

## INTERFERENCES BETWEEN TRADITION AND MODERNITY IN THE SYMPHONIC AND CONCERTO WORKS BY ADRIAN POP – (2) *ETOS I*

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**SUMMARY.** The present study is part of a series of analytical approaches undertaken on the symphonic-concertant oeuvre of Cluj composer Adrian Pop. Following the chronological order of the works and keeping as a reference their common source of inspiration – namely the Romanian folklore –, the conclusion seeks to highlight the way in which the composer's individuality relates to both the trends of contemporary language and the European cultured musical tradition, without attenuating the signs of the local stylistic matrix. Starting from the melody of a Miorița from Sălaj, whose typology will prove crucial in rendering the Blagian concept of the undulating plain, the composer uses traditional means – in particular the timbral essences and effects specific to folk organology – or contemporary techniques such as spectralism, texturalism, heterophony, to capture both the descriptive aspects of the idyllic universe and the archaic, archetypal, timeless and, last but not least, tragic essences of the philosophical and literary source. The symphonic discourse established at the level of the three main sections of the work follows a path of almost organic development, from the cellular-motivic elements that anticipate the Miorița theme, engaged in homogeneous, pulsating, diaphanous, or extremely dissonant textures, to the unique moment of virtuosity of the two semantroms in the central section and, finally, to the display of the original melody in juxtaposition, or superimposition with its inversion, in a tableau dominated by the ascent and descent of the flocks of sheep.

**Keywords:** folklore, melody, variation, evolution, texturalism, heterophony, spectralism, timbrality

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### Adrian Pop. Originality sources and resources

The way the composer from Cluj Adrian Pop relates to the local folklore reveals a deep knowledge – facilitated by the thorough study of folklore in the field, archives and treatises – of its beauties and meanings, at the level of detail – traditions, marks of the ancient repertoire “reverberating about the numerous connotations of times, roles and feelings”<sup>2</sup> – as well as in the macro, philosophical-poetic perspective of the Blagian “myroritic” space – “high and indefinitely undulating space-matrix, endowed with the specific accents of a certain sense of destiny”.<sup>3</sup> The connection with the Romanian ethos meets, in the work of the Cluj author, the ingenuity based on mastery, generated by a “mind fascinated by balance, tradition and classicism”<sup>4</sup>, as well as by an “inquisitive intelligence”<sup>5</sup>, manifested both in the processing of folkloric quotations and in the pieces written “in popular style”.

The use of specific techniques of language or folk organology – in works such as *Gordun* for solo cello, whose title refers to the low part of the traditional peasant string ensemble, specific to Transylvanian folklore, or *Țiituri* for violin and cello, with a direct reference to a typical accompaniment used in traditional Romanian fiddlers’ ensembles (“tarafuri”) –, often in an unusual synthesis with other stylistic tendencies – such as the Western European, neo-baroque (in the suite *Star Songs*) –, is successfully doubled by the presence of modern principles of writing or discursive elaboration. In this respect, we would mention the heterophonic technique – essential in underlining the satirical character of the “Reason Carol” *Vine hulpe di la munte* for mixed choir – or the obvious allusions to spectral procedures that can be identified in the economy of the piece *Gordun* for cello and so on.

Representative in terms of the fusion of Romanian folkloric background and contemporary trends is Adrian Pop’s symphonic-concertant corpus: the strong improvisatory character of the *Concerto for cello and orchestra* (dated 1975)<sup>6</sup> is built on the variational principle and the numerous possibilities of sonorous articulation of the solo instrument; *Etos I (Ethos I, 1976)* stands out

<sup>2</sup> Pop, Adrian, *Etos I* for orchestra, Presentation U.C.M.R.

<sup>3</sup> Blaga, Lucian, *Trilogia Culturii (The Trilogy of Culture)*. Humanitas Publishing House, Bucharest, 2011, p. 141.

<sup>4</sup> Dediu, Dan. *Meșteșugarul dibaci: Adrian Pop (The Skilful Artisan: Adrian Pop)*. In *Siluețe în mișcare. Eseuri despre compozitori români (Moving Silhouettes. Essays on Romanian Composers)*. Muzicală Publishing House, Bucharest, 2021, p. 177.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>6</sup> A detailed analysis of the work is available in *Studia UBB Musica*, LXVIII, Special Issue 2, 2023 (p. 377 – 412). DOI: 10.24193/subbmusica.2023.spiss2.24.

See: Șandor, Paula, *Interferences between Tradition and Modernity in the Symphonic and Concerto Works by Adrian Pop – (1) The Cello Concerto*.

for its archaic timbral effects, but also for the textural iridescence that outlines the contours of the Romanian wavy plain, following the expressive intention “of making the ancestral voice resonate by the means of contemporary symphonic language”<sup>7</sup>; *Solstițiu* (*Solstice*, 1979), a symphonic work based on a “sun carol” from Bihor, represents, according to Sofia Gelman, “a continuation of the composer’s preoccupations in *Ethos I*”<sup>8</sup>, referring in particular to the heterophonic technique which, “combined with other procedures, contributes to the complex articulation of the work’s structure”<sup>9</sup>; the three contrasting movements of *Triptic* (*Triptych*, 1997, rev. 2018) – part of a ballet music project – recreate, one by one, different aspects of the 19th century Transylvanian world by means of a modal-chromatic language “anchored in contemporaneity”<sup>10</sup> and a discourse configured on the basis of the generative motifs; the most recent work – the suite *Hore* (2018, rev. 2023) – just performed on 9 September 2023 at the “George Enescu” International Festival, also with a choreographic background, keeps the melody in the foreground, but although it is built on “authentic folkloric elements” it seems to be “most often based on freely inspired musical ideas, which nevertheless preserve the reflections of a more overt or veiled popular character”<sup>11</sup>.

The extraordinary success enjoyed by *Ethos I* (*Ethos I*, 1976, rev. 1984) – the symphonic opus that won the Union of Composers Award (1978) and the UTC Award (1984), being performed in the seasons of most Romanian orchestras (“George Enescu” Philharmonic Bucharest, National Radio Orchestra, “Transylvania” State Philharmonic Cluj-Napoca etc.), as well as those abroad (Staatskappelle Dresden, Szeged Philharmonic – Hungary, San Remo Symphony Orchestra – Italy) – is confirmed by the press of the time, as well as by later references, which appreciate the poignancy of Romanian folkloric essences – the music being built on a “Miorița” melody from the Sălaj region – and the convincing power with which the composer uses the “grammar of modern music”<sup>12</sup>.

Thus, in a novel way, the suggestions of the melody “together with the unspoken but pervasive meanings that derive from its function and ethos, imbue the substance of the piece at all levels – from intonational microstructure to harmonic «alluviation», from dynamic breathing to timbral colors, from the

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<sup>7</sup> Pop, Adrian, *Ethos I* for orchestra, Presentation U.C.M.R.

<sup>8</sup> Gelman, Sofia, *Adrian Pop*. In *Muzica Journal*, no. 2 / 1985, p. 16.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>10</sup> Banciu, Ecaterina, *Archetypal Ethos: „Triptic” (Triptych) by Adrian Pop*. In *Studia UBB Musica*, Issue no. 2 / 2016, p. 272.

<sup>11</sup> Pop, Adrian, *Hore* for orchestra, Presentation U.C.M.R.

<sup>12</sup> Hofmann, Alfred, *Revenirea lui Vladimir Orlov (The Returning of Vladimir Orlov)*. In *România Liberă*, Bucharest, 16.03.1991.

rolling and interweaving of the melodies to the poetic meaning, marked by a lyricism with a restrained funeral note, which begins in premonition and ends in atonement, on a path of incessant ups and downs, in the suggestion of that space which Lucian Blaga called «myoritic».<sup>13</sup>

### **Adrian Pop. *Etos I (Ethos I, 1976, rev. 1984)***

Although it is not based on a declared programme, the symphonic discourse of the work, conceived as a monolith, integrates – according to the composer’s explanations – three large sections that “let one glimpse in its structure a succession of images, all of which come to outline the content of an archaic world of shepherds”<sup>14</sup>. This is overlaid by the myoritic space of the “undulating plain”, outlined “by a series of sound waves resulting from accumulations / rarefactions within the musical parameters”<sup>15</sup>, and the folkloric essence of the work is complemented by the resonances of an authentic Romanian melody from the ancient repertoire of Transylvanian carols, a “Miorița” from Sălaj used in various juxtapositions.

As in the whole creation of the Cluj composer, timbrality is given a significant importance in rendering the aesthetic and expressive valences of the piece, and the elements of popular organology ensure, besides the other aspects of symphonic writing, the identity of each segment: “the first section evokes pastoral whistles”<sup>16</sup> and is under the imprint of the natural harmonies of the alpenhorn, while the middle section is made up of the virtuoso dialogue of two semantroms (traditional instruments of the Orthodox church), and the third section has as its “dynamic and expressive pattern the appearance of flocks of sheep ascending and descending mountain slopes”<sup>17</sup>. The novelty of *Etos I* lies precisely in the way the composer, using contemporary language techniques – such as heterophony, spectralism and texturalism – creates a “quotation processing” unique in Romanian symphonic creation.

**Section I (m. 1 – m. 95)** previews, along two secondary segments – A (m. 1 – m. 43) and B (m. 44 – m. 95), contrasting agogically and in writing – the melodic outline of the Miorița theme, as well as its funeral echoes. The

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<sup>13</sup> Pop, Adrian, *Etos I* for orchestra, Presentation U.C.M.R.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>15</sup> Sandu Dediu, Valentina, *Muzica românească între 1944-2000 (Romanian Music between 1944-2000)*, Editura Muzicală, Bucharest, 2002, p. 130.

<sup>16</sup> Sîrbu, Anca, *Adrian Pop sau despre ideal în muzică (Adrian Pop, or about the music ideal)*. In *Actualitatea muzicală* Magazine, no. 4 / 2017, Uniunea Compozitorilor și Muzicologilor din România, p. 35.

<sup>17</sup> Pop, Adrian, *Etos I* for orchestra, Presentation U.C.M.R.

introduction into the archaic world is gradual, starting in *pianississimo*, on the *tranquillo* background, by the suspended chime, over the ison of which are installed, in the string compartment (violin, viola and cello), duration pedals and the minor second cell (F – E) generated by the alternation of the parts, during the first 10 bars. In fact, the musical universe of this segment is constituted according to the natural resonance of the G tone in the high octave, the composer using the spectral technique “in intonational-generalizing combinations of the popular melody”<sup>18</sup>, which significantly contributes to the rendering of the undulation feeling, generated not only by the fluidity of the discourse – amplified by the alternating accentuation of the melodic pillars in each of the string parts – but also by the various forms of sound articulation, i.e. *al ponticello* (bow stroke near the gag, with sound), *sul ponticello* (bow stroke on the edge of the gag, without sound), or the sliding of the bow along the string<sup>19</sup>. The incipit thus offers a “sample” on a smaller scale of the “oscillations” that later symphonic development experiences at the macro-structural level.

E.g. 1

**ETOS I**

ADRIAN POP

The image shows a musical score for 'ETOS I' by Adrian Pop. The score is for string instruments: Violini I and II, Viola, and Violoncello (Vlc.). The tempo is marked 'tranquillo, J cca 56' and the dynamic is 'ppp'. The score includes a tempo change to 'Allegretto' at measure 10. Annotations include 'sul G', 'al ponticello', and 'sul ponticello'. A green box highlights a passage in the Violoncello part between measures 5 and 9, which is the focus of the caption below.

**Minor 2nd and timbral oscillations on pedals (m. 5 – m. 9).  
Semi-candential cell on F**

<sup>18</sup> Popovici, Fred, “*Etos I*” de Adrian Pop (*Ethos I* by Adrian Pop). In *Muzica Journal*, no. 7 / 1979, p. 10.

<sup>19</sup> Pop, Adrian, *Etos I. Partitura* (*Ethos I. The score*), Editura Muzicală, Bucharest, 1983, p. 3.

The second oscillation is “concluded” in m. 10, giving way to generally descending lines – which are also recognizable in the original melody – engaged in heterophonic writing. The timbral palette is gradually complemented by alternations between flageolet and usual sounds, but also by successive interventions of horns in F with *bouché* effect (m. 22), contrabass (m. 24) and timpani (m. 25), which assert themselves through short, dissonant, aleatoric motifs, slightly enlivening the generally descending, conclusive course of the first “wave” in the initial A1 segment. Again, the moments of suspension on the descending minor 2nd cell – invested with a semi-cadential role (m. 27 - m. 28) and of delineation of the component phrases – stand out.

E.g. 2

The image shows a musical score for measures 20 to 25. The instruments listed are Cor. (Horn), Vni II (Violin II), Vle (Viola), Vlc. (Violoncello), Timp. (Timpani), and Cb. (Contrabass). The score includes dynamic markings such as *poco f*, *bouché*, *pp*, *mf*, and *p*. Two specific musical phrases are highlighted with green boxes: one in the Viola part (m. 27) and one in the Violoncello part (m. 28). The Viola part has a *pp* marking, and the Violoncello part has a *mf* marking. The Timp. part has a *pp* marking, and the Cb. part has a *p* marking.

Conclusive path of the first wave of accumulation-decrease in the A segment.  
Semi-cadential cell in m. 27, 28, on G

The transition to the second stanza of the first segment – A2 (m. 28 with *Auftakt* – m. 44) is also made through the semi-cadential cell, consisting of “the same play of harmonics (more explicitly ordered than in the first section – in their appearance, following the series of odd numbers)”<sup>20</sup> but revolving around the E flat note. The free dialogue of the woodwind players is noticeable, initiating archaic motifs ornamented by apogiaturas or mordents, after which they engage in a free, *legatissimo* polyphonic weave whose generally ascending direction is dictated by brief fragments of chromatic scale. The segment evokes, by its timbral specificity, but also by the arrangement of melodic ornaments in the form of *apogiaturas*, the sound of the pastoral whistles, on the background of which is introduced the first textural section consisting of *ostinato* layers, placed in polyrhythm, of the string parts, in the second segment B (m. 44 – m. 94).

At the beginning of Phase 1 (m. 44 – m. 69) in Segment B, the orchestral writing is delineated by two planes: the main one – dominated by the presence of the woodwind players, who continue to render the dialogue of the whistles (flute-oboe-clarinet), while the bassoon pedals are converted, as they experience a dynamic amplification, into veritable echoes of the alpenhorns –, and the secondary, accompanying one, which brings back the pulsating sensation through the overlapping of homogeneous layers, repetitive at the perceptive level, but undergoing an organic evolution through variational techniques, melodically, and with the help of rhythmic progressions. The undulations are also present here, the melodic patterns (alternations of notes or the circular, repetitive structure of the component cells in the figurative lines) proving to be extremely suggestive in delineating the “myoritic” plain.

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<sup>20</sup> Popovici, Fred, *Op. cit.*, p. 10.

The image displays a musical score for an orchestral section, specifically Developmental segment B, Phase I. The score is divided into two systems, each with a green box highlighting the flute, oboe, and clarinet parts, and a blue box highlighting the bassoon part. The first system includes parts for Flute 1, Oboe 1, Clarinet 1 and 2, Bassoon 1 and 2, Violin I and II, and Viola. The second system includes parts for Flute 1, Oboe 1, Bassoon 1 and 2, Violin I and II, and Viola. The score features various dynamic markings such as *ppp* (pianississimo) and *pp* (pianissimo), and includes a rehearsal mark '45' in the first system. The bassoon part is characterized by a polyrhythmic accompaniment of undulations, which serves as a textural layer for the other instruments.

**Developmental segment B, Phase I. Whistle (flute, oboe, clarinet) and alpenhorn (bassoon) effects. Polyrhythmic accompaniment / textural layer – undulations (m. 44 – m. 47)**

Shortly after the beginning of the section, the entire orchestral apparatus gradually merges into a welded and voluble sound layer, anchored by the bassoon pedals, which continue to evoke, at certain moments of the



discourse, the sounds of the alpenhorns, and the successive interventions – as the writing becomes denser (significant in this sense are the divisions in the strings compartment) – of the wind players (also in divisions), who present themselves in a dual role: through sound accents and as part of the texture.

In conjunction with the timbral expansion in the area of the brass and percussion (timpani – m. 63), there is a clear dynamic amplification in the overall sound, although at a microstructural level one can observe, in accordance with the idea of the all-pervading “undulation”, an alternation of low and medium dynamic steps throughout the first bars of the phase. As the climax approaches, however, anticipated by the insistent trills of the string section, the *crescendo* is irreversible.

Dynamization is achieved, here too, by means of sound articulation techniques, the *frullato* interventions and *glissandos* on harmonics of the horns (m. 63 – m. 64), as well as the oscillating *glissandos* (descending / ascending) on the timpani anticipating the climax of the phase (m. 65 – m. 69), which concludes the texture with a chordal overlay in duration pedals, on trills, in aleatoric harmonic *glissandos* represented through modern graphism on the horns (m. 65 – m. 68) and on the *frullato* background gradually established in the entire wind section. The textural aspect is preserved throughout the climax, with expressive accents, rapid increases and decreases making their appearance in an “imitative polyphonic” manner, without however affecting the inner metrical-rhythmic regularity and overall sonorous homogeneity.

The image shows a page of a musical score for a symphony or orchestral work. The score is arranged in a standard format with multiple staves for different instruments. The instruments listed on the left are: Fl. (Flutes), Ob. (Oboes), Cl. (Clarinets), Fg. (Bassoons), Cor. (Horns), Tr. (Trumpets), Trb. (Trombones), Timp. (Timpani), Vni. I (Violin I), Vni. II (Violin II), Vle. (Viola), Vic. (Violoncello), and Cb. (Double Bass). The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like 'ff' (fortissimo) and 'div. a3' (divisi a 3). Performance instructions like 'frull.' and 'trull.' are present above several staves. A red rectangular box highlights the Horn section (Cor.) in the middle of the page, specifically the staves for the first, second, and third horns. The page number '13' is visible in the bottom right corner of the score.

**Segment B, Phase I. Harmonic culmination dynamised by sound articulation techniques (*frullato*, *trills*, *glissandos*) and aleatoric layering of horns (m. 66 – m. 48)**

If in the first phase the textural layer is based on the process of repetitiveness in polyrhythmic layers, the second phase of the evolving segment B (m. 69 – m. 81) – which abruptly follows the moment of climax – fully displays the syntony – that quality inherent to textures, “which appears as a result of the association of several sounds, which are therefore perceived together”<sup>21</sup>. The first major element in the creation of the textural sound effect is the *cluster* – found in the divisions of the violin part and accentuated by duplication in the other string parts – which, through sonorous agglomeration, i.e. through “the superimposition of too many foreign chordal sounds, produces excessive dissonances which make the constituent elements relatively indistinguishable”<sup>22</sup>. The second particular element in the creation of the texture is given by the dynamization of the *clusters* by means of continuous *glissandos* in *legatissimo*, which follow the oscillating direction – ascending / descending, respectively *ppp* / *poco f* of the sound magma and facilitate, through prolongation, the customization of the static window<sup>23</sup>, “given by the effect of the prolonged suspension of a syntonic sound conglomerate”<sup>24</sup> (the rests in measures 70 and 76, of great dramatic effect, do not significantly “affect” the unitary perception, as a block, of the segment). The use of suspended cymbals – whose timbrality and somewhat undetermined pitches (typical to complex sounds and noises) enhance the “welding of texture” – also contributes to the degree of syntonic fusion of the music.

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<sup>21</sup> Cozma, Andrei, *Texturalismul sau sintonia muzicii din cea de-a doua jumătate a secolului XX (Texturalism or syntony of music in the second half of the 20th century)*, Editura Muzicală, Bucharest, 2019, p. 13

<sup>22</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 26

<sup>23</sup> According to the theorisations of composer Dan Dediu (*O teorie a “ferestrelor” muzicale / A theory of “musical windows”, 2006*), musical windows are structural units homogenised by relationships of sonic or architectural parameters, and Andrei Cozma, in *Texturalism or the tuning of music in the second half of the 20th century* (Ed. cit., p. 51), describes them in direct correspondence with “the semantic units specific to texturalism”.

<sup>24</sup> Cozma, Andrei, *Op. cit.*, p. 55

The musical score is divided into two systems. The first system (m. 69-81) features a complex texture with continuous glissandos on clusters. The instruments are: I Timp., II Ptto sosp., Vni I (1-6, 7-12), Vni II (1-6, 7-10), Vle (1-4, 5-8), Vlc. (1-4, 5-8), and Cb. (1-6). The percussion parts include Cl. (2/4). The score is marked with dynamics such as ppp, pp, mp, and poco f, and includes performance instructions like 'gliss. continuo, legatissimo', 'vibr.', and 'non vibr.'

Segment B, Phase II (m. 69 – m. 81). Texture produced by applying continuous *glissandos* on clusters

The conclusion of the textural path is made gradually, in each string part, in pedals, the final chord fully outlined in m. 81 being also a *cluster*, to which the clarinet contributes discreetly, already present in the setting since m. 79, in anticipation of the last evolutionary phase, the third (m. 82 – m. 95). This brings repetitiveness back to the basis of the textural discourse, which is presented, however, in two distinct timbral hypostases: the first, in *legatissimo* (m. 82 – m. 89), is dominated by wind instruments, which display in polyrhythmic layers figurative overlays based on cellular units (alternations of two sounds arranged at various intervallic distances – 2nds and 3rds). As the strings join in m. 87, the “figural ambit” expands significantly, with the adoption of *pizzicato* as the main form of sound articulation. The ostinato punctuations of bongos (starting m. 89) and wood blocks (starting m. 92) enhance the *sempre accelerando* and general dynamic amplification of the last bars of the phase. Another evolutionary mark is signaled at the syntactic level, where the instrumental layers, this time based on motivic units, are obtained through metrical-rhythmic variations (the most frequent here being the replacement of the note within an ostinato motif with a pause) applied to intervallic cells (the predominant one being the perfect fourth).

## E.g. 6

The image shows a musical score for Example 6, starting at measure 90. The score includes parts for Oboe (Ob.), Clarinet (Cl.), Flute (Fg.), 3 Bongos (Bgs.), Violin II (Vni II), and Viola (Vle). The Bongo part has the lyrics "con le mani" and "pizz." written above it. Green boxes highlight specific rhythmic patterns in the Bongo, Violin II, and Viola parts.

**Segment B, Phase III (m. 89 - m. 93). Texture produced by repetition of motifs based on intervallic cells (perfect 4th predominantly) subject to metrical and rhythmic variations (replacement of certain melodic steps by rests).**

The same diaphanous texture of the strings will ensure the transition to the second section of the work (m. 107 – m. 142), a transition achieved, first, by the subtle insertion of the semantrom sound – the first appearance being reserved to semantrom 1, driven by wooden mallets – starting with m. 95 and the suspended cymbals – operated here by wooden brushes. This couplet “substitutes” for the earlier percussive apparatus of bongos and wood blocks, while the rest of the symphonic corpus, still made up of strings in divisions, supports the *pizzicato* texture unfolding, gradually dissipating through *diminuendo* and the reduction of figural lines down to the group of three violin divisions, in the last bar of the transition (m. 106).

95 (J=80)

3 Bgs.

Simandra (Tocó)

3 W-bl.

Ptto sosp.

spaziole di metallo

1-2

3-4

5-6

7-8

9-10

Vni

11-12

1-2

3-4

II 5-6

7-8

9-10

Vcl

1-2

3-4

5-8

Vlc

1-4

5-8

ff

mf

dim.

pizz

18  
**Beginning of the transition segment (m. 95 – m. 106), marked by the appearance of semantrom 1 and suspended cymbals, on the *pizzicato* textural block of the strings**

Unusually, the architecture of the symphonic work provides in the central section (the second of the three delineated) a timbral configuration dramatically reduced to only two percussive instruments, specific to Romanian folk organology: the semantrom, featured in two versions – with wooden hammers (Simandra 1) or metal hammers (Simandra 2). The timbral option is justified by the composer, in the interview with Ecaterina Banciu<sup>25</sup>, in terms of the ancestral dimension and archaic essence that characterize the effect of the semantrom<sup>26</sup>, without losing sight of the ritual connotations of the Miorița theme (death, posthumous wedding) that the instrument – used mainly in the Orthodox liturgy – captures, by extension.

Thus, after the subtle introduction, yet noticeable in relation to the textural background, of the semantrom 1 in the transitional segment, the first articulation of the second section (m. 107 – m. 142) is built on the soloistic contribution of the same instrument (m. 107 – m. 120) which initiates an accelerated rhythmic progression on the background of which a captivating play of accents and a continuous *crescendo* is installed. The fascination of this new sounding configuration arises from the way in which, over the clearly evolutionary and well-marked layer of the semantrom (from quarter-note structures to triplets of quarter-notes, then triplets of eighth-notes, sixteenth-notes and sextolets on thirty-second notes) a second layer is placed, of accents, which may or may not coincide with the metrical pulse, their configuration oscillating between periodic arrangements (on accentuated or soft parts of the beat) and irregular ones, generated by interruptions or displacements on other parts of the beat.

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<sup>25</sup> Banciu, Ecaterina, *Op. cit.*, p. 263 – 264

<sup>26</sup> For the same reasons, after *Etos I*, Adrian Pop will also use the semantrom effect in the piece *Solstițiu (Solstice)* for orchestra, dated 1979 and in the orchestral suite *Triptic (Triptych)*, 1998, rev. 2013).



The image displays a musical score for E.g. 8, showing the beginning of Section II (m. 107 – m. 142) dedicated to semantrom 1. The score includes parts for Simandra I, Ptto sosp., Vni I 3-4, and Simandra I. The tempo is marked (♩ = 66). The score shows a rhythmic progression starting at m. 110 and continuing through m. 115. The Simandra I part features a complex rhythmic pattern with accents and a 'poco a poco cresc.' marking.

**Beginning of Section II (m. 107 – m. 142) dedicated to semantrom 1.  
Rhythmic progression**

The addition of the second drum in m. 121 adds new timbral essences, while giving the rhythmic structures, now based on thirty-second notes, an even greater degree of flexibility through the imitative or free dialogue generated by the overlapping of the two percussive layers. We notice, however, the cohesion of the instruments throughout the last bars of the section, where after a certain rhythmicity of accents, they engage in a regular oscillation on sixteenth-note units, concluding, on the background in *accelerando*, the moment while anticipating the transition to the last section of the work.

The image displays a musical score for two Simandra parts (I and II) and a string section. The Simandra parts are characterized by intricate rhythmic patterns, often with accents and dynamic markings such as *ppp*, *cresc*, and *accel*. The string section includes Violins II, Violas, Violas, and Cellos, all playing *arco* with a *mf* dynamic. A red rectangular box highlights the section from measure 140 to 141, which is a cadenza for the Simandras, featuring a regular oscillation of playing accents.

Dialogue of the two semantroms, throughout the second section (m. 107 – m. 142). *Cadenza* prepared by the regular oscillation of playing accents (m. 140 – m. 141)

The third section (m. 151 – m. 255) begins with the quotation of the Miorița from Sălaj, consisting of a heptatonic Dorian, descending tetrachordal melodic lines, presented sequentially, and the transition to the new modal context is made by the oboe on the dissonant chordal background of strings, which brings back the ornamented motif of the whistles (displayed by the flute in the first section) in m. 149 – m. 150. The transition to the new modal context and the D fundamental is abrupt. In timbral terms, the melodic quotation is announced by the intervention, in premiere, of the chimes (m. 151 – m. 153).

E.g. 10

Transition and beginning of the third section (m. 151 - m. 255). Modal jump on the ornamented flute motif from section I, resumed by the clarinet (m. 149 – m. 151). First exposition of the Miorița theme played on the violins in divisions (m. 151 – m. 158).

The constitutive typology of the Miorița theme will provide, both in its original version and after its processing, an almost plastic means of rendering the mountain plains as well as the herds ascending and descending. Thus, throughout the last section of the work, three main segments can be identified, which on a macrostructural level articulate a major “undulation” – given by the descending sense that the general direction of the quotation imposes on one hand ( Phase I), and on the other hand by the ascending line established by its inversion (Phase II) – concluded in the final articulation (Phase III) by the overlapping of the two melodic surfaces, up to the total fusion in a textural layer with archetypal echoes.

The display of the Miorița melody in a heterophonic setting, by violins in divisions (m. 151 – m. 158) and flute (on *cadenza*) is a first sample of this plasticity, with a unique effect on the auditive level. Before being resumed in variation by violin and cello in m. 161, the wind players compensate the lyrical-tragic “ethos” of the quotation by bringing back the pulsating feeling of the idyllic setting, found in various figural layers (flute 2, flute 1, clarinet 2), alternated by lines with a predominantly descending direction obtained by means of sequencing (flute 1, oboe 1, clarinet 1). The last occurrence of the theme in the first phase retains the heterophonic writing but moves to a different modal center (G) and involves slight changes in meter and rhythm. The general descending, highly dissonant *glissando* attached to the *cadenza*<sup>27</sup> (m. 165) initiates the modulatory inflections (G – C – C#) of the short transitional segment (m. 167 – m. 170), built on chordal pedals of the winds (now joined by the horns and trombones), towards Phase II.

## E.g. 11

The image displays a musical score for E.g. 11. It features five staves: Flute (Fl.), Oboe (Ob.), Clarinet (Cl.), Violin (Vie.), and Viola (Vlc.). The Violin and Viola parts are enclosed in a green rectangular box. The score includes dynamic markings such as 'con sord' and 'p'. The music shows a heterophonic setting of the Miorița theme, with the wind instruments and string quartet playing variations of the melody.

<sup>27</sup> A “stilema” of composer Adrian Pop, often used in correspondence with gestures of sound “deconstruction” (e.g. *Cello Concerto*, *The Silk and Metal* quartet, etc.).

INTERFERENCES BETWEEN TRADITION AND MODERNITY...

165

Fl. 2  
Ob. 2  
Cl. 2  
Fg. 1-2  
Cor. 1-2-3  
Trb. 1-2  
Vni I 1-12  
Vie 1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8  
Vlc. 1-2, 3-4, 5-8  
Cb. 1-6

*pp*, *p*

**General descending *glissando* at the end of the first phase (m. 166 – m. 168)  
– the beginning of modulatory inflections and the transition  
to the second phase**

The efficiency of the variation techniques underlying the almost organic development of the entire symphonic discourse is also manifested in the representation of the herd's ascent during the second phase (m. 170 – m. 182), which is done by the inversion of the Miorița theme, starting on the C# note and having the B note as final. The heterophonic display of the theme is also assigned to the strings, which will dominate the entire phase, providing, in addition to the main layer, an accompanying one configured by harmonic pedals (m. 170 – m. 175) or in a figurative setting, in the form of a pulsating *ostinato* (m. 176 – m. 181, on violas, cellos and, towards the end of the articulation, also on violins). The ascending effect is also accentuated by the shift to the medium-high register, on a *diminuendo* background, as double basses, violas, and violins subtle withdraw from the airy texture.

E.g. 12

The image displays a musical score for a string ensemble, specifically measures 170 to 182. The score is arranged in a system with the following parts from top to bottom: Vni I (Violins I), Vni II (Violins II), two staves for Viols (Violas), two staves for Vlns (Violins), and Cb (Double Basses). Each staff is marked with 'senza sord' (without mutes) and a dynamic marking of 'p' (piano). The upper strings (Violins I and II) play a melodic line that ascends and then descends. The lower strings (Violas, Violins, and Double Basses) play a pulsating ostinato pattern, which is a rhythmic and melodic motif that repeats. The overall texture is described as 'airy' and 'diminuendo' (fading) in the text.

## INTERFERENCES BETWEEN TRADITION AND MODERNITY...

The image displays a musical score for a string ensemble. The top section shows the Violin (Vni) and Viola (Vie) parts, with measures 1-4 and 5-8. The bottom section shows the Viola (Vie), Violoncello (Vc.), and Contrabasso (Cb.) parts, with measures 1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8, and 1-2. The score is marked with 'cresc.' (crescendo) and 'vibr.' (vibrato). A box labeled '175' is present in the top right corner. The bottom section of the score is highlighted with a green border.

### Beginning of the second phase (m. 170), marked by the inverted display of the Miorița theme

The last phase (m. 183 – m. 255) captures the Mioritic plain in all its amplitude, being musically constituted by the juxtaposition, or superimposition, of the Miorița theme (corresponding to the descent of the flocks of sheep) and its inversion (symbolizing the ascent) as the orchestral density increases and the work evolves towards its climax. The shifting of the modal center one tone lower is done naturally (the tonic of the previous phase here becomes the starting note of the Miorița in its original setting, imposing the tonic of the mode on C), the return of the theme in the same heterophonic setting being slightly “disturbed” only by the *oiseaux*-tinged intervention of the flute (m. 183 – m. 186) which anticipates the addition of woodwinds and horns to mark – in a manner similar to the transition from phase I to phase II – the chordal pedals.

The image displays a page of a musical score for a symphony, specifically the beginning of the third phase (m. 183). The score is for a full orchestra, including Flute (Fl.), Oboe (Ob.), Clarinet (Cl.), Bassoon (Fg.), Horns (Cor.), Violins (Vni), Violas (Vle), and Violas (Vic.). The score is annotated with blue vertical boxes highlighting specific chordal pillars and green horizontal boxes highlighting the violin parts. Dynamics include p, mf, and cresc.

**Beginning of the third phase (m. 183) – display of the Miorița melody in the new modal context – Dorian on the C note. The appearance of the chordal pillars with a modulatory role**

In addition to the sound enhancement, the modulation to the new modal F# center tone is ensured by the winds and the string compartments. The interweaving here of chordal pillars with the concluding phrase of the melody played by violins – adapted of course to the new modal context – is also noticeable.



The image shows a page of a musical score for a symphony. The instruments listed on the left are: Fl. (Flute), Ob. (Oboe), Cl. (Clarinet), Fg. (Bassoon), Cor. (Horn), Tr. (Trumpet), Trb. (Trombone), Violin I (vi), Violin II (vii), Viola (vi), Cello (vc), and Double Bass (vb). The score is annotated with blue vertical bars and green horizontal boxes. The blue bars are located in the upper half of the page, highlighting a specific section of the music. The green boxes are located in the lower half of the page, highlighting specific passages in the Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello parts. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamics like *poco f* and *p*.

Chordal pillars in the overlapping of the Miorița theme.  
Modulation to Dorian on F#

Although entirely dedicated to the chords, during m. 192 – 208 the writing becomes more and more complex, bringing together in a synthesis the two spatial determinants – the theme of the Miorița and its ascending inversion, clearly differentiated up to this point. We thus distinguish, aurally, although in a fairly homogeneous sonority – with textural tendencies, further marked by the heterophonic arrangement of the voices – descending lines, overlapping the ascending ones, together with other figural motifs that contribute to the dynamization of the passage. As the sonorous amplification (explicitly called for by the *poco a poco crescendo*) increases, the focus shifts to the inverted version, with an ascending direction (although the violins, violas and double basses maintain the original version in rhythmically and melodically varied positions) which prefigures the culmination of the work by moving the strings into the high register, with a first, consonant, brilliant climax in measure 205 – reiterated in measures 206, 207.

The image shows a page of a musical score for orchestra, specifically focusing on the first climax at measure 205. The score is divided into three main sections: strings (top), woodwinds (middle), and brass (bottom). The string section (Violins I & II, Violas, Cellos/Double Basses) is highlighted with a red box. The woodwind and brass sections (Flutes, Oboes, Clarinets, Bassoons, Trumpets, Trombones, Tuba/Euphonium) are highlighted with a green box. A blue box highlights a specific measure in the string section. The score is marked with 'sempre cresc.' and 'mf cresc.' throughout. The number '205' is written above the first staff of the string section.

The first climax of the work (m. 205)

While the first climax of the work occurs in the idyllic context of the undulating plain, the second culmination, prepared by an exclusively homophonic,



The addition of the *gran cassa* drum, at first intermittently (m. 209) and then in tremolo (m. 214), for the first time in the work's economy, confirms the significance of the moment, increasing its dramatism. The *tutti* in the measures leading up to the symphonic apogee is distributed in two layers from m. 216 onwards: that of the strings, which will maintain lasting pedals on clustered chordal structures, and that of the winds, who alternately mark their steps, helping to dynamize the texture and highlighting the ancestral resonance. Between the two layers the *gran cassa* drum and the suspended cymbals are placed.



The textural block established at the culmination of the work (m. 216) will be maintained until the end (m. 255), following a path of “sonic deconstruction” achieved by the gradual disappearance of the sound tones of the wind players and the reduction of the orchestral ensemble. Thus, in m. 231 the *gran cassa* drum is replaced by three wood blocks, then by bongos, whose *staccato* rhythmic punctuations recall the central section, dedicated to the semantroms. Moreover, the winds, then the chimes will return before the end, with short figurative moments or taken from the melodic content of the work, accentuating the impression of “disintegration” (*al niente*) in a timeless universe. The reinsertion of the suspended cymbal pedal, in m. 246, over the dissonant background of the strings, embodied in a *cluster* of three sounds on the tone of the piece’s opening (G) – provides the context for a finale realized in a similar manner to the beginning of the work, which confirms the circular discursive character worthy of the perennial nature of the central theme.

The image shows a musical score for the ending of a work. The score is arranged in a vertical layout with the following parts from top to bottom:

- Fg:** Flute and Clarinet parts. The flute part starts with a *ppp* dynamic marking.
- II Ptto sosp.:** Suspended cymbals. The notation shows a long, sustained note with a fermata, ending with the instruction *al niente*.
- Vni:** Violin parts, numbered 1-12.
- Vlc:** Viola parts, numbered 5-8.
- Vic:** Violoncello parts, numbered 1-5.

The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, dynamics, and articulation marks. A small box containing the number '27' is located in the upper right corner of the score area.

The ending of the work, made in symmetry with the beginning, by the suspended cymbals



## Conclusions

Starting from the Romanian folkloric background, defined by the concept of “ethos”, which he uses as the title of the orchestra work completed in 1976, the Cluj composer Adrian Pop captures the idea of the Blagian “myoritic” space – the undulating plain, transferring it, in a deep and complex manner, to the symphonic discourse, by applying language techniques specific to both tradition and modernity. Thus, although the piece can be classified as a “processing of a popular quotation”, the core of the discourse being a carefully selected “Miorița” from Sălaj, the typology is not a usual one, the display of the “original” melody occurring only in the final movement of the work, following a process of accumulation and prefiguration of its rhythmic-melodic components, but also of the lyrical-tragic meanings associated with its symbolism.

Structurally, the piece is presented as a monolith, but the writing and elements of symphonic language used in accordance with the interplay of meanings and images allow the delineation of three main sections. In the first one (m. 1 – m. 95) we are exposed, successively, to some visual and auditive features of the “myoritic space” – such as oscillations / undulations (at first more restricted, within a distance of a second, and later in figural layers constituted by intervallic alternations), echoes of pastoral whistles and alpenhorn in the winds – gradually overlaid in volatile textural blocks (built by repetition), but also static, built by prolongation (*glissandos* on *clusters* in section I, segment B, phase II, m. 69 – m. 81). The second section (m. 107 – m. 142) involves the total absence of the orchestral apparatus previously presented, the discourse being exclusively dedicated to the two semantroms which, in addition to demonstrating virtuosity during the accents play, mark, through funeral connotations, correspondences with the ritual area of the Orthodox liturgy.

The final section of the piece (m. 183 – m. 255), the most complex in terms of construction, returns to the myoritic plain, which this time is presented as the background of the ascending or descending movements of the flocks of sheep. The discourse goes through stages of evolution and processing of the “Miorița” quotation, whose configuration – generally descending, sequential – allows the almost plastic rendering of the descending movement, while its inversion captures the ascent towards the heights. The individual exposition of the two melodic settings, along the first two phases, is followed by a synthetic phase in which, simultaneously with the gradual amplification of sonority and orchestral density, they will be arranged in layers of textural blocks that prepare the two culminations (one idyllic, the other strongly dramatic), before the “atonement” along the prolonged “cadenza” configured

by the sonic “deconstruction”. In general, there is an intense use of variational procedures, both at the microstructural level and in the development of the major discursive articulations, the majority of which are classified as “phases”, aiming to render as closely as possible the features of “Mioritic space”.

The folkloric essence of the work does not reside, however, only in the theme of Miorița, whose contribution in the composition of the sound edifice is undeniable. The composer Adrian Pop employs with ingenuity and refinement some modern compositional techniques, whose specificity is clearly linked to the local background and, in particular, to its archaic dimension. One of these is spectralism, manifested from the very beginning of the work (built on the harmonics of the G sound), and also throughout the first section (the third section being largely under the influence of the heptatonic Dorian of the original theme), which composer Octavian Nemescu associates with “the very nature of sound”<sup>28</sup>, considering the harmonic spectrum and the phenomenon of natural resonance as a “natural archetype”.

In a unique way, the composer Adrian Pop does not hesitate to use, in the same work, another contemporary technique, seen as an opposite of spectralism, namely texturalism – which appeared “at the end of the 1950s (the music of Xenakis and the Polish school), based on acoustic agglomeration (in which each instrumentalist of the orchestra is a soloist) and the effect of sound mass, where one no longer hears the details, but the overall effect”<sup>29</sup>. This choice is fully justified by the concept of the mioritic landscape at the basis of the work, transposed to the orchestral level in various juxtapositions: texture based on repetition – highly effective in building up the pulsatile effect and micro-oscillations in section I, but also texture based on *cluster*, of great dramatic impact in association with the general *glissando* in section I, or simple in the final section.

It could not be missing from the arsenal of compositional means employed in a symphonic work of folkloric essence, having as its central image the “undulations” of the myoritic plain, the heterophony which, in its general meaning reflects a “pendulation between the monovocal and the plurivocal state, i.e. the alternation between unison and plurimelody”<sup>30</sup>, materialized in a “vertical distribution (overlapping) of similar monody, evolving simultaneously and oscillating permanently between two states”<sup>31</sup>. The

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<sup>28</sup> Nemescu, Octavian, *Istoria muzicii spectrale (The History of Spectral Music)*. In *Muzica Journal*, no. 5 / 2015. [https://www.ucmr.org.ro/Texte/RV-5-2015-1-ONemescu\\_Istoria%20muzicii%20spectrale.pdf](https://www.ucmr.org.ro/Texte/RV-5-2015-1-ONemescu_Istoria%20muzicii%20spectrale.pdf) Accessed 27.09.2023.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibidem*

<sup>30</sup> Niculescu, Ștefan, *Reflecții despre muzică (Reflections on Music)*, Editura Muzicală, Bucharest, 1980, p. 276

<sup>31</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 283.

technique is used above all in the final movement, built on the melodic quotation, accentuating its ancestral resonances, but it is also applied in the opening of the work.

Another essential resource in the configuration of the popular “ethos” is the timbral one, the symphonic apparatus – often used in a reduced version, by alternating the group of wind players and the strings (in divisions), whose specific essences are highlighted by various ways of sound articulation, but also in wide overlapping (final section, climax) or textural, towards which the evolutionary process converges – being complemented by instruments specific to Romanian folk organology (semantrom operated by wooden or metal mallets), respectively by its characteristic effects, required from flutes (whistles), bassoons (alpenhorns), chimes (“zurgălăi”), and suspended cymbals – whose airy, continuous and homogeneous sonority supports the timeless, archetypal dimension of the sound universe, built from *ppp* and brought back to the initial stage of *al niente*. We notice the prevalence of the string compartment in the rendering of pulsatile textures built by overlapping homogeneous figural layers, in *legato* (section I) but also of dissonant, *cluster*-based, or airy (in *pizzicato*) tunings, with woodwinds completing the sounding universe, while the brass makes a substantial contribution to the dynamic support of the “climax” moments in the economy of the oscillating discourse – the moment of random *glissandos* on harmonics in the horns, represented by graphic elements constituting another element of modernity. The percussive apparatus accompanies, according to its acoustic specificity, “strategic” moments of the sound development – such as the discreet beginning (suspended cymbals), the harmonically and dynamically “tense” sectors (timpani, *gran cassa* drum) or diaphanous, to underline the archaic ambience (wood blocks, bongos). The allocation of an entire section of the architectural body of the piece to the semantroms – percussive instruments specific to traditional Romanian instrumentation and Orthodox liturgy – is quite unique.

The attention the composer devotes to the timbral valences in relation to the literary-philosophical source of *Etos I* and the Romanian stylistic matrix in the Blagian perspective is not an isolated phenomenon in his folkloric-inspired creation. In the study entitled *Did George Enescu Know Romanian Folklore?* published in the volume *Folk Music as a Fermenting Agent for Composition, Past and Present*<sup>32</sup>, Adrian Pop draws attention to a close connection between George Enescu’s creation – with reference to a work apparently lacking any popular connotation, namely the famous piano piece *Carillon Nocturne*, from the cycle of the *7 Pièces Impromptues* op. 18 dated

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<sup>32</sup> Țiplea-Temeș, Bianca & Kinderman, William (Ed.), Cluj-Napoca, MediaMusica, 2019.

1916 – and Mihai Eminescu’s poem *Sara pe deal* (*Evening on a Hill*), by invoking the timbral dimension and pointing out that “the entire harmonic complexity of the group of chimes is based on a sonority that evokes the fullness of the bucium sound”<sup>33</sup>. We thus notice that, in the opinion of the Cluj composer, the organological aspects are significant indicators of the manifestation of the stylistic matrix, being included, along with other marks, such as the “villageoise” or “popular” spirit – of Enescu’s creation – also found in the descriptive scenes of Eminescu, in the “Romanian cultural and artistic heritage”.

An expression of a mature and original thinking, manifested by a particular symphonism “built on the foundation of contemporary means of notation and conception, but appropriate to the sensitive perception of the listener through the instruments that evoke the myotic space and the spirit that suggests timelessness, authenticity, ancestral, archetypal, folkloric and, last but not least, the beauty, music, itself, constituting an argument for the composer’s visions”<sup>34</sup>, the work *Etos I* is part of the established masterpieces of Romanian creation, enjoying even today, more than four and a half decades since its genesis, a wide appreciation among Romanian and international audiences.

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<sup>33</sup> Pop, Adrian, *Did George Enescu Know Romanian Folklore?* In *Folk Music as a Fermenting Agent for Composition, Past and Present*, Ed. Bianca Țiplea-Temeș & William Kinderman, Cluj-Napoca, MediaMusica, 2019, p. 191

<sup>34</sup> Sîrbu, Anca, *Op. cit.*

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