**Literature**

# ROMANIAN MIGRATION REFLECTED IN RECENT PORTUGUESE LITERATURE: THE ROMA ETHNICITY AS A CASE IN POINT

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**Abstract**: *This article focuses on three contemporary Portuguese literary works that feature Roma characters and culture-specific elements within a wider selection of authors who mention or delve into past and present Romanian realities. This selection was aimed at determining which are the themes, historical events, lived or narrated memories, symbols, images, and ethnotypes that interest contemporary Portuguese authors in relation with the Romanian immigrant segment, a population fairly representative in Portugal (ninth largest minority group, with some 31,000 residents and an annual immigration rate of 2,000 new arrivals). My exploration (through several channels: library catalogues, oral sources, databases) revealed ten literary works which tackle elements related to: the Roma ethnic group and the negative ethnotype of prostitution, crime and begging; the former elite (aristocracy, intelligentsia), above all, temporally anchored in the early years of the 20th century; and the Communist regime, its apparatus (party and secret police) and its fall at the end of the eighth decade of the 20th century. In this article I shall focus on the analysis of the first group, basing this on the concept of "ethnotype", observing how the image of a given immigrant population is constructed, and how this image affects its members in the public and private spheres.*
**Keywords**: Portuguese literature; Romanian ethnotypes; Roma ethnicity; Alfonso Reis Cabral; Maria Velho da Costa; Chico Buarque.

## Introduction

The world map of human movement notably offers the figure of 281 million people (IOM, 2021: 3) who are currently on the move, and, although the wars and conflicts taking place in different areas of the globe appear to be the principal cause of this boom, poverty and the lack of resources needed to survive continue to be the primary cause of human migration. A significant number of citizens of the former Soviet bloc countries have moved in recent decades to the EU nations with the highest levels of development. This is

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how former *exporters* of migrants (Spain, Portugal) have become host countries and how others, such as Romania, have acquired the double condition of sending citizens abroad (as of 2017 nearly three million reside in EU countries, according to Şuiu, 2019) and at the same time receiving migrants from the former Soviet Union countries or China. There are some 700,000 Romanians in Spain (15 percent of all foreigners and 1.5 percent of the total population), aged between 20 and 44 years old, of whom more than half are women (largely employed as domestic workers or in the care for children or the elderly, while the men are employed in construction, agriculture, or catering); it is thus a case of economic migration (Şuiu, 2019) whose purpose is to attain a higher standard of life, higher income, and better opportunities for the future.

The presence of Romanians in Portugal is less common, with a population of five million, of whom half a million are foreign-born (half of these are concentrated in Lisbon). Some 31,000 Romanians reside in Portugal, of whom a third are tax-paying workers. In fact, according to Olivera & Gomes (2019: 143) in the *Observatorio das migraçoes*, Romanians and Bulgarians represent the highest employment levels among migrants, although their salaries are not comparable to those of Portuguese citizens. It is a young, educated segment which thus contributes to the country's demographic politics, and which suffers from lower rates of workplace injury, as they are employed in sectors with less exposure to high accident rates than those in which other foreigners are employed, which means they can choose the kind of jobs they take unlike other migrant groups (178). Only 15 percent of the Romanians own their own homes, the rest choosing to rent (229). Remittances from Romanians residing in Portugal rise to almost 20 million euros per year. All of this indicates, as is the case in Spain, that these are economic migrants, who sometimes are the targets of racist and xenophobic attitudes (most notably in the case of the second generation) on the part of the host society, especially among the lowest strata. The EU MIDIS II study (2008–2016) on racial and ethnic discrimination highlights (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2018: 13) ethnic and migratory origin as the principal cause of discrimination, and which is experienced by one in four of survey respondents, with the Roma ethnic group targeted in 26 percent of cases, along with North African and Sub-Saharan migrants. According to Oliveira & Gomes (2019: 284), the rate of naturalization among Romanians in Portugal is 1.4 percent of the total of foreigners (versus 11 percent for citizens from Santo Tomé, 9.5 percent from Guinea Bissau, or 7.8 percent from Angola), applying the principles of *ius sanguinis* and *ius soli*.

Genova (2015: 5) points out that there is no universal migrant experience, since, as Vertovec (2007: 1024) observes, diversity is not what it

used to be (a large, well-organized community with a defined geographic origin) but it is a rather "new, small, scattered, multiple-origin, transnationally connected, socio-economically differentiated and legally stratified" population. This is the case of Romanian and Roma immigrants in the Iberian Peninsula. Their degree of integration, or, in Koulaxi's (2022) terms, *conviviality*, understood as a constant encounter with difference, gauged by Amin (2012) as access and use of urban infrastructures, is also patent in recent literary works of the host countries. Conviviality is not a natural outcome of urban encounters, as Koulaxi (2022: 211) shows, but a process of identity-formation that is rooted in the context of everyday life and emerges at the juncture of embodied encounters with the Other. Togetherness and separation are not to be seen as binary but rather as dialectical, based on a diverging distribution of modes of communication, according to Georgiou (2017), who reckons media to separate citizens from non-citizens, while face-to-face communication brings them together. I would add a third type of encounter: the literary one. I argue that together with the media (local or in the country of origin) another important means of cognitive embodiment of diasporas that reflects, and, to a certain extent, influences connection and disconnection of migrant population is literature. This article proposes an examination of 10 contemporary Portuguese literary works (divided into three groups: the Roma ethnicity[1], the former elite[2], and the Communist regime[3]) that feature Romanian characters and culture-specific elements, with the aim of determining which are the themes, historical events, lived or narrated memories, symbols, images, or ethnotypes (Leerssen, 2016) that interest Portuguese authors in relation to an immigrant segment that is fairly representative.

### Methodology

The methodology underlying this study combines documentary analysis of migration-related questions, from official Portuguese sources (migration observations, diverse reports from specialized institutions), and review of literary bibliography so as to identify those works that contain Romanian elements, to be analysed later. In order to verify the results of the analysis of literary works and sociological sources, I carried out field

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[1] In *Leva-me contigo* (2019) by Alfonso Reis Cabral; *Myra* (2008) by Maria Velho da Costa; and *Budapeste* (2002) by Chico Buarque.

[2] In: *Encontros e encontroês de Portugal no mundo. Romenia*. (2019) by Leonidio Paulo Ferreira; *No Estoril. Uma noite igual a tantas* (1952) by Adeliade Felix; *Livros de Crónicas* by Antonio Lobo Antunes, and exceptionally, *Os Maias* (1888) by Eça de Queiroz.

[3] In: *A blusa romena* (2002) by Antonio Mega Ferreira; *A noite nâo é eterna* (2016) by Ana Cristina Silva, and as a children literature epilogue in *Ser diferente e bom* (2008) by Sonia Pessoa.

research, more precisely, I conducted a series of in-depth interviews with Romanians residing in Portugal[4]. The presence of Romanian characters or elements in contemporary Portuguese literature is anecdotal. The outcome of this research based on a selection of ten works, which, as previously mentioned, can be grouped into three blocks: a) the Roma ethnic group and the negative ethnotype of prostitution, criminality, and begging; b) the former Romanian elite (aristocracy, intelligentsia) temporally anchored in the early years of the XX century; and c) the Communist regime, its apparatus (party, secret police) and its fall, at the end of the eighth decade.

### Theoretical Background

Rather than the broader category of stereotypes, this analysis is concerned with its more specific variant, the *ethnotype*. The scholar who has labelled and drawn up (Chew, 2006), a *grammar* of image studies, the Dutch imagologist Joep Leerssen (2016), defines *ethnotypes* as a stereotypical attribution of national, supra-national or ethnic characterisation, responding not to an anthropological reality but to an opposition between the auto-image and the hetero-image, i.e., between the Self and the Other. Like prejudice and stereotype, the ethnotype is promoted in times of tension and diminished in periods of stability. In Leerssen's view, ethnotypes use *rhetorical formulae* and *moral tropes* and are based on *oppositions* and on *behavioral profiles* (temperamental patterns or psychological predispositions), obviously not drawn from historical constants but rather from images and counter-images. The danger of ethnotypes is their ontological half-life and their diluted presence in texts. Leerssen warns that even if we have more than one frame for a nation, the active frame pushes the others into latency. In Chew's (2006) view, "stereotypes colour, to a large extent, not only our self-perception (*auto-image*) and our perception via the image of the other (our *hetero-image*) but determine for better and for worse our behaviour toward the other" (Leerssen, 2006: 180, my emphasis). Leerssen (2007: 344) argues that the way a nation believes it is perceived constitutes a *meta-image*, and he (Leerssen, 2016) encourages a redefinition of imagology in the light of recent developments, showing that the concept gains urgency (as it did after the Second World War), with resurgent nationalisms, due to crisis conditions and

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[4] In this study the interviewee's names have been changed, so no personal data can be identified, except for a public figure who gave his approval. The four interview subjects have been given the fictitious names of Elena: (30 years old), Gina (34), Dorina (24) and Tudora (45); all four have completed at least some university studies, but they are employed below their qualification level. Two are part of the first generation of migrants, and two of the second. The four subjects speak Portuguese fluently, two of them graduated from secondary school and university in Portugal. The other two needed some four years to acquire the basics of Portuguese, beyond grammar and phonetics.

unprecedented migration (Hoenselaars & Leerssen, 2009). However, ethnocentricity characterized human societies and "anything that deviated from accustomed domestic patterns is 'othered' as an oddity, an anomaly, a singularity" (Leerssen, 2007: 17). The anecdotal belief in national features lasted until the late eighteenth century and later influenced the nineteenth century's comparative-historical paradigm. Like many stereotypes, the image of Roma has been contradictory, oscillating between romantic wanderers (bohemian, indicating a geographic location) and demonizing portraits (thieves, impostors, lazy, immoral, even cannibals) as Kommers shows (2007: 171). In scientific literature, Roma people are depicted as fata morgana, elusive and non-existent, as Willems (1997: 300) explains. The tropes attached to them throughout centuries of literary production are (Kommers, 2007: 173): bohemianism, untamed passion (gendered as a *femme fatale* image such as Hugo's Esmeralda, or Mérimée's Carmen and less frequently as men —Emily Brontë's Heathcliff), nomadism (suggesting freedom), and disregard for law and conventions.

**Reality: Testimonies by Residents of Romanian Origin in Portugal**

With the goal of corroborating the observations gleaned from sociological studies, I carried out field work consisting of four in-depth interviews with Romanian women residing in Portugal, belonging to the first and second generations of the diaspora. In addition to their personal details, the interview covered the following sets of questions: migration (when, how, why), legal status, employment status, housing, health, studies, language, discrimination, and an ample section on Romanians in Portugal. Additionally, I interviewed Daniel Silva Perdigão (personal communication, July 23, 2020), a bilingual university professor who is profoundly knowledgeable about Romanian culture (and who, with his refugee family, spent his childhood and completed his university studies in Romania).

Focusing on the first of the three categories of literary works identified, I will continue by analysing some of the questions commented on by the interview subjects, regarding the Roma ethnic group and the discrimination it is submitted to by the host society.

Regarding the question of whether there is discriminatory behaviour on the part of the Portuguese society, the four interview subjects are of the opinion that there is, especially toward African society (based on skin colour), followed immediately by hatred of Romanies. When asked to rank them, the four subjects assigned the first place to rejection of the Roma population in general, followed by that of Romanies of Romanian origin, with some highlighting the frequent equivalence of Romanians and Romanies. The four interview subjects recognised the existence of

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discrimination against the Romanian group (three of the four gave examples, while one said that she had not experienced it directly although people she knew had). As to the question of rejection of Romanian Romanies by Romanian migrants in Portugal, three believe that it does exist, and one chose the option of 'not much', although all of them identified as the cause the predominant ethnotype (delinquency), as well as the generalised (especially with lower social strata) confusion between Romanians and Romanies and also point out that these attitudes arise from generalizations about cases of petty theft and begging in tourist zones, media campaigns carried out by radical political groups, and skin colour. Three of the four interview subjects are of the opinion that the media are primarily responsible for the dissemination of negative images of minorities. This is combined with the *luso-tropicalist* ideology about the historic reality of the former Portuguese colonial empire. The youngest subjects underscore poverty as the backdrop for this situation. They point out that they are not ashamed of being Romanian and that they fight on a daily basis against generalizations and stereotypes, while the first generation of migrants are not getting involved in deeds such as begging, delinquency and prostitution associated with this ethnic group and are more given to separate the image of Romanians from that of Romanies of Romanian origin, sustaining that they represent separate cultures, although they do point to education as the solution. In turn, Silva Perdigão indicates that Romanies of Romanian origin are not accepted by the endogamous Iberian Roma population owing to a question of intermarriage and the control of traditional trades (market stalls, iron-mongering). Regarding the Romanian population, in Perdigão's opinion, it tends to lose its identity in Portugal (he gives the example of the dozen Romanian cultural associations that existed in the 2000's, and which have disappeared), except for an intellectual elite that self-identifies as such.

To contrast these results with the perception held by the members of the host society, I consulted diverse sources. One is the study carried out by Rosario, Santos & Lima (2011), which finds that the Roma are not seen as a nomadic people who settled in various countries over many centuries, but rather that, in the eyes of interview subjects and focus groups, drawn from the Portuguese lower and middle classes, Gypsies are exclusively from Romania: "*a raça cigana vem da Romenia*"[5] (143). In fact, for these interview subjects, "Romanian is synonymous with gypsy", a surprising equivalence, given the numbers of Portuguese Romanies living in the country. Generalizations and stereotypes (ethnotypes) associate Romanian migration with delinquency, even if in this definition of 'Romanian' is the underlying imagological concept of Gypsy in all of its connotations: "*os*

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[5] The Gypsy race comes from Romania.

*romenos saõ traiçoneiros, mendigos e inspiradores de sentimientos de piedade*"[6] (169). Even when the Sub-Saharan population, because of its physical characteristics, is the target group of xenophobic and racist attitudes, Romanies appear to be at the head of the list due to two factors: 1) its association with criminality in the collective imagination; 2) its geographic distribution across the whole country, in contrast with the African population, which is largely concentrated in Lisbon and environs.

### The Roma Ethnicity

Hancock (2002/2017) refers to the liberation of the Roma people from slavery in 1864 in the recently created Romanian State, with about 600,000 emancipates. However, they continued to be seen as outsiders, mainly because they were not Christians, had no country of origin and preferred to keep to themselves (31). In previous times, restrictive laws had been dictated in Europe to regulate their treatment and movement (in 1568, Pope Pius banished Romanies from the realm of the Holy Roman Church) and for centuries, to be born a Romani had been illegal. In Eastern Europe, under Communism, they lived in ghettos (*mahala* in Romanian) with high rates of unemployment and crime. To cope with racism, discrimination, and violence in Europe, the UN established the Roma Rights Centre (53). In the European folklore, Romanies are identified as non-white and evil-doers, and they could not access mechanisms to combat stereotypes. Media, often relying on literary or poorly researched sources, have transmitted news in an anti-Roma direction, as Kenedi shows (1986: 14), and Romanies remain the ideal target for *scapegoatism*. In turn, Beck (1985: 103) refers to other minorities in Romania who do have support (Germans, Magyars, Jews) whereas the Roma people lack a protective state and a history to legitimize them. Glase (1998: 1) claims that without a history, Romanies are defined by their 'behaviour' (Leerssen warned against using behavioural or temperamental patterns to define a group, leading to hazardous generalizations and ethnotypes) and they are submitted to racism, religious intolerance, and a literary tradition, making a blurred or non-existent distinction between imagined and real people. According to Hancock (2002/2017: 64), during the Industrial Revolution, literature depicted gypsies as either leading an idyllic rural way of life, or as 'noble savages' in need of Christian salvation, and their contemporary 'persona' is the result of dynamics rooted in the 19th century, based on colonialism and racial hierarchy, combined with a romantic nostalgia for unspoiled territory. On the other hand, children (especially European children) were presented with a misleading image of Romanies at ages when stereotypes and attitudes are formed. The image of 'Gypsy' as antithetical to

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[6] They are treacherous, they are beggars, and they intend to inspire pity.

'us' while at the same time spatially nearby. It is also dichotomic, hinting at the myth of 'children-stealers' which still circulates, (see Kommers, 2007: 172) and at the image of far-away exotic people. Both clichés are equally dangerous because of their pedagogical power and the discrimination they both exert on this ethnicity through an *othering* strategy. The Romani reaction to this treatment goes in two directions, as Hancock shows (2002/2017: 67): either avoiding any contact with non-Romanies or cohabiting but educating in self-exclusion. Kommers (2007: 171) shows that this *status aparte* was sought by some Roma-elites and the minority has contributed to a certain degree to the perpetuation of the representation of alterity. This phenomenon is common to 'small cultures' that evolved under the sign of an inferiority complex in search of recognition such as those in the Balkan Peninsula, adopting mental pictures of themselves as they were "produced, reproduced, and distributed by literature and mass media from countries located far away" (Musat, 2022: 154). Kishwar (1998: 14) explains how people who are constantly humiliated and attacked often "transform their behaviour into that of the stereotyped image projected on them". As an example, Stockin, King & Knight (2001) interpret the flamenco dance as a 'stylized aggression' reflecting the resentment of having to entertain the patrons in exchange for protection from racism.

### Fiction: The Roma Ethnicity in Literary Texts

Out of the ten literary works selected for analysis, three contained Romani elements. In the following section, we shall identify the prevalent ethnotypes (out of the most frequently found in literature, which go from slave and childish mentality, through hygiene and magic, to morals and crime), and the stylistic devices through which they are sub-textually introduced.

In the first place, the travelogue *Leva-me Contigo* by Alfons Reis Cabral (2019) recounts both a life experience and a social experiment, during the author's journey on foot from the North to the South of Portugal, "*pela Estrada Nacional 2*" sharing his experiences on social networks and receiving comments from friends and strangers. On the nineteenth day he meets some Roma children of Romanian origin (133) "*escondidos pelo pó de un camino*" (hidden in the dust of a country road), who are eating out of the garbage, are filthy, do not attend school, and do not speak Portuguese. One of them speaks to him in Romanian, whose similarity is a surprise for the author ("*cheios de frases em romeno que soavam quase a portugués*"—full of Romanian phrases that almost sounded like Portuguese), although he is disconcerted when a child who appears to be younger than he is ["*com oito anos, aparentava cinco*"— at eight years old, he seemed five (133)], with skin that is "between burnt and dirty", with "clear, green eyes", says to him

in the little Portuguese he speaks (133): "*Leva-me contigo*" ("take me with you").

On one hand, the ethnotype alludes to the childish mentality, since the narrator refers to his interlocutor as appearing to be three years younger than his real (physical and intellectual) age. On the other hand, the narrator refers to hygiene, another major point of debate. Surprisingly, he does not offer a reflection on this encounter, but rather limits himself to describing it, recounting that the children are afraid of his tripod, a fact that leads the reader towards observing their endogamic life has taken place outside of urban centres. Nevertheless, he does in fact use the child's words as the title of this book, which leads the reader to empathize with his subjects, despite not legitimizing the group or countering the ethnotype, but rather reinforcing it with this echo of the myth of the 'noble savage'. Along the same lines, we note that the author has included (174) the three Roma children in his acknowledgments at the end of the book ("*aos três rapazinhos ciganos, por terem conversado comigo*"—to the three Gypsy boys for speaking with me.)

*Myra* is the protagonist of the novel with the same title written by Maria Velho da Costa (2008); she is a Russian adolescent, victim of a prostitution ring in Portugal, who lives surrounded by violence, under various identities, and on the verge of suicide, and who finds solace only in the company of her dog, a link to her yearned former life. The episode that motivates the selection of this literary work relates Myra's encounter with Sister Maria Augusta, who asks about her background. For obvious reasons, Myra invents a reality that is far from the truth, telling the nun that she is Romanian and, in order to be more convincing, includes a gastronomic element (71), ("*e hoje à noite temos bolas de carne com ervas e salpicão, que é o que eu mas gosto*"—and tonight, we're having meatballs with herbs and sauce, which is my favourite), leading to the questions (72): "*Tu és romena, filha? És da etnia cigana? Năo te mandaran observar, naceste a termo?*" (Are you Romanian, my child? A Gypsy? Have you seen a doctor? Were you born normal?) Myra replies "*Nasci já cá, no Hospital de Setúbal, [...] e a minha măe tem más medo de ciganos do que do diabo na cruz*"[7]. The nun's inference in classifying Myra as being part of the Roma ethnicity is based on existing prejudices in the Portuguese society: the girl was born without a doctor's care and is thus deformed.

Among the above-mentioned ethnotypes, at least two appear here: that regarding hygiene (it is suggested that they follow unconventional lifestyles and have a different understanding of healthcare norms) and that of delinquency, depicting the criminal gypsy, who 'upright' people fear. The

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[7] I was born here, at Setubal Hospital, and my mother is afraid of Gypsies more than of the devil on the cross.

author uses Myra's response to correct the nun's generalization and to draw a line between Romanians and Romanies, although she does not address the stereotype of danger that shadows this group, as she substitutes the nun's confusion about the Roma population's lack of medical care with another ethnotype, criminality: gypsies are "more feared than the devil".

The novel *Budapeste* (2002) by the Brazilian author Chico Buarque (well-known as a singer and poet), who is an exception in my selection of works limited to the Portuguese-speaking geographical context (due to his large number of readers in Portugal), is the first-person narration of an anonymous writer (ghost writer) who, during a stay in Budapest, falls in love with the Hungarian language and later with his teacher, Kriska, thus beginning a double life, divided between two cities and two women. While having a drink at the 'Asshole' Bar, a thief attempts to rob him and supposedly kill him (46): "*era romeno, usava um medalhão de bronce no peito, uma argola na orelha, um anel em cada dedo, era um cigano romeno*"[8]. He had gold teeth, brutal fists, and murderous intentions (47): "*E assim ficou evidente que per alguna artimanha, com alguna prestidigitaçao cigana, eles tinham reservado para mim a bala do tambor. […] Estavam de olho no meu dinheiro desde o inicio, organizavam minha morte*" (It was obvious that through some scheme or Gypsy trick they had a bullet with my name on it…they were after my money from the beginning and had planned to kill me). The protagonist manages to slip out of the bar in the middle of a group of Danish tourists and the episode ends there.

Once again, we observe how contemporary literature, far from standing against ethnotypes (in this case, once more, that of delinquency and accompanied by a series of visual symbols in the medallion, rings, gold teeth, and earrings, almost a figure from a nineteenth-century engraving), it perpetuates them, with the Gypsy as an exponential case in his hypostasis of criminality, as was the case in the past in the writing of Cervantes, Tolstoy, Conan Doyle, or Verne. In fact, in none of the three cited works do we see the other vision of the Gypsy, romantic and more amiable (the bohemian, artistic Gypsy), which in the opinion of one of the interview subjects reflects a hardening of the Portuguese society's xenophobic attitudes over the past decade, and which, in turn may have something to do with the far-right's entry in the Portuguese Parliament (André Ventura's *Chega* Party). Moreover, Buarque corrects the initial perception that the narrator has when he first encounters this character— *era romeno* (he was Romanian) —settling on *cigano romeno* (a Romanian Gypsy) after describing his appearance ("*era romeno, usava um medalhão de bronce no peito, uma argola na orelha, um*

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[8] He was Romanian, wearing a bronze medallion on his chest, an earring, and ring on each finger; he was a Romanian Gypsy.

*anel em cada dedo, era um cigano romeno*”). Even though he makes this clarification at the end of the sentence, the deliberate ambiguity that he introduces with this confusion is latent in the subtext, and perhaps in the imagination of the reader.

**Conclusions**

This paper focused on the presence of Roma elements in three literary works selected for analysis (out of the ten identified as containing Romanian elements) as a reflection of a demographically diverse Portuguese society. It also delved into the striking fact that the Roma minority is considered by a part of Portuguese society as belonging exclusively to the Romanian migration of the nineties and 2000s, in spite of the pre-existence of a considerable local Roma population prior to the migration phenomenon, which was indeed intensified in the aftermath of the fall of the Eastern European communist regimes. In one of the novels (Chico Buarque's *Budapeste*) a dangerous criminal emerges, whereas in the other two, the reader is faced with children as victims of begging (Alfonso Reis Cabral's *Leva-me Contigo*) and prostitution (Maria Velho da Costa's *Myra*) with whom the reader obviously sympathizes, but which is no obstacle to the perpetuation of the ethnotypes through literature. Even if they dwell on a biased perception of the Romanian community in Portugal, these three books do reflect a) a part of the Portuguese society's fears and obsessions regarding otherness, at least those of the lower classes (according to the results of the ACIDI Report by Rosario, Santos & Lima, 2011), and b) the negative image of Romanian immigrants based on stereotypes/ ethnotypes and reinforced by media campaigns.

After having approached ten literary works written in Portuguese in the last two decades, containing characters and elements of Romanian culture, history and society, we can conclude that the ten works differ in views and topics, but also share some common elements, such as a Manichean view of Romanians, either as suspect characters of unreliable aspect, prone to evil-doing and deliberately depicted in a relation of synonymy with the ethnic Roma group (with its own ethnotypes), or as an educated and cultivated elite exoticized through religious, folkloric, idiosyncratic, and gastronomic elements.

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