

The germinative potential of musical allusions and quotations. Case studies from the work of Romanian composers

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Abstract: Since the earliest times, pre-existing music has been a germinative layer that generated new musical entities. As the composer Dan Dediu inspiringly states, “music begets music”. In the particular case of using musical allusions or quotations, the set of their associated connotations has the potential to create a space of interference that can amplify the semantic reverberations of the new work. Sometimes, musical imprints from other spaces or times are placed in the showcase, in plain view. Other times, they are deliberately hidden, transformed into subterranean energies, like unseen rhizomes nourishing the musical organism from within. The case studies selected from the work of Romanian composers represent some hypostases of this fascinating and fertile dialog between past and present. The case studies selected from the works of Romanian composers (*Narrative II* by Anatol Vieru, music for the film *Osânda* [The Punishment] by Tiberiu Olah and the *Triple Concert “Brahmsodia”* by Dan Dediu) represent some of the hypostases of this fascinating and fertile dialog between past and present. From the point of view of the relationship with pre-existing music, the three chosen works propose different solutions: Vieru uses a very well-known music, but with subtle extra-musical connotations, leading to the idea of a discreet dissidence, Olah integrates a popular carol, but, given the political-ideological context, he permanently camouflages it, through modern compositional means, and Dediu constructs his own music starting from fragments of Brahms' music, thus highlighting the organicity of the German composer's creation.

Keywords: musical quotation, musical allusion, Anatol Vieru, Tiberiu Olah, Dan Dediu.

1. Introduction

In the great atlas of music, composers try to configure a territory as personal as possible, with as distinct a landform as possible. But the peculiarity of musical territories is the absence of firm boundaries. The musical universe is elastic, permeable and constantly expanding. There are vast networks of connections between the various musical territories, which can also be described by the term *intertextuality*. Each composer's territory is irrigated by springs, sometimes transformed into rivers or streams that come from other territories – some closer, others more distant in time or space. According to

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Daniel Barenboim in his 2008 book *Everything is connected*, there is a constant interchange of ideas, concepts, stories and characters, stylistics and phrases, musical and non-musical alike. Because the elements that feed the musical territories come not only from the musical domain, but from all other domains – artistic, scientific, social, historical, etc., the only peculiarity being that they are converted into sound.

Since the earliest times, pre-existing music has been a germinative layer that has generated new musical entities. As the composer Dan Dediú (2012, p. 42) inspiringly states, “music begets music”¹. Julia Kristeva and Roland Barthes, the founders of intertextuality, go even further and consider that any text is composed of a multitude of quotations: “Every text is constructed as a mosaic of quotations; every text is the absorption and transformation of another text.” (Kristeva, 1966/1969, p. 85); “The text is a tissue of quotations drawn from the innumerable centres of culture” (Barthes, 1968/1977, p. 146).

With regard to this perspective, of quotation as omnipresence in a text, I think it is necessary to ask: do all the elements that can be identified as “taken” also fulfill the condition of “quotation”? The definition of quotation by David Metzger (2003, p. 384) – “the placement of parts of a pre-existing piece in a new composition or performance” – remains rather ambiguous in this respect. In my opinion, in order for a structure to be understood as a quotation or allusion, *its origins must be clearly traceable*, going beyond the level of “commonplace” and being placed on a higher level, in the sense of direct association with a *particular* musical work. Sometimes the composer himself emphasizes this lineage. At other times, the burden falls on the receiver, in which case the degree of recognizability becomes directly proportional to the receiver's musical background, with no quotation being identifiable as such by all potential receivers, as John Fallas (2007, p. 5) notes.

If the traceability of identity (i.e. the relation of the musical fragment to a particular work) is a condition fulfilled, the connotations and meanings associated with the musical quotation or allusion have the potential to create a space of interference that can amplify the semantic reverberations of the new work. As David Metzger points out (quoted in Wiens, 2008, p. 383), “When a musician borrows from a piece, he or she draws upon not only a melody but also the cultural associations of that piece. [...] Those manipulations provide a means to comment on cultural topics and to reconfigure fundamental cultural relationships.”

Part of the charm of the use of musical quotations and allusions lies in the fact that, however familiar the quotation or allusion may be, the reception will be in a context different from the original one, which will create the

¹ The composer mentions procedures such as using a *cantus firmus*, a theme etc. as a starting point.

premises of *otherness*. Therefore, any quotation will be a hypostasization of the *familiarity-alterity* couple. If *familiarity* is attached to the first aspect (identity), forming a common platform between the composer and (certain) receivers, *alterity* underpins the second aspect: *defamiliarization*². An essential process and even the goal of the artistic approach, *defamiliarization* means proposing another angle of vision, another way of perception.

In this sense, the 20th century witnessed dramatic changes of perspective in terms of the composer's relationship with the past of sound art: if in the 1950s integral serialism, in its vectorial evolution, rejected any dialog with the past, since the 1960s there has been a reaction in the opposite direction, recuperatory, the quotation or allusion becoming a fashion sometimes taken to extremes through the collage technique. But in order to benefit from the extra-musical value of the quotation, it is not enough to simply insert it as an aural reference. It is necessary to create relations, connections, a relationship between the quotation (as a part) and the work (as a whole). And the relationship is established by formulating an attitude, which can go from affirmation (the quotation represents the work, supports its meaning, agrees with it) to negation (the quotation is distorted, parodied, put in a divergent context) or problematization (reflection, debate, questioning – the most germinating attitude in the process of defamiliarization).

The degree of integration/expansion is directly correlated to the *number* and *heterogeneity* of citations. Because a musical work has a limited absorbing capacity, determined by the balance between unity and heterogeneity. An extreme diversity of material will inevitably lead to a decrease in the degree of coherence, despite the recognizability of the inserted fragments. At the same time, insufficient clarification of the relationship between the quotation/allusion and the work may lead to the perception of the quotation as a mechanically, quasi-arbitrarily, randomly embedded reality, as J. Peter Burkholder notes (2001): “Proof of borrowing is incomplete until a purpose can be demonstrated. If no function for the borrowed material can be established, its use remains a mystery and the resemblance may be coincidental. Reliance on the borrowed material as a theme, structural element or point of prominence makes its function clear.”

Another aspect we should bear in mind is the visibility of the quotation. Sometimes, musical imprints from other spaces or times are placed on display in plain sight. At other times, they are deliberately hidden, becoming subterranean energies, like unseen rhizomes nourishing the musical organism from within.

² A term first used by Viktor Shlovsky (1917) in his essay “Art as technique”. Shlovsky believes that *defamiliarization* (to see in another way what seems familiar) is more or less the goal of all art, tracing the idea back to Aristotle (“poetic language must appear strange and wonderful.” Shlovsky, 1917/1965, p. 783).

The case studies selected from the works of Romanian composers represent some hypostases of this fascinating and fertile dialog between past and present.

2. The quotation in Anatol Vieru's creation. Case study: *Narrative II for saxophone and orchestra (1985)*

Anatol Vieru often uses musical quotations, many of which belong to the area of traditional music, particularly to children's folklore – which introduces a mixture of playfulness, purity, ingenuity and nostalgia. In *Games* for piano and orchestra (1963), Vieru inserts, in the *Joc de copii* [*Children's Game*] section, the song *Paparuda* [*Dodola*], in a version that is pulverized and fragmented, but still identifiable in terms of sound. In *Scoica* [*The Clam*] (1981), initially entitled *The Sârbova Village Monograph*, Vieru quotes 70 melodies from the Ursu collection; although the melodies appear in their original version, they are in fact “hidden” through the overlapping of a maximum of 15 voices and through an extremely low intensity (*pppp sul tasto*), which, as Vieru himself notes (1993, p. 178), results in *white noise*, within which one can, at times, discern disparate fragments; other times, though, a melody is foregrounded through a change in intensity (*forte*). And in the *Sinfonia concertante* for cello and orchestra (1987), we find, in the third part, rhythmic-melodic fragments which allude to traditional children's songs such as the bitonic *Lună, lună nouă, Melc, melc codobelc* or *Sorcova veselă*.

The classical musical quotations are selected from a period that runs the gamut from the Baroque to the contemporary world. *Musical Museum* (1968) for cembalo and orchestra uses Bach's *Prelude in C Major* from the WTK I as both its starting and reference point. In *The Sieve of Eratosthenes* (1969), conceived of as a “comedy of prime numbers” (Vieru, 1993, pp. 215-217)³, each prime number is attributed a musical structure. For the prime numbers from 11 to 37, Vieru associates quotations extracted from the *Moonlight Sonata* by Beethoven (for no. 11), *Gypsy Melodies* by Sarasate (for no. 13), the *Clarinet Concerto* by Mozart (for no. 17), Beethoven's *Trio in c minor* (for no. 19), *Partita in G* for cello solo by Bach (for no. 23), and then continues with fragments from his own work or from that of his contemporaries. In *Screen* (1970), after the golden section, we find fragments from the *Poem of Ecstasy*

³ By employing the algorithm of the sieve of Eratosthenes, the sequence of integers is converted into the sequence of the multiples of prime numbers (for example, the numbers 4, 8, 12, 16 etc. are considered reappearances of 2). Vieru allocates 3 to 4 seconds to each number, and the impact of the associated musical structure is inversely proportional with the number of appearances of each respective prime number. With regards to the numbers that are associated with quotations, each time one of their multiples appears, the quoted work continues its development. As the author remarked, the work was criticized for its “Dada” discourse and for its “separation between macro- and micro-structure”.

by Skriabin. And *Țara de piatră* [*The Stone Land*] employs melodies from his own works: two from the *Miorița* oratorio and one from *Rezonanțe Bacovia* [*Bacovia Resonance*] (Vieru, 1993, pp. 218, 220).

In *Narrative II* for saxophone and orchestra (1985), Vieru creates a multi-layered dialogue between the present and the past through the insertion of the *Frère Jacques* song, quoted multiple times. On its first appearance it is performed thrice: on the trumpet (Fig. 1), again on the trumpet – in a *stretto* dialogue and in an inversed version with the piccolo flute (mm. 39-43) – and, already noticeable altered, on the solo saxophone (Fig. 2).



Fig. 1 Anatol Vieru, *Narrative II*, mm. 35-38 (excerpt)



Fig. 2 A. Vieru, *Narrative II*, mm. 44-50 (excerpt)⁴

The quotation is then performed in a fragmentary manner, distorted by the introduction of the Lydian fourth (Fig. 3).



Fig. 3 A. Vieru, *Narrative II*, mm. 162, 167 (excerpt)

We then find another complete appearance, in which its development is altered through rhythmic augmentation and intervallic condensation, with the song's intervals being transformed into microtones (Fig. 4).



Fig. 4 A. Vieru, *Narrative II*, mm. 170-180 (excerpt)

⁴ In the score, the large majority of the notes have accidentals that indicate the execution $\frac{1}{4}$ of a tone higher.

through-line which gives meaning to the work (*Musical Museum* is the only other work in his oeuvre where we encounter a similar situation). The melody quoted in *Narrative II* is not only a musical structure, but also has an associated text (Table 1), which is distinguished by its satirical content, which is non-standard for a children’s song.

The lyrics in French	English translation of the lyrics
<i>Frère Jacques (x 2)</i>	<i>Are you sleeping, (x 2)</i>
<i>Dormez vous? (x 2)</i>	<i>Brother John? (x 2)</i>
<i>Sonnez les matines, (x 2)</i>	<i>Morning bells are ringing, (x 2)</i>
<i>Ding, ding, dong. (x 2)</i>	<i>Ding, ding, dong. (x 2)</i>

Table 1 Lyrics of the song *Frère Jacques*

With regards to the content of the text and the origin of the song, a number of different opinions have been expressed, from possible links to a famous surgeon monk, Frère Jacques Beaulieu, 1651–1720 (a hypothesis asserted by E. Bourdin, 1917, recently researched – but unconfirmed – by J. P. Ganem și C. C. Carson, 1999) or possible connections to the too comfortable life-style of the Jacobin monks (David & Delrieu, 1988), to the claim that the song was written by Rameau (Bouissou, 2014). To complete the whole picture, it is necessary to recall that Vieru created this work in the full totalitarian period of the communist regime, just a year after his opera, *Praznicul calicilor* [Paupers’ Wake], was banned shortly after its premiere in 1984, because of its conspiratorial text⁶. In this context, the text acquires, in my opinion, meanings that transcend satire and enter the realm of the outright subversive, becoming an undetected doppelganger of the banned song *Wake up, Romanian / From the sleep of death* (nowadays, the national anthem of Romania), spoken (mentally, of course) not in Romanian, but in French, a widely spoken language in Romania of those times, which allowed the hidden meaning to be deciphered by many listeners. If his opera failed to fool the censors’ vigilance, a seemingly innocent “narration” (*Narrative II*) succeeded.

⁶ Although finished in 1980, the opera debuted on June 24 1984, after the composer had accepted to change the title to *Pedeapsa* [The Punishment] and to make various “adjustments” requested by the censors (Băscă, 2006, pp. 94, 96; Cosma, 1991, p. 61). After the debut, though, the work was banned (Marghita, 2016), and was only performed after 1989 (in November 10, 1990, at Hebbel Theater in Berlin). Despite’s the regime’s opposition, Vieru’s preoccupations continued along these lines. The composer went on to write three satirical mini-operas in 1982-1984, inspired by the works of I. L. Caragiale (*Telegrame* [Telegrams], *Temă cu variațiuni* [Theme with Variations], *Un pedagog de școală nouă* [A New School Pedagogue]). *Narrative II*, which debuted in 1985, is situated in proximity to these opera works and borrows, in my opinion, their subversive character.

But what is the meaning behind the transformations undergone by the quoted song? What results is a process of alteration with tinges of the tragical and the grotesque, through intervallic compression, on the one hand, and through the replacement of the perfect fourth with the augmented fourth, on the other (possibly an intentional adaptation of the French song to specifically Romanian intonations). Paradoxically, the final recovery of the initial intervallic structure, due to rhythmic uniformization, represents not a reinvigoration, a rapprochement with the original profile, but a lifeless flattening of it. The curve of transformations, enhanced by the simplicity of the melody, is as depressing as it can be – a possible musical image of oppression and dehumanization, of a profound lack of hope (possibly associated, as mentioned above, with the anthem *Wake up, Romanian*). Had the musical structure of the quotation been more complex, its alteration would not have had the same impact. The grotesque and tragic deformations that the quotation undergoes throughout the work thus come to be perceived with painful sharpness.

In my opinion, *Narrative II* becomes thus a dissident work, in which Vieru proves that himself to be a master of the art of dissimulation through music, an art that he would have learned from Prokofiev⁷ and Shostakovich⁸. And over time he offers us the testimony of an intellectual endurance, discreet, almost Apollonian, yet which can be adequately decrypted by listeners and, above all, grants the composer a dignity and a particular human beauty.

3. The quotation in Tiberiu Olah's creation. Case study: *The Punishment film music (1976)*

Always concerned with the relationship between tradition and innovation, Olah was a seeker and discoverer of hidden treasures in the musical works of other times. What Olah was looking for in these works did not belong to any particular stylistic era. On the contrary. His analyses went beyond the particularities of a certain style and aimed to grasp the inner logic, the connections that ensured the solidity and uniqueness of the work. Part of his investigations took the form of a number of studies remarkable for the originality of their approach, on the works of Schubert, Bartók, Webern and Enescu, thus revealing some of his elective affinities. But only part of his travels through the history of music is reflected in his writings. In most cases, his space of reflection was the very perimeter of music, where Olah felt most

⁷ As D. Jaffé (1998, p. 172) points out, the second part of Prokofiev's *Piano Sonata VII*, which received the Stalin Prize, contains a quite clear allusion to the Schumannian Lied *Wehmut/Sadness* from *Liederkreis Op. 39*.

⁸ See the use of the DSCH melody in the *10th Symphony* or in *Quartet No. 8*, as a possible symbol of resistance by retreating into the inner universe.

comfortable. Some of his musical works are conceived as spaces of contemplation, analysis and dialog with other composers' opuses (Lupu, 2024b, 2021, 2016a, 2016b): *1907 Events* (1972), *Symphony III "Metamorphoses on the Moon Sonata"* (1989), *Obelisk for Wolfgang Amadeus* – concerto for saxophone and orchestra (1991) and *Sinfonia giocosa (!?)* (1991)⁹.

This time I turned to an example of his film music and I chose *Osânda* [The punishment], the film inspired by the interwar novel *Velerim and Veler Doamne* by Victor Ion Popa, which tackles the theme of stigmatization.

For Tiberiu Olah, this is his 27th experience in the film world and one of his greatest achievements in this field. Manlache Preda, a giant with the soul of a child, played by Amza Pellea, returns home after 10 years in the holocaust and two years at the front. He wants nothing but to live a normal life, and the beautiful love story that develops between him and Rusanda, played by Ioana Pavelescu, makes him hope this could be possible.

The main musical themes of the movie identify with the character and his tragic destiny. They accompany Manlache from his first appearance. Olah captures in these two themes (Fig. 7 and Fig. 8) Manlache's childlike candor, his tenderness and gentleness, his gentle strength, capable of a strong and steadfast love.

Fig. 7 Tiberiu Olah, *Osânda*, scene 1b ("Pre-opening credits"), mm. 1-8 (reduction)

⁹ Olah had already explored the idea on several occasions, in various expressive registers: *PaROdiSSINIANA* (1973) – conceived as a musical joke on themes by Rossini –, *Metamorphoses on a Caprice by Paganini* (1980), *Harmonies IV* (1981) – which quotes a fragment from Enescu's *Chamber Symphony* –, but the works of the last period stand out for their particular dramatic force.

Fig. 8 T. Olah, *Osânda*, scene 1b (“Pre-opening credits”), section A, mm. 1-8 (reduction)

But these two particularly beautiful themes are only the easiest perceptible level of the music. There is another musical character in the movie. It is the very carol that gave the name to the novel – *Velerim and Veler Veler Doamne* (Fig. 9) and it represents a model of the interweaving of opposites (binary and ternary meter, ascending and descending melodic profile, major-minor shifting).

Du - pă dea-lul ce - la ma - re, Ve - le - rim și Ve - ler Doam - ne

Fig. 9 The carol *Velerim și Veler Doamne*

But, because carols were not allowed in those communist times, Olah, who was very witty, finds a way to avoid censorship. The carol is present in the score in half of the musical structures used, making it the most powerful yet discreet cohesive factor. But the audience doesn't hear it. How does Olah achieve this? By hiding the carol through overlaps and fragmentations.

In the movie, we hear the carol as such only at the beginning of the scene “Manlache with the child”, sung by the boy Vasile, but with deviations from the original version. Yet the carol appears, discreetly, in half of the structures used, infinitely rich, reminiscent of Lisztian musical characters and of the varied and sometimes contradictory forms that certain themes take in Beethoven, Schumann, Brahms or Rahmaninov. The modern techniques here

applied are a proof of Olah's notion on using folklore in symphonic music, going as far as "transforming it most radically"¹⁰. Thus, he uses various imitations and overlappings, the effect of which is at the border between imitative polyphony, heterophony and transparent, diatonic texture, as can be seen in the examples below:

- 3 superposed voices, *stretto* imitations (Fig. 10);



Fig. 10. T. Olah, *Osânda*, scene 2b ("Dialogue Manlache – Pleșa"), mm. 4-7, trumpets (excerpt)

- 4 superposed voices, synchronic beginning and ulterior shift (Fig. 11);



Fig. 11 T. Olah, *Osânda*, scene 2b ("Dialogue Manlache – Pleșa"), rehearsal mark A [+3], fl. and cl. in Sib (excerpt)

- 3 superposed voices, each comes in at different point of the carol (Fig. 12).

¹⁰ According to Olah (1965/2008, p. 49), the transfiguration of folklore "can go as far as the most radical transformations, where composers [...] reach, in some cases, a personal, new, unprecedented language."



Fig. 12 T. Olah, *Osânda*, scene 2b (“Dialogue Manlache – Pleșa”), rehearsal mark B, tr. (excerpt)

- 4 superposed voices in fragments of the carol, each voice comes in at a different point of the carol (Fig. 13);



Fig. 13 T. Olah, *Osânda*, scene 7b (“Horse thieves”), rehearsal mark 2 [+6], fl. and cl. in Sib (excerpt)

- dense texture, with imitation at the semitone, in *stretto*, one beat apart (Fig. 14), and a very augmented conclusion (Fig. 15 – mm. 7-14). The same six-layered overlapping of the carol, in very tight canon, is used by Olah in the attempted rape scene, and the result is spine-tingling music.

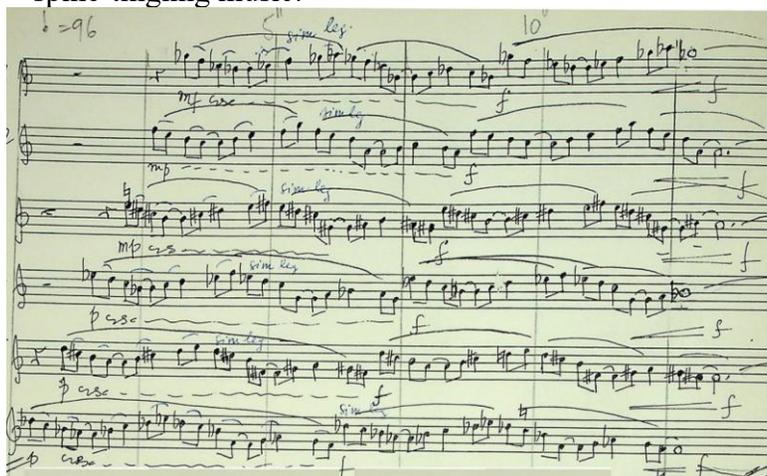


Fig 14 T. Olah, *Osânda*, scene 23 (“The constables and the wolves”), mm. 1-6, woodwinds/strings (excerpt)

- 5 superposed voices in *stretto* imitation at one beat and a 6th voice in augmented version (Fig. 15, mm. 15 and Fig. 16, mm. 16-18), followed by very augmented finale (Fig. 16, mm. 19-24).

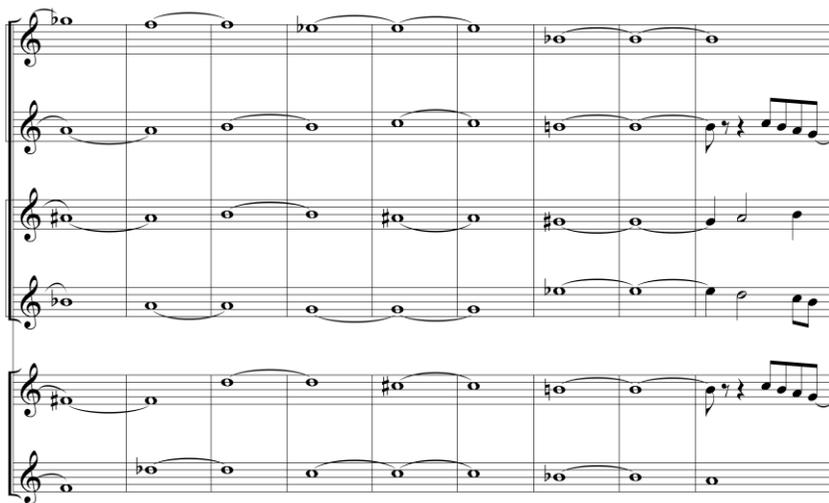


Fig. 15 T. Olah, *Osânda*, scene 23 (“The constables and the wolves”), mm. 7-15, woodwinds/strings (excerpt)



Fig. 16 T. Olah, *Osânda*, scene 23 (“The constables and the wolves”), mm. 16-24, woodwinds/strings (excerpt)

- transparent, diatonic texture, resulted from combining (permutation) the sounds of the initial tetrachord, 4 voices superposed (woodwinds – Fig. 17), or of the two tetrachords.

The image shows a musical score excerpt for five instruments: Flute 1 (Fl. 1), Flute 2 (Fl. 2), Clarinet 1 (Cl. 1), Clarinet 2 (Cl. 2), and a Bass line. The score is written on five staves. Flute 1 and 2 play a melodic line with a 'p' dynamic and a 'mf' dynamic. Clarinet 1 and 2 play a more rhythmic line with triplets and a 'p' dynamic. The bottom staff shows a bass line with a 'mf' dynamic.

Fig. 17 T. Olah, *Osânda*, scene 25 (“The surgery”), m.1, fl. and cl. in Sib (excerpt)

In the final scene of the movie, Manlache is shot in the back as he climbs up the mountain to the tomb and the cross of Rusandra, which he himself had carved. It is a scene with a strong Christic symbolism, for which Olah even uses the subtitle “Golgotha” in his manuscripts. For this final scene, Olah also uses the carol *Velerim and Veler Doamne*. But because here he needed a melody and carols were, as we have said, forbidden, Olah finds another solution: he uses only the words of the carol (from which he eliminates the refrain *Velerim and Veler Veler Doamne*, probably for ideological reasons, to avoid the forbidden word *Doamne/God*), to which he associates his own music.

But the two remaining verses are eloquent enough: *After the great hill, The proud sun has risen*. Basically, these two verses condense Manlache's destiny: on the one hand, his immense suffering (*the great hill* he has just climbed, Golgotha); on the other hand, his hope of overcoming his doom, of leading an ordinary, simple existence (*Rising the proud sun*), and how, in the end, his hope is fulfilled, but only by passing into eternity.

Thus, in addition to the visible musical layer – lyrical, singable, accessible –, Olah creates a depth layer – modern, with avant-garde accents, in which the folkloric quotation from which he starts is camouflaged in textures, heterophony and dense polyphony, embellished with suggestive instrumental effects, in such a way that only transfigured echoes of the original source can be detected. Through his extensive yet extremely subtle use of the carol, Olah not only achieves that inner coherence, but also addresses a reverence to the author of the inspiring novel, in which this specific carol plays a leading role¹¹.

¹¹ In Victor Ion Popa's novel, the carol *Velerim și Veler Doamne*, which constitutes an organ point through the more than 10 appearances associated with the main hero, signifies

And, above all, it offers us the key to understanding the deeper meaning of the novel and the homonymous film, in which the carol represents the essentialization of Manlache's destiny and its projection into a superhuman dimension that transcends time.

4. The quotation in Dam Dediu's creation. Case study: *The Triple Concerto "Brahmsodia"* (2020)

For Dan Dediu, music is, above all, content, substance, message wrapped in sound clothes. Some of his statements form an *ars poetica* that stands on three pillars:

1. communication – “expression is the basis of musical composition”; “a work of art is made first and foremost to please and to say something” (Dediu, 2012, pp. 25, 74);

2. relevance – “true art” is that which “raises questions”, which preserves “the diversity of the world, its complexity” (Dediu, in Rădulescu, 2008/2018, p. 195);

3. truth – “I am not interested in finding new sounds, but true meanings revealed in new musical ways” (Dediu, in Apostu, 2016/2018, p. 220).

In the creation of his sound universe, which has reached almost 200 works, Dediu explores not only artistic fields (musical, plastic, literary, cinematographic, etc.), but also philosophical and scientific thought, extracting ideas that he metabolizes and transforms into affluents that feed his inspiration and give him the unpredictability, the mobility that has become his stylistic hallmark. “I like to explore in other artistic forms, but also in philosophical and scientific thought. It inspires me and gives me ideas. No matter in what form, be it philosophy, physics, film, photography (to keep me within the ph/f-word horizon) or whatever, I absorb information and knowledge from many sources that I try to adapt in my composition” (Dediu, In Apostu, 2016/2018, p. 217). In this way, he builds plurivalent networks of musical and extra-musical correlations, in which different times and spaces are interwoven and in which each listener finds himself, with his own subjective history.

One of the aspects that facilitates the understanding of his music is the construction of accessible landmarks for different audiences. In this respect, Dediu quite frequently resorts to quotations or musical allusions, which he uses in versions that are more or less distant or closer to the original. Sometimes the origin and even the very existence of the quotations and allusions remain undisclosed, the composer giving the listener the satisfaction of discovery. At other times, their presence is emphasized right from the title, as in the case of

Manlache's innocence, childhood nostalgia, tenderness, his sensitivity and vulnerability, the hope of a better life, which keeps postponing, transforming into the passing to the eternal.

the works *Wagner Under – ConcertOpera* Op. 157 (Rădulescu, 2018) or *Brahmsodia – Triple Concerto for violin, cello and piano* Op. 169.

In this Triple Concerto, Dediu proposes a spiral journey towards the core of Brahmsian music (Lupu, 2024a). As the composer confesses (Dediu, 2020), the opus was born out of “admiration for the diversity of Brahms's music, capable of accessing areas of refined expression – as in Op. 116, 117 and 118 – as well as the more rough, popular and accessible areas – as in the *Hungarian Dances* and *Wiegenlied*.”

Throughout the three movements, the tectonics of the work become increasingly strong. In the first part, Brahmsian material is included as a *readymade* layer, in the form of arrangements for the trio soloist. In the second part, a few Brahmsian sound runes are used to generate themes with a different personality. And in the final movement, Dediu transcends national or ethnic boundaries in a quasi-circular route that highlights and celebrates the diversity as well as the compatibility of different musical ethos

In what follows, I propose a more detailed exploration of aspects of the second movement, intitled *Brahmsian Tardigrades* and inspired by the fascinating microscopic, four-legged organisms also called little water-bears because of their appearance and environment. These creatures have a very special resistance to extreme conditions: they are the only animals known to survive in the cosmos, and they can suppress their metabolism to cope with extreme temperatures or radiation.

Converted into music, the idea takes the form of “melodic and rhythmic motifs” taken from the three pieces quoted in Part I, supplemented by “several motifs from other pieces belonging to the same piano cycles” (Dediu, 2020). But this time Dediu rarely uses recognisable motifs or fragments. Starting from Brahmsian sound particles, he constructs his own musical themes, with different expressiveness.

In what follows, I will focus on a single theme, which appears in the (reversed) reprise of the second part, before resuming the second theme.

This third theme, which is very singable (first exposed in measure 177), will dominate the last surface of the movement (Fig. 18).



Fig. 18 Dan Dediu, *Brahmsodia*, mvt. 2, theme III, mm. 64-272, solo violin (excerpt)

alludes to the *Intermezzo* Op. 118 No. 6, which is itself, as known, a reference to the *Dies irae* sequence (Fig. 22 and 23).



Fig. 22 D. Dediu, *Brahmsodia*, mvt. 2, theme III, motif 1



Fig. 23 J. Brahms, *Intermezzo* Op. 118 No. 6, mm. 1-2 (incipit of *Dies irae*)

The middle and final cell may consist of four sounds and may be derived from *Intermezzo* Op. 118 No. 4 or *Intermezzo* Op. 118 No. 2 (Fig. 24-27).



Fig. 24 D. Dediu, *Brahmsodia*, mvt. 2, theme III, motif 1



Fig. 25 J. Brahms, *Intermezzo* Op. 118 No. 4, mm. 67-74



Fig. 26 D. Dediu, *Brahmsodia*, mvt. 2, theme III, motif 1



Fig. 27 J. Brahms, *Intermezzo* Op. 118 No. 2, mm. 3-4

However, the most important filiation remains with the *Dies irae* motif, the first 7 notes of the theme constituting a variation of the Gregorian sequence, by permuting the 5th and 6th sounds. Practically, we can consider that the third theme of part II of the *Brahmsodia* is constructed from this motif (Fig. 28). At the same time, the camouflage of the descent seems deliberate, including the shift of the accents from the odd sounds of the formula (c-h-c-a) to the even (c-h-c-a).



Fig. 28 D. Dediu, *Brahmsodia*, mvt. 2, theme III, motif 1
(*Dies irae* motif, cu permutarea sunetelor 5-6)

Dediu thus seems to emphasize the importance of this motif in cycle 118. For Brahms refers to *Dies irae* sequence not only in the *Intermezzo* Op. 118 No. 6, in which he uses the first five sounds of the formula, but also in the *Ballade* Op. 118 No. 5, in which he uses the entire seven-sound incipit, but hidden in the end of the theme (mm. 7-9). The fact that Dediu alludes to this hidden quotation is confirmed by the repeated exposition (three times, mm. 177-178, 184-185, 275-276) on the same pitches as in Brahms' *Ballade*, starting on E-flat (Fig. 29-30).



Fig. 29 J. Brahms, *Ballade* Op. 118 No. 3, mm. 6-9 (*Dies irae*)



Fig. 30 D. Dediu, *Brahmsodia*, mvt. 2, mm. 177-178, 184-185, 275-276, solo piano (excerpt)

In this way, Dediu's *Triple Concerto "Brahmsodia"* is transformed into a "a meditation on the whole tradition of classical scholarly music and where it is heading in the future" (Dediu, 2020). About music, studies and articles are written, generally. Dediu writes "a music about the music of Brahms, deterritorializing this music and then reterritorializing it with the same material dislocated [...] and relocated" (Dediu, 2020). Throughout the compositional

process, meticulous analysis of the source texts and boundless inventiveness are constantly intertwined. The analytical layer highlights the internal coherence and organic nature of Brahms' music, as well as the congruencies and affiliations that link different works. The analytical layer highlights the inner coherence, the organicity of Brahmsian music, the congruencies and filiations that link different works. And the fascinating process of creating new sonic pathways, starting from existing musical particles but arriving at a “completely different musical language, meaning and context than the original one” (Dediu, 2020), is associated by the composer with a concept taken from biology – *exaptation*, in which a certain feature changes its function.

5. Conclusions

The three case studies represent as many hypostases of the use of quotation or musical allusion.

Anatol Vieru quotes *Frère Jacques*, a well-known song. Clearly recognizable at first, it is deliberately subjected to a process of deformation, which, together with the extra-musical connotations of the underlying text, transforms it into a possible anti-communist manifesto – a form of discreet dissidence.

In the film *Osânda* [The Punishment], Tiberiu Olah musically concretizes the title of Victor Ion Popa's novel. Unrecognizable as a musical profile to the listener, but visible to the musician analyzing the score, the carol *Velerim și Veler Doamne* is always camouflaged, being clearly audible only at its first appearance (when sung by a child). By the subtle way in which he manages to integrate the carol, at a time when this category of songs was forbidden, but also by the way in which he emphasizes, at the end of the film, the meaning of the two verses mentioned above, Olah manages not only to support the writer's initial message, but also to amplify its deep meaning, its transcendent, Christic dimension.

In the case of Dan Dediu, it is not a quotation as such, but an allusion intended to emphasize the organicity of Brahms' creation, by highlighting the complex network of correlations existing within one or more works, including connections with emblematic phrases in the history of music, such as the Gregorian *Dies irae* sequence. As Grimes (2002, p. 392) observes with regard to the music of Wolfgang Rihm, this type of approach is also a form of musical analysis that no longer requires verbalization, but relies solely on the sonic material, understood as a starting point for the creation of other sonic realms¹². The two stages, analysis and recreation, are permanently intertwined. It is a game between memory and imagination, between “it was” and “it will be”.

¹² Similarly, Tiberiu Olah's *Third Symphony* is a purely musical analysis of Beethoven's *Moonlight Sonata* (Lupu, 2016).

And the result is a music in which we find ourselves, because it includes nuggets tucked away in the recesses of our previous musical journeys. But we also reinvent ourselves, because we are offered new and fascinating experiences, whose poeticism and relevance lie largely in the way the old is converted into the new.

In all three cases, the creators show, on the one hand, exceptional compositional virtuosity, and on the other hand – a deep concern for the fructification of the germinative potential of the allusion or musical quotation used, through which they create coherence and inner cohesion and project the entire work to another level of meaning.

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