

Approaching Elements of Musical Folklore in Romanian Choral Creation (3)

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Abstract: *Even though Enescu did not create his own school of composition during his lifetime, the teacher-student activity being completely lacking, his contemporaries and later many other generations sought, described and applied in their works principles of constructing musical discourse starting from Enescu's stylistics. This is: "the way of integrating folklore into forms of Western European tradition and re-creating it in a Romanian popular character"². From the procedures found in Enes' works, Valentina Sandu Dediu makes a grouping according to stylistic parameters³, and I present them synthetically: 1) heterophony; 2) the principle of melody that reconstructs Romanian folk stylemes in a melodic of its own; 3) harmony...from the perspective of tonal-modal-atonal fusion, with an insistence on the chromatic modal; 4) the framing of the rhythmic principle in the parlando-rubato system...; 5) from the perspective of the formal principles of musical discourse, the variational process will be found massively...*

Keywords: *Romanian musical works; musical composition; style; folklore;*

Introduction

The modal universe is not an unknown, but on the contrary, it always incites and raises challenges from the perspective of both musicologists and composers. Thus, in the 19th, 20th, and 21st centuries, congruences between several concepts appear. From the scholarly religious Gregorian and Byzantine modes, to the secular ones, theorized in particular by composers representing the Second Viennese School: A. Schoenberg, A. Berg, A. Webern who reacted to the tonal tradition of late romanticism through atonality, dodecaphonism, expressionism, in order to reach the modes with limited transposition theorized by the composer O. Messiaen, a clear line is outlined against which a popular, spontaneous, folkloric modal is configured, initially orally exposed and later theorized, which became a strong source of inspiration for the National Schools. All of this leads either to musical creations with posttonal - neotonal - atonal, serial, etc. languages, or to creations related to the exploitation of popular modes, the mixing between tonal and secular/religious modals, or between all these various musical textures.

1. Ways of Approaching Musical Parameters: Melody Harmon

In Romanian music since the 19th century, there has been a multitude of trends: from the musical avant-garde with influences for twelve-tone music, to neoclassicism or the "type" of Berg, Prokofiev, Shostakovich, Stravinsky, Messiaen represented by composers such as A. Vieru, A. Stroe, M. Marbe, Ș. Niculescu, D. Constantinescu, D. Popovici, C. Țăranu... to composers characterized by moderate modernism such as P. Benteoiu, W. G. Berger, N. Beloiu, D. Capoianu who had Bartok/Enescu as their model... and to those who would flirt with a classical folkloric

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² Valentina, Sandu – Dediu. 2004. *Muzica nouă între modern și postmodern*. București, Editura Muzicală, p. 44.

³ *Ibidem*, pp. 45-49.

style, processing modal vocal singing in predominantly choral creations: A. Pașcanu, R. Paladi, I. Odăgescu... etc. Therefore, from the perspective of melodic lines with a thematic character in Romanian choral creation, constructions can be distinguished that start from: **1. the folkloric quote** (the theme song comes "ad litteram" from traditional songs belonging to musical folklore; the harmonic plan is supported tonal, modal or tono-modal); **2. moderate folkloric inspiration** (the theme song is created in the style of folk music by referring to "organic" modes (the old modes accepted and imposed by the communities of an era, whose sound content is also found in the harmonic plan); **3. of radical folkloric inspiration** (creations that are based solely on extracting compositional principles from the morphology of Romanian folklore, reaching the definition of archetypes through various ways of integrating randomness, minimalism, etc.; modalities obtained through "synthesis" can be applied: the hexatonic scale, the chromatic scale, the serial scale of the chromatic scale, Messien's modes, etc.)⁴.

From the perspective of chordal structures we will observe either exclusively modal chainings⁵ of classical chordal structures (less common) or tono-modal concatenations (moderately), modal concatenations of classical chordal structures with modern ones (frequent), exclusive concatenations of modern chords (rarely common), combinatory structures of the previously presented modalities (frequent).

2. Analytical Forms into Own Creation

2.1. Mică suită, mixed choir, four divided voices: it is a triptych, conceived based on the contrast of movement, fast – slow – fast, in which two vocal melodies and one game melody are involved: *Paparuda*, *Drăgaica* and *Sârbă*. The work falls within the sphere of **folklore quotation**.

2.1.1. Paparuda, is a spring song, for the invocation of rain, thought in variational technique: Introduction / A / A1 varied / A2 varied / Coda. The Introduction starts with a rhythmically figured pedal, in the male voices, which will be stepped, from perfect first to major second and will rise to perfect fifth, above which the female voices will be multiplied, in perfect octave, with detachment from perfect first to major second for Alto and in perfect fifth for Soprano: a complex sound conglomerate is obtained, which has as an overlap a chord of fifths with a traditional one (minor, in the 2nd inversion). The A is made up of two thematic, anacrusal ideas, contrasting as sound material, but also timbrally: female/male voices. The first motive, played by Soprano, a tetratonicity with major third, will be freely imitated by Alto, which amplifies the sound structure towards a hexachord with major third. Each voice, alternately, after the exposition, remains on the last syllable in the *ison*. By repeating this phrase, the first idea is exhausted.

⁴ Wilhelm Georg, Berger. 1979. *Dimensiuni modale*. București: Editura Muzicală, p.22; Valentina, Sandu – Dediu. 2002, *Muzica românească între 1944-2000*. București: Editura Muzicală, p.161.

⁵ Dan Buciu. 2020. *Mic tratat de scriitură modală*. București: Editura Grafoart, p. 34.

Mică suită
I

versuri populare
Moderato
(L. Paparodi)

Muzică: Eugen Petre Sandu

The second thematic idea is stated through a similar mechanism: The Tenor proposes a tetratony with a minor third (mi, fa, sol, si), which will be repeated slightly varied by the Bass through another tetratony (re, mi, fa, si), which will later, in the second phrase, transform into a trichord (re, mi, fa). A1 variat unfolds the two thematic ideas presented, in different hypostases: the first idea is distributed exclusively to the Soprano, who, in its exposition, produces an extension of the melodic ambitus, from perfect fifth to major ninth, while the Alto performs a figured pedal between the intervals of perfect fifth and fourth; by overlapping the two voices, short moments of heterophony are installed. The second idea highlights the Alto voice, whose repeated phrase is subject to variation through the mobility of the Bass, which produces rhythmically figured pedals on different steps, which overall imprint an archaic sound structure, tritony. A2 varied will join the first motive of the two thematic ideas, obtaining a phrase of a new expression, on a new timbral path, Soprano - Tenor, with a resumption by Alto -Bass. The sound discourse will be provided with some stops (the appearance of crowns), which will increase the tension, already accumulated through the pedals made by the voices that do not participate in the thematic construction, but which, in the vertical plane, spatialize, through chords resulting from the overlap of 9M + 5p, 6M + 7m, 4p + 7m. The sound picture is completed by some percussion effects obtained by clapping hands and feet that lead to the increase of the aggressiveness of the aksak rhythm, omnipresent, in different pulsating combinations.

2.1.2. *Drăgaica*, harvest song, with a melody developed on an aksak rhythm, on constant pulsating units, has two sections developed variationally: A / A varied. The first section is made up of two distinct thematic ideas. The first thematic idea consists of a phrase, presented twice by the Soprano, built on a tetratony (la, si, re, mi). It is supported, at the beginning, by a slightly mobile pedal, by the Alto voice, to which the Tenor is later added, through an ison. The second thematic idea is successively participated by the two female voices, and the sound structure undergoes a continuous amplification: the melody tends towards a chromatic pentachord type 1 and a chromatic heptachord in the 5th state; the harmony is presented through overlapping pedals, in a slight movement. The varied restatement of the stated material is achieved as follows: in presenting the first thematic idea, the Alto presents the first motive which is continued by the Soprano (an inversion of the female sound planes), while the male voices provide the pedals: The bass performs

a rhythmic figuration; the tenor is in a process of continuous mobility; in the second thematic idea, the main role will be held by men, who, through motivic dialogue (Tenor - Bass), ensure the evolution towards the end of this section, whose harmonic support, of the ison type, is now present in the female voices.

2.1.3. *Sârba*, is a game melody, performed vocally, on a formal structure of variational type: A / Avariat / A / Coda. The introduction proposes the framework for the development of the accompaniment, in which the Bass and Alto participate, located 62 divided. The sound structure is represented by a heptachord with a minor third, Aeolian, on E. In relation to this sound center, modal chains of classical chords occur: I - V6 - III - I. The first section has the following construction: phrase 1 is a tetratonic sound construction, on an ambitus of 6M, and phrase 2, a pentachord with a minor third developed on an ambitus of 8p. The formed period has the main melody attributed to the Soprano voice and will be exposed repetitively, with some timbral variations, to the internal voices: Alto - Tenor. In the third period, the male voices actively participate this time: phrase 1 is played by the Bass and contains a repeated tetrachord motif; phrase 2 is an amplified reprise of the Tenor: two tetrachords with a junction sound (re, mi, fa, sol; sol, a, si, do). The modal color is also found in the harmonic plane, through a pedal of perfect fifths, attributed to the female voices, Soprano - Alto. The second section, A variat, formally, has the same structure as the first. The differences are of a melodic nature, in the sense that, in the first period, a secondary melody is added to the main theme (from the Soprano), in the Alto voice: a hexachord with a major third to which the fourth step is mobile (re, mi, fa#, sol - sol#, a, si). The second period will propose a dialogue between the Bass and Alto voices, while the Tenor will alternately execute onomatopoeic effects and short harmonic pedals. The finale proposes a resumption of the sound material expressed in the first section, with a jump to the Coda, before the beginning of section 2.

2.2. *Balada unui greier mic*, choir on two equal voices (soloists), is a work of moderate folk inspiration: the architectural structure is of a two-part lied with a small reprise. Within A, two sections are designed, related to each other: A1 and A1 varied. A1, in turn, is built from two subsections, unequal in size; the first has in its composition two periods, respectively four melodic phrases similar to the four melodic lines, with the following sound structures, arranged successively by conjunction, in two voices: 1. tetrachord with minor third; 2. hemitonic pentatony, consonant, in the Vth state; 3. hemitonic pentatony; 4. pentachord with minor third. I emphasize the fact that each sound structure, in its end, remains on an ison that creates moments of heterophony compared to the following exposition:

Versurke: G. Topolani
Andantino con leggerezza

Musica: Eugenio Sandu

I
II

Per - te den - tari agri - bi - ri - le.

Per - te ta - ri - rui sibi - bi -

p
A ve - ni a - gi clo - da - ti.

p
più mosso (allegretto)
Lac - gi - da - ti.

f
i - le.

f
Toccare con la - ta - re - na - ti.

f
Bate - ciao.

f
C - ue rui - nando de -

f
Ciao se - na - ri -

f
In - gre - ri -

f
ta - di - na - na - ti a - di

f
cia - cal - di

f
de - ci - di

f
li - si -

f
pap - ta -

f
Poi - na - ta - fra - ta

f
na - ta -

f
Sire - de -

f
de - pa - le

f
a - na - ta

f
Poi - na - ta - fra - ta

f
na - ta -

f
Sire - de -

f
a - na -

2.3. *Zdreanță*, mixed choir for four voices. This choral piece, of radical folkloric inspiration, was and is present in the repertoires of many choral groups, of which I mention: Choir "Gaudeamus" "Nuovo Gaudeamus", Chorale Philharmonic "Oltenia", Choir "Consonance", Choir "Cantabile", choral ensembles that have received ovations from the public and awards at various national and international festivals. The architectural structure is conceived, due to the text, in an open form, of small dimensions: ABC.

Assimilating a musical motif at the level of a melodic laugh, we obtain the following articulations: introductory phrase, played by the Bass in the form of a pedal, rhythmically and melodically figured, contaminated by harsh dissonances (seconds); in the first period, the first phrase has a

double thematic idea presented by the female voices, through contrapuntal procedures: inversion, varied sequence and inversion and is accompanied by the ison performed in the debut, by the Bass voice; the second phrase, in the form of an accompanied monody, has a new thematic idea, built from a sequenced motif, based on the perfect fourth interval, presented by the Soprano; the intermediate voices provide the harmonic support, also on the perfect fourth interval, in chromatic glide, on the ison previously presented by the Bass:

Zdreanță

Versuri: Tudor Arghezi Muzica: Eugen Petre Sandu

Allegro vivace $\text{♩} = 168$

Ham, hum, ham, ham, ham, ham, hum, ham,

L-ați vă-zut cum - va pe Zdrean - ță Cel cu o - chii de fa - ian - ță?

L-ați vă-zut cum - va pe Zdrean - ță Cel cu o - chii de fa - ian - ță?

Ham, ham, ham, ham, ham, ham,

E un căi - ne zdren - tu - ros De flo - cos dar e fru - mos s,

E căi - ne zdren - tu - ros dar e fru - mos. Par - că-i strâns din pe - ti -

E căi - ne zdren - tu - ros dar e fru - mos. s,

Ham, ham, ham, Ham, ham, ham,

The second period is asymmetrical: the first phrase has as its thematic idea a trichord, played by Alto, discreetly accompanied, on short values; the second phrase, homophonic, is a descending chromatic projection of a "modern" chord: $2M + 5p + 5p$; the third phrase has a reduced sound consistency; the Soprano's voice is imitated by Alto through inversion. B has in its composition two periods: the first, belongs only to the male voices, which at the level of the first phrase presents a double thematic idea, through inversion; the second phrase is a monody of the Tenor, on a pentachord sound scale with a minor third, accompanied by a triple ison of the female voices (Alto 1 - 2, Soprano), rhythmically figured and continues on the same pedal formulated by Bass. In the second period, the first phrase is formulated by a tenor motif, which will be repeated by multiplied ison, with some rhythmic variations, by the Alto, which, in the ensemble, will lead to short heterophonic moments; the second asymmetrical phrase ends with a homophonic motif, harmonically realized also based on the perfect fourth interval, on a sinuous, chromatic profile. The final section, C, is built from two asymmetrical periods. The first period has as its main role the Tenor, accompanied by the female voices, with a descending, chromatic pattern of major

seconds; the third phrase puts in harmonic opposition at an interval of 9M, the Tenor and Alto voices, on a melodic line dominated by the intervals of 1p and 4p, with an ascending profile. The second period has at the level of the first phrase a homophonic structure in which the pairs of female - male voices are reproduced by inversion: sevenths/sixths on a descending chromatic march with sixths on an ascending chromatic pattern; the second phrase has in its construction a homophonic motif and a monodic one on the Bass' ison; the third phrase resumes the constructive idea from the second period, on another melodic pattern, when the Tenor and Alto are the main actants, in a harmonic relationship of a minor seventh. The coda has a thematic idea formulated by the Tenor, accompanied by the double ison of the female voices and concluded rhetorically, homophonically, through a spoken recitative by the choral ensemble.

The image displays two systems of a musical score for a choral piece. The first system, starting at measure 69, is marked *piu rubato* and features four staves. The lyrics are: "Când se ui - tă dac. Zi - ce lui: Cănd se ui - tă dac. Zi - ce lui: Cănd se ui - tă la gă - i - nă, cu cul - cu - șul lui, ve - ci - nă, Zi - ce Zdrean - ță - n gân - dul lui: Cot - co - dac." The second system, starting at measure 73, is marked *Presto* and *a tempo*. It also features four staves. The lyrics are: "S-a fă - cut a dra - cu - lui!" and "L- ați vă - zut cum - va pe Zdrean - ță?". The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

3. Conclusions

The three examples of sounding demonstrate the interferences existing between various sound languages: **from the folkloric quotation to moderate or radical folkloric** inspired contents, the substance and expressiveness of the melodic sound structures were presented, which are captured through the prism of the profile, the contour, the melodic cadences, reaching the rhythmic systems in which binary and ternary rhythmic cells of the giusto-syllabic rhythmic system are present; at the same time, the harmonic garments are captured that assume the use of classical chords in predominantly plagal relationships with modal or authentic consequences - plagal constituting tono-modal moments and last but not least, the insertion, the use of modern chords that assume unusual expressiveness... In this spirit, I find myself quite close to what the composer Theodor Grigoriu said: "The unification of my own artistic destiny took some time..."

through folkloric quotation, then it came to an intuitive imaginary folklore, to linger in an imaginary folklore proper, suggested by Bartok, which seemed to me to be quite fertile ground, triggering deep inner resonances... I didn't think much about innovation, because here everything was new. Later, the integration of contemporary techniques served the same imaginary folklore, of course also up to certain limits, the integral knowledge of Enes' creation, but also of the theory of languages... Between imaginary folklore and the investigation of the ethos of Romanian melos, the differences are of level, the second representing a qualitative leap⁶. In contemporary times, style undergoes transformations due to perpetual contaminations and we reach "mestizaje-rect impurity, and heterogeneity – becomes a more significant value than purity...the stylistic freedom of the composer of today is much greater than that of the composer of 20 or 40 years ago. Flexibility and versatility are gifts for a creative mind, but they also hide pitfalls:...the loss of musical logic is equivalent to the loss of movement and inner orientation within the work"⁷.

4. References

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⁶ Valentina, Sandu – Dediu. 2002. *Muzica românească între 1944-2000*. București: Editura Muzicală, p. 118.

⁷ Dan Dediu. 2012. *Cei 9 "i" sau cum compunem*. București: E.D.P., p. 14.