

**“BABEȘ-BOLYAI” UNIVERSITY, CLUJ-NAPOCA
FACULTY OF ORTHODOX THEOLOGY**

**CELESTIN CHEREBEȚIU IN THE CULTURE OF
TRANSYLVANIAN SACRED MUSIC**

DOCTORAL THESIS ABSTRACT

**Advisor,
Pr. Prof. Univ. Dr. Vasile Stanciu**

**PhD Candidate,
Alexandru Suciu**

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ABSTRACT

The present research was triggered by the discovery of some original materials from the life and work of Professor Celestin Cherebețiu, which I had the honour and opportunity to deal with in my didactic and scholarly activity. The wish of a reasonable valorisation and dissemination of the innovative documents as well as the desire to make them available to fellow researchers, professors, and students encouraged me to pursue a systematic search and a thorough examination.

Celestin Cherebețiu possessed a complex personality: he was a priest, professor, composer, conductor and artist, presenting himself as a remarkable figure in the culture of Transylvanian sacred music. By means of his relentless work in the didactic and musical field, he had a great influence not only upon his disciples, but also upon the Romanian church music. Therefore, when I came across the original works of the distinguished professor that had never before been revealed to the public and that bear witness of his prolific activity, I decided to bring them to light into such a multicultural and multireligious Transylvania.

The six chapters of the study follow the life and work of Celestin Cherebețiu, starting with a broad framework of the sacred music and education in Transylvania from the 18th to the beginning of the 20th century, then going through his working period as a priest and musician and then focusing on his work as a composer and educator. The highlights of this paper are the musical analyses of some of his original works.

The first chapter deals with the historical background of the 18th and 19th centuries, with reference to the religious musical education, the starting point of sacred music. In this respect, the relationship between church – school – historical context was beneficial to the development of the Romanian religious music. This was a very prolific period from the point of view of religious musical creations which had a direct contribution to the development of the Romanian culture and consequently to the universal one. Since sacred choral compositions constitute an

important part of Cherebețiu's work, I pointed out the historical hallmarks related to this field and I named some of his predecessors.

The second chapter focuses on the figure of Celestin Cherebețiu, from his biographical background to his studies. The last part refers to his ordination as Greek-Catholic priest. The next chapter takes upon the task to describe his activity as a teacher and conductor in Blaj and then Cluj-Napoca. As educator, he had a great influence upon the life and further growth of his pupils. At the same time, he left a positive mark on the cultural and spiritual development of the cities. In Blaj, he initiated different choirs and organised ceremonies, concerts and festivities, while in Cluj he continued the same kind of work, while also becoming a member of the Philharmonic Orchestra and then a professor at the Music Conservatory.

The fourth chapter of this thesis goes over the musical creation of Celestin Cherebețiu, from his works that bear a didactic purpose, to the sacred ones, the chamber music, vocal-symphonic creations, musical transcriptions, arrangements, and adaptations. The practical part consists in analysing two of his religious creations: *The First Psalm* and *The Doxology*. This chapter ends with the presentation of Celestin Cherebețiu's conducting technique: *the elastic conducting*. The fifth chapter shows some of Cherebețiu's discourses uttered on different occasions, expressing human and professional features of the master, and helping to outline a clearer and more complex image of this personality.

The last chapter ends this journey with a collection of testimonials, bringing into light features and traits that have fascinated those who had the honour to be Celestin Cherebețiu's students or colleagues and to whom he conveyed his love of God and music.

Key words: Celestin Cherebețiu, sacred music, Transylvania, Iacob Mureșianu, Holy Mass, manuscript, Virgil Cutean, Blaj, The eight tones.

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