ASPECTS OF TRADITIONAL FOLK MUSICAL LANGUAGE IN THE WORK SUITA A III-A BIHOREANĂ BY TUDOR JARDA*

PH.D. Student ANDRA-DANIELA PĂTRAȘ

National Academy of Music “Gheorghe Dima” of Cluj-Napoca

Andra Daniela PĂTRAȘ was born in 1988 and she began the study of music, playing violin and vocal singing at the School of Music “Sigismund Toduță” in her hometown, Cluj-Napoca. She continued her musical training at the “Gheorghe Dima” Academy of Music in Cluj, graduating with a Bachelor's degree (2012) and a Master's degree (2014), in the field of Musicology. During her studies she took part in numerous scientific events and competitions, her research being awarded and published. Starting with 2012, she works as Musical Secretary at the Cluj Academy where she had the opportunity to work in organizing teams of prestigious artistic events. She is currently a Ph.D. student at the same institution (she received an Erasmus scholarship at Universität für Musik und Darstellende Kunst, Graz, Austria), since 2017, beginning her teaching activity as an associate doctoral student at the Academy of Music (The Faculty of Theoretical Studies) and at “Babeș-Bolyai” University (Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences). Ever since she was a student, Andra Pătraș has shown her curiosity and interest in the field of Ethnomusicology, being a member of Ensemble “Icoane”, she has participated in actions of collecting musical folklore from the ground, skills that naturally converged towards the doctoral research in the same field.

ABSTRACT

The present work aims to highlight a choral score by composer Tudor Jarda, both from a structural analysis perspective and by presenting the context of its composition. *Suita a III-a bihoreană* [The Third Suite from Bihor] demonstrates an apposition of neomodal musical language with folkloric style composition techniques.

Keywords: choral work, suite, neomodal language, folkloric style, Tudor Jarda.

A composer's work can provide his characterization, exposure, an attitude that is not easily attained and which involves opening oneself up to the abyss that

* Translation from Romanian by Cătălina Popa-Mörck.

is musical art, since emotion reaches the great audience once it has passed through the creative process. Should we consider emotion as a personal and intimate treasure trove, when brought to light in this way, it may become a collective treasury.

We will dive into great composer Tudor Jarda's (1922-2007) universe via his creation portfolio, namely, from the perspective of analyzing his choral piece *Suita a III-a bihoreană* [The Third Suite from Bihor]. His work collection includes opera, ballet, musical theater, choreographic tableaux, symphonic works, chamber music, choral pieces (choral tone poems, choral suites, choirs), music for puppet theater and religious music. His theoretical endeavors show a predisposition towards writings on traditional folk music topics: *Armonia modală cu aplicație la cântecul popular românesc* [Modal Harmony as it Applies to Romanian Traditional Folk Songs]; *Relații funcționale în moduri* [Functional Harmony in Modes]; *Doina – gen, formă sau mod de interpretare* [Doina – Genre, Form or Performance Approach]; *Fluierași, trișcași din Leșu* ["Fluierași", "Trișcași"² from Leșu]; *Fluierul cu dop și fluierul semitranscris fără dop* [The Corked Whistle and the Open Ended Whistle] etc. His musical works are filled with modal-folk atmosphere, materialized in modal harmonies³, rhythmical structures which bare a folk music stamp, folkloric melody; transfigured through modern composition techniques specific to the 20th Century. Valorizing authentic folk music is a constant pursuit for the composer, appearing as a red line throughout his entire creation portfolio.

A chronological overview of the choral suites reveals pursuits which span across two decades:

- 1954, *Năsăudeana* [From Năsăud], choral suite with accompaniment;
- 1957, *Suita I bihoreană* [Suite I from Bihor] for mixed choir;
- 1957, *Suita a II-a bihoreană* [Suite II from Bihor] for mixed choir;
- 1958, *Suita a III-a bihoreană* [Suite III from Bihor] for mixed choir;
- 1959, *Suite for Solo Soprano, with Mixed Choir and Traditional Orchestra*;
- 1960, *Suita a IV-a bihoreană* [Suite IV from Bihor] for mixed choir;
- 1975, *La fântâna dorului* [At the Yearning Well] for mixed choir (*To Chant, Song, Alongside, Fiddler with Good Strings*⁴).

¹ Studied music at the Conservatoire in Cluj/Timișoara with great teachers, famous names in the field: Tudor Vulpescu, George Simonis, Augustin Bena etc. His development as a man of culture has been furthered through the study of Philosophy where he met Lucian Blaga, D. D. Roșca and Liviu Rusu as his professors. The composer's professional activity is multifaceted: trumpet player in the Cluj Opera Orchestra, Conservatoire professor, secretary of the Local Branch of the Composers' Union, professor at the Pedagogical Institute in Târgu Mureș, folk music collector; he has published numerous articles; biographical selections from *Musicians from Romania – lexicon* (*Muzicieni din România – lexicon*), Viorel Cosma.

² Types of traditional Romanian wind instruments.

³ As theorized during the modal harmony course.

⁴ In Ro: De strigat, Cântec, De-a lungul, Ceteraș cu strune bune.

In the same year he composed *Suita a III-a*, the composer also worked on concepts for other choral works such as: *Trei cântece de pe Mureș* [Three Songs on the Mureș] for mixed choir and *Când vii bade* [When You Come] for mixed choir. Vocal music is perhaps the best represented in his portfolio, rising him to the level of a highly prolific composer of Romanian choral music. Considering a few biographical instances will help us understand his predilection for traditional folk music: though born in an urban setting, his creation output is deeply rooted in folk music due to an appreciation for the inestimable value of folklore, a love which has been nurtured by his parents as well as his first violin teacher, Ionel Șerban. In 1952, he collected folk music¹ in the field from Leșu (Bistrița-Năsăud) with Sigismund Toduță, and in 1955 from the Năsăud² area together with a group of researchers from Bucharest: "I have focused primarily on the traditional folk music of Năsăud, Maramureș and Bihor but I have never neglected the other regions: Banat, Hunedoara, and others"³. He lived and worked in Cluj, Bistrița, Timișoara, Târgu Mureș (where he left a significant mark through his collaborations with the Pedagogical Institute, between 1961-1972, by teaching harmony and folk music) and Oradea.

An edited version of the 4 suites from Bihor⁴ has been published by the Universitatea Oradea Publishing House in 2001 under the supervision of Felicia Man, a score which is not currently found in the Cluj-Napoca Music Academy Library archives⁵. Concerning choir repertoire, in practice, the suites are performed independently from one another, unfortunately relatively infrequent. A CD recording of the *Suita a III-a bihoreană* may be found on the 2nd CD⁶ of the *An Anthology of Romanian Music* series subtitled *Romanian Choral Compositions, Choirs by Romanian Composers*, performed by the „Transilvania” State Philharmonic Choir, conductor Cornel Groza. Upon a first score assisted audition, certain dissimilarities between written text – both musical and literary – and sound material become apparent. Given the year of the recording, 2003 (when the composer was still alive) and due to the nature of the differences, we can conclude that the composer and conductor enjoyed a strong collaboration. Concretely, full verse lines have been changed/adapted, or certain words replaced, musical phrases have been added, through repetition, as is the case of the first 4 bars which are

¹ Nelida Nedelcuț, *Cu Tudor Jarda despre Tudor Jarda*, Editura Tradiții Clujene, 2012, p. 19-20.

² Constantin Brăiloiu conducted research in the same area in 1939.

³ Nelida Nedelcuț, *Cu Tudor Jarda despre Tudor Jarda*, Editura Tradiții Clujene, 2012, p. 24; author's translation.

⁴ Observing the titling of 4 of his choral suites as "*bihoreană*" [from Bihor], we deem it justified to further study, in a subsequent work, the source of this interest for the Bihor region and how the local style particularities transpire in choirs.

⁵ Here one can only find the score for the 1st Suite.

⁶ CD accomplished with the help of the Ministry for Culture and Cults from the National Cultural Fund, in 2003.

repeated, in their entirety, on the recording. Through this ingression we aimed to highlight a common practice of choir conductors which involves changing structural elements in tandem and with the composer's approval with the purpose of reinforcing the expressive potential of a musical work.

In order to particularize and specify instances of traditional folk music language used by the composer in *Suita a III-a bihoreană*, we depend upon the inherent level of analysis. Its purpose is to identify and name the folk music mode's counterpart used in a stylized manner in literate creation.

As a genre, the suite implies an alternation of multiple contrasting parts (dances) of different character and tempo. Through its expressive content, deep meaning and dramaturgical structure, the suite influenced the genesis of other musical genres and forms. During the National Schools period, the suite originated in traditional dances, musical folklore serving as an inexhaustible source of inspiration for literate creation. In this case, the suite may be defined as a successive collection of 3 parts, the character change being noted in the score with a new marker number. On a macro-structural level, each marker brings about a new musical idea, making the change obvious and easy to sense. A micro-structural level analysis reveals that the development of the 3rd part elaborates thematic material. The whole work is based upon the fast-slow-fast alternation, this developmental plan not coinciding with the beginning of each part: bar 1, marker 1 (fast) – bar 50, marker 3 (slow) – bar 71, Tempo I, as such a return to the tempo of marker 1 (fast). Architecturally, it follows the genre specific alternation.

The first movement begins in *Allegro* and occupies bars 1-49. We will refer to the first 4 bars as a chorus due to it being repeated 5 times within the work's economy, under varied forms and with a binding role between thematic changes. The chorus is constructed as follows: first 2 bars are based upon a Lydian tetratonic scale (G, B, C#, D) with the augmented 4th (G-C#) where G also represents its final; this tetratone transforms, in bars 3 and 4, in a Lydian pentachord by filling the scale with the note A (G, A, B, C#, D) in which we find the "picnon" (trichord subset) G, A, B. As such, the A note is conferred a cadential role, the cadenza being moved on the 2nd note of the scale, from G to A. Moving the cadenza on the 2nd note of the scale is a method which originates in the melodic structures of vocal folk songs mostly heard in the Maramureş and Banat regions. Notice that the beginning is assigned to the male tenor voices, after which the theme migrates, in bar 3, to the female soprano voices while the other voices accompany this theme in modal style.

25

Allegro

Sopran
Alto
Tenor
Bas

De - ie - Ńi Dum - ne - zeu no - roc
De - ie - Ńi Dum - ne - zeu no - roc
Hai măn - dru - ță să te joc De - ie - Ńi Dum - ne - zeu no - roc
De - ie - Ńi Dum - ne - zeu no - roc

Example no. 1: Tudor Jarda, *Suita a III-a (Third Suite)*, bars 1-4

This dialogue between male and female voices is maintained throughout the piece and it constitutes a construction particularity of the musical discourse. In the next segment of the first movement, the accompanying voices comment in a counterpoint: the alto voice on a C Mixolydian mode (bar 8) and the tenor and soprano voices, on a Dorian structure (tetratonic or pentachordic) starting on G. We notice, as composition techniques, the overlapping of major and minor modes as well as the transposition of the melody upwards to the fifth. Also, a characteristic of folk songs is to move the melody in another phrase up by a fifth or down by a fourth, of Hungarian influence¹ as found in Romanian traditional folk songs. With bar 13, the chorus theme appears in a modified form, embellished by the color of the whole vocal apparatus: soprano has the theme while the other voices offer a harmonic accompaniment. The development uses rhythmical and melodic elements already presented. In the middle of the first movement (beginning in bar 21) the imperative nature of the lyrics determines a general ascending dynamic profile, „Că noi bine ne vâjim” [“Because we fit so well”] offering a different aesthetical meaning to the same musical material.

Marker 2 (bar 29) brings on a change at tonal-modal level through the introduction of a new melody in the sphere of a chromatic Dorian (via the downward alteration of E) or chromatic Aeolian, which is considered as a second thematic idea, the theme appearing at the soprano voice while the other voices provide a harmonic accompaniment. The chorus reappears in bar 45, easily identifiable, with the same text „Hai mândruță să te joc” [“Come girl so we can dance”], sang by the tenors, but with a development in the modal sphere, namely the addition of a Lydian tetrachord in the inferior part of the scale (C, D, E, F#) again with the cadenza on the 2nd note, D. Consequently, we are dealing with a

¹ This form is also frequently seen in medieval Central-European songs.

descending unraveling of the scale $D2, C\#, B, G, F\#, E, D, C$, where $C1$ acts as a subdinal, the cadenza being on D ; the so-called “augmented forth from Bihor” is now piercing through.

The return of the chorus in a tonal-modal amplified form marks the beginning of the **second movement**, a contrast which is also underlined through the *Andante rubato* indication. This part develops between bars 50 and 70. The slow middle part brings with it a third thematic idea, a melody derived from “doina” (improvisational) songs with the following characteristics: quasi-free form; heavily ornamented melody with multiple anterior and posterior grace notes, melismas, cadenzas on long notes. The accompaniment techniques are either imitation inserts, or harmonic accompaniment, these embellishments underlining the expressive and ethereal character of the main melodic line. The alternating meter of $3/4, 2/4, 3/4, 2/4$ etc. is determined by prosodic accents.

29

Example no. 2: Tudor Jarda, *Suita a III-a* [Third Suite], bars 50-54

On the topic of versification, we are dealing with a traditional folk music particularity due to the fact that the musical text brings and treats an interjection (the sound attributed to the syllable „da” = “yes”), keeping versification intact, it remaining for the entirety of the suite octosyllabic of the acatalectic form.

The third movement is introduced without the reiteration of the chorus, with a sudden transition manifested thorough a tempo change and the reappearance of the melody from marker 2. It develops across 35 bars (starting with bar 71), marked by the indication *Tempo I*. Structurally, this part is constructed around the development of motifs, thematic or rhythmical elements previously presented. The novelty in this movement can be considered the different composition techniques employed to reshape the same rhythmical-melodic material. As an example, the unveiling of the musical discourse by picking up the textual idea resulting in an effect similar to the opening of a fan (bars 75-80), rigorous writing in canon, the introduction of a totally new element through the insertion of the refrain „Hai, li, lir, li, li”, an element which represents the dialectal territory of Bihor. The composer turned to traditional folk music from this region, taking both the text, stylistically typical for the area, and the rhythm specific to the dancing music from Bihor, receiving an onomatopoeic valence, in the broad sense of the word.

S
Hai li lir li li

A
Hai li lir li li

T
Hai li lir li Hai mân -

B
Hai li lir li li

Example no. 3: Tudor Jarda, *Suita a III-a* [Third Suite], bars 93-94

The ending is presented in a doubled unison manner. If starting with bar 96 the unison is strictly at a rhythmical level, from a melody stand point, the composer uses the transposition to the lower fifth (doubling at a fifth, D-G) between the external pair of voices while the internal voices convey an inversion of the motif constructed on a Lydian tetratone, following a mirrored musical discourse. The next fragment brings a rhythmical augmentation (bars 99-100) while the ending is in unison both from a rhythmical and melodic perspective (doubling at an octave). This poignancy of the unison ends the choral suite with expressive force, a method which also comes from traditional folk music. The repeated monadic intonation of the same musical material is found in the traditional folk music from the occasional genres and group songs.

Pointing out some conclusive observations. In the *Suita a III-a bihoreană* Tudor Jarda used creative principles found in musical folklore, as well as certain local stylistically typical elements for the Bihor region. These can be found at a micro- and macro-structural level as follows:

- the composer did not use folk music citation in the 3 principal thematic ideas of the work, instead he created them in traditional style;
- the melody is based on modal structures, extrapolated also to harmonic level;
- overlapping of minor and major modes;
- the elements of folk music identity are the Lydian tetratones from the choruses, major trichords in pentachordic structures, use of scales which contain the “augmented forth from Bihor”, cadenza on the second note of the scale;
- use of the principle “accompanied melody” either through modal or functional harmony through the techniques: canon, imitation, counterpoint, unison;
- his counterpoint technique follows two directions: on one hand, with the expressive purpose of the voices overlapping and on the other hand the technique

of motif development. This last technique has its roots in musical folklore, folk music language construction often following the cell-motif development;

- from a rhythmical point of view, the folkloric inspiration is seen in the rhythmical freedom of the middle movement (which represents the *parlando-rubato* system), or in the lively pulse of the dance songs used in the fast parts;

- in the slow part, he undertook ornamentation and variation techniques specific to traditional folk music;

- on a versification level, he uses local speech, the text abounding in regionalisms or local expressions typical for the Bihor region;

- he keeps the octosyllabic acatalectic versification of traditional songs, building phrases around this type of organization.

Through the treasure that he left behind, Tudor Jarda is considered an important representative of the Romanian school, going down in music history due to his creation catalogue which boasts authentic autochthonous expressivity, many of his works adhering to neomodern language.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

COSMA, Viorel, *Muzicieni din România – Lexicon bio-bibliografic*, Editura Muzicală, Bucharest, 1989

JARDA, Tudor, *Armonia modală, cu aplicații la cântecul popular românesc*, Editura MediaMusica, Cluj-Napoca, 2007

NEDELCUȚ, Nelida, *Cu Tudor Jarda despre Tudor Jarda*, Editura Tradiții Clujene, Cluj-Napoca, 2012

PĂDURE, Ramona, *Tudor Jarda – creația sa de operă în lumina contemporaneității*, Ph.D. thesis, National Academy of Music “Gheorghe Dima”, Cluj-Napoca

POPOVICI, Doru, *Muzica corală românească*, Editura Muzicală, Bucharest, 1966