

## RELIGIOUS CHANTS – THE DIVERSITY OF CHURCH HYMNS TYPES

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**SUMMARY.** In the Romanian musical space, in the Orthodox Church hymns' repertoire, there is a great variety of non-liturgical chants intended to be sung in different moments of the liturgy. The moments these chants can be introduced are during the *kinonikón*, the believers' communion and the end of the liturgy. Either they are called *kinonikón*, hymns, **Calophonic** Hirmos, spiritual or liturgical chants; the religious chants became a part of the Orthodox rite, training the Christians 'community in the church chant. Having appeared in diverse historical contexts and being written by Byzantine music composers, by priests, by church singers and local liturgical communities, these religious chants have deeply been rooted both in the ancient liturgy ritual, and in the different moments of religious activities, pilgrimages, conferences, spiritual gatherings. Having an extremely accessible melodic line and being constructed on doxological, doctrinarian and moralizing character texts, the religious chants are an efficient means of making the Christian communities more dynamic.

**Keywords:** *kinonikón*, hymn, religious chants

The rising interest, of the liturgical community in the religious chant, results in some spiritual and communitarian implications. From a spiritual point of view, the Christians are trained in a sole living and feeling, forming the community of those who pray, through chant, in the same belief. On the other hand, from a communitarian point of view, the chant unites in a sole voice the Christians with different social positions and age groups. The chant unifies and erases differences. Due to the development of the religious music for many centuries, Christians cannot keep up to date with the vast musical repertoire. From the direct cult actors in the first centuries, they ended up

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being the spectators of a cult they cannot longer identify with. Of course, there are exceptions, where the same repertoire is performed, and a musical tradition is created so that it can be assimilated. Nevertheless, few are the moments when the Christians can be direct participants of the liturgical act: *Our Father...* chant, the *kinonikón*, and at the end of the liturgy. The moment of the chant of the *kinonikón* is a fixed point when the Christians can be involved in the liturgy through the unison chant. For the moment of the *kinonikón* we have up to today, an entire series of religious chants. In the present research we are going to make a thorough analysis of the most utilized religious chants that have entered the liturgical ritual, by the pressure of the community or church singers, replacing the old Byzantine *kinonikón*. Moreover, we shall describe the impact that these religious chants had on the ritual and the community.

## 1. The *Kinonikón* – the liturgical chant specific to the Holy Communion moment

### 1.1. The *Kinonikón* vs *priceasna*

During the Holy Liturgy, the climax of the entire ritual, that really represents our Lord Jesus' promise fulfillment<sup>2</sup>, is the clerics and Christians communion, during which, according to the Byzantine cult, such a chant must be performed. Therefore, the hymnography that is sung during the Holy Liturgy, during the clerics' communion, is called *Kinonikón* or *priceasna*.

*Kinonikón*<sup>3</sup> (κοινώνικον = what is common) is the hymn during the holy communion and it is the performance of a chant, mostly a verse or line from David's psalms. The *Kinonikón* is sung in papadic style, at ease, to give the clerics the chance to take communion and to prepare the Holy Eucharist for the believers. According to the tipiconic classifications, the *kinonikón* must be on Sundays, weekly (common days), on holidays, and all the other celebrations of the church year, being composed on all the voices. The *kinonikón* texts is linked,

<sup>2</sup> „Aceasta să o faceți întru pomenirea Mea/ Do this for my remembrance” (Mt. 26, 26-29; Mc. 14, 22-25; Lc. 22, 19-20)

<sup>3</sup> More detail about the *kinonikon* see at: Dimitri E. Conomos, *The Late Byzantine and Slavonic Communion Cycle: Liturgy and Music*, Washington DC: Dumbarton Oaks, 1985; Thomas H. Schattauer, 'The Koinonikon of the Byzantine Liturgy', *Orientalia Christiana Periodica*, 49 (1983), p. 91-129; Robert F. Taft, *A History of the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom; Volume V: The Precommunion Rites*; Chapter VI „The Communion Psalmody or “Koinonikon”, *Orientalia Christiana Analecta* 261, Rome 2000; Nicolae Gheorghită, *Chinonicul dominical în perioada post-bizantină/ The Sunday Kinonikón in the Post-Byzantium Period (1453-1821). Liturgică și muzică/ Liturgics and Music*, București, Editura Muzicală, 2007.

either connected to the respective holiday, or to the kinonik act (communion), and it is closed by the chant: Halleluia<sup>4</sup>.

In Transylvania or Banat, the *kinonikón* are called „priceastăă” or „priceasă” by the Old Slavic term: Прича́стие – which here designates the action of participating to the *Blessed Sacraments*, more specifically to the communion with our Lord Jesus Christ’s Body and Blood.

If we refer to the meanings that these two words incorporate, *kinonikon* and *priceasna*, then the appropriate term for this liturgical moment is of *kinonikon* and not of pray song. Therefore, Saint John Chrysostom, in his commentary to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Epistle of the Corinthians, says: “The bread which we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? But why did the apostle use the word μετοχή<sup>5</sup>, and not κοινωνία<sup>6</sup>? He wanted to show through the word κοινωνία that there is more meaning than to the word μετοχή; although, in other cases, these two words are remarkably similar. He wanted to show us that we do not only unite through communion, but we unite with Him through it. Because there is one bread and we who are many are one body, and it is His”<sup>7</sup>.

The purpose of the Eucharist is to create communion. Therefore, from Greek and Slavic inheritance, the appropriate term for the moment is *kinonikon/communion* and not pray chant/priceasna/participation. In the current practice both terms are used for the same liturgical moment. What is more, the *kinonikon* that are sung must be coordinated not only with the liturgical moment but also the event being celebrated during the mass.

## 1.2. The *kinonikón* in the cult

In the Orthodox cult, the *kinonikón* is sung at the holy liturgy after the priests’ words: *Let us be attentive! The Holy Gifts for the holy people of God*, followed by the lectioner’s answer: *One is Holy, one is Lord, Jesus Christ, to the*

<sup>4</sup> *Dicționar de muzică bisericească românească/Romanian Church Music Dictionary*, (coord): Nicu Moldoveanu; Nicolae Necula; Vasile Stanciu; Sebastian Barbu-Bucur, Basilica, București, 2013, p. 144.

<sup>5</sup> Μετοχή – participare/ participation. Cf. *Greek Dictionary of the New Testament*, by James Strong, S.T.D., L.L.D, Albany, OR USA, 1997; *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, G. W. H. Lampe, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1961. In Slavonic translated by: Прича́стие – communion, participation cf/according to: <https://dic.academic.ru/dic.nsf/ushakov/978354>.

<sup>6</sup> Κοινωνία – **communion**. Cf. *Greek Dictionary of the New Testament; A Patristic Greek Lexicon term translated from Slavic*: Общение – communion, cf: <https://dic.academic.ru/dic.nsf/ushakov/978354>.

<sup>7</sup> *Comentariile sau explicarea Epistolei I către Corinteni a celui întru sfinți părintelui nostrum Ioan Chrisostom, arhiepiscopul Constantinoplei/ The Comments and Explanation of the 1<sup>st</sup> Epistle to the Corinthians*, translation from Elenistic, Oxonia edition, 1847, de Arhim Theodosie Athanasiu, București, 1908, p. 324.

*glory of God the Father. Amen.* As in the holy altar the believers take communion, the lectern singers and the believers chant the *kinonikón* of the day.

In the contemporary practice it is customary that the *kinonikón* is replaced by a series of religious chants, that are not officially part of the liturgical repertoire of the ritualistic moment, but due to their popularity and accessibility became part of the liturgy. Among the chants that have been transferred from other rituals, replacing the *kinonikón*, we enumerate: the pilgrimage songs and the Pray chants dedicated to the Virgin Mary (*marianic*), kalophonic chants, the folk pray chants, and the religious chants inspired by the literature of the communist prisons.

Consequently, we shall analyze these religious chants that entered the holy liturgy, replacing the old *kinonikón*.

## 2. The pilgrimage religious chant

The chants that were used during pilgrimages were the first that made their way in the liturgical service, due to their popularity and accessibility. Passed on from one generation to another, in time, they became proper religious hits, sung especially during feasts honoring Virgin Mary.

### 2.1 Terminological statements about the pilgrimages' phenomenon<sup>8</sup>

Before moving on to the description of the stylistic particularities of the pilgrimages' chants, for a whole picture, it is proper to contextualize the phenomenon and its religious, cultural, and social implications, of the pilgrimage.

From an etymological point of view the word pilgrimage in Romanian derives from the French word: "pèlerinage". The French word: „pèlerinage” comes from the Latin „peregrinus”, that means traveller, foreigner, who came from foreigners, he who goes to a foreign country and settles there. The word „peregrinus” is a derivate of the verb „peragro”, meaning progress, proceed, visit<sup>9</sup>. At large, the word suggests the way we access a space, a territory.

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<sup>8</sup> J. Sumption, *Pilgrimage: An Image of Mediaeval Religion*, London, Faber and Faber. V. and E. Turner, 1975; *Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture: Anthropological Perspectives*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1978; M.L. Nolan, „Pilgrimage Traditions and the Nature Mystique in Western European Culture”, *Journal of Cultural Geography*, 7/1 (1986), p. 5-20; R. H. Stoddard and A. Morinis eds, *Sacred Places, Sacred Spaces: The Geography of Pilgrimage*, Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University, Geoscience and Man, 1997.

<sup>9</sup> G. Guțu, *Dicționar Latin-Român/Latin-Romanian Dictionary*, Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, București, 1983.

The idea that the word suggests is leaving home, and go, for a period, to another place. The word has been adapted by other languages: in Italian „pellegrino, pellegrinaggio”; in French „pèlerin, pèlerinage”; in Spanish „peregrino, peregrinaciòn”; in English „pilgrim, pilgrimage”; in German „Pilger, Pilgerfahrt”; in Romanian „pelerin, pelerinaj”<sup>10</sup>.

In the Romanian language, the word *pelerinaj* designates a ritualistic journey made by believers, individually or in groups, in a holy place (Jerusalem, Lourdes, Mecca). Journey made in a historically and culturally renowned place. Continuous movement, progress<sup>11</sup>.

## **2.2. The Pilgrimage's purpose**

In its dynamic, the pilgrimage is supposed to be the departure, journey and arrival in a holy place and the act of veneration. The reasons why people embark in pilgrimages are multiple. We can enumerate the diverse, religious, cultural, and spiritual ones. Likewise, the pilgrimage implies a series of cultural, psychological, sociological, topographic, and economical, and by reuniting them, an active phenomenon is constantly maintained, in a constant evolution, and in the degree of interpreting the need and an interior impulse of those who practice it<sup>12</sup>.

The pilgrimage supposes a series of gestures and intrinsic motivations: the sight of a church, of an icon, an artifact, and relics. The pilgrimage is made to keep a promise, a silent agreement. What is more, the internal motivation for a pilgrimage is the intervention for a wish coming true, cure for illness, atonement from troubles, the missing of the sacred and liturgical space. In Giorgio Otranto's opinion, the birth and development of the Christian pilgrimage is tributary to the change in historical conditions. He argues that the change of paradigm needs a long time to assimilate determined conditions; but the Christian pilgrimage develops immediately after the peace of the Church, as the answer to the necessity for long given by the biblical readings, to visit the places in which our Lord lived and practiced<sup>13</sup>.

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<sup>10</sup> Mirel Bănică, *Nevoia de miracol. Fenomenul pelerinajelor în România contemporană/The Need of Miracles. The Phenomenon of Pilgrimages in contemporary Romania*, Polirom, Iași, 2014, p. 40.

<sup>11</sup> *Dicționarul explicativ al limbii române/The Romanian Language Explicative Dictionary* (ediția a II-a revăzută și adăugită), Academia Română, Institutul de Lingvistică, Editura Univers Enciclopedic Gold, 2009.

<sup>12</sup> Mirel Bănică, *Nevoia de miracol/The Need of Miracle*, p. 45.

<sup>13</sup> Giorgio, Otranto, „Il pellegrinaggio nel cristianesimo antico”/ *The Pilgrimage of the Ancient Christian*, in: *Vetera Christianorum* 36 (1999), p. 239-257.

The pilgrimages and processions in different moments have a veritable tradition in the Western Church. The disasters and heresies were the two factors which made the exit of the Christians possible, outside the churches' walls. Earthquakes, draughts, volcanic eruptions, and the danger of invaders, the Avars in 626, the Slavs in 860, were the events which drove the citizens of Constantinople on the streets, to beg for divine help<sup>14</sup>. The heresies that attacked the dogma in the Church's first centuries were also a starting factor of the liturgical processions having as a purpose to attack the wrong teachings through chant. We have many examples in this sense: Ephraim the Syrian<sup>15</sup>, Saint John Chrysostom<sup>16</sup>. Some Christian poets must be remembered who composed non liturgical hymns having as goal the strengthening of the Christian communities. We must remember *Ambrosius of Milan*<sup>17</sup>, **Gregory of Nazianzus**<sup>18</sup>. These liturgical processions were at Constantinople and left a special print on the holy liturgy and on other rites of the Byzantine official ceremonial<sup>19</sup>.

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<sup>14</sup> John F. Baldovin, *The Urban Character of Christian Worship. The Origins, Development, and Meaning of Stational Liturgy*, (Orientalia Christiana Analecta, 228) Rome: Pontificio Istituto Orientale, 1987; Robert F. Taft, *Ritual bizantin/ The Byzantine Rite*, translation from English by Dumitru Vanca și Alin Mehes, Editura Reîntregirea, Alba-Iulia, 2008, p. 35.

<sup>15</sup> Efreim Sirul/ **Ephrem the Syrian** (306-379) took a stand against the Arianic heresy from Edesa, beginning to write various hymns and papers against the heretics. In this sense, as a counterattack to the heretics represented by the philosopher Bardaisan, he gathers Christian choirs which he personally teaches them to sing Christian hymns. Cf. Miller, Dana, *Istoria și teologia Bisericii Răsăritului din Persia până la sfârșitul secolului VII/ The History and Theology of the Eastern Church of Persia until the end of the 17th century*, în *The Ascetical Homilies of Saint Isaac the Syrian*, translated by the Holy Transfiguration Monastery, Boston MA, 1984, p. 481-541 și p. LXVI-LXXI, în Isaac Sirul, *Cuvinte către singuratici/ Words for the Lonely*, 2<sup>nd</sup> part, recently discovered, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, introductory study and notes by diac. Ioan I. Ică jr., editura Deisis, Sibiu, 2007, p. 475-476.

<sup>16</sup> Saint John Chrysostom, as Patriarch of Constantinople, initiates nightly processions, during which christian hymns were being sung, to fight back against the processional actions of the Arian heretics. Cf. John F. Baldovin, *The Urban Character of Christian Worship...*, p. 183.

<sup>17</sup> Ambrosius Mediolanensis, *Patrologia Latine*, 16, 17, J.P. Migne, 1845; Luigi Biraghi, *Inii sinceri e carmi di Sant Ambrogio*, Milano 1862; Jan den Boeft, „Ambrosius Mediolanensis: Delight and Imagination: Ambrose's Hymns”, in: *Vigilae Christianae*, 62 (2008), p. 425-440.

<sup>18</sup> Gregorius Nazianzenus, *Patrologia Graeca*, Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1862; A. Grenier, *La Vie et les poésies de S. Grégoire de Nazianze*, Clermont-Ferrand, 1858; Michele Pellegrino, *La poesia di S. Grigorio Nazianzeno*, Pubblicazioni della Università cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Serie Quarta: Scienze Filologiche, volume XIII, Milano, 1932;

<sup>19</sup> Robert F. Taft, „How Liturgies Grow. The evolution of the Byzantine Divine Liturgy”, in: *Beyond East and West. Problems in Liturgical Understanding* second revised and enlarged edition, Edizioni Orientalia Christiana, Pontifical Oriental Institute, Rome, 1997, p. 203-233.

### 2.3. Short description of a pilgrimage to Nicula Monastery

To observe the dynamic of the pilgrimage songs and the implications on the pilgrims' community, it is essential to make a short description of such a pilgrimage. Therefore, we shall stop at the famous and renowned pilgrimage at the Nicula Monastery.

To assure an excellent development of a pilgrimage, there are guidelines that ought to be followed when progressing in a pilgrimage, which are the rules and the songs that must be sung<sup>20</sup>.

Consequently, the pilgrims' group is organized ever since The Dormition Lent. In front of the pilgrims there can be a cleric or an elderly, who knows the route and has the sole role of coordinating the group, to say the adequate prayers and the texts for each moment and to follow the same path on foot or, lately, by means of transport.

The procession starts a few days ahead in the church yard. As a distinctive sign, symbol of the pilgrims, these have ahead a procession Cross or a *prapur!* flag embellished with traditional towels. This is the *flag* guiding the procession, being the distinctive sign of the group. After the constitution of the group, the believers surround the Church trice and begin their journey, singing. On the traditional path, grace is given to all the sacred assigned spaces marked by shrines, Churches, stopping and adoring them. Likewise, during the pilgrimage, the group's members are welcomed by the villagers, who give them water, food and, in need, accommodation for the night.

When arriving at the monastery, the pilgrims head to the Church, which they surround trice, standing or leaning on their knees, singing the arrival song at the monastery. The next ritualistic gesture is represented by the worship of the Saint icon of our Virgin Mary. They bow before it, they pray, they lower the flag and touch the objects they brought from home, to be blessed: basil, icons, and personal objects.

After having worshiped the Saint icon, the pilgrims sit in a designated place given in the monastery space. Where there is a pilgrimage tradition, there are yearly designated places by tradition to take part in the holy masses,

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<sup>20</sup> For a better understanding of the entire pilgrimage ceremonial, there have been various guides published, in which we can find the ritual and the traditional songs: *Calea mântuirii. Îndreptar practic, cum să se facă pelerinajele la sfânta mănăstire/ The Atonement Way. Practical Guide, of how the Pilgrimages are made to the Holy Monastery*, Editura Ordinul Sfântului Vasile, Biksad, 1943; *Culegere de rugăciuni și cântări. Pentru creștinii cari merg la sfânta mănăstire/ Prayers and Songs Compendium*, Tiparul Tipografiei Diecezane, Arad, 1938; Vasile Stanciu, *Cântați Domnului tot pământul. Cântări bisericești, Picesne, Colinde, folosite la Sfânta Liturghie și la Paraclisul Maicii/ Sing to the Lord all the Earth. Religious Songs, Picesne, Carols, used at the Holy Liturgy and the Mother Paraclis*, Renașterea, Cluj-Napoca, 2019.

celebrated at feast. During the time spent at the monastery the pilgrims pray, sing, get confession and communion. What is more, this is a good time to hear and note new religious songs, sung by other pilgrims' groups.

Another important moment during pilgrimage is the night vigil mas, at which end the Church is surrounded twice with the miraculous icon of our Lord's Mother. In front of the reduced procession, because only clerics and singers take part in it, there are each group's representatives, carrying the *flag*. After the festive liturgy in the very day of the celebration, the pilgrims, after having again surrounded the wooden monastery church, head back home singing<sup>21</sup>.

This is a short presentation of the pilgrimage ritual for the Great Mary celebration, at Nicula Monastery, Cluj County.

#### **2.4. The origin of the pilgrimage song in Transylvania**

Regarding the pilgrimage songs' origins, the specialists<sup>22</sup> agree that they remind of the melodic frames of old religious songs present in the anthologies that were in circulation in Europe beginning with the 17<sup>th</sup> century<sup>23</sup>.

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<sup>21</sup> For much more information about the Nicula Monastery Pilgrimage consult: Kádár József, *Szolnok - Dobokovarmegye monographiája*, vol. V, Dej, 1901; Victor Bojor, *Maica Domnului de la Nicula/ The Mother of Lord at Nicula*, Editura Mănăstirii de la Nicula, Gherla, 1930; Ion Apostol Popescu, *Arta icoanelor pe sticlă de la Nicula/ The Art of Glass Icons at Nicula*, Editura Tineretului, București, 1969; Ioan Podea, *Mănăstirea Nicula*, Editura Mănăstirii Nicula, Nicula 1995; Dumitru Cobzaru, *Monografia Mănăstirii Adormirea Maicii Domnului, Nicula/ The Dormition of the Lord's Mother Monastery Monography, Nicula*, Editura Ecclesia, 2015.

<sup>22</sup> Gheorghe Ciobanu, „Izvoare ale muzicii românești/ Springs of Romanian Music”, în: *Studii de etnomuzicologie și bizantinologie/ Studies of Ethnomusicology and Byzanthology*, vol I., Editura Muzicală, București, 1976, p. 9; Vasile Stanciu, *Muzica bisericească ortodoxă din Transilvania/ Orthodox Church Music in Transylvania*, Editura Presa Universitară, Cluj-Napoca, 1996, p. 26; Constanța Cristescu, „Pelerinajul și cântecul de pelerinaj din Transilvania epocii comuniste/ The Pilgrimage and the Pilgrimage Song in Transylvania during Communism”, în: *Crâmpoie din cronologia unei deveniri/ Sights in a Transformation Chronology*, vol I., Editura Muzicală, București, 2004, p. 67.

<sup>23</sup> *The Liber Usualis*, Desclee & Co., Tournai, 1956. For the Calvinist Romanians, it is printed in 1570, in Latin a *Little Book of Chants*, translated after the Hungarian book by Szegeđi Gergely. This paper would eventually be completed and translated by Ioan Viski, *Psalmi și cântece bisericești/ Psalms and church songs*, for the Calvinized Romanians in Heșeg County. It was also the pastor Ioan Viski who puts together the *Psaltirea calvino-română versificată/ The Romanian-Calvino Book of Psalms in Verses*, which comprises not only the versified psalm by the author, songs, carols for Christmas and the New Year, for Paresimi, for Easter and Rusalii. Cf. Nicolae Albu, *Istoria învățământului românesc din Transilvania până la 1800/ The History of the Romanian Educational System in Transylvania until the 1800*, Tipografia Lumina, Blaj, 1944, p. 24; 109.



These have entered the Transylvanian space by livresque sources<sup>24</sup>, but also by religious propaganda of the Catholic cults, Lutheran and Protestant. The music researcher Romeo Ghircoiașu states that, in this sense, the reality by which “the musical current implanted by the reformers among the Transylvanian Romanians could have stimulated the development of a musical-literary-cultic tradition unspecific to Orthodoxy, of so called *pricesne*, of folk influences, but also protestant, as a means of true faith expression, tradition that is still ongoing in many orthodox churches of Transylvania, and more specifically in the God’s Army practices.”<sup>25</sup>. The Religious chants that have marianic themes are called „Marienlied” or pilgrimage songs<sup>26</sup>. Regarding the affiliation with the religious and procession songs, we can suppose the existence of some melodic typology which the Romanian believers have assimilated, *Romanized* along the centuries, transmitting by word of mouth, to match the ethos, feelings, and devotion of the orthodox pilgrimage.

After many centuries of transformations and adaptations at melodic structure level, the orthodox pilgrimage songs took shape on a unitary musical stratum, distinct and specific to the liturgical -processional space of Transylvania<sup>27</sup>.

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<sup>24</sup> What is more, the spiritual songs entered Transylvania by the way of the schools created by the Catholic Church in Oradea, Alba Iulia, therefore, the Lutheran and Calvinist Schools in Sighișoara, Caransebeș, Hețeg, Turda. For more information you can check: *Istoria învățământului din România/ The History of the Romanian Educational System*, Editura Didactică și Pedagogică, București, 1971, p. 35. Paul Brusanowski, *Învățământul confesional ortodox român din Transilvania între anii 1848-1918/ The Orthodox Educational System in Transylvania between 1848-1918, Între exigențele statului centralist și principiile autonomiei bisericești/ Between the Centralist States Requests and the principles of Church Autonomy*, Editura Presa Universitară Clujeană, Cluj-Napoca, 2010.

<sup>25</sup> Romeo Ghircoiașu, *Contribuții la istoria muzicii românești/Contributions to the Romanian Musical History*, vol I., Editura Muzicală, București, 1963, p. 100.

<sup>26</sup> Thomas A. Thompson, „The Virgin Mary in the Hymns of the Catholic Church”, in: *The Oxford Handbook of Mary*, Edited by Chris Maunder, Oxford University Press, 2019, p. 247-265. The marianic hymns flourished during the Middle Ages, After the Trent Synod (1545-1563), the Catholic missal contained, with a few exceptions, only the scripturistic and euhologic texts in Latin. The devotional marianic hymns, of non-liturgical provenience managed to create special marianic devotion. After the Council of Vatican, the Virgin Mary was included in the *Christ Sacrament* being celebrated in the mass, but at the same time creating a scripturistic and ecclesial image of the Virgin Mary. To deepen the issue regarding the reception and role of the Virgin Mary in Christianity to be seen: *The Oxford Handbook of Mary*, Edited by Chris Maunder, Oxford University Press, 2019.

<sup>27</sup> Constanța Cristescu, „Pelerinajul și cântecul de pelerinaj din Transilvania epocii comuniste/ *The Pilgrimage and the Pilgrimage Song in Transylvania during Communism*”, în: *Crâmpoie din cronologia unei deveniri/ Sights in a Transformation Chronology*, vol I., Editura Muzicală, București, 2004, 55-69.

## 2.5. The Particularities of the pilgrimage chant

From an architectural point of view, of the procedures that merge the text with the song, it is noted that the *marianic pricesne* or the pilgrimage chants belong to a lyrical-epic creation typology, having a religious theme, musical structures, and execution modes, which particularize them.

As a musical genre, the pilgrimage chant belongs to a folk category of occasional ceremonies<sup>28</sup>, being related to the star Christmas songs<sup>29</sup>. The musicologist Constanța Cristescu analyzing the *marianic pricesne* states that these “have their own texts, and specific content. Some of them are of cultured or semi-cultured origin, being created by the deacon or the priests. The theme is intricately connected to the event it accompanies. The texts are causally linked to the three essential moments of the pilgrimage: the pilgrimage itself, with the arrival, the stay, and the departure from the monastery. Most of the chants are liturgical, being connected to the Virgin’s cult<sup>30</sup>.”

The melodies used in the in these pilgrimage chants are associated to the romance songs, of proper song, of star Christmas songs, but they have their own melodies. In these chants we encounter hexacord sonorous structures, amplified by the inferior support tetrachord, with an ending on the first stage. The new pilgrimage chants have a tonal-functional structure, and the melodic and cadential formulas diversify according to each piece’s ambitus<sup>31</sup>.

The rhythm of the pilgrimage chants is *giusto-silabic*, being intricately connected to the metric and the verses’ beat, in which the long and short syllables, noted by quarter notes and eighth notes, that assure a connection between sound and word. For the melismatic formulae present in the text,

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<sup>28</sup> Constanța Cristescu, „Pelerinajul și cântecul de pelerinaj din Transilvania epocii comuniste/ *The Pilgrimage and the Pilgrimage Song in Transylvania during Communism*”, în: *Crâmpeie din cronologia unei deveniri/ Sights in a Transformation Chronology*, vol I., Editura Muzicală, București, 2004, 55-69.

<sup>29</sup> These similitudes between *the pilgrimage songs* and the star chants can be found in the research of musical folk songs: Sabin Drăgoi, *303 colinde cu text și melodie/ 303 Carols with Text and Melody*, Scrisul Românesc, Craiova, 1925; George Breazu, *Colinde/Carols*, Cartea satului, 21, București, 1939; Béla Bartók, *Melodien der Rumänischen Colinde (Weihnachtslieder). 484 Melodien, mit einem einleitenden Aufsatz*. Wien. Universal Edition. 1935; Gheorghe Cucu, *200 de colinde populare culese de la elevii seminarului Nifon în anii 1924-1927/ 200 folk carols gathered by the students of the Nifon Seminary in the years 1924-1927*, Societatea Compozitorului Român, București, 1936; *1484 colinde cu text și melodie/1484 Carols with text and melody*, coordonator: Ioan Bocșa, Alba Iulia, Fundația Culturală Terr Armonia, 1999, 2 vol., Cluj Napoca: Editura Media Musica, 1999.

<sup>30</sup> Constanța Cristescu, „Pelerinajul și cântecul de pelerinaj/ *The Pilgrimage and the Pilgrimage Song ...*”, p. 56.

<sup>31</sup> Constanța Cristescu, „Pelerinajul și cântecul de pelerinaj/ *The Pilgrimage and the Pilgrimage Song ...*”, p. 59.

lesser values are used. The songs develop from a rhythmical, cursive, fluid point of view, at a constant speed, which leaves no place for stops and eludings of duration. This rhythmicity allows their execution by multiple singers. A separate category from the pilgrimage chants is represented by those musical creations destined for pilgrimages, which develop by pitch pulsation, framing the vocal rhythm accommodated to the pitch in ceremonial style<sup>32</sup>.

The pilgrimage chant knows a particular evolution, process in which, various musical strata are formed. Consequently, by the inculturation process, the elder generation invites, induces, and forces the younger generation to adopt the group specific the pilgrimage chants. But these songs behave differently due to a series of internal and external variety factors. We are to enumerate some of these: the ambitus width, the modal transformations, and the sonorous material enrichment through the import of various melodic formulas from the proper song, romance, carol or doina. In the diversity of the repertoire there are also external factors: the songs from other groups of pilgrims, songs that come from other coexisting cults (mostly neo-protestant), melodies from other cultural environments (urban and cult). Entering in each group's musical repertoire, these are often transformed by previous typologies. A great impact in the repertoire diversification is given by the social networks and media, infusing new melodic typologies and melodies.

These pilgrimage chants' form is a stanzaic form, each stanza having 4-6 melodic lines. The stanza has, in its turn; two or three two lines phrase segments. The melodic lines have an elevate profile in the first section, with the main breath mark on the first segment of the mode, placed after the second melodic line<sup>33</sup>.

The repeatable functions of these pilgrimage chants are the *latreutic* function, by which grace is given to the saint people and the religious feelings expression and the therapeutic function, by which the atonement from soul and body sufferings is requested. Being intricately linked to the processional phenomenon, which requires the believers' implication in a common devotional purpose, the pilgrimage chants can be sang by anyone, both during the rite and outside it. The pilgrimage chants act as a cohesion and religious factor.

When we talk about the pricesne in Nicula Monastery, we must bring into discussion the contribution of two singers, collectors and pricesne composers, at their popularity growth.

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<sup>32</sup> Train Mîrza, „The Vocal Rhythm Accommodated to the Beets in the Ceremonial Tradition, with a distinctive rhythm of folk music”, în: *Lucrări de muzicologie/Musicology Works*, vol. 10-11, Cluj-Napoca, 1979, p. 245-257.

<sup>33</sup> Constanța Cristescu, „Pelerinajul și cântecul de pelerinaj/ *The Pilgrimage and the Pilgrimage Song ...*”, p. 59.

The hierdeacon Ilarion Mureșan of Nicula Monastery<sup>34</sup> and Eugenia Marinescu<sup>35</sup> have a wide repertoire of pricesne called „pricesne niculane/ pricesne from Nicula”. The pricesne from Nicula Monastery are known and sung by all the pilgrims that come every year at the monastery, at high religious celebrations. The impact that these “pricesne from Nicula” have on the believers is overwhelming. Passed on from generation to generation, they are widely known by yearly participants at the celebration. A moment of great emotional intensity and spiritual charging is represented by the procession of the Dormition of Our Mother of Christ Eve, when thousands of believers, gathered around the monastery, with candles in their hands, sing in a sole choir the traditional pricesne: *O, Măicuță sfântă, Ajută-ne, Măicuță, Lacrimi mari îmi curg pe față, Ție, Mamă-ți cer.*

To sum up, these are the general structural characteristics of the pilgrimage chants. Knowing these traits gives us a series of markers which we can build taxonomy with of the religious themed repertoire performed in the liturgical space of the Romanian orthodox cult. Due to their popularity, the marianic pricesne have surpassed the pilgrimage sphere, entering the Sunday repertoire of the church singers around the country and, consequently replacing the *kinonikón chant*.

## **2.6. The sociological impact of priceasna**

When we analyze, from a sociological point of view the impact that the priceasna have on the pilgrims, but also on the believers in a sacred space, at certain liturgical celebrations, we must consider that “pricesnele belong to a musical identity of the pilgrims’ groups”<sup>36</sup>, identifying with these. Pricesnele act as an identity marker, making each group that comes into the procession unique, having come in different melodic rhythms.

The pricesne melodies, which are sung in well-established moments, during the pilgrimage, are used as construction instruments of the community<sup>37</sup>. These give the pace tempo, being adapted to the rhythm, it focuses the

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<sup>34</sup> One of the most known and sung pricesne that the author declares to have composed is the priceasna: *De la margini o, apostoli/ From the Margins, oh Apostles*, which is sung on August the 15<sup>th</sup>, at the Dormition Celebration, around the church, with the wonder making icon. Moreover, there must be stated that the Hierdeacon in Nicula, Ilarion, who is a good iconographer. In spite of his disability from his childhood, he lost his left hand, he is a talented glass icon painter, being one of the few painters that carries on the tradition of the church painting on glass, the Nicula style.

<sup>35</sup> The folk music singer Eugenia Marinescu is a prolific pricesne interpreter from Nicula Monastery, having recorded over 8 Cds.

<sup>36</sup> Mirel Bănică, *Nevoia de miracol/ The Need of Miracles*, p. 89.

<sup>37</sup> Mirel Bănică, *Nevoia de miracol/The Need of Miracles*, p. 98.

attention on the event that they are going to celebrate, raise the emotional state of the participants, all in all, it articulates the spiritual feelings and believes, uniting the personal motivations to the devotional gestures.

“The music is linked to the natural energy shapes, with the movement kinetics, and the human body that reach certain musical parameters, make specific movements, common, the musical tempo and the style of music playing a decisive part in the emotional states creation”<sup>38</sup>. In this sense, the anthropologist Dupront states that “hearing has the property to be included in the religious extraordinary and to convert it in the sensorial food of the popular religions, often resulting in pilgrimage cultures”<sup>39</sup>.

The benefits of music, on the masses are well known. In a sacred space, as the monasteries’ grounds, the music transmitted through the speakers delimitates a sonorous space which establishes a physical and metaphysical relationship with the surroundings. Music has the capacity to maintain the sacred fulfillment and the spiritual tension specific to a certain place. Music gives way to a community feeling. This thing is mostly seeable at the great pilgrimage at Nicula Monastery. Each group arrives at the monastery singing their own *pricesne*. What is more, in the spare time, when there is no mass being celebrated and through the sleepless nights, the pilgrim’s groups sing *pricesne*. In these moments, various *pricesne* are simultaneously sung, which creates this unique polyphony. So, we can observe that these *pricesne* unify, give way to a community feeling, becoming a *protection screen* against the surrounding aggression<sup>40</sup>.

### 3. The religious chant of non-liturgical provenience - *pricesasna*

#### 3.1 Terminological ambiguities

The non-liturgical *pricesasna*<sup>41</sup>, as a musical genre, is a religious chant of cultured provenience, religious or folk, usually anonymous, which is sang during the Holy Liturgy, when the believers and clerics get communion, or at its end. Between the non-liturgical *pricesasna* and the *pricesasna/ kinonikón*

<sup>38</sup> Tia de Nora, *Music in Everyday Life*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001, p. 87.

<sup>39</sup> Alphonse Dupront, *Du Sacré. Croisades et pèlerinages. Images et langages*, Gallimard, 1987, p. 357.

<sup>40</sup> Mirel Bănică, *Nevoia de miracol/ The Need of Miracles...*, p. 112.

<sup>41</sup> We use the term of non-liturgical *pricesasna* to distinguish it from Old Slavonic, *pricesna*, the equivalent of the *kinonikón*. The non-liturgical *pricesasna* hasn’t a reachable liturgical correspondent and is not mentioned in the Byzantine manuscripts tradition. It is the equivalent of religious themed chants made by priests, singers, people or anonymous, with songs from the local folk tradition.

the only resemblance is that they are sung at the same liturgical moment. On the other hand, the noticeable differences at the melodic level and at the textual ideas are definite.

Today, under the priceasna umbrella, understood as a musical religious piece, there are integrated a wide range of non-liturgical chants. Analyzing them from a melodic line and used text perspective, we can classify them into: pricesne from Romanian folk, moralizing pricesne focused on the emphasis of the moral Christian behavior; psaltic pricesne; folk pricesne; and pricesne belonging to the Lord's Army, many of them having Traian Dorz's lines.

As time went by, pricesne became the norm in most of the Orthodox parishes in Transylvania, replacing the old *kinonikón*. This phenomenon has multiples implications, not only on a liturgical ensemble, but also a spiritual one. The old *kinonikón* have been forgotten, being replaced by pricesne, out of various reasons: the lack of *kinonikón* from the Transylvanian religious songs repertoire; the ignorance of many church singers regarding the psaltic notation to be able to render the *kinonikón*; the lack of musical education; the neo-protestant cults' influence; the excessive promotion of pricesne in the media and social media space; the invention of audio recordings; the poaching of this musical genre by folk singers; the pricesne popularity due to concerts and festivals.

We must also mention the fact that the *kinonikón*'s replacement by non-liturgical pricesne has a series of consequences on a liturgical and spiritual plan. Liturgically, their introduction results in a breach of a 1500-year-old traditional liturgy. There would have been no issue if these pricesne had had a biblical and patristic undertone, or if they had been adapted to the celebrated liturgical moment, but most of them are different from the Byzantine Melos and hymnography.

In the evolution of Byzantine music, we can note a similar phenomenon which we are able to find today in connection to the reluctance of the introduction of the non-liturgical pricesne in the cult, phenomenon that had occurred in the first centuries of Christianity, when there was a significant opposition of the monarchs to the introduction of the new hymns of non-liturgical provenience<sup>42</sup>. In time, with the rise of new celebrations, the development of new

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<sup>42</sup> About the reticence of the monarch about a new christian imnology, to be seen details in: Edmond Bouvi, *Poetes et Melodes. Etude sur les origines du Rithme Tonique dans L'Hymnographie de l'Eglise Grecque*, Nimes, Paris, 1886, p. 56-59; Wilhlem von Christ and M. Paraniakas, *Anthologia graeca carminum christianorum*, Leipzig, 1871, p. XIII-XX; J. M. Neale, *Hymns of the Eastern Church*, London, 1863; J.B. Pitra, *Analecta sacra spicilegio Solesmensi parata*, Paris, 1876; J.B. Pitra, *L'hymnographie de l'Eglise greque*, Rome, 1867, p. 41-44; Jean Bremond, *Părinții pustiei/The Fathers of the Desert*, the introduction and comments by Marinela Bojin, Nemira, București, 2002, p. 265-327; Vasile Răducă, *Monahismul egiptean. De la singurătate la obște/ The Egyptian Monarchism. From solitude to community*, Nemira, 2003, p. 207-210;

hymnographical forms was observed: trope, motet, canon, of biblical and patristic inspiration, that could poetically express the celebrated biblical event. Consequently, a rich Byzantine hymnography was born, coated in the most vivid forms of religious music. At a more profound comparative analysis, we cannot say the same thing about the new musical creations that have entered in the last two decades in the church singers' repertoire. Today, dreadfully, many of the pricesne, do not fit in the musical pattern of the consecrated Byzantine hymnography.

On the spiritual level, the lines they have and the romanticized melodic line, the pricesne do not set in a state of inner reflection, prayer, meditation, but mostly, they have strong sentimentalist accents. If we were to analyze most of the texts, we would notice that they are departing from the Orthodox belief spirit. All the songs in the Holy Liturgy are composed, both in the stanza and in melody, such as to create a prayer state, a meditation. The Liturgy is supposed to be a sonorous space that extracts you from the daily struggle and induces a state of communion, of taking part in the sacrament that is performed. Nonetheless, the presence of these pricesne with a pious-moralizing theme, and a melodic line with strong folk accents, results in our exit from the ambiance of the Byzantine ritual.

### **3.2 The non-liturgical pricesne origin**

It is extremely hard to establish the origin of these pricesne, given the fact that they are always in a process of transformation. Their distribution through the media, made their spreading possible in all the Patriarchy. In most cases, their origin is anonymous; being the creation of some liturgical communities, where due to the pricesne notebook<sup>43</sup> they are orally transmitted from generation to generation. Under the orality pressure these pricesne go through profound transformations at the melodic line level.

There are also a series of pricesne whose author can be established, belonging to certain priests, church singers and Christians. Lately, under the excuse of popularity and public acknowledgement, many of the folk music interpreters compose the text and melody of the sung pricesne.

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Lucien Regnault, *Viața cotidiană a Părinților deșertului în Egiptul Secolului IV/ The Daily Life of the Desert Fathers in the 4<sup>th</sup> century Egypt*, ediția a II-a, traducere diac. Ioan I. Ică jr, Deisis, Sibiu, 2004, p. 89- 107; Petre Vintilescu, *Despre poezia imnografică din cărțile de ritual și cântare bisericască/ About the Imnographic Poetry from the Ritualist Books and Religious Chant*, Editura Partener, Galați, 2006, p. 56-59; Picu Ocoleanu, *Introducere în genealogia teologică a monahismului creștin/Introduction to the Theological Genealogy of the Christian Monarchism*, Editura Christiana, București, 2008, p. 184-196.

<sup>43</sup> Without the presence of musical notation, that makes it impossible to determine the melodic line.

Regarding the origins of the *pricesne* sung in Ardeal, the Church Music professor Gheorghe Șoima, of the “Andrei Șaguna” Theological Institute in Sibiu, stated the following: “Neither the dance songs nor the party songs influenced the religious music in Ardeal, but the *doine*, star songs and the carols, therefore the cleanest and brightest genres. We cannot find foreign folk music influences in the people common sense, unworthy of the people’s decency and humanity”<sup>44</sup>.

### **3.3 For and against *pricesne***

Regarding the introduction of prayers in the worship, there are two currents among church singers. A few singers and clerics, belonging to the psaltic musical tradition, completely rule out the introduction of priests into worship, calling them “*mane*, sectarian songs”, “songs foreign to the spirit of the Orthodox tradition”, “folk songs”. All these Puritan partisans of psaltic church music claim that both the songs and the lyrics uttered by the priests are at odds with the Orthodox liturgical spirit. They are suitable only for those extra-liturgical manifestations, pilgrimages, spiritual visits, religious activities, concerts, festivals, which do not necessarily involve the presence of a clergyman and a consecrated ritual.

On the other hand, there are many Christians who support the idea of introducing priests in the liturgical space. The clergy and church singers from Transylvania believe that these prayers are suitable for singing during the Holy Mass, because they are appropriate to the experiences of the believers present at various services. At the same time, they consider that prayers have a decisive role in involving the community of believers in homophonic singing. Through the effect it creates, due to the simple, tender lyrics, sometimes with a clear note of sentimentality, and the simple and repetitive music, the prayers have a community, missionary, and therapeutic role.

### **3.4 Collections of Transylvanian *kinonikón* and *pricesne*.**

If in the musical perimeter of the repertoire destined to be sung during the *kinonikón*, in Wallachia and in Moldova<sup>45</sup>, we have a rich tradition; the same cannot be said about the repertoire from Transylvania.

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<sup>44</sup> Gheorghe Șoima, „Folclorul muzical religios/ The Religious Musical Folk”, în: *Scieri de teologie și muzicologie/ Writings of Theology and Musicology*, ediție îngrijită de Vasile Grăjdian și Cornelia Grăjdian, Editura Universității „Lucian Blaga”, Sibiu, 2010, 184.

<sup>45</sup> *Heruvico-chinonicar*. Tomul 1. *Heruvico-chinonicar which comprises three layers of Sunday heruvics and Kinonikon on all voices, but not of the week, that have been added axions 22*. Tom 1. Translator, editor and typographer: Anton Pann. București, 1847; *Heruvico-chinonicar*. Tomul 2. *Heruvico-chinonicar annual that comprises in itself heruvics and kinonikon for all the yearly celebrations, that have had their axions added*.



In the Orthodox Church of Transylvania, the situation of church music was a special one. Only at the end of the 19th century, more precisely, in 1890, thanks to the effort made by the priest professor Dimitrie Cunțanu, appears the first musical work destined for pupils, students and singers. If we were to compare it with the collections from other regions of the country, we will find that it is incomplete. In it we find only a few songs for the most important liturgical services and melodic models of practical application for the other hymn texts that were not put-on notes.

For the moment of the *kinonikón*, in Cunțanu's collection, we have recorded only a few prayers: The Sunday prayer "Praise the Lord from heaven" in voice I, in detail; priceasna from the Paschal period "The Body of Christ" on voice III, at large, composed by Dimitrie Cunțanu; priceasna at the Feasts of the Mother of God "The eye of my heart" on voice IV, in detail; the prayer from Holy Thursday "Your Last Supper" on voice VII, at length; the prayer from the Liturgy of the Gifts previously sanctified "Taste and see" voice I, in detail.

We also find two hymns intended to be sung after the end of the Holy Mass: "Mistress receives the prayer of your servants", on voice VIII and the song "Today the coffin"<sup>46</sup> intended to be sung on the feast of the Entry of the Mother of God into the Church, instead of "Mistress receive...". The latter's song was introduced for use by Metropolitan Andrei Șaguna, on the text of Zaharia Boiu.

The effort of collecting religious prayers and songs is continued by Professor Timotei Popovici, who makes up a series of popularizing collections<sup>47</sup>. Among those who capitalize musically on the *Kinonikón* and the Transylvanian

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Tom 2. Translator, editor and typographer: Anton Pann. București, 1847; *Liturghierul lui Serafim Ieromonahul*. Pagina de titlu: *Rînduiala Sfintei și Dumnezeieștii Liturghii care cuprinde în sine: Binecuvintează și celelalte antifoane, heruvicele, axioanele și chinonicele de peste tot anul și ale Postului Mare de la Liturghia Sfîntului Vasile și de la Liturghia mai-nainte sfințită a Sfîntului Grigorie Dialogul/ The Rules of the Saint Liturgy that comprises: Bless the other antiphones, heruvics, axions and yearly kinonikon and of the Great Lent at the St Basil Liturgy and the Before-Sanctified Liturgy of the Saint Gregory the Dialogist Tomul 2. Editor and typographer: Serafim Ieromonahul. Buzău, 1856; Nifon Ploeșteanu, *Carte de muzică bisericească/ Religious Music Book*, 1902; Ion Popescu-Pasărea, *Culegere de cântări bisericești ce se cântă de către preoți în sobor la diferite servicii bisericești/ Religious Songs Compendium that is sung in a council by priests at different celebrations*, București, Tipografia Cărților Bisericești, 1946.*

<sup>46</sup> *Cântările bisericești după melodiile celor opt glasuri ale Sfintei Biserici Ortodoxe/ Collection of Church Songs for the Gathering on the Eight Voices of the saint Orthodox Church, gathered, noted and arranged by de Dimitrie Cunțanu, profesor la Seminarul „Andreian” Arhidieceșan, Sibiu, Editura autorului, 1890, p. 52.*

<sup>47</sup> *Priceasne și cântări pioase în cinstea Preasfintei Născătoare de Dumnezeu/ Praises and pios chants for the adoration of the Lord's Saint Mother*, the majority are from the collection of the composer Timotei Popovici. Cf. Prof. univ. dr. Dumitru Jompan, *Timotei Popovici (1870-1950) - Monografie*, Editura Andreiana, Sibiu, 2006.

pricesne, we must also mention Vasile Petrașcu<sup>48</sup>. In the collection of 45 prayers, Petrașcu collected and noted after hearing prayers from different students or church singers, he processed prayers and religious songs taken from the repertoire of religious choirs or concerts, according to different authors<sup>49</sup>. At the same time, he composed new ones.

The series of teachers who took care of collecting and editing the prayers is continued by Father Professor Vasile Stanciu, who makes up several collections of prayers: *Songs in honor of the Mother of God*<sup>50</sup>; *Sing to the Lord all the earth - Songs at the Holy Mass, prayers, carols, and the Paraclis of the Mother of God*<sup>51</sup>. At the same time, we mention the collection of Professor Domin Adam, *Collection of Christmas pricesne and carols*<sup>52</sup>.

### **3.5 Marianic pricesne - the binder of Christian unity in Transylvania.**

The pricesne dedicated to our Mother of the Lord which the orthodox, catholic, and Greek- catholic sing on their way to the monasteries in the context of marianic celebrations can be considered a mark of melodic value of the Transylvanian Christians piety. These hymns are a tribute to the biblical, patristic and communitarian – liturgical creations that the Christians composed ever since the first centuries, as a sign of devotion for the Virgin Mary and her part as Theotokos și Mediatrix.

<sup>48</sup> Dr. Vasile Petrașcu: *45 pricesne (chinonice) pentru Liturghiile Duminecilor/ 45 Pricesne (Kinonikon) Collected, Noted, Composed And Polished By Different Authors, Singers, And Amateurs Of Church Music On A Sole Voice* Cluj, Edit. Petrașcu-Ardeleanu, 1938.

<sup>49</sup> Atanasie Lipovan; Augustin Bena; Celestin Cherebețiu; Trifon Lugojan; Gavriil Musicescu; T. Foșu; Stepan Ivanovich Davidov; I. Vorobchievici; Gheorghe Dima; Ion Cartu; G.N. Mugur. Mihai Brie, „Kerkunft und Entwicklung des Kirchlichen Chorgesang un den Rumänischen Ländern und Siebenbürgen. Musikologische Perspektiven”, in: *Studia UBB Musica*, LXIV, 2, 2019, p. 101-120.

<sup>50</sup> *Cântări în cinstea Maicii Domnului/ Chants for the Adoration of the Lord's Saint Mother*, Editura Mesagerul, Cluj-Napoca, 1996. The Compendium contains pricesne for the Mother of our Lord collected by the author from the pilgrims who travel to Nicula and Rohia Monastery. What is more, the Compendium contains a few pricesne from Timotei Popovici's collection.

<sup>51</sup> *Cântați Domnului tot pământul – Cântări la Sfânta Liturghie, pricesne, colinde și Paraclisul Maicii Domnului/ Sing to the Lord all the earth - Songs at the Holy Mass, prayers, carols and the Paraclis of the Mother of God*, Editura Renașterea, Cluj-Napoca, 2017. Conceived as a missionary instrument for the eparchy believers and not only, the Professor Vasile Stanciu selects *Songs at the Holy Mass, prayers, carols, and the Paraclis of the Mother of God, from different collections and authors*. The collection is a mixture of chants from the uniform psaltic music, but also chant from the Transylvanian music.

<sup>52</sup> Domin Adam, *Antologie muzicală de strană/Musical Anthology for the Lectern*, Alba Iulia, Editura Reîntregirea, 2007; *Culegere de pricesne și colinde/ Collection of pricesne and Carols*, Alba Iulia, Editura Reîntregirea, 2011. The religious chants from both collections that professor Domin Adam made, which the author calls pricesne, are part of the folk treasure, of Christian inspiration, of the Romanian people, creation born from the piety of the regular Christian, and that have a wide usage. Cf. Domin Adam, „'Priceasna' and 'Koinonikon' - history, structure and form”, în: *Altarul Reîntregirea*, 3 (2012), p. 69-88.

The hymns that Christians have composed in honor of the Mother of God date back to the apostolic age. Of these, some of them are present in Holy Scripture<sup>53</sup> and in the apocryphal gospels<sup>54</sup>. One of the oldest prayers discovered, addressed to the Mother of God, which is also a well-known hymn in Byzantine space, is Ὑπὸ τὴν σὴν εὐσπλαγχνίαν (Under your mercy/ Sub tuum praesidium)<sup>55</sup>. This hymn dates from the third century and is contained in the papyrus 470, purchased by the “John Rylands” Library in Manchester in 1917<sup>56</sup>. The antiquity of the hymn attests to the fact that the Christians in Egypt, before the systematization of Marian theology in the fifth century, had a liturgical cult of the Virgin, manifested in hymns. With the development of Byzantine hymnography, starting with the fifth century, there is a need to multiply hymns of non-biblical origin, to give voice to the new church realities included in the series of Christian tradition. Thus, for the new church holidays, for the saints, for important events included in the calendar of annual celebrations, a whole series of new hymns were created. In this context, we must also mention the famous hymn dedicated to the Virgin

<sup>53</sup> Imnul Născătoarei de Dumnezeu/ The Lord's Mother Hymn (Magnificat), Luca 1, 46-55; Raymond E. Brown, Karl P. Donfried, Joseph A. Fitzmayer and John Reumann (ed), *Mary in the New Testament: a collaborative assessment by Protestant and Roman Catholic Scholars*, Fortress Press and Paulist Press, Philadelphia and New York, 1978; John Anthony McGuckin, „Mary in the Hymnody of the East”, in: *The Oxford Handbook of Mary*, edited by Chris Maunder, Oxford University Press, 2019, p. 107-122.

<sup>54</sup> The apocryphal gospels are of essential importance in the definition of the Mother of Christ cult and of the hymnography dedicated to her life and dormition: H.R. Smid, *Protoevangelium Jacobi: a commentary*, Van Gorcum, Assen, 1975; J.K. Elliot, *The Apocryphal New Testament. a collection of Apocryphal Christian Literature in an English Translation*, Oxford, 1933; *Evangheliile apocrife/ The Apocryphal Gospels*, translation, introductory study, notes and presentations by Cristian Bădiliță, ediția a IV-a adăugită, Polirom, 2007. The researcher Stegmüller finds more similitudes between the prayer *Sub tuum praesidium* (3<sup>rd</sup> century) and some prayers like hymns in *Faptele lui Toma/Thomas Deeds*, a text composed at the beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century. Although, Stegmüller does not state that these apocryphal traditions are the source of an old prayer for Mary, he states that the *merciful Mother* from *Thomas Deeds*, who is a person with heavenly origins, seems to remind us of Virgin Mary from the prayer *Sub tuum praesidium*. Stephen Shoemaker, *Fecioara Maria în credința și evlavie creștină primară/ Virgin Mary in the Belief and Primary Christian Piety*, trad. Lucian Filip, Ed. Doxologia, 2018, p. 98-104, apud. Otto Stegmüller, „Sub tuum praesidium. Bemerkungen zur ältesten Überlieferung”, in: *Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie*, Vol. 74, No. 1 (1952), p. 76-82.

<sup>55</sup> Ὑπὸ τὴν σὴν εὐσπλαγχνίαν καταφεύγομεν Θεοτόκε· τὰς ἡμῶν ἰκεσίας μὴ παρίδῃς ἐν περιστάσει ἄλλ’ ἐκ κινδύνου λύτρωσαι ἡμᾶς μόνῃ ἀγνῇ μόνῃ εὐλογημένῃ. (*Sub milostivirea ta scăpăm, Născătoare de Dumnezeu. Ruǎciunile noastre nu le trece cu vederea în nevoi, ci din primejdii ne izbăvește pe noi, una curată, una binecuvântată/ Under your mercy we escape, Mother of God. Our prayers do not oversee in need, but in dangers deliver us, one pure, one blessed*).

<sup>56</sup> Stephen Shoemaker, *Fecioara Maria în credința și evlavie creștină primară/ Virgin Mary in the Primary Belief and Piety*, p. 99.

Mary, the *Akatist Hymn*<sup>57</sup>, which came to be consecrated in the Byzantine world as the Hymn par excellence of the Mother of God. The Akathist Hymn is an anonymous 5th-century creation that was created to celebrate the mystery of the Mother of God in Christ and His Church<sup>58</sup>. We find a few other Marian hymns in the hymnography of the Orthodox cult and in the writings to the Church Fathers<sup>59</sup>: St. Nicodemus the Hagiorite<sup>60</sup>, Bishop Nectarios of Aegina.

It is worth mentioning that one of the hymns composed in honor of the Mother of God by Bishop Nectarius, Ἀγνή Παρθένε, (Agni Parthene) *Virgin Mother*<sup>61</sup>

<sup>57</sup> The Theological themes, about the Mother of Christ from this Hymn Acatist, are an admirable synthesis of the Ecumenical Synods in Ephesus (431) and Chalcedon (451), of the writings of the Patriarch Proclu of Constantinople and of Hierarch Basil of Seleucia. All this Christian marianology became crystalized due to the efforts made by the August Virgin Empress Pulcheria, the true inspiration of the Hymn Acatist, the one who orchestrated the triumph of marianic and Christological Orthodoxy. Cf. Ermanno M. Toniolo, *Acatistul Maicii Domnului explicat. Imnul și structurile lui mistagogice/ The Mother of Christ Acatist Explained. The Hymn and mistagogic Structures*; presentation and translation by Ioan. I. Ică jr., Editura Deisis, Sibiu, 2009, p. 57.

<sup>58</sup> Ermanno M. Toniolo, *Acatistul Maicii Domnului explicat/ The Mother of Christ Acatist Explained ...*, p. 21.

<sup>59</sup> Jaroslav Pelikan, *Fecioara Maria de-a lungul secolelor. Locul ei în istoria culturii/ Mary Through the Centuries: Her Place in the History of Culture*, Translation from English by de Silvia Palade, București, Humanitas, 1998.

<sup>60</sup> Nicodemus the Aghiorite, *Canoanele Maicii Domnului, Cununa Pururea Fecioarei sau Noul Theotokarion/ The Mother of God Canons, The Eternal Halo of the Virgin or The New Theotokarion*, represents a cult book that is read at the end of the Compline all year long, structured on eight voices. The *Theotokarion of Saint Nicodemus* is better written and edited, the author composing an anthology, which gathers the most beautiful canons for the Mother of Christ, gathered by Byzantine hymnists as: Saint John of Damascus, Saint Andrei Criteanul, Saint Theodore the Studite, Joseph the Hymnographer, Patriarch Photius, the monk Tecla, St. John of the Ehhite, Metropolitan Mitrofan of Smyrna, Gheorghe of Nicomedia, Patriarch Atanasie, Arsenie Monahul, Teoctist Studitul, Teofan of Nicey Graptul, Ilie Criteanul Eccidul, Patriarch Ignatie, Mark of Ephesus (Evghenicul), Calinic of Heraclea, and others, some known and others brought back from obscurity by St. Nicodemus. Cf. Saint Nicodemus the Aghiorite, *The New Theotokarion, Canoanele aghiorite ale Maicii Domnului/ The Aghiorite Canons of the Mother of Christ*, translation by Laura Enache, Iași Doxologia, 2012, p. 10. This collection is based on the old hymnographic canons for the Mother of Christ, written by Agapie Landos in 1643, which Saint Nicodemus enriches considerably. Cf. Elia Citterio, *Saint Nicodemus the Aghiorite, personality, work, ascetical and mystical teachings*, Deisis, Sibiu, 2001, p. 259.

<sup>61</sup> Agni Parthene (gr. Ἀγνή Παρθένε) is a non-liturgical hymn (not included in the Church's masses) text composed by Nectarios of Aegina in the 19<sup>th</sup> century when he was headmaster of The Theological Seminary in Athens. According to a tradition from Aegina Monastery, built by Bishop Nectarios, he would have written the text after he had a vision of the Virgin Mary who asked him to write down this poem. The original manuscript can still be seen on his bedroom table at this monastery. Alter it was published as a non-liturgical hymn and spiritual awakening called „Theotokarion of Odes & Hymns for the Most-Holy Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Maria” din 1905, which included similar poems. The poem circulated in the

became famous throughout the Orthodox world, being translated into all languages in which the Byzantine Orthodox rite is performed. At the same time, this Marian hymn was harmonized for different choral formations<sup>62</sup>.

In the line, of these hymns composed for the adoration of Virgin Mary, are written the marianic pricesne made in the Transylvanian liturgical space by the Christian confessions' communities<sup>63</sup>. Surpassing all the confessional divergences, the Christians did not think twice about landing the marianic pricesne from others. Such an example is the well-known priceasna for the praise of the Mother of God: *O, Măicuță sfântă/ Oh, saint Mother*, that is also known by *Fii lacrimilor tale/ The Sons of Your Tears*, priceasna which is claimed by both Orthodox and Catholics. This priceasna is one of the most famous and sung in the entire Romanian Orthodox Church, being intricately connected to the pilgrimages at Nicula, Rohia, Moisei and Bixad Monasteries.

In the above mentioned pricesne collection, we find the following not: "from the Vasile Stanciu collection; "taken from Nicula Monastery, Rohia". Likewise, Vasile Stanciu collects the chant and mentions that it is „one of the most popular and beloved Virgin Mary chants, encountered in all Transylvania especially in *Sf. Ana Monastery – Rohia* and Nicula, in the Clujului Metropolitan" being "noted after the recordings done by the above-mentioned monasteries"<sup>64</sup>. The collection and notation of this marianic prayer by Professor Stanciu reveals the popular character of the song, which he acquired over time, going through various melodic transformations. The history of this priceasna is a special one. If we were to think about the origin and reason for the composition of this prayer, then we should turn our attention to the Bixad Monastery, 1946, before the entry into force of Decree 358, of 1948, by which the Greek Catholic Church was removed outside the law of the atheist communist state. We find this Marian

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Greek Orthodox space. This hymn's music was composed on the 5<sup>th</sup> voice by Hiermonk Gregory from the „Simonospetras" Monastery in the Saint Mount Athos. The hymn became famous ever since the '90, after it was recorded by the monarchic choir of the monasteries. The Romanian version of this hymn belongs to the hieromonah Ștefan Lascoschiotul. Cf. *Paraclisul Maicii Domnului. Fecioară curate. Cuvânt bun/ The Mother of Christ Paraclis*, Chilia „Buna-Vestire", Schitul Lacu, Sfântul Munte Athos, 2001, p. 69.

<sup>62</sup> Irina Denisova harmonization for a mixt choir: Мария Дево Чистая обр монахини Иулиании Денисовой; *Fecioara curate/ Pure Virgin* - vocal concert-symphonic, sustained by the psaltic group *Tronos* of the Romanian Patriarchy, conducted by Mihail Bucă and The Metropolitan Orchestra Bucharest, conducted de Daniel Jinga.

<sup>63</sup> The Processional marianic pricesne which the Christians sing on their way to the monastery, were presented in various religious magazines: „Versuri la procesiuni/ Lines at Processions", în: *Vieța creștină/Christian Life*, 17-18 (1938), p. 4; „Versuri la procesiuni", în: *Vieța creștină*, 11-12 (1946), p. 6-8.

<sup>64</sup> Vasile Stanciu, *Slujbele Sfinților Români din Transilvania și alte cântări religioase/ The Masses of the Romanian Saints in Transylvania and other Religious Chants*, Editura Arhiepiscopiei Vadului, Feleacului și Clujului, 1990. p. 156.

hymn mentioned for the first time in an almanac calendar called the Dela Bixad Calendar from 1946, edited by the Order of Saint Basil of Satu Mare, bearing the name of *Sons of Your Tears...*, with the subtitle *Lăcrămioare/Lilies*. The text of the song is signed by Father Gavril Sălăgeanu, and the song is composed by Father Gh(eorghe) Marina, composer of church music. The Basilian hieromonks from the Bixad Monastery are part of the order of Saint Basil the Great of the Greek Catholic Church. At the same time, the authorship of the text of this hymn is reaffirmed in the magazine *Vieața Creștină* from 1946, which reproduces the text with the 14 stanzas and the chorus, signed by the Basilian hieromonk P. Gavril Sălăgean<sup>65</sup>.

We have a testimony about the origin of this hymn from a Greek Catholic clergyman, Priest Philip Christmas, the last survivor of the Greek Catholic Monastery in Bixad, who says in this regard: "I: But about the song "Sons of your tears" ("Oh, Holy Mother") what can you tell us? pr. C: In 1947, after the Pan-Orthodox Congress in Moscow, it became increasingly clear that the fate of the Romanian Greek Catholic Church was sealed. The challenges and threats from the communists were increasingly aggressive and overt. Already Ukrainian Greek Catholics have been outlawed and imprisoned. We were already talking about the fact that the Greek Catholic Church is the next opponent on Stalin's blacklist. And then, in that atmosphere of terror of the red devil from the East, Fr. Gavril Sălăgeanu composed the lyrics, and Fr. Gheorghe Marina the melody of a new song: "Sons of your tears" - a prayer song of our resistance, of the Basilian monks from Bixad and of the Greek Catholic Church. Today everyone sings it, but few know why and especially how it was written"<sup>66</sup>. The hymn *Sons of your tears or Oh, Holy Mother* has undergone several transformations both in terms of melodic line and lyrics<sup>67</sup>.

Overcoming all the divergences and controversies between the two Churches, the Romanian Orthodox Church, and the Greek Catholic Church, both the precious *O, the Holy Mother*, and the other marianic priests who

<sup>65</sup> „Fiii lacrimilor tale/ Sons of Your Tears...”, în: *Vieața creștină/ Christian Life*, 13 (1946), p. 2.

<sup>66</sup> Cristina Cîcău, „Ultimul supraviețuitor de la Mănăstirea Bixad: Cine trecea la ortodocși era liber. Cine nu, îl mănâncă pușcăria/ The Last Survivor of Bixad Monastery: Who became orthodox were free. Who did not, was thrown in prison”, în: *Adevărul*, 13 noiembrie 2013, 22:14.

<sup>67</sup> Regarding the variants of this popular priceasna, we are going to render the most representative: „Fiii lacrimilor tale/ Sons of Your Tears...”, în: *Vieața creștină/ Christian Life*, 13 (1946), p. 2; Vasile Stanciu, *Cântări în cinstea Maicii Domnului/ Chants for the Mother of Christ Adoration*, p. 4-5; <http://mobile.catholica.ro/cantece/o-maicuta-sfanta.html>; <http://chinez-isidor.blogspot.com/2013/02/fiii-lacrimilor-tale-de-marcela-saftiuc.html>; The last variant of the priceasna *The Sons of Your Tears* is made by Marcela Saftiuc, on Tatiana Stepa's lines, after an old folk song. This is a piece of great refinement and sensitivity, which makes an impression due to its dramatic effect without overflows of artisan effects and means. The transposition in folk key does not impose on this creation spirit. Grigore Lese interprets it in his characteristic style, accompanied by whistle.

circulated in both communities through pilgrims, without taking into account tensions and misunderstandings, can be considered as the binder and the point of convergence between the two denominations. In the devotional act of the pilgrims, the prayers are not confessional, but communitarian; they have a precise purpose, the veneration of the Virgin Mary.

### 3.6 Psaltic pricesne

Another category of non-liturgical songs is the so-called chosen psaltic songs - kalophonic composed by various protopsalts for the purpose of their singing during the Holy Mass, at the time of the *kinonikón*, or at the end of it. One of the most representative and well-known them we mention the following: *Nădejdea creștinilor /The Hope of Christians* and *Taina creștinătății /The Mystery of Christianity* by Ion Popescu Pasărea on Voice V, *The Morning Chant/ Cântarea dimineții* by Anton Pann on the lyrics of I. Heliade Rădulescu; *Cântarea Sfintei Cruci, Pe Tine, Dumnezeule, Te laudăm /The Song of the Holy Cross, On You, God, we praise Thee* voice VIII; *O, preafrumoasă pustie /Oh, beautiful deserted land*, voice 5, the composition of Macarius the Hieromonk, from an old manuscript with dogmatic teachings; *Oh, beautiful desert/ O, preafrumoasă pustie*, voice 5, by the Hieromonk Dometie Ionescu; *The Morning Song/ Cântarea dimineții*, voice 8, by Macarius the Hieromonk; *The One You Gave Food to the People/ Cel Ce ai săturat pe norode*, voice 8, by Dimitrie Suceveanu. Also, in various collections<sup>68</sup> of church music we find many other non-liturgical songs. Unlike Marian songs, which have a simple, accessible melodic line, with a repetitive character, kalophonic songs are more difficult from a melodic point of view, requiring a minimum of musical training and vocal skills.

Among these songs are the new psaltic creations of various composers, intended to be sung in church at certain annual celebrations or on certain occasions. Among these new creations we mention: *For, You, Lord, /Pentru, Tine, Doamne*<sup>69</sup>, *Sub milostivirea ta/ Under your mercy*, *Balada Sfinților Martiri Brâncoveni /The Ballad of the Holy Martyrs of Brâncoveni*, pe glasul on

<sup>68</sup> Arhid. Anton V. Uncu, *Antologhion*, București, 1947; Ion Popescu-Pasărea, *Liturghierul de strană/ The Lectern Liturgy Book*, Editura Arhiepiscopiei Tomisului, 2001; Pr. Nicu Moldoveanu, *Cântările Sfintei Liturghii, colinde și alte cântări bisericești/ The Chants of the Holy Liturgy, Carols, and other Church Chants*, Editura Institutului Biblic și de Misiune al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române, București, 1999; *Cântări la Chinonic - pe dublă notație muzicală*, Editura IBMO, București, 2015; Arhim. Clement Haralamb, Cezar Florin Cocuz, *Cântările Sfintei Liturghii. Antologie psaltică/ The Chants of the Holy Liturgy. Psaltic Anthology*, Editura Institutului Biblic și de Misiune Ortodoxă, București, 2016. Ionașcu, Stelian, „Intersections of Arts. Structural a language analogies”, in: *Studia UBB Musica*, LXIII, 2, 2018, p. 143-164.

<sup>69</sup> Chiril Popescu.

*the 1<sup>st</sup> voice*<sup>70</sup>, *Crucified smile*, on the 5th voice<sup>71</sup>, *Pe Tine, Doamne, Te slăvesc/ You, Lord, I glorify You*, on the 5th voice<sup>72</sup>. These calophonic songs are written in the style of psaltic music, respecting its rules.

### **3.7 Spiritual *pricesne* or religious songs of the Lord's Army movement**

The spiritual rebirth movement initiated by the priest Iosif Trifa from Sibiu, in 1923, known as the Lord's Army, attracted a significant number of Christians to an austere Christian life, in which the precepts contained in Holy Scripture were assumed and strictly observed. Those who showed support for this movement within the Orthodox Church participate in a series of spiritual meetings, after the religious service on Sundays and holidays, in which a catechesis program takes place. During these gatherings, music still plays an especially important role today. Accompanied by musical instruments, Christians in the Lord's Army praise God. The most prominent composers of the songs from the Lord's Army were the poet Traian Dorz and the composer Nicolae Moldoveanu. The biblical hymns composed by them, which were collected in volumes of hymns<sup>73</sup>. They are sung today in many Orthodox Churches and in the programs of many Christian denominations. *Pricesne* can be sung in congregations, but also outside them are considered an alternative to contemporary music, which often does not correspond to biblical morality. Nicolae Moldoveanu, one of the most prolific composers in the Army, speaking about the spirit of Christian music, stated the following: "Spiritual singing is a gift of the Holy Spirit, it is a great grace that must rejoice Heaven and earth. This gift is lurking in the great enemy, the devil, who seeks all the time to divert man from the true goal, which is the glory of God, and to give to Christian hymns the appearance of the present age by the worldly spirit expressed in a wild rhythm and a certain, flattering, and feigned way of intoning sounds, which is no different from the kind of world. Religious "contemporary" music no longer reaches the goal, that is, it no longer brings glory to God, it does not search the soul, and it does not move the heart and

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<sup>70</sup> Chosen and transcript by Dumitru Codruț Scurtu.

<sup>71</sup> The Text and melody of the song were composed by Professor Eugen Dan Drăgoi during the Pandemic SarCov2 which has invaded the entire planet and determined the prohibition of the different confession believers' access at the masses. It is a manifest text of the sufferings that the entire planet is going through.

<sup>72</sup> Adaptarea *pricesnei Fecioară Maică/ The adaptation of the pricesna Virgin Mother.*

<sup>73</sup> Nicolae Moldoveanu, *Cântările Psalmilor, Cântările Bibliiei, Cântările harului/ The Psaltic Chants, The Biblical Chants, The Grace Songs*, cu versificări din textele biblice de către fratele Traian Dorz.



spirit towards the true Christian life - the Life of the Lord Jesus, a life of prayer, worship and meditation on truths Gospel<sup>74</sup>. Among the admitted prayers are those that speak of the joy of salvation, those with a moral theme, those of praise to God, and those that urge love<sup>75</sup>.

The religious song of the Lord's Army follows certain rules and canons, ensuring a sacredness that has remained as alive and working today. In a way, many of the songs of the Lord's Army have become "spiritual doine". The Lord's Army gave way to a religious literature with a popular and cult character, finding new possibilities to express the Christian sensibility of the laity. Professor Alexie Al. Buzera, in the preface of the book of religious songs "All the breath to praise the Lord", is of the opinion that at the Lord's Army the mustard seeds "from which the tree of the religious hymn to the Romanians arose and grew must be sought". Between 1930 and 1950, through church singing and the religious hymn, the Lord's Army contributed to the revival of the Christian faith and piety among the entire Romanian community<sup>76</sup>.

As for the origin of these songs, they belong, in most cases, to the community, resembling doines and folk ballads. We find this collective origin of the songs expressed by the editors Ioan Marini and Traian Dorz, in the preface they signed in the volume *Let's sing to the Lord* published in 1940: "We know that our hymns (...) are simple songs, many of them - poems and songs, and even notation - being made by people, without poetic and musical culture. But they are a fruit of grace, faith, and return to God, so they move souls, persuading them to turn from sin and receive the Savior"<sup>77</sup>. Among the well-known authors, creators of lyrics and songs we can list the poets: Ioan Marini, Ioan Tudusciuc, Traian Dorz și compozitorii: Iulius Igna, Cornel Rusu, Nicolae Cioran.

The founder of this movement, the priest Iosif Trifa is of the opinion that the religious music promoted by the Lord's Army must not remain only in the perimeter of the Church, but it must accompany all daily activities, as it was at the beginning of the early Church. The limitation of church singing only in the Church and rituals is due to several factors: weakening the faith and zeal of

<sup>74</sup> Nicolae Moldoveanu, „Cântările Domnului/ The Lord's Chants”, <https://tezaur-oasteadomnului.ro/index.php/nicolae-moldoveanu/articole/4003-cantarile-domnului-nicolae-moldoveanu-x>

<sup>75</sup> Moise Velescu și Gheorghe Precupescu, „Scurt istoric al mișcării duhovnicești „Oastea Domnului” din cadrul BOR/ Short History of the Army of God Movement in ROC”, în: *Confluente literare*, 90 (martie 2011), [https://confluente.org/Scurt\\_istoric\\_al\\_miscarii\\_duhovnicesti\\_oastea\\_domnului\\_din\\_cadrul\\_b\\_o\\_r\\_.html](https://confluente.org/Scurt_istoric_al_miscarii_duhovnicesti_oastea_domnului_din_cadrul_b_o_r_.html)

<sup>76</sup> *Toata suflarea sa laude pe Domnul/ Every Breath Bless The Lord*, Ed. Oltenia, Craiova, 1992, represents religious chants, pricesne and religious hymns carols and star chants, gathered and revised by Priest professor Alexie Al. Buzera.

<sup>77</sup> *Să cântăm Domnului. Carte de cântări ale Oastei Domnului/ Let us sing to the Lord. Books of Chants of the Army of the Lord*, Sibiu, 1940.

Christians, restricting singing only in the service of singers and church choirs and thus eliminating the people from homophonic singing, not including poetry and fact popular in the Church. In a word, one of the purposes of the Lord's Army is to introduce the people to church singing<sup>78</sup>. Currently, the songs from Army are included in a representative volume entitled "Let's sing to the Lord" / „Să cântăm Domnului”, published in several editions. The 15th edition includes several one thousand fifty songs - an expression of the Christian piety of the lay faithful of the Orthodox Church, enrolled in the Movement of Awakening and Spiritual Renewal "Army of the Lord"<sup>79</sup>.

Many of these songs also entered the repertoire of church singers from Transylvania, being sung at the Holy Mass, at the time of the *kinonikón*, at the end of the service or on various occasions: pilgrimages, religious meetings. Having a moralizing theme and being accompanied by a song with accents of cult and folklore, they are especially appreciated by Orthodox Christians in rural parishes. The possibility of participating in songs in unison, the engaging repetitive song and the notes of sentimentality make these songs true Sunday "hits" for many of the Transylvanian Orthodox communities.

Among the most sung and well-known religious hymns we mention a few: *Unde să mă duc eu, Doamne! Era seară liniștită; Naintea Ta, Iisus iubit; A bățut la ușa ta cineva; Blândul păstor/ Where should I go, Lord!; It was a quiet evening; Before You, beloved Jesus; Someone knocked on your door; The gentle shepherd.*

### 3.8 Folk *pricesne*

The musical repertoire, generically called "priceasnă", also includes the religious creations of a folkloric nature of the different performers of popular music. In a careful analysis of the repertoire of established performers, especially those asserted after the revolution of December 1989, we notice, in addition to the specific repertoire in the area they represent, the presence of the priests. The theme of the prayers is very varied, among them we find Marian prayers, moralizing prayers and thematic prayers adapted to the biblical events celebrated in the Christian holidays. In terms of how they are performed, we find *pricesne* sung without accompaniment, *pricesne* accompanied by ison, toaca, bells or musical instruments. If we were to analyze from a musical

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<sup>78</sup> Iosif Trifa, „Cântați Domnului/ Chant to the Lord...”, în: *Să cântăm Domnului. Carte de cântări ale Oastei Domnului/ Let us sing to the Lord. Books of Chants of the Army of the Lord*, ediția a XV-a, Sibiu, 2006, p. 5-9.

<sup>79</sup> *Să cântăm Domnului. Carte de cântări ale Oastei Domnului/ Let us sing to the Lord. Books of Chants of the Army of the Lord*, ediția a XV-a, Sibiu, 2006.

point of view the melodic lines of these prices, we could observe the influence of the popular melody with strong doina accents and the presence of songs from the neo-occasional musical genre, the songs themselves.

Referring to religious musical folklore, Gheorghe Șoima states that it: “meets all the precious features that we have found in the consideration of folklore in general. Thus, religious musical folklore is an admirable means of cultivating the religiosity of the people. At the same time, it fulfills an important social function of solidarity. Any constructive activity, carried out jointly, binds and supports those who commit it; music and especially musical folklore achieve this solidarity to a great extent”<sup>80</sup>.

These kinds of pricesne, which are often popularized at festivals and competitions, which are in several editions, are also appreciated by the Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church. He, in a bulletin on the opening of a price festival, states that “pricesna is both prayer and singing in simple words, recalling the song sung at the village seats, but evoking the same deep meanings of the Orthodox faith confessed in this porch of heaven. These generous prayers are part of the all-time perseverance of Orthodox Christians in Romanian villages and fairs, to confess the Lord Jesus Christ and the joy of remaining united with Him, in history and in eternity”<sup>81</sup>.

Among the performers consecrated by pricesne we mention Teodora Păunescu Tucă, Marian Mărcuș, Cristian Pomohaci, Marius Ciprian Pop, Cornelia Goția, Paula Seling, Oana Carmen Bozga, Mariana Anghel, Elisabeta Ticuța, Denisa Blaga<sup>82</sup>. The popularized songs of folk music performers, during festivals, religious-themed shows, through media channels: YouTube, Facebook, Spotify, etc., came to be sung, learned and then introduced in the Sunday repertoire, in the famous “pricesne notebooks” of church singers. Often, referring to the popular prose, singers, and Christians in the pews of churches, consider it as a song through which the human soul approaches God, through which it expresses its joys, sorrows, needs and, finally, thanks for help received. Pricesna brings comfort and joy to the faithful soul.

### **3.9 Pricesne from communist prisons**

Born during the horrors of the communist dictatorship, prison literature is one of the most significant moments of our contemporary literature and a unique experience in the entire history of Romanian literary creation. Mentally

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<sup>80</sup> Gheorghe Șoima, „Folclorul muzical religios/ Religious Musical Folk Chants”..., p. 185.

<sup>81</sup> PF Daniel, „Pricesnele, mărturisiri ale bucuriei de a fi împreună cu Domnul Hristos/ Pricesne, confessions of the joy in communion with the Lord”, în: *Lumina*, 28 mai 2019.

<sup>82</sup> We must remind here the young singer Denisa Blaga with the pricesna The Hymn of Sufferings, verses by Stefan Vasile, composed to show the people sufferings during the pandemic.

elaborated, in the respite they had between the torments and the tortures to which they were subjected, the poems of suffering keep in a living form the intensity of the feelings that generated them. The theme of these religious poems that have been dressed in various melodic lines with themes from carols, from psaltic songs, is truly diverse. For the present research we consider only those poems that speak about the peace of mind that the convicts have acquired after long sufferings, about the care of God, about the nation, about the country, about their sacrifice. Among the poets who went through the communist prisons and left behind a series of poems that were put on notes, we mention: Radu Gyr, Nichifor Crainic, Vasile Voiculescu, Demostene Andronescu, Valeriu Gafencu, Andrei Ciurunga.

The nuns from the Diaconești Monastery from Bacău County were the ones who composed several melodic lines for the poems written in the communist prisons, transforming them into true "hymns of suffering". Many of them came to be sung during the Holy Mass, in festivals and concerts with a religious theme.

It should be remembered that the singer Tudor Gheorghe dedicated a whole series of concerts to the literature in the communist prisons, recording a CD that he titled: *Cu Iisus în celulă/ With Jesus in the cell*.

## Conclusions

The religious songs called: prayers, Marian prayers, Transylvanian prayers, folk prayers, kalophonic songs, spiritual songs, etc., came to be sung today at the Liturgy, during the communion of the clergy, replacing the old *kinonikón*. Assimilated by Christian communities and used on various occasions, prayers are considered a constituent part of the Orthodox ritual. Overcoming all divergences regarding the introduction or not in the cult, the prayers bring a considerable contribution in the dynamics of the pastoral mission, being a means of community cohesion and of training the faithful in the common liturgical song. Given the thematic and melodic diversity of the prayers, an important role in the selection and introduction in worship of the most appropriate songs has the clergy and church singers. The selected pieces must be part of the hymnographic and melodic tradition of the Orthodox Church. There is a danger that by not making an objective selection of the prayers, the moment of the communion of the clergy and the faithful will turn into a kind of folkloric spectacle, irreversibly distorting the liturgical sequence. The purpose of the song is to create the atmosphere necessary for sharing, full of sobriety, mystery, prayer, introspection. Consequently, the accent must be on prayer, not the show.

Knowing the precarious and limited musical training of the church singers from the rural parishes of Transylvania, we are aware that it will be difficult to include in their repertoire the melodies of the old psaltic *kinonikón*, the melodies of the kalophonic songs or, at least, the Transylvanian hymns composed after the biblical verses<sup>83</sup>. Therefore, the prayers they learn after hearing from various sources must go through a selection process to be done by the priest, in order to preserve as much as possible, the spirit of the Byzantine liturgy.

We do not exclude the value of prices of different categories and melodic patterns. We consider them as a manifestation of popular genius and suitable to be popularized in festivals, concerts, but also on various occasions: pilgrimages, religious-themed trips, catechetical activities with young people. The most appropriate and appropriate ideas from an ideological and musical point of view can find a place in the ritual of the liturgy, at the end of it, while the faithful are anointed and leave the Church.

After reviewing those more representative songs/ prayers, we can conclude that, in the church music space, there are a lot of songs with religious themes, some more successful, others less successful, all illustrating the creative force and genius of the Romanian people. Each song suitable for the purpose for which it was composed has a well-defined place in religious activities. Regarding the replacement of the old *kinonikón* with different prices, we consider that the latter must correspond to the liturgical moment and be in line with the millennial tradition of Byzantine ritual.

*Translated from Romanian by Marcela Stan*

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<sup>83</sup> To be seen Vasile Petrascu Collection, 45 *Pricesne*.

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