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THE FACULTY OF ORTHODOX THEOLOGY
THE ”PR. PROF. DR. ISIDOR TODORAN” DOCTORAL
SCHOOL

THE CHURCH MUSICAL CULTURE OF LĂPUŞ LAND.
TRADITION AND CONTINUITY

– DOCTORATE THESIS –

SUMMARY

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Cluj-Napoca

2018

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Keywords: *Church music, ecclesiastic lectern, cult, strană, church, monastery, school, notes, tradition, analysis.*

The traveler who walks along the routes of Maramureș, the countryside of men of state who alighted, will meet a legendary land, the Land of Lăpuș, where once Pinteia the Brave's outlaws were impressing over the secular forests, making justice to the oppressed.

Here are righteous people - like the trees in the forests that surround them and with whom they are twinned, wide-hearted and rushed in generosity, like the clearings that border the land.

Our work, entitled **The Church Musical Culture of Lăpuș Land. Tradition and Continuity**, aims to investigate the musical and liturgical past in the area called "Land of Lăpuș" and to show how the ecclesiastic lectern music is present in contemporary circulation.

We started from the **premise** that Byzantine music, present in the cult of the Eastern Church, a cult celebrated in this region since ancient times, is part of the national musical heritage, along with dogma and liturgy, the emblem of Orthodoxy and the very life of our ancestral Church.

The **theme choosing** is justified by two reasons: a subjective one, due to the consideration and affection I have for the people and their places, and another of an objective nature represented by the necessity of researching the *Church musical cultural* phenomenon of this reference area for Maramureș County. The paper is intended to be a comprehensive study of unraveling the historical, religious and musical competences that are kept in archive documents, in notes on books of worship or in testimonies of participants to the religious life.

I considered it to be **necessary** the debate upon this subject, due to the manner in which the music resounds today at the chanter of the churches in the area.

I have followed the evolution of church music in the Land of Lăpuș from the middle of the nineteenth century to the present day. For the more distant period of time back down in history, due to missing archive documents, as well as other notes, the phenomenon cannot be verified; it can only be estimated by referring to the contemporary form of music practiced at the ecclesiastic lecterns today.

The **purpose** of this PhD thesis is to present the church music in the Land of Lăpuș in all its complexity. We intended to follow the path of Lăpuș church music from the chanter's singing point of view, marked by the phenomenon of oral transmission from one generation of church singers to another, trying at the same time to identify the "key" of its belonging and development from Byzantine music, in general and from the Transylvanian one, in particular.

In this regard, we are always referring to the musical version noted in the nineteenth century by the illustrious Priest Professor Dimitrie Cunțanu, a variant enriched now a days with the effort and work of P.C. Pr. Prof. Univ. Dr. Vasile Stanciu, the dean of the Faculty of Orthodox Theology in Cluj-Napoca, who honored me to scientifically lead this thesis.

As documentary sources that have been of great use was the specialty literature and, above all, the field research, a timewhen we have been collecting literary and musical material from those who serve as church singers.

The research methods I have used are:

- **Historical and statistical data analysis.** On this perspective, the specialty literature and the documents in the existing archives have been at hand - either those of the Romanian State, or the Episcopal or archpriestship ones -, the discussions with the participants to the liturgical life in the Land of Lăpuș, being given the fact that a part of the investigations is contemporary history, which is, above all, "*memory*".

- **the analytical and critical approach** of the bibliographic material, presenting, in a comparative perspective, the collection, analysis and editing of the church melodics. This was accomplished through a series of the discussions recordings with church music participants, a material that we have transposed using the linear notation, **the results of research being highlighted by a rich visual material consisting of scores, tables and graphic representations.**

- **the observation method**, which helps us to determine the tendencies existing with in church music. The completion of the above mentioned methods will be materialized with the questionnaires and audio recordings presented.

The religious musical culture in the Land of Lăpuș represents the object of our research, research in which, to complete it, we took into account the following:

- performing a theoretical and practical analysis of the musical culture, its evolution in Lăpuș area, from a historical, liturgical and musical point of view;
- the musical process and its components analysis;
- determining the role, functions, degree of development, dynamics and quality that church chant has on the spiritual life of the inhabitants of the Lăpuș Land.

In our research, we have met people of rare goodness and godliness. The chanters singers, have been and will remain examples of morality and fairness for the entire community.

The work has as **groundwork**, besides the specialty bibliography, hundreds of archival documents and more than 800 photos, in which we captured the notes from the worship books of various generations of church singers. At this point, a confession has to be made: the research gave us the privilege to browse all the books of worship that the Land of Lăpuș spiritual shepherds in the parishes have put us at hand - priests to whom I want to thank them, and to ensure the of my appreciation. I felt then the holy thrill that made a spiritual connection with our fore fathers, who, in each Sunday and feast days, skimmed them and praised God by singing. We gladly recognize that we have found aesthetically impeccable worship books which are over 100 years old, and this shows us that there lived devoted men at the side of the churches of Lăpuș Land, men with fear of God, who worshiped His service by singing a lifetime.

Being given the multitude of elements that contributed to defining the actual aspect of the chanter in the Land of Lăpuș, a three-level investigation was needed: **cultural-historical, socio-musical and musicological**.

The scientific approach (documenting, collecting information and musical variants and its processing) materialized in the present paper, structured as following: **Introduction, three distinct chapters** - each with a different field of research - and **Conclusions**.

We start from the hypothesis that the large number of monasteries and churches, some of them very old, the population ethnic diversity, the cloudy history, the geographical conditions of the area of only 918 km² allowed the evolution and continuity of the church musical culture, in its own forms.

In the **Introduction**, we presented a brief history of Lăpuș Land, geographical delimitation, toponymy and land development, starting with the Bronze Age, continuing with the Roman rule, then with that of the Hungarian kingdom, the Moldavian lords, the Habsburg Empire, or to the Austro-Hungarian, up to this day.

Being a monographic research, the work refers to all the material and spiritual aspects of the area's culture. Starting with the historical and geographical data, continuing with the economic and cultural aspects of the studied space, we have tried to explain the influences that the times and epochs have had onto the different generations of church singers who, with their voices, brought to God's glory, praise and honor.

In the **cultural-historical** investigation we have used the information provided by the historical and monographic works and archival documents that allowed us to analyze the churches role in preserving the ecclesiastical musical tradition. By analyzing records on worship books, we have not only had the exhilaration of discovering aspects of church singers' participation in preserving the Christian-Orthodox faith through music, but also becoming witnesses some events of the past.

Thus, **Chapter I - Church Life in the Land of Lăpuș from the beginnings to the present day** - presents, monographically, settlements and people of the Lăpuș Land.

The chapter is divided into three subchapters. The first subchapter, **Churches of Lăpuș Land, preserving the ecclesiastical musical tradition**, exposes in detail the ecclesial life of the 31 localities belonging to the researched area (the documentary attestation of the locality, the evolution of its name and its etymology, the description of the parochial churches that existed or exist, legends circulating in the area, the succession of priests who have served in each parish over the time). The brief monographs of the localities, the monographs which, in 1972, at the request of the Eparchial Center of Cluj-Napoca have been realized by each parish priest, were of great use in the documentation.

There are few legends to explain etymologies, but their preservation in collective memory is explained by the dramatic "kernel of truth" that generated the name, and by extension, and by the locals' pleasure of describing themselves in the sense of the word.

For instance:

“According to the legend, before the village was founded, there were two people on this territory: Costea and Dobrea, each one of them wanted to have his own territory. The conflict between the two ended with the death of Dobrea, in the place that today is called *thetombs*. Costea stayed for a long time in those lands, so that he could follow his path until he found a suitable place for the foundation of a settlement, which was named Costeni.”

From Dobrea, however, remained the name of Dobric village, which etymologically means *good*.

Most of the localities names are of Hungarian origin, but, being inhabited by the Romanian population, the inhabitants preserved their identity and faith, as witnessed by the churches built during the Hungarian or Austro-Hungarian rule. Evidence of the profoundly Christian character of the Lăpuș communities is also the raising of Orthodox churches, some of them dating back to the 17th century, others built in the 1970's and 1980's, when honorable

priests confronted bans and threats of the communist regime (for instance: priests Emil Man from Boiereni, Ploscariu Ioan of Fântânele and Ioan Cosma from Dumbrava.)

The second subchapter, **the Monastery - the hearth of preserving the Romanian church music**, presents the history and the evolution of the monastic life of the six oases of Orthodox spirituality found in the Land of Lăpuș: *Monastery dedicated to "The Assumption of Our Lady" – "Saint Ana" - Rohia, Monastery dedicated to "The Holy Virgin" – Rohița, Boiereni, Monastery dedicated to "Nativity of Our Lady" – Lăpușul Românesc, Monastery with the "Holy Trinity" - Breaza, Suciul de Sus, Monastery dedicated to "St. Prophet Elijah" - Dealu Mare, Coroieni and the Monastery dedicated to the "Ascension of the Holy Cross" (Șatra) - Dumbrava*, all preserving the church musical tradition.

The third subchapter, entitled **Education in the Lăpuș Land - part of music**, describes the denominational schools' evolution, teachers and masters who have activated in the localities of Land of Lăpuș, as well as the role of church singers in the instructive and educational process, especially in the 19th century and the first decades of the 20th century. At this point, I highlighted the Church's effort of developing the education and the capital role of Metropolitan bishop Andrei Șaguna in setting up national schools.

I have highlighted in this subchapter what the role of church teachers in school was, their function being often the equivalent of a teacher, and I have emphasized the abnegation with which the leaders of our Church have militated for the status and salary rights of those who ensured the activity of schools.

By approaching our theme from a **socio-musical** perspective, we have appealed to the common memory, of communities and church singers, who have revealed to us the manner in which church music has been assimilated, shared and preserved over the time: through the "home school", through church music schools, through faith and talent. Thus, **Chapter II** of the paper, which has more than a hundred pages, chapter entitled **The Church Canticle in the Land of Lăpuș over the time**, attempts to redesign the history of the way in which church music has developed in the Lăpuș area. The six subchapters are dedicated to: the Church musical phenomenon in Transylvania (subchapters II.1 and II.2: *Ecclesiastical Music Schools in Transylvania and the Theological Schools in the Maramureș and Satu Mare Diocese*), and a detailed presentation of the one in the Land of Lăpuș, in subchapters II.3. - II.6. (*Canticle of chanters in the Land of Lăpuș, Notes of the church singers on the books of worship, Nowadays Church singers from the Land of Lăpuș, Choral phenomenon in the Land of Lăpuș*).

In this part of the paper we recalled the merits of two of the great Transylvanian hierarchs Nicolae Bălan (Metropolitan bishop of Transylvania from 1920 to 1955), who, in 1926, established the "Dimitrie Cunțanu" School of Singers, and Nicolae Colan (bishop of Cluj between 1936-1957, then Metropolitan bishop of Transylvania between 1957 and 1967), who in 1936 opened a school of church singers in the Nușeni domain belonging to the Vad, Feleac and Cluj Episcopate.

Also in this chapter I presented the appearance and development of the theological schools, high school and faculty level, within the Orthodox Episcopate of Maramureș and Satu Mare, underlining the relentless concern of H.E. Justinian Chira, Archbishop of Maramureș and Sătmar, in accomplishing this goal.

It seemed appropriate and relevant to insist on the way in which Byzantine chanter singing transforms in Transylvania under the multi-secular influence of the Romanian folk song, as well as to insist on the presentation of the church singers in the Land of Lăpuș and their role in the Church and in the community. The Transylvanian hierarchs took care of the church singers salaries issue, which led to the organization of exams for the assimilation of the church singers, exams organized in 1945, 1946 and 1993 respectively. (We found in the Archives of the Metropolitan Church of Cluj and in the Maramureș and Satu Mare Episcopate the files of the participants in this exam, and based on them, I tried to make a short biographical portrait.)

We have carefully and boldly leaned on the notes of the chanters on the worship books, being confident that we will discover there the local history through the most various information about historical events, community events, various phenomena and natural calamities, but also about the daily familial and community's life and work. It was worth mentioning the caretaking of worship books, the cantor's representation in the community, or the history of our people in the 1940's-1950's.

The inscriptions on church books impress by content and so much more. Here's an example (the author probably being the cantor Ioan Popan of Vima Mare):

"In the spring of 1912, May, it was a great wind, as it has never been before that rived the trees and pull out from the soil. The same year, rain came in July and the eatables were not matured, and in the following year 1913 the waters came out not only once but several times, and water came from the windows up and past causing many damages."

Prayers and verses are testimonies of the spiritual beauty of the chantor authors. For example, the church singer of Hatos Vasile of Dealu Mare will write on an Euhology, the 1913 edition, "the property of Hatos Vasile Cantor", Dealu Mare the following verses:

“Come Christians, Jesus calls us to embrace the holy altar,

It is not known whether tomorrow we will live on this earth.”

In order to be able to present the actuality of the church singer function, we applied to a number of 14 subjects aged 55-85 from each *valley* of the Lăpuș Land, a questionnaire which collected the biographical data of today's people serving parochial churches lecterns and the information on how these people perform the song (framing the songs of the Divine Liturgy and the 8 Ecclesiastical Voices in one of the various variants of church lectern music that circulate on the territory of Transylvania).

The 14 persons are: Buda Petru - Ungureni, Hereș Gavril - Costeni, Șanta Vasile - Rogoz, Văsuț Vasile - Rohia, Man Alexandru - Răzoare, Horvat Ioan - Inău, Lazăr Ioan - Suci de Jos, Burzo Ioan - Suci de Sus, Toma Nicolae - Lăpuș, Trifoi Ioan - Pointe Botizii, Bogdan Alexandru - Dealu Mare, Todoran Dan Ionel - Baba, Zaharia Simion - Fântânele and Sima Ioan - Drăghia.

From our research rises the conclusion that these lectern singers are the common memory and, at the same time, the source of church music that they send to parishioners when they worship God.

The end of this chapter is reserved for choral music, more precisely the presentation of the activity of the few choral, religious or secular choirs, active in the churches of the Lăpuș Land. These are two church choirs - the Women's Choir of the Church in Lăpuș, respectively the Mixed Choir “Armonia” of the Church of Târgu Lăpuș, and two laic choirs which also have in the repertoire religious songs, especially carols –the Men’s Choir “Dacii liberi” from Libotin land the Mixt Choir “Symbol” of “Petru Rareș Theoretical High School” from Târgu Lăpuș.

The musicological research was a record of several musical variants, then transcriptions in linear notation, resulting in a whole series of scores, including the songs of the Eight Ecclesiastical Voices, the Masses of the Divine Liturgy, the Songs of the Holy Sacraments, and which all synthesize the contemporary melos that echoes in the lands of the Land of Lăpuș. These can be found in **Chapter III - Contemporary Church Lectern Music. Collection and transcription in linear notation.**

This chapter, perhaps the most important of the paper by its originality character, comprises the comparative analysis of the songs of the Eight Ecclesiastic Voices and the Tropares of the Resurrection in unpublished version, collected and transcribed in linear notation, of the songs of the Divine Liturgy, of the Baptism and Wedding Sacraments, as well as those of the Funeral Service, to which I added some pricesne that the church musicians gave me.

I also considered necessary to make a praise to the Priest, the Teacher, the Pedagogue and the Composer Dimitrie Cuțanu, whose work remains the milestone, representing "the basis of the current church chant in the Metropolitan Church of Transylvania".

We used, for study and comparison, variants interpreted by five chanters: Hereș Gavril, Podina Constantin, Sima Ioan, Șanta Vasile and Văsuț Vasile.

The comparative analysis of each noted and transposed version gives a clear picture of the affinity with the version of Father Dimitrie Cuțanu. Influences of any nature (socio-cultural, monastic, or confessional - recalling here the effects that the Blaj School still have on the participants in the cultural life through melos) also make their presence felt in the musical-liturgical elements, but not defining them.

The paper **Church Musical Culture in the Land of Lăpuș. Tradition and continuity** is intended to be an investigative study that generates the improvement of church singers in this part of the country, as well as the responsabilisation of priests to guide them in order to achieve this goal.

We acknowledge that the present thesis is far from being exhaustive, that some aspects could have also been approached from other perspectives, that some aspects may seem incompletely analyzed, but we have chosen in the development of the studied subject the ways of approaching and presentation that seemed to us best suitable for achieving the proposed end goal.

We consider the work to be **original** from two perspectives:

1. by useful information on how to interpret church music in this blessed land and the possibility of producing a report of observing the affinities and / or differences that are reflected in the analyzed material:
- broadly speaking, the eccleastic lectern in Land of Lăpuș remains in the parameters offered by the work of Father Dimitrie Cuțanu;

- the process of transmitting musical variants with the help of the "orality" procedure leads to the revival of church music and to the emergence of new, melismatic enriched variants, without departing from the model. The absence of this similarity between the contemporary variant and the model of the Cunțanu melos is observed where the influence of the monastery or that of the musical culture acquired in school is lacking;
- the influence of commercial music, listened all day long on the various radio and TV stations, contributes to the presented musical variants moving away from what we call "modal system", the tendency being to embrace the tonal version of the song;
- the lack of a solide vocal culture, of using the vocal technique, leads to the frequent and repeated use of the liturgical recitative.

2. by researching the notations made by church singers on the worship books. We are the first to cover and study these notes, which can constitute historical, social, economic, human testimonies. They could easily represent starting points for other further research.

We consider that our approach contributes to the enrichment of the church musical heritage and of the specialized literature with a number of variants of church music performed at the church lecterns of the Lăpuș Land, our paper offering a local church music bouquet - often ancient and unpublished - that echoes up to the present day in the holy ecclesiastic services.