

Musical Repertoire Written for Military Bands. Marches

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Abstract: *The musical repertoire accompanying military and official ceremonies is made up of works belonging to the genres of ostrich music: marches, hymns and odes. Ceremonial performances follow clear legislative specifications and are held on national holidays. These ceremonies are held in all the major cities of the country, in the presence of official and military officials and the general public. To the sound of brass band music, the highest-ranking officials are honoured and troops from the area's garrisons march past. The atmosphere becomes festive, solemn, commemorative and evocative.*

Key-words: *brass band, wind instruments, percussion, performance, interpretation, creativity, voice, military music.*

1. Introduction

The military bands existing in the Romanian military garrisons have been active since their foundation 190 years ago. Their artistic activity has responded to social and cultural directions, fulfilling an educational role both for the army officers, the wider society, and for young people through specific forms of schooling. In the post-December period, they faced a numerical decline since 2002, when most of the more than 100 bands existing at that time were disbanded. At the same time, the Baia Mare garrison brass band also ceased its activity.

At present there are 17 active military bands in addition to the Romanian garrisons, but there are also brass bands supported by local councils such as the Baia Mare Municipal Brass Band, which performs all military music services at ceremonies in Maramureş County (and not only). The repertoire consists of marches, hymns and odes.

Law no. 215/2016 on official ceremonies stipulates in Article 19 “Depending on their nature and purpose, official ceremonies shall also be carried out in

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compliance with the regulations in force regarding the approaching of the Romanian flag, the singing of the national anthem and the use of the seals with the Romanian coat of arms, by public authorities and institutions, respectively with those regarding the coat of arms and the state seal, as well as with those of the Regulation of military honours and ceremonies.”

2. Statement of the hypothesis

The performances of military music in the communist and post-revolutionary periods are remarkable both in terms of sound structures and repertoire and from a social point of view (Gheorghită 2020, 240). There are few analyses on this musical genre, although Romanian military bands were present in the life of civil society. However, valuable interpretations have maintained in the collective memory instrumental repertoires of the genre, some marches or hymns being present even in general school music education with the generic name of patriotic songs. Their importance is not only historical but also of national ethos, collective emotion and remembrance of the deeds of the nation's heroes.

3. Dissertation

3.1. Military music. General characteristics

Through their main functions of signalling, encouraging and culturalising the masses and armies, military music bands have intertwined their evolution with that of the armies and armies on Romanian territory. Throughout its 190 years of existence, military music has provided the soundtrack to ceremonies, commemorations, national holidays, cultural events, but especially in the midst of battles fought by the Romanian army.

In 1864 a special section was established within the Ministry of War, which was subordinated to the musical bands, which generated a period of great musical, artistic, tactical and organizational progress, through the efforts of inspectors general of military music - exceptional musicians and good organizers and tacticians.

Over the next three decades, these bands carried out a rich musical activity, developing the existing repertoire with new compositions by bandmasters who had a higher level of musical training. The need to enrich the repertoire was also apparent during the War of Independence in 1877 when revolutionary marches were played by soldiers and civilians alike. The same marches and patriotic songs sustained the morale of the troops in World War I, with military instrumentalists

actively participating on the front line. The interwar period marks new repertoire developments through the work of Egizio Massini (1894-1966), Inspector General of Military Music, former conductor of the Romanian Opera, an outstanding personality of those times. He enriched the repertoire, the number of instruments, the number of instrumentalists in the units, and most importantly, in 1936, he founded *the School of Military Music Students*.

During the communist period, after the Second World War, military music replenished its personnel and adapted its repertoire to the new Soviet trends, responding to propaganda requirements promoting nationalist ideas. Musical compositions were evaluated by the Fanfare Subsection of the *Romanian People's Republic Composers' Union*, established in 1957 through the efforts of Dumitru Eremia (1910-1976), the General Inspector of Military Music.

After 1989, the army underwent an extensive restructuring process, which resulted in the disbanding of most of the garrison bands. The 17 bands that remain active today perform ceremonial, parade or anniversary and promenade services for the public. The top echelon is provided by the Bucharest-based symphonic orchestra of the Representative Music of the Ministry of National Defence.

3.2. Repertory

The ostrich repertoire consists mainly of hymns, marches and odes. The first hymn of the Romanian Principalities was written by Eduard Hubsch between 1862 and 1884 and was called *Triumphal March and the Reception of the Flag and His Majesty the Prince Domnitor*. It is still sung today as the *March of Welcome* and is sung at the reception of official or military personalities.

In the years that followed, numerous marches and songs were composed by military bandmasters such as Iosif Ivanovici, Mihail Mărgăritescu or Ioan Vlăduță, which encouraged the organisation of the first National Fanfare Competition in 1906, on the 40th anniversary of the reign of King Carol I. The repertoire required by the competition included three works, among which marches and a “national piece” of choice (Vlăduță 2005, 30).

The formation of the unitary Romanian state in 1918 gave impetus to creation inspired by the national vein among both military and civilian composers. Without great artistic pretensions or a sophisticated musical language, the marches composed in this period are the result of the enthusiasm of a nation in formation. We recall works written during this period that remain in the active repertoire to this day: *Pui de lei* by Ionel Brătianu, *Mărășești* and *The great România marches* and *The unknown hero hymn* by Ioan Vlăduță, *The march of the braves*, *Silistra-march*, *Song of victory* by Mihail Mărgăritescu, *Oda romanians soldiers* by Iosif

Paschill (lyrics by Vasile Alecsandri); *March of Freedom* and *March of the Third Battery* by Ion Vidu; *Triumphal March* by George Stephănescu and *Pass, Romanian Battalions, Carpathians*, author unknown.

In the interwar period, the ostras repertoire was promoted through the work of two musical and military personalities of the time, the military music inspectors Ioan Vlăduță (1875-1965) and Egizzio Massini. The establishment of the School of Military Musicians in 1936 made the repertoire of marches and hymns part of the structure of the school programmes, thanks to the hard work of the officers Savel Horceag (1898-1996), Emanoil Dvorak, etc. The aim of the school was also to send graduates to conservatories in the country, the one in Bucharest having a class of "Military Orchestration". The ostrich repertoire was disseminated to the 110 brass bands all over the country through the "Publishing house and music help" fund, run by the two officers: Alfred Mendelsohn and Savel Horceag.

During the Fascist occupation (1941-1944), repertoires from the Austro-German area were imposed, with King's Day parades "after the German model". This approach changed radically in the Stalinist period that followed, which imposed new manifestations of ideological propaganda. Thus, new marches such as *Red Moscow*, *May Day (or International)*, the *March of Brotherhood*, *Sentinel*, *We and You are the People*, *August 23*, *Salute to the Red Army*, *To Work*, etc., were imposed, marches that can be found in collections of scores such as *Marches and Songs of the Ostrich, No. 1*, General Inspectorate of the Army for Education, Artistic Directorate, 1948.

The composers of the communist period (and there were many of them) who created brass band music with a martial character are those of the guild, Dumitru Eremia, Ion Totan, Ion Chiorean, Sergiu Paiu, Dumitru Crăciunescu, but also composers from outside the military sphere: Ioan Chirescu, Anatol Vieru, Ion Dumitrescu, Viorel Doboș.

Dumitru Eremia (1910-1976), inspector of military music for almost three decades during the communist period, in addition to reforming all the brass bands in the country, campaigned for the reform of the main Cossack miniature genre: the march. It should be based on the national folklore vein and be „new”, i.e. not taken from other genres or cultures. Eremia and his team (e.g., Ion Dumitrescu) propose a simple compositional form as a model, with a well-defined rhythm, using Romanian folkloric themes and respecting the specificity of the army or specialisation to which the march is addressed: infantry, tanks, engineers, aviation, naval, etc. Examples are: *Solemn March and Festive March* by Alfred Mendelsohn.

After 1976 under the guidance of the new Inspector General of Military Music, Emilian Ursu (born 1927), a unique and minimal repertoire for all brass bands in the country was published by the Editura muzicală, which exploited the popular tradition of military music. This promoted compositions in new

arrangements, works belonging to already established composers: Iosif Ivanovici, Mihail Mărgăritescu, Ioan Vlăduță, Alexandru Marian, Ștefan Cotrupi, etc.

Since 1990 there has been a clear depoliticisation and a move away from folkloric themes in terms of composition. The *Iosif Ivanovich National Competition for Brass Band Music*, which is held annually by the General Inspectorate of Military Music under the patronage of the Royal House of Romania, promotes and evaluates works by the country's chief military music composers or members of bands. In 2022, for example, Marin Voican's *March of the Engineers*, performed by the MAPN Representative Music and the Choir of the Dinu Lipatti High School in Bucharest, was entered in the competition.

The repertoire of the currently active brass bands includes marches: *The Sailors* by Temistocle Popa; *The Friendship March* by Col. Emil Chiriac (2009); *Concert March* by Iosif Ivanovici, orchestration by Ionel Croitoru (2004); *Welcome March no.1* by Dumitru Eremia; *"170" Festive March, Romania's soldiers, Sports March, Honour to the Flag, Welcome March, March of the Genius* by Ionel Croitoru; *Anti-aircraft Artillery March* by Dobrin Ioan; *Artillerymen's March* by Ion Pelearcă; *March of the Airmen* by Richard Oschanitzky; *Carol I March* by Iosif Ivanovici, orchestral arrangement by Ionel Croitoru; *March of the Scouts* by Alfons Castaldi; *Fanfare March* by Eduard Hubsch, orchestral arrangement by Constantin Platon; *March of the Infantrymen* by Sergiu Eremia; *March of the Transmitters and March of the Mountain Hunters* by Ludovic Paceag, orchestration Viorel Doboș; *Victory March* by Tiberiu Olah, arrangement Emilian Ursu; *Victory March* by Sergiu Paiu; *Farewell*, collection Timotei Popovici, *Avant* by Ioan Stamatiade; *Funeral March* from *Eroica Symphony III* by Ludwig van Beethoven; *Funeral March* by Frederich Chopin; *Radetzky March* by Johann Strauss, orchestration Ionel Croitoru.

3.3. Marches. General musical analyses

One of the first marches created and performed in Romania was the *Welcome March* written by Eduard Hubsch (1833-1894). It was the first anthem of the Romanian Principalities between 1862 and 1884, under the name of *Triumphal March and the reception of the flag and His Majesty the Prince Domnitor*. It is now sung at the reception of officials by the military music present at the military or civil ceremony.

Farewell, farewell, drumbeats by Ștefan Nosievici on the verses of the poet Vasile Alecsandri, was one of the marches that mobilized Romanian soldiers in the War of Independence in 1877. It remained in the collective memory and was sung during the First World War, becoming a popular song. These characteristics can also be found in the march *Pass the Carpathians Romanian Battalions*, whose author is unknown.

More recently composed marches that are part of the permanent repertoire of military bands are *Romania's soldiers* by Ionel Croitoru or *Salute Romanian Army* by Horea Ardeleanu.

The vast majority of marches have no lyrics. However, there are marches created in recent decades that have a choral anthem as their original source, such as the *Anti-aircraft Artillery March* by Mandu Petrișor to the lyrics of Dobrin Ioan, the *Artillerymen's March* by Ion Pelearcă (music and lyrics), the *Infantrymen's March* by Sergiu Eremia to the lyrics of Nicolae Tăutu or the *Transmitters' March* by Ludovic Paceag to the lyrics of Traian Reu, etc.

The intonation systems are always tonal, predominantly in the keys of B flat major, E flat major, A flat major, G minor and F minor. Depending on the bipartite formal structure, some marches modulate to the related key of the first degree. The amble generally ranges from Contra F to tuba and G³ to piccolo.

Passages with intonation difficulties are given by ascending chromatic gait (pasus duriusculus), successive thirds, arpeggios followed by trills, sharp seventh leaps. In Ionel Croitoru's *Salute Romanian Army* the oboe leads the theme to the A period (Figure 1):



Fig. 1. Ionel Croitoru – “Salute Romanian Army”, oboe, m. 16-23

The metric system is binary or binarycompound, in 2 and 4 fourths. The binary metre is specific to the cadenced gait of marching bands, marching with equal steps in an organised formation of dozens or hundreds of instrumentalists. The dominant rhythmic formulas are spondaic, pyridic, molos, dactylic, anapestic, brevis, with whole note values, doimos, quadratics, optima (normal divisions) and triplets (exceptional divisions). The percussion is the one that supports the constant rhythm: the bass drum predominantly maintains the quadratics (accented or not), the snare drum and the kinelele walk in quadratics with equal divisions or rhythmic formulas (dactylic or anapest). Passages with difficulties in rhythmic reading are represented by groups of sixteenthths, ternary divisions in binary, ascending triple apogee, attacca on dactylic, etc. We give as an example a passage from Iosif Ivanovich's *Charles I March*, where the exceptional divisions at measure 68 on triplets animate the mobilizing message on saxophones, horns, trombones, percussion, tuba (Figure 2):

The image shows a musical score for four instruments: Tbn. 1, Tbn. 2, 3, D. S. (Drum Major), and Timp. (Timpani). The score is in bass clef with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The time signature is common time (C). The music consists of three measures. In the first measure, Tbn. 1 plays a quarter note G2, followed by a quarter rest. Tbn. 2, 3 play a quarter note G2, followed by a quarter rest. D. S. plays a quarter note G2, followed by a quarter rest. Timp. plays a quarter note G2, followed by a quarter rest. In the second measure, Tbn. 1 plays a quarter note G2, followed by a quarter rest. Tbn. 2, 3 play a quarter note G2, followed by a quarter rest. D. S. plays a quarter note G2, followed by a quarter rest. Timp. plays a quarter note G2, followed by a quarter rest. In the third measure, Tbn. 1 plays a quarter note G2, followed by a quarter rest. Tbn. 2, 3 play a quarter note G2, followed by a quarter rest. D. S. plays a quarter note G2, followed by a quarter rest. Timp. plays a quarter note G2, followed by a quarter rest. There are triplets of eighth notes in the second and third measures for Tbn. 1, Tbn. 2, 3, and Timp.

Fig. 2. *Iosif Ivanovici, "Charles I March", trombones, bass drum, snare drum, timpani, m. 67-69*

The musical syntax is always homophonic, with one or more musical themes running through the various instruments, the rest of the instruments providing the accompaniment.

The evolution of the harmonic planes is done by modulation to the related key, for example from F minor - A period, to A flat major - B period (*Romania's soldiers* by Ionel Croitoru), B flat major - A period, E flat major - B period (*Farewell, farewell, drum beats* by Ștefan Nosievici and *Charles I* by Iosif Ivanovici), E flat major, A flat major (*Salute Romanian Army* by Horea Ardeleanu), G minor, B flat major (*Pass the Carpathians Romanian Battalions*, author unknown). The harmonic movement is made through authentic and plagal cadences.

The dynamic planes comprise numerous dynamic terms, in graduated succession. The alternation of contrasting piano/forte terms is often done to dynamise the musical discourse. To suggest breadth and festivity, composers often used the fortissimo attack (Figure 3):

The image shows a musical score for five instruments: Piccolina, Flaut, Oboi, Clarinet Mib, and Clarinet Sib. The score is in treble clef with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The time signature is common time (C). The music consists of three measures. In the first measure, Piccolina plays a quarter note G4, followed by a quarter rest. Flaut plays a quarter note G4, followed by a quarter rest. Oboi plays a quarter note G4, followed by a quarter rest. Clarinet Mib plays a quarter note G4, followed by a quarter rest. Clarinet Sib plays a quarter note G4, followed by a quarter rest. In the second measure, Piccolina plays a quarter note G4, followed by a quarter rest. Flaut plays a quarter note G4, followed by a quarter rest. Oboi plays a quarter note G4, followed by a quarter rest. Clarinet Mib plays a quarter note G4, followed by a quarter rest. Clarinet Sib plays a quarter note G4, followed by a quarter rest. In the third measure, Piccolina plays a quarter note G4, followed by a quarter rest. Flaut plays a quarter note G4, followed by a quarter rest. Oboi plays a quarter note G4, followed by a quarter rest. Clarinet Mib plays a quarter note G4, followed by a quarter rest. Clarinet Sib plays a quarter note G4, followed by a quarter rest. There are triplets of eighth notes in the second and third measures for Piccolina, Flaut, Oboi, Clarinet Mib, and Clarinet Sib. The dynamic marking *ff* (fortissimo) is present in each measure for all instruments.

Fig. 3. *Ionel Croitoru, "Romanian Soldiers", piccola, flute, oboe, clarinets Eb and clarinets B*

Predominantly tempo di marcia is specified, with MM around 117. The nature of the musical genre march does not allow tempo deviations or alternations of measures, in order to respect the motor movements of the marching band.

4. Conclusions

The miniature march genre is closely linked to the history of the Romanian armies. Military or civilian composers have found ways to create a repertoire with a mobilizing character, using means of musical expression suitable for wind instruments and the sonority of brass. The marches accompanied the struggle for national liberation or the defence of Romanian territories, often based on folkloric themes. Many marches have remained in the collective memory, being sung by civilians in times of peace, as a reminder of times of bravery of the Romanian people and as an exhortation not to forget the sacrifice of the ancestors.

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