

Reception Patterns: Marin Preda at the Beginning of the 1990s

ALINA BAKO

The Two Literatures

A RETROSPECTIVE approach to 1989 and the ensuing years shall provide a new starting point, not in the sense of a radical renewal, but rather of a reconnection of broken or hidden, secret, vicious or maybe forgotten links with the past.

Similar to any event created by a violent context, this one was no exception and generated a disjunction in the Romanian cultural area, evinced by the powerful polarization in the reception of some writers of the communist regime. In this respect, we find the case of Marin Preda's reception as relevant for the understanding of the mechanisms operating in a society in the aftermath of a dramatic context. Jauss resorted to nine poems authored by Hugo and four authored by Baudelaire (1857) to identify some social organization patterns of the 19th century in addition to outlining a communication pattern.¹

Hence, an analysis of Marin Preda's reception at the beginning of the 1990s enables such a pattern, where freedom from the shackles of dictatorship, in addition to freedom of speech, lead to the shaping and mapping of a new approach to literature and therefore the whole society: the re-examination of acclaimed authors, bringing biography to the forefront and ranking the work of art second, as well as the proclivity to connect to world literature.

The Romanian literary canon at the end of 1989 was mainly a realistic one, made up with the critical tools and perspectives of the 1960–1970 generations, despite the artificial inclusion and subsequent discussion of certain texts which failed the test of time mainly because of foiling censorship. After 1989, the list of renowned writers, like Marin Preda, would increase due to the introduction of authors who had been forbidden, in exile or whose writings were no longer published and would be part of the canon, however, even if by omission. We acknowledge here what Jacques Rancière called a

This work was supported by a grant of the Romanian Ministry of Research and Innovation, CCCDI-UEFISCDI, project number PN-III-P1-1.2-PCCDI-2017-0821/INTELLIT, within PNCDI III.

“distribution of the sensible” regarding the relation between politics and literature, in the sense of a minutely supervised division of attitudes, that is, the ordinary and the outstanding, by means of a “delimitation of spaces and times, of the visible and the invisible, of speech and noise.”²

Consequently, literature embedded a great stake in itself which emerged throughout the struggle of identifying arguments for both the ordinary and the outstanding or authentic. Thus, the selection of criteria for the reception of a work of art would temporarily change after 1989, as the principle of “having been a communist or not” was both a red thread and a common denominator in the initiation of any debate, whereas Marin Preda’s work and biography came to stand as representative models of analysis in endorsing such arguments.

In one of his interviews published on 1 March 1990, Eugen Simion defended literature and highlighted the intrinsic aesthetic criterion as it successfully preserved “the feeling of aesthetic value in the midst of a culture undergoing multiple challenges and oppression” and set forth his belief that the cowardice attributed to some Romanian writers by Octavian Paler turned out to be a mere fallacy since “Literature cannot be divided . . . into silent literature and outspoken literature (against totalitarianism).” We should instead refer to “good literature (from equally aesthetic and ethical perspectives—as long as it advocated humane values) and bad literature, from any perspective.”³ A similar dichotomic perspective on the Romanian literature prior to 1989 was undertaken by Monica Spiridon in “Puterea literaturii și literatura puterii” (The power of literature and the literature of power) identifying an official literary production (“flirting with authority”⁴) and an opposing literary output. This idea would be reinforced later by Ion Simuț, who emphasized the shameful single-minded critical revision of literary works, with specific reference to some literary critics who were overtly biased and favored “a distribution of the sensible” in keeping with the rules governing the communist regime, in addition to other instruments: “radical repudiation of the whole literature in the communist regime, which means, in my opinion, a negative attitude of proletarian culture.”⁵

Based on the famous theories of Gadamer, Jauss or Stempel, literary reception provides a reliable instrument enabling an author and, hence, literary production, to find their way towards historicization. On the other hand, all revisions from 1990 onwards regarding Marin Preda and other writers resort to different assessment criteria creating a distortion which further triggers a re-evaluation of the process of capitalization of literary works. There were times when the ensuing controversies, including both repudiation and defense, helped bring them into the limelight and thus rescued them not from oblivion but rather in a reenactment by renewed means of analysis. Nonetheless, the historicity of a literary work is defined by the reading experience instead of the topical critical reception, as literary history is the result of the triple process, according to Jauss, “on the part of the receptive reader, the reflective critic and the author in his continuing productivity.”⁶ Literary revisions related to Marin Preda’s novels, imitating a Lovinescian component, include both the aesthetic criterion and the historical one—generated by politics, all rooted in the first part of the 1990s.

Hence, such a discussion about Marin Preda is relevant for the schizoid reception, given by the distorted expectation horizon (with notable affinities to Foucault’s epistemes

or Marcel Gauchet's *le pensable*), which had gone through various forms, from the "loud and contesting revisionism" to a "form of synchronization with the overall trend of changing (or rather substituting or disguising) the nomenclature," which brought about a misleading hierarchy of literary values when "there were no two hierarchies of values, an official one and a genuine one."⁷ The social pattern promoted by this type of reception, reflecting Jauss's theory, relates to a denial of any value of Marin Preda's literary work, considering his biography and literary texts. Consequently, there is no change of the object subject to reception, instead some other criteria are applied emerging from false attitudes depicting a chaotic world, with no principles, where the "distribution of the sensible" set forth by Rancière would not surpass the initial stage of noticing the "ordinary."

From Resistance to Revision

MARIN PREDA was in a class by itself. His case was immediately reopened as soon as the communist regime was overturned and it subsequently generated countless disputes. From critical judgment regarding the author's morality, to the meaning of the concept "resistance through culture," to some ideas triggered by the writer's social origin, the post-communist literary landscape had been ripe with manifold accusations and charges unsupported by evidence. For this particular reason, we have noted that the year 1990 and the subsequent ones facilitated and even urged the formulation of such a "moral judgment" concerning the writer, in keeping with some kind of popular trend at the time, in literature as well as in societies, that of "dismantling statues."

In a text published in *România literară* (Literary Romania), Eugen Simion retorted to a discussion generated by S. Damian⁸ regarding the issue of literary revisions and concluded that "there is currently a huge propensity in the national press to destroy values, in fact all postwar values. Everything is subject to dispute and contestation, from the work of art to the author's morality." Such a penchant for contestation has triggered further attitudes regarding postwar authors, including Nichita Stănescu and Nicolae Breban. According to Damian's perspective, Marin Preda failed in his attempt to become a fully-fledged writer, as he could "only connect" with the rural world, whereas in the novels *Delirul* (Delirium), *Cel mai iubit dintre pământeni* (The most beloved of earthlings) there are merely "scattered episodes"; moreover, all writings produced after *Morometzii* (The Morometes) suffer from such ailments as "placing favorite characters in advantageous situations" and "mocking negative elements."⁹

In the same year, 1990, occasioned by the publication of one chapter of his novel *Delirium*, previously banned, Ovid S. Crohmălniceanu commented on Marin Preda's relation to censorship: "When we discussed the scanty chances for the episode to be 'accepted,' Marin confessed . . . 'If I give in, they will accept others,'"¹⁰ thus acknowledging a strategy that other writers resorted to and thus managed to have certain fragments published, eluding investigative censorship. Also with reference to *Delirium*, in a contribution to *Tineretul liber—Suplimentul literar și artistic* (Free Youth—Artistic and Literary Supplement) Eugen Simion responded to Victor Atanasiu, who made some references

to the passage about the “young” Ceaușescu as follows: “What we very well know is that *Delirium* is a work of fiction and as long as the prose writer makes no direct reference (see the Antonescu case) any other identification is a mere speculation.”

In this respect, mention should be made of the inquiry published in *Caiete critice* (Critical Quarterly), no. 2 (1990) entitled “The Resistance of Literature” which emerged as a response to two questions related to the resistance and submission of literature to dictatorship and its survival. The respondents were Marin Sorescu, Ștefan Aug. Doinaș, Bedros Horasangian, Monica Spiridon, Cristian Teodorescu, Marta Petreu, and Mircea Cărtărescu. Doinaș mentioned Preda in relation to the “evasion from ideology,” together with Eugen Barbu, D. R. Popescu, Mircea Horia Simionescu, Augustin Buzura, Constantin Țoiu and others, whereas Monica Spiridon¹¹ identified two essential forms of resistance: “direct opposition” (illustrated by Paul Goma, Dorin Tudoran, Mircea Dinescu, Dan Petrescu, Al. Călinescu, Luca Pițu, Liviu Antonesei, Mariana Marin, Liviu Ioan Stoiciu and others) and “defensive resistance” concerned with the revival of values and landmarks of our classical literature and resistance “in the trenches” or “underground” in view of “maintaining our connection, however delicate, to the European network of values.”¹² Marin Preda’s case has triggered vivid interest as he would fit neither category, in a clear-cut manner¹³ *Moromeții* and *Viața ca o pradă* (Life as prey)—in addition to *Bunavestire* (The Annunciation) by Nicolae Breban, *Iarna bărbaților* (Men’s winter) by Ștefan Bănuțescu, *Cronică de familie* (Family chronicle) by Petru Dumitriu—rank among the texts which, according to Marta Petreu, are “writings that will stand the test of time” and are an integral part of the “intellectual resistance.”

In a manner similar to the way in which Marin Preda was half-forgiven for having lived during the communist regime, Octavian Paler, interviewed by Angela Martin, considered that the tolerant attitude towards the communist regime could be accounted for by the urge for expression and publication, albeit with a somewhat subversive nature: “A writer may become, in a totalitarian society, a value only by expression . . . Marin Preda has chosen the road that would not prevent him from publishing . . . not very comfortable for the powerful ones. It was regrettable that he introduced in *Delirium* a fragment that featured Ceaușescu, although he was not named.”¹⁴

Literary Work and Morality

10 YEARS AFTER Marin Preda’s death (1980–1990) several reception dossiers were compiled and published in the press of that time, analyzing on the one hand the political and historical context in which Marin Preda published, as well as his novels. Alexandru Papilian confronted “conscience and stupidity” as the main characteristics of a totalitarian society: “Every time I think of Marin Preda . . . I am urged . . . to ponder upon the struggle between conscience and stupidity. The fight between the great conscience, both fragile and individual, and the immense stupidity, the party and state idiocy.”¹⁵

Mircea Iorgulescu published, in the same issue, some considerations—somewhat mystical and also sometimes overemphasized—about Marin Preda’s work. He used grandiose

phrases such as “moral symbol,” “symbol of intellectual resistance” in the attempt at legitimizing an attitude of advocating the criticism addressed to the regime: “In 1971, Marin Preda published a book with a warning title: *Imposibila întoarcere* (The impossible return) . . . Could it be true, as someone confessed, that Marin Preda allegedly threatened Ceaușescu: ‘Should you implement again the socialist regime I shall commit suicide?’!”¹⁶ Mention should be made of the statement that Marin Preda’s work is an integral part of the Romanian literary tradition, representing a starting point for Romanian prose: “Literature that shall be written and published from now on in Romania is influenced by and rooted in Marin Preda’s fertile tradition.”¹⁷

The most vehement opponent to Marin Preda, especially in terms of his morality, was Gheorghe Grigurcu, who published in *Contemporanul* (The Contemporary), issue no. 15, an article entitled “About Marin Preda, unconventionally” as the beginning of a long series of ideas and debates. In 1989 *Creație și morală* (Creation and moral) was published as a volume of journalistic writings and confessions that made Grigurcu note Preda’s aesthetic and moral adherence to the communist political regime.¹⁸

Grigurcu’s revision starts from the premise that he benefited from a “fanatical” reception blaming him for the weakness of not being willing to accept “seclusion by writing” in addition to the “deplorable” morality (*Argeș*, no. 8, in dialogue with Călin Vlasie). Furthermore, the attitude of seclusion might be considered, as history fully testified, a non-productive one (not to mention the mission undertaken by such writers as Jean-Paul Sartre, Camus, Italo Calvino, Milan Kundera etc.). Nicoleta Sălcudeanu ascribed this situation to “a long series of frustrations triggered by interdictions”: “Based on the moral judgment of writers, many attempted a moral destruction of their work, where the confusion between ethical and aesthetic seemed to hinder all means to capitalize on literature.”¹⁹ The name of Marin Preda was also mentioned in the discussion about the “solidarity of Romanian writers” in relation to the well-known Goma case. Al. Dobrescu, in his reviews to *Gherla* and *The Colors of the Rainbow 77* (Paul Goma) compared the submissiveness of Romanian writers at that time (Marin Preda, Nichita Stănescu, D. R. Popescu) with the privileges they benefited from. “Throughout the 40 years when communism ruled in Romania, most prestigious writers became its advocates.”²⁰

In the same context of extreme responses and reactions, particular mention should be made that the year 1990 marked not only the moment of liberation but also the opposite of freedom as a result of violence, which has triggered several conspiracy theories, in addition to fierce and exacerbated contestation. This is yet another trend we have identified according to Jauss’s pattern, also enforced by the reception of Marin Preda’s death. It was particularly this moment that, given a convoluted social context, triggered by such reactions as the newspaper column of 25 August 1990 published in *Timeretul liber—Suplimentul literar și artistic* (no. 34) authored by Sorin Preda and entitled “Era ticăloșilor” (The age of scoundrels): “We do not have too many details about him, especially since, after his death, all significant manuscripts, diary, letters have disappeared.”²¹ Only some pungent hypotheses emerged: in *Dreptatea* (Justice) newspaper, an article authored by Marin Bucur and entitled “Imposibila întoarcere” (The impossible return) made it clear that Marin Preda was a writer “whose mysterious death should be explained and clarified by means of a thorough and authoritative criminal investigation.” In a

similar manner to Bucur, Darie Novăceanu wrote in his article “Istoria tragică a literaturii române, II” (A tragic history of Romanian literature), published in *Adevărul* (The Truth), no. 97 (1990) about Marin Preda’s death in “obscure circumstances.”

An investigation dedicated to the memory of Marin Preda²² was also published in *România literară* with contributions from Valeriu Cristea, Eugen Simion, and G. Dimisianu. Simion also noted and commented on the writer’s reception at that time: “His moral stance and vision of history stir interest . . . His most popular books in terms of readership seem to be currently *The Most Beloved of Earthlings* and *Life As Prey*. Have *Moromeții* got tired? Perhaps our curiosity has been drained.”²³

A Different Approach to Preda: National and European Recognition?

SOON AFTER 1990 few critical studies in volume format were published about Marin Preda and the great part of its reception/revisio/analysis was performed by means of inquiries/ articles/ interviews available in the press of that time. *National Ideology Under Socialism Identity and Cultural Politics in Ceausescu’s Romania* written by Katherine Verdery came out in September 1995 as the first book published after 1990 which confronted resistance and compromise and included statements such as “from the party came the initiative that brought a subterranean language of national values back above ground”²⁴ and also mentioned the subversive language as well as double meanings and values of the words employed in the literature published during the communist regime. The same author further wrote about Marin Preda’s work (and integrated him in the socialist literature) in a comparative approach to Mihail Sadoveanu, given the context of a specific discussion about the social category of peasants, concluding and drawing attention to certain elements that were meant to praise and highly acclaim the benefits of collectivization “with authors such as Marin Preda and Mihail Sadoveanu offering fictional works about the wonders of socialist agriculture.”²⁵ Kligman and Verdery also refer to the discussion regarding the collection of quota taxation as another example of the socialist ideology: “the second volume of Marin Preda’s celebrated *Moromeții*, for example, has a scene in which peasants refuse en masse to deliver their quotas.”²⁶

Hence, in that particular context, literature’s relation and interaction with specific social realities proved to be essential, and literary works could be resorted to for a historical analysis, overlooking the inherent aesthetic additional considerations. We shall thus point out to an idea frequently emerging lately, that is, the method and manner of Romanian literature reception in the European context as well as the means of understanding/analyzing/appreciating a novel by a literary critic outside the Romanian area.²⁷ This is precisely what Nicoleta Ifrim wisely noted in the introductory remarks to an analysis of the critical reception published in *Literatorul* (Man of Letters) between 1991 and 1992: “Thus fluctuating between ardor and iconoclasm, the Romanian post-December discourse tackles various arguments in favor or against the European validation of literature.”²⁸ On a different level, the comparison between Preda and Sadoveanu has

been noted and employed by Spiridon, who mentioned that “Sadoveanu was much more thought-provoking than Rebreanu”²⁹ in his article “Doi prozatori față în față cu lumea” (Two prose writers confronting the world) published in 1991. Preda’s philosophy, particularly noticeable in *The Most Beloved of Earthlings*, is closely akin to Kierkegaard, “a kind of creative bet” able to solve the dispute between finite and infinite, according to the same author.³⁰ Similar ideas will be reiterated in a comprehensive critical study published in 1993, *Omul sub vremea* (The man under the ages), authored by Monica Spiridon who launched, at the very beginning, into an elaborate and detailed argumentation, where Preda is compared to Rebreanu, Sadoveanu and Camil Petrescu: “Preda is undoubtedly the opposite of Rebreanu,”³¹ while some reluctance is evinced regarding Sadoveanu, though imbued with some “nuanced admiration,”³² and with Camil Petrescu there is “an opposing interaction, repetition for change.”³³ Following the same route, the author highlights some similarities between the *Scrutul negru* (The black chest of drawers) by G. Călinescu and *The Most Beloved of Earthlings*.

The relations between truth and lies as well as the one between reality and fiction are perceived by Spiridon as certain stages of history and storytelling—faces of truth preventing charges of false statements. The author feels that Preda’s philosophical approach to history had been influenced by Hegel’s *Lectures on the Philosophy of History* as well as what is called “unmediated history.” Such an analysis of his novels leads to the conclusion that the characters tell stories throughout the structure of the discourse of the novel. In keeping with existentialist philosophy as set forth by Camus, the author concludes, in a rather evasive manner, we believe, that “revolt is the historical nature of Preda’s characters.”³⁴ Kierkegaard’s philosophy facilitates the explanation of the idea of necessity which might trigger suicide, for example, whereas to account for the inability to deciding and choosing between good and evil, Spiridon resorted to the idea of the “dialogical tribunal set up by Dostoyevsky.” Besides the pertinent critical statements and manifold references to literature and philosophy we find it difficult to understand the rationale for the author’s choice of overlooking certain aspects related to the troubled literary landscapes and related controversies, including not taking a clear-cut stance regarding the revision of Preda’s literary work.

There is a different situation, however, in terms of a study published later, in 1996, by Adrian Dinu Rachieru, who ironically noted that Preda became an “ultra-profitier” to the post-December world.³⁵ After a long exploration of Preda’s charges, the author outspokenly expressed his opinion about the aesthetic value of the work of art, summing up the literary context of the 1990s as follows: “The ultimate goal is ‘demonization’ of our greatest writers . . . ourselves and the unmerciful masters of conscience, suffering from the Jacobean spirit manifested as the proletcultist inquisition.”³⁶ The attempt at revision is perceived by the writer as another endeavor for politization, where logic and reason most often rank second to unconditional admiration for Preda’s work. Critical analysis focused on the endeavor to testify to the writer’s originality (almost pushed to an extreme) and keep track of the biographical details (“this is the new and last Preda another Preda?”³⁷) encountered in the novels subject to analysis. The critic’s admiration was a little far-fetched, striving to build an insurmountable defense against defamers, whereas the critical comment finds itself overinfluenced by the text. “Whoever

‘coined’ the *Morometianism* left his indelible and unique print on each thought and every page.”³⁸

Concluding Remarks

FOLLOWING THIS incursion into the various attitudes generated, against all expectations, not only by Preda’s work, but by other factors as well, external ones, certain conclusions should be drawn in the sense of pointing out the mechanism of operation of a writer’s critical reception, at the time of the occurrence of a particular socio-political event, as well as the deeply-rooted literary dispute which sometimes leads to some arguments denied in a different system of reference, however easily and hypocritically accepted whenever convenient, according to an artificially designed pattern for the critical endeavor.

The first conclusion refers to the two facets generated by the case of Preda the novelist as early as the beginning of the year 1990. Besides the unanimous criticism addressed as regards the publication of some texts with a marked ideological emphasis—“Desfășurarea” (The unfolding), “Ana Roșculeț”—we have also highlighted disputes triggered by his affiliation to the “privileged,” lawyers and detractors with sufficient arguments for both sides. However, in addition to the presentation of such elements in the press of that time, we have noticed that Preda’s work was mainly assessed from an aesthetic perspective, whereas any criticism of the former director of Cartea Românească Publishing House shall remain secondary. In his texts published abroad, Preda’s reception followed the same dichotomic pattern (a potential communication model, according to Jauss’s theory): either the writer who published, abiding by the communist ideology due to style and content (see the *Encyclopedia of Literature and Politics*)³⁹ or the one who preserved in his best known texts a certain “degree of aesthetic individuality.”⁴⁰

The second conclusion refers to the fact that despite countless mentions in the literary press of that time, Preda’s reception in the context of national and European prose cannot fully and accurately clarify his role and place. The volumes published some years after 1990 provided a general overview of the work, with fragmentary ideas or biographical details—as mentioned above, and special mention should also be made of the collection of letters Marin Preda, *Scrisori către Aurora*, Eugen Simion, Aurora Cornu, *Convorbiri despre Marin Preda* (Letters to Aurora; Conversations about Marin Preda) (Bucharest: Albatros, 1998) and the revised edition of Eugen Simion, *Portretul scriitorului îndrăgostit* (A portrait of the writer in love)⁴¹ balancing between the two ideas: noticing the ordinary (according to Rancière’s terminology) regarding the communist ideology or overemphasizing the aesthetic, by overlooking a comprehensive analysis of the work.

Thirdly, we have noted that Marin Preda’s work has endured, in keeping with the criteria for a literary canon, in defense of some kind of intrinsic hierarchy, an internal barometer which made some texts stand the test of time. A process of “cleansing” certain writers may not actually represent a valid solution to restore the arguments of capitalizing on a literary work, but rather an unveiling of meaning, an updating endorsed by a respon-

sible discussion on literature. The year 1990 has paved the way for an expansion of the Romanian literary area, by the inclusion of certain writings from the exile, literary journals, and other works of art previously not published, as well as literary confessions. Paradoxically, contestation and controversy have become a means of bringing Marin Preda to the forefront, generating discussions and advocating groups or causes that provided pertinent arguments. Likewise, the identification of essential characteristics, noting the inequality of his writings, short fragments/texts with obvious political references, *Morometianism* requires a periodical return to his novels by means of a perspective free from the postcommunist ardor ruined by the fervor of complete and unhindered freedom. □

Notes

1. Hans-Robert Jauss, "Literary History as a Challenge to Literary Theory," in *Toward an Aesthetics of Reception*, transl. Timothy Bahti, introduction by Paul de Man (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1982), 45.
2. Jacques Rancière, *Le Partage du sensible* (Paris: La fabrique, 2000), 13–14.
3. Eugen Simion, "O lume nouă nu se poate construi cu o ură veche (interviu acordat lui George Arion)," *Flacăra* (Bucharest) 1, 9 (1990), apud *Cronologia vieții literare românești: Perioada postcomunistă*, vol. 1, 1990 (Bucharest: Editura Muzeul Național al Literaturii Române, 2014), 99–100 (hereafter cited as *CVLR 1*).
4. Monica Spiridon, "Puterea literaturii și literatura puterii," *Contrapunct* (Bucharest) 1, 21 (1990), apud *CVLR 1*: 256.
5. Ion Simuș, "Canonul după canon," *România literară* (Bucharest) 39, 6 (2006): 15.
6. Jauss, 38.
7. Nicoleta Sălcudeanu, *Revizuire și revizionism în literatura postcomunistă* (Bucharest: Editura Muzeul Național al Literaturii Române, 2013), 17.
8. Eugen Simion responded in *România literară* 23, 48 (1990) to the challenge issued by S. Damian on the topic of revisions, in *Amfiteatru* (Bucharest), new. ser., 1, 9–10 (1990), apud *CVLR 1*: 546.
9. S. Damian, *Nu toți copacii s-au înălțat la cer* (Bucharest: Ideea Europeană, 2016).
10. Ovid S. Crohmălniceanu, in *Caiete critice* (Bucharest), new. ser., 1, 8 (1990), apud *CVLR 1*: 416.
11. Monica Spiridon considers that "the literature of resistance coined novel, specific formulae easily recognisable by their reliance and connivance with the other . . . a kind of literature with a double foundation or 'underlying meanings,' which requires a common denominator for an accurate understanding."
12. The inquiry "The resistance of literature" was published in *Caiete critice*, new. ser., 1, 2 (1990), apud *CVLR 1*: 505–506.
13. Marta Petreu, "Foarte mulți scriitori români, în loc să se conformeze imperativelor puterii, s-au supus doar imperativelor axiologiei morale și estetice," apud *CVLR 1*: 507.
14. Cornel Moraru on Octavian Paler's books, *Vătra* (Târgu-Mureș), new. ser., 1, 6 (1990), apud *CVLR 1*: 325.
15. Alexandru Papilian, in *22* (Bucharest) 1, 26 (1990), apud *CVLR 1*: 342.
16. "Marin Preda was, at that time, the only writer feared by the regime . . . No one could infer and express with such dramatic seriousness the two greatest processes triggered by

- communism: uncontrollable outburst of the aggressive primary spirit as well as the inner debasement of Being, its fall into ‘the Age of the Scoundrels.’” Mircea Iorgulescu, “Despre Marin Preda,” 22 1, 26 (1990), apud *CVLR 1*: 343.
17. Ibid.
 18. On revisions, see Andrei Terian, “Legitimitatea revizuirilor morale: De la E. Lovinescu la ‘lovinescianismul’ actual,” *Philologica Jassyensia* 7, 2 (2011): 153–161.
 19. Sălcudeanu, 18.
 20. Al. Dobrescu, in *Convorbiri literare* (Iași), new. ser., 1, 26 (1990), apud *CVLR 1*: 395.
 21. Sorin Preda, “Era ticăloșilor,” *Tineretul liber—Suplimentul literar și artistic* (Bucharest) 1, 34 (1990), apud *CVLR 1*: 406.
 22. Valeriu Cristea refers to the affinities between Marin Preda and Swift, thus connecting Romanian literature to the European one—see his interview “Nimic nu se poate clădi pe ură,” *Tineretul liber—Suplimentul literar și artistic* 1, 18 (1990): 14.
 23. Eugen Simion, “Marin Preda, zece ani după...,” *România literară* 39, 19 (1990): 225–226.
 24. Katherine Verdery, *National Ideology under Socialism: Identity and Cultural Politics in Ceausescu’s Romania* (Berkeley–Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1995), 133.
 25. Gail Kligman and Katherine Verdery, *Peasants under Siege: The Collectivization of Romanian Agriculture, 1942–1962* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2011), 233.
 26. Ibid., 113.
 27. See also Andrei Terian, *Critica de export: Teorii, contexte, ideologii* (Bucharest: Editura Muzeul Național al Literaturii Române, 2013).
 28. Nicoleta Ifrim, *Identitate culturală și integrare europeană: Perspective critice asupra discursului identitar românesc în perioada postdecembristă* (Galați: Europlus, 2011), 46.
 29. Monica Spiridon, “Doi prozatori față în față cu lumea,” *Luceafărul* (Bucharest), new. ser., 1, 9 (1991), apud *CVLR 2, 1991* (Bucharest: Editura Muzeul Național al Literaturii Române, 2014), 97.
 30. See Monica Spiridon, “Boală mortală. (Disociații),” *Ramuri* (Craiova), new. ser., 1, 4 (1990), apud *CVLR 2*: 218.
 31. Monica Spiridon, *Omul subt vremi* (Bucharest: Cartea Românească, 1993), 20.
 32. Ibid., 25.
 33. Ibid., 37.
 34. Ibid., 94.
 35. Adrian Dinu Rachieru, *Marin Preda—Omul utopic* (Bucharest: Eminescu, 1996), 143.
 36. Ibid., 157.
 37. Ibid., 87.
 38. Ibid., 103.
 39. *Encyclopedia of Literature and Politics: Censorship, Revolution, and Writing*, ed. M. Keith Booker (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2005), 226.
 40. Marcel Cornis-Pope and John Neubauer, *History of the Literary Cultures of East-Central Europe: Junctures and Disjunctures of Cultures of East-Central Europe* (Amsterdam–Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2004), 117.
 41. Eugen Simion, *Portretul scriitorului îndrăgostit: Marin Preda* (Bucharest: Editura Muzeul Național al Literaturii Române, 2010).

Abstract

Reception Patterns: Marin Preda at the Beginning of the 1990s

An analysis of the reception models of writer Marin Preda (1922-1980) and his literary work, right after the December 1989 Revolution, provides a model of perceiving all changes triggered by turmoil—in this case, the revolution—and their subsequent impact on literature in particular and culture in general. His writings have endured due to some kind of internal barometer that has stood the test of time and survived the ongoing evolutions subject to inherently emerging controversies that contributed, paradoxically, to a revival of the meanings of his work of art.

Keywords

reception, Romanian literature, novel, political, moral, aesthetic