

Aurel Vlaicu in Romanian folk songs

Alina-Lucia STAN¹

Abstract: *At the beginning of the 20th century, more precisely starting in 1913, just a few years before the Great Union of 1918, a song was circulating in all Romanian territories, reminiscing of the daring attempt of the first Romanian aviator, Aurel Vlaicu, to fly across the Carpathians with an aircraft of his own build. The song soon became well known and close to people's hearts, for two main reasons: first, because the young aviator died in this attempt, and secondly, because the whole event touched upon the old wish to see Transylvania united with the Romanian Kingdom. In this paper, we analyze comparatively melodic variants from several musical collections, in order to identify shared elements and differences, both from a musical and from a literary standpoint. The finding of a variant recorded in 2017 during a field research carried out in the Land of the "Pădureni" (Forest Dwellers) in Hunedoara County ascertains once again how deep of an impact this historical event had upon the collective mind of the Romanian people.*

Keywords: *proper song; ballad; melodic and literary variant; Aurel Vlaicu; Land of the Forrest Dwellers, Hunedoara; Negreni – Huedin, Cluj, Retișul, Brașov; Dodești, Iași/Jassy;*

Introduction

During the most recent field research, carried out in the summer of 2017 together with Professor Ioan Bocșa, Ph.D., in the Land of the Forrest Dwellers (Pădureni), Hunedoara County, we recorded a very special song, different both musically and literary from the rest of the area-specific material, such as carols, ritual bride songs, ritual funeral songs, laments, or old-style songs. This song, called (approximative translation) *Vlaicu, a peasant's son (Vlaicule, fiu de țăran)*, was recorded from an elderly woman in Cerișor and is reminiscent of a historic event – the attempted flight of Aurel Vlaicu, the pioneer of Romanian aviation, across the Carpathians. Sifting through the musical literature, we discovered several other melodic and literary variants in field collections put together in the thirties by Ilarion Cocișiu in Southern Transylvania and in Moldavia. Another variant that we discovered was recorded in the Huedin area, near Cluj, forty years later. Alexandru I. Amzulescu has inventoried Vlaicu's song² in Southern Romania under the literary aspect, collecting about 15 text variants from the Gorj, Olt, Dolj, Vâlcea, and Mehedinți areas.

While recording the above-mentioned variant in Pădureni, we were moved by the performer's emotion, by the precision of the versified recounting and by the deep meaning that the desire of the Romanian engineer and pilot, to „unite in flight” Transylvania with the Romanian Kingdom, was still holding, more than hundred years after the event. The fact that the song can be found even in the most distant Romanian territories makes us realize what impact

¹ Theoretical Faculty, The „Gheorghe Dima” National Music Academy of Cluj-Napoca, alinastan_icoane@yahoo.com.

² Al.I. Amzulescu. 2000. *Heritage Values of the Elderly Song in Oltenia [Valori de patrimoniu ale cântecului bătrânesc din Oltenia]*. București: Editura Grai și suflet - Cultura Națională, p. 200.

the tragedy near Câmpina at 13 September 1913 must have had and how powerful the strive to keep Aurel Vlaicu's memory alive over generations was.

1. On Aurel Vlaicu's figure

Aurel Vlaicu was an engineer, inventor and aviator, the pioneer of Romanian aviation, internationally famed for his accomplishments³. He was born in November 19, 1882, in Southern Transylvania, at that time part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, in the village of Bințiți (nowadays named Aurel Vlaicu), near Orăștie, Hunedoara County. He studied at the "Kocsárd Kún" Highschool in Orăștie, which later received its name after this most famous alumnus. He graduated in 1902 from the actual „Gheorghe Lazăr” National College in Sibiu. His family took the effort to send him to Budapest, to study Engineering at the Technical University. Later on, he moved to Germany, graduating in 1907 from the Technische Hochschule in Munich. He returned to Romania in 1908, with a passion, bordering on obsession, to fly. He first built a glider, with which he made several flights. His engineering talent and intellectual capacity secured him the opportunity to move to Bucharest, in the Romanian Kingdom, in 1909. Here he began the construction of this first powered airplane, the „Vlaicu I”, at the Army Arsenal, which he was able to fly. Soon after, in the late 1910, he started the construction of his second airplane, the „Vlaicu II”. With this aircraft, he won five prizes at the International Flight Week in Aspern, Austria, the only Romanian pilot amongst 42 others, from the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Germany, France, Russia, Belgium, and Persia.



Fig. 1. Aurel Vlaicu

In 1982, Vasile Bogdan interviewed for Radio Romania Ion Ciulu, Vlaicu's mechanic, the one who helped him build his first powered aircraft in 1910. This interview gives us a few information about Aurel Vlaicu's demeanor: "He was a very nice guy, funny, open, friendly with everybody; he was never snobby and talked to whomever approached him. Sometimes, when things were going well, he indulged into singing some Transylvanian tune; he had an average voice, it was more of a whistling. While at Cotroceni, he used to sing along with the buglers

³ Aurel Vlaicu. Retrieved April 9, 2023, from https://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aurel_Vlaicu.

practicing there, on the Cotroceni field; his speech was clearly Transylvanian, he spoke it unaltered. He was a handsome man..."⁴.

For his accomplishments in the field of aircraft engineering, Aurel Vlaicu was elected *post mortem* as a member of the Romanian Academy. Also, a biopic directed by Mircea Drăgan was shot in his memory in 1977, starring Gabriel Oseciuc, Radu Beligan and Octavian Cotescu. Choral music also paid its homage to his personality, with a piece for three equal voices named *Song for Aurel Vlaicu*, written by a teacher Ioan Popa, born in Orăștie, on lyrics by Valeriu Bora.

2. Genre and function classification of the *Aurel Vlaicu* song

If we were to check how the *Aurel Vlaicu* song is classified in musical literature, in courses of musical folklore, we will find it filed either under the category of oral records („jurnal oral”, see Amzulescu, 2000) or under that of elderly songs („cântec bătrânesc”). Compared to the classically accepted notion of the ballad – an epic song of ample dimensions, based on a clear-cut narrative and belonging to the declamatory type, *i. e.* only sung in front of an audience, the *Aurel Vlaicu* song is being classified under the category of *historical songs*⁵. Such songs refer to concrete, historical facts, and tend to be shorter, forgoing a really ample epic development. Emilia Comișel asserts that the melody of such songs is usually strophic in form, retaining all the characteristics of the proper song. Based on her research, she states the following: “Besides the ones already mentioned (*Horia*, *Avram Iancu* – author’s note), the few preserved historical song that are still around are the *Song of the 1848 Revolution*, *The Song of the Independence War*, *The Song of the 1907 Uprising*, and *Vlaicu’s Song*, speaking about the genius inventor who impressed the masses. The small number of historical songs is due to their imperfection, as well as, in some cases, to them being prohibited by the authorities. Vlaicu’s theme penetrated other musical genres, as well, becoming a *ceremonial funeral song*”⁶. Regarding this last statement, we found no variants in Transylvanian collections to fit this genre. So, compared to ballads in Southern Romanian, characterized by an epic recitative, the epic texts inside the Carpathian arc are sung to, or, better said, they adapt to melodies specific to the *doina*, to proper old style, modern style or even dance songs.

Although there is no direct mention to the *Aurel Vlaicu* song, in the *Romanian Musical Folklore* course authored by Gheorghe Oprea and Larisa Agapie we find such mentions of historical events assigned to the category of *oral records*⁷, which are sung exclusively on proper song melodies. We may thus conclude that, in Transylvania, epic texts are being sung with proper song melodies of either old or modern style. An exception here are pastoral or feudal court ballads, which circulate mostly with carol melodies (*Miorița*, *Meșterul Manole*).

⁴ Silvia Iliescu. 2015. January 2. *Ion Ciulu*: “Shortly before the 1st of January 1910, Aurel Vlaicu went to Paris to order his engine...” [*Ion Ciulu*: „Aproape de 1 ianuarie 1910 Aurel Vlaicu a plecat la Paris să-și comande motorul...”]. Radio România, Agenția de Presă RADOR. Istorie orală. Retrieved April 9, 2023, from <https://www.rador.ro/2015/01/02/ion-ciulu-aproape-de-1-ianuarie-1910-aurel-vlaicu-a-plecat-la-paris-sa-si-comande-motorul/>.

⁵ Emilia Comișel. 1967. *Musical Folklore [Folclor muzical]*. București: Editura Didactică și Pedagogică, p. 299.

⁶ *Ibidem*.

⁷ Gheorghe Oprea & Larisa Agapie. 1983. *Romanian Musical Folklore [Folclor muzical românesc]*. București: Editura Didactică și Pedagogică, p. 287.

Even if they are sung by peasants and not by professional musicians in front of a knowledgeable audience, such songs have retained both their cathartic function, of an intense re-living of the recounted event, and their educational one, of conveying unwritten information.

3. The *Aurel Vlaicu Song* in literature

3.1. Ilarion Cocișiu – The monograph of the Târnava Mare County

The first bibliographical record of the *Aurel Vlaicu Song* belongs to Ilarion Cocișiu and occurs in a monographic writing dedicated to the Târnava Mare area⁸. A song named *Vlaicu, son of a peasant (Vlaicule, pui de țăran)* was gathered from the researcher's home place, Retișul, near Brașov, along with a vast folkloric material of almost 300 melodies, offered to the Phonographic Archive of the Ministry of National Culture (founded in 1927, under the direction of George Breazul, Tiberiu Brediceanu and Sabin Drăgoi) and to the Folklore Archive of the Society of Romanian Composers (founded in 1928, under the direction of Constantin Brăiloiu). This melody's musical features are different from that of the proper old-style song that is specific to the area (free rhythm, minor state structure). One significant peculiarity is the ample strophic build, AABC_{rf}BC_{rf}, based on repeated elements; further, the sound structure is Ionian, the final is on G, the general melodic profile is descending 551111, verses are tetrapodic, the rhythm is quasi measured with elongated final values, and ornamentation consists of passage, exchange and leap sounds. Even if the melody is mentioned as to have been recorded on a phonograph under no. 5178a, on the 6th of August 1934, informant being Emilia Dan, 19 years old, it is possible that the lack of proper ornamentation is caused by the fact that melody was initially written down by ear (Cocișiu mentioned that his first music collections in Retișul were carried out in 1929, but he only had access to a phonograph starting in 1931).

72. Cântecul lui Vlaicu

Retișul F. 5178a

Vlai-cu-le, pui de ță-ran, Vla-i-cu-le, pui de ță-ran, Dum-re-zeu-tu dat un plan.
A-u-re-le-mai-chi.

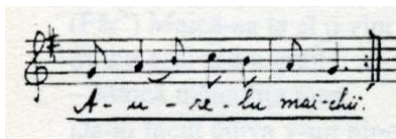
⁸ Ilarion Cocișiu. 1944. *Monograph of the Târnava Mare County [Monografia județului Târnava Mare]*. Sighișoara: Editura Miron Neagu.

<p>Vlaicule, pui de țăran, Dumnezeu ți-o dat un plan Ca să-ți faci aeroplan. Tu noaptea când te culcai Tot aeroplane visai; Te sculai și le făceai Și peste Carpați zburai. Si zburai peste Carpați Să dai mâna cu-ai tăi frați. Dar când s-o gătat benzina Tu ai plecat la Câmpina. Benzina ți s-a gătat, Tu la Câmpin-ai picat!</p>	<p>După Vlaicu cine plânge? Plânge sora cea mai mare Cu părul lung pe spinare, Plânge sora mijlocie Cu părul pân' la călcâie; Plânge sora cea mai mică, Când o vezi, inima-ți pică; Plânge taica, plânge maica, Plânge România-ntreagă, C-o rămas țara beteagă. [Retișul, 06.08.1934, Emilia Dan 19 ani]</p>
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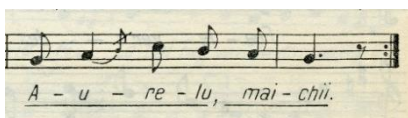
Fig. 2. *Vlaicu Song*. Ilarion Cocișiu. 2014, no. 72.

Another peculiarity is the presence of a refrain worded *Aurelu maichii*. In the *Musical folklore* course authored by Traian Mîrza, Ileana Szenik, and Ioan R. Nicola, this refrain is noted differently than in Cocișiu's collection. Its metrical classification varies, depending on the accent falling on the third or on the fourth syllable:

- in the Cocișiu variant (no. 72), with the bar line after the fourth syllable, the refrain may be defined as tripodic regular:



- in the second variant (included in the *Musical folklore* course, p. 336), with the bar line occurring after the fifth syllable, the refrain may be classified as tripodic irregular:



Thus, taking into consideration all of the above-mentioned features (major scale, measured rhythm, amplified form, the presence of refrains), the melody in Southern Transylvania may be assigned to the category of the *modern style* proper song.

3.2. Ilarion Cocișiu – Romanian folk songs

During the same period, in the thirties, Ilarion Cocișiu endeavoured a vast field research in the outer-Carpathian territories. The following melodic variant of the *Aurel Vlaicu* song was recorded in Dodești, near Bârlad-Jassy, on the 29th of July 1936, from an informant Panaghie Constantin, 33 years, phonograph entry 1653. In this area, the epic-descriptive lyrics are sung on a dance melody, more precise a *hora*. The architectural build is AA_kB, each musical phrase, as is

the specificity of dance melodies, being covered by two acatalectic tetrapodic verses. The sound structure is Mixolydian, with the final on D, and the general melodic profile is descending 551. Even if interpreted to a *hora* tempo, the rhythm brings along two different movements: part A is sung „fairly briskly”, observing a divisional rhythm, while part B is sung to a syllabic giusto bichronic rhythm, with elongated final value. Also, the ornamentation consists of nothing else than passage or exchange sounds.

38

CÎNTECUL LUI AUREL VLAICU

[Fig. 1653]

Com. Dodești — (Bîrlad-Iași),
Inf. : Panaghie Constantin [33 a.],
29.7.1936

Rit pejor

Foaie verde lozioară, într-o zi de primăvară,
Sosi bună veste-n țară, Dintr-un sat, de la Binținți,
C-a sosit un tainic dor Să cuprindă lumea-n zbor,

Făt-Frumos și tinerel,
Numit Vlaicu Aurel,
Cu-a lui pasăre pribeagă,
Ce farmecă-o lume-ntreagă.
— Vlaicule, Vlăicuțul mării,
Cînd ai vrut să treci Carpații
Să dai mîna cu toți frații,

Benzina s-a isprăvit,
Pasărea jos te-a trîntit,
În Cîmpina te-ai lăsat,
Doctorii te-au-mbălsămat
Și la tren te-au așezat,
La București au plecat...
Plînge sora mare, frate,
Cu păru-aurit pe spate;
Plînge cea mai mijlocie,
Cu părul pînă-n călcîie;
Iar cînd plînge cea mai mică,
Frunza-n codru se despică...
Te-a plîns mamă,
te-a plîns tată,
Te-a plîns România toată,
Și-n inimile tuturor
Ai rămas nemuritor!

Fig. 3. Aurel Vlaicu Song. Ilarion Cocișiu. 1966, no. 38

3.3. Musical folklore from the Huedin area. Huedin Környéki népzene.

The following melodic variant was identified in a collection of melodies from the Cluj area. The piece was gathered in Negreni, on the 11th of July 1976, from the 58 years old Gabrian Petru. Typologically speaking, the melody shows the same musical features as the one collected by Ilarion Cocişiu from Retişul, Braşov. The AABC_{rf}BC_{rf} build and the final cadence on G are shared elements. The difference consists in the free rhythm, which allows for a much richer ornamentation: simple, double and triple anterior and posterior appoggiaturas. The sound structure corresponds to a Mixolydian mode, although the F natural sound occurs strictly ornamental, and the inside cadences are placed on 553531, resulting in a descending general profile. The refrain brings along a different content from the one in the Cocişiu collection, the lyrics (*Tinerelul mării* or *Tinerelul tatii*) being sung on a regular tripodic metric structure.

Mg. 3100/20.
11.VII.1976

349. Vlaicule, pui de țăran

Negreni
Gabrian Petru 58 a.

Parlando rubato (♩=208)

și Foa-ie ver-de mă-de-ran Vlaicu - le pui
de ță-ran Ti-ne - re-lul ma-mii
Vlaicu - le pui de ță-ran și Ti-ne - re-lul ta-tii

și, Foaie verde măderan,
Vlaicule, pui de țăran,
Tinerelul mării,
Vlaicule, pui de țăran,
și, *Tinerelul tatii.*
Dumnezeu ți-a dat un plan,
Ca să-ți faci aeroplan.
Aeroplanul l-ai gătat,
Sus, la nori, te-ai ridicat.
Când erai să treci Carpații,
Dădu dumnezeu un vînt
Și-ai căzut jos, la pămînt.
Plînge mamă, plînge tată,
Plînge România toată.

Fig. 4. Vlaicu, kid of a peasant. Folclor muzical din zona Huedin. Huedin Környéki népzene. 1978, no. 349.

3.4. Ioan Bocşa, Alina Stan – *Traditional vocal music from the Land of the Forest Dwellers (Pădureni), Hunedoara*

In the Pădureni area in Hunedoara, two variants of the afore-mentioned melodic type were identified. The first melody was gathered by Rusalin Işfănoni in his home village, Dăbâca, in 1983, from the 73 years old Maria Şimodean. The song shows a similar strophic structure, six melodic lines, Mixolydian mode, final cadence on G, free rhythm, but less ornamentation. The melodic profile is descending, 551111, and the literary text of the refrain is *Cinerele mamii*, falling under the regular tripodic category.

Dăbâca, HD
Şimodean Maria, 73

♩ = 82

Vlai - cu - le, fiu de ță - ra - nu,
Vlai - cu - le, fiu de ță - ra - nu,
Ț-o dat Dum - ne - zău un pla - nu,
Ci - ne - r'e - lu ma - mi!
Ț-o dat Dum - ne - zău un pla - nu,
Ci - ne - r'e - lu ma - mi!

PAD 402 Cul. Işfănoni R., 1983, Tr. Stan A.

Vlaiçule, fiu de țăranu,
Vlaiçule, fiu de țăranu,
Ț-o dat Dumnezău un planu,
Cîner'elu mamii!
Ț-o dat Dumnezău un planu,
Cîner'elu mamii!

Ca să-ț fași aioroplanu,
Și să zbori păstă Vâlcanu,
: Din Vâlcan păstă Cârpațu. :|
: Să dai mâna cu tăț frațu. :|
: Ioroplanu s-o strîcatu :|
e₂ : Și zos cu cîne-o picatu. :|
e Plânze-l mamă, plânze-l tată, (x 3)
Plânze-l Rumânia tătă,

ei Plânze-l sora șea mai mar'e,
 ei₂ |: Cu păru ales cărar'e; :|
 ei Plânze-l sora șea mai mică; :|
 ei Cu păru ales în cică. (x 3)

Fig. 5. *Vlaicu, son of a peasant. Ioan Bocșa, Alina Stan. 2021, no. 505.*

The second melody was collected a few years ago, in the summer of 2017, by a team from the “Gheorghe Dima” National Music Academy in Cluj. The team, consisting of Ioan Bocșa and the author, carried out an exhaustive field research in the Pădureni area, in the footsteps of the forerunners Béla Bartók and Emilia Comișel. The melody was recorded from an exceptional informant in Cerișor, the 84 years old Cosana Vinca „a lui Chici”, who was recently awarded the distinction of Living Human Treasure. The musical features of the song are almost identical to the ones on the Dăbâca variant. The only difference is in the general melodic profile, which is 551515 – vaulted combined, because of the placement of the first refrain’s cadence in the high register. The lyrics of the refrain also bring along a variation: *Vlăicuț, puiule!*

Cerișor, HD
 Vinca Cosana, 84
 „a lu' Chici”

♩ = 94

pi, Vlaicu - le, fiu de ță - ran,
 Vlaicu - le, fiu de ță - ran,
 Ai a - vut și tu un plan, *Vlăicuț, pu - iu - le!*
 Ca să-ț fași a - e - ro - plan. *Vlăicuț, pu - iu - le!* #

PAD 092 Cul. Bocșa I., Stan A., 2017, Tr. Stan A.

Vlăicule, fiu de țaran,
 Vlăicule, fiu de țaran,
 Ai avut și tu un plan,
Vlăicuț, puiule!
 Ca să-ț fași aeroplan.
Vlăicuț, puiule!

păi Planul ți s-o împlinîit,
 Pasărea ți-ai construit,
 și₁ |: Când ȳerai să treși Vulcanii; :|

Să dai mâna cu dușmânii,
 Și la rând cu căpitanii;
 șî₁, ii₂ | Când ierai să treși Carpații, :|
 Să dai mâna cu tăț frații,
 Și la rând cu cam aradzii,
 păi₁ | Pasărea fi s-o stricat, :|
 | Și zos cu ie ai picat.
 păi₁, ii₂ | Ș-ai picat p-un strat cu flori, :|
 Cē-au plâns fraț, cē-au plâns surori,
 Cē-au plâns fețe și fișiori,
 păi₁, | Ș-ai picat p-un stan de piatră, :|
 | Cē-o plâns mamă, cē-o plâns tată,
 Cē-o plâns România tuată.

Fig. 6. *Vlaicu, son of a peasant. Ioan Bocșa, Alina Stan. 2021, no. 506.*

Belonging to the same melodic type, the variants recorded in the Pădureni area were also assigned to the category of modern-style proper song with scholarly influence, similarly to the variants from Retișul, Brașov and Negreni-Huedin, Cluj.

3.5. Maria Ciobanu - *Aurelul mării*

The following melody was identified in Maria Ciobanu's repertoire. The piece was recorded (audio) for Radio Romania on the 30th of October 1967, in the accompaniment of the Radio Folk Music Orchestra conducted by George Vancu. There is also a video recording from 1977, belonging to the National Television (TVR). Compared to the previous variants, this is a dance melody, a *sârba*, played in a rather moderate tempo (quarter note = 96). The sound structure is minor, with the final cadence on the first step, E, the rhythm is distributive (4/4 beat), the build is AA_kBB_k, and the general melodic profile is descending.

♩ = 96

Frun-ză ver-de ma-ghe-ran, A - u - re-lu' ma - mii,
 Vlai-cu-le, fiu de ță-ran, Mi-ti - te-lul ma - mii,
 Te-am cres-cut, te-am le-gă-nat, A - u - re-lu' ma - mii,
 Tot la poa-lă de Car-pat, Mi-ti - te-lul ma - mii.

Inf. Maria Ciobanu, 30.10.1976, Tr: Stan A., 2023

Frunză verde magheran, *Aurelu' mamii*,
 Vlaicule, fiu de țaran, *Mititelul mamii*,
 Te-am crescut, te-am legănat, *Aurelu' mamii*,
 Tot la poală de Carpat, *Mititelul mamii*.

Din doina ce te-a crescut, *Aurelu' mamii*,
 Vis de zbor tu ți-ai făcut, *Mititelul mamii*,
 Să zbori peste munți înalți, *Aurelu' mamii*,
 De la frați până la frați, *Mititelul mamii*.
 Pe unde-ai vrut tu să zbori, *Aurelu' mamii*,
 Acum totu-i numai flori, *Mititelul mamii*,
 Ce spre soare și spre stele, *Aurelu' mamii*,
 Poartă și visele tele, *Mititelul mamii*,
 Ce se leagănă și cresc, *Aurelu' mamii*,
 Pe pământul românesc, *Mititelul mamii*.

Fig. 7. *Mommy's Aurel* – Maria Ciobanu⁹

4. The literary content of the *Aurel Vlaicu* song

Lacking the expertise required for an in-depth analysis of these songs' literary content, we will only note a few of the more obvious aspects:

- all variants are of relatively limited extent, consisting of only 20-30 verses;
- they all employ the same introductory formula, informing the listener directly about the identity and origins of the main character:

Vlaicu, son of a peasant! (Vlaicule, fiu de țaran) (Bocșa, Stan, no. 505, 506,

⁹ *Aurelul mamii*, Maria Ciobanu. Retrieved April 10, 2023, from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ds6hCdVYd5Q&ab_channel=BestMusicOfRomania.

Maria Ciobanu)

Vlaicu, kid of a peasant! (Vlaicule, pui de țăran!) (Cocișiu, no. 72, Huedin, no. 349)

- in songs of outer-Carpathian origin, the introductory formula is a general one, typical of dance songs:

Green little willow leaf (Foaie verde lozioară!) (Cocișiu, no. 38)

Green marjoram leaf (Foaie verde măgheran!) (Huedin, no. 349, Maria Ciobanu)

- all variants include some mention of the idea of flying across the mountains in order to unite with brothers on the other side:

And you flew across the Carpathians

To shake hands with your brothers!

(Și zburai peste Carpați,

Să dai mâna cu-ai tăi frați!) (Cocișiu, no. 72)

- Emilia Comișel was mentioning that the Aurel Vlaicu theme had seeped into other genres as well, becoming a ceremonial funeral song. We did not identify such songs in the available collections; however, some variants bear an obvious similitude with the ritual funeral song. In every variant, the final thematic motif is one that describes the mourning of the whole country. In some of the variants, this is preceded by the depiction of the sorrow felt by each family member. This process of listing each mourning family member individually is common occurrence in ritual funeral songs:

The oldest sister mourns her brother (Plânge sora mare frate,)

Golden locks hanging on the back (Cu părul-aurit pe spate;)

The middle one is grieving (Plânge cea mai mijlocie,)

With her hair down to her heels (Cu părul până-n călcâie;)

And when the youngest one is weeping (Iar când plânge cea mai mică,)

The leaves in the forest are splitting (Frunza-n codru se despică.)

Your mother mourned, your father mourned (Te-a plâns mamă, te-a plâns tată,)

The whole Romania mourned for you (Te-a plâns România toată)

And in everybody's hearts (Și-n inimile tuturor)

You will forever be alive! (Ai rămas nemuritor!) (Cocișiu, no. 38)

- the refrains' literary content proves once more how well-liked Aurel Vlaicu was by the people. He is referred to as a family member, as a way too soon lost child:

Mommy's Aurel (Aurelul maichii) (Cocișiu, no. 72);

Mommy's youngster (Tinerelul mamei) – Huedin, no. 349), or, in the specific Pădureni pronunciation, *Cinerele mamei* – Bocșa, Stan, no. 505)

Mommy's little one (Mititelul mamei) (Maria Ciobanu);

Vlăicuț, baby! (Vlăicuț, puiule!) (Bocșa, Stan, no. 506).

5. Conclusions

The present research on the *Aurel Vlaicu song* had as its main aim to identify and classify the already published musical variants of the song. The attempt was deemed necessary as this category never underwent a deep theorization; discussions around it only targeted the literary aspect. The Aurel Vlaicu thematic is classified by the ethnologist and folklore specialist Alexandru Amzulescu under the category of oral recordings, while the ethnomusicologist Emilia Comișel ascribes it to the historical song category. The number of musical variants that we found and discussed herein is relatively small; we believe this to be due to the fact that the former political regime in Romania prohibited the singing of certain „historical songs”, as Emilia Comișel mentioned decades ago. The identified musical variants show several defining stylistic features:

- the melodies in the inner-Carpathian area make up a single melodic type, a modern-style proper song melody. The literary aspect is equally consistent;
- the outer-Carpathians melodies are essentially dance songs from the zonal repertoire (*sârba* in the Southern part of the country and *hora* in Moldavia). Literary texts built on the Vlaicu theme were adapted and applied to these area-specific melodies.

These differences notwithstanding and given the facts that, firstly, the Aurel Vlaicu song was found in very distant parts of the country, from Southern counties (Gorj, Olt, Dolj, Vâlcea, Mehedinți), to Southern and central Transylvania (Hunedoara, Brașov, Cluj) and up to Northern Moldavia (Jassy), and, secondly, that the field recordings spread across almost a century, we may assume that the beloved figure of Aurel Vlaicu and the events surrounding his life and death were widely known at that time and that his deeds touched upon the deeply ingrained desire towards union animating the souls and minds of people in all regions inhabited by Romanians.

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