

## THE TRADITION OF “CUNȚANU” CHURCH MUSIC BETWEEN THE ORALITY AND THE UNIFORMIZATION TRENDS

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**SUMMARY.** The Orthodox Church music in Transylvania, unlike the other regions of the country, had a special path. Circulating in oral form, it was first fixed in writing, in 1890, in the collection belonging to Professor Dimitrie Cunțanu. Alongside this, there were other attempts to fix in music notation a local variant or to supplement and disseminate some of the indigenous musical variants. Analysing the content of these musical works, we can observe the similarities and the distinctions that can be seen both at the melodic line and at the level of the cadential structures. Circulating in an academic form, but also in an oral variant, both styles are part of the same Transylvanian church musical tradition, having their source in Byzantine music.

**Keywords:** church music, orality, “cunțanu style”, uniformization.

The orthodox church music, performed in the main regions of our country has a different evolution from one area to another, being influenced by historical, cultural and political factors. The pressure exerted by these factors determined the appearance of several local church musical variants, folded on the specificity and ethos of each area.

Starting from these aspects, the purpose of this research is to show the course of the Orthodox church chants in the Transylvanian area, beginning with the nineteenth century, with the first attempts to fix in the linear notation a regional musical variant.

To limit the scientific approach, we will only stop at the local musical variants, developed around the main university centres: Sibiu and Cluj-Napoca. The boundaries of the area are dictated by the role they have played in editing, broadcasting, and implementing a style of church music.

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Unlike the other regions of Romania, the orthodox church chant is built, in Transylvanian, at the intersection of historical, socio-political, religious and cultural factors, which gave it a distinctive dynamics and a series of specific features. Following the diachronic course of the Orthodox cult music from the Romanian territories, we can see how the historical and social context in Transylvania was less favourable to the development of psaltic chant than in Wallachia and Moldova.<sup>2</sup>

Overall, in its evolution, the church music in Wallachia, Moldavia and Transylvania was marked by two major events: the romanianisation<sup>3</sup> of the church byzantine songs, started with the works of Filothei Sin Aga Jipei and the union of a part of the Transylvanian Romanians with the Church of Rome. Following the two events resulted, on the one hand, the action of the romanianisation or adaptation the Greek Church songs to the Romanian text<sup>4</sup>, and, on the other hand, the enclavization and diversification of the church chants, caused by the church consequences of the union act with Rome (1701).

These historical events would develop in Transylvania and Banat a special church music, grafted on the Byzantine music. In this regard, the researcher Constanța Cristescu states that: "Through a multi-secular oral practice, the regional styles, derived from the Byzantine musical tradition, has crystallized in Transylvania, Maramureș, Oaș, Banat and Crișana a special church music, assimilating various musical elements from folklore,

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<sup>2</sup> Several details about the history and evolution of the cult and church music in Transylvania, until the nineteenth century, see: Ioan Lupaș, *Istoria bisericească a românilor ardeleni*, (*The Church History of the Transylvanian Romanians*), Sibiu, 1918; Ștefan Meteș, *Istoria Bisericii și a vieții religioase a românilor din Transilvania și Ungaria*, (*The History of the Church and the Religious Life of the Romanians in Transylvania and Hungary*), vol. I, Sibiu, 1935; Petru Gherman, „Muzica bisericească din Ardeal” (“The Transylvanian Church Music”), in: Omagiu I.P.S.S. Dr. Nicolae Bălan, Sibiu, 1940, pp. 426-437; C.C. Ghenea, *Din trecutul culturii muzicale românești*, (*From the Past of the Romanian Musical Culture*), Editura Muzicală a Uniunii Compozitorilor, 1965; I.G. Popescu, „Învățământul muzical în Biserica Ortodoxă Română. De la începuturi până în secolul al XVIII-lea inclusiv” (“Musical Education in the Romanian Orthodox Church. From the beginnings until the eighteenth century inclusive”), in: *Biserica Ortodoxă Română*, (9-10), 1969, pp. 1027-1061; Ioan Lupas, *Istoria bisericească a românilor ardeleni*, (*The Church History of the Transylvanian Romanians*), Sibiu, 1918.

<sup>3</sup> The concept of romanianisation designates the process of translation, copying and adaptation of the Byzantine music into Romanian texts. The term was used for the first time by Anton Pann, in the preface of the book *Fabule și istorioare* (*Fabule and the stories*), where he stated: “After learning the canons and the spelling of this of this art, I began to romanianisation and to put on notes the most needed books”. Anton Pann, *Fabule și istorioare* (*Fabule and the stories*), Bucharest, 1841, p. 4.

<sup>4</sup> Effort sustained by the process of romanianisation, editing and dissemination of musical books of the great artists of Romanian musical tradition: Macarie Ieromonahul, Anton Pann, Dimitrie Suceveanu, Ion Popescu-Pasărea.

from cult music of other religions (Catholicism, Protestantism) and from secular music and entertainment".<sup>5</sup>

Developed under historical and religious conditions unfavourable to the Orthodox cult, the church music in Transylvania preserved, in its melodic structures, the old Byzantine formulas. For the Byzantine origin of Transylvanian chants advocates and the existence of numerous music schools that have activated in this province, until the year 1701, but also the phenomenon of the circulation of musical manuscripts between churches and monasteries.

More specifically, the church chant was developed in Transylvania through the existing monastery schools in Bălgrad, Prislop, Sâmbăta de Sus, Moisei, Peri, Vad, Hodoș-Bodrog, Șemlacul Mic, Srediștea Mică, Caransebeș, Scorei, Apșa, Budești, Giulești, but also through the churches of Streisângeorgiu, Feleac, etc., where, alongside cultural-spiritual activities, there were also activities for learning the Byzantine musical notation.<sup>6</sup>

As for the church musical manuscripts, on the territory of Transylvania, they enjoyed the careful and competent research undertaken in works signed by Nicu Moldoveanu<sup>7</sup>, Sebastian Barbu-Bucur<sup>8</sup>, Gheorghe Ciobanu<sup>9</sup>, Gheorghe Petrescu<sup>10</sup>, Hrisanta Trebici-Marin<sup>11</sup>, Vasile Stanciu.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Constanța Cristescu, „Trăsături stilistice ale cântării românești de tradiție bizantină din Ardeal”, în: *Contribuții la valorificarea tradiției muzicale din Banat și Transilvania*, („Stylistic Traits of the Romanian Byzantine Tradition in Transylvania”, in: *Contributions to the Validation of the Musical Tradition in Banat and Transylvania*), Editura Muzicală, București, 2011, p. 68.

<sup>6</sup> See: Ștefan Meteș, *Mănăstirile românești din Transilvania și Ungaria*, (*The Romanian Monasteries of Transylvania and Hungary*), Sibiu, 1936, pp. CVII; Ștefan Meteș, *Istoria bisericii și a vieții religioase a românilor din Transilvania și Ungaria*, volumul I (până la 1698), ediția a II-a, revăzută și întregită cu 115 ilustrații, (*The History of the Church and the Religious Life of the Romanians in Transylvania and Hungary*, Volume I (until 1698), 2nd edition, revised and completed with 115 illustrations), Sibiu, 1935, Editura Librăriei Arhidiecezane, pp. 112-113 ; 442-444; Ioan G. Popescu, „Învățământul muzical...”, („Musical Education ...”), p. 1034; Vasile Stanciu, *Muzica bisericească ortodoxă din Transilvania*, (*Orthodox Church Music in Transylvania*), Editura Presa Universitară, Cluj-Napoca, 1996, pp. 16-19. Father Vasile Stanciu also reminds about the denominational music schools in Transylvania, Calvin (Sighișoara, Caransebeș, Hațeg and Turda) and Catholic (in Oradea and Alba-Iulia), who are in a proselytizing competition, pp. 20-27.

<sup>7</sup> Nicu Moldoveanu, „Izvoare ale cântării psaltice în Biserica Ortodoxă Română – Manuscrise muzicale vechi bizantine din România, grecești-românești și româno-grecești, până la începuturile secolului al XIX-lea”, Teză de doctorat. („Sources of Psaltic Chants in the Romanian Orthodox Church - Old Byzantine Musical Manuscripts of Romania, Greek-Romanian and Romanian-Greek, until the Beginning of the 19th Century”, PhD Thesis), Extras, în: *BOR*, XCII (1974), nr. 1-2, pp. 131-280; Nicu Moldoveanu „Manuscrise muzicale vechi bizantine din România”, („Old Byzantine Musical Manuscripts of Romania”) in: *MO*, XXVIII (1971), nr. 9-10, pp. 759-769.

The situation of the church music, in Transylvania, is changing radically after the act of the Union, since 1701, when Orthodox believers are forced to recognize the authority of the Roman Catholic Church.<sup>13</sup> The cessation of ties with the others Romanian lands, the isolation of the rest of the Orthodox Christians, the destruction of monasteries and schools of church singers<sup>14</sup>, had as a consequence, in the musical plan, the emergence of variants based on the oral tradition<sup>15</sup> and crystallized around the main

<sup>8</sup> Sebastian Barbu-Bucur, *Cultura muzicală de tradiție bizantină pe teritoriul României în secolul XVIII și începutul secolului XIX și aportul original al culturii autohtone*. Teză de doctorat, cu o prefață de prof. univ. dr. Sigismund Toduță și o postfață de prof. univ. dr. Romeo Ghircoiașu, (Musical culture of Byzantine tradition on the territory of Romania in the 18th and early 19th centuries and the original contribution of the native culture, PhD thesis, with a preface by prof. dr. Sigismund Toduță and a post of prof. dr. Romeo Ghircoiașu), București, 1990, 250 p.

<sup>9</sup> Gheorghe Ciobanu, „Izvoare ale muzicii românești”, în: *Studii de etnomuzicologie și bizantinologie*, („Sources of Romanian Music”, in: *Ethnomusicology and Byzantinology Studies*) vol. II, Editura Muzicală a Uniunii Compozitorilor, București, 1979, pp. 263-269.

<sup>10</sup> Gheorghe Petrescu, *Elemente de propedeutică muzicală în manuscrisul psaltic 1106*, (*Elements of musical propedeutics in the psaltic manuscript 1106*), BCU, Cluj-Napoca, 1991, pp. 77-79.

<sup>11</sup> Hrisanta Trebici-Marin, *Anastasimatarul de la Cluj-Napoca. M.S. 1106*, în „Izvoare ale muzicii românești”, (*Anastasimatarul from Cluj-Napoca. MS 1106*, in “The Springs of the Romanian Music”), vol. VIII. Monumenta et transcripta, București, Ed. Muzicală, 1985.

<sup>12</sup> See, at Vasile Stanciu, *Muzica bisericească ortodoxă*, (*The Orthodox Church Music*), pp. 34-36, the detailed presentation of the Oriental Manuscript 365 (signalled by Gheorghe Ciobanu, dated by the composers, in the 14th century, and after writing, in the 16th century), Ms. Oriental 362 (signalled by Nicu Moldoveanu in the doctoral thesis, along with other 144 manuscripts from the 18th century), Ms. Oriental 356 (dated 1758, belonging to Archbishop Ghermanos), Ms. Oriental 359 (Irmologhion, which includes the Heymos of the Octoechos), Ms. oriental 355 (dated 1814 and before 1817, contains the compositions of fifteen church authors, among which the psaltes, like Petros Vizantie Berechet, the archbishop and patriarchs Athanasius of Jerusalem), Ms. oriental 354 (an Irmologhion, written in hrysantic notation, after 1818, compiled from Petros Vizantie), Ms. oriental 366 (written at the beginning of the 19th century, having several protopsaltis authors).

<sup>13</sup> Mircea Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Române*, (*The History of the Romanian Orthodox Church*) vol. III, Editura Institutului Biblic și de Misiune a Bisericii Ortodoxe Române, București, 1981, p. 309.

<sup>14</sup> Ștefan Meteș, *Minăstirile românești...*, (*Romanian Monasteries ...*) p. XIX. The destruction of the monasteries and, implicitly, of the schools of singers took place, in the XVIII century, in two stages, in 1761, by order of general Adolf von Buccow and in 1782 by order of emperor Joseph II (1765-1790).

<sup>15</sup> For the influence of the orality on the church music in Transylvania, see the works signed by: Vasile Grăjdian, Sorin Dobre, „Cântăreți bisericești din Ardeal”, („Church Performers from Transylvania”), vol. I, Sibiu, 2003; Vasile Grăjdian, *Oralitatea cântării bisericești din Ardeal*, (*The Oralities of Church Music in Transylvania*), Sibiu, 2004.

cultural centres in the provinces under the Austro-Hungarian dominion: Banat<sup>16</sup>, Arad<sup>17</sup>, Oradea<sup>18</sup>, Blaj<sup>19</sup>, Sibiu<sup>20</sup>.

As a result of all the historical hardships through which the Transylvanian church music passed, according to musicologist Constanța Cristescu, two distinct main regional styles have been crystallized: a central-Transylvanian and Nordic style, called "Cunțana Song", after the name of the one who fixed it, in a linear notation, Dimitrie Cunțanu, and a south-western and western border style from Banat and Crișana, arranged on notes by various priests and teachers, from the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>21</sup>

Regarding the Byzantine musical background kept in the melodic structures of central Transylvanian style "cunțanu", which we deal with in this study, musicologist Gheorghe Ciobanu, in his study "Ecclesiastical Music in Transylvania and Banat", specifies that in maintaining the circulation of Byzantine chant in Transylvania contributed the permanent links with the Romanian countries, like for example:

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<sup>16</sup> Sentinela Cântărilor Bisericești Române, (The Sentinel of the Romanian Church Chants) written by Terentius Bugariu, Temesvar, 1908; Cele opt glasuri bisericești, (The Eight Ecclesiastical Tones) arranged on the liner notes after the old tunes used in the Banat and Crișana, by Atanasie Lipovan, Arad, 1926<sup>1</sup>, 1936<sup>2</sup>; Cântări bisericești. Răspunsurile la Sfânta Liturghie, Irmoase, Pricesne și alte cântări de peste an, Cele opt glasuri, (Church chants. The responses at Holy Mass, Irmoase, Pricesne and other chants over the year, The eight tones), written on the notes by Nicolae Fîru, Timișoara, 1943; Dimitrie Cușma, Ioan Teodorovici, Gheorghe Dobreanu, Cântări bisericești (Vecernia, Utrenia și Sfânta Liturghie), (Ecclesiastical Songs. Vespers, Matins and Divine Liturgy), Ed. Mitropoliei Banatului, Timișoara, 1980.

<sup>17</sup> *Strana. Colecție de cântări bisericești pentru strună pe cele opt glasuri (adică Anastasimatarul)*, (A collection of church chants for the strana on the eight tones, Anastasimatarion), arranged on notes by Trifon Lugojan, Arad, 1905<sup>1</sup>, 1907<sup>2</sup>, 1927<sup>3</sup>; *Cele Opt Glasuri după Episcopul Ioan Papp*, (The Eight Tones after Bishop Ioan Papp), arranged on notes by Trifon Lugojan, Arad, 1912<sup>1</sup>, 1939<sup>2</sup>; *Cele opt glasuri la Utrenie*, (The eight tones at Matins) arranged on notes by Trifon Lugojan, Arad, 1927.

<sup>18</sup> Cântări bisericești pe cele opt versuri ale bisericii orientale, prescrise pentru Dieceza română unită de Oradea. (The church songs on the eight tones of the oriental church, prescribed for the Romanian diocese united by Oradea) Partea I. Vespers, Partea a II-a. Utrenia, Oradea, 1928.

<sup>19</sup> Cele opt versuri bisericești în felul cum se cântă la Blaj, (Vecernia vol. I și Mănecatul sau Utrenia vol. II), (The eight ecclesiastical tones as they are played in Blaj, Vespers vol. I and Matins vol. II) written on linear notes by Celestin Cherebețiu, Cluj, 1930.

<sup>20</sup> Cântările bisericești după melodiile celor opt glasuri ale Sfintei Biserici Ortodoxe Române, (The church chants after the songs of the Eight Tones of the Holy Romanian Orthodox Church) collected and arranged by Dimitrie Cunțanu, a former professor at the Andreian Seminar in Sibiu, 1925<sup>2</sup>, 1932<sup>3</sup>. The third edition of the church authorship cared for by Timothy Popovici, priest, professor of music at the normal school Andrei Șaguna and Conductor of the Metropolitan Choir, Institutul de Arte grafice Krafft & Drotleff S. A., Sibiu, 1932.

<sup>21</sup> Constanța Cristescu, *Sigismund Toduță și stilul liturgic de la Blaj*, (Sigismund Toduță and the liturgical style of Blaj) Fundația „S. Toduță”, Editura Arpeggione, Cluj-Napoca, 2011, p. 10.

“the spread of the cult books, by different clerics and teachers, which were supposedly taken with them and how to sing; the ordination of the Transylvanian hierarchs in the Romanian Lands, which return to the Transylvanian lands brought with them the cultural and musical tradition; the existence of properties of rulers of the Romanian Lands in southern Transylvania, where they built churches and monasteries; the literary creation and the manuscripts of some Transylvanian authors who have learned books in the cultural centres of the Romanian Lands, such as: Bucur Grămăticul of Sâmbăta de Sus, Ioan Duma of Braşov, Naum Râmniceanu”.<sup>22</sup>

Given the historical contexts in which the church music was developed in Transylvania, it should be pointed that it has been transmitted eminently orally and has been maintained by the people. The church music was the coagulating factors for the unity of language and nation. This situation, determined by various external factors, is not foreign to the Byzantine musical tradition, characterized, in its turn, by this process of orality.<sup>23</sup> In his work on byzantine music, Egon Wellesz affirmed that the Byzantine musical notation: “It was only an *aide-mémoire* for the singer, not just in the early stage of the musical notation, when the scale of the intervals was not fixed, but also in the 13<sup>th</sup> century notation, with the intervals fixed from a theoretical point of view. The psalt, that used the songbooks, knew the songs on the outside”.<sup>24</sup>

The orality of the music, in Transylvania, implies the existence of a musical background, of a matrix, which the variant fixed by Cunţanu tries to encompass it in writing.

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<sup>22</sup> Gheorghe Ciobanu, „Muzica bisericească în Transilvania și Banat”, în vol. *Studii de etnomuzicologie și bizantinologie*, (“Ecclesiastical Music in Transylvania and Banat”, in volumes, *Ethnomusicology and Byzantinology Studies*), Ed. Muzicală, Bucureşti, 1974, p. 346-384.

<sup>23</sup> The phenomenon of the orality in Byzantine music culture took: Troelsgård, Christian „Byzantine chant notation: Written documents in an aural tradition”, in: *Aural Architecture in Byzantium: Music, Acoustics, and Ritual*. ed. Bissera Pentcheva. Abingdon (Oxon) & New York: Routledge, 2017. p. 52-77; Walter Ong, *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the world*, (3rd ed.), Routledge, 2015; Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*, A study of Memory in Medieval Culture, Cambridge University Press, 2008; Tore Tvamø Lind, *The Past Is Always Present. The Revival of the Byzantine Muzical Tradition at Mount Athos*, Europea: Ethnomusicologies and Modernities Series, No. 13, The Scarecrow Press, Lanham, 2012.

<sup>24</sup> Egon Wellesz, *A History of Byzantine Music and Hymnography*, ed. II, Oxford Clarendon Press, 1961, p. 24.

„Orality seems to be an active element, an expression of the living, creative character, which leads further into its evolution, by gradually accumulating variants, often beyond the perception of generations, while the attempts of uniformization seem to express the need of unity as well as the stability of the spiritual fund of Christian singing”.<sup>25</sup>

Gheorghe Șoima coming to the department of Church Music in Sibiu (1941) and investigating the dynamics of the evolution of liturgical chanting in the orthodox church of Transylvania, he would assert:

“For centuries, the church singers from Transylvania were people without a theoretical musical teaching. Thus, it was not possible to preserve or occasionally relearn the psaltic chanting, loaded with a lot of melodic ornaments, which these Transylvanian singers were simplifying them. Simplifying them, the chants of the Divine Liturgy and some melodies of the troparion, kontakion, and other church services, became accessible to all believers with musical voice and hearing. They can be sung in common by almost all those who participate at the Divine Liturgy or service. These were the characteristics of the songs of the Transylvanian Orthodox Church, at the time when the Theological School in Sibiu was founded, in 1811. It was a simple eastern church music with a pronounced Romanian folk trait”.<sup>26</sup>

At the level of the modal configurative line structure of the variants of the style “cunțanu” it may be established the existence of defining cadential formulas for each tones. The consigning in linear notation of a local variant constitutes the petrification of a song model, which serves as a melodic pattern for future applications on liturgical texts. About the normative petrification of an variant enclave, Constanța Cristescu said that:

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<sup>25</sup> Vasile Grăjdian, „Oralitate și uniformizare în evoluția cântării bisericești de origine bizantină”, (“Orality and uniformity in the evolution of Byzantine chants”) în: Vasile Grăjdian; Sorin Dobre; Corina Grecu; Iuliana Streza, *Cântarea liturgică ortodoxă din sudul Transilvaniei. Cântarea tradițională de străină în bisericile Arhiepiscopiei Sibiului*, (*Orthodox liturgical chant in southern Transylvania. Traditional song in the churches of the Archdiocese of Sibiu*), Editura Universității „Lucian Blaga”, Sibiu, 2007, pp. 22-32.

<sup>26</sup> Gheorghe Șoima, „Muzica bisericească și laică în Institutul Teologic din Sibiu”, (“Church and laic music in the Theological Institute of Sibiu”) în: *Mitropolia Ardealului*, VI (1961), nr. 11-12, pp. 798-806.

“The oral tradition has conserved and preserved the liturgical model in several melodic variants, so the melodic patterns are preserved by scribbling on the portative and printed in close variants, proving their stylistic unity. The melodic patterns, noted by various priests and teachers, are local rhetoric clichés preserved for a long time by the oral tradition and church practice. They are singed as such on their own text, but they are also models to adapt and multiply on other liturgical texts, generating another group of variants. The variability of the rhetorical clichés is even more eloquent for the melodic models representative of each tones in the ritual of vespers and matins”.<sup>27</sup>

In Transylvanian church music, because of the lack of manuscripts and a musical variants fixed in musical notation, the connection with the past can be done from de practice of the current chanting, with all the mutations occurred throughout the history. In Transylvania, the fixation of a local church musical variant was first made in 1890, through the efforts of the priest Professor Dimitrie Cunțanu. But this action was not singular. Throughout its historical evolution, church music in Transylvania has also known several attempts to petrify a church music taken from the oral tradition. All these composing efforts were looking for nothing more than to create a uniformized musical variant, that would contribute to the unity of language, faith and Orthodox feeling in a geographic area confronted with many internal conflicts.

In the following we will refer to those regional church musical variants of Transylvania that remained only in manuscripts and sample editions, not accepted by the community of church singers, tributaries to a style become normative, the style of “cunțanu”. Exceeding the entire opposition manifested by the partisans of the style of “cunțanu”, in connection with their attempts to record a zonal variation, we must emphasize that, in its evolution, the church music in Transylvania was and is constantly marked by the phenomenon of orality. Oral musical variants have preserved in their structures formulas and melodic cadences specific to the Transylvanian ethos, which have been perpetuated from generations to generations of singers, forming an unmistakable melodic pattern, which served as a model for all church music teachers from Sibiu and Cluj-Napoca. These melodic patterns will be found in the manuscripts discovered in recent years, but also in the creations of the Transylvanian composers, which we will continue to analyse.

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<sup>27</sup> Constanța Cristescu, „Retorica și stilistica muzicii românești de tradiție bizantină”, în: *Contribuții la valorificarea tradiției muzicale din Banat și Transilvania*, (“Rhetoric and stylistics of Romanian music of Byzantine tradition”, in: *Contributions to the valorisation of the musical tradition in Banat and Transylvania*), Editura Muzicală, București, 2011, p. 26.



**Stages of uniformization of a zonal musical variant.  
Petru Băcilă și Petru Sîntion**

The first attempt to write in musical notation a church variant in Transylvania belonged to teachers from the Sibiu area. In pastoral of 6 December 1859, Metropolitan Andrei Șaguna urged teachers and priests from the Transylvanian Metropolitan Church, to collect folk songs and carols.

In this regard, two teachers from Rășinari, Petru Băcilă and Petru Sîntion, respond to the circular given by the Metropolitan and send him a 17-page manuscript containing: "The song of the Divine Liturgy, the evening and morning church music, which is more lacking for learning the eight tones; such as the first stihologia and athiphones of every tones and troparion; the troparion of the most important feasts and all the axions".<sup>28</sup>

Unfortunately, the manuscript is no longer found, the only researcher who studied it and published some data about him was Ilie Frecea, after which, the manuscript is missing. For the history of church music in Transylvania, it would have had of great value. It is not known precisely the date when it was written, but from the way that the authors are signed, teachers in Rășinari, it is assumed that it was dated in the period 1861-1879, so before the edition printed by Dimitrie Cunțanu. From the references of Ilie Frecea, the manuscript contained the church tones as they sang in the churches of Sibiu and its surroundings.<sup>29</sup>

**Iosif Micu**

The second attempt, in chronological order, of the fixation in written of a zonal musical variant, belonged to Iosif Micu. The Sibiu researcher, Sorin Dobre, lecturer at the Faculty of Theology of Sibiu, revealed, in the year 2006, from the heritage of the Library, belonging to Metropolitan Andrei Șaguna, issue 3296, an extremely valuable document for the evolution of church music in Transylvania.<sup>30</sup> He discovered a musical collection belonging to the student Iosif Micu, who notes, in the manuscript dated 1867, the songs of the eight church tones, much earlier than Cuntanu's edition of 1890. Iosif

<sup>28</sup> Gh. Tulbure, *Mitropolitul Șaguna. Opera literară. Scrisori pastorale. Circulări școlare. Diverse, (Metropolitan Șaguna. Literary work. Pastoral letters. School circulations. Miscellaneous)*, Sibiu, Tipografia Arhidiecezană, 1938, pp. 226-227.

<sup>29</sup> Ilie Frăcea, „La 140 de ani de la nașterea lui Dimitrie Cunțanu” (140 years after the birth of Dimitrie Cunțanu), în: *Mitropolia Ardealului*, Sibiu, nr. 4-6, 1978, p. 275-285, nota 22.

<sup>30</sup> Sorin Dobre, „Cântarea bisericească din Ardeal într-un manuscris inedit din a doua jumătate a sec. al XIX-lea”, (“The church singing in Transylvania in a manuscript of the second half of the nineteenth century”) in: Vasile Grăjdian; Sorin Dobre; Corina Grecu; Iuliana Streza, *Liturgica chant...*, p. 79.

Micu's collection was the result of the appeal that Metropolitan Andrei Șaguna made it to the priests, in a post-scriptum at the Christmas Pastoral on December 6, 1859, to collect folk songs and carols.

After all the research undertaken, we know that Iosif Micu attended the pedagogical course between 1862-1864, and after graduation, he attended the theology courses, between 1864-1867. After completing his studies, he works as a teacher in his native village (1876-1878), after which he is elected priest in Feldioara city, Brașov county.<sup>31</sup>

The manuscript found has an indication that reveals us the date when it was written and who is the author: "Made by Iosif Micu, cleric in the 3rd year 14/6/1867". The recorded variants are made up of the songs of Saturday evening Vespers: *Lord, I cried...; Let my prayer be set forth before thee...*, and the first stich and the first sticherion of all eight tones. Structurally, between the Micu and Cunțanu variants, there are some differences regarding the cadential formulas and the configurationally modal line of each tones. The Micu collection is closer to the oral variant of the church tones.

It should be noted that the presence of this musical manuscript in the library of the Theological Academy of Sibiu raises a whole series of essential questions for the evolution of Transylvanian music: Where did Iosif Micu collect the mentioned variants? Was there another manuscript he copied? The variants recorded by Iosif Micu were the only ones singing in the church? As long as we study a musical phenomenon mainly transmitted orally, it is not protected from the influences and changes that may occur in its contact with the local musical tradition, hence and the structural mutations that appear in its recording. The answers that can be given to the above questions are relative and, because of the lack variants, they can not be avoided from the influence of subjectivism.

### ***Dionisie Făgărășanu***

Another important moment in the history of church music, in Transylvania, is the discovery made by researcher Gheorghe Malene, teacher of church music at the Orthodox Theological Seminary, in Făgăraș. It reveals to the academic community a manuscript dated to 1886, which belonged to Dionisie Făgărășanu. The collection of church chants of Dionysius Făgărășanu was discovered in the library of the museum "Valeriu Literat", in the citadel of Făgărașului, at No. Inv. 3379.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 81

<sup>32</sup> Gheorghe Malene, *Muzica bisericească în Ținutul Făgărașului*, (Church Music in the Land of Fagaras, doctoral thesis), teză de doctorat, Cluj-Napoca, 2009.

The musical manuscript is divided into two parts:

1. *The musical manuscript of I. Maximilian*. 1878, identical to Cunțanu;
2. *The collection of Dionisiu Făgărășanu's church chants*. 1886.

In our research, we will only refer to the second manuscript, composed by Dionisiu Făgărășanu, which includes the songs from the Vespers: *Lord, I cried...; Let my prayer be set forth before thee...*; the first stichera, the troparion and the antiphon of the tone.<sup>33</sup>

I. Maximilian's manuscript is identical to the variant that Cunțanu recorded, which proves the existence of a stable oral tradition. The Făgărășanu collection, in turn, is a synthesis between the Maximilian variant and the oral tradition in the Făgăraș area. Compared to the collection of Cunțanu, which will appear four years later, there are no major differences, that can be spotted at the level of the modal line and the cadential formulas.

These structural aspects entitled us to say that in the area of Sibiu and Făgăraș was a musical maturity, in which the oral tradition had its own modal pillars, around which the melodic line was constructed. At the same time, the Făgărășanu collection also represents the attempt to write another enclaved musical variant, far from the centralism that the collection of Dimitrie Cunțanu wanted to impose.

### ***Dimitrie Cunțanu (1837-1910)***

In Transylvania, the process of Romanianization and uniformization of church music was made through the collection of Dimitrie Cunțanu, in 1890. This process of uniformization of a local variant, did not automatically imply the imposition of a new style of singing, but only the fixation in linear notation of an indigenous style, cultural-scholarly style.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Gheorghe Malene, „Două manuscrise muzicale inedite din Țara Făgărașului”, în: *Dimitrie Cunțanu (1837-1910) și cântarea bisericească din Ardeal*, (“Two unpublished musical manuscripts from the Land of Făgărașului”, in: *Dimitrie Cunțanu (1837-1910) and the church singing in Ardeal*), Editura Universității „Lucian Blaga”, Sibiu, 2010, p. 133.

<sup>34</sup> Vasile Grăjdian, „Oralitate și uniformizare în evoluția cântării bisericești de origine bizantină”, (“Orality and uniformity in the evolution of the church singing of Byzantine origin”), in: Vasile Grăjdian; Sorin Dobre; Corina Grecu; Iuliana Streza, *Cântarea liturgică...*, p. 31.

Thanks to the crucial role that priest Dimitrie Cunțanu<sup>35</sup> played in the ecclesiastical musical culture of the Romanian intracarpatic province, Professor Vasile Stanciu rightly named him a “road opener” and “the patriarch of the ecclesiastical music in Transylvania”.<sup>36</sup>

With the arrival of Metropolitan Andrei Șaguna, Dimitrie Cunțanu was appointed, in 1864, a music teacher at the Theological Seminary in Sibiu, receiving the hierarchical counsel<sup>37</sup> to seriously dedicate himself to the study of music, as he confesses himself:

“Recognizing the necessity and usefulness that the songs of the churches should be fixed by putting them on the notes, since 1868, Metropolitan Andrei advised me that, for their preservation and cultivation safer, to gather all the church songs and put them on the notes”.<sup>38</sup>

Regarding Șaguna's role in shaping church music in the re-established eparchy, musicologist Constantin Catrina believes that behind the mission entrusted to Dimitrie Cunțanu was, in fact, the Metropolitan's dissatisfaction towards the manner in which the singers of the Transylvanian churches practiced the song: with unclear pronunciation of the liturgical text and with a rhythmically and melodically deficient intonation.<sup>39</sup> This state prompted the

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<sup>35</sup> Valeriu Popa, „Dimitrie Cunțan”, în: Școala Ortodoxă Română de Cântăreți Bisericești „Dimitrie Cunțan” din Sibiu, (Romanian Orthodox School of Singers “Dimitrie Cunțan” from Sibiu), Anuarul II, 1927-1937, Tipografia Bucur Orendovici, Suceava, 1947, pp. 1-14; Vasile Stanciu, *Muzica bisericească ortodoxă...*, (Orthodox Church Music), pp. 68-86; Gheorghe C. Ionescu, *Muzica bizantină în România. Dicționar cronologic*, (Byzantine Music in Romania. Chronicle Dictionary), Editura Sagittarius, București, 2003, pp. 205-206; Nicu Moldoveanu, *Istoria muzicii bisericești la români*, (The history of church music in Romanian), Ed. Basilica, București, 2010, pp. 192-194; Pr. lect. univ. dr. Sorin Dobre, „Dimitrie Cunțan – repere biografice”, în: Simpozionul Național: Dimitrie Cuntan(1837-1910) și cântarea bisericească din Ardeal, (Dimitrie Cuntan - biographical references”, in: The National Symposium: Dimitrie Cuntan (1837 – 1910) and the church singing in Transylvania), Editura Universității „Lucian Blaga”, Sibiu, 2010, pp. 4-25; Vasile Grăjdian, „Dimitrie Cunțan (1837-1910) și cântarea bisericească din Ardeal”, în: Simpozionul Național: Dimitrie Cuntan (1837-1910) și cântarea bisericească din Ardeal, (“Dimitrie Cunțan (1837-1910) and the church singing in Transylvania”, in: The National Symposium: Dimitrie Cuntan), Editura Universității „Lucian Blaga”, Sibiu, 2010, pp. 31-47.

<sup>36</sup> Vasile Stanciu, *Muzica bisericească ortodoxă...*, (Orthodox Church Music), p. 75.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 73.

<sup>38</sup> Dimitrie Cunțanu, *Cântările bisericești...*, (Church chants), Third edition, preface.

<sup>39</sup> Constantin Catrina, „Mitropolitul Andrei Șaguna – despre practica și tradiția cântării de sorginte bizantină în Biserica Ortodoxă din Transilvania”, (“Metropolitan Andrei Șaguna — about the practice and tradition of Byzantine singing soresces in the Orthodox Church of Transylvania”), in: *Acta Musicae Byzantinae*, 1999, pp. 69-73. Cf. Nicu Moldoveanu, „Cântarea corală în Biserica Ortodoxă Română în secolul al XIX-lea”, (“The choral chant in the Romanian Orthodox Church in the 19th century”), pp. 513-514.

Metropolitan to charge the young music teacher Dimitrie Cunțanu with an ample action to collect the church music from Transylvania and transcribing it in a linear notation. Thus, the musical work done by Dimitrie Cunțanu, over twenty-five years, is based on this extremely laborious activity of "investigating and selecting church chants, in the context of the principles of culturalization imprinted in Transylvania by Metropolitan Andrei Saguna".<sup>40</sup>

The lack of a collection of songs fixed in musical notation, observed by Cunțanu, was, at that time, a reality of Transylvania's church music life, alongside what Vasile Stanciu called "the exclusive oral transmission of certain variants of tones, structured roughly on the same coordinates of the psaltic Byzantine modalism"<sup>41</sup>, but also "the existence of a variety of singers, some of them with possible psaltic musical training in Brașov or even in the Moldavia and Wallachia".<sup>42</sup> Among them, we can mention: the singer Toader of Ibașfalău (Dumbrăveni - Sibiu), also known as a copy-calligrapher and author of an Antologhion, which includes all the services of the feasts; Picu Pătruț and the old singer Florea Simeon, who worked as a teacher and singer, since 1834.<sup>43</sup>

In his collection, Dimitrie Cunțanu transcribed the chants that were sent to him, in an oral form, by Ion Bobeș and Ioan Dragomir, as he confesses:

"All the songs of our church I began to write them according to the notes of the modern musical as I had learned from my predecessors, teachers Ioan Bobeș, today in Boița, the protopresbital tract of Sibiu and Ioan Dragomir".<sup>44</sup>

Regarding the geographical area, in which this style of music is played, Stanciu Vasile said:

"The entire county of Sibiu, the north-western part of Brașov County, the Târnavelor area, in the Orthodox parishes, the largest part of the Alba county with the Apuseni Mountains, the Cluj County, in the Orthodox parishes, Nicula Monastery, Bistrița-Năsăud County, in the south, Maramureș County with the Rohia Monastery; part of the Sălaj and Bihor counties and even Satu-Mare County. Considering that at the Andreian Seminary in Sibiu students from all over Transylvania were trained both in the theological and pedagogical section (see the students' matrices of 1865-1909/1910), we believe that, since Dimitrie

<sup>40</sup> Vasile Stanciu, *Muzica bisericească ortodoxă...*, (Orthodox Church Music), p. 76.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 76.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 77.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 78.

<sup>44</sup> Dimitrie Cunțanu, *Cântările bisericești...*, (Church chants), Third edition, preface.

Cunțanu's time, this model of church singing was generalized in the entire Orthodox Church of Transylvania, except for the United parishes, where is practiced the so-called chant of Blaj".<sup>45</sup>

Regarding the reception, today, of the church music in Transylvania, written by Dimitrie Cunțanu, in the academic circles of Sibiu, is talk about "an original contribution and an expression of the Romanian genius in the Transylvanian process of Romanization of the singing Byzantine tradition"<sup>46</sup>, a successful combination between the orthodox Byzantine ethos, transmitted orally, and the influences of the Romanian folklore.<sup>47</sup>

Vasile Grăjdian believes that, in the case of "cunțanu style", in this meeting of the Romanian folk genre with the great Byzantine musical culture, is also about the participation at a post-Byzantine continuation of the Byzantine cultural synthesis, in which so different Eastern and Western cultures have not lost their specific identity in a huge syncretic and eclectic globalization, but have found a wonderful fulfilment through fellowship to the divine christian symphony".<sup>48</sup>

Dimitrie Cunțanu's work will remain a landmark for all the future generations of the church singers and music teachers from Transylvania. Thanks to Cuntanu's position in ecclesial structures, his variant will become normative. Starting with the 1890 edition, all attempts to fix in writing a local variant will be made taking into account the rules set by Cunțanu. These considerations entitle us to affirm that, the work undertaken by Professor Dimitrie Cunțanu, is defining for the church music in this region.

### ***Timotei Popovici (1870-1950)***

The imposition at the central level of the chants fixed by Dimitrie Cunțanu did not automatically mean the disappearance of the oral variants or the blocking of the development of new regional musical forms, influenced by various factors. I noticed that, in Transylvania, in addition to the action taken by Cunțanu, there were other actions of "petrification" of some zonal and microzonal musical variants.

<sup>45</sup> Vasile Stanciu, *Muzica bisericească ortodoxă...*, (*Orthodox Church Music*), p. 83.

<sup>46</sup> Vasile Grăjdian, „Dimitrie Cunțan (1837-1910)...”, p. 35.

<sup>47</sup> Vasile Grăjdian, „Dimitrie Cunțan (1837-1910)...”, p. 35. Cf. Petru Gherman, *Muzica bisericească din Ardeal, (Church Music from Transylvania)* Tiparul Tipografiei Arhidiecezane, Sibiu, 1940, p. 7; Gheorghe Șoima, „Muzica bisericească...”, (*Church Music ...*), pp. 798-806; Ion Popescu, „Muzica bisericească din Transilvania”, în: *Muzica românească azi, (Church Music in Transylvania)*, in: *Romanian Music Today*, ediție de P. Nițulescu, București, 1939, pp. 597-602; Gh. Ion Popescu, „Elemente bisericești tradiționale în opera muzicală a lui Dimitrie Cunțanu”, (*Traditional church elements in the musical work of Dimitrie Cunțanu*), în: *Mitropolia Ardealului*, 2008, nr. 11-12, pp. 789-806.

<sup>48</sup> Vasile Grăjdian, „Dimitrie Cunțan (1837-1910)...”, p. 46.

The structural differences at the melodic lines between the "cunțanu" style and the oral variants were also noticed by Timothy Popovici who, together with Candid Popa<sup>49</sup> and Aurel Popovici<sup>50</sup>, in 1925, are printing the second edition of the book "Church Songs" of Dimitrie Cunțanu, with extensive changes. The reason for the revision of the first edition is explained in the preface of the paper:

"Following the exhaustion of the Church Chants Manual, published in 1890, by the Dimitrie Cunțanu, the Archdiocese Consistory initiated the issue of a new edition of this book. For this purpose, through Act Nr. 2855 bis. of 12 March 1924, they asked the undersigned to present proposals on the reprint of the manual. In our response we have shown that in order to meet the current requirements, the manual must be submitted to a review. The review can be done in two ways: supporting the songs used in the archdiocese, but making the necessary adjustments, or applying the principle of unification of church chants. In the first case, the review can be done immediately, while, in the second case, it requires, in addition to time and lengthy work, a principled decision from the part of the church. The book has to be reprinted, subjecting the whole material to a review both in terms of songs and the application of texts to them".<sup>51</sup>

The review of the songs, fixed by Dimitrie Cunțanu, made by the members of the commission was not welcomed by the singers and priests, which led the return to the princeps version for the following editions: Sibiu III, 1933 and Sibiu IV, 1945.

In the absence of scriptural testimonies, we do not know what was the real reasons for returning to the original version. However, some historical considerations require us to nuance this conservative attitude. Firstly, the Theological Academy in Sibiu was the only higher education institution in Transylvania. Here come to school all the young people who wants to became priests. Secondly, the church music taught at the Academy,

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<sup>49</sup> Professor of church music at the "Andreian" Theological Academy.

<sup>50</sup> Professor of church music at the "Andrei Șaguna" Normal School.

<sup>51</sup> *Cântările bisericești după melodiile celor opt glasuri ale sfintei Biserici Ortodoxe culese, puse pe note și aranjate de Dimitrie Cunțanu, profesor la Seminarul Andreian Arhiepiscopesc din Sibiu, ediția a II-a, revăzută și augmentată – publicată de consistoriul arhiepiscopesc, Sibiu, 1925, prefața la ediția a II-a. (The ecclesial chants after the songs of the eight tones of the holy Orthodox Church, gathered on the notes and arranged by Dimitrie Cunțanu, professor at the Andreian Archdiocese Seminary in Sibiu, 2nd edition, revised and augmented - published by the Archdiocese Consistory Sibiu in 1925, the preface at the second edition).*

was assimilated and then later disseminated throughout Transylvania, hence its large geographic expanse. Another aspect that is worth mentioning is that we do not know to what extent the graduates, familiar with “cunțanu style”, put it into practice, in the rural or urban parishes, given the lack of a structure of specialized church singers. Considering the oral tradition, we notice that then, as today, the music performed in the rural parishes and even in the urban parishes was not the same as the uniformed variant of Cunțanu. It should also be mentioned that, this eight-year interval between the two editions of 1925 and 1933, does not justify the automatic change of the way of interpretation of the church chants, which leads to a conservative attitude. From the point of view, of the melodic lines, the differences between the two editions are not so large as to cause mutations at the reception level of the new variants.

Certainly, the local oral variant was not influenced by the second edition of Timotei Popovici. All these considerations lead us to believe that, the conservative opposition was rather a central one, dictated by the need to assert stability and continuity in order to legitimize a musical tradition. The need for a stable, uniformized, unanimously accepted musical tradition, was also dictated by the process of unification of the psaltic music in the Principate, beginning with the desiderate of Bishop Melchisedec Ștefănescu, in 1881.<sup>52</sup>

Returning to the second edition, it was considered by some musicologists to be more successful than the first collection made by Dimitrie Cunțanu. Ion Popescu, referring to this edition, says: “it is recognized that it is superior to the first edition”.<sup>53</sup> Gheorghe Șoima also shares the same opinion: “Professor T. Popovici, in collaboration with Prof. Aurel Popovici and Candid Popa, notes again and with more competence the songs of the eight tones and the other church songs, selecting some more successful variants and more widespread than those printed by Cunțanu”.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> In the vision of Bishop Melchisedek, in order to cultivate their sense of belonging to the same people, led by the same ideals, all Romanians should sing the same church repertoire, composed in Romanian and on the musical structures of the Romanian ethos, where the need that the most successful chants, “the best and more compatible with our old national music” to be played in monodic and harmonic variants. Melchizedek Ștefănescu, “Memoir for the Church Songs in Romania”, in: *BOR*, 1882, no. 6, pp. 11-47.

<sup>53</sup> Ion Popescu, “Church music...”, p. 312.

<sup>54</sup> Gheorghe Șoima, “Church music...”, p. 803.



### **Vasile Petrașcu (1889-1973)**

Vasile Petrașcu<sup>55</sup> was the first teacher of the Church and Ritual Music Department, from the Theological Academy of Cluj, founded in 1924. Following the courses of the Andreian Theological Institute in Sibiu, he had as teachers Dimitrie Cunțanu and Timotei Popovici, who contributed to his formation in the line of the Transylvanian church musical tradition.

During his teaching activity, but also after his completion, he was very much dedicated to continuing the process of restitution and writing of the Transylvanian musical tradition. In this sense, all its church musical works are characterized by the use of the melodic structures specific to the "cunțanu style". The musical style imposed by Dimitrie Cunțanu was continued by Vasile Petrașcu. This can be seen in the melodic formulas and in the musical discourse of his choral creations.

Regarding the evolution of ecclesiastical music in Transylvania, the compositional works of Vasile Petrașcu was an editorial event with great significance in the landscape of the church music at that time, because from the first edition of the work of Dimitrie Cunțanu, no music books have been printed for the use of church singers.

Among the most representative works, it is worth mentioning: *Catavasier*<sup>56</sup>, *Glory ... And now... Preblessed* and *Doxologii* on all eight tones<sup>57</sup>. In the preface of his *Catavasier*, Petrașcu places his contribution in the continuity of the church musical tradition noted by his Sibiu teacher, stating that: "in the prosodic application of the church songs, the main

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<sup>55</sup> Biobibliographic details at Vasile Stanciu, „Viața, activitatea și opera muzicală a prof. dr. Vasile Petrașcu”, (“Life, activity and musical work of prof. Dr. Vasile Petrascu”) în: *Mitropolia Ardealului*, XXXIII (1988), nr. 2, pp. 20-36; Vasile Stanciu, *Muzica bisericească ortodoxă...*, (*Orthodox Church Music*), pp. 233-238; Gheorghe C. Ionescu, *Muzica bizantină în România. Dicționar cronologic*, (*Byzantine Music in Romania. Chronological Dictionary*), București, Editura Sagittarius, 2003, pp. 373-374; Viorel Cosma, *Muzicienii din România. Lexicon*, (*Musicians from Romania. Lexicon*), vol. VII, Editura Muzicală, București, 2005, pp. 363-364; Vasile Stanciu, „Petrașcu Vasile”, în: *Dicționar de muzică bisericească...*, (*Dictionary of Church Music...*) s. v. *Petrașcu Vasile*; Daniel Mocanu, „Vasile Petrașcu – reperele unui traiect intelectual”, în: *Icoană, mărturie creștină, totalitarism*, (“Vasile Petrașcu – the landmarks of an intellectual tract”, in: *Icon, Christian testimony, totalitarianism*) editors: Vasile Stanciu și Cristian Sonea, Cluj-Napoca, Editura Presa Universitară, 2017, pp. 597-621.

<sup>56</sup> *Catavasier*, cuprinzând odele sau pesnele canoanelor (*catavasiiilor*) mai însemnate din Duminici și Sărbători peste întregul an bisericesc, aplicate și fixate în notație liniară de Dr. Vasile Petrașcu, profesor la Academia Teologică din Cluj, 1933. (*Catavasier, comprising the most important catavasies of Sundays and Celebrations over the entire church year*, applied and fixed in a linear notation by Dr. Vasile Petrascu, professor at the Theological Academy of Cluj, 1933).

<sup>57</sup> *Slavă... Și acum... Prebinecuvântată și Doxologiile pe toate cele 8 glasuri*. Cluj-Napoca.

forms, figures and phrases were preserved and used together with the main cadences of the songs used today in the Archdiocese of Sibiu and in the Eparchy of Vad, Feleac and Cluj”.<sup>58</sup>

Vasile Petrașcu wanted, that through his compositional works, to continue the editorial work that Cunțanu, which due to the lack of material resources, failed to accomplish it, leaving many liturgical texts, from the church services, without the melodic text. This work, of course, was not covered by Petrașcu's compositional and editorial efforts, and he also left it for future generations to fix in writing what is sung in the oral tradition.

### **Vasile Grăjdian (1953)**

Teacher of church music at the “Andrei Șaguna” Orthodox Theology Faculty in Sibiu. During his teaching, he reprinted the exact Cunțanu's edition of 1890, “in order not to awaken reforming suspicions from pious conservatives of the *style cunțanu* memory”<sup>59</sup> with an appendix, containing the most used oral formulas that are sung in the orthodox churches of Transylvania.

Vasile Grăjdian was preoccupied with the dynamic oral musical tradition, so that, through an eparchial project, he researched a lot of parishes, recording the local musical variants, for the purpose to build a digital archive. As a result of the research, he noticed the method of the singers to use the version noted by Cunțanu, to sing the *Lord, I cried ...* and then apply the model to the other liturgical texts, but using a series of “oral formulae” distinct from those recorded in the 1890 edition. These formulas are often more ornamented than those recorded, with other melodic variations, matched with the degree of reception and vocal performances of the singers.

The merger of the “academic variant” with the “traditional variant” led to emerge a stylistic compromise, resulting in the “cunțanu style”. This style does not mean the identical reproduction of Cunțanu's melodic line, but it is more a church music in the “cunțanu style”. This “cunțanu style” turned out to be a mature one, a collective creation of several church singers who determined the proliferation of a stable and well defined local musical variant in its melodic structures.<sup>60</sup>

<sup>58</sup> *Catavasier...*, p. 3.

<sup>59</sup> Vasile Grăjdian, „Aspecte de oralitate...”, (“Aspects of orality...”), p. 57.

<sup>60</sup> Vasile Grăjdian, „Importanța activității lui Dimitrie Cunțan pentru evoluția cântării bisericești din Ardeal”, (“Importance of Dimitrie Cuntan's activity for the evolution of the church chanting in Transylvania”), in: Vasile Grăjdian; Sorin Dobre; Corina Grecu; Iuliana Streza, *Cântarea liturgică...*, p. 67.

### **Vasile Stanciu (1958)**

Vasile Stanciu is a professor of church music and ritual at the Faculty of Orthodox Theology in Cluj-Napoca. His musical preoccupations include the action of composition, publishing and broadcasting of the church music books, starting from the variant "cunțanu".

The fact that, out of the total number of chants used in the liturgical context in Transylvania, over time, only few of them have been fixed in a linear notation and put at the disposal of the singers, determined Vasile Stanciu to revive the tradition of his illustrious predecessors Dimitrie Cunțanu, Timotei Popovici, Vasile Petrașcu, conducting an ample project of composing, fixing on the notes and publishing of the church songs.<sup>61</sup>

In the preface to his collection *Anastasimatarion*, the author explains the compositional principles that were the basis of this work:

"The church music with his Byzantine origin cannot remain at the level it has recorded by Dimitrie Cunțanu, but it must be perfect, both qualitatively and quantitatively. This music has all the objective data to support melodic composition and processing in the style already shaped by the orality, which turns out to be incomplete and deficient, if it is conserved and asserted only in oral".<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Thus, during his activity as a professor of church music, he printed: *Slujbele Sfinților români din Transilvania și alte cântări religioase*, (*The Services of Romanian Saints in Transylvania and other religious chants*), Cluj-Napoca, 1990; *Compoziții prelucrări și armonizări pentru o voce, două și trei voci egale și pentru cor mixt*, (*Composition, processing and harmonizing for a voice, two and three equal voices and mixed choirs*), Editura Arhiepiscopala, Cluj-Napoca, 1996; *Cântările Sfintei Liturghii pentru cor mixt*, (*The Songs of the Divine Liturgy for Mixed Chorus*), Editura Arhiepiscopala, Cluj-Napoca, 1997; *Liturghia Sfântului Ioan Gură de Aur în Do major, pentru cor bărbătesc*, (*The Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom in Do Major, for male choir*), Editura Arhiepiscopala, Cluj-Napoca, 1999; *Slujbele și Acatistul Sfântului Pahomie de la Gledin, Episcopul Romanului*, (*The Liturgy and Acatist of the Holy Pachomie of Gledin, Bishop of Roman*) Editura Renașterea, Cluj-Napoca, 2007; *Slujbele Sfinților Martiri și Mărturisitori Năsăudeni Atanasie Todoran din Bichigiu, Vasile din Mocod, Grigore din Zagra și Vasile din Telciu*, (*The services of Saints martyrs and confessor Năsăudeni Atanasie Todoran from Bichigiu, Vasile of Mocod, Grigore of Zagra and Vasile of Telciu*), Editura Renașterea, Cluj-Napoca, 2008; *Anastasimatarul sau Cântările vecerniei de Sâmbătă seara și ale utreniei de Duminică dimineața*, compuse și fixate pe notație liniară după melodiile celor opt glasuri bisericești, notate de preotul Dimitrie Cunțanu, (*The Anastasimatarion or the songs of the Saturday Night Vespers and Sunday morning Matins, composed and fixed on a linear notation after the songs of the eight church tones, noted by the priest Dimitrie Cunțanu*), Editura Reîntregirea, Alba Iulia, 2010, retipărit la editura Renașterea, în anul 2016.

<sup>62</sup> Vasile Stanciu, *The Anastasimatarion...*, preface.

And in terms of working method, the author tells us:

“I combined the two Byzantine traditions of the church, the psaltic and the transylvanian, recorded by Dimitrie Cuțanu. I have put into practice the principle of the symphony of the most successful variants, in order to highlight, on the one hand, the Byzantine common fund, and on the other hand, to highlight the qualities that Transylvanian church music enjoys and which Vasile Petrașcu, Augustin Bena, Gheorghe Șoima discovered”.<sup>63</sup>

The Transylvanian traditional church music, starting with the 18<sup>th</sup> century, had a special path towards the psaltic music in Wallachia and Moldavia. Having its source in Byzantine music, it has developed in a special way, combining several elements of cult, folkloric and secular invoice. Surviving all external and internal oppressive factors, the church music in Transylvania, after almost two centuries of orality, was crystallized into an academic scriptural form, spread throughout the Orthodox Church in Transylvania.

The first edition made by Dimitrie Cuntanu will be the model that his descendants will follow, in their compositional works, keeping the ethos of church music. Of course, the oral variant of this musical tradition also survives today, alongside the academic variant, being two musical manifestations of the same common Byzantine background.

*Translated from Romanian by Marcela Stănescu*

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<sup>63</sup> *ibidem*, preface.

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