

***Noi istorii ale muzicilor românești***  
**[New histories of Romanian types of music] –**  
**The most important editorial publication in the**  
**Romanian musicology of recent years**

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**Abstract:** The vast work *Noi istorii ale muzicilor românești* [New histories of Romanian types of music]<sup>1</sup> (816 pages), published by Editura Muzicală in 2020 was a project of the Romanian Composers and Musicologists’ Union, represented by composer and university professor Adrian Iorgulescu, a project meant to mark the celebration of a century of activity of the organisation. The two volumes of the *New histories*, coordinated by Valentina Sandu-Dediu and Nicolae Gheorghîță, reflect the fulfilment of a long research project, begun in the 1990s, with a view to reassessing the musical past of Romania, expressing ideas verified in time through repeated analyses. The coordinators’ vision is edified through the following directions: 1. the joining of all musical genres – Byzantine, folkloric, military, academic, jazz, entertainment – and creating a modern perspective on the types of Romanian music; 2. using the tools of modern musicology – interdisciplinary relating, archival and recent bibliography, an objective, critical, accessible style, efficient and orderly elaboration; 3. removing all influences of the communist ideology reflected by the writings about music in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century by assimilating the ideas formulated by historians after 1990; 4. capitalising on foreign authors’ writings about Romania and about Romanian music, but also on last-minute research on international music for the synchronisation with the contemporary manner of historical research.

**Keywords:** Phanariote music, church music, oral-tradition music, military music, compositional directions.

## 1. Introduction

The reassessment of the cultural past of Romania was configured as a priority research direction after 1990. The freedom of expression of the post-totalitarian era, the desecretisation of archives, the access to the international

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<sup>1</sup> Sandu-Dediu, Valentina; Gheorghîță, Nicolae (coord.) (2020). *Noi istorii ale muzicilor românești. I. De la vechi manuscrise la perioada modernă a muzicii românești; II. Ideologii, instituții și direcții componistice în muzica românească din secolele XX-XXI* [New histories of Romanian types of music. I. From old manuscripts to the modern period of Romanian music; II. Ideologies, institutions and compositional directions in the Romanian music from the 20<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> centuries]. București: Editura Muzicală

scientific and philosophical literature directed the study in the integrative political-social-cultural-artistic universe. The writings about Romanian music also outlined this observation channel, going through distinct stages beginning with 1995, once the uncensored history of the Romanian Composers and Musicologists' Union, signed by Octavian Lazăr Cosma (Cosma, 1995), was published. The research continued through two volumes of great national and international reverberation, published in 2002 – *Muzica românească între 1944-2000* [Romanian music between 1944 and 2000] by Valentina Sandu-Dediu<sup>2</sup> and *Peisaje muzicale în România secolului XX* [Musical landscapes in the Romania of the 20<sup>th</sup> century] by Speranța Rădulescu, writings which discuss, analytically and punctually, the influence of the communist politics in determining compositional styles and musical practices. The process of rethinking and reassessing our musical history evolved on uneven ground, with amazing discoveries and revelations but also with the resistance of the supporters of the so-called autonomy of art or those left in the channel of sentimentally promoting national values. So that as late as eight years later was a reinterpretation of the history of the Orthodox religious music published, initiated by Costin Moisil through a series of volumes which debuts with the study *Românirea cântărilor: un meșteșug și multe controverse* [The Romanianisation of Byzantine chants: a craft and many controversies], continued by other novel works of fundamental scientific research.<sup>3</sup>

The integration of the Romanian theme with international research has channeled musicologists' interest in recent years. The conferences organised by the National University of Music Bucharest and by New Europe College – *Music in Dark Times, Europe East and West, 1930-1950* (in 2014)<sup>4</sup>, *The Music of Power. Music and Musicians in Totalitarian Regimes in 20<sup>th</sup> Century Europe* (in 2018)<sup>5</sup> were followed by pieces of research and reinterpretations of the musical phenomena in older eras<sup>6</sup>, also capitalised on by the special issue

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<sup>2</sup> See also the German-language volume, Sandu-Dediu, Valentina (2006). *Rumänische Musik nach 1944* [Muzica românească după 1944]. Saarbrücken: Pfau.

<sup>3</sup> Moisil, Costin (2012). *Românirea cântărilor: un meșteșug și multe controverse* [The Romanianization of Byzantine chants: a craft and many controversies]. București: Editura Muzicală – followed by other volumes by the author: (2016). *Geniu românesc vs. tradiție bizantină* [Romanian genius vs. Byzantine tradition]. București: Editura Muzicală și (2018). *Construcția unei identități românești în muzica bisericească* [The construction of a Romanian identity in church music]. București: Editura Universității de Muzică București.

<sup>4</sup> Sandu-Dediu, Valentina (editor) (2016). *Music in Dark Times. Europe East and West 1930-1950*. București: Editura UNMB.

<sup>5</sup> An international conference organised by the National University of Music Bucharest and by New Europe College in October 2018. Some of the conference papers are published in the magazine *Musicology Today*, vol. 9, issues 3, 4/ 2018; vol. 10, issues 1, 2/ 2019.

<sup>6</sup> Gheorghită, Nicolae (2015). *Musical Crossroads: Church Chants and Brass Bands at the Gates of the Orient*. București: Editura Muzicală.

of the magazine *Nineteenth-Century Music Review* dedicated to the Romanian musical phenomenon (*Music in Nineteenth-Century Romania*)<sup>7</sup>.

Beside its informative mission, the detailing of the process of rethinking and rewriting of the history of Romanian music aims to argue the scientific value of the research featured in the vast work *Noi istorii ale muzicilor românești* [New histories of Romanian types of music], a project initiated by the Romanian Composers and Musicologists' Union on the occasion of celebrating a century of existence of the organisation. The two volumes of the *Noi istorii* [New histories], coordinated by Valentina Sandu-Dediu and Nicolae Gheorghîță, reflect the fulfilment of a long research process, begun in the 1990s, expressing ideas verified through recursions and repeated analyses – a line supported by the main group of authors. Beside the mentioned editors, who signed several chapters, we also mention Costin Moisil, Speranța Rădulescu, Florinela Popa, Haiganuș Preda-Schimek, Antigona Rădulescu, active musicologists in the process of previous research.

The coordinators' vision expressed in the Foreword edifies the main directions: 1. joining all musical genres – Byzantine, folkloric, military, academic, jazz, entertainment – and creating a modern perspective on the Romanian types of music; 2. using the tools of modern musicology – interdisciplinary relating, archival and last-minute bibliography, an objective, critical, accessible style, efficient and orderly elaboration; 3. removing all influences of communist ideology, reflected by the writings about music from the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, by assimilating the ideas formulated by historians Neagu Djuvara, Vlad Georgescu, Șerban Papacostea, Lucian Boia a. o.; 4. capitalising on some foreign writers' writings about Romania and about Romanian music but also on the last-minute research on international music (signed by Herman Danuser, Jimm Samson, Richard Taruskin) for the synchronisation with the contemporary manner of historical research. The conceptual plan and the diversity of the envisioned contents determined the coordinators to also approach authors outside of the initial research nucleus, marked specialists in their fields of work – Dan Dediu, Mihai Cosma, Alex Vasiliu – and young authors, formed in the requirements of modern musicology and/or open towards the new style of historical approach: Irina Boga, Vlad Văidean, Alice Tacu, Andrei Tudor.

### **Vol. I. *From old manuscripts to the modern period of Romanian music***

The first volume opens with **Costin Moisil's** study – *În loc de istorie a muzicii vechi românești* [In place of a history of old Romanian music]. The

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<sup>7</sup> *Nineteenth-Century Music Review*, vol. 14, Special issue 3 (December 2017), Cambridge University Press features articles signed by Haiganuș Preda-Schimek (coordinator and author), Valentina Sandu-Dediu, Nicolae Gheorghîță, Florinela Popa.

ideas supported and proved with documents by the author are novel and especially brave. It is a parallel reassessment of the writings about old music and of the extant documents with musical notation, the author underlining that “history is made on documents and where these lack it is best to be silent” (p. 18). Ascertaining the relative antiquity of the manuscripts and of the prints with musical notation (extremely rarely attested before 1500), Costin Moisil comments upon the writings of each of the eight canonical authors<sup>8</sup>, phenomenologically retracing the make-up and the aims of the works (anthologies of personal works and adaptations, made for one’s own use, commercialisation or distribution in the specific environment) and bringing new specifications on the contents, on their influence in the musical practice from the Romanian territories. For instance, the reverberation of the Manuscripts from Putna, especially of Evstatie’s chants is underlined, due to their multiplication through copies and reintegration in the subsequent anthologies from the Romanian Principalities; at the same time, the author reduces the importance of the collection Codex Caioni, which, in the light of new research only features two dances, that are explicitly named Wallachian, next to the famous Song of Voivode Lupu, when the work features over 200 pieces (religious and lay from the early German and Italian Baroque, a few local compositions in this style). The richness of the explanations in the footnotes and the novel titles of the bibliography participate in shedding light on many overshadowed areas of the Romanian musical past but also in debunking the concepts of antiquity and continuity. The beginning chapter of the work *Noi istorii ale muzicii românești* [New histories of Romanian music] is a strict exercise in reformulating the discourse about old Romanian music through the relativisation of the established discourse and the imposition of the historian’s dwelling on proved data. “And the rest (...) is silence” (p. 31).

The next section – *Practici muzicale laice la curțile domnești și boierești din Valahia și Moldova în epoca fanariotă (1711-1821)* [Lay musical practices at the princely and boyar courts from Wallachia and Moldavia in the Phanariote era (1711-1821)] – is elaborated by **Nicolae Gheorghică**. The ideas of this study are also challenging: the rulers and the chief boyars are not the ones who prevented the development of national culture and its contact with Europe, as the Phanariote princes were cultivated in the West and interested in art; court music was very varied, from Turkish music and love or party songs of Oriental influence to Italian opera airs and urban romances, enjoying a wide

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<sup>8</sup> Evstatie Protopsaltul from Putna (15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> centuries), Johannes Honterus from Brașov (16<sup>th</sup> century); Valentin Bakfark – a lute player born in Brașov – (the 16<sup>th</sup> century); Gabriel Reilich – organist, Sibiu (17<sup>th</sup> century); Ioan Caioni, Franciscan organist and monk from Transylvania (17<sup>th</sup> century); Filotei sin Agăi Jipei, hieromonk at the Metropolitan Seat of Bucharest (17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> centuries); Daniel Croner – organist from Brașov (17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> centuries); Dimitrie Cantemir, composer of Ottoman music (17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> centuries) (p. 20).

audience among the aristocracy; in the Romanian Principalities there activated great composers of Byzantine, lay and religious formation, who imposed a style successfully taken over by Romanian singers, tightly connected to the poetry of Greek influence cultivated by the Levantine intelligentsia. Of great interest is the information about Nikifor Kantuniaris – a composer of religious and lay music, settled in 1814 at the Golia Monastery in Iași – and the revelation of his contribution to the music of the time. Upon reading Nicolae Gheorghiuță's study, one changes one's view of the Phanariote era: it was a period of intense musical practice – military, lay, religious – different from that of Europe. The historical and political determination is obvious but the presentation of the artistic phenomenon – as it was before – removes the traditional inferiority complex in relation to the European practices of the 18<sup>th</sup> century or to the future self-assertion of Romanian music. The new discourse on Phanariote music is supported by a special bibliography, formed out of archives and document collections, old books and recently published works, few studies of history and musicology from the communist period.

If the authors of the commented chapters, Costin Moisil and Nicolae Gheorghiuță, much like most of the authors, underlay their work on previous research and publications, **Vlad Văidean** (a very young Ph.D. candidate-musicologist, born in 1992) debuts with great succes in this thematic area with the study *Între cosmopolitism și localism – Etape premoderne ale culturii muzicale profesionale în Transilvania (Secolele XVI-XVIII)* [Between cosmopolitanism and localism – Premodern stages of the professional musical culture in Transylvania (16<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> centuries)]. It is a problem-raising musicological text, which capitalises on authentic sources and top research without avoiding the formulation of hypotheses/suppositions, in the tradition of historiographic writings. The presentation evinces the role of the Saxons' Lutheran church in developing the European-type music (the subchapter *Meșteșug și consistență locală – cultura muzicală enclavizată a sașilor luterani* [Local craft and consistency – the enclave musical culture of the Lutheran Saxons]), at the same time ascertaining the inexistence of a Romanian music author. Vlad Văidean insists on the lack of documents (scores, comments) and the partial retracing of history – especially of the old one, from Alba-Iulia (1542-1690), but also in the case of the organists attested in the archives, from Brașov and Sibiu, whose extant scores he presents. Thus he brings arguments against the exaggerations in the previous Romanian writings, pleading for the reassessment of the contributions. The documentation sources were the key of this special study: a European (in the English and German languages) or, with very few exceptions, contemporary Romanian bibliography, doctoral theses in which recent research was integrated, tightly connected to the profile of the stable or transitory musicians, who had come from the countries of Central and Western Europe.

The next chapters – *Muzica în principatele române de-a lungul secolului al XIX-lea* [Music in the Romanian Principalities across the 19<sup>th</sup> century] by **Costin Moisil** and *Începuturile compoziției românești, între naționalism și obsesia sincronizării cu Occidentul* [The beginnings of Romanian composition, between nationalism and the obsession of synchronising with the West] by **Valentina Sandu-Dediu** can be seen through complementarity. Costin Moisil retraces the era through the initial sources – the writings of Teodor T. Burada, Constantin Bobulescu, Mihail Poslușnicu, Gavril Galinescu – through useful excerpts from the subsequent Romanian musicology, signed by George Breazul, Octavian Lazăr Cosma a. o. and realises a selection of the events, authors, scores produced. The study treats the beginnings and spread of European (learned) music in the Romanian Principalities, assessing its effects on the other genres – military and church music. The author also updates the debates regarding national music, presented in the literature and publications of the time by offering “expressive” examples on an objective, documented, neutral tone.

Valentina Sandu-Dediu realises an op-ed, reflecting a convincing personal synthesis on the Romanian music from the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Underlining the main information on the history of Romanian sonic art, the author resizes the picture of the beginnings by describing the process of amalgamation of styles, sources, cultures, the process of accumulation of compositional experience, through interrogations of the national premieres (“the first Romanian symphony”, “the first Romanian opera”, etc.). The real contributions but also the semi-professional level of most scores written until after 1900 are underlined. We conclude with the author: the composers of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, “amateurs rather than professionals (...) managed to reach a critical mass for the appearance of a truly significant figure – George Enescu” (p. 190).

*Muzica și publicul Bucureștiului prin prisma literaturii de călătorie din secolul al XIX-lea: un spațiu al absorbției multiculturale* [The music and the audience of Bucharest seen through the travel literature from the 19<sup>th</sup> century: a space of multicultural absorption] by **Haiganuș Preda-Schimek** is a new history chapter of Romanian music, an original study. Using recent treatises of the history of Romania but also classical writings (Nicolae Iorga), research of social history, travel memoirs in original versions, the author brings a significant contribution to the knowledge of the relationship between social classes, ethnic categories and the cultivation of music in the Bucharest of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. We extract a few sequences from the richness of information and ideas of the study. The Romanian or Romanianness in the German authors’ vision results from a mix of ethnic streaks, which produced “an absolutely remarkable human type [...]; as a consequence of the foreign contribution, what was already [...] beautiful and strong in the Romanian type often acquired truly ideal forms” (p. 193). The Bucharest of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was culturally, linguistically and musically cosmopolitan through the coexistence of

the “folkloric, Levantine, Byzantine, European” styles (p. 196) and around the year 1900 it was a city with a great bourgeoisie and a middle class interested in Western music. The description of the environment of picking up works and artists is a feature of the classical works of music history, neglected for a while in favour of creation, it is also resumed through Haiganuş Preda-Schimek’s research, happily completing the picture of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

**Florinela Popa**’s study – *Aspecte ale propagandei naționaliste în presa muzicală românească de la finele secolului al XIX-lea* [Aspects of nationalist propaganda in the Romanian musical press in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century] brings new arguments and details on an idea previously debated on – the problem of national music. Departing from the ascertainment that the musical press – found at a beginning stage – reflects the direction of the young Romanian state of developing through the assertion of its own values and the assimilation of the European musical culture, the author identifies two attitudes: 1. the idealisation of the national spirit which must be extracted from the folklore and supported through mobilising discourses; 2. the vehement criticism brought against the Romanian musical life, compared to the European music produced by the foreign artists found on tour in Bucharest. The author claims that these two directions stimulated one another, determining an expectation horizon within the public. The conclusion results from the critical recursion to original documents (articles from the periodicals *Lyra română – foaie muzicală și literară* [The Romanian lyre – musical and literary sheet] and *România musicală* [Musical Romania]).

*Muzicile militare moderne în Țara Românească și Moldova în secolul al XIX-lea* [Modern military types of music in Wallachia and Moldavia in the 19<sup>th</sup> century] by **Nicolae Gheorghită** constitutes another new topic in the Romanian historical musicology, based on archival research in Iași and Bucharest. The founding of the first European-type military orchestras, the role of military music within the armed conflicts of the century – 1848, 1959, 1877; instrumental and choral repertoires; the cultural function of the military types of music and the function of stimulating Romanian composers’ works – are ideas developed and supported in documentary fashion.

The first volume closes with a contemporary picture of George Enescu, the perception of a very young musicologist, avid of perusals and (re)meanings, endowed with all the skills of thinking about music: Vlad Văidean – *George Enescu – Recitiri, reascultări, re poziționări* [George Enescu – Rereading, relistening, repositioning]. In the first part of the study – *Muzician total, simbol național, om exemplar* [A complete musician, a national symbol, an exemplary human being] – the author follows the moulding of George Enescu’s personality cult in Romania – from its debut until posthumously – through consensus in admiration, without an ideological direction, defending the composer against the accusations of collaboration with the democratic-

popular regime and criticising the capitalisation on Enescu's image out of nationalist interests. In the second section, *Geniu al sintezei pan-europene* [A genius of the pan-European synthesis], the author argues the composer's universal musical conscience through a synopsis of compositional strategies – a personal hermeneutics of the information in the top Enescu bibliography (Bentoiu, Niculescu, Olah, Clemansa Liliana Firca, Țăranu a.o.). Also consulting works of history, aesthetics, books about Enescu signed by foreign musicologists, Vlad Văidean creates an essay of a high intellectual, musicological, literary level.

## **Vol. II. Ideologies, institutions and compositional directions in the Romanian music from the 20<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> centuries**

The 2<sup>nd</sup> volume continues the succession of thematic chapters with an implicit chronology of events, stressing and proving the influence and/or the restraint of political ideologies on the artistic environment. The first chapter, *Ideologii muzicale în România secolului XX* [Musical ideologies in the Romania of the 20<sup>th</sup> century], signed by **Valentina Sandu-Dediu**, is emblematic for this perspective. The author configures a panorama of the socio-political media, which influenced the musical life and the contents of creation through the 20<sup>th</sup> century, formulating the terms of the politically-fed aesthetic tensions: synchronicity and localism (in the interwar period), avant-garde and nationalism, opportunism and the technique of avoiding censorship (during communism). The study offers an ample development of the ideas which dominated the century, stressing dramatic periods: the right-wing extreme nationalistic dictatorships (1938-1941), the rough Stalinism in the era of socialist realism (1944-1953), the re-ideologisation of sonic art after the “July theses”, 1971. The section *Studiu de caz: tensiunea dintre „național” și „universal”* [A case study: the tension between “national” and “universal”] explains the phenomenon of imposing an ideology through the multiplication of an idea, which becomes a cliché and a trap in the writings about music. Reread today, the articles reveal strata of content which need to be dismantled in order to remove the conventional formulae that were meant to manipulate political censorship. A reader unacquainted with the ideological ambience of the time will not manage to read “between the lines” in order to perceive the core of truth. Period publications, new archival documents, the previous Romanian studies in the theme profile, inspiring literature next to historical works, foreign authors' cultural studies about Romania<sup>9</sup>, in which the author

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<sup>9</sup> Verdery, Katherine (1994). *Compromis și rezistență. Cultura română sub Ceaușescu* [Compromise and resistance. Romanian culture under Ceaușescu]. București: Editura Humanitas (transl. Mona Antohi and Sorin Antohi); Deletant, Dennis (2014). *România sub regim comunist* [Romania under the communist regime]. In Bărbulescu, M., Deletant, D.,



found departure points, models of approach, form a consistent bibliography, which underlies the topic. There remains, however, the doubt formulated in the study motto: *There are many things in history which one had better leave in the dark. Knowledge does not make man richer. Objectivity does not always surpass subjectivity. And the concrete fact does not always dissipate illusion* (Haruki Murakami).

There follows a series of studies, which summarises the histories of cultural and musical education institutions. *Construind instituții și o viață muzicală modernă* [Building institutions and a modern musical life] by **Antigona Rădulescu** and **Alice Tacu** features an especially ample research area, dealing with the activity of the conservatoires from Bucharest, Iași, Cluj, of the Bucharest Philharmonic, of the Composers and Musicologists' Union, of the Radio and of international festivals. Documenting themselves in detailed monographs, Antigona Rădulescu and Alice Tacu edify syntheses and objective selections of musical facts, tightly connected with the unravelling of historical events and the influence of political factors. The authors own up to the responsibility of selecting the most important names of professors, artists, journalists, managers, repertorial and broadcast policies.

**Mihai Cosma** (*Opera în România secolului XX* [The opera in 20<sup>th</sup> century Romania]) also writes a history full of data, following the evolution of the genre from the first opera performances to the activity of the institutions from Bucharest and the country, offering countless examples of premieres, lyrical artists in the succession of generations, conductors, directors, choreographers a. o. Delicate problems are not avoided, such as the emigration of great artists in the West, the repertorial constraints regarding Romanian titles, the closed door to contemporary opera, the internal and external difficulties of institutional management. The latter aspect is completed by a picture of the succession of the general managers of the National Opera Bucharest, from 1921 to the present day.

Completing the history of the main performance institutions, **Irina Boga** signs the chapter *Teatrul muzical românesc: cazul operetei bucureștene* [The Romanian musical theatre: the case of the Bucharest Operetta]. Following with predilection the typology and the evolution of the works staged, the author embarks on a long journey, from the vaudeville of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the variety revue in the interwar period, subsequently to the operetta of folkloric inspiration in the period of socialist realism, to performances for children and the musical in the contemporary period. The author argues in detail the double role played by this genre through its entire history – that of delighting the public through accessibility, vivaciousness and humour, as the valuable scores

remained or returned to the repertoire after decades – but also that of promoting an ideology among the wide masses.

**Speranța Rădulescu** elaborates the chapter *Prefacerea muzicilor orale de-a lungul secolului XX* [The change of oral types of music across the 20<sup>th</sup> century] capitalising on and refining her previous research. The architecture of the study itself, edified through the alternation of the sections presenting folkloric genres and practices and academic pages targeting the configuration of a dictionary of ideas and mandatory information in the research area, creates an edifying picture of the phenomenology of the oral types of music and the evolution of its study, an explicit demonstration for every type of reader – man of culture, professional musician, student. Speranța Rădulescu's study evinces the richness, originality and variety of Romanian folklore in parallel with its extensive research, represented by great specialists in ethnomusicology. But the conclusions are dramatic: the modernisation of social structures and the way of life, the folklorisation imposed by the power and assumed by the people, the globalisation through media channels and the migration of the population has led to the disappearance of rural types of music and the blossoming of new urban types of music. Thus, the folklore collections and studies have become archival pieces, sometimes used in the contemporary industry of folkloric performances, but especially in the reportorial orientation of the few ensembles of traditional music founded by music departments or research institutes.

The following chapter – *Construind o muzică bisericească națională* [Building a national church music] – is also elaborated by a specialist in this theme, asserted through consistent research – doctoral thesis, published books and studies: **Costin Moisil**. Aware of the niche character of the writings of Byzantinology, accessible with difficulty even to generalist musicologists, the author conceives an essay, which claims a wider audience, a presentation of Orthodox music for all musicians and men of culture. Starting his demonstration from the historical moment produced by Macarie Ieromonahul through the adaptation in the Romanian language of the traditional chants of the Orthodox Church, Costin Moisil traces the gradual change of mentality in the direction of imagining the church music in Romania as a *particular version* with national features, identified in “piety, simplicity, sweetness, the absence of external figures” (p. 221). The author insists on the role of the state in the transformation of Byzantine music in Romania, stressing the main moments: 1. the opening towards Europe through the introduction of harmonic choirs, beginning with the 1830s and continuing the cultivation of the new genre in musical and general education, 2. “the banning of singing in churches in a language different from Romanian” (in 1863), 3. stressing the national direction by printing and distributing chant collections to be executed in a monodic or harmonised version in as many churches as possible, 4. the

founding in 1928 of the Academy of Religious Music, which set out to “create a single genre of church singing proper to the Romanian Orthodox church”, as Ion Popescu-Pasărea specified at inauguration (p. 231), 5. the standardisation of the chants through the decision of the Holy Sinod of 1950 and the imposition of a unique repertoire for the entire country. The effect of this century and a half of direction Orthodox music towards the formation of national specificity through the adaptation, confinement, the replacing of the traditional repertoire is also expressed through the rejection of the old styles revived after 1990. The new wave of Byzantine singing inspired by the Greek style in which “psaltic chant has been preserved better” is liked neither at the official level, nor by ordinary people. “Virtuosity has become a vice and simplistic execution a virtue” – concludes the author (p. 235). I would clear this sceptic finale a bit by adding that the psaltic ensembles who have regenerated old Romanian chant through concert repertoires, interpretations, voices of great value, have created a new audience and a new state of mind. They have produced and/or given renewed birth to the joy of religious experience through music.

The study *Muzicile militare românești în secolul XX* [The military types of music in the 20<sup>th</sup> century] by **Nicolae Gheorghîță** is an original piece of research and a new topic in the treatises of music history. The difficult access to documents found in archives, the ban on the study of the works dedicated to the royal house in communism, musicologists’ decreased interest for this topic – exceptions being Octavian Lazăr Cosma and Viorel Cosma, who insert informative samples in the general historical context – are factors that have led to fragmentary knowledge. By studying the meanwhile desecretised military archives, the new histories of the Romanian army, old writings from the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries but also propaganda articles from the 1950s, Nicolae Gheorghîță documents musicologically a history dense with information and interpretations. By retracing the past of the military types of music from the period 1900-1944, the author underlines the construction of a special professional line supported by the state through the foundation of an increasing number of brass bands, semi-symphonic orchestras, choirs, through the appointment to the leadership of military types of music of very well educated musicians (composers, arrangers, conductors) – Josif Ivanovici, Mihai Mărgărețescu, Ion Vlăduță, Egizio Massini –, by organising resounding musical events: the monarchy jubilee – Carol I’s 40 years of reign (1906), the coronation concert from Alba-Iulia (1922), the tour of the military bands abroad (1934), the foundation of the School of Military Musician Students (1936), etc. Naturally, the political changes had an immediate effect on soldierly music, the author emphasising the repertoire changes during Carol II’s dictatorship (1938-1940), the legionary one (1940-1941) and the military dictatorship (1941-1944). More dramatic changes happened during tough

Stalinism (1944-1953): the purge and the political subjugation of the Romanian army, reducing the brass bands to less than 50%, new propaganda types of music – marches of Soviet influence or excerpts of “revolutionary” music from the international symphonic repertoire. The author argues for the reconstruction of military types of music in the service of national-communist politics through: the foundation of the brass-band subsection with the Romanian Composers and Musicologists’ Union (1957) and the composition of a great number of new works, including easy-listening music, the establishment of a unique repertoire, the publication of scores and records, the organisation of the Contest-festival of soldierly songs: *Te apăr și te cânt, Patria mea!* [I defend and sing you, my motherland!] (1972), etc. The fact that military music continues to exist in the free contemporary society in a reduced form justifies the utility, the necessity of the genre: its wide audience owed to the popular repertoire belonging to all musical genres (symphonic, folkloric, entertainment). Upon reading Nicolae Gheorghică’s study, we realise that military music constituted a powerful segment of musical life in Romania.

In the following chapter – *Istoria jazzului românesc în documente inedite* [The history of Romanian jazz in novel documents] – **Alex Vasiliu** treats the genre in the spirit of the central idea of the volume, following the correspondence between the succession of historical, cultural, political events and the evolution of artistic practice. At the same time, the author regards jazz as a multifaceted cultural phenomenon: the performing musicians or performing composers; the broadcasting through radio, records, television, festivals; the education for jazz owed to publications, musicology, training, etc. Retracing the history of jazz through a documented piece of research (in interwar periodicals, in those of the years 1950-1965 and subsequently), Alex Vasiliu completes the picture of the practice of jazz in Romania with novel information, identifying a coherent journey marked by three beginnings: 1. the wide audience of American jazz and the proliferation of performing practices, determined by the foundation of the station Radio București (1928), 2. “the offensive of jazz” in the period of political thawing, 1962-1971 (top artistic individualities, modern styles). 3. the mature stage of Romanian jazz after 1974 (along with the creation of the International jazz festival from Sibiu). Following the waves of historic evolution, the author also documents musicologically the most difficult period of jazz – the two decades of ideological pressure of socialist realism (1945-1963) – during which the musical practice of performing, broadcasting, recording is maintained through various subterfuges and means of avoiding censorship. Even if the editorial space of this chapter does not offer him the possibility of commenting upon all styles, all important artists, all events of contemporary jazz, Alex Vasiliu creates a clear picture of the evolution of this genre in Romania, reflected by the works of top-tier musicians such as Jancy Körössy, Richard Oschanitzky, Eugen Ciceu, Johnny Răducanu, Ștefan Berindei, Marius

Popp, Adrian Enescu a. o., by the Romanian jazzology: Mihai Berindei, Cornel Chiriac, Florian Lungu, Octavian Ursulescu, Alex Vasiliu a. o.

*Accesibilitate și popularitate: o privire panoramică asupra muzicii ușoare românești* [Accessibility and popularity: a panoramic view of the Romanian easy-listening music] represents the contribution of a young artist, **Andrei Tudor** (b. 1983), faculty member at UNMB, known as a pianist, composer, arranger in the current genres of entertainment music. A synthesis of information and ideas, this approach of the history of the easy-listening genre follows a few guiding lines – from terminological specifications, information regarding sources, influences, musical features, to representative ensembles, festivals and competitions. The analysis is exemplified with names of successful composers, from Ion Vasilescu to Florin Bogardo, with titles of songs entered into the anthology of national memory. The annex *Compozitori reprezentativi și cântecele lor de muzică ușoară (selecție)* [Representative composers and their easy-listening songs (selection)] happily completes this “panoramic view”, useful for general knowledge and education in the history of the genre.

The last chapter of the volume – *Contribuții componistice românești după 1960* [Romanian compositional contributions after 1960] – is elaborated by **Dan Dediu**. This study reflects the ample experience of the composer, situated for many years in the leadership collective of the Romanian Composers and Musicologists’ Union and thus in direct contact with the most diverse scores, and of the composition professor exercised in the analysis and systematisation of contemporary music. Also, of the aesthician with novel studies about the new meanings of current art. The study benefits from an original conception and content, meant to identify, systematise, describe Romanian composers’ novel ideas, “the musical-ideational contribution of post-1960 Romania to world culture” (p. 353). The author’s conception capitalises on both the genealogies, the families of compositional thought (the tree series) and the horizontal correspondences – the spread of aesthetic techniques/ideas in different composers’ works (the rhizome series).

The systematisation criteria target writing techniques and aesthetic ideas, each category being found through novel and adapted aspects. A mere enumeration of the categories as they appear in the two synoptic chapters at the end is also relevant: Novel techniques (Heterophony and the theory of musical syntax; Tuning systems and morphogenesis); Adapted techniques (Modal organisations; Spectralism; Serialism; Electronic music; Polystylism and metastylism); Novel aesthetic directions (Archetypal minimalism; The Vernacular – the poetics of Romanian ethos; Onirism); Adapted aesthetic directions (Maximalism or postmodern integralism; Improvisation and indeterminacy; Retro – Mixture/Transgenres). The organisation conceived and applied by Dan Dediu, with perfect systematic thinking, offers solutions for the integration of the works of a large number of authors. The coldness of rational

systematisation is “warmed up” and “coloured” by memorable aesthetic and stylistic appreciations: Ștefan Niculescu – “tectonics of the soul, a prayer in stone floating between heaven and earth” (p. 359); Liviu Dănceanu – “diversity, humour and absurdity” (p. 361); Tiberiu Olah – “the prodigious melodic talent, the orchestral sense and the imaginative ease, the powerful constructive vein, the masterful management of discourse breaking, the outstanding combinatorial and developing capacity” (p. 363); Adrian Iorgulescu – “the draconic economy of technical means and musical material [...] the incisive gesturing of the melodic-rhythmic trajectories [...] the complete mastery of extended formal arches” (p. 364); Doina Rotaru – “gradual processuality and homogeneity of the sonic material [...] unwinding of the flickering and whining from an imaginary limbo, come from the depths of ancestral memory” (pp. 364-365), etc.

The self-reflection of the vision – “a subjective offcut”, “an interesting, instructive and, of course, in the end utopian exercise” (p. 406) – marks a correspondence over time with Anatol Vieru: “the movement of ideas does in no way replace the musical production [...]. Composers cannot be classified according to currents of ideas. A reasonably important artist cannot fit into a current.” (Vieru, 2001, p. 233). In this case also, philosophical doubt sheds even more light on Dan Dediu’s constructive idea of identifying techniques and aesthetics which assert themselves and influence the contemporariness of the idea and, at the same time, perpetuate themselves across generations, directing compositional thought. A new approach in contemporary musicology!

## Conclusions

We express our hope that, through the extended format of the review of the two volumes *Noi istorii ale muzicilor românești* [New histories of Romanian types of music], we have managed to underline the novelty of information, the rigour of documentation, the critical and/or detached style of the approach, the coverage of all musical genres. At the same time, we set out to emphasise the identity of every thematic chapter, each author’s stylistic nuance – aspects which resonate with the manner of international research through collective volumes, like the ones in the series *The Cambridge Companion to Music* or *Musiques – Une encyclopédie pour le XXIe siècle* (edited by Jean-Jacques Nattiez). Here, therefore, is a first Romanian analogous title, a history which deserves and has to be revealed, also because it does not offer a definitive ready-made like a classical textbook/treatise, but a series of original approaches connected to a whole which stimulates reflection and the continuation of research.

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