

Metropole: Berlin, Rome, Paris through the Eyes of a Romanian Writer (Liviu Rebreanu)

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Abstract: *The paper analyses from an imagological point of view Liviu Rebreanu's travelling book "Metropole", mainly composed of the notes taken during the trips to Berlin, Rome and Paris. There are also some information provided about Poland, Yugoslavia and Hungary. The Romanian writer sets the people in the center of his interest and compares the realities seen abroad with the ones in his home country, thus rendering the work fit for a study in the history of the mentalities. Considerable attention is also given to the political events of the turbulent interwar period; Rebreanu skillfully detects the causes of the events to come, such as German revisionism and the rise of the extreme right. There are also several remarkable portrayals of historical figures such as Hindenburg, Benito Mussolini, Piłsudski, Raymond Poincaré.*

The Emergence of the Work and the Interwar Context

Metropole is one of the least known works of Liviu Rebreanu, being outshone by the great success of his novels. The author himself delayed the writing of the voyage notes, which appeared a few years after the ending of these trips; however, the preparations for his daughter's wedding and the bank loan forced him to increase his income by publishing another book. Having several projects already started, including the future novels *Gorila* and *Răscoala*, Rebreanu considered that *Metropole* would be easier to write and would save him from the financial troubles.

Everyday problems did not allow him to finish on time not even this project: from financial reasons, he underwent a tour of conferences through the country; at the same time, the campaign led by Nichifor Crainic against him in the journal *Gândirea* became more and more violent. The slow progress is also due to the particular writing style of Rebreanu, who often complained about this in his diary: "During all the nights, I wrote, but only little. *Metropole* gives me headaches. Nonetheless, any kind of writing is equally difficult for me. Creation is for me a wild writhing. The hardest struggle is with the excessive amount of ideas and too intimate images, which

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