

REFERENCES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CLUJ-NAPOCA SCHOOL OF COMPOSITION IN THE CONTEXT OF ROMANIAN CHORAL MUSIC

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SUMMARY. In this article, we have emphasized the premises that led to the birth of the Cluj-Napoca school of composition belonging to the Music Academy, a place where great musical personalities will be shaped, both for the Romanian and universal artistic-musical context. One of the most important composers of the interwar years is Sigismund Toduță, a former student of this institution, who later became leader of the Cluj-Napoca school of composition. The stylistic coordinates used in his compositional approach will be featured, based on the triad of inspiration sources – the folk melos, the Byzantine song and the Gregorian chant. Through his musical, pedagogical and human qualities, Toduță will be able to guide, in the composition class, a generation of musicians that will prevail in the Romanian cultural space through a musical language that has as its starting point the orientations and conceptions of the master, enriched, along the way, with their own conquests and principles.

Keywords: stylistics, Sigismund Toduță, Cluj-Napoca, choral music.

Introduction

From the musical point of view, the twentieth century represents a period of research and experimentation, in order to enrich the choral repertoire with original works, of great expressiveness and popularity. In European music there are on the one hand, the composers of the Second Viennese School, whose compositions are highlighted by a series of innovative elements, and on the other hand, the neoclassical composers, such as Shostakovich,

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Bartók, Enescu and others. This heterogeneity of western music has inspired some Romanian post-war musical creations, which are defined by the combination of visually opposing ideas that coexist and tolerate one another.

The musical-historical context regarding the crystallization of the Cluj school of composition

In our country, the musical evolution follows the path drawn by Enescu, in terms of composition techniques or cultivated forms, there being „a whole series of nuances”³ of neoclassicism. Thus, some Romanian composers combine the modalism specific to the popular melos with neoclassicism, neo-romanticism, neo-baroque, neo-impressionism. Other times, composers such as Paul Constantinescu, Sigismund Toduță, Zeno Vancea, Marțian Negrea, George Enescu, Sabin Drăgoi, are oriented towards bringing modal Byzantine music into a classical context, with „attempts to adapt the psaltic themes to the European tradition”⁴.

The styles of the post-war Romanian composers are diverse and translate into music, on the one hand, through a multitude of means of expression found in Western music, and on the other hand, by means of capitalizing on Romanian folk music, resulting in a stylized and even musical approach, which is (at times) extremely original. This osmosis between the music of Western Europe and that of Eastern Europe is beneficial for the evolution of cult music, and according to Doru Popovici, the Romanian school represents „a substantial contribution in the context of European music art, alongside the Russian, Hungarian, Bulgarian, Greek and other national schools”.⁵

The Romanian choral creation is expressed through the prism of various musical forms and genres, improving continuously from the point of view of the compositional techniques used: choral miniatures, madrigals, choral poems, hymns with or without orchestral accompaniment, choral suites, folkloric adaptations, a cappella pieces or with instrumental accompaniment, cantatas, oratorios, operas etc.

³ Irinel Anghel, *Orientări, direcții, curente ale muzicii românești din a doua jumătate a secolului XX (Developments, Ways and Trends in Romanian Music during the Second Half of the 20th Century)*, Musical Publishing House, Bucharest, 1997, p. 20.

⁴ Valentina Sandu-Dediu, *Muzica românească între 1944-2000 (Romanian Music between 1944-2000)*, Musical Publishing House, Bucharest, 2002, p. 75.

⁵ Doru Popovici, *Muzica românească contemporană (Contemporary Romanian Music)*, Albatros, Bucharest, 1970, p. 329.

The composers born around 1900, who approach folklore as a source of inspiration in the choral works are: Augustin Bena, Marțian Negrea, Nicolae Oancea, Sabin Drăgoi, Gheorghe Danga, Nicolae Lungu, Tudor Ciortea, Nicolae Ursu, Paul Constantinescu, Sigismund Toduță. After 1950, a new generation of composers assert themselves in the sphere of choral music, which resides on an aesthetic plane in which tradition and innovation coexist: Tudor Jarda, Anatol Vieru, Zoltan Aladár, Vasile Herman, Miriam Marbé, Dan Voiculescu, Costin Miereanu etc . This new generation aims to recognize and enhance the fame of Romanian music abroad.

In the first half of the 20th century the composers of choral art highlight in their works the folk melos, especially in quotes or in processed form, using a choral language that does not suppress the beauty and authenticity of the folk song. The harmonization of popular songs, respecting the modal functions and the rhythmic-melodic specificity of the folk song, leads to the crystallization of a compositional approach that preserves the sensitivity of folk music. The accomplishment of the Great Union of 1918 raises strong feelings of patriotism, and Romanian composers will approach topics that reflect the sensitivity and value of the Romanian people. They did not reproduce the compositional techniques of the foreign authors, but preferred to deepen the national specific, using the Romanian folk melos.

The evolution of musical language during the twentieth century was achieved through the intermingling of processes, techniques and means of expression in the compositional process. Main aspects defining the Romanian cult creation appear in the publications of important musicologists such as Clemansa Firca or Ede Terényi, but also of other musicians who had concerns in this field.

In the first part of the twentieth century some composers use as a source of inspiration the folkloric modalism, and among the procedures used by them we find:⁶

- Thorough research of *tension characters* regarding popular modal scales;
- Exploration of complex and ambiguous harmonic profiles from a functional point of view;
- Interweaving modes;
- Pedal type harmonizations, which highlight the popular quote;
- The composer's use of the *concluded harmonies* found in the modal parts of the songs;

⁶ See Clemansa Liliana Firca, *Direcții în muzica românească 1900-1930 (Directions in Romanian Music 1900-1930)*, Academy Press, Bucharest, 1974, p. 110.

- The practice of descending chromaticization, like *passus duriusculus*;
- Linearization of voice management within the modal harmonization;
- Application of chords based on fourths;
- The predominance of subdominant harmonic relationships, of the plagal type.

In the second half of the twentieth century, the modern Romanian school is in close connection with the avant-garde means of expression, reaching aleatoric music, serialism, punctualism, but without departing from folklore. The new generation of composers, a generation that manifests especially after 1950-1960 (Ștefan Niculescu, Vasile Herman, Cornel Țăranu, Alexandru Pașcanu, Anatol Vieru, Tiberiu Olah, Liviu Glodeanu, Ede Terényi, Nicolae Brânduș, Cornelia Tăutu, Miriam Marbé, Aurel Stroe, Hans Peter Türk, Octavian Nemescu, Dan Voiculescu, Adrian Iorgulescu, Șerban Nichifor, Sorin Lerescu etc.) boldly approach the new techniques used by currents and trends, such as:

- the archetypal current;
- minimalism;
- spectral music;
- heterophonic music;
- morphogenetic music;
- imaginary music.

Among the compositional processes practiced by the Romanian composers of the interwar years and those after 1950, the following examples can be distinguished⁷:

- The rich presence of modulations and chromatisms;
- Exploration of polytonality;
- The use of popular modal scales consisting of a variable number of sounds (from 5 to 8 sounds);
- Increasing frequency of the use of dissonant chords composed of 5, 6 or 7 sounds, of chromatic chords, of chords with altered sounds etc.

The exploitation of the specific expressions belonging to the Romanian folk music takes place in several stages⁸, in which they will be followed:

- Transfiguration of popular harmonic elements in compositions, using musical quotation;

⁷ See Eduard Terényi, „Problema polivalenței în armonizarea modernă” (The problem of polyvalence in modern harmonisation), in *Lucrări de muzicologie (Musicology Papers)*, Cluj-Napoca, 1965/1, p. 95.

⁸ See Maria Marina Simionescu, *Sisteme tonale în creația corală a compozitorilor clujeni în secolele XIX-XX (Tonal systems in the choral creation of the Cluj composers in the 19th-20th centuries)*, MediaMusica, Cluj-Napoca, 2016, p. 11.

- The preponderance of the treatment of the folkloric quotation through various compositional techniques: sequencing, transposition, polyphonic, heterophonic imitations and so on;

- Composition of monods with modal, popular or church character;
- Elaboration of own themes, having modal substrate.

In conclusion, in the analysis of the Romanian creation there are some essential points that must be examined:

- research of the involvement of the sacred in composition, by taking simpler or more complex elements of Byzantine music;
- investigating the possibilities of exploiting the sources of folklore – Romanian or extra-European, archaic or new;
- examining the acquisition of modern techniques from the European and American creation of the 20th century, some Romanian composers reaching the stage of developing their own compositional style according to the writing models based on certain criteria found here;
- the correlation of the above points with a given political situation.

According to Dan Buciu⁹, the choral composition school in our country will go through a period of height during 1945-1985, contributing to this various factors such as the emergence of prestigious choral ensembles or the increasing demands of an increasingly specialized audience.

The choral genre is one of the most approached by Romanian music composers throughout the twentieth century. It should be mentioned that some of the choral works composed after 1950 are written out of ideological obligations (music for and about the communist party, homeland, *Song to Romania Festival* etc.). At the same time, with the emergence of large choral ensembles (*Madrigal, Radio* etc.), important works for the history of Romanian choral music are born.

From the thematic point of view, there is a classification of the a cappella choral genres by Valentina Sandu-Dediu¹⁰, which highlights four different creative directions:

- The revolutionary, patriotic song, which includes:
 - Song of mass, in marching character: Ioan D. Chirescu, Matei Socor, Hilda Jerea, Anatol Vieru, Alfred Mendelsohn, Mircea Neagu, Vicinius Grefiens, Irina Odăgescu, Radu Paladi, Teodor Bratu, Gheorghe Dumitrescu, Vasile Timiș, Vasile Spătărelu, Dumitru D. Botez, Laurențiu Profeta, Gheorghe Bazavan et al.;

⁹ Dan Buciu, „Muzica corală” (Choral Music), in *Muzica (Muzica Magazine)*, Bucharest, 1984/9, p. 11.

¹⁰ Valentina Sandu-Dediu, *op.cit.*, p. 140-145.

- Song of mass, in folk character;
- Lyrical mass song: Sergiu Sarchizov, Laurențiu Profeta, Christian Al. Petrescu, Felicia Donceanu;
- Musical adaptations of folklore, sometimes of psaltic music Sabin Drăgoi, Paul Constantinescu, Gheorghe Bazavan, Mircea Neagu, Gheorghe Dumitrescu.
- Songs inspired by popular songs or dances: Tudor Jarda, Alexandru Pascanu, Nicolae Brînduș, Dan Voiculescu, Dan Buciu, Radu Paladi, Vasile Spătărelu, Adrian Pop, Valentin Petculescu, Christian Al. Petrescu.
- Romanian madrigals, in which more or less modern compositional processes are explored: Alexandru Pașcanu, Max Eisikovits, Vicinius Grefiens, Dumitru D. Botez, Liviu Comes, Cornel Țăranu, Anatol Vieru, Tiberiu Olah, Liviu Glodeanu, Mihai Moldovan, Hans Peter Türk, Vasile Herman, Dan Voiculescu, Adrian Pop, Vasile Spătărelu, Christian Alexandru Petrescu, Șerban Nichifor, Felicia Donceanu, Dan Constantinescu, Adrian Rațiu, Anton Dogaru, Dan Buciu, Vasile Timiș, Doru Popovici et al.

The mentioned composers represent important musical individualities, each contributing in the formation of a musical language with a Romanian specificity. They were educated either at the Conservatory in Bucharest or at the one in Iași – these being the oldest Romanian institutions of this profile (1864), or at the Conservatory in Cluj-Napoca, a new school appeared in the Romanian musical landscape (1919), which is gradually becoming one of the most important institutions of this profile in Romania and an „important branch of the Romanian composition”¹¹.

Sigismund Toduță – the father of the compositional and musicological school in Cluj-Napoca

Professor Sigismund Toduță (1908-1991) is considered the most important exponent of the Cluj-Napoca school of composition and its leader, influencing the compositional path of several musicians, such as: Vasile Herman, Cornel Țăranu, Ede Terényi, Emil Simon, Hans Peter Türk, Dan Voiculescu, Valentin Timaru, Adrian Pop etc. Manifesting itself on several levels - both compositionally, pedagogically or musically, demonstrating outstanding filtering capabilities through his own thought of infallible folklore sources, „Sigismund Toduță will manage to reach a maximum level of

¹¹ Dan Voiculescu, Hans Peter Türk, „Sigismund Toduță și școala componistică clujeană” (Sigismund Toduță and the Cluj School of Composition), in *Lucrări de muzicologie (Musicology Papers)*, Cluj-Napoca, 1984/15, p. 97.

musical vision, inaccessible to other musicians. [...] In the last decades he has established himself as a Romanian top composer, as probably, after Enescu, our music has not had"¹².

Toduță provided a solid theoretical and practical musical basis, having as tutors among others Marțian Negrea, Ecaterina Fotino-Negru in Cluj-Napoca or Ildebrando Pizzetti, Alfredo Casella in Rome, culminating in obtaining the title of doctor in Musicology at the *Pontificio Istituto di Musica Sacra* in Rome in 1938. This success represented a first among the Romanian musicians, afterwards the composer contributing to the establishment of the first Romanian Doctoral School in this field (1968). Toduță was, during the period 1971-1983, the scientific leader of fifteen theses¹³, belonging to prominent personalities, known both in the country and abroad for their compositional or musicological achievements: Romeo Ghircoiașiu, Gheorghe Ciobanu, Vasile Herman, Cornel Țăranu, Erwin Junger, Victor Giuleanu, Octavian Nemescu, Anatol Vieru, Hans Peter Türk, Gheorghe Firca, Constantin Rîpă, Nicolae Brânduș, Péter Vermesy, Dan Voiculescu, Ede Terényi.

The development of the cultural-musical life in Cluj-Napoca, during the years 1960-1980, is clearly related to Toduță's personality. He is the rector of the „Gheorghe Dima” Conservatory between 1962-1965 and the director of the „Transilvania” State Philharmonic in Cluj-Napoca, visibly influencing the progress of the two institutions, on the one hand, as the Cluj Conservatory becomes one of the most prestigious and prolific academic schools in this field in our country, and, on the other hand, for the creation of the permanently budgeted philharmonic choir, which will quickly become known, due to its interpretative quality of the symphonic and vocal-symphonic score.

In order to gain a deeper understanding of the way in which Toduță set a mark on his disciples, a brief presentation of his personality and creative style will be made in the following rows, which have represented topics for multiple articles, volumes and doctoral theses. About the way in which the musical parameters (melody, harmony, rhythm, form) are used in the Toduță's compositions, certain conclusions have been drawn from the extensive studies on his creation, to which Romanian renowned musicologists have arrived, based on detailed analyzes of his works.

1. Regarding the **melody**, the following aspects are noticeable:

- The use of popular themes, well-rounded, containing specific modal cells;

¹² *Ibidem*, p. 99.

¹³ See <https://sigismundtoduta.org/biografie/>. (Accesed in 23.01.20).

- In the last period of creation, he will resort to „the infinite melody impregnated with leitmotif cellular idioms”¹⁴;

- Beautifying the melody with *Byzantine-Gregorian melismas and splendors*¹⁵;

- Capitalization of chromatisms, up to the total chromatic.

2. From a **harmonic** point of view, his concerns are related to:

- Exploiting popular folklore and traditional musical formulas;

- The development of the so-called *Toduță's leit-chord*¹⁶, equivalent to a seventh chord with diminished octave, in which there is „always the minor seventh, and each constituent element of the chord can be «doubled» to the lower octave, completing the chord with «ajoutées» sounds (first of all by adding the sounds from the harmonic series of the fundamental sound)”¹⁷;

- Use of the mixture technique;

- The practice of polimodalism.

3. The elements of **metric** and **rhythmic** nature found in Toduță's creation include:

- Applying quasi-free rhythms, asymmetric rhythms;

- Phrases that require measures composed of 6-10 times, sometimes without writing the measuring bars or finding them only periodically, through dotted lines;

- The practice of polymimetry (related to polimodalism), „which brings an added interest through the inner ordinations [...]; Polymetry is also present when it is not digitally marked, but results from a specific spelling”¹⁸.

4. Regarding the principles of **form** applied in the compositions, the following concepts are identified:

- Toduță continues „the great *line* of Renaissance, Baroque and classical European compositions”¹⁹. He inclines towards preclassic forms,

¹⁴ Dan Voiculescu, „O înțelegere superioară a rolului artei” (A better understanding of the role of art), in *Tribuna (Tribune)*, Cluj-Napoca, 1988, p. 6.

¹⁵ See Veturia Dimoftache, „Sigismund Toduță – Evocare” (Sigismund Toduță - Evocation), in *Muzica (Muzica Magazine)*, Bucharest, 2010/3, p. 141.

¹⁶ Ede Terényi, „Conceptul armonic a lui Sigismund Toduță în lumina muzicii sale corale a cappella” (Sigismund Toduță's harmonic concept in the light of his a cappella choral music), in *Lucrări de muzicologie (Musicology Papers)*, Cluj-Napoca, 1979/14, p. 80-86.

¹⁷ *Ibidem*.

¹⁸ Dan Voiculescu, „Polifonia în creația corală a lui Sigismund Toduță” (Polyphony in the choral creation of Sigismund Toduță), in *Lucrări de muzicologie (Musicology Papers)*, Cluj-Napoca, 1979/14, p. 117.

such as: passacaglia, fugue, toccata, baroque concert, madrigal (in which he combines Renaissance elements with elements of Romanian folklore), but also to classical forms: tripartite sonata or rondo-concert.

- After 1965, the composer will treat the forms more and more freely, „even if their names recommend them as traditional patterns. In this context, the freedom of polyphonic writing contribute substantially to the liberalization of formal schemes and these, in turn, are maintained not once in the perimeter of the universal tradition, to which the composer always feels strongly connected”²⁰.

5. Among the **polyphonic** techniques applied in compositions, the following are distinguished:

- Use of popular polyphonic procedures: mixing technique, ison;
- Practicing single, double or multiple counterpoint;
- Imitative writing will occupy „a central place in the palette of the technical methods with which the composer operates.”²¹ They refer to: simple imitations, canon, fugato, augmentation imitations, stretto, ostinato counterpoint;

6. At the level of **heterophony**, we can identify:

- Prefiguration of an own vision on it, considered as „a transient state, of meteoric concealment of the monodic consensus or as a partial, provisional disturbance of the unison state. The contextual hypostases are diverse: from ison to antiphony, passing through the ambiguity of the „delusion” states of voices and/or instruments, to monodies and paraphonies on ison or to more elaborate structures, such as the figured coral”²².

- Heterophony is achieved by Toduță through „the variety of modal processes, recognizable in typical linear-melodic or polyphonic-harmonic forms, but also in other «passing» forms, of mutual intersection, going up to the stages of autonomous chromatic-diatonic structures”²³.

¹⁹ Vasile Herman, „Formă și stil în creația compozitorului Sigismund Toduță” (Form and style in the creation of the composer Sigismund Toduță), in *Studii toduțiene (Studies about Toduță)*, MediaMusica, Cluj-Napoca, 2004, p. 19.

²⁰ *Ibidem*.

²¹ Dan Voiculescu, *op. cit.*, p. 105.

²² Gheorghe Duțică, „O abordare tipologică a invarianților structurali în creația lui Sigismund Toduță (1) Monodia-Heterofonia” (A typological approach to structural invariants in the creation of Sigismund Toduță (1) Monody-Heterophony), in *Lucrări de muzicologie (Musicology Papers)*, MediaMusica, Cluj-Napoca, 2009/22, p. 54.

²³ Gheorghe Firca, „Caracterul modal al muzicii lui Sigismund Toduță” (The modal character of Sigismund Toduță’s music), in *Lucrări de muzicologie (Musicology Papers)*, Cluj-Napoca, 1979/14, p. 64.

Depending on the melodic core / typology of the writing that are the basis of Toduță's choral works, Dan Voiculescu makes a classification of the repertoire, in a 1979 study, being subsequently completed by Hilda Iacob²⁴:

Table 1

Melodic core / Typology of writing	Title of the work
Adaptations of folk songs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Two choral songbooks ➤ <i>20 choral pieces for equal voices</i> (1950-1956), ➤ <i>10 choral pieces for mixed choir</i> (1958-1959); - <i>Six folk songs</i> (1973).
Songs created in the folklore spirit, without using the folklore quote	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Doină și Joc / Doina and Dance</i> (1985), for equal voices and piano, on popular lyrics; - <i>Eglogă / Eclogue</i> from the third choir book - <i>15 choral pieces for mixed choir</i> (1969); - <i>10 miniatures for equal voices</i> (1984) on popular lyrics.
Works using stylized folklore	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Triptych for equal voices</i> (1951), lyrics by Ana Voileanu-Nicoară: - <i>Arhaisme / Archaisms</i> (1942) - <i>La curțile dorului / At the court of yearning - Three madrigals on verses by Lucian Blaga</i> (1978); - Choirs for equal voices, on lyrics by Lucian Blaga: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>Estampă / Print</i> (1986) ➤ <i>Scoici / Shells</i> (1986) - <i>Noapte de mai / Night of May</i> (1991)
Choirs with a Renaissance tone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>2 Madrigals on verses by Dante</i> (1965), for mixed choir
Compositions for children, with piano accompaniment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Imn pentru pace / Hymn for Peace</i> (1956), lyrics by Vlaicu Bârna; - <i>Cântec pentru pionieri / Song for pioneers</i> (1976), lyrics by Ana Voileanu-Nicoară;
Religious creations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Psalm 97</i> (1938), for mixed choir and organ; - <i>Psalm 23</i> (1937), for mixed choir; - <i>Psalm 133</i> (1939), for soloists, choir and orchestra; - <i>The liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom – Golden Mouth in the style of the church songs from Blaj for the mixed choir</i> (1937); - <i>Liturgy no. 2</i> (1974); - <i>La râul Babilonului / At the river Babylon</i> (1974), for mixed choir; - <i>Missa</i> (1937), for mixed chorus with orchestral accompaniment.

Classification of the choral creation of S. Toduță

²⁴ Apud Hilda Iacob, *op. cit.*, p. 205-206.

Toduță's choral creation depicts a sonorous world that has evolved in several stages of creation, in which it combines modalism as reflected in the broad directions of Romanian and universal music, extracted from Romanian folk music with Renaissance and neoclassical modal music, which was later filtered through the spectrum of his complex personality and resulting in a unique and original language.

Sigismund Toduță's disciples

The multitude of compositional personalities who graduated from the Conservatory of Cluj is ranked by Mirela Mercean-Țârc²⁵ according to several criteria – the tonal expression, the compositional techniques used and the specific ways of expression:

- The first generation – the romantic generation of composers from Cluj, represented by Gheorghe Dima;

- The second generation – with romantic / impressionist influences preserved and combined with indigenous tonal-modal elements, in the tendency to outline a personal style with a national specific: Augustin Bena, Marțian Negrea, Mihail Andreescu-Skeletty, Iuliu Mureșianu, Celestin Cherebețiu, Eugen Cuteanu, Albert Márkos, Mircea Popa, Nicolae Ursu et al.

- The generation of neoclassical / non-classical composers, with the incorporation of elements of chromatic language, sometimes dodecaphonic series: Sigismund Toduță, Max Eisikovits, Tudor Jarda, Liviu Comes;

- The avant-garde generation, manifested around 1960-1970, aimed at the aesthetics of European currents (archetypal music, randomism, heterophonic music): Vasile Herman, Cornel Țăranu, Ede Terényi, Constantin Râpă, Hans Peter Türk, Dan Voiculescu, Valentin Timaru, Adrian Pop, Szegő Péter;

- The generation of postmodern orientation: Ionică Pop, Iulia Cibisescu, Adrian Borza, Ciprian Pop, Cristian Bence-Muk, Răzvan Metea, Tudor Feraru et al.

Of the personalities listed above, the generation of composers that manifested itself around 1970 had Sigismund Toduță as a teacher in the composition class. In discovering their own and personal language, these musicians experienced several styles and tendencies of European music, treating with great freedom in the choral creation the serial dodecafonism,

²⁵ Mirela Mercean-Țârc, „Stylistic Stages in the Choral Works of the Composers from Cluj-Napoca”, in *Studia UBB Musica*, Cluj-Napoca, 2009/2, p. 95.

which they try to integrate into the Romanian music. Also, the palette of sound effects has widened, there are often (sometimes violent) sound contrasts, and the shapes are fluid. As modern means of expression found in the Cluj musical scores, there are:

- Cluster;
- The whispered sound, the murmured sound;
- Sound with approximate intonation, sound spoken;
- Sound without vibrato;
- Glissando.

In completing the personal creative style, this generation of composers will go through several stages of transformation between 1950-1970, which are presented and explained by Ede Terényi in a study²⁶:

- Establishing the starting point: „The works of the 1950s present - naturally, first of all harmonically - the tendencies of taking over and processing all the elements offered by the music of the first half of the century.”

- The maturation stage: „The creation of the 1960s shows us the emergence of innovative tendencies and in the organization of the vertical dimension of the sound material.”

- Synthesis stage: „In the 1970s we witnessed significant syntactic achievements (including harmonically); the musical character becomes more transparent, simple, more accessible, but at a higher quality level.”

A characteristic aspect of this generation of Cluj composers is the adoption of composing techniques in vogue around 1970, of the dodecaphonic technique and of serialism, handling with great freedom the chromatic totality, and the sonority of the works being inscribed in neomodernism, neoclassicism, neo-impressionism or neo-impressionism.

In certain creations, the composers will use musical scales resulting from the sounds generated by a certain order of the intervals used when the musical cells are subjected to metamorphoses that follow mathematical rules (addition, subtraction, multiplication, division).

The specificity of the music in the Transylvanian area is an inspiration for the Cluj composers, who take as their starting point the rhythmic and melodic formulas, the modal structures or the polyphony of the popular songs of this region.

²⁶ Ede Terényi, *Armonia muzicii moderne (The harmony of the modern music (1900-1950))*, Gheorghe Dima Music Academy, Cluj-Napoca, 1983, p. 175.

Conclusions

The musical language of the Romanian composers that manifests itself during the 20th century has several „layers”, the most important being drawn from the Romanian folk melos, next to which the influence of European romantic music and neoclassical or neo-baroque sounds, the latter being noticeable at the level of harmonic or melodic language.

The level of Romanian cult music increased with the remarkable achievements of some composers educated in Cluj-Napoca, who formed a school of composition that was shaped around Sigismund Toduță. The entire creation of Sigismund Toduță occupies a leading place in the Romanian musical culture, becoming a writing model for a whole multitude of composers who will find in the scores the demands of a compositional thinking aimed at organizing the musical content centered around the modalism, explored at all levels.

The model of exploiting the diatonic modal sources is also followed by his disciples, but in his own and personalized language. The valuing of the sources of inspiration (folkloric or ecclesiastical), regardless of the form of assimilation of the modal language (quotation, adaptation of a folk/church song or a composition written in folkloric spirit, with original themes) has as a priority the preservation of their authenticity and beauty.

As common features extracted from the choral creations of the composers from Cluj, we can mention:

- The concept of polyphonic writing;
- The chromatic mode at the level of the song.
- „The depth of the structuralist orientation” printed by Toduță to most of its representatives, „from Vasile Herman to Dan Voiculescu, from Hans-Peter Türk to Péter Szegő, from Valentin Timaru to Adrian Pop.”²⁷
- Integration in the different context of the inspiration drawn from Transylvanian oral traditions.²⁸

The complexity of the picture of the contemporary choral music school of Cluj is very high, this article wishing to illustrate in broad terms the fundamental qualities of this important landmark of Romanian cult music. Each composer or even some significant works from their creation represents, in part, a living individual phenomenon, with its own universe that deserves to be researched and appreciated due to its special attributes.

Translated by Laura Greavu

²⁷ Valentina Sandu-Dediu, *op. cit.*, p. 129.

²⁸ *Ibidem.*

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