

Psychological perspective in the musical work *Mithya* by Doina Rotaru

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Abstract: *Musical analysis and semantic interpretation are nowadays inherent aspects when approaching a musical score, no matter its genre, composer, cultural-geographical origin, stylistic features or historical period. The present research is concerned with the analytical techniques which are necessary when analysing a contemporary musical work, in order to grasp its deepest meanings. The purpose of our paper is to use structural analysis, semantic interpretation, combined with hermeneutical remarks and psychological aspects of the composing process, in order to analyse the musical work "Mithya", created by Romanian composer Doina Rotaru, whose name has a large echo all over the world. Beginning with the principles indicated by Leonard Meyer in his book, "Emotion and Meaning in Music", we tried to learn the mechanism by which the first piece of the cycle, entitled "As a prayer", generates an exciting psychological process and a permanent connection between playing and listening.*

Key-words: *tradition, innovation, cultural identities from East and West, eternal values.*

1. Introduction

Doina Rotaru is a renowned Romanian composer, with a broad perspective on musical styles and cultures of the contemporary era. Her music has gained the appreciation of musicians all over the world, being performed in many concerts and festivals in Europe, Far-East, Australia, Canada and South-America. Some of these events were organized as "author concerts".

Composed in 2007, the musical work entitled *Mithya* was performed for the first time by Italian flutist Mario Caroli, during the Romanian festival *International Week of the New Music*, in 2009. It is well-known Doina Rotaru's preference for the flute timbre, obvious in most of her works, generating a continuous concern for a refined manner of writing, in order to discover the most expressive and subtle effects of this instrument.

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2. General aspects in the musical work *Mithya* by Doina Rotaru

Doina Rotaru creates her own musical universe by thinking and expressing her ideas in original ways, implying the investigation of traditional cultures from Far East and searching for deep connections between Japanese and Romanian archaic elements. She explains her choice for certain musical instruments by discovering “similarities between ancient Romanian music for little flutes, pipes or human voice and the beautiful music for *shakuhachi*: the slow and permanent variation of a previously exposed material, the free rhythm *parlando rubato*, the long sounds which are enriched with *glissandi*, *melisma*, microtones and also the melancholic atmosphere, with a painful beauty.” (Rotaru 1999, CD). The interference between the two cultures is suggested from the very beginning of the work *Mithya* through the expressive indication *Dolce, come un shakuhachi*.

The work is conceived as a cycle of three musical pieces, with different stylistic features, suggested by the genres mentioned in each title and united by their common source of inspiration – archaic Romanian music and also by certain indications of emission that are related to the performing manner in Far-East, particularly in the musical culture of Japan. The semantic content suggests a sonorous metaphor of the spiritual and cultural existence of Romanian people: prayer, carol, doina. The title of the work, inspired by Indian philosophy, means both real and unreal, referring to an illusory realm which has a particular signification for D. Rotaru: “interference between dream, desire and illusion”², accomplished through a special music and a proper instrument for her intention – flute. From these explanations, one can intuit the subtle suggestion of a deep, unconscious psychic level, where real is intertwined with unreal, generating a place of universal archetypes which have similar forms, but different contents, due to the originating culture. Therefore, the three pieces of this cycle have subtitles focused on specific expressions in each part and symbolic value given by the ternary structure, generating certain feelings through sonorities, rhythms, timbre effects, writing manners which are strongly connected to the Romanian culture: 1. *As a prayer*; 2. *As a “colinda”*; 3. *As a “doina”*.

The analysis from this paper is focused on the first piece of the cycle *Mithya*, in which D. Rotaru expresses her musical perspective on flute, “an instrument of meditation and prayer”, suggesting pain or hope. According to the inner state which is intended to create, “the monody of the flute comforts or implores”³. Due to the musical language features which allow subtle interpretations when approaching this work, we aim towards a different musical analysis by following a psychological

² Information extracted from the presentation of the work on the website where the score can be bought: <http://www.babelscores.com/en/catalog/instrumental-music/solo-instrument/mithya-i>

³ *Idem*.

direction, similar to the auditory effect generated during the process of listening. Our purpose is to challenge the reader and the listener to grasp the semantic substrate by investigating the process of composition and the aspects that lead to certain influences on its reception. From this reason, the intention is meant to be more psychological than musicological, which leads to the insertion of certain personal observations as elements of hermeneutical interpretation. Because the psychology of intercepting the sonorous phenomenon became an important component in many analytical works, considered “hermeneutical” or “semiotic” in modern musicology, we will approach D. Rotaru’s composition in a subjective-objective perspective, with subtle observations of the sonorous discourse and psychological aspects that will be integrated in detailed musicological analysis.

3. Musical analysis of the piece *As a prayer* from *Mithya* by Doina Rotaru

Some of the most striking general features regarding the musical language in the D. Rotaru's score are the alternation between the linear evolution of the melody and the fragmentation of the discourse, the continuous variational process of the musical units, the narrative style. These aspects generate a genuine instrumental threnody, while the *rubato* movement and the lack of time signature lead to a musical fluency with an improvising tendency. The free organisation of the form may be perceived as a musical construction in spirals and volutes, created by cyclical developments, recalling previous motives, themes in the score. The writing manner is dense, containing reversed chromatic formulas, symmetric intervallic structures (reminding of Bela Bartok’s techniques), melismatic ornaments, *appoggiatura* notes, trills, *vibrato* effects with extensive sonorous oscillations.

D. Rotaru emphasized the crucial function of the symbol, as a central element in her works, because it leads to the guiding principles of her creative process: “In my music, I have used structural principles of symbolic values and functions – like circular or spiral shapes, sacred numbers and so on. The *symbol* becomes an idea of composition, and this idea generates the structures, the musical time, the syntax, the architecture and the expressions of the work. I also like to use elements from ancient Romanian traditional music, where almost every sound is enriched with ornaments, *glissandi*, micro-tones, overtones and, of course, heterophony.”⁴

In the musical piece entitled *As a prayer*, the first melodic idea represents the core, the germinal nucleus of the entire work. In the following example, one may observe the beginning in *ascension* movement, consisting of a perfect fourth and a minor sixth, followed by a slow descent in *glissando* towards an unstable sound, D, with tendency to slide down. The first sonorous gesture is similar to a soaring jump, with diatonic elements and clear, stable sounds, followed by a sliding in the opposite

⁴ Doina Rotaru, presentation published on <http://www.freewebs.com/doinarotaru/>

direction, on a two tones distance. This musical gesture starts on E, jumps on A through eighth-notes and stops temporarily on F in the upper octave, reaching the inner culmination by straining indefinitely the superior chromatic element (related to the beginning sound) which is solved through another non-temperate sliding. This musical idea has a sorrowful, plaintive expression, going towards E, then D sharp, then leaving it suspended in a harmonic resonance, indicated in the score.

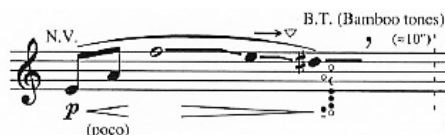


Fig. 1. *Doina Rotaru, "Mithya" for solo flute, "As a prayer", page 1, first staff*

The form of the work can't be analysed using traditional principles, because the absence of time signature determines a different approach of the structure. D. Rotaru organized the discourse in a fluid evolution, suggesting the running of time. As Romanian musicologist Valentina Sandu-Dediu wrote about this type of musical construction, "the temporal dimension results from the archaic way of living time, which is not moving linearly, but circularly or in spirals." (Sandu-Dediu 2002, 183). The only marks of the internal organization are the musical cells, which are resumed, processed, varied, transformed in different hypostasis and also the musical segments separated by meditating breaths, similar to those silences with intrinsic consistency.

The proportion between freedom and rigour is influenced by the detailed notation, which sets in order the sonorous space, creating a metaphoric direction of the temporal flow. Another aspect of this relation is the alternation between the fragments based on the sounds of a certain mode (for example, the pre-pentatonic scale formed of the sounds E-F-A, with D sharp included, in the previous fragment) and sections which are developed from the initial structure, with a tendency towards improvisation. The constant return on the centre E is a clue for the modal stability, given by the sonorous construction in musical "waves" or "loops", strongly anchored in the originating point.

Therefore, the spiral pattern is used as generating principle both at microstructural and macrostructural level – in the first case, by inserting interval games and developing a specific melodic line, while the latter situation refers to the construction of the entire work, generating a strongly coagulated structure by using the initial elements and transfiguring them as aesthetic concepts.

The piece is composed of three sections, marked as A, B and A₁, which are based on the same sound material, creating an arch shape by constant transformation. We will use traditional notation for the first musical idea – motive α – composed of cells x (with ascending direction, temperate diatonic structure,

intervallic jumps of perfect fourth and minor sixth, quaver rhythm) and *y* (with descending direction, chromatic structure, non-tempered because of *glissando* indication, sonorous progress in two semitones, rhythm in long durations).

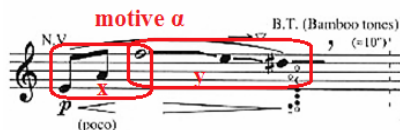


Fig. 2. Doina Rotaru, "*Mithya*" for solo flute, "*As a prayer*", page 1, stave 1

The initial motive is recalled immediately in a varied version, by inserting new sounds which lead to a more ornamented aspect, an extended profile and an intrinsic meaning.



Fig. 3. Doina Rotaru, "*Mithya*" for solo flute, "*As a prayer*", page 1, stave 1

The first phrase (as a musical articulation with autonomous musical meaning, enforced by the ending sounds) will be notated as "a", containing motive α , its variation and the cadential formula, as one can see in the following example, where the final note is E.



Fig. 4. Doina Rotaru, "*Mithya*" for solo flute, "*As a prayer*", page 1, stave 2

The phrase parked as "b" brings a new type of motivic structure, entitled β , conceived in ascendant direction, based on a modal scale with intervallic proportions of 5:1:3:1:4:1. The sounds of this scale will find return in other segments of the piece, which we considered to be variations of this phrase. From this reason, the next phrases will be notated by using the same letter b, in order to suggest the close relation of the musical material inside them (as one may observe in the table of form in the following pages).



Fig. 5. Doina Rotaru, “Mithya” for solo flute, “As a prayer”, page 1, stave 5

Another type of motivic structure can be identified in the last stave from the first page. This motive will be marked as γ , characterized by descending direction, intervallic jumps which do not affect the general line of the melody. Actually, it represents a dispersive arrangement of the sounds A_2 , G_1 , F sharp $_2$, G_2 , while the rhythm is composed of combined durations (sixteenths, notes with prolonged or medium duration).



Fig. 6. Doina Rotaru, *Mithya* for solo flute, *As a prayer*, page 1, stave 7

These three motives, together with cadential formulas represent the musical material that generates the sonorous evolution in this work, leading to a structural organisation that is difficult to delimitate and analyse. In the following table, we suggest a possible delimitation of the form, at the level of sections, phrases, motives, cells (in some cases). The development, transformation and the return of certain elements are happening continuously, similar to living organism which grows and evolves from the deepest level (cellular, invisible) to the exterior aspect (general outlook). But, as any living creature which can be observed, analysed on microscope, music can be discovered in all its details and elements, gaining unicity in every form it gets.

Sections	Subsections (articulations)	Motivic structures or component formulas	Musical centres
A	a	motive α ($x + y$) \rightarrow ascending-descending profile, rhythm in medium and long durations; α_{v1} ($x_{v1} + y_{v1}$) cadential formula	Beginning on E (three-tone scale with leading tone towards E) \rightarrow cadenza on E
	a₁	α_{v2} ($x_{v2} + y_{v2}$)	Begins with IVth degree on E scale (with chromatic elements) \rightarrow stops on B (dominant of E)
	b	motive β \rightarrow ascending profile, rhythm in short durations	chromatic evolution \rightarrow stops on B flat
	b₁	motive γ \rightarrow descending profile, rhythm in combined durations	chromatic evolution \rightarrow return on E
B	b_v	elements from b (variation by intervallic extension, amplifying the sound ambitus)	chromatic evolution \rightarrow stops on B flat
	b_{v1}	elements from b₁ (variation by sonorous agglomeration, leading to a higher rhythmic density); - unlike b₁ , b_{v1} has a culminating evolution.	intense chromatic evolution \rightarrow stops on F, with an unstable movement towards the centre E.
	b₂	contains elements from a₁ (cell y_{v2}) and from a (cadential formula)	chromatic evolution with persistence on E, preparing the final return on E.
A ₁	b_{1v2}	contains elements from b (motive β appears concentrated) - contains a free evolution, without recognizable elements)	beginning on E, free chromatic evolution, with cadenza on B, sliding towards B flat
	a_{v2}	- motive α returns with the same intervallic structure, but transposed on other sounds; - other elements are also recalled, from phrase b (motive β_v and its development)	- unexpected appearance of motive α , built with identic intervals, but starting on C; - during this phrase, the persistence on E, anticipated by F and D sharp suggests connections with the three-tone structure of motive α .
	final cadenza	- the profile of the cadenza resembles that of the cadential formula at the end of phrase a and also from phrase b₁ .	- it is focused on centre E, enforced by two leading notes: superior-F and inferior-D sharp.

Table 1. *Delimitation of the form, at the level of sections, phrases, motives*

4. Psychological and hermeneutical elements in the musical construction of the work *Mithya*

In the following analysis, we will try to offer an interesting perspective on the psychological course that is created during the audition of the *prayer* composed by D. Rotaru by observing the impact of the initial experience, the expectations generated by the subsequent evolution, the manner of solving or intensifying tensions, the effects which were generated in the listeners' perception.

Leonard B. Meyer considered music as a fundamental pattern for the psychological process that usually happens in the mind of the listener. In his volume – *Emotion and Meaning in Music* – he enunciated certain laws which enable the interpretation of the music during and after the audition. This aspect is available for a musical work composed in previous periods, in tonal or tonal-modal language, but what happens when a work is non-tonal, containing many modern techniques and unexpected instrumental effects? The answer could be found in Meyer's book, where he expressed his opinion about a very important condition for knowing a musical work: to get accustomed with the musical language used in that piece, because music is similar to foreign language. If someone doesn't know the functioning laws of a new language, he will perceive its message vaguely or he won't understand anything. The same thing will happen in the musical field, where the contact with a new, unheard style will complicate the process of understanding, because the listener doesn't know what to expect.

In a musical work, the elements which generate inner tensions and auditory expectations are mentioned by Leonard Meyer (Meyer, 1956, p. 26):

1. A series of rules that a professional listener applies instinctively during an audition, according to his previous knowledge, his own sensitivity and preferences about musical styles and aesthetic orientations.
2. Another aspect is given by the hypostasis of music when it is performed by respecting these rules. For example, in the tonal music, a progression which begins and finishes with the tonic chord is enclosed, which means that the listener doesn't feel that a certain fragment needs to be continued. On the contrary, an open harmonic progression generates the suspension of the musical phrase, requiring a resolution. Therefore, music implies different evolution until the next closed cadenza.

The author mentioned his preference for the transformations generated by the implications imposed by music, rather than the idea of expectations generated in the listener's perspective during a musical audition. One could deduce that the reason for his option is given by the intrinsic evolution of music, according to latent possibilities that are suggested from the first measures of the score: certain harmonic relations, sonorous structures, stylistic directions which are deeply included in the structure of that discourse, influencing its evolution.

During the audition, any expectation is accompanied by a tendency to respond, which is

„a pattern reaction that operates, or tends to operate, when activated, in an automatic way. A pattern reaction consists of a set or series of regularly coincident mental or motor responses which, once brought into play as part of the response to a given stimulus, follow a previously ordered course, unless inhibited or blocked in some way.”
(Meyer, 1956, p. 24)

The term „tendency” used by Meyer includes all the automatic patterns of answer that are generated by our previous experiences, no matter they are native or achieved. At the same time, the tendency to respond may be conscious or unconscious. If the reaction pattern follows its usual course, then the entire process could be completely unconscious. This tendency appears consciously only when a form of inhibition occurs and the usual way to react is disturbed. Therefore, if the accumulated suspense is high, the emotional relief is also intense after the culmination and relaxation. This observation proves that in any aesthetic experience, the emotional pattern must be considered at the same time a tension itself and a gradual evolution until the end. An artistic experience without aesthetic resolution is worthless in the context of the entire construction, as it happens in music, where any tension must be solved, released at some point.

Starting from the premises formulated by Leonard Meyer, we are aiming towards proving that contemporary musical language may create particular mental itineraries, configurating a genuine network of surprising connections. After having analysed the form of the piece and the microstructural units, we have the impression that returning to the audition of this work is similar to reminding a dream: the evolution of the musical discourse remains vaguely in the listener's memory, but leaves an intense feeling, like a deep print inside him. One may feel it as a “burning” experience, which has the ability to catch not just the listener's attention, as a conscious concentration of his mind, but also other areas, deeper and harder to access rationally. The variations, transformations, anticipations, returns of motives take the aspect of mixed echos, generating new structures, with blended cells, in different contexts, which make the microstructural analysis more difficult to delimitate and classify. In the previous table, the basis of the classification consisted in some intervallic patterns, successions of notes or rhythms, which represent the essence of the key-motives. The musical work is homogenous from the smallest units and the analysis of the cellular, motivic, intervallic, rhythmic details offers an objective structural support for a holistic approach.

In section A, there are two obvious articulations with a certain motivic independence (**a** and **b**), each being followed by a variation of themselves (**a₁** and **b₁**). From the dramaturgical point of view, the unfolding of the music is clear, logic, with an expressive, concise opening and intrinsic meaning, which would be later amplified, contributing to the general meaning. We refer to motive α , followed by its variation by development, interpolation of new elements, extension of ambitus and dimensions, ended with cadential formula in recitative manner on the centre E. The three musical units compose together the phrase “a”, whose evolution is gradually unfolded, going towards the culmination moment and returning to the previous register to reach the final cadenza. This process outlines a tensional arch shape, a specific interior dramaturgy which introduces the musical themes, sets the intonational system, the character of the piece and the purpose of the movement. Listening to this first fragment, the intuition of a sensitive listener may anticipate an approximate evolution: the development of the exposed material, the extension of ambitus, the search for a culmination at a higher level, the occurrence of sonorous tensions which create the assumption of preparing an intensely chromatic continuation. Our expectations were confirmed to some extent, because it is a natural phenomenon in a musical work which was composed coherently, with a certain meaning and artistic purpose. But there is an important coefficient in the final result of this “equation”, namely the unforeseeable aspects of the musical evolution that ensure the listener's interest for what comes next: fulfilment of his expectations, postponing the sound resolution, suspending the harmonic context or an unexpected ending.

The idea of **psychological expectation** that is explained by Leonard Meyer in his book has a crucial function when establishing the artistic value of a score. The first piece of the cycle *Mithya* has a particular way to lead the listeners' attention towards the culmination, with previous moments which generate the wanted tensions, but somehow insufficiently powerful. D. Rotaru conceived the dramaturgical line in tensional waves, “deceiving” on purpose the listeners' expectations, in order to get a more intense effect of the climax. Therefore, this work has a tensional arch shape that starts in a neutral point, with sound oscillation from the first musical unit, motive α , advancing towards a varied version, α_v , that gives a larger breathing to the beginning idea, generating the first sonorous phrase, named **a**. The next sequence is based on a cadential formula on E, where the musical discourse becomes developing, with melismatic elements.

Dolce, come un shakuhachi

α

B.T. (Bamboo tones)

N.V.

α_V

p

(poco)

p

mp

poco vibr.

N.V.

B.T.

B.T.

p

p

pizz.

N.

poco gliss.

ppp

a_1

mp

p

Fig. 7. Doina Rotaru, “*Mithya*” for solo flute, “*As a prayer*”, page 1, staves 1-2

Inside the second phrase, marked as a_1 , the transformational process of the cells x and y is enforced by the chromatic sliding in search for a new reference sound point. If a tonal work contains unstable moments in order to modulate, in this case, the musical discourse becomes ambiguous in the modal context by bringing elements such as A flat, B flat, E flat, D flat, stopping temporarily on B (which can be related to the initial centre E, due to the perfect fifth interval between them (similar to the relation between tonic and dominant)).

p

p

p

p

mp

gliss. (1 ST)

mp

poco vibr.

N.V.

B.T.

(= 1:15)

(7)

(= 1:30)

N.V.

poco

p

mp

p

ppp

(= 1:45)

Fig. 8. Doina Rotaru, “*Mithya*” for solo flute, “*As a prayer*”, page 1, staves 3-4

As one may have expected, the chromatic tendency towards a_1 continues, in order to reach new modal centres by “conquering” new sonorous spaces in the high register of the flute. This process creates instability, with a slight tensional tendency, as the performing indications suggest: *incalzando*, *poco esitando*, *dolce*.

Fig. 9. Doina Rotaru, “Mithya” for solo flute, “As a prayer”, page 1, staves 5-6

The last articulation of the section A has an obvious resolutive character, generated by the descending direction of the melody, longer durations, where the presence of the motive γ has an important role for returning to the initial modal context. At the same time, the relaxation of the musical energy is generated by the feeling of cadenza in the eight stave that ends the first section from this work.

Fig. 10. Doina Rotaru, “Mithya” for solo flute, “As a prayer”, page 1, staves 7-8 and page 2, stave 1

In the previous example, the persistence on B flat draws the attention because it can be related to A (note) by *glissando* technique and *appoggiatura* notes, preparing the cadenza on E. One may judge this type of melodic evolution as a plagal relation between IVth and Ist degrees of the scale (A – E) or as a tendency to intertwine the initial mode with locrian on E, by bringing and insisting on the characteristic

interval – diminished fifth between B flat and E –. The overwhelming, painful effect of the locrian is balanced by the cadential formula recalled from the first musical phrase, gaining a recitative manner, a plaintive expression, in the style of a Romanian *doina*. The rhythmic details are relevant for these observations, requiring acceleration and retardation, according to the indications specified by the composer in the list of conventional signs.

Second section, marked as “B”, contains sonorous material from previous phrases a and a₁, b and b₁, which lead to the conclusion of a high level of resemblance with section A. The notation of this section using letter B as a result of the inversion between the two types of musical material (the succession of the phrases is b_{v1}, b_{1v}, b₂), as one can see in the previous table of form.

First phrase, b_{v1}, recalls the sounds which compose motive β, but in a different order, reaching much faster the peak of the musical idea in the high register than it happens inside phrase b. Afterwards, the chromatic sliding in a descending direction anticipates the next phrase.

Fig. 11. *Doina Rotaru, Mithya for solo flute, As a prayer, page 2, staves 2-3*

The next phrase, b_{1v} contains a different process than b₁ from section A. On the one hand, this aspect can be understood as a natural phenomenon, because the second section of the work is expected to bring an amplified evolution, but it can also have a surprising effect, as the discourse acquires an unexpected, unanticipated change of the melody, which leads the dramaturgy of the piece to a larger extension (concerning sonorous space and tensional accumulation. We refer to the culminating evolution of this phrase, which is in contrast to the previous b₁ that had a different function – resolution, relief of musical tension, conclusion, in order to create the ending segment of the section A. In the case of section B, phrase b_{1v}, although related to b₁, has a different position inside the context, representing a middle section, with a developing function, by focusing on motive γ (that appears also in descending direction) and creating a succession of chromatic “waves” which lead to the culminating note of the phrase (F in the third octave). This peak of the musical evolution is not stable, having a tendency to slide towards its inferior note, E₃ by

glissando technique of flute emission. The oscillation between these two notes indicates that, despite the intensely chromatic content of this section, the musical discourse keeps its tendency to return to the modal centre E.

Fig. 12. Doina Rotaru, *Mithya* for solo flute, “*As a prayer*”, page 2, staves 4-5

The continuation of this musical idea is realised in regressive form, starting with a remote version of the motive γ (compared to the original), followed by the insertion of “reminiscences” from a_1 that persist on returning to the initial centre, E. The cadential formula from the first phrase, a , comes back for the third time with an extended aspect, easily unstable because of the oscillation between E and D sharp.

Fig. 13. Doina Rotaru, “*Mithya*” for solo flute, “*As a prayer*”, page 2, staves 5-8

It is interesting to observe the manner of integrating elements from section A in a different order, with many variations, transformations, but still easy to recognize. The inner cohesion of the section B, differently accomplished than previously, inside A, generates an organic cohesion of the musical material, a substantial coherence that leads to a unitary psychological perception. All these details and connections help us to understand better the transformational process and the techniques of composition that were applied in this piece.

Looking retrospectively, after the stop on E, one may observe a symmetric structure between sections A and B, because the elements from the phrases marked as **a** are located in the opposite extremities, while those notated with **b** are situated in the middle. If the audition stopped in this exact moment, after the cadenza on E, it would be interesting to presume what solutions would expect the listeners (particularly at the dramaturgical level of the entire piece). The experiment would be exciting to analyse the psychological phenomenon of expectancy in a contemporary work. One possible idea would be the return of the musical material used in the beginning, in a closely related version to the initial exposition, followed by a final conclusion, in order to outline a balanced ternary symmetry. Nevertheless, one would ask an essential question: which is the climax of the work? Is any of the previous moments highly tensioned enough to be considered culmination of the entire piece? The answer is negative. Even though the previous evolution had some accumulations and reliefs of tension, the general dramaturgy needs a more amplified wave of energy with a moment of maximum condensation that would have the power to unleash the whole amount of tension.

The latter option was Doina Rotaru's choice. She added a final section in which she recalled elements from **b**, **b₁**, inserting fragments with densely ornamental melody, generating a musical evolution with improvising style and fast ascension towards the peak of the melodic arch shape. The culmination leads to a trance effect, generating a genuine sound vortex, accomplished through register changes, intervallic jumps, trills, tremolos. The relief of tension has a chaotic aspect, similar to a disintegration of all elements that were gradually gathered, ending like flashing fall from the second octave on the sound **C₁**, in *pizzicato*, sliding towards **B** and **B₁** flat from the lower octave. We could say that D. Rotaru's intentions are clear, because **C₁**, although the lowest note of the flute, is surpassed by the other two inferior notes, in *glissando*, suggesting the dramatic return in the telluric space, the inner spasm generated by the contact with the earth, our primary matter.

Fig. 14. Doina Rotaru, *Mithya* for solo flute, *As a prayer*, page 2, staves 1-5

The last musical segment, with the indication *calmo, dolcissimo*, brings again the motives exposed in the beginning of the work, in closely related version to the initial appearance, respecting the same succession of intervals and the cellular structure of motive α .

Fig. 15. Doina Rotaru, *Mithya* for solo flute, *As a prayer*, comparison between motive α exposed in page 1, first stave and its version transposed on C at page 3, fifth stave

After the return of motive α , motive β is also recalled, with certain intervallic and structural changes, emphasizing the thematic synthesis.



Fig. 16. Doina Rotaru, *Mithya* for solo flute, *As a prayer*, page 3, stave 6

In the last but one stave, the cadential formula from phrase **a** is used again in order to conclude the last section of the piece. At this point, one may observe that this formula appears with precise function – to create cadenzas for each composing section. At the psychological level, this formula defines the formal units A, B, A₁, outlining a ternary structure. The last insertion of the formula stops on the centre E from the second octave, unlike the previous appearances that were ending on E₁. It also contains new sounds (used as *appoggiaturas*): A, F, D sharp. These three notes, with E included, form together the modal structure of the motive α exposed in the beginning, leading to a structural and modal symmetry of the piece.



Fig. 17. Doina Rotaru, “*Mithya*” for solo flute, “*As a prayer*”, page 3, stave 7

The final cadenza leaves a suspension on the major seventh resulted from the superposition of the sounds F₁ and E₂, followed by the last echoes which resonate around E and D sharp by alternation in *glissando*, with imprecise intonation. The centre of gravitation of the entire piece is present, concrete, but “slippery”, similar to a silent sigh after a long, exhausting search for answers in superior spaces, far too high for the limited possibilities of the human being.

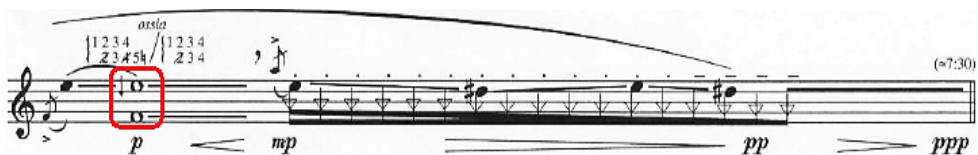


Fig. 18. Doina Rotaru, “*Mithya*” for solo flute, “*As a prayer*”, page 3, stave 8

The indication inserted in the score by reversed triangles on each note refers to play the flute by overlapping the musical sounds with the performer's breathing, leading to an eolian effect of the notes. This technique could suggest the vital breath of the human being who raises his prayer to heaven, because of the winding route between the telluric and celestial space. A very important idea about the emission techniques used in this musical work (*bisbigliando*, the long notes with pulsations accomplished by breath, the superposition of the voice and the flute's timbre, the wind and whistle effects, the harmonics and the *tremollo* between them) is the strong impact created on the listener's reception, as it has a major contribution to the mental configuration generated after listening to it.

5. Conclusion

The analysis of the piece *As a prayer* from the cycle *Mithya* by Doina Rotaru reflects the composer's conception, based on the balance between order and (the apparent impression of) disorder, between clarity and ambiguity. On the one hand, we noticed the unity of the thematic construction, the periodical recall of motives and segments from the initial theme, the variational derivation of the entire sonorous material; on the other hand, we felt a fascinating ambiguity resulted from the unmeasured rhythm, with *parlando-rubato* evolution, the free intonation (given by *glissando*, microtonal units, chromatic structures, particular effects of emission). Moreover, the macro-structural level is clearly organized in sections and musical phrases, while the micro-structural level has an improvising unfolding, generated by perpetual variation of the original units. These elements compose the semantic content of the work *Mithya*, in which the fundamental aspects of spiritual Romanian existence are transfigured into musical meanings, following a flexible direction in a complex dramaturgy.

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