

COMPOSERS OF THE MANUSCRIPTS FOUND IN THE LIBRARY OF THE *NEW NEAMŢ* MONASTERY

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Abstract: *Aurel Stroe is one of the most important Romanian composers from the second half of the XXth century, an exceptional complex artist, a complete musician, composer, teacher and musicologist, the composer aware of his responsibility, because the authentic art is a consequence of our deepest beliefs. I expose in this work a summary of his main creative paradigms, with examples and applications, making the connection with its musicological text and concepts, so original and little known.*

Key words: *composers, monastery, New Neamţ, romanian, manuscripts.*

A considerable number of manuscripts of the monastery have been drawn up in the second half of the 19th century, in a time when the tradition of writing manuscripts was on the brink of disappearance in Moldova, due to the emergence of the printing paper.



Fig. 1. *Noul Neamţ Monastery*

Out of the priceless pages of Byzantine chants, we can extract 45 names of authors whose works circulated in various Romanian and Greek manuscripts and were largely being used in the liturgical practice. Works of authors from Constantinople during the Byzantine period (13th-15th centuries) such as: John Glikis, John Cucuzel, John Klada, Xenos Koronis, Petru Peloponisiul, Manuel the Protopsalt, Hurmuz Hartofilax, were greatly popular at the time, and were often included in the Romanian musical manuscripts from the 17th-19th centuries.

The central figure of the Byzantine period was John (Ioan) Glikis – the founder of a great school of liturgical music composition. Highly popular, his works were largely used in the liturgical practice. John Glikis was considered one of the greatest teachers and was, in his turn, the student of John Cucuzel and Xenos Koronis. The works of John Cucuzel (~ 1280 - ~ 1360) have deeply

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influenced the Byzantine music. During his manifold activity as a protopsalt, composer of liturgical music, theoretician and peerless pedagogue at the Church of Saint Sophia in Constantinople, he was one of the greatest psalmists in Constantinople. Most of the manuscripts describe him in eulogistic terms such as: master, sweet voice, the divine swan or an angelic voice.

Another disciple of John Glikis was Xenos Koronis. His name, Koronis, is supposedly related to the Church of Korona, from the region with the same name. Through his compositions, he has innovated the musical presentation of the Great Vespers. He has also written a series of musical arrangements based on the works of his predecessors.

From the post-Byzantine period, we can hereby mention the following psalmists and cantors of the Great Church of Constantinople, whose names are enlisted on the manuscript pages from the New Neamţ Monastery: Patriarch Afanasie, Daniil the Protopsalt, Hieromonk Damian, Dimitrie Domesticos, Gregorios Lampadarios, George the Cretan, Bishop Gherman, Drigorie - the teacher of the twelve Apostles, Hurmuz Chartofilax, Halatzoglu the Protopsalt, Protopsalt Jacob - the Peloponnesian, John the Protopsalt, Kiril - the Hieromonk from Tinas, Manuel the Protopsalt, Petros Lampadarios Peloponnesios, Peter Mperechetu, Peter Vizantije and Palasiu Iereos.

Another three composers from Constantinople, whose names appear in the manuscripts and represent the older generation of musical masters of the Great Church in Constantinople, are: Gherman Neon Patron, Palasiu Iereos and Athanasius, Patriarch of Constantinople. On pages dating back to the late 17th and early 19th centuries, there also appear names such as Hieromonk Damian, Panagiot Halatzoglu, John the Protopsalt and Daniil the Protopsalt.

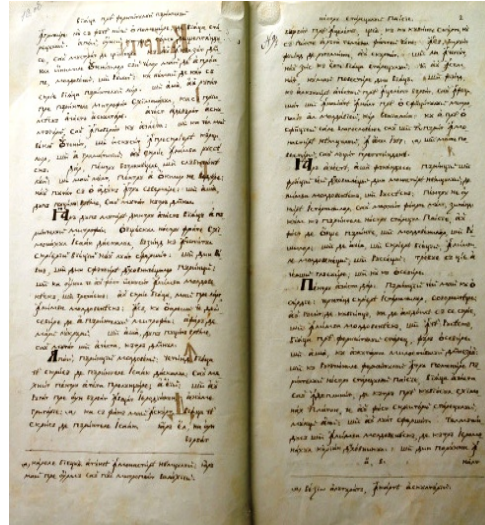


Fig. 2. *Noul Neamţ Manuscript*

The oldest manuscript with Byzantine notation, written in Greek, from the New Neamţ collection dates back to the year 1745 and comprises chants used only in the mass services.

During the 2nd quarter of the 19th century, another three manuscripts comprising liturgical chants were written by the first abbot of the New Neamţ Monastery.

Amongst the composers of the New Neamţ manuscripts, there is also one of the most renowned creators of Byzantine music (up to the reform period), namely Petros Peloponnesios (also known as "Peter the Peloponnesian" or "Peter the Lampadarios").

Out of the fifteen manuscripts, eleven are signed by this composer, who also wrote many musical books. The few psalm chants written by Peter the were widely spread in the manuscripts Peloponnesian of the region, being the most popular amongst psalm singers and scribes. Later on, after the reform was completed, they were transcribed into a new system of Byzantine notation, being sung in both Romanian and Greek.

The composers pertaining to the 17th-19th centuries were as follows: Protopsalt Jacob - the Peloponnesian, George the Cretan, Manuel the Protopsalt, Gregorios Lampadarios and Hurmuz Chartofilax. In the history of Byzantine music, the latter are considered to be the great reformers of psaltic music (1814). During the first half of the 19th century, the composers that operated in Romania were Greek: Dionysio Fotino, Peter Vizantie, Archdeacon Nichifor, Teodor the Protopsalt and Peter Efesiu. They have largely contributed to the dissemination of "the new system" of Byzantine notation and chants all over Romania. Peter Efesiu was the disciple of George, the Cretan and the founder of the "Psaltic Music School" in Bucharest (in the new system) and the founder of the printing house of Byzantine music books. His disciples were Hieromonk Macarie and Anton Pann, among others.

A special place amongst the manuscripts from the New Neamț Monastery belongs to the musical work of composers Hieromonk Visarion, Monk Josef, Nectarie Nemțeanu and Hieromonk Macarie from Neamț.

Monk Josef was a teacher of Orthodox psalm music and he led the school of singers from New Neamț Monastery. A considerable part of his works was transcribed into the new system of Byzantine notation by Hieromonk Visarion (composer and author of books of chants in Romanian).

Hieromonk Visarion was a great expert in the old and new notation systems, thus becoming largely popular thanks to the numerous psaltic works that he transcribed from the old notation system into the new one. The works of hermit Josef (Iosif) can be found in seven manuscripts of the New Neamț collection and those of Hieromonk Visarion – in six of them.

Nectarie Nemțeanu (1802-1898) is yet another great protopsalt who lived and worked at the Neamț Monastery. He was a

teacher of psaltic music and composer of many musical works in Greek or Romanian. He lived a considerable part of his life at the Holy Mountain Athos. Some of his works were found in numerous manuscripts from Athos. In addition, his works were found in two books from the library of New Neamț Monastery.

Another exceptional personality, whose name is found in many pages from the New Neamț manuscripts is Hieromonk Macarie, a disciple of Constantine, the Protopsalt, who was the reformer of Romanian music. He wrote the very first grammar book ever printed in Romanian, called "Theoreticon or an in-depth examination of churchly practices, according to the new system", printed in Vienna in 1823. He contributed to the process of Romanization of the Byzantine chants and their printing, as well as to the vocal training of church singers, being a teacher and leader of the school of church singers in Neamț. Some of his chants have been discovered in three books of the New Neamț Monastery collection.

Seven of the fifteen Byzantine musical manuscripts from the New Neamț collection are written by: Hieromonk Andronic – manuscripts no. 4, 5, 6; Archdeacon Callistrat Galactinovici – manuscript no. 12; Psalm singer Ștefan Tătaru – manuscript no. 3; Archdeacon Pavel Bradu – manuscript no. 14 and abbot Dometian – manuscript no. 2.

The three manuscripts of Hieromonk Andronic (inventory no. 4, manuscripts no. 4, 5, 6) are of great importance. By analyzing the footer sections from the back of the initial pages, we find that the manuscripts were written by Father Andronic in 1841 (manuscript no. 4) and 1849 (manuscript no. 5 and 6) at the Secu Monastery. The three manuscripts were brought into Bessarabia by Father Andronic and introduced in his 1884 book catalogue.

They represent selections of church chants written in Greek and Romanian (with the Cyrillic alphabet), in a Chrysantic notation. Manuscript no. 4 – a book containing specific church hymns (such as the Anixandaria, the Polyeleos, the Evlogitaria and other Vigil service chants) was written by Father Andronic at the age of 21 (in 1841), at the Secu Monastery. This manuscript comprises anonymous melodies, as well as ten cycles of original works, namely: Greek works by – John the Protopsalt (Tone 1), Protopsalt Visarion (Tone 1), Anastasie Larsinu (in the Leghetos tone), Grigorie (Tone 3), Dionisie the Peloponnesian (Tone 8) and Peter the Peloponnesian (tone 5); and Romanian cycles by Peter the Peloponnesian (Tones 5 and 7), Dionisie the Peloponnesian (Tone 8) and Visarion the Hieromonk (Tone 6). Hence, Dionisie and Visarion each have two cycles – a Romanian and a Greek one and Peter - the Peloponnesian has two Romanian cycles and a Greek one.

The richest section of this manuscript is the Polyeleos – a cycle of verses called the Polyeleos psalms, which are chanted during the Matins service on religious holidays or on saint's feast days. Manuscript no. 4 comprises a number of 38 Polyeleos cycles: eleven Greek and five Romanian cycles, written on the text of Psalm 134, "Servants of the Lord"; eight Greek cycles and a Romanian one on the text of Psalm 135 "Praise the Lord", as well as eight Greek cycles written on special subsequent verses from Psalms 134 and 135 and five Romanian works of the same type.

Manuscript no. 5 – The Book of chants used in Vigil services and the Akathist to our venerable mother Paraschiva, which "have come together and have been written by me at the Secu Monastery, when I was 29", comprises twelve cycles of Polyeleos – that is six Polyeleos cycles by authors, three Greek cycles belonging to Grigorie

(Tone 3), Hurmuz (Tone 8) and to Archdeacon Nichifor (Tone 8) and three Romanian cycles by Peter the Peloponnesian (Tone 5), Hieromonk Visarion (Tone 6) and Dionisie (Tone 8).

In these both manuscripts (no. 4 and no. 5), we have two types of Polyeleos: the whole one, which consists of the full chanting of 40 semi-verses on the text of Psalm 134 and 26 verses on the text of Psalm 135; the chanting "in verses" selected from the texts of Psalms 134 and 135; eventually, this results in an 8-strophe cycle, with 4 verses from each psalm.

After each semi-verse, both types of Polyeleos contain the refrain "Alleluia!". The only difference is that the Polyeleos melodies based on Psalm 135 use the double refrain principle – with "Alleluia" repeated twice: firstly - as a semi-cadenza and, the second time, as a closing cadenza.

Stylistically, the forms of Polyeleos are diversified into two manners of interpretation: the syllabic style manner, based on melodic simplicity; in the style of Irmologion chanting, where the amplitude derives from the melodic development and from its enrichment with ornaments and repetitions of words or syllables.

Manuscript no. 6 was written in the same year as manuscript no. 5 (namely, in 1849) and it comprises liturgical chants, among which The Creed, the Lord's prayer (Our Father), the Palm Sunday Canon, a few liturgical creations by Filotei sin Agăi Jipei, the Lord's Lamentations and the Chant of Ioasaph – Prince of India.

These three manuscripts of Father Andronic are greatly important, as they show us the contribution of the Romanian composers from the first part of the 19th century to the "Romanization" of the Greek sources and their adaptation and transcription into contemporary neumes (by Hurmuz Gheorghiu Chartofilax), as well as to the creation of autohtonous chants.

Archdeacon Callistrat Galactinovici is one of the greatly important authors of manuscripts. In addition to being the disciple of Father Andronic and of Nectarie - the Psalm singer, he was the author of several books and manuscripts, such as: *The Lamentations of Jesus Christ, Our Saviour* (1866), the *Anthology for Liturgy, Vigil services and other uses* (1867) and the *Anthology for Vigil services in Chrysantic notation* (1868) – all written in the Romanian hermitage "Prodrom" in Athos.

As stated in the author's note from the title page of the first manuscript, "The Lamentations of Jesus Christ, Our Saviour", this book has been transcribed specifically for the New Neamt Monastery, more exactly "...for the New Lavra of the sacred Monastery of Neamț from Chitcani, Bessarabia, by archdeacon Callistrat Galactinovici from the Secu Monastery - the disciple of Father Andronic, confessor from 1848, the 21st of November".

Here is what Father Andronic writes about this manuscript: "...it is very delicately written by my apprentice, archdeacon Callistrat at the Holy Mountain of Athos". This manuscript comprises three parts: I – The Lamentations by Nectarie Neamțul; II – The Greek Anixandaria by Hermit Joseph from Moldova; III – The Axion estin (an hymn to Mary, also called Theotokion) by Protopsalt Nectarie. The first part is divided into three sub-sections, with a non-traditional number of verses:

- I - 76 verses;
- II - 63 verses
- III - 48 verses.

Each verse that is chanted is preceded by the reading of the same verse. Verse 76 from the first section represents the repetition of the first verse. The first and

second sub-section are written in Tone 5 "Pa" (in "D" key), with final cadenzas on Ga (meaning the "F" key). The third sub-section is written in Tone III "Ga" (in the "F" key), with final cadenzas on Ga (in "F" key).

In the analysis of this manuscript, Margareta Cernoveac points out the few versions of cadenza formulas: "In the final cadenzas of Tone 5, in the first and second parts, there are two predominant versions of the melodic formulas, ending on Ke.

Out of the 76 verses, the first formula is found in 51 of them, whereas the second - in 13. In the second part, out of 63 verses, there are 39 cadenzas of the 1st type and 18 of the second type. Other versions of cadenza formulas, also ending on Ke, are relatively rare - from one to four.

In the third part, there are three formulas that are used for the final cadenza, ending on Ga.

The first two formulas are predominant: out of 48 verses, 15 end with the first formula, 16 with the second and 9 with the third".

The second part of the manuscript – the Anixandaria – is written by Hermit Joseph in Tone 8 on "Ni" (in "C" key) and its melody is rich in melismas. According to the text, it can be divided into two parts.

Part I – comprising the cycle of strophes, plus the first refrain – the evloghimenos hymn;

Part II – the strophes, accompanied by refrain 2 – "Wonderful are...";

Part III – the Axion estin (or Theotokion), written by Protopsalt Nectarie in the Leghetos tone (on Vu) and it represents an hymn to Mary, the Mother of God, chanted during the Liturgy, after the gifts are sanctified. This manuscript is greatly important, thanks to its content and to the fact that it is an original manuscript of Callistrat Galactinovici.

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