RUSTIC ENTERTAINMENT MATERIALIZATION OF THE ROMANIAN STYLISTIC MATRIX

Mădălina Dana RUCSANDA [1]

Abstract: *Sabin Dragoi's concern to determine the ethnic specific of the Romanian folk music, which can be achieved only by comparative-historical research, is not a goal in itself, but rather a factor which must serve practically at establishing and strengthening a national cult music school, and the stylistic matrix which has a generative ethnos meaning, in its typical sense, is a form and style creator and it stands at the origin of the folklore creations. In Rustic entertainment regarding the determinants of the stylistic matrix, we can see that, for example, the similarity of the horizon space - that can be intuited in the carol, in the melancholy song and in the mourning - with the physical landscape is more a happy coincidence than the effect of a targeted conditioning, because not the presence in a geographic and social area influences directly the spiritual creation, but the transfiguration of this permanently spiritual reality in a style dominant.*

Key words: *Drăgoi, folklore, Rustic entertainment, stylistic matrix.*

1. Introduction

Sabin Drăgoi's creation is, in spirit, the product of the Romanian folklore ambience, with whose vision of cosmic undulation it can be identified.

The composer's consubstantiality with the folklore soul is what gives the naive and magical sense to his music and its touching principle, its impulse towards being, towards flowing naturally and spontaneously. His work „expressed in a proper and original artistic voice, knead in the stylistic matrix of our ethnographic culture" [1], occupies a place of honour in the Romanian music.

The style matrix made up by Lucian Blaga generally occurs due to the semantic load that the notion of style communicates, under two aspects: as an intimate mental resort that influences the creations of a cultural group, but also as a result of a cognitive act of abstraction and comprehension of the key events in the national spirit. Thus, each of the stages of evolution that the ethnos culture goes through has its purpose in the crystallization process of the national stylistic matrix and we consider that the state of the traditional culture – the folklore represents its structure, the canonical culture stage (sacred music)

gives it new features, and the modern composition shapes it continuously.

We should, however, understand the difference between the detection of the stylistic matrix at the cultural organism level and at the concrete creative music level. Thus, reported to the phenomenon of culture as a whole, the notion of stylistic matrix remains an abstraction, a speculative concept; however, if considered at the scale of a particular work, it will materialize in the features of the sound material.

2. Musical analysis

Next, we will try to identify the Romanian stylistic matrix in the composer Sabin Drăgoi's work, "Rustic entertainment".

The Rustic entertainment, written between 1924 and 1928, awarded the first prize during the Enescu Competition in 1928, is an instrumental suite for chamber band: either small orchestra (4 violins 1, 4 violins 2, 2 violas, 2 cellos, 2 contrabasses, 1 flute, 1 oboe , 1 clarinet, 1 bassoon, 1 horn, harp and piano), or 11 instruments (one from each party).

The five parts of the work are consistent with the classification which the composer Béla Bartók made regarding the Romanian folk music [2], in the article "*The Romanian musical dialect of Hunedoara*", in classes which are sung or performed at certain events.

The composer designed the entertainment „as a cult synthesis of the folklore music tradition in its most authentic and purest forms of expression" [3] using folklore quotes as the basic thematic material and, in order to respond to the expressive enrichment needs, has diversified the content of the parts by a binary rotation in each of them: 1. Star song + carol; 2. Lyrical song + dance; 3. Voice mourning + instrumental mourning; 4. Dance + rubato song; 5. Ritual wedding song I (adagio) + Ritual wedding song II (giocoso).

The writing is kept in an easy sound register for each instrument (except for the mourning), the composer does not use colour effects, the composition expresses clarity, purity and balance, those features not giving the work a classical feature.

The first theme of Part I - *Carol* - expressed by instrumental variations in coral style, is the famous star song "Oh, what wonderful news" [4], (example no. 1) in which each musical phrase ends with long fermatas, and theme II, expressed through a fugato, is the carol "*Under the red east*" [5] (example no. 2).

Fig. 1. *Example no.* 1

SUB CEL ROSU RASARIT

tema a II-a

SUB CEL ROSU RASARIT

varianta populara   Lipova, jud.Timis

Sub cel   ro - su   ră -să - rit, Mân-dri-s po - mii   d-în -flo -riti   Mă -ru-le, cu flori d-al-be.

Fig. 2. *Example no.* 2

Part Two – The melancholy song – made of four parts (ABAvBvA), the original theme being the melody of the lyric song - "I was a shepherd" [6] (example no. 3), played on clarinet in a harmony of quarts, typical of the composer's style, and the second theme is a dance – Played on bagpipes (example 4).

The mourning, the most impressive and dramatic part of the work, serves as a folklore quote the famous "*Song for the dead*" (example no. 5) which, although was played on the flute to the author, it betrays, by the peculiarities of the structure, its vocal origin, its grave melody releasing a detained, almost solemn pain through the homophonous intonations of the wind instruments.
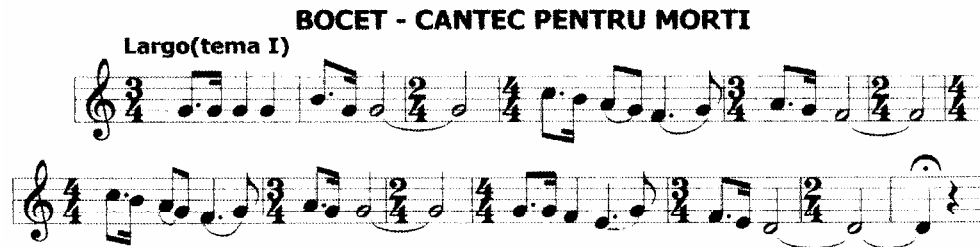
exemplul nr.3

DOINA

Andante

Fig. 3. *Example no.* 3

Allegretto giocoso

Fig. 4. *Example n*o. 4

Fig. 5. *Example* no. 6

The theme is expressed by all the wind instruments players and it is supplemented by a tremolo of the strings, after which the melody is repeated by the strings; after the appearance of the second theme on flute (example no.6), the lamentation touches the pathetic and the return of the first theme on horn, together with the second melody on the flutes, creates a very impressive atmosphere. The part ends with a short coda, after which the flute, during a general break, brings the melodic-rhythmic cell of the first theme, like an echo.

Fig. 6. *Example no*. 6

The dense rhythmic and dynamic pulse, the downward profile, the continuous segmentation of the blow, and the long sound like a sigh at the end of the melodic line, make of this extraordinary melopee the onomatopoeia for a low roar of crying.

In Part Four - Dance – the composer uses a folk song from the Petriş commune (example no. 7) that he develops, and, getting farther from the quote, he remains to the end within his own invention, which culminates in a proper song (example no. 8) Melancholy song tempo - final variation, where the elements of the theme can hardly be recognized.

The last part of the Entertainment has lied form, the first section consisting of a long breathing song (example no. 9) taken by the composer from the repertoire of a Selişte wedding ritual, whose solemn feature evokes exactly the ceremonial atmosphere of the peasant wedding, followed by the second sentence (example no. 10), which is a personal continuation of the musician.

The second section is a small composition made of three parts in Allegretto giocoso (example no. 11), also based on a folklore quote from Selişte, namely the farewell song sung by the guests at the end of the party on Sunday, which is developed by the composer in the spirit of the quote, the section ending with the return of the initial theme, in a lyrical and majestic atmosphere, enlivened by a last dancing echo.

The composer gave up the lavish and spectacular forms and opted for the

chamber solution, suitable to the interiorization and monologue, which in turn, conditioned the reduction to the essential of the complexity at all levels of the sound composition.

The analytical browsing of the score shows the author's concern for understanding the fundamentals of the folklore music material and their effective involvement in the configuration act, and the moulding of the ethnophonic cult discourse from the virtues of the monody core is reassessed on the superior level of the ethical issue, and ultimately, it gets weight and gravity.

Regarding the determinants of the stylistic matrix, we can see that, for example, the similarity of the horizon space - that can be intuited in the carol, in the melancholy song and in the mourning - with the physical landscape is more a happy coincidence than the effect of a targeted conditioning, because not the presence in a geographic and social area influences directly the spiritual creation, but the transfiguration of this permanently spiritual reality in a style dominant.

Moreover, timing is a crucial and defining fact, and if we refer to its mental image, we see that, although it consumes, time remains somewhat inert, stuck in a continuous present, this abolition of the temporality reminding the apparent lack of evolution of the Romanian melancholy song and of the carol, as well as of the touching stasis of the Byzantine melos.

The progressive renewal of the discourse, together with keeping the generative intonation complex, namely the folklore quote, as well as the sound and temporal fluid plasticity, manifested also at the syntactic and macro-structural level, approaches the configurative principle of the work to the folklore improvisation.

Organizing the musical discourse on the principle of waves foreshadows the "undulated infinite" of the "mioritic space", the undulating motion combining with the steady rising pace towards the climax.

In order to obtain a quasi-spontaneous flow of sound, the composer uses folklore modalism resources, the sound track passing through a series of modal formations, some of which are simple, diatonic, and other complex, with fluctuating levels, and the combination of tones and modal ethos animates both the horizontal and the vertical dimension of the course.

At the end of the work we are still left with a feeling that it does not exclude, but rather it involves the beginning of some new sound avatars. The open form of the entertainment also conveys, at another level, the concept of "undulated infinite".

This paper is intended to be a confession of a geographically and spiritually vibrant space, of its creative, of its dramatic destiny, and, beyond the ethical significance, it reveals the author's attitude towards following, in the sound space, the birth and becoming of the music ideas, or, in other words, the very music noeza in all its stages.

Sabin Dragoi's concern to determine the ethnic specific of the Romanian folk music, which can be achieved only by comparative-historical research, is not a goal in itself, but rather a factor which must serve practically at establishing and strengthening a national cult music school, and the stylistic matrix which has a generative ethnos meaning, in its typical sense, is a form and style creator and it stands at the origin of the folklore creations.

Notes

1. Rădulescu, Nicolae: *Sabin V. Drăgoi*, Bucharest, Musical Publishing House, 1971, p. 244.
2. Béla Bartók thinks that the melodic repertoire of the Romanian can be divided into five main categories: 1. *The carol songs*; 2. *The wedding songs*, which accompany the nuptual ceremonies; 3. The various funeral songs, known as *mournings*; 4. *The dance songs*, which are played on an instrument, only for dancing, or during dancing, vocally (their text is called in Romanian *strigături* or *chiuituri (witty couplets or extempore songs))*; 5. The most important category, the so called *melancholy songs*, the songs themselves, which are sung without a particular reason, both on lyric texts, and on ballad texts; (*The Romanian musical dialect of Hunedoara*, 1920, in *Short writings on the Romanian folklore music*. Gathered and translated by Constantin Brăiloiu, 1937, p.5.)
3. Rădulescu, Nicolae. *Sabin V. Drăgoi*, Bucharest, Musical Publishing House, 1971, p. 141.
4. Regarding this song, Nicolae Rădulescu thinks that due to its similar features with the protestant choir (tones and major system, fermatas within the interior meters etc) it has been borrowed by the Romanian from the Saxons of Ardeal.
5. The carol „*Under the red east*" was gathered by the composer from Tia Pavel, from Lipova, county of Timiş when he was 45 years old, in 1923.
6. The melody with the original folklore text of the song „*I was a shepherd*" was gathered by the composer from the Petriş commune and it was harmonised for voice and piano in the First Notebook of the *Melancholy songs* (1925).