

Nationalism Through Sacred Chant? Research of Byzantine Musicology in Totalitarian Romania

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Abstract: In an atheist society, such as the communist one, all forms of the sacred were anathematized and fiercely sanctioned. Nevertheless, despite these ideological barriers, important articles and volumes of Byzantine – and sometimes Gregorian – musicological research were published in totalitarian Romania. Numerous Romanian scholars participated at international congresses and symposia, thus benefiting of scholarships and research stages not only in the socialist states, but also in places regarded as ‘affected by viruses,’ such as the USA or the libraries on Mount Athos (Greece). This article discusses the mechanisms through which the research on religious music in Romania managed to avoid ideological censorship, the forms of camouflage and dissimulation of musicological information with religious subject that managed to integrate and even impose over the aesthetic visions of the Party. The article also refers to cultural politics enthusiastically supporting research and valuing the heritage of ancient music as a fundamental source for composers and their creations dedicated to the masses.

Keywords: Byzantine musicology, Romania, 1944–1990, socialist realism, totalitarianism, nationalism

Introduction

In August 1948, only eight months after the forced abdication of King Michael I of Romania and the proclamation of the people’s republic (30 December 1947), the Academy of Religious Music – as part of the Bucharest Academy of Music and Dramatic Art, today the National University of Music – was abolished through

the implementation of the new Stalinist reform of Romanian education.¹ Together with that prestigious institution, more than forty schools for church cantors and Orthodox theological seminaries disappeared as well (not to mention similar schools of Catholic, Uniat, Protestant, Jewish, and other faiths), leaving just two Orthodox theological institutes (in Bucharest and Sibiu) and six seminaries. This way the teaching of monodic chant in the Romanian Orthodox Church was drastically reduced. It survived in part through old *psaltes* (or chanters) who still knew the art of monodic choir singing in the few churches and monasteries that still promoted Byzantine chant.

The transmission of Byzantine chant became difficult, too, by recourse to the ‘joint chanting’ of the members of both the clergy and the congregation i.e. of every participant in the religious services² and above all due to the institutional promotion by the local Orthodox Church of a single, reduced, and simplified repertoire, a process known as ‘uniformisation of church music.’³

But things did not stop there. Almost a decade after the abolition of the Academy of Religious Music, following a decree passed in 1958, the Communist Party began the purge of the young and middle-aged generation from the Orthodox monastic space. More than a hundred monasteries and convents were closed down and monks and nuns younger than forty were forced to give up their contemplative life and go to work in factories or take other jobs “useful to society,”⁴ thereby actively contributing to the construction of socialism. It is self-evident that the decree in question obstructed the transmission of Byzantine chant and imperilled its survival in the Romanian Orthodox Church, an institution which, in comparison with other denominations, enjoyed a certain degree of tolerance from the part

1. Decree no. 173/3 of August 1947. Sebastian Barbu-Bucur, “Academia de muzică bisericească în trecut și astăzi” [The Academy of Religious Music in the past and today], in idem, *Tezaur muzical românesc de tradiție bizantină. Secolele XVIII–XXI (1713–2013)* [The thesaurus of Romanian music of Byzantine tradition. 18th–21st centuries (1713–2013)], (București: Editura Semne, 2013), 467.

2. Ene Braniște, “Temeiuri biblice și tradiționale pentru cântarea în comun a credincioșilor” [Biblical and traditional bases for the joint chanting of the believers], *Studii Teologice* 4/1–2 (1954), 17–38.

3. According to the decisions of the Holy Synod passed in June 1952, the new repertoires (published during the previous year) were to be imposed “uniformly and obligatorily” throughout Romania, and the Patriarch himself argued “that it is time to do away with regionalist ecclesiastical music and that it is absolutely necessary that in Transylvania and in the Banat and in every other part of the country we be guided by traditional psaltic music, so that eventually, having made sacred chant uniform, a believer from Dobruđa will be able to participate actively in the responses of the Holy Liturgy in a church in Maramureș and a believer from the Banat will be able to feel just as comfortable in this respect in a church in Moldavia.” Extract from “Lucrările Sfântului Sinod al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române. Importante hotărâri luate de Sfântul Sinod în sesiunea din iunie 1952” [The proceedings of the Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church. Important decisions taken by the Holy Synod at the session of June 1952], in *Biserica Ortodoxă Română* 70/9–10 (September–October 1952), 616–617.

4. Florin Mătrescu, *Holocaustul roșu sau crimele în cifre ale comunismului internațional* [The red holocaust or the crimes of international Communism in figures], (București: Irecson, 1998), 56–57. See also Gheorghe Mazilu, “Harta Gulagului românesc” [The map of the Romanian gulag], *Memoria* 1 (1990).

of the regime, although the price for this was obedience to the Party and vocal approval of its policies.⁵

While the practice of sacred chant in communist Romania was carried out chiefly within ecclesiastical enclaves,⁶ musicological research was entirely supervised by a lay institution called the Bureau for Criticism and Musicology of the Society of Romanian Composers, which, according to the Soviet model, became the Union of Composers of the People's Republic of Romania, and which is now the Union of Composers and Musicologists of Romania. In the new political context, Matei Socor (1908–1980), whom the communist regime appointed president of the institution in 1949, together with other opportunists laid down the new ideological direction for Romanian music,⁷ thereby becoming the Party's principal exponent in relation to the community of musicians. Employing the all too familiar rhetoric of the period, Socor claimed that Western music was “undergoing a process of decadence,” that Paul Hindemith promoted mysticism, and that Olivier Messiaen composed music “expressing the end of the world,”⁸ in other words music that was pessimistic and consequently formalist and at odds with the mobilising and optimistic spirit of socialist realism. Since nor did he overlook Romanian composers (see, for example, the case of Paul Constantinescu [1909–1963], the author of two Byzantine oratorios, and an Iron Guard sympathiser, who, along with other national composers “has brought to Romanian music the sound of funeral dirge and Akathist hymn”),⁹ we may conclude that Romanian composition and musicology was engaged in the same forced march to a devastating political utopia which was characteristic of the other communist-bloc countries.

5. Denis Deletant, *Ceaușescu și Securitatea. Constrângere și disidență în România anilor 1965–1989* [Ceaușescu and the Securitate. Coercion and dissent in Romania between 1965 and 1989] (București: Editura Humanitas, 1995), 206–209.

6. For details, see Franz Metz, “Muzica bisericească și muzica sacră după 1945, în România” [Church music and sacred music after 1945 in Romania], *Muzica* (new series) 11/2 (2000), 120–138. See also Vasile Grăjdian, “Die orthodoxe Kirchenmusik in Rumänien vor und nach der Wende 1989,” *Kirchenmusik in Sozialistischen Ländern vor und nach der Wende von 1989. Bericht vom Symposium an der Kunstuniversität Graz, Institut für Kirchenmusik und Orgel (13–15 November 2003)*, eds Johann Trummer and Stefan Engels (München: Edition Musik Südost, 2006), 65–83.

7. Valentina Sandu-Dediu, *Muzica românească între 1944–2000* (București: Editura Muzicală, 2002), 16. Also available in German: eadem, *Rumänische Musik nach 1944* (Saarbrücken, Pfau, 2006).

8. Octavian Lazăr-Cosma, *Universul muzicii românești. Uniunea Compozitorilor și Muzicologilor din România. 1920–1995* [The universe of Romanian music. The Union of Composers and Musicologists from Romania. 1920–1995], (București: Editura Muzicală, 1995), 193.

9. Lazăr-Cosma, *Universul*, 194.

Transitions: 1944–1965

1: Hard-line Stalinism (1944–1954)

If the art of composition, thanks to its abstract nature, could still provide ways to ‘evade’ socialist realism, sometimes eluding the vigilant eye of communist censorship,¹⁰ the written word, even when referring to music, had to confront far more obstacles. Statistically, in the transition period from 1944–1945 to 1964–1965, musicological writing with overtly religious subject matter was in fact non-existent. The subject – a taboo, a topic officially banned by totalitarian ideology – was mentioned only peripherally and camouflaged under the cover of the wide-ranging theme of “critical valorization of the autochthonous musical past,”¹¹ always being presented in a musicological discourse that had to overlap with that of the Party, thereby becoming an ideological weapon in the service of the regime.

The following is one such example: speaking about the *Exhibition of Musical Archives* held between 24 June and 8 July 1951 at the Gheorghe Dima Conservatoire in Cluj, which aimed to display the ‘rich musical heritage’ of Transylvania, local musicologist Ștefan Lacatoș (in his native Hungarian: István Lakatos [1895–1989]), quoted Lenin, ‘who repeatedly argued for the importance of ancient sources,’ and Zhdanov ‘who demonstrated the importance of musical tradition,’ thus being able to comment on the content of the exhibition using a terminology, extraordinary in its frankness, constantly referring to religious and ecclesiastical aspects. Besides other documents that were lay in content, the article reviews a host of religious parchments, incunabula, codices and printed music in Latin, Greek, Romanian, Hungarian, and German belonging to the Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant liturgical traditions, musical monuments which prove that “despite bourgeois-landowner machinations, different nations joined hands in the musical field, creating spiritual bonds among themselves, through mutual understanding of each other’s cultures.”¹² Regarded by the reviewer as a “modest, but essential outset,” the exhibition brought together musical documents covering more than a millennium, from a 9th-century *Gospel according to St Luke* containing neumatic

10. See for example the case of composer Doru Popovici (b. 1932), who at the height of the Stalinist period (1954) wrote a symphony ‘based on Byzantine chant.’ Due to censorship, the work was not performed in public until 1968, the year when it was included in official work lists. Sandu-Dediu, *Muzica românească*, 76.

11. See Anton Pann, *Cîntece de lume* [Worldly songs], ed. Gheorghe Ciobanu (București: Editura de Stat pentru Literatură și Artă, 1955); Ciobanu, “Istoricul clasificării modurilor” [The history of the classification of modes], *Muzica* 4/3–4 (1954), 5–10 and 7–11, respectively; George Breazul, “Munca științifică la Conservatorul Ciprian Porumbescu” [Scientific activity at the Ciprian Porumbescu Conservatoire (of Bucharest)], *Muzica* 6/7 (1956), 36; Breazul, “Contribuții la cunoașterea muzicii noastre” [Contributions to the cognition of our music], *Muzica* 9/11 (1959), 23–33; Zeno Vancea, “Muzicologia” [Musicology], *Muzica* 9/8 (1959), 29; etc. Some articles were published in ecclesiastical periodicals and, as a result, were perhaps ideologically less dubious; see for example, Gabriel Cocora, “Școala de psaltichie de la Buzău” [The psaltic school of Buzău], *Biserica Ortodoxă Română* 78/9–10 (September–October 1960), 844–871.

12. Ștefan Lacatoș, “Expoziția de arhivistică muzicală” [Exhibition of musical archives] *Muzica* 1/5 (1951), 78.

plainchant notation to a codex of printed psaltic music from the second half of the 19th century, with the author drily noting: “The church musical material on display is merely an insignificant part of what is available to us in Transylvania. It was not possible to exhibit more due to lack of space.”¹³

It is important to note that the exhibition – which had a counterpart in Bucharest as well, at the *Romanian Music Week*¹⁴ – was combined with a musical event the title of which was dictated by the well-known patriotism, respectfully obliged to proletarian internationalism, as a tribute the new official Muscovite culture: *Concert of Ancient Music from Transylvania*. Despite being sprinkled with quotations from Lenin and Zhdanov, the review of the event is a sustained plea that “the labour of valorizing our musical past should become one of our musicologists’ main tasks” and at the same time an “action to unmask and annihilate bourgeois stances in music.” But in order to guarantee the success of such an action and to make the task “as fruitful as possible and productive of the healthiest and most valid traditions . . . our musicologists must take a determined position based on the standpoint of Marxist–Leninist principles.”¹⁵

2: Signs of change (1954–1965)

The impression of an apparent abandonment of socialist realist practices, subtly hinted at after the death of Stalin in 1953 and more obviously after the Third Congress of the Romanian Workers’ Party in 1960, when the President of the Republic, Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej (1901–1965), declared: “the Party’s historic mission is to achieve the national goals of the Romanian people,”¹⁶ created the illusion of cultural liberalisation and a relative ideological flexibility.

Alongside the entire Romanian cultural sphere, the Romanian musical world also reflected the political changes of the time. In 1954, Matei Socor was replaced

13. Ibid.

14. It seems that the *Romanian Music Week* was originally planned to take place in June, probably to coincide with the Cluj exhibition. In the end, it was held in the autumn of 1951, between 22 and 30 September, under the heading *Să cântăm pacea și prietenia între popoare* [Let us sing the peace and friendship between nations], cf. Lazăr-Cosma, *Universul*, 221. The *Week* also included a “documentary exhibition” organized by the Union of Composers in partnership with the Library of the Academy of the Romanian People’s Republic in the foyer of the Athenaeum. After visiting the exhibition, which also displayed numerous manuscripts of religious music, Hungarian musicologist Bence Szabolcsi (1899–1973), chairman of the Hungarian Musicians’ Union, in attendance alongside the representatives of the peoples’ republics and other countries (the Soviet Union, China, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, East Germany, Poland, and Britain), stated flatteringly: “The richness of the incunabula and musical parchments from the Middle Ages that you have makes you second only to the British Museum.” Viorel Cosma, “Pentru o vie activitate muzeografică în instituțiile noastre culturale” [For a lively museological activity in our cultural institutions], *Muzica* 5/1–2 (1955), 55.

15. Ilie Balea, “Un concert de muzică veche românească. Pentru valorificarea trecutului nostru muzical” [A concert of ancient Romanian music. For the valorization of our musical past], *Muzica* 1/5 (1951), 84–87.

16. Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, *Articole și cuvântări* [Articles and speeches] (București: Editura Partidului Muncitoresc Român, 1951), 101.

by Ion Dumitrescu (1913–1996) as head of the Composers' Union. The following year, the Union set up its own publishing house (by the way, the only music publisher in Romania), and in 1958 it adopted the new resolution in musical matters passed by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, which declared Zhdanov's policy void and criticised it as a "profound error, a manifestation of the negative features 'characteristic of the period of the personality cult.'"¹⁷

Despite the adoption of these positive measures, the plans of creation and activity of the Composers' Union were still conceived "in the light of the documents" of the congresses of the Romanian Workers' Party. Similarly to other publications in the same field,¹⁸ the monthly review *Muzica*, established in 1950 as the official press organ of the Union and the Ministry of Education and Culture, remained highly politicized. The frequently evoked 'cultural revolution,' then in its early phases, resulted in intensive visits to the country's factories and villages by cultural activists, culminating with the establishment of the Workers' University of Musical Culture in the autumn of 1959.¹⁹

In parallel and under the same cover of valorizing the musical heritage of the past, musicological writings made veiled references to subversive subjects such as the history of musical modes, which inevitably had to include Byzantine and Gregorian music; the musical education in Wallachia, touching the topic of church music at the Old Court in Bucharest and the schools of psaltic music in other regions of the country.²⁰ In a report²¹ on "the huge leap made by our musicology in the years since the liberation [i.e. 1944] . . . a leap inconceivable under different historical circumstances," Zeno Vancea, the representative of the musicological department at the Composers' Union, called on experts of the "new historical musicology" to join their efforts in order to "clear the ground in the as yet little studied areas of our ancient music and to create the necessary technical tools of research," even mentioning the achievements in the field of Byzantine music made by Ioan D. Petrescu (1884–1970), an expert whom we shall discuss below.

By far the most important achievement of this period was the publication in 1955 of the collection of lay and religious music entitled *Spitalul amorului sau Cântătorul dorului* [The hospital of love or The singer of longing], to mark the

17. Lazăr-Cosma, *Universul*, 323.

18. *Probleme de muzică* (published by the Institute of Romanian–Soviet Studies, the Romanian Association for Closer Ties with the Soviet Union [ARLUS], and the Union of Composers), a journal contributing "to the knowledge of Russian musical thinking"; *Studii și Cercetări de Istoria Artei* (bulletin of the Institute of Art History of the Academy of the Romanian People's Republic); *Revista de Folclor* (published by the Institute of Folklore). For details, see Vancea, "Muzicologia," 31.

19. Silvian Georgescu, "Deschiderea Universității Muncitorești de Cultură Muzicală" [The opening of The Workers' University of Musical Culture], *Muzica* 9/10 (1959), 16.

20. See the publications listed in note 11.

21. Vancea, "Muzicologia," 29–33.

centenary of the death of its author, Anton Pann (ca. 1796–1854). The launching of the publication was preceded by a concert of vocal and instrumental music and a lecture given by George Breazul (1887–1961), in which the celebrated musicologist evoked not only the life of Anton Pann, but also “the wide-ranging ideas of his musical and literary, religious and lay works, which are full of patriotic inspiration.”²² As it may easily be imagined, the volume in question was not published under its original title, but rather one that fit the new ideological requirements: *Cîntece de lume* [Worldly songs].²³

Between cultural liberalisation and ‘openings that close’: 1965–1990

In the chapter on oral musical traditions as compositional sources of her book analysing Romanian music between 1944 and 2000, Valentina Sandu-Dediu observes that the Byzantine source (which is never referred to as ‘religious’ or ‘ecclesiastical’)²⁴ became tolerated mainly after 1965,²⁵ in the context of the promotion of the policy for national specificity and interests within the communist bloc, as well as the progressive reorientation towards the West. Let it be said in passing that this tolerance also seems to have come from the incompetence of the official censors, who had neither the musical culture nor the professionalism to detect religious sources in musical scores.²⁶

The same ideological relaxation can be observed with regard to musicological writings whose obvious subject was Byzantine music, which began to be tolerated with a certain degree of regularity after 1964,²⁷ and in particular after 1965.²⁸ Since every meeting of the Union’s specialized sections insisted on greater professionalization (a positive fact), from 1966 the Union began to organise musicological seminars on topical subjects in step with the demands of society: *Valorization of the Heritage of the Composers and Musicologists of the Past, Humanism and Socialist Culture, Humanism and Musical Culture, Aspects of Musical Culture*

22. Lazăr-Cosma, *Universul*, 278.

23. Pann, *Cîntece de lume* [Worldly songs]. For the second edition, see idem, *Spitalul amorului sau Cîntătorul dorului* [The hospital of love or The singer of longing] ed. Nicolae Gheorghîță (București: Editura Compania, 2009).

24. Sandu-Dediu, *Muzica românească*, 40.

25. *Ibid.*, 73–91, here: 73.

26. See Thomas Beimele’s interview with composer Myriam Marbe in Thomas Beimele, *Vom Ritual zur Abstraktion. Über die rumänische Komponistin Myriam Marbe* (Wuppertal–Unna: Tokkata Verlag für Frauenforschung, 1994). Quoted in Sandu-Dediu, *Muzica românească*, 73, note 124.

27. Gheorghe Ciobanu, “Aspecte ale culturii muzicale în epoca feudală. Cîteva manuscrise bizantine” [Aspects of the musical culture in medieval times. Some Byzantine manuscripts], *Muzica* 14/5–6 (1964), 57–59; Cristian Ghenea, “Creații muzicale în veacurile trecute” [Musical composition in bygone centuries], *Muzica* 14/5–6 (1964), 62–66.

28. Ioan Dumitru Petrescu, “Aspecte și probleme ale muzicii bizantine medievale” [Issues and problems of medieval Byzantine music], *Studii de Muzicologie* vol. I (București: Editura Muzicală a Uniunii Compozitorilor, 1965), 99–123.

in the Territory of 18th-century Romania, and so on. Another positive fact was the organisation in 1967 of the first international symposium of musicology at the *George Enescu International Festival*, attended by leading experts such as Ioan Dumitru Petrescu.²⁹ The Union also organised recitals of works by formerly banned composers, such as Charles Ives or Virgil Thomson, and invited foreign contemporary musicians to give lectures, including Anthony Lewis from England and Harold Gortz from Austria.³⁰

One sign that the Communist Party encouraged the work of the Union was the attendance of its new chairman, Nicolae Ceaușescu, at the General Assembly of Composers and Musicologists from the Socialist Republic of Romania in 1968 (*Plate 1*). It is well known that in this early period of his rule, Ceaușescu used to be accompanied during his working visits in addition to writers and fine artists by two or three composers and musicologists.³¹

PLATE 1 The General Assembly of Composers and Musicologists from the Socialist Republic of Romania (1968)



29. Lazăr-Cosma, *Universul*, 380.

30. *Ibid.*, 392.

31. *Ibid.*, 394–395.

Internationalization

Although it was not new,³² it seems that after 1965 the Party's deft cultural strategy of making a dual appeal to 'competence' and 'national values,' to reaffirmation of national identity and the heritage of the past in an international context – a practice shared more or less by every country of the communist bloc in this period – bore unexpected fruit. Thereafter, the periodical *Studii de Muzicologie* was to have summaries in French, the official foreign language of the Union. Whole volumes of musicology, including some on religious subjects, were published either in Romanian–French or Romanian–English bilingual editions or entirely translated, while others were written already in a foreign language, such as I. D. Petrescu's monumental volume *Études de Paléographie Musicale Byzantine*³³ (Plate 2) and Vasile Tomescu's *Musica Daco-Romana*.³⁴ More often than not forewords and tables of contents were translated into a number of foreign languages, as in the case of Victor Giuleanu's excellent *Melodica bizantină* [Byzantine melodic],³⁵ with its table of contents given in Romanian, French, Russian, German, and English (Plate 3).

The Party's strategy of international opening also led to the organisation of the 14th International Congress of Byzantine Studies in Bucharest in 1971, an event that also had a section dedicated to the sacred music of the Eastern Church. Alongside Romanian researchers, major names in Byzantine musicology from all over the world presented papers inevitably addressing Romania's musical heritage, too.³⁶ As Western academic interest in certain topics of Romanian mediaeval music (e.g. the 16th-century musical school at Putna) coincided with its policy of national promotion, the Party facilitated foreign researchers' access to Romania's archives and even reprinted or translated into Romanian their articles and sometimes books³⁷ (Plate 4). Romanian researchers gained increasing visibility in the West, as they were encouraged to publish in foreign languages, not only in the

32. The phenomenon was visible as early as 1946, when English, French and German translations of Romanian texts were published in the *Romanian Review*, a monthly publication with the aim to communicate the entire world the dedication of the Romanian intelligentsia and scientific community to the socialist system, by constructing an artificial image of "Romania's political, social, economic, literary, artistic, and scientific life" (*Romanian Review*, 1/1, May 1946). The publication included regularly brief articles and reports, too, designed to hail, in a militant language, the upsurge in Romanian musical life as viewed through the lens of the new socialist realist aesthetics. For an analysis of the musical content of the periodical, see Joel Crotty, "Promoting Romanian Music Abroad: *The Rumanian Review* (1946–1956)," *Music and Politics* 3/2 (Summer 2009), 1–17.

33. Rév. Père I. D. Petresco, *Études de Paléographie Musicale Byzantine* (Bucarest: Éditions Musicales de l'Union des Compositeurs de la République Socialiste de Roumanie, 1967), 677 pages.

34. Vasile Tomescu, *Musica daco-romana* (Bucureşti: Editura Muzicală, 1978 [vol. I], 1982 [vol. II]).

35. Victor Giuleanu, *Melodica bizantină* (Bucureşti: Editura Muzicală, 1981).

36. Oliver Strunk, Jørgen Raasted, Elena Tončeva, Bartolomeo di Salvo, Iona Borsai, Dimitri E. Conomos, Anne E. Pennington, Stefan Lazarov, Christian Hannick, Danica Petrović, Dimitrije Stefanović, Clara Lombardi-Giordano, Johannes Koder. See *Actes du XIV^e Congrès International des Études Byzantines : Bucarest (6–12 Septembre 1971)*. Résumés. Communications. Publiés par les soins de M. Berza et E. Stănescu, vol. I (Bucarest: Edition de l'Académie de la République Socialiste de Roumanie, 1974), 293–311.

37. See, for example, Anne Elizabeth Pennington, *Music in Medieval Moldavia: 16th Century / Muzica în Moldova medievală: secolul al XVI-lea*. Bilingual edition with an essay by Dimitrie Conomos, Romani-

PLATE 2 Title page and the author's acknowledgements in the volume *Études de Paléographie Musicale Byzantine* (1967)

RÉV. PÈRE I. D. PETRESCO

ÉTUDES
DE
PALÉOGRAPHIE
MUSICALE
BYZANTINE

Cet ouvrage paraît aujourd'hui, dans notre pays, la République Socialiste de Roumanie, en des circonstances stimulatrices pour tous les créateurs, quelque soit leur spécialité, leur domaine d'activité. Le fait doit être souligné, car pour moi, auteur, qui ai peiné beaucoup d'années à l'achèvement de ce livre, la satisfaction est d'autant plus grande que je comprends la signification majeure de la voie que parcourt, à présent, la culture roumaine.

Mes remerciements pleins de reconnaissance au Patriarcat Roumain, qui m'a apporté tout l'aide moral et matériel nécessaires pour la parution du livre.

Un chaleureux hommage à l'Union des Compositeurs de la Roumanie, à l'Édition Musicale et à tous les collaborateurs pour les efforts qu'ils ont déployés pour que ce travail voie le jour.

I. D. PETRESCO

ÉDITIONS MUSICALES DE L'UNION DES COMPOSITEURS
DE LA RÉPUBLIQUE SOCIALISTE DE ROUMANIE
Bucarest — 1967

journals of the Union or the research institutes of the Academy of the Socialist Republic of Romania, but also in international periodicals, such as *Studies in Eastern Chant*³⁸ and the *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik*.³⁹

In addition, ensembles as well as young and old specialists of ancient music were given financial support via the Union of Composers to take part at festivals, symposia, and congresses held in Holland, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Austria, the United States, Belgium, and elsewhere – with permission from the Party, of course. Scholarships and grants were provided for research not only in Romania and other communist countries, such as Bulgaria, the Soviet Union, Poland, East Germany and Yugoslavia, but also in the countries ‘contaminated’ by definition: Greece, France, West Germany, Austria, and even the United States. I believe that

an translation by Constantin Stih-Boos, ed. Titus Moisescu (Bucharest/București: The Musical Publishing House / Editura Muzicală, 1985).

38. Grigore Panțiru, “Une nouvelle interprétation de la notation ekphonétique d’un manuscrit à Iași, Roumanie,” in *Studies in Eastern Chant*, vol. III, eds Egon Wellesz and Miloš Velimirović (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973), 124–140.

39. Gheorghe Ciobanu, “Théorie, pratique, tradition – facteurs complémentaires indispensables au déchiffrement de la musique byzantine ancienne,” *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 32/7 (1982), 29–37.

PLATE 3 Cover of Victor Giuleanu's volume on *Melodica bizantină* [Byzantine melodies], (1981)

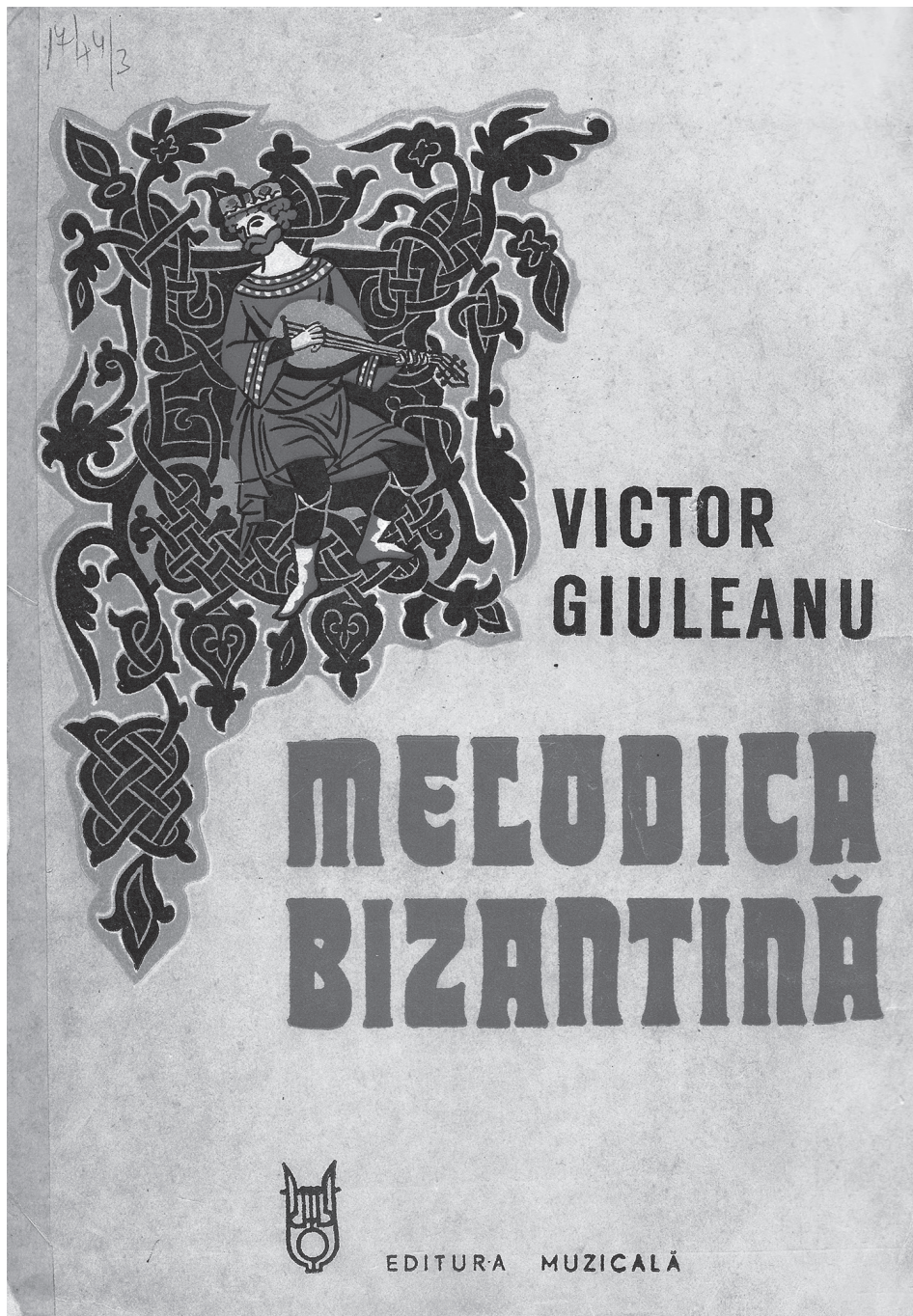
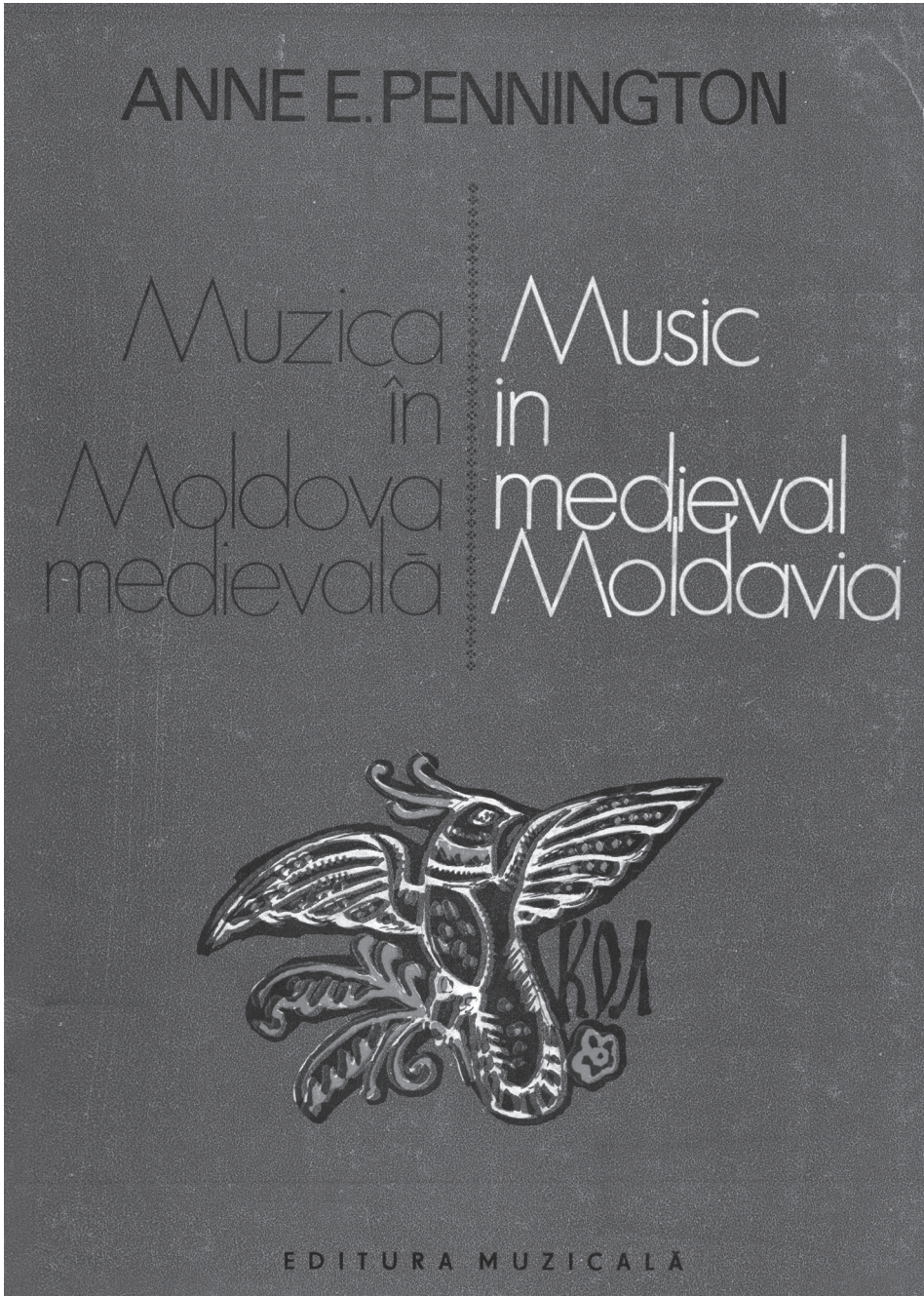
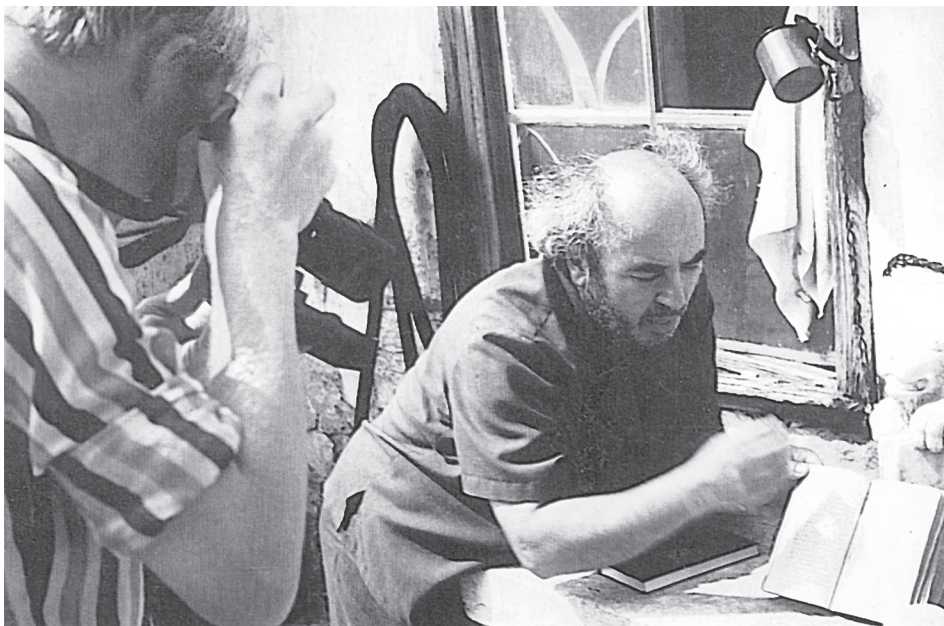


PLATE 4 Cover of the paperback bilingual edition of *Muzica în Moldova medievală: secolul al XVI-lea / Music in Medieval Moldavia: 16th Century* by Anne Elizabeth Pennington (1985)



one of the most spectacular and incredible musicological research expeditions undertaken during Romania's totalitarian period was made by Professor Sebastian Barbu-Bucur (1930–2015) who between 1982 and 1986 examined the Romanian musical manuscripts of Byzantine tradition preserved at Mount Athos (*Plate 5*).

PLATE 5 The late Archdeacon and university professor Sebastian Barbu-Bucur, holding a manuscript for a photographer, in Mount Athos (1984)



Only two decades earlier, Sebastian Barbu-Bucur, then a young monk, had been evicted from his monastery by the one-party state and while a student at the Conservatory he had been expelled for handing out crucifixes to his fellow students...

The series *Izvoare ale muzicii românești* [Sources of Romanian music]

This is the title that allowed the Union of Composers to publish important works on ancient Romanian music.⁴⁰ Politically supported and encouraged precisely because it tackled the sensitive subject of the 'multisecular' traditions of the Romanian people, the project – initiated by the Bureau for Criticism and Musicology Section and planned to run for at least twenty volumes – sought to demonstrate

40. Lazăr-Cosma, *Universul*, 490.

the variety of Romania's cultural and musical past.⁴¹ It permitted the albeit-partial recovery of not only lay instrumental and vocal corpuses, but also codices of religious music, both Byzantine and Gregorian.⁴² As part of *Sources* and following the model of the prestigious Danish publication *Monumenta Musicae Byzantinae*, founded in 1935 by Carsten Høeg, a group of researchers headed by Gheorghe Ciobanu (1909–1995) and Titus Moisescu (1922–2002) founded a series of Byzantine music unique in Central and Eastern Europe. The three directions of the series – *Documenta/Monumenta*, *Transcripta*, and *Studia* – enabled extensive publication of analyses and transcriptions of major musical codices from the Romanian tradition, in which there were two major themes: 'The Musical School at Putna' and 'The Process of Romanianisation of Chant' (i.e. translation and adaptation in Romanian of Greek liturgical texts).⁴³

But let us not believe that the positive aspects described above were linear and without incidents. As mentioned above, musicologists were not allowed to use terms such as 'religious music' or 'ecclesiastical music.' Rather, it was recommended to employ 'Byzantine music,' 'Gregorian music,' or 'mediaeval musical sources,' while 'Christmas music' was referred to as 'the music of the winter holidays.'⁴⁴ But the censorship was even more drastic when the liturgical texts included names such as 'God,' 'the Mother of God,' 'Jesus,' and 'the Holy Ghost': these either had to be removed from the text or else the text itself had to be omitted.⁴⁵ In the 'glory years' of the Ceaușescu regime, the strategy for lulling the vigilance of the censors was to include at the beginning of a study an older or preferably a more recent quotation from a speech by the 'beloved president' of the Republic on the subject of the upbringing, the public education or the culture of the homeland. Then, the author would abruptly plunge into his subject, but taking care to scatter brief texts from Party congresses all over his research account.

Musicologist Corneliu Buescu, a former member of the editorial board of *Editura Muzicală*, recounted to me an astonishing situation: the political representatives of the publishing house once insisted that the bibliography of a volume of musicology include works by Nicolae Ceaușescu and that the index should begin with the letter C rather than A. And this was by no means an isolated case.

41. Gheorghe Ciobanu, *Culegeri de folclor și cântece de lume* [Collections of folklore and worldly songs] (= *Izvoare ale muzicii românești* [Sources of Romanian Music], vol. I), (București: Editura Muzicală, 1976), 5–23.

42. Sandu-Dediu, *Muzica românească*, 39–40.

43. Nicolae Gheorghîță, "Muzicologia bizantină în preocupările UCMR" [Byzantine musicology within the activities of the Union of Composers and Musicologists from Romania], *Muzica* (new series) 21/4 (2010), 104–110, here: 105.

44. Metz, "Muzica bisericească," 134.

45. This was a constant practice up until 1968–1970 and to a lesser extent thereafter.

In place of a conclusion

Undoubtedly, the major field in which Romanian musicology excelled under the communist dictatorship was the research into archaic oral traditions: folk music and Byzantine music.⁴⁶ As a peripheral area, which could constitute at any time a severe ideological sin, Byzantine musicology took advantage of the ideas and ideals of the Party through a series of strategies exploiting them to a noble end, particularly in the period after 1965–1970. The professionalism of the research, the value that the international academic community attributed to the achievements of Romanian researchers, and the extent to which Western interests in the field became topics of research in Romania are questions that require more detailed and nuanced answers.

But beyond the irregularities and fluctuations of the system and the greater or lesser compromises that were made, the balance sheet was predominantly positive for a field which in some communist countries – for example the Soviet Union⁴⁷ – could not even be mentioned. In an article from 1988 on Byzantine musicological research worldwide, Diane Touliatos wrote: “Romania has an active group of scholars producing a steady flow of research,” and granted significant space to Romanian research in the field.⁴⁸ In 1995, Titus Moisescu, who was a member of the board of Editura Muzicală for more than thirty years and was even its director for a time, compiled statistics on the works published between 1957 and 1990: more than 2,500 titles, of which more than 800 were works of musicology,⁴⁹ about 380 of them dealing with Byzantinology. And if we add the works published elsewhere, then the total is more than 550 of which approximately 380 were bilingual or either written already in a foreign language or containing a summary in a foreign language.

The above statistics makes me believe that of all the branches of musicology, research into Byzantine music in communist Romania was paradoxically the field that enjoyed the greatest promotion, transparency, and international interest.

46. Sandu-Dediu, “A scrie despre muzică în România postbelică: surse sovietice, naționalism, structuralism” [Writing about music in postwar Romania: Soviet sources, nationalism, structuralism], *Octave paralele* [Parallel octaves], (București: Editura Humanitas, 2014), 187.

47. V. Detlef Gojowy, “Wiederentdeckte Vergangenheit – Die russisch-sowjetische Avantgarde der 10er und 20er Jahre rehabilitiert?,” *Neue Musik im politischen Wandel*, ed. Hermann Danuser (Mainz: Schott, 1991), 11. Quoted in Sandu-Dediu, *Muzica românească*, 73–74.

48. Diane Touliatos, “Research in Byzantine Music Since 1975,” *Acta Musicologica* 60/3 (September–December 1988), 205–228, here: 215.

49. Titus Moisescu, “Ce a fost și ce este Editura Muzicală a Uniunii Compozitorilor Români” [What was and what is the Music Publishing House of the Union of Romanian Composers], *Muzica* (new series) 6/4 (1995), 58–59.