

Traian Vulpescu and the Uniformity of Religious Chants

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Abstract: Folklorist, byzanthologist, university professor at the Conservatory of Music and Dramatic Art in Cluj, Traian Vulpescu was a key figure in the Transylvanian academic musical space. Among his scientific concerns there is the effort made in the introduction of the psaltic music in a region dominated by a strong oral autothonomous musical tradition, synthesized in the collection *The eight voices* by priest Dimitrie Cunțanu from Sibiu. *Saint John Chrysostom Mass: The Hymns and Irmoi of the Yearly Celebrations*, which Traian Vulpescu wrote in 1939, was the means by which he wanted to make psaltic music more accessible in Transylvania and in the entire country. Using the collections made by Macarie Ieromonahul, Anton Pann, Dimitrie Suceveanu, Ion Popescu-Pasărea, Vulpescu built a personal transcription of the psaltic music in linear notation, choosing the most representative musical variant. The effort he made was fairly in vain because, being as multicultural as it was, the religious music in the area is special. Nevertheless, Traian Vulpescu’s collection is of utmost importance in the Transylvanian musical space, because it answers the Bishop’s Melchisedec Ștefănescu request, and that is to create a religious musical repertoire in linear notation, to be accessible to all Orthodox Romanians.

Keywords: Mass, religious music, uniformity, simplification.

1. Introduction

Due to his musical, didactic and editorial preoccupations, Traian Vulpescu was an extremely important figure for the Romanian religious music in the Transylvanian space. Formed in a psaltic church tradition and having an academic musical preparation, he tried to contribute to the implementation of a unitary religious musical style, on a united Romanian territory. Sadly, his editorial and didactic efforts in the Carpathian arch area, remained, little known and cherished. Therefore, we thought to unveil a few unique details of this research on religious music, contributing thus to a better reception of his religious music work, and such awaking the musicologists and byzantinologists.

Firstly, we shall shortly refer to a few aspects of his biography, necessary for a better understanding of the context which led to his involvement in the religious music development. What is more, in time, Traian Vulpescu’s

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personality had the attention of many researchers: aspects of his academic activity were presented by George Breazul (1932), Ligia Zoicaș Toma (1984), Nicu Moldoveanu (1997), Gheorghe Ionescu (2003), Viorel Cosma (2006), and his contribution to religious music got Elena Chircev's attention (1999). The present study is based on novel documents from the Donation Fond of the "Romanian Academy's Folk Archive" Institute in Cluj-Napoca: personal documents, memoirs, letters, photographs and manuscripts. The study of such documents allowed me to enrich with new details Traian Vulpescu's biography, correcting the differences noticed in a few papers, and, more than that, to give a more vivid image of the interests he had in studying religious music.

Likewise, the premise of the present paper is to emphasize the aspects of the transcription process and to present Vulpescu's particular vision on the Romanian religious music.

Through his uniformity and transcription process, Traian Vulpescu *Romanized*, with his personal touch, part of the church musical repertoire for the Holy Liturgy, joining his predecessors Hieromonk Macarie, Anton Pann, Dimitrie Suceveanu, Ion Popescu-Pasărea, in the wide process of forming and developing the Romanian religious music.

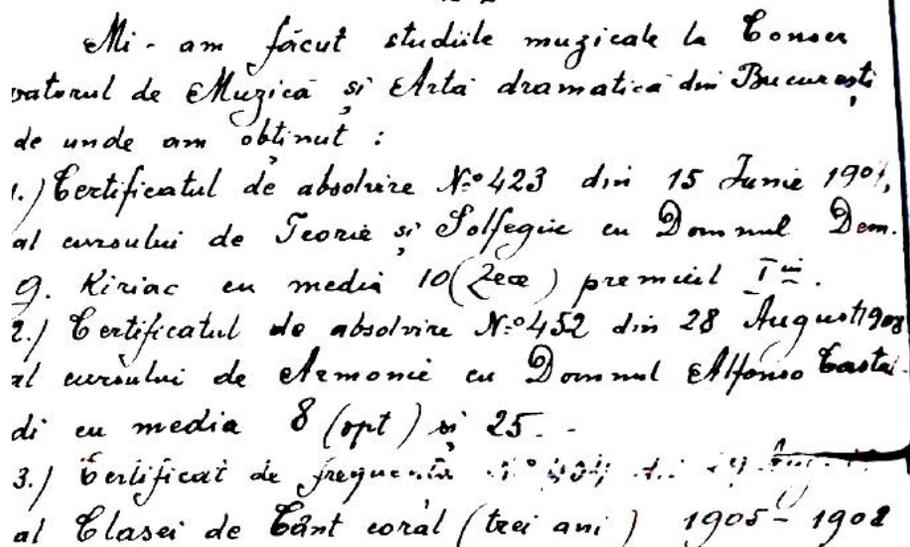
2. Biographic landmarks

Traian Vulpescu was born in "the month of January, the 23rd to the 24th, Old Orthodox Calendar/ January, the 19th 1884, New Orthodox Calendar, a Christian Orthodox by religion"¹, in Lupsanu village, Lehliu department, from parents Vulpescu Marin, 32 years old and Vulpescu Lița, 25 years old. He died at 84, on the 19th of December 1968, in Bucharest. His father, Marin, was an Orthodox priest, having been the brother of His Eminence Sofronie Vulpescu, Bishop of Ramnic between 1900-1910.

After he had finished middle school, and having been raised in a religious environment, the young Traian went to the Orthodox Theological Seminary *Nifon* in Bucharest. Here, apart from the theological subjects that he gladly studied, he discovered his passion for musical studies. Consequently, he studied psaltic music with the renowned professor and composer Ion Popescu-Pasărea, and the linear music and choir assemble with Gheorghe Brătianu. After graduating the Seminary in Bucharest, Traian Vulpescu enrolled at the Music and Dramatic Art Conservatory in Bucharest, where he was awarded the graduation certificate no.423, from June the 15th 1907, for the Theory and Solfeggio by D.G. Kiriac, having an average of 10(ten); the graduation certificate no.452, from August the 28th 1908, for the Harmony Course of Alfonso Castaldi, with an average of 8,25; the attendance certificate no.454,

¹ Registrul Stării civile [General Register Office], nr./no. 8/1884.

from August the 29th for the Coral Chants Class. He also attended Alfonso Castaldi's Counterpoint, Fugue and Instrumentations Courses.



Mi-am făcut studiile muzicale la Conservatorul de Muzică și Artă dramatică din București, de unde am obținut :

- 1.) Certificatul de absolvire N°423 din 15 Iunie 1901, al cursului de Teorie și Solfege cu Domnul Dom. g. Kiriac cu media 10 (zece) premiul I^m.
- 2.) Certificatul de absolvire N°452 din 28 August 1908 al cursului de Armonie cu Domnul Alfonso Castaldi cu media 8 (opt) și 25.
- 3.) Certificat de frecvență N°404 din 29 August 1908 al Clasei de Cânt coral (trei ani) 1905-1908

Fig. 1 Traian Vulpescu, Memoir

At the same time, he finished his theological training at the Theological Institute in Bucharest, between 1909-1912. Here he was awarded a license degree in Theology. After having graduated from the Music and Dramatic Art Conservatory in Bucharest, after the capacity exam, which he passed with a 9,08 average, he came second from 39 candidates, he was named a tenured professor at the Music Department at the Highschool and Normal School for Teachers in Buzău, by the order no.57276, series B, by the Instruction Ministry. He started from September 1st 1909 and remained there until 1913. For his teaching activity there, he was kitted out for a decoration.

We are emphasizing these details to correct the information Nicu Moldoveanu wrongly mentions in his article in the *Romanian Religious Music Dictionary*, where he states that Vulpescu: "...He was a music teacher in Buzău, between 1917-1919. Supporting this statement, we have his brother's Mihail testimony, who, in 1930, in *The Romanian Folk Music...*, at note 1, speaks about a song: «heard from his brother – professor Traian M. Vulpescu – when he was a music teacher in Buzău, 1915». Here we have father Antofie Radu's statement in the volume *Religious and Folk Songs*, Buzău 1987: «My love for music, inherited from my paternal father, grew during the studies at the Theological Seminary in Buzău, by the excellent music teachers we had: » Nicolae Severeanu, *Traian Vulpescu and Constantin Țepuși*» (2013, pp. 862-863).

According to the *Memoir* that Traian Vulpescu wrote between 1909-1913, he was a teacher at the Highschool and Normal School for Teachers in

Buzău, and not at the Theological Seminary, as Nicu Moldoveanu's biography states. During 1899-1921 timeframe, the Normal School in Buzău moved its activity in the Theological Seminary's building, which was erected in 1838². Being at the same location, it is clear that both institutions' teachers were known to students, which is why Radu Antofie counts Vulpescu among the highly regarded teachers which seeded his love for music, while he was a theology student.

After having finished his teaching activity in Buzău, he is named, in 1913, sub-lieutenant in reserve of the 79 Infantry Regiment, in 1916, and is advanced to lieutenant in reserve in the 36 Infantry Regiment. Vulpescu confessed that: "I took part in both campaigns of World War I on the front, in 1913 and 1916-1918" (Vulpescu, *Personal Memory*, p. 1). All this time (01.09.1909-01.09.1919), he was still a professor la at the Highschool and Normal School for Teachers in Buzău, being subsequently paid³.



Fig. 2 Traian Vulpescu and the students of the Highschool and Normal School for Teachers in Buzău

² The History of the *Spiru Haret*, Highschool in Buzău, retrieved from <http://www.pedagogicbuzau.ro/index.php/despre-noi/2016-05-14-16-49-01>)

³ Certificate no. 45/30.01.1950, The Popular Republic of Romania, The Ministry of Internal Affairs Interne, the Archives of Buzău Subsidiary.

After his campaigner experience on the front, immediately after the Great Union, in 1919, like many teachers in the Kingdom, he moved to Cluj, to help found some of the Romanian academic institutions. By the Governing Council's order, in October the 19th 1919, the first high school comes to being in Cluj, bearing the name of the great man of letters Gheorghe Bariț. Subsequently, in 1919, Vulpescu was transferred to Cluj, where he had a music teacher's position until 1923. Petre Țuțea, "Bariț" High School student between 1922-1923, remembers Traian Vulpescu, who was "awarded a license degree in Theology and graduated the Conservatory in Bucharest" (Țuțea, 1993, p. XI).

In the extended modernization process of the entire Romanian education system, in Transylvania, after the Great Union, we can find the founding, in 1919, of the Music and Dramatic Art Academy, under the management of the chancellor Gheorghe Dima. Starting from 1923, Vulpescu called to lead the Theory, Solfeggio, Aesthetics, Didactic and Methodic Department of music teaching, which would serve as his retirement location, in 1947.

Traian Vulpescu died in 1968, being buried in his father-in-law's family tomb, priest Fierea, in Plevna commune, Ialomița County. Regarding the date of the renowned teacher's death, there are multiple opinions. Relying on a note made by his wife on a *Formulary* at the Viforâta Monastery, professor Nicu Moldoveanu states that he died on the 17th of December: "With much piety and faith I hereby donate this to the Saint Viforâta Monastery in Dâmbovița this paper in the memory of my deceased husband, Prof. Traian Vulpescu, who died in 1968, 17 XII: Wife Ecaterina" (Moldoveanu, 2010, p. 139).

The documents found at the "Romanian Academy's Folk Archive" Institute it is mentioned that Traian Vulpescu died on the 19th of December 1968.

Priest Nicu Moldoveanu portrayed Traian Vulpescu as an "extremely valuable theologian and musician, who played a key part in the preservation of national consciousness, because he thoroughly stuck to his duty, keeping the candle of byzantine music and therefore of Orthodoxy, in Transylvania, after the Great Union, for 30 years" (Moldoveanu, 2010, p. 139).

Being familiar with the context and the religious music's history in the region, we find it essential to nuance these statements. On the contrary, we would deduce that there had been no religious byzantine music before the Great Union. Both before the Great Union, and after it, there was an ongoing flame of the religious byzantine music, and it was this music that shaped and kept alive the Transylvanian religious music, which, naturally, due to outside pressure, had a particular development.



Fig. 3 Traian Vulpescu

3. The scientific activity

In an attempt of trying to contour a unitary image of Traian Vulpescu's musical contributions, we are rendering, as it follows, a complete list of the papers he wrote. Presenting his scientific and editorial activity, based on his Memoirs, is essential, because we have not found any paper comprising his entire publication activity.

Traian Vulpescu is the author of various theoretical papers, of a collection of songs and school choir, musical folk papers and also byzanthology. The first category is represented by: *Lectură muzicală pentru clasa I secundară* [Musical Readings for the 1st secondary grade], Editura I. Călinescu, Buzău, 1910; *Lectură muzicală pentru clasa a II-a secundară* [Musical Readings for the 2nd secondary grade], Editura I. Călinescu, Buzău, 1913; *Teoria Muzicii. Curs* [Musical Theory. Course], Editura Institutului de Arte Grafice „Ardealul”, Cluj, 1923; *Principiile muzicii pentru cunoașterea în orice grad de învățământ* [Musical Principles to know no matter of the education level], Editura „Ramuri”, Craiova, 1927; *Chestionar la principiile muzicii* [A Survey to the Music Principles], litografie proprie [own lithography], Cluj, 1927; *Curs pentru clasa I secundară* [Course for the 1st secondary grade in 1918], written by Georges Pantillon principles (in manuscript); *Curs complet de principiile muzicii pentru Conservator* [Complete Course in Musical Principles for the Conservatory], 1st and 2nd year, own lithography, Cluj, 1924-1926; *Cunoștințe de bază ale teoriei muzicii pentru admiterea în Conservator* [Fundamental Course of Musical Theory for the Conservatory Admission], typed, with Dragoș Alexandrescu's reference from “C. Porumbescu” Musical Conservatory in Bucharest, proposed for editing,

1962; *Metodica solfegiului* [Solfeggio Methodology], own lithography, Cluj, 1927; *Curs elementar de solfegii* [Solfeggio Elementary Course], 1st and 2nd part, manuscript, 1936; *Curs de metodica solfegiului în școlile secundare* [Solfeggio Methodology Course in the Secondary Schools], typed, Music Conservatory in Cluj, 1943; *Curs elementar de estetică muzicală* [Elementary Course in Musical Aesthetics], Conservatory in Cluj, manuscript; *Pregătirea și dirijarea corului* [Training and directing a Choir], lithography, Conservatory in Cluj, Own Edition, 1928; *Noțiuni elementare de cor pentru trebuințele învățătorilor* [Elementary Choir Notions for the Use of Primary School Teachers], 1918; *Notițe de curs complet de armonie ale profesorului Alfonso Castaldi* [Complete Harmony Course Notes of Professor Alfonso Castaldi], Bucharest Conservatory in 1907, noted by Traian Vulpescu as his student, manuscript; *Curs de teorie* [Theoretical Course] (in manuscript), 1915, unfinished, that comprises: written signs, the measures, the scale and the pauses.

Songs and choir songs Collection: *Cântecule de curs primar împărțite pe divizii* [Primary Course Songs Divided in Parts], 1914; *27 de coruri școlare (bărbățești)* [27 Male School Choirs], 1916; *Coruri bărbățești pentru Moș Ajun* [Male Choirs for Christmas Eve], 1915; *Noțiuni elementare de cor pentru trebuințele învățătorilor* [Elementary Choir Notions to serve Primary School Teacher], 1918.

Byzantinology: *Curs elementar de arta psaltică* [Psaltic Art], manuscript; *Studiu asupra consoanelor în muzica psaltică* [Consonants' Study in Psaltic Music], manuscript; *Liturghia Sfântului Ioan Gură de Aur, troparele și irmoasele tradiționale, curățite, simplificate și refăcute, scrise pe notație liniară* [The Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom Collection: the troparia and the traditional irmoi, cleaned, simplified and rebuilt, written in linear notation], Cluj, 1939, awarded manuscript by the Romanian Patriarchy.

Musical folklore: *Culegerea cu fonograful și apoi transcrierea a 130 melodii populare românești din județul Ialomița* [Recorded by Phonograph and then the transcription of 130 Romanian Folk Songs], manuscript, 1922; *Folclor muzical din județul Ialomița* [Musical Folklore in Ialomita County], 270 melodii populare românești [270 Romanian Folk Songs], manuscript, 1927; *Culegere de 67 colinde din Muntenia* [Collection of 67 Carols from Muntenia], manuscript, 1928.

4. The Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom Collection: the Troparia and the Irmoi, for the holidays over the year.

To understand Traian Vulpescu's conception of the church music and the problem of the uniformity of the psaltic songs, a conception that is reflected, in fact, also in the working method he used in the compilation of the collection of songs entitled *The Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom Collection: the troparia*

and the *irmoi*, for the holidays over the year, we must describe the context that generated this work.



Fig. 4 *The Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom Collection*

The collection of church songs destined for the Holy Liturgy “simplified and cleansed/purified” is the result of the participation of Traian Vulpescu in a competition of musical works initiated by Patriarch Miron Cristea, with the purpose of forming “a collection of traditional liturgical songs, in a single voice and put into notes, after our clean song, simplified and, as far as possible, inspired by the best versions, with the addition: troparia, irmoi and hymns for the holidays of the year” (Vulpescu, 1939, p. II). Originally from Ardeal, a graduate of the Theological Academy in Sibiu, Patriarch Miron Cristea had as a teacher of church songs the priest Dimitrie Cunțanu. Being contemporary with the appearance of the first church music work in Transylvania, he knew very well the genesis, its content and its importance for the Orthodox Romanians in this province. After the event of the Great Union and his appointment in the dignity of Patriarch of Romania, on February 4th, 1925, bearing in mind the missionary-cultural pastoral model of Metropolitan Andrei Șaguna (1847-1873), surely that Patriarch Miron wanted, in his turn, a unification of the church music in all the Romanian provinces.

This wish of the liturgical chanting unit is connected primarily to the name of Bishop Melchisedec Ștefănescu, who, in 1881, presented to the Holy Synod a report on the situation of church music in the Romanian Provinces, imposing the phrase of national music, which would derive logically from the

fact that “it is very popular and is identified with the religious wishes and wishes of the Romanians” (Ștefănescu, 1882, pp. 11-47). In the vision of Bishop Melchisedec, in order to cultivate the feeling of belonging to the same people, led by the same ideals, all Romanians should sing the same church repertoire, composed in the Romanian language and on the musical structures of the Romanian ethos, hence the need for the best and most compatible songs with our old national music to be sung in monodic and harmonic versions. At the same time, the state itself was called upon to support this endeavor by including church music in school curricula, by financing the publication and mass dissemination of musical prints (Mocanu, 2016, p. 208).

From the perspective of building the national and through the church music, Patriarch Miron starts the competition in which Traian Vulpescu participates with his work.

The stated purpose of the collection made by Vulpescu was to produce a single edition, which would become official, of “clean and simplified” songs, in the sense of “keeping no memory of the oriental way of carrying the voice from a sound to another” (Vulpescu, 1939, p. II). In support of this assertion, the author uses the authority of Hieromonah Macarie, who speaks in the preface of the *Irmologhion* of “mixtures of pestref [...], Turkish compositions” (Macarie, 1823, p. X). This conception of the loans in Turkish music present in the works of Hieromonah Macarie and Anton Pann, used by Traian Vulpescu as a methodological argument, was deconstructed by musicologist Costin Moisil, who, analyzing the contents of the Romanian songs by the two proposals, showed that: “the Romanian musical prints did not reduce the ornaments and modulations, did not shorten the songs and did not eliminate the hyphens”, but “their purpose is to keep the original song, within the limits imposed by the differences of accent, number of syllables and topic between the Greek and the Romanian texts. There is no information in these prefaces that justifies the opinion that Romanian would have meant (and) adapted to the Romanian sensitivity, spirit or folklore. The two psalms did not intend to remove the Greek features of the strange song and made no reference to this subject, their opposition was not directed to the ethnic character, but to the secular spirit, which had penetrated the church music.” (Moisil, 2010, p. 151)

Vulpescu also states about the songs included in the collection, “that they were sung and sung in our churches and are in the older and newer Romanian prints” (Vulpescu, 1939, p. II). It should be noted that, in 1939, when this collection was printed, Orthodox Church music had a special situation in Transylvania. Going through multiple transformations caused by the historical-social changes, the church song was enclaved, crystallized around centers, developing local variants, more or less close to the psaltic music of Moldova and the Romanian Country (Cristescu, 2011, p. 10). The psaltic music was little known in Transylvania, with the exception of a few monastery centers and the

Saint Nicholas Church in the district of Șchei in Brasov, places where it was sung, in 1939, by the new system. Both before the imposition of the new system and after its introduction in Transylvania, the psaltic church singing was developed and practiced through the existing monastery schools in Bălgrad, Prislop, Sâmbăta de Sus, Moisei, Peri, Vad, Hodoș-Bodrog, Shemlacul Mic, Srediștea Mică, Caransebeș, Scorei, Apșa, Budești, Giulești, but also in the churches of Streisângeorgiu, Feleacu, etc., where, along with cultural-spiritual activities, activities of learning Byzantine musical notation were also carried out (Mocanu, 2016, p. 183). The situation of church music in Transylvania changes radically after the act of the Union, from 1701, when the Orthodox believers are forced to recognize the authority of the Roman Catholic Church. The break of the links with the Romanian Provinces and Moldova, the isolation of the rest of the Orthodox Christians, the destruction of the monasteries and the schools of church singers have resulted, in the musical terms, in the appearance of variants based on the oral tradition and crystallized around the main cultural centers in the provinces under this state. Austro-Hungarian: Lugoj, Arad, Oradea, Blaj, Sibiu. In all the Orthodox areas in the Metropolitan Church of Transylvania, after the Great Union, the music set in linear notation by Dimitrie Cuțanu was performed, which the graduates of the Andrew Theological Academy had taught and, later, promoted it in their parishes.

The collection of psaltic songs selected and simplified by Traian Vulpescu did not have any echoes in the musical liturgical space in Transylvania. Researching the central church magazines of that period, I found that, as a professor at the Music Academy, Vulpescu had no collaboration with the students of the Theological Academy of Cluj-Napoca, which the church music was taught to by Professor Vasile Petrașcu, a faithful follower of the Transylvanian musical tradition, and not with the Bishopric of Vadului, Feleacului and Cluj. Thus, lacking an institutionalized framework in which to distribute new songs and not being affiliated with any local ecclesiastical structure, Vulpescu's collection remained only at the stage of trying to record, in linear notation, some psaltic variants. Due to the lack of a unitary psaltic musical culture, the effort made by Vulpescu was overlooked.

5. Traian Vulpescu's conception of church music

In order to illustrate how Vulpescu built his work, it is necessary to present his conception of church music. In Vulpescu's view, the situation of the church music in Romania as a whole suffered by the lack of musical education structures and the specialized singers, realities that altered the tradition of psaltic music, imposing an amateurish song, impregnated by foreign melodic structures of Byzantine melody. "Because of an authority, at the eparchial level, in the parishes of the Orthodox Church throughout the country, the

church music is sung with the consent of the priests, without any choice and control, only to the glory of God. The advanced melodies are performed with strange melodic and rhythmic formulas, with flowering, with melodic figures written with vocals, with a singing style that alters the serious character of the church song.”(Vulpescu, 1939, p. I)

The inexistence of a united vision of the religious music and the social-historical situation of the different regions incorporated in the Great Romania territory generated a whole series of religious music variants, the majority transmitted orally. According to Vulpescu, these chants “are sung with foreign rhythmic and melodic formulas, with embellishments, with melodic figures written with vowels” (Vulpescu, 1939, p. I). The amateurism and provisional state that could be seen at the repertoire level, sung during the public divine service, was sustained by an entire series of external factors: the lack of payment of the church singers, the lack of schools and of vocational teachers, the lack of books with psaltic or linear notation and the lack of a national uniformity program of the Romanian musical repertoire. All these aspects, noticed by Vulpescu were at the basis of the “alteration of the serious character of the religious song” (Vulpescu, 1939, p. I).

According to the author, the church song had to be a simple one and not adorned by melismas, in order to be easy to interpret. At the same time, it had to be transcribed in linear notation, in order to be accessible to all Orthodox Romanians. Even if a century had passed since the imposition of the new system in the Romanian Country and in Moldova, the psaltic notation was not accessible to all the church singers, so for a wider dissemination, it was necessary to transcribe it in the linear version.

However, when referring to the situation of the church music in Transylvania, which he knew very well during his stay in Cluj, Vulpescu stated that this, “unlike the original [Romanian psaltic music, a.n.], is far from the spirit and the ethos of church music”. In the melodic pattern of the configured modal lines “there are small motifs and cadences, reminiscent of profane songs, and at other times, we find small confusions and disfigurements of voices and voices” (Vulpescu, 1933, p. 2). Not having a steady academic musical tradition, the church music from Transylvania was developed and transmitted eminently in oral form, being loaded with multiple melodic layers, foreign to the spirit of the church singing.

Also, when he talks about applying a liturgical text that does not have a linear notation on a voice, a procedure often encountered in the strange practice of the Transylvanian singers, he mentions that often: “This kind of music education leaves the door open not to variants, but to the departures from the original - there is an original -, away from the spirit and ethos of church music, sometimes to contributions of small motives and cadences, which recall profane songs, sometimes confusions and disfigurement of lines and verses

(voices), or the partial abandonment of a verse, or the reduction of their cadences and formulas, almost everywhere to two of each verse, to forget the now non-existent modulations, to remove one of the most powerful means of expression of religious feeling, ornaments (big signs or hypostasis)” (Vulpescu, 1933, p. 4).

Practical singing or application of liturgical texts on the pattern of well-known songs is the most commonly used mode in the parishes in Transylvania. The church singers, most of them without a minimum of musical training, imitated the melodic patterns heard or learned from their ancestors. This musical practice has given rise to a lot of variants with a pronounced local colour.

The main feature of the religious chants in the area is orality. If we were to refer to the meaning of the religious music’s orality in Transylvania, then we should emphasize the fact that it presupposes the existence of a common matrix that generated local variants. It is anonymous, being the result of a successive overlap of melodic variants. Likewise, the orality counts on the existence of some active, intense and creative musical variants, which, in the evolution, are impregnated by new local variants. Vulpescu reminds us of “confusions and transformations of little motives and cadences”, but all these, to the Transylvanian singers’ minds, represent their musical identity. What is more, we could state that, the stereotype of the simple formulae can determine the emergence of a monotonous character during execution. But those simple melodic cells are the ones that create singing unity during the divine service. What counts first and foremost is the active participation of the believers by singing. By knowing the melodic pattern, it adds to the singer in the execution of different songs during mass.

Even if he does not agree with this form of church singing, which is largely amateurish, Vulpescu recognizes the importance of the musical works composed in Transylvania and Banat, starting from the native oral variants. It is obvious that the role of these collections of Transylvanian church songs is to fix in a linear notation a variant that will serve as a landmark, boundary, for those who have minimal knowledge of linear music.

Referring to these collections, Vulpescu stated that: “All our editions of church songs have one or the other, or one or more shortcomings, yet they have their value; on the one hand, because these editions have responded and respond to the needs of our worship, setting for those who dedicate themselves to the priestly mission a norm of how to sing in the church, a way not to depart; on the other hand, because, by writing down notes a norm has been given, which will guide in their studies all those who will deal with our church music and, at the same time, will prevent any wrongdoing, which time would bring. For these reasons, it is necessary to pay our tributes to those who gave all their efforts to note and to bring to light our traditional songs: Dimitrie Cunțanu,

Trifon Lugojan, Anastasiu Lipovan and Celestin Cherebețiu.” (Vulpescu, 1933, p. 4)

Impressed by the special situation of the church music in Transylvania, Vulpescu would embark in a project of composing a uniform musical repertoire, starting from the original tradition of psaltic music in the old Kingdom: “We must not be content with this phase in the history of our religious songs. We have to go one step (not many more) further. We have to reinstate the eight verse scales (voices), to writing them everywhere at the same level, we mean at the same tempo, pointing above every chant the voice and the metronome.” (Vulpescu, 1933, p. 4)

In a socio-political and cultural context prone to the development of the nationalistic movement, Traian Vulpescu would affiliate to a trend in the Romanian Orthodox Church, which used to consider the Romanized music by Macarie Ieromonahul and Anton Pann as a nationalistic music that would correspond to all the Romanians ideals (Luca, 1898; Nifon, 1902, Popescu-Pasărea, 1931).

Regarding the religious music, Vulpescu had been Ion Popescu-Pasărea’s student at the Seminary of Bucharest and was influenced by his teacher’s ideas, ideas we can find in his paper’s preface and that is the starting point of this entire work method. Among Ion Popescu-Pasărea’s thesis regarding religious music, we shall mention only the ones that are connected to Vulpescu’s approach. According to Professor Popescu-Pasărea, the religious music has a national character (Popescu-Pasărea, 1937, p. 3), this is why it is of utmost importance for a uniform repertoire to be gathered for all the Romanian provinces (Popescu-Pasărea, 1937, p. 1); the religious music has Byzantine origins, but was transformed by the genius contribution of the Romanians (Popescu-Pasărea, 1937, p. 2); the psaltic music is more important and has to be our Romanian music forever (Popescu-Pasărea, 1937, p. 7).

A permanent preoccupation which Ion Popescu-Pasărea had, which Traian Vulpescu would inherit, was the uniformity of religious music, in order to become a “common church music to all the Romanians, as the language they use daily” (Popescu-Pasărea, 1937, p. 2). Therefore, he wrote a levelled church repertoire, simplifying and re-writing variants from the collections of Macarie Ieromonahul, Anton Pann, Dimitrie Suceveanu, Ioan Zmeu. This editing was necessary, according to Popescu-Pasărea, because, in time, the Romanian church music had many transformations of the melodic line and rhythm, due to modernization tendencies and the impact of folk music (Popescu-Pasărea, 1937, p. 207).

According to Popescu-Pasărea, Anton Pann “rounded, cleaned, simplified and accustomed the chants to the Romanian sayings” (Popescu-Pasărea, 1930, p. 3). Pann shortened the chants from papadic and stihiraric rhythm, cleaning them of the external forms, of Asian origin, adapting them to

a religious line and “keeping up with the way and rhythm of the old singers from Muntenia” (Popescu-Pasărea, 1930, p. 5). What is more, due to his musical genius, Anton Pann brought a substantial contribution to the sketching of a national music, adapted to the personality, the language and the customs of the Romanians (Popescu-Pasărea, 1930, p. 6).

These ideas found at Popescu-Pasărea, regarding the Romanization of religious songs by Anton Pann would be cited and used as a methodological argument by Vulpescu, in his collection. Unlike Anton Pann who romanizes a Greek musical repertoire, accompanying it with many consonant formulas, Vulpescu would romanize them even more, cutting all the melismatic formulae, reaching a simple, blank melodic line (Vulpescu, 1939, p. V).

Regarding the ethos of the voices that should be used in the Holy Mass, Vulpescu says that the melodic variants in Sunday liturgical mass should have a joyful character, and the most appropriate for such a festive day is the eighth voice, in major mode. To create a conceptual unity of the general feeling of those who take part in the Holy Mass, only a vice should be used (Vulpescu, 1939, p. V).

In the religious singing, the feeling that the melodic line transgresses is highly important and the singer’s performance. That is why, when we sing during Mass, the chants have to be accompanied by “a general feeling of the major mode [...], and the serious and solemn feeling, [...] and piety” (Vulpescu, 1939, p. VII) the fourth and eighth voices are the most appropriate for the request, for the endurance prayer.

To sum up, following the clean intervention of Vulpescu at the melodic lines level, the chants of the Holy Mass were chosen by the echoi, then they were simplified and cleaned with major care. Some of them were repeatedly rewritten, when they were transferred in linear variant, suffering radical changes at the flourishes/grace-notes.

6. Simplification and “purifications”

After the presentation of Traian Vulpescu’s conception regarding religious music, we shall linger on some examples of simplifications and “purifications” operated at the melodic lines level of the selected musical variants of the songs for the Holy Liturgy. When he works on a musical variant of a known author, referring to the formulas that burden the melodic text, Vulpescu fixes as consonants *psifistonul*, *varia*, *antichenoma*, *omalonul* și *eteronul*. To his mind, they have a rarely seen expression power when interpreted *Holed up*, *seeded*, *swam*, by a Greek maestro. Whereas, in the Romanian music, this feeling is “sometimes overshadowed, or even erased, by the oriental form of the melodic line, by the oriental rhythm but foremost by the oriental way they are sung” (Vulpescu, 1939, p. XVII). On the one hand, these consonantal formulae burden and turn the melodic line into monotony,

and on the other hand, they complicate and make it more difficult. Simplified, the enriched consonantal chants make the melodic line have “have the same impression, make it simpler, easier, more varied and easier to understand; without them, it will be continuous, without voids or pauses, and will generally have a powerful expression and consequently an artistic value (Vulpescu, 1939, p. XVIII).

Analyzing Vulpescu’s action by which he simplifies the highly melismatic chants, we reckon that the procedure is wrong. The simplified variants, adapted from Pann, Suceveanu, Popescu-Pasărea repertoire, had already been simplified by the authors themselves in the Romanization process. Vulpescu does not begin his action from the Greek original, but from the Romanian variant. Each and every author had a personal style of adapting the Greek chants to the Romanian language particularities, retaining their own right to be loyal to the original melodic line, fact that resulted into the birth of a new style: Pann, Macarie Ieromonahul, Suceveanu, etc. The simplification of the already *simplified* Romanian variants, leads to the lessen of the melodic line and to the deprivation of this of the *rich melismatic* formulas that make each voice special.

Regarding the chants hronos, this has to be adapted to each moment of the Holy Liturgy “to set aside any feeling of hurry or lack of expansion, and, at the same time, to sing with a feeling of calm, silence and piety” (Vulpescu, 1939, p. V). That is why, starting from the references of the songs’ hronos, mentioned in the works of Anton Pann (1845-1846), Ion Popescu-Pasărea (1930, p. 3), Gh. Ionescu (p. 241), Simion Nicolescu (1913, pp. 5-6), Vulpescu establishes the tempo of the irmoi songs at “76 de tempos/ syllabi per minute”, and for the papadic songs, in which we have the Heruvic, The Great Answers, Axion, Kinonik, “there has to be a rare move of 44 de tempos per minute” (Vulpescu, 1939, p. VII).

In the religious music, for the wide chants, a syllable can be on different tempos, which is why “the gradual methodic movement, if it has a great expression of religious feeling, it fades in beauty, can become monotonous, when is in stihiraric and papadic hronos and the tempo is represented by a single sound” (Vulpescu, 1939, p. IX). Therefore, where it is necessary and it is possible, the melody was simplified, consequently “the melodic line became figurative, calm, smooth, with other high and low tones/ formulas that rises or falls little by little gradually resting, and which sensibly phrased compose the beauty of the papadic” (Vulpescu, 1939, p. XX). Some formulae of the trigorgon, with three ison with omalon and gorgon are simplified and replaced with two sounds, without the song losing “neither line, nor rhythm, or feeling” (Vulpescu, 1939, p. XI).

Vulpescu tried to particularize the time of each liturgical moment to synchronize with the prayers that the priest says at the Holy Liturgy. To give more time to the liturgical ceremony execution, in a moment of silence, the chronos of the songs is adapted to each moment of the mass. The purpose of the

calm and serene songs is nothing else than “expressing the religious feeling”. Without being part of the clergy, Vulpescu sensed and told the hurry in which some chants are sung, affecting the specific of the ritualistic moment. The fact that he establishes the right tempo at the beginning of each song is a very helpful aid for the future singers, who would perform from his book, at the masses.

In the preface of his paper, Vulpescu mentions how he simplified the selected songs, destined to be sung during the Holy Liturgy.

At the litany level, for the Great Litany, the answer in the seventh voice is considered “hurried, without an expansion” and “contradicting the religious chants cu ethos”. The classic litany used in churches even today in uniform chant, in Anton Pann’s variant (1847, pp. 54-55), has, in Vulpescu’s opinion, “something strange: it seems something modern and that does not have a feeling of calm, silence and piety”. Therefore, they have been modified and brought to the coordinated hronos and the liturgical moment, singing “a syllable a tempo and the 76th tempo part of a minute” (Vulpescu, 1939, p. VI).

The answers to the Greath Litany, adapted from Anton Pann, were modified to correspond the liturgical moment. During these, the community prays with the lectern for all the people and their needs. This is why, the atmosphere has to be of piety.

The Antiphons, thought to be the most beautiful and adapted are in the VIII-th voice, after Iosif Naniescu and Nectarie Frimu, because, the major state of the VIII-th voice, they give away a feeling of praise, of genuine, of solemnity.

When made to choose from different variant of the *Good God* chant, Vulpescu inclines to the oldest he can put his hand on, which he simplified, adapting it to the modern rhythm, and contemporary requests as he had noticed at the rural singers.

1.

2.

Sfin-te Dum-ne - ze u - le Sfin - te ta -

3.

4.

Sfin-te Dumne - ze u - le Sfin - te . ta -

5.

ta fel

The image displays a musical score for the hymn "Sfinte Dumnezeule/Aghios o Theos". It consists of five systems of staves, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment line. The lyrics are written in Romanian. The first system includes the word "ră" and the beginning of the phrase "re... Sfin te... fă...ăr'de moar... te...". The second system continues with "ca următorul" and "re... Sfin te... de moar... te". The third system includes "mi-lu - e...ște ne... pre... noi...". The fourth system continues with "mi-lu - e...ște ne... pre noi...". The score features various musical notations, including treble clefs, a key signature of one flat (B-flat), and a 3/4 time signature. There are several triplet markings (indicated by a '3' over a group of notes) and slurs throughout the piece.

Fig. 5 *Sfinte Dumnezeule/Aghios o Theos*: 1. Ion Popescu-Pasărea (1911, p. 9);
2. Nifon Ploeșteanul (1902, p. 113); 3. Ioan Zmeu (1892, p. 183); 4. Anton Pann (1847, p. 30,
a III-a variant); 5. Anton Pann (1847, p. 30, 1st variant)

Simplifying Anton Pann's variants, Vulpescu states that the 1st variant is to be sung all the Sundays, and the second is to be sung rarely, especially during important holidays, in order to give the deserved solemnity to the celebrated moment.

Ehul al II^{lea} baza sol, $\text{♩} = 56$ A. Pann 1847

A - min Sfin - te Dum - ne - ze — u — le

Sfi — in - te ta — re Sfi — in —

te . . fă — ăr' de moar - te . mi - lu - e — ște

de 3 ori

ne pre noi

$\text{♩} = 76$

Mă - ri - re Ta — tă — lui și Fi — u — lui și sfân — tu - lui Duh

și a - cum și pu — ru — rea și în ve - cii ve - ci - lor A - min

$\text{♩} = 56$

Sfi — in - te . . . fă — ăr' de moar — te . mi - lu -

e — ște ne pre noi.

Sfin - te Dum - ne - ze - u - le Sfi — in —



Fig. 6 *Aghios o Theos*, Traian Vulpescu's simplified variant (1939, p. 7)

The noted variants made by Vulpescu comprise few rhythmic and melodic formulae, “external formula”, as Anton Pann used to call them. He fixed what he used to call “strange/foreign formulae” both in the hronosul papadic and stihiraric, and in the heyrmological hronosul. A foreign formula was considered the imperfect tempo (grace-noted) in *vu*, in the VIII-th mode which are used both in our folk music and in the Greek folk music (Vulpescu, 1939, p. V).

For his collection, Vulpescu opts for Anton Pann's variant Holy God, on voice VIII, which he adapts to the modern time and rhythm. The adaptation of the chants, as the author mentions, is dictated by the situation of the music in the Romanian villages. If the Liturgy takes place during the week, and there is not only a festive liturgical environment but also a low number of believers, then all the chants shall be executed in a more alert rhythm. On Sundays and during holidays, when the Holy Liturgy has a more solemn vibe, adapted to the celebrated biblical events, the chants are executed in a more festive way, slower. This is why Vulpescu proposes two variants of the Holy God, one more rhythmic, one wider.

Regarding the Heruvic chant, Vulpescu chooses from Ion Popescu-Pasărea's collection (1931, pp. 14-15), the VIII-th voice variant, because it lacks modulations as in other variants by Petru Lampadarie, Petru Efesiu, Gr. Protopsaltul, translated by Anton Pann, or those written by Şt. Popescu, Nectarie Frimu, Dimitrie Suceveanu. In Vulpescu's opinions, the excessive modulations in the Heruvic chant are ways of expression in the Byzantine chant's art, but that “are not in coordination with what is being sung, expressing a different feeling” (Vulpescu, 1939, p. XIX). Adding to the

collection Popescu-Pasărea's variant in the VIII-th voice, this had no need of being simplified or purified because it is enriched figuratively. While singing the Heruvic it has to give away "a feeling of serenity, of piety, serious, and the second part a feeling of solemnity" (Vulpescu, 1939, p. XXI).

The chant of the Cheruvimic hymn is a very important moment in the Byzantine ritual of the Holy Liturgy. According to the hymn's words, the clerics form the funeral procession, during which, in a symbolic way, the body of Christ, present in the bread and wine, is brought in procession from Proskomide to the Holy Table. Vulpescu chooses Popescu-Pasărea's variant which he considers the most appropriate, because it is not excessively melismatic and sends a feeling of seriousness and solemnity, at the same time.

The axion for the collection destined to the Holy Liturgy is the one in Ștefanache Popescu's variant, in the VIII-th voice, that, with the Irmoi the repasts in Macarie the Hieromonah's variant, is written in an almost identical style with the original song, enriched in figures, with all the forms of consonants, a little heavy and monotonous, but still very beautiful.

The sources that Traian Vulpescu uses in the organization of his collection of Chants for the Holy Liturgy are the works Macarie Ieromonahul (1823), Anton Pann (1846, 1847, 1848, 1892), Ioan Zmeu (1892), Ion Popescu-Pasărea (1910, 1911, 1925, 1931, 1933), Gavriil Musicescu (1934), Nifon Ploieșteanu (1902), Vasile Mitrofanovici (1909), Silvestru Morariu-Andrieviciu (1883).

7. Final considerations

Traian Vulpescu's paper *The Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom* represents, for the Transylvanian Orthodox Musical Space, a moment of reference, by creating a religious songs repertoire de destined to the liturgical service, anchored in a Romanian Psaltic tradition. The transposition in linear notation of psaltic songs, the simplification and the cleaning of the melodic lines of the majority of the musical variants used during the holy liturgy makes the paper accessible to all the religious singers from all the Romanian regions, spreading the psaltic songs even in the parts where the tradition of the neumatic notation and the psaltic style, is missing.

Regarding Vulpescu's uniformity method and the way he applied them on the selected variants, we can mention the following. Firstly, the selection he makes is one subjective and arbitrary, because it is only based on a few collections of the Holy Liturgy. Then, the simplification and cleaning process is not realized starting from the Greek original, as his predecessors had done, but from a series of Romanian variants, that, in their turn, passed through an adjustment phrase. This fact generated a chants' cleanse of the formulas and strong melismatic lines, taking away the very ethos which made them special. The simplification and cleaning, the two methods he adopts from Popescu-Pasărea, are applied by Vulpescu in a personal manner, in the uniformity of the

selected variants. By applying his own transcription method, the chants were very simplified, eliminating the big intervallic break, the modulating passages, the complex formulas, so that the song is more calm and smooth, creating a unity between text and song.

His personal transcription was not recognized, nor applied by other byzanthologists. We deduce that it remained at the manuscript's phase because it erases exactly those aspects that particularize and make this Romanian musical style beautiful. What is more, by simplifying and excessively cleaning all the melismatic formulas, the effort of the past Romanian protopsalms' efforts who tried to embellish as faithful as possible the Romanian liturgical texts with Romanized chants, from the Byzantine repertoire.

The Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom Collection: the troparia and the traditional irmoi, cleaned, simplified and rebuilt, written in linear notation would be awarded by the Romanian Patriarchy but it would not be used by religious singers. It would be printed in Cluj in 1939. From the research I have made in the Vadului, Feleacului and Clujului Eparchy, by applying a survey to the priests and singers, it could be deduced that this paper cannot be found in churches' lectern or in the parishes' libraries. Even in the academic musical space, at the Seminary and Faculty of Theology's level, this collection did not enter the liturgical use. It further remains only in the researches and musicologists' attention.

Even if it hadn't the intended impact, being distributed at the entire Patriarchy's level, Vulpescu's collection is still important in the historic development of the Romanian religious music because of various reasons: it sketches a unique style of interpretation and transcription of the neumatic notation in linear notation; it levels a musical repertoire to his own aesthetical tastes; it makes the psaltic chants accessible to all the singers, even those familiarized only with linear notation; it spreads, in the Transylvanian musical space, a psaltic variant of the Holy Liturgy, of the troparia and the traditional irmoi.

Due to his interests in religious church music, Traian Vulpescu will always be a reference point for future generations. The abnegation and determination he had during the gathering of the collection of the chants for the Holy Liturgy are to be followed by those who want to support the elaboration of a uniform musical repertoire for the entire country.

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