

## The Ideological System of Adrian Marino

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### Abstract

The paper is an attempt to demonstrate the fact that the return of the theoretician to Enlightenment and "*pașoptism*"<sup>1</sup> represents in fact a return to polyvalence and to the multifunctionality of the concept of Europe. The main theories formulated by Adrian Marino's ideological works can also be read as an evolution of "Europe" from the state of possibility towards a specific political concept. Generally *Europe becomes a grid, an ordering scheme of Romanian space*, in the measure in which the author confesses that his preoccupation regarding the "way in which the Romanian spirit and culture grasp and assimilate this reality in expansion".

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### 1. The Idea of Europe

The central theme that crosses like a red line the complete works of Adrian Marino – from literary theory creations to journals or ideological writings – is, as the author calls it himself "the *idea* of Europe" (my italics). Adrian Marino's insistence is not incidental regarding the fact that Europe is in the first place an idea. The author confers it a highly personal theoretical content. *Even if not particularly enunciated, this fact, Europe, appears as a source irradiating all the systems constructed by Adrian Marino. An idea of force, a concept of maximum efficiency that prepares a wide range of other distinctions.* Thus, before discussing all the main theories formulated by Adrian

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<sup>1</sup> *Pașoptism, pașoptist* – Romanian terms denominating the ideology of the participants of the 1848 Revolution in the Romanian countries and the representatives of this ideology.

Marino's ideological works, we must elucidate the term "Europe" with its area of semantic extension.

Firstly, an evolution or at least a variation of the term "Europe" can be recognized in the work of Adrian Marino. If in his journals he rather spoke about an intellectual Europe seen through an aesthetic lens, in his works of comparatism – *Etiemble ou le comparatisme militante* (1982), *Comparatism și teoria literaturii* (Comparativism and Theory of Literature) (1998) – Europe gains a more palpable ideological content. A bluntly politicized Europe, gained from the abstract sphere of the idea is to be found only in the volumes appearing after 1989. However, the militant aspect is obvious right from his very first writings, but this content has been kept in a latent state. Otherwise the author often manifests against aestheticism or against the theories that make abstraction of the ideological perspective. The development of Marino's writings can also be read as an evolution of "Europe" from the state of possibility towards a specific political concept.

Hence it follows that Europe is not an abstract, *a priori* idea, a purely ideological construction, but a living, combative reality. It represents in the words of the author "by excellence an ideology and an active political idea, affirmed openly and without inhibitions".<sup>1</sup> Superficially seen or from a height, the concept of Europe promulgated by Adrian Marino may seem paradoxical. It is used both in contexts denoting the universal as in particular or actual situations. Only that in a fragment from *Carnete europene* (European Notebooks), Marino signals and explains this semblant ambiguity. Referring to the conditions of promotion of a writer's work on "universal" scale, the author remarks: "I deliberately avoid the content of the word "universal", which cannot have the particular, immediately verifiable content that I intend to express."<sup>2</sup> Therefore, at the very moment when he talks about a Europe under the sign of the universal or of the general, Marino keeps in sight a well-defined system of relations. In this context I consider it appropriate to relate a dichotomy that the author often actualizes: it is the one between the absolute values (postulated by G. Călinescu or by E. Lovinescu) and the values in use. The universal which Marino refers to would be one of

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<sup>1</sup> Adrian Marino, *Pentru Europa – Integrarea României. Aspecte ideologice și culturale* (For Europe – The Integration of Romania. Ideological and Cultural Aspects), Iași, Polirom, 1995, p. 13.

<sup>2</sup> Idem, *Carnete europene – Însemnare a călătoriilor mele făcută în anii 1969–1975*, (European Booklets – Record of my Journeys in the Years 1969–1975) second edition, Bucharest, Noul Orfeu, 2003, p. 108.

circulation, in which the works are integrated in a larger European context opposed to the "absolute universal", self-sufficient, autarchic of the aesthetic. Furthermore Marino is one of the first Romanian personalities who constantly and systematically emphasize the fact that "it must be meditated on the material, quantitative, constant and systematic fact of success."<sup>1</sup> The "absolute" of Marino is not poetical or abstract, but practical and militant: "I believe that I belong to a form of culture where truth is however possible" notes the author."<sup>2</sup>

However, in Marino's arguments the gradual ascension of Europe on the scale of the universal is interesting. In *Pentru Europa* (For Europe), the ideologue retraces a history of the idea of European literature.<sup>3</sup> If for the creators of this expression a militant universalist connotation has been involved, then in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, in the academic circles its meaning is restricted to a pure theoretical and descriptive acceptance. With all these in addition to Etiemble or Wellek, the theoretician believes that we are dealing with a double universalization of the term: from East to West (in the sense in which oriental literatures also start to be encompassed), but also from the literary towards the universal-human. Through these two processes of extension the "universalist and intrinsic vocation of European literature" is also recovered. In this excellent theoretical demonstration in steps, Marino however avoids a too abstract sense with no theoretical covering: "We do not wish to claim a utopian universal competence, but only to think constantly about literature in the context of universality."

Further, within the frame of Marino's writings, the concept of Europe is strewn in a large series of reflections. From an imagological perspective, for example, for Romanians there exists a "financial Europe" that "gives all the time", and this overshadows a "spiritual Europe of rights and liberties".<sup>4</sup> The ideologue is preoccupied with the image of Europe in the Romanian conscience, regardless of it's appearance as a "wonderful, incredible land" or, on the contrary as a "as a general synonym for foreignness". Generally *Europe becomes a grid, an ordering scheme of Romanian space*, in the measure in which the author confesses that his preoccupation regarding the "way in which the Romanian spirit and culture grasp and assimilate this reality in

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 42.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 56.

<sup>3</sup> *Idem*, *Pentru Europa - Integrarea României. Aspecte ideologice și culturale*.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 22.

expansion”.<sup>1</sup> *I shall attempt to demonstrate the fact that the return of the theoretician to the Enlightenment and “pasoptism” represents in fact a return to polyvalence and to the multifunctionality of the concept of Europe: in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century this turns into mentor, trainer, public opinion, honour board, awarding commission, authority that decides in all essential cultural, social and political problems of the Romanian nation*”.<sup>2</sup> The volume *Libertate și cenzură în România*<sup>3</sup> (Liberty and Censorship in Romania) is a history of Romania from the perspective of Europeanism with its main branches: liberalism and democracy.

I believe in fact, that the subtle oxymoronic formula – “to bring Europe *home*” (italics mine) – succeeds in granting the complete degree of complexity of the European idea at Adrian Marino: the fight for Europe does not level with the combat for obtaining the familiar, the common, that which is already ours. Though we have actually never stepped out from Europe, we are in the position of fighting more than ever for its idea. The actualization of the European idea presupposes thus a re-memorization, or what is more, a process of *anamnesis* (in the Platonic sense), that to re-actualize a latently existing reality in the Romanian historic conscience. When he proposes to retrieve “the Romanians’ tradition of the idea of freedom”,<sup>4</sup> the ideologist unavoidably assumes the role of the national memory archivist.

## 2. Encyclopaedism as a historical solution

After 1989, the problem of memory is becoming more acute with the degree of “the hermetic isolation from Europe by the totalitarian system of Romania and of the entire Soviet block”.<sup>5</sup> Along democracy and liberalism, the European idea enters in shadow for a period of fifty years, though it maintains some factors of continuity inasmuch as – in Marino’s opinion – “Romanian literature has never completely and radically left Europe”.<sup>6</sup> Starting from a few observations of Alina Mungiu, the ideologist makes some rather interesting observations, which stand in fact on the basis of his entire political reflection after eighty nine:

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 107.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 177.

<sup>3</sup> Idem, *Libertate și cenzură în România – Începuturi* (Liberty and Censorship in Romania – Beginnings), Iași, Polirom, 2005.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7.

<sup>5</sup> Idem, *Pentru Europa*, cit. ed., p. 42.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 53.

after the totalitarian regime, Romania is confronting a trauma of identity: "isolated and torn apart from his future, the new Romania does not recognize itself in the old one".<sup>1</sup> What is more, Marino formulates a few constant themes which place the new Romanian world in a stadium of the beginnings: the absence of a democratic tradition, of the theoretical synthesis and of political science. *In this context of a Romania without his past and without the idea of future, the process of anamnesis definitely gains weight. Furthermore, in one of his journals the ideologist directly connects the idea of remembering to the one of synthesis: "Remembering in my opinion has no less than one very positive, determinative aspect; it permanently compels to summary and synthesis to classification and organization".*<sup>2</sup> *The only solution in the case of a state the recent memories of which have been erased is the recovery of the lost time through the encyclopaedism of memory of certain exemplary historical moments. Because it does not have any recent memories about democracy and Europe, the Romanian will have to reflect on the manner in which he shall approach these on the different stages of its evolution. Marino pleads thus for the particularity of the aesthetic culture in rapport with the West. If Europeans can focus on specialized and fragmentary studies, the East can only prefer, for now, a global knowledge through which he might recover the lost time and to integrate within "the sphere of the essential references"*<sup>3</sup>.

*The (post)totalitarian world and the period of Enlightenment are theoretically overlapping each other in the system of Adrian Marino. In very different contexts in more than a hundred and fifty years historical distance, the ideals of the two Romanias – the pașoptist and the communist – meet. This fact is directly and repeatedly expressed by the ideologue: "A reviewer of my book *Etiemble ou le comparatisme militant*, otherwise a very eulogizing review, has a single regret: the influences of the Enlightenment. He did not realize that in 1981–1982, amid the golden age of the restrictive period, the appraisal of free communication, of the universal fortress of letters, of cosmopolitanism or others, represented – at least in intention – an act of independence, if not anti-totalitarian spiritual resistance".*<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Adrian Marino, *Politică și cultură - Pentru o nouă cultură română* (Politics and Culture – For a new Romanian culture), Iași, Polirom, 1996, p. 192.

<sup>2</sup> Idem, *Carnete europene*, cit. ed., p. 55.

<sup>3</sup> Idem, *Pentru Europa*, cit. ed., p. 60.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 61.

Thus, between *pașoptism* and the post communist world there is an enormous historical chasm “predominantly nationalist and forever anti-European”.<sup>1</sup> Actually, pointed out Adrian Marino, the communist system was more like a continuation of the anti-European conception regarding the state and the mistrust towards the European idea. The process of abandoning the liberal ideas and Europe goes back to the representatives of the *Junimea*<sup>2</sup> organization and to the theory of Mairescu on the theory of “forms without essence”, then passing through “*superjunimism*”<sup>3</sup> and the extreme nationalism of Nae Ionescu. The totalitarian system only brought forward the isolationist tendencies of the Romanian thinking estranged from the *pașoptist* ideal.

The journals of Adrian Marino are nothing but oblique forms of discussing European realities: “I used to write journey books as well and I considered – sometimes – from a superior naivety – that I could bring Europe home”.<sup>4</sup> In *Evadări în lumea liberă* (Escapes into the Free World), the ideologue can openly confess the fact that “journals have in the first place a very precise ideological and polemic meaning”.<sup>5</sup> Accordingly, for an ideologue Europe is a project thought through and assumed – both theoretically and existentially – on multiple levels. Then again, the nature of the journal is altered in order to uphold the ideological project of its author. In almost every journey book, Marino insisted on a few expressions as “intellectual journal”, “anti-literature” or “anti-tourism”. In writings impregnated by such powerful ideological significance, any kind of aesthetic cheapness or tourist frivolity is programmatically rejected. Not less are the journey fragments escapes from a platitudinous, anti-denotative discourse of hollow claptraps so peculiar to the totalitarian system. Marino rejected literature and the stylistic ornament for the simple reason, because, in the totalitarian

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 34.

<sup>2</sup> Organization founded in 1863 in Iași under the rule of Alexandru Ioan Cuza by a group of young intellectuals willing to give another course to Romanian culture and literature. The political program of this association shall be subordinated to the cultural one. The *Junimists* have fiercely criticized the 1848 revolution, which they considered an imitation of the French model. They were not against changes or western culture, but insisted on the fact that changes had to be made slowly, in a pace that could be followed by the Romanian society. (Translator’s note.)

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 146.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 31.

<sup>5</sup> *Idem*, *Evadări în lumea liberă* (Escapes into the Free World), Iași, European Institute, 1993, p. 6.

Romania, literature was tightly connected with illusion and lies. The thirst for Europe is also the thirst for the lost referentiality of discourse. On the other hand culture for the author was a "vast abstract encyclopaedia",<sup>1</sup> "any journey presumes a special hermeneutics",<sup>2</sup> while the modern man is defined as the "man of the ideas in motion".<sup>3</sup> The famous concept of "values of circulation" is probably the main reflex of this vision of culture as spatial extension. The volume *Prezențe românești și realități europene* (Romanian Presences and European Realities) contains even an interesting journey taxonomy from the point of view of the traveller's knowledge level".<sup>4</sup>

In the post communist period Marino symptomatically abandoned the journey fragments. An entirely different discourse was required here in this world freshly emerged on the surface of history. There were two modalities of action and implicitly two stages that these writings give evidence of: a "battle of ideas" and "militant writings" were firstly required, which had to familiarize the wide public with the concepts of Europeanism, liberalism and democracy. We are speaking of an "indispensable preliminary phase" of definition and of popularization followed then by "historiographic studies".<sup>5</sup> *The ideologue was in one person an arbitrator of the new public space and a researcher trying to documentarily explore the democratic tradition of Romanian culture. The two approaches: one facing actuality, the other turning towards the past, both originating from the same encyclopaedic imperative. For a staggered Romania, which suddenly remained without its history, the continuous re-stabilization with its past was crucial. Or, as we have shown, remembrance was an important factor of synthesis and encyclopaedism in the system built by Adrian Marino.*

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<sup>1</sup> Idem, *Carnete europene*, cit. ed., p. 47.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 30.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 9.

<sup>4</sup> "...in function of the thirst of knowledge of the traveller: 1. the one who does not know a thing ... and cannot travel; 2. the one who knows something, but cannot travel; 3. the one who cannot travel, but does not know a thing; 4. the one who can travel and understands – the most rare species." (Adrian Marino, *Prezențe românești și realități europene. Jurnal intelectual*, Bucharest, Albatros, 1978, p. 31.).

<sup>5</sup> Idem, *Pentru Europa*, cit. ed., pp. 5–7.

## 2.1. The program of actuality

Adrian Marino's ideological books which would illustrate the "preliminary phase" of the pro-European politics are in spite of their fragmentariness, real maps of concepts. Even if not projected like a system, they are inevitably organized into a very coherent program.

For *Europe or Culture and Politics* are genuine radiographs of the post-revolutionary world in the measure in which they are discussing all the major issues of Romanian society. Created by assembling some previously published fragments, the books inevitably contain a series of repetitions; however, this "baroque style" implying permanent recurrences with nuances – was convenient to Marino.<sup>1</sup> The ideologue involuntarily handled the great themes of the "new world". In his political articles Marino started from the premise that he was dealing with another social-political reality that had to be restructured and re-ordered. The ideological "morning" of *pașoptism* was related to communism from this aspect as well. Thus the ideologue had the obligation to reconstruct the "meaning of words" by delimiting the old concepts from the new ones. Adrian Marino perfectly understood that any revolution is primarily equal with a semantic revolution.

Therefore, the theoretician placed new expressions in the Romanian discourse, as "cultural resistance" or literary resistance, decomposing with utmost attention and circumspection each ambiguous mechanism that these notions deal with. In *Culture and Politics* Marino proposed right under that determined impulse which characterized him a taxonomy of social resistance in the communist Romania. The general conclusion of this analysis was a cautious and a circumstantial one: "In such cases of great dilemma and doubt, there are only – as a matter of fact – strictly individual and unique answers and solutions",<sup>2</sup> Marino concluded after the examination of the "Noica case". *Ambiguity* is the main coordinate of the public conduct in the totalitarian space. Generally, the commentaries of the ideologist excel at the explanation of the social and psychological mechanisms of communism: from the myth of the "irreversible situation" and to the writer's schizoid condition – all these being exact labels of the totalitarian community. Marino was also a very good diagnostician in the sense that he identified the most acute diseases

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<sup>1</sup> "I am not at all embarrassed by being defined as a Baroque spirit; in any case, I like insistent, rhythmical, easily obsessive returns, in architectonic superimposeure." (Idem, *Carnete europene*, cit. ed., p. 12).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 101.



of the post-communist world: “a guilty conscience of (pseudo) collaboration and a false conscience of (pseudo)resistance”.<sup>1</sup>

Through his entire publicist activity after December 22<sup>nd</sup>, Adrian Marino indicated himself the arbitrator of the European idea. The reconstruction of the public space became the ideologue’s main preoccupation, which he saw as totally deformed by the communist repression. The break-down of dictatorship left behind “an amorphous, indifferent, undecided, morally and civically underdeveloped society”.<sup>2</sup> Accordingly, the public domain in a wider sense was the domain of predilection of the militant action. Marino underlined the necessity of the switch from the role of the individual (or “mass man” expression set about by Hannah Arendt) to the role of the citizen. The development of a political scientific reflection had an important role in the process of constructing a middle class opened towards the liberal values according to Adrian Marino. The ideologist congratulated, encouraged and guided all those studies that attempted to scrutinize the problems of the new society – he commented on political scientists such as Alina Mungiu, Sorin Antohi, Stelian Tănase or Dan Pavel. Actually these volumes inaugurated in Marino’s conception “the most original chapter of culture after 1989”.<sup>3</sup> Apoliticality, the flight from assuming a precise ideological position was the gravest problem of those involved in social activities in Romania. The observations regarding the intellectual’s role in the new policy are also very precise, though it must be mentioned that his predilect space is the opposition – “it is hard to conciliate the analytical spirit with political partisanship”.<sup>4</sup> In this context Marino identified the two political camps that argued their legitimacy in the Romanian post-revolutionary opposition: the radicalism of the old generation of political prisoners was in this context the competitor of the new generation’s relativism and pragmatism.<sup>5</sup>

## 2.2 The historiographic project

The only solution in the amnesia-phenomenon caused by the totalitarian system – as we have seen it – was encyclopaedism as a form of memory transposed into synthesis. The volume *Libertate și cenzură în*

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 115.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 156.

<sup>3</sup> Adrian Marino, *Cultură și politică*, cit. ed., p. 120.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 152.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 153–155.

*România*<sup>1</sup> was thus the direct expression of an encyclopaedism transformed into act, a symptom of the memory in action. Marino's historiographic project can be likened to the platonic *anamnesis* inasmuch as the latter denotes an *a priori* knowledge of ideas, which only need to be re-actualized. They have existed since the beginnings of Romanian thinking, only that they have been shadowed by different political and cultural phenomena.

The last volume of Adrian Marino therefore has an expressive active and polemic sense, a reaction to the rightist and leftist ideology: "between these two compact groups, centrist Romanian culture remained fragile, intimidated, isolated, without great actualized traditions"<sup>2</sup> asserted the ideologue in one of the articles replicated in *Pentru Europa*. *Due to the militant sense of the project, when one is reading Libertate și cenzură în România must take into consideration Adrian Marino's other political positions as well. When the ideologue returned to the origins of the idea of liberty, he did not accomplish an act of free historical encyclopaedism, but he enterprised an action of strict actuality for the Romanian debates. Enlightenment was brought back into the actuality not just in order to exemplify the meaning of a tradition, but especially in order to offer a living example.* The multiple parallelisms of the Enlightenment and the (post)communist situation illustrate this. The most valorous chapters in *Libertate și cenzură în România*, are those that put into debate common dilemmas of Enlightenment and totalitarianism. The fragments on the liberalization of press – being otherwise the richest in information, signalling that the author insisted upon this issue – represent in fact new extensions of latent meanings of the condition of Romania in the 1980s. Adrian Marino's ideological work is a history with many openings towards the recent history of communism.

The study is also interesting from another point of view, Adrian Marino's poetics. If up to this point the author's favourite theme had been Europe, then *Libertate și ideologie* (Liberty and Ideology) was equivalent with a "return to the homeland".<sup>3</sup> The researcher could culturally return home, if in this "home"-term the idea of Europe began to articulate increasingly. Marino's work is essential for the Romanian culture in the measure in which Enlightenment and *pașoptism* are not viewed from an aesthetic but from an ideological angle. The researcher even testified

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<sup>1</sup> Adrian Marino, *Libertate și cenzură în România. Începuturi*, Iași, Polirom, 2005.

<sup>2</sup> Idem, *Pentru Europa*, cit. ed., p. 145.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8.

certain “voluptuousness” in his proposal of alternative hero-models for the Romanian culture (evaluated thus from an ideological angle). On the other hand, Marino subtly argued the fact that the actions/writings of Enlightenment and *pașoptism* had in fact no aesthetic finality. The prolonged obsession of Romanian culture to literarily valorize these writings actually represents nothing but an error of reception.

Despite the title of the book, I believe that this time too Europe was the subject that confers specificity and relief to Marino’s historiographic project. Its images and situations were so intense within the ideology of the Enlightenment that it succeeded in including other categories as well such as liberty, democracy or laicization. The fragments in which the researcher approximated the birth of the idea of Europe in the Romanians’ supra-conscience give evidence of great subtlety. The first “form without essence” – thus the first reflexive division of Romanian society, was equal with the discovery of a “grandiose but empty Europe”.<sup>1</sup> If in the West Europe had been formed organically, in the Romanian states, it “represented only a model and an ideological ideal” – went on the researcher. The configuration of Europe as an ideological model was equivalent with the first shift of paradigm, with the first step towards freeing itself from the traditional society (“to be effectively for the first time contemporary with history”<sup>2</sup>).

Subsequently I would say that Europe for Adrian Marino in *Libertate și cenzură în România* was a political supra-reflection in Claude Lefort’s manner (“the politician is an auto-representation of society”). The Romanian society gains a precise liberal and democratic orientation only in the moment when it perceives the distance towards Europe (when this latter appears as a “mirage” – the researcher himself used the word). The modern political organization will be outlined when society does not correspond to itself anymore, when it is predisposed to a work of thinking upon itself. Thus, for Marino, Europe was exactly the grid, the scheme which systematically imposes the reflection of Romanian society upon its own identity.

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 136.

<sup>2</sup> *Idem, Pentru Europa*, cit. ed., p 167.