

MIGRATION OF IDEAS: FROM THE ITALIAN FUTURISM TO THE ROMANIAN INTEGRALISM

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Abstract: *The current paper aims to illustrate the manner in which the Romanian literature of the Avant-garde managed to find its place in the European literary landscape, after numerous fluctuations between synchronicity with similar European literary movements, marginalization, independent manifestations or architecture of the Art Nouveau. The influence that the Italian futurism had on the Romanian literature of the early twentieth century was not a direct one, but its ideas and spirit migrated toward this fertile literary space in continuous waves, leaving behind original creations and contributing to the birth of a purely Romanian literary movement – the integralism. This literary movement, atypical of Western Europe, represents the only Romanian avant-garde manifestation that managed to melt together futurist, Dadaist, constructivist or surrealist influences, in a creative Romanian synthesis, although it is not a homogenous, unitary movement that occurs artistically and literarily. Futurist reverberations were present in all Romanian publications of the literary avant-garde and they included the telegraphic style, alert pace, abundance of neologisms (especially inspired by technology), whereas futurist manifestos were published almost at the same time with the Italian ones. On this background of melted ideas, Western literary avant-garde movements, occurring before the Central ones, found in the Romanian cultural space both a place for possible convergences and one for discovering the old under the veil of the new.*

Keywords: *futurism, integralism, literary avant-garde, Dadaism, constructivism, surrealism*

1. INTRODUCTION

The literary avant-gardes emerged and will probably continue to appear out of the obsession for the new, out of need to supersede, by means of an "infantile malady" into action, expressed as such in a literary environment characterized by generationist linearity. In this climate, we need to understand the need for new, not in relation with the instruments of modernity or with the need of progress, but in rapport with the need of surpassing, by means of innovation or even tradition. The Romanian literary avant-garde perceived this reality and made room for a remarkable evolution. If this was hazard or if the local cultural environment led to such a phenomenon, it is the literary history to find out, in time. It is only certain that the Romanian literary avant-garde fosters the new as openness, in a unique model and in a synthesis that deserves greater attention.

Installed in a moment of creative stagnation, of lack of ideas, the Romanian literary avant-garde manages, although in the absence of a linear

manifestation, to align itself to the innovative European spirit and to fully contribute to the advance of the post-modern literature. Migration of new ideas was initially achieved in intimate circles, based on mutuality, respect and consideration, and, later on, ideas were shaped and turned into distinct literary movements. Social, economic or politic influences of the epoch were always present in the literature of the avant-garde; yet, their manifestations were not identical in the European and Romanian cultural spaces. The literary criticism of the avant-gardes oscillated between placing the Romanian avant-garde at the European avant-garde's periphery and underlining the essential role it had for the evolution of the European avant-garde, between highlighting the time-distance in relation with the European movement and the synchronism of its manifestation. However, the real interest in the Romanian literary avant-garde manifested only in the last three decades of the twentieth century and there are some terminological confusions with regard to the perception of the Romanian literary movement. The current paper does not intend to

clarify the confusions caused by certain literary critics of the avant-garde, but rather, to indicate the influences of the first avangardist movement – the Italian futurism – on the Romanian.

2. ITALIAN FUTURISM

The first avant-garde movement, in the limits of the meaning “historical avant-garde” is futurism, which is dated on the 20th of February, 1909, when Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, the founder and the main exponent of the Italian movement, published his famous *Manifesto of Futurism* in the French magazine *Le Figaro*. Under the title of *Manifesto di fondazione*, the text was also published in Italian, shortly after, in no.1-2 of the magazine *Poesia*. It is interesting and equally important for the Romanian literature that, simultaneously with the appearance of the first avangardist manifesto, right in the same day - the 20th of February, 1909, there appeared its Romanian version, in the journal *Democrația* of the city of Craiova.

The dynamic, expansive director of the magazine *Poesia* of Milan, first published in 1905, having echoes in the Romanian printed press had found in the Romanian publisher with socialist views, Mihai Drăgănescu, an emissary (...).

as Ion Pop noted (2009:7).

Nevertheless, if in the French and Italian publications the manifesto had found a target public to resonate with the issue under debate, in Romania, there was not an adequate background for its receiving, because the problem was strange to the Romanian cultural space. For example, if the French and Italian literary environments could declare their boredom against a norm, the Romanian literature was in its incipient phase and, more than that, those museums and libraries to be set on fire, invoked by Marinetti, were rather scarce in Romania for them to be subjected to such treatment.

Futurism is, therefore, the literary/artistic movement of proportion, from which, chronologically speaking, we can speak about the avant-garde movements. Drogoreanu underlines this aspect in the preface of her study *Influences of the Italian futurism on the Romanian avant-garde* (2004:17):

The early times of the avant-garde and of the futurism interfere. Literary histories agree to place the Italian futurism within the first avant-gardes that appeared in Europe, it being, in fact, absolutely the first one.

The fact that futurists started to call themselves avangardists only in the third decade of the past

century does not mean that they became avangardists at that time. This reality may be perceived only as conscientization of their common front of action in negating the previous literature, to which the other European movements of the beginning of twentieth century had also adhered. However, different from the other avangardist movements, futurism came up with something new, an expression of the very term that defines it: the possibility of construction through openness toward future. It may be asserted that futurism offers one of the main directions in defining the avant-garde, as openness toward future, as anticipation, as advance on unknown territory, even as openness toward multi-art, toward a convergence of the act of writing with painting and acting.

Marinetti launched numerous manifestos: *Manifesto di fondazione*, *Uccidiamo il chiaro di luna*, *Manifesto tecnico della letteratura futurista* (completed by *Supplemento al Manifesto tecnico della letteratura futurista*), *Imaginazione enza fili e le parole in libertà*, *Manifesto dei dramaturghi futuristi*, *Lo splendore geometrico e meccanico e la sensibilità numerica*, *La declamazione dinamica e sinottica*, etc., all of which aimed at various areas of art and in which there was invoked the necessity of projecting a new language, resulting from the need of adjustment to a different social reality:

Poetry is called – Marinetti believes – to express modern sensitivity in a new language, adequate to the functional-mechanical style of the epoch, of the industrial society. By abandoning all aristocratic isolations, the poet must go out in the street, face anonymous crowds, he has to praise the big metropolises, the crowded railway station covered in smoke, the factories. Both vocabulary and grammar of the old poetry are totally insufficient for this. There is need for a dynamic language, as fast as the modern means of locomotion; a language that has something of the beauty and functional structure of the new technical inventions. (Călinescu, 1972:189)

The Italian futurist revolution led, however, not to liberation in the linguistic field (one must see the proclaimed freedom of words), but rather to a new confinement, to a re- codification of stylistic means, and even of grammar. *Paroliberism* (*paroliberismo*, in Italian), one of the fundamental claims of the futurist esthetics, originates in *Manifesto tecnico della letteratura futurista* of 1912, but, in its completeness, the theory of words in freedom was only presented one year later, when the norms of the new poetry had been established, based on destruction of syntax, use of verbs only in their infinitive forms, abolition of both adjectives and

adverbs – since they represented the poetic attitude, by excellence -, abandonment of punctuation, preference for nouns followed by double nominatives, “death of literary Ego”, “lyrical obsession for matter”, analogism, poetic supremacy given to onomatopoeias and mathematical symbols (David Drogoreanu, 2009:20-21).

Consequently, by placing Marinetti and his collaborators on divergent position in rapport with the norms of the time, futurism achieves not liberation but a mechanization of style, within whose borders the size, boldness or fonts of the typographic signs are directly connected with art/painting (thus they constitute the foundation of the future verbal-iconic rapports) and with music (establishing verbal-sound relationships). Both directions will be further exploited by the representatives of the Italian futurism; still, the freedom of words ends up in transforming language into a mere instrument.

Aspects related to the openness of literature toward the visual, convergence of painting with writing, respectively, of music with written texts, lead not only to the proclamation of a linguistic revolution, but equally, to creation of the first literary works that highlight this reality. Despite some critics who consider that futurism did not have any literary works, but only literary manifestos as its literary expression, the visual works of A. Soffici or C. Govoni illustrate convincingly the openness of Marinetti's manifestos. Moreover, it is worth mentioning that futurists tried to achieve a lyrical simultaneity, to reach the supreme poetry, in which colors, sounds, scents, noises, weights, thickness, and analogies to be melted together.

The Italian critic Sandro Briosi (*apud* Drogoreanu, 2004:20) claimed that futurism is the precursor of the visual poetry, aspect that was also mentioned by the representatives of that movement (*poesia visiva*), who considered that their artistic achievement originated in *paroliberism*.

The visual poetry was present in the Romanian avant-garde from its first wave, whereas signs of some subsequent development had appeared since the late decade of the nineteenth century, when some representatives of the Romanian symbolism were very keen on associating images with poetic texts (by means of various fonts, sizes, colors), yet, without achieving a unitary whole text-image. Later on, under the direct influence of futurist ideas, the visual poetry of the Romanian historical avant-garde receives distinct character and it may be placed on the same value level with the similar creations of the European avant-garde movements.

3. CONSTRUCTIVIST FOUNDATIONS. FUTURIST AND DADAIST ECHOES IN THE INTEGRALIST MELTING POT.

If for the European avant-garde the representative movements are the Italian futurism, the Russian futurism, Dadaism and surrealism, in Romania, realities are much more confusing. We can speak of three main waves of the avant-garde, pretty ambiguous when related to the values of the European movement, but which give a special particularity to the Romanian modernism.

The first wave includes among its most important representatives writers such as Tristan Tzara, Ion Vinea, Adrian Maniu, B. Fundoianu, Ilarie Voronca, Stephan Roll. This wave is not characterized by closeness to a distinct literary-artistic direction (Cătălui, 2011:77) like in Western Europe; rather, it represents a mixture form of the futurist, Dadaist and cubist tendencies around the central publication, *Contimporanul* magazine, of constructivist orientation, and around its minor magazines, *75 H.P.*, *Punct*, and others.

The second wave, appeared in 1930, is defined by an incipient surrealism, mainly expressed by the magazine *unu*, but also by its satellite magazines *Alge*, *Muci* and others.

The third wave, initiated around the year of 1940, is the only one to express the ideas and values of a single avant-garde movement, in an unaltered form. It claims to be surrealist from beginning to the end, and includes Gellu Naum, Gherasim Luca, Paul Păun, Virgil Teodorescu and D. Trost among its most famous representatives.

Before we bring up the constructivist-integralist peculiarities of the first wave, we should notice the manner in which the echoes of the main European avant-garde movements are reflected on its similar Romanian movement. Although we cannot speak about a Romanian futurism, influences of this movement were present in the Romanian literature of the avant-garde, at a certain time distance, and they contributed to the syncretic image of the Romanian avant-garde (Drogoreanu, 2004). Futurist reverberations are present in all Romanian avangardist publications of the first wave. They regard the telegraphic style, the alert pace, the abundance of neologisms (especially inspired by technology) which depict some of the literary works of the first wave:

The poetry of futurist inspiration published by Ilarie Voronca, Stephan(e) Roll, Mihail Cosma and, occasionally, Ion Vinea in the magazines “75 H.P.”, “Punct” and “Integral” has for its main characteristics

the telegraphic style (punctuation marks, connectors and even predicates are usually missing), juxtaposed notations at an alert pace, unusual ludic-ironic associations, predominantly neologicistic lexis and abolition of the lyrical self (the poet is distant, cold, refusing sweet and obsolete sentimentalism, taking pleasure only in recording external perceptions with the eye of a reporter) (Morar, 2005:129).

In *Contimporanul*, the most significant of these magazines, futurism is given generous space, throughout three consecutive issues, 96, 97 and 98, in which fundamental futurist texts are shown. These texts include the manifesto *Sensibilitatea futuristă* (translated: Futurist sensitivity), an interview with Antonio Giulio Bragaglia, as well as a reportage of Marinetti's, following his visit to Romania, *Incendiul sondei din Moreni* (translated: The Fire of the Moreni Derricks), in which the founder of the movement appreciates the Romanian writers Petrașcu, Codreanu, Iancu, Maxy, Minulescu, Vinea and Marcu. Let us notice that the birth certificate of the Romanian avangardism, in the Romanian critic Paul Cernat's perspective, *Manifestul activist către tinerime* (translated: Activist manifesto for the young people) was created by Vinea on base of a futurist rhetorical matrix, Marinettian, more precisely.

Other magazines of the first wave display important futurist reverberations, as well. In *75 H.P.*, *Punct* and *Integral*, numerous pages are dedicated to the futurist movement. Issue 27 of *Integral* magazine contains, for example, texts by Marinetti and other Italian futurists - F. Casavola, Farfa, P. Buzzi, and futurist texts of the Romanian authors - Mihail Cosma, Stephan Roll, Ernest Cosma etc. The futurist spirit is discernible in other works of Voronca, Roll, Cosma or Vinea. Among them, we can mention Voronca's article-program *Aviograma. În loc de manifest* (translated: Aviogram. Instead of a manifesto), the text *Accidente* (Accidents) by Mihail Cosma or the manifesto *Metaloid* by Stephan Roll. As a result of these cultivated connections with the Italian futurists, the Romanian magazines of the first wave, especially *Integral*, make use of their instruments, discourse and technical means of achieving the page layout.

We observe some consistent materialization of futurist influences throughout the entire structure of the magazine but especially in the idea fund and in the writing style of theoretical articles, in poetry, in theory of theater and film, in prose,

states Drogoreanu (2004:166) in *Influențe ale futurismului italian asupra avangardei românești*

(translated: Influences of the Italian futurism on the Romanian avant-garde).

In what Dadaism is concerned, although this current of nihilist nature was brought to light, among others, by important Romanian avangardists: Tristan Tzara, Marcel Iancu or Arthur Segal, it did not have relevant reverberation in Romania. In the absence of an esthetic program (Tzara will disconsider the possibility of any esthetic projection; he will promote a "recipe" for making a Dadaist poem), and willing to free art from dogmas, Dadaism did not resonate with the Romanian cultural space. Although some of the Dadaist literature features are present in the pages of the first avant-garde wave magazines (deconstructivist approach, ludic spirit, phonetic occurrence in discourse, abolition of syntax or punctuation marks) – but which are also common for futurism, pure Dadaist reverberations are rare.

There are also other premises that could have led to a greater Dadaist influence on the Romanian avant-garde. For example, the appearance of *Contimporanul* is owed mainly to Marcel Iancu, that had just returned from Switzerland after he had abandoned his Dadaist impulses. Important names of Dadaist authors including Hans Arp, Kurt Schwitters, Philippe Soupault etc. sign artistic works or program articles in the pages of Romanian publications of the first avant-garde wave. But equally, the European futurist publications host Dadaist creations, too. Some critics (Morar, 2005:141, for instance) consider that *Pictopoezia* (translated: Pictopoetry) in the *75 H.P.* magazine would be the result of a Romanian embodiment of the Dadaist collage. Others, (Drogoreanu, 2004:204, for example) highlight the influence of verbal-iconic structures synthesis entitled *tavole parolibere*.

Mention should be made that, despite its permanent dialogue with the Dada movement, and despite its proven paternity on the avant-garde literature from Cabaret Voltaire or the publication of texts belonging to famous Dadaists, the Romanian avant-garde, open to synthesis and not to violent and total negation, did not allow the perpetuation of this ideas within the Romanian cultural space. Apart from the ludic spirit, probably of Dadaist origin, the other Dadaist influences are minor. Furthermore, in spite of the violent reaction of the first wave of the Romanian avant-garde in relation with surrealism, Dadaism was not rejected. It simply did not manage to grow roots in a soil that could not assure the necessary nutrients for its development.

Constructivism, an avangardist current of lesser importance in the landscape of the beginning

of twentieth century in Europe, left the deepest imprint on the first wave of Romanian avangardism.

Developed in Russia (its paternity is attributed to the painter Vladimir Tatlin), under the influence of futurism and cubism (some of the Romanian literary critics and historians associate it with the “literary cubism”), constructivism becomes an international avant-garde movement, manifest in Western Europe, mainly in Netherland and Germany. The group of *De Stijl*, for instance, declares its constructivist origin. It launches its well-known manifestos that highlight the principles of the new art organization, based on anti-mimetism and non-figurativism, suppressing and undermining even the metaphysic to the detriment of a construction in which the word does not benefit from the subject’s illusion, but from the objective reality of syntax, prosody, typography and orthography elements, respectively, from arithmetic structures to be able to express itself plenary. Commenting on the second manifesto of *De Stijl*, signed by Theo Van Doesburg, Piet Mondrian and Antony Kok, Adrian Lesenciuc, the author of the only Romanian work dedicated to visual poetry, noticed the role of the Dutch constructivists on the Romanian avant-garde as well as on the verbal-icon reform:

It is not the duality form/content that makes the constructive unity between form and content. Which means that only together the readable and the visual may recompose the coverage area through language, may reestablish the relationship between language and speech, may revive the “meaning” of words, may cover words with inexpressivity. (Lesenciuc, 2006:55)

Constructivism, through its multiple forms of manifestation, starting from Mondrian’s neoplasticism, aims to promote the total art., which is able to include life, not to negate or to reproduce it. Thus, art becomes part of the real and the abstract, of the verbal and of the iconic. The consequences of constructivism in the literary avant-garde, in general, and for the visual poetry, in particular, lead to the creation of an inseparable connection between the esthetic theory promoted by the *De Stijl* followers and the verbal-iconic expression present in the pages of the avant-garde magazines (including the Romanian publications of the first wave, directly influenced by constructivism).

The program of *Contimporanul* is, accordingly, based on the Dutch constructivist group, from which the idea of “denaturalization” of art is taken over. Many of the *Contimporanul* poets were assigned to reformulate an esthetically literary belief, in neoplasticist terms, and to create

“poetry in the manner of the neoplasticism” (Pop, 1969:64). Due to this reason, the constructivism of *Contimporanul* is completed by ideas mainly derived from the futurist vision.

The constructivist movement is initiated in Romania, as a consequence of Marcel Iancu’s influence – a converted constructivist, who participated in the first international congress of the avant-garde movement that was held in 1922, at Düsseldorf, and who was to declare *Contimporanul*, in the same year of its launching the “Romanian constructivist organ”.

Thus, *Contimporanul* declares it is a publication built on constructivist skeleton, in which literary creations and those belonging to the plastic arts are doubled by articles or interviews with the current’s promoters in Western Europe: Van Doesburg, Le Corbusier, Georges Linze etc.

The constructivist skeleton suffered from various alterations, including the birth certificate of the Romanian avant-garde, in Paul Cernat’s opinion, in the form of a manifesto article characterized by integralist eclecticism, not by purely constructivist values, principles and directions of action:

The activist manifesto addressed to the young people, published by Ion Vinea in no. 46/1924 of his magazine, reflects the same eclecticism, expression of the wish to create an “integral art”, “sign of the great epochs” (Hellenism, romanticism, gothicism, byzantism etc.)” (Morar, 2005:147-148)

Other publications of the first wave express their closeness to the movement, too, either directly (the case of *Punct* magazine – “magazine of international constructivist art”) or indirectly, but, in general, these publications are characterized by a visual skeleton, including works of some painters who adhere to the constructivist principles, such as Marcel Iancu, Mița Petrașcu, Victor Brauner, Mattis Teutsch, M.H. Maxy, Corneliu Michăilescu etc., completed by literature and program articles, influenced, to a great extent by the Italian futurism. The two movements are consonant and permissive with each other, as long as futurism had an important influence on the appearance of constructivism. The reform of the word, as it results from the *De Stijl* projection, led to a certain geometrization of the text, anticipating, in a way, the lettrism of Isidore Isou, according to Morar (2005:153).

If we synthesize the external influences on the Romanian avangardism, there may be observed easily that, on a background of constructivist predominance, first of all, of *Contimporanul*

magazine, the dissonant expression of surrealism was vehemently rejected, even by some of its satellite magazines, such is the case of *Integral*, the Dadaist expression did not occur, whereas the futurist one was intensely present. Commenting on this general background of manifestations, Drogoreanu asserted:

(...) the essential weight in the competition of tendencies manifested at is taken by constructivism, which offered the magazine and the Romanian avant-garde, in general, a coherent, permissive, accommodating theoretical support. At the same time, the wish for creative synthesis promoted by all Romanian avant-garde groups held a decisive substance, which explains the presence of other influences, otherwise motivated by the late reception of the avant-gardes in Romania. This is the very reason why we consider that futurist influences melted more easily with constructivism, rather than with expressionism. (Drogoreanu, 2004:120)

Given this background like a melting pot, the avant-garde currents of the West, occurring at a certain distance from the Center, found in the Romanian cultural space both a place for a possible convergence and an environment for the discovery of the old under the veil of the new, in the light of innovation. Drogoreanu (2004:120) underlines:

The extremism of the first avant-garde program accompanied closely the Romanian literature stage of discovering the innovative and iconoclast cultural spirit of the beginning of the century.

4. ROMANIAN INTEGRALISM

Between the three waves there are inactive spaces, from the manifestation standpoint, but yet they are fertile from the perspective of future movements' projection. In general terms, the Romanian historical avant-garde may be characterized by a synthesizing term, "integralism", an avant-garde literary movement that displays, conscientiously, constructivist, Dadaist, futurist and even surrealist elements. Integralism was launched as a synthetic version of constructivism, manifested through the publications of *Contimporanul*, *75 H.P.*, *Punct*, *Integral*, through the Dadaism of *75 H.P.* magazine, of the late futurism and of the incipient surrealism of the magazine *unu*.

Integralism represents in its essence, not only a path toward the above mentioned synthesis, but also as a path to synchronization with the European spirit, such as M.H. Maxy was to claim

in his article "*Plastic politics*", published in number III of the *Integral* magazine.

This movement, atypical of western Europe, represents, in fact, the solitary purely Romanian avangardist manifestation that became, by extension, a landmark of the entire Romanian avangardist movement of the former half of the twentieth century:

Despite these delimitations, the Romanian literary avant-garde, also called historical, is not a homogenous or unitary current to manifest in one direction only, or to "surf" literarily and artistically one single wave, be it futurist, Dadaist, constructivist, or surrealist, but a melting pot of currents, synthesized in the formula of "integralism". (Cătălui, 2011:78)

Nevertheless, the placement of the entire Romanian avant-garde under the integralist sign symbolizes a simplified approach, even a simplistic one, unable to give interpretative consistency to an ample and perfectly synchronous phenomenon with the its similar movement from Western Europe. The "integralist" label is still defining for the Romanian avant-garde and it metaphorically offers a way of understanding its synthesizing, constructivist particularity, in contrast with the dominant de(con)structivism of the Western European movements.

The integralist synthesis, naturally insinuated, is the one to add value to the Romanian historical avant-garde, making it particular and producing, by its means, a relocation of efforts to place the European avant-garde terminologically, in new conceptual frameworks. This is what Umberto Eco will do, when he fosters the distinction between avant-garde and experimentalism, but who will propose a new equilibrium of the avant-garde – tradition rapport, given his understanding of hidden resorts of a natural cyclicity: deconstruction-reconstruction.

In these terms, the Romanian historical avant-garde is, in a way, a precursor of a process that came to be the object of analysis for theoreticians, but which could only gain achievement in the Romanian cultural space. Each of the Western avant-gardes ended in the intricacies of their own impositions, whereas the Romanian avant-garde ended in its own ascendance, by imitation. The dialectic materialism led, on the one side, to recognition of tradition, and on the other side, to the consciousness transformation of the present into nostalgia of the past.

This is the expression of the maximum closeness of the avangardist art to a tradition with amazing potential of manifestation, renewing

cyclically, a form of preceding. Moreover, *Integral* becomes a way of capitalization of esthetically non-indoctrinated culture, manifested in its pure form, consonant with the form of art practiced by Brâncuși, opposing degenerative borrowings, respectively, of a tradition of elevated creation that slipped into imitation and mannerism. By this positioning, integralism opposes Dadaism, a current that starts by demolishing the profound layers of culture.

Within the Romanian culture, integralism becomes a landmark for the entire historical literary avant-garde, characterizing it and placing it in the “avant-garde” of the European experimentalism. More than that, in this integralist composition

It can be asserted that the Romanian literary avant-gardism was assimilated by modernist tendencies and its role, instead of being mainly protesting and inhibiting, was above all a recovering one, in the spirit of a synthesizing cultural system. (Mincu, 2006b:229)

5. CONCLUSIONS

In order to establish the place and role of the Romanian literary avant-garde in rapport with the European avant-garde, we need to detect some accurate criteria of assessment, as well as the extremes of the literary criticisms with regard to this rapport. It is much simpler for us to start by defining these interpretative extremes and then to build the natural criteria of comparison and to place the Romanian artistic and literary avant-gardist reality in the European environment. The first aspect that is worth mentioning, is that of perfect synchrony between the Romanian avant-garde and the European one, as the critic Ion Bogdan Lefter (2000) stated. The Romanian cultural space's contribution to the European avant-garde cannot be contested either, since some of its important names, such as Tristan Tzara or Constantin Brâncuși are top billing in literature or plastic arts:

a movement (...) perfectly <synchronous> with the European avant-garde, in which it participated, both as a phenomenon, as part of a continental cultural whole, and through its distinguished representatives, starting with Tristan Tzara and Brâncuși, in the sphere of plastic arts (Lefter, 2000:33)

The lack of correspondence appears in relation to the effective role of the Romanian avant-garde, and not of the products belonging to the Romanian cultural space within the European avant-garde.

In this respect, we can mention two extremes. On the one side, the literary critic Marin Mincu (2006a) considered that the Romanian avant-garde is placed in the foreground of the international avant-garde in almost all areas of arts, through Tristan Tzara in poetry, Eugène Ionesco in dramaturgy, Constantin Brâncuși in sculpture, Victor Brauner in painting.

On the other side, Nicolae Manolescu (2008) answered Marin Mincu ironically (and critically), stating that the Romanian avant-gardists entered the literature history especially due to what was not avant-gardist in their works. The literature of the avant-garde remained, from this perspective, in a corner that was rarely visited by literary critics. The two extreme positions result not only from divergent esthetic perspectives but also from ideological disputes.

Furthermore, the Romanian avant-garde was judged by the criterion of center-periphery. If, in the previous case, of the role detained, we can distinguish two opposite tendencies, manifested through Mincu and Manolescu extremes, in this case, of the center-orientation rapports, there is a certain lack of balance; there is only one perspective, belonging to the university professor Paul Cernat. Paul Cernat (2007a) reconsiders the rapports of the Romanian avant-garde with the European one, based on some relationships of the type center-periphery. Thus, he places the Romanian movement under the periphery sign.

His perspective has to be analyzed with certain circumspection. When establishing the center-periphery rapports, Cernat sends to the channel of propagation, of capitalization of artistic creation, not to the creative, enhancing background where the artists developed intellectually. The complex of periphery analyzed by Cernat's study regards the market and promotion of the very artistic products, because some of those genii of the avant-garde strongly claimed their connection with the Romanian creative inspiration. The best example, in this respect is that of the sculptor Constantin Brâncuși, who repeatedly affirmed that his avant-gardism is but a way of “restoring archaic traditional art” (Muntenuş, 2008:150).

Moreover, the most adequate counter-example to Cernat's viewpoint belongs to Ion Pop, who considered that the Romanian literature's special openness made possible the subsequent expression of Tristan Tzara, assertion that was taken over and enriched by the Swedish Tom Sandqvist's study (2010:98). The latter places at the base of the Dadaist movement both the Romanian literature's openness, at the beginning of the twentieth century and the openness given by popular culture.

The consideration of this rapport is very interesting: from the interior, through Paul Cernat's eyes, the Romanian avant-garde is aware of its periphery complex, whereas, from the exterior, through the eyes of foreigners (Sandqvist is only one of the numerous cultural personalities that firmly stated this reality), the Romanian popular culture contributed fundamentally to the European avantgardist manifestation.

But this avantgardist force coming from the depth of popular culture would not have probably become visible without the migration of ideas from Western Europe, especially from the futurist Italy at the beginning of the twentieth century. The Romanian integralist combustion was, in other words, initiated by the explosive futurist movement.

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