# INTERSECTIONS IN ARTISTIC RESEARCH.

# The Model of the Other and the Culture of Mobility

*The International Conference of Doctoral Schools*
*"George Enescu" National University of Arts Iași, Romania*
*(November 3-5, 2022)*

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# Intersections in Artistic Research: the Model of the Other and the Culture of Mobility

## - Foreword -

In recent years, more intensely than ever, the importance of cultural openness to the Other, to other spiritual and cultural geographies was revealed to us in terms of artistic research. More than in the past, the mobility of ideas required be doubled by a mobility of the encounter, of the gaze that meets the gaze of the Other. In everyday life, we often define ourselves through the Other. Similarly, the culture of a nation and, in particular, artistic research in a certain field need to be reflected in the model of the Other, in order to profoundly understand the similarities and differences, the closeness and the distances. Only in this way can we understand, in a reasonable way, who and how we are, what and how we are researching or should be researching.

The official requirements for the internationalization of Doctoral Schools in Romania and, implicitly, for doctoral research, can be interpreted as ambitions or obligations specific to "young cultures" (Lucian Blaga's elegant solution to replace the terminologically inadequate formula "minor cultures"). Beyond this cautious reading of the term "internationalization", it is much more fertile to assume this process under the sign of the intersection, of the encounter, of the openness to what is, at least apparently, different for you.

How open are our languages in the artistic research conducted by the Universities of Arts, whether we talk about the language of music, theater or visual arts? How willing are we to become familiarized with and recognize our cultural neighborhoods? How do we integrate the experience of meeting the Other in our own research and personal attitudes in relation to art? How much loneliness and how much plurality is there in contemporary artistic research? What particularities do trends and concepts such as "globalization", "internationalization", "trans-nationalization", "regionalization", etc. bring to artistic research? How much "national feeling" and to what extent a sense of belonging to a European model or a universal model exists, deliberately or involuntarily, in our decisions to research certain topics to the detriment of

others, to opt for certain methodologies and certain structures of the actual research process?

The international conference *Intersections in artistic research: the model of the Other and the culture of mobility,* organized by the Doctoral Schools within IOSUD-UNAGE Iași from 3rd to 5th November 2022, aims to provide a framework for reflection on questions such as the above. Our aim is to bring together different international / trans-national experiences of researchers in the artistic field (professors, PhD students), to learn about practices and models of artistic research from other cultural spaces, to communicate and hope for joint projects of research, in this territory that is so generous in terms of cultural-artistic diversity.

<div align="right">The Editors</div>

# MUSIC SECTION

# The identity of musical works in the web era[1]

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***Abstract:*** What is and, more precisely, what does a musical work consist of? In what sense can it coincide with a score or with a performance? How can its identity persist over historical time? Introduced by Polish philosopher Roman Ingarden in the 1920s, these questions have become recurrent in the analytically oriented philosophy of music. To this day, it does not seem easy to find an answer in a framework become more complex because of the generalization of phonographic and video-phonographic recording systems – and of that great recording system that is the Web. This article wonders how it could be appropriate to relaunch this question, focusing on its meaning and theoretical scope from a perspective considering the multiplicity of devices that populate the contemporary musical world.

***Keywords:*** ontology, musical work, recording, normativity.

## 1. Introduction

As is well known, the issue of the identity of musical works has undergone considerable development in analytical aesthetics since a famous "germinal" book by American philosopher Nelson Goodman, *The Languages of Art*, whose first English edition dates to the late 1960s[2]. It may be recalled, however, that a few decades earlier this question was first raised by Polish philosopher Roman Ingarden, who, since the late 1920s, had intended to reflect on the identity of musical works in historical time[3].

The reasons that may explain the resurgence of this issue are easily stated: despite what common language (but certainly also some legal language) might lead us to believe, a musical work cannot coincide with a score, since

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[1] This work of the Interdisciplinary Thematic Institute CREAA, as part of the ITI 2021-2028 program of the University of Strasbourg, CNRS and Inserm, was supported by IdEx Unistra (ANR-10-IDEX-0002), and by SFRI-STRAT'US project (ANR-20-SFRI-0012) under the framework of the French Investments for the Future Program.

[2] Nelson Goodman, *Languages of Art: An Approach to a Theory of Symbols*, Indianapolis, Bobbs-Merrill, 1968; Indianapolis, Hackett, 1976[2].

[3] Roman Ingarden, *Utwór muzyczny i jego tożsamośći*, Warszawa, Panstwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1966; *The Work of Music and the Problem of Its Identity*, translated from Polish by Adam Czerniawski, edited by Jean G. Harrell, Houndmills, Macmillan, 1986.

the latter — as Ingarden first observed — is not part of its sound structure. So, what does it coincide with? It does not seem to be an object like any other — in a sense, it could be said that it is not even an object, since it is generally presented as a process or an event that turns over time. One could say that such an event coincides with a "performance" or, since recording has existed, with an "audio playback" (analog or digital). But how can one explain the fact that there are many different performances, while the work is generally regarded as unique? How is it possible for one and the same work to be performed simultaneously in multiple places? When, after all, how, and to what extent does what we hear in a performance or a recording of a Chopin Mazurka constitute his own work (and not, for example, a new work inspired by Chopin's work)? If we play it on an accordion, for example, will it remain, strictly speaking, a Chopin's work?

The attempt to answer these (and other) questions has resulted in the formulation of interesting theories. I will just recall in a quick roundup some answers that have become "classic" (at least in the narrow field of the philosophy of music). For Ingarden's phenomenological perspective, a musical work is a "purely intentional object"; in Goodman's semiotic and nominalist viewpoint, it coincides with a "compliance class" in a symbolic system; in Peter Kivy's[4] or Julian Dodd's[5] Platonic perspective, with an "abstract type"; and in Jerrold Levinson's[6] moderate and contextualist Platonic viewpoint, with an "indicated type", including the specification of the means intended to instantiate it. Each of these models entails advantages and difficulties, imposing important revisions of the common way of thinking[7].But their greatest limitation probably lies, as Stephen Davies pointed out[8], in the fact that they focus almost exclusively on one type of musical work: the "notated" work, intended to be presented through a real-time performance. Let's look around, and take, for example, the music posted on a popular platform like YouTube: how much of it looks like a notated work? "A lot", a Conservatory student would perhaps say. "Few", would say instead a person with any musical culture "other" than classical (let us use this label in the broad and

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[4] Peter Kivy, *Introduction to a Philosophy of Music*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 2002, pp. 202-223.

[5] Julian Dodd, *Works of Music: An Essay in Ontology*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2007.

[6] Jerrold Levinson, *Musical Concerns. Essays in Philosophy of Music*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2015, p. 46.

[7] Suffice it to recall the famous paradox of the wrong note in Goodman's perspective (see the fine observations on this topic formulated by Bernard Sève, *L'instrument de musique. Une étude philosophique*, Paris, Éditions de Seuil, 2015, pp. 298-310). But one can also think of the idea, formulated by Kivy, according to which musical works can never be destroyed, since they are similar to Platonic universals.

[8] Stephen Davies, *Themes in the Philosophy of Music*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2003, p. 35.

generic sense of the common parlance). A jam session does not refer to a score; and the same is true of a record of rock, pop, or another genre taken from the vast galaxy of what is sometimes called in France "musiques actuelles" (to distinguish them from the "contemporary music"). But even a piece of rap, electronic music, house, techno, not to mention the new genres born with the Web 2.0, such as hauntology, chill wave or vapor wave, does not imply the performance of a score.

Indeed, all the genres we have just mentioned could not exist without a major technological change: the advent of phonographic recording. With the invention of the phonograph (T. A. Edison, 1887), and then the development of recording systems (up to the great recording device that is the Internet)[9] we see a new phenomenon: music is not only playable (I'm thinking of the actual performance of one or more musicians) but it is technically reproducible. Mechanical reproducibility, the focus of a seminal essay by Walter Benjamin[10], not only concerns the visual arts (especially photography and film) but also music (which was also present in that essay but to a marginal extent). From the 1980s to the present, several authors have tried to account for this important shift in explaining what a musical work consists of[11]. Moving from the perspectives I have recalled (but also from others), I would like to propose a personal solution that, in trying to account for the complexity of today's musical world, could offer some benefits.

## 2. Works and performances

I would start with a simple observation: a work (musical, but not only) is something that endures (or by principle should be able to endure) over time. This is true at least in the intentions of the one making it — and often in the expectations of the one receiving or enjoying it. In a sense, every work of art is a challenge to that *fugit irreparabile tempus* in which all human things are. To counter this assumption, one can observe that there are works that bring attention precisely to their ephemeral character: in the *commedia dell'arte*, for example, or in the art of mime and certainly in much music as well, the artist

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[9] On this topic, see Maurizio Ferraris, *Mobilisation totale*, translated into French by Michel Orcel, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 2016, p. 37.
[10] Walter Benjamin, *The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility and Other Writings on Media*, edited by Michael W. Jennings, Brigid Doherty & Thomas Y. Levin, translated by Edmund Jephcott, Rodney Livingstone, Howard Eiland & others, Cambridge, Mass. & London, Harvard University Press, 2008.
[11] See, among others, Evan Eisenberg, *The Recording Angel: The Experience of Music from Aristotle to Zappa*, New York, Penguin, 1988; Theodore Gracyk, *Rhythm and Noise: An Aesthetics of Rock*, Durham, Duke University Press, 1996; Andrew Kania, *Making Tracks: The Ontology of Rock Music*, "The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism", vol. 64, no. 4, 2006, pp. 401-414; Roger Pouivet, *Philosophie du rock. Une ontologie des artefacts et des enregistrements*, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 2010.

finds himself inventing something in the moment, without it being meant to be re-executed. Of course, this something is normally constituted starting *from previous traces* (some patterns, formulas, grids, or prior elements that define its movement) and, moreover, it can certainly also *leave some traces* (in the mind of those who were present at the performance, for example, or in a recording). These traces extend the life of that performance: if we do not want to say that they make it perennial, let us say that they make it more durable. But what lasts over time in this case? A short answer might be the following: a sort of document of this performance. Indeed, such a trace shows one of the main functions of music recording: that of documenting an artistic performative act. Such an act does not necessarily prescribe its iteration (an improvisation designed to be replayed would seem a contradiction in terms).

Now music can certainly exist in this way: that is, not as a product intended to last over time, but as the expression of a performing art. That is, of an art in which the main object of our attention (the center of the process of aesthetic particularization) is a result closely associated with the performative act (think about the art of miming). To identify in a music an improvisation (or, if you will, an "improvisation-work") is to grasp its meaning as an art "in one phase": an act in which product and process eventually collimate.

As we all know, however, there is also another way of making music: that of composing a piece intended to be performed. According to some scholars, this way of conceiving music should be regarded as less original and general[12]. Perhaps they are right: we can assume that in the ancient times, as well as in some musical cultures around the world, there are no songs to sing or symphonies to play. To consider, however, that the performance of a musical piece is something modern, strictly linked to the idea of a practice that refers to the concert hall and to a composer considered as an individual author, seems to me equally excessive. Hymns, songs, melodies have existed since the dawn of time. Moreover, most musical cultures in the world, in the past as well as in the present, have a repertoire of pieces that are transmitted orally. They constitute what is called sometimes the "corpus" of musical orality[13]. It matters little that, in most cases, such pieces turn out to be anonymous (or that no one can claim artistic copyrights of them): they belong to a tradition, a genre, a cultural or national or ethnographic identity rather than another and can be recognized in their individuality.

Now, in a broad sense, I think it is appropriate to call this kind of structures, designed to be recognized and taken over, "musical works." What I am interested in, is emphasizing an elementary fact: if in a performance I recognize the presence of a Mozart minuet, of a Beatles song or of a folk

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[12] See, for example, Christopher Small, *Musicking. The Meaning of Performing and Listening*, Hanover, University Press of New England, 1998, p. 8.

[13] *Cf.* Mondher Ayariand Antonio Lai (ed.), *Les corpus de l'oralité*, Sampzon, Delatour, 2014.

melody, my attention focuses on these structures that last over time and that I can grasp in their unity. Here, precisely in this something that presents itself objectively (at least in a cognitive sense) and durably, lies the point. Music functions, in this case, as an art of the trace: something is created not to be entirely consumed in the present but to be stored and found again in a later experience. This something works as a "revenant": it is designed to reappear as such, to "haunt" the future. One could say that in music nothing returns exactly as before; this is true, but this does not detract from the fact that, in the different versions of a piece, it will still be possible for us to recognize it in its traits —more or less numerous, but which will enable us to distinguish it from other pieces. In a way, we can say that they constitute, precisely, its identity.

I think it's convenient to think of music as a temporal art situated in the "force field" between these two poles: an art of the performance and an art of the trace. Note: the expression "art of the trace" is not meant to exclude performance practice (although there are musical works that do not need any performative act to exist); rather, it implies recognizing performance as having a (categorically) well-defined meaning: not a performative act that is (aesthetically) worthwhile as such, but rather one that is worthwhile as an enactment of a prior trace.

To put it another way, works and improvisations both consist of traces, but the latter have different meaning and value. The fact, moreover, that they are based on traces indicates that their nature is not primarily that of a physical object, nor that of an abstract object (as some of the philosophers I mentioned at the beginning thought), but rather that of a "social object". How is a such an object properly constituted? According to Maurizio Ferraris[14], essentially by inscription (or registration). Put differently: a social object (as a credit card, a bus ticket, or a birth certificate) cannot exist without some registration. Returning to our case, one could ask: what makes possible the existence of returning sound structures that we call works or compositions? The answer is: the recording of a trace to which a normative value is attributed.

### 3. Orality, notation, phonography

This observation can be developed in this way: how many ways of recording the trace do we have in music? Three ways seem to me to stand out quite clearly: orality, notation, and phonography.

| Orality | Mnemonic trace |
|---|---|
| Notation | Score |
| Phonography | Audio track (tape, disk, file, etc.) |

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[14] Maurizio Ferraris, *Documentalità. Perché è necessario lasciar tracce*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 2009, p. 183.

In the first, the trace consists of a mnemonic scheme on which there depends the constitution of a pattern that can be modified according to various situations: variations and arrangements characterize its way of working. We speak in this case of "oral works": devices in which we can usually verify (important) divergences between the pattern and its presentation. When, on the other hand, the trace is fixed in a score, a more binding adaptation of the latter to the former becomes necessary. In the most ideal case, we are in the presence of what Goodman called a "notational system" (based on the principle of "disjuncture"). It should not be forgotten that, as Goodman clearly pointed out, a score usually contains numerous non-notational signs (as those of the vocabulary of tempo: "allegro," "andante," etc.) that give rise to multiple possibilities of execution. Instead, when a work has been built through a recording intended to be decoded and reproduced, we are in the case of the "phonographic work". While it can be the object of a public presentation (an "implementation" that is perhaps best kept distinct from its mere reproduction), this kind of work does not lend itself to actual performance.

This typology (which develops, as has been observed by other scholars, such as François Delalande, who had spoken of a technological paradigm shift)[15] can give us the impression of a progression based on historical development. This is not a wrong impression: it is true that over time we have gone from a situation when works functioned orally (think early Christian singing), to one in which notation fixed their characters (from medieval polyphony to contemporary music) to one in which, finally, they were conceived through recording media (from electronic music to rock and pop). But this linearity should not be misunderstood. Each way of working, in fact, is not exclusive: rather than replacing the previous one, it overlaps with it. In other words, works with oral functioning continue to exist even after the advent of notation and recording (think again of the heritage of musical orality, from dances to folk songs, the subject of adaptations, arrangements, transcriptions, hybridisations, etc.); but also of certain aspects of a notated work that may remain linked to an oral transmission (a *Mazurka* by Chopin demands a high amount of deviations from the written sign).

Here is a way to depict this progression (and this persistence):

| Oral work | | |
|---|---|---|
| | Notated work | |
| | | Phonographic work |

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[15] François Delalande, *Le paradigme électroacoustique*, in Jean–Jacques Nattiez (ed.), *Musiques: une encyclopédie pour le XXIe siècle*, vol. 1: *Musiques du XXe siècle*, Arles / Paris, Actes Sud / Cité de la musique, 2003, pp. 541-543.

## 4. Identifying musical works

Here we have a strategy to know how to identify a musical work in its constituent properties. It is a matter of paying attention to the way of fixing the trace that, in the context of its origin, enables its recovery and ensures its specific normativity. Of course, an oral song could come to us also by a recording or by a transcription; however, its identity remains that of a song that, in its ontologically "thin" [16] nature, not only allows but usually requires different arrangements or variations. In its turn, a Beatles song can certainly be transcribed and covered: its identity remains that of a phonographic work, ontologically "thick" (if not even "saturated")[17].

An objection could easily be raised at this point. Musical reality, in most cases, does not so easily fit into one and the same category. It would take very little to see that, in the light of this typology, many works could be seen as keeping one foot in two shoes: think already of much "mixed music", bringing together real-time performance with electronics – sometimes recorded, sometimes also real-time. Think of a jazz standard, founded in a sense on a score, and yet the subject of performances in which what matters is not to play the trace in its integrity, but to create something new just starting from this trace. Let us think of many musical practices that are founded on a sort of script, but in which what pre-exists are distinctive notated elements, but no actual complete work – as in Iranian radif. Faced with these other cases, one might ask: does it still make sense to talk about the identity of a musical work?

Despite everything, I think the answer is affirmative. But we must not misunderstand this answer: it is in no way a matter of forcing reality into a prior grid, nor of asking works to exhibit (so to say) their ID card. Instead, it is a matter of entering into the complexity of the real musical world, trying to understand the different ways in which, within it, a work is conceived. Border cases do not invalidate the relevance of one or the other category. These categories should be understood as a sort of "poles", something toward which individual cases may tend, to a greater or lesser extent – certainly not a rule that would be applied a priori.

But for what reason should such an identification be made? The answer emerges easily when we face the question of the meaning and the value of what we listen to. Lydia Goehr has argued that the identity conditions of works are nothing more than bad translations of ideals existing only in relation to some musical practices[18]. I agree that the identity of a work should be conceived

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[16] We take up this way of talking about the ontological "thickness" of musical works from Davies, *Themes*, p. 39.

[17] See R. Pouivet, *Philosophie du rock….*, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

[18] Lydia Goehr, *The Imaginary Museum. An Essay in the Philosophy of Music*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1992, pp. 96-97.

considering the practice in which it was conceived; but this admission doesn't dissolve the question of the identity of the work, nor does it reduce it to a question of practices. The idea of a concordance between the score and its performance has certainly become an ideal thanks to the aesthetic beliefs that have accompanied a musical practice; but finding in a performance a previous sound morphology, some patterns, or profiles, useful for identifying a specific song, certainly refers to a more general principle. Imagine listening to an improvisation thinking that it is a pre-existing piece: would your judgment remain the same? An affirmative answer is unlikely: what we look for in an improvisation is generally very different from what we look for in a piece (starting with a different way of thinking about temporality, about the unfolding of musical events over time). To the performance of a pre-existing piece, it seems legitimate for us to demand some fidelity to the trace. This fidelity certainly has a different meaning if the work is oral or notated: but in the former case it is not completely absent. These circumstances show us that the (categorical) question of the type of work and its different ways of being is by no means secondary and that our ability to set up in the right sense a listening or (if we are musicians) a musical performance depends on it.

In a nutshell, the point is to understand the ways of working and the specific normativity of the trace that come into play in the case we are interested in, through an observation of the actual functioning of the works we are listening to.

It is only the outline of an answer; but perhaps it is enough to show the importance of relaunching the issue of the identity of musical works, trying to clarify the functioning and normativity of the trace, which constitutes them.

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# Reflection of the *Other* in the Byzantinologist Gheorghe C. Ionescu's Lexicographic Pursuits

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***Abstract:*** Teacher, conductor, Byzantine musicologist, Gheorghe C. Ionescu (1920-1999) devoted the last years of his life to researching the history of Romanian Byzantine music and published in specialized journals several comprehensive papers that address various topics and bring back in focus personalities of the past. Due to his solid musical and theological training, guided by prestigious teachers from the interwar period, the distinguished musician had a rich artistic and cultural contribution to the second half of the previous century. The change of the political regime in Romania allowed him to return to the pursuits of his adolescence and youth and to continue his research of Orthodox church music in Romania. Along with his papers at various scientific events and the published studies, his tireless work materialized, soon after 1989, in the writing of a lexicon dedicated exclusively to those who had researched Romanian Byzantine music, in 1997. It was followed by a chronological dictionary, the foreword of which was written by the academician Virgil Cândea, who appreciated the importance of the book and the quality of Teacher Ionescu's work. Entitled *Muzica bizantină în România* [Byzantine Music in Romania], the book appeared posthumously, through the care of his family, in 2003. Although the centenary of his birth passed almost unnoticed, both productions are valuable working tools for all those who will continue to value Orthodox church music in our country. One more reason to evoke this personality who put a lot of passion in illustrating the richness and beauty of music sung in Romanian churches, two decades after the book was printed.

***Keywords:*** dictionary; lexicon, Byzantine music.

## Introduction

Our work is both a testimony of the way in which teacher Gheorghe C. Ionescu managed to describe in his books personalities of Romanian Byzantine music – especially in the *Lexicon* and in the *Dicționarul cronologic* [Chronological Dictionary] – and a reflection of his own personality, who will go down in our music history for these achievements. However, the centenary of Gheorghe C. Ionescu's birth has gone almost unnoticed, although, along with several consistent studies, his two lexicographical works are valuable

tools for all those interested in Orthodox church music in our country. Only one *in memoriam* article announcing the event was posted on the website of the National Choral Association of Romania[1], the author of which was professor Alexandru Bădulescu[2], an important cultural personality in Prahova region. I met Mr. Gh. C. Ionescu in Iași, at the beginning of the 90s, at an already advanced age, and I admired the tenacity with which he continued to do research and write, despite his frail health (he was already over 70 years old). My attachment to the generation that continued to write about church music during communism grew especially during the annual meetings in Iași, devoted to debates about Byzantine music; therefore, I always feel obliged to draw attention to the achievements of these personalities who have gradually left us. On the other hand, our paper is also the echo of Professor Al. Bădulescu's counsel at the end of the mentioned article: "...I urge all those who knew him and had the joy of working with him – as well as future generations – not to forget this exceptional musician from Prahova region, and his life's work is a beautiful legacy and the basis from which Romanian choral music and Romanian culture as a whole should evolve"[3].

### Biographical highlights – formative years

Before talking about the "reflection of the *other*" Gh. C. Ionescu's writings, I would like to "reflect" his personality. I suspect that they are not many those who knew him, although an extensive *in memoriam* study, signed by the late priest professor of Iasi Florin Bucescu, was published in 2002, in the magazine *Byzantion romanicon*[4], and later in the tome of studies of the distinguished professor and priest[5]; therefore, I will start with some biographical data. He was born in Bughea de Jos Village, Bughile Commune,

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[1] https://www.ancorom.ro

[2] Alexandru I. Bădulescu (b. 20 February 1929, Dara, Buzău County, Kingdom of Romania – d. 2 January 2021, Ploiești, Romania) was a Romanian professor and musicologist, PhD in musicology, member of the Union of Composers and Musicologists of Romania, member of the Union of Professional Journalists, founding member of the Union of Performers, Choreographers and Music Critics of Romania, Honorary Citizen of Ploiești Town, a cultural personality of Prahova County and of Romania. Retrieved from https://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexandru_B%C4%83dulescu

[3] *Cf.* https://www.ancorom.ro/noutati_doc_380_100-de-ani-de-la-naterea-profesorului-gheorghe-c-ionescu-dirijor-si-muzicolog-bizantinolog_pg_0.htm

[4] Florin Bucescu, *In memoriam – Gheorghe C. Ionescu. Contribuții la cercetarea muzicii de tradiție bizantină* [In memoriam – Gheorghe C. Ionescu. Contributions to the research of music in the Byzantine tradition], "Byzantion romanicon. Revista de arte bizantine" [Byzantion romanicon. Byzantine art magazine], tome VI, "George Enescu" University of Arts of Iași, 2002, pp. 183-208.

[5] Florin Bucescu, *Bizantinologie muzicală. Studii și articole. Liturghia psaltică în glasul al III-lea* [Musical Byzantinology. Studies and articles. The psaltic liturgy in the 3rd mode], Iași, Editura Artes, 2018, pp. 126-147.

in Prahova County, in 1920. The formative years of the future teacher, conductor and musicologist do not differ from those of other musicians born in the same period, with primary school attended in his hometown, then middle and high school at "Nifon Mitropolitul" Theological Seminary (1933-1941) and higher education at the Faculty of Theology (1941-1945) in Bucharest. Alternatively, he also attended the Royal Academy of Music and Drama in Bucharest – the teaching department (1941-1946). As it was customary at that time, in order to teach, he had to attend "Titu Maiorescu" College of Pedagogy in Bucharest, where he specialized in vocal music, which he graduated in 1947.

This almost a decade and a half of training left a decisive mark on the young man from Prahova, as he had the chance to enjoy the guidance of teachers to whom we look back with respect, for their many and diverse achievements. Once more, we are convinced of the importance of our role models during our personality shaping and formative years. Let us go into detail: at "Nifon Mitropolitul" Theological Seminary he learned Byzantine music from Ion Popescu-Pasărea (1871-1943) during the first three years (1933-1936) and then, until his graduation (1941), from Anton V. Uncu (1908-1976). They are resonant names in the panoply of great Byzantine music chanters of the previous century, who introduced many generations of students to church singing. Equally resounding are many of the names of those who enriched his theological and musical training. We only refer to three of his theology professors – Nicolae M. Popescu (History of the Romanian Church), Grigore Pișculescu (known as Gala Galaction, Study of the Old Testament); Petre Vintilescu (Liturgy) – and three others from the other mentioned institutions: Dimitrie Cuclin (harmony, counterpoint, musical aesthetics), Tiberiu Alexandru (folklore), Dumitru D. Botez (vocal music and pedagogical practice). One way or another, the training provided by them will materialize years later, in his pursuits as a teacher, conductor and musicologist, which we will talk about a little later. For now, I only note his Faculty of Theology graduation thesis, *Ioan Cartu, omul și opera* [Ioan Cartu, the man and his work], and his senior teaching thesis entitled *Apariția și dezvoltarea muzicii vocal-simfonice în patria noastră* [The emergence and development of vocal-symphonic music in our country] received the highest mark, 10 (1967), just like all his other teaching examinations.

One more remark about the quality of his bachelor's degree graduation thesis needs to be made. The distinguished professor George Breazul (1887-1971) addressed to the young graduate, in 1949, an appreciative letter, where he requested folklore information:

> Bucharest, 22/06/1949
>
> Dear Mr. Ionescu,
> Through the kindness of Mr. Manolache from the Library of the Faculty of Theology, I was able to see your graduation thesis, for which you deserve the warmest praise. Thus, I also learned about your folklore

research. I am interested in the material from the region you are working on. In particular, my current pursuits include star caroling songs, carols, laments, lullabies and any other songs in which the sound material is scarce (oligochords – 2, 3, 4, 5 sounds) prepentatonic and pentatonic.

I would be very grateful if you replied and informed me of such material on your records.

Many thanks and warm wishes.

Breazul[6]

We infer, also from Professor Breazul's correspondence[7], that the letter had not reached the addressee, but we also learn that he had quoted from that bachelor's degree graduation thesis:

Bucharest, 08/10/1957

Dear Mr. Ionescu,

I thank you from the bottom of my heart for your precious writing, *Din folclorul nostru* (From our folklore)[8], which you were kind enough to send to me too. I warmly congratulate you on this valuable contribution to the study of our folk music and wish you ever greater success in your folklore research work.

I read your work on Cartu and, a few years ago, I wrote to you in your hometown, at the address indicated in that work; I did not get any answer. I had just been appointed head of the music history department and I would have liked to collaborate with you. Now things have changed. I would just like to know if you have added anything to the old text, then we could talk.

If you have the Russian material necessary for the study of the sources of Cartu's liturgy, I would be very grateful if you could lend it to me as well. I am now working on a 'Musicescu' – in which I also quoted you – and I need such material.

Someday, perhaps we will find time to see your folklore collections together.

I want to thank you again cordially and wish you the best in your work.

G. Breazul[9]

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[6] George Breazul, *Scrisori şi documente* [Letters and documents], tome II, Bucureşti, Editura Muzicală, 1990, pp. 107-108.

[7] The cited letters were in Gh. C. Ionescu's possession at the time of the preparation of the collection of correspondence by Titus Moisescu, the edition being edited and annotated by him, according to Moisescu's annotation 1209 on page 371, in which some information about Ionescu is specified.

[8] He refers to *Din folclorul nostru* [From our Folklore], edited by the Regional House of Popular Creation in Ploieşti, in 1957.

[9] George Breazul, *Scrisori şi documente* [Letters and documents], *op. cit.*, p. 250. T. Moisescu's annotation on this letter, on p. 386 (note no. 1357), specifies that G. Breazul quoted

**Professional life**

Although his initial training and higher education would have allowed him to have a career in the theological field, the circumstances of the Romanian society in mid-20th century pushed Gh. C. Ionescu more towards secular music, which he served on several levels: as a teacher, conductor, animator of cultural life and, last but not least, musicologist. His teaching activity began immediately after graduating from the College of Pedagogy, in the turbulent years of the fifth decade. Thus, we should point out the disastrous effects that Decree 177 of August 1948 regulating the regime of religious cults had on church music. This decree ordered, among other things, the dissolution of more than 40 schools of church singers, the number of theological high school dropped to six across the country and there were only two institutions of higher theological education[10]. On the other hand, after the end of the Second World War, education in general was affected by the lack of specialized teachers. This is how, in the 1946-1947 school year, the graduate Ionescu became not only a teacher, but also the headmaster of the primary school in his native village, Bughea de Jos. A year later, he was already a vocal music teacher and religion in Vălenii de Munte[11], and 1949 found him in Ploiești, at "I. L. Caragiale" Boys' Theoretical High School (1949-1963). Considered, due to his training and pursuits, a specialist in amateur music, he was also employed at the Regional Center of Popular Creation (1956-1963), until he left for Bucharest. His passion for folklore brought him to Bucharest in 1963, at the Ethnological and Dialectological Research Institute, where he worked until his retirement (1983).

His presence in Ploiești – the town where the violinist Sandu Albu and the composer Paul Constantinescu were trained – was also noted due to his involvement in the artistic life of the town. Those were the years when workers and peasants were forced to join various "artistic amateur ensembles", alongside teachers specialized in this field. His meeting the conductor D.D. Botez at the College of Pedagogy (who was the author of a well-known *Tratat de dirijat și cânt coral* – Treatise on conducting and choral singing) in addition to his natural endowment and musical education have enabled Gh. C. Ionescu to contribute his talent and work to the management of several amateur

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Gh. C. Ionescu in the monograph *Musicescu*, on p. 24, note 17, with the thesis *Ioan Cartu – Omul și opera* (1946).

[10] Decree no. 177/1948, see: Legislative portal, retrieved from http://legislatie.just.ro/Public/DetaliiDocumentAfis/47, accessed on 20/03/2019. For other details, see: Elena Chircev, *The Influence of Political Regimes on Romanian Psaltic Music during the Second Half of the 20th Century*, "Musicology Papers", tome XXXV, issue 1, Cluj-Napoca, Editura MediaMusica, 2020.

[11] At "Nicolae Iorga" Mixed Commercial High School and no. 1 Primary and Middle School (1947-1949).

ensembles. Since this was an industrial town, in 1949, he started to work with the choirs of the Refinery 1, "1 Mai" Factory and 3rd Oil Trust of Ploiești; then, between 1954-1956, he was the conductor of the mixed choir of the vocal-instrumental ensemble of the Oil-Methane Gas Union in Ploiești.

An important landmark in his evolution as a choir conductor was the founding of an amateur ensemble, in 1955, at the newly founded Culture Palace in the town. Despite being a town of oil workers, Ploiești had had a beautiful music tradition, considering that, at the initiative of the Hieromonk Macarie, a Byzantine music school was established there in 1830, and, after the Greek choir singers had withdrawn, Ioniță Văleanu established an all-Romanian school of church singers, which resembled, according to George Sbârcea, "a small conservatory", due to its reliability and discipline[12]. In the last decades of the 19th century, two choirs operated in the town and, in the interwar period, the *Ploiești Music Association* also existed for a decade[13]. We should also note that, between 1932 and 1934, the young Paul Constantinescu (1909-1963), an apprentice in his native town, also conducted the pupils' orchestra of "I. L. Caragiale" High School[14]. The ensemble founded by Gh. C. Ionescu, which would bear the name of the aforementioned composer – the 'Paul Constantinescu' Choir[15] – included "...workers, technicians, economists, clerks, teachers, engineers and doctors"[16]. He distinguished himself on several national and international stages and was the pride of his town (after 20 years of activity he could already boast 14 prizes at various national and international competitions). The prestige of the choir, recognized for its professional level performances, determined D. D. Botez to mention it in tome II of his *Tratat de dirijat și cânt coral* [A treatise on conducting and choral singing], in the section related to choral activity in our country[17]. His conductor activity covered several decades; in 1978, when the collaboration with this ensemble ceased, he took over the management of the "Ioan C. Danielescu" Choir in Ploiești (1978-1981), and in Bucharest he was the conductor of the "Philarmonia" Chamber Choir of the People's Art School (1982-1987).

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[12] George Sbârcea, *Orașele muzicii* [The Cities of Music], tome 3, București, Editura Muzicală, 1976, p. 153.

[13] *Idem*, p. 157.

[14] *Idem*, p. 158.

[15] The choir was initially part of the *Singing and Dancing Ensemble of the Town of Ploiești*, from which it was separated under the name the *Choir of the Palace of Culture* and, since 1971, honored the Ploiești-born composer, according to George Sbârcea, *Corala "Paul Constantinescu" la două decenii de activitate* ["Paul Constantinescu" Choir – two decades of activity], "Muzica" Journal, Year XXVI (1976), issue 4 (April), București, p. 11.

[16] *Idem*, p.160.

[17] Dumitru D. Botez, *Tratat de dirijat și cânt coral* [A treatise on conducting and choral singing], tome II, București, Editura Muzicală, 1985, p. 427.

To conclude on his activity as a conductor, we quote George Sbârcea, who, referring to the trophies, prizes and medals won by the "Paul Constantinescu" Choir at prestigious international competitions, explained the ensemble's success as follows: "The reason is easy to guess: in a musical town, with a philharmonic orchestra, a variety theater, a folk singing and dancing ensemble, a music high school, a people's university, this amateur choir rose through work, through the support that was always given to it, through the ambition of its leader and its members, rising to the level of the best and most experienced professional ensembles"[18]. This quote reveals some traits of Gh. C. Ionescu's personality, which were also reflected in his constant effort to stimulate the choral movement by creating collections, especially of Romanian music[19], also by publishing books about this activity: *100 de ani de activitate corală în oraşul Ploieşti, Corul Palatului Culturii, Concert coral* [100 Years of Choral Activity in the Town of Ploieşti, Choir of the Culture Palace, Choral Concert]. In a suggestive portrait, published years later, in *Actualitatea muzicală* [Music News] journal, the composer Mircea Neagu – who had been a colleague of Gh. Ionescu at the People's Creation Center – characterized him by emphasizing several traits of his personality: perseverance, passion for choral art, enthusiasm, artistic competence, good organizer, good musician and talented conductor skills. He noted the particular emphasis placed on local choral creation, the approach to various lyrical works in terms of writing and style, also considering their accessibility for the audience[20]. Mircea Neagu considered him "...an optimist confident in terms of the goals of his profession, continuously striving to obtain outstanding interpretive results and being considered as a genuine animator of the Romanian choral movement"[21]. Priest Fl. Bucescu emphasizes in his evocation the professional level to which he managed to raise amateur ensembles, showing that "his great passion for choral singing and his talent as a conductor could not go unnoticed at that time when music was used by the rulers of the time as an important «weapon» in forging the consciousness of the «new man», attracting the attention of specialists and cultural leaders of that time"[22].

Returning to Gh. C. Ionescu's leading the ensemble from Ploiesti, we must also specify that it was appreciated for its performances, the praises coming from important musicians, namely D. D. Botez, Gh. Dumitrescu, Vasile Tomescu, Viorel Cosma, Octavian Lazăr Cosma, N. Lungu, N. Oancea, Al. Pașcanu, Radu Paladi, Liviu Comes, etc. In the article referred to above,

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[18] George Sbârcea, *Oraşele muzicii* [The Cities of Music], *op. cit.*, p. 161.
[19] *Muzică corală românească* [Romanian Choral Music], Bucureşti, Centrul de Creaţie Populară, 1968 etc.
[20] Mircea Neagu, *Portrete. Gheorge C. Ionescu* [Portraits. Gheorghe C. Ionescu], "Actualitatea muzicală" [Music News], Year X, no. 214 (1/febr.), Bucureşti, 1999, p. 2.
[21] *Ibidem*.
[22] Florin Bucescu, *Bizantinologie muzicală...* [Musical Byzantinology...], *op. cit.*, p. 123.

Mircea Neagu argued that "...the teacher and conductor Gh. C. Ionescu has had a rich artistic activity, investing love and passion and even making great sacrifices (for example, commuting between Ploiești and Bucharest for many years) and being among the best conductors in the field of choral art"[23].

Apart from choral conducting, another aspect of his activity was represented by his pursuits of folklore, which deepened after he had started working at the Ethnological and Dialectological Research Institute in Bucharest. He collected vocal and instrumental music folklore from Prahova, Buzău and Dâmbovița, part of which was published at the beginning of his activity in Ploiești, *Din folclorul nostru* being edited in 1957 by the Regional People's Creation Center in the town[24].

### Musicological and lexicographic activity

If we were to look at the pages of dictionaries and articles in which his personality is presented, we would notice that during the years spent in Ploiești, but also after settling in the capital, he had an important publishing activity, totaling almost 100 various articles, interviews, recordings of local artistic events, concert reviews, published between 1955 and 1987, in the local newspaper "Flamura Prahovei" and in daily newspapers across the country.

His research of church music intensified after his retirement, when he returned to the pursuits of his youth. In 1985, he published, in the tome XIX of the journal *Studii de muzicologie* [Musicology Studies], an extensive work entitled *Ioan Cartu – Omul și opera*[25], by revisiting and reviewing, probably, part of his theology bachelor's degree graduation thesis. We believe, however, that the timing is not random and does not necessarily coincide with his retirement. The Musical Publishing House had started to publish the 'Sources of Romanian Music' series several years before. Thus, thanks to Titus Moisescu and Gheorghe Ciobanu, several tomes with photocopies of the manuscripts from Putna and the first two of the series devoted by the Archdeacon Sebastian Barbu-Bucur to *Psaltichiei rumanești* of Filothei sin Agăi Jipei have already been published. Sebastian Barbu-Bucur Romanian Psaltiche of Filothea sin Agăi Jipei. Also in 1985, Titus Moisescu's book *Prolegomene bizantine. Muzică bizantină în manuscrise și carte veche românească*[26] was also published – it was therefore a

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[23] Florin Bucescu, *Bizantinologie muzicală...* [Musical Byzantinology...], *op. cit.*, p. 123.

[24] He also had the following books published: *Cântece de luptă și viață nouă* [Songs of battle and new life] (1962) and *Melodii de joc* [Dance Songs] (1963) by the Centrul de Creație Populară Ploiești.

[25] Gheorghe C. Ionescu, *Studii de muzicologie și bizantinologie* [Studies in Musicology and Byzantinology], București, f.e., 1997, pp. 237-261.

[26] Titus Moisescu, *Prolegomene bizantine. Muzică bizantină în manuscrise și carte veche românească* [Byzantine prolegomena. Byzantine music in manuscripts and old Romanian books], București, Editura Muzicală, 1985.

period when the interest in old church music materialized in articles, studies and books that unexpectedly escaped the communist censorship. Stimulated by the friendly atmosphere, Gh. Ionescu returned to his student pursuits and, starting with 1987, he published at least one study each year, in the Studies and Researches of Art History journal (SCIA), Drama, Music, Cinematography series (TMC). He was particularly interested in Hieromonk Macarie, Ion Popescu-Pasărea (his former college professor), Ștefanache Popescu and Filotei the Monk from Cozia, the Lamentations of the Lord and some Byzantine music manuscripts. The author collected everything he had written for a decade about Orthodox church music in the book the publishing of which was funded by himself in 1997 (in only 30 copies), with the title *Studii de muzicologie şi bizantinologie* [Studies in Musicology and Byzantinology]. Whereas in 2002 Father Fl. Bucescu mentioned, alongside this book, the *Lexicon*[27], considering that "these two books established Gh. C. Ionescu as a specialist in this field (our note, that of religious vocal music research)"[28], the following year, thanks to his wife's efforts, the other important book was also published posthumously, *Muzica bizantină în România. Dicţionar cronologic* [Byzantine music in Romania. Chronological dictionary][29]. Thus, we can now appreciate and compare the way Byzantine music chanters, copyists, composers, theorists, musicologists, religious vocal music teachers, performers are reflected in these books.

First, the two books stand out due to the novelty of the approach. As Father Florin Bucescu argued (along with the other reviewers), "the *Lexicon* published in 1994 meat pioneering work for Gh. C. Ionescu, his book being the first work of lexicography on the Byzantine music chanters that have been active in Romania since ancient times (4th century AD) until the 10th decade of the 20th century"[30]. Only by counting the reviews can one measure the importance of the book: 12 reviews were written between 1994 and 1996, published in magazines from Bucharest, Braşov, Iaşi and Sibiu. The signatories (in order of appearance of the reviews) were, in 1994 (therefore, shortly after its publication), Titus Moisescu and Vasile Vasile. A year later, eight other reviews appeared, being signed by Vasile Vasile (three), Ștefan Petran, Marin Velea, Viorel Cosma, Nicolae Peneș, Constantin Catrina, and, in 1996, together with Father Bucescu, Vasile Vasile published a new review. Of course, all the authors obviously welcome the initiative and appreciate the amount of work involved in gathering such a significant amount of information, collected from various sources, for the more

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[27] Gh. C. Ionescu, *Lexicon al celor care, de-a lungul veacurilor, s-au ocupat cu muzica de tradiţie bizantină în România* [Lexicon of those who, over the centuries, have dealt with music of Byzantine tradition in Romania], Bucureşti, Editura Diogene, 1994.

[28] Florin Bucescu, *In memoriam...*, *op. cit.*, p. 125.

[29] Gh. C. Ionescu, *Muzica bizantină în România. Dicţionar cronologic* [Byzantine music in Romania. Chronological dictionary], Bucureşti, Editura Sagittarius, 2003, p. 575.

[30] Florin Bucescu, *In memoriam...*, *op. cit.*, p. 127.

than 480 names included in the book. It was equally appreciated during the meetings with the author, which took place in the capital city, as well as in in Ploiesti, Craiova and Iași.

The success of this book is due to the fact that it was "...a must for the good knowledge of an artistic field that has existed for centuries in Romanian culture"[31], as argued by Titus Moisescu, the one who had suggested, in fact, the creation of such a working tool. For many years, the book was considered a "fundamental tool", and its publication "an event in our scientific musical life", as time confirmed what Ștefan Petraru had written in his review in the journal *Cuget românesc* of Brașov (1995)[32].

The subtitle of the book suggests the categories of musicians and choir singers that it addresses: "composers, theorists, musicologists, religious vocal music teachers, copyists, performers", in other words, all those who worked for 16 centuries to perpetuate and research church music.

How is the 'reflection of the *Other*' actually achieved in this encyclopedic work? As usual, by providing biographical data, by listing his main professional achievements, by determining his personal contribution – as the case may be, composed works, copied manuscripts, published books, church choir singing or conducting choral ensembles, etc. – and, of course, by listing all the bibliographic references in which his name is mentioned. Nothing special, so far, but the value of the book was appreciated, understandably, not for its presentation form (which corresponds to the usual standards), but most important for its orientation towards categories of musicians that could not be talked about too much for almost half a century, under the well-known communist restrictions.

The manner in which each personality is presented depends on the amount of their work and, of course, on the information we have about those who lived many centuries before us. Thus, the main attributes are specified after the name – Byzantine music chanter, copyist, singer, theoretician, etc. – he/she is located in time and space, the year/century and place of birth (if known) are shown. A narrative text, variable in size, summarizes the main aspects of the activity and its importance. For personalities like the Hieromonk Macarie, this text is structured, the biography being separated from his *Professional life, Published books, Manuscripts*. Or, in the article devoted to Gh. Ciobanu, the headings are: Studies, Functions, Musicology-Byzantinology (volumes), Critical Editions, again Musicology-Byzantinology, to record studies and articles, and, finally, an appreciative/conclusive text.

Most papers end with their references. In some cases, they are missing, but they may be inferred from the context, because the name was found by Gh.

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[31] Constantin Catrina, *apud* Titus Moisescu, *op. cit.*, p. 190.
[32] Ștefan Petraru, *Cântările Bizanțului – dascăli, psalți, copiști* [Songs of Byzantium - teachers, psalters, copyists], "Cuget românesc" [Romanian thinking], Brașov, 1995.

C. Ionescu in a manuscript or it is a simple choir singer, like Chialda Tomaida from Pasărea Convent (p. 75), whom he probably knew personally; Or Măgureanu Nicolae, chanter and teacher from Câmpulung Muscel (19th and 20th centuries), the religious hymn for two voices of whom was published by Ion Popescu-Pasărea (p. 228) (Fig. 1).



**CHIALDA, Tomaida (Ioa-na), călugăriță, cântăreață (n. 6 XI 1934, com. Avrig, jud. Sibiu).**

La vârsta de 6 ani (în 1940) vine în mănăst. Horezu unde primește îndrumări teologice și muzicale. Urmează cursurile Seminarului monahal din mănăstire (muzica bisericească cu prof. I. Pușoiu). Cântăreață la strana dreaptă și conducătoare a grupului de cântărețe în procesul cultului divin. Execută cu abilitate și plăcere de a cânta imnele liturgice. A polarizat în jurul său și a îndrumat în tainele muzicii psaltice generații de tinere, surori și măicuțe, insuflându-le dragostea pentru muzica tradițională a bisericii noastre. De la Cozia se transferă la mănst. Pasărea unde slujește în continuare la strana dreaptă în rang de primă cântăreață. Face parte din grupul coral de muzică psaltică organizat în mănăstire.

**MĂGUREANU, Nicolae, cân-tăreț, profesor (Câmpu Lung-Muscel, sec. XIX-XX).**

Cântăreț bisericesc în orașul Câmpu Lung-Muscel, jud. Argeș. În 1933 era profesor de muzică bisericească la Școala de cântăreți bisericești din Câmpu Lung. Profesorul I. Popescu-Pasărea îi aprecia pentru profesionalitatea sa și pentru preocupările sale în domeniul creației psaltice incluzându-l în unele dintre colecțiile tipărite. Este prezent cu imnul religios *Ridica-voi ochii mei la ceruri*, glas. V, aranjat la 2 voci egale, în notație psaltică, în: I. Popescu-Pasărea, *Cântările Sfintei Liturghii scrise după melodiile tradiționale pe notațiunea psaltică pentru corurile bisericești școlare*, București, Tip. C. Bis., 1933.

Fig. 1 Lexicon articles

Both persons who reviewed the book or used it appreciated the large number of lexicographical articles. Although some of these are limited to just a few lines and are poor in information – as shown in the examples above –, the author's contribution lies in the attention given to some names that were only briefly mentioned in various studies and books or discovered in Byzantine music manuscripts. Christian, then Byzantine music survived and developed on the current Romania territory thanks to the common continuous daily contributions of teachers and priests, of monks and chanters from monasteries or from churches in modest localities, alongside great personalities who kept in touch with Byzantium, with St. Mount Athos. The value of the book resides precisely in the references to all of them, as a reflection of the representatives of Byzantine musical culture in Romania.

In order for the big picture to be complete, teacher Gh. C. Ionescu went through an impressive number of bibliographic references, from which he collected names and personal achievements, mentions and appreciations. He was thus able to describe the creation of Romanian Byzantine music chanters, such as the monks from Putna Monastery – First Chanter Evstatie, Theodosie Zotica, Dometian Vlahul – alongside with the two representatives from the 18th century Iovașcu Vlahul and Filothei sin Agăi Jipei, as well as those from the 19th century – Macarie, Pann, Suceveanu, Ghelasie Basarabeanu, Ștefanache Popescu, Ioan Zmeu, Nectarie Frimu, Ion Popescu-Pasărea, from the beginning of the 20th century and many others. He listed all the names of church music copyists and editors, Byzantine music chanters, musicologists.

Whereas the publication of the Lexicon in 1994 was followed by an avalanche of reviews, this was not the case with *Dicționarul cronologic* [Chronological dictionary], published posthumously and dedicated to his wife Elena Ionescu, who made sure that the book materialized after Gh. C. Ionescu's death. However, we can safely say that the first pages of the book make up for the mentioned gaps, the foreword signed by the academician Virgil Cândea being followed by two more texts belonging to Titus Moisescu and Vasile Vasile, entitled: *Un nou lexicon muzical românesc* [A new Romanian musical lexicon] as well as *Note pe marginea unei cărți de excepție* [Notes about an exceptional book].

According to academician Virgil Cândea, "...post-Byzantine Romanian music should not be nowadays an object of cultural archeology, but a way of spiritual regeneration~, since, in his opinion, "research is merely the first step towards a higher aspiration, that of bringing back to the practice of our pews, to liturgical life and to prayer, the Orthodox Musical Tradition in all its richness, authenticity and beauty"[33].

The other two texts emphasize, in addition to the value of the new work tool offered to specialists and the richness of information that may touch a wider audience, the fact that this is not a revisitation, a republication of the lexicon, but a new approach in terms of form and content. The summary that follows the mentioned texts, compiled by the author's wife, insists on these aspects. We learn that the assiduous work carried out over several years was based on the consultation of the Old Book and Manuscript Fund at the Library of the Romanian Academy, the Library of the Holy Synod; the National Library, the Râmnicu Vâlcea Library, the State Archives in Ploiesti, the personal archives of Titus Moisescu and Alexandru Dimcea, libraries of monasteries and hermitages throughout the country, as well as the catalogs compiled by Gabriel Ștrempel, Constantin Litzica, Virgil Cândea, etc. The information received from prominent Byzantine musicologists – Archdeacon Sebastian Barbu-Bucur, Constantin Catrina, Titus Moisescu, Vasile Vasile, Archimandrite Grigore Băbuș and Alexandru Dimcea – should also be mentioned. This new documentation allowed for some errors in the Lexicon to be corrected and the dictionary to be complemented with new names and information, including the studies published in the meantime in the magazine *Byzantion Romanicon* in Iași. The bibliography was completed, the text was accompanied, in some cases, by the photograph of the person referred to, and some facsimiles were added. In addition to the chronological arrangement of the names, the dictionary also includes "...696 micro-portraits of authors and institutions in which the author presents new characters, manuscripts, schools, various treatises, from simple presentation to musicological study"[34].

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[33] Gh. C. Ionescu, *Muzica bizantină în România. Dicționar cronologic* [Byzantine music in Romania. Chronological dictionary], *op. cit.*, p. VIII.
[34] *Ibidem*.

Here are just a few examples of the work carried out to compile the *Chronological Dictionary*. In the next pictures we are comparing the two entries about Radu Grămăticul's contribution:

Lexicon                                    Dictionary
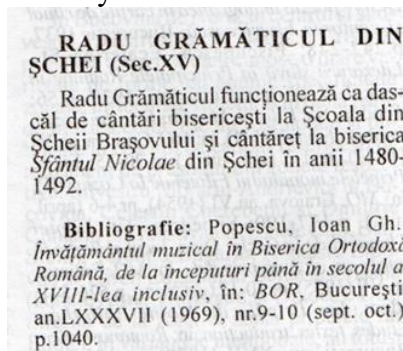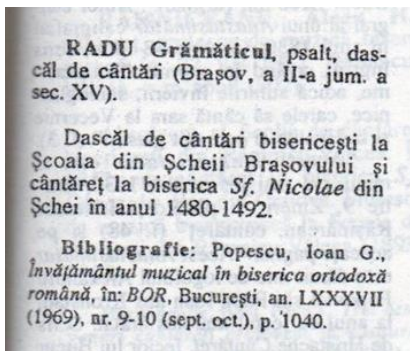


Fig. 2 Same entry in lexicon and dictionary



Fig. 3. Page from the article dedicated to Iovaşcu Vlahul

In addition to the manner in which the information is presented, for better localization purposes, the fact that he also worked at Șcheii Brașovului School is mentioned.

Many texts have been considerably enriched in the new book. Let us take as example the article devoted to Iovașcu Vlahul, which in the Lexicon is arranged on three columns, while in the Dictionary it has six and a half columns, being complemented by a photocopy that reproduces a page from his Doxology (Fig. 3).

The importance of the publishing the first books printed in Romanian is emphasized; the books that were edited in Vienna in 1823 by Macarie the Hieromonk were reserved a whole article in the new book, the rich explanatory text being accompanied by a photocopy of the title page of the *Theoriticon*. In the Lexicon, these books were briefly described, under the heading *Printed works*, in the article devoted to the well-known Byzantine music chanter.
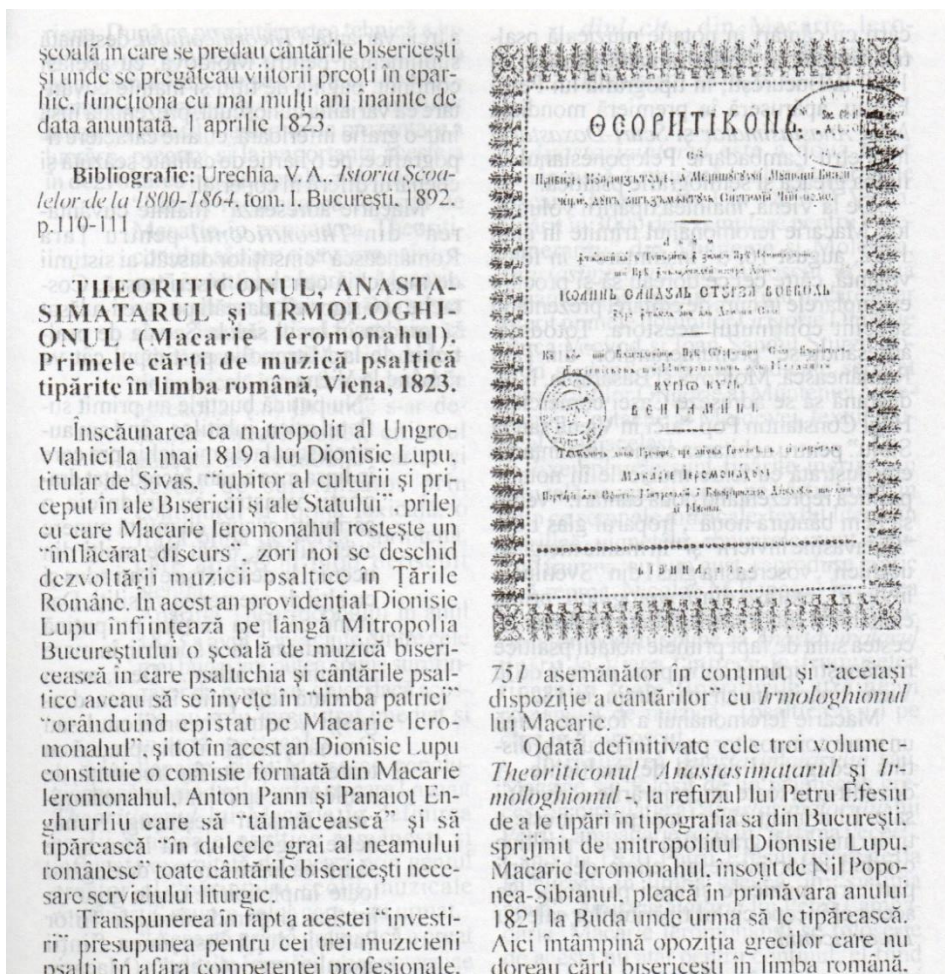


Fig. 4 Article dedicated to the books of Macarie Hieronmonakh (fragment)

Let's also add the fact that the names of composers of choral religious music are also listed in the *Dictionary*, and by this we mean personalities such as Nicolae Filimon or several students who participated in the symposia and Byzantine music singing competitions held in Iași. The last page of the book also informs the reader that a software for writing neumatic notation was created in 1995 in Bucharest – the piece of news was taken from an article in the journal *Actualitatea muzicală* [Music News][35].

### Instead of conclusions

At the end of the text that Titus Moisescu wrote on 2 July 2000 – published at the beginning of the book – the author expressed his belief that the book "...will arouse the interest of all musicians in our country and abroad". We who enjoy this very useful work tool treat with the utmost respect the books compiled by Mr. Gh. C. Ionescu, whose memory we will keep alive and for whose work we will always be grateful.

In our opinion, not only the limited edition but also the value of the book is proven by the fact that, when searching for it on the Internet, we find that it is sold out in all antique book shops. In a time when everything is just a click away, the absence of the book on the market is also an indication of its importance!

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[35] Gh. C. Ionescu, *Muzica …*, *op. cit.*, p. 533.

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# *Alla Turca,* the Origin of the Main Percussion Instruments in Symphony Orchestras and the Romanian Principalities

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**Abstract:** *Alla turca*, percussion instruments of a symphony orchestra and the Romanian Principalities are, at first glance, a strange and inappropriate combination of words. Yet, if one goes deeper into the subject, one may easily find a silver thread running through them all, which facilitates the understanding of these combinations of words and especially the reason for their combination. In this case, the culture of mobility is extremely visible and interesting. *Alla turca* was a cultural phenomenon specific to Western Europe since the 17th century, which was due to the interest shown by Europeans in the oriental culture gradually brought to Europe by the Ottomans. The increasingly powerful Ottoman Empire, its incursions towards the West and frequent military, diplomatic and cultural contacts piqued the Europeans' interest in the exoticism of the new world with which they came in contact, music being one of the main areas of influence. This is due to Ottoman military music (mehterhane), consisting mainly of percussion musical instruments, which produced extremely loud music accompanying the Ottoman armies on the battlefield and supporting the efforts of the soldiers through its marches. At the same time, the effect of this music on their opponents was the complete opposite, as they were not used to such sonorities and were easily intimidated by it. The effectiveness of Ottoman military music proven on the battlefield and its physical appearance impressed the European monarchs who tried to imitate it in various forms and by various methods and implement it both in their armies and in their ceremonial music, as a symbol of political power, since the mehterhane was also a powerful political symbol in the Ottoman Empire. Starting from here, various European composers, the most important being Mozart, were also influenced by the exotic features of this music and by its novelty and used it in their own creations, at first playing it using Western musical instruments and then gradually adopting in the orchestra instruments specific to mehterhane, the so-called "Turkish drums", thus developing the symphony orchestra to the form in which it is present today. As far as the Romanian Principalities are concerned, their connection with the elements mentioned above consists precisely in the fact that their geo-political location allowed the contact between the West and the East and the occurrence of *alla turca* influences, since the mehterhane had been present in the Romanian Principalities since the 15th century and foreign Western travellers crossing these regions listened to it and described it in their memoirs, making it known to the West, its most important promoter being Franz Joseph Sulzer.

**Keywords:** *alla turca*; *mehterhane*; percussion instruments; Romanian Principalities; Ottoman Empire.

## 1.  Introduction. What is *alla turca* and how did it manifest itself?

The goal of our research is a historical approach to the *alla turca* phenomenon, which consists of the description of the background against which it occurred, of the history of specific musical instruments used in the West long before *alla turca*, as well as the role played by the Romanian Principalities in its promotion, under particular circumstances.

*Alla turca* or *turquerie* usually referred to oriental clothing fashion, consumption habits and the oriental way of life, which had reached its peak between the mid-17th century and the mid-18th century. Several wars took place, peace treaties were concluded and many diplomatic and cultural exchanges occurred between Western Europe, especially the Holy Roman Empire of German Nation, and the Ottoman Empire, during all this time. All these events culminated in the Peace of Karlowitz of 1699, when European interest in Oriental and Ottoman culture peaked, with European courts and the political elite adopting Oriental fashion in various aspects and forms[1].

From the musical point of view, *alla turca* meant the attraction of Europeans, from monarchs to musicians, to Ottoman military music, called mehterhane. This music had a very important role in Islam, the whole Muslim world placing great emphasis on percussion instruments, more precisely on certain drums, which make up musical formations, incorporating other instruments, such as aerophones, and gradually coming to suggest and represent the power of the supreme ruler – the caliph – and become a symbol of his political power. However, as things evolved, the caliph eventually empowered each Arab tribal leader by offering them particular signs of power – *insignia* – including the military music band, originally called "tablkhana". This practice was also adopted by the Ottomans, who improved it until the military music band was called "mehterhane", which was the name of the highest category of servants at the imperial court. It also came to be a sign of the political power of the sultan and his great dignitaries, including the rulers of the Romanian Principalities, by virtue of the political relations between these political entities[2].

The invasion of Europe by the Ottomans, which a first peak in 1453 with the conquest of Constantinople and their gradual movement towards Central and Western Europe, and with a second peak in 1535, when the

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[1] Martin Rempe, Cultural Brokers in Uniform: The Global Rise of Military Musicians and Their Music, in *Itinerario: International Journal on the History of European Expansion and Global Interaction*, Vol. 41, No. 2, 2017, p. 330.
[2] Eduard Rusu, *Muzica și puterea politică în Moldova și Țara Românească, secolele al XV-lea – al XVIII-lea* [Music and political power in Moldavia and Wallachia, 15th-18th centuries], Iași, Editura Universității „Alexandru Ioan Cuza", pp. 202-205.

King of France Francis I made an alliance with Süleyman the Magnificent to escape the Habsburgs, facilitated political, military and cultural relations between the two worlds. In this context, the East, through the Ottoman Empire, began to be discovered by Europeans and even became a strong point of attraction in the 17th century, due to its exoticism, to the different way of life of its people, to their clothes, fabulous stories and last but not least to its music, especially military music. Military music was "introduced" to Europe primarily through armed confrontations, since it was actually part of the military contingents. Second, it was noticed by Europeans during their diplomatic exchanges, as every high-ranking Ottoman dignitary had a mehterhane as a sign of political power, which accompanied him permanently. Third, Ottoman music penetrated the European world as a result of the alliances concluded with various European monarchs, as a "gift" from the sultans, a gift that was actually a sign of the political power of the sultan and his influence over the one with whom he concluded the alliance. For instance, in all three Romanian Principalities, especially in Moldavia and Wallachia, both the investiture of the new ruler of the principality and the conclusion of any peace treaty or alliance were sealed with the sending of symbols of Ottoman political power, among which there was always a mehterhane. This is the general background against which the occurrence of the "concept" *alla turca* is set, which represents the Ottoman musical influence, represented by the mehterhane, first on the European military music and then on art music, as the Ottoman military music represented a desideratum of various composers in their various artistic compositions, due precisely to the exoticism and degree of novelty brought by its percussion instruments. The *alla turca* style is in music one of the many versions of "Turkishness" penetrating European culture and it is obvious that the version chosen has more to do with European interests in the subject than with anything intrinsic to the Ottomans or Ottoman music[3].

Starting from here, the Ottoman troops, always in search of jihad, exerted a great deal of pressure on Europe, from the South-East and East to the West, which meant that Europeans collided with the army of the Ottoman Empire and implicitly with its military music, which was always present on the battlefield its very important role being the support of the morale of the Ottomans or the destabilization of their opponents, who were terrorized with this loud and unfamiliar music.

Due to its musical performances, mehterhane music gradually became fashionable in the European courts, where the sovereigns began to

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[3] Mary Hunter, *The* Alla Turca *Style in the late Eighteenth Century: Race and Gender in the Symphony and the Seraglio*, in Jonathan Bellman, *The Exotic in Western Music*, Boston, Northeastern University Press, 1998, p. 44.

adopt and imitate in their own music specific elements of Ottoman martial music and use them in their court festivities, such as coronations, weddings and baptisms. lor In the West, this "trend" began in the states of central and northern Germany, which rejected the Catholic restoration of the early 17th century and where court musicians adopted Ottoman clothing and began to imitate their music[4]. In all likelihood, the first genuine Ottoman military music was played in Western Europe in 1672, at the coronation of Sweden's King Charles XI. A year later, similar music seems to have been used by Jan Sobieski during the military events of Hotin, in northern Moldavia, for his triumphal entry in Warsaw. The King of Poland and Elector of Saxony, Augustus II (1694-1733), was the first European sovereign to have a genuine mehterhane at his court, received as a gift from the Sultan, who had attended the festivities of his son's wedding, in 1719, the band having 27 members[5]. The same monarch came dressed as a sultan to the christening of the future elector and the musicians who accompanied him also adopted Ottoman clothing and fashion, precisely to emphasize his power and pomp. The inclusion of the mehterhane into the festivities of the European monarchs perfectly imitated the original model of their contemporaries, the Ottomans[6].

Interestingly enough, not only Turkish (Ottoman) musicians were in high demand in Europe, but also black ones. Frederick Wilhelm I of Prussia (1700-1740) had at his court approximately 30 flautists and drummers from Africa, who had a privileged position and were considered throughout the empire as "janissaries", the famous Ottoman infantrymen, whose music military was that of the mehterhane[7].

While in contact with the Ottomans, Europeans absorbed and reproduced the dual role of the mehterhane, both military and ceremonial. The military confrontations, mutual diplomatic and cultural exchanges between Western Europe and the Ottoman Empire allowed Westerners to borrow the characteristics of mehterhane music. This oriental influence had great impact on Viennese culture, for example, becoming a trend in Vienna.

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[4] Martin Rempe, *op. cit.*, p. 330.
[5] Eve R. Meyer, *Turquerie and Eighteenth-Century Music*, in "Eighteenth-Century Studies", Vol. 7, No. 4, Summer, 1974, p. 485; Martin Rempe, *op. cit.*, p. 330.
[6] Alexander Bevilacqua, Helen Pfifer, *Tourquerie: Culture in Motion, 1650-1750*, in "Past and Present", No. 221 (Nov. 2013), p. 99.
[7] Martin Rempe, *op. cit.*, p. 330.

### 2. *Alla turca* and western military music

Percussion played a very important role in several styles of music, the most important of which was military music, as it supported the rhythm of marches, of attacks and, along with trumpets, announced various manoeuvres on the battlefield.

Ottoman military music and especially its characteristics were quickly adopted in Europe, due to its warlike nature and loud sounds, specific to such music, which had to be obvious and heard. The first European army to organize its military music on the model of the Ottoman one, borrowing some of its characteristics, was that of the Poles. They were followed by the Austrians, the Russians, the Germans and the French, and by the year 1770 military music based on the Ottoman model had become a standard of European military musical bands[8].

Considering the great popularity of the mehterhane at the European monarchical courts, it should not be surprising that its music began to be adopted and practiced by the native military music as well, becoming to a certain extent a European military music. The statement of the Swiss Joseph Franz Sulzer, who was contemporary with the *alla turca* phenomenon, is extremely important in this sense:

> One should not consider as genuine the Janissary music that has recently been introduced in most regiments of the Roman-Imperial Austrian army, which sees daily new pieces from German composers. The difference between them is huge. Our German-Turkish war music cannot even boast the same instruments, much less the same manner, striving in vain to imitate it with European measures and German ears.[9]

Nevertheless, the Ottoman influence continued to manifest itself leading to the creation within the standing European armies of distinct bodies of musicians who performed music played on instruments such as cymbals, Chinese pavilion (Turkish crescent), nagara and davul drums (the big and small drums, both having the same origin). The musicians of these bands were included in the army budget for the first time by Austria in 1800, and by Prussia in 1806[10].

Although, at first, the impact of the integration of percussion musical instruments in European military music was minor, military music gradually changed its character so much that at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century it was

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[8] Catherine Schmidt-Jones, *Janissary Music and Turkish Influences on Western Music*, "OpenStax-CNX module: m15861", retrieved from http://cnx.org/content/ m15861/1.2/, p. 6.

[9] Gemma Zinveliu (Ed.), *Fr. J. Sulzer în Dacia cisalpină şi transalpină*, translated and adapted by Gemma Zinveliu, Bucureşti, Editura Muzicală, 1995, p. 155.

[10] Martin Rempe, *op. cit.*, p. 331.

divided into two: harmonic music (*harmonie musik*) or field music and Turkish (Ottoman) music. These two were different not only in terms of instrumentation but also as concerns their function. Harmonic or field music was composed for musical instruments such as: oboes, clarinets, horns, trumpets and bassoons, while Ottoman music was mainly dominated by percussion instruments[11].

Field music was played on the occasion of the deployment of the main guards and of the castle guards, while Ottoman music was used on Monday evenings in front of the barracks and sometimes in front of the main guard (the military leader of the garrison or military detachment), when the weather was nice[12]. Interestingly enough, Ottoman music was used at the same times as in the Ottoman Empire, in the evening, at sunset, during peacetime. In wartime it was always present on the battlefield for the soldiers, and it was played in front of the sultan's tent, if he was present, or in front of the tents of the main leaders, as we have noted here.

The same happened in Wallachia and Moldavia, but with more nuances. Except for military music, composed according to the Western model, the court of these principalities also had a mehterhane. The mehterhane here was a genuine one, given the political connection between these countries and the Ottoman Empire and the political symbolism of this band.

Around 1770 most European armies had already appropriated their new style of military music, which in most cases adopted the (small or military) drum, timpani, cymbals, triangle, tambourines and jingling Johnnie, becoming the music known on the continent under the name "harmonie music"[13].

Although the "Turkish drums" were a sign of exoticism, they were quickly adopted into military music or military-style music with some obvious exotic aspects. Ottoman marches quickly became indistinguishable in the current repertoire of European military music in the second half of the 18th and early 19th centuries. For example, the British trend of the drum band costumes, those leopard-skin aprons, and performing tricks with drumsticks, are reminiscent – even when the music is not associated with exoticism – of the Ottoman Oriental influence, which sometimes required that the drummers of the martial music be black people from Africa, dressed traditionally,

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[11] Martin Rempe, *op. cit.*, p. 331.

[12] Matthew Head, *Orientalism, Masquarade and Mozart's Turkish Music*, London•New York, Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2000, p. 58; Martin Rempe, *op. cit.*, p. 331; Chaterine Schmidt-Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

[13] Henry G. Farmer, *Oriental Influences on Occidental Military Music*, "Islamic Culture", Vol. XV, No. 2, April, 1941, p. 239.

precisely for their exoticism, performing certain tricks with their drumsticks[14].

### 3. *Alla turca* and Western composers

*Alla turca* occurred in European music when composers wished to use new sounds and musical instruments in their creations, with the aim of attracting the audience and innovating, the allure of the oriental world being well-known[15]. The influence of Ottoman music on French music in the period 1625-1700, for example, materialized in the enrichment of music in general, a secondary contribution to the basic musical structure[16].

After Ottoman musical instruments had been adopted, additional European instruments, such as the triangle and piccolo, were used to reproduce the sonority of Ottoman military music, complementing and enriching its sonority, as this is how European composers thought that this exotic music should sound[17]. The *alla turca* style was first considered an imitation of original Ottoman music and a translation of perception of the original[18].

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was one of the first to implement the *alla turca* style in their music. Thus, he adopted two distinct elements or influences of the *alla turca* "current" in his operas; first, he used unusual musical instruments such as piccolo, triangle, cymbals and big/small drum, trying to imitate the specific mehterhane instruments, and especially its sonorities, and, second, he used stories, settings and characters specific to the oriental world, in particular the Ottoman world[19].

Mozart used the term *alla turca* to designate the Turkish style in the absence of instruments specific to Turkish music. *Alla turca* broadens its meaning to a stylized representation of national specificity, such as *alla pollaca* and *alla tedesca*, and includes melodic, rhythmic and harmonic elements[20]. This mixture of instrumental integration and tonal imitation even left its mark on piano music. Therefore, piano manufacturers introduced, in the early 18th century, the so-called "janissary pedal", which was a

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[14] Mary Hunter, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

[15] D. Doran Bugg, *The Role of Turkish Percussion in the History and Development of the Orchestral Percussion Section*, LSU Major Papers, vol. 27, 2003, p. 22.

[16] Mary Rowen Obelkevich, *Turkish Affect in the Land of the Sun King*, "The Musical Quarterly", Vol. 63, No. 3 (Jul. 1977), p. 378.

[17] Martin Rempe, *op. cit.*, p. 331.

[18] Mary Hunter, *op. cit.*, p. 48.

[19] \*\*\*, *East meets West: The influence of alla turca style in Mozart and Haydn's music*, "MUS 663-Term Paper", retrieved from https://www.academia.edu/23434836/East_meets_West_The_influence_of_alla_turca_style_in_Mozart_and_Haydn_s_music_MUS_663_Music_in_Gallant_period_Term_Paper, p. 7.

[20] Matthew Head, *op. cit.*, p. 62.

mechanism that made the sound of bells, cymbals and drums[21]. In 1710, in Salisbury Cathedral, a percussion pedal was added to an organ to imitate the dark sound of the drum. The same thing happened to the Weingarten Cathedral organ, to which a "cymbalstern" was added to imitate the sound of the Chinese pavilion[22]. The novelty was adopted by some composers in their piano pieces at the end of the 18th century, which increased the popularity of Ottoman music in Europe, leaving a visible mark on the European music of that period[23]. The musicians' fascination with these instruments is the result of their desire to 'obtain' the sound of Ottoman music, which was "found" in musical ensembles that had nothing to do with a symphony orchestra.

Turkish or Ottoman music refers to that music that contains certain percussion instruments, while *alla turca* refers to melodic, harmonic and rhythmic elements, able to imitate Ottoman music. The *alla turca* influence was most visible during Western musical classicism, but was limited in scope, while Ottoman music, which was particularly influential in Western military music, was deeper and more lasting, even if less known than *alla turca*[24].

Two distinct categories of imitation of Ottoman music may be distinguished in European instrumental music at the end of the 18th century, which occurred either together or separately, each with different stories, but both reflecting the tension of assimilation or distance from this musical phenomenon[25]. The first effect of this influence was an instrumental one, especially through the use of percussion instruments such as the cymbal, which brought a certain colour to this music, but also the drum or the tambourine, which originates in classical Ottoman music and not in military music[26], that of the Chinese pavilion. The triangle was also introduced, although it was not specific to Ottoman music, regardless of its nature, but goal being precisely to imitate the sound produced by the Chinese pavilion[27].

The second category of effects derived from the influence of Ottoman military music involves melodic, rhythmic, harmonic and phraseological techniques, without any particular timbral association. These musical characteristics, beyond the use of "Ottoman percussion", remained exotic until the late 18th century. From a melodic point of view, *alla turca* includes elements of specific musical language, taken from the melody of Ottoman

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[21] Martin Rempe, *op. cit.*, p. 331.
[22] D. Doran Bugg, *op. cit.*, p. 23.
[23] *Ibidem*.
[24] Chaterine Schmidt-Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 1.
[25] Mary Hunter, *op. cit.*, p. 44.
[26] Eduard Rusu, *Muzica și puterea politică...* [Music and political power...], *op. cit.*, pp. 321-330.
[27] Mary Hunter, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

military music, as for instance in the overture of the opera *L'incontro improvviso* by Haydn. In terms of rhythm in the *alla turca* style, it is almost always in duple meter, the first measure is stressed and the second is unstressed, thus imitating the mehters' technique of striking the drum with a larger stick with the right hand and with a smaller lighter one with their left hand. In terms of harmonics, this style is often static, keeping the same chords for several measures and switching abruptly from one chord to another[28].

The drum, cymbals and triangle were adopted into orchestras as a homogeneous group, as they produced a specific colour when used simultaneously. This new section of percussion instruments was used quite independently of the timpani, which had already found a place in orchestras due to their proven popularity in European military music starting with the 15th century[29].

The big drum was introduced in symphony orchestras by Michael Haydn in 1777, in his composition called the *Turkish Suite*, and then by Joseph Haydn, in the *Symphony no. 100 (Military)*, composed in 1794, also used this drum. Other well-known symphonic creations in which the drum was used and played an important role are *Symphony no. 4* by Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky, *Polovtsian Dances* in the opera *Prince Igor*, composed by Alexander Borodin and *Symphony no. 9* by Ludwig van Beethoven[30]. There are also several creations that used the *alla turca* style[31].

The size and depth of the pit in which the orchestra played influenced the layout of the instruments, as there are drawings of these pits, such as the one at *La Scala* in Milan, from 1825, which shows that Turkish-style percussion instruments were placed at the back of the orchestra, at opposite ends[32]. The 19th century and the beginning of the following one was the period of 'maturation' of the Turkish percussion instruments introduced in symphony orchestras. Each of the standard percussion instruments were transformed according to the new requirements and sonorities, which enhances their autonomy in the composers' mind, who reserved them solos and gave them a certain degree of freedom that allowed their association with other instruments in symphony orchestras[33].

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[28] Mary Hunter, *op. cit.*, p. 46.
[29] D. Doran Bugg, *op. cit.*, p. 24.
[30] E. Bachhus, *The universal drum and other percussion musical instruments*, "Cape Librarian", March/April, vol. 54, no. 3, 2010, p. 21.
[31] D. Doran Bugg, *op. cit.*, pp. 27-28.
[32] *Idem*, p. 24.
[33] *Idem*, p. 44.

**4. Origin of the main percussion instruments in symphony orchestras and their classification**

It is very interesting to note that, although *alla turca* manifested itself concretely in music in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, both in military music and in cult music, musical instruments specific to *alla turca* were already in use by Europeans, after they had penetrated by the oriental channel. However, they were used separately, depending on the specificity and destination of each of them.

*Timpani*

Among the percussion instruments introduced in symphony orchestras, the timpani were the first[34]. This was due to the fact that they had been known and used in Europe since the time of the Crusades, when they had been adopted from the Arabs. Most likely, they were first used in court music, which was very diverse, and were present in miniatures as early as the 13<sup>th</sup> century, in the *Cántigas de Santa Maria* manuscript, in 1280, where reference was made to the siege of the Tortose (Tartus) fortress in Syria by the Crusaders[35]. However, not long after, the timpani were out of sight, for reasons still unknown, and were no longer used on a large scale until the 15<sup>th</sup> century, when they reappeared in the military music played by Hungarians and even Romanians, who, in their turn, adopted them from Ottoman armies on the occasion of their frequent contacts up to the 15<sup>th</sup> century[36]. In particular, according to the testimony of a French clergyman named Benoît, in 1457, the Hungarian king Ladislaus Posthumuos sent a messenger to France to request the hand of Princess Madeleine, the daughter of King Charles VII. The messenger was accompanied by very large timpani, never before seen in the West, carried on the backs of horses. From there on, timpani of this shape began being used in this manner throughout Western Europe[37]. The timpani were quickly adopted as military music by the Germans as well[38] (Fig. 1).

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[34] Jeremy Montagu, *Timpani and Percussion*, New Haven•London, Yale University Press, 2002, p. 73.
[35] *Idem*, *Origins and Development of Musical Instruments*, Lanham, Maryland•Toronto•Plymouth, Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2007, p. 33.
[36] Henry G. Farmer, *op. cit.*, p. 239.
[37] Curt Sachs, *The History of Musical Instruments*, New York, W. W. Norton & Company Inc. Publishers, 1940, p. 329; Jeremy Montagu, *Timpani and Percussion*, pp. 42-43.
[38] Curt Sachs, *op. cit.*, p. 329.

Fig. 1 The military music of Rudolf I of Habsburg, according to the chronicle of Diebold Schilling the Elder, 1484-1485

They were also adopted by the French, their existence being mentioned in 1471 at the court of René of Anjou[39]. In 1542, King Henry VIII of England sent his representatives to Vienna and Buda to purchase timpani that could be used on the backs of horses, following the Hungarian model[40]. His attempt seems not to have materialized, as there is no record or testimony indicating the presence of timpani at the court of England in those times[41]. Interestingly enough, Germany had a good tradition in the use of timpani since the 14th century – before large timpani carried on the backs of horses appeared in Europe – as Duke Philip of Burgundy sent his drummers to Germany to learn

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[39] Jeremy Montagu, *Origins and Development of Musical Instruments*, *op. cit.*, p. 43.
[40] Henry G. Farmer, *op. cit.*, p. 239.
[41] Jeremy Montagu, *Origins and Development of Musical Instruments*, *op. cit.*, pp. 44-45.

there the art of playing the drums. Therefore, the timpani were later considered a typical German instrument[42].

The penetration of timpani in Europe is very important for us, where they were adopted from the East, from the military practice of the countries here. This happened precisely because of the geopolitical context, the Kingdom of Hungary and the Romanian Principalities being the first to face the Ottoman armies, after they had subjugated the Balkans and reached the Danube. It is extremely important that this drum model, which went a long way in Western military music, originated precisely here. Moreover, timpani appear in our churches' frescoes almost half a century before their penetration into the West, at the end of the 14th century, namely at the Cozia Monastery, founded by Mircea the Elder (Fig. 2). Also, at the end of the 15th century and even during the reign of Stephen the Great, timpani were painted in the frescoes of the Bălinești and Arbore Monasteries (Fig. 3 and Fig. 4).



Fig. 2 The "Mocking of Christ" Scene, Cozia Monastery, Vâlcea

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[42] Curt Sachs, *op. cit.*, p. 329.

Fig. 3 The "Mocking of Christ" Scene, Bălineşti Monastery, Suceava


Fig. 4 The "Mocking of Christ" Scene, Arbore Monastery, Suceava

Timpani were used alongside trumpets only in military music and in certain ceremonies, the sovereign being the only one who had the right to

own such music. For this reason, they were not used in "free" music until the end of the 18th century, when this kind of music became accessible to other categories of people, under certain circumstances and after a certain evolution. It seems that timpani were first used by Joseph Haydn in his creations[43].

### Big and small drums

As in the case of timpani, although their direct ancestor is thought to be the davul of the mehterhane, the big drum or the small drum in current symphony orchestras had very close relatives in the West as well, the best known being the single-membrane drum used in the military music played by the infantry. Although, initially, military music consisted only of trumpets and timpani (and cymbals in the East), the modernization of armies and battle tactics and especially the appearance of mercenary troops, saw gradual changes in military music as well. Thus, the infantry troops came to have their own music, not just cavalry troops, as before. Therefore, the musical instrument called in English "tabor-pipe" (Fig. 5), used throughout the West especially in street dance music (also painted in Bălinești, in the mentioned scene), consisting of a small-sized drum hanging from the hand holding a pipe, both instruments being used by the same person, eventually evolved and became two distinct instruments.



Fig. 5 Summary (Ms. Pierpont Morgan Library. M.8)

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[43] Jeremy Montagu, *Origins and Development of Musical Instruments*, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

The small drum (tabor) became a larger drum, carried on the side of the drummer, who hit the membrane with sticks in both hands, and the whistle (pipe) was replaced by the traversière flute, which then had a sharp sound. Both instruments were introduced, for their sonorous qualities, in the military music of infantry regiments with the aim of keeping the soldier's marching pace. The first European infantrymen who had such music in the Middle Ages were the famous Swiss, who became the guards of the Pope in Rome. They were also the source of the illustrations of such music, at the end of the 15th century (Fig. 6).



Fig. 6 Military music of the infantry, according to the chronicle by
Diebold Schilling the Elder, 1484-1485

The oldest side drum preserved to this day is one of Swiss provenance, dating back to 1575[44]. The same drum was also found at the court of King Henry VII of England, in 1491, and the documentary evidence stated that those drummers were Swiss, *i.e.* the ones who had introduced this type of drum into circulation[45].

As mentioned before, a drum extremely similar to the one that we have described so far is the Turkish davul, that double-membrane mehterhane drum (Fig. 7), which later became, in the "*alla turca* period", the drum called "military drum" or "cassa", in its larger version. This type of drum also appeared in some Romanian, Serbian and Macedonian frescoes (Fig. 8), from the mid-14th century, being very similar to the Turkish davul and also to the drums generally used by the Arabs[46]. For this reason and considering that these drums also appear in Romanian frescoes, we believe that they were known to Europeans long before the direct musical influence exerted by the Ottomans in the 18th century.



Fig. 7 Turkish davul (retrieved from http://davidvaldespercussion.blogspot.com)

Fig. 8 Double-membrane drum, "Saint Nicholas" Church, Curtea de Argeş, painted between 1364-1369

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[44] Jeremy Montagu, *Origins and Development of Musical Instruments*, *op. cit.*, p. 37.

[45] Jeremy Montagu, *Timpani and Side Drums in England in the 16th and 17th Centuries*, in Monika Lustig, Ute Omonsky, Boje E. Hans Schmuhl, *Perkussionsinstrumente in der Kunstmusik vom 16. bis zur Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts*, Wißner-Verlag, 2010, p. 44.

[46] *Idem*, *Timpani and Percussion*, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

*Cymbals*

As for cymbals, their use in the West until the influence of the *alla turca*, both in the Middle Ages and during Renaissance, is neither well known nor documented. They appeared in Western Europe only extremely rarely, in undefined contexts, and, moreover, they did not appear in the form of those used in mehterhane or as shown in Romanian mural paintings as of the 14th century, all very similar to those used nowadays in symphony orchestras. Thus, the dilemma arises whether cymbals or other percussion instruments of lesser importance were preserved only in Eastern Europe, which was in permanent contact with the Ottomans, or whether they were also used in the West, but in the music of the lower classes, not of interest to the aristocracy, which is why they do not even appear in the documents. Thus, according to researchers, it seems that these instruments were preserved sporadically in the West, only in the music of ordinary people[47].



Fig. 9 The "Mocking of Christ" Scene, "Saint Elijah" Monastery, Suceava

As a result, the reason why we see cymbals in our mural paintings, alongside trumpets, representing military music, in Cozia (Fig. 2), the "Saint Elijah" Monastery in Suceava (Fig. 9) or the Voroneț Monastery (Fig. 10), churches founded by Stephen the Great, is precisely the early Ottoman

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[47] Jeremy Montagu, *Timpani and Percussion*, *op. cit.*, pp. 28-31; 50-52.

influence. The martial sound of cymbals – used in military music originally alongside the trumpet until replaced by timpani or even used simultaneously, according to some paintings – was most likely a way of standing out and impressing the opponent, meant to mark differences in status and even to strike fear into opponents on the battlefield, as was the case with mehterhane music. Therefore, also in the case of the use of cymbals, we have a centuries-old precedence over the West, which is another important element of the role played by the Romanian Principalities, enhanced by their geopolitical location, in the penetration of oriental musical influences in the West.



Fig. 10 The "Mocking of Christ" Scene, Voroneț Monastery

### Triangle (Chinese pavilion)

Western composers resorted to using the triangle, especially in the version with metal rings (Fig. 11), initially to imitate the sound produced by the instrument called the Chinese pavilion, due to its Chinese-style building shape and ornamentation with bells and chains. The history of the use of the triangle in Europe is old, its first mention dating back to the 10th century, being used predominantly in devotional music[48].

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[48] Mark Berry, *From Angels to Orchestra (Part I): An Iconographic History of the Triangle Through the 19th Century*, p. 1, retrieved from
https://www.livingsoundtriangles.com/content/PART%20I_from%20Angels%20to%20Orch

Fig. 11 Triangle with metallic rings (M. Berry, *op. cit.*, p. 1)

## 5. Contribution of the Romanian Principalities to the popularization of *alla turca* in the West

The Romanian Principalities have had an undeniable contribution to the influence of Ottoman military music on the West, as they were at the political and geographical confluence of East and West. Although this has not been discussed before, it is a clear and indisputable fact, especially considering that Romanian rulers were, throughout the centuries, allies or collaborators of the Ottomans, Hungarians, Habsburgs or Russians, or considering the numerous diplomatic contacts with France, England, Italy, Poland and other countries, which meant that many foreign diplomats visited our lands. Diplomatic exchanges and especially the visit of these diplomats to the Romanian Principalities brought the Ottoman influence, the musical one in this case, to the West, even to a small extent. Thus, we need to point out the contribution of personalities such as Del Chiaro, Joseph Franz Sulzer, De la Croix and many others, who made our culture known to the West. All these Western diplomats who resided in the Romanian Principalities for a while wrote in their memoirs about the culture of the Romanians, about their music and inevitably about the rulers' mehterhane, which was of great interest to them, due to its exotic sonority. This was also the case of foreign travellers who arrived in our countries and who reported in their memoirs what they

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%20Mark%20Berry%20-%20last%20revision%2009_22_2016.pdf

saw here. Also, the diplomatic ceremonial itself, in use until the beginning of the 19th century, required Romanian rulers or their representatives to welcome diplomats and important guests with a procession that always included a mehterhane. Thus, since their very first visit to our Principalities, official visitors were welcomed on the sounds of this music[49]. This proper welcome was followed by the official dinner, during which music was played, which also included mehterhane, especially at the time of toasting. The diplomats or the foreign travellers would hear mehterhane daily for as long as they remained in Iași or Bucharest.

Moving from the general framework in which foreigners came into contact with this music due to their presence in the Romanian Principalities, to what they themselves recorded in their reports and memoirs, we see that each of them was at least curious about the music of this band, regardless of whether they were positively or negatively impressed, precisely because of its exoticism and the fact that the music they were hearing was completely new compared to what they were used to. From a chronological point of view, the first diplomat or western traveller who visited the Romanian Principalities and wrote about this music is the Italian Franco Sivori, who described the mehterhane accompanying Petru Cercel to Constantinople, in 1583, to take over the throne of Wallachia, as being a band: "[...] with drums, trumpets, and other instruments common to the Turks, which made great noise"[50]. Then, in 1685, Philippe le Masson du Pont described the military music of the janissaries as follows:

> The janissaries' drums which are twice as long and almost twice as wide compared to ours; they beat on them at both ends; with their right hand they strike with the usual little stick and with their left hand, with a rod, and their arm rests on the drum which they hold much higher than the usual. The drum is accompanied by several kinds of cymbals with two handles on the back to put the hands in; they are made of a metal that has a very vibrant sound. Some youths strike these cymbals against each other in cadence, which, together with the drum, produces a very pleasant martial sound which can be heard from afar.[51]

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[49] Eduard Rusu, *Music of the Embassies*, in Iulian Boldea, Cornel Sigmirean, Dumitru Buda (Editors), *Paths of Communication in Postmodernity*, Tîrgu Mureș, Arhipelag XXI Press, 2020, pp. 104-112.
[50] Maria Holban, M. M. Alexandrescu-Dresca Bulgaru, Paul Cernovodeanu (Editors), *Călători străini despre Țările Române* [Foreign travellers about Romanian Countries], vol. III, , București, Editura Științifică, 1971, p. 7.
[51] Maria Holban, M. M. Alexandrescu-Dresca Bulgaru, Paul Cernovodeanu (Editors), *Călători străini despre Țările Române* [Foreign travellers about Romanian Countries], vol. VII, București, Editura Științifică și Pedagogică, 1980, p. 288.

In 1709, the Hungarian diplomats Mihail Teleki and János Pápái described the mehterhane of the pasha in Timișoara as having "eight horn players, six trumpet players, one tambourine player, two drummers with large Turkish drums, four drummers with small drums"[52].

That same year, when talking about the cymbals that he saw in Moldavia, the Slovak Daniel Karmann said:

> Every night the singing of the Turkish sentinels [is] accompanied by some military musical instruments, struck with both hands and making a sound that lasted better than fifteen minutes.[53]

When describing Iosif Podoski's messenger in 1759, the Polish Adam Golarlowski noted the pasha of Hotin had a music (mehterhane) composed of "trumpets and drums covered with red cloth and bagpipes", which made "great noise, very unpleasant to ears unaccustomed to such things"[54].

The report made in 1768 by Nicolaus Ernest Kleemann, a German commercial agent, traveling through Wallachia, Chilia and Crimea, captured the musical atmosphere in the courtyard of the khan of Căuşani as follows:

> I have never heard anything more godless, more discordant in melody and tone. Ten men were blowing instruments similar to an oboe (zurna), but half the size of an oboe and with a very thick end. Three of them were beating in small cymbals (our note: nagara) that one could not tell what they were made of because of the mud on them. Ten men had large drums hanging from their necks to which patches of red cloth were tied; they beat to the beat with a large and bent stick over the drum and with a smaller one below, very fast. This music was started by ten oboists who blew for several minutes in the same tone; after that one blew a solo and did cadences, fugues, triolets, *fiorituras* until his face turned green, blue and black; after that they would all sing together and a little later the cymbals (our note: nagara) players started their thundering accompanied by the drums. They all played *andante*, but it was absolutely impossible to get a real song out. When a piece was finished, the first oboe would start again and the others would follow it again in the manner described above. At the end, one of the musicians would loudly salute the khan [scopos] and the others ended it with a hoot.[55]

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[52] Maria Holban, M. M. Alexandrescu-Dresca Bulgaru, Paul Cernovodeanu (Editors), *Călători străini despre Țările Române*, vol. VIII, București, Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1983, p. 253.
[53] *Idem*, p. 257.
[54] Maria Holban, M. M. Alexandrescu-Dresca Bulgaru, Paul Cernovodeanu (Editors), *Călători străini despre Țările Române*, vol. IX, București, Editura Academiei, 1997, p. 410.
[55] *Idem*, p. 638.

In 1786, Lady Craven described the mehterhane of the ruler of Wallachia in the following manner:

> And then my ears were deafened by the most diabolical noise I had ever heard [...], I saw all kinds of trumpets, brass plates struck one against the other and drums of all sizes – some of them, barely the size of a cup, displayed on the ground and the people who beat them were crouched on the ground to be able to do it. Each musician tried to cover the neighbour's noise with an even louder noise – if possible.[56]

In 1792, William Hunter described the mehterhane of the ruler of Moldavia, Alexandru Moruzi, as follows:

> His military music consisted of drummers and trumpeters and a few cymbal players, whose chief merit consisted in making a lot of noise, for they were not skilled performers and the songs with which they delighted us were only distinguishable by their insipid nature[57].

Another testimony, belonging to the Englishman Thomas Thornton, from the beginning of the 19th century, shows that the Romanian rulers: "were honoured with flags and mehterhanes and took their oath of faith and allegiance in the presence of the sultan"[58].

The account of Auguste de Lagarde, who travelled through Wallachia in 1813, shows that the Ottoman music at ruler Caragea's court consisted of "fifty large drums, as many cymbals (our note: nagaras), three bagpipes and six oboes"[59], and Ludwig von Strümer provides information about the music that he had heard in 1816 in Wallachia:

> The prince has his own music offered to him by the Sultan as a sign of respect, which consists only of Turks. Every evening they play in front of his house, but not to the satisfaction of European ears.[60]

And last but not least, we should mention Joseph Franz Sulzer, who spent a substantial period of time in the Romanian Principalities in the second half of the 18th century, the one who spoke the most and most pertinently, in

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[56] Maria Holban, M. M. Alexandrescu-Dersca Bulgaru, Paul Cernovodeanu (Editors), *Călători străini despre Țările Române* [Foreign travellers about Romanian Countries], vol. X, part I, București, Editura Academiei Române, 2000, p. 721.

[57] Maria Holban, M. M. Alexandrescu-Dersca Bulgaru, Paul Cernovodeanu (Editors), *Călători străini despre Țările Române* [Foreign travellers about Romanian Countries], vol. X, part II, București, Editura Academiei Române, 2001, p. 1098.

[58] Georgeta Filitti, Beatrice Marinescu, Șerban Rădulescu-Zoner, Marian Stroia (Editors), *Călători străini despre Țările Române în secolul al XIX-lea* [Foreign travellers about the Romanian Countries in the 19th century], new series, vol. I (1801-1821), București, Editura Academiei Române, 2004, p. 380.

[59] *Idem*, p. 568.

[60] *Idem*, p. 715.

our opinion, about the mehterhanes at the courts of the Romanian rulers. Since he was himself a musician, he knew how to analyse and compare Eastern and Western military music, making pertinent comments, one of which has already been referred to above[61].

## 6. Conclusions

*Alla turca* was a cultural phenomenon that somehow went against the natural course of things, since it united what could never be united, at least on the political and religious levels. It was a cultural bridge between two antagonistic worlds, and also proof that art, with all its substitutes, has no boundaries and knows no limits. On a different note, and again against the historical course of events, the Eastern influence prevailed over the Western one and not the other way around, as in most cases, proving once again that these were truly exceptional situations.

Looking at *alla turca* from a musical point of view, one notices that the 'seedling' was planted long before, as early as the time of the Crusades, but it did not really sprout until the 18th century, when the 'soil' was very fertile and favourable of such 'culture'. This is primarily due to the fluidization of borders and barriers between the West and the East, enhanced by constant contacts since the 14th century, when the Ottomans reached the Danube.

The fascination exerted on the Westerners by the exotic new world proves a certain tranquillity and stability, in all respects, which urge humans to satisfy their curiosities, always focusing on what is new.

As we have seen, *alla turca* had a musical impact on both military and art Western music, thus creating a new current that brought the two worlds closer together. When analysing this phenomenon, one should not ignore the contribution of the Romanian Principalities to the popularization of oriental influences in the West, starting from the presence of the timpani in mural paintings in Wallachia more than half a century before its penetration into the West. They were adopted by the Hungarians and all the diplomats and foreign travellers who visited our lands and shared accounts of the mehterhanes that they had seen at the court of Romanian rulers.

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[61] *Fr. J. Sulzer în Dacia cisalpină, passim.*

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# The Model of the Other in Shostakovich's Work

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*Abstract:* The aim of this article is to conduct early research that is meant to provoke further (directions) studies based on the relationship between the art creator and his/her Self, as well as between the creator, performer and auditor or between the creator, the political power and other fellow creators. These relationships are subsumed and interpreted according to the theme of the International Conference of Doctoral Schools within "George Enescu" National University of Arts of Iasi, Intersections in Artistic Research: The Model of the Other and the Culture of Mobility, having Dmitri Shostakovici at the center of analysis and research. The article comprises three parts: Argument, Chapter I - The fugue of the inner perspective in Shostakovich's works; Shostakovich's interaction with his work; Shostakovich's interaction with the public by means of his work. The interpreter's interaction with the audience by means of Shostakovich's work; Chapter II – Shostakovich's intersections with the Soviet Power; The Model of the Other in Shostakovich's work compared to other models of other modern composers of his time and Conclusions - where a practical example of *the model of the Other* in Shostakovich's creation is presented in the form of a script created to the music of *String Quartet No. 5, op. 92*.

*Keywords:* Dmitri Shostakovich's creation; 20th century modern music; musical movements and orientations.

### Argument

A research subject that certainly has two concrete dimensions, *human mobility* and the *direct contact* of those who meet on the meridians of the world. From the dawn of man, even before the beginnings of civilization, *mobility* played a leading role in survival. It ensured the first *hunter-gatherers* with a source of food and health (not being sedentary). However, this mobility is not only found in humans. Almost all animal species possess and practice it; some even make a real mastery of it, migrating huge distances for food, nesting, or wintering.

Therefore, *mobility* has been an engine of survival for many species, not a recent discovery, by any means. Without it, life could not thrive, for this *movement* not only brings food, but leads, in humans, to economic, cultural, religious exchanges, to sharing ideas, mentalities, as well as enriching

linguistic or genetic legacies. These exchanges made on multiple levels of human life, apart from *mobility*, also need an extremely important factor, namely, *trust*. Without *trust, mobility* alone is not enough. Going around the world doing business, one needs to be trustworthy and to have trust in others, because otherwise no exchange between people would be possible, only war and robbery would reign. Consequently, *the model of the Other* is the expression of the trust one has in the Other when interacting with him/her, when crossing paths with him/her. Naturally, the reverse is also valid; *the model of the Other* must see in one a trustworthy person, otherwise nothing will materialize. These considerations only wish to show that *the model of the Other* and *the culture of mobility* are as old as the human being itself, being inseparable from it even after man's sedentarization and the emergence of the first cultural centers and ancient agrarian civilizations.

At this point, we shall return closer to our days and analyze the manner in which the two concrete dimensions, *mobility* and *direct contact*, were reflected in Dmitri Shostakovich's life and creation, adapted, nonetheless, to the specifics of his life and creation. For this reason, when we shall speak of the *culture of mobility* in Shostakovich, we will not do so primarily by thinking about his travels (although, we will definitely not exclude them, should they be of particular importance in the logical development of the discourse) but, we will see what his *sources* of inspiration were, because some are from the Slavic (Polish-Russian) world, while others from the Western world. This *mobility* already shows us that, without having to move physically, the bases of his creation can still be found at a great distance from the place of his birth. This is also a form of *mobility*, but one in the realm of ideas, concepts, sounds, forms that circulate with greater density than Shostakovich could have done in person. The *intersections* or *the model of the Other* will have a different paradigm than that carried by their first meaning. We shall highlight first of all his relations with the Soviet Power in general, but also with the people in his close circle.

**1. The inner perspective in Shostakovich's works. Shostakovich's interaction with his work. Shostakovich's interaction with the public by means of his work. The interpreter's interaction with the audience by means of Shostakovich's work**

Dmitri Shostakovich's creation falls within the tumultuous 20th century, a century that has known all the lighted and dark areas of mankind. A nature so sensitive that it could not remain indifferent to such complex social and political events and actions. In this regard, he identified on an existential level with human suffering, he appropriated it on a personal level, he did not avoid it. He identified himself in the model of the wronged, of the oppressed, he was their spokesperson.

This sincere empathy however has manifests itself in an unusual way in his creation, seemingly contradictory to everything that I have stated so far, namely, Shostakovich was never at the center of the story, he never seemed to be part of the action. Indeed, emotionally, mentally, maybe even physically, in certain situations, he was not absent, he was there feeling everything without censorship, but he was never at the center of the action. He is the storyteller, the witness, the reporter, the cameraman, who sees everything, who records everything, who empathizes and suffers a great deal, but is not directly involved in the middle of the action, but is positioned somewhere on the side, describing to us what he sees and hears. His entire creation, no matter how staggering or expressionistic it is, bears the mark of the *storyteller*, the *witness* who describes in great detail, with honesty and full of emotion, what he saw around him. The composer's interaction with the images suggested by his music, or with the events described, seems to be neutral. However, this neutral state must not be confused with indifference, because Shostakovich is never uncaring. He is affectively and emotionally empathetic with everything that happens before him, he is not an objective, unbiased observer, but really cares and defends those tormented and afflicted by various horrors, in other words, he is on their side. He has a complex personality, hard to define stylistically, and now we understand why. Perhaps the most appropriate term, instead of *complex personality*, would be *paradoxical personality*; this is the only way we can understand how someone can be neutral but also empathetic at the same time, which is difficult to notice in everyday life but perfectly natural in Shostakovich's case (obviously, in his creation, because from this point of view we are observing his position while he reveals his works to us). Thus, as a fine empathetic observer, Shostakovich has a great interaction with the real or imaginary characters of his creation, to whom he grants all his credibility and emotional and mental support. In terms of mobility, however, he is an unimportant, fixed point from which he observes, unhindered, all the unfolding action which he then describes in great detail, with an extremely intense and convincing emotional and expressionistic charge, sending us vivid images of an uncensored raw realism.

Antoine Golea[1] considers Shostakovich a humanist composer, alongside De Falla, Enescu, Bartok, Prokofiev, Honegger, Milhaud, Auric, Dallapicola, Jolivet or Messiaen. This categorisation supports our statement about Shostakovich as being an empathic observer, but it does not support that of him being a neutral observer. Nor could it, because as mentioned earlier,

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[1] Antoine Goléa, *Esthetique de la musique contemporaine*, 1954, Paris, Cap. II, *apud* Gh. Firca, *Structuri și funcții în armonia modală* [Structures and functions in modal harmony], București, Editura Muzicală, 1988, p. 11.

Shostakovich's *paradoxical* and complex *personality* cannot be easily fit into just one category[2].

Any analysis of a human personality, even more so one of Shostakovich's stature, can never be fully encompassed due to the fact that we will always observe only one dimension, only a part of it and never the whole. This is also a paradox; even though the human being is finite in space and time, any analysis will always come up against subjectivism, lack of comprehensive information, therefore aspects will be perceived either incompletely, subjectively, or wrongly. Our analysis perceives Shostakovich, or rather, perceives *the model of the Other*, in Shostakovich the composer, as a fixed observer, in an unimportant, discrete point, from which he can nonetheless observe everything empathetically, but without participating or interacting in a direct manner. It is a cinematic way of structuring a musical composition internally. We, the listeners, together with Shostakovich become witnesses and, at the same time, emotionally empathetic with the scenes and characters unfolding before our eyes on the screen, but without being able to intervene, without being active characters in the script.

One might wonder if other composers have this cinematic way of structuring a musical work as well. The answer is no. The majority, even if they describe a special, clear, objective scene, are in the middle of the action, one can feel them acting directly[3].

The *mobility* of the observer-neutral composer Shostakovich is null, his emotional interaction, however, is intense and maximal. Shostakovich's influence on the music-loving public was strong from the very beginning. Not necessarily in the unreserved acceptance of his work (even though, in most cases, it was precisely that) but rather in the hypnotic force of his music. The (apparently) simple writing hides an extremely powerful musical energy capable of impressing and impregnating the audience emotionally and imaginatively. Of course, there is no secret, there is no wonder, Shostakovich had the rare ability of great creators to use any method in their art to achieve maximum efficiency (in his case, he used any rhythmic, melodic, harmonic, modal, polytonal, polymodal, polyrhythmic process possible where its

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[2] Paul Collaer sees Shostakovich as being part of the 3rd generation of modern composers, namely, those who try to reconcile the different directions in new music, alongside Auric, Poulenc, Orff, Dallapicola. *Cf.* Paul Collaer, *Geschichte der modernen Musik*, Stuttgart, 1963, pp. 25-29, *apud* Gh. Firca, *Structuri și funcții în armonia modală* [Structures and functions in modal harmony], *op. cit.*, p. 11.

[3] Beethoven, for example, in his symphonies, quartets, sonatas, is the Titan who fights for us, he is the one who suffers; even though we can identify with his sufferings and fights, he is the main character. Mozart is always in the middle of the action, be it inside his own feelings or in an external action. Berlioz, in the *Symphonie Fantastique*, is the main character in all its parts. Impressionists are always present with their subjective feelings, not those of others. And the list could continue.

presence was imperatively required in the economy of the musical composition). Moreover, he sought to simplify the musical discourse as much as possible so that the audience, whether informed or not, could understand the message, the story, the characters, the emotional states or the images present in the script and in the architecture of the musical work. He was aware that Modernism would have brought panic to the music-loving public, making the latter hesitant to attend concerts. Therefore, to be able to interact with the public as well as possible, he sought to eliminate the fear of Modernism or the public's lack of understanding of modern music through simplification and well-chosen musical methods.

Some composers, or other creators, prefer to isolate themselves in "ivory towers" and become hermetic without caring if the public understands or accepts them, creating works of art (apparently) only for themselves and not necessarily for a wide audience. This is not Shostakovich's case. From the very beginning, he wished that "five words, if he said to them, to be understood, rather than a thousand words not understood by anyone"[4]. Hence the conciseness and clarity of his musical discourse, being compared in this regard to Mozart and Vivaldi. His main concern in interacting with the audience was to ensure that they left the concert having understood and appropriated the message of the musical work.

The interpreter/performer's role as a mediator between the composer and the audience is overwhelming. It could be likened to that of a priest of a religion who makes the connection between God and the people. In the case of music, the responsibility is equally great, because the manner in which he renders the work as he understood or visualized it can positively or negatively influence the audience's reaction. However, it is not only that. The interpreter also bears responsibility for the audience's health, as the audience comes in healthy and, without realizing why, could go home with organic or metabolic imbalances as a result of a poor performance. Nor does it have to be a performance below any level, it is enough for all the agogical, dynamic, technical or interpretive requirements not to be performed naturally. The public may not even perceive all the interpretive "shortcomings" (especially if they are not knowledgeable or professional), but those "shortcomings" will negatively affect the health of the listeners to a greater or lesser degree (not just the listeners, the interpreter him/herself can be affected by his/her performances full of "shortcomings"). Therefore, the interactions of an interpreter with the public are not so simple and innocent, but entail taking care of the public, which, like a child, entrusts him/herself to the doctor or teacher as well as the interpreter/performer. This trust must not be deceived, nor treated superficially.

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[4] To paraphrase the Apostle Paul, *First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 14:19.

These brief considerations apply, obviously, also when interpreting Shostakovich's work. We will have to precisely identify phrasing, intonation, technique, expression, and to attempt to find the best image, story or the most suitable characters to support the architecture of the work and its development for the author's message (as understood by us as interpreters) to reach the auditor without any loss of signal. Then, with strong confidence in our role as intermediaries, we bring the work of art to life by always letting the music shine through and not ourselves, because then we are good performers, when it is not us who come to the forefront, but the work of art, and implicitly, the author. The performance must be sincere and intense, we must believe in it and not just pretend, because the audience will immediately feel the insincerity of both the performer and his/her performance.

## 2. Shostakovich's intersections with the Soviet Power; The *Model of the Other* in Shostakovich's work compared to other *models* of other modern composers of his time

The destiny of the man and composer Dmitri Shostakovich was full of ups and downs, he knew both *agony* and *ecstasy*. He came from a family with Polish roots, his great-grandfather, Piotr Szostakiewicz, was deported to the Urals for fighting against Russian domination in a territory that had once belonged to Poland, and his grandfather, Boleslaw, was exiled to Siberia because, being a member of the socialist revolutionary organization "Land and Freedom", he had participated in the insurrection against Russia in 1863. Therefore, we notice that his ascendant path was equally energetic and agitated. One must point out the fact that Dmitri Shostakovich's ups and downs were not the result of revolutionary deeds, like his ancestors. His life, from this point of view, as Shostakovich the man, was peaceful. His works lifted him up in the good graces of the Power, and they also took him down to the blackest despair[5].

From an early age he came into contact with the dramas of life, as a child being seduced by the ideals of the Bolshevik Revolution. Shortly after enrolling at the Conservatory of Petrograd, his father died, which forced the young composer and pianist to sing in a cinema accompanying silent films in order to support himself. This period would mark his pictorial and visual compositional style with which he conquered the public and specialists.

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[5] We recall here a troubling episode when, called to an interrogation at the NKVD headquarters, from which he did not come out very well, being Saturday, the investigator told him to go stay with his family and to come back on Monday. The composer was sure he was going to be deported to Siberia, at the very least. When he returned on Monday, he was shocked to discover that the investigator had been arrested and executed a day earlier. Thus, Shostakovich escaped from a hopeless situation, especially since one his brother-in-law had already been convicted and was, most likely, in Siberia. (Episode mentioned in the documentary film *Shostakovich against Stalin* by Larry Weinstein.)

At the beginning of the 1930s, agencies of arts and culture propaganda strongly demanded that artists bring to the fore the working class, factories and socialist-type relationships. In these new conditions, it seemed that the position of semi-official composer of the Power would be occupied by Shostakovich, given the fact that he was the most famous and valuable composer of his generation. However, the price paid by the composer was commensurate, accepting compromises with the Power. In 1935 he was part of the delegation of Soviet artists that went on tour in Turkey, but in 1936 he was knocked to the ground following the performance of his work *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District*. Stalin was also present in the concert hall, but the next day an article in the *Pravda* newspaper defamed the composer and his work. It is believed that the author of the article was Stalin himself. This was the moment in which Shostakovich thought he would be deported, but escaped only because the officer who was investigating him was arrested and executed a day earlier.

Generally, Shostakovich's creation was regarded, at least in some of his works, as a form of resistance against Soviet censorship and power. At the same time, however, at least in some periods, he was also the composer of the Power. Therefore, his complex personality incapable of fixing only on a certain direction would seem paradoxical and inexplicable at a quick glance. But we could understand it if we analyzed carefully what is commonly called *the Russian (Slavic) fatalistic spirit*. It is that state of mind that longs for something beautiful, followed by remorse and regret that in pursuing that beautiful ideal one has committed an unforgivable sin. This tireless but suffocating oscillation between wanting, doing, and sinning pushes such people to all possible heights of despair, vileness, or holiness. Most often, this state of mind has no real basis either in virtue or in sin, but the pangs of conscience or the delight for some moral deeds quickly succeed each other, leading one to different extremes. Of course, Shostakovich went through this state of the Slavic (Russian) spirit all his life. On the one hand, he believed in the ideals of the Revolution which proclaimed a state free from servitude and the exploitation of man by man, but on the other hand, he saw how the selfish, wretched human nature treacherously created through Soviet propaganda an enslavement of the human being, depriving it of the most basic rights for which many people fought during the Bolshevik Revolution. His music must not be viewed and understood only in this key, of anti-Soviet resistance. We must approach his work also through other reception plans, because he was truly an authentic creator, fully capable of rendering all human states of mind and spirit and not only a "masked" critic of the Power.

Shostakovich's creation has only one *model of the Other*: the human, human drama, human tragedy, the hopeless fight against relentless and merciless destiny. These landmarks are reflected and noticeable in all pages of his creation. This fatalism in his works caused him many problems with the Soviet Power

that wanted art to always be triumphalist, where there was no place for doubts or criticisms, whether masked or not. Shostakovich only sees the Human in relation to destiny, he does not see himself at all. As previously mentioned, Shostakovich observes, but only observes others, those around him. His music renders his narrative as a storyteller, as a spectator of others, very rarely seeing himself in subjective introspection, and even then is perceived in relation to *the model of the Other r*ather than in an analysis of the self. Therefore, Shostakovich is the eternal humanist, or the Promethean humanist who strives in a Beethovenian manner to transcend the difficulties of the lives of those around him. He sees himself through *the model of the Other*, he is the manifestation or the most suitable definition of *the model of the Other*, the one who, like *Don Quixote*, fights the windmills for some ideals in which nobody else believes anymore, except him.

We have seen earlier what *the model of the Other* is in Shostakovich's creation, namely, the Human, Humanism in relation to self-denial. In what follows, we will analyze, in just a few paragraphs, what *the models of the Other* are in the vision of other modern composers, contemporary with Shostakovich.

We shall start with Stravinsky, for whom *the model of the Other* is *the Hero, the Archetype, the Myth*. *The Firebird* and the *Rite of Spring* are telling evidence.

Prokofiev's universe manifests another *model*, namely, the world of fantasy, the world of phantasms, surreal and burlesque, scattered with sarcastic or caustic accents.

For Enescu, *the model of the Other* is the *hypersensitive Human*, impressed by nature, by sensations, by history, by childhood, by the spoken beginnings, murmured by music from the beginnings of human civilization. This *model* is overloaded in an overloaded amalgam of voices and sounds, like lianas in a thick jungle.

In Bartók, a *cubist model of the Other*, a constructivist model is manifested, crafted onto an archaic background that transcends nations or ethnicities, although he uses some folkloric nuances as well (like Enescu).

Schönberg presents us with *a model of the Other* that breaks down, dehumanizes, automates itself, alienates itself and others, discovering itself empty on the inside.

Finally, Shostakovich's art is perfectly recognizable among these coryphaei of the 20th century, his music weaving together fragments of each, just as fragments of Shostakovich are also found in other modern composers. His music intrigues us, unsettles us, creates shattering or diaphanous images, leads us through agony and ecstasy, shakes us and impresses us. It is the music of an oscillating destiny, the music of a man who has seen many terrible but also beautiful things, it is the music of an era and of an oppressive system, but

at the same time, it is a music of liberation, a music of *the Human* and of the *idealistic and naive Humanism*.

### Conclusions

In closing, instead of conclusions, we will present in a practical way the manner in which *the Model of the Other* manifests itself in a quartet by Dm. Shostakovich, aspects highlighted so far only theoretically. I have selected for this demonstration *Quartet no. 5, op. 92 in B-flat major* for which I have constructed a script project entitled: "The lovers of Verona". The script was created in 2012 under the direction of Mihai Bica together with a group of actors from the Dramatic Theater of Brașov in the form of a silent film, Shostakovich's music being performed by the "Gaudeamus" String Quartet and accompanying the actors' play, with the title proposed by the director "*Carpe diem* in performing art". The show was presented to the public at Casa Armatei in Brașov[6].

This script came into existence while working on my Doctorate Thesis *String Quartet in the creation of Dm. Shostakovich*, as a demonstration of what a performing musician artist must do when preparing a work to be presented before the public. The interpreter must not sing (only) notes, these representing just a code, a language through which the composer expresses his images, feelings or story in a veiled way. The interpreter attempts to re-compose either the same story (if it is programmatic music), or to think of another one that perfectly overlaps with the music (like a silent film or a ballet).

### The Lovers of Verona

Scenographic vision by Sebastian Vîrtosu to the music of *Quartet No. 5 op. 92 in B-flat major* by Dmitri Shostakovich

In these lines, a special role will be given to the music of this quartet. It will be the *soundtrack* to a possible script, either for a silent film or a ballet. This quartet comprises three parts. Each part will be similar to an Act within a play, opera or ballet.

Act I (Part I)
- Scene I (mm. 1-12) – A square in an Italian *quatro-cento* town. Mottled people walk around on various errands, street vendors call out for customers.

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[6] See *CARPE DIEM (după o idee de Sebastian Vîrtosu, regia Mihai Bica)* [*CARPE DIEM* (after an idea by Sebastian Vîrtosu, directed by Mihai Bica)], retrieved from https://youtu.be/MNJOjECMZkg

- Scene II (mm. 13-38) – Suddenly, two noblemen start arguing. They are the heads of two noble families, Capulet and Montague, who hate each other to death for reasons long forgotten. The people in the square fret, trying to separate them. Finally, one of them walks away towards a young and beautiful lady, his daughter, and leaves the square still mumbling about his enemy, dragging the poor girl after him.

- Scene III (mm. 68-83) – Now, the young lady becomes the center of our attention. Her heart is full of candor and love and, standing on the balcony, she dreams of the moment when she will love and be loved.

- Scene IV (mm. 83-104) – From under the girl's balcony, a young man, wearing noble attire, appears who, in only a few words declares that he has had the young lady in his heart and in his mind for a long time. Happy Juliet (mm. 105-115), for it is her to whom we are referring, professes the love in her heart with all her might. Then, little teasing, little jealousies (mm. 116-130) and their vows of love are swallowed up by the noise of the street and the nearby square.

- Scene V (mm. 138-329) – But the love of Romeo and Juliet is not to the liking of their families. They stand in their way, giving them troubles, arguments, duels, threats, street fights. To all these conflicting states, Juliet opposes her heart, in love and hurt at the same time (mm. 349-363). The concern for the fate of their love takes over the two lovers (mm. 363-403).

- Scene VI (mm. 404-481) – The quarrels and threats disappeared for the moment. Juliet, on the balcony, alone, sad, looks into the distance, lost in thought, when suddenly, she hears the chords of a guitar (mm. 404-481) and, without seeing him, she knows for sure that it is Romeo. Then, her thoughts go towards the fulfillment of their love, without any other obstacles in their way, and she slowly falls asleep thinking about the love of her life.

## Act II (Part II)

- Scene I (mm. 1-8) – Her dreams were fairly agitated, it is midnight, it is cold, but more than the cold, Juliet is scared by a premonition colder even than death. This makes her feel like her whole body is freezing. Slowly, she starts to get braver (mm. 9-43). Her fears reappear, but this time she rebels against Fate (mm. 44-57 and 58-72) and even scolds Romeo for leaving her alone with these dark thoughts, when, surprisingly, Romeo himself appears on the balcony (mm. 75 -103). Now, both are tested by grim omens (mm. 117-124), but optimism, youth and Love win, and here they are, once again, in each other's arms (mm. 150-174). Weary, they fall asleep next to each other.

## Act III (Part III)

- Scene I (mm. 1-46) – a cunning threat lurks to destroy their happiness. Evil hovers in the air, still diffuse, but ready to strike at the right moment. Yet

the vapors of the night are chased away by the dawn (m. 47-52 and 52-90). The heads of the two families each discuss in their own family how to separate the two young lovers (mm. 91-151). Romeo and Juliet, in the sunlight, do not suspect anything of what is in store for them (mm. 151-167).

- Scene II (mm. 168-321) – Evil is no longer diffuse, but becomes more and more obvious and daring. The fight is given between unequal forces, Evil seems to be stronger, Romeo and Juliet can only oppose by the power and purity of their Love.

- Scene III (measures 321-353) – before the madness of Evil, one can only oppose, alongside Love, only Song (mm. 321-353). Romeo begins to accompany Juliet on the guitar. This small thing changed the balance of forces in their favor and in that of their Love. Next come the joy and the happiness of the victory of Good over Evil (mm. 353-400). Evil, however, lost a battle, not the War. It will continue to lurk, in hiding, to bring either Romeo and Juliet, or others less fortunate, to their doom (mm. 401-489).

This is where my dramaturgical experiment ends, on the music of *Quartet No. 5 op. 92* by Dmitri Shostakovich, in which the Good and Love triumphed, at least this time.

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# *Šárka*, a legendary female character, in two lesser known Czech operas. Overtures and compositional techniques

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*Abstract:* The lyrical works of Czech composers from the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century are very little known, and not just to Romanian musicians. Even when it comes to composers who have gained notoriety, such as Bedřich Smetana, Antonín Dvořák or Leoš Janáček, without consulting a dictionary, we cannot name more than one of their titles: Smetana's *Prodaná nevěsta*, Dvořák's *Rusalka* and Janáček's *Jenůfa*, even though each of them wrote countless other works dedicated to the opera. When we think of composers like Zdeněk Fibich and Otakar Ostrčil, obscurity is almost total. Beyond the fact that this study attempts to make a contribution to the knowledge in this field, other objectives include analyzing the compositional language that two composers embraced in homonymous operas and observing the manner in which they related to the mythology of their people. One of the major characters of the Czech national mythology is called *Šárka*, a title that both Leoš Janáček and Zdeněk Fibich have attributed to one of their operas. In studying the action of the two stage works, this research also turns to the Czech writers of that period and the manner in which they reflected the fundamental Czech myths in their literary works. Details related to the time of appearance of the operas and, in the case of Zdeněk Fibich, brief but welcome information on his biography and creation are also presented. The original contribution of this study consists in analyzing the overtures of the two homonymous operas in terms of compositional techniques, elements of construction and musical expression and, last but not least, observing the similarities and differences of vision between the two creators.

*Keywords:* Šárka; myth; opera; Janáček; Fibich.

### Introduction

For the history of Europe, the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the first decades of the last century are periods of technological breakthrough, but also of great political, social and ethnic turmoil, a conjuncture that led to the outbreak of World War I and the emergence of national states. For their part, the members of the cultural and artistic elites had very different reactions and orientations. In the period of time to which we are referring, the history of

European music witnessed inherent crystallizations and positionings, the route of the syncretic genre of the opera being of particular interest to the purpose of this article.

The two coryphaei of the 19th century lyrical theater had distinct visions: Giuseppe Verdi preserved and polished the ancient Italian operatic tradition, drawing inspiration from the great German, French and English literatures, while Richard Wagner was the father of musical drama, where he processed and stylized the myths of the Nordic peoples. In the second half of the century, verism appears in Italy and *grand opera* in France, its momentum dying out in the delicate *Pelléas et Mélisande* by Claude Debussy, a work that marked the dawn of the 20th century.

In all this time, Slavic composers also ventured into the realm of the opera and tried to carve out a path that would differentiate them from their great contemporaries. Several aspects unite them, but also separate them, namely, the recourse to the musical-literary folklore of their peoples and the librettos that were influenced or composed by fellow countrymen writers and poets. When it comes to opera creations, the most important Russian composers of the period are:

- Mihail Glinka, who wrote music for the piano, as well as chamber and orchestral music, melodies for voice, piano and choirs. He is the author of *Жизнь за царя* and *Руслан и Людмила* (*A life for the Tsar*, also known as *Ivan Susanin* and *Ruslan and Ludmila*);

- Piotr Tchaikovsky wrote symphonic, chamber, concert and religious music. He is the author of the works *Евгений Онегин*, *Орлеанская дева, Мазепа, Пиковая дама, Иоланта* (*Eugene Onegin*, *The Maid of Orleans*, *Mazepa*, *The Queen of Spades*, *Iolanta*) and of the ballets *Лебединое озеро*, *Спящая красавица* and *Щелкунчик* (*Swan Lake*, *The Sleeping Beauty* and *The Nutcracker*), to which works for voice and piano are added.

The above-mentioned composers are joined by the members of the so-called group of *The Five*, including:

- Nicolai Rimsky-Korsakov, who, apart from symphonic music, also wrote the operas *Млада*, *Садко*, *Снегурочка–весенняя сказка* and *Сказание о невидимом граде Китеже и деве Февронии* (*Mlada*, *Sadko*, *The snow Maiden* and *The Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh and the Maiden Fevroniya*);

- Alexander Borodin, the author of the symphonic poem *В средней Азии* (*In the Steppes of Central Asia*) and of the opera *Князь Игорь* (*Prince Igor*);

- Modest Mussorgski, the signatory of works that quickly became famous, such as the suite for the piano *Картинки съ Выставки* (*Pictures at an Exhibition*), the symphonic poem *Ночь на лысой горе* (*Night on Bald Mountain*) and the opera *Борис Годунов* (*Boris Godunov*).

Going further to the West, a Polish composer of utmost importance is Stanisław Moniuszko, who wrote symphonic and chamber music, as well as the operas *Flis*, *Halka*, *Hrabina*, *Paria*, *Straszny dwór* and *Verbum nobile*, but also comic operas, operettas, pastorals and vaudevilles, and many songs for voice and piano. For his exceptional compositional contribution, he is considered to be the father of the Polish national opera.

As for the Czech composers, the following have earned a place in the universal history of music:

- Bedřich Smetana is famous for his cycle of symphonic poems entitled *Má vlast* (*My fatherland*), comprising six works: *Vyšehrad*, *Vltava*, *Šárka*, *Z českých luhů a hájů*, *Tábor*, *Blaník* (*Vyšehrad*, *Vltava*, *Šárka*, *From Bohemia's Woods and Fields*, *Tábor*, *Blaník*). Among Smetana's nine works, the most famous, perhaps because it expresses the Czech national musical spirit the best, is the opera *Prodaná nevěsta* (*The bartered bride*). We shall see that the third symphonic poem, *Šárka*, but also the opera *Libuše*, written between 1869-1872, are greatly connected to the theme of this study;

- Antonín Dvořák has a very rich creation, both in the symphonic and chamber fields, as well as in the vocal and opera fields. Among the works related to our theme, we mention the famous *Slovanské tance* (*Slavonic dances*), small symphonic works bearing the national stamp, grouped 8 each under the names of *opus 46* and *72*, and the opera *Rusalka*.

- Leoš Janáček was a complex personality, composer, conductor, professor, folklore collector and essayist. The music in his first opera, *Šárka*, and that in his only ballet, *Rákos Rákoczy*, bears a strong Czech national-folkloric imprint.

These are joined by two other important composers, renowned not only in the Czech Republic:

- Zdeněk Fibich[1], a name that is rather obscure in Romania, wrote symphonic and chamber, vocal, choral and piano music, stage music and seven operas. The subjects of two of these, *Šárka and Blaník*, are connected to Czech spirituality;

- Otakar Ostrčil[2], an almost unknown creator in Romania, wrote symphonic and chamber, vocal, choral and opera works. The works dedicated to the stage include *Vlasty skon* (*The death of Vlasta*) from 1903.

**The myth, national imprint and source of inspiration for Czech composers**

In the second part of the 19th century in particular, two of the most important musical genres impressed through the vigor with which they succeed in conveying feelings and experiences of national essence. We refer to the newly invented symphonic poem and the reinvented opera, whose program and libretto, written by the composers themselves or by writers of the time, bring popular spirituality and national themes to the fore.

> It might seem curious to the average modern music lover that opera, that most elite of genres, came to be seen as music's pre-eminent contributor to nationalism. This apparent contradiction derives, however, from two common misconceptions: on the one hand, that nationalism was essentially an expression of popular (nineteenth-century) revolt; on the other, that opera's associations with the aristocracy should debar it from relevance to more general political concerns. Such misconceptions might seem appropriate for an ideology such as nationalism, which has always covered the traces of its invention by rewriting history in its own image, but opera too is defined by its continual reinvention of itself.[3]

If Verdi himself made politics through his opera *Nabucco*, so did composers belonging to nations in full affirmation of their own individuality, in the second part of the 19th century and the beginning of the following one. The most valuable means of national individualization are turning to one's own musical folklore and specifically to popular themes, and Czech composers make no exception.

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[1] Zdeněk Fibich (1850-1900), prolific Czech composer. Retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zdeněk_Fibich, consulted on 23 September 2022.
[2] Otakar Ostrčil (1879-1935), Czech conductor and composer. Retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Otakar_Ostrčil, consulted on 23 September 2022.
[3] Suzanne Aspden, *Opera and national identity*, in *The Cambridge companion to opera studies*, edited by Nicholas Till, Cambridge University Press, 2012, p. 276.

When it comes to the Czech writers of the period to which we are referring, one of their favorite directions was the myth. Inspired by *Chronica Boemorum*[4], writers such as Josef Wenzig[5], Julius Zeyer[6], Alois Jirásek[7] and Karel Pippich[8] wrote poems and dramas treating great mythological themes. In order not to broaden the research area too much, we shall only refer to some of them that are closely related to the Czech people and to the city of Prague and which fall at the same time into the current of the "Amazons":

> Warrior maidens, daughters of Ares and Artemis, some say. In some accounts their mother was Aphrodite or Otrere. They came from Asia Minor or Scythia and made a practice of breaking the arms and legs of all male infants to keep them subservient. They cut off one breast to make it easier to use a bow or spear. There were three tribes, each with its own city and ruled by one of three queens. Some say that they killed and ate any men who landed on their shores.[9]

Another characterization of the Amazons, this time in the Slavic acceptation, is of "women fighters led by Vlasta"[10]. Returning to the Czech Republic, one legend says that *Libuše* or *Libussa* was the third and youngest daughter of *Czech*, the leader of the homonymous eastern tribe who settled on the lands of the present Czech Republic after crossing three rivers: the Oder, the Elbe and the Vltava. Married to *Přemysl*, *Libuše* thus became one of the founders of the Czech people[11] and of the future city of Prague[12]. As mentioned above, *Libuše* is the title of an opera by Bedřich Smetana.

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[4] *Chronica Boemorum* is the first history in Latin of the Czech countries, written by Cosmas of Prague in the 12ᵗʰ century. Retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chronica_Boemorum, consulted on 23 September 2022.

[5] Josef Wenzig (1807-1876), writer and librettist from Bohemia. As a teacher at a high school in Prague, he put the Czech language on the same level as the German language. Retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Josef_Wenzig, consulted on 23 September 2022.

[6] Julius Zeyer (1841-1901), a Czech writer, poet and playwright of Jewish origin. Among other things, he wrote the poem *Vyšehrad*, inspired by Czech history and mythology. Retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Julius_Zeyer, consulted on 23 September 2022.

[7] Alois Jirásek (1851-1930), a Cezch writer. In 1894 he published a volume of *Old Czech Legends*. See Peter Demetz, *Prague in Black and Gold*, New York, Hill and Wang, e-book, 2011.

[8] Karel Pippich (1849-1921), Cezch laywer and writer. He wrote the drama *Vlasty skon* (*The death of Vlasta*), becoming a source of inspiration for the work of the same name by Otakar Ostrčil. Retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Karel_Pippich, consulted on 23 September 2022.

[9] J. A. Coleman, *The Dictionary of the Mythology*, London, Arcturus Publishing Limited, 2007, p. 56.

[10] *Loc. cit.*

[11] See Peter Demetz, *op. cit.*

[12] Retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Libuše and https://pragueeventery.com/good-to-know/prague-myths-and-legends/, consulted on 23 September 2022.

A second legend bears the name *Dívčí válka* (*The maiden's war*):

> Vlasta, Libussa's favorite, felt abandoned and angry when the men held the maidens up to ridicule. They seized arms, and the "maiden's war" against the menfolk began. Vlasta deftly organized her army and trained the many women who were leaving their husbands, brothers, and fathers to join the fight; the strong were chosen to lead the attack, and the most beautiful to entice the men away from their battle groups to be killed.[13]

Before presenting the third legend of Czech tradition, which has *Šárka* at the center of attention, we find the similarity between this fighter's name and two other legendary male names interesting: *Sarkany*, a demon from the Hungarian-European tradition, who "has the power to turn people into stone"[14] and *Sarkap*, a hero-fighter from the Indian tradition who "earned the name Beheader from his habit of decapitating those whom he defeated in games"[15]. Here is the legend of the character *Šárka*, closely related to the previous one, about *Libuše*.

> *Šárka*, *Vlasta*'s lieutenant, entrapped a band of armed men led by *Ctirad* by tying herself to a tree, claiming that the rebel maidens had tied her there and put a horn and a jug of mead out of reach to mock her. *Ctirad* believed her story and untied her from the tree, whereupon she poured mead for the men to show her thanks. Little did the men know that *Šárka* and the maidens had put a sleeping potion into the mead. When all the men had fallen asleep, *Šárka* blew the horn as a signal for the rebel maidens to come out of their hiding places and join her in slaughtering the men. *Ctirad* was captured and then tortured to death in *Děvín*. The valley where it happened is today called *Divoká Šárka* (*Wild Šárka*).[16]

The legend that we have described immediately above inspired Czech composers to write several musical works, including:
- The symphonic poem *Šárka*, the third title from the six of the symphonic cycle *Má vlast* (*My Fatherland*) by Bedřich Smetana;
- The opera *Vlasty skon* (*The death of Vlasta*) by Otakar Ostrčil;
- The opera *Šárka* by Leoš Janáček;
- The opera *Šárka* by Zdeněk Fibich.

The last two, or rather, their overtures, are the subject of the research below.

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[13] See Peter Demetz, *op. cit.*

[14] Coleman, J. A., *op. cit.*, p. 908.

[15] *Loc. cit.*

[16] Retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Maidens'_War, consulted on 26 September 2022.

## The opera *Šárka* by Leoš Janáček

Leoš Janáček's interest in the opera as a genre appeared gradually due to his journalistic activity at the *Hudební listy* (*Musical leaves*) newspaper published in Brno between 1884 and 1888, on the initiative and under the leadership of the Czech musician. As a reaction to the German Theater in Brno, founded in 1882, the elite of the Czech intellectuality in the city decided to establish in 1884 a theater in which to show mainly creations of fellow national authors. Seated in a rather inappropriate building on Veveří Street[17], the institution was initially called *Na Veveří* Theater. In 1894, it received the title which it still carried nowadays - the National Theater of Brno.

The publication of the newspaper previously mentioned is almost exclusively due to establishing that theater and to Janáček's desire to make the operas performed there and their authors as popular as possible. Among the authors of the opera and operetta performances that Leoš Janáček attended and later commented on in his many reviews, we mention Karel Bendl[18], Karel Richard Šebor[19] and Josef Richard Rozkošný[20].

> Janáček cut his teeth reviewing a total of thirty-three operas and operettas (several times, in many cases), for his journal *Hudební listy*, which he started partly for this purpose. His reviews provide most of the information about what he saw and what he thought about it, and this can be amplified by his collection of piano-vocal scores and librettos of operas […] Janáček's regular reviewing, until the journal folded in the summer of 1888, provides the background for the composition and revision of his first opera *Šárka* (1887-8).[21]

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[17] Detailed and very interesting information on this subject is provided by https://www.theatre-architecture.eu/en/db/?theatreId=349, consulted on 27 September 2022.

[18] Karel Bendl (1838-1897), a Czech musician, worked as an orchestra and choir conductor, singer, composer, publisher and professor. Highly prolific, he wrote chamber and symphonic music, songs for voice and piano, liturgical works, mixed and male choirs, a cappella and with orchestral accompaniment, cantata. He also wrote many operas with a national, historical, comical character, in the genre of the *grand opera*, operettas and ballets, theater music. Retrieved from https://www.ceskyhudebnislovnik.cz/slovnik/index.php?option=com_mdictionary&task=record.record_detail&id=7406, consulted on 26 September 2022.

[19] Karel Richard Šebor (1843-1903), a Czech opera composer, music director of the theaters in Prague and Leipzig, then marching band leader in the Austro-Hungarian army. Retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Karel_Šebor, consulted on 26 September 2022.

[20] Josef Richard Rozkošný (1833-1913), a Czech composer and pianist. Retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Josef_Richard_Rozkošný, consulted on 26 September 2022.

[21] John Tyrrell, *Janáček, years of a life*, *Volume I (1854-1914)*, *The lonely blackbird*, e-book, London, Faber and Faber Ltd, 2006, cap. 25.

Being surrounded by the operatic atmosphere of the performances he attended and commented on, Janáček decided to write his own opera and did so, choosing to use the theme of a libretto written by Julius Zeyer[22].

> At the request of Dvořák, Zeyer produced a libretto by adapting the fourth part (*Ctirad*, 1879) of his five-part verse epic *Vyšehrad*; perhaps on the lookout for something more internationally attractive, however, Dvořák was reluctant to set *Šárka*.[23]

After this failure, the writer turned to Bedřich Smetana to compose the music, but the latter did not follow up on his request. Disappointed, Zeyer published the libretto in three issues of the *Česká Thalie* magazine in January-February 1887[24]. A correspondent of the magazine, Karel Sázavský, brought the libretto to Janáček's[25] attention, who decided to use it as text for his first opera. Without asking for the writer's permission, he decided to bring some changes to it, in accordance with his own opinions on the composition of an opera score. When Janáček finally asked for his opinion, in two letters that he addressed to him, Julius Zeyer refused to grant him permission, the first time politely and relatively delicately, the second time directly and categorically[26]. In these circumstances, even though he had already written the music for the opera between 1887-188, the composer had to abandon the idea of a premiere and the work was shelved. From the preface of the printed score of an orchestral work from the same period of creation, we learn how, where and by whom the score of the *Šárka* opera was rediscovered:

> It is Janáček's only and, moreover, not quite accurate, reference to this work; otherwise, the composer never returned to the work and nowhere makes mention of it - not even when his pupil, Břetislav Bakala, discovered the composition, along with the opera, *Šárka*, in 1918, in the dowry chest from Moravské Slovácko.[27]

With great enthusiasm, Janáček revisited, in 1918, the score he had written 30 years previously and made some changes to it, and in 1919 he abandoned the project of a stage production once again. Meanwhile, Julius

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[22] See footnote no. 6.
[23] John Tyrrell, *op. cit.*, cap. 26.
[24] Information taken from Nigel Simeone, *The Janáček Compendium*, Woodbridge, The Boydell Press, 2019, p. 244.
[25] Information taken from the preface of the score of opera *Šárka*, edited by the Universal Edition / Editio Moravia, UE 31654 / EM 74200, p. XXV.
[26] For details, see John Tyrrell, *op. cit.*, cap. 26. The full translation of Zeyer's response letters can be read in the preface to the score of the opera *Šárka*, edited by the Universal Edition / Editio Moravia, UE 31654 / EM 74200, p. XXVI.
[27] Theodora Straková in the preface to Leoš Janáček, *Adagio für Orchester* (1891), Partitur, Vienna, Universal Edition, UE 16789, p. V.

Zeyer died[28] and Leoš Janáček was already a well-established composer, whose request to use the libretto the Czech Academy of Sciences - the institution that administered the writer's copyright - could not refuse. Finally, after further revisions and with the third act orchestrated by Osvald Chlubna[29], the premiere took place on the 11th of November 1925, at the National Theater of Brno. This is how John Tyrrell retells the action:

> The action of *Šárka* takes place in the "maidens war", the armed revolt of Czech women against the patriarchy. Women's power declined after the marriage of Libuše and even more after her death, when her consort Přemysl was left in sole command. In protest the women form an army of women warriors. Their success, especially the exploits of Šárka, the boldest of the women, caused consternation among the men. Ctirad offers to hunt Šárka down and equips himself for this task with magic weapons. In order to deal with this new challenge, Šárka has her women bind her to a tree at a place in the forest where Ctirad will pass. He discovers her and is deceived by her explanation that she has been left to die by one of her rivals. Hus pity is aroused, and then his love. Too late he realizes that this is an ambush; Šárka relives him of his magic weapons and then, with her horn, summons her women, who make quick work of him. But Šárka has fallen in love with him. In remorse she throws herself on to his funeral pyre.[30]

The main characters of the opera, whose action is so similar to the legend that I have described above, are the following[31]: *Přemysl* (baritone), *Ctirad* (tenor), *Šárka* (dramatic soprano) and *Lumir* (tenor). The musical organization consists of three acts preceded by an overture. In what follows, we shall analyze this introductory fragment in detail.

If we were to discuss architecture first, the overture of the opera *Šárka*, JW I/1[32] is composed in a manner that does not fit into the – let us call them established patterns - of the opera genre. The form of the sonata or the lied, as they were understood by the great opera composers before Janáček or by his contemporaries, were not models for the overture we are analyzing, just as the

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[28] A year after the composer Julius Zeyer's death, in 1902, the Czech composer Josef Suk (1874-1935) wrote the elegy *Pod dojmem Zeyerova Vyšehradu* (*Under the Impression of Julius Zeyer's Vyšehrad*), *op. 23, for violin, cello, string quarter, harmonium and harp*. Retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_compositions_by_Josef_Suk, consulted on 27 September 2022.

[29] Osvald Chlubna (1893-1971), Czech composer, Janáček's student. According to Nigel Simeone, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

[30] John Tyrrell, *op. cit.*, cap. 26.

[31] According to the score of the opera *Šárka*, edited by the Universal Edition / Editio Moravia, UE 31654 / EM 74200.

[32] It is about the catalog number of this work. For further details see Nigel Simeone, John Tyrrell, Alena Němcová, *Janáček's Works. A catalogue of the music and writing of Leoš Janáček*, Oxford University Press, 1997.

Wagnerian, leitmotivic conception was not used here by the Czech composer either. It is true that we do hear two themes, but the structure is fairly complex and, very importantly, we can already identify the compositional technique that has as its foundation the musical motif, its repetition, sequencing and processing. This is the method of work that Leoš Janáček used with increasingly greater certainty and imagination in the operas that followed, transforming it into his most important compositional tool and taking it to the highest heights of refinement. A first idea about the formal structure is the following:

- Introduction (mm. 1-21);
- Section A (mm. 22-44);
- Section B (mm. 45-66);
- Transition (mm. 67-76);
- Section C (mm. 77-107);
- Coda (mm. 108-114).

There are six clear fragments, which, briefly analyzed, only in terms of extent, are characterized by: an almost equal development, of around 20 measures, of the first three formal articulations, the same for the transition and the coda (maximum 10 measures); the most extended section, which I named C, covers 31 measures. Of course, the duration in time of the said musical fragments is not equal, because we are witnessing several changes in tempo.

The statements above continue with a new opinion, which we can adopt after we have passed the surface layer and taken a few steps into the depth of compositional thought. In this light, another form seems more plausible:

- Introduction (mm. 1-21);
- Section A (mm. 22-66)
  - $A^1$ (mm. 22-44);
  - $A^2$ (mm. 45-66);
- Transition (mm. 67-76);
- Section B (mm. 77-107);
  - $B^1$ (mm. 77-84);
  - $B^2$ (mm. 85-92);
  - $B^1$ repeated (mm. 93-100);
  - $B^2$ repeated (mm. 101-107);
- Coda (mm. 108-114).

We believe that the scheme above is closer to the composer's thought process due to the two large fragments, A and B, surrounded by an introduction and a coda and separated by a transition. Moreover, we hear melodic-rhythmic fragments that we can consider themes, especially the one in section B, the

expressiveness of which is undoubtedly impressive, thus dominating the melodic structure of the whole.

In order to delve even deeper into the details of compositional technique, the next steps of the analysis focus on each individual section. The introduction is based on the exposition, repetition, sequencing and brief processing of two musical-dramatic motifs:



Fig. 1 Motif 1, exposed for the first time in mm. 1-2



Fig. 2 Motif 2, exposed for the first time in mm. 2-3

We know that Janáček did not use the leitmotifs and that he did not leave us a program of the overture, therefore, we are left with the task of interpreting for ourselves the message that the two musical-dramatic motifs wish to convey. In our opinion, the first motif signifies, without disguise, strength and firmness, the second hides cunning and cruelty; in varying proportions, all the main characters of the work possess these qualities. In the first measures of the overture, the juxtaposition of motifs (each intoned by several instruments in unison) is followed by repetition and superposition. In the 10th measure, the composer temporarily gives up the first motif and attributes two expressions to the second one:



Fig. 3 The two expressions of the motif 2, mm. 9-11

Now, still, the second motif is accompanied by a group of sounds that process the intonation of the motif, which can be observed very clearly in the following figure.

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Fig. 4 Motif 2 in the horns and its processing, accompanied by the strings, mm. 9-11

The musical material is then repeated until the 15th measure, when Janáček brings back the first motif, which he immediately repeats twice, in several registers. The transition to section A is made starting with the 18th measure, through a short fragment that brings back the sonority of the first measures, this time in small and very small nuances.

Fig. 5 Theme I exposed and sequenced, and polyphony with motif 2, mm. 22-27

Section A$^1$, which begins with measure 22, carries the first motif towards a theme (we shall name it theme I, given that another one appears later), its message transforming the initial feelings of strength and firmness into a dual experience, rushed but slightly sad. This is how the violins should sound here in octaves, then the second violins and the violas, which bring back the theme in a slightly modified sequence. The composer resorts to polyphony and entrusts the cellos with a melodic-rhythmic route where the second motif lies intact.

The polyphonic process of combining theme I with motif II is also repeated in the following measures, starting from different sounds. The string instruments are the ones that maintain the melodic-rhythmic priority, the woodwind instruments and the horns being only accompanying tones, with coloristic significance.

Section A$^2$ has a completely different development, which results in an obvious change in musical attitude and in the aesthetic messages sent to the listeners. Due to its quicker tempo (*Allegro* compared to *Moderato*, the movement in which the overture began), the first sense is one of crowding, from which the theme and the melodic expressiveness disappear. The change in sound perception is also due to Janáček's decision to move from contrapuntal to homophonic syntax. The latter is not thought according to the usual pattern of distinct sound planes, in which one dominates the other(s), but rather in the form of several layers interdependent with each other. In his following lyrical works, Leoš Janáček will use intensively and perfect the sound layering technique, here already at an advanced stage. Between measures 45 and 64, therefore in almost the entire A$^2$ section, we remark upon

the permanent presence of at least three layers: the strings and woodwinds dominate the melodic aspect, while the brass follows a harmonic path.



Fig. 6 Melodic layers at the strings, harmonic start at the trombones, mm. 45-47

The two characteristics, the melodic and the harmonic, are in a balance the relative equilibrium of which is destroyed by the rhythmic element, the point of maximum interest of the section. The composer ingeniously models the inner life of the measure of 6 fourths: the 12 eighths are not grouped into two groups of 6, which would preserve the ternary pulsation, but into four groups of 3, which transforms the rhythm into a binary one. If we eliminate pitches and tones, the importance of which is not primordial here, the rhythmic development of a fragment from section $A^2$ looks like this:

Fig. 7 Fragment from the rhythmic path of section $A^2$, mm. 45-58

We notice the masterful combination of rhythmic layers, the manner in which the binary rhythm merges with the ternary one in a unitary but at the same time diverse whole. The harmonies and fragments of melodies are

downright melted by the force of the rhythm, which creates the feeling of a war confrontation, of an almost desperate fight.

This war-like state dies down gradually, beginning with measure 67 (Fig. 8), when the tempo slows down (*Meno mosso*) and the transition to section B begins. What draws the attention about this segment of the overture is the ingenuity with which the composer succeeds in opening the path to another state of spirit without letting go of the previous motivic thinking. Could this constancy be the reason why Janáček does not use a theme with an impact on the listener from the very beginning, but prefers to use two small but highly expressive musical fragments?

We are only speculating, but if it is so, it means that, despite his young age when he wrote this work, the Czech musician already showed an outstanding power of insight and synthesis. Moreover, apart from using the two previous motifs, Janáček sets here, *avant la lettre*, the setting for the next theme, which will resound in section B.

Figure 8 shows the technique of repetition and sequencing, here in a descending sense, which Janáček would use in all his works.

Fig. 8 The beginning of the transition, mm. 67-74

Section B begins with measure 77, best expressing the composer's relation with Moravian folk music and the influence that his great contemporary, Bedřich Smetana, had on him at that time. If we were to analyze the means of musical expression of this fragment of the overture, we could not say that the melody is the most profound expression of the composer's inspiration, just as the orchestration or the rhythm are not the strongest points of Janáček's thinking, because it is precisely in these regards that the influences and models of his time are noticed. At first impression, we are enchanted by the swirling and generous course of the melody, by the crystal sonority of the violins, the expressiveness of the flutes and the brilliance of the cellos in the high register.



Fig. 9 The path of the melody in B$^1$, mm. 77-84

It is, however, only a surface impression. Only refined connoisseurs can understand that the essence of this music is harmony, that this is where the composer's originality is concentrated and that this is also where we find his connection with the living substance of popular music. A harmonic route of modal expression is brought to the fore, the roots of which can be found in the musical folklore of Moravia and Slovakia. Janáček combines the diatonic and chromatic scales, and creates a play between fixed and mobile steps, bringing musical freshness and vitality in a much greater concentration than the motifs that make up the previous sections.

While the armor continues to be that of *E-flat major*, which, in fact, we never hear in a distinct mode, the mode that makes up the musical material is made up of seven gradual sounds, with tonic on *E-flat*, which is actually the Aeolian mode with the minor third at the base and the 6th and 7th raised by half a step.


Fig. 10 Mode of seven steps

This structure is completed by several movable chords that adorn the scale and give it the Moravian specificity. We see how the movable chords, through their leading notes are gravitating around the 5th chord, *B-flat*, and thus giving it the recitativo character.


Fig. 11 Scale with movable chords

The melody continues in $B^2$ (mm. 85-92), maintaining its characteristics, but being accompanied by paths that complete a non-imitative polyphonic speech, from which the quintuplet formula on a three-beat movement and zig zag sounds emerges. Janáček decides to replay the fragments $B^1$ and $B^2$ exactly as they were, probably for reasons related to the balance of the formal construction of the whole, and also perhaps because he was aware of the strong impact that the repetition could bring on the listeners. Nevertheless, it is paradoxical that, even though it sounds the best in the entire *Šárka* opera overture, section B is the least original. The last seven measures of the overture (mm. 108-114) are a coda which does not have the character of a closure, but of a continuation, a bridge to the entrance on the scene of the opera's first character. We hear motif 1 again, more precisely the ascending octave, repeated by various woodwind instruments several times, supported by a harmonic foundation ensured by the trombones and the *tremolo* chords of the stringed instruments.

This is the end of an overture that, although as little known as the opera the beginning of which it represents, demonstrates the solid compositional technique, the folkloric inspiration, as well as the influence of present models, from the national and European sphere. A visionary, Janáček was right to trust his first creation in the field of lyrical theater.

### *Šárka*, opera by Zdeněk Fibich

A Czech composer who is almost unknown in Romania, Zdeněk Fibich made a great contribution to the development of music in his country at the end of the 19th century. Part of the bibliography we have consulted[33] comprises rather brief information, such as the period of his life, the places where he studied and some of the works he wrote. Nonetheless, substantial studies have also appeared, dedicated especially to the Czech composer's opera creation. One of these makes a statement that can cause a sensation nowadays, given the limited spread that Zdeněk Fibich's music has had at international level:

> Evidence of his contemporary standing is abundant, and his position in the firmament of Czech composers was characteristically summed up by William Ritter in 1896 when he described Fibich as the "Son" in the "Holy Trinity" of Czech music, in which Smetana was, naturally enough, the "Father" and Dvořák the "Holy Spirit".[34]

John Tyrrell[35] continues and completes the statements above with the following opinions, which are now no longer surprising:

> After Smetana and Dvořák he was the most prominent Czech composer of the second half of the 19th century, notably of operas and orchestral and piano music. […] Fibich is often referred to as the greatest Czech Romantic composer. A cultured man with a broad knowledge of art and literature as well as an extensive familiarity with music of the past.[36]

Born in Všebořice in 1850 and died in Prague in 1900, Zdeněk (or Zdenko) Fibich began studying music at the age of 14, in Prague, then

[33] See *Bakers's Biographical Dictionary of Musicians*, Third edition, New York, 1919, p. 259; *Bakers's Biographical Dictionary of Musicians, Centennial edition, Volume 1*, New York, Schirmer Books, 2001, p. 1101; Paul Griffiths, *The Penguin Companion to Classical Music*, London, Penguin Books, 2004, p. 678.

[34] Jan Smaczny, *The Operas and Melodramas of Zdeněk Fibich (1850-1900)*, in "Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association", 1982-1983, Vol. 109 (1982-1983), pp. 119-133. Retrieved from https://www.jstor.org/stable/766139

[35] John Tyrrell (1942-2018), British musicologist, author of in-depth studies on Leoš Janáček and other Czech composers. Retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Tyrrell_(musicologist), consulted on 3 October 2022.

[36] John Tyrrell, *Fibich, Zdeněk [Zdenko] (Antonín Václav)*, in "Grove Music Online", retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.09590

continued in Leipzig (at the Conservatory and privately) and in Paris, only to finish his training period in Mannheim, in 1870. Returning to Prague for various not very long periods of time he worked as a choir conductor for the Provisional Theatre for the local Russian Orthodox Church, then as a playwright of the National Theater. He was also a private music professor, his students also including Anežka Schulzová[37]. He died in Prague on the 15th of October 1900 due to pneumonia.

His creation includes established genres, such as the symphonic, chamber, vocal, choral, stage music and opera, to which some of small circulation but of large scope are added, such as concert melodrama and stage melodrama. Given that they are related to the subject of our research, we will enlist the seven opera titles: *Bukovín* (1874[38]); *Blaník* (1881); *Nevěsta mesinská* (*The bride of Messina*, based on Schiller, 1884); *Bouře* (*The tempest*, based on Shakespeare, 1895); *Hedy* (based on *Don Juan* de Byron, 1896); *Šárka* (1897); *Pád Arkuna* (*The Fall of Arkun*, 1900). It is important to note that

> his opera, *Nevěsta messinská* ("The Bride of Messina", 1882–3), to a libretto adapted from Schiller's tragedy by Hostinský, that has sometimes been praised as the finest Czech 19th-century tragic opera.[39]

At the end of these few mentions about Zdeněk Fibich's life and work, we must say that he was very concerned with the symbiosis between words and music, which is why, most of the music critics of the time considered him - not always with good intentions - a Wagnerian, even if this label cannot be applied to his entire stage creation. Some of his operas focus on subjects from Greek antiquity, and the eye towards mythology turned to its national, Czech branch.

Proof of the latter orientation is the opera *Šárka*, which he composed almost 10 years after Leoš Janáček had approached the same subject, but without Zdeněk Fibich being aware of the work of his contemporary for the simple reason that it had been stored in an old dowry chest. The moment when the composer turned to this theme, namely when the supporters of the Czech nationalist spirit in art reproached him for a refractory attitude is worth mentioning:

> At the time Fibich was aware of the distrust with which he was regarded in many quarters. Branded as a Wagnerian, Fibich's national

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[37] Anežka Schulzová (1868-1905), a Czech librettist, she studied piano and composition with Zdeněk Fibich, who later became his collaborator and lover. She wrote the librettos of the composer's last three works. See John Tyrrell's study entitled *Schulzová, Anežka*, https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.O006943, consulted on 3 October 2022.
[38] Here and with the other titles, the year of the premiere appears in parentheses.
[39] See John Tyrrell, *Fibich, Zdeněk [Zdenko] (Antonín Václav)*, in "Grove Music Online", retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.09590

credentials were increasingly called into question. The decision to embark *Šárka* was conditioned by his feeling that a setting of a familiar legend would do much to improve his tarnished image. The broad framework of the legend and the use of a theme based on a sixteenth-century song were as far as Fibich was prepared to go by way of compromise.[40]

The libretto is an adaptation of the "war of the maidens" legend that Anežka Schulzová made after the story signed by Jaroslav Vrchlický[41] and the subject of the opera is almost the same as that of the homonymous opera written by Janáček, the characters being more numerous, having the pair *Šárka-Ctirad* at the center of the action.

> To the Czech people, nursing memories of tragic defeat from the Hussite times and the battle of the White Mountain, *Šárka* must have had – and probably still has – a peculiar appeal.[42]

Throughout the work, the musical expression is very stylized, because the composer gives up the obvious display of the leitmotif technique and turns to verismo-style[43] allusions. As it comes closer to the genre of the *grand opera*, we notice that in Zdeněk Fibich's *Šárka* the choir has a more extensive and difficult presence than in Janáček's work of the same name. Solo voices have complicated and long paths, the ability to extend their vocal range, resistance and good adaptation to an often-massive orchestra being just some of the mandatory requirements for the performers of the main roles. The three acts have relatively equal durations, which add up to around 130 minutes. The premiere took place at the National Theater of Prague, on the 28th of December 1897, being followed in a very short time by 18 other performances[44], bearing testimony of an admirable success with the public. The sources we have consulted tell us that this title is even today in the current repertoire of the Czech lyrical institutions and inform us of the existence of several recordings, which can be heard in whole or in part on the YouTube channel. In our study, the overture is the only fragment we have focused on, basing our analysis only on the piano version[45], as the orchestral score was impossible to find. For this

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[40] See Jan Smaczny, quoted study.

[41] Jaroslav Vrchlický (1853-1912), famous Czech poet, nominated several times for the Nobel Prize for literature. Retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jaroslav_Vrchlický, consulted on 3 October 2022.

[42] Gerald Abraham, *The Operas of Zdeněk Fibich*, în *19th-Century Music*, Autumn, 1985, vol. 9, no. 2 (Autumn, 1985), pp. 136-144, published by California Press. Retrieved from https://www.jstor.org/stable/746579

[43] The idea is suggested by Jan Smaczny in the study quoted. Let us recall that Pietro Mascagni's *Cavalleria rusticana* had premiered in 1890, seven years before Fibich's *Šárka.*

[44] Information taken from Gerald Abraham's study.

[45] https://imslp.org/wiki/Šárka,_Op._51_(Fibich,_Zdeněk)

reason, the impression of the instrumental colors will be limited to the one left by this audition[46]. Here, the composer's interest in the melodic, rhythmic, dynamic, harmonic and coloristic aspects of his music does not seem to be that keen. When he approached a strategy that primarily aims to capture the attention of the widest possible masses of the public, we believe that Zdeněk Fibich was aware that he would leave the construction aspects we talked about above in the background. But he did so because he intended to achieve spectacular effects, which would somewhat manipulate the national, patriotic feelings of his listeners and critics, and the number of performances that took place immediately after the premiere seems to prove him right.

The form of the overture is one often used in small-scale works, that of de A B A$^1$ B$^1$ A$^2$ Coda, in which the sections are differentiated by the character and tempo of the music. The first feeling of listeners nowadays is one of grandeur, given by a massive orchestral ensemble, dominated by brass[47], which always resounds. In the first two measures, which take the place of an introduction, there is a minor chord with the tonic on *D*, this sound also being the tonic of the overture's basic tonality. First, the chord appears in *p* and in the low register, then in *f* and in the high register, and this sequence is repeated.



Fig. 12 Repeated chords of the tonic, mm. 1-2

In the first A, which lasts up to measure 36 inclusive, we identify at the beginning a theme of four measures, with a heavy and oppressive sonority, at the same time solemn and funereal, part of a speech that preserves the previous chordal construction. The harmonic path unfolds in *D minor*, with inflections towards the dominant tonality (*A minor*) and towards the subdominant of the relative major (*B flat major*). Usual note values appear in simple combinations, from which we can distinguish the dotted sixteenth-eighth grouping, which can be found in Moravian musical folklore.

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[46] We used the version https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iG-DpCyq0Vw

[47] It is not excluded for the mentioned version to include some Wagnerian tubes or similar brass instruments.

Fig. 13 Theme from A, mm. 3-6

The thematic exposition is followed by four other measures with the same meaning, where the first two are repeated and the other two soar to the high register, followed by a slightly more extended fragment, which sounds similar to a Protestant chorale.

Measures 18 and 19 are the most banal so far, representing a string of sixteenths starting from the low register and then going higher chromatically, in accumulations of nuances and number of instruments. At measure 20, the theme resumes, this time in a high register and with a massive orchestra, from which the cymbals hitting each other, and the tremolos of the timpani are not missing, in an atmosphere of mythical grandeur that fades gradually.

Through a few passing modulations and intoned passages of bassoons and bass clarinet, the same chord in the *D minor* key is reached, the tonic of which is whispered by the tremolo of the double basses and timpani.

The legend has it that, once *Ctirad* unties her, *Šárka* blows the horn to call her companions for help[48]. To give voice to this call-to-action, the French horn intones a characteristic signal, followed by a diaphanous, ethereal measure, in the form of a major chord with the tonic on *E*, the sounds of which are simultaneously exposed by the strings and an arpeggio by the horn. Zdeněk Fibich repeats the two measures and thus makes the transition to section B.

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[48] See above how John Tyrrell described the action of the opera *Šárka* by Leoš Janáček.

Fig. 14 Transition to B, mm. 37-40 [49]

Section B (measures 41-73) probably illustrates the arrival of the women warriors and the ambush in which they surprise the men. We would have expected an unleashed, bustling music, but we only hear a new, rather long and not too impressive exposition of chordal blocks, the higher note of which constitutes the melody. Surprisingly uniform, the rhythm repeats an absolutely common formula countless times, the nuances fail to be unpredictable, because they start from *p* to gradually increase to *f* and, to complete the picture of lack of imagination, the discourse begins in the low register and rises slightly towards the middle one, as it happened in A.



Fig. 15 Fairly monotonous beginning of section B, mm. 41-46

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[49] The orchestration is noted by Leonard Dumitriu based on the sound document.

As if a first exposition of 16 measures was not enough, Zdeněk Fibich resumes the entire musical material in B an octave higher (mm. 57-73) and in a crowded orchestration, a procedure he also used in section A. Once more, we would have expected a greater involvement of his creative imagination, the use of more musical techniques and procedures and, why not, some more sophisticated than repetition, the accumulation of nuance and the transition to the upper octave. By the end of the overture of the *Šárka* opera, the composer no longer uses any other musical material, any other manner or technique of composition and orchestration, and the evolution of the harmonic paths are devoid of modulating boldness. As mentioned above, $A^1$ $B^1$ and $A^2$ follow, with very little differences compared to the previous sections, which consist only in shortening the extend of said fragments. The coda includes the last nine measures and repeats the musical motif from the first measure of the overture three times, ending in an apotheotic and at the same time tragic sonority.

At the end of our analysis, we emphasize once again the composer's lack of concern for authentic musical innovation, for sparkling melodicity and thrilling rhythms, for richly colored orchestration and surprising dynamics. Extracted from the context of the performance and played in concert, the overture of the *Šárka* opera by Zdeněk Fibich cannot capture the audience's attention for the reasons we have just exposed above. Nevertheless, revealing the shortcomings in the musical conception cannot hide the composer's wish to create a sound framework as illustrative as possible for the future action of the opera. Moreover, transported through time, we can say that, beyond what it actually represents, Fibich's music can constitute a very expressive sound background for an artistic film, as well as for a historical or geographical documentary.

**Conclusions**

Apart from casting a historical look at the operatic trends in the music of the Slavic peoples at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, this study brings to light several legends of the Czech people and analyzes the overtures of two operas of the same name, *Šárka*. These lyrical creations are little known around the world and the Romanian lyrical theaters, for instance, have never included them in their repertoire. Leoš Janáček's overture is the proof of a vivid creative imagination, of a well-structured compositional strategy, from which the soaring melody and the rough rhythm emerge, and even if the orchestration does not yet reach the peaks of his late lyrical works, the color palette is far from monotonous, and the same could be said about the evolution of nuances. The same praise cannot be given to Zdeněk Fibich's overture, which is much more concerned with the general impression it leaves on the audience than with compositional techniques and strategies.

The information that we have presented, some of it new for the Romanian reader, and the observations that we have expressed in as objective a manner as possible, aim at awakening and stimulating interest in the interpretation and research of operas that are not in the limelight nowadays and about which little or nothing has been written in our country.

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# The Impact of French Pedagogy on Romanian Piano Art. Disciples of Alfred Cortot

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***Abstract:*** A very special effervescence in terms of artistic life animated the City of Cluj at the beginning of the 20th century. The city's newly established institutions, after the historical moment of 1918, were increasingly asserting themselves, polarizing culture in its numerous forms and manifestations. This is the context in which the Academy of Music and Dramatic Art of Cluj (currently "Gheorghe Dima" National Academy of Music) was founded by a team of professors, who had been trained at various higher music schools in Western Europe and who implemented the highest standards meant to raise the new school at the level of the other European schools of this kind, in an effort to narrow the historical gap that separated the former from the latter. Among them stand out, due to their special artistic and pedagogical qualities, young pianists returned from Paris, where, within the prestigious *École Normale de Musique de Paris*, they had been trained by the renowned pianist Alfred Cortot. They were: Ecaterina Fotino-Negru, George Ciolac, Eliza Ciolan, Alexandru Demetriad, Viorica Adelina Radu, Gabriela Ţereanu. Our paper aims at providing a documented image of this significant direction of development, which relied on the artistic and pedagogical knowledge acquired by the Romanian musicians trained in the privileged environment of Paris and who later returned to work at the National Academy of Music in Cluj. We will tackle the subject from several points of view, namely the *peregrinatio academica* phenomenon, the socio-political background and the founding personalities of the *École Normale de Musique de Paris*, the pedagogical principles, their reception in Romania, and the evolution and current status of this noble lineage.

***Keywords:*** French Pedagogy; Romanian Piano Art; *peregrinatio academica* phenomenon.

> *Go study in other countries, then come back and*
> *make the best use of everything you learned abroad.*
> Francisc László

## Pro domo

This paper is the fruit of our doctoral research conducted under the guidance of the distinguished university professor PhD Adrian Pop, which materialized in the thesis entitled *La pian cu Alfred Cortot. Artişti clujeni la*

*École Normale de Musique*[1]. The goal was precisely a return to our artistic parents, to the founders of the Romanian piano school, a school that finds its roots in French culture. According to the contemporary novelist and musician David Foenkinos, "we cannot make our mark on the present unless we know our past"[2]. Moreover, among the *Civilized Man's Eight Deadly Sins*, Konrad Lorenz mentions the break with tradition, the growing schism between generations on a professional level. The current work is seen precisely as a return to our predecessors, to our teachers, pianists and artistic parents, whose past wisely illuminates our present. It is an unmissable anamnesis meant to prevent the loss of tradition, threatened by the merciless and irreversible passing of time[3].

### *Peregrinatio academica* and the Parisian model

Academic peregrination or *peregrinatio academica* is a phenomenon that dates back to the Middle Ages, when guilds were based on communication, the perpetuation of science and craft from one generation to the next. Therefore, 'initiation' trips were organized, which were almost mandatory both for aristocrats and for young university students and apprentices who wanted to specialize in various trades. Their companions were either masters or more advanced disciples, who carried compendiums and vademecums containing precise advice and guidance (in fact, a literary genre developed, which was part of the so-called *ars apodemica* – the art of travel). The early academic migration phenomenon, directed to the then few universities in Europe (Bologna, Paris, Oxford and Cambridge), intensified in the 15th and 16th centuries, when the universities of Central Europe – Prague, Vienna, Krakow – and the German ones – Heidelberg, Freiburg, Ingolstadt, Tübingen – were founded. The academic peregrination phenomenon has been growing rapidly throughout Western Europe since the mid-19th century, and this expansion constitutes one of the fundamental processes of modernization[4].

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[1] Cluj-Napoca, Editura MediaMusica, 2021.

[2] David Foenkinos, *Către frumuseţe* [Towards Beauty], translated from French by Daniel Niculescu, Bucureşti, Editura Humanitas, 2020, p. 105.

[3] The documents underlying this paper, which tell the story of the famous school, are: Report to the Ministry drafted by Auguste Mangeot, principal of the School and its cofounder with Alfred Cortot, the Bylaws of the School also drafted by the two of them, articles in the Le Monde musical journal, as well as a vast list of publications of French musicology, which I had the privilege of consulting in various Parisian archives and libraries. Also, our attending the various musical events held by the students and teachers of École Normale de Musique de Paris enabled us to get a glimpse of the current vibrating and effervescent activity of the School.

[4] It is no accident that sociologists and historians consider the mid-19th century as the beginning of the era of education, when the state saw school as an 'indispensable service', as education opened the way to free initiative, social prestige, safety, prosperity.

The Romanian Principalities also joined this phenomenon through its political decision-makers in 1859, when an important yet expensive system of training abroad for the native intellectual elite was implemented. Once they returned, they started to promote Western educational and scientific standards. Thus, between 1860 and 1944, almost all our politicians, university professors and high officials got educated abroad[5]. According to the late musicologist Francisc László, the 11th commandment of any Romanian was: "Go study in other countries, then come back and make the best use of everything you learned abroad"[6]. At this point, we should also mention the views of the historian Ioan Aurel Pop, President of the Romanian Academy: "although Romanians were not involved in the genesis of the great transformations of European culture, they did not build Gothic cathedrals, they did not produce heroic poetry, [...] they did not have scholastic universities in the 13th and 14th centuries, nor Renaissance like in Italy or France, nor great philosophers, dramatists or fabulists in the 17th and 18th centuries"[7], they did have values, openness, European consciousness, intertwined in a beautiful Western vocation. In other words, they had the awareness of the European model and the culture of mobility. In terms of music, the local piano pedagogy has not had a centuries-old tradition, nor experienced and prestigious teachers, although the nobles, merchants and intellectuals wanted their descendants to have a musical education. Piano lessons started in our country at the end of the 18th century, but without having been preceded by the study of the harpsichord or other keyboard instruments, as was the case in Western Europe. The stage of empiricism, corresponding to the flourishing era of instruments from the harpsichord family, was missing, and mechanicism only had some sporadic influence.

However, the roots of Romanian professional piano education are strongly anchored in the European tradition, through the representatives of the first generations of pianists and pedagogues trained in famous conservatories. Zealous as they were and supported by state policy, they went to study it abroad, in renowned cultural centers and, once they returned to the country, they consolidated a local school, capable, in its turn, of producing universal values. At first, the young pianists went to Vienna, Berlin, Leipzig and Budapest, then, in the interwar period, to Paris, and after 1950 to Moscow.

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[5] Lucian Kovács-Nastasă, *Studenți români la École Pratique des Hautes Études (Section des Sciences Historiques et Philologiques) 1868-1948* [Romanian students at the École Pratique des Hautes Études (Section of Historical and Philological Sciences) 1868-1948], Cluj-Napoca, Editura Eikon, 2016, p. 13.

[6] Francisc László, *Memoria lui George Ciolac* [The memory of George Ciolac], "Făclia", Cluj-Napoca, year XVIII, issue 5049, 6 June 2007, p. 4.

[7] Ioan-Aurel Pop, *Transilvania. Starea noastră de veghe* [Transylvania. Our vigil], Cluj-Napoca, Editura Școala Ardeleană, 2016, p. 66.

France, and especially Paris, was one of the preferred destinations for what the phenomenon of *peregrinatio academica* meant among young Romanians, due to the quality of higher education based on the principles of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic organization, which favored meritocracy, without prejudices regarding religion and social origin. It was also a relevant center due to its ideological effervescence, publications and prints, gossip or avant-garde artistic and literary manifestations. For all these reasons, Paris exerted an undeniable attraction on young people, becoming a place of reference in the European world and being the "academic capital of Europe"[8] for a long time.

### *École Normale de Musique de Paris*: the epicenter of European musical pedagogy

*École Normale de Musique de Paris* has always been one of the most prestigious and lasting musical education institutions of modern times, an institution where, over time, numerous musicians from all over the world have studied.

The institution was founded in 1919 and, although the name of Alfred Cortot was the spearhead of this institution, representing a guarantor of the notoriety and authority of the education system, several personalities of French pedagogy and performing arts laid the grounds and contributed to the development of the School[9].

In order to understand the history and specificity of the education dispensed by the creators of the *École Normale de Musique de Paris*, we need to know some facts about its founders and about the historical and cultural European background of that time.

**Auguste Mangeot** (1873-1942) played an essential role in launching this cultural and educational project. A powerful voice of his time, he is the one who 'set the tone' in the creation of the new educational institution. Despite the lack of any consistent information about Auguste Mangeot, even in French bibliographical sources, his portrait appears from the richness of the activities undertaken, correlated with his writings: articles, reports, official letters, most of which were published in the magazine *Le Monde musical*[10]. He had a particular interest in musical education (he came,

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[8] Lucian Kovács-Nastasă, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

[9] Pianist Ignace Paderewski (President of the Council of Ministers of the Polish State in 1919), composers Camille Saint-Saëns and Émile Paladilhe, organist Théodore Dubois, composer and pianist Gabriel Fauré, organist and teacher Charles-Marie Jean Albert Widor, Gustave Charpentier, Henri Rabaud, members of the Institut de France.

[10] The archives of the magazine *Le Monde musical* have provided a lot of information about the specificity of the School, about the complexity of the personality of its founders, Auguste Mangeot and Alfred Cortot, as well as about their management policy. The articles in the

moreover, from a famous family of piano manufacturers established in Nancy) and his most prominent activity was that of editor-in-chief of the well-known magazine, an acclaimed music journal which became a real *agora* of debates on pedagogical methods, institutional reforms, curriculum and concert activities in France and abroad.

On the other hand, at the time the School was founded, **Alfred Cortot** was 42 years old. He was influential and known for his activity as a pianist, performer, member of the famous chamber ensemble (the trio with Jacques Thibaud and Pablo Casals), conductor, teacher. Thus, this project benefited from his image capital and cosmopolite views, while Mangeot contributed with his financial, managerial and diplomatic resources. Both witnesses of the First World War, the two founders' musical actions were driven by their desire to preserve French culture, advocating for the revitalization of the selection system of the academic elite, and claiming that values such as freedom of expression, collective memory, patriotism and attention to heritage must be promoted.

Thus, the *École Normale de Musique de Paris* opened its doors on 6 October 1919, just four months after the signing of the Peace Treaty of Versailles.



L'École Normale de Musique de Paris
Un groupe de Professeurs et Élèves le jour de l'Ouverture

Fig. 1 *École Normale de Musique de Paris*. Group of teachers and students on the day of its opening[11]

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magazine describe concerts, premieres, debuts, stage appearances of the students of the School. It also includes views of music school teachers and principals, as well as of officials about various administrative aspects; organizational decisions, minutes from the meetings of the Management Board, operating documents, as well as measures taken regarding foreign students were also published.

[11] Photograph from the article signed by Auguste Mangeot, *Ouverture de l'École Normale de Musique de Paris*, "Le Monde musical", Paris, issue 10, year XXX, 1919, p. 291.

The school was conceived as a propaganda tool, a highly nationalistic anti-German cultural entity, set against the background of an imperative need to recover a certain capital of image, culture and artistic authority: "Our purpose is not to attract foreigners to France to settle here, but, on the contrary, to give them the opportunity to rank first in their country of origin through educational methods that they will implement in their turn, because, far from subjugating their nationalism, they will give them the opportunity to thrive and express themselves freely"[12].

In the School's promotional materials, its founders pointed out that this institution provided "full musical education to composers, virtuosos, performers, lyrical artists and teachers, both foreigners (including those who were not admitted to the Conservatories in Germany and Austria) and the French who did not meet the criteria to integrate the Conservatory"[13]. For the first time in the history of French education, future teachers could benefit from specific training for this profession. In spite of the elitist admission criteria set by the Conservatory, the new school aimed to admit all those who, "for reasons of age, level or simply chance, failed to pass the merciless entrance examination of the venerable establishment"[14].

An important document is the *Bylaws of the École Normale de Musique de Paris*, published in 1929, which includes data about the specificity of this prestigious music institution. The document reflects its permanent musical openness, observance of the demands of society, adaptability of the School to the diversity and the large number of students coming from all over the world. According to these bylaws, the basis of piano art is mental effort and then solving technical difficulties. The School insisted on the idea that the work of the instrumentalist must be guided, organized and continuously supported by their intellect. That meant the study of solfege, harmonic analysis, musical forms, etc. and attention directed towards awareness of muscle sensations starting from the fingertips, wrist (*poignet*), forearm, arm, shoulder.

According to the same bylaws, education in the *École Normale de Musique* was organized in such a way as:

1. To establish links between the courses taken by a student;
2. To allow the student self-control and to allow them to be their own teacher after they left school;

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[12] Auguste Mangeot, "Rapport sur la fondation à Paris d'une École Normale de Musique", Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Institut de France, Fonds Bernard Gavoty, Ms 8359, Ecole Normale de Musique, 1er octobre 1918, p. 1.

[13] Auguste Mangeot, *Ouverture de l'École Normale de Musique de Paris*, *op. cit.*, p. 292.

[14] Nelly Juhuette, *Regard sur Alfred Cortot. De la conception de l'interprétation aux applications pédagogiques*, Master's Degree Graduation Thesis, Paris, Université de Rennes II, 1991, p. 101.

3.　　　To allow the student to benefit from a lesson given in their presence to another colleague and thus involving them so as to keep them interested and focused throughout the course.

There are basically two key terms that define the founding and management policy of the institution: the **humanistic** approach (student-focused) and the **universalistic** approach (opened). Subsequently, these principles also underlay the teaching activity carried out by the teachers of the Cluj Conservatory, opening new educational and interpretive horizons.

## Romanian talents at the *École Normale de Musique de Paris*

The *École Normale de Musique de Paris* trained numerous Romanian pianists from:
- Bucharest: Ecaterina Fotino-Negru, George Ciolac, Ovidiu Drîmba, Radu Mihail, Dinu Lipatti, Silvia Şerbescu, Letiţia Ivaşcu, Jeanne Ghika, Cornel Cărbunescu, Emanuela Eremia;
- Iaşi: Eliza Ciolan, Rodica Suţu;
- Cluj: Viorica Adelina Radu;
- the Municipal Conservatory of Târgu Mureş: Alexandru Demetriad;
- or who had had private tuition: Gabriela Ţereanu took classes in Berlin with the renowned Artur Schnabel and then specialized at the *École Normale de Musique.* Six of them taught at the Conservatory in Cluj.

Among the representatives of the Cluj piano school, we will mention those who laid the foundations of an artistic education of French parentage, analyzing their contribution in terms of teaching and artistic achievements. They will be presented in the chronological order of their arrival at the Cluj Conservatory[15].

The review of the Romanian pedagogues who specialized in Paris can only begin with the pianist **Ecaterina Fotino-Negru**. She pioneered the 'importation' of the principles of the French school; she studied for two years at the renowned *École Normale de Musique*, where she had Alfred Cortot, Lazare-Lévy and Ricardo Viñes as maestros, and Diran Alexanian as chamber music teacher. Those courses decisively influenced her artistic path. Perfectly integrated in the elevated atmosphere of the school, she took part as a soloist in various artistic productions of the institution. At the same time, she had the revelation of authenticity in the interpretive approach of French piano pieces and participated, in the summer of 1924, in the courses held by Maurice Ravel, when she had the opportunity to perform his *Sonatina* under the direct

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[15] The data about the pianists from Cluj were extracted from the Archives of "Gheorghe Dima" National Academy of Music, from Parisian archives, from the press of the time, as well as from the testimonies of the disciples.

guidance of the composer. "Successfully performing the *Sonatina* in front of its demanding author, the future teacher managed, in the years to come, to religiously render the subtle charm of this demanding piece."[16]



Fig. 2 Maurice Ravel and his students at the master class, *École Normale de Musique*, 1924.
Ecaterina Fotino-Negru: in the second row, second from the left.

The young teacher had a rich and prodigious artistic activity between 1925 and 1961, during which she gave numerous concerts, recitals and trained generations of musicians who became renowned personalities, among them Sigismund Toduţă, Ninuca Oşanu Pop, Voichiţa Tiniş, Mihai Moldovan or Emil Simon. However, her center of gravity was her teaching career, as the pianist and Professor PhD. Ninuca Oşanu Pop argued:

> And yet, teaching was her main concern, her rich knowledge being made available to her disciples with a love that did not exclude severity. Her role in the evolution of Cluj higher education is important, considering that Ecaterina Fotino was part of both the first teaching team of the old Conservatory of Music and Dramatic Art, together with Ana Voileanu-Nicoară, Cornelia Deac, George Ciolac, and of the second one, that of the renewed institution after 1948, together with Eliza Ciolan, Magda Kardos and Gheorghe Halmos.[17]

Ecaterina Fotino-Negru brought a new breath, which materialized in several aspects, revealed by her disciple, Sigismund Toduţă, in his article *Sub semnul înnoirii pedagogiei pianului*[18]. These encompassed a new technique

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[16] Ninuca Oşanu Pop, *Memento – Ecaterina Fotino-Negru (1902-1991)*, "Muzica" Journal, Bucureşti, issue 2, 2002, p. 149.

[17] *Ibidem*.

[18] Sigismund Toduţă, *Sub semnul înnoirii pedagogiei pianului* [Under the piano pedagogy renewal sign], "Musicology Papers", vol. 15, Cluj-Napoca, "Gheorghe Dima" Music Conservatory, 1984, pp. 65-69.

(the piano apparatus is not limited to the action of the fingers, but also needs the *poignet*, the forearm, the arm and the shoulder blade, thus achieving an ample, rich sonority, a variety of sound timbres), new editions of the scores (those arranged by Bruno Mugellini, Alfredo Casella, Alfred Cortot), playing of a French repertoire (the music of Fauré, Debussy, Ravel begins to be studied), playing the local repertoire as well (the names of Mihail Jora, Sabin Drăgoi, Mihail Andricu or Marțian Negrea are heard more and more), not to mention student assessment forms (starting with the academic year 1931–1932, the piano class graduation exam also included a public concert, held in collaboration with a symphony orchestra). Sigismund Toduță ends his article with appreciation and gratitude to his teacher, Ecaterina Fotino-Negru: "All the innovative ideas mentioned and briefly described belong to one person: my teacher Ecaterina Fotino-Negru. We express all our gratitude for her ideas. It is our belief that they hit fertile ground and were not slow to bear rich fruit."[19]

Indeed, the 'seeds' of Parisian pedagogy fell on Romanian 'fertile ground' and designed the entire higher music education system at a level close to Western standards; among her disciples we should mention Sigismund Toduță, Ninuca Oșanu Pop, Voichița Tiniș, Mihai Moldovan, Emil Simon, all of them renowned personalities in the Romanian musical world.

The pianist **George Ciolac** (1903-1977) was, in his turn, an exponent of the Romanian and French piano schools. Born in Moldova, he studied in Bucharest and later settled in Cluj, as a teacher at the Conservatory, and then, between 1940 and 1945, in Timisoara, where the Cluj Academy of Music had sought refuge. As the musicologist Francisc László used to say, "I personally do not think that there has been another Romanian artist of his level who was so organically integrated in all four large historical provinces of Romania"[20].

Eager to improve his skills, he studied at the prestigious *École Normale de Musique* in Paris between 1926 and 1929, where he had Alfred Cortot and Lazare-Lévy as teachers and was awarded a *Diplôme de Licence de Concert de Piano*. Alfred Cortot himself praised his student dearly in the magazine *Le monde musical*, at one point considering him his most talented disciple[21]. After three years of successful performances in Paris, as well as in other cities of France, George Ciolac returned to the country, with the diploma signed by Cortot. George Ciolac taught for 21 years at the Cluj Conservatory. Like the pianist Ecaterina Fotino-Negru, George Ciolac carried out an intense teaching and artistic work: he performed as a concert soloist, gave recitals and was the member of various chamber ensembles. In 1940, he gave a recital in Bolzano, during which he also performed George Enescu's no. 1

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[19] Sigismund Toduță, *op. cit.*, p. 69.

[20] Francisc László, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

[21] *Ibidem*.

*Sonata in F sharp minor*, *op. 24*, being the first pianist from Cluj to play this opus in public, an inspired piece, but of great artistic difficulty. During the Second World War, he continued his work in Timişoara, contributing to Romanian musical life in a difficult era for artistic culture. His career prospects were brilliant, but fate wanted otherwise. Due to health issues, he retired in 1950, leaving behind a brilliant but meteoric career. He remained in the memory of his disciples, the valuable musicians Dorin Pop, Miron Șorec, Max Eisikovits, Tosca Nistor Șorban, Romeo Ghircoiașiu, Eva Radeș and Enea Borza.

**Eliza Ciolan (1900-1980)** was one of the most important and complex pianists in the Romanian musical world. He was born, raised and educated in an environment conducive to the development of her obvious musical skills. Important Romanian musical personalities contributed to her development as a musician: Eduard Caudella, Enrico Mezzetti, Emil Mihail, Alexandru Zirra, Antonin Ciolan. She married the latter, the founder of the Cluj Philharmonic Orchestra, in 1924 and forming a harmonious tandem both on stage and in real life. Eliza Ciolan taught in Iași, performed on stages all over the country, and in 1949 started to teach in Cluj. Throughout her teaching career, Eliza Ciolan considered the transmission of knowledge and artistic experience acquired in the country and abroad a wonderful mission. During her almost three decades of teaching activity, she trained generations of pianists and musicians, among whom we mention: Romeo Ghircoiașiu, Harald Enghiurliu, Cornel Ţăranu, Walter Metzger, Tiberiu Szász (Tibor Szász), as a pupil and student. The passing of time has confirmed that her disciples have become renowned artistic professionals, some of them helping the Piano Department of the Music High School and Conservatory in Cluj grow.

**Alexandru Demetriad (1903-1983)** was one of the most prodigious Romanian pianists, an artist focused on the performing arts. His success was hindered by the limits imposed by the communists, who forbade him to give concerts in Western Europe, although he was invited by the most important philharmonic orchestras in Europe. Nevertheless, his artistic activity was rich, his concerts revealing a preference for the romantic and French repertoire, like his Master from Paris. Also, the concerts commented by the performer were a first for Romania and imitate the concerts given by Alfred Cortot (an additional argument for the visible influences, but above all, for the import of the French model in our country). Among the six pianists, he studied for the longest period in Paris, 7 years, during which time he thoroughly studied both composition and piano. Back to Romania, Alexandru Demetriad gave numerous recitals, concerts, musical-educational events, following Cortot's model. Unfortunately, since he worked for a very short time in the Conservatory in Cluj, we could not find any records of him in the Archives. However, due to his rich performing activity, we found numerous

reviews, including one signed by Profira Sadoveanu, the daughter of the famous writer, who suggestively titled Demetriad 'the piano tamer'. With a dense performer career spanning over five decades, Demetriad remained in our collective memory as a talented assiduous pianist, permanently eager to improve.

**Viorica Radu (1900-1956)** and **Gabriela Țereanu (1917-1990)** were accompanists and assistant piano teachers. **Viorica Radu** taught for 29 years at the Cluj Conservatory. Although she was a discreet and emotional person (as the pianist describes herself), Viorica Adelina Radu was a complex personality. She translated from German treatises and booklets needed by students in the piano department, as well as conducting treatises. **Gabriela Țereanu** taught for 16 years at the Cluj Conservatory and was a pianist influenced by the German, French and also Hungarian schools. All these influences contributed to the creation of a complex pianist, with a rich teaching activity, carried out both in Arad and Cluj. According to the documents kept in the ANMGD Archives, she was a devoted teacher, a conscientious and assiduous pianist, eager to improve and share the secrets of music with her students.

**Epilogue**

Although the privileged moment when the musical life of Cluj City was directly connected to the thriving cultural life of Paris is a thing of the past, it is still perpetuated today through the exponents of the young generation who make the best use of its teachings. The pianist Georgiana Fodor, teacher at "Gheorghe Dima" National Academy of Music, young graduate of the *École Normale de Musique*, is one of these continuators.

> I greatly appreciate the elegant and refined style of Alfred Cortot and French pedagogues in general. The French school places great emphasis on clarity and purity of sound. I definitely want to instill these values and this way of looking at music in my students. I encourage a theoretical and contextual knowledge of the studied pieces as thorough as possible and I try to guide them as much as possible in the direction of developing their own artistic vision.[22]

Although, several generations later, Cortot's principles have been updated and modernized in line with current requirements, they remain, for the most part, the guidelines of the Cluj piano school. Therefore, today's representatives of the Cluj school find themselves in a noble artistic lineage and celebrate through their performances a high-class pianistic tradition.

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# A perspective on the musical criticism of Iasi from the interwar period

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*Abstract:* The advantage of learning history through the perspective of the criticism of a certain period lies in the fact that the journalist does not merely reproduce the information, but also describes the state emanating from the events commented upon, himself being contemporary with them. For us, readers of later decades, newspapers are, objectively speaking, a genuine history textbook. However, discovering interwar periodicals from Iasi has proven to be a fairly difficult task. In order to identify the titles from Iasi, I have consulted the catalogues of three major libraries in the city: "Mihai Eminescu" Central University Library, "Gheorghe Asachi" County Library and the library of "George Enescu" National University of Arts. In this endeavor, I discovered titles that appear either in the pre-war or in the post-war periods. Moreover, publications such as *Curierul de Iași* issued both before and after the wars but ceased their activity in the interwar period. Finally, the titles that circulated in the interwar period and could be accessed are *Flacăra Iașului, Ziarul Opinia, Evenimentul, Însemnări ieșene* and *Ziarul Scânteia*. Starting from their pages, I have attempted to reconstruct a side of the interwar artistic climate of Iași.

*Keywords:* history; newspapers; interwar; musical life; artistic.

### Introduction

The first major war of the modern era that shook the whole world had, unsurprisingly, a profoundly destabilizing result, both in the political and economic climates, as well as in others, through its macro-level domino effect. Once with the end of the conflict, the population, still disoriented, mistrustful, cautious, dares to resume its daily course of life, a setting favorable for sprouting feelings of trust and fulfillment. In this period, artists from various fields, who had considerably reduced public presence, resume their activity at a normal pace. In music, public manifestations increase in frequency, music schools regain their rightful place and, generally, the public artistic activity is experiencing a revival. The newspapers of the time allow us to discover a perspective of life in this particular period.

Apart from the historical publications which addressed a certain type of readers, the periodicals overall make up a fresco which mirrors reality, naturally, through the lens of the journalist who brings a quasi-objective contribution. The advantage of learning history through the media of the time lies in the fact that the journalist does not merely reproduce the information, but also describes the state emanating from the events commented upon, himself being contemporary with them. For us, readers of later decades, newspapers are, objectively speaking, a true history textbook. From the area of musicology, the concern of historians George Pascu and Melania Boțocan for the music from Iasi generated a reference work entitled *Hronicul muzicii ieșene*[1] [Chronicle of Iași music].

However, discovering the titles of the interwar periodicals from Iași has proven quite challenging. In order to identify the titles from Iasi, I have consulted the catalogues of three major libraries in the city: "Mihai Eminescu" Central University Library, "Gh. Asachi" County Library and the library of "George Enescu" National University of Arts. In this endeavor, I discovered titles that appear either in the pre-war or in the post-war periods. Moreover, publications such as *Curierul de Iași* appeared both before and after the wars but ceased their activity in the interwar period. Finally, the titles that circulated in the interwar period and could be accessed are *Flacăra Iașului, Însemnări ieșene*, *Ziarul Scânteia*, *Ziarul Opinia* and *Evenimentul*. Starting from their pages, I have attempted to reconstruct a side of the interwar artistic climate of Iași. A first observation is that *Evenimentul* paid greater interest in the culture of Iasi than the *Opinia*, which stands in concise announcements about certain musical events, especially operettas, cinematographic events and various celebrations with entertainment music. Apart from the activities with a declared cultural/musical purpose, music in the interwar period was integrated in events such as cinema movies accompanied *live*, various celebrations, commemorations and anniversaries where the music was ensured by the military orchestra.

Given the lengthy 20-year interval between the two World Wars, a research covering the entire period requires, on the one hand, consulting numerous periodicals and, on the other hand, a long-term focus. Incidentally, this paper is declared to be only the beginning of a larger, more complex and, undoubtedly, more than necessary research. Why necessary? Because learning the past is not only a moral duty, but also a means of understanding the present. The modern musical life of Iasi could be considered to have written its first lines right then, in the interwar period, both challenging and flourishing. In this regard, bringing some of the journalistic contributions that are not available to

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[1] George Pascu, Melania Boțocan, *Hronicul muzicii ieșene* [Iași Music Chronicle], Iași, Editura Noel, 1997.

the general public into an accessible environment is a benefit for our culture. It must be established from the very beginning that the following observations refer mainly to the years 1918-1920.

If we go behind the scenes of the research process for a moment, we find that spending a good few hours a day consulting newspapers, especially old ones, typed in small font, erased and yellowed by time, is in itself a demanding job. However, transposing oneself into the spirit of the time through these vividly written pages of history is a true delight! One learns about political and economic life, about daily interests, conflicts and their source, and even about certain items available in shops. Well, in all this turmoil – political changes, intrigues, economic challenges, shortcomings – art is an island surrounded by the waters of society: it cannot be fully integrated, but neither can it be completely separated.

### 1. Symphonic and chamber music

According to the newspapers of the time, the period immediately following World War I was marked by the artists' efforts to revive cultural life. The endeavor required all the more work since, at that time, music institutions still did not exist. The philharmonic would open its doors only in 1942, and the Opera even later, in 1956. Thus, we have the opportunity to see both local bands and guest ensembles or artists on the stages from Iași.

Symphonic music was mostly supported by the "George Enescu" Symphony Society orchestra established in Iasi in October 1918 and having George Enescu himself as the honorary president. Therefore, we owe him the success of this artistic beginning that our city harnessed to ensure the continuity of musical life. The first concert was hosted by the National Theatre on the 15th of October, under the musical direction of Mircea Bârsan. This institution would also host a good part of the city's future musical events. At the following concerts, George Enescu himself and, later, Mihail Jora took the conductor's podium.[2] For the public willing to break away from the harsh reality and to reconnect with art through the universal language of music, there were, even then, performance programs that included, as reported in *Evenimentul* of February 15th 1919, "explanatory theoretical notes of the pieces being performed"[3]. The orchestra's repertoire consisted of established classical works, but also works by lesser-known composers, such as Pietro Nardini.

A common presence in the newspapers of the time is Eduard Caudella, who publishes consistent texts. Caudella was so involved in the musical activity of Iași, that every performance seemed to occupy a well-established place in his schedule. In an article-chronicle on the 14th symphonic concert of

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[2] *Cf.* George Pascu, Melania Boțocan, *op. cit.*, p. 174.
[3] "Evenimentul" newspaper, Year XXVII, No. 10, Friday, 15 February 1919, p. 2.

the "Enescu" Society, published in *Evenimentul* from March 16th 1919, the musician wrote:

> I am delighted that I could attend once again a concert given by the musical society 'George Enescu'. During the week, it is impossible for me [to do so], no matter how hard I try, due to my particular occupations.[4]

Eduard Caudella's chronicles contain both considerations related to interpretation and brief historical-stylistic reviews. In the 2nd of March 1919 *Evenimentul* issue, the musician explains that his journalistic activity is due to the presence of Enescu and his society, and that with the end of the series of concerts, he will make room for other critics. In the first interwar years, Maximilian Costin, Dr. Emil Savini, Don Dièse, Alexandu Cişman, as well as an author who goes by the abbreviation "Ar. Foc" also signed articles related to the musical events in Iasi[5].

Important names such as George Enescu, Antonin Ciolan, Mircea Bârsan, Enrico Mezzetti, conductor Gheorghe Ionescu, cellists Nicu Teodorescu and Flor Breviman, tenor Giacomo Borelli, pianists Ilie Sibianu and Vasile Onofrei, violinists Alexandru Garabet and Alexandru Stavrache and Traian Ionaşcu and others enlivened the musical life of the city. Some of them are only mentioned in the announcements of upcoming concerts, others are the actual subject of articles. For example, George Enescu was, naturally, the central point of several articles.

Let's linger on Caudella's article published in *Evenimentul* of the 15th of February 1919, entitled *Recitalul Beethoven dat de Maestrul George Enescu şi d-nul Flor Breviman* [Beethoven Recital given by Maestro George Enescu and Mr. Flor Breviman]. Here, while admiring the musician's multiple interpretive talent, the author concludes:

> When one has to choose what to admire more of the maestro's playing the piano or the violin, you have to say 'mon coeur balance entre la brune et la blonde' (i. e. between the piano and violin). He is perfect and a great artist on both instruments.[6]

In the same newspaper, two days later, an article-open letter is published, *To Master Enescu*, the "sender" being Dr. Emil Savini, one of the founding members - together with Dr. Constantin Ion Parhon - of the Romanian Society of Neurology, Psychiatry and Endocrinology, established in 1919. The author confirms the unwritten conviction that there is an intimate, unspoken

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[4] Eduard Caudella, *XIVth symphonic concert*, "Evenimentul" newspaper, Year XXVII, No. 35, Saturday, 16 March 1919, p. 2.

[5] "Evenimentul" newspaper, Year XXVII, No. 12, Sunday, 17 February 1919, p. 2.

[6] Eduard Caudella, *Recitalul Beethoven dat de Maestrul George Enescu şi d-nul Flor Breviman* [Beethoven Recital given by Master George Enescu and Mr. Flor Breviman], "Evenimentul" newspaper, Year XXVII, No. 10, Friday, 15 February 1919, p. 2.

connection between medicine and music that goes beyond scientific records. A fragment of the text of an almost poetic lyricism will prove eloquent:

> Your calling is great, your duty sublime. Go among your own and preach them peace and unity. Your divine art makes you almighty. In the spell of your harmonies all evil thoughts are bound and numbed forever like a fly in a spider's web. For you, at will, can make us laugh or cry, hope or despair, melt with pain or jump for joy.[7]

Another musician who is the subject of an unsigned article, also from *Evenimentul* (20th February 1919), is the cellist Nicu Teodorescu. The following is a fragment extracted from the admiring text:

> The title of a "great artist" that the critics grant with such ease and abundance is fully deserved by Nicu Teodorescu. The manner in which he performed the de Saint-Saens concerto in the last symphony concert ranks him at the top of our cellists. (...) For us, who have known him for a long time, his success was a normality, but for the general public, it was a revelation.[8]

The concert from May also had positive reverberations, after which the instrumentalist was addressed in a laudatory article (signed by Ar. Foc.). The appreciation focuses on his ability to acquire professional training without having studied abroad:

> Through his own work, he has become the artist most beloved by the public. He did not go among foreigners (...). Here he carried the apostolate of true art and succeeded in growing on the public.[9]

The pages of the March 12th 1919 *Evenimentul* highlight the artistic personality of the tenor Giacomo Borelli, soloist of the Metropolitan Opera in New York. In the anonymous article dedicated to the recital presented with the pianist Enrico Mezzetti, the singer is described as *"one of the world-renowned tenors, having a very strong, voluminous voice that knows how to impress.[10]"*

We learn opinions about the pianist Ilie Sibianu from the article signed by Don Dièse regarding the Chopin Recital (*Evenimentul*, the 29th of March 1919)*:

> He had a strong temperament, sonority, phrasing, feeling, elegance, in short, all the qualities of a high class musician and pianist; but for him to

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[7] Emil Savini, *Maestro Enescu*, "Evenimentul" newspaper, Year XXVII, No. 12, Sunday, 17 February 1919, p. 2.

[8] "Evenimentul" newspaper, Year XXVII, No. 19, Wednesday, 20 February 1919, p. 2.

[9] Ar. Foc., *Nicu Teodorescu Concert*, "Evenimentul" newspaper, Year XXVII, No. 64, Thursday, 8 May 1919, p. 1.

[10] *Giacomo Borelli Concert*, "Evenimentul" newspaper, Year XXVII, No. 31, Tuesday, 12 March 1919, p. 1.

interpret and "sing" Chopin as he did on Monday in the University Aula, we certainly did not expect.[11]

The author of the article insists on the verb "to sing", wishing to highlight the almost vocal lyricism the pianist manages to obtain on playing the instrument.

## 2. Operetta music

Starting with the autumn of 1919, the Avram Nicolau (formerly Gabrielescu) Operetta Company had a recurring interpretative activity in Iași. Avram Nicolau was a senator in the county then called Timiș-Torontal, and also an artist involved in theater. In 1918, he led the Grigore Gabrielescu Company, later renamed after his name, which toured the big Romanian cities, definitely including the city of Iasi.

The band's repertoire included such titles as *The Violinist* by Edmund Eysler, *Where the Lark Sings* by Franz Lehár (1918), *Grape Harvest* by Oskar Nedbal (1916), *The Black Forest Girl* by Leon Jessel (1917), *The Carnival Fairy* by Emmerich Kalman and *The Miss from the Post*, operetta whose author I have not identified. The Gabrielescu Company included Jean Niculescu, Virginia Miciora, Lică Rădulescu, Lily Tănăsescu, Nicu Kanner, Gina Hermeziu, Marilena Bodescu, Ana Grand and Bob Hopkins, according to a small publication at the Jsidor A. Stern & Emil Embra Publishing House, Bucharest, 1918, entitled *Caricatura sub ocupaţie [Caricature under occupation]* (Text by A. De Herz, Adrian Maniu, Ion Pribeagu, Ap. Rodan and Orfeu). The announcements of the performances of the Avram Nicolau Company (formerly Gabrielescu) could only be found in the *Opinia* newspaper.

Another part of the operetta shows was organized by the Israeli Operetta Drama and Comedies Company. A few names that stood out are Askenazy, Goldenberg and Clara Young. This company used to play in the Sidoli Theater-Cinema.

## 3. Opera music

In the lyrical theater area, an important role was played by the guest companies, given the fact that, as previously mentioned, the local music institutions had not yet come into existence. Thus, the opera performances offered by the Bessarabia Opera Company led by Jean Bobescu and Bojena Belousova were highly welcome. A four-day tour - June 28-July 1, 1919 - announced important titles that the audience in Iasi had the privilege of

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[11] Don Dièse, *Chopin Recital*, "Evenimentul" newspaper, Year XXVII, No. 45, Friday, 29 March 1919, p. 1.

watching, namely *Cavalleria rusticana* by Pietro Mascagni, *The Queen of Spades* by Piotr Ilici Tchaikovsky, *Aida* by Giuseppe Verdi, *La Juive* by Jacques Fromental Halévy, *Pagliacci* by Ruggero Leoncavallo and a scene from *Eugene Onegin* by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky, all under the musical direction of Jean Bobescu, a conductor who graduated from the Conservatory of Iasi.

### 4. Conservatory activity

Another compartment of the cultural life in Iasi is the activity of the Conservatory. Some of the students of the time became prominent figures in the composition or performance field. From *Evenimentul* newspaper, where some of the exam sessions are recorded, we learn information about students with promising results.

The piano exam in Professor Sibianu's class on the 23rd of June 1919 is declared to have been "a real musical celebration"[12]. Pianist Migueta Barberis, sister of the composer Mansi Barberis, stood out. The recital given during the exam included *Toccata* by Bach, studies by Liszt and Chopin and *Fantasia in F minor* by Chopin. "The performance exceeded all expectations. The temperament and sentiment she performed with prove a deep musical skill, which attracted the accolades of the examining jury."[13]

Many instrumentalists stood out from the violin class of professor Athanasie Teodorini as well. Over time, they proved to be pillars of the performing arts in Iași and beyond: Mansi Barberis, Avy Abramovici, Alexandru Garabet, Jean Bobescu, Vasile Filip and many others.

### Conclusions

A review of the musical life in Iași from the beginning of the interwar period would first of all show a decentralization, due to the lack of local music institutions, as mentioned above. In the context of the interwar musical events, we can thus distinguish performers from the local sphere, on the one hand – i.e. established artists, but also conservatory disciples – and from other cultural institutions in Romania and abroad on the other hand. As for the genres integrated in the repertoire, they include symphonic music, chamber music, opera and operetta.

What we are today in terms of musical public life is owed mostly to the interwar period artistic work. All that's left for us is to cherish the positive aspects of history and fulfill our duty of further enriching the great musical work with both its classical and modern infusions.

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[12] "Evenimentul" newspaper, Year XXVII, No. 100, Wednesday, 25 June 1919, p. 2.
[13] *Ibidem*.

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# Aurel Stroe – Dominants of Musical Thought
# (90 years since birth)

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*Abstract:* Aurel Stroe, one of the greatest post-Enescian Romanian composers, is also a master of putting into words the metabolism of the great axiological ideas of humanity. At his 90th birth anniversary, given the originality of his discourse and his system of thought, Aurel Stroe needs an analytical synthesis of his entire vision of sound art (not just of his compositional system). Articulated under the sign of interdisciplinarity, his streams of ideas are so consistent that they draw their energy from different spheres of human culture, supporting a dramaturgy of creation that proposes incommensurable models juxtaposed within the same work. The morphogenetic music (born from the translation of the great mathematical theories of time into sound art), the composition with several tuning systems or within which immeasurable cultural dominants are confronted, give rise to a type of work of art that faces the same main difficulty as every valuable creation: sustaining its unity (which inevitably, breaks down, endangering its very quality). This paper offers some of the strategies the composer harnesses to handle his musical material, under the conditions of an extreme semantic difficulty: that of the expressive stabilization of the work in the imbalanced context caused by the coexistence of incommensurable elements. In this framework, other favorite topics are: the ontology of the work of art (and its sufferings in the modern context), the reflection of the theories of bifurcations, fractals and the chaos theory in sound art, the application of thermodynamic principles in the sound compositional space. The result of such strategies is dramatic, catastrophic, collapsing structures that propose unpredictable dynamics. A theoretician without equal, deeply knowledgeable of the great musical systems, he saw them as sound expressions with universal consequences, of great magnitude.

*Keywords:* modernity; dynamic; chaos; ontology; catastrophe.

## 1. Introduction: Milestones of Aurel Stroe's life and work

Aurel Stroe, one of the greatest post-Enescian Romanian composers, is also a master of putting into words the metabolism of the great axiological ideas of humanity. At his 90th birth anniversary, given the originality of his discourse and his system of thought, Aurel Stroe needs an analytical synthesis of his entire sound art vision (not just of his compositional system). On the 5th of May 2022, master Aurel Stroe would have turned 90 years old, fulfilling a

destiny that had to face many challenges: those of freedom that he assumed at any cost, even that of leaving his country in the face of the communist calamity that was about to take over. Simple yet so complex, close to the youth and yet so sophisticated, good-hearted to the point of being beyond reproach, Aurel Stroe – The musician who saw ideas[1] was not only a great composer and thinker of artistic phenomena, but also a mentor of musical consciousnesses, a human being of rare generosity, who shared his musical joys with a child's candor.

Aurel Stroe was also a master of putting into words the metabolism of the great axiological ideas of humanity, of his entire vision of sound art (not just of his compositional system). Articulated under the sign of interdisciplinarity, his streams of ideas were so consistent that they drew their energy from different spheres of human culture, supporting a dramaturgy of creation that proposed incommensurable models juxtaposed within the same work. A system of such novelty could only be supported by a complex musicological apparatus, never fully investigated until now, which must be illuminated by specifying its dominants.

Born on the 5th of May 1932 in Bucharest, in the family of the illustrious pediatrician who – from the position of father and trainer – knew how to place his son, from a very early age, in the presence of the greatest musical values that he himself admired and assimilated, accompanying him to the greatest festivals in Europe and in the greatest concert halls in Bucharest. The family took great care of the early education of the young musician who was under the tutelage of the greatest professors of the time: from the pianist Maria Fotino he learned (1951-1956) the expressive mysteries of music, the way in which music narrates its paths through sounds. His studies in composition were carried out with Mihail Andricu, in harmony with Marțian Negrea and in orchestration with Theodor Rogalski. During his courses in Darmstadt, he assimilated the secrets of the avant-garde, a decade and a half later, alongside Mauricio Kagel, György Ligeti and Karlheinz Stockhausen, continuing his research at the International Comparative Musicology Institute with Alain Danielou in the period 1972-1973.

Visiting professor in the university musical environments from Europe and the United States of America in the last two decades of the 20th century (where he had a unique pioneering role in computer-generated music, a role that was never officially recognized), Aurel Stroe also developed a career in teaching at the Bucharest Conservatory after 1962. After leaving the country – where communism was heavily exerting its constraints at cultural level as well

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[1] Dan Dediu, *Aurel Stroe, muzicianul care vedea idei* [Aurel Stroe, The Musician who Saw Ideas], "Evenimentul Zilei" newspaper, 06 Octombrie 2008, retrieved from https://evz.ro/aurel-stroe-muzicianul-care-vedea-idei-823405.html

as in the others, Aurel Stroe became a composition teacher at the Hochschule für Musik in Mannheim after 1986.

He would however return to Bucharest as a professor after the Revolution. In 2002, Aurel Stroe was awarded the "Gottfried von Herder" Prize at the University of Vienna, in recognition of his exceptional merits. The master passed away on the 3rd of October 2008, in Mannheim. He was returned to his homeland, as was his wish. His courses in Bușteni (started in 1992 and held even when he was barely able to move) were his way of conveying some secrets to which not everybody had access, that one had to experience before being able to understand. It was only there that I heard of the connection between thermodynamics and ontology – musically speaking.

An extremely selective list of his creation includes an important series of works dedicated to the stage (being a man of tragedy), among which: *Ça n'aura pas le Prix Nobel* (opera in 3 acts, 1969-71), *La paix* (anti-opera in 3 acts based on Aristophanes – 1973), the comedy-mystery *Das Weltkonzil* (*comédie mystère*, based on V. S. Soloviev – 1988), but especially the *Orestia* trilogy based on Aeschylus (composed of the works *Agamemnon* (*Orestia I*, music for theater in 3 acts – 1981), *Les Choéphores* (*Orestia II*, music for the theatre in 3 acts – 1977) and *Eumenides* (*Orestia III*, opera in 3 acts based on Sophocles – 1985).



Fig. 1 Aurel Stroe in his later years

His orchestral and instrumental works, which maximally honor the history of Romanian music, include: *Arcades* – 1962, Concert music for piano, 4 percussionists and 12 brass instruments – 1964, *Laudes I* and *II* for string instruments – 1966-68, *Canto I* and *II* – 1967-71, *Accords et comptines* – 1988, *Préludes lyriques* – 1999, *Mandala with a polyphony by Antonio Lotti* – 2000, but also the unknown masterpiece related to the mystical experience of the Burning Bush from the Antim Monastery in Bucharest – *Melodramas after The book of Job.*

In the area of chamber music, the three sonatas dedicated to the piano propose as many approaches to the reflection of non-musical phenomena in the sound language: Sonata No. 1 *Morphogenetica* – 1955, Sonata No. 2 *Thermodynamics* – 1983, Sonata No. 3 *In palimpsest* – 1992. The concertante creation revolutionizes the genre through the masterpiece from his early creation (Concerto for clarinet – 1976), but especially through the works of the last decade (*Capricci e Ragas*, concerto for violin and chamber orchestra – 1990; *Prairie, prières*, Sinfonia concertante for saxophone and orchestra – 1993; *Ciaccona con alcune licenze*, Sinfonia concertante for percussion and orchestra – 1995 and *Concerto for accordion and instrumental band* – 2001).

Despite of the fact that his musical creation has been investigated quite briefly thus far, beyond it there is a reservoir of musicological ideas of great depth and originality, perhaps as valuable as his sound art. This is our concern in this paper, since its sources are some of the most original and valuable concepts haloing music. Aurel Stroe is unique in the history of European art by duplicating a genius creation through an astonishing apparatus of thought on the musical phenomenon: a philosophical-mathematical excursion on the realities that are the basis of his musically articulated paths. Music always absorbed energies from beyond itself. In the wake of his music, much wider resorts must be sought, which engage the music in spheres far removed from its original context.

## 2. Stylistic dominants of Aurel Stroe's creation

Music recounts true world tragedies sonically, absorbing shockwaves into masterpieces that it transforms into significance. Our guide is his study from 1983: *Orestia, an essential reporting*. *The hidden side of Coephores*, from the "Secolul 20" magazine, no. 270-271. The paper offers some of the strategies with which the composer handled his musical material, in the conditions of an extreme semantic difficulty: that of the expressive stabilization of the work in the context of an imbalance offered by the coexistence of incommensurable elements.

### 2.a. Planetary folklore

In the first stage of his creation, he approached planetary folklore, through the

> concern for simplifying sound systems, appeals to extra-European folklore sources (Indian, Chinese, Japanese, Hebrew), but also to Romanian carols, Byzantine melodies, Gregorian songs, attempting a fusion of sound materials. A final stage of a broad compositional vision in time, in the perspective of formalizing music based on multi-mobiles, on catalogs of various microstructures, towards that morphogenesis of major inner tension, with disrupting, surprising moments, is gradually found in the last concerts.[2]

The master attempted a return to simplicity, a rediscovery of the self, a search for the roots from which the existing musical system as a whole flourished: it is the call for the one who needs a foundation, who seeks stability in the innocence of early beginnings, the one who needs pure sparkle of the first sound structures.

### 2.b. Interdisciplinarity, probing boundaries

> Aurel Stroe has brought together mathematics and logic, morphogenetic processes and the calculation of probabilities, giving great importance to musical tone. His very original style exploited unusual sonorities, mixing instruments in an unusual manner. He also explored the microtonal world (including the extra-European one) and the most diverse vocal techniques (from *Sprechstimme* to shouting).[3]

### 2.c. Morphogenetic music, disaggregation, rupture, anomaly, the irrecoverable

Many of the master's ideas of the master stand under this sign. The composer of

> catastrophic ruptures, of inexorable disaggregation, nourished by the spirit of destruction, of structural anomalies, of the irreversible and the irretrievable as basic conditions of being, of reflecting on the principles of thermodynamics in closed systems, of states of continuous collapse by the openness to another world – with a different mentality[4], Aurel Stroe did not only seek the linear illustration of the text in the musical score,

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[2] Viorel Cosma, *Aurel Stroe*, in *Muzicieni din România. Lexicon* [Musicians from Romania. Lexicon], vol. 8, 2005.

[3] Ruxandra Arzoiu, in *Grove's New Dictionary for Music and Musicians*, electronic edition, *Stroe, A.*

[4] Aurel Stroe, *Orestia, o raportare esenţială. Faţa ascunsă a Coephorelor* [Orestia, an Essential Reporting. The Hidden Side of Coephores], "SECOLUL 20" magazine, no. 270-271, 6-7/1983, p. 25.

but also the access to the "deeper level of dramatic significance and musical structures"[5].

All these have become elements responsible for the constitution of the tragic condition through

> ruptures inside the being. The dramaturgical ruptures are reflected in music through fissures that grow irreversibly and produce severe disturbances in the musical composition, dislocations in the musical language. The music breaks under the pressure of the tragic text.[6]
> The temporal breakage, the cleavage of sliding planes, the stylistic dislocations lead to the decrease of discursive coherence, to the increase of confusion, finally to the ontological catastrophe of the work.[7]
> The decomposition of the work releases an energy and a psychological flow that makes it possible to embody it as a show.[8]
> The fractured work embodies the destruction of a world.[9]

The morphogenetic music (born from the translation of the great mathematical theories of time into sound art), the composition with several tuning systems or within which immeasurable cultural dominants are confronted, give rise to a type of work of art that faces the same main difficulty as every creation of value: sustaining its unity (which inevitably, breaks down, endangering its very quality). This paper offers some of the strategies with which the composer handles his musical material, under the conditions of an extreme semantic difficulty: that of the expressive stabilization of the work in the context of an imbalance caused by the coexistence of incommensurable elements.

In this framework, other favorite topics are: the ontology of the work of art (and its sufferings in the modern context), the reflection of the theories of bifurcations, fractals and the chaos theory in sound art, the application of thermodynamic principles in the sound compositional space. The result of such strategies is dramatic, catastrophic, collapsing structures that propose unpredictable dynamics. A theoretician without equal, deeply knowledgeable of the great musical systems, he saw them as sound expressions with universal consequences, of great magnitude.

### 2.d. The ontology of the work of art

In this framework, other favorite topics are: the ontology of the work of art (and its sufferings in the modern context), the reflection of the theories of

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[5] Aurel Stroe, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

[6] *Idem*, p. 26.

[7] *Idem*, pp. 52-53.

[8] *Idem*, p. 54.

[9] *Idem*, p. 27.

bifurcations, fractals and the chaos theory in sound art, the application of thermodynamic principles in the sound compositional space. The result of such strategies is dramatic, catastrophic, collapsing structures that propose unpredictable dynamics. Being a theoretician by inner constitution (passionate of ideas), connoisseur of the great musical systems, he saw them as sonorous expressions with universal consequences, of great magnitude. In his music, not only systems were broken, but worlds, ontologies: his vision went far beyond the auditory one. Aurel Stroe's music built not only on the acoustic, sound level, but also on the "conceptual and especially ontological level"[10]. It was always about "understanding beauty and perceiving its significance"[11].

### 2.e. The multilayered (superpositional) complexity

Master of overlapping times, of incommensurable complexities on an acoustic (but also a conceptual) level, Aurel Stroe sought internal history (the becoming) beyond the seen, external history. "The composition with several tuning systems – seen as cultural paradigms[12] is another constant of his musical thinking and creation.

> Aurel Stroe's work was inspired by avant-garde areas of contemporary thought. For the theory of morphogenetic music, which he conceived during his period in Germany, he relied on René Thom's theory of catastrophes. The composer always depended on his encyclopedic knowledge, of which all those who knew him speak (fed with intensive readings in mathematics, symbolic logic, thermodynamics, history of sciences, linguistics).[13]

### 2.f. The surrealist tragedy (the cult of paradox)

His music commenced from the adventure of creation, the discovery in itself of some fabulous sound scales, extracted and compiled from cultures other than the one to which it belonged, for reasons difficult to understand: why would one want, as a composer, to put one's work in the precarious (and tense!) situation of fracturing its unity through morphogenetic, catastrophic (in the mathematical sense) techniques, when its unity is a universal desideratum? Why seek ontological tension, difficult to manage both at the compositional and at the interpretive levels (and not just any kind of tension, but that between

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[10] Aurel Stroe, *op. cit.*, p. 28.
[11] Alain Danielou, *apud* Aurel Stroe, *op. cit.*, p. 28.
[12] *Aurel Stroe*, "433. Refugiu. Experimental" ["433. Refuge. Experimental"], 19 Martie 2008, retrieved from https://web.archive.org/web/20090210035258/http://www.433.ro/muzica/2008/03/19/aurel-stroe/
[13] *Cf.* Dan Dediu, *Aurel Stroe, muzicianul care vedea idei* [Aurel Stroe, The Musician Who Saw Ideas], "Evenimentul Zilei", 06 Octombrie 2008, retrieved from https://evz.ro/aurel-stroe-muzicianul-care-vedea-idei-823405.html

incommensurable elements, which have nothing to do with one another)? Why propose – in one's own masterpieces – worlds that break and carry with them the tragedy of characters who have almost nothing to say to one another?

These great "why's" write the story of the life and creation of the most original Romanian composer of the second half of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century, the man who invested with properties specific to tragedy even his concerts or works without an operatic dominant. He always manifested a purely scenic vision, which was visible even in purely instrumental works – which would not normally entail it. For this reason, he had so much adherence to tragedy, and for the same reason, he looked through its grid at the discourse of many of his works, which preserve the dramaturgical structure of the fight between opposites. This over-complexification of his musical language – always superpositional, always involving the immeasurable called for an impossible dialogue! – is merely his way of seeking to create and sustain the tragic inner tension of surrealist origin. This is the portrait of today's world...

### 3. Conclusions

Aurel Stroe's music (especially music from the last period, in which the Concert for accordion and instrumental band draws a symbol difficult to decipher) is best represented by the melody that moves towards the highest register at the end of the concert dedicated to the saxophone, a melody that rises towards unmatched rarefactions, breaking from itself a remnant, then a last remnant ... A man who was capable of synthesizing in his music the finest essences, Aurel Stroe was the only one of his generation who placed the ideas of Parmenides and Don Scotus together, the great and small infinity, the most advanced mathematics and Rene Guenon's concepts, frozen time and the eternity of Epiphanies (from *Ciaccona con alcune licenze*), mathematically argued fractals and catastrophes. Having a deep understanding of the great musical systems, he saw them as sound expressions with universal consequences of great magnitude.

He was a thorough thinker who found his arguments in the most distant epistemological premises of art. The composer Dan Dediu said of the master:

> in my opinion, Aurel Stroe was a brilliant personality. Both his music and his theoretical ideas have influenced many musicians from Romania and abroad. Personally, I was especially attracted by his clear manner of thinking and by the musical paradoxes to which he gave rise. As Camil Petrescu said, «this man saw ideas».[14]

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[14] Dan Dediu, *op. cit.*

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# Technical and Semantic Aspects in Viorel Munteanu's *Symphony No. 2*

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**Abstract:** *Symphony No. 2*, a recent creation of composer Viorel Munteanu (first performance in 2021), is a fascinating, modern and provocative work. It is part of the *"Shadows and Genesis"* cycle, accumulating the effort of over thirty years of experience: "My shadows and genesis are quasi-permanent sources of inspiration; they are themes always born and reborn from my own evolution"[1]. *Symphony No. 2* stands out through the massiveness of its structure, the originality of the orchestration and its character deeply anchored in Romanian folklore motifs. The sources of inspiration, "shadows and genesis", can be recognized, through references to previous creations and to Enescu's music, as well through its use of the "George Enescu" melogram. The symphonic work is made up of five parts, entitled suggestively: - I. *Imprints*, II. *Contrasts*, III. *Heterophonies*, IV. *Byzantine Sources*, V. *Dance of colors*. This paper presents the compositional techniques, Viorel Munteanu's fascination for the melograms - melodic "codes" transformed into the main thematic profile - and proposes an interpretation of the sound images generated by the expressive orchestration and thematic richness.

**Keywords:** Viorel Munteanu; *Symphony No. 2*; melogram; orchestration; themes.

## 1. Introduction

Viorel Munteanu is a composer who has dedicated himself to the symphonic genre, creating a total of 22 works. His creation comprises of two symphonies (*Symphony No. 1 "Gloss"* and *Symphony No. 2* from the cycle *"Shadows and Genesis"*), a flute concert, the cantata *Stephen the Great*, a vocal-symphonic poem (*The Voices of Putna*) and an oratorio. Leaning towards spirituality and depth of artistic expression shown through music, the composer from Iasi is living in prayer, seeking inner peace, always looking inward.

*Symphony No. 2* stands out through the massiveness of its structure, the originality of the orchestration and its character, deeply anchored in

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[1] Viorel Munteanu, *Presentation of the work for acquisition by UCMR* [Presentation of the work for acquisition by UCMR], manuscript.

Romanian folklore motifs. The symphonic work is made up of five parts, entitled suggestively: - I. *Imprints*, II. *Contrasts*, III. *Heterophonies*, IV. *Byzantine sources*, V. *Dance of colors*.

## 2. Analysis of work

The first part, ***Imprints***, is dominated by mystery, uncertainty, which broadly speaking creates, the sound of old, past times. Structurally, it is a prelude showing "a synthetic and enunciative representation of the essential motifs that will persist through the entire *Symphony* (the status of *prolegomena* for the entire cycle)"[2].

**The first motif** (**α** – the "George Enescu" melogram) is played by the celesta, generating a magical sound universe. The modal structure of the melogram, together with the sounds added, determines the symmetrical modal configuration 3-1-2-1. The note ***D*** (mobile step) determines the oscillation between the Phrygian mode (*Db-C*) and the chromatic 3 mode (*C-D#*), the note *C* having the role of an axis. The same modal structure is performed by strings in the higher register, in 16ths, providing tension to the sonic discourse.



Fig. 1 Viorel Munteanu, *Symphony No. 2*, part I – *Imprints*, mm. 1-3

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[2] Viorel Munteanu, Presentation of the work for acquisition by UCMR, manuscript, p. 2.
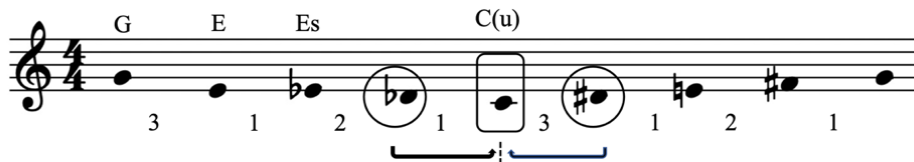
Fig. 2 Modal structure of "George Enescu" melogram

The second generating structure (**β**) is based on the symmetric mode 1:2, being made up of scales and interval leaps of thirds and fourths. The sonority that covers this structure combines the heroic expression of the brass timbre (trumpets-trombones), the tragic accents of the intonational incipit, due to the inverted chromatic formulas. The chord at the end of the exposition, a *precluster* composed of the sounds *C-C#-D-F#* displayed in parallel fourths, accentuates the tension of the discourse



Fig. 3 Viorel Munteanu, *Symphony No. 2*, part I – *Imprints*, mm. 4-9

The third generative structure, which the composer entitled "**thematic idea no. 1**" is dedicated to the woodwinds section and consists of sixteenth-

note formulas preceded by rests, acting as a signal. It has a fluid character and includes two cells inspired by George Enescu's *Chamber Symphony*. The structure appears in different instances appears throughout the work, being identifiable due to its distinct rhythm.



Fig. 4 Viorel Munteanu, *Symphony No. 2*, part I – *Imprints*, mm. 10-14

Sequentially, the composer creates a chain of contrasting moments, characterized by an oscillating expression, with timbral richness and diversity.

*Tempo primo* (m. 23) marks the first moment of orchestral tutti in which the *motif of introduction* (beta) is played, having a heroic character. It is made up of intervals characteristic to symmetrical mode 1:2: 4+, 7M, 2m. The thematic continuity gets dissipated by the intervention of the trumpet and the horns that play a modal structure similar to a military signal (m. 25).

Another unexpected change is marked by section marker 30. The writing is rarefied, the theme being played by the woodwinds section (oboe and English horn followed by clarinet). The atmosphere outlined is mysterious, the new modal theme (**E**) (which will be developed in part 3 of the symphony) being accompanied by chordophones in parallel octaves and seventh intervals on the harp.

The end of the first movement showcases another theme (**B**) in full display. It has a glorious character, exposed by the chordophones and woodwinds. The main motivic structures are performed by the trombone and the flute. Enescu's imprint is reiterated by the integration of the piano into the orchestral discourse and by the last motif of the first violin that evokes a fragment inspired by Enescu's creation (*Sonata No. 3 for piano and violin*).

Fig. 5 Viorel Munteanu, *Symphony No. 2*, part I – *Imprints*, mm. 45-55

**Part II**, suggestively entitled ***Contrasts***, is similar to the *Ying - Yang* symbol. The composer creates a continuous tension between drama and peace, between darkness and light.

In order to actualize this opposition, Viorel Munteanu utilized modern compositional techniques, integrating textures, sound densities and a wide diversity of timbres. On the same principles of contrasts, the sonata form is used, approached in a modern style.

The main theme (**C**) has an incisive, dynamic and fragmented character played by strings and horns. Composer Munteanu makes a new reference in his creation, a fragment of the work *Resonance I*, inspired by George Enescu's *Chamber Symphony*.

The drama and dynamism of the debut is continued by an incisive chorus of woodwinds and brass, complemented by the percussion, which has a solo moment. The independence of the rhythmic formulas of the three instruments (*tamburo*, *gran-cassa* and *tom-tom*) gives the feeling of a collective improvisation, a dramatic unleashing.

Fig. 6 Viorel Munteanu, *Symphony No. 2*, part II – *Contrasts*, mm. 5-9

The discourse is developed though free polyphony, by the juxtaposition of orchestral compartments that determine the configuration of a sonic accumulation.

A game of acoustic densities occurs in measure 25, where the composer configures a polyphonic texture of the string section by permuting the sounds belonging to the A flat mode. In the higher register, the woodwinds enunciate a chord composed of parallel fourths and fifths based on the note *E*. The complementarity of the two structures results in a *cluster* of density 9. The orchestral massiveness is dissipated by a moment of sudden rarefaction, in which the sounds of the vibraphone and the gong stand out, setting up the transition to the second theme of the sonata.

In a solar ambient, with ancestral reverberations, the strings play a lullaby from Transylvania, discovered by composer Viorel Munteanu in the work *Pages from the history of Romanian music* by ethnomusicologist George Breazul.



Fig. 7a George Breazul, *Pagini din Istoria muzicii româneşti* [Pages from the history of Romanian music], vol. 5

Ex. 7b Viorel Munteanu, *Symphony No. 2*, part II – *Contrasts*, mm. 33-41

The theme is based on the *G* pentatonic scale, in which the *D* plagal cadence is used, oscillating between *G* and *D* centers. The orchestration is soft, the theme being accompanied by chordophones and short interventions by the muted trumpet.

The recapitulation (m. 88) restores the balance by reiterating the two contrasting themes (D-C), in a clear and concise manner, remembering the constitutive binomial of this part.

**Part III, *Heterophonies***, is a tribute to contemporary music in which this type of writing is predominantly exploited. Viorel Munteanu approaches heterophonic writing in most of his creations (*Concertino* for flute, oboe and bassoon, *String Quartet No. 2*, *Symphony No. 1 "Glossa"*, *Glasurile Putnei* [The Voices of Putna]) which creates an expression deeply anchored in modernity. However, in this part of the symphony, the composer has a different approach, subjecting his own melogram to the process of transformation. In other words, a sound delta is created starting from an inner source - his own name. Thus, we are witnessing an ample moment of introspection, of self-searching, which merges a genuine effort of reflection.

The "Viorel Munteanu" melogram is founded on a modal structure based on the *C*, which has intervals characteristic of the Lydian (*C-F#*) and Ionian (3M, 4P) modes, the movable step *F-F#*, also having a 3m leap specific to the minor pentatonic scale. The *G#* is added to complete this structure and to facilitate permuting the sounds in multiple variations.



Fig. 8 "Viorel Zamfir Munteanu" melogram

Part III begins with the intonation of the melogram, transformed into the main thematic idea of the section (**E**). The theme is made up of three contrasting motifs, arranged consecutively in distinct orchestral compartments. The motif **δ** (delta), exposed by the flute and chordophones, is made up of long notes, which create a sound suspension due to the augmented fourth and the repeated *E* note. The motif ε (epsilon), played by the flutes, has a percussive character due to the pause in the sixteenths formula and to the accents on the *G* sounds arranged in the hemiola. The third motif, **ε**var is rhythmically similar to epsilon due to the anacrusis debut. The motif is performed by the oboe. Structurally, it contains a tetratony (*C-F#*), it has a bimodal character due to the movable step *F-F#* (Lydian/eolian) and modulating inflection in the pentatonic mode on *A*.



Fig. 9 Viorel Munteanu, *Symphony No. 2*, part III – *Heterophonies*, Main theme



Fig. 10 Viorel Munteanu, *Symphony No. 2*, part III – *Heterophonies*, mm. 1-9

The heterophony of the horns creates a surprising moment in which each of the four instruments holds independence, interpreting permutations of the basic mode. Thus, a game of registers and sound effects is created. On a secondary level, the horns are accompanied by an indeterminate sound (through the oscillating sounds created by the flute head) and by the effects created by the semantron and bells (mm. 45-48). The ending maintains the evocative character, created by a trombone monologue.



Fig. 11 Viorel Munteanu, *Symphony No. 2*, part III, mm. 45-49

**Part IV**, *Byzantine sources*, reveals the composer's passion for the Byzantine *melos*, for the Orthodox rite, for prayer and interiorization. The Byzantine intonations are integrated into numerous creations, such as *The Voices of Putna*, the Oratorio "Chemări spre mântuire" ["Calls for Salvation"] - *Pilgrims to Saint Parascheva*, *The Psaltic Triptych* and carols suites. The structure of this part is a variational lied (AB) which is based on two moments utilized previously in the chamber work *Ecouri din Transposibil* [Echoes from Transpossible], treated orchestrally in the Oratorio "Calls for Salvation", the second movement - *Mass* and *Road of the Cross*.

The main theme (**F**) is based on the Locrian mode, having intervallic structures of the Phrygian mode, the mobile step *C/C#*, which determines the oscillation towards the Aeolian mode. This debut with mystical echoes is attributed to the cello solo, which contains an introspective expression. Subsequently, a variation of the theme is taken up by the oboe and continued by the chordophones. It intertwines with the original version played by the clarinet. The accompaniment is soft, being joined by *sonagli* and bells, creating a sonic environment inspired by the liturgical ritual.

Fig. 12 Viorel Munteanu, *Symphony No. 2*, part IV - *Byzantine sources*, mm. 1-12

The second part develops the sound material used in *The Road of the Cross*, in a complex sound dramaturgy dominated by drama. In contrast with the first part, this section features moments of orchestral *tutti*, *cluster* chords, woodwinds and brass (trombone - trumpet) playing the main theme (**G**).

In the end, the composer reveals a new *shadow* inspired *by Symphony No. 1 "Gloss"* – the main theme of the creation played nostalgically by the clarinet.

**Part V**, *Dance of Colors*, is dominated by vitality, energy and contrast. This section puts forth "an explosion of rhythms born from the Romanian dances; a discourse that associates, horizontally and vertically, melodic, rhythmic, harmonic, dynamic and tonal elements in a compositional synthesis, having also brief episodes, with various returns from the previous parts".

Part 5 is based on the Rondo form, which determines the composer to bring together fragments from earlier creations, such as the song *I want to dance* from *Return to Blaga* – Seven poems for soprano and piano, and fragments from previous parts. The refrain of the rondo *I want to dance* is dominated by energy and force. Musically, this image is illustrated through frequent changes of meter, alternations of *aksak* measures in 4/4 time, and through the accelerated *tempo* and the themes extracted from Transylvanian folklore. The orchestration is dense, rich, involving many timbre changes in the thematic exposition (clarinet, flute, oboe). An important role is played by the percussion part, which provides an oriental touch to the dance and a variety of *colors* offered by the marimba, xylophone and piano.

In the last section, the second theme inspired by the lullaby (**D**) is played in its entirety, giving a nostalgic color to the musical discourse. In the

end, the sonic idea of the refrain is complete, recalling the passion, energy and volcanic character of the final sections from Viorel Munteanu's creation.

**Conclusions**

The unique character of the symphonic creation is offered by the multitude of themes merging throughout the creation (approximately 11 original themes) and by their development through many compositional methods and strategies (alternating sound densities, orchestral accumulations and rarefactions, etc.).

As Viorel Munteanu himself mentioned, "the music of this cycle gave me the opportunity to confess my fascinating friendship with the ethos, with the musical modes and syntaxes, with the wonder of sound architectures, which are always returning to my soul and mind, reformulated". The composer outlined a unique creative vision, by the motifs or themes recurring repeatedly throughout his work, as well as by the involvement of melograms, which have the role of generative motifs. The melograms used in this creation are "George Enescu" and "Viorel Zamfir Munteanu", *Symphony No. 2* being the first work in which the composer develops his own melogram. The variety of forms (prelude, sonata, variational lied and rondo) and their treatment into a modern acceptation, the complexity of the orchestration and the use of heterophony and polyphony as a writing technique are noted herewith.

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# Sources of Inspiration in Composer Tudor Chiriac's Creations. "Miorița" – the Poem

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***Abstract:*** Tudor Chiriac has had numerous sources of inspiration in his creations. While the composer has been consistent in terms of composition principles and key concepts, his sources of inspiration have varied greatly showing his inexhaustible originality and endless imagination. Tudor Chiriac has noticed the beauty, originality and virtues of folklore and popular music since his early childhood, and still is to this day fond of the specific national ethos and melos. Tudor Chiriac followed into Constantin Brăiloiu's footsteps when he supported the development of Romanian academic music in its own musical genres. Thus, due to his clear vision of the development of Romanian music and of the background against which the composition techniques specific to the 20ᵗʰ and 21ˢᵗ centuries have evolved, Tudor Chiriac has refined folklore suggestions in his own, unmistakable manner. Myths, fairy tales and legends are another highly attractive source of inspiration for many creators. Their value lies in the connection to the primordial archetypal meaning endowed with a rich, often esoteric symbolism. Tudor Chiriac has used several themes and symbols inspired by Romanian mythosophy. An edifying example is the poem *Miorița*, generally acknowledged as a masterpiece in terms of the symbiosis of a ballad theme with the most modern compositional techniques. Tudor Chiriac emphasized the semantics of musical works and the creation of an original ideational concept perceptible by the listener. Therefore, he made a rigorous selection of literary creations from poets/writers from both banks of the Prut River, thus enhancing and further emphasizing the message behind his works.

***Keywords:*** myths; *Miorița*; symbolism; folklore; legends.

## Introduction

Fairy tales, myths and legends continue to be an inexhaustible source of inspiration for many creators. Their value lies in their connection to the primordial archetypal meaning endowed with a rich symbolism, often of an esoteric nature.

It is difficult to provide an exhaustive definition of myth, that is unanimously accepted by both the knowledgeable and the less knowledgeable, although it has been attempted countless times and in several cultures.

According to Mircea Eliade, the myth is "the story of a making", of a "genesis", of a "beginning", "which recounts the sacred history of some supernatural beings who created everything; hence, it expresses «an exemplary model of all human activities»"[1].

Vasile Lovinescu argues that:

> Myth is not mere fantasy, nor a product of popular "poetic" imagination, as is commonly claimed. It is a coherent and meaningful way of thinking, as well as an expression of a spiritual way of living. It can therefore be a "document" like any written or figurative message, allowing a glimpse at the spiritual profile of a civilization[2].

The accurate interpretation of myths, fairy tales and legends involves reference to tradition as a cultural heritage and knowledge of conventional semantic codes, stored in the collective subconscious of a certain geographical area. "René Guénon considers fairy tales as carriers of relics of extinct[3] esoteric traditions"[4].

The importance of tradition and its influence on the collective subconscious could constitute another chapter. What we want to point out is that tradition played a special role for Tudor Chiriac, as did folklore, the concept of ancestry, identity, etc. Tradition has always been one of the main pillars on which he built his entire musical universe[5].

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[1] Mircea Eliade, *Aspecte ale mitului* [Aspects of the myth], București, Editura Univers, București, 1978, pp. 5-6, *apud* Romulus Vulcănescu, *Mitologia română* [Romanian mythology], București, Editura Academiei Republicii Socialiste România, 1987, p. 26.

[2] Vasile Lovinescu, *Dacia hiperboreană* [Hyperborean Dacia], București, Editura Rosmarin, București, 1996, p. 9.

[3] "Esotericism is the inside, the core of everything. In Greek, *esoteros* is a comparative and means «innermost»." *Cf.* Vasile Lovinescu, *Al patrulea hagialâc* [The fourth Pilgrimage], București, Editura Cartea Românească, 1981, p. 11.

[4] Cristina Pănculescu, *Taina Kogaiononului. Muntele sacru al dacilor* [The Mystery of Kogaionon. The sacred mountain of the Dacians], București, Editura Ștefan, 2008, p. 15.

[5] We open a parenthesis, as in our opinion these examples may account for the compositional direction chosen by the composer Tudor Chiriac. "Indeed, tradition is everything our Romanian nation has had since prehistory. For example, at my father's funeral, a woman came and put some money in his pocket. She could not explain why she did it. I later found out that in the past Dacian coins we not used for buying things, but were put in dead persons' pockets so that they could pass the various customs and be recognized by their ancestors. Or, when she went to work up on the hill, my other would leave early to catch the cool of the morning before the sun rose high, and when she got there, she would grab the hoe, turn to the East, cross herself by bowing to the ground and say «Help me, God!» and only then she would start her work. Why was she facing the sun? We have been Christianized and have been done with sun worship for 2000 years now! But this custom has been preserved to this day. That is where God is, towards the sun. Again, all this has been passed down from history, from everything, from the very beginning - this is tradition! And it has included everything." (Dialogue with Tudor Chiriac, 12/08/2019)

In the Romanian popular tradition, fairy tale is the representative genre of mythosophy[6], which is a phenomenon of "«*sui generis* historicization, of fabulous-Romanesque transfiguration»[7] of reality, perceived from the angle of its archetypal values"[8].

Tudor Chiriac used several themes and symbols inspired by Romanian folk tales in his creation.

> Creation in general and especially artistic creation dwells on myths and their meanings and bears the author's personal touch, subsequently becoming impersonal and thus engaging the artist in an archetypal "adventure".[9]

This is what Tudor Chiriac meant when he talked about his tremendous inner turmoil entailed by his creation efforts, like a "consumption" of the spirit. It is like a *tapas*, a sacrifice on the part of the creator when he wants to make a work of art. It is the archetype of the sacrifice of creation, which refers to the idea that no true and great achievement can endure unless it is based on sacrifice. The same goes for the ballad of *Manole the Stonemason*, which reinforces the universality of the myth of sacrifice for the sake of creation, emphasizing that the creator must surrender a part of himself, thus becoming a messenger of the divine, and his work – a message from divinity to people.

In *Dacofonia no. 2* the composer relies on the legend of the lark[10], the musical conception of which may be laid down in the following musicological terms: "the expression of the artist's self-definition as a creative personality". The lark – a symbol of virtuosity, the meaning of which deepens towards the archetype of the creative genius, which is also found in Brâncuşi, who took inspiration in the legendary *Pasărea măiastră* [Magic Bird] of the Romanian folklore and who immortalized it in his *Măiastra* sculpture – a mythical creature distinguished by its golden plumage and enchanted songs. Drawing an analogy between its rising to the sky like an arrow or, on the contrary, suddenly letting itself fall, the lark may be a symbol of the "evolution or involution of the Manifestation", and its successive passages from Earth to the Sky and vice versa "connect the two poles of existence: it is a kind of mediator"[11].

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[6] Myth-based philosophy. Term coined by Lucian Blaga.

[7] Mircea Eliade, *Folklorul ca instrument de cunoaştere* [Folklore as an instrument of knowledge], "Revista Fundaţiilor Regale", year IV, issue 4, April 1937, p. 3, *apud* Nicolae Ciobanu, *Între imaginar şi fantastic în proza românească* [Between imaginary and fantastic in Romanian prose], Bucureşti, Editura Cartea Românească, 1987, p. 26.

[8] Nicolae Ciobanu, *Între imaginar şi fantastic în proza românească*, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

[9] Mihaela Vosganian, *Simbolism arhetipal trans/meta-cultural (II)* [Trans/meta-cultural archetypal symbolism], "Muzica" Journal, issue 4, Bucureşti, 2017, pp. 29-30.

[10] The lark – a symbol of the artist.

[11] *Cf.* Jean Chevalier, Alain Gheerbrant, *Dicţionar de simboluri* [Dictionary of symbols], translation by Micaela Slăvescu, Laurenţiu Zoicaş (coord.), Iaşi, Editura Polirom, 2009, p. 242.

In *Dacofonia no. 2*, Tudor Chiriac preserves the pattern of the rhythmic-intonational motif of *the Lark's* theme, which he subjects to an intense transformational process, extrapolating it and adapting it for the entire orchestra. Metaphorically speaking, that solitary lark, unique in its excellence but frail in its symbolic power, metamorphoses into a phoenix bird whose song never ends and is reborn each time with even more power. The composer virtually transforms that folklore song into a concerto for an entire orchestra (a musical genre that Witold Lutosławski, Rodion Şcedrin or Béla Bartók also tackled). This enhancement of the initial original musical content increases its value from a semantic point of view as well. *Dacofonia no. 2*, seen from this perspective, symbolizes the self-definition of the creative genius.

The composer was not only inspired by the Romanian fairy tale, but also rethought it as an artistic genre in *Carmina Daciae. Povestea din Codridava* [The Story of Codridava] – a musical fairy tale of the proportions of a cantata. This story has *Codruţ* as its protagonist – the prototype of the small child who explores the world around him with the age-specific naivety and sincerity materialized in true 'words of wisdom', to the delight of adults.

Among the characters that populate this work of art, one may notice the *murguţ* [the bay horse], also known in universal mythology as *Pegasus* or *Icarus*. Due to its intelligence, elegance and ability to be domesticated, the horse occupies a special place in the Romanian pantheon and has multiple meanings. It embodies the Forces of Good and is a "solar and avataric symbol"[12]. In some contexts, the horse is a "psychopomp animal (...) that takes the soul to the *underworld*"[13].

At the same time, according to Romanian beliefs, the horse is a premonitory animal, a macabre messenger with atypical behavior (usually it refuses to pull on the harness) who warns its master of their looming *death*[14]. In the musical fairy tale *Carmina Daciae. Povestea din Codridava* [The Story of Codridava] , the author uses this character as a symbol of Good, its musical illustration being achieved by various technical means.

Thus, the composer chooses the timbre of the xylophone, due to the brilliance and precision of its sound, to suggest the sound of horse hooves, and not of an ordinary one, but of an enchanted one (given the context in which it appears, namely a musical fairy tale). This timbre is obviously appropriate in a metro-rhythmic formula corresponding to *walking at a slow pace* and *galloping*:

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[12] Vasile Lovinescu, *Dacia hiperboreană*, *op. cit.*, p. 9.
[13] Ion Ghinoiu, *Mică enciclopedie de tradiţii româneşti* [Small Encyclopaedia of Romanian traditions], Bucureşti, Editura Agora, 2008, p. 54.
[14] *Ibidem*.

Fig. 1 Tudor Chiriac, *Carmina Daciae. Povestea din Codridava* [The Story of Codridava], reference [5]

     *Di-di-di* is a hiking song, in which the on- and off-beat formula of the accompaniment is neither original nor common. It is adequate, it follows human gait, the proof being that all marches are based on this rhythmic pattern[15].

     The swallow – another symbolic character – is the embodiment of the maternal figure here (a vision of the great poet across the Prut, Grigore Vieru).

     The poetic nature is strengthened by associating the feeling of motherhood with the depths of the *doina* as a musical genre, which attempts to reproduce the image of the thick fog at the auditory level by the sound of many muted violins over which the timbre of the pan-pipe rests thoughtfully.

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[15] Tudor Chiriac, *Semantic Code* from *Carmina Daciae. Povestea din Codridava* [*Carmina Daciae. The Story of Codridava*], Score, Iași, Editura Artes, 2016, p. 5.

Fig. 2 T. Chiriac, *Carmina Daciae. Povestea din Codridava* [The Story of Codridava], reference [42]⁻¹

### The Poem *Miorița*

"Eminescu said that «Miorița» contains the simple thoughts of a shepherd disguised in the royal cloak of poetry"[16].

In the Romanian ancestral tradition, the Miorița myth represents a cultural archetype that has become a pillar on which the entire Romanian philosophical and historical thought rests. This myth in reflected in our region in a pastoral ballad, which, according to Adrian Fochi's research (*Miorița. Tipologie, circulație, geneză, texte* [Miorița. Typology, diffusion, genesis, texts], București, 1964), may be found in the Daco-Romanian territory in more than 1000 variants. There are numerous opinions and even controversies regarding the topic of the ballad. Mircea Eliade believes that accepting death is an "existential decision", which gives "a new meaning" to destiny, as there is "a mystical solidarity between man and nature". The historian of religion "translates" the message of the Oița Năzdrăvană [Wonder Sheep] as an oracular revelation, which the shepherd transforms into a cosmic wedding in which the whole of nature takes part, an attitude that "allows him to triumph over his own destiny"[17]. The shepherd's decision is actually an archetypal

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[16] Mihai Cimpoi, Preface to the *Miorița* score, Chișinău, Editura "Literatura artistică", 1989.

[17] *Cf.* Mircea Eliade, *De la Zalmoxis la Genghis-Han* [From Zalmoxis to Genghis-Han], București, Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1980, pp. 223-250.

attitude, which Mircea Eliade calls "cosmic Christianity", specific to a mentality and religion rooted in Daco-Getic spirituality.

> When the issue is thus raised, the ballad "Miorița" appears as an artistic processing of a very archaic myth, related to beliefs about destiny, death and about man's relations with the beings and things of the surrounding world[18].

The *Miorița* ballad is part of the mythology of death in Romanian folklore and reveals several specific components of any funeral rite: the shepherd's desire to be buried near the sheep yard, to be buried with his earthly possessions (the whistles), the clear demarcation between the two types of existence (the life on earth and the afterlife), as well as the fact that the two worlds do not have an impenetrable boundary, as he will still hear the sound of whistles, the barking of dogs, etc.

> The shepherd is our Ulysses who crosses an odyssey in a blink of an eye [...]. *Miorița* is our fundamental ballad which expresses our views on life, on existence: to be means to be inside and in nature [n.a.]; man is a part of the great cosmos, to which he is eternally "engaged"; his accomplishment as human being is impossible without others, without those to whom at the moment of entering eternity he could say with Shakespeare's words: "Save that, to die, I leave my love alone"[19].

Lucian Blaga paid more attention to the landscape and its mythologizing in the ballad: "Let us call this space-matrix, high and indefinitely undulating and endowed with specific accents of a certain sense of destiny, *mioritical space*"[20].

Due to its significance and the deeply spiritual connection with the ancestral tradition and the Romanian world, the ballad *Miorița* has had a huge potential in our culture, being tackled by most artistic branches. In music, the symbol of the *miorița* materialized in a significant number of compositions in various genres: the oratorio-ballad *Miorița* (1957-1958) by Sigismund Toduță, the a cappella choral poem *Miorița* (1952) by Paul Constantinescu, the oratorio *Miorița* (1957) with the subtitle *Agnus Homini* by Anatol Vieru, the musical stage performance *Model mioritic* [Mythical model] (1973) by Corneliu Dan Georgescu, the choreographic poem *Miorița* (1980) by Carmen Petra-Basacopol, laments for female voices, percussion and piano *Multisonuri mioritice* [Mythical multisonics] (1975) by Dorin Vulcu, the oratorio *Răstimp*

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[18] Ivan Evseev, *Enciclopedia simbolurilor religioase și arhetipurilor culturale* [Encyclopedia of religious symbols and cultural archetypes], Timișoara, Editura "Învierea", Timișoara Archdiocese, 2007, p. 419.

[19] Mihai Cimpoi, Foreword to *Miorița* Score, *op. cit.*, 1989.

[20] Lucian Blaga, *Trilogia culturii* [Trilogy of culture], București, Editura Humanitas, 2018, p. 165.

*mioritic* [Mythical time] (1975) by Cristian Misievici, *Aulodie mioritică* [Mythical *aulodia*] for clarinet and orchestra (1975) by Iancu Dumitrescu, *Pe urmele Mioriței* (1983) by Valentin Timaru and so on. Two creations stand out in the Bessarabian world: the oratorio *Miorița* (1984) by Ion Macovei and the poem *Miorița* (1986) by Tudor Chiriac.

The composer Tudor Chiriac develops the mioritical concept in the symphonic poem *Pe-un picior de plai* for large symphony orchestra (1979), in the poem *Miorița* for voice, organ, tubular and church bells and magnetic tape (1986), but also in other creations, in which the topic is indirectly addressed or implied from certain language or semantic parameters. The originality of our composer in the use of the mioritical epos lies in the special architectural construction and the musical genre based on native folkloric species. This may be one of the reasons why the poem *Miorița* was selected at the International Tribune of Composers within UNESCO among the 10 best worldwide creations of that year. In 1987 the poem was highly praised at the biennial in Zagreb (former Yugoslavia). Also, Tudor Chiriac's *Miorița* was played in Australia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Iceland, Japan, Norway, the Netherlands, the Federal Republic of Germany, Spain, France[21].

Based on the topic of the ballad *Miorița*, as already suggested by the title, the poem is semantically built around the theme of death, and not a natural death (of old age or as the people say "to die a good death"), but the "annihilation of the neighbor by premeditated murder"[22]. Having this idea as a starting point, the poem *Miorița* by Tudor Chiriac deals with a topical subject, regardless of whether we are talking about the period in which it was written (1986) or the present, as, according to the author himself, it involves us all, as potential victims or murderers[23].

Tudor Chiriac creates a special sound universe in this poem. The creation is impressive through the symbolic symbiosis between the archaic substrate (the melodic line of the voice, with ballad and *doina* elements), the traditional European instrumental means (the organ) and modern means (the extension of some sonorities through temporal axes, clusters, magnetic tape, etc.). Although the presence of sound centers is felt, regardless of the direction of the musical discourse, the author stands out through his permanent intonation modeling, which surprises the listener and creates a permanent tension.

In this work, the moment of greatest intensity – that of death – is rendered by a chromatic *cluster*, on the entire scope of the organ, which creates a true sound "uproar" with a devastating impact as a musical image. It is a unique

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[21] Violina Pogolșa, *Foreword* to the *Miorița* Score, Chișinău, Editura "Literatura artistică", 1989.

[22] Tudor Chiriac, *Semantic Code* of the Poem *Miorița*, The Poem *Miorița*, Chișinău, Editura "Literatura artistică", 1989.

[23] *Cf.* https://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tudor_Chiriac, accessed on 31/08/2022.

method in the history of music, which places the work among the modern Romanian creations of the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century.

The work was built on a folkloric quote of the song collected by folklorist Andrei Tamazlâcaru from Ileana Anastasiu from Manta village, Cahul district (Republic of Moldova)[24]. "The motif implicitly contains the inner intonational struggle – the trigger of the sound discourse"[25]. The principle underlying the organization of sound material is the variational one, according to the laws of progression in music. The actual musical form and genre of the poem *Miorița* rests on the process of dramaturgical construction. It is difficult to fit the work into a pre-existing genre, which is why we will attempt to determine what would be closest to the essence of the score. What is certain is that the music is in direct correspondence with the text and its meaning. Starting from the main theme referred to from the very beginning, the variational principle touches all language parameters: melody, sound syntax, rhythm, meter, timbre.

Apart from the variational principle, the composer also uses the principle of the progression of musical discourse, close to that found in monothematic sonata, but without the struct rules of the classical form. The composer follows the epic unfolding of the ballad, rendering three distinct large sections in his score, which correspond to epic dramaturgy: exposition, action and resolution that includes the coda with a concluding role at the end. However, it would be more accurate to structure the work on tableaus corresponding to the plot and the characters, separated by soloist interludes played by the organ:

- ❖ introductory tableau (reference [1] – [5];
- ❖ episode of the Wonder-Working Sheep (reference [5] – [8]);
- ❖ Shepard's will (reference [8] – [14]);
- ❖ episode of the old lady (reference [14] – [22].

The composer is inspired by four folk genres: the ballad, the *doina*, the carol, the lament. The vocal part includes both clear melody and balladic recitative. In both cases the composer explores the area of the untamed system using infra-chromatic intonational resources. Although the melody clearly suggests a *doina*-specific discourse, the rigorous notation leaves no room for improvisational interpretation, except to a very small extent. However, the author renounces a stable metric system, the dialogue between the voice and the accompaniment being carried out through landmarks and temporal correspondences indicated in the score through interrupted vertical axes.

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[24] *Cf.* Violina Pogolșa, *Foreword* to the *Miorița* Score, *op. cit.*, 1989.
[25] *Ibidem*.

The construction of the theme foreshadows the unfolding of the entire work. Thus, the main theme is built from the following sequence of motifs: motif **α**, motif **α**<sub>var</sub>, motif **α**<sub>var1</sub>, motif **α**<sub>var2</sub>, motif **α**<sub>var3</sub>, motif **α**<sub>var4</sub>. Basically, the theme consists of a chain of motifs quite close in terms of **sound**. We would like to warn the reader that when separating the architectural structures, we will use words that we consider closer to the meaning of the work. Thus, in our opinion, the word stanza is more appropriate, also taking into account the vocal ballad discourse, when we talk about the constitution of the theme, especially since from the point of view of the literary text, the exposition of the theme corresponds to the first stanza of the ballad:



Fig. 3 T. Chiriac, *Miorița*, reference [1]

Motif **α** is represented by a descending trichord ($C\#, B, A$), which reveals an inner struggle between cells **x** and **y** from the very beginning, the former having a repetitive character, the latter being specific to the *doina* through its mordent and descending progression. Motif **α**<sub>var</sub> is the action of cell **y**, the fifth step of which is altered and descending. The following motifs are a synthesis of the first two, expanding the sound space to pentachord and having a cadential role. From an intonational point of view, the theme is built on a Doric pentachord with a movable fifth step. The theme is the core of the dramaturgical conflict based on the question-answer relationship.

Starting with reference [2], the theme undergoes several modifications, which are both intonational and rhythmic:



Fig. 4 T. Chiriac, *Miorița*, reference [2], reference [3], reference [4]

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Although the transformations of the motifs are visible, the thematic profile is preserved, as well as the question-answer motif relationship.

The episode of the Wonder-Working Sheep begins with a qualitative transformation of content. It begins with an organ interlude, which is specific to *sârba* cimbalom accompaniment. In this case, the accompaniment is designed to add dynamism and tension to the musical dramaturgy, as if suggesting the approach of terrible news. The new way in which the sound material is exposed is Lydian:



Fig. 5 T. Chiriac, *Miorița*, reference [5]

The theme continues to undergo significant transformations. Tudor Chiriac uses a special method to suggest the dialogue between the shepherd and his sheep by assigning each character a distinct intonational mode, namely the Lydian mode to the shepherd and the Doric mode to the sheep. The organ accompaniment supports the musical discourse of the characters through a multitude of technical solutions, such as the overlapping of two- or three-time axes, diversification of writing typologies (*sârbă*, chorus, fantasy), the appearance of clusters, etc.

The organ part reveals the peculiarities of an advanced modern writing. The climax of the work (references [17]-[18]) is achieved through extramusical means, through a cluster that includes the entire keyboard of the organ and the disconnection of the instrument from the circuit, topped by a sinister death-predicting dog howl (Fig. 6).

The episode of the old lady coincides with the resolution, if we were to see it in terms of sonata. This time the theme is resumed in the aeolian mode,

with a movable fifth step, on an organ accompaniment reminiscent of a descending mistuning, with a timbre closer to that of the viola.



Fig. 6 T. Chiriac, *Miorița*, reference [18]$^{-2}$

The coda is achieved by the repletion of the first line – *Pe-un picior de plai* – which brings to the foreground the motif of human destiny which, in terms of rhythm, falls apart 'note by note', as if suggesting the cessation of heartbeats:



Fig. 7 T. Chiriac, *Miorița*, the Coda

The ideational conception of the poem *Miorița* determined the composer to operate with intense dramaturgical tensions in order to render the tragedy of human destiny, which can sometimes reach unthinkable heights. However, the poem has kept an inner balance, specific to Romanian songs, to the *doina*-like manner in which Romanian spirituality manifests itself. They are aspects of our national tradition, which Tudor Chiriac uses in his entire creation.

**Conclusions**

This paper highlights the originality of the music and personality of the composer, thinker and teacher Tudor Chiriac. The diversity of his sources of inspiration supports the composer's constant preoccupation with discovering new possibilities for employing his compositional principles. Thus, we approached the aspects of mythosophy from the viewpoint of the universality of this concept and from that of tackling the topic in the creations of the composer Tudor Chiriac. Myths, fairy tales or legends have infinite potential in terms of sources of inspiration, which also prompted our composer to explore them. The more thorough analysis of the poem *Miorița* enabled us to detect the extremely modern compositional means used to render the meaning of the ballad, which has existed in our region for centuries.

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# THEATRE SECTION

# Present-Day Trends in the Research and Creation of Living Arts in the Academia: A North American Model

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*Abstract:* This paper tackles several aspects of the "opening towards the Other" that has marked an emancipation trend in the arts of the stage for more than a century; I will name them *living arts* because, of all the arts, they are distinctly characterized by this essential quality. It also finds its meaning in the institutional *decompartmentalization* and the opening of disciplinary practices towards the *others*. Under the sign of the inherent human *living* presence, the *living arts* refer to experiences in the whole spectre of the stage arts, coming under a polymorphous subject of research as early as the former half of the 20th century. It includes the most diverse disciplinary aspects, which are no longer just those of the drama, dance and choreography, performance or music, because the disciplinary practices of the *other* field and also practices from more remote fields like the visual arts, the cinema or those of the languages of new technologies connected, for instance, with the complex projections on the stage or its augmentation through Virtual Reality etc. can be added to it any time. Thus, we can notice how, in an intermedial process, in the meeting of drama and film, drama, as an art of the unmediated and of the living presence, tends to leave a mark (i.e. of the *living*) on the spectre of the delayed presence of the film in an *inter-* or even *transdiciplinary* relation. Therefore, the paper explores phenomena around the meeting of distinct entities under the *interdisciplinary* and *intercultural* aspects that mark the strong current interest in alterity and hybridity in the stage act but also in the new modes of perception in which the spectator is invited to engage or in the new interpretation grids demanded of the researcher. I will enrich this perspective by offering a few present-day reserach and creation trends in the living arts in the academia. They are extracted from my experience of both research-creation and doctoral project coordination. I share this experience in order to reveal a distinctiveness of research and creation at University of Laval, Québec and, at a larger scale, a trend or maybe even a model for the North American space. Apart from its descriptive aspects, my paper aims at raising new questions, inspire new possibilities and reinforcing new contributions in the research and creation of living arts.

*Keynotes:* living arts; interdisciplinary; intercultural; University of Laval.

## "Opening towards the *Other*"... in a cultural and disciplinary way

I have chosen the "opening towards the Other" as a general topic, but this also implies the opening towards disciplines and fields *other* than drama

for these two reasons that have marked for a longer while a phenomenon by which drama has blurred the boundaries between itself and the other arts both in a cultural and a disciplinary way. This carries the discussion further into the notion of *living arts* under the aspect of an inclusiveness by "indiscipline," which also automatically generates the aspect of their polymorphism with which I will deal in the first part of this paper. In the second part, I will introduce what is understood by the concept of research-creation in North America, and in the third part, I will show the meaning and principles of creation in the academic environment, as well as some methodological approaches to the spirit of research-creation projects. These will also be illustrated by a few exemples or research models in the living arts. The examples are furnished both by my experience of running some research-creation projects and by my experience of coordinating such projects, i.e. the programme called "Literature and Arts of the Stage and of the Screen"[1] at the Department of literature, theatre and cinema[2] at University of Laval, Québec, Canada. I will also include the projects of the few doctoral students with whom I have the pleasure to collaborate[3]. In conclusion, this picture will also occasion a reflection on themes related to the *opening to the other*, namely *the internationalization of research* and *the culture of mobility*.

### *The living arts* – opening and inclusiveness through indisciplinarity

More often than not nowadays, the *living arts* prove to be at least a terminological alternative to what we usually call "the arts of the stage", i.e. drama, dance, music, but also the circus and other performance arts as defined by the experience they offer in a stage context. However, these unifying categories (the stage and the show) are not sufficient to define them in their depth, which is that of a living form, on the one hand, and to bring them together under the quality of a free choice of expression, on the other. Their institutional framework has been an entity aimed at preserving after all the uniqueness and even the identity of each art, but also a metadiscourse with its own jargons, which is a form of confining each in a specific culture. I see this as a separation and therefore a confinement of drama, music, dance, etc. in distinctive disciplinary frameworks and contexts. This propensity, somehow natural despite its artificiality, can be observed in academic

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[1] "*Littérature et arts de la scène et de l'écran*" (our translation).

[2] "*Département de littérature, théâtre et cinéma*" (our translation).

[3] For these examples and for the discussion in this paper I already used the opportunity offered by the *Conference of the Doctoral Schools* at "George Enescu" National University of Arts of Iaşi, which I attended on 3 November 2022 with a paper that attempted to bring forward the somewhat idealistic topic of the *opening towards the Other* in the pragmatic context of a lively exchange of experiences among the participating universities, as well as their research and creation experiences.

vocational institutions such as art schools and conservatories and in professional institutions such as national and municipal theatres or even genre festivals. Nonetheless, there is an emerging trend towards an increasing relaxation of the disciplinary borders.

The *living arts* term brings about a new inclusive specificity related to, of course, the *living* mark of the human presence in front of a public, but also to the principle of freedom, which is itself a notion of the living, after which these arts choose and reinvent their expressions and approaches. In other words, the *living art* is essentially *living* because it is no longer confined to a specific pattern, because it follows the principle of *free* evolution and of *free* choice of its forms of expression. Of ourse, the *living art* continues to organise itself around a *DNA* that still keeps a whatever small amount of *nucleic* identity mark of drama or maybe of *performance* or dance, of music or opera, connecting it more to an art than to another, to give just a few examples. However, the *living art* can only be an art of emancipation: it is no longer *subjected* to a specific and unique discipline, and it tends to fully assert its opening to change and innovation through interaction, interdisciplinarity or even *indisciplinarity*. In the academic environment, they also speak, in this context, of an *interartistic* (Marie-Christine Lessage, 2008) or even *transartistic* dimension that is already signalled by the wave of crossings, trends and countertrends of the early 20th century (Liviu Dospinescu, 2022/ 2017) and the polymorphism crystallized in the avantgarde productions.

### The polymorphism of living arts, from experimental creation in the artistic environment to research topic in the academic environment

Since the former half of the 20th century, in the arts of the stage the topic of research and creation has focused on the aspect of polymorphism, tending to graft the most diverse practices around the original disciplinary nucleus. Here I propose a bird's eye view of this territory for a better underpinning of the argument in some historic reference points.

**In the dramatic art** and its new innovative visions, we can remember the way in which Appia describes how the arts of time and space work, suggesting ways in which these could collaborate in the stage act.[4] In another exploratory dimension, Erwin Piscator used to experiment for the first time the intermediality between the theatre and the cinema with a profound insight

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[4] See Adolphe Appia, the chapter "Les éléments" *L'œuvre d'art vivant*, Genève et Paris: Édition Atar, 1921, pp. 13-31. Relevant to the topics tackled in this paper is the stress laid by Appia on the living aspect of representation in the chapters *La durée vivante*" (pp. 32-38), "L'espace vivant" (pp. 33-45) and "*La couleur vivante*" (pp. 46-53). The chapters "*La fusion*" (pp. 45-77) and "*La collaboration*" (pp. 78-88) are also very suggestive when it comes to the *opening to the Other* as I am planning to tackle it here.

and perceptiveness of the interdisciplinary phenomenon, which even today stir admiration and inspiration for new innovations on his footsteps. Almost 100 years ago, his show *Hoppla Wir Leben!* (1927) offered a first authentic intermedial model, as his writings show:

> The first thing to be seen in the show had to be a huge screen on which the introductory film was cast. Then, when this cinematographic introduction reached its dramatic effect in the represented picture, the arc of the stage had to open (the prisons represented in the film appeared successively in the cell of the first scene). So this was a perfect union of film and theatre.[5]

We could also mention here Meyerhold, whose reading of Frederick Winslow Taylor's *The Principles of Scientific Management* (1911) inspired his constructivist vision of articulating the actor's moves into what we know today as *biomechanics*. During his workshops, Meyerhold used to illustrate his principles on the puppet pattern, for its capacity of producing moves that lacked any useless blur. Edward Gordon Craig (1911) also built his dream of a theatre without actors[6] around the puppet, whose pattern was used for the same reasons; he thus achieved the concept of Superpuppet[7]. Paradoxically, Craig came to offer a revival of the very art of acting, as the Superpuppet promotes the idea of complete command (cf. *super*) of the actor's art in the first place, through a process of denaturalization and bringing expression to the level of a puppet. From the same Superpuppet, we can infer yet another derivation in the show of gigantic puppets like today's street theater *Royal de luxe*.

**In choreography**, the approach to the dancer's training through elements of theatrical play and thinking in the pedagogy outlined by Rudolf von Laban (1950) is far from being commonplace. His poetic expressions in the preface of his books are genuine philosophical landmarks for the *art of movement*, as well as inspiration sources for his new conceptualization both in the field of choreography and in that of the actor's acting. His vision of the art of movement thus manages to achieve deep connections among disciplines that are actually very different, like poetry, philosophy,

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[5] "Le spectateur devait voir d'abord un gigantesque écran sur le lequel était projeté le film d'introduction. Puis, à l'instant où cette introduction cinématographique débouchait dramatiquement sur le tableau représenté, l'arc de scène devait s'ouvrir (les prisons représentées par le film s'enchaînant sur la cellule de la première scène). Donc une union parfaite du cinéma et du théâtre." (our translation). Erwin Piscator, *op. cit.*, p. 145.

[6] *Cf.* "I believe in the time when we shall be able to create works of art in the Theatre without the use of written play, without the use of actors [...]," Edward Gordon Graig, "The artists of the Theatre of the future," *On the Art of Theatre*, London, William Heienmann, 1911, p. 53.

[7] *Idem*, "The actor and the Über-Marionette", pp. 54-93.

choreography and drama[8]. Last but not least, Mary Wigman's or Kurt Joos's dance experiments in the 1920s add to the challenge to the hegemony of classical ballet and break with the Apollonian expression of the prefect body, preparing the leap towards Pina Bausch's Dionysian *Tanztheater* (Phillipe Ivernel, 1996).

　　　**In music –** Wagner's concept of *Gesamtkunstwerk* ("the total work of art") reunites, even as early as the middle of the 19th century, the art of music, song, dance, poetry, theatre and the visual arts, anticipating a fusion of the arts in the space of the stage, which is based on his new conception of the opera genre. In the early 20th century, through the revolution of the Dada movement, we can trace lines of filiation in time: from sound poetry, as a magic blending of poetry, drama, music and *bruitage*, to John Cage's undefinable works. The bruitist and performative theatricality conglomerate of the *Water Walk* piece (1959) or the minimalism of absolute dumbness claimed and demonstrated ("Everything we do is music"[9]) by the *4'33* piece (1952) are evidence of it. In the same line, we mention the creation of the contemporary composer Herald Weiss, whose voices seem to sculpt theatricality in the fabric of an atmospheric and visual music presented in performative shows but also composed for theatrical pieces such as *Night Birds* (*Nattfaglar*), a dance theatre choreography on motifs and scenes of Edward Hopper's painting[10].

　　　The *living art* aspect of these historical examples, what makes them so *alive* lies in: i) *their indefinite character*, because they to not abide by the institutional patterns and ii) *unlimited creativity*. These are common features that underpin the approaches, both in the artistic and in the academic context, which signal the new conception of the arts nowadays. It has its source in deep research and interdisciplinary experiments both in expression and in

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[8] Remarkable in this sense are his innovative texts that illustrate these connections in a profound manner in an unexpected poetic form; see Rudolf von Laban, *Espace dynamique: textes inédits, choreutique, vision de l'espace dynamique*, Éditions Contredanse, 2003, pp. 282-289.

[9] John Cage makes this statement with regards to the *4'33* piece; see chapter "Three. His Own Music (to 1970)," in Richard Kostelanetz & John Cage, *Conversing with Cage*, London,  Routledge, 2003, p. 74.

[10] I tackled these aspects in my introductory essay "Croisements et contre-courants:: du décloisonnement des arts et de leurs transgressions au XXe siècle" to issue 7/ 2017 of *Concordia Discors vs. Discordia Concors – International Journal for Researches into Comparative Literature, Contrastive Linguistics, Cross-Cultural and Translation Strategies* magazine of „Ștefan cel Mare" University of Suceava; the version in Romanian was published in issue 5/ 2022 of *Vitraliu* magazine of the cultural Centre "George Apostu" of Bacău.

content, carried out as an aspiration towards the *opening out*[11] of artistic practices on account of in(ter)disciplinarity.

### The nature of artistic creation in academia

Artistic creation in the academia is closely connected with the concept of *research-creation*. The syntagm provides that in the academic environment it is compulsory to approach creation by coupling it with research. Lately, there has been a dramatic orientation towards the activity of creation, but that calls for a close collaboration between theory[12] and practice. Therefore, we can speak of an intersectoriality among fields that used to be very separate, at least in the academic environment, which has thus stimulated a variety of research practices with a high potential in the development of artistic subjects, of creative or teaching methods, of theoretical patterns and of teaching innovations in the living arts. In research-creation, the stress may be laid on either of the two structural domanins, i.e. theory or practice. The relations among these may vary according to the stress laid on either of the two domains, allowing for a diversity of approaches, as the studies conducted by Chapman and Sawchuk (2012) of Concordia-Montréal University show. I will introduce them in the following section.

**"Research-for-creation"** is the first subcategory of research-creation and it refers to:

> an initial gathering together of material, ideas, concepts, collaborators, technologies, et cetera, in order to begin. This gathering is «research» in the same way that reading through recent journal articles, tracking down important references, or conducting interviews are key elements of producing various academic contributions to knowledge […] The gathering is research because it is directed towards a future «revealing», enabled through an artistic perception.[13]

This subcategory entails getting the field ready for the creation project, nuancing the process of getting to grips with the artistic concepts, documenting the technical aspects or developing the dramatic art project, the production or

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[11] For the Romanian version "Crossings and Countertrends: on Arts and Their Transgressions in the 20th Century" I have chosen this term for lack of a better word for "*décloisonnement*" in the context in which it is used in French in the original version of this article. On the other hand, in the summary in English that accompanies the original version in French of the essay, the term "*decompartmelization*" was used.

[12] ... or at least scientific documentation.

[13] Chapman, Owen; Sawchuk, Kim, *Research-Creation: Intervention, Analysis and 'Family Resemblances*, "Canadian Journal of Communication", vol. 37, p. 15.

reception strategies, etc. This approach is mostly used by practitioners, whose project targets the public presentation of some exploration laboratories or of an experimental work of creation.

**Research-from-creation** "can […] involve analyzing different dynamics that flow from a [...] creative project and may lead to the writing of more formal academic papers that are based on an experimental art practice." (Chapman and Sawchuk, 2012: 16) The element used here is the research potential of the act of creation as an experimental laboratory, as the authors also suggest: "Pushing the limits of different technologies, developing paths of exploration and experimentation – this leads to the development of new research questions [...]"[14].

**Creative presentation of research** refers to

> [...] the presentation of traditional academic research in a creative fashion [...] The explosion of academic genres in recent years is one clear indication of the liveliness of this dimension of research-creation across a number of disciplines, including sociology, cultural studies, anthropology, and communications and media studies.[15]

This is about a method in support of research result dissemination, more accurately in the spirit of their illustration through various creative methods, such as graphic presentations, conceptual patterns, phenomena simulations, etc. This allows for a larger and better understanding of the research subject and results.

**Creation-as-research** is the last subcategory taken into account by the Canadian authors:

> [It] involves the elaboration of projects where creation is required in order for research to emerge. It is about investigating the relationship between technology, gathering and revealing through creation […] while also seeking to extract knowledge from the process. Research is more or less the end goal in this instance, although the "results" produced also include the creative production that is entailed, as both a tracing-out and culminating expression of the research process.[16]

Thus, *creation-as-research* chooses the creation process as a keystone of new theoretical explorations, of how some methods are conceived and validated as a result of exploring the phenomena manifested in the field of

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[14] Chapman, Owen; Sawchuk, Kim, *op. cit.*, p. 17.
[15] *Idem*, p. 18.
[16] *Idem*, p. 19.

creative experience. Therefore, creation becomes a research tool or a reason for creative research.

**Present-day research-creation trends in the arts of the stage and of the screen**

In the sections above, I have tackled some interdisciplinary aspects in the field of the living arts as a source of renewing especially forms of expression, and as an emancipation from the institutional grids. Apart from these, I will also approach, in the examples through which I will try to outline at least one facet of a North American pattern of research-creation, the intercultural aspect of creation. Interculturality, which has been thoroughly debated recently, sometimes quite passionately[17], is perhaps the most profound way of *opening to the Other*, not only in the field of the living arts in search for new forms of expression, but in the whole art spectre in general, and at the level of the individual in a more and more globalized society.

Both in the act and in the form and content of creation, interculturality refers specifically to *meeting the Other* or the meeting point of distinct cultural entities, and it involves a process of *mongrelization*, a cultural *hybridization* or *fusion*. In the process of creation, these entail an exchange, then adopting or appropriating certain cultural elements such as myths, traditions, customs, rituals with a virtually universal potential. Finally yet importantly, interdisciplinarity and interculturality together are aspects that leave a poignant mark on the interest in alterity and mongrelization in the act of creation, both in the artistic environment and in the academic one. In the latter, which will be my focus in the next section, the two transactional aspects are the most frequently suggested issues in research-creation projects.

**From my experience of the *research theatre* at University of Laval**

First of all, I would like to introduce myself as a professor and researcher at the Department of literature, theatre and cinema of the University of Laval in order to outline a contextual framework for my examples of research that I plan to give here in the attempt of constituting what I called in the title of this paper "a North American model" of research-creation. Thus, I would outline my profile of a researcher-creator as well as my philosophy in this matter by stating an *intermittent alternation of theory and practice*. As a professor, I teach only one tutorial, which subsumes several theatrical practices, namely *Mise en scène III – La*

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[17] I mean the recent debates about cultural appropriation, which I will not discuss now. For further details on this issue, see Shelley Ruth Butler, "Appropriation culturelle: de quoi parle-t-on?", *L'état du Québec 2020*, Clé 12, 2019, Institut du nouveau monde, 2019. [online] https://inm.qc.ca/edq2020-cle12/ (accessed on 20 November 2022).

*direction d'acteurs*. I should translate it, using a paraphrase, as a class in theatre staging. Everybody understands the term *mise en scène* and everybody is able, I think, to notice the richness of nuances that the French expression brings to our getting to grips with the act of staging. Key to this class is *guiding the actor*. That is to say that the students understand how to *direct* the actor's acting, but also how to let themselves directed, for the very reason that the art of directing is a process that demands the knowledge of both the professional and human aspects of the *living* stage performance creation. Thus, as aspiring stage directors, we let ourselves be guided by the principle *let yourself be guided if you want to be able to guide, you don't aim at growing a stage tyrant*. My opinion is that this is an integrated approach to the art of acting and directing, respectively, because this helps to fulfill the actor's entire potential, at the same time showing respect for their humanity, art and sensitivity, in order to emphasize a major ethical aspect. Essentially, this class is about a *fundamental opening towards the Other*, that is the meeting of the director and the aspiring actor...*with each other*. In my pedagogical vision, *the director should have a minimum experience and a deep understanding of the actor's spirit and art, as much as the actor should have a minimum experience and a deep understanding of the director's spirit and art*...I conclude the teaching and pedagogical side of this profile mentioning that, although the other classes I teach are theoretical (fundamental, thematic, panoramic, etc.), I added an experimental component to most of them: thus, I encourage my students to put into practice a theoretical notion of their choice, previously tackled in class. This is how I make sure that the theory is not merely a dry word, as the students may have the impression it is in their chase of a dream, which is only natural, of the luring limelight...

### "Stage writings for permeable screens"

Now I can proceed to the presentation of a first example of research that I am extracting from my own experience. I have chosen a project that I deem to be representative for the concept of research-creation explained above, and also of significance for me as an experience. Being developed along an *inter-* and even a *transdisciplinary* axis, "Stage writings for permeable screens" is a project that entailed a work with advanced stage and screen techniques in an intermedial theatre/cinema approach. In order to give it a proper introduction, I will start with the research questions and objectives, I will explain the concept of *permeable screen*, and then I will give a brief description of the stage concepts of the two experimental productions achieved, as well as of the results they yielded both in practice (i.e. playing with the screen) and in theory (i.e. contributions to a hyperrealist aesthetics and the development of new ways of perception).

The research questions of the project revolve around several aspects of the "permeable screen," which I will define later: *How can a screen become a passage to the projected film on a theatre stage? How could the two universes of representation, i.e. the real (on stage) and the virtual (in the film) be fused? Is it possible for an actor in the physical reality to cross a screen on stage by inscribing his acting in the universe of filmic projection in a realistic manner? What would the technical and aesthetic implications be? How would that impact reception?* These are the questions that guided this project carried out between 2010 and 2013 at LANTISS – *Laboratoire des nouvelles technologies de l'image, du sen et de la scène* at University of Laval. The project's objective was to explore the possibility of creating an **organic connection** between stage and film action and fiction, in other words the illusion of a *contact* between the world of the theatre and the world of the film that cohabit the space of representation with an effect of the real, and this in spite of an *impossibility* of the nature of an *aporia*. I set myself specific objectives of a technical nature, i.e. conceiving some special projection devices called "permeable screens", and of an artistic nature, i.e. exploring stage dramatic art in the light of a hyperrealist aesthetics around the idea of the *screen permeability*, therefore of *enabled crossing*.

"**The permeable screen**" a key concept of the project, implies treating the projection screen as a living surface, which therefore *lends itself to* being crossed from the stage space to the filmic space and vice versa, with an effect of the real. There is a close connection here with the concept of *Live Movie* developed by Kirby Malone and Gail Scott White (2002). From their collective work, I retained a first view of the concept articulated by Jennifer Parker Starbuck: "One distinguishing feature of this category [i.e., *live movie*] is an examination and often a deconstruction of working film and video techniques and their translation into the live performance space"[18]. Of course, it did not take me long to realize that dramatic art must also admit the idea that the film is a physically accessible world, i.e. "permeable matter", despite its *impermeable* nature.

Aesthetically speaking, hyperrealism proved to be the best trend to lead to the idea of *crossing* conceived as a "travel in hyperreality"[19]. Our intermedial adventure also drew on Baudrillard's concept of "simulacrum" (1981). I hope that these landmarks will moor the concept both practically and technically, as well as theoretically, as an underpinning element of the research-creation project. As far as its results are concerned, in several

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[18] Kirby Malone, Gail Scott-White, *Live Movies. A Field Guide to New Media for the Performing Arts*, Fairfax, VA, Multimedia Performance Studio, George Mason University 2002, p. 45.

[19] Umberto Eco, *Travels in Hyperreality. Essays*, San Diego, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 1986, pp. 36-100. "voyage dans l'hyperréalité" (our translation).

exploratory labs and also in the public presentation of two experimental creations, I realized that when the actor crosses the screen, something unexpected occurs at the level of perception: the virtual character (who continues the plot *in the film* after crossing the screen) seems to inherit something of the *living* nature, of the presence invested in the actor on the stage. Thus, the permeable screen works a paradox (or a feat of magic) that consists in the fact that the actor and the permeable screen turn into a double interface that *allows the transfer of the actor's presence and living nature from the theatrical environment to the cinematographic one*...to the spectator's big surprise. So we witnessed a *transgeneric* and *transmedia* effect, or even a *magic* one, if one takes into account the feeling invested by the spectator in this manner of perception.

In order to complete the project, we explored along several field research sessions around the world various techniques and practices in the sphere of the "magic" play with the screen – and this brings me to the aspect of *research for creation* and also to that of the importance of the *culture of mobility*. In the first place, I had the opportunity of talking with the American researcher Kirby Malone from George Washington University about the concept of *Living film*, then I had the opportunity of visiting two companies that use in their productions devices that are very close to the concept of "permeable screen". My first visit was to the ZUR – Zone utopiquement constituée in France, which allowed me to discover various screen devices, among which a form of "sand screen", a concept I took over and developed in the experimental production *Sables vivants* (2012). In this show, an adventurer à la Indiana Jones uses the screen to plunge from one world into another: he *enters* and *exits* the world of the film to save somebody held captive there. The effect, which is spectacular, proves to be very efficient at least in a theatre performance dedicated to the young public.

I had the opportunity of visiting the British company Forkbeard Fantasy, whose productions are very expressively labeled as *liquid film*. Here I realized the importance of synchronizing the actor's acting with his/her image in the projection in the moments when (s)he is ready to *enter* or *exit the screen*. The technique I had to develop – for the character in another experimental production, *La Boite* (2012) – is a matter of craftsmanship, not so much the actor's as the magician's, which implies a lot of precision and finesse of performance when it comes to the synchronicity between the living actor's moves and his/her image on the screen.

In the production of *La Boite,* the concept of permeable screen put into practice is more abstract than the first (the sand screen). *Entering* and *exiting the screen* is done, apparently in a banal way, through the doors situated on either side of the screen (Figure 1). When the actor in physical reality seen from behind (at the entrance) or up front (at the exit) opens the door, the

same image is cast on the screen, but it is caught sideways (Fig. 2). In the combination of the two images and angles, we discovered a cubist effect[20] that puts the spectator in a perceptual dilemma, at the intersection of the two worlds, the theatrical (of the stage) and the filmic (cast on screen). It is this *in-betweenness* that creates a certain blockage of the spectator against the background of the dilemma *"Which of the two worlds shall I watch?"* since the stage introduces one to the world of the theatre and of the film at the same time, giving equal importance to the two distinct modes of perception. Eventually, this complex of effects allows the unperceived transfer of the *living presence* of the character on stage towards the character on screen – hence the *magic* effect of the real at the level of reception. A special effect of this form of cubism can be noticed in Figure 3, where the characters are on either side of "the same door", the male one in the film and the female one on stage.

This project benefited from numerous other original discoveries at the level of hyperrealistic aesthetics. According to *Dictionnaire de la peinture* of Larousse[21],

> being a formalist rather than analytical vision, Hyperrealism tends to demonstrate, through the force of virtuosity, that painting can create the illusion of a verisimilitude with the accuracy of photographic language.[22]

Therefore, hyperrealism would characterize the possibility that painting should imitate reality as well as photography does. Likewise, in my project, hyperrealism tends to demonstrate that the film can create the illusion of a verisimilitude to reality, going as far as imitating the presence of *living nature*, which is characteristic of a theatre performance. Furthermore, the concept also plays with the magical effect of a form of *virtual reality* (the film cast) *that wakes up to life, being augmented by the presence of the theatrical universe.* Hence the idea of a *living film*. I called the hyperrealist effects that I conferred to the project in some key moments dramatic and aesthetic hypertrophies (cf. *hyper-*, i.e. *over* related to the real, the stage universe). The idea of hypertrophy, as it appears in the video-stage performance, also seems to reinforce the analytic *hypertrophied* dimension of hyperrealism, according to the definition in the *Dictionnaire Larousse*. This is the result of effects that rely on the very superposition of parallel worlds

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[20] According to the principle of the simultaneity of several points of view of the subject, *cf.* Albert Gleizes and Jean Metzinger (1912).

[21] Laclotte, Michel & Jean-Pierre Cuzin (Eds.), *Dictionnaire de la peinture*, Paris, Éditions Larousse, 2003, pp. 391-392.

[22] "Vision formaliste plus qu'analytique, l'Hyperréalisme tend à démontrer, à force de virtuosité, que la peinture peut créer l'illusion d'une vraisemblance avec l'exactitude du langage photographique." (our translation) *Ibidem*.

(the stage and the screen) and on the acuity of the passage from one world to another through the aporia of screen crossing[23].

**From my experiences as a doctoral project coordinator**

The examples to which I am going to introduce you here contribute to the outlining of an obviously partial image, which is nevertheless sufficiently diversified, of the doctoral research within the "Literature and arts of the stage and of the screen" programme at University of Laval. I will highlight the projects of a number of doctoral students with whom I collaborate as a coordinator. Those projects offer a representative image for our doctoral programme on the axis of the studies that develop both the interdisciplinary and intercultural dimension of the living arts. It is a small panoramoc view that also allows of an illustration of the methodological categories of Chapman and Sawchuk's research-creation and also of a *research* (theoretical thesis) approach. All these projects are very well accommodated to the central issue of "the opening towards the Other" that I have also chosen to articulate in this paper, and most of them valorize the themes of *research internationalization* and *mobility culture*.

<div align="center">*</div>

"*Le rêve d'Urmilla* [*Urmila's Dream*]: **a research-creation project starting from the study of the *Rasa* theory in *Natyashastra*"** is the title of the thesis undertaken by Sylvie Belleau, a doctoral student of the "Literature and arts of the stage and of the screen" programme. She has a vast experience of the art of storytelling and dance, but also as an actress and producer in the field of the living arts and as an author of children's literature. Her interest in the non-Western forms of the theatre gave her the opportunity to specialize in the kathakali dance in India, which she practises in many of her creations, most of which are interdisciplinary and intercultural. She presented one of those creations in her thesis, whose methodology as a whole is one of *research-for-creation*, because the creation project starts from the study of the *Rasa* (savour) concept and experience in *Natyashastra*, the dramatic art treatise of ancient India. There is also a *research-from-creation* side to it because the creation process also occasions a reflection on the intercultural

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[23] Based on this model, I could summarize and discuss a series of other fogures and their effects in several moments of the performance. They were approached in several conferences at: Université Laval, Québec (2012), Ștefan cel Mare University, Suceava (2013w), Université de Lyon II (2013), Istanbul Universitesi (2015), Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca (2015), Université du Québec à Montréal (2016), and lately as part of the presentation given at the Conference of the Doctoral Schools „Intersecții în cercetarea artistică: modelul Celuilalt și cultura mobilității"/"Intersections in artistic research: the Other and the culture of mobility" at "George Enescu" National University of Arts, 3-5 November 2022.

and interdisciplinary relations implied in the integration of the *kathakali* practice in a performance designed for a western audience. The thesis explores the impact of the Indian theatre techniques and of the elements of Indian culture both upon the actor and the spectator of western cultures. Hence some conclusions, which are at least partial at the present moment: firstly, upon the adaptation to these techniques both of the western actor's body and way of reception, and upon the adaptation, in reverse order, of the *techniques* meant to facilitate their assimilation by the western actor's body and spirit, on the one hand, but also the mediation of their decoding by the western spectator, on the other.

As a creator of the show, Sylvie Belleau is interested in understanding and managing the effects of *strangeness* (cf. induced by the "foreign" elements) at the level of the spectator's experience. Facilitating the reception of the elements of oriental tradition occasions a reflection on the intercultural issues related to both production and reception. Indeed, there is a whole range of issues for each, which is related to the fact that the western public is ignorant of the kathakali codes, and therefore cannot receive the show according to the *Rasa* principles, namely the *savour* that the corporeal expression in the Indian theatre must be capable of inducing to the viewer in front of the experience offered by the stage. Of course, through its universal dimension, the kathakali dance can easily be appreciated for its exotic (a.s.f.) aesthetic qualities, but *decoding* the *mudra* [i.e. "seal", "mark", or "gesture" in Sanskrit, a series of symbolic body postures and hand movements used in South Asian classical dancing or art] continues to be a problem at the level of its semiotic meaning according to the kathakali codes. Here it is why: the mudra is a complex of mimic and gesture with a symbolic significance, and although they are underpinned by the principle of mimesis in order to represent the character's moods and emotions, they are nonetheless, as most of the oriental theatrical forms are, highly stylized, and thus they can be reduced to some abstractions in the eyes of the western viewer.

Sylvie Belleau's thesis plans to bring solutions meant to facilitate decoding without altering the *Indianness* of the play in an excessive manner. In order to do so, she summons a series of western stage languages, such as the art of storytelling, but also a form of Brechtian *song* that help the viewer understand the essence of the dramatic conflict and of the relations among the characters, as well as a dramatic art that is intertextual and, through the sources composing it as part of the oriental and western space, also intercultural. As such, Urmila's story inspired by the Indian mythology is built as a mirror image of Penelope in the Greek mythology. This triggers a whole process of intercultural negotiation that entails a comparative study of dramatic art (Urmila *vs.* Penelope), oriented towards ensuring a minimum of familiar elements, sufficiently accessible to the western public, as well as

towards devising a dramatic art that may easily lend itself to the oriental cultural graft. Eventually, this negotiation has the advantage of allowing the Indian forms to give a peculiar aesthetic colour to the production: to invoke, without imposing or copying it, the *Indianness* of the creation topic, to support that of the stage representation and, last but not least, to infuse reception with that *savour* (*Rasa*) inherent in the dramatic principles of *Natyashastra*. Thus, Sylvie Belleau opens research towards a discussion of how both cultural and disciplinary *hybridity* is assumed at the level of her creative design but also of her management of the creation process.

**"Theatricality in the traditional Brazilian celebration and its transcultural reinvention: contributions to the actor's acting and the spectator's involvement in a form of ritualistic theatre adapted to the non-Brazilian theatre"** is the title of Claudia Funchal's research-creation thesis project. Claudia Funchal, also a doctoral student of the "Literature and arts of the stage and of the screen" programme, with a rich practical experience of the comic actor and clown's art, proposes a doctoral creation project that is original not only by its title, *Conversation of Oxen and Cows*, which already transports us into an absolutely special world in which the main characters, *oxen and cows* stand out in their unexpected human dimension of a *wisdom* lost on humanity. This project is also original by the variety of the stage modalities of representation, the actor's art intertwined with many carnivalesque aspects. Claudia Funchal's artistic and research interests relate to the theatricality of the folk comic and the corporeal ways in which the festive spirit is transmitted. This last aspect is present in her doctoral creation and her success, in terms of performativity in the *spirit* of John Langshaw Austin's speech act theory (1962) relies on blending theatre acting with other art forms like storytelling, singing, music, Brazilian traditional dances and the *capoeira* martial art.

The main concept and objective of creation is the fusion of the stage universe and the audience towards the achievement of an intercultural festive spirit. To this end, the issue of improvisation *with the involvement of the audience* is approached in the spirit of folk theatre cultures like *commedia dell'arte, théâtre de la foire,* dramatic dances in the Brazilian tradition and the art of the clown. A specific objective of the project is redifining the relationship with the audience in order to integrate them into a ritualistic form in the spirit of *celebration*, pursuing the visions of Jean Jacques Rousseau or Vesvolod Meyerhold. Therefore, the project needs a solid balance of practice and theory achieved through bridges with a theoretical and methodological framework inspired by Jean-Marie Pradier's ethnoscenology (2001), Eugenio Barba and Nicola Savarese's anthropology of the theatre (1991), but also Victor Turner's cultural anthropology (1969, 1982) for the notions of "social ritual," "social drama" and "social remedy."

This project belongs in the subcategory of *research-for-creation* as long as the theoretical framework seeks to facilitate reaching the objectives of creation, but also that of *research-from-creation*. Claudia Funchal is already well equipped at a theoretical level, so she plans, as an ultimate subcategory of methodological approach, to extract from the experience of creation a series of concepts and situational relations in order to theorize them in support of her production strategies, and therefore extract a model of transcultural reception. The forms of expression being those of Brazilian culture, the project calls for a cultural mediation through stage acts in order to make the *non-Brazilian* spectator accept the Brazilian stage forms and also embrace the contents they carry. Ultimately, the project's aim is not just to coalesce the multicultural fabric of creation but also to actively participate in accomplishing the ritual by inducing cultural reflexes that are close to the Brazilian model.

Claudia Funchal masters several techniques of folk comic, which is a true catalyst of her project, but along her doctoral research she did not hesitate to develop her skills through activities of formation in a *mobility culture*: she activated in the interdisciplinary Centre of theatre research of the Sao Paolo la Campinas University, she perfected her clown's art with Sue Morrison from the Centre of Theatrical Resources of Toronto, she explored the *comedia dell'arte* with Cristina Ioviţă from the Théâtre de l'Utopie of Montréal. From Victor Turner (1986) she took the model of "anthropology as experience," practising it in 2018 in *field research* of the folk theatre traditions and forms in a rural community in the south-east of Brazil. As a matter of fact, that is where the foundation of her creation materialized in her decision of building it starting from the *Bumba-meu-boi* ritual[24]. All these experiences in the mobility culture are at the basis of the project's success, and through her thesis Claudia Funchal attempts at demonstrating and discussing it on the multiple plans of the construction and functions of her ritualistic theatre. The last one is eventually examined not only as an aesthetic experience but also as one of *sharing* between actors and spectators the ephemeral perspective on the cultural communion that aspires towards the universality of living in the space and time of celebration and in its spirit.

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[24] The ritual is entered in the Immaterial Cultural Legacy of Humanity, see the article "Cultural Complex of Bumba-meu-boi from Maranhã", in UNESCO (2019), *Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity* [online], retrieved from https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/cultural-complex-of-bumba-meu-boi-from-maranho-01510?fbclid=IwAR0dXGevXWNs2cB92AlWxuKGsx5heNgb8fwae3kKuy-uKOOinNlI1VZVU, accessed on 18 November 2022.

**"The search for the ludic mode in the epic arts: the analysis of the *mvet* practice of Central Africa"**[25] is the title of the doctoral thesis undertaken by Essouma Long, a doctoral student in the "Literature and arts of the stage and of the screen" programme. This *research* project (creation is not a request here) consists in a descriptive and critical undertaking of theorizing the practice under analysis. The author knows the practice very well from his own experience, as he practises the mvet art. Having undergone all the stages of traditional formation, of which the initiation stage only in the expression forms and in the rituals attached to it takes an interval of no less than seven years, the art is vocational and it was acquired directly from an experienced mvet practitioner. Thus, Essouma Long chooses to resort to distancing himself from his own experience, maybe also to avoid the inherent biases, but especially in order to be able to appreciate and compare it with that of the members of his fellow artists so that he can describe it objectively and define its formative principles, in particular in connection with the ludic mode and the aspect of theatricality. His major research question refers to the specificity of *the theatre play* in the mvet performance, and the preliminary explorations occasioned at least a few certainties so far: Mvet is an art of the epic actor, of storytelling by means of the actor's acting, among others.

Indeed, the mvet teller possesses a great skill of playing the characters and *playing with* them, but also with the audience and, which is interesting to notice, one does it with the same detachment and stylization found in Brecht's play. The peculiarity of this play is also found in the musicality of the mvet performance, including the aspect of singing. The teller resorts to them as mobilization and entertainment instruments but also as *distancing* effects similar to the alienation effect in Brecht's theatre. Therefore, the mvet resorts to music and singing in order to establish a contact with the spectator, and that performs a function similar to the Brechtian *song*, which aims at causing a cognitive disturbance in the spectators and making them aware of the theme of the performance, more often than not with social implications. These aspects also contribute to an interaction against the background of a *ritual act* involving the audience, which is also an aspect to take into account in this project.

Being extracted from his own experience, these preliminary considerations allowed Essouma Long to build a set of well targeted questions and to get answers that he validated through ethnographic methods and means like the questionnaire. Thus, in a field research mobility in Cameroon, in 2019, the meetings with several mvet tellers helped him carry out this task. Essouma Long's involvement in the Euro-African Network of Epic Research is also an aspect of his research mobility, which reinforces the

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[25] Essouma Long, *Quête du ludique dans les arts épiques:: analyse de la pratique du mvet d'Afrique centrale*, Thesis project, as a partial requirement within the Doctoral programme in Literature and arts of the stage and of the screen, Québec, Université Laval, 2019.

research potential in achieving the scientific portrait of the mvet art. Until he defended his thesis, I could appreciate at least the quality of his hypothesis, namely that "the epic ludic mode lies both in the narrative and in the actor's conceptual and technical apparatus. Any mvet performance would be a duality that fuses the verbal and the non-verbal, the seen and the unseen. This concurrence is confirmed only in the acting space, which is a place where intentionally ludic actions are performed"[26], and those are performative, I would like to add. That is so because beyond the established scenario, these acts refer to the interaction with the audience, but also with the character of the community, the everyday, its customs and stories – all of them waiting to be integrated into the performance.

This dimension of the interaction is a complex one, as it seems to develop on the *long way*[27] the teller takes from the moment of accepting the invitation to that of the performance *per se*. Spanning at least nine days of preparations, the process is marked by a series of rituals in the host community, under the provisions of a *quiet* management of the social and professional activities, as well as the prohibition of any festive activities. These are meant to prepare the meeting between the mvet artist, considered to be a keeper of spiritual values, and the community that thus aspires to a refreshment of collective memory and a renewal of trust in the shared values and life.

**"Bodily violence as a return to ritual in Jan Fabre's shows"** the project undertaken by Beatrice Lăpădat, also a doctoral student in the "Literature and arts of the stage and of the screen" programme, concludes the panorama of the examples I planned to give in the context of this conference and in proceeding publication. At face value, it is a classical theoretic thesis, but this is only a formal impression given by its theoretic dimension, because the topic tackled and the approach are as original, topical, and pertinent as they can be. She proposes a deep analysis of the figures of bodily violence in four shows directed by Jan Fabre, in order to demonstrate that what seems to be a transgression of the classical rule of decorum (which provides that the theatre show should not shock the public) is ultimately a way of integrating the spectator in a social ritual. As it can be seen, Victor Turner's anthropological motif is recurrent, and it will be explained in the context of this thesis. Beatrice Lăpădat shows how the figures of bodily violence weave

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[26] "le ludique épique réside autant dans le récit que sur l'ensemble de l'appareil conceptuel et technique de l'acteur. Toute performance de mvet serait à la base une dualité qui fédère le verbal et le non verbal, le visible et l'invisible. Cette concomitance n'est confirmée que dans l'espace de jeu, lieu de déploiement d'actions intentionnellement ludiques.", *idem*, p. 20.

[27] Essouma Long narrated it to me in a discussion we had about the mvet art and its practice, video recorded for a didactic purpose in my personal archive, "Arts vivants, société et culture", 14 October 2022.

connections with various ages and civilizations in which violence is either an outlet for the society's frustrations or an instrument of manipulation with a view to preserving the privileges of the *elected*. From witchhunts, going through the punishment by exposing parts of the body, the repulsion at the "woman's unclean body" to the imposition of the rejection of the carnal or erotic body (with its echoes in some cultures of the present-day), all these attest to the *dark* or *unassumed* side of humanity, present in each of us.

Exposing the spectators to these figures aims at facing them with the accomplished facts of the history of humanity, and thus preventing them from *forgetting* or *not looking at* them. The spectators are thus compelled to assume responsibility for the horrors of their own species, and it is exactly this aspect that could be part of a *social ritual* meant to save not so much their conscience as their *refusal to know* what defiles it. The exposure to violence would thus gain the value of a *remedy* for a humanity dispossessed of its values, but not of its right to claim its human nature due to its instinct of self-preservation, of the preservation of comfort and personal calm as deeply asocial attitudes. Therefore, this is what connects it with Turner's concepts, among which that of the social ritual aimed at finding a social remedy, and which promises to be one of the most interesting ones in developing this topic through the analyses and interpretations it proposes, with incursions in the history of culture and civilization and with arguments from various fields of the humanities.

In her thesis, which is about to be defended soon, Beatrice Lăpădat will also expose some particular aspects of her stance as a researcher under a perfectly legitimate subjective aspect, namely the reaction she had to the manifestations of the "radical body" in Fabre's shows, but also how she coped with them. Furthermore, she will account for the way in which she dialectically transcends the conflict this body stirs between its crude theatrical representation and the moral judgement to which it appeals. For it is exactly by maintaining this conflict open or supporting it that Fabre would try to trigger the spectator's sense of guilt at least towards the tacit acceptance of the culture of violence as a consequence of its self-preservation instinct, if not also for other better assumed reasons such as religious ones or having their sources in ultra-conservative cultures. Therefore, I find interesting the capacity of this thesis of challenging our conscience, this being what takes it out of the paradigm of more classical theses.

Thus, Beatrice Lăpădat's research thesis tends to open itself towards a *practical* form, be it of reception, albeit a creative one, whose effects at the level of one's conscience echo the "social ritual" that is central to the theoretical argument. It is certainly not *research-for-creation,* nor is it *research-from-creation*, but it has the potential of generating a very original modelling as a *creative presentation of research* in Chapman and Sawchuk's

terms. And the model will consist in the account of the researcher's own reaction and of the cultural context of her subjectivity to eventually situate her in a mechanism capable of illustrating the "remedy" effects of the "social ritual" of which dramatic art is part, and staging the figures of violence in Jan Fabre's work.

<div align="center">*</div>

Of course, there are still other doctoral projects that are as many original challenges in the "Literature and arts of the stage and of the screen" programme, even among those that I am pleased to coordinate, all of which stir my curiosity and interest or help me enrich my knowledhe and even my expertise. Those I have chosen to present here are either one of the most advanced or they allow me to illustrate my topic. I would also like to mention that the research(-creation) model of these doctoral projects, together with my own project, is extracted from my own experience of research-creation and of coordinating such doctoral projects; of course, I could not afford to introduce here ongoing projects that I do not coordinate. Once this aspect made clear, I could notice the interdisciplinary and intercultural aspect in most of the doctoral projects hereby presented, but also the incidence of Victor Turner's cultural anthropology in them, especially through the concepts of *ritual* and *social drama*. Methodologically speaking, I could notice that most of the projects had an important ethnographic dimension manifested through different specific activities, oriented towards the practices summoned to be used in the stage act: kathakali in Sylvie Belleau's approach, techniques of the traditional comic in Claudia Funchal's approach, or the epic art of Mvet in Essouma Long's approach. In the first and in the second example I highlighted two subcategories of approaching research-creation, namely *research-for-creation* and *research-from-creation* according to Chapman and Sawchuk's model, and in the tird example, following the same model, I gave an example of the *research-for-creation* approach. In Beatrice Lăpădat's research project I noticed, apart from her theoretical and critical approach, that she highlights the aesthetics and the functions of the figures of violence at the level of theatrical representation, and also the potential of developing a very original approach to *creative-methods-presentation,* also belonging in Chapman and Sawchuk's research-creation subcategory system. Last but not least, in my own project "Stage writings for permeable screens", I tackled two approaches to the same system, one focused on the documentation of the creative techniques for the development of the "permeable screen" concept in a research-for-creation approach, and the second carried out according to the *creation-as-research* model, because I was interested in a contribution to the development of the *Live Movie* genre, with an eye both for the principles of a hyperrealist dramatic art and for the new modes of perception they imply.

Ultimately, the perspectives of the *opening towards the Other* topic can be declined on the grounds of *research internationalization* and *mobility culture*. These depend not only on the researcher's will but also, to a large extent, on the institutional support, including the financial one, if this is possible at an academic institutional level, and if it is not, at a governmental level. However, it seems essential to me that the university, through its study programmes, should offer the formative support necessary for guiding the young researchers and orienting their research towards the direction and spirit of Victor Turner's "anthropology of experience." The young researchers do need to be encouraged and *trained* to get out into the world, *on the field*, or to bring the world *home*, this meaning the experience of the Other or of the other space of research or creation. The internationalization of research is a topic of interest for the completely academic environment worldwide, as it is made obvious if one looks at the projects described here. I have tackled it especially under the very important aspect of *getting out of the comfort zone* and enriching the research or creation experiences. That is because, especially in the field of theatre studies or, even in a more enhancing and interdisciplinary manner, *all performance studies*, research cannot be limited to the study in the libraries and the research of the Internet data bases, all the more so as the *creation* component is part of the transaction game projected by research in a globalized world. Although the more classical research hypostases and procedures mentioned above remain fundamental for each project, related to the category and process of the research-creation and to the researcher's complex stance between theory and practice, they must be seen as a starting point or a *launch* basis. Thus, research per se in our field needs to prove to be as dynamic and *alive* as the artistic and disciplinary spectrum it explores. As a matter of fact, I have seen and I am aware of how important *meeting the Other* or *meeting on the territory of the Other* is for all the projects presented here. I can only encourage this conception of mobility, being convinced, also based on my own experience, that it is the catalyst of the progress and development of creative knowledge, competence and practice in the academic environment and beyond.

(Translated by Dana Bădulescu)

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# Annexes



**Figura 1:** Spațiul scenic, cu cele două ecrane și cele două uși de *intrare în și ieșire din film*, al producției *La Boîte* a proiectului *Écrans perméables*, prezentat la LANTISS, Université Laval, Québec, QC. Foto: Luciana Nechita (2012).



**Figura 2:** *Ieșire din film* – personajul real deschide ușa din spatele dispozitivului ecrcranic în sincronie cu imaginea lui din filmul în proiecție. Captură de ecran după filmarea producției *La Boîte* (2013) a proiectului *Écrans perméables*, prezentat la LANTISS, Université Laval, Québec.

**Figure 3**: Personaj masculin (virtual) *în film* şi personaj feminin (real) *în scenă*; uşa este singurul reper care întreţine efectul cubist. Imagine dintr-un laborator experimental pentu producţia *La boîte* a proiectului *Écrans perméables*, LANTISS, Université Laval, Québec, QC. Foto: Julien Poirier (2013).

# General Considerations on Performing Poetry in the Current Performing Arts Context

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***Abstract:*** The contemporary theatre landscape seems to have strayed away from the feelings specific to poetry and to reciting it in front of an audience. The topics preferred by theatrical productions now, at the beginning of the XXIst Century, are strongly connected to the social realities one encounters on a daily basis. Certainly, it is reasonable for things to be this way, as theatre depends on firmly anchoring itself in reality, and the means of expression and of conveying emotion have, now, particularities that no one would have thought of fifty years ago. The present study intends to bring performance poetry back into discussion, as a type of artistic expression that has very well contoured specific elements, but that does not benefit from addressing broad audiences anymore, unfortunately.

***Keywords:*** poetry; recital; Purcărete; Pitiș; Botta.

As we all very well know, the current context of performing arts bears all the marks of the times we live in. Without any doubt, this statement may seem completely prosaic, but I consider important to start with this not so spectacular premise. Of course, beyond all this, one may need the work and the achievements of a well-established institute or center for research in performing arts just to map and to establish the norms and the characteristics of what is commonly known as 'current context of the performing arts'. This is a consequence of borders between the arts being more and more fragile, of more and more frequently looked for confluences and of overlapping and intersecting trends in arts that are rapidly moving. All these are connected to a global audience that is more diverse, more informed and "stronger" than ever before, as everybody can now *like* or *comment*, so there is constant, rapid and transparent feedback. It looks like, in this direction, the whole concept of 'broad audience' can be reevaluated, as it is a very fertile ground to do so.

Going further on with all these general considerations, I am getting closer to the present time's specific frame: we are living the final days of a pandemic, after two years of isolation that created strong repercussions in all the areas of the field we are dealing with. This particular canvas is quite

large: the most dramatic effect was that of isolation and alienation in a field which, on the contrary, would bring people together, would bring communities together by making them stronger and more diverse and would also contribute to form a new audience. We also were the witnesses of a process of refurbishing the performing arts through tech: this was the result of the need to identify new ways of artistic expression. These searches for 'new forms' may seem similar to Anton Chekhov's Treplev's passion and naivety as he was also haunted by his personal quests for new artistic means of expression, adapted to his dramatic universe. Of course, now, almost three years later, it may seem easy and comfortable to talk about and to analyze all the positive outputs, but we need to never lose the memory of that dramatic spring of 2020, when the theatres were closed worldwide.

Keeping in mind all this framework of references and the overview of the current landscape of performing arts, I will try to bring us closer to the topic of performing poetry. In this way, the first step is to try to explain and define it through its importance. First, performing poetry is a concept that is unfortunately too rarely analyzed. Romanian research in this field is not preoccupied by it and there is a certain fear in handling it even among the academia. Here we must keep in mind the particularities of the Romanian theatre environment: of course, people of certain age all keep strong memories (often traumatizing memories) since before 1990, when public reading versified texts was part of the duties of any actor with a certain visibility. The patriotic poetry that was preferred by the communist regime was, in fact, a rudimentary and forced versification of certain slogans and commitments the working-class people would take and assume in front of the state and its leaders. The social realism managed something incredible: it created 'patriotic poetry', as this was the official term for it. The versified text, once it was publicly performed, had three major directions: the two state leaders and the communist party, as they was perceived as supreme, functional spheres of influence. Also, the frame of ideas contained by the verses performed was very narrow: gratitude for the presidential couple, for the communist party and for the forefathers, as well as strong urges to work combined with commitments that industrial and agricultural production will go off the charts. Of course, this was an instrument for the propaganda that had its purposes and its effects and there was no place for emotions: these texts were not meant to create emotions in the audience, but a certain state of mind, a certain energy that would be useful for the major targets of the official communist agenda. In short, through the public reading of the text in verses, the propaganda aimed for the large audience to gain an attitude of gratitude for the state, to wish to work more, to produce more, NOT to show and deal with feelings.

Together with all these versified texts (the so-called patriotic poetry), another widely spread practice before 1990 was the "re-reading" of certain established poets, but in a specific key that will be of great use for the official propaganda. There is a lot of literature about these re-readings of important poets – Mihai Eminescu (the last major European romantic) is a great piece of example, with his *Emperor and Proletarian*. Not least, I need to emphasize the re-reading of some "minor" poets, of local and regional importance, again, in the sense of adapting the artistic content to the propaganda. The effect and the result for these practices was unhappy, as we all know and, maybe remember, there was a certain outdated "festivism", that had nothing to do with poetry and with emotion and with art in general.

On the other hand, there were some notable exceptions of poetry performers before 1990 (and also after), that we need to point out and to emphasize. Emil Botta was one of the most important ones: having graduated the Royal Academy of Arts in Bucharest in 1932 he made use of a special technique in performing poetry, using his stage speech to create emotion by almost enchanting the poetry. Botta used some specific stage speech techniques that were part of the norm between the two world wars, only to change decades later. Of course, this was the "old" way of performing poetry on stage. Botta used to lengthen the vowels, to exaggerate the rhythm of the verses and he managed to identify an internal music of the poetry that he delivered to the audience. It would be a major error to consider his approach as outdated. His performance was solidly enclosed into the expectations of his time and into the audience's spiritual universe. Today, watching Emil Botta performing poetry is quite similar to performing arts archaeology because we discover a unique and expressive stage speech that is very demanding for the artist, but for the contemporary audience it may seem time specific.

Georghe Cozorici was another remarkable example of performing poetry before 1990: he used a similar technique, but he adapted his expression to a more contemporary audience. Graduating the academy twenty years later than Botta, Cozorici started and developed his artistic career during the cruel and harsh Romanian1950s, when social realism was more than ever the official channel in art. Still, his way of expressing poetry kept him at a safe distance from the re-reading of classical Romanian poetry. In performing poetry, Cozorici focused on the situation he imagined, on the emotional context in the text and on the specific features in certain character's voices.

Lucia Mureșan (graduated in 1958) made herself well known before (and after) 1990, as being one of the few women that engaged into the challenging field of performing poetry. With an exquisite vocal timbre and using a vocal diction that tangented perfection, Lucia Mureșan focused

especially on performing Lucian Blaga and Tudor Arghezi. It is important to emphasize this professional and personal preference for at least two reasons: the two poets' lyrics are difficult and problematic to perform, their verses being abundant in specific particularities. Also, as she preferred mainly Blaga and Arghezi, she had the perfect opportunity to study their poetry (in order to perform it), which implies she had a method, she had a coherent approach, and she developed a research plan.

The 'star' of Romanian poetry performance, Ion Caramitru (graduated in 1964) and made his entrance into the artistic establishment at a very young age, when he quickly became one of the most visible voices of his generation. His way of performing poetry was a profoundly emotional and participative endeavor: his genuineness was mixed with a very elaborate spontaneity. The audience perceived Caramitru performing poetry as delivering poems that were unpremeditated and naturally distributed towards their targets. The performer made use of a very interesting technique: he contemporized his approach towards poetry while using his voice and his breathing to cleverly emphasize the verbs, therefore creating powerful images.

More than that, it is of crucial importance that Ion Caramitru was followed by his disciple. During his short academic career, one of his most important offspring was Constantin Chiriac (graduated in 1980), an actor that makes use of the same elaborate spontaneity and of the same emphasization of the verb that becomes an engine which will keep together all the ensemble of the unique expressive feelings in the poetry that is being performed. In the same aspect, it is important to stress that Constantin Chiriac is the author of several studies on performing poetry and his concern and focus on this subject is a unique direction in the Romanian artistic education and performing arts. Constantin Chirac's books do not teach students and audiences *how* to perform poetry, as this is a practical issue, but they analyze and disseminate the research method needed for creating a poetry recital and they represent an essential bibliographic resource on this subject. Not coincidentally, Constantin Chiriac starred in Silviu Purcărete's production at Radu Stanca National Theatre in Sibiu - *Games, Words, Crickets*, in which he performs poetry on stage, alongside a group of actors that are interacting with the lyrics through a wonderful set of acting improvisations. The production opened in September 2022 and the audience responded to it as to a very non festive and natural approach to poetry.

It is clear we now face a crisis in the current Romanian performing arts: most actors will keep themselves at a very comfortable distance from performing poetry. The exceptions briefly presented above (and also Ovidiu Iuliu Moldovan, Florian Pittiș and a few others) are just a drop in an ocean of half of century of mediocre poetry performance. More than that, even the

audience (especially the educated audience) will regard performing poetry with a certain suspicion and will connect this artistic endeavor with minor, local, "festive" events.

Meanwhile, in other artistic environments, the situation is quite different: concepts as "slam poetry", "rap poems", "performance poetry", "festivals of spoken words" are part of the cultural and artistic establishment for many decades now. The reason for this is quite simple: other cultures will assume the exhibition of the emotions for the performers. Romanian performing arts, on the other hand, is caught in a posttraumatic stress symptom generated by the 45 years of communism and by the unhappy inertia after 1990, when the public manifestation of emotions still bears the signs of association with a local, provincial festivism. This posttraumatic stress we are facing is only a partial explanation, that is adapted to Romanian realities after the second World War. Further on, I strongly believe we need to pull out a certain distancing effect and make use of one of Hans-Thies Lehmann's ideas from his famous *Postdramatic Theatre*:

> Rather the new theatre has to be understood in the context of the comprehensive virtualization of reality and the widespread penetration of all perception by the grid of the media. In the face of the formative power and hardly avoidable mass dissemination of mediatized reality, most artists see no way out other than to 'graft' their own work onto the existing models, rather than to undertake the seemingly hopeless attempt of finding entirely divergent 'personal' artistic formulations in a mediatized world. But as the mediatized clichés creep into any representation, seriousness is on its last legs, too. Cool is the name for emotionality that has lost its 'personal' expression to such an extent that all feelings can be expressed only in quotation marks, and all emotions that drama was once able to show must now pass through the 'irony filter' of a film and media aesthetic.[1]

In simpler words, Lehmann talks about a new performing art that is strongly connected to media and about being 'cool', as about the loss of the personal expression of emotionality. There is a certain connection between the loss of emotionality and being cool, as they are coined by the German critic, with the current Romanian context of performing poetry, as the latter is also running away from showing emotionality and tries to be as cool as possible.

Here we may have a paradox as, of course, all directors will fight to get to emotions, they will strive and they will concentrate all their artistic

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[1] Hans-Thies Lehmann, *Postdramatic Theatre*, translated and with an *Introduction* by Karen Jürst-Munby, London & New York, Routledge, 2006.

energies towards this complex notion, as they very well know that this way, they will touch their audience. Also, we talk very often about poetry in the performances of a certain director, but this idea is now extrapolated to a conglomerate of visual and audio effects and, of course, to acting. Delivering emotions to the audience through poetry seems unsafe and 'uncool' and it seems that the performing arts industry prefers to achieve this prospect through other means than poetic text.

We need to be honest: Romanian performing arts keeps a certain safe distance from performing poetry, mainly because of the reasons I have presented before. Is there nothing to be done? Well, not to sound like Beckett, with his famous opening line in *Waiting for Godot* ("Nothing to be done"…), there are people who do. And there is a great deal of things that still need to be done. Students in Romanian theatre universities deal with poetry when it comes to their stage speech classes. So there is an ongoing start, there are seeds that are planted for the future actors during the school years. So why is there no future concern for performing poetry? My personal answer is because the Romanian theatre university system is training the future actors for working in relation with directors and with a certain type of performance, that absolutely excludes performing poetry. Performing poetry entails the actor to be somehow alone, in front of the audience, with his most inner and intimate thoughts and feelings. The stage director the school is preparing the future actor to work with will be a cover-up for his feelings, will guide the actor's emotions and it seems that this is more comfortable for the performer, unfortunately. On the other hand, I strongly believe in the need to teach poetry in Romanian theatre universities. We all know the harsh and difficult aspects of curricula and how complicated it is to mix the needs of the students with the requirements of the regulations in the higher education, but creating a course for introduction in poetry (BA or MA level), would be useful and would adjust and maybe compensate the huge voids the students bring with them from high school. So, to conclude, there is this specific fear on behalf of the actor to expose feelings through such intimate texts as poetry and she or he prefers to "hide" behind the stage director.

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# Five Days at the International Art Biennale in Venice

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***Abstract:*** Seeing *La Biennale di Venezia* is a celebration in itself. This major contemporary art event has a long history that speaks on the importance of strategic thinking and the cultural dimension of a city's leaders. Because the "lagoon city" had such visionary people. At the end of the 19th century, in 1893, at the initiative of a group of Venetian intellectuals, led by the mayor of the time, Riccardo Selvatico, an administrative resolution was launched to "establish a national biennial art exhibition". Two years later (1895), the first edition of this event dedicated to visual arts took place. Over time, the Venice Biennale branched out, accumulating new and new sections: music, theatre, cinematography, architecture and dance.

***Keywords:*** Biennale; Venice; the Other.

Starting from the topic suggested in the title of the conference, "the model of the Other", I have chosen to present a study visit that I carried out this summer at the Biennial in Venice. Being there every other year is itself a celebration. This major event of contemporary art has a long history which reveals the importance of strategic thinking and the cultural dimension of those who manage a city, as Venice did benefit from such visionary people. At the end of the 19$^{th}$ century, in 1893, due to the initiative of a group of Venetian intellectuals led by the mayor, Riccardo Selvatico, an administrative resolution of "instituting a national biennial art exhibition" was launched. Two years later (1895), the first edition of this event initially dedicated to visual arts took place. In the meanwhile, the Venice Biennial has branched out, accumulating several new sections: music, theatre, cinematography, architecture, dance.

An eclectic mélange of artistic projects from all over the world, the Biennial generates a dialogue in the world contemporary art every year; at the same time, it is an important meeting platform for all those involved in the contemporary artistic discourse: artists, curators, collectors, cultural operators and, evidently, consumers of art. The participation of Romania in this manifestation, starting no later than 1907, is also worth mentioning. Since 1938, Romania has had its own pavilion in the Giardini della Biennale.

In order to clarify my need, as a practitioner of theatre, to experience the artistic event of the Venice art galleries *live*, I have to make a reference to my professional past. In 2011, thanks to the "Alien Ties"[1] performance project carried out by the visual artist Dan Acostioaei (a project that won the "Fostering Artistic Practices" contest organized by the Romanian Institute of Culture and Humanistic Research, Venice), I got in contact for the first time with this event. It fortunately coincided with the degree in theatre directing that I obtained in the same year. Dan Acostioaie's project applied practices inspired from the *invisible theatre* and *forum theatre*, theatrical species developed by Augusto Boal and Panagiotis Assimakopoulos. Thus, different public places from Venice became stages of a performance observed by unaware tourists passing-by, who involuntarily came to be performers within the project.

My performance participation from 2011 gave me an active need to come back to Venice as often as I could. The deeper and deeper interdisciplinarity of arts has amplified this desire. I, thus, followed the tendency of offering a theatrical feature to visual art practices, the same way in which some artists appeal to the means of the stage to deliver their message: lighting, sound effects, performers in act, etc. The other way around, I have noticed an amplification of the codification of the theatrical product, a more and more evident conceptualization of the staging in contemporary theatre.

In 2019, I returned to Venice as a visitor, which gave me the detachment necessary to objectively observe the artistic phenomenon that I was attending. Eight years before, I had experienced the state of a performer, but now, during my second visit at the 'centrum' of contemporary art, I truly discovered the amplitude and subtleness of the manifestation, along with a certain voluptuousness of art consumption. The visit to the Venetian biennial became, for me, a form of documenting creative thinking. By adopting the course of Performance Techniques from the Master's Programme given by the Iași Faculty of Theatre, I felt the need to seek, along with the practices of performance art, to constantly connect to the pulse of contemporary art.

Thus, following a pandemic blockage which robbed the event of the cadence of uneven years, the month of July found me in the exhibition pavilions of Venice. I believe it is important to mention that I traveled with the intention of observing parts of the sections dedicated to performance arts. I was directly interested in the earliest and, otherwise, main artistic direction of the manifestation: contemporary visual arts. The curator of this year's Biennial, Cecilia Alemani, the manager of the public art programme for High

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[1] *Cf.* https://www.icr.ro/pagini/alien-ties-de-dan-acostioaei-un-proiect-romanesc-performativ-pe-strazile-venetiei

Line Park, New York, chose a topic which raised controversy among art critics: "The Milk of Dreams"[2]. The title is taken from a book of tales authored by the surrealist artist Leonora Carrington. At the same time, I felt, through this unacted caption, reverberations of the Shakespearean line of Prospero from *The Tempest*: "We are such stuff as dreams are made on".

As usual, the two main exhibition spaces, Arsenale and Giardini, were supplemented by a vast infrastructure of buildings from the whole of the lagoon. It is overwhelming to find out that, all the while of the Biennial, Venice breathes differently, gains a new pulse and seems to structurally reconfigure. This year, more than in 2019[3], I could observe this seductive transformation of the city. The combination between the new media and technologies, as a part of the modern instruments of visual expression, and the architectural styles of the Venetian buildings, are provocative and raise controversy. It is a type of a very unusual dialogue, which consumes a conflictuality generating profound existential questions, implications of art still insufficiently explored, evolving terminologies, unpredictable hybridizations and resemantizations of the creative act.

By making use of technology, the artists from the Biennial achieved absolutely fascinating spatial reconversions. Although, in performance arts, people talk about fluid spaces, character spaces that interact with the actors and influence the action, in the Venetian Biennial, we, the spectators, became, one by one, performers engaged in an active dialogue with the innovative exhibition suggestions. After two years of isolation and absence, the reconnection with art and with the aesthetic achieved an inevitable theatrical dimension. I myself discovered that I was not just simply observing the works exhibited, but, on the contrary, I was chasing stories, activating receivers ready to detect the dramatic conflict preceding each work. The associations inherent with theatre gave flavor to the interaction. Thus, I had revelations at every step. Chromatic and structural extravagances and intensities, the cult of effects and of hallucinating combinations of techniques and methods, ardent and provocative topics englobed an obvious "theatrical symptomatic".

The performance appetite of visual artists is seductive. The theatrical feature of the works exposed has, as far as I am concerned, two major dimensions: on the one hand, it unintentionally insinuates, as an effect of a conceptual contamination; on the other hand, it is an imposition necessary for the message transmitted. The selection of the artists featured certain names which were noticed promptly. The Romanian Andra Ursuța[4] showed a sculptural installation containing hybrid, uncertain beings, constructed with

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[2] https://curatorial.ro/arta/bienala-de-arta-de-la-venetia-2022-the-milk-of-dreams/
[3] https://uap.ro/arrivederci-bienalei-de-arta-de-la-venetia-editia-2019/
[4] https://www.labiennale.org/en/art/2022/milk-dreams/andra-ursu%C5%A3a

the aid of moulds of her own body. Delcy Morelos[5], from Colombia, proposed an ambient installation made of aromatic clays and spices from the Amazonian geographic space. The Polish artist Joana Piotrowska[6] exhibited photographs through which she wanted to discuss the topic of the anxiety and intimate states of the being. Marguerite Humeau[7], France, proposed a biomorphic sculpture placed at the border between engineering, medicine and paleontology. The American Lynn Hershman Leeson[8] exhibited photographic portraits of apparently real people, but which had been fully created out of codes generated by artificial intelligence systems. Diego Marcon[9], Italy, came with a video installation bordering the grotesque, on topics such as the alterity of the family and of the individual, or the artificiality of life. The German artist Wu Tsang[10] brought an immersive video installation, placed on the exterior, next to the Arsenale dock, an introspection into the aquatic world as seen from the perspective of a whale. This sample of visual refinement was fully integrated into the historical space which hosted it.

In the central pavilion, the choreographic part *Encyclopedia of Relations* would recurrently play, under the coordination of Alexandra Pitirici[11]. Unfortunately, the performance was too long for the marathon pace of the visiting circuit. Therefore, the work was "condemned" to a fragmentary, incomplete view.

In the collateral Exhibitions, I noticed the presence of Anish Kapoor[12] at the Gallerie dell'Accademia and Palazzo Manfrin, an extraordinary show of sculptural force which had a paradoxical advantage: its theatrical feature. The installation works could serve, in terms of scenography, each of the great Shakespearean tragedies. Anselm Kiefer[13] exhibited, at Palazzo Ducale, a pictorial installation of large dimensions, a mixture of force and beauty: enormous panels, which covered the walls and the works of cultural heritage of the permanent museum, spoke precisely of the tumultuous history of this spectacular edifice. Bruce Nauman[14] occupied the whole space of Punta della Dogana, the building itself being an excellent plea for reconversions of museum architecture and design. The performance frame and the sound exploration were the two major dimensions of this installation.

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[5] https://www.labiennale.org/en/art/2022/milk-dreams/delcy-morelos
[6] https://www.labiennale.org/en/art/2022/milk-dreams/joanna-piotrowska
[7] https://www.labiennale.org/en/art/2022/milk-dreams/marguerite-humeau
[8] https://www.labiennale.org/en/art/2022/milk-dreams/lynn-hershman-leeson
[9] https://www.labiennale.org/en/art/2022/milk-dreams/diego-marcon
[10] https://www.labiennale.org/en/art/2022/milk-dreams/wu-tsang
[11] https://www.labiennale.org/it/arte/2022/il-latte-dei-sogni/alexandra-pirici
[12] https://www.lissongallery.com/studio/anish-kapoor-in-venice
[13] https://www.viennaartweek.at/en/anselm-kiefers-inferno-in-the-palazzo-ducale/
[14] https://artsupp.com/en/venice/exhibitions/bruce-nauman-punta-della-dogana

As for the national pavilions of Giardini, it is difficult to make general observations. One of the best pavilions, in my opinion, was that of Belgium, with the project *The Nature of the Game*[15]. The space of the gallery was occupied mostly by projection surfaces and screens on which children's games from various parts of the world were shown simultaneously. The anthropological and universal approach to the dynamics of the game was revealed as an instrument of interacting with the world, and also as a way of countering isolation. The idea of activating the space as a work material is found in the German Pavilion, where Maria Eichhorn uncovered the walls and the floor of the structure so as to reveal the "history of the gallery"[16], from the Bavarian Pavilion to the extension from the Nazi period (1938) and to the recent renovations. Ukraine presented an installation by Pavlo Makov, *The Fountain of Exhaustion*[17], having, as a central element, the vital liquid which makes the relation between several recipients possible. I have translated this fountain as a metaphor of the links from our bodies, as an expression of the post-pandemic relation between the individual and the urban landscape, and also as a cry towards the likes of a man caught in the middle of an absurd belligerence.

By far, the pavilion of Denmark[18] has impressed me the most. Here, the space transformed into a dramatic scenography – a mixture of realism and hyperrealism – in which a female centaur gave birth to a child, while the male centaur hanged himself in the nearby stable. Impeccably done, the two inert bodies gave you the impression that they could move in any moment, leaving you breathless. A remarkable presence was that of the Rome Pavilion, which hosted Eugen Raportoru's project, curated by Ilina Schileru. The installation, *The Abduction from the Seraglio*[19] – an evocation of Mozart's work – gained a different resonance when regarded under the subjective lens of the artist's childhood. It is a direct reference to the wall carpet representing a key element of the Romani culture. Serbia presented Vladimir Nikolić's project, *Walking with Water*[20], a spectacular installation composed of two immense video projections: ample surfaces of water, either wild (a panorama of the ocean) or domestic (an Olympic swimming pool). In relation with the human, this installation generated subjective means of liaison.

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[15] https://www.e-flux.com/announcements/457499/francis-alsthe-nature-of-the-game/
[16] https://www.artnews.com/art-news/news/maria-eichhorn-german-pavilion-review-1234625925/
[17] https://ukrainianpavilion.org/
[18] https://www.labiennale.org/en/art/2022/denmark
[19] https://propagarta.ro/imagini-video/expozitia-lui-eugen-raportoru-de-la-venetia/
[20] https://msub.org.rs/walking-with-waterthe-republic-of-serbia-pavilion-at-the-59th-international-art-exhibition-la-biennale-di-venezia-2022/?lang=en

With the aid of Zineb Sedira, an artist of Algerian origins, we managed to enter the French pavilion, a reality specific to cinematography. The scenographic installation *Dreams Have No Titles*[21] evoked the atmosphere of a movie set in which the artist inserted autobiographical narrations, fictional situations and documentary infusions, with the help of décor elements, video projection and sound. South Korea came with a high-tech project carried out by Yunchul Kim. *Gyre*[22]; the installation built by him seemed to pertain to an extraterrestrial civilization whose extremely sophisticated machinery, once captured by the humans, became the unquestionable proof of the existence of life in outer space.

The participation of Romania in this edition has brought a reiteration of the success that the film *Touch Me Not*, by Adina Pintilie, had enjoyed in Berlin, in 2018, where it was awarded The Golden Bear. The cinematographic installation *You Are Another Me – A Cathedral of the Body*[23], carried out by the above mentioned director and curated by Cosmin Costinaș and Viktor Neumann, was devised as a multiplex space populated by video projections. From the screens, we were observed and talked to by people belonging to the LGBTQIA+ community, while they were exploring their own bodies or those of their partners. Adina Pintilie's research gave me the sensation of an intervention meant to moderate the enhanced polemic that the Romanian society is having on the topic. Thus, I watched sequences of great visual intensity about corporality in a game of intimacies, of seeking the self, of questioning corporal identity.

During both the visit and afterwards, when I returned to Romania, I read several comments questioning the quality of the curatorial selection from the 2022 Venice Biennial. It is difficult to define in decisive terms a phenomenon of such amplitude. What I know for sure is that I returned from this trip with an informational baggage hardly accessible under different circumstances, and also with a self-reflection tendency which assures, for a while, the objectiveness of the relation with the self. The unprecedented dynamics and versatility of the forms of artistic expression and the dialogue raised between them brings promises and high expectations from the future editions of the biennial.

(Translated by Andi Sîsîiac)

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[21] https://www.artnews.com/art-news/news/zineb-sedira-french-pavilion-venice-biennale-1234625781/

[22] https://www.labiennale.org/en/art/2022/korea-republic

[23] https://revistaarta.ro/ro/tu-esti-un-alt-eu-o-catedrala-a-corpului-un-proiect-de-adina-pintilie/

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# The Conflict with the Other. Premises of the Rebirth of Tragedy

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***Abstract:*** Written under the impact of the war in Ukraine, the present text aims to verify a series of effects in a theatrical plan. The main effect: the conditions for the revival of tragedy as a theatrical genre. Such a hypothesis, of course, presupposes the reevaluation of some classical components of tragedy: the hero, the feeling of absolute injustice, the feeling of absolute loneliness, the new deities and the types of relationships that contemporary man develops in relation to them, the new dimensions of suffering, and so on. An important component of the study concerns the relationship with the Other. On the one hand, the Other as a stranger, and on the other, the other as a hidden self, with which we frequently come into conflict.

***Keywords:*** conflict; tragedy; war; the Other.

## War, Conflict…

Tempting for cinematography, treated in the most diverse ways, whether it occurred in Troy or in a dehumanizing future, the war has never been of much interest for the theatre along the history of this art. There is no doubt that the war topic has been frequently the focus of some stage productions, albeit either in an essentialized form or under the guise of symbols or visual metaphors, announced by sounds, colours, and of course, playing life and death. We have to admit that it is more and more infrequent to watch wars in the true sense of the word, with grand displays of forces, fierce clashes, and great casts engaged in physical confrontation on stage. War dramaturgy is itself in confusion; the theme is somehow lightly tackled but not entirely approached. Not even in the violent times of ancient history did the poets show the war; they only rendered it in words. Euripides, for instance, would send a messenger occasionally to report the events on the battlefield, while Aeschylus preferred to give minute descriptions of the vestments and attitudes of the seven commanders who besieged Thebes instead of showing us the siege per se. Shakespeare was also elusive about the war. He had no hesitations to show us the most cruel atrocities the humans are capable of, there is no historical play without the war being part

of it, but it is always alluded to or brought on stage indirectly trough story telling sequences. Falstaff fought in battle, he also has captives, but Shakespeare preferrred to show him in pubs, not in battle, be it just a mockery of it. In *Henry V*, which is maybe the play of the most intense belligerent atmosphere, we are always in the immediate vecinity of the battlefields, but never in the throng of battle. In *Anthony and Cleopatra* Shakespeare goes as far as giving us a sense of "soldier kisses", thus subtly indicating the way in which war and love superpose, and in *King John*, one of the few texts in which the stage is taken by the battle field, the unconvincingly represented war is cut short by a political engagement.

The ambition of mirroring war with naturalistic faithfulness was totally abandoned in the 20th century, when all these "awry wars", to paraphrase Sartre, had to be translated into other types of conflict. Ibsen, Chekhov, Strindberg were already interested in this theme, preferring to transport it in the realm of psychological wars, in the war between the individual and time or society, in confrontations among social classes, a.s.f., in the belligerent atmosphere of this or that character with its own self. Gorki's political theatre moved most of the war zones within. Later, Brecht re-exorcized them, trying to focus the viewers' attention again on the concrete nature of war. As a matter of fact, Brecht can be called the last important playwright of physical war, one who seems to be the last to tackle the subject. Re-reading Beckett, I sometimes have the sense of an absent war, with Vladimir and Estragon in the position of veterans confused by the fact that Godot, this white-bearded deity, who could be a decadent warrior god, keeps sending innocent messengers who announce peace, i.e. nothing. One does not need much imagination to see in the natural backdrop in *Waiting for Godot* the "ruins" of an old batle field. In the Romanian space, in a social context in which everybody talked about the war, Camil Petrescu created a drama of moral dilemmas, while Mihail Sebastian, exasperated by the everyday reality, took his characters out of the "conflict zone", relocating them at pensions in the mountains or in small towns "in the midst of the field", where people learn to gaze at the stars and to ignore history.

The theatre stage does not seem to be a good host for true wars, those waged with weapons, canons, soldiers and trenches. The wars of the 20th century, so overwhelming and grandiose, are theatrically interrogated through their effects; the playwrights restore "slices" that they reshape to contain the present. No war is truly relevant if it does not include us one way or another seems to be one of the principles of the theatre discourses about the war. A soldier on stage, we have to admit it, has something dated; something inevitably archaic accompanies his appearance; he brings with him another time, a world we know from hearsay and with which we do not want to have anything to do. The demilitarization of the theatre stages seemed to be an

irreversible process, the 21$^{st}$ century inviting us generously to catalogue its new proposals: micro-biological wars, economic wars, technological wars. To many of us, a (physical or digital) virus looks more familiar than a soldier does. Maybe this is the reason why, in *The Return Home*, the play about the uselessness of war at "Matei Vişniec" Theatre of Suceava (2022), director Botond Nagy dresses his soldier characters in costumes that vaguely evoke military vestments that rather seem to be the remains of an old-fashioned outfit. Only the general wears a uniform, a casquet, and many decorations on his chest. Nagy feels the implicit ridicule of the costume and skillfully generalizes it through emphasis: the great general carries a huge bag of... corn puffs for a long while.

Sometimes, however, history will not heed human logic or aesthetic tendencies. Even in the moments when we contemplate the new list of wars of the 21st century, still traumatized by the SARS CoV (1&2&3...) war, a brutal, primitive war, in which true weapons, true bullets are used, a war "by the book", as we thought we would never see again, has revealed itself to us... Ukraine's invasion by Russia has brought back to our attention, aggressively, without sparing us from its atrocities, the theme of war, compelling us to meditate, among other things, upon the kind of relation art can still entertain with war these days.

### War and Aesthetics. Or If I Were Ukranian…

The complexity and difficulties entailed by the war *mise en scène* have always been a challenge for the aesthetics through which art has tried to reflect it. If sometimes war has been tackled through existing aesthetics, with a Procrustean tuning meant to harmonize form and content, some other times war has generated its own aesthetics, even its own philosophies, such as existentialism, interested in indicating/denouncing the tensions between essence and existence. Then, it is plausible to accept that, without the two World Wars of the 20th century, the theatre of the absurd and implicitly the aesthetics of the absurd would not have been possible; they spring from the human being's immense perplexity occasioned by the encounter with meaninglessness, with what defies reason and what is beyond reason, beyond Aristotle's laws, beyond the cause-and-effect relation that we had deemed to be immovable, a major benchmark of human enterprise. Not even today do the Nazi concentration camps and their whole league of horrors make any reasonable sense; likewise, the deaths of hundreds of thousands of children, the victims of wars with which they had nothing to do, human suffering in its most extreme forms, the fields of bones and rotting meat that feed our modern and flourishing world are pointless.

On the other hand, the absurd shows its limits; apart from a certian poeticity that is still part of its aesthetics, it is difficult to stick to the absurd

in a century when humankind has an explanation for virtually everything. The Neo-scientism that characterizes the 21st century excludes the powers of the absurd from everything; it refuses its access and exiles it in the museum of outmoded feelings of humankind. When by a simple click on the internet all the "how to-s" find a solution, when our lives are so minutely guided, oriented, programmed, filled with tasks that leave you no time for reflection, the blockage caused by the absurd[1] becomes an absurdity in its turn. The rhythms of today's societies will not tolerate this; for the individuals who find themselves in this existential situation our societies have invented special clinics where illnesses such as depression, stress, schizophrenia, a.s.f. are treated.

Leaving the compensatory prejudices or rhetorics aside, we have to admit that, no matter how surprised we might have been by the war between Russia and Ukraine, we do not consider it is absurd. It is even more rational than the previous event we experienced, the Covid pandemic, because we find its certain origin: we can indicate its starting point: the decision of a person whose name we know – Vladimir Putin. Of course, the fact that such a person can live in the 21st century may seem absurd to some, but, except for this aspect, there is nothing absurd about a war of conquest and state reinforcement. This war is surely characterized by a voracity that the generations of the future will recognize.

Nor does surrealism know how to tackle the bloody story being unfurled tens / hundreds of kilometers away from Romania. If I were Ukranian and an artist would treat the drama I am undergoing surrealistically, I would feel sad and deserted by art, through art. The urgency, the imminent danger, the stark drama calls, on the part of the one living it, for attitudes of engagement and faithful rendering rather than oniric parantheses or poeticities that transfigure reality, betraying or hijacking it... Returning to the old realistic aesthetics would not be enough. Today, realism looks like merely one-half of a road, a groping through thickets of reality leading nowhere. Chekhovian realism, for instance, with all its symbolic escapades, still worked in a black-and-white world, with hues of white and hues of black. It is hard to imagine that if Chekhov had been Ukranian and lived today he would have found any relevance in the kind of realism he practised in the late 19th century.

Art has to resort to something different in order to give a credible, honest, and at the same time artistic message about the horrors of our times. Among other things, it should take into account a certain state of mind that, at

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[1] It is interesting how concerned the authors of the theatre of the absurd were with tragedy. Let us remember Becket's comments on Racine, the pastiche of Corneille's *Le Cid* (*The Kid*), the "tragedy of language" Ionesco was talking about, and also how he melted the tragic into the comic and the comic into the tragic theorised in plays like *The Bald Soprano*.

least at the beginning of the war in Ukraine, seemed to be dominant. This state of mind, which looks like solidarity, has deeper roots; it comes from something we thought was lost or something we deemed to be an "affair" of the individual, not of the species. That something is nothing else but the age-old sense of tragic that fed tragedy. After the two years of collective emotional vulnerable exposure, marked by the physical and mental isolation brought about by the pandemic, caught somehow unguarded, all our sureties questioned, we were prepared for this new and old at the same time, strange, and yet deeply familiar experience: the experience of the tragic[2].. If I were Ukrainian, if I were one of the thousands of refugees left without a "home", if I heard the whiz of the shells, of the rockets, of the dying breath of the person next to me, maybe this experience of the tragic would have clearer contours than those I manage to sketch in front of a laptop, in a space where I can still feel protected as a theorist who is outside of the danger zone.

### The Problematic Sense of the Tragic

In everyday life, the tragic[3] continues to make its presence felt, with effects that are as devastating today as one hundred or one thousand years ago. The grief of a contemporary mother whose child dies is similar to that of a mother in the past; there is no doubt that this/that mother lives/lived a tragic experience. We watch her mourning hopelessly the dead body of her child and, in our turn, we have, more or less, the eperience of the tragic, in that exact farrago of pity and terror Aristotle[4] used to speak about. My projection in the mother's suffering, the unuttered fear that I might experience what she experiences, but also the unfaked and at the same time helpless pity, are still

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[2] Maybe not accidentally, one of the most complex books about the wars of the 20th century bears a suggestive title: Alistair Horny, *Hubris: The Tragedy of War in the Twentieth Century*, Orion Publishing Co, 2016.

[3] Liiceanu dwells on the tragic conscience of European culture, a conscience outlined in an intimate connection with the founding tragedies of Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides. But for these tragedies, we would not have had a conscience of the tragic. This is why no approach to the tragic can be made outside of the aesthetic background. Tragedies would be "the documentary form of the opinions of the tragic", necessary for a knowledge, be it relative, of the relations between the tragic and mythology. Gabriel Liiceanu, *Tragicul, o fenomenologie a limitei și a depășirii* [The Tragic, a Phenomenology of the Limit and Transgression], Second Edition, București, Editura Humanitas, 1993, p. 30 (translated into English by the translator of this article).

[4] Likewise, Liiceanu drew attention to a certain precaution we should have when we tread the trodden path of Aristotle's definition: "Aristotle's definition of the tragic as the phenomenon that stirs our pity and terror, taken over, directly or indirectly, by the theorists of the aesthetics of tragedy in various European cultures, accredited a simplistic judgement of the tragic phenomenon; spreading the thought of synonymy between the tragic and the terrible, it made any misfortune capable of stirring compassion and dread a source of the tragic". G. Liiceanu, *op. cit.*, p. 26 (translated into English by the translator of this article).

states of mind that situate us in a direct relation with the tragic. However, the problem boils down to this: our incapacity of experimenting today with the tragic on a theatre stage, as the ancient Greeks are supposed to have done, watching from their amphitheatres the stories of Antigone, Hecuba and Medea, and in general of all these so-called "tragic heroes". Nietzsche holds Euripides responsible for contaminating tragedy with doubt and reason, with mocking at myth and mythology[5]. He names Socrates and his contemporary, the "dubious" Euripides, explicitly as de luxe gravediggers of tragedy, and implicitly of the theatrical sense of the stage tragic. The German philosopher suggests that, when conscience entered stage, that enigmatic daimon with which Socrates used to entertain now and then, something got lost forever in the way the Athenians looked at the sky and imagined that something was there beyond the spheres of the visible. In the early 1960s, George Steiner, in his famous book on the death of tragedy, drew a firm conclusion: tragedy and the stage tragic are no longer possible in times when "we are no longer protected by God's shadow". He thus continues Nietzsche's thought, indicating one more condition of the tragic: the unadulterated faith in gods or in any other instances of the Unseen that would decide upon the matters of life and death when it comes to the vulnerable human being. Steiner finds yet another culprit, one who drove away the last deities hidden neither in the skies nor in the underground lights but in the recesses of the subconscious: Freud. Maybe if it hadn't been for Freud and psychoanalysis, the gods, renamed and transported to other homelands, would have been able to continue their divine existences undisturbed. They would have been called Terror, Guilt, Trauma and would have continued to keep us connected with the networks of the Unseen and of the... tragic. Finally yet importantly, another cause for the incapacity of tragedy to exist would be the Christian doctrine that rewards tragic suffering by cancelling it.

Symbolically speaking, the 20th century positivism/scientism tried to impose its own deities, but these gods proved to be utilitarian and so lacking in stateliness that much as you might try to see a deity in the idea of a car or, more recently, in Artificial Intelligence, you simply fail to figure out such meta-representations. More empty than ever, the sky we are watching from our present-day perspective offers us nothing else but precarious and worn out poetic images or meteorological information. The ancient Greek who,

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[5] "What was your goal, godless Euripides, when you tried to force this dying old thing (the myth – C.C.) to continue to serve you? It died of your brutal hands; and then you employed a masked myth, the simulacrum of a myth that, like Hercules' monkey, knew only how to deck itself with ancient splendour." Nietzsche, *Naşterea tragediei* [*The Birth of Tragedy*], in *de la Apollo la Faust* [*From Apollo to Faustus*], *Foreword* by Victor Ernest Maşek, translated by Ion Dobrogeanu Gherea, București, Editura Meridiane, 1978, p. 225 (translated into English by the translator of this article).

lying on his back somewhere on the outskirts of the polis, would gaze at the starry vault of the sky when nights were clear, felt something totally different from what we feel, in our adventures and exercises of urban romance and philosophical thinking at week-ends.

Formally speaking, in order for it to be a feeling of enough intensity to be represented on the theatre stage, the tragic has to meet certain conditions: the belief in the existence of deities that should be unpredictable in relation to the human being[6], the sense of absolute injustice, the conviction that some blind necessity is ready to destroy our certainties, tragic heroism and undisimulated vocation for suffering, the public character of suffering[7]. Can these conditions be met today, in a world that has just overcome a pandemic and entered an unexpected war? Let us take them in turn!

### Neo-Olympus or from the Fall of Troy to the Fall of Mariupol

In the thinking of the ancient Greeks, the Mount Olympus was not an abstraction; it was a topos as concrete as a topos can be, and it entertained a complicated and continually changing power network with the mortals' topos. Being intensely anthropomorphized, the gods almost became a "social class", one that had control and influence, but also one whose vulnerabilities people knew, and of which they would take advantage with shrewdness and cynicism now and then. Maybe this is why a considerable number of directors who staged ancient texts in the 20th century proposed interpretations that were intriguing at first sight: the Mount Olympus as a mafia network, Zeus as a Boss, Eros as a pimp, Aphrodite as a principle of feminism, Apollo – as a match-maker, etc. Transposed in this philosophy of power, the old Mount Olympus has kept its functions to the present day. In the common thinking of people, for the average people in today's civilized world, names like Joe Biden, Vladimir Putin, Emmanuel Macron, Boris Johnson, Kim Jong-un, Angela Merkel a.s.f. supplant the old deities, constituting a neo-Olympus as admired and as contested, as inaccessible and as concrete as the founding Olympus. For hundreds of millions of people, the president of the United States, no matter if he is called Obama, Trump or Joe Biden, represents a metaphor of supreme power. He can be hampered in

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[6] "Tragedy is that form of art that needs the unbearable burden of God's presence", George Steiner, *Moartea tragediei* [*The Death of Tragedy*], translated by Rodica Tiniș, București, Editura Humanitas, 2008, p. 281. Another relevant passage: "The absolute tragedy, the image of the human being as not being wanted in life, as a creature *gods kill in their game, as playful boys would kill flies*, is unbearable for human reason and sensibility." *Idem*, p. 13 (translated into English by the translator of this article).

[7] Other features of the tragic: "the brevity of heroic life, the vulnerability in front of murder impulses and the whims of inhuman nature, the fall of the polis." Steiner, *op. cit.*, p. 18 (translated into English by the translator of this article).

exerting his power only by other "deities" that, in their turn, closely follow the games and mechanisms of power. It might sound like reductionism, but some of the dwellers of our planet watch the war between Russia and Ukraine as a *Götterdämmerung*, a confrontation of proud "gods" who sooner or later will make peace, who will certainly strike a deal with no admixture of the "mortals" and their will.

The media channels ensure a huge notoriety for these gods, one that is superior to the one enjoyed by the old deities. It is almost impossible for one not to hear at least one of the names mentioned above in the interval of one day. Moreover, each name is associated with an image carefully delivered in the public space, so that the intensity of the "god's" presence in our lives rules out vagueness and approximation.

Consolidating this sense of distance/intangibility and also of closeness/familiarity gives legitimacy to the neo-Olympus and new relevance to the discussion on the gods' camp and the mortals' camp. Mythology insinuates itself once again into the real, cracking and rendering it relative. The erotic whim that led to the famous Trojan war is now echoed by a territorial whim, and the fall of Troy and Mariupol are examples of *gods'* will exerted over some *human*[8] actions.

### The Sense of Absolute Injustice

In ancient literature, tragedy sometimes springs from the sense of an absolute injustice. This is, for instance, the case of Antigone, for whom the interdiction of burying her dead brother and the contempt for a venerable tradition seem to be supreme abuses. Likewise, Medea, who left her homeland to marry Jason, acts under the impulse of the same sense of boundless injustice[9]. Oedipus, in his turn, knows that he is subjected to the injustice of a fate decided by the gods, like Orestes who, tormented by the Erinyes for having killed his mother, frequently thinks of Apollo, the god who had demanded that he committed the crime. In each of the cases mentioned, the source of injustice is precise; there is no room for doubts or hesitations. Characters like these cannot put up with injustice; they are

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[8] It was fascinating and terrifying to watch, when the Russian invasion had just started, the declarations of some Russian soldiers who simply had no idea what they were doing in the country they were attacking. Retrieved from https://stirileprotv.ro/stiri/international/presa-soldatii-rusi-capturati-nu-stiau-ca-invadau-ucraina-ei-credeau-ca-se-afla-la-exercitii-in-crimeea.html

[9] Apart from the theme of the war, how can you help thinking of Medea when you find out about the mother who hurled herself together with her two children from a block of flats, exasperated by a contemporary "Jason"? Retrieved from https://www.digi24.ro/stiri/caz-socant-la-timisoara-o-mama-s-a-aruncat-de-la-etaj-impreuna-cu-cei-doi-copii-cu-varste-de-3-si-6-ani-1925937

stupefied and they wonder why life chose them to treat so unjustly. Arrived at Colonus, long after he had found out the truth, Oedipus still keeps traces of his initial perplexity, and the echoes of the tousands of "why-s" he asked himself in the beginning will not leave him in the seconds before he dies.

It is exactly this sense of absolute injustice undergone by the tens or even hundreds of thousands of Ukranians whose lives seemed stable, predictible, settled; they found themselves under attack, slaughtered, humiliated and forced to take exile. They did nothing wrong, many of them led morally valid lives, paying their taxes, doing their duty as claimed by the modern society in which they lived. An immense injustice descended upon the streets of Kiev, Donbas and Mariupol, and, together with it, the tragic contour of some destinies started to become more and more clear. This time again, the source of injustice was precisely identified: Putin, in his double hypostasis – a man of no morality and principle (Jason type), an irresponsable and discretionary god (the type of the gods created by Euripides: selfish, and more often than not failing to assume the consequences of arbitrary decisions).

For the rest of us who watch this pointless war, some sort of moralizing singers in a choir, the sense of uncertainty has been stronger than that of injustice: nothing is truly certain, stable, firm, no certainty is final. A necessity which is blind and deaf to the contemporary individual's arguments can shatter, in just a fraction of a second, all the material and moral values we have built for ourselves.

### Tragic Heroism and the Public Nature of Suffering

There is a lot of written critical reflection on "the tragic hero/ine", that character upon which the befuddling blows of fate are made to fall. That kind of character is not essentially positive; Medea's murders or the killing at the crossroads committed by Oedipus are two of the most obvious examples of tarnished biographies, integrated and melted into the "character description" of the hero/ine. To be truly tragic, the hero/ine has to end up badly, by dying or by a ceaseless and terrible psychological burden grinding one's soul[10]. There have been endless debates over which is the most tragic character in ancient literature. We will not repeat them here; we will only point out that

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[10] George Steiner pushes the definition of tragedy to the extreme: "What I identify as *tragedy* in a radical sense is the dramatic representation or more accurately the dramatic confirmation of a view of reality in which the human being is considered an unwanted guest in this world (...) However, absolute tragedy can be found only in situations when Sophocles' assertion according to which *it is better for one not to have been born at all* is considered an essential truth or when the final conclusion concerning the fate of the human being is expressed by Lear's *never* uttered five times." Steiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 12-13 (translated by the translator of this article).

death was not perceived as a guaranteed end of suffering. Let us not forget that Oedipus blinds himself to prevent an encounter with his own father, whose sheets he has defiled.

Considering the war in Ukraine and trying to identify such a possible hero/ine, one would feel hugely tempted to cast President Volodymyr Zelensky to play that part. The planetary sympathy capital he still enjoys is immense. Relying on his charisma, he has known how to build and interpret his role as a leader ready to fight the war through, valuing his country above everything else and bracing up for the peril of death every single second. In the early days of the war there were quite a few headlines reading: "Zelensky's wife says she and children have not seen president since start of the conflict"[11], "Zelensky survives three assassination attempts in one week"[12], "Zelensky refuses US offer to evacuate, saying "I need ammunition, not a ride"[13], etc. The dramatic formula underpinning the military conflict in Ukraine becomes clear for every freshman of dramatic art: the confrontation between a hero (Zelensky) and an anti-hero (Putin), which is the eternal archetypal conflict between good and evil.

In the early days of the war, Zelensky was the true effigy of a tragic hero in whose under-eye bags one would read genuine suffering and that existential fatigue characteristic of the great figures on the brink of falling into the abyss. Nonetheless, from the moment Zelensky became aware of his own tragic vocation and started to display it by a range of carefully studied means, the authenticity of the tragic got lost. His heroism, which continued to be positive and inspiring, became a dramatic one, leaving the territory of genuine tragedy. Military or political heroism does not necessarily imply a tragic component; on the contrary, more often than not, it rules it out. However cynical it might seem, it is death only – which is not desirable, of course – that may restore the tragic aura Volodymyr Zelensky originally promised to emanate.[14]

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[11] Verity Bowman, *Volodymyr Zelensky's wife says she and children have not seen president since start of the conflict*, "The Telegraph", 9 April 2022, retrieved from https://www.telegraph.co.uk/world-news/2022/04/09/volodymyr-zelenskys-wife-says-children-have-not-seen-president/

[12] Gerard Kaonga, *Volodymyr Zelensky Survives Three Assassination Attempts in One Week*, "Newsweek", 3 April 2022, retrieved from https://www.newsweek.com/volodymyr-zelensky-assassination-ukraine-russia-invasion-survive-war-1684801

[13] Sharon Braithwaite, *Zelensky refuses US offer to evacuate, saying 'I need ammunition, not a ride'*, 26 February 2022, "CNN Edition", retrieved from https://edition.cnn.com/2022/02/26/europe/ukraine-zelensky-evacuation-intl/index.html

[14] "...any realistic approach to the tragic theatre must have its origins in the event of the catastrophe. Tragedies end up badly. The tragic hero/ine is crushed by forces that can neither be fully comprehended nor vanquished by rational caution (...) Tragedy is irreparable." G. Steiner, *op. cit.*, p. 21 (translated by the translator of this article). Musing on Kirkegaard's *The Sickness unto Death*, Ileana Mălăncioiu firmly distinguishes the tragic from despair:

To speak the truth, the war we tackle here has other tragic heroes. In the spring of 2022, I became the owner of a collection of photos taken by Florin Ghioca. Most of the pictures foregrounded the features of Ukranian refugees; plain and not meant to be designedly artistic, the pictures are troubling by the intensity with which they reveal the most deeply hidden layers of human suffering. The tragic flutter makes its presence felt in a mere glance, in a discreet face expression, in an apparently banal posture. These great anonymous exiles are, I believe, the true tragic hero/ines of our times. To them, we can add the thousands of innocent casualties of a war they neither wanted nor understood.

For tragedy to be fulfilled, the suffering it implies has to have a public character. In the Greek tragedies, the chorus used to always have, among other things, this role of being a witness. It would keep a record of the events, it would comment on them and it would make sure that they were passed on after the hero/ine died. On the verge of leaving this world, Hamlet feels he needs such a witness; he asks Horatio to tell the story of what and how things happened. Had Horatio died, Hamlet's tragedy would have been incomplete. More than ever, the public character of the war in Ukraine, livestreamed, reported from its hot areas, its filmed disasters posted on the social media networks, is a certainty. Images such as Florin Ghioca's reached the media[15] as valuable, painful and public documents of human suffering.

### Is a rebirth of tragedy possible?

When, in the din of ambulance sirens, we would periodically receive news about the death of one more friend, acquaintance, colleague, and when, from another war of fake news, of duels between pro- and anti-vaccine camps, of the feeling that it is impossible to fight something you neither know nor see, I tried to make sense of how art can reflect panic, anxiety and extreme depression. In principle, the rebirth of tragedy as a dramatic genre but also as a spectacle would be possible. As argued above, some of its fundamental prerequisites are met: merciless and reckless gods, the background of absolute injustice, blind necessity, tragic heroism and the public character of suffering – we have them all in plenty in our complicated and meaningless times.

Technically speaking, the language stylistics – a lofty condition of tragedy writing from Aeschylus to Racine – could find its refuge in a totally

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«being tragic means, beyond any doubt, infinitely more than being in despair. To be more accurate, it means despair plus the loss it entails." Ileana Mălăncioiu, *Vina tragică* [The Tragic Guilt], Third Edition, Iași, Editura Polirom, 2013, p. 132 (translated into English by the translator of this article).

[15] I also asked for his permission to use them as illustrations for the spring issue of "Dacia Literară" magazine, published by the National Museum of Romanian Literature of Iași.

new poeticity, as yet not theorized but intuited, forefelt, lived by the people of our century. It is a rather uncontemplative poeticity that would blend cry, action, attitude, genuine experience of the unbearable, confession, revolt. The tragedies of the 21st century, if written, would be confessional, violently engaging documents of what we have become and of how the suffocating lack of reason gathers more and more ground in the apparently well-organized fields of our existence.

The rebirth or, why not, reinvention of tragedy is not, however, something one would expect only in drama, both as dramaturgy and as art. Such an endeavour, which is not totally conscious and planned, but dictated by the desire to express what we mean generically by *Zeitgesit*, must have similar echoes in the literature, philosophy and arts of our time. Thus, we would be in the situation of experiencing again the special interest in tragedy and the tragic of the German idealistic philosophy of the 19th century, rendered concrete by attempts at rejuvenating tragedy as a dramatic and literary genre[16] , a rebirth abandoned *en route* under the pressure of the new positivist philosophies and the siren songs they were murmuring.

I would like to conclude by considering that a horizon of ethical reflection is worth taking into account in this argument for exploring a new sense of the tragic experienced by contemporary society through the war. Desiring a 21st century marked by the tragic for art's sake only means valuing art more than life. Ultimately, it would be preferable for humankind to be spared from this gloomy and aggrieving feeling, even if tragedy might never be possible in its absence[17].

(Translated by Dana Bădulescu)

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[16] See the thorough study of the relation with the tragic entertained by the German philosophers of the 18th and 19th century written by Joshua Billings, *Genealogy of the Tragic. Greek Tragedy and German Philosophy*, Princeton University Press, 2014.

[17] "The death of tragedy is not a spiritual gain, and it should not soothe us – on the contrary, it should worry us", Ileana Mălănciou wrote in the 1970s (*op. cit.*, p. 6, translated by the translator of this article), and there was truth in her statement. On the other hand, the restoration of the conditions in which the tragic would be possible makes us feel ill at ease and troubles us even more...

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# A Diverse Beauty: *Amore,* by Pippo Delbono

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***Abstract:*** To consider something or someone different is to discriminate. Objectively, this term has no moral connotation. You take a category and relate to it by choosing different references. Pippo Delbono manages to synthesize the beauty inside the difference; an intense, painful, even tough beauty. For him, contrast is not a method, but an acceptance of identity: marginalization as an existential condition. He places himself in both seats: in the audience – and *inside the* show. Spectator and actor, director, he changes the perspectives because he embraces them all, thus indicating that each of our roles is interchangeable. We can always be *the other* or *different* for someone, a group, a context, and the list could go on. One of the central images of *Amore* performance this year, at the International Theatre Festival in Sibiu, is a heartbreaking *Pietà* illustration.

***Keywords:*** Pippo Delbono; beauty; the Other.

> *"Belief and the power to worship – that is what we lack"*[1]

To find something or someone different involves a certain discrimination. Objectively regarded, this term does not have a moral connotation. You take a category and you relate to it, choosing something else. Pippo Delbono manages to integrate the beauty of difference: an intense, painful and even harsh beauty. For him, the contrast is not a procedure, but an assumption of identity: marginality and diversity as an existential condition.

He adopts both positions: close to the public – and *in* the performance. A spectator and an actor, a director, he changes perspectives because he assumes all of them, thus showing us that the roles played by each and every one of us are interchangeable. We can always be the *other* or *different* to someone, to a group, a context, and the list goes on. His only request and

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[1] Edward Gordon Craig, *Croyances et faux-semblants*, in *Le théâtre en marche*, "Pratique du théâtre", Paris, Gallimard, 1964, p. 111, in Monique Borie, *Corp de piatră, corp de carne. Sculptură și teatru* [Body of stone, body of flesh. Sculpture and theatre], București, Editura Nemira, 2019, p. 17 (translated after Craig, E. G., *Belief and Make-Believe*, "The Theatre – Advancing", Boston, Little, Brown and Company, 1919, p. 55).

expectation from the other (the public, meaning each person from the public) – is to be listened to. He addresses the public, by saying: Good evening. Silence. Once again, a bit more emphatic: Good evening! Good evening, a few voices answer more clearly. I am here, I am talking to you, I am watching you, this isn't theatre, it isn't a performance, this is about us. Us who?

One of the central images of the *Amore* performance, staged this year on the occasion of the Sibiu International Theatre Festival, is a poignant Pietà. An Angolan singer, Aline Frazão, embraces Gianluca Ballarè, an actor from Pippo Delbono's troupe suffering from Down syndrome, as if he were her own child. A human-child. Another man, the other. She accepted him as he was. He is us, each of us with our immense need: the need of every one of us and of the whole pained humanity, to be "accepted", caressed, touched, embraced in the suffering of existence. The bare fingers of the singer and the lace of the traditional bride's dress touch the naked skin of the human, in an act of utmost vulnerability. It is like a cry, hard to endure, which Pippo Delbono transmits to the spectators, to the whole world.

The artist chose a common topic: love and a universal language – the love song – to chant and ease his own different and unique suffering. Fado is a music of the other, not his, not ours – and yet it contains a universal cry of sensuality, melancholy, dolour and wistfulness.

The same as some physical deficiencies – love, suffering stigmatize. Thus, each one of us becomes the other at a certain point. Us who? The public answered in the end, when they all acclaimed as one. Different people with different experiences reacted, touched by the inspiration of music and the archetypal situations, and also by the apparently naïve honesty with which the director told the story.

Pippo Delbono confesses, in a performance which is a sort of a human poem-installation: AMORE. In exchange, he asks for empathy as a natural, essential, human aspect. The performance seeks to remake, in a desperate attempt, the profile of the perished Other – out of love and life. The Other is the *different* one, because of deficiency, gender or illness; it is also *the other* from a couple, who suddenly stands out, without "asking for permission", forgetting to have been part of a whole. The director amplifies the image of suffering by exposing the suffering of other individualities.

The aching beauty is what Pippo Delbono shares with us through this performance. Embracement and crucifixion – or the other way around. The wound is beautiful, for it is human. The innocent wound, I would say. Hurt by his journey throughout this world, the artist exposes his wounds so as to heal them. The performance of the innocence of bodies.

Recent research in the field of psychobiology has begun to question the immateriality of the soul, without denying its existence (surpassing, thus,

materialism or, on the contrary, spiritualism). Biology, closely regarded, proves to have features which we commonly attribute to the immaterial soul: desire of freedom, volatility, unpredictability[2]. I had this strong feeling of the soul manifesting through the body during Pippo Belbono's performance, *Amore*, in which the body is material and the voice is also material. The voice affluent in an assumed pathos, with a timber like a thick felt: "Il tuo corpo, amato e perduto…" / "Your body, loved and lost…" holds the stage and the auditorium together all throughout the performance.

Beauty is not always, but *every time*. Beauty regarded neither like an object, nor like a moral category, but from the perspective of the personal response to existence. The place where difference is the most manifest is the body: the agile body as a spiritual glyph of the actress Dolly Albertin, the continued, tireless motion of Grazia Spinella, dancing in a corner with her own solitude, fixed in a cone of light, as if her arms did not have joints.

The actors form sculptures of flesh[3], in ronde-bosse, with the air moving around them. Lack, happiness, pain, wistfulness – manifest through the body. Thus, we feel more directly and more intensely the suffering of the other. And it is good that we feel the pain, for it is not different, it is ours. It seems as if it wants to read, with a sort of optimism, Pippo Delbono's performance. And not only because we project ourselves, through our passions, in what we see on the stage. It is also because we are truly hurt to see the woman, laid on a chair, motionless, like a pagan sphynx, with large, saggy breasts, while the men, grouped in a line, pass, hanging a string of evergrowing, oversized beads around her neck. And this moves you to tears. The burden of love. You cannot resist thinking about the biblical words: "her many sins have been forgiven; hence, she has shown great love." (Luke, 7, 47).

The second statuary group which remains in my memory, as an effigy, is the one about which I talked at the beginning of these lines. That poignant Pietà. And the bare fingers of the singer on the naked back of the vulnerable one, abandoned in the embracing; and his arm around her neck. It is not the perfect ones who need easing. But who belongs to this category?

And, in the end, another body, the one of the director-actor, who rises from his place amongst us and goes to unite himself (and us, together with him) – with his own story. His vertical body transforms into a horizontal body; the stage is united with the auditorium. The artist and the man lies at the root of the tree, a tribute to the hope that he who is gone shall return. He changes places with the one who has gone and is regretted, and is

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[2] Pier Vincenzo Piazza, *Homo biologicus. Cum explică biologia natura umană* [*Homo biologicus*. How biology explains human nature], București, Editura Humanitas, 2022.
[3] Monique Borie, *op. cit.*

accompanied by a singing body (that of Pedro Jòia, the composer and guitar player) – who now takes the place of the director.

Every ritual has its own music. The crying of love is accompanied by fado[4] music, which means destiny or fate, from the Latin *fatum*. Indeed, when you listen to fado music and, in this performance, to the affecting voice of Miguel Ramos, the impression is that the soul has a body. And if it were to "break", it would break at the same time, the soul and the body together. Pippo Delbono has chosen the most "material" of music.

The Nobel Prize winner, the Chinese writer Gao Xingjian, has spoken of a cultural revolution that only the independent ones, in a freedom of spirit, could accomplish. "The current artistic and literary renaissance can only hope for the awakening of independent writers and artists. Only those particular cases of authentic writers and artists, uncompromising in their autonomy, lacking taboos, can offer a profound understanding, through their refined and acute exposure, and the works that they leave behind become live testimonies of the human life and nature, much more real and durable than the history written by the political power."[5] It is also the case of Pippo Delbono, who carries out his own revolution (along with a group of followers), although he himself claims that he is not a revolutionist, even if he seems to be one in the context of a world which has fallen into commonplace and of an art which has grown old: "Theatre has become commonplace. The world has become commonplace. (…) I am not a revolutionist. But art has grown significantly old. (…) I simply look like a revolutionist in the context in which art appears to be old" said Delbono on the occasion of a conference within the Sibiu International Theatre Festival, cited by Monica Andronescu[6].

In Pippo Delbono's art, through the presence of *different* bodies, reality corrects theatre and becomes a vehicle through which the animate reaches us by the means of the truth. The truth, because difference is a natural state of living matter. Only we, because of our egocentrism, believe that difference makes us special. The truth is that, from the cells of our body to all species, everything is different. "A lung, a heart, a liver and a brain are more different from one another than a man from a mouse. (…) The only thing that draws a heart closer to a lung is the fact that we have both. Otherwise, we could think that they come from very distant galaxies. (…) And yet, all organs and cells

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[4] In 2011, the Portuguese music genre *Fado* entered the list of the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

[5] Gao Xingjian, *Literatură şi libertate* [Literature and freedom], Iași, Editura Muzeelor Literare, 2017, p. 37 [our translation].

[6] Monica Andronescu, *O mare roşie. Iubire. Pippo Delbono* [A Red Sea. Love. Pippo Delbono], retrieved from https://artitudini.ro/o-mare-rosie-iubire-pippo-delbono [our translation].

in our body carry the exact same genes"[7], as the neurobiologist and psychiatrist Pier Vincenzo Piazza asserts. Therefore, difference is the rule instead of the exception. To learn of this scientific truth is shocking and amazing. As it awakens the spirit, "certainty determines ageing, and the research spirit (…) keeps us alive, preserves us as artists, as public, as animate beings"[8].

After all, the search for beauty is "the most difficult subject" for the artist and man who thinks, as the sociologist, writer and philosopher Henry-Pierre Jeudy mentions in his book about the body in art: "The most elevated subject in art for the contemplating man is man, or only his exterior, and the artist has as many difficulties in exploring the exterior of man as the sage has in exploring the interior. And the most difficult subject is beauty, as paradoxical as it may seem. But beauty, in fact, is not subjected to number and measurement."[9] To assert this fact on the stage requires courage. A courage which Pippo Delbono assumes: "I seek beauty. As Dante said, it takes courage to discover the beauty of the truth. When you talk about yourself, you talk about the whole world."[10]

The encounter with what is different reawakens spirituality and, perhaps, a more animate life.

(Translated by Andi Sîsîiac)

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[7] Pier Vincenzo Piazza, *op. cit*., p. 49 [our translation].

[8] Pippo Delbono, retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gh8jn9odzX8&t=43s, [our translation].

[9] Joachim Winckelman, *Erinnerung uber die Betractung der alten Kunst*, in Henry-Pierre Jeudy, *Corpul ca obiect de artă*, București, Editura Eurosong & Book, 1998, p. 28 [our translation].

[10] Silvia Năstase, *Căutătorul de frumusețe – Pippo Delbono*, retrieved from https://yorick.ro/cautatorul-de-frumusete-pippo-delbono/, "YORICK.ro", nr. 220, 24.06.2014 [our translation].

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# The Otherness through *Le rêve d'Urmila (Urmila's Dream),* an interdisciplinary and intercultural research creation doctoral project through *Natyashastra*

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***Abstract:*** This communication will present how research creation based doctoral project can be an opportunity to explore the Otherness and *other* disciplines, to open to new realms of research as well as to question the artist's posture in his journey between the culture of origin and the culture of the discipline in which he trains. As an apprentice, I studied kathakali in South India in my early twenties and it influenced all my theatre practice. The dance-theatre of Kerala has been part of my creative tools since the beginning of my creative life as a professional stage artist. My doctoral research was a way to question the footprint of the kathakali training in a creation project, to deepen my knowledge of Indian theatre and to explore the connections between kathakali, *Natyasastra*, the classical Indian treaty of dramaturgy, and my doctoral creation, *Le rêve d'Urmila*, which has been presented in September 2018 at Université Laval, in Quebec City. As part of my doctoral research on cultural hybridity, I had to train a group of western artists to dance and play with the codes of Indian dance to reach the level of cultural and disciplinary competence needed to produce the doctoral creation. I will thus present the specificities of the training process and expose the ways in which we explored various elements of the kathakali performance: the four *abhinaya*, rhythmic and musical elements, etc.

***Keywords:*** Natyashastra; kathakali; *Le rêve d'Urmila*.

Research creation project in academic field can open new realms for researchers, offering a unique opportunity to explore the Otherness, and to question the posture of the artist through his journey between his culture of origin and the culture of the discipline under which he trains. I had the privilege to do my master and my PhD projects as creations. In both cases, it was an opportunity to explore new realms of research and to develop a creative process in an academic context. In Montreal, research master's degrees in dance, theatre and visual arts started at *Université du Québec à Montreal* (UQAM) in the early eighties. These new realms of research soon raised questions on how to develop a scientific approach to the creative

process. In 1988, I started a Master degree in Dramatic Art at UQAM. Soon in my research, I decided to explore a dance form opposite to kathakali under which I trained during the early eighties at Kerala Kalamandalam, the Art Academy of Kerala. I was drawn to Japanese Noh theatre, which at first seemed so different from the exuberant dance theatre form of Kerala, but which revealed to have much more in common than I could imagine. The master degree was an occasion to study *The tradition of Noh*, the dramatic treaty by Zeami, written in the early 15th century, to adapt one of his masterpiece *Hagoromo, or The feather coat*, to a North American context, to explore dramatic and dance technics and to apply new knowledge of Noh elements to the needs of my *mémoire-création*. Japanese Noh artists were none in Montreal, videos were essential to learn the movements and dance figures. The ones created by Monica Bethe and Karen Brazell in the context of a PhD project at Cornell University were very helpful. Finally, *La dame du cap Tourmente,* my adaptation of *Hagoromo* from Zeami, was presented at UQAM in 1991, in collaboration with the co-creator, Gerardo Sanchez, under the supervision of our director Larry Tremblay.

In 2001, I went back to Kerala Kalamandalam to refresh my kathakali training. In the following years, the presence of Kala Bharati, a centre for Bharata Natya directed by Dr Mamata Niyogi-Nakra, was essential to keep me in contact with Indian dance. My participation to their numerous activities triggered my desire to deepen my knowledge of *Natyashastra*, the dramatic treaty from ancient India written two thousand years ago. I joined Laval University in 2014 to start a PhD project with Dr Liviu Dospinescu as supervisor. A research creation based approach appeared the best way to question the footprint of kathakali in my theatre practice, and in the practice of other western artists trained in the same form. As my first dance training, kathakali has impacted all my theatre practice. The PhD also enabled me to discover *Natyashastra*, to pair it with my kathakali practice and to apply its precepts to a creative work while reflecting on cultural hybridity through my posture as a western artist trained in Indian dance.

Over the years, academic literature on research creation process has emerged from the academic field forcing me to identify my approach as a creator and a researcher. As Pierre Gosselin from UQAM mentions in *La recherche-création: pour une compréhension de la recherche en pratique artistique,* it was important for me "to specify the point of view from which [I] approache[s] the object of [my] study."[1] In the article *Research-Creation: Intervention, Analysis and 'Family Resemblances'*, by Owen Chapman et

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[1] Pierre Gosselin: nécessité pour "le chercheur de préciser le point de vue à partir duquel il aborde l'objet de son étude." Pierre Gosselin et Éric Le Coguiec, *La recherche-création création: pour une compréhension de la recherche en pratique artistique*, Québec, Presses de l'Université du Québec, 2006, p. 28.

Kim Sawchuck (2012), from Concordia University, gave four models to define research creation. In order to deepen my understanding of kathakali and to study *Natyashastra*, a ***Research-for-creation*** approach was adopted. This first part included the full study of the thirty-six chapters of *Natyashastra* with a special attention to *Rasa* theory, the study of Hindu mythology, mainly the epic *Ramayana*, as well as a comparative study between the Greek myth of *Odyssey* and different versions of *Ramayana.* A special attention was given to the characters of Urmila and Penelope both waiting for their beloved to return. This reflects upon the writing of the libretto for the play *Le rêve d'Urmila* [*Urmila's dream*]. A bank of movements from personal archives resulting from my training in kathakali in 1980, 1981 and 2001 and my fieldtrip in India in 2016 (kathakali classes, conferences, workshop, shows) was created. This bank includes embodied knowledge through practice, notes, books, videos, mudras, photos, dance figures as kalasham, rhythms, choreographic patterns, as well as numerous live and virtual Kathakali performances.

The ***Research-from-creation***[2] approach intervened later in my projects development and consists of all the documentation and analysis results gathered through the creative process. It includes aspects of training the actors from my distribution to shape their bodies in kathakali movements (of which they didn't have any experience), initiating the musician and the singer to Indian classical and kathakali music, teaching them a different approach to rhythms and melodies, selecting *talas* (rhythmic patterns) and *ragas* (melodic modes), supervising the creation of the music to accompany the dancers, choreographing dance movements and gestural sentences of mudras, etc. The creation process soon raised multiple questions: the actors wanted to know more about the story, the characters, the meaning of certain aspects of the dance-actor practice they needed to develop; about ways to approach the interpretation of a character; as for myself I was interrogating different methods for transmitting the dance technique… everything kept me in constant research.

Research and creation results have been shared with the audience through the presentation of three public laboratories. The feedback from the audience, the exchange with artists, fed my reflection on cultural hybridization and cross-fertilization in the performing arts throughout the creation process and were essential for the research to emerge. All the different steps of creative process and the presentations and experimental performances have been documented through videos recording. The final text, musical scores, partitions, gestural sentences, choreographies, and

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[2] Owen B. Chapman, Kim Sawchuk, *Research-Creation: Intervention, Analysis and "Family Resemblances"*, "Canadian Journal of Communication", Vol. 37 (1), 12 April 2012, retrieved from https://cjc.utpjournals.press/doi/10.22230/cjc.2012v37n1a2489, consulted July 16 2019.

lighting plans are also part of the results. To compare my posture with other Western artists (from France, Mexico and Quebec) trained extensively in kathakali in India, I conducted a series of seven interviews about training and integration of kathakali in creative approaches within a western context, which helped me to precise my concept of hybridization. I will define my understanding and sense of the notion later.

With the importance of the material compiled during the four years of the research, a need to name and organise the materials has aroused. In *Méthodologie de la recherche creation,* Louis-Claude Paquin, from UQAM, proposes a way to name, organise and select documentations. Paquin defines three types of documentation: distanced, experiential and 'artefactual'. Spontaneous testimony can constitute a fourth type of documentation. Distant documentation consists of photos, videos, sound recordings, production activities, etc. The experiential documentation consists of notes and reflections surrounding the experiment, that is, factual and reflective elements such as what worked, what did not work as planned, how to readjust, etc. The 'artefactual' documentation consists of the produced material: plays, choreographies, music, sketches, scores, etc. Spontaneous testimonies reflecting the first degree of reception of a work can complete the documentation, but in Quebec the rules of "research ethics on human beings[3]" make these unsolicited testimonies difficult to integrate in a PhD project.

To define hybridity, I chose the definitions by scholars like Peter Burke, François Laplantine and Alexis Nouss, as well as Sherry Simon from Montreal. The hybrid has often been a solitary place to stand as it is bound with time, space and experience. In her article *Hybridity and translation*, Simon reminds us that it has "a long history of negativity. Consider the words mongrel or half-breed, which share the same semantic field. During the 18th and 19th centuries hybridity was regularly associated with the abnormal, the monstrous or the grotesque"[4]. By opposition *métissage*, translated in English by interbreeding or melting pot, and creolization, both produce a being, or a language, that will spread and live long after the disappearance of its genitors. However,

> [w]hen two different things are brought together – when plants or
> animals are 'crossed', when two identities are fused, when literary

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[3] Ethics Committees for Research Involving Human Subjects protect the rights, the physical and psychological integrity of those who participate to research projects. Project with interviews needs to be approve by a committee.

[4] Sherry Simon, *Hybridity and translation*, in Yves Gambier and Luc van Doorslaer, *Handbook of Translation Studies*, vol. 2, Amsterdam, John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2011, p. 52.

genres are mixed, when a building combines the features of different architectural styles – something new results. This new thing is a hybrid.[5]

If it is still nowadays considered as contamination of the pure by some, Simon points out that hybridity is part of human culture since the beginning of civilisation, as individuals and groups have been travelling through countries and continents, merging with the local population, and carrying part of their cultural identity. Migratory movements belong to human history and have enriched civilisations as new cultures are been absorbed by the ancient one or transformed it. Simons underlines that "all cultures are interwoven, and there are aspects of hybridization in the cultural life of practically any identity or object that is put into circulation"[6].

In the artistic field, if hybridity often refers to the use of two different mediums like dance and theatre, or electronic devices and acting, it can also be applied to the artist himself. The artistic journey of Eugenio Barba from Italy to Denmark brought him to reflect on expressivity. The discovery of Asian performing arts brought him a new understanding of the evolution of European theatre through its various encounters with the East resulting in Eurasian theatre. The contemporary dancer Akram Khan, trained both in classical kathak and contemporary dance, born and raised in England in a Bangladeshi family, is a perfect example of the Hybrid artist.

> I am not British nor even Bangladeshi, my condition is that of a stranger everywhere. (…) I am searching for a voice that is the combination of my motherland roots and the culture of the place where I was born. It is about a third road, a new path in between the East and the West[7]

says Khan. In her interview with him, Annalisa Piccirillo points out that:

> Khan locates himself as a hybrid, transitional dancer and body, moving between the traditional (the past, the sacred and the spiritual) and the modern (the present, the human and the material), between an original physical language and the Western system.[8]

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[5] Sherry Simon, *op. cit.*, p. 50.

[6] *Idem*, p. 52.

[7] Annalisa Piccirillo, *Hybrid Bodies in Transit: The 'Third Language' of Contemporary Kathak*, "Anglistica", vol. 12, n° 2, 2008, p. 30-32, retrieved from http://www.anglistica.unior.it/sites/anglistica/files/04%20Piccirillo.pdf [Consulted July 12 2016].

[8] *Ibidem*.

To explore the Otherness, research creation process offers infinite opportunities. For my thesis, encountering the Other took many paths: deepening my knowledge of Indian culture and arts, training non-Indian artists in kathakali dance, sharing Indian music theory with Western musicians, supervising the creation crew in search for homogeneity and harmony, interviewing artists, and finally sharing an adaptation of an Indian myth in French in front of a francophone audience in Quebec city. For the artists and the audience, discovering the Other, not to also say *the Otherness*, was experimented through the intercultural performance in which artists of different backgrounds and origins worked together but also who gathered multiple practices and cultural flavours.

Deepening my knowledge of kathakali and linking it with *Natyashastra* was very revealing. For example, space and rituals descriptions from *Natyashastra* reflected directly in kathakali practice. For example, the opening ritual of kathakali, the *Namaskaram*[9], the Salute, is transposed in the opening dance.



Fig. 1 Le rêve d'Urmila, 3rd laboratory, Université Laval (Courtesy of Sylvie Belleau)

To stage *Le rêve d'Urmila*, we designed a square space with top lights evoking the traditional theatre. The performance started with the fade in of a spot on the ritual lamp standing at the front of the performing space, representing symbolically the lighting of fire. The show opened with a choreography based on the *Namaskaram* creating a ritualistic atmosphere. The whole process of teaching dance and music, sharing embodied

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[9] Namaskaram: in kathakali, a series of salutation movements done before starting the performance.

knowledge to the artistic team was another way to share the Otherness in me as the kathakali artist. Deepening my knowledge of dance, I felt more confortable to transpose kathakali elements to my creative work. As the dancer Prabal Gupta explains: "One can't push boundaries unless s/he is thoroughly aware of the tradition."[10]

For the creation of the text, I followed the model of kathakali plays where the liberation of the soul is the ultimate achievement of the character. In many ways, the work was transgressed and broke rules but always with respect to the form and spirit. The play was written as a triptych with a long narrative introduction setting the story of Urmila retold by the storyteller and commented by the choir. Then the play started with Urmila as a widow facing mixed emotions after the departure of her beloved. Women and goddesses embodying her different feelings visit Urmila in her sleep. As she woke up, she freed herself of the weight of sorrow by dancing to break the chains of her souvenirs and to celebrate being alive.



Fig. 2 and 3: *Le rêve d'Urmila*, 3rd laboratory, Université Laval (Courtesy of Sylvie Belleau)

The artists participating to the project were exposed to Otherness in three different ways: by learning a new art form and by their different backgrounds, the team being composed of individuals from different origins (Brazil, Central Africa, and Quebec) and from different art backgrounds (theatre, storytelling, contemporary dance, clown, martial art, jazz music, and classical singing). Most of them had a very limited knowledge of Indian arts and culture before starting the project.

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[10] Yogesh Pavar, *This artist performs Cleopatra in Kathakali - Artist Prabal Gupta speaks to Yogesh Pawar about his performance as the Shakespearean Queen of the Nile*, "DNA" Newspaper, 02 September, retrieved from https://www.dnaindia.com/just-before-monday/report-this-artist-performs-cleopatra-in-kathakali-2658021, consulted July 16 2019.

For the audience, *Le rêve d'Urmila* exposed them to a non-realistic form of theatre integrating dance, poetry, acting, music and singing through the usage of the four *Abhinaya* as described in *Natyashastra*. *Abhinaya* literary means, "leading the spectators towards" and allow them to experience *Bhava*, the emotions, and to taste *rasa,* the flavour of the play, which is linked to the aesthetic pleasure. The *abhinaya*, or mode of expressions, refers to *Āṅgika*, the body in movement; *Vācika*, to the speech; *Āhāria*, to the ornamentation (make up, costumes and props); and finally, *Sāttva*, to the emotion. Each *abhinaya* described in *Natyashastra*, has been linked with its equivalent in kathakali and transformed through the creative process using the two modes of representation, *Lokadharmi*, the realistic one, and *Natyadharmi*, the evocative and poetic one. Exploring the Otherness came also with discovering other forms of Indian dance and theatre such as *kutiyattam*, *chau* and *terakuttu*, as well as with discovering the impact of *Natyashastra* in all of them.

*Le rêve d'Urmila* may be understood also as an attempt to make the Otherness accessible to the spectators through the contact that the performance facilitated with a variety of cultural figures and with a wider than usual spectrum of presences of the Other. Though it is not kathakali, the play shares the flavour of the art form and Indian aesthetic. The Otherness is present through a variety of disciplines involved in the production: the various ways to perform the text (storytelling, singing, acting, mudras) and the variety of musical instruments (double bass, accordion, various percussions and drums and digitalised musical loops) used to blend Indian musical concepts to Western based music, not to forget the variety of accents that have sculpted the French language of the performance.

This reflection on Otherness gave a new dimension to my definition of hybridity. In the past years, the academic studies have been an occasion to deepen my knowledge of Otherness within me. It gave me a deeper understanding of the *Natyashastra*, enriched my understanding of kathakali and other Indian dance forms, enabling me to share this knowledge with my peers, putting them in touch with the Otherness through dance and allow them to experiment it within themselves. Interviewing Western kathakali artists carrying the Otherness within them helped me to precise my reflection on hybridity, which has been central to my project. My training in kathakali and my experience in India have forged me both as an artist and an individual. For most western artists, theatre is a play written by a dramaturge and performed more or less naturally by actors. From my perspective, as in kathakali, theatre blends acting, poetry, dance, music and singing, but also

the spirit of the *Other*. Taking its roots in classical Indian theatre, *Le Rêve d'Urmila* is not hybrid work only on a disciplinary level, but also by the diversity of the artists with a variety of cultural backgrounds and theatre experiences, thus bringing the project's hybridity to a superior level of complexity.

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# Festival d'Avignon – The Challenges of a
# Doctoral Documentation

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*Abstract:* In my doctoral research, even though I chose the scientific route and not the professional one, I sought to expand the theoretical discourse in various applicative areas. In order to understand the springs of clowning and the psycho-somatic structure of the clown actor, I conducted a non-verbal monologue study about the trickster, I participated in physical and online workshops with clowning teachers from the UK and Spain and, last but not least, I conducted together with an interdisciplinary team a niche theatrical laboratory with the theme: the clown condition of some dramatic characters. After all these practical extensions of the research, it was my turn, this summer, to undertake a documentary visit to the Avignon Festival. I had planned to watch shows that clearly contain a clownish expression, but also shows where I could identify it based on criteria defined in my research. Thus, I discovered that getting to Avignon during the festival is an adventure in itself. You risk yourself into a heterogeneous theatrical dynamics that is difficult to assimilate. The diversity of events that take place both in the courtyard of Palais des Papes and in several hundred other locations in the old town, but also in five other neighbouring towns – Châteauneuf-du-Pape, Monteux, Courthézon, Vedène and Noves – surpasses any other festival approach from Europe. This fact complicates the options for any viewer, competent or not. This year, in the official section (July 7-26), there were more than 40 events, some resumed in consecutive days, resulting in several hundred performances, all of them sold out. The "Off" section of the festival had a longer duration (July 7-30) and 1570 performances, each show having multiple performances, some even running the entire duration of the festival. No mathematical calculations are needed to get an idea of the artistic effervescence of those summer days in the south of France.

*Keywords:* clowning; Avignon; the Other.

In our doctoral research, although we chose the scientific path instead of the professional one, we sought to extend the theoretical discourse to certain applicative areas. In order to understand the sphere of clowning and the psychosomatic structure of the actor-clown, we carried out a monologue study about the trickster through non-verbality, we participated in onsite and online workshops delivered by teachers of clowning from Great Britain and

Spain and, last but not least, we implemented, together with an interdisciplinary team, a niche theatre laboratory on the topic of the clown condition of certain dramatic characters.

Thus, through the practical, applicative extension of our research, we sought to approach cultural paradigms, which are fundamental for the topic of our doctoral thesis. From this perspective, it has become impossible to ignore the French cultural space, which has imposed models of clown expression in artistic fields such as theatre, film or literature.

During the doctoral study, we have identified multiple reference frames of the clowning practices from this space, beginning with Fiurelli[1], whose character, Scaramouche, inspired from the nature of the Italian Commedia dell'arte, had developed his visual and performing aesthetic, decisively influencing Jean-Baptiste Poquelin Molière. Moreover, Pierrot[2], a sort of a French Pedrolino, is typical for the transformation of the interior essence that the clown develops along with the emergence of this character. Also, we cannot omit the presence of the Footit and Chocolat duo, the same as that of the Fratelinni brothers, who are illustrative for the contemporary visual aesthetic of the clown. Let us remember that the red nose was for the first time worn as an accessory by Albert Fratellini, after he had appeared, again for the first time, together with his brothers in a trio. In the French cinematography, Jacques Tati is acknowledged to be a true innovator of the comic film in the 20th century. In literature, the existentialist clown characters are brought by Jean-Paul Sartre, he himself a clown-like character. In 1964, he was awarded The Nobel Prize for literature, but the writer refused it because "no man deserves glorification during lifetime". We thus encounter a clear pattern of the inability of the individual to adapt to his social context, a feature which is specific to the clown. In theatre, clown characters are launched by those absurdists who break up the human consciousness to the point of alienating from the others and from the self. The characters of this dramaturgy are the expression of a naivety bordering foolery, another feature of the ontological crisis of the clown. The French artistic pedagogy is strongly marked by Jacques Lecoq[3], whose theory of performing extended from the stage practice to the alternative therapy.

Obviously, the French culture, given its prominence, could not ignore the expressive and semantic potential of the condition of the clown. In fact, in the papers that we have written and defended during the research, we analyzed the main promoters of the clown character in France. The

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[1] Maurice Willson Disher, *Clowns and Pantomimes*, London and New York, edited by Benjamin Blom, 1925, p. 73.
[2] Robert F. Stoney, *Pierrot, A Critical History of a Mask*, Princeton, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1978, p. 28.
[3] Simon Murray, *Jacques Lecoq*, London, Routledge Press, 2003, p. 79.

theoretical study lacked a fundamental component: the direct contact with the French cultural model. This is why, when the opportunity of a study visit abroad appeared, through the FDI "DOCTART.INT" project coordinated by professor Matei Bejenaru, the destination came with no hesitation: Avignon Festival. We had the intention of viewing performances manifestly containing clown expression, together with performances in which we could identify this form of expression based on certain criteria defined in our research. For the moment, we shall not mention them, as the list is still under investigation.

The history of this festival is centered around the emblematic appearance of Jean Vilar, actor and theatre manager, who has fervently advocated for the decentralization of the French theatre. The Avignon Festival, founded in 1947, is one of the theatrical "constructions" which link their existence with the efforts of this visionary artist. It is also worth mentioning that it is the oldest French festival and, at the same time, one of the most important manifestations dedicated to the contemporary performance arts in the whole world. Over the years, outstanding figures of the 20$^{th}$ century theatre have been invited to the festival, such as: Robert Wilson, Peter Brook, Ariane Mnouchkine, Antoine Vitez, Thomas Ostermeier, Jan Fabre or Romeo Castelucci.

The "Off" section of the theatrical event is nowadays the largest performance market in the world. In 1980, the Avignon Festival went under the financial patronage of the state of France, which has enabled its sustained development. The flourishing of many generations of playwrights, directors and choreographers is linked to this festival; they have reinvigorated the theatre of the 21$^{st}$ century.

Thus, between 21 and 26 July, we carried out this work-related trip in the South of France, in the city which served, in the 14$^{th}$ century, as house of the pontiffs, for a period of 72 years. On this occasion, we found out that reaching Avignon during the festival is an adventure itself. The diversity of the events which take place both in the courtyard of Palais des Papes[4] and in other different spaces from the old town and from five neighboring places - Châteauneuf-du-Pape, Monteux, Courthézon, Vedène and Noves – outranks every other festival in Europe. This aspect makes it difficult for every spectator, competent or not, to choose where to go.

This year, during the official section (7-26 July), over 40 events took place, some of them replayed in consecutive days, resulting in a few hundred performances, all sold out. The "Off" section of the festival took longer (7-30 July) and had 1570 performances, each having several presentations, some

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[4] https://www.palais-des-papes.com/en, accessed on 16.11.2022.

during the entire festival. There is no need of arithmetic to discern the artistic effervescence of those summer days.

The massive amount of theatrical information which was brought to us did not offer enough time to process all that we had seen. It was difficult to decide between different spaces, conventional or not, between *mainstream* and Off, young or mature artists, well established or beginners, famous or yet to be known productions. Animated by the desire to feel the pulse of both sections, we decided to view, for start, two performances from the official programme of the manifestation. *Tumulus*[5], a scenic construct designed at the crossroads of theatre dance and sonant expression, offered us the chance of a vibrant, carnal journey throughout the European art, from the Renaissance to the present day. What seems to be important for us to mention here is the space that hosted the production, La Fabrica, a former industrial warehouse, today one of the most reputable performance rooms in Avignon. The second performance of the official section which I attended was *Richard II* by William Shakespeare, directed by Cristophe Rauck. The coherent perspective of this director has revealed multiple subtleties of the Shakespearean tragedy, concentrating the attention on the actors' discourse placed in a timeless, almost sterile spatiality. The performing aesthetic featured a very skillful balance between acceptance and detachment, with the public becoming the partner to whom the characters confided. A parable of the struggle for power par excellence, the play permitted, in the perspective of Cristophe Rauck, a contemporary validation of a seductive freshness. This was the performance which confronted us with an unexpected festival reality. The Avignon Festival does not include English subtitling for those who do not speak French. The French *Richard II*[6] is a surgically designed performance, with a distinctive aesthetic, but which does not equal many of the Romanian performances directed by Mihai Măniuțiu or Silviu Purcărete. To all which has been mentioned, we should add that the presentation took place in a school auditorium, Gymnase du Lycée Aubanel, a space so generous that it made me think of the importance that the French give to non-formal education. As expected, neither of the two *mainstream* performances that we watched allowed us to measure the elements of my doctoral topic. They only counted as experiences of the competent spectators who wished to understand, through sampling, the phenomenon in which they took part.

As for the Off section, we enjoyed a few performances with a manifest clowning aesthetic. The linguistic barrier, French indeed being a foreign language to me, allowed me to detachedly regard and identify elements of

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[5] https://festival-avignon.com/en/edition-2022/programme/t-u-m-u-l-u-s-191103, accessed on 29.10.2022.

[6] https://festival-avignon.com/en/edition-2022/programme/richard-ii-191116, accessed on 29.10.2022.

clowning stylistics in the expression of certain characters, in the making of certain scenes, in the interpretation style and even in the theme of some performances. *L'Adulte, mode d'emploi*[7] represented an initial experience of encountering the clown expression in theatre. Developed as a lecture given by a clown, the performance aimed at providing a sort of a hilarious guideline for children to understand the problems specific to the adults. I could gather little information about the performance, right before its presentation, from one of the English speaking volunteers. This was the reason why, during the play, I could follow the clowning mechanisms which determine reactions from the public. By far, the physical comedy, the gesticulation and the behavioral construct of the actress, Muriel Henry, determined the most intense reactions from the public, even to the detriment of the text.

A performance with distinctive dynamics, meant to demonstrate the multiple capacities of the actor was "All abroad (on va bien s'amuser)[8] with and by Michelle Cajolet-Couture. By interpreting the character Diesel, a clown doll, the performer had, for almost an hour, an exceptional solo performance. The pantomimist's refinement was perfectly counterbalanced by the moments in which the performer sang and danced with the most various of rhythms, from arrangements of famous Russian songs to sounds of psychedelic origin. This show surveyed in what seems to be the clearest of terms the fine line between the actor and the clown, bringing the problem of identifying the characteristics of the actor-clown into focus.

By far, the performance which drew my attention the most was "Old Clown Wanted" by Matei Vișniec, performed at Théâtre du Balcon, one of the five "historical" theatres of Avignon, active all during the year. The other locations are Théâtre du Chien qui fume, Théâtre du Chêne noir, Théâtre des Halles and Théâtre des Carmes. Matei Vișniec has been present as an author, and also as a permanent guest at the Avignon Festival since 1990. His play, "Old Clown Wanted" was mounted precisely by the manager of this theatre, the actor and director Serge Barbuscia. He plays the role of Nicollo. The role of Filippo is played by Richard Martin, the manager of the Tourski Theatre of Marseille. From what I understood from Matei Vișniec himself, Richard Martin has worked with Cătălina Buzoianu and Virgil Ogăsanu, and they organized an artistic cruise on a Romanian warship to promote performances in different ports in the Mediterranean Sea. The third actor, playing the role of Peppino, is Pierre Forest, a French actor highly admired for his many roles in movies. This noteworthy distribution assured a mature and profound approach to Vișniec's text. We

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[7] https://www.laprovence.com/article/critiques-avignon-off/6432601/ladulte-mode-demploi-indispensable.html, accessed on 29.10.2022.
[8] https://www.festivaloffavignon.com/programme/2022/all-aboard-on-va-bien-s-amuser-s30641/, accessed on 29.10.2022.

should mention, however, a certain theatricality which we sometimes encounter nowadays in the case of Romanian actors, an echo of the boulevard comedy, rather than of the clown art, which aims at the superficial, the effortless.

During the five days spent in Avignon, I have had the feeling of a race against the clock. Maybe it was an expression of the avidity with which I wanted to receive as much information as possible from this epicentre of the European and world theatre. The permanent tumult of artists promoting performances, of managers seeking to sell or purchase, of the public migrating between locations, shelters something which, in Romania, is still at its beginning: a culture of artistic demand and offer. It exceeds primary needs, the chase after the immediate, the need of having. I believe that what vivifies the artists from the Avignon Festival is probably an ardent desire to live within and through theatre. The spirit of the place prompts theatre consumption. Even when it is excessively practiced, it does not destroy, it builds.

Overall, I have understood, from firsthand experience, that the Avignon Festival is a successful cultural enterprise, a model of good practices which gathers hundreds of thousands of spectators every year, as the city has an economy mainly based on cultural tourism. The days spent there gave us the impression of an enormous edifice from which we could grasp a few small fragments. There are major differences in terms of perception of ideas and theatrical practice between Romania and France, and the connection with such events could act as a reset, a vital reset I would say, of the artistic beliefs and biases. The conclusions of my study visit in Avignon are slowly settling, waiting for the right moment to be displayed, most likely on the pages that will come out on the last mile of the research I am still carrying out.

(Translated by Andi Sîsîiac)

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# The Other's Silence – between Complementarity and Distancing

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***Abstract:*** Silence is an universal language. If there is anything that crosses multiple cultures, in ways that seem so familiar to anyone, this can be achieved by silence. The concept of silence does not need grammatical forms, declinations or accents, although it includes them on a subtle level, silence does not need, most of the time, translation, it goes without saying, because its peculiarities are predominantly emotional, and emotions are universal. Of course, there can be cultures of noise, just as, for example, there are cultures of silence, inclined towards an expression that includes to a very large extent the need for silence. In theatrical art, we cannot get rid of the "other" or the "others" – stage partner, audience, director, etc. The profile of a so-called "other" is a hypostasis that seems to offer a more intimate setting, a direct connection, without witnesses, that moment of wholeness to which a man, from time to time, aspires. The silent being attracts the being in need of an answer. Is "the other" a foreign, separate, culturally or metaphorically distanced formula? This study aims to x-ray moments where the other (either a character, a state, a world, etc.) meets another and decides to "complete" him, to adhere to each other's world, or, on the contrary, to cause him to distance himself and close himself in his own world. The gaze cast at the "other" is a glance thrown beyond the boundaries of one's own person – the gaze of one is silently linked to the gaze of the other.

***Keywords*:** silence; body of silence; theatre; the Other.

The Other's silence still seems to be an insufficiently explored topic, or in any case it seems to be a commonplace subject matter for the collective mindset, since it is not necessarily considered a "phenomenon" one can relate to out of curiosity, or out of a need to discover what lies there *behind*, if there is any such place. We mean a silence beyond the borders of the self, which may trigger one's need to decipher the Other's mystery and secret, because silences come together with this load of the unknown. How much of the Other's silence do we understand and how much lies hidden and secret? Besides being a dialogue with one's own self, silence is also a relation, a dialogue with the Other. Its meaning is established according to the other factors that may accompany it: glance, gesture, sound, the direction of silence

being taken over by the body. In this study, I would also like to point out one of the aspects I will develop in my research, namely the means by which the word and silence are based on a technique; it is easier to perceive the technique behind the word than behind that of silence. More often than not, the actors' silences appear to us as authentic moments extracted from the reality of the present, and not as clear signs of a craft. In a way, we can have the *model* of the text's phrasing, but we seldom have a *model of silence*.

An analysis, a questioning of the way in which, through silence, either of gesture, of the body or the mere absence of the word, we relate to the Other, the *Other* hypostasis in whose mirror we see our reflection, by whom we often let ourselves be influenced, whether we want it or not, seems to be an analysis that risks to elude the concrete realm, since we are rather tempted to turn this silence into something abstract or to make our own assumptions with regards to it. *The other, the interlocutor*, with whom we are engaged in a dialogue, either verbal or non-verbal, on the stage, will always be the unknown or half-inferred path, taking into account that we cannot do without the *Other* in any possible way. The deep solitude itself often implies the following paradox: we experiment, in our own being, within our own self and in the closed intimate circle of our own person some kind of *other self*, an inner voice that we perceive as *another self*, another one who would do things differently, who would act in a totally different way, as if existence were a continual duality, either inwards or outwards.

At first sight, the word *Other* urges us to focus our attention, from the onset, upon something that seems foreign to us, something separate from us, as if two worlds were clearly outlined as distinct, and between them there might be a dialogue or not. As a rule, the supreme test two worlds are subjected to is exactly this: finding a common language, something to bring them close, but simultaneously this connection should occur by engaging the specific cultural background, something that confers them individuality and inevitably distances them at the same time. This is about a balance, a certain proportion of what belongs to us, what is outlined as unique and, at the same time, a proportion of what we can share and that belongs equally to me and to the *Other*. *Silence* either weighs towards an expansion of the space between the two worlds or, in our case, two characters, making them share the same language, which may eventually lead to a fusion of the worlds, where the *Other* becomes something much closer to me, because we have a tacit agreement, or, on the contrary, it determines the crude segmentation of the worlds, the strict demarcation, the impossibility of closeness, which leads to isolation, loneliness, estrangement, lack of contact, lack of understanding, of complicity, even of tolerance, and inevitably there is a deep lack of common language, a language that would familiarize us with each other, that would create a bridge between me and the *Other*.

Of course, in time, I have learned that the closeness with each other can occur through different methods, starting with learning a new language, getting in touch with countries whose culture is very different from ours, to adopting the customs, thinking patterns and even word loans from other languages. Theatre made no exception to the idea of loans. Many notions, tendencies and drama visions have underpinned the development of other perspectives upon the theatre performance – such as the famous example of *Commedia dell' Arte* for the classical comedy. So there have been various means by which worlds, and not only the worlds of art, have felt the need to migrate, travel, to cover the long or short road towards the *Other*, because this is what the *Other* means: a road, a process.

The numerous interconnections and migrations reveal a need of belonging, of safety and stability. This need is, paradoxically, doubled by another, which seems to keep the insides of the human being in a tense balance between an impulse to loneliness, detachment, disseverance, on the one hand, and their opposite – non-belonging, on the other. In this area, silence seems to feel more "at home" (because, obviously, there is this tendency of associating silence with some sort of mystery and intimacy of the self) than on the ground of fusion, completion, safety, belonging – notions partaking in the *social*, *socialization*, and the social means dialogue, speech, word, verbal entertaining of the *Other*.

In the theatrical act, the silence of the Other (which can be the characters' or the public's) may invite a very wide range of interpretations, including moments of complicity, tacit agreement, harmony, but also separation, overlooking, refusal, isolation, blockage, etc. (as they occur in the worlds of Chekhov's characters, where it is clear that the repeated use of "pauses" and "silences" indicates a discrepancy, a mental and emotional desynchronizing among the characters).

The moments when silence becomes an instrument that is complementary or completes another part – be it *another* silence or a word – are moments when the mirroring in the *Other* seems to be perceptible (I mention here the interdependence of Beckett's characters, where *silence as a kind of convergence* is more clearly outlined). Since silences are so global and universal, when two characters are silent this sense of *fusion-silences* is created, the effect being the illusion that they coalesce, in other words they are not clearly separated, nor do they obviously signal the identity of each silence, while the word has this capacity. The individuation of silence depends to a large extent upon the factors giving it direction – glance, gestures, body language in general, but also as a sonorous background – music having this extraordinary capacity of giving significance and meaning to silence. "The Power of Music and Film" documentary sets out this idea according to which the sonorous backgrounds have a determining role in the

subtle orientation and intensity of the narrative thread. This concept of the discreet relation between music and silence is intensely used in the art films, especially by Tarkovski.

On stage, the silences among characters cannot be exactly silences, we do not perceive them as a plurality unless they are interrupted by words, because they come together in a more ample silence that we would almost perceive as a *body of silence*, a third subtle and invisible character. Chekhov uses the sonorous dimension as a character that he introduces on stage through those moments of pause and silence. Thus, the sound is *another* that is manifested discreetly and in close connection with silence.

A facet of the Other's silence also refers to the Other's loneliness, to the moments of isolation and estrangement from the outside world. In Ingmar Bergman's *Persona* we encounter the formula of the Other's silence as distancing. The film opens a space between a character's verbal flux and the other's deliberate silence, which causes deep effects on both sides and in which communication takes place through glances that now speak of emotional agreement, now of a deep lack of agreement, small and repetitive gestures, tensions that manage to transpire among these moments and numerous moments of shared silence (*the Other's complementary silence*, i.e. the silent witness who completes my story, the silence, the words; here the Other's silence marks their capacity of turning their attention towards an interior monologue) and unshared dialogue (the Other's silence that is prone to isolation; the witness is, indeed, in this case, only a witness of circumstances, which they feel no need to alter); all these become the central axis of communication. Here silence is not just silence; the silent character in *Persona* uses *silence as a mask*, some sort of obstacle to any connection with the Other, but at the same time this silence assumed as a mask seems to open new possibilities of relating to the Other, of deep and intimate knowledge between two persons. The Other's silence estranges the *Other* and the others related to them. Thus, an aura of mystery takes shape, and that attracts like a magnet and intrigues the audience. The film's progress is essentially based on the individual's fierce need to alter things, each trying to control and to take command of a narrative that threatens to throw everything into havoc, either by excessive speech or by a deep and endless silence. In these two different ways of maintaining control there is a clash, the impact of the two characters that fluctuate in being close and taking a distance, in isolation and intimacy, each putting the Other's private space in jeopardy, or, conversely, ensuring a meeting space beyond what can be uttered.

The Other's silence is uncomfortable, and the longer it takes the more impenetrable the enigma grows, triggering chaos, dilemmas, uncertainty, imbalance. But is there always in the Other's silence only a permanent, unfluctuating dissociation in what concerns the relation with the others? At a

first stage, the Other and the Other's silences feel like signs of a voluntary and conscious act of revolt, which seems to emphasize a firm determination – a decision that reveals a closed, impenetrable and dour person. This can be rendered by many aspects – glance, gestures, body posture. In *The Man's Back*, George Banu mentions that "the back turned is associated with confession"[1], therefore we may suggest that there are moments when the word hides, while the silence exposes. In these cases, the Other's silence becomes revealing. Elisabet's silences in *Persona* seem to have two poles of manifestation – one of the silences, which acts like a veil for Alma's perception, i.e. the silences whose role is to block intimate knowledge, and one of *confessional* silences, i.e. that reference to spiritual, mental and emotional complicity. Through this type of silence-confession the characters complete each other, they become complementary. The *Other* becomes a support, and the silent and passive witness is now an active one. The Other's silences trigger here a circle of intimacy. Alma survives the Other's silence like Beckett's characters – through the word, through excessive verbalization, even when she is silent in the name of that unuttered complicity, this silence is disquieting; Paul Goodman calls it "confused silence" or "the silence of the peaceful agreement with other persons or of the communion with the cosmos"[2]. Elisabet's silence is so much impregnated into the film narrative that it becomes a continuous discourse, perfectly overlapping other types of discourse in the film, blending the two characters in a natural agreement in the sense of a harmonious constellation that functions under its own parameters. In most of his films, Bergman captures the deepest aspects of human nature, amplifiying and diversifying them in relations dominated by an unconscious dynamic. For Bergman, the Other is a mirror, the essence of all future actions and thoughts, as if the director wanted to ensure us of the whole and all-encompassing existence of *another* who dominates and guides our decisions, almost effortlessly. Therefore, silence is an appropriate filter for these interconnections and reciprocal influences to take place. One way or another, Bergman clearly emphasizes the fact that it is not by means of the word that one reaches the depths of the human being but by means of silence, especially the Other's silence.

After all, the different facets of human silences seem to be congruent; the circle of intimacy entails mooring in the apparently distinct poles of the same silence – the complementarity among characters or their distancing. Mirroring in the Other occurs in the relational flux as a kind of loan – owing a glance, a gesture, a sensation, a mood. In a way, the word separates, while

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[1] George Banu, *Spatele omului, Pictură și Teatru* [The Man's Back, Painting and Theatre], translated from French by Ileana Littera, București, Editura Nemira, 2008, p. 100.
[2] Article *Paul Goodman on The Nine Kinds of Silence*, published in the "The Marginalian" magazine, 2015.

silence unites in the same way in which "the front individuates, and the back levels"[3]. However, both hypostases, that of the front and that of the *back turned*, are often confessions of the same mood, of the same instinct.

(Translated by Dana Bădulescu)

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[3] George Banu, *op. cit.*, p. 149.

# Dear Caroline…

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***Abstract:*** On the quest of expanding one's horizons, people frequently come across… the *Other*. Having hopes, dreams, plans, roots, and feelings of being de-rooting, everyone is capable of exerting an influence on who they interact with, and telling one's story through art can, eventually, lead to a thorough, deeper mutual understanding. Although unsuccessful, the application process for the Caroline Plummer Fellowship in Community Dance set the cornerstone for a new field of interest, and also for a new type of approach towards the back-stage world of performing arts – the pedagogy. The following text aims to explain not only the quintipartite structure of the proposed program, the expected outcome, the intended work method and the possible anthropological analysis derived from it, but also the presumed reasons for the response received from the host institution and even details related to what can be the cause of the *Fascination of the Distance*, of what makes the freedoms of mobility and movement appealing from more than a socio-economical or a physical perspective.

***Keywords:*** the Other; Caroline Plummer; fellowship.

Caroline Plummer left us at the mere age of 25, yet, her legacy lives on to this day, through the memorial fellowship in community dance that her family established, alongside the University of Otago, in 2004. She had a people-centred personality, therefore, self-understanding, the analysis of personal experiences, and learning to share them with the others (with the World, after all) need not be left aside when relating to her memory. This is the first moment when the concept of *the Other* comes into discussion in this case – a network of unfamiliar names becomes the foundation of a creative project focusing on the development of a wider group of people.

When I discovered the possibility of applying to the Caroline Plummer Fellowship, I realised that it would be a great opportunity to explore, alongside people my age, the relationship our generation has with the country where they were born, and also with the place they are

currently living in, as the environment and the ones we come across define our personality as much as our origin, profession, and hobbies do.

What is community dance? Although the name of this type of creative exposure might seem self-explanatory, it only partially is. Yes, it does mean that a professional in the field of performing arts (usually choreography) guides a group of amateurs towards a final artistic result, but the notion of community as a broader image implies adhering to and identifying with a context of the present times, and also with a series of *Others*[1]. This contact within the extensive limits of a pleasant activity that the entire group enjoys has the capacity of leading to mutual understanding, in the literal sense: various approaches, different word choices for the same ideas, and distinct manners of concept-context analysis must be translated for- and must accommodate the needs of the people forming the group, the community. Each of the participants filters the view of the others through their own philosophy on life, observing and, why not? implementing several of the newly discovered thought-habits into their own life. This way, community dance enables the existence of a manner of artistic back-stage practice rarely available to groups of professionals, who have the mutual language of identical or similar theoretical aspects: creation, implicitly movement derived from the organic communion with the other, "from an essential otherness"[2].

However, one more question arises - why New Zealand? Why?! As the furthest place I can go to at the moment, professionally speaking, this country would have granted me not only the chance to come across my peers' polar opposite (literally!) but also to challenge myself in regards to my relation with Romanian values, traditions, and ways of being, with everything that I call *familiar*. Facing the unknown and adhering to a community I would have been a stranger to, at least initially, my only resort would have been understanding the others, communicating inside the social groups encountered there and, eventually, altering, or, perhaps,

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[1]  https://www.communitydance.org.uk/DB/resources-3/what-is-community-dance  -  Site dedicated to developing the knowledge in the field of community dance. The link provided here explains, in simple terms, the three major aspects of community dance – "sense of identity and belonging to a locality or cultural group", "coming together with others", and working alongside a professional.

[2] Laurence Louppe, *Poetics of Contemporary Dance*, translated by Sally Gardner, Alton, Dance Books Ltd., 2010, p. 126. The author states the fact that movement "does not have its origin within the subject [...] but, on the contrary, comes from an essential otherness", more visible, dare I say, in the practice of community dance than in the theoretically established professional choreography and elaboration of dance productions or experiments. Laurence Louppe consciously presents movement as an anthropological practice that aims, since the earliest times, to assure a thorough development to the people involved in it, to the members of the performing… community.

even reshaping my old self. Consequently, wanting to place myself in contexts beyond socio-economic migration, choosing to relocate (temporarily or not) for professional advancement highlighted the importance of having freedom of movement, freedom of choice in what concerns *the Other* we let us be influenced by, either by virtue of fascination, or out of intrinsic necessity.

The project I proposed for the 2023 Fellowship was divided in two major parts: a series of workshops accessible to anyone interested in exploring this side of themselves, and a dance piece where the exercises from the workshops would have been placed in a cursive context, within a storyline.

Starting from a series of questions (What does New Zealand mean to you? What is the image, landscape, or the sound/word/taste/smell (etc.) that defines it? What did New Zealand take from you? What did it give to you?), we would have created a factual, yet subjective, image of the place the participants live in now. If New Zealand were a person, what would they look like, what would their distinctive features be? If this person were to give you a gift, what would that gift be? If this person were to steal something from you, what would that thing be?, thus creating not only an image that can be turned into movement, but also forming a clearer definition of the relationship the participants have with the surroundings.

Below, I will detail the general aspects of each of the steps, following their chronological order:

The first stage of the workshops and the rehearsals for the performance consisted of tasks centred around extracting an idea from a written text and, eventually, from a spoken one - what does the text say?, what do I want to choose from this text, and why?, if it is an image – how does it look?, if it is a concept – how does it make me feel? These applications will then be repeated on a text that will not have a written support – the story of what New Zealand means for the participants. By the beginning of the second stage, all of the participants would have been able to extract an idea from a written text or a vocally-presented speech, but now, how can this be turned into movement? – by extracting the visual essence of it and creating a context for the bodies to freely move in: how does it look? – represent it, using its shape, in the beginning; is it static or does it move? – if it moves, represent its movement; is it big/ is it small? – how would it move if it were smaller/bigger?; is it loud or quiet/fast or slow? etc. The third part of the series of exercises was focused on playing with masks and using certain other objects as if they were something completely different and it had the purpose of stimulating the imagination of the participants, in order for them to be able to make use of the

environment and surroundings when working on the storytelling tasks. Once the participants would have become aware that no idea is wrong, nor "crazy", but it simply reflects the world as <u>they</u> see it, they would have been able to dive into their imagination without taking any possible barriers into account. From that moment onwards, the entire team was to start working on the way in which we could tell stories. The participants in the workshops were to create the narrative that would have been the basis of their future activities. Using the tasks from the previous parts of the project, the story would have become movement and I would have guided the performers, in order for them to not lose touch with their initial idea. Each of them would have had the chance to choose a song that either reminds them of their place of origin, or depicts their relationship with New Zealand or with an experience that they inherently associate with that place, this way creating a sense of authorship[3] for each of them, and also encouraging an anthropological take on their relationships with their roots or feeling of "de-rooting".

After the series of workshops, the participants in the dance piece would have begun the actual rehearsals for the final stage of the project. The last part of the Fellowship was, thus, focused on building and stabilising the dance production. As the final performance would have been separated into solo acts, but also duo, trio, and group scenes (the number of each type of act depending on the stories that would have been portrayed), the unity of the entire choreography would have been created by ordering the movement pieces chronologically, based on when they took place in the lives of the group of performers. The transition between the scenes would have, then, been based not only on temporal logic, but also on spoken-word parts or non-movement scenes derived from and inspired by what would have happened during the rehearsal period - memories of their childhood, shared with the entire creative team, the story of how they felt when they had to move to New Zealand, a description of the place where they felt or still feel most like home, a poem... At the end of the production, for the purpose of creating a sense of community that also embraced the audience, the performers would have asked members of the public the previously mentioned series

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[3] Kate Flatt, *Choreography. Creating and Developing Dance for Performance*, Ramsbury, The Crowood Press, 2019. As a glossary of terms related to not only choreography, but also to performance practice in general, the previously mentioned book explains and allows the reader to understand vital aspects of the creative process: "Be open to finding a meaningful connection between yourself and the dance material that is emerging." (p. 31) This is what I intended to ignite in the team I was going to work with – the personal link created between the performer and the story with the help of this sense of authorship would have allowed all of us to have an intimate relationship with the outcome of our work.

of questions related to New Zealand. Using the exercises from the workshops, they would have enacted that, as movement, also allowing and even engaging the spectator in this.

From an anthropological perspective, the project would have been constructive for the participants by presenting them with the variety of backgrounds of the team members, allowing the performers to understand *the Other*'s cultures not only from their own perspective, but also from the series of interactions they would have had with one another, from the points of view of their peers. The relationships between different upbringings, the similarities between cultures thought to have been radically different, and the realisation that communities are formed not only on the basis of mutual points, but also on aspects that are opposite will also benefit them, by solidifying the foundation of mutual understanding and inclusion. In addition to this, the anthropological viewpoint would have given the group of participants the chance to observe how the originary environment affects one's relation with movement, rhythm, and sound, by cooperating towards a mutual goal with people from different countries and cultures[4].

From a perspective opposite of what I had previously focused on professionally, the proposed project had a strong pedagogical side, rooted in the improvisation exercises proposed by Viola Spolin. Accessible to both professionals and amateurs, these "games" would have also enabled me to explore an aspect of directing praxis that I was not yet very familiar with - didactic explanation, aimed at a group foreign to specialised terminology and theatre jargon. The challenge imposed by this would have implied the development of a new vocabulary, not necessarily a written or a spoken one, but non-verbal, universal, or at least specifically designed for the newly-formed community[5]. Pedagogy as a form of communication, not only as a means of teaching and explaining, as a form of connecting the members of a

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[4] In conformity with the Routledge Companion to Theatre and Performance, anthropology, in theatre, has the purpose of "linking performance with other aspects of human behaviour like ritual and play", resulting in "intercultural performances", therefore, inherently, in a direct communication between the cultural backgrounds of the parties involved in the creative process. Allain, Paul, Harvie, Jen, *Routledge Companion to Theatre and Performance*, Second Edition, London and New York, Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2014, p. 253.

[5] Viola Spolin emphasises the necessity of developing healthy relationships within a group working towards an artistic result: the "Seven Aspects of Spontaneity" subchapter stands as the fundament for my ideas of correlating the team members through both the work approach and the pedagogical interpretation of the games used in the method, given the "number of individuals working interdependently [and, yet, collaborating, may I add] to complete a given project". Viola Spolin, *Improvisation for the Theatre. Handbook for Teaching and Directing Techniques*, Evanston, Northwestern University Press, 1963, p. 9.

heterogeneous group, of creating mutual (although, temporary) roots. This, alongside the influence the original place has on one's movement were supposed to cultivate a coherence within the team participating in the workshop series, diminishing the distance between the individualities, the *Others* involved in the creative research process.

The outdoors, the relationship one has with nature, using art as a form of self-expression and catharsis, enhancing the distinctive and exceptional aspects of every given moment were elements that defined Caroline Plummer, alongside her unchangeable desire to bridge communities through exchanging creative ideas and approaches and learning from one another. Her principles and values would have been incorporated in this dance project by forming bonds between students from different cultures and allowing them to be the storytellers and to clarify their relation with their space of origin, with the civilizations they grew up in, and also with the place where they are now. Furthermore, the manner in which the proposed project was constructed would have supported the participants to become creators, to learn how to build and use metaphors, and how to understand themselves better, while giving them the chance to play the part of the architect of their own story-telling.

Unfortunately, the board did not agree with me in this regard. Or, perhaps, the cause of the rejection was my not-yet-appealing portfolio? Or could it have been the fact that the distance between where I live and work, the place that has influenced me most, and New Zealand, its communities and its typical aspects, made it too difficult for me to be able to relate to it at the moment, to understand it, and to be able to propose a project that would have been truly relevant to the people involved in it? Regardless of the reason, the experience of writing a project proposal, maintaining a constant and unitary approach to the selection of activities that I wanted to do while being there, and, most importantly, admitting that *trying* to get selected for this Fellowship was, at this stage of my career and professional evolution, more valuable than *actually being chosen* by the committee stood as cornerstones in the process of me learning about these types of processes and opportunities.

As most of this text was based on questions meant to generate an exposure of thoughts, I will ask (myself) one more, thus stating my conclusion: Would I try again? Most definitely. However, not right now. The respect I have towards New Zealand, as a symbol of *the Other*, of the opposite capable of teaching me the importance of sharing, of guiding, of authorship, and of the perseverance to pursue a trial-and-error kind of professional development once again does not allow me to

present the same self I did this year. I still have closer vicinities to explore, more familiar *Others* to encounter and to let my-self be fascinated and altered by before I can try to reach the so-called Edge of the World again on my quest to expand my horizons and find people I can be mirrored by.

(Translated by Dana Bădulescu)

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# Lack of Documentation on the Phenomenon of Body Shaming in Romania. In Search of a method...

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*Abstract:* My research is based mainly on the vast phenomenon that we call body shaming. Although it has existed for a long time in social interactions, the phenomenon has inevitably spread much faster with the evolution of social media platforms, and is part of the wide range of contemporary psycho-somatic disorders. In a first analysis of the subject, we can formulate the false impression that body shaming is an isolated manifestation of negative remarks, about one individual's weight by another, in order to denigrate it. But if we look at the depth of the psychic processes that arise from such an interaction, we see that, in fact, body shaming has far more complex implications in everyday life. For example, certain verbal expressions we use daily can become triggers of bodily trauma to those around us, without our intention having any derogatory purpose. Internationally, the phenomenon has already raised some question marks among psychologists and industries that include working with body shapes, thus forming an opportunity to study the triggering mechanisms of body shaming, its forms and the effects it can have on an individual. Society itself has become familiar with the harmful effects and has developed an ability to censor itself in such situations. In Romania, however, the phenomenon is just beginning to be introduced into society as a real problem of the 21st century, research on it being even less common.

*Keywords:* body shaming; theatre; dance.

The research that I intend to carry out is mainly based on the vast phenomenon known as *body shaming*. Although it has existed for a long time in social interactions, the phenomenon has inevitably spread a lot faster together with the evolution of the social media platforms, and is a part of the wide range of contemporary psychosomatic disorders. "Body shaming (BS) is a popular term for a type of negative social interaction, which frequently occurs in social media. However, there is a lack of a clear scientific definition of BS and data on its relation to other concepts in social aggression research."[1]

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[1] Constanze Schlüter, Gerda Kraag, Jennifer Schmidt, *Body Shaming: An Exploratory Study on its Definition and Classification*, in "International Journal of Bullying Prevention", Vol. 5, 2021, retrieved from

A preliminary analysis on the topic could give us the false impression that *body shaming* is an isolated manifestation of certain negative remarks made by an individual about another individual's weight, with the purpose of denigrating the latter. However, if we regard the psychic processes emerged from such an interaction more profoundly, we notice that, in fact, *body shaming* has much more complex implications in everyday life. For instance, certain verbal utterances which we use every day, even without having a deprecatory purpose, can become elements leading to corporality related trauma to those around us. "When feeling shame about one's body image one may perceive oneself as having unattractive, defective and rejectable physical attributes and thus that one may stand at risk of being put down, excluded, passed by, or even harmed by others. Body image concealment or avoidance of situations of possible negative scrutiny by others may then be adopted as defensive outputs to protect the self of such presumed social threats, leading however to increased distress and invalidation in one's life."[2]

The phenomenon has already raised questions, worldwide, among psychologists and the industries, which deal with body shape; this results into an opportunity of studying the triggers of *body shaming*, its forms and possible effects on an individual. Society itself has become familiar with the damaging effects of *body shaming* and has developed a capacity of censorship in such situations. In Romania, on the other hand, the phenomenon is only beginning to be considered as a true problem of the 21st century, while the research on the topic is scarce. This is exactly why, by relating with the capacity of dance to facilitate the therapy of certain psychological disorders, I intend to carry out a detailed research aiming to obtain, as a result, a well-structured and demonstrated methodological mechanism able to make the problem known, and to offer a few viable solutions.

### Body shaming – a real problem of everyday society

The same as in the case of *bullying* or other toxic social interactions, there is a constant question whether these constitute real issues or simply isolated misdeeds done by an individual in relation with the others, misdeeds which can be solved or not, but which do not influence in any way the psyche of those who participated in them, voluntarily or not. After a series of

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https://www.researchgate.net/publication/356067936_Body_Shaming_an_Exploratory_Study_on_its_Definition_and_Classification

[2] Cristiana Duarte, José Pinto-Gouveia, Cláudia Ferreira, *Escaping from body image shame and harsh self-criticism: Exploration of underlying mechanisms of binge eating*, "Eating Behaviors", Vol. 15, 2014, pp. 638-643, retrieved from

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/265855303_Escaping_from_body_image_shame_and_harsh_self-criticism_Exploration_of_underlying_mechanisms_of_binge_eating

detailed research, psychologists have reached the conclusion that such social interactions generate deep trauma in the psychic evolution of the individual, and, thus, intervention in ameliorating or even eliminating them is required.

As we asked for the initial understanding of body shaming, the majority of participants agreed that body shaming refers to negative body-related comments, mostly in the form of insults. These verbal or written offenses mostly take place online, but they can also occur in real life. Additionally, participants felt that the severity of comments could vary from well-intended to harmful. Most participants agreed that body shaming has negative consequences for the victim, for example, bad feelings, impairments in self-esteem as well as social exclusion and stigmatization. Taken together, our participants' initial understanding of body shaming largely overlapped with our proposed definition. Therefore, most of them agreed with it.[3]

The solutions suggested are much more present in the case of *bullying*, for example, than in the case of *body shaming*, which is a branch that encompasses, in its structure, everything that means negative discourse strictly related to the human body. Although some forms of *body shaming* have been around since ancient times, society, especially the western one, is only now beginning to show a particular attention to the phenomenon and to truly consider it as an impediment in the healthy development of the individual. I believe that the term *shame*, at least metaphorically, has always had a place near the term *body*, if we consider the human desire of always being better, more famous, closer to the other who we see as the corporal ideal. It is normal, depending on the mentality of the society in which we live, for this ideal to change. If we regard the visual representations from painting and photography during time, we will notice that the image of the "perfect" body has suffered drastic changes. Nowadays, because of the information which flows much more rapidly, changes of this sort occur in a rapid pace and are more and more diverse. At this point, with the evolution of technology, social media platforms emerge, where *bullying* and, implicitly, *body shaming*, happen more easily. The two become subcategories of *cyberbullying*.

Internet search engine use shows that the term "body shaming" has become increasingly popular in the public. The frequency of the search term in Google shows a steady increase during the past 5 years. According to a study conducted by Yahoo Health with 2000 participants aged 13-64 years, 94% of adolescent females and 64% of

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[3] Constanze Schlüter, Gerda Kraag, Jennifer Schmidt, *op. cit.*

adolescent males experienced being shamed online related to their bodies.[4]

### *Body shaming, a real problem of the Romanian society*

Although the matter is already topical, especially in western societies, where the stage of accepting and getting to know the phenomenon has passed and they have reached the stage of finding solutions to the problem, in Romania there isn't a complex and applied study capable of offering a radiogram of the attitudes that the individuals have in relation with their own body and with the bodies of the others. In most of the cases, the body represents either a taboo, or a way in which one could determine the other to feel inferior, but we do not have the exercise of building a relationship with the body, to understand it, to listen to it and to think more about it. In order to begin to acknowledge what this phenomenon of *body shaming* really is, we must first learn to accept, little by little, the trauma and insecurities that we ourselves have and of which we are sometimes unaware. This is the stage of the current Romanian society, that of acknowledging our own problems in relation with our body and the fact that the others have the same problems, which we could aggravate if we spoke in a certain way or expressed an inappropriate opinion. We notice, actually, that the Romanian language does not have a term with the capacity to include what *body shaming* really is, as we are bound to use the English phrase. This demonstrates that, at least for the moment, the isn't enough interest in what concerns this important topic of our society. I am saying this from experience, as my debut performance, *KARNAL*, was based precisely on the issue of *body shaming*; through the discussions I had with the performers about their experiences with their own bodies, and from the feedback that I received from the public, I have reached the conclusion that, for the moment, it is necessary to make the phenomenon and its instances known and to create a context in which people can come and interact with their trauma and with those of the others. The experience of this performance was unique: it was for the first time when I really felt that my artistic product could acquire therapeutic characteristics, without the spectator being actively involved in the action. Then I decided that I wanted to develop this branch, to use what I had learned about choreographic art in order to help the others at least begin a process of healing through motion. The most evident proof was, undoubtedly, the therapeutic process that we, the performers, went through during the development of the performance. We managed to collectively treat our childhood insecurities, and we found the best methods of getting over the fear of being exposed on the stage, not only metaphorically, but also practically, through the naked body. Another

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[4] Constanze Schlüter, Gerda Kraag, Jennifer Schmidt, *op. cit.*

important aspect which we discovered during the development of the performance was that transforming one's purported disadvantages into advantages is an efficient method of beginning the process of accepting one's own body. For instance, an overweight body can be transformed into a feature of scenic power, *i.e.* dominating the space through a prominent presence. In the performance, I made use of this contrast and placed a body which society might consider "well shaped" in a relation of scenic inferiority with an overweight body. The desired effect was achieved and the trust given to the performer helped him overcome the complex of corporality and use it in a positive manner.

I have also noticed that, along with the psychic process we all went through, the physical motion and the fact that the performers were doing something consistent with their bodies which they believed to be unsuited for dance, simply brought a change in their mentality and state of being of that time. Since several studies have shown that physical exercise facilitates the ordering of the relation with the body, I somehow expected this reaction, but I was truly surprised by the power that dance had to modify the psyche. The concentration with which they approached the technical movements and the corporal expressivity became infinitely important in comparison with the shame and discomfort. "A study by Daubenmeir (2005) found that yoga practitioners reported more body responsiveness, more body awareness, lower self-objectification, greater body satisfaction, and fewer disordered eating attitudes than those participating in aerobic or nonaerobic exercise."[5]

I strongly believe that my experience can be used to help other people in this complex process and this is precisely why I intend to structure the information in a clear, concrete and practical method through detailed research on the topic. It is necessary to make contact with people coming from different social environments, of different ages, with certain disabilities, as all of these aspects are part of the discussion about *body shaming*. I do not think that the final purpose should be the total removal of the term *shame*, as I assume that sometimes, the shame of what the body could become in comparison with what it is today (I am referring to the responsibility of corporal health rather than hunger) might determine people to take action in this respect. Human nature is most of the time neglectful and inattentive, and an impulse such as the one given by shame can be useful sometimes. In fact, in western societies, there is talk about the reduction of the *body shaming* phenomena which should not go to the

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[5] K. Alysse Bailey, Larkin Lamarch, Kimberley L. Gammage, Philip J. Sullivan, *Self-Objectification and the Use of Body Image Coping Strategies: The Role of Shame in Highly Physically Active Women*, "The American Journal of Psychology", Vol. 129, No. 1, Spring 2016, pp. 81-90, retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5406/amerjpsyc.129.1.0081

other extreme, *i.e.* to encourage unhealthy bodies. Shame can be diminished and brought to a level of self-awareness, and placed next to other terms such as self-esteem, acceptance, understanding, terms which need to be more present in our mentality.

(Translated by Andi Sâsâiac)

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# Annexes

Photos from the *KARNAL* performance. Credit: Alexandra Iftime

# The Actor, Between *the Self* from Theatre and *the Other* from Music

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*Abstract:* The worlds of music and theatre have been brought together under the sign of scenic creation since the origins of the appearance of the theatre, the interdisciplinary artistic dialogue between the two arts sharing common aesthetic, psychological, psycho-social landmarks. The interactions between these worlds gave birth, finally, going through different forms and long searches, to the most original and popular theatre genre, the Musical. At the same time with technology and the digital revolution, live music, the orchestra, the musicians present on the stage of the theatre, were replaced with recordings, original stage music faces increasingly rare performance in theaters. The amazing intersection of theatre and music must be seen as a matter of course. My research will focus on the analysis of the fragile relationship between identity and alterity in the case of a few artists at the congruence between theatre and music (Ada Milea – *A lost letter in concert*, *The Explorer*, *Chirița in concert*, Răzvan Mazilu – *Cabaret*, *Maria de Buenos Aires*, Bobo Burlăcianu – *Cats*, *The City*, *Metamorphosis*, Alexander Hausvater – *The Machine. Musical*, Ada Lupu-Hausvater – *Hamlet*, Tibor Càri – *The little prince*). If a few years ago shows like *Rocky Horror Show* by Alexander Hausvater were considered original or controversial precisely because they skilfully crossed the boundaries between theatre and music, today we realize that the hybrid genre is also on an upward trend in terms of public taste (proof is The Young Actor`s Gala 2022 theme) and dramaturgy (Eugen Rotaru – *Musical Theatre Plays*), and of actors with professional training in both fields, tempted by the border between the arts. The co-creation experiences between the actor and the musician also bring with them important pedagogical aspects, resulting in an improvement of the work of each individual artist. The requirement to constantly search for new ways of artistic expression remains important, wich inevitably brings together artists from different art forms.

*Keywords:* music; theatre; identity; alterity.

The world of music and that of theatre have been united under the sign of scenic creation ever since the beginning of theatre, the interdisciplinary artistic dialogue between the two arts sharing common aesthetic, psychological and psychosocial reference frames. The interactions between

these two worlds have eventually generated, after going through different forms and prolonged quests, the most original and popular theatre genre – the musical. Along with technology and with the digital revolution, the live music, orchestras and musicians present on the theatre stage have begun to be replaced by recordings, the original stage music being less and less often interpreted in performance rooms. The actors and musicians have gradually separated in scenic creations, finding their place and carrying out their activity in distinctive genres and cultural institutions. Although, from ancient times to the 19th century, the presentation of a play could not be imagined in the absence of songs, arias and musical interacts, as theatres employed vocal and instrumental performers, nowadays musicians only step on the theatre stage for occasional collaborations. This separation of the artistic worlds of the musician and of the actor has interrupted the discovery of all that links creation to life; it has also interrupted the discovery of the added value which the other brings to one's own artistic life by multiplying the ways of enriching the dramatic language. The amazing intersection between theatre and music must be regarded as natural. I have analyzed the fragile relation between identity and alterity in the case of a few Romanian artists, situated at the congruence between theatre and music. Their artistic creation emerged from the cooperation with other artists coming from different fields of performance arts (musicians, actors, composers, instrumental or vocal performers) and represents artistic products capable of a better expressiveness, in which we could recognize some of the most powerful means of expression: the word and the musical sound. The artists who authored the scenic creations of which I have chosen to talk carried out performances bringing together different art specialists and contributed significantly to the impact on the public, the message delivered, the quality of the performance, the atmosphere created, the scenic image. We are talking about Ada Milea, Răzvan Mazilu, Bobo Burlăcianu, Alexander Hausvater, Ada Lupu Hausvater, Tibor Càri. For an artist coming from the world of theatre, the two coordinates, theatre-music, do not exclude one another, but coexist; the proof consists in the unifying experiences of the performances which will be briefly presented in this paper. There is a balance between what the artist is and what completes him in the identity-alterity relation. Theatre and Music, Acting and Directing or the Musical composition are parts of an artist with an encompassing view and with multiple identities necessary for artistic creation. The mobility which the artist has is the integrating key in the process of creation and in the relation with the self. "The selfhood of oneself implies otherness to such an intimate degree that one cannot be thought of without the other, that instead one passes into the other."[1]…

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[1] Paul Ricoeur, *Sinele ca un altul* [*Soi-même comme un autre*], translated by Alina-Daniela

Ada Milea is the artist who brings on the Romanian theatre stage a true theatrical-musical phenomenon, the concept of concert performance. By combining the theatre area with the commercial area of the artist (as she already has a niche public), Ada Milea manages to gain the affinity of a mixed, curious, intrigued, classical and also nonconformist public. The musical performance area set by Ada Milea surpasses the structure of a musical (with a script especially designed for this genre) or of a musical part. Ada Milea offers a performance-concert based on any text (*A Lost Letter*, by I.L. Caragiale[2], *Memories of My Boyhood*[3], by Ion Creangă; *The Tempest* by W. Shakespeare[4], *Chirița* by V. Alecsandri and Matei Millo[5], *The Daydreamer* by Ian McEwan[6]), these being concert performances in the view, direction, music and lyrics of the artist. She uses all of her resources to create the spectacular, to render the comic, to highlight the actors. Ada Milea is unique, and so are her performances, as her style is easily recognizable. Ada Milea's feature is that of presenting the texts, and also the extra-texts with good humour and (self)irony (a feature which cannot be lacked in musicals or musical performances). Conventional theatrical elements are not that common in performance-concerts (a performance which does not depend on canon, the actors usually sitting on chairs, thus positioned in front of microphones or able to play instruments); compensation, however, comes from the theatricality of the music and from the performing of the artists. The musical instruments become themselves adequately displayed characters, which highlight the comic effect specific to each type of character (from the piano and the usual guitar, to percussion instruments, toys and even household items or unconventional instruments: brooms, graters, mugs,

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Marinescu şi Paul Marinescu, Bucureşti, Editura Spandugino, 2020, p. 20; *Oneself as Another*, translated by Kathleen Blamey, Chicago & London, Chicago University Press, 1992, p. 3.

[2] *O scrisoare pierdută-n concert*, after *O Scrisoare pierdută* [A Lost Letter] by I.L. Caragiale, performance-concert by Ada Milea, songs by Ada Milea and Anca Hanu, scene movement by Andrea Gavriliu, Scenography, light design, video Andu Dumitrescu, National Theatre of Cluj-Napoca, 2022.

[3] *Amintiri*, after *Amintiri din copilărie* [Memories of My Boyhood] by Ion Creangă, performance-concert by Ada Milea, scenography Alexandra Constantin, light design Andrei Florea, Teatrul Tineretului Piatra Neamț, 2018.

[4] *Furtuna*, performance, musical vision, direction, lyrics by Ada Milea after William Shakespeare, translated by Cristi Juncu, visual concept, scenography Andu Dumitrescu, electronic music versions Alin Teglaș, Bucureşti, "Bulandra" Theatre, 2021.

[5] *Chirița în concert*, performance-concert by Ada Milea after Vasile Alecsandri and Matei Millo, songs by Ada Milea and Anca Hanu, scenography Alexandra Constantin, National Theatre of Cluj-Napoca, 2019.

[6] *Visătorul*, performance-concert by Ada Milea, after Ian McEwan, scenography Alina Herescu, staging Nicoleta Zaharia, translated by Dana Crăciun, pictures and animation Paul Mureşan, Teatrul Tineretului Piatra Neamț, 2017.

spoons, whips, cans, canisters, buckets, and many others). The way Ada Milea's music communicates with theatre and its world is also facilitated by interjections vocalized by the actors, by sounds specific to each character, key words and coiled leitmotifs, wordplays and noises which form the rhythmicity of the music composed by the artist. The actors are subjected to diversified development, thus being aided by the cooperation with other musicians during the making of the projects: Alexander Bălănescu, Bobo Burlăcianu, Vali Răcilă, and others. This theatre-concert idea began as a normal concert in which the roles of various characters were performed by the artist and her guests, who were seated on chairs in front of microphones and musical instruments[7]. The theatre-specific elements, such as scenic movement, dance, scenography, costumes, lights, projections, have gradually entered the stage, among musical instruments and microphones. The acting creativity of the protagonists is expected to overcome the situations in which the musical skills are less performant or inexistent, but one thing is certain: all of the actors are well highlighted regardless of the *music part* that they may bring, as Ada Milea uses acting as the main language of communicating the musical message to her public: "I have found myself in music with a theatre mind"[8], Ada Milea says, her words being descriptive of her creation settled at the confluence between the performance arts of theatre and music.

The initial component of creating a character or a musical piece requires the independent work of the actor or musician. As they step towards the more advanced phases of the shaping of the performance, the artists have to cooperate with other partners in creation, to modify and maybe adapt the performance, to connect to the other and also to leave their own artistic print. They all depend on the creative energy and inspiration of the other as a source of nourishment for their own one, thus forming a circuit, a good conductor of ideas. Indeed, the actors represent the essence of the theatre performance: they are performers of text, the centre of the scenic situation. Actors approach every role, from the very beginning, assuming that it will be an unforgettable experience. Along the way, they will face blockage and trouble, they will take risks, rediscover, inspire or censor themselves, or they will let their imagination and psycho-emotional state loose; they will identify with the character which they outline on the unknown territory of theatre, of the stage, of rehearsals. This whole story is ideally accompanied by music; it comes to life through the dialogue between the actor and music, which

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[7] *Apolodor*, concert Ada Milea after *Cartea cu Apolodor* [The Book with Apolodor] by Gelu Naum; *Quijote*, concert Ada Milea after *Don Quijote de la Mancha*, Miguel de Cervantes.

[8] *Dimensiunea teatrală a muzicii* [The Theatrical Dimension of Music], Doctoral thesis, PhD Candidate Ada Milea, Scientific Coordinator, Prof. Mihai Măniuțiu, PhD, Babeș-Bolyai University, Doctoral School of Theatre and Film, Cluj Napoca, 2021, *Introspecții*, *Interviu cu Andreea Dumitru* [Introspections, Interview with Andreea Dumitru], p. 279.

potentiates the emotional level of the future intersection between the actor and the other – the spectator.

Such performance concerts are similarly designed by Bobo Burlăcianu (a member and co-founder, together with Bobi Dumitraș, of the band *Fără Zahăr*), who focuses on the theatrical performing of music, on the creation of characters behind the microphones and the (both classical and unconventional) instruments. The two artists, Ada Milea and Bobo Burlăceanu, are two compatible figures from the theatre area analyzed here, as they have borrowed artistic prints from one another through their numerous joint projects and concerts carried out since 2004 up to now. Bobo Burlăcianu made his debut as a music and theatre composer in 2007, at the National Theatre of Iași, with the music of the play *With a little help from my friends*[9]; later, he composed the music of other performances in Bucharest, Sibiu, Cluj, Timișoara, Arad, Piatra Neamț: Beginning with 2018, as a director – musician – composer, he mounted several performance-concerts on Romanian stages: *Orașul*[10], at the "Luceafărul" Theatre of Iași, *Pisici*[11] and *Pisici2*[12] at the "Matei Vișniec" Municipal Theatre of Suceava, *Metamorfoze* [13]at the "Mihai Raicu Troupe Nord Theatre", Satu Mare. The lyrics belong to his cooperator, Bobi Dumitraș: "Bobi writes lyrics, I put them on music and, with the help of a wonderful troupe of actors, we give them life on stage"[14], the musical director describes the naturalness of the theatre-music intersection.

The work of the musician is the force which concentrates the two existing parts of the theatre equation (spectator – actor), so as to feel the pulse of the stage all in the same key. As the hardest part of his work is carried out in isolation, the musician must maintain a permanent relation with the stage and the actor, in order to stay aware of and connected with the process of performance creation: its defining trajectories have to correspond with the musician's own process of creation. The stage is the usual place to

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[9] *With a little help from my friends* by Maria Manolescu, directed by Radu Apostol, music by Bobo Burlăcianu, scenography by Alina Herescu, "Vasile Alecsandri" National Theatre of Iași, 2007.

[10] *Orașul* [The City] script after an idea of Oltița Cîntec, musical directing Bobo Burlăcianu, lyrics Bobi Dumitraș, scenography and video-design Andrei Botnaru, "Luceafărul" Theatre, Iași, 2021.

[11] *Pisici* [Cats] musical directing Bobo Burlăcianu, lyrics Bobo Burlăcianu and Bobi Dumitraș, pictures Ana Maria Țăranu, "Matei Vișniec" Theatre, Suceava, 2018.

[12] *Pisici2* [Cats2] musical directing Bobo Burlăcianu, lyrics and text Bobi Dumitraș and Bobo Burlăcianu, pictures Ana Maria Țăranu, "Matei Vișniec" Theatre, Suceava, 2021.

[13] *Metamorfoze* [Metamorphoses] musical direction Bobo Burlăcianu, lyrics Bobi Dumitraș, scenic movement Roxana Fânață, Scenography Cristian Gătina, "Mihai Raicu Troupe Nord Theatre", Satu Mare, 2021.

[14] Bobo Burlăcianu about the *Metamorfoze* [Metamorphoses] performance, *Interview*, Youtube.

meet; here originate the vision, ideas and main trajectory from which individual ideas and creations begin. At the same time, the cooperation and mobility of artists from different fields enable the professional development, the exchange of experience, the acquisition of new skills or their improvement, the professional evolution, the reciprocal teaching and new career perspectives. Even under the best of circumstances, stress, uncertainty, the short-circuiting of ideas and personalities, are inevitable between collaborating partners. There is a need for the ability to maintain the cooperative attention on the making and development of the performance, an ability which could avoid a devastating impact on the artistic cooperation.

Another director coming from the sphere of music and musical composition for theatre is Tibor Càri, a pianist and composer with a consistent experience in the world of performance, and also a prize winner at the UNITER (The Romanian Association of Theatre Artists) Gala in 2013 for his theatre music. In 2020 he made, at the "Matei Vișniec" Theatre of Suceava, the first musical performance as a musical director, *The Little Prince*[15], a Musical – Visual Experience after Antoine de Saint- Exupéry. The composer dares to exceed the limits of music towards those of stage direction at the Suceava theatre, where the actors perform live music. As announced on the playbill, it is a visual and musical experience, two sides subtly and uniformly integrated in the performance, in accordance with the well-known text about childhood and the essential aspects of life which are *invisible to the eye*. From the 1943 America to this day, the journey of this renowned novel, written by the Frenchman Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, has gone through the area of inspiration of many visual artists, painters, dancers, actors, musicians, choreographers, as it has been an inexhaustible source of ideas for many art creators. This literary work constitutes a favourable ground for the congruence between performance arts and not only. The character, the Little Prince, is not just a material presence in the view of the director-musician, as we can hear his voice and see his appearance through video projections, as an imaginary figure present in the mind and the soul of the child (or in those of our inner child). This directing idea encourages the meeting between technology and the stage, making the latter friendlier with the theatre public. Tibor Càri is one of the performance creators who endorse and promote, as much as possible, the live performance of music on the stage. The encounter, in the scenic space, between people of theatre and musicians suffers changes, their connection being interrupted when it is replaced by technology, by methods of rendering music which are, otherwise, more convenient financially. From the musician-director's viewpoint, it does

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[15] *The Little Prince*, Musical – Visual Experience after Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, stage direction and original music by Càri Tibor, staging and lyrics Cezara Fantu, choreography Victoria Bucun, Light/Video Design Erös Làszló.

not matter if we speak of a theatre performance, a musical performance or a musical: recorded music is not an option (although it is less costly, takes less effort and does not permanently require music specialists for carrying out the musical arrangement); the vocal and instrumental recordings are cold, emotionless and without the capacity of music to transmit the feeling and the message of the performance to the public.

The actor's *self development*, *his work with himself*, actually involves being available to the other. The work of an individual is indeed isolated at the beginning, and is followed by the artistic *blend* with the other forms of expression, and by the *encounter with the eye* of their animated representatives, with the final purpose of increasing the emotional level perceived and felt by the soul of the witnessing spectator.

One of the most valued Romanian choreographers is the dancer Răzvan Mazilu, a winner of the Uniter Prize for developing the Musical in Romania. The first to set a theatre-dance performance in action in Romania, *The Lady of the Camellias*[16], Răzvan Mazilu is the representative of Romanian choreography who went further, having the courage to bring the Broadway specific performance, *i.e.* the Musical, on the Romanian stage, thus combining dance, music, theatre and scenography among his creative preferences. The Romanian theatre has made acquaintance with the effervescent world of the musical through his creations: *Mon Cabaret Noir*[17], *Zaraza*[18], *The Sound of Music*[19], *The Addams Family*[20], *Maria de Buenos Aires*[21], *Cabaret*[22] and his most recent

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[16] *The Lady of the Camellias*, theatre-dance performance by Răzvan Mazilu, Bucharest National Theatre, 1995.

[17] *Mon Cabaret Noir* – after texts by Dan Mihu, Salvador Dali, Edith Piaf, Joe Jenčik, concept, direction, choreography, costumes Răzvan Mazilu, décor Romana Țopescu, sound design Mihai Dobre and Gabriel Baruta, musical arrangement Ana Cebotari, "Teatrelli" București, 2015.

[18] *Zaraza* – direction, costumes, choreography Răzvan Mazilu, script Daniel Chirilă, décor Ioana Popescu, musical production Alexei Turcan, light design Alin Popa, musical arrangement Viorel Gavrilă and Ion Radu Burlan, "Toma Caragiu" Theatre, Ploiești, 2018.

[19] *The Sound of Music* – musical by Richard Rodgers, after Oscar Hammerstein's libretto, direction, choreography and costumes Răzvan Mazilu, décor Sabina Spatariu, musical lead Alexandru Ilie/Gheorghe Iliuță, musical arrangement Maria Alexievici, Tudor Scripcariu, Abel Corban, Mihaela Neacșu, Comic Opera for Children, 2018.

[20] *The Addams Family* – libretto Marshall Brickman and Rick Elice, music and lyrics Andrew Lippa, translation and adapting of text Carmen Stanciu, translation and adaptation of songs Alex Ștefănescu, direction, costumes and scenography Răzvan Mazilu, musical production Alexandra and Alexei Turcan, décor Sabina Spatariu, musical arrangement Maria Alexievici, "Excelsior" Theatre, București, 2019.

[21] *Maria de Buenos Aires* – libretto Horacio Ferrer, translation from Spanish Albert Denn, adaptation of lyrics on musicAlex Ștefănescu, direction, choreography, costumes Răzvan Mazilu, music Astor Piazzolla, light design Ștefan Vasilescu, musical arrangement Maria Alexievici, "Teatrelli" București, 2021.

premiere, *The Threepenny Opera*[23], performances implemented by Răzvan Mazilu – choreographer, director and in charge of costumes. "In Musicals, practice and continuance are very important. The continued training of the voice, along with the body, as professionals do"[24], Răzvan Mazilu believes. "A drawback of Romanian theatre is that nobody teaches us the musical in school"[25], the director mentions in an interview; "the actors feel out of their element it the position of singers"[26]. The director and choreographer strives to promote the idea of a *total actor* and that of a theatre performance in which music, dance, choreography, scenography intermingle. In Romania, musical-performances are of niche, and the artist, through repeated creation, endorses and encourages the genre. This is the reason why, this year, Răzvan Mazilu was the president of the Uniter *Hop* Young Actors Gala, and the topic he chose was *Total Actor – Total Show*, thus promoting the idea amongst very young actors and the future generations of dramatic artists. Mazilu's musical actor has to go through a tough process of selection, to have clear information, to be a very good singer of the parts of the genre which are influenced by cabaret, opera, operetta, lied, to be a good actor on music, a good dancer with a fine corporal expression, able to use all of the instruments of the human body. It is necessary for a team of *trainers*, of specialists from all of these disciplines to meet and cooperate in order to model the stage artist designed by Mazilu. He has formed, during the years, a core of actors, starting with 2014, when the selection for the *West Side Story*[27] performance, "Odeon" Theatre, Bucharest, took place. They are, among others: Lucian Ionescu, Ana Bianca Popescu, Mihai Smarandache, Maria Alexievici, to mention only a few. From the Musical creations of the artist choreographer, the *Cabaret* performance mounted at the "Odeon" Theatre, Bucharest, is remarkable due to the spectacular which is characteristic to Răzvan Mazilu, spiced with the good quality humour to which he permanently aspires. A complete artist, Răzvan Mazilu signs both the choreography and the direction of

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[22] Libretto Joe Masteroff, after the play of John Van Druten the stories of Christopher Isherwood, music John Kander, lyrics Fred Ebb, direction, choreography, costumes Răzvan Mazilu, décor Sabina Spatariu, translation of text Carmen Stanciu, translation of songs Alex Ştefănescu, musical arrangement and lead Maria Alexievici, "Odeon" Theatre, Bucharest, 2021.

[23] *The Threepenny Opera* – by Bertold Brecht, translation Ozana Oancea, adaptation of songs collectively created after the version of Ninei Cassian, direction, choreography and costumes Răzvan Mazilu, décor Dragoş Buhagiar, musical arrangement Maria Alexievici, "Excelsior" Theatre, Bucureşti, 2022.

[24] Răzvan Mazilu, *Interview by Dragoş Vasile*, Free Europe Romania, 1 iulie 2022.

[25] *Ibidem*.

[26] *Ibidem*.

[27] *West Side Story* (*Manifestul unei generaţii / The Declaration of e Generation*), libretto Arthur Laurents, original direction and choreography Jerome Robbins, music Leonard Bernstein, lyrics Stephen Sondheim, direction and choreography Răzvan Mazilu, musical direction Gabriel Bebeşelea, "Odeon" Theatre, Bucureşti, 2014.

*Cabaret*, as well as the spectacular costumes, which are a must for the production of a musical. The musical arrangement, which is imperative in such a performance, is attributed to Maria Alexievici, an actress-musician, a part of the performance and an interdisciplinary artist with whom the director permanently cooperates in his productions. During the Cabaret performance, because of the musical, corporal and choreographic arrangement, we witness a display of instances accurately exhibited by Mazilu's actors; they are capable of a vocal and choreographic efficiency similar to that shown by the artists from the great Broadway productions. Although they are not professional singers or dancers, thanks to the team of trainers specializing in musicals (Maria Alexievici, Răzvan Mazilu, choreographic assistant Monica Petrică), the artistic product meets the expectations of the public. The actor Mihai Smarandache, who plays the role of Master of ceremonies, represents the *total actor* sought by Mazilu, through his expressive and performant scenic movement, calculated gestures, clean and expressive voice, acting: the actor marvelously leads the "great decadent costume ball"[28], as Răzvan Mazilu calls it in an interview for TVR - the Romanian National Television. The scene is lively, colourful, euphoric, the costumes drawn by the director send us back in time and space in the atmosphere of the 1930s Berlin. So rare is, nowadays, in the Romanian performances, the use of the live orchestra with instruments such as piano, drums, bass, clarinet, saxophone, trombone, trumpet, instruments which render the resonant colour of the genre. Besides the spectacular, the original music and the glamorous costumes, the Total Show is based on the cooperative effort of a team of artistic creators and trainers, with the purpose of obtaining an impeccable and authentic final product. The relation between music and theatre in the scenic creation allows the stage music to fade into the background, without minimizing its role of accompanying and sustaining the moments of major importance (tense, psychological, emotional, sensitive, dramatic, etc.) from the play.

Assuming that some years ago, in Romania, performances such as *The Rocky Horror Show*[29], by Alexander Hausvater, were considered original and controversial for the very fact that they easily crossed the limits between theatre and music, we now realize that the hybrid genre is becoming a trend in the taste of the public (a situation once again proven by the Young Artists Gala, 2022, *Total Actor – Total Show*). The same type of total actor is sought by the director Alexander Hausvater in the distribution of his performances. Mounted for the first time in 1973 during the Sexual Revolution, the intention of *The Rocky Horror Show* musical was not mainly commercial, but Hausvater sought the area of entertainment, and therefore the performance was not mounted in a theatre room, but in a club. The space served both the

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[28] Răzvan Mazilu, *Interview for TVR* (Romanian National Television), 19 November 2021.
[29] *The Rocky Horror Show* – music and lyrics by Richard O`Brien, direction Alexander Hausvater, staged at Kristal Glam Club, București, 2008.

need of sound of a nonconformist musical, and the directing choice of displaying a bizarre space in which a couple of lovers (Janet Weiss and Brad Majors), while on a voyage in which their car broke down during a storm, accidentally entered the world of Doctor Frank`N Furter, the eccentric transsexual living in a castle.

Another powerful intercultural performance is *Hamlet*[30], directed by Ada Lupu Hausvater, staged at the National Theatre of Timișoara, an experimental performance in which the story of the Danish Prince Hamlet, written by William Shakespeare, is brought into the present and put on the live music of the band *Subcarpați*, with rhythms of hip-hop, dubstep, electronic music and songs with strong Romanian folkloric influences. One of the best known and plentiful of symbols Shakespearean texts, the story of the young rebellious prince, misfit in the contemporary society with all its filth, is still extremely actual. Here too, Ada Lupu Hausvater becomes the *DJ* of a cultural, temporal and interdisciplinary *mix*: the text of Shakespeare, the honoured Renaissance English writer, about the Danish royal house, at the congruence between Romanian folklore and modern rhythms of dubstep, hip-hop and electronic music. The performance, besides its experimental feature, represents a declaration.

> Besides the social challenge that the project represents and the egoistic angle of the fact that I can play in a performance, I have discovered that, through theatre, one can shoot not only aesthetic arrows, but also social arrows. It is important to want and to be able to do this. After all, this is also our musical path[31],

said Marius Andrei Alexe, known as Bean MC of Taica [Pop] Bean, the founder and vocalist of Subcarpați, who sings the role of the ghost of Hamlet's father.

The co-creative experiences between the actor and the musician bring important pedagogical aspects, resulting in an improvement in the work of each of the artists. The requirement of a permanent search for new means of artistic expression remains important. This inevitably brings artists from different fields together. "Alterity, together with identity (or vice versa) have been reasons of reflection or even of thorough studies during time"[32].

(Translated by Andi Sâsâiac)

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[30] *Hamlet* – after William Shakespeare, translation and adapting by Ștefan Peca, direction Ada Lupu Hausvater, original music Subcarpați, scenography Iuliana Vâlsan, National Theatre of Timișoara, 2016.

[31] Marius Andrei Alexe / MC Bean, *Interview with Gabriela Lupu*, "Adevărul.ro", 23.08.2017.

[32] Constantin Dehelean, *Despre identitate vs. alteritate* [On Identity vs. Alterity], "Arca Magazine", No. 4-5-6 / 2018.

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# Key Elements of Rhythmic Gymnastics in The Efficient Training of the Professional Dancer

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***Abstract:*** "The other one's model and the mobility's culture" represents the inter-disciplinary example that every devoted researcher should follow in their work and study, and emphasizes, in reality, the fact that only by opening up our heart and soul to another person and to other cultures and fields, we can discover and rediscover ourselves, before we can truly understand the purpose of our artistic research. Starting from this premise, I'm proposing myself to go thoroughly into a research in sports and art alike, always putting in antithesis those two directions of body movement from Eurhythmics and Ballet, in order to discover the key elements in the most efficient forming and improvement of a professional dancer. After a rigorous selections, I wish to assemble a methodological direction that can guide and support the dancer in his formation, confirmed and reinforced by my own experience, a kind of bibliographical exteriorization, as a gift, but also as a guarantee. But, in order for me to achieve my goal, I know that is not enough. Therefore, "the other one's model" offers me not only the ambitions, but also the obligation to extend my research internationally, resorting, in the lack of a generous national bibliography, to external sources.

***Keywords:*** sport; eurhythmics; ballet.

> "There comes a time when you realize that almost everything has been said before.
> Use all of the possible forms, as long as the message comes from your soul".
> (Aureliu Manea)

The course of the life of man is linear at the beginning. We are all born equal. It is the will of iron that turns thoughts into deeds and gets obstacles out of the way, so as to reach the true potential. For this to become possible, we must carefully choose the instruments which model our evolution and progress, not only physically, but also mentally, emotionally and spiritually.

Throughout my doctoral research, I wish to thoroughly analyse the informational substrata of two different spheres of motion, namely rhythmic gymnastics and ballet, with the purpose of gaining precious time and knowledge. These gains are planned to be compressed within a methodology

comprising the life experience of several acknowledged practitioners. This will serve the young dancers who choose dance both as a profession and a lifestyle.

After a rigorous selection, I intend to put together a methodological route capable of guiding and supporting the dancers during their progress, a route which has been confirmed and upheld by my own experience – a sort of a bibliographical manifestation, a gift and, at the same time, a guarantee.

The roots of technical motion of both rhythmic gymnastics and ballet have combined at the beginning of their footing, due to their similar means of training and to certain "temporary or constant content borrowings"[1] concerning basic technical elements, and also due to their common founders (Gineta Stoenescu mentions, in her work, *Gimnastica ritmică modernă* [Modern Rhythmic Gymnastics] Loïe Fuller, Isadora Duncan, Emil Jacques-Dalcroze, François Delsarte, Rudolf von Laban, and many others). Although "dance was originally the expression of prayer, the gesture of collective education"[2] and although "dance continued to express renewed joy through gestures"[3], later there has been a need to set out and clarify the lines between these two directions of motion, thus separating them for good. Contrary to this more recent necessity, I actually want to break out these lines and combine, as harmoniously and functionally as possible, the methods and techniques of motion which form the basis of both genres and which, through an act of integration, will conclude a training methodology for professional dancers.

Before carrying out this integration of information from the two fields of motion, in order to achieve my goal, I would like to define each of these fields in part, in order to make them a little clearer.

Iuliu Hațieganu, a Romanian doctor and scholar, defined the physical education of women as "one of the most interesting feminine motions, not only psycho-physically, but also socially and politically"[4], insisting that it was

> a truth which characterized the essential features of the feminine motion under its various aspects"[5]. According to La Rochefoucauld, the "absolute gracefulness is for the body what common sense is for the mind[6];

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[1] Gineta Stoenescu, *Gimnastica ritmică modernă* [Modern Rhythmic Gymnastics], București, Editura Sport-Turism, 1978, p. 19.

[2] *Ibidem.*

[3] *Ibidem.*

[4] *Idem*, p. 14.

[5] *Ibidem.*

[6] *Ibidem.*

on the other hand, Plato claimed that "there are two arts which the Gods gave to mankind: music and gymnastics, for the harmonious adjustment of spirit and knowledge"[7] – the philosopher is thus acknowledged as an early precursor of the *harmonic* gymnastics, the modern rhythmic gymnastics.

Consequently, in complete agreement with the emotional importance of rhythm-music-motion-physique-psyche, modern rhythmic gymnastics is, as Gineta Stoenescu maintains, "a branch of gymnastics which seeks the fulfilment of the basic objectives of physical education with specific expressive and artistic-emotional means, with the use of musical accompaniment. It is a discipline which contributes to the aesthetic education of the youth, while music, as it accompanies the artistic motion, plays a particularly important role, as it involves an infinite variety of rhythm and tempo, which implicitly influences the features of rhythm and motion form, thus supplementing its artistic qualities. This is why the motion in modern rhythmic gymnastics can be particularly wave-like, cursive, flowing or sudden, emphatic, intermittent, slow or dynamic, in a relation of intimate correspondence with the feature of the accompaniment music"[8].

Surprisingly or not, classical dance also has its origins in a series of steps that had generated some "dances occasioned by civil and religious, noble or rural celebrations", which later developed into couple and group dances, dramatic scenes or buffoonery with masks, "ways of expression that converged towards the new theatrical form which has dominated, for four centuries, the whole Europe: Classical Ballet."[9] However, the different direction adopted by this type of motion is due to the royal facet, from the Italian fashion, which has "united dance and literature through a common destiny, traced by the poets of La Pléiade, who advocated for a form of total theatre in which the song, music, dance, declamation and décor contributed to the display of a story".[10] *Ballet comique de la Reine*, by Balthazar de Beaujoyeulx, was the first historic performance, held on 15th October 1581 at the Louvre, on the occasion of Duke de Joyeuse's marriage. Later,

> the evolution of this court ballet, as Thoinot Arbeau described it in his treatise, *L'Orchésographie,* published in France in 1588, reveals a totally new meaning of the motion meant to value the dignity of the courtier.[11]

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[7] Gineta Stoenescu, *op. cit.*, p. 14.
[8] *Idem*, p. 15.
[9] Isabelle Ginot, Michel Marcelle, *Dansul în secolul XX* [The Dance in 20th Century], translation by Vivia Săndulescu, București, Editura Art, Centrul Național al Dansului, 2011, p. 15.
[10] *Idem*, p. 16.
[11] *Ibidem*.

The motion gives up any track of violence or uncontrolled impetus, and acquires plenitude and calm, while the *demi-pointe* technique becomes a "prelude of elevation".[12] New rigorous rules come into act, leading dance towards the development of its performing technique. Pierre Beauchamps suggested the *en-dehors* [outward] position, an unnatural posture, where the dancer's leg moves outward; it comprises five fundamental positions corresponding to five positions of the arms; Raoul Feuillet comes with the first choreographic notation consisting in the graphic description of the steps, the direction and the consecution of the movements.[13]

While rhythmic gymnastics develops as a high-performance sport with an emphasis on the corporal aesthetics and plastics, classical ballet sets the bases of modern dance and represents the fundament of the corporal motion of every dance style, precisely due to the increased attention to the "correctness" and form of movement, as well as to the control exerted on and during it. Rhythmic gymnastics develops its own performing rules and generates specific basic elements, with an emphasis on the degree of difficulty of the performance, with a system of recording the possible errors and of precisely quantifying every element which has been carried out accurately; ballet develops the theatrical facet and emphasizes the transmission of emotion and the playing of a character who is a part of a story or, at least and most often, is carrying a message. However, both directions of motion represent forms of art which coexist and complete one another, whenever there is a common interest: the shaping, development, evolution and refinement of the human body – the instrument of motion expression. Thus, the blend between gymnastics and ballet leads to a form of complex movement which combines dance and acrobatics at the highest level of performance.

As a practitioner of both forms of art, I feel that it is my duty to analyze thoroughly, in my doctoral research, both directions of motion. The goal is to study, discover, meticulously examine, select and elicit the work instruments which are useful in the creation of a training plan, a methodology, a structure with the most efficient techniques and methods of professional preparation, teaching, development and refinement; the techniques and methods also focus on bringing awareness, balance, control and mastery of the exterior and interior corporal abilities, both physical and mental. The methodology addresses future dancers from far and wide, thus completing the applicative professional education system.

"The model of the Other and the culture of mobility" represent the interdisciplinary model which all of the devoted researchers should follow in

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[12] Isabelle Ginot, Michel Marcelle, *op. cit.*, p. 17.
[13] *Idem*, pp. 17-18.

their work and study; they underline, in fact, that only by opening our mind and soul towards the Other and towards different cultures, we can discover and rediscover ourselves, before truly understanding the purpose of our artistic research.

The same quality of a practitioner of both forms of movement, along with this "model of the Other and culture of mobility", gives me both the ambition and the responsibility to expand my research on an international level, accessing, in the absence of a generous national bibliography, external sources. Moreover, several interviews consisting in professional dialogues with internationally acknowledged specialists would represent a significant achievement. They could give me precious information about their own perception of corporal movement, concerning the technical precision, the aesthetic and plastic corporal image, the theatricality of choreographic motion and, last but not least, the performing of the role and of the character.

The steps of my research will categorize all of these aspects which are indispensable for the training of a complete dancer on the stage, and will set out and underline the importance of each one in part. However, it depends on how each performer in part will understand, perceive and apply what I have to offer, as I will not impose a precise and rigid methodology; instead, it will be more of a guide towards the discovery of a training process adapted for everyone, which will allow the fulfilment of the desired objectives and the achievement of the desired results provided that there is much discipline, patience, perseverance, will and ambition in the organizational structure of each user.

Following this multi-, inter- and transdisciplinary path, I wish, through my research, to add to the parallel made between the two directions of motion several analogies and antitheses between dance and other sciences which implicitly modify the creation process of making a dancer and his artwork, and also the final artistic performance. Starting with mathematics, physics, biology, philosophy, astrology and not only, the body of a dancer is, in my opinion, able to transcend all of the stages in which the human body had been regarded initially; in choreographic terms, numerous simple and complex principles, such as the principle of fractals in mathematics (based on the Mandelbrot set concept) presumably translate into an interminable corporal motion, which links its movements and its passing from one another without the sensation of beginning or ending – an infinite corporality which applies simple and fundamental laws of the universe – gravity, antigravity / levitation, friction, sliding friction, etc., as well as unwritten universal laws or principles governing all that happens in the Universe and holding everything together in a perfect harmony - the law of mental attraction, of vibration, of polarity/duality, of rhythmicity, of cause-effect, of correspondence and of gender (masculine and feminine).

However, besides the perfectly built and adapted for survival biological machinery, the human body is energy; it is vibration; it is consciousness. Besides the physical barriers, a dancer is, thus, able to transcend the known visual limits and to connect energetically with another level. And although the human essence surpasses any degree of complexity that we can imagine, and even if it cannot be defined, numerous thinkers, throughout history, have approached the existential problem of man, his origin and purpose, the link between body, consciousness and spirit, the immortality of the soul, ways of thinking and reasoning, subconsciousness and unconsciousness, human essence and many other topics of interest from several perspectives: biological, psychological, social, political and philosophical. It is, however, the corporal vibration that leads the performer to the capacity of functioning in the scenic environment, canalizing and materializing the creator's energy, thoughts, ideas through actual gestures and movements, defining the physicality of the steps in a coherent and expressive manner.

A compelling point of analysis in this field is Raluca Ianergic's book, *Trasee coregrafice* [*Choreographic Routes*], which, "for the first time in the aesthetics of the art of dance, brings ideas such as the dance-science relation, dance and other areas of human thought, dance-transdisciplinarity)"[14].

Dance is a form of art, which will certainly continue over the centuries, will permanently evolve, represent civilizations and feed the souls of those who understand it. This is why it is topical for everyone involved in this field to be interested in someone who analyses the multitude of variants discovered throughout the evolution of dance, who identifies and selects the strengths and impediments, the obstacles in the way of progress in students' education, who displays the efficient and innovative methods and techniques that could bring the art to another level, thus helping those who choose to devote their whole life to practicing this profession which is full of sacrifice and of satisfaction at the same time.

(Translated by Andi Sâsâiac)

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[14] Raluca Ianegic, *Trasee coregrafice* [Choreographic Routes], București, U.N.A.T.C. Press, 2007.

# Dancing to talk about yourself. The character is me.
# Case study: Pina Bausch

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***Abstract:*** From the corpus of our doctoral research, an essential place in the development and analysis of the theatrical elements of contemporary dance is the subject of Pina Bausch. The choreographic world has been and will remain strongly guided by the well-implemented corporeal principles of Pina Bausch, also called the choreographer of souls. The corporeal rigors imposed by the artistic system and classical working techniques are not the only methods by which we can access a complete final product, to the surprise of many practitioners or theorists. The proof that emotion and corporality can be accessed and directed through multiple variants lies in the work exercises created by Pina Bausch. I will not use the term method or technique because "there is no method, no technique to follow: What remains is a process, and to build from this process becomes the highest quality of Pina Bausch, moving in your own direction and taking advantage of the available resources." The esthetics of the movement occupied a leading place in the ranking of choreographic priorities until the emergence of the precursors of modern dance, which exposed new meanings of corporeality. Pina Bausch supported the move by stating that "I am not so interested in how they move as in what moves them." The purpose of the study is to analyze the work processes and to classify them in distinct stages, meant to help in forming a direction that will bring us as close as possible to the nature of the theatre.

***Keywords:*** Pina Bausch; theatre; dance.

he aesthetic of motion had held a leading position in the hierarchy of choreographic priorities until the emergence of the precursors of modern dance, who have exhibited new meanings of corporality. This more profound approach to the Pina Bausch topic has the purpose of analyzing the work processes and of classifying them into different stages, meant to aid the shaping of a direction, which should bring us closer to the nature of theatricality.

An essential step in developing a career as a choreographer consists in the indispensable study of the creations and innovations brought by Pina Bausch, a drainless source of emotions. It is with affection that we notice, in

the few, but important fragments where we see Pina Bausch herself dancing, the emotion transposed at the corporal level. Her body, one of the main pillars of creation, has been little analysed compared to the intensity of its presence. The initiation into the profound analysis of Pina Bausch's way of choreographic thinking thus begins with the study of the exterior side.

Corporeal fragility and sensitivity are aesthetics coming from the sylph pattern of Pina Bausch's body. With the unusual length of her arms, she could reach an inevitable amplitude of moves, subduing the surrounding space regardless of its surface. Her thin and long neck allowed her a maximum rotation of the head which, most of the time, touched the arms, thus forming a relation of bondage. The prominent bone structure of her chest was a sort of a corporal Axis mundi, holding two breasts, which timidly spoke to us through the melted cloth. Through the same cloth came into sight the prominent iliac bones, which resembled not only two fallen wrists, but also a bodily weakness bordering illness. The legs, a little absent from this physiological architectural picture, had the role of sustaining, of generating a connection with reality[1]. We thus ask ourselves why a body of this sort, inclined to be unceasingly observed for hours and hours, draws off discretely behind the fragile and yet highly profound creations. We reach the idea of an artistic sacrifice, which begins when the flux of information, once accumulated, becomes necessary to be shared with your predecessors, leaving no room for the time to rediscover your own body; it may also become a real call to the pedagogical side, characterized by an intense empathy.

The corporeal rigors imposed by the artistic system and the classical work techniques are not the only methods by which we can access a complete final product, to the surprise of many practitioners or theorists. The proof that emotion and corporality can be accessed and guided through multiple versions resides in the work exercises created by Pina Bausch. I will not use the terms *method* or *technique* because "There is no method, no technique to follow; so what is left is a process, and to build from that ground becomes Bausch's greatest influence."[2] We thus introduce the main question which generates new meanings: *how?* How to feel the sorrow, how to touch a face, how does a sensation change the entire corporality? "She is looking for the way in which each individual contains his or her expression, how it lives in his or her body."[3] This self-analysis opens access to multiple and various

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[1] Images from the choreographic performance of Pina Bausch in *Café Müller*, Wuppertal online archive, retrieved from
https://www.pinabausch.org/archives/video/cafe_19850518_01_0002.
[2] Royd Climenhaga, *The Pina Bausch Sourcebook. The Making of Tanztheater*, Taylor & Francis Ltd, 2012, p. 60.
[3] *Idem*, p. 59.

possibilities of creation and interpretation, a sort of an interior abyss from which Pina Bausch extracts creative force.

> Tenderness. What is it? Where does it start? How far does tenderness go before it turns into something else? When is it no longer tenderness, or, does tenderness persist? A man takes a woman's hand and bends her finger backward. A woman approaches a man and bites his ear. Men and women pinch each other's armpits, push their eyes closed, pluck out a hair or pull a chair out from under them and then calmly walk away, arm in arm. Later on these little antagonisms continue. Tender gestures turn into punches. The transition is smooth. At the end of the performance, all the men surround and touch a woman. They cover her body with touches.[4]

These images, taken from the Kontakthof performance, talk, besides tenderness, about the model of the other. The stage partner is the one in front of whom we reveal ourselves emotionally, in the arms of whom we entrust our weaknesses and power. We are a whole, the same. Is the stage partner my reflection?

When asked what her weaknesses and strengths were, Pina Bausch confessed, after long moments of silence, that her strength was her greatest weakness[5]. Does the capacity of empathizing with the performers, of intensely living every breath, of being overwhelmed by so many sensations, represent power? Or it is rather a weakness which consumes you and brings you close to exhaustion? To find a relieving solution, you must feel the same pain; to laugh naturally, you need to rejoice sincerely. Can detachment bring the same result?

Pina Bausch said that

> It's not so simple to turn a feeling, an idea into dance. Sometimes a small event happens and makes me open my eyes. Suddenly I see a tiny key but don't know what it is. Something that I know is present, that I must respond to. Then, I start asking myself questions, and one thing leads to another. It is like an adventure but with no map. At first, I have to listen to my feelings, then I do it again and again to maintain this approach in my daily work. This is a difficult and sometimes terrifying process.[6]

In an attempt to shape an idea about Pina Bausch's work manner and structural steps, I have brought together, in different ways, the information gathered so far, and each final version leads me to the same answer: question.

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[4] Royd Climenhaga, *op. cit.*, p. 67.

[5] Interview, *Golden Lion Awarded*, retrieved from
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WM6wp9zLux0&t=185s.

[6] Interview *Kyoro Prize*, retrieved from
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WSvqC3oKiq8&t=6s.

Does the question refer to the inexistent work "technique" of Pina Bausch? Does the question generate creation? Does it germinate an already existing kernel?

The connections resulted from the association of the multiple pieces of information may generate a systematized working method. The young creators of the 21st century, characterized by a more and more prominent agitation, or by an equally prominent negligence, need a guide. Along with a well outlined technique and intense physical training, choreographers/dancers need the naturalness coming from emotion, the naturalness of a simple gesture. They need to experience the profoundness, for it offers life to the true meanings. This "guide" is Pina Bausch's working method, which we discover, if we pay attention, in many interviews, video materials, confessions of the performers and of her collaborators. It is a sort of a guide of spirituality which leads, through study and patience, to enlightenment, and, in our case, to a potentially limitless inspiration.

I had the intention and even insisted to learn more of the yet to be researched information about the Pina Bausch choreography, and also about the person Philippine Bausch, through an email exchange with Ismael Dia, the manager of the Wuppertal archive. I could understand his at least momentary inability to offer more information, but I have appreciated his involvement and effort to find a few solutions, such as Pina Bausch's online archive[7]. Although I have repeatedly accessed it, I admit that, in the rush after information, I missed a few of Pina Bausch's confessions, which actually represent the essence of creation. Thus, we shall rediscover her childhood, her passions, her desire to dance, and will answer many of the questions that we have asked ourselves.

The capacity of observing, of analyzing emotions and interactions has developed since her childhood.

> Even the restaurant in our hotel was highly interesting for me. My parents had to work a great deal and weren't able to look after me. In the evenings, when I was actually supposed to go to bed, I would hide under the tables and simply stay there. I found what I saw and heard very exciting: friendship, love, and quarrels – simply everything that you can experience in a local restaurant like this. I think this stimulated my imagination a great deal. I have always been a spectator. Talkative, I certainly wasn't. I was more silent…

"The question" surely represents the working method and is the personal print of Pina Bausch, who has gone through a whole process of transition.

> Then, at the beginning – I did in fact have a large group and in the rehearsals, I was afraid to say, "I don't know," or "let me see." I wanted to say, "OK, we'll do this and this." I planned everything very

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[7] See https://www.pinabausch.org/archives

meticulously but soon realized that, apart from this planned work; I was also interested by completely different things that had nothing to do with my plans. Little by little I knew… that I had to decide: do I follow a plan or do I get involved with something which I don't know where it will take me. New was also the way of working with 'questions.' Even in Bluebeard I had started to pose questions for some roles. Later in the Macbeth piece He Takes Her by the Hand and Leads Her into the Castle, the Others Follow, in Bochum; I then developed this way of working further. There were four dancers, four actors, one singer…and a confectioner. Here of course I couldn't come up with a movement phrase but had to start somewhere else. So I asked them the questions, which I had asked myself. That way, a way of working originated from a necessity. The "questions" are there for approaching a topic quite carefully. It's a very open way of working but again a very precise one. It leads me to many things, which alone, I wouldn't have thought about.

The same as every creator whose approaches are different, unacted, Pina Bausch was rejected by the public at the beginning of her choreographic career.

The first years were very difficult. Again and again spectators would leave the auditorium slamming doors, while others whistled or booed. Sometimes we had telephone calls in the rehearsal room with bad wishes. During one piece I went into the auditorium with four people to protect me. I was scared. One newspaper wrote in its review: "The music is very beautiful. You can simply shut your eyes." The orchestra and chorus also made things very difficult for me. I wanted so much to develop something with the chorus. They turned down every idea. In the end I managed to have the chorus singing from the boxes – from amongst the audience – that was then very nice.

Pina Bausch's relation with her performers was special. She did not treat them as subordinates, but as partners, as undrained sources of information.

I love my dancers, each in another way. It is close to my heart that you can really get to know these people on stage. I find it beautiful, when at the end of a performance you feel a little bit closer to them, because they have showed something of themselves. That is something very real. When I am engaging somebody, surely I hope that I have found a good dancer, but besides that it is something unknown. There is only the feeling of something, which I madly want to know more about. I try to support each of them in finding out things for themselves. For a few, it goes very quickly; for others it takes years, until they suddenly flourish. For some, who have already danced for a long time, it is almost like a second spring, so that I am really amazed, what all appears. Instead of becoming less, it becomes more and more.

The artistic sacrifice that I mentioned at the beginning of this paper is found in the choreographer's sayings and feelings.

> Actually, the whole time I only wanted to dance. I had to dance, simply had to dance. That was the language with which I was able to express myself. Even in my first choreographed pieces in Wuppertal, I was thinking of course that I would be dancing the role of the victim in Sacre and in Iphigenie the part of Iphigenie, for example. These roles were all written with my body. But the responsibility as choreographer had always held back the urge to dance. And this is how it came that I actually have passed on to others this love, which I have inside me, this great desire to dance.[8]

The influence of this choreographic personality is profoundly marked in the history of dance, as it represents the basis of dance theatricality. The work exercises characterized by the access of senses with the aid of questions, sincere and natural interactions, can be "assembled", thus giving birth to a new work method. The study of this topic has the purpose of constructing and testing this method, and of analyzing the results obtained, with the hope that they will provide at least a scrap of what Pina Bausch represented.

(Translated by Andi Sâsâiac)

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[8] All the fragments have been cited from the article *What moves me* from the archive: https://www.pinabausch.org/post/what-moves-me.

# Annexes



Dominique Mercy in the performance *The Window Washer* – Pina Bausch

Ruth Amarante and Julie Shanahan in the performance *Palermo Palermo* – Pina Bausch

Silvia Farias Heredia in the performance *Rough Cut* – Pina Bausch

Julie Anne Stanzak in the performance *Carnations* – Pina Bausch

Pina Bausch in the performance *After Zero* – Pina Bausch

# VISUAL ARTS SECTION

# Image and Post-Truth

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***Abstract:*** Nowadays, under the non-stop assault of over-information and the multitude of sources and media, the consumers of information (related to non-fiction audio-visual content) suffer from an overflow. They are oversaturated, blasé, disinterested, they have the feeling they know everything and are entitled to jump straight to conclusion (their own or ready-made conclusions). The content they cannot process is rejected. With such an audience, content creators diversify their arsenal of stimuli: shocking images and sound, partisan speech that confirms the viewer's own perceptions and beliefs. But mostly, emotions. Emotion is the most powerful stimulus applied to the viewer and has an enviable effect among content creators. The emotionally connected viewer will develop trust, dependence on the source of information and, in conjunction with other stimuli, will become susceptible to mobilization. It is a key effect in the study of disinformation and propaganda, which makes it possible to manipulate the viewer into acting in a certain way. In other words, emotion becomes a tool. It is used intentionally to trigger a certain reaction from the audience. Our research analyses the extent to which the need for emotion in the news shapes reality, that is the events as they happened, and how we would expect them to be covered on screen. We follow the methods that journalists use to give viewers as much of this stimulus as possible, once considered a foreign body in the news bulletin. And in the analysis of the media content (image and sound) we notice how two fields that once seemed utterly opposed by reference to objective reality (physical truth), journalism and artistic creation (fiction), ended up sharing a common ground, that of emotion. The corpus of our analysis consists of CNN, BBC and RT television reports on the war in Syria during two of its key moments, the WMD attacks of 2013 and 2018. The study method we will apply is rhetorical analysis, proposed by Professor Guillaume Soulez from the University of Sorbonne. This is how we reach a second junction, because the French professor proposes discursive analysis for any kind of media content, whether fictional or not.

***Keywords:*** Post-truth; image; emotion; propaganda; manipulation; news; consensus engineer; chemical weapons.

News is, in our view, the specific representations of reality that are based on facts and statements, delivered by journalists as truthfully as possible. To attempt a nonsubjective approach to news, journalists make a

clear distinction between opinion journalism and information journalism, i.e, news itself. As such, the information has to be delivered in an objective manner, it has to be a balanced rendering of facts for all parts involved in a conflict, so that the audience, like a judge, should have free access to the ideas being debated and decide which side they are on.

Impartial, objective journalism was authorized at the time of the invention of the telegraph and first press agency foundation, in the late 19th century. Out of financial reasons, i.e. to attract a larger number of subscribers, press agencies were forced to present the news so it would be convenient to all audiences. In the lines to follow, we will understand that this was not an easy process and that it proved almost impossible to be carried through while at war.

These days, under the pressure of over-information and the numerous sources and media, the information consumer shows little interest in news, feels (s)he knows everything and rejects all information (s)he does not understand. Confronted with such audience, TV broadcasters use a series of stimuli: shocking information and images, partisan discourse that acts as the audience's confirmation of personal emotions and perceptions and huge amounts of excitement that involve the viewers emotionally. Viewers are deeply involved in a love or hate process. Televisions no longer inform; they form perceptions and opinions. The TV reality is distorted by journalists to meet the audience's expectations.

Our research focused on the extent to which news emotion distorts reality, i.e. the events as they really happen. We inspected the approaches used by journalists to offer the audience the amount of emotion they would expect, that were once rejected from all news programmes. Journalists use a complex mechanism that is based on the important role of social media in the augmentation of consumerism and, implicitly, the audience's emotions. We also examined the way in which multiplied viewership images can form or transform the public opinion.

The context of our research was provided by the complicated Syrian war which involved several belligerent parts, many political interests and the eternal moral issue of war: is there anything more important than stopping human suffering? We compared the CNN, BBC and RT broadcastings that were considerably different in approaching the Syrian issue.

For the present article, we used the most dramatic report of our research, that was emblematic as a BBC production and was shot at the fighting site. The production used very few images provided by the rebels.

A major event at the beginning of 21st century, the Syrian war broke out 11 years ago as a reaction to the Arab Spring in the Middle East. Inspired by the wave of popular rebellions against dictatorial regimes in Tunis, Libya and Egypt, the students of the Damascus University started a resistance

movement against President Bashar al-Assad. Their communication and gathering together were helped by images spread through social media networks. As the conflict escalated (several organizations, countries and armies joined the rebels), the broadcast images started to play a more powerful role in drawing universal attention upon the event, mostly by gaining the sympathy and support of international community. These images, that were spread at first only on social media and were subsequently diffused by the Syrians from all over the world, presented the war from within. At first glance, they may be considered the best images a reporter can get as they show the events as they unfold: a bomb is seen exploding, a barrel of chemicals is thrown form a helicopter, an airplane launches rockets, corpses are torn apart or burned, bodies are covered in blood, dying people cry for help, desperate parents run away carrying their bleeding babies in their arms, confused children run out of school during classes, a hospital is full of dying people, lots of funerals, white shrouds for the dying people, large shrouds, small shrouds for dead children, killed by the cruel enemy. These are part of the countless images the Assad regime and the anti-government rebels tried to gain international sympathy by.

At the beginning of the war, such images pervaded Middle East social media and militant TV broadcasts on Syrian conflict, provided entirely by reporters. There were many cases in which the same images were used differently in accordance with the position taken by a certain television.

The images taken by rebels or Syrian militaries share a number of characteristics:

• They seem very real as they present unfolding events, the filming uses the "cinéma vérité technique", the images are slightly shaken to make the viewers feel the reporter's emotion, the camera records without interruption and the events are presented with no mounting. The message of such techniques is that the reporter, that captures apparently useless images, is so impressed himself that he is confused about what to record first.

• The reporter involves the viewer in the events as he gives comments in a low or very loud voice according to the dramatism of the event.

• At times, the reporter becomes a character himself. He turns the camera on himself, makes comments on the events and asks for help. The technique is identical to that of the stand-up practiced by journalists.

• The characters of the so-called war reports, the victims or their rescuers, the fighters or the civilians caught in the middle of the events, show a specific behaviour that is amplified by the camera; they look straight into the camera (they talk to the audience), they make certain gestures to show suffering, they cry out loud and sometimes ask for the international community's help: stop the killing!, what are you waiting for?, do you need more proofs?.

• In some cases, as we will notice when analysing a few reports, such examples will appear rudely truncated and strangely inserted among the images filmed by professional reporters. The reason for such instances is the augmentation of the viewer's emotion. Otherwise, there would be no explanation for mixing up professional reports with amateur reports that are questionable in terms of truthfulness. The main question that now arises is: should war reporters search only for truth and the means of revealing it? Or should they use whatever means to impress the viewers?

Such reports were deliberately avoided by big broadcasters such as CNN, BBC and Euronews until August 2013, a critical month in the Syrian War when a first chemical weapon attack on anti-government rebels was registered. A number of scenes of unknown source were yet to be found in the BBC report that we will analyse in the lines below.

First of all, a few words on the main role of the image in the post-truth context. Basically, a cognitive passive receptor turns into a spectator. Therefore, the main way to deliver him content and meaning is through images, not texts. As such, the definition of post-truth used by Prof. Lee McIntyre from MIT[1], contains the idea of passive *cognitive waiting* when people have better reactions to emotions and beliefs than to arguments and proofs. Reacting involves the presence of stimuli and its effect means action, change, a process that cannot take place without stimuli. The definition also explains the nature of efficient stimuli. The human being is receptive to feelings (emotions) and confirmation of beliefs that he develops in time because of getting in touch with other people's beliefs. Take, for instance, the TV talk shows or the monologues in vlog productions on social media (mostly on TikTok) in which only beliefs count, not facts or proofs.

The image, mostly the cinematographic image, has a powerful effect on the human brain. A series of studies on the psychology of perception focused on the subjects' reaction to various static images (inside and outside a room): photos, posters, ads (with images and texts or only with texts) as well as to moving images (cinematographic). Confronted with all these visual stimuli, the subjects' attention was invariably attracted to the moving images. Nowadays, this effect is amplified by the new image rendering devices. Electronic devices with incorporated light sources (LCD, LED or OLED screens) are more attractive to the eye than the projected light such as the classic cinema light projection on a white screen in a dark room.

The frequent consumption of images produces a series of effects that are very similar to addiction. Any other means of delivering information becomes secondary to watching moving images and the consumer will get addicted to it. He will use it repeatedly, ignoring all other means. Then, the

[1] Lee McIntyre, *Post-Truth*, Boston, MIT Press, 2019, p. 5.

image addiction will develop specific mechanisms that are opposed to critical thinking. The Italian politologist Giovanni Sartori, who wrote the essay *Homo Videns. TV Brainwashing*, noticed that the generations that watch TV very often tend to be more superficial than those whose education is based on reading and writing. The new generations, whose first contact is with moving images and later with written texts and the need to understand them, are no longer capable of using abstract notions. Therefore, an important aspect of the post-truth state is that people, who get their education from watching images and not from reading, develop a different relation to truth.

> The video addicted have less critical sense compared to those who use abstract meanings. By losing our capacity to use abstract notions, we also lose the capacity to make the distinction between true or false.[2]

On August 29, 2013, BBC World broadcasts a complex report[3], that contains scenes shot just after the attack, a post factum record of the place where a bomb fell, when the reporter presents the unfolding events with scenes from the hospital and the arriving burnt victims. Except for the first 30 seconds of the report, which are amateur filming, the rest is filmed by BBC reporters. The hospital scenes were shot on the site and leave no doubt as to the truthfulness of the event, being documented by professional journalists.

The report is hard to watch. The details are terrifying; there are many wounded people, children included. If the report had been broadcast in Romania, the NCA (National Audio-visual Council) would have fined the company as it did when the first images of the Collective tragedy were presented on TV. The Romanian broadcast law requires that televisions blur shocking images, such as wounds, and protect the minors' identity. Showing suffering or wounded people is an unjustified action that can deeply harm the viewers emotionally. Besides, the Romanian broadcast law stipulates that every minor that is placed in a degrading situation should be protected and filmed from the back or with a blurred face.

The report begins with images filmed by rebels just after the bombing, accompanied by a voice heard in the background. One man handles a blanket to another to cover the dead body of a child. The images are hard to decipher as they are very shaky, they are poorly shot and the filming angle seems to have been chosen to protect the participants, as their faces are completely hidden. The scenes look more like amateur filming by someone with a phone hanging on his neck. It is characteristic for rebel filming and it is tense,

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[2] Giovanni Sartori, *Homo Videns. TV Brainwashing*, București, Editura Humanitas, 2005.
[3] Ian Pannell; Darren Conway, *Syrian Crisis: Incendiary Bomb Victims 'like the walking dead'*, "BBC News", 29 August 2013, retrieved from https://www.bbc.com/news/av/world-23892594

terrifying, horrifying. To augment the viewer's perception, the voice in the background is heard saying how undignified death is in Syria.

We are eventually informed that the voice belongs to the school headmaster who lets the BBC journalists in to show them the remains of the building after bombing. However professional the filming may look (images are clearer and the camera does not shake), the filming angle has not been changed. The viewers see only the legs and the back of the headmaster. However, the reporter specifies that the headmaster does not want to be seen. This piece of information makes the spectator understand that the area is risky and the headmaster may be in danger. The report turns more emotional because it makes the viewer feel as if he were in the middle of the events himself. Besides its practical reason of filming the inferior part of the body, forcing the viewers to look only down has a powerful effect as it gives them the impression that some unknown and unusual being makes him do this. Usually, you will look up in such unexpected situations, to see as much as you can. The perception imposed on the viewer is that the opponents of the Damascus regime themselves are forced to bend down and hide in the underground; they have to obey and be humble. Moreover, is there a worse thing than an undignified death?

The viewers are presented scenes with the victims' belongings: a man's shoe in the ashes, a girl's shoe, and the emotional shock. These may be even more impressive than seeing a dead body. No words, just the two shoes and the spectator's imagining how they were lost when their owners, that are no longer alive, were running in terror.

The school headmaster describes the horrific scene and points to the burnt bodies of the children lying on the floor. The huge hole left by the bomb becomes more visible when the headmaster approaches it. In addition, the large black mark on the classroom wall it left when falling. Definitely, there has been a fire there.

Reporter Ian Pannell marks the location. He makes an explanatory stand-up and a sensorial connection to the site of the tragedy. He mentions he cannot identify the content of the bomb, but that he can still smell the chemicals it contained. He appeals to the spectator's senses and makes the latter see what he hears and believe it is real, it is the only truth. Consequently, after all these preparations, the spectator is emotionally ready for the events to come.

The reporter confirms this strategy of obtaining gradual emotion and informs them about what is to come. He adds that the view is hard to describe.

An important observation is that of Ian Pannell's who explains why the firing bomb was directed towards a school. The government airplanes

fly at a low altitude and search for crowded places with large gatherings of people/rebels. Bombs were launched on people queuing for bread or shopping in the market. Apparently, the day of the bombing too many children were allowed to play in the schoolyard. The reporter now has the opportunity to explain how things happened and who the person responsible for that was, namely the pilot. The viewers need someone to blame at this point. The brain, which is engaged in processing strong feelings and much information, is looking for an end. The question everybody is asking is: who was capable of doing such a thing? Ian Pannell answers that by saying: "What a horrible thing for a pilot to do!"

As negative feelings start to build up, the spectators are shown horrific scenes: the victims of the attack arrive at the hospital, half-naked or in shreds, badly wounded, with torn skin, looking more like ghosts. With raised arms and in shock, they head for the hospital in search for help, all passing in front of the camera. The scenes are terrible and Ian Pannell's voice is heard once more in the background saying "They arrived like the walking dead". (This was later used by other TV broadcasters.) The implications of his words are both cultural (religious) and emotional: people looking like ghosts, walking dead, hell-like atmosphere, a reminder of the place where Christians think people get tortured after death, losing their soul. The effect is that of fear, resentment and anger. At this point, the viewers' only wish is to see the guilty get punished.

The peak of terror is reached when a shaking 15-year-old boy is showed on TV. He is alone and nobody seems to care for him. He is in shock and he looks around as if calling for help or straight into the camera as if addressing the viewers. The message is thus made clear: the spectator is no longer a witness; he becomes part of the tragedy. He has to do something for the boy. The boy does not cry or complain, he does not beg for attention. He has a dignified attitude. However, he is obviously in a bad condition, he has been badly burnt. The BBC journalists use the situation to deliver a political message; they use the child's suffering, who stands with arms reaching out while the reporter explains in the background that most countries forbid firing bombs in civilian areas and yet, he goes on, „Ahmed's government has not signed the treaty". The audience finds out now that the boy's name is Ahmed and that his government is guilty for his situation; the attention is drawn from his tragedy to ending the Syrian conflict.

The message becomes even more obvious when the helpless suffering boy's scene is instantly followed by a rebel's political message. An angry man appears on screen, he is dissatisfied with UN and the international community that do not take any action against Bashar al-

Assad and do not protect the civilians. In a loud voice, he asks the entire world not to remain indifferent to the Syrian tragedy. The BBC filming looks very amateurish, with close-ups and gros plans, harsh words and loud voices. It is definitely intended to have a strong impact on the audience that are still in shock and do not know what to make out of all information. They need to calm down first, but they are delivered more information and they start to feel guilty. Then guilt turns into dislike, anger and hatred. The emotional manipulators have clearly completed their task.

The question that arises at this point is whether the BBC report could have been presented in a different manner and if the impact on the audience would have been the same. In many TV editorial offices, as is the case of Romania too, the usual trend is to use the most shocking images in the news reports as a start, to impress the audience and make them watch the report or newscast. As such, the BBC report should have started with the hospital images, followed by the stand-up of the school the bomb had fallen on. But this approach would have had less emotional impact on the audience. The viewers would have lost interest in the report soon after it had started and no message of compassion would have been delivered to them.

This analysis was oriented towards two directions:

1. Reporting – narrating facts, their logical progress and the relationship between content and objective truth (that can be sustained). That was the reason I offered detailed examples of the events presented in the productions I chose to analyse. The images were intended to be rhetorical analyses.

2. Also, image language with artistic features that was not focused on truth-telling. It was intended to create emotion as a response to the story and not to the events, out of the war context, not interested in pointing out the guilty or in using any of the habitual reporting mechanisms. I was interested only in conveying emotion and meaning at the same time.

In other words, our study focused on two dimensions: the rhetoric and the poetics of images.

The conclusions of the rhetoric analysis pointed out the ideology of the editorial offices. In the Western countries, the audience was not affected by the suffering of the Syrian people at first. The latter were thought to be far from them, and the rebellion against the Damascus dictator was of no interest to the West. However, by presenting the horrifying scenes on TV, the event started to become part of their lives and, with the many refugees coming, the Europeans realized how close the Syrian war was to them.

At an emotional level, I noticed that the viewers of the above reports experienced a myriad of feelings, some of them being very surprising, such as guilt or happiness (the Digi24 perception experiment showed that the subjects were happy because they were convinced they would never be affected by the Syrian war as it was taking place far from Romania). But besides these odd aspects, the images of the terrible acts in the Syrian war are emotionally shocking, going from terror, compassion, sadness, hatred to disgust for Bashar al-Assad. The last affective reaction counts for the consensus creator because disgust makes the viewer want to act, rebel against or put an end to the source of his anger, namely the criminal Damascus regime.

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# (At) Home and (On) the Road: Contemporary Photography Techniques of Documenting the Migration Phenomenon

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***Abstract:*** The current presentation includes several queries regarding the interaction of migration and globalization – one of the most significant phenomena of social transformation in recent decades, as well as the meanings that this interaction presents for artistic research and practice. The major social and cultural transformations that have taken place in recent decades following more intense migratory movements have sparked an interest among artists for creating visual discourses, which, by using languages specific to different genres and environments, contribute to the dissemination of knowledge about migrants and migratory experiences different from the discourses generally offered and exploited by the media and public opinion. In cultural studies, the mobility turn also influences how contemporary art reflects on the direct and indirect implications of migration. The selection of works we analysed (which mainly use the medium of documentary photography) challenges the way we understand the notions of space and time, by exploring ideas regarding the concepts of (*at*)*home* and *road,* which are, moreover, two of the notions that undergo most changes during migratory experiences. The artistic projects selected reconsider defining the concept of *(at)home* as the place where the individual builds his sense of belonging, referring only to the physical house and not just to a single house set in an immovable place, but considering multiple connotations of the idea of home. Migrants' personal narratives reveal the ways in which individuals move between multiple homes, developing attachments and reinventing their identities along the way. Considering both the international context of migration and the particular case of Romanian economic migration as a recent phenomenon with important socio-cultural implications, I sought to investigate through my own artistic practice how documentary photography can become an environment for reflection on the topic, by combining autobiographical elements and a subjective discourse added to the objective dimension.

***Keywords:*** migration; identity; globalization; home; diaspora; documentary photography; autoetnography.

The socio-cultural changes that have taken place for the past decades because of increased migration have generated a higher interest in creating specific visual discourses. Migration and the migratory experiences are now approached in

a different manner from the usual discourses of media and public opinion offered so far. The present article raises a number of questions on the migration/globalization interaction, a significant phenomenon of social changes that has taken place in the past decades[1] – and the contemporary artistic practices.

Migration is defined as the voluntary or forced displacement of a number of individuals or populations from a specific region to another, or from one country to another, due to economic, social, political, cultural or environmental factors[2]. Its fluctuant aspect is reflected in almost all fields of the contemporary life[3]. The increased mobility of individuals is an important characteristic of 21st century[4]: as nowadays, there are more regional and international migrants[5] than ever in the world history. There are around 244 billion migrants all over the world[6], and one in seven people is an internal or international migrant[7].

Migration, as a social representation of moving in time and space, is basically the oldest globalization expression[8] as it has been a historical characteristic of humanity since the nomadic movement of primitive people to the exodus of entire nations.

The Western European countries experimented a massive raise in the number of migrants after World War II, and in some countries, migration had started even earlier. An important example was offered by West Germany that recruited billions of workers from abroad shortly after the end of World War II. The new nation that was based on a capitalist economy started to bring workers into the country on a temporary basis. They were known as *Gastarbeiter* or *visiting workers* and came from Italy, Spain, Turkey, Morocco, Portugal, Tunis and Yugoslavia, to supplement the working force of the country that had lost over three billion men during the war. Although their hiring was temporary, as the German government considered it was the only solution to support the

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[1] Burcu Dogramaci, Birgit Mersmann, *Handbook of Art and Global Migration. Theories, Practices, and Challenges*, Berlin, De Gruyter Press, 2019, p. 10.

[2] "Diaspora", retrieved from https://dexonline.ro/definitie/migra%C8%9Bie/definitii

[3] Nikos Papastergiadis, *The Turbulence of Migration: Globalization, Deterritorialization and Hybridity*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 2000, p. 1.

[4] Thomas Nail, *The Figure of the Migrant*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2015, p. 2.

[5] In this article, the generic term of *migrant* was used to include the numerous dislocation experiences: free or compulsory, historical or contemporary, emigration or immigration, refugee or economic migrant.

[6] International Organization for Migration (IOM), *World Migration Report 2018*, Geneva, Marie McAuliffe; Martin Ruhs (Editors), 2017, p. 6, retrieved from: https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/wmr_2018_en.pdf

[7] United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, *International Migration Report 2017: Highlights (ST/ESA/SER.A/404)*, 2017, retrieved from https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/publications/migrationreport/docs/MigrationReport2017_Highlights.pdf

[8] Célia Riboulet, *Habitar en la migración*, "Arte y Ciudad: Revista de Investigación", no. extra 3.1, 2013, p. 524, retrieved from https://dialnet.unirioja.es/descarga/articulo/4704601.pdf

economic development at that time, many of these workers, mostly Turkish, settled down and later brought their families, becoming a visible presence in the German social life[9].

Besides the classic South-North migration that is considered te be basically inherited from colonialism, after the fall of communist regimes in Europe, another type of migration appears, that of former Soviet Union countries. The difficult transition toward capitalism and democracy was reflected into the major socio-economic issues that led to a massive integration of East European people into the international mobility that resulted in a massive East-West migration process[10].

Migration as a transnational movement of people, of material and immaterial cultures and lifestyles, leads to a deeper and more critical reflection on all elements involved in the migration process[11]. The amplitude and complexity of migration created new areas of study and investigation. Besides social, political and economic sciences that were founded basically on social and economic factors as a main reason for migration, the cultural influences of migration have also been explored by humanistic sciences and cultural studies, and the subject has been debated in postcolonial, diaspora, transnational studies, etc.[12]

The notions related to border, nation, citizenship, exile, diaspora, immigrant/emigrant, refugee, road, travelling, belonging and home have gradually changed their meaning along with the changes in the approaches to the ways and motivations of the migrants, influencing the contemporary migration debates. Consequently, the studies on the subject have tried to shed light on the nature of the migration experiences and the adjacent concepts[13].

A crucial moment in the development of these new studies is the so-called *mobility turn* of the 1990's, as a response to „understanding the historical and contemporary importance of the movement for the individuals and the society"[14]. This change in social sciences approaches is focused on the concept of mobility and disagrees with understanding migration as functioning only between sedentarism and deterritorialization. Contemporary life is undoubtedly

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[9] Amy A. DaPonte, *Candida Höfer's* Türken in Deutschland *as 'Counter-Publicity*, "Art Journal 75", 4, 2016, p. 20, retrieved from https://www.jstor.org/stable/45142820

[10] Ramón Díaz Hernández, *Las migraciones internacionales o el gran desafío del siglo XXI*, "Vegueta", no. 6, 2001-2002, p. 250, retrieved from
http://revistavegueta.ulpgc.es/ojs/index.php/revistavegueta/article/view/223

[11] Nikos Papastergiadis, *The Turbulence of Migration ...*, pp. 12-13.

[12] Dogramaci and Mersmann, *Handbook of Art and Global Migration ...*, p. 9.

[13] Ruth Erickson, Eva Respini, *Curators' Introducti*on, "When Home Won't Let You Stay: Migration Through Contemporary Art", Boston/ New Haven/ London, Eva Respini and Ruth Erickson Press, Institute of Contemporary Art/Boston; Yale University Press, 2019, p. 17.

[14] Anne Ring Petersen, *Migration into Art. Transcultural Identities and Art-making in a Globalised World*, "Rethinking Art's" Histories Series, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2017, pp. 2-3.

characterized by a mobility culture as both international migration and other types of mobility, such as tourism and travelling, have visibly changed the societies and politics of the past decades[15].

To make the extent to which the subject is nowadays debated in cultural studies more clear, we will briefly present in the lines below a number of theories regarding the characteristics and the effects of this socio-cultural phenomenon, followed by a series of documentary photography projects that captures various migration experiences, mostly economic, making use of (*at*) *home* and (*on*) *the road* concepts.

*The home* is a way of living or owning something. From an anthropological perspective, a home can be treated as such after a given space is used as a living place[16]. As part of the many issues resulting from the increase of global migration, *being at home* implies unconscious processes of integration and survival, on which the migrant builds his new identity in the adopting country[17].

Because of people's leaving their native home, we can talk about their having several *homes*, yet none of them actually becomes their real *home.* Sara Ahmed, for instance, points out the fact that the notion of *home* becomes unclear for the migrants as "belonging to a home turns into travelling with a home after you" and that "a nomadic conscience refuses to be part of any particular place and belongs to the whole world"[18].

*Being at home* becomes an idealistic place in the diasporic imagination[19]. Therefore, the place where one can best feel at home, *i.e.* a comfortable and familiar space, is (no longer) (only) the space he lives in, but mostly the space in which he is himself at his best. In such a space, the subject has a destination, a route, even a future although this may prove risky, as he may actually never fully reach that place[20].

Generally speaking, migration has been treated as a movement in space, a dislocation. As we have noticed, migration is, above all, moving from one place to another in search for a home, a place to live in. The main element of migration is consequently a continual movement from the native place, that becomes unclear in the migrant's mind, to his destination in which actually the migrant never fits[21]. This is the reason why migration, in the migrant's imagination "starts before he

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[15] Anne Ring Petersen, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

[16] Célia Riboulet, *Habitar en la migración*, *op. cit.*, p. 526.

[17] *Idem*, p. 523.

[18] Sara Ahmed, *Home and Away: Narratives of Migration and Estrangement*, "International Journal of Cultural Studies", Vol. 2, issue 3, 1999, p. 338, retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1177/136787799900200303

[19] *Idem*, p. 341.

[20] *Idem*, p. 331.

[21] Mieke Bal, *Migratory Aesthetics: Double Movement*, "Exit", no. 32, 2008, p. 152, retrieved from https://transaestheticsfoundationdotorg.files.wordpress.com/2016/01/bal-mieke-migratory-aesthetics-double-movement-exit-32-december-2008-january-2009-150-61.pdf

leaves and never ends as no place corresponds to the migrant's image of a home"[22], basically the main purpose of moving. Consequently, the migrants' identity is shaped „by and when travelling" and is not "a closed subject that goes before movement"[23].

The experience of frequent moving may result in a new form of belonging. In the present globalized migration, "the migrant's figure is detached from the static preconception of *to be* in a place, which is replaced by *to become* a place, as a result of his movement or dislocation"[24]. Belonging means emotional attachment and the feeling of *home*, of hope for a better future and a basic element for the understanding of shaping and reshaping identity. However, in modern times people have started to get used to build their belonging by devoting themselves to a particular nation. For the last decades, the movement across borders has acquired a complex form of movement and articulated new forms of diasporic communities[25].

As the migration process leads to an unbalance in people's identity (migrants, their families left behind, or the newly formed communities), the changes in their identity has become a basic element of migration studies[26].

Migration involves changing the residence place, which leads to a symbolic and cultural reaccommodation to a new territory, and creating relationships with the new community the migrants choose to settle in[27]. As a consequence, after settling in, the migrant has to get used to, compare and appreciate a new world that can prove more or less similar to his native country. As such, the migration process has a powerful impact on the socio-territorial identity of the migrant, which can take different turns. His native identity may become even stronger or it can be rebuilt as a result of total assimilation into the new socio-territorial surrounding[28]. We may speak about a selective attitude of the migrant regarding the shaping of his identity[29], and this process usually takes place unconsciously, without the

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[22] Mieke Bal, Miguel Ángel Hernández-Navarro, *Introduction*, in *Art and Visibility in Migratory Culture. Conflict, Resistence and Agency*, edited by Mieke Bal and Miguel Ángel Hernández-Navarro, Brill Publishing, 2011, p. 11.

[23] Nikos Papastergiadis, *The Turbulence of Migration...*, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

[24] Dogramaci and Mersmann, *Handbook of Art and Global Migration...*, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

[25] Nikos Papastergiadis, *The Turbulence of Migration...*, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

[26] Anne Ring Petersen, *Migration into Art ...*, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

[27] Margarita de Jesus Quezada Ortega, *Migración, arraigo y apropiación del espacio en la recomposición de identidades socioterritoriales*, "Cultura y representaciones sociales. Identidad, territorio y migración", vol. 2, no. 3, September 2007, p. 36, retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/265824588_Migracion_arraigo_y_apropiacion_del _espacio_en_la_recomposicion_de_identidades_socioterritoriales

[28] Margarita de Jesus Quezada Ortega, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

[29] Daniel Castillo Torres, *Sentido de pertenencia y estereotipos de la otredad entre Europa y Latinoamérica (Alemania y Perú)*, "Revista Peruana de Antropología", Vol. 2, No. 3, December 2017, p. 205, retrieved from http://www.revistaperuanadeantropologia.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/ART-15.pdf

migrant being aware or reflecting on it[30].

The art works we will deal with in the lines to follow aim at reconsidering the notions of *home* and *travelling*, as basic elements of shaping the feeling of belonging. The projects deal with the migrant's condition in contemporary society, characterized by visibility/invisibility as well as by mobility/immobility, debating on the way migrants move from house to house, relocate, create new communities and new attachments, reinventing identities as a result of various migrating experiences.

One of the first cultural projects that reflects on the *Gastarbeiter* experience, the guest-workers mentioned in the first lines of the article, was a book entitled *A Seventh Man: Migrant Workers in Europe* that was published in 1975 by writer John Berger and photographer John Mohr. The book is a contextualized narrative rendering of the travel of a guest-worker from his recruitment place to Western Europe and back[31]. By combining a number of narrative strategies, the two focus on the migrant's personality and the actuality of migration. The work has a timeless value as it presents the interaction between the individual will and the global economic structures as a humanized rendering of the manner in which the wishes of the individuals and their hopes come true in the international work market[32].

Another work that reflects on the guest-workers subject is *Türken in Deutschland* (1979) by German photographer Candida Höfer. The photos she had taken for six years are about the constantly growing Turkish immigrant community in her native town, an aspect that became increasingly evident in the 1970's[33]. The images present the immigrants' daily life, at work and outside work, revealing the areas in which these communities were integrated and those in which they were left outside the dominant German culture[34].

Much as it illustrates a somewhat disadvantaged minority community, Höfer's photos are not focused on poor living conditions or exotic cultural practices; they are truthful and offer glimpses of family life[35]. The images betray openness and reciprocity, the subjects look straight into the camera, clearly of

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[30] Margarita de Jesus Quezada Ortega, *op. cit.*, p. 65.

[31] Begüm Özden Firat, The Seventh Man: Migration, Politics and Aesthetics, in Art and Visibility in Migratory Culture. Conflict, Resistance and Agency, edited by Mieke Bal and Miguel Ángel Hernández-Navarro, Brill Publishing, 2011, p. 128.

[32] Anna Cieslik, *Reviewed Work: A Seventh Man, 2010 by John Berger and Jean Mohr*, "Urban Studies", Vol. 49, No. 6, 2012, p. 1401, retrieved from www.jstor.org/stable26150924

[33] Burcu Dogramaci, *My Home Away from Home. Artistic Reflections on Immigration to Germany*, "The Culture of Migration Politics, Aesthetics and Histories", edited by S. P. Moslund, A. R. Petersen, M. Schramm, London, I.B. Tauris, 2015, p. 295.

[34] Amy A. DaPonte, *Candida Höfer's* Türken in Deutschland ..., *op. cit.*, p. 17.

[35] *Idem*, p. 18.

their own free will[36]. Höfer shows the Turkish immigrants as part of the German society, and the photos present them as negotiating their identities in the country they have settled in[37].

The *Take Care* project (2018 – until now) of Italian photographer Benedetta Ristori, includes a series of portraits of the migrant women in Italy that are caregivers for old people or children. The pictured women live together with the people they take care of, and the latter's homes become their homes all the way through their work contract. Yet these homes are never really their *home*, and the photos that were taken with the employers' permission, point out precisely this aspect[38]. The photos picture them with respect and dignity, despite the alleged inferiority of their work.

Ristori uses this project to signal an important phenomenon in the Italian society. With over one billion women employed as caretakers, most of whom come from Eastern Europe, Ristori is interested in pointing out the considerable gap between the Italian state need for these caregivers and its failure to acknowledge these women's rights and integrate them into the Italian society[39].

*Gone Away (2019 – until now)* is a developing project of journalistic investigation of the lives of Romanians in the diaspora by photographer Cosmin Bumbuț and journalist Elena Stanciu. The two live in a caravan among the Romanian communities whose migratory experiences and lives they present through texts and images. By getting documented on the lives of Romanians that settled in Spain, UK, Germany, Denmark, etc., they intend to find out the main reasons why the former left their country, the impact of their leaving on their families and how they integrated into their new country and lifestyle"[40].

Beginning of January 2019, the reports of the *Gone Away* project are based on journalistic investigations devoted to important social matters. The photos included in this project are snapshots of the daily life of Romanian migrants to the West, at home and at work, as well as portraits of the subjects, in which they look straight into the camera, with dignity and trust. The reports of Bumbuț and Stanciu are about Romanians belonging to various social positions, working in different places, from agriculture, cleaning services or taking care of old people to engineers, physicians, mayors or opera singers. Part of the project was presented in the Romanian Pavilion as part of the Biennale of Architecture in Venice in 2021, within the *Fading Borders* exhibition.

The last project that will be analysed in this article is also based on the Romanian migration subject and is the result of my own artistic practice. *Birds*

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[36] Amy A. DaPonte, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

[37] *Ibidem*.

[38] Benedetta Ristori, "Take Care", retrieved from http://benedettaristori.com/take-care/

[39] *Ibidem*.

[40] Elena Stanciu, Cosmin Bumbuț, *The Wandering Project – About Us*, retrieved from https://teleleu.eu/despre-noi/

*of Care* is part of the artistic research within the doctoral studies that I started in 2019. The project, based on field research information, focuses on the understanding of contemporary Romanian economic migration from an artistic perspective. This involves photographic documentation of many life stories of the Romanians that have left their country. The main focus is my own interest in understanding the migratory experience of my family, with examples, and integrating the migratory experiences of other families or individuals as well as my one-year stay that had a great impact on me.

Therefore, this approach is based mostly on the need for a better understanding of migration phenomenon that deeply influenced my life and many other Romanians' whose relatives, friends or acquaintances left our country. My mother and my middle brother left for Spain, my older brother and his family, wife and children, left for the UK. I also have uncles, aunts, cousins that left our country many years ago. I have friends that live in Western Europe or in other parts of the world. Their leaving made me see and live life differently. This personal experience was a large part of my documentary research. The stories in this project, which I documented with photos, are presented from the perspective of my being left behind, at home, and incorporate auto-ethnographic elements to a certain extent.



Fig. 1 Ionela from Pitești with Santiago, an old man from Spain that she has been taking care of for 10 years, Bilbao, Spain, September 2021

Among the documentation strategies I would count living with the subjects, participative observation as a working method, snapshot aesthetics, self-reflexivity and autobiographic or auto-ethnographic elements, writings on personal experiences, performative elements, aesthetic approaches to various situations, seriality and sequentially.

The project will result in a photobook presenting the migration stories of almost 57 individuals or Romanian families, which were observed during the two-year travel documentation process in 440 places from 13 countries.



Fig. 2 Self-portrait in Ascen's house (on the right), an old lady from Spain that I took care of for a week, to go through my mother's experience myself, Muskiz, Spain, September, 2021

In *Birds of Care* I write about my family's life story, a personal, intimate but not unique story as it is very similar to the stories of many other Romanian migrants, of both those that have decided to come back and those that remained abroad.

The realities of all those stories are undoubtedly stronger than my life story, but I included mine among the others as it makes the whole project more authentic and relevant (Fig. 3-4).

Fig. 3 Romanian Building Workers, London, UK, September 2020



Fig. 4 Romanian workers led by Florin, a seasonal tree cutter in Galicia,
Lugo, Spain, November 2021

At first, my intention was to emphasize the geographic expansion of Romanian migration and the diversity of their works and life stories. My rendering of their lives was intended to be different from the national media or from that of the countries with large Romanian communities. The media information relies mostly on stereotypization (turning them into victims or shedding a bad light on them) as well as on the negative or dramatic aspects of migration. Instead, I wanted to focus, as objectively as possible, on the normality of their living and daily routine in another geographical background, in a different language and community.

The dynamic and active lifestyle I had to adopt for two years as a photographer within the European space, getting in touch with the Romanian migrants and living with them for a few days, made me experience their way of living myself.

Returning *home* every time and relating to the frequent state of being *on the* road is a manner of understanding the migration phenomenon by an ethnographic autobiographic process of reflection on the changes that take place in a society and the way migration is reflected on every individual and on the members of his family. *Birds of Care* has its roots in the migratory birds way of living, and it is about taking care of yourself and the others around you (family members, children) in a constant need to make life better.



Fig. 5 My mother and the old lady she was taking care of several hours a day, every afternoon, while her daughter was working as a seasonal ice cream seller in a Bizkaia harbour, Zierbena, Spain, September 2021

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# Reflexive Design and the Consumer's Expectations

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***Abstract:*** Design is a term that is paradoxically (or not) harder to define these days. Its often-theoretical ramifications make a clear and univocal definition even more difficult to state In 2005, Donald Norman mentioned three levels of design: visceral, behavioural and reflexive in his book *Why We Love (or Hate) Everyday Things*. *Design hybrids* is yet another term that has been introduced into the specialized vocabulary lately as a result of designers' attempt to go above and beyond product design, graphic design, environmental design, furniture design, interaction design, etc. In 1896, Louis Sullivan formulated the principle "form comes after function". After WWI, theorists such as Theo van Doesburg, Walter Gropius and Le Corbusier, suggested a more radical tendency: "form comes after utility and meaning". The new context suggests a more complex approach, *i.e.* "form observes expectations", as a follow-up of Raymond Loewy's MAYA (Most Advanced Yet Acceptable) principle. The present study is based on the transdisciplinarity of design[1], on reflexive design as a means of approach as well as on their relationship.

***Keywords:*** reflexive design; design process; transdisciplinarity.

## In an Ever-Changing World, Design Should not Follow a Trend, but Challenge It Instead

Design as a rule counts among the human activities that are in permanent search for solutions and answers to specific issues and needs. Another perspective on this matter is that design maintains a balance between art and technology. Both art and science aim at fulfilling human needs. It is therefore legitimate to attempt a differentiation between design and other processes that have a similar goal. An important aspect is that the design process counts primarily on the user's experience (Justice, 2019) while the art-science-design synergy makes the last offer not only practical and useful solutions, but visually impressive as well. Along with architecture,

> design goes beyond the art-science-technique trinome; the specificity of architecture (design, A/N) does not originate in art, science, technique or even in the three put together.[2]

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[1] Alex Coles, *The Transdisciplinary Studio*, London, Stenberg Press, 2012.
[2] Gheorghe Săsărman, *Funcțiune. Spațiu. Arhitectură* [Function. Space. Architecture],

Its specificity lies in the culturality of a specific geographical zone that has distinct needs.

Therefore, we can think of design as a comprising subject where creativity, science, technology, culture and real-life experiences are interdependent. A practical approach to design involves reasoning as a superior cognitive process that can extract basic logic characteristics by abstract-formal processes to understand, explain and predict a series of real causal relations and develop concepts, notions, theories, cognitive systems as mental models of reality.

The mix between analytical thinking and intuitive thinking provides a balance between trusting and and viability of solutions. Analytical thinking resides in voluntary mental activities that involve even complex calculations while the intuitive thinking is based on impressions and feelings, usually belonging to automatic thinking. The design thinking represents an important move of particular cognitive activities toward general cognitive activities, from accidental to necessary, from acknowledging an object to interpreting it and offering a logic-causal explanation. This is the passage from mental cognitive-sensory processes to superior cognitive processes[3].

We cannot imagine a world without the two basic sources of knowledge, brain and sensitivity, nor a world without one of the two.

> The lack of sensitivity would deprive us of object possession, and without our brain we could not think of any object. The lack of content would make our ideas bare, and intuitions without concepts are blind. So it is equally important to turn our concepts into sensitive concepts, i.e. to add the object into intuition and to make our intuitions intelligible, i.e. to subordinate them to concepts. These two faculties or capacities cannot change their function. The brain cannot make suppositions and the senses cannot think. Only their merging can result in knowledge. (Kant)

Combining intuition with analysis opens the path toward the designer's reflexive approach at all levels of his creative process.

There are basically three levels of reflection in design that ensure an efficient practice. The first level would be that in which reflection takes an active part in the design process, "a reflection in action"[4], as Schön puts it, while Grocott calls it "a project-based reflection" (2010). A second level

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Bucureşti, Editura Meridiane, 1979.

[3] Emanuela Dobra, *Gândirea – Proces cognitiv superior* [Thinking – A Superior Cognitive Process], 2009, retrieved from https://www.scribd.com/doc/23034228/gandirea

[4] D. A. Schön, *Designing as reflective conversation with the materials of a design situation*, "Knowledge-Based Systems", Vol. 5, issue 1, 1992, pp. 3-14, retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1016/0950-7051(92)90020-G

would involve a reflection on action and draws much on Schön's reflection in action or Grocott's reflection in practice, approaching the process of design retrospectively by iterative reflection.

A third level lies in the discursive act of result negotiation where specific elements that transcend the designer's understanding and practical experience complete the process of design. At this level, the user's experience and his expectations play a fundamental role more often than not.

Forlizzi and Katja (2004) developed an understanding frame for experimenting with the product user. The frame was intended to act as a tool that emphasizes the type of experience contained in a product and has three basic components or experience dimensions: the subconscious, the knowledge and the story. Understanding their relationships and exchanges is essential for the designer as it gives him the opportunity to analyse the type of experience he will create.

The concept of *design* appeared before that of *industrial design*[5] and one of its founders, Henry Dreyfus (2018), asserted that: „Industrial design was the result of eliminating excessive decoration; it started to function when it focused on product analysis and inventing means to make it more evident and attractive"[6].

The aesthetics of the industrially designed product may now be approached in a different manner. A specific type of present-day design, the commercial design, is more focused on profit than on quality, which is more evident when applying the Design Thinking approaches to management and marketing strategies. While the concept of *design thinking* appeared in the 1950-1960, it became more popular around 2000 when a consortium of companies offered design consulting services (IDEO) that presents its design process starting from design projects and thinking. They refer basically to the set of cognitive, strategic and practical procedures used by all designers and to the specific notions the latter have to be familiar with to approach design issues. But the new social, cultural and technological conditions introduced a new key element, the user's emotional well-being, a novelty of the modern concept. The writings on this topic (Tim Brown, David Kelley from IDEO, Roger Martin & Rotman, etc.) rely on the idea that in the long run design thinking will have a bigger impact on industrial design than the designers themselves can imagine. In fact, the information used to approach the design concept is continually changing.

The *design thinking* approach offers the opportunity to re-evaluate and accommodate a new conceptual perspective which breaks the apparent

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[5] Victor Papanek, *Design pentru lumea reală* [*Design for A Real World*], translated by Cristina Sabău and Roxana Aneculăesei, București, Editura Publica, 2018.
[6] Henry Dreyfus, *Designing for People*, in Papanek, Victor, *Design pentru o lume reală* [*Design for A Real World*], *op. cit.*, 2018.

linearity of the process. The rethinking of empathy and its placing in a top position in the design process represents a very important step forward. Empathy needs to be applied to all factors that interact with the design product, the product itself included. Though at first the approach or set of tools was meant only for the designers, it was soon adopted into the business world, marketing or even creative industries. When applied to business, it makes very little use of form aesthetics, it does not count on the process of achieving it, and it does not take into consideration its multiple failures.

However, the *design thinking* is defined first as a type of research – action approach that originates in iterative and failure friendly prototypes to be found in specific immersive social research contexts[7]. Accepting the *design thinking* as a design work methodology we take a further step toward considering design a "way of thinking" (Herbert A. Simon, 1969; Robert McKim, 1973; David M. Kelley, 1987; Richard Buchanan, 1992, Tim Brown, 2009), which is basically the starting point of the present study. We have now reached Tim Brown's definition of this "way of thinking" as: a "process" deeply connected to the user centred notion (Louis L. Bucciarelli, 1994; Dym and Little, 1999).

Every design process starts with defining its issues. Project devising, context needs, requirements and solution limitations should also be taken into consideration. (Grocott, 2010 withe references to Dieter & Schmidt, 2013; Dym, Little, & Orwin 2013; Fogler, LeBlanc and Rizzo, 2014; Ulrich & Eppinger, 1995; Yock, *et al.*, 2015). Beyond its financial efficiency (see Bauhaus school), novelty and practicality are also basic to differentiate the design product from other products that fulfill similar needs and have similar functions. In his work *The Psychology of Emotion*, Sartre (1939) stated that "When we change the form and proportion of a triangle, we actually get to its 'core', no matter its particularities." To paraphrase Heidegger's words *on the essence of truth as a truth of essence*, we can connect the idea of simplicity in design to the public's needs and expectations. Simplicity does not mean superficiality, but deep implication and hard work. Nelson Goodman states that:

> In search for a true system, you are actually in search for truth itself. A collection of specific truths could not be considered a science in itself. Science means systematisation, and systematisation – simplification. There is no simplicity without science.[8]

If we start from a principle that is thought to belong to "the father of

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[7] Cameron Tonkinwise, *A Taste for Practices: Unrepressing Style in Design Thinking*, "Design Studies", Vol. 32, No. 6, November 2011, retrieved from doi:10.1016/j.destud.2011.07.001

[8] Nelson Goodman, *The test of simplicity*, "Science", No. 128, October 31st 1958.

modern architecture", which asserts that "Form comes after function" (Louis Sullivan, 1856-1924) as well as from Sartre's variations, we soon notice the similarity to the Bauhaus promoters (Theo van Doesburg, Walter Gropius and Le Corbusier) that consider form to "come after utility and meaning" and later on, in *Don Norman* (2010), reception takes place at three levels: visceral, behavioural and reflexive. When we take a closer look at the principle that was first stated by Sullivan and originated in Roman architecture, dealing basically only with architecture, we see that it was introduced into the world of design and turned into a rule. Moving from a mere craft to a real art, design was the result of industrial revolution. The craftsman was emotionally involved in his work and made it very meaningful while industrial technologies would not. Given the circumstances, the appearance of such a domain in which projects turned meaningful before turning into industrial mass productions was of greatest importance. Such was also the case of the term "significance", promoted by the Bauhaus school. However, the socio-cultural expansion and the public's increase in expectations and needs lead to the reinvention and repositioning of design.

Chronologically speaking, *Don Norman* mentions in 2005 the perceptible characteristics of objects and the way they make the user/observer feel, defining this form of interaction between the object and the contemplator/consumer/user *Visceral Design*. It is followed, in his view, by *Behavioural Design* that refers to practical and functional aspects of the product or any other usable component A third level would be *Reflexive Design* that refers to the rational and intellectual aspect of a product, approached by rational thinking arising from personal experiences, value systems and cultural level.

From this perspective, in which an object means every construct that bears a message, and that of MAYA principle (Most Advanced Yet Acceptable), formulated and put into practice by designer Raymond Loewy (the father of the industrial design), let us consider two different examples: In 2001 the Apple company launched its first iPod that belonged to the classical iPod line. Its rectangular form with a square screen and a round button was not modified until 2007 when the Touchscreen technology took its place and was to be perfected with the launching of smart phones. In 2014, the Apple company announces its market withdrawal. The second example is that of Google Company that launched Google Glasses, a type of smart glasses that are withdrawn from the market less than a year after, in January 2015.

The above examples are used to illustrate two different approaches in terms of strategies of implementation. The iPod contained many elements the customers were not yet familiar with, but its design met their expectations. They had to press the same round button that was very similar to the classical radio button. Consequently, its simple form and functioning turned it into a

quickly accepted product. The Google glasses, instead, were not as quickly accepted because the consumers were not prepared for such a huge technological change. The launching of the glasses into the market was very little prepared and their rejection was quite predictable as it proposed a very unusual interaction between the user and environment.

To conclude, through scientific approaches we identify and define all parameters that provide useful design solutions, choosing the appropriate methods for better results. In other words, thinking design solutions counts on intuition, inspiration and emotion. However, the three elements have to take into consideration all limitations the design process involves. They are superimposed and interconnected[9], defining every idea that is essential for a successful implementation. Artists and scientists together operate with real world elements, be it symbolic or palpable, while designers are permanently asked to treat imaginary things as real, which makes their work uniquely special in terms of approach and solutions (John Chris Jones, 1970). *Design thinking* is yet not only the designer's concern; it has to be the responsibility of decision-making factors as well.

The present study has been entirely focused on the identification, analysis and introduction of new approaches or conceptual platforms to implement a new perspective on the teaching process of young undergraduate designers. With all the privileges that present-day design has as a subject matter, it needs a restart where innovation and creativity are very important and a strategy for survival. When analysing the reflexive approaches, it has been noticed that the synergy of the creative forces is much more efficient than individual work.

The identification of a new type of customer, *the pro-customer* (producer and customer at the same time) as a basic element in design marketing represented a better reason to change this paradigm through empathic approaches. To develop strategies that can turn the customer into a pro-customer is a step forward in the evolution of traditional design and calls for more reflexive approaches. I think that design studies should adopt this concept as part of present-day reality.

When brought together, *conceptual thinking, focus on human needs* and *collaborative activity* accommodate a new conceptual platform or even a new science of anticipation originating in reflexive design.

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