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ABSTRACT - PhD THESIS

Principles of Composition in the Short Sticheraric Genre

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II. Key words

New Sticherarion, Anastasimatarion, Doxastarion, idiomela stichera, melodic genre, syntomon compositions, musical analysis, hrisantic notation, transitional semiography, musical exegesis, musical formulas, modulations, rhetoric techniques.

III. Abstract - PhD Thesis

Introduction

The subject I have chosen is part of my current preoccupations regarding musical composition in general and the composition in the sticheraric genre in particular.

Following my preliminary researches and my musical experience accumulated over the past twenty years, I have concluded upon the following aspects:

1. Between the oral and the written traditions there is (and there ought to be) an organic connection: the oral tradition (the practical chant in Church) is fundamented on the written tradition, multiplying and perpetuating the latter, while the written tradition confirms and corrects, whenever it is necessary, the oral tradition.

2. Between the text and the melody there is always (and ought to be) also an organic connection in the sense that the melody should always follow the text and enhance it.

3. The melodies that we considered before to be “improvised” proved to have as background a well defined repertory of formulas as well as a set of strict rules.

4. I concluded that there are differences not only between the compositic genres but also between the compositions of different authors (contemporary or not), belonging to the same genre of composition.

Among the three melodic genres of the byzantine music, my preoccupations focused especially on those generating ample/extensive melodies: the sticheraric and the papadic genres. More precisely, my thesis deals with the short sticheraric genre, an option I have made for practical reasons:

1. The short sticheraric genre corresponds with the practical need of the Church practical chant

2. The sticheraric genre is more accessible than the papadic genre.

3. There already exists a rich repertory, coherent enough, of sticheraric compositions with which our research may begin.

The above mentioned observations have reinforced my conviction that the byzantine music - just like iconography, architecture, byzantine poetry - is governed by laws, by norms which guide the composition of melodies in a way that they do not differ from the old ones and preserve, at the same time, their “byzantine ethos”, but above all, in a way which helps these melodies remain strongly connected to the theological meanings of the text. In some musical compositions, there are certain mentions regarding the existence of rules of chant, and in others, such rules are even mentioned, more or less explicitly.

Apart for the rules, we also notice that certain musical motives reoccur constantly, while others come across rarely or not at all. Taking as landmark the stereotype character of the recurrent motives we may deduce that they occupy an important place in the melodic construction (or otherwise they would not be recurrent) and that they may be gathered in a musical vocabulary or in a dictionary of formulas.

In the second half of the past century and the beginning of our century, researches have been made regarding the rules of chant/composition, only some of them approach directly or indirectly the sticheraric melodic genre. Most of them help us to formulate an idea about how the sticheraric chant works, but helps only to a reduced extent in the assimilation and the practice of the sticheraric chant. This latter aspect particularly differentiates our research from the majority of the studies and sets it apart in a special category of theoretical works, but having a practical (didactic) and applied finality. Thus, one of the three purposes of this research envisages 1) to complete the anterior researches in this field. The other two objectives aim 2) to correct some musical practices and 3) to complete the existing sticheraric repertoire. The two final purposes correspond to a long term project of academic research.

Starting from the premise that there are rules (unwritten ones) of composition and a set of basic melodic components with which we may compose, we have strived, in this research:

- to identify and extract the principles of composition, by delimitating the strict ones from the relative/incidental ones, and to specify the exceptions to the rules;
- to make an anthology and to classify the stereotype melodic elements, specifying in some cases the frequency of their utilisation;

- to describe the non-repetitive melodic elements and to determine their function and their importance in the musical sticheraric composition;
- to determine the relation between the repetitive and the non-repetitive elements;
- to determine the connection between the rule and the liberty allowed in the sticheraric composition.

If in an initial stage I have set out to analyze the musical creation in the sticheraric genre of Romanian composers from the first half of the XIXth century, I have focused eventually on the works of the greek (spartan) composer Petros Lampadarios Peloponnesios, due to the fact that the most important printings in the Romanian language in the above mentioned period of time are dominated by translations of his compositions which have only subsequently been completed with other compositions, identical or at least stylistically similar to his own. Following a series of metamorphoses of the initial plan of research, the actual thesis is structured in four chapters.

Chapter 1 - The short sticheraric genre (general ideas)

The Chapter **The short sticheraric genre** – includes three subchapters in which I have tried to specify the particular terminology used along the research, to define the compositional category/class in which the material we have analyzed may be integrated, and to present the stylistically and codicological evolution of the sticheras.

In the subchapter entitled *Stichera: Hymnographic considerations* (1.1.) I have presented briefly the genesis of the sticheras (1.1.1.), underlying the context in which they have appeared, the way in which they have been assimilated by the Church chant and the functions of these short-length poems have had during history: their apologetic and pastoral functions. Also, I have tried to give a definition of the stichera by presenting the types of the sticheras according to their place in the religious service, the books in which they are found and some of the most important composers.

After presenting some general considerations on the sticheras, I have classified them (1.1.2.) according to four criteria: 1) manuscript in which they have appeared during time, whether accompanied by notes or simply text; 2) the theme which is being analyzed and the position it occupies in some of the Church's laudae 3) the connection between

melody and text, in which the melody is autonomous from the text (the three melodic genres: heirmologic, sticheraric and papadic); and 4) the connection between text and melody, in which the melody is determined in a strict or relative manner by the formal characteristics of the text (prosody, punctuation, etc.). In the last category I have given a particular place to the two composing classes – idiomela (1.1.2.4.1.) and automela together with the prosomia (1.1.2.4.2.).

The subchapter entitled *The Clasification of the byzantine compositions* (1.2.) includes two subdivisions. In *Terminological specifications* (1.2.1.) I have clarified three terms included in the title– „genre”, „sticheraric” and „short” – each being included in a broader terminological and semantical category. For the first term – **genre** – I have specified the meanings, the alternative terms used in musicology by authors who have used them. Thus, in parallel with the term „genre” there have also been used: „melodic genre”, „tact”, „idiom” and „style”.

The speciality vocabulary in which the **sticheraric** and **short** terms are included may be divided into three categories of terms, regarding: 1) the concise compositions, 2) the extended compositions, and 3) the intermediary compositions. A short presentation of the stylistic evolution of the Sticheraric genre shows the way in which some particular species and distinctive styles of the melodic sticheraric genre have developed in time, from which the “short” or “syntomon” is the object of our research thesis.

In the *Genres of byzantine music: classifications* (1.2.2.) I have presented some classifications of the most important byzantine musical compositions, theorized by different musicians: Chrysanthos of Madytos, Gregorios Stathis, Nicolae Lungu, Georgios Hatzitheodorou and Iannis Arvanitis. All the classifications might be reduced to the three melodic categories: heirmologic, sticheraric and papadic.

In the subchapter *Anastasimatarion and Sticherarion* (1.3.) I have briefly presented the codicological evolution of the repertoires which have included sticheras idiomelas along history, from the *Tropologhion* of the last centuries of the first millennium to the contemporary *Minologhion* (with notation). By this I have outlined the paradigm in which the structure and contents of the Anastasimatarului and the Stihirarului/Doxastarului have crystallized - as we have them today - in the course of the musical experiments of the XVIIIth century, motivated by the search for a “shorter”

compositional path. After having revisited all the composers from the XVIIIth century which have composed certain categories of musical pieces from the Anastasimatarion and the Doxastarion, I have focused on the creations of a unique composer: Petros Lampadarios Peloponnesios. The subchapters 1.3.2.2. and 1.3.3.2. describe the content, the structure and the particularities of the Anastasimatarion and of the Doxastarion of Petros, mentioning also the printed editions published in the XIXth century, the authors of some complementary chants, the interpreters and the total of the sticheraric compositions included in the two volumes (543). Their content is inventoried and systematized in a series of annexes (1, 2 and 3) at the end of this thesis.

Chapter 2. Petros Lampadarios Peloponnesios

The Chapter **Petros Lampadarios Peloponnesios** – includes two subchapters: the first deals with the life, the activity and the intercultural relations of Petros Lampadarios with the Muslims and the Armenians and the second presents the rich creation of this author.

The Subchapter *Lampadarul „The Great Church of Christ”* (2.1.) presents a series of autobiographical data (2.1.1.), among which the date and place of birth, the time of his arrival in Constantinople, the time of his death (as well as controversies regarding these information), the sur-name he was known by at the time (Lampadarios, Lachedemonion, Alatsas, Bardaki, Hirsiz), his apprenticeship with Ioannes Protopsaltes and Daniel Protopsaltes, the “fraudulous” take over the position of „lampadarios” and the didactic activity in the Second School of Music founded by the Patriarch Sophrony of Jerusalem. I have also underlined the complex (as well as controversial) personality of Petros as well as his legendary qualities (absolute hearing and exceptional musical memory), the way they are reflected in the relation of some anecdotes with Petros as main character (2.1.2.).

The Subchapter *The Creation of Petros Lampadarios Peloponnesios* (2.2.) makes an inventory of Petros’s creations: on the one hand, the exegesis of the classical creations and those of more recent authors (2.2.1.), and on the other hand, his compositions (2.2.2.) for the Vespers (2.2.2.1.), the Matins (2.2.2.2.) and the Holy

Liturgy (2.2.2.3.). Additionally, I have discussed the originality of Petros's creation (2.2.3.) and his location in the category of composers who respect and continue the tradition of byzantine music.

Chapter 3. The short sticheraric genre: Analysis parameters and general analysis

Chapter 3 - The short sticheraric genre: Analysis parameters and general analysis – includes three subchapters out of which the last is the most extended from the entire thesis. In *Terminological specifications* (3.1.) I deal with the meanings of „musical analysis” and tries to give a complete and nuanced definition starting from the etymology of the term “analysis” and completing with different definitions from academic dictionaries (*The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, Harvard Dictionary of Music* and *Dicționarul de Termeni Muzicali/The Dictionary of Musical Terms*).

The subchapter *Landmarks of analysis in the ecclesiastical musical literature* (3.2.) aims to identify different types of musical sources which might offer, if not criteria of analysis, at least some guiding references. The sources are divided in two categories: *musical compositions* (3.2.1.) – including first of all the sticheraric compositions of Petros (3.2.1.1.), secondly, the compositions of his pupils/followers (3.2.1.2.) and thirdly, the manuscripts in double notation, „transitional” and hrisantic (3.2.1.3.) - and *theoretical writings* (3.2.2.). The theoretical writings are also divided into four categories: a) didactic and theoretical writings of byzantine music with a general character (3.2.2.1.); b) general studies on byzantine music (3.2.2.2.); c) musicology treaties which deal either with the byzantine musical mainstream through the theory of tonal music, either with musical aspects valid for any type of music, thus implicitly for the byzantine music (3.2.2.3.); d) studies and academic researches on composition or the sticheraric genre (3.2.2.4.).

The Subchapter 3 deals with *Methodes* (3.3.1.), *types* (3.3.2.) and *parameters of analysis* (3.3.3.). The parameters identified in the academic literature were grouped into six categories, each of them with multiple subdivisions and ramifications: the description of the mode (3.3.3.1.), the diastematic structure (3.3.3.2.), rythm structure (3.3.3.3.),

morphology and syntax (3.3.3.4.), the modulation system (3.3.3.5.) and the relation between melody and text. (3.3.3.6.).

Chapter 4. The short sticheraric genre: a detailed analysis and exegesis

Chapter 4. The short sticheraric genre: a detailed analysis and exegesis – includes two subchapters. The first subchapter which refers to (and deals with) *The analysis of the sticheras of the 8 echos/modes* (4.1.) completes the preceding chapter and includes some of the elements which are particular to each mode and individualizes it stylistically from the other echos. The scheme of the analysis parameters copies to a great extent the one from the preceding chapter, with the distinction that some of the parameters are connected because of methodological reasons (the modulations and the diastematical structures) or they are approached selectively (rhetorical methodes), while others are being treated in a rather introductive manner (the formulas with all their types and subdivisions), destined to keep the subject open for further continuation and development of the present research topic, following new musical coordinates. From all the categories of formulas I have chosen to analyse in detail a particular one, the most controversial one, which correspond in the compositional practice to the highest level of difficulty: the formulas *argon*, taken from the Old Sticherarion and the New Sticherarion.

The grid of individual analysis of the sticheraric *syntomon* compositions integrated in each of the eight Church echos includes the following items: the description of the mode (the martyria, the apechemata, the stichos and the ethos), the rhythmic structure (types of rhythms), modulations and diastematic structures (with diagrams, brief explanations and examples) as well as some examples of rhetoric figures (or compositional devices with a rhetoric effect).

In the subchapter *The Exegesis of the Kekragarias of Petros Lampadarios Peloponnesios* (4.2.) I have questioned the fact that, although Petros Lampadarios was and continues to be a referential composer and although in the publishing tradition of byzantine music in the XIXth century existed the practice of printing two or three lines of kekragarias belonging to the same author or to different ones, still the kekragarias of Petros have not been interpreted by anyone (not even his disciples) and have neither been

printed. This shortcoming left a great empty space in the didactical and artistic repertoire of Church music. Starting, on one hand, from the comparison of Petros' kekragarias and of other sticheraric compositions belonging to him, simultaneously exposed in the two notations (hrisantic notation and transitional notation), and on the other hand, taking as landmark the Doxastarion manuscript in "double notation of Peter the Peloponnesian and the methodological and exegetical suggestions presented by the musicologist Costin Moisil in his study „Sketch of a transcription method of chants in the new sticheraric style", I have formulated a personal exegesis of the above mentioned compositions, the concrete outcome (the compositions) being annexed to the present thesis. The kekragarias are placed each on a single page, both in the transitional notation (above) and in the hrisantic notation (below), offering thus the possibility to anyone who is interested to compare the variants and even to verify if the exegesis in the new notation is correct or not.

Conclusions

Following the investigations made on the sticheraric compositions of Petros Lampadarios Peloponnesios we consider that our thesis has reached its initial purpose. Firstly, I have succeeded in formulating a generative grammar, consisting in, on one hand, the extraction of a set of rules or principles of composition for the short sticheraric genre and, on the other hand, the definition of a dictionary of recurrent musical sticheraric components (cadences, formulas) and non-repetitive (free zones) with the help of which it is possible to articulate the musical discourse in the specific short sticheraric genre, specifying at the same time the connections established between them and the role of each within the structure of the musical phrases. Most of them are to be found within this thesis, more precisely in the special formulas adopted from the Old Sticherarion. Secondly, I have concluded that the rules and the delimitation of the constructing musical material does not represent constraints for a composer, but landmarks, indicators and guidelines which guide the compositional freedom. Rules are meant to maintain the coherence, the dynamics and the plasticity of the chant whenever the experience of the "beginner" is not reach enough; however, the assimilation of these rules is followed by

the next stage. Beyond this, lies the realm of musical freedom. The diversity of the vocabulary of formulas and the large variety of their combinations, enriched by modulations, compositional and rhetorical techniques give an altogether new dimension to compositional freedom.

From our research thesis we may draw the following conclusions, some general and other particular (technical):

- the melody is constantly determined by the poetic text, either at the basic level (the grammar), either at the semantic level (the rhetoric);
- each sound of the melody has behind an intention and a purpose with reference to the other sounds and the melodic whole;
- the concepts of „improvisation” and „originality” requires a strict redefinition, in order to understand them as freedom of combining in different ways - not necessarily different/inovatory - the given musical material, considering the experience the intelligence and the sensibility of each composer;
- although the vocabulary of formulas of the short sticheraric genre is different from that of the other genres and strictly delimited species, there are some common elements: some common formulas (adopted from the argon irmologhion), asmatic formulas (adopted from the argon sticherarion or from the papadic) and the syllabic zones (found in the irmologic);
- some of the sticheraric composition rules are specific only for the sticheraric zone, others are generally valid for all the genres and styles;
- in Petros Lampadarios, the rhetoric is more developed than in the compositions of his predecessors (on the coordinates of the new styles) but more „ conservative” than in the works of his followers, and the modulation system is very balanced, the “alterations” being used with parsimony;
- micro-formulas, as quasi independent morpho-syntactical units, may be present in every part of the musical phrase (formula, free zone) and sometimes, by means of density (numerical), reduced or enhanced, they may change the aspect of a stichera (concise, developed);

- some formulas from the old notation – both custom formulas and “insertions” from the old sticherarion - may be interpreted/analyzed exiguiste “in short” or “at length”, according to rules still undefined;
- the scales used in the short sticheraric genre are completed and/or replaced by flexible diastematic micro-structures, determined by the ambitus of the melody and different types of modulations;
- the ambitus of the syntomon sticheraric chants is more reduced (with at least half an octave) than the ambitus of the chants in the sticheraric argon, which require a minimum value (an octave) and a maximum one (a little over an octave and a half) in special cases;
- the martyrias in the Ephesios edition do not have a uniform utilisation, and cannot be used as exclusive landmark for the delimitation of the musical phrases;
- Petros uses a rich repertoire of rhetoric formulas, briefly inventoried in this thesis, with which he suggests the idea of the text, sometimes in a subtle manner, other times „with force”.

My thesis places itself on the line of scientific researches aiming to set in order the thinking and the practice of Church music, so that everything within the liturgical space - image, gesture, sound - may keep its theological coherence and fulfil its purpose : the transposition/the participation of every Christian into the kingdom of God.

Perspectives for further research

Although I have succeeded in covering a vast musical perimeter (over 500 sticheraric compositions), the subject remains open for further research, for wider analysis, for discussion, corrections and completions. Around this theme as landmark, the research may be extended from Petros Lampadarios to prior, to contemporary and to subsequent composers. One might analyse, for example, the creation of the Old Sticherarion (in one or several authors) in order to find convergent points between the „argon” and „syntomon”. The investigation may be extended to the works of psalms/composers from the first half of the XVIIIth century - when there began to simultaneously coexist short versions of the classical compositions with the ones

anticipating “the dawn” of the new sticherarion - namely the professors (Teodosios from Smirna, Ioannes Protopsaltes Trapezoundios), their colleagues (Iakovos Protopsaltes, Daniel Protopsaltes) and the disciples of Petros Lampadarios (Petros Byzantios, Gheorghios Kritis), as well as the composers from the following generation (most of them contemporaries or even collaborators of the Hrisantic Reform). Such an extended study is meant to better contextualize the work of Petros Lampadarios, because it offers more terms of comparison.

The research may be extended - just as I had intended in the initial project of the thesis - to the Romanian paradigm, on two coordinates: translations and compositions. It is interesting to observe the extent to which (and in what proportions) the constitutive elements of the new sticherarion were preserved (syntax and vocabulary) by translation from Greek into Romanian, what obstacles the translators had to overcome (due to the lexis, the prosody, the topic, etc.) and the solutions they found for each problem; in other words, the way in which they managed to adapt the sticheraric compositions of Petros into the Romanian language. The second plan of analysis focuses on the compositions themselves and tries to understand the degree to which the musical stylistics have been preserved from translations to compositions, what are the existing compositional peculiarities for the Romanian zone (firstly, for a specific author) and which are the coordinates according to which the short sticheraric genre has evolved within the Romanian space.

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