

ROMANIAN LYRICISM IN THE TRANSYLVANIAN LIEDER

The close relationship between music and poetry has been perceived since the oldest time and along the centuries, the two forms of art have evolved in a perfect symbiosis. This union is the root of the diverse traditions of singing poets, troubadours and medieval Minnesänger, who used to write verses in order to sing them. The old Greeks used the term *poietaes* (creator) to denominate only the musician and the poet. The set of rules, techniques regarding verse writing, prosody (*gr. Prosodia – intonation, accentuation <pros> towards, <ode> song*) indicates the connection to music. This correlation is most palpable in the genre of the lied (*germ. Lied – song*). The term refers to a genre of classical music, namely a vocal composition based on a lyrical text or a poem, usually accompanied by a piano.

The subject has been treated differently according to the two component parts, poetry and music, usually in researchers on the Lied, studies usually made by musicologists, who have focused more on the musical aspects. Nevertheless, the influence of the musical art on the reconfiguration of poetry must also be taken into account. The analogy music-poetry is frequently found in literary studies, especially those on Mihai Eminescu's poetry, but omitting to offer further explanations regarding the double influence. As a result, our aim is to clarify certain aspects related to the *musicality of poetry*, as well as those regarding *the poetry of music*.

The goal of this doctoral thesis is to offer a complete and complex analysis (thematic, structural, etc.) of poetry in relation to music, a technical analysis (stylistic), focusing on the language (rhetoric) and the mechanism (poetics) of both poetry and lied. One can talk about poetic "cells" in poetry, that evolve in the same way as musical cells do, about unisons and octaves (for example, synonyms), about Leitmotifs, polyphony, imitation, melody, harmony (the consonance or dissonance of verb agreements), about poetical timbre, rhythm, meter, etc.

The results of this research contribute substantially both in the field of literature and music, through the transdisciplinary approach of the musical phenomenon of literature.

This research on the lied in literature and music will restrict itself to the transylvanian cultural field, which is unique from a historical, geographic, political and social point of view, as the aim is to discover the literary and musical implications of the Romanian Lied, as well as to observe certain attitudes, options or tendencies of these composers, in case they exist.

In other words, we will examine the Lied of the following Romanian composers stemming from the afore mentioned space: Gheorghe Dima (1847-1925), Nicolae Bretan (1887-1968), Marțian Negrea (1893-1973), Tudor Ciortea (1903-1982) and Sigismund Toduță (1908-1991). The latter generations of composers are not included in the present study, as their work is still growing and represents what some would call a *work in progress*.

The criteria of selecting the texts reflects the options of the transylvanian composers from the late 19th century and the beginning of the twentieth century. Our attention is directed towards the Lied inspired by such poets as Vasile Alecsandri, Mihai Eminescu, George Coșbuc, Octavian Goga și Lucian Blaga, thus covering the main stages in the evolution of the Romanian poem, from its beginnings, to the maturity reached through Mihai Eminescu, towards the maturity of Lucian Blaga's inter-war poetry.

The semantic capacity of music, alongside its fundamental characteristic, which is to create emotions, has been often debated upon. However, the category represented by lyricism has not been a topic of interest to the musical theoreticians, which is noticeable by the low number of critical studies. This is certainly so for a reason. Lyricism is "at home" in the field of music, as it is the fundamental trait of music itself. Lyricism manifests itself and is perceived as such in music, but its theory is to be found in literature.

During my incursion into the dynamics of the literary lyricism, almost all authors that I have analysed have referred to music, directly or indirectly. It goes without saying that these theoreticians of literature are aware that lyricism cannot be restricted to the area of literature, and, in order to understand the phenomenon better, they analyse lyricism both from a literary and a musical perspective. The two instances are closely related, so that one cannot be analysed in the absence of the other. Coming back to the triad represented by poetry-lyricism-music, we can observe that lyricism is situated somewhere in the middle, as a unifying element, that represents the meeting point of the two arts. Thus, lyricism identifies itself with the third party included from Basarab Nicolescu's axiom. It is the link between the two levels, poetry and music.

The common origins of the two arts, poetry and music, cannot be denied, especially if one takes into account the basic principles of the two, which start from harmony and meter. These two components can be seen as organising elements of all arts, but also of the universe, which fights against chaos and turmoil. This pitagoreic idea reveals their universal character, the rhythm of art being a metaphor for the cosmic rhythm, as a numeric unit of the universe.

Melody and harmony include the presence of a musicality that is specific to poetry. What is more music, governed by ideas, reminds of the art of thinking through sounds. Both literary and musical creations are governed by a message, by an idea which appears to be a synthesis of the spiritual content. The act of understanding a literary or musical creation must overcome the one-sided formalist, descriptive and affectivist aspects and include them into a superior synthesis, enlightened by a philosophical vision.

Music's message, being more abstract and general, can be decoded in many ways, which some view as a downside of the musical language, but the fascinating force of attraction specific to music lies in this infinite generality. The formalist, morphological and syntactical principles of the musical discourse are the outcome of some fundamental rules of thought, through which the message of music becomes clearer. Repeating a theme, identically or not, opposing an idea to its contrasting equivalent, continuity or a borderline between sections, all reflect a process of thought in the exposure of an idea. But the verse offers a complex significance and eloquence to music, being permanently influenced and transformed by literature and the *poetic idea*.

If one were to take into account the literary lineage of the Lied, and the fact that the lied is born out of a composer's attraction to a certain text and imagining a possible music, we are in our right to say that "in the beginning there was the word". On the other hand, it is clear that the poetic text is enriched through music and that the musical language is an extension and a completion of the poetic language. In order to establish the primacy of a type of language over the other, arguments can be brought in favour of both theories, namely, that the verse competes the music or that music enriches poetry. This dilemma present in the destinies of poetry and music will probably represent an eternal adventure, nevertheless it is not excessive to say that that fusion between music and word represents a superior vision of thought.

The first manifestations of poetry in Romanian literature are highly connected to music, with the chant. Starting with the verses collected by Vasile Alecsandri, which existed not only in literary form, but in a synthesised manner, with the aim of being sung, the two forms of art separate themselves from one another, giving up on the musical structure. The literary musical genres of folklore, like the ballad, the chant, the so called "doină" and "bocet", or wail song, aim at a literary existence. Mention should be made that from this point on, one does not refer to popular creations, but rather cult creations, adaptations or corrections.

There exists a certain preference for chants in the creation of the poets that I have analysed. This form of poetry evolved from the popular song, restyled by V. Alecsandri, to G. Coşbuc's and O. Goga's songs, that simulate popular poetry and reaches a rather intellectual than musical type of song, created by L. Blaga. This is the evolution of musical art, which in the 20th century loses its "musicality" and becomes more and more intellectual and non-tonal.

Mihai Eminescu establishes a new coordinate, but his poetry does not need this categorisation, as it is in itself musical, an absolute form of music that transcends the words.

Although the chapter dedicated to the analysis of his texts is structured into subchapters, that focus on one aspect at a time, the criteria of text and excerpt selection, as pertaining to a certain category, can bring up difficulties.

The same text is both poetical and musical, through balance and symmetry, through acoustical effects, structure and sequence of ideas, but also through the rhythmical options and the created poetical images. Using and combining these methods of expression, the lines are almost impossible to separate. Where does repetition stop and where does the process of theme variation begin? Which is the limit between the symmetry of sonority and harmony, or between prosodic rhyme and the rhythm of poetic narration?

In Eminescu's case, the elements that constitute the whole, be it form or shape, are perfectly combined, in a refined and measured manner. This is probably what Tudoe Vianu (1974) referred to when he said that Eminescu's harmony must not be searched for in rhythm or acoustic effects, as music is so much more than a simple intertwining of sonorities. We truly believe in this statement. However, the feeling of infinite and grandeur specific to music, is achieved through the following elements: rhythm, melody, harmony, structure, etc.

In these conditions, a close examination is necessary, provided that one goes beyond the prosodic creation of poetry. We agree with Ioana M. Petrescu's opinion that the harmony of Eminescu's poetical universe pertains to the universal laws of harmony, following the description of the Pythagoreans: the world as musical order. This quality of the verse evolves towards perfection both in the area of the concrete and the abstract. This is yet another condition that proves the superiority of Eminescu's art.

By transposing verses into music, composers aimed at translating the text into a different, complementary language. Although this language differs from one era to another, from one composer to another, a constant trademark is that they could not ignore certain invariables, that

they maintained and mentioned. However, they were capable of offering a new colour to the poetic text, by adding a touch of creativity and personal style to the existing taste and style of the epoch. It is quite interesting how, starting from the same text, the composers obtained different results.

Both poetry and music use the same resources and tools of expression, which in their turn have their equivalents. It all depends on the creative force of the author. Lucian Blaga is truly interested in the musical art, but only on theoretical level. Due to his instruction, he manifests interest in all forms of art, but painting is certainly his strong point.

There is most certainly a reason for his being surrounded by valuable musicians: the composers Tudor Ciortea and Tiberiu Brediceanu, the violinist Mihai Constantinescu, and even singer Maria Tănase, whom he enjoyed listening to during his stay in Bucharest.

He is a connoisseur of the main musical principles, which is transparent in the usage of musical notions in his poetry. Nevertheless, he did not adventure himself on a more specialized area. We do believe that he had the necessary knowledge to promote musical thinking.

When it comes to the themes of choice, the texts that the composers opted for were usually imagistic lyricism, texts referring to love or texts of philosophical nature, and not so much of social or political kind, despite the transformations that happened in Transylvania at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. The number of patriotic texts is far less important, related to the number of composers.

The Lied is cultivated for its aesthetic and artistic value, and is not used as a socio-political or propaganda tool. It conserves the features that represent its very essence. It is not only a chant, but a form of art born out of the interweaving of poetry and music.

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