu Maiorescu and Junimea. The impression that German literature was the go-to literature for *CL* was so strong, that a prank like this was thought of and, for that matter, pulled off. Even though the reality of poetry translation in *CL* contradicts Hasdeu, there is another reality that most likely molds his thinking and public discourse. That reality is the fact that Romanian culture was francophone during those years, and novel translations, for instance, reflect that, as shown by Baghiu (Baghiu 94), since less than 30% of all novels translated in Romanian prior to 1918 are non-French. Indeed, poetry translations are much more balanced, and directly contradict the francophone status quo of Romanian culture. And if we look even deeper, we discover that the general French

propensity has another consequence: granted, translations from French and German are similar in number and size, but the eras they cover are vastly different, with 21% of French translations rendering pre-Romantic poets, 58% Romantic poets, and 21% post-Romantic poets, whereas 94% of German translations render Romantic poets, distinctively showing the main movements of interest for *CL*. Moreover, the next two cultures of origin are the Roman Empire and Ancient Greece, insofar as Ireland, although fourth, is an anomaly, due to 51 translations from Thomas Moore published in one year, 1905, in a sort of retrieval effort, which is another possibly fruitful avenue of interpretation.

Since I have already suggested some possible categories to chronologically integrate all translations, Figure 8 shows (this time by number of words) the evolution of the publication of poetry translations in *CL*, with all poems separated in five groups: (Ancient) Greek, Latin, pre-Romantic, Romantic, and post-Romantic. Besides the fact that Romantic poetry seems to be all-present, and clearly dominates the first third of the graph, something strange happens afterward. Following the publishing of many Romantic poems up to the early 1880s, one would expect *CL* to turn to, or at least attempt to turn to, the post-Romantic era; instead, contributors begin to intensively translate Latin poetry (until the late 1890s), followed by the Ancient Greek poetry that dominates all translations published after 1900. Therefore, just as *CL* does not seem to be able to leave Junimism behind when it comes to local production, its conservative stance turns even more conservative, and the journal turns (radically) backward instead of going forward.

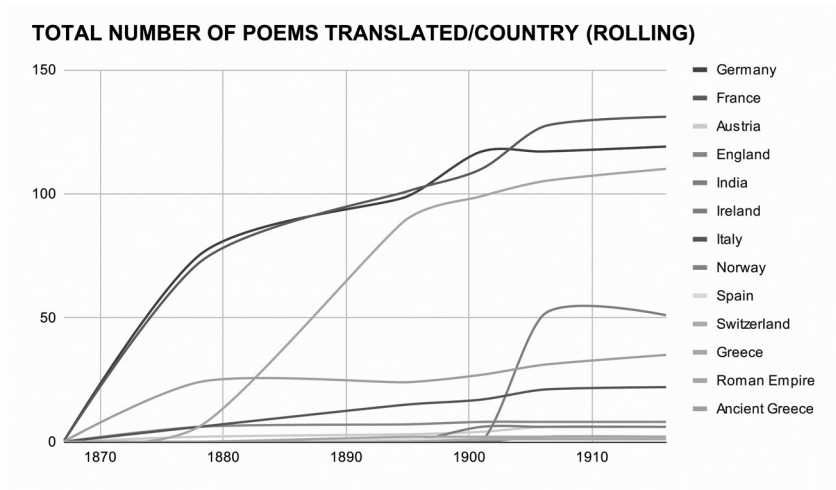


Figure 7: Total number of poems translated per country (rolling sum).



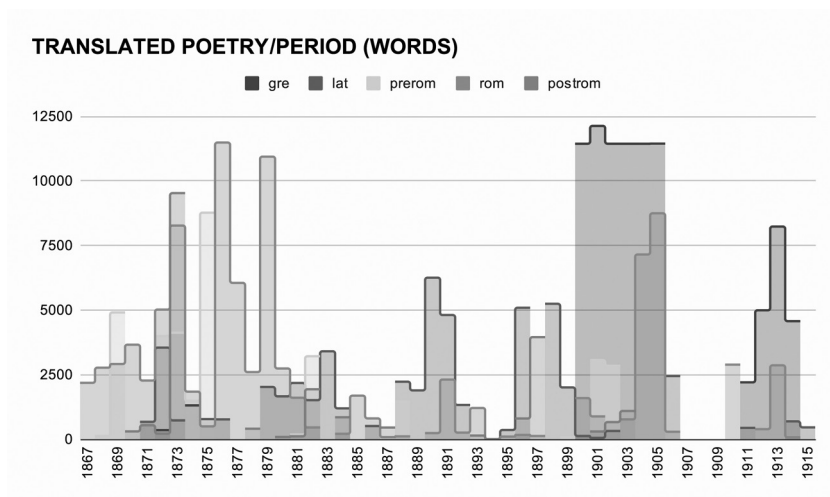


Figure 8: Translated poetry per designated period (words).

## Vasile Alecsandri and Mihai Eminescu in world literature networks

As shown above, if we consider the number of poems and the number of words at the same time, two poets emerge as central to *CL*: Alecsandri and Eminescu. But even so, Alecsandri leads (by far) in both categories. Even though he was already an established poet by the time the first issue of *CL* appeared, he was appreciated by the Junimea society. At every step, however, his name seemed to be deployed as a tool to push forward Eminescu's name, starting with a nationally read article that Maiorescu published in *CL* in 1872; in that article, Maiorescu mentions Eminescu directly after naming Alecsandri and thus starts a twofold process: the canonization of Eminescu and the replacement of Alecsandri as the prominent Romanian poetic figure. This leads to Eminescu's "quick recognition as a top literary figure and even 'national poet'," which "must have appeared odd because the position seemed to have been filled already by an older and more distinguished writer, namely Alecsandri," who "surely fit the job description" and, in fact, "was overqualified" (Terian, "Mihai Eminescu" 38). The relationship between Maiorescu and Eminescu seemed to mirror another relation that led to the eventual canonization of a national poet, namely that between Slovenian critic Matija Čop and Slovenian poet France Prešeren, in which "Čop offered his friend Prešeren philosophical, historical and

comparative aesthetic knowledge as well as the fund of his private library and that of the lyceum” (Juvan 43). Junimea and Maiorescu funded Eminescu’s studies abroad, arranged jobs for him, and published his works. But how did Maiorescu and *CL* canonize Eminescu? This last part of my study tries to quantitatively prove a hypothesis proposed by Andrei Terian in his contribution to the collective volume *Romanian Literature as World Literature*, namely that

it is not by accident that Karel Hynek Mácha has been called “the Czech Byron,” and that Hristo Botev has been dubbed “the Bulgarian Victor Hugo,” whereas Adam Mickiewicz was exported to the United States during the First World War sometimes as “the Polish Goethe” and sometimes as “the Polish Shakespeare.” All these authors gained legitimacy as national poets also through “at-distance” associations of various kinds with authors belonging to other cultures—if you think about it, the very granting of the title of national poet implies or, to my mind, should imply that the author in question does double duty as a transnational poet, that his or her work and his or her overall figure are a kind of business card one literature offers to the others. (Terian, “Mihai Eminescu” 36)

In brief, the hypothesis is that the Romanian national poet is canonized by means of linking him to foreign cultures that legitimize him on the local literary scene. Therefore, my colleague Ana-Maria Stoica and I extracted the names of non-Romanian poets and philosophers (to cover both literary production and thought production) who appear on the page before, on the same page, and on the page after the appearance of the names of Alecsandri and Eminescu. From a methodological point of view, I used ARCANUM’s database and OCR (so clearly there will be errors, as not all instances of names were found) to search for the names—using “Eminescu” for Eminescu and “Alecsandri” plus “Alexandri” for Alecsandri. During the manual extraction, names were eliminated in various instances: they appeared in the contents section; they appeared after the end or before the beginning of the contribution containing the name; they appeared in contributions about other literary figures, and they did not specifically refer to Alecsandri or Eminescu. The results are in the table below and in Figures 9 and 10.

	mentions	links	unique links
Alecsandri	1679	336	85
Eminescu	1203	1121	207

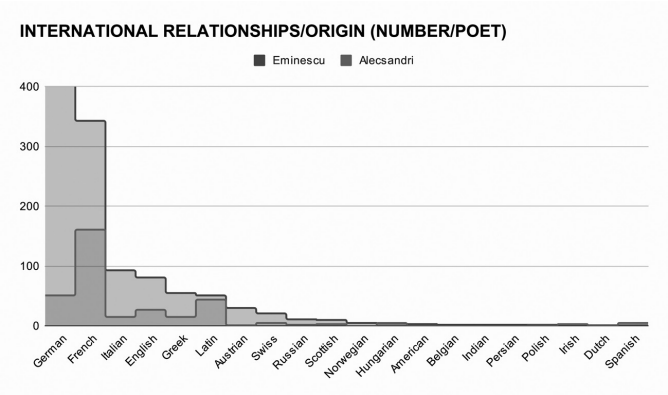


Figure 9: Number of international relationships per origin for Mihai Eminescu and Vasile Alecsandri.

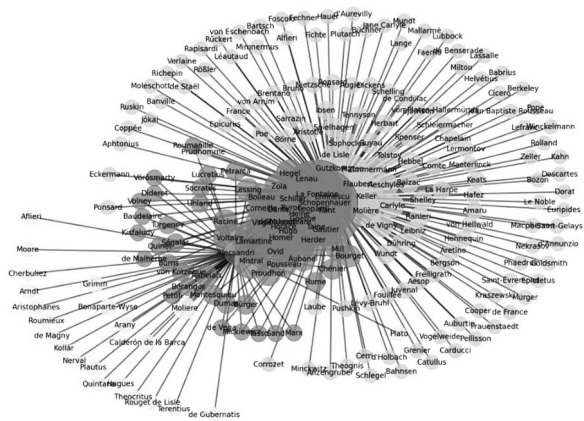


Figure 10: Network visualization of international relationships per origin for Mihai Eminescu and Vasile Alecsandri (generated with GPT-4, based on a links .csv).

The discrepancy in links and unique links is immediately striking. Eminescu has almost three times more international connections with over two times more unique links. And yet, the difference only intensifies if we calculate the average ratio between the number of mentions and the number of links, as Alecsandri is at 0.2, while Eminescu is at 0.93. That means that every five times Alecsandri's name appears, one

foreign name accompanies it, whereas almost every time Eminescu's name appears, it does so alongside a foreign name. Terian's intuition seems to be duly confirmed.

But if we look at the data more closely, and operate with categories rather than just numbers (Figure 9), we will see that Alecsandri's network of relationships is mainly in the French world (48%), whereas Eminescu's is mainly in the German world (36%), but with the French world being a close second (31%). This echoes the place of their formal education, with Alecsandri being educated partially in Paris, and Eminescu partly in Vienna and Berlin. But it also reveals a pattern of preference that associates Alecsandri only with the French canon (the next spaces of origin are the German one at 15% and the Latin one at 13%), while associating Eminescu with both the French and the German canons. And as we have already seen, the poetry scene is not nearly as francophone as the prose scene, which suggests that this system of canonization greatly favored Eminescu at Alecsandri's expense. Moreover, the network in Figure 10 (color-coded by singular and shared relationships: on the left are Alecsandri's singular relationships, in the middle the shared relationships, and on the right Eminescu's singular relationships) shows the sheer difference in breadth and scope between the two names. Around 20 names would disappear from the network if Alecsandri's name also disappeared, whereas more than 130 would disappear if Eminescu's name also disappeared.

## Conclusions

Drawing everything from the analytical parts of this study together, a few insights were gained that support the idea that *CL* is the last bastion of European Romanticism. Firstly, the local poetry published in the magazine centered around the poetic output of Junimism, a late blend of Classicism and Romanticism, and was unable to overcome it, thus almost abandoning poetry publication by World War I despite the general growth in poetry production. Secondly, the translations published in *CL* were mainly from French and German, but after the exhaustion of the European Romantic poets the magazine did not turn to post-Romantic poetry, but rather circled back to Latin and Ancient Greek translations. And thirdly, Eminescu was canonized as the Romanian national poet through the critical internationalization of his poetry and his integration into world literature networks rather than through a better national grounding.

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## Zadnji branik evropske romantike: kvantitativna analiza poezije v romunski literarni reviji *Convorbiri literare* (1867–1916)

Ključne besede: romunska poezija / evropska romantika / pesniški prevodi / Eminescu, Mihai / Alecsandri, Vasile / Maiorescu, Titu / kvantitativna analiza

Članek predstavi kvantitativno analizo poezije, objavljene v najbolj priljubljeni romunski literarni reviji druge polovice 19. stoletja *Convorbiri literare* (CL) od njene ustanovitve leta 1867 do leta 1916, ko je Romunija vstopila v prvo svetovno vojno. CL, ki velja za zadnjo večjo literarno revijo evropske romantike, je začela izhajati v času, ko je bila poezija privilegirana zvrst v romunski književnosti. Na svojih straneh je predstavljala tako narodnega pesnika Mihaia Eminescuja kot najvidnejšega romunskega literarnega kritika 19. stoletja Tituja Maiorescuja. Članek indeksira in kvantitativno analizira objavljeno poezijo in podatke, ki jih lahko razumemo kot pesniška omrežja. Rezultati analize podpirajo tezo, da je bilo objavljanje poezije in teoretiziranje o njej sestavni del enega zadnjih državotvornih procesov v Evropi. Iz ARCANUM-ovega digitalnega arhiva z več kot 66.000 stranmi CL so izluščeni in preučeni trije sloji metapodatkov, ki so povezani s poezijo: lokalna

produkcija poezije (kdo je objavljajal v *CL* in kdaj ter koliko); tuja produkcija poezije (čigava poezija je bila v *CL* prevedena v romunščino in kdaj ter od kod so bili avtorji prevodne literature) in mreže vpliva (kateri tujci so bili najpogostejše omenjeni v zvezi z dvema najpopularnejšima romunskima romantičnima pesnikoma, Eminescujem in Vasilom Alecsandrijem). Z odkrivanjem mednarodne mreže avtorjev, ki so bili v središču literarnih razprav v *CL*, si članek prizadeva očrtati nacionalno shemo relevantnosti, ki velja za romunsko poezijo v drugi polovici 19. stoletja.

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