

## 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 Căndea, 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<sup>1</sup>, the author of which was professor Alexandru Bădulescu<sup>2</sup>, 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"<sup>3</sup>.

### **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*<sup>4</sup>, and later in the tome of studies of the distinguished professor and priest<sup>5</sup>; therefore, I will start with some biographical data. He was born in Bughea de Jos Village, Bughile Commune,

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ancorom.ro>

<sup>2</sup> 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](https://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexandru_B%C4%83dulescu)

<sup>3</sup> 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](https://www.ancorom.ro/noutati_doc_380_100-de-ani-de-la-naterea-profesorului-gheorghe-c-ionescu-dirijor-si-muzicolog-bizantinolog_pg_0.htm)

<sup>4</sup> 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.

<sup>5</sup> Florin Bucescu, *Bizantinologie muzicală. Studii și articole. Liturgia psaltică în glasul al III-lea* [Musical Byzantinology. Studies and articles. The psaltic liturgy in the 3<sup>rd</sup> 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<sup>6</sup>

We infer, also from Professor Breazul's correspondence<sup>7</sup>, 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)<sup>8</sup>, 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<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> George Breazul, *Scrisori și documente* [Letters and documents], tome II, București, Editura Muzicală, 1990, pp. 107-108.

<sup>7</sup> 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.

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

<sup>9</sup> George Breazul, *Scrisori și 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-20<sup>th</sup> 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<sup>10</sup>. 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<sup>11</sup>, 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).

<sup>10</sup> 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.

<sup>11</sup> 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 3<sup>rd</sup> 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<sup>12</sup>. In the last decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, two choirs operated in the town and, in the interwar period, the *Ploiești Music Association* also existed for a decade<sup>13</sup>. 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<sup>14</sup>. The ensemble founded by Gh. C. Ionescu, which would bear the name of the aforementioned composer – the ‘Paul Constantinescu’ Choir<sup>15</sup> – included “...workers, technicians, economists, clerks, teachers, engineers and doctors”<sup>16</sup>. 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<sup>17</sup>. 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 “Philharmonia” Chamber Choir of the People’s Art School (1982-1987).

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

<sup>13</sup> *Idem*, p. 157.

<sup>14</sup> *Idem*, p. 158.

<sup>15</sup> 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, *Corală “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.

<sup>16</sup> *Idem*, p.160.

<sup>17</sup> 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”<sup>18</sup>. 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<sup>19</sup>, also by publishing books about this activity: *100 de ani de activitate corală în orașul Ploiești, Corul Palatului Culturii, Concert coral* [100 Years of Choral Activity in the Town of Ploiești, 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<sup>20</sup>. 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”<sup>21</sup>. 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”<sup>22</sup>.

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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<sup>18</sup> George Sbârcea, *Orașele muzicii* [The Cities of Music], *op. cit.*, p. 161.

<sup>19</sup> *Muzică corală românească* [Romanian Choral Music], București, Centrul de Creație Populară, 1968 etc.

<sup>20</sup> Mircea Neagu, *Portrete. Gheorge C. Ionescu* [Portraits. Gheorghe C. Ionescu], “Actualitatea muzicală” [Music News], Year X, no. 214 (1/febr.), București, 1999, p. 2.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>22</sup> 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”<sup>23</sup>.

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<sup>24</sup>.

### 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*<sup>25</sup>, 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 rumanesti* 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*<sup>26</sup> was also published – it was therefore a

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

<sup>24</sup> 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.

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

<sup>26</sup> 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 și bizantinologie* [Studies in Musicology and Byzantinology]. Whereas in 2002 Father Fl. Bucescu mentioned, alongside this book, the *Lexicon*<sup>27</sup>, considering that “these two books established Gh. C. Ionescu as a specialist in this field (our note, that of religious vocal music research)”<sup>28</sup>, the following year, thanks to his wife’s efforts, the other important book was also published posthumously, *Muzica bizantină în România. Dicționar cronologic* [Byzantine music in Romania. Chronological dictionary]<sup>29</sup>. 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 meant 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 (4<sup>th</sup> century AD) until the 10<sup>th</sup> decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century”<sup>30</sup>. 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, Brașov, Iași 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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<sup>27</sup> Gh. C. Ionescu, *Lexicon al celor care, de-a lungul veacurilor, s-au ocupat cu muzica de tradiție bizantină în România* [Lexicon of those who, over the centuries, have dealt with music of Byzantine tradition in Romania], București, Editura Diogene, 1994.

<sup>28</sup> Florin Bucescu, *In memoriam...*, *op. cit.*, p. 125.

<sup>29</sup> Gh. C. Ionescu, *Muzica bizantină în România. Dicționar cronologic* [Byzantine music in Romania. Chronological dictionary], București, Editura Sagittarius, 2003, p. 575.

<sup>30</sup> 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 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”<sup>31</sup>, as argued by Titus Moiescu, 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)<sup>32</sup>.

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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<sup>31</sup> Constantin Catrina, *apud* Titus Moiescu, *op. cit.*, p. 190.

<sup>32</sup> Ștefan Petraru, *Cântările Bizanțului – dascăli, psalți, copişti* [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 (19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries), the religious hymn for two voices of whom was published by Ion Popescu-Pasărea (p. 228) (Fig. 1).

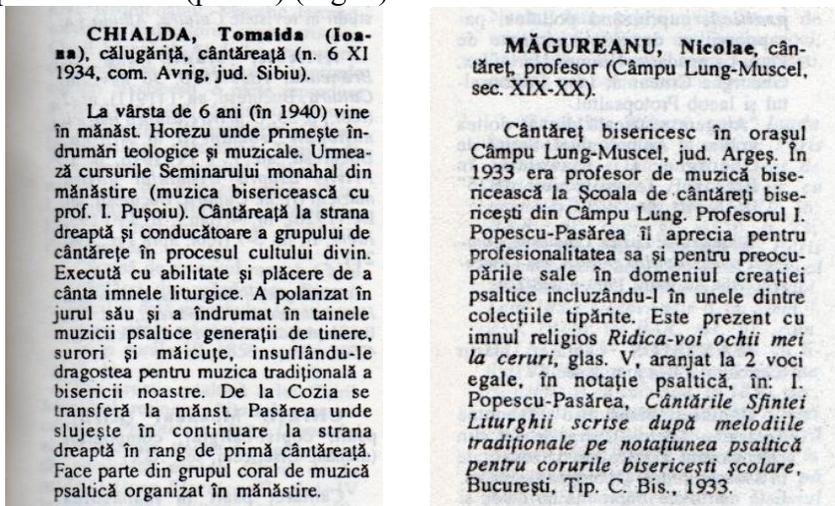


Fig. 1 Lexicon articles

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 18<sup>th</sup> century Iovașcu Vlahul and Filothei sin Agăi Jipei, as well as those from the 19<sup>th</sup> century – Macarie, Pann, Suceveanu, Ghelasie Basarabeanu, Ștefanache Popescu, Ioan Zmeu, Nectarie Frimu, Ion Popescu-Pasărea, from the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> 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 Căndea 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 Căndea, "...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"<sup>33</sup>.

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 Căndea, 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"<sup>34</sup>.

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

<sup>34</sup> *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

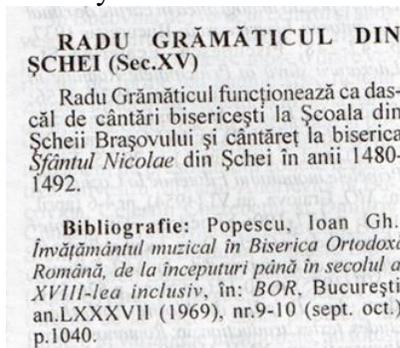
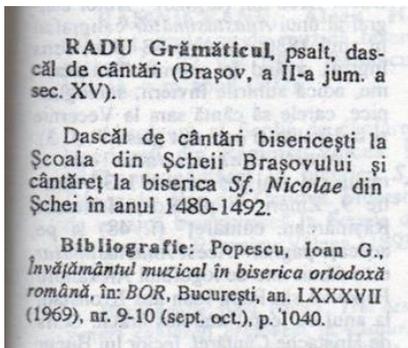


Fig. 2 Same entry in lexicon and dictionary

Biserica Domnească din Bucureşti cu hramul *Buna Vestire* în anul 1665 şi "începător în ale psaltichiei" înaintea acestei date, fixându-i începutul carierei în limita anului 1660. Opinează, de asemenea, că a activat ca protopsalt al Curţii până în anul 1689, primul an al domniei lui Constantin Brâncoveanu, de la această dată numele său nemaiapărând în actele Bisericii Domneşti (murise sau funcţiona la o altă biserică).

Dacă Iovaşcu Vlahul, spre sfârşitul vieţii s-ar fi retras la Athos (numele de "Βλάχος" trădează acest fapt, de asemenea circulaţia creaţiilor sale mult mai mare în Grecia - îndeosebi la Athos - decât în Tară), rămâne în domeniul presupunerilor, fără a exista un document atestatar.

Activitatea creatoare excepţională a lui Iovaşcu Vlahul îl plasează alături de marii compozitori ai Orientului ortodox din a II-a jumătate a secolului XVII: Ghermano Neon Patron, Cosma Macedoneanul, Balasie Preotul şi Damian Vatopedinul. Gheorghios Papadopoulos îl caracteriza drept "un melod neimitat" (original), din cântările căruia se distinge *Doxologia* glas IV de la *Înălţarea Sfintei Cruci* "panegirică (sărbătorească) şi veselă". Appreciate astfel, creaţiile sale au fost preluate de psalţi şi protopsalţi, de copişti şi caligrafi, difuzate şi cântate la strană sau în şcolile mănăstireşti în timpul vieţii sale şi mult timp după aceea. Până la noi au ajuns câteva titluri numai, zece la număr, păstrate în 40 de manuscrise: o *Doxologie*, un *Heruvic*, un *Chinonic duminical*, cinci *Irmoase calofonice*, *Catavasiile Adormirii Maicii Dommului* şi un *Asmaticon*, în două variante, suficiente pentru a ilustra capacitatea creatoare a lui Iovaşcu Vlahul.

**Creaţii:**  
1. Δόξα σου τὸ θεῖον τὸ πῶς (Slav)

Iovaşcu Vlahul. *Doxologia*, ch. IV  
BAR, Ms. gr. 1467 f.31<sup>v</sup>

Ms. gr. 74 / 875, f.364-366<sup>v</sup> şi Ms. gr. 92 995, f.299-300<sup>v</sup>; - *Dohiaru* - Athos, Ms. gr. 372, f.171<sup>v</sup>-175<sup>v</sup>; Ms. gr. 407, f.18-21; Ms. gr. 376, f.90<sup>v</sup>-93; Ms. gr. 338, f.130-132 şi Ms. gr. 390, f.130<sup>v</sup>-132, Bibl. Fac. de Teologie "Kliment Ohridski" - Sofia, Ms. gr. 878, f.84, şi *Sf. Pavel* - Athos, Ms. gr. 98, f.336-339<sup>v</sup> şi Ms. gr. 132, f.355-358<sup>v</sup>.

2. Αἰνεῖτε τὸν Κύριον ἐκ οὐρανῶν (*Lăudaţi pe Domnul din ceruri*), glas I, Chinonic duminical, în cinci manuscrise: BAR, Ms. gr. 693, f.142<sup>v</sup>-143; - *Bibl. Nat. Copenhaga*, Ms. gr. 4466, f.127; - *Xiropotamu* - Athos, Ms. gr. 317, f.194<sup>v</sup>-195<sup>v</sup>; - *Panteleimon* - Athos, Ms. gr. 967, f.399<sup>v</sup> şi *Xenofont* - Athos, Ms. gr. 158, f.150-152.

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.

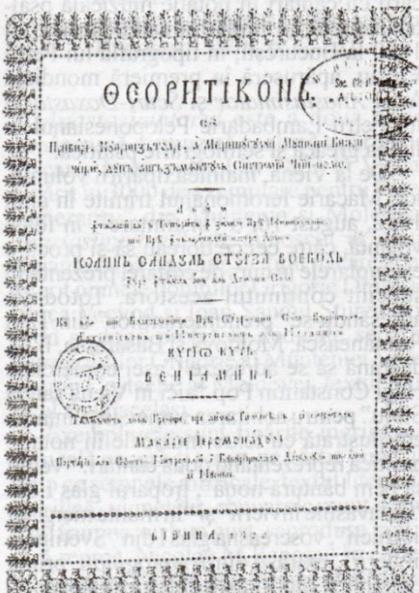
școală în care se predau cântările bisericești și unde se pregăteau viitorii preoți în eparhie. funcționa cu mai mulți ani înainte de data anunțată. 1 aprilie 1823.

**Bibliografie:** Urechia, V. A., *Istoria Școalelor de la 1800-1864*, tom. I. București, 1892, p.110-111

**THEORITICONUL, ANASTASIMATARUL ȘI IRMOLOGHIUNUL (Macarie Ieromonahul). Primele cărți de muzică psaltică tipărite în limba română, Viena, 1823.**

Înscăunarea ca mitropolit al Ungro-Vlahiei la 1 mai 1819 a lui Dionisie Lupu, titular de Sivas, "iubitor al culturii și priceput în ale Bisericii și ale Statului", prilej cu care Macarie Ieromonahul rostește un "inflăcărat discurs", zori noi se deschid dezvoltării muzicii psaltice în Țările Române. În acest an providențial Dionisie Lupu înființează pe lângă Mitropolia Bucureștiului o școală de muzică bisericească în care psaltichia și cântările psaltice aveau să se învețe în "limba patriei" "orânduind epistat pe Macarie Ieromonahul", și tot în acest an Dionisie Lupu constituie o comisie formată din Macarie Ieromonahul, Anton Pann și Panaiot Enghiu care să "tălmăcească" și să tipărească "în dulcele grai al neamului românesc" toate cântările bisericești necesare serviciului liturgic.

Transpunerea în fapt a acestei "investiri" presupunea pentru cei trei muzicieni psalti, în afara competenței profesionale,



751 asemănător în conținut și "aceiași dispoziție a cântărilor" cu *Irmologhioul* lui Macarie.

Odată definitive cele trei volume - *Theoriticonul Anastasimatarul* și *Irmologhioul* -, la refuzul lui Petru Efesiu de a le tipări în tipografia sa din București, sprijinit de mitropolitul Dionisie Lupu, Macarie Ieromonahul, însoțit de Nil Poponea-Sibianul, pleacă în primăvara anului 1821 la Buda unde urma să le tipărească. Aici întâmpină opoziția grecilor care nu doreau cărți bisericești în limba română.

Fig. 4 Article dedicated to the books of Macarie Hieromonakh (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]<sup>35</sup>.

### **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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<sup>35</sup> Gh. C. Ionescu, *Muzica ...*, *op. cit.*, p. 533.

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