

THE *DISCHANT*¹ – AN ARCHAIC FORM OF PSYCHOTHERAPY²

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SUMMARY. The present work is a study on romanian „*dischant*” (*descântec*) from the psychotherapeutical effect’s perspective that this magic practice has. In addition study’s declared goal is to revalue the *dischant* being known that it is one of the folkloric species that are inevitably subject of degradation and disappearance.

As a result we bring together information about this romanian practice but also about two complementary to modern psychotherapy therapies, music therapy and logotherapy. In fact our approach is straightened just towards showing the similitudes between this archaic form of psychotherapy and unspecific therapies used by modern psychotherapy.

In our opinion the *dischant*’s ritual is one of the archaic forms of stress’s attenuation and it is probabil that it would have applicability in our days as relaxing and stress attenuation method in urban medium because through the listening of the *dischant* (even without its specific ritual) it is achieved a temporary break from daily reality and a projection of the listener in a space governed by symbol and myth that permits living states in another form and wich satisfies at the same time the need for magic within us.

Keywords: *dischant*, exorcism, music therapy, logotherapy

Human existence always unfolds in the frame delimited by two dimensions: one of the concrete, sensible, biological world and the other of the spiritual world, of mistery. In Blaga’s opinion⁴ precisely this placement of man in the *mistery’s horizon* differentiates him from vegetal and animal world. The existence of *soul* is that makes man superior.

¹ In Romanian: „*descântec*”. The translation of this Romanian term in English as “*exorcism*” is in our opinion unsuitable; in Romanian culture the term *exorcism* define precisely special religious services done for possessed people by monks or preasts with special abilities and in the church. The term “*dischant*” (*descântec*) is rather “lighter” in its significance and we prefer to use it in this form through the study. **Also, with the present study we propose to introduce this term as a new musicological terminology.**

² A part of this study’s content was previously published in my work *Muzicoterapia. Istoric, actualitate, perspective (Music Therapy. History, Present, Perspectives)*, Ed. Universității din Oradea, 2008.

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⁴ Blaga, Lucian, *Despre gândirea magică*, in: *Trilogia valorilor (About the Magic Thinking, in: Values Trilogy)*, Ed. Minerva, București, 1987, p.272.

The endeavour of human spirit to imagine himself in this mystery's horizon and to reveal it come true since earliest times of human existence in two approaches, the myth and witchcraft, that belong to two types of relating to the world: mythical thinking and magical thinking.

Considered by many sociological researches as a social phenomenon witchcraft intervenes in the event of any activity or important action wick result is not for certain in the power of man⁵.

As a system of ceremonies and actions determined by the belief in the power of magician to act upon the objective reality with the help of supernatural forces, the witchcraft relies on the faith that in nature exist forces in self (wich many primitive populations call *kami* or *mana* – term that religions's history asumed as syntetic definition) that the magical invocation can compel to act in favor of man or against him⁶.

The primitive witchcraft has since earliest times a direct report with certain practical activities: healing illnesses (popular medicine), love relationships (directing amatory attraction), attracting venison (securing food), military actions; also with the practice of purification (a kind of *catharsis*) wich ritual includes the notion of *tabu* through wich it is forbidden the touching of certain objects, places or beings considered either sacred or unclean. Almost every magical practice implies the exorcisms and charms.

In our opinion the „*dischant*” (romanian: *descântec*) is not only an aspect of magical thinking's manifestation but also a form of archaic music therapy so we will try in the following a look from the effects about psychic's perspective that the dischant has.

1. The Dischant at Romanians

Although unrecognised as such by the science popular medicine is practised by romanians since earliest times. It includes beside quak medicines a series of therapeutical methods that belong to archaic witchcraft, methods that seem totally meaningless to modern thinking. Quak medicines are mostly simple recepies that capitalize the therapeutical principles of certain substances of vegetal, animal or mineral origin these substances being always available to the man who unfolds his existence in the middle of nature. In the popular mentality in order to be efficient some quak medicines must be accompanied by *dischants* (magic incantations).

⁵ Malinowski, B., *The Sexual Life of Savages in North-Western Malanesia* apud Claude Levi-Strauss, *Antropologia structurală (Structural Anthropology)*, traducere de J. Pecher, Ed. Politică, București, 1978

⁶ Kernbach, Victor, *Dicționar de mitologie generală (General Mythology Dictionary)*, Ed. Științifică și Enciclopedică, București, 1989, p.314

Due to some zonal specific features this type of magical – empirical medicine remained almost institutionalised till XX century. A districtual doctor registers in 1935 that for the peasants old woman's medicine and the dischants with all their empiricism remain the principal means they resort to in case of illness⁷.

It seems that the dischant is the most frequent proceeding to which popular medicine resorts to. It is a complex therapeutic form that brings together the magic (psycho-hypnotic) treatment with empiric treatments that belong to phytotherapy's field.

The essence of dischant is the magic incantation which declared therapeutic role is to either drive away illness's spirits or undo the spell made above someone. The incantation is generally a lexical formula made of irregular verses of unequal lengths and with fortuitous rhyme consisting especially of assonances⁸. A series of ritual gestures that are in composition of dischant accompanies this incantation requiring the use of diverse objects or plants. Most plants used by healers are considered sacred and can be found also in the medical pharmacopoeia⁹.

1.1 The dischant – act of initiation

Officiated in special conditions dischant's ritual requires the initiation. Not anyone can heal through dischant. It is believed that is best to address yourself to an old woman; younger women often know dischants but only in their old ages declare to be healers meanwhile men very seldom appear in this posture.

General faith is that the secret of dischant must be kept; non-observance of this condition alters the therapeutic power of dischant. However the old healers take care of letting the dischant *on earth* otherwise this is a *sin* and they say the words slow in order the patients *to steel* for only stolen dischant helps¹⁰.

The social statute of healer is special; it is believed that she possesses magic powers (of *freezing the water*, of *stopping the rain* etc.). Mainly she makes the connection with *the righteous world*, she is on the best terms with

⁷ Cosac, P., Dr., *Studii de etnografie medicală română. Descântece și leacuri băbești din România (Romanian Medical Ethnography Studies. Dischants and Quack medicines from Romania)*, Craiova, 1935

⁸ Papadima, Ovidiu, *Literatură populară română (Romanian Popular Literature)*, Editura pentru Literatură, București, 1968, p.362

⁹ Niculae, Cornel, Dan, *Leacuri și remedii magice din Carpați (Quack medicines and Magic Remedies from Carpathians)*, Ed. Axis Mundi și Ethos, București, 1994, p.97

¹⁰ Candrea, I. Aurel, *Folklorul medical român. Privire generală. Medicina magică (Romanian Medical Folklore. Overview. Magic Medicine)*, București, 1944

magic forces. The magic power can be inherited or obtained; in order the dischant to be effective the healer must be yet *clean* both physicaly and mentally¹¹.

Sometimes the healer may suffer some drawbacks or even get ill herself in the attempt of healing the ill; in this case she never says the dischant to herself alone but she apeals to another healer preferably older then she identically with the altaic shaman who adresses to another shaman to be healed. In the battle with malefic forces the healer tries to assure her security respecting strictly the ritual. The dischant once started must be finished without mistaking a word otherwise the illness *drops* on aathe healer and her children¹². To protect herself the healer sometime put herself in her belt or on the back a spoon or she catches a needle in her breast with the faith that illness will pass above the object.

The rituals place the healer in a sacred space and presents her like an initiated. It is very interesting the affirmation of some healers who affirm that they learned the texts and magic practice in dream urged by Saint Friday analog to shamans that are submitted to an extatic initiation (dreams, visions, trances).

As professionals and experts in spirits the healers take good care in respecting certain interdictiones. Most tabus reffers to names because any danger may be broght up-to-date or stired only by naming it¹³. In this category are some illnesses, animals, demons or demonic being's names. Beside these plants are no lesser dangerouse; it is well known the mysterious power of belladonna, *the grass of life and death*¹⁴, plant wich must be respected, indifferently the benefic or malefic goal in wich it is used. As a rule these tabu names are replaced by euphemisms or other names in dischants¹⁵.

The connection of the healer with the spirits is achieved naturally; as a result of her faith in her magic powers, this faith being sustained by the trust that both the ill and the rural community give to her, the healer place herself in the position of intermediary between the supernatural and natural worlds, between the sky and the earth. Using the dischants as operational formulas¹⁶ she make the connection between these two worlds, between Divinity and people. Some healers are convinsed that they are helped by

¹¹ Gorovei, Artur, *Folclor și folcloristică (Folklore and Folklorism)*, Ed. Hyperion, Chișinău, 1990, p.131-132

¹² Cireș, Lucia – Berdan, Lucia, *Descânțețe din Moldova (Dischants from Moldavia)*, Caietele Arhivei de folclor, Iași, 1982, p.11

¹³ idem, p.12

¹⁴ Eliade, Mircea, *De la Zalmoxis la Genghis-Han (From Zalmoxis to Genghis-Han)*, Traducere de Maria și Cezar Ivănescu, Editura Humanitas, București, 1995, p.232

¹⁵ Cireș, Lucia – Berdan, Lucia, *op.cit.*, p.12

¹⁶ Kernbach, Victor, *op.cit.*, p.139

St. Friday whom they honor by fasting and not working on Friday¹⁷. Identically in their approach of healing ills the shamans use auxiliary spirits that appeared to them in the course of their initiation¹⁸ and which will help in their entire shamanic practice.

The interference of Christian dogma is perceptible as well in dischants univers; the Divinity appears treated accordingly to the category of *sophianique* formulated by Blaga in the sense of transcendent that descends towards the world, towards man¹⁹. Holy Virgin descends from the sky on a golden lather or on a wax one to heal the illnesses, God and Saint Peter travel as old men on earth and offer therapeutic models. The divine force is yet inefficient without the force of magic because it exerts itself only through healer's mediation²⁰. In its turn it can be counteracted by Divinity the condition of healing being *if God wants* so the consensus of these two active principles. The interdependence of these two factors is explicitly formulated in the end of dischants: *My dischant / The remedy from God or Remedy from me, health from God* etc.

1.2 Unfolding, significances, symbols

As we mentioned before the dischants are often accompanied by empiric remedies; in fact popular medicine is a joining of magic and empiric practices although the magic element can be missing sometimes. Among empiric remedies most used are the *bundles* (plants mixtures puted on the body's ill place), the *rubbings* (rubbings or massages with butter, oil, fat, soap, vinegger etc.) and the *poultices* (washings with water in which herbs boiled)²¹.

Though appear almost always accompanied by the empiric element the dischants are used sometimes as exclusiv magic practices using in these cases the suggestion and self-suggestion as healing mechanisms.

One can not talk about a typical unfolding of dischant; depending on the illness, the local traditions, the personality and knowledge of the healer there are significant differences. Dischant's ritual is yet rather complex; it includes beside the central rite (the magic incantation) many manual rites (the preparing of necessary substances, the use of certain objects etc.). Also both the healer and the ill submit themselves to some preparatory, purification rites; both take care in being physically clean before starting the ritual and some healers fast in the day that they want to do the ritual. Yet the optimal realisation of dischant is conditioned.

¹⁷ Niculae, Cornel Dan, *op.cit.*, p.99

¹⁸ Eliade, Mircea, *Mituri, vise și mistere*, in: *Eseuri (Myths, Dreams and Misteries, in: Essays)*. Traducere de Maria și Cezar Ivănescu, Editura Științifică, București, 1991, p.169

¹⁹ Blaga, Lucian, *op.cit.*

²⁰ Cireș, Lucia – Berdan, Lucia, *op.cit.*, p.6

²¹ Nicolae, Cornel Dan, *op.cit.*, p.179

A first condition that must be fulfilled by the person who does it refers to temporal coordinates. The dischant is done three or nine days according to illness's gravity. The days are chosen after moon's phases: for illnesses and sorrow when the moon is descending; for love and well being when the moon is rising. Usually one does the dischant only on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays (fast days) and never on Sunday. There isn't a general rule yet; when is absolutely necessary one can do it also on the other days of the week and more, in some regions it is believed that the dischants are efficient only on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Some old women do the ritual before the sunrise others in the afternoon²².

The objects that constitute the arsenal of dischants are ment to drive away the evil spirits that popular mentality consideres to be the illness's authors. The menacing of these *unseen enemies* is done with cutting objects (knife, sickle, axe etc.) or sharpened ones (needle, nail, splinter), with a hazelnut tree twig (in dischants against snake bites), with the broom, with garlic (that drives away all bad things), with a cross, with incense, holy water or other things considered saint and with many usual or unusual objects or plants²³.

For *the evil eye* one does the dischants with burning coals that must be extinguished in *whole water*; the used coals are thrown at a crossroads for the evil eye run and scatter like coals.

In Oltenia region for *dry sun* (identified as sunstroke) one does the dischant using nine rocks puted in water and a sickle saying as follows: *Like the sickle cuts all straws, all grasses and litter so cut itself the longing from (this or that); like water washes all rocks, all banks so wash itself all stitches from (this or that)*²⁴.

There is a category of objects that are used due to the fact that fulfil certain conditions imposed by magic mentality. These are: *whole water, destined water, objects stolen, found, abandoned, new, bought without bargaining*.

In most dischants yet water is the main element used by healers. Purifying element and primordial substance that make all forms appear from and revert to through regression water is one of the symbols associated with human unconscious; it is at the same a universal binder but also element that separates and dissolves²⁵.

Whole water is ment generally to purifications. The house, the domestic animals, the trees, the gardens are sprinkled with it. It must be brought from a spring or a *clean* fountain at dawn in a recipient from wich nobody drank

²² Gorovei, Artur, *op.cit.*, p.134

²³ Idem, p.135

²⁴ Niculae, Cornel Dan, *op.cit.*, p.101

²⁵ Evseev, Ivan, *Dicționar de simboluri și arhetipuri culturale (Symbols and Cultural Archetypes Dictionary)*, Ed. Amarcord, Timișoara, 1994, p.16

previously. The woman that brings it must be also clean²⁶. After doing the dischant for the ill in the whole water he is wet on the forehead, on the temples, the water is given to him for drink three times or the ill zone of the body (or the wound) is washed with it. The left water is thrown at the door's hinge, on the fence's stakes or in a pit that nobody must step over for not getting ill in his turn.

Destined water is invested at the moment of its gathering with magic-therapeutic functions. Thus in Bucovina before starting a *They* dischant (rheumatism, spondylosis) the healer goes to a running water having with her a bit of bread, a small block of salt and a new pot in her right hand. Arrived at the river's bank she genuflects three times in the opposite sense of flowing, she throws some bread and salt in water and she takes some of the water that flu over the bread and salt in the pot. At the same time she utters: *Running water / I destine you / Also with bread and salt / to heal (this or that) / From had to toes / With remedy / With health and eternity*. From here she descends downstream on the river and repeats identically the gesture of destining the water threee times; after filling up with water the pot she turns back home taking care that nobody sees her and talks to her²⁷.

In Ardeal, in order to destine the water, the healer throws a bit of bread in water saying: *Holy water I give you knot-shaped bread / You give me remedy*. Then she takes water from up to down with a new, enameled pot²⁸.

Also very used is *holy water* took from the preast; togheter with the basil it serves in dischants for *white* (cataract) and *arrow shot* (neuralgia)²⁹. After doing the dischant the water can not be used for nothing and must be thrown in an unbeaten place; sometimes it is thrown on the cat or dog from man's house not with the intention of sicken them but with the wish that the illness runs from the ill as these animals run from water.

In many dischants it is used *the knife*³⁰ with wich is done a cross, the ill is touched at all articulations or just on the ill spot; sometimes two crossed knives are used. It is very important the *weded knife*; this is a knife that stayed in the groom's belt or the bride's breast during the religious wedding; sometimes it is necessary a knife that was *weded seven times*. After doing the dischant the knife is shoved into the ground behind the door or elsewhere and is left there from half an hour to three days; if it is rusty when pulled out this is a sign that the ill is cureless.

²⁶ Gorovei, Artur, *op.cit.*, p.136

²⁷ idem, p.139

²⁸ Niculae, Cornel Dan, *op.cit.*, p.104

²⁹ Gorovei, Artur, *op.cit.*, p.143

³⁰ idem, p.139

Generally *iron objects* symbolize for Romanians the body health³¹. Iron is considered a metal with multiple magic and apotropaical valences. This is the reason that in some zones a bit of iron is puted in baby's dressing or iron tools are kept near his cradle to shelter him from the evil eye.

Like metals *salt* is also considered a weapon against the pirts and a symbol of purification and health. It is puted in baby bath or is sprinkled on threshold and windows. If at the time of doing a dischant there is a baby in the house salt must be sprinkled on baby's head for the illness not to catch him.

Among *plants* used in magic medicine's field the most powerful and unbearable for the spirits or ghosts are: the *Garlic*, the *Hedge*, the *Hazelnut tree*, the *Lovage*, the *Wormwood*, the *Aconite*³². Between these garlic is the best protection means against evil spirits. If someone gets a *night ugliness* (generally by this term it is understood a stroke, a facial paralysis or epilepsy – condition provoked by *Pixies*), in order to heal him the healer takes a thread of garlic and piercing it on all parts with the tip of a needle utters the following incantation: *From the house / From the table / (this or that) standed / And he went / Healthy / And cheerful / On the way / And the path. / When he was in the middle / Of way / And path / (this or that) was met by:/ Nine male ghosts / Nine male phantoms / Nine female ghosts / Nine female phantoms / Nine evil eyes / Nine uglies. / And when they met him / Through heart they arrowed him / In death bed they lied him / Nothing good for they left him. / (this or that) started to groan / And to wail./ Nobody heard him / Nobody saw him / How he groaned / Except God's Mother / From Heaven's door./ She heard him / She saw him / From right hand took him / Towards sun turned him / Bodily health gave him.* After saying the dischant she rubs the ill on the entire body with a part of the garlic and gives him to eat the other part³³. Often the peasants wear at the belt bunches of garlic being convinced that it guards them of the ominuous action of spirits.

Other illnesses produced by *The Pixies*, by *evil hour* (depressive psychosis, the scaring) have as remedy the use of hedge, lovage and belladona. The last is gathered always following the rite according to the goal in wich it will be used (illness's healing, love or evil spell). Very interesting informations about belladona's cult in Romania brings Mircea Eliade³⁴.

The *Basil* is one of the indispensable plants both in love remedies and charms and in dischants³⁵.

³¹ Evseev, Ivan, *op.cit.*, p.60

³² Niculae, Cornel Dan, *op.cit.*, p.137

³³ idem, p.162

³⁴ Eliade, Mircea, *De la Zalmoxis la Genghis-Han (From Zalmoxis to Genghis-Han)*, p.215-232

³⁵ Niculae, Cornel Dan, *op.cit.*, p.165

Popular mentality identifies the causes of most illnesses with the malefic action of some demons or spirits or with malevolent action of wizards. In Romanian demonology on the first place between human enemies is the devil³⁶; most frequently he is nominated through nicknames. The other demonic spirits are distributed in specialized classes; a specific feature is the preponderance of female demons either malefics (*Pixies, Whitsuntide* etc.) or benefics (*Fate, Midsummer day* etc.) to which are added the mixt spirits both good and bad (*Fairies*) and male demons (*Werwolves, Ghosts*). Big illnesses like the epidemics are personified by demons like the *Plague, Cholera* etc.

Generally in dischants illness's name is identified with the demon's name that produced it. Beside spirits the wizards provoke many illnesses. The spells are made usually by magic proceedings like *the throw, the fact*³⁷ and through magic discourses like *courses*. Most usual illnesses provoked by spells are eczemas (*scald head*), stroke, apoplexy (*palsy*), stitches and ocular affections (cataract). The dischants are the remedies against spells; if they do not work the ill seeks church's help paying religious services and prayers that bring the healing.

The magician's attitude and the measures he takes differs depending on illness's gravity. Common affections that are not a danger for patient's life are attributed to weaker spirits easier to remove and imply simpler remedies. A tonsillitis is cured by a massage and a reverse counting, a lipoma (*frog*) through the disappearance's enunciation, the same a mygrene, a herpes, an eczema or an indigestion³⁸. On the contrary serious or cureless illnesses are attributed to spells or infernal beings, their removal necessitating complicated rituals.

The general belief is that one of dischant's success condition is the description as well as possible of the illness after its physical identity signs³⁹. For example for the illnesses with cutaneous manifestations which provenience is often hard to establish even scientifically it is used the enumeration of all known manifestations; a dischant for *boil: White boil / black / red / blue / with anthrax / hurried / with swellings / with venoms / cow's / sheep's / goat's / romanian / gipsy / french* etc.⁴⁰ And for much more safety it ends with a formula that includes all possibilities unnamed: *illness of 99 kinds / of any kind* etc.

Other dischants give concrete details about the illness's origin or symptoms (for *sick*: *sick by water / sick by onion* (...) / *sick by 99 vegetables* ...) that proves the fact that at the base of dischant's practice are often exact medical knowledges obtained empirically and transmitted through tradition.

³⁶ Kernbach, Victor, *Universul mitic al românilor* (*The Mythic Univers of Romanians*), Ed. Științifică, București, 1994, p. 214

³⁷ Niculae, Cornel Dan, *op.cit.*, p. 115

³⁸ Cireș, Lucia – Berdan, Lucia, *op.cit.*, p. 17

³⁹ Papadima, Ovidiu, *op.cit.*, p. 398

⁴⁰ Gorovei, Artur, *op.cit.*, p. 193

It seems that in close relation with the phenomenon of epiderm's coloration that appears in different illnesses one can talk about a chromatics of dischants, preciser a monochromatics determined by the characteristic colour of illness⁴¹. For example in a dischant of *plague* it is predominant the colour black: *A black man / with a black daughter / dishevelled / with a black whip / with two black horses (...) with all black etc*⁴².

Many times the colour is not related with the physical aspects of illness but is ment to emphasize the horror of the occurrence that produced the illness (in *evil hour's* dischants) or to enhance agent's that produced the illness fear. Other times the colour is applied to abstractions⁴³ : *Stop! Red fate profate / blue problue / yellow proyellow (...)* (dischant for *unbinding fate*).

Generally the application of a single colour on reality's image has the role of canceling illness. Most frequent colours that appear are white (in *cataract* or *evil eye* dischants), red (in *boil* dischants), yellow (*jaundice* dischants) black (*black boil*).

In popular medicine colour's significance derives from the magic principle *similis similibus curantur* and from this point of view I. A. Candrea analyses based on many examples the significance of different colours⁴⁴. White and red are usually associated with health, purity, with idea of wellness. Red is the first in colours's hierarchy; it is the colour that attracts the attention and for this is used preventive against the evil eye.

A large part of dischant's formulas are made on the numbers symbolism. Most frequent used are the numbers three and its multiple nine, with its doubling ninety-nine. In Ivan Evseev's opinion the number nine is a magical-symbolic number that is found in all forms of romanian folklore⁴⁵ demonstrating its magic efficiency especially in dischants. The other numbers till nine appear seldom and mostly in the form of reverse counting.

The dischant's final formula combines usually two elements: the health wish and the mentioning of the natural or supernatural force that eventually decides this recovery⁴⁶. The health wish indicates metaphorically the state in wich the ill must arrive – *clean, lightened*. The symbols associated with this state appear as comparisons: *like strained silver, like blown gold, like the sun with sunrays, like the star in the sky, like dew on the earth* etc. All these symbols: silver, gold, sun, dew signify purification, regeneration, healing.

⁴¹ Papadima, Ovidiu, *op.cit.*, p. 402

⁴² idem

⁴³ ibidem

⁴⁴ Candrea, I. A., *Folklorul medical român comparat (Compared Romanian Medical Folklore)*, Casa Școalelor, București, 1944, p. 292-299

⁴⁵ Evseev, Ivan, *op.cit.*, p. 117

⁴⁶ Papadima, Ovidiu, *op.cit.*, p. 407

The second term of the final formula refers to the intervention of the healer in the process of healing; she ends sometimes with an energetic command: *Run in the mountains / in cold rocks / in dry rocks (...)*. Other times the command disappears; it is enounced simply the healer's power and benevolence: *Let it be remedy / from my mouth / from my heart*⁴⁷.

The most frequent formula is although the one that enounces the participation of Divinity beside the healer to the healing: *The dischant from me / The remedy from God*.

2. Elements of Music Therapy in dischant

Although the dischants were in researchers attention under different aspects (mithological, linguistic, empiric) there is little research of psychotherapeutic aspect. Most of research mentioned this aspect without studying it. In our opinion precisely the psychotherapeutic effect of the dischants is the cause of „miracle healings” and the reason that made possible the maintaining of this practice to our days.

Contemporary to the first therapeutic act psychotherapy accompanied medicine since its beginnings. As a concept mostly used psychotherapy refers to individual or group relationship through which it is explicitly pursued the positive influence of psychic or physical suffering through ideo-affective way⁴⁸. Modern psychotherapy totalizes today over 200 techniques and methods that gravitates around two poles: psycho-analysis and cognitive psychotherapy⁴⁹. Beside its specific techniques contemporary psychotherapy also uses in its effort of improving human suffering certain therapies like music therapy or logotherapy.

As a means of psychotherapeutic treatment music therapy applies receptively and actively a specific means of communication – music – to obtain therapeutic effects mostly in the treatment of neurosis, psychosomatic conditions, psychoses and neuropsychiatric illnesses. Used since earliest times (a realisation of a *musical pharmacopoeia* was tried⁵⁰) this type of therapy is used today more and more competent in many areas based on the finding that music produces real influences on human organism's functioning (neuromuscular reactions, changings in puls, arterial pressure, respiratory movements and metabolism).

⁴⁷ idem

⁴⁸ Brânzei, Petre, *Itinerar psihiatric (Psychiatric Itinerary)*, Ed. Junimea, Iași, 1979, p. 435

⁴⁹ Ionescu, G., *Psihoterapie (Psychotherapy)*, Ed. Științifică, București, 1990, p.13

⁵⁰ Nechifor, E. – Bocârnea, C., *Medicina și muzica (Medicine and Music)*, Ed. Medicală, București, 1965, p. 22

Also, rhythmation with music like method finds its justification in the finding that rhythm is an essential element for all things around us. It belongs at the same time to space and time, movement and organism's functioning; the heart beats rhythmically, the respiration has its own rhythm, the sleep and wakefulness succeed each other rhythmically, our psychic and its genesis and development can be framed in the context of rhythm all that allowing us to speak about inner, subjective, spiritual rhythms.

The rhythmanalytic approach of many physical, social, physiological and psychic phenomena is today familiar. The rhythm is used in therapy to ameliorate certain illnesses through structuring and organizing inner rhythms, intellectual and affective, that are disturbed.

Researches on the beginnings of psychotherapy reveals the fact that ideoaffective influence of illness through music was very used. Archaic emotional therapy exerted its benefic effects not only through direct physical helping of illness but also through effecting rituals consisting of presenting offerings, singing and dischants that were meant to determine the supernatural intruder to leave the ill⁵¹.

It appears that dischant's formulas were always chanted on a specific musical support, magic itself⁵². Some antique documents (from Egypt, Mesopotamia, China, India and especially Hellada) indirectly show that the magic incantation became functional and led to a certain effect on subjects through two paths: 1. a psychotherapeutic effect, through suggestion, because of the text of a certain symbolique force, acting literary or purely phonetic if they were only rhythmic combinations of words or pseudo-words without syntactic relation; 2. a benefic effect on nervous system's rebalancing, through music therapy, because of the musicality of dischants (sometimes even proper songs, at Greeks *epoda* meaning not only *incantation*, *magic words* or *refrain* but also *choral epoda*)⁵³.

Today the majority of dischants is recited not being possible to trace out explicitly a certain musical support. One can ask himself: why has this support been lost in time? A probable answer would be the social-historical evolution. It is possible that the initiatic information was transmitted more and more summarily according as the initial institution of healer-priest has degraded in time, the outcome being that only the essence concentrated in word, in logos was kept from the initial magical incantation.

On the other hand, the research we made on the modality of saying of some dischants led us to the conclusion that there is a doubtless melodisation tendency during the execution of dischant; it is possible that this fact escaped

⁵¹ Brânzei, Petre, *op.cit.*, p.436

⁵² Kernbach, Victor, *Dicționar de mitologie generală (General Mythology Dictionary)*, p.139

⁵³ Idem

to folklor researchers because the most part of dischants were picked up separated from their functional side thus these were said (and not chanted) by the healer without executing their rituals therefore without investing them with healing function and without the psycho-affective participation of the healers. We present as an example an *evil eye dischant*; here is its text and unfolding:

Gender: *the evil eye dischant*
Colection: Anca Rusu

Informer: Elena Stănculescu, 47
Măciuca, Vâlcea, 23 mai 1996

Run Wood's Mother !⁵⁴
Run dishevelled ugly !
Go to your ghosts !
Go to your hobgoblins !
Leave Gheorghe clean,
Saved of pain!
Run ghost !
Run hobgoblin !
Gheorghe to remain liberated,
Abandoned by evil.
Run Wood's Mother !
Run dishevelled ugly ! Fugi, urâtă despletită!
Run ghost ! Run hobgoblin !
Leave Gheorghe clean
Like strained silver!
Leave him bright
Like shiny gold !
Run ! Run ! Run !

The objects used by the healer are a clay mug in wich she puts water and nine burning coals (or nine striked matches burned more than half) that she extinguishes in water. During the ritual she holds the mug in right hand straightening it towards the ill and blowing in it.

The dischant nine times and the ill is sprinkled with exorcised water between the repetitions. At the end he is watered on the forehead and hands and he drinks from it.

⁵⁴ The original text in romanian: Fugi, Muma Pădurii! / Fugi, urâtă despletită! / Du-te la muroii tăi! / Du-te la strigoii tăi! / Lasă-l pe Gheorghe curat, / De dureri scăpat! / Fugi, muroaie! / Fugi, strigoaie! / Gheorghe să rămână dezrobit, / De rău părăsit. / Fugi, Muma Pădurii! / Fugi, urâtă despletită! / Fugi, muroaie! Fugi, strigoaie! / Lasă-l pe Gheorghe curat / Ca argintu' strecurat! / Lasă-l luminos / Ca aurul lucios! / Fugi! Fugi! Fugi!

From intonational point of view each repetition of the dischant presents more or less significant differences given the first execution; the melodisation tendency is perceivable starting with seventh repetition to the end.

This tendency of melodisation was clearly explained in our opinion by Ghizela Sulișteanu in *The Psychology of Musical Folklore*⁵⁵. Trying to explain the formation of musical intervals in the process of consciousness of musical sounds the researcher started from the premise of existence of a pre-musical stage. Specific to this prior to music stage is the fact that the (vocal) execution is not consciously musical being framed in the content of some functionalities which activity do not claim any proper musical quality even it exists. In this situation can be framed vocal shouts with signaling role, from shout and onomatopoeia – call or urge until command shouts at forest work and also part of children repertory. All these manifestations are not conceived as music in executants mentality. Being executed like verbal language the respective temporary connections have a different psycho-physiological structure; first of all they follow verbal language's intonational laws. Yet because of the different functionality sounds with musical modulation and with obvious tendency towards constant musicalisation appear. In time through stereotyping these become specific to a certain functional category.

Reminiscences of pre-musical stage can be found in many cultures and nations, not only at human collectivities considered of primitive type; these reminiscences (work shouts, incantations) remain through their functionality and not because of the lack of evaluate thinking.

Another idea that must be hold is that of the provenience of music from an inner, psycho-physiological in nature stimulus⁵⁶. We think that this explains better the tendency of melodisation in dischant; the goal of the healer is to provoke a psychological shock to the ill in order to get him out from the state of apathy inherent to illness. Hence the affective intonations of the verbal language that evaluate further in melodisation.

We present further on the transcription of the dischant mentioned confessing yet that in the nine executions that were noted there is some approximation regarding the pitch due to the difficulty of such notation (perfect only if realized mechanically):

⁵⁵ Sulișteanu, Ghizela, *Psihologia folclorului muzical (Musical Folklore Psychology)*, Ed. Academiei, București, 1980, p.136 - 147

⁵⁶ Idem, p.132

THE DISCHANT – AN ARCHAIC FORM OF PSYCHOTHERAPY

Ex. 1

R.a. = Registrul acut;
 R.n. = Registrul normal de vorbit;
 R.g. = Registrul grav

1.

R.a.
 R.n.
 R.g.

Fugi Mu-ma Pă-du-rii! Fugi u-ră-tă des-ple-ti-tă! Du-te la mo-ro-ii tăi!

2.

R.a.
 R.n.
 R.g.

Fugi Mu-ma Pă-du-rii! Fugi u-ră-tă des-ple-ti-tă! Du-te la mo-ro-ii tăi!

3.

R.a.
 R.n.
 R.g.

Fugi Mu-ma Pă-du-rii! Fugi u-ră-tă des-ple-ti-tă! Du-te la mo-ro-ii tăi!

4.

R.a.
 R.n.
 R.g.

Fugi Mu-ma Pă-du-rii! Fugi u-ră-tă des-ple-ti-tă! Du-te la mo-ro-ii tăi!

5.

R.a.
 R.n.
 R.g.

Fugi Mu-ma Pă-du-rii! Fugi u-ră-tă des-ple-ti-tă! Du-te la mo-ro-ii tăi!

6.

R.a.
 R.n.
 R.g.

Fugi Mu-ma Pă-du-rii! Fugi u-ră-tă des-ple-ti-tă! Du-te la mo-ro-ii tăi!

7.

R.a.
 R.n.
 R.g.

Fugi Mu-ma Pă-du-rii! Fugi u-ră-tă des-ple-ti-tă! Du-te la mo-ro-ii tăi!

8.

R.a.
 R.n.
 R.g.

Fugi Mu-ma Pă-du-rii! Fugi u-ră-tă des-ple-ti-tă! Du-te la mo-ro-ii tăi!

9.

R.a.
 R.n.
 R.g.

Fugi Mu-ma Pă-du-rii! Fugi u-ră-tă des-ple-ti-tă! Du-te la mo-ro-ii tăi!

ANCA SPĂȚAR

1.

R.a.
R.n.
R.g.

Du-te la stri-go-ii tăi! La-să-l pe Gheor-ghe cu-rat, De du-reri scă-pat!

2.

R.a.
R.n.
R.g.

Du-te la stri-go-ii tăi! La-să-l pe Gheor-ghe cu-rat, De du-reri scă-pat!

3.

R.a.
R.n.
R.g.

Du-te la stri-go-ii tăi! La-să-l pe Gheor-ghe cu-rat, De du-reri scă-pat!

4.

R.a.
R.n.
R.g.

Du-te la stri-go-ii tăi! La-să-l pe Gheor-ghe cu-rat, De du-reri scă-pat!

5.

R.a.
R.n.
R.g.

Du-te la stri-go-ii tăi! La-să-l pe Gheor-ghe cu-rat, De du-reri scă-pat!

6.

R.a.
R.n.
R.g.

Du-te la stri-go-ii tăi! La-să-l pe Gheor-ghe cu-rat, De du-reri scă-pat!

7.

Du-te la stri-go-ii tăi! La-să-l pe Gheor-ghe cu-rat, De du-reri scă-pat!

8.

Du-te la stri-go-ii tăi! La-să-l pe Gheor-ghe cu-rat, De du-reri scă-pat!

9.

Du-te la stri-go-ii tăi! La-să-l pe Gheor-ghe cu-rat, De du-reri scă-pat!

THE DISCHANT – AN ARCHAIC FORM OF PSYCHOTHERAPY

1.

R.a.
R.n.
R.g.

Fugi Mu-roa-ie! Fugi stri-go-a-ie! Gheor-ghe să ră-mă-nă dez-ro-bit, De rău pă-ră-sit.

2.

R.a.
R.n.
R.g.

Fugi Mu-roa-ie! Fugi stri-go-a-ie! Gheor-ghe să ră-mă-nă dez-ro-bit, De rău pă-ră-sit.

3.

R.a.
R.n.
R.g.

Fugi Mu-roa-ie! Fugi stri-go-a-ie! Să ră-mă-nă Gheor-ghe dez-ro-bit, De rău pă-ră-sit.

4.

R.a.
R.n.
R.g.

Fugi Mu-roa-ie! Fugi stri-go-a-ie! Gheor-ghe să ră-mă-nă dez-ro-bit, De rău pă-ră-sit.

5.

R.a.
R.n.
R.g.

Fugi Mu-roa-ie! Fugi stri-go-a-ie! Gheor-ghe să ră-mă-nă dez-ro-bit, De rău pă-ră-sit.

6.

R.a.
R.n.
R.g.

Fugi Mu-roa-ie! Fugi stri-go-a-ie! Gheor-ghe să ră-mă-nă dez-ro-bit, De rău pă-ră-sit.

7.

Fugi Mu-roa-ie! Fugi stri-go-a-ie! Gheor-ghe să ră-mă-nă dez-ro-bit, De rău pă-ră-sit.

8.

Fugi Mu-roa-ie! Fugi stri-go-a-ie! Gheor-ghe să ră-mă-nă dez-ro-bit, De rău pă-ră-sit.

9.

Fugi Mu-roa-ie! Fugi stri-go-a-ie! Gheor-ghe să ră-mă-nă dez-ro-bit, De rău pă-ră-sit.

ANCA SPĂȚAR

1.

R.a.
R.n.
R.g.

Fugi Mu-ma Pă-du-rii! Fugi u-ră-tă des-ple-ti-tă! Fugi Mu-roa-ie!

2.

R.a.
R.n.
R.g.

Fugi Mu-ma Pă-du-rii! Fugi u-ră-tă des-ple-ti-tă! Fugi Mu-roa-ie!

3.

R.a.
R.n.
R.g.

Fugi Mu-ma Pă-du-rii! Fugi u-ră-tă des-ple-ti-tă! Fugi Mu-roa-ie!

4.

R.a.
R.n.
R.g.

Fugi Mu-ma Pă-du-rii! Fugi u-ră-tă des-ple-ti-tă! Fugi Mu-roa-ie!

5.

R.a.
R.n.
R.g.

Fugi Mu-ma Pă-du-rii! Fugi u-ră-tă des-ple-ti-tă! Fugi Mu-roa-ie!

6.

R.a.
R.n.
R.g.

Fugi Mu-ma Pă-du-rii! Fugi u-ră-tă des-ple-ti-tă! Fugi Mu-roa-ie!

7.

Fugi Mu-ma Pă-du-rii! Fugi u-ră-tă des-ple-ti-tă! Fugi Mu-roa-ie!

8.


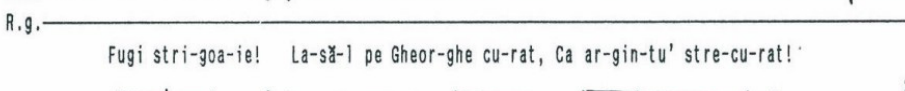
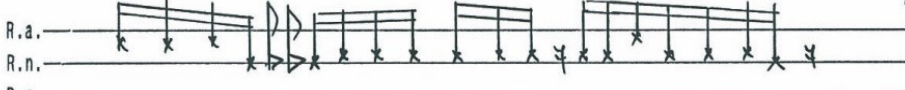
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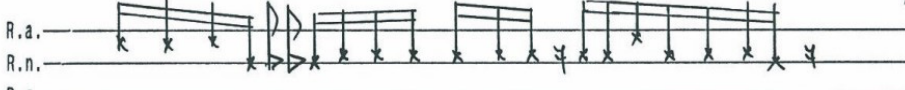
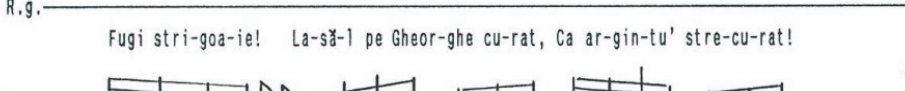
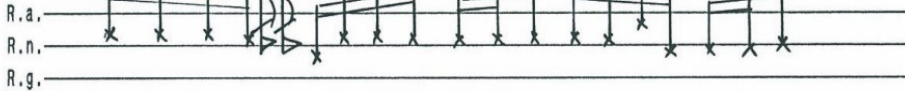
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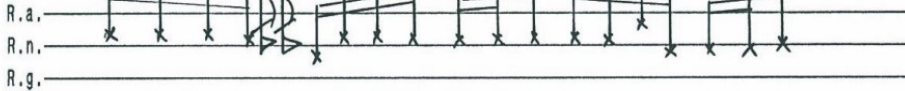
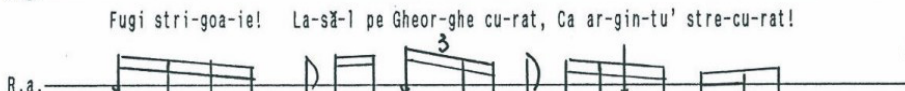
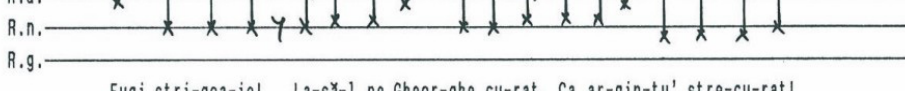
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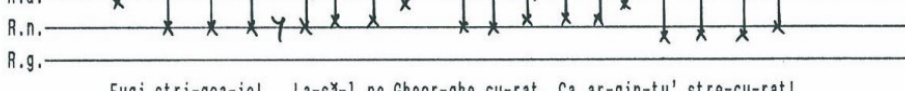
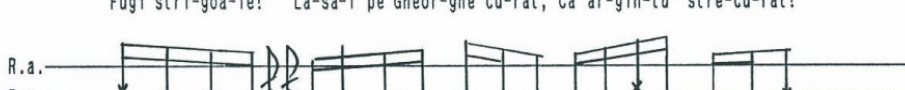
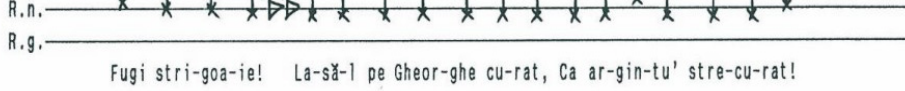
THE DISCHANT – AN ARCHAIC FORM OF PSYCHOTHERAPY

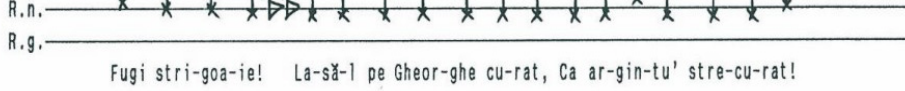

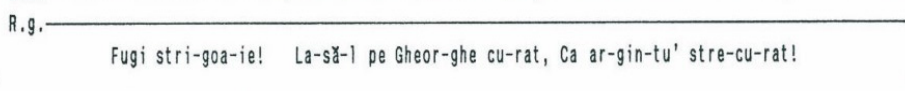
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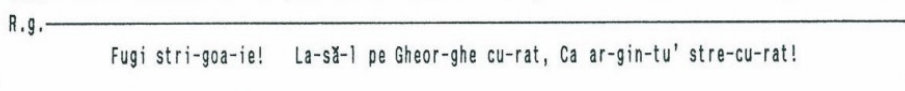

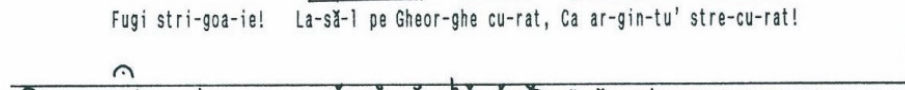
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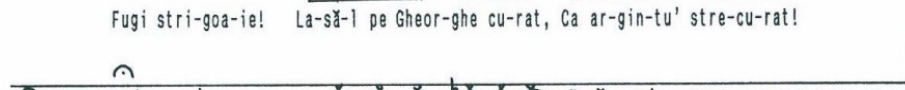


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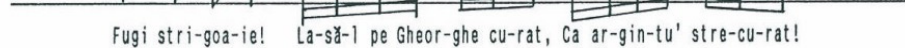

R.a.   




R.a.   

R.a.   

R.a.   

R.a.   

R.a.   

R.a.   

Fugi stri-go-a-ie! La-să-l pe Gheor-ghe cu-rat, Ca ar-gin-tu' stre-cu-rat!

Fugi stri-go-a-ie! La-să-l pe Gheor-ghe cu-rat, Ca ar-gin-tu' stre-cu-rat!

Fugi stri-go-a-ie! La-să-l pe Gheor-ghe cu-rat, Ca ar-gin-tu' stre-cu-rat!

Fugi stri-go-a-ie! La-să-l pe Gheor-ghe cu-rat, Ca ar-gin-tu' stre-cu-rat!

Fugi stri-go-a-ie! La-să-l pe Gheor-ghe cu-rat, Ca ar-gin-tu' stre-cu-rat!

Fugi stri-go-a-ie! La-să-l pe Gheor-ghe cu-rat, Ca ar-gin-tu' stre-cu-rat!

Fugi stri-go-a-ie! La-să-l pe Gheor-ghe cu-rat, Ca ar-gin-tu' stre-cu-rat!

Fugi stri-go-a-ie! La-să-l pe Gheor-ghe cu-rat, Ca ar-gin-tu' stre-cu-rat!

Fugi stri-go-a-ie! La-să-l pe Gheor-ghe cu-rat, Ca ar-gin-tu' stre-cu-rat!

Fugi stri-go-a-ie! La-să-l pe Gheor-ghe cu-rat, Ca ar-gin-tu' stre-cu-rat!

ANCA SPĂȚAR

1.

R.a.
R.n.
R.g.

La-să-l lu-mi-nos, Ca a-u-rul lu-cios! Fugi! Fugi! Fugi!

2.

R.a.
R.n.
R.g.

La-să-l lu-mi-nos, Ca a-u-rul lu-cios! Fugi! Fugi!

3.

R.a.
R.n.
R.g.

La-să-l lu-mi-nos, Ca a-u-rul lu-cios! Fugi! Fugi! Fugi!

4.

R.a.
R.n.
R.g.

La-să-l lu-mi-nos, Ca a-u-rul lu-cios! Fugi! Fugi! Fugi!

5.

R.a.
R.n.
R.g.

La-să-l lu-mi-nos, Ca a-u-rul lu-cios! Fugi! Fugi! Fugi!

6.

R.a.
R.n.
R.g.

La-să-l lu-mi-nos, Ca a-u-rul lu-cios! Fugi! Fugi! Fugi!

7.

La-să-l lu-mi-nos, Ca a-u-rul lu-cios! Fugi! Fugi! Fugi!

8.

La-să-l lu-mi-nos, Ca a-u-rul lu-cios! Fugi! Fugi! Fugi!

9.

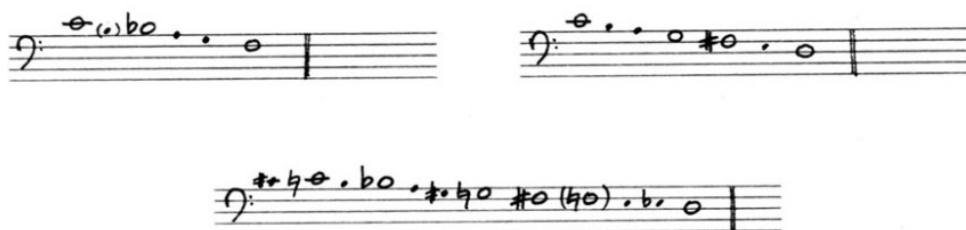
La-să-l lu-mi-nos, Ca a-u-rul lu-cios! Fugi! Fugi! Fugi!

THE DISCHANT – AN ARCHAIC FORM OF PSYCHOTHERAPY

From the transcription one can observe the following:

- a) the virtual existence of a musical scale in which on the affective intonations of verbal language the incipits of musical cells point out;
- b) the outlining of characteristic rhythmic cells;
- c) the presence of the acute sound as expansive, affective in nature degree that determine also
- d) its oscillating character;
- e) the tendency of insistence through repetition on certain sounds that become principal;
- f) the outlining of a generally descendant profile;
- g) the frequency of glissandi;
- h) the presence of triolet, formula characteristic to prose;
- i) the presence of sixteenths which frequency is also characteristic to verbal language;
- j) the intonation more musically stressed of some parlatto sounds;
- k) the outlining of the virtual scale by addition of sounds gained with each new repetition from a tritonic nucleus through tetratony towards pentatony;

Ex. 2



These data allow us to conclude that in the ritual of dischant the ill is influenced also through music therapy. Thus:

The gradual melodisation of the dischant stimulates the ill in a process in which the mode of communication changes in his turn evolving from verbal to non-verbal (melodie) although the healer's vocal execution isn't consciously musical (any healer asked if she *sings* will answer amazed that she isn't⁵⁷) as part of the ritual and having a precise role in the healing.

The repetition of dischant, the repetition of the same rhythmic formulas generated by the verse's metric (prosody) influences in his turn the ill's state following several stages, from the *annoyment* produced by the monotony of the repetition to the *accustomisation* with auditory stimuli to *sliding* in the rhythmic structures heard and implicitly to the *internalisation* of these structures, all these having as a result the *inner rhythmisation*.

⁵⁷ In romanian to sing = a cânta; to utter a dischant = a descânta

The character of the execution close to *giusto* in the first part and modified towards the end to *parlando-rubato* by the enlargement of tempo and augmentation of durations determines in our opinion a modification of inner state from the initial agitation and precipitation to calm in the end.

3. The dischant – a form of logotherapy?

Defining a new current in modern psychotherapy, logotherapy derive from classical psychoanalysis (Freud – the first viennese psychotherapy school) and from individual psychotherapy (Adler – the second viennese school). In psychoanalysis view, the motric and determinative force of man is the subconscious; adlerian psychotherapy proposes that man should be approached like socialized, individual being. Frankl, the father of logotherapy, enounced the theory that human specific lies not only in his physic, psychic and socio-cultural dimensions but beside all these in his spiritual dimension⁵⁸; thow one can tell that logotherapy is a psychotherapy that starts from the spirit. It don't denies the importance of other dimensions somato-physic and psychics but considers that their role is not determinant and exclusive in man's life, like one should believe accordingly with earlier psychotherapeutic theories.

Exactly this inclusion of spiritual as a point of departure in psychotherapy's research aria influenced us in associating this method with the dischant and with the modality of approaching the ill in its healing practice.

One can say that the healer and the logotherapist have the same function, meaning that both reactivate the ill through logos, through word, and transforme him in his own therapist puting him in the situation of searching alone his sense and motivation. On the other hand, in both cases the goal is changing illness's direction of evolution through conscioussening and projecting the state of well being.

The logotherapist treats every pacient as a unique and irrepetable unit; the same situation can be meet again in dischant by the technique of single out observed by Lucia Cireș, technique that individualise the pacient and his illness⁵⁹.

Derived from psychoanalysis, logotherapy uses its specific methods. Among these we are interested particulary in *abreaction* (catharsis); this term names in psychoanalysis the decisiv moment of the treatment, when the ill relives intently the initial situation that is at the origin of his condition, before overtaking it definitively⁶⁰.

In *Structural Antropology*, trying to explain the psychology of the shaman during the healing *spectacle*, Levi-Strauss makes a compared approach with

⁵⁸ Frankl, Viktor E., *Logotherapie und Existenzanalys (Logotherapy and Existence Analysis)*, Wien, 1950. Translation by Dr. Med. Wilhelmine Popa, manuscript, Clinique of Neuropsychiatry for children and adolescents, Timișoara

⁵⁹ Cireș, Lucia – Berdan, Lucia, *op.cit.*, p. 40

⁶⁰ Levi-Strauss, Claude, *Antropologia structurală (The Structural Anthropology)*, p. 216

psychoanalysis. In his opinion the shaman is a professional abreactor; he talks and do abreaction for the ill who is silent, meanwhile in psychoanalysis the ill is the one who talks and do abreaction against the doctor who listens⁶¹. Drawing at our turn a parallel with the dischant we believe that one can talk about abreaction in this case too; we bring as argument the researchers's findings on *the evil eye* dischant, one of the most spreaded types of dischant, regarding the state of illness that installs during the saying of the dischant both to the ill and the healer and the amelioration of this state trough the end. We may affirm that in this case the abreaction take place both at the ill and the healer.

To provoke the abreaction both the logotherapist and the healer appeal to myth and symbols. By using symbols and myths both the archaic healer (the shaman or the healer) and the modern one (the logotherapist) give the ill a language for expressing states and feelings. The passing to the verbal expression wich allows to live the state in an ordered and intelligible form is the factor that provoke the deblocking of physiological processes.

In our opinion the dischant is an early, archaic form of logotherapy.

4. From stress to *unloading soul*

The modern life solicits today more and more man's possibilities of adaptation; the concept of adaptation implies not only the mantaining of organism's integrity but also its dynamic equilibrium with the surrounding medium. When mantaining the equilibrium requires special efforts and the solicitations surpass adaptative resources's limits, when the organism's integrity is threatened, the individual enters in stress state.

The term stress appears usually with two utilizations⁶²: one that reffers to the stressful situation (bad, agressive conditions that assault or threaten the organism, pressures, compulsions, privations that individual must support); the other regards the organism's state of stress (it's suffering and usage and individual's psychological and physiological responses to stressor's agents action).

In stress, the state of stress regards the whole organism as psycho-physiological unit; one cannot talk only about a biological (systemic) stress or just of psychic stress. Generally the systemic stress produced by physical, chemical and biological agents includes both somatic and psychic modifications.

In psychic stress the stressor agents act upon psychic's sphere wich they modifie because of the meaning they have for the particular individual. The individual perceives, evaluates and interpretes the situation as being stressful and lives it subjectively as psychic tension, discomfort, anxiety. The stressful meaning of stimuli – threat, frustration, conflict – solicits the person

⁶¹ idem, p.218

⁶² Floru, R., *Stress-ul psihic (Psychic Stress)*, București, Ed. Enciclopedică Română, 1974, p. 17-36

almost near the limits of adaptative possibilities; the anticipation of a danger has a threatening meaning, the appearance of an obstacle in achieving an important goal give birth to a feeling of frustration, the competitive solicitation of two incompatible answers provokes a conflictual state.

Psychic stress means at the same time modifications of conduct, behavioral answers through which the individual tries to cope with the stressful situation; to visible modifications of behavior correspond usually alterations of somatic functions.

It seems that medium solicitations can produce psychic stress only if the individual anticipates the fact that he will not be capable to cope; psychic stress exist not through the unbalance between objective solicitations and organism's possibilities to cope with but through the solicitations perceived subjectively and the possibilities that the subject thinks he possesses. The threat does not exist if it isn't receptioned as such neither at solicitations that the subject is convinced that he can cope with, but only at the anticipation of incapacity to master the situation⁶³.

In M. B. Arnold's opinion⁶⁴ in psychic stress the succession of organism's reactions is as follows: perceiving the stimuli, evaluation of the situation, remember of similar feelings (affective memory), reevaluation of the situation (identifying it as dangerous or disturbing), stress emotion and proper action. The most important moment is the evaluation; this is the cognitive moment that directs both the configuration and succession of responses and the selection of certain adaptative modalities⁶⁵. The intensity of stress state is determined by this subjective evaluation of the situation, of danger, either real or imaginary.

Beyond biology's and medicine's limits stress entered in the vocabulary and goal of social sciences's research. Psychology's privileged position, that intersect both spheres – nature sciences's and social one's – offered not only the path of passing but also a field of investigation more and more productiv for stress's knowledge. Identification beside physical, chemical and biological stressor factors of psychological, social and cultural factors that can give birth to a stress state and the analysis of emotional, cognitive and action responses that are characteristic to psychic stress were object of interdisciplinary researches with unchallenged applicable results. One of these results is the application of unspecific methods from contemporary psychotherapy that is music therapy and logotherapy in stress state's attenuation.

Unloading the soul, that is relieving of daily load of stress's forms, is an ancient and essential function of rituals⁶⁶. In our opinion the dischant's ritual is one of the archaic forms of stress's attenuation.

⁶³ McGrath, J. E., *Social and psychological factors in stress*, Holt Rinehart and Winston, New York, 1970 apud R. Floru, *op.cit.*, p. 34-35

⁶⁴ Arnold, M. B., *Stress and emotion*, apud R. Floru, *op.cit.*, p. 95

⁶⁵ Floru, R., *op.cit.*, p. 99

⁶⁶ Kernbach, Victor, *Universul mitic al românilor (The Mythic Universe of Romanians)*, p.107

We spoke earlier about the importance of the evaluation moment during the succession of organism's reactions produced by psychic stress. The evaluation materializes in fact the appreciation of stimulus-situation by the individual, based on his previous personal or communicated experience.

The source of psychic stress is the anticipation of potential danger. This anticipation of harmful results does not refer and limit only to physical damage but involves a wider sphere linked with person's needs and motives either organic, psychological or psycho-social. The stressful effect of anticipation derives from evaluating the situation as being threatening. We can not feel threatened by a danger that we do not know neither we are worried by situations that we appreciate as *current*, that we lived before and we had the opportunity to verify that their solving is between the limits of our possibilities. The most specific emotional reaction to anticipation of a virtual danger is anxiety.

The dischant's ritual is a proceeding that directly influences individual's capacity of controlling the anticipative anxiety and this influence is done through suggestion and self-suggestion's mechanisms. On one hand, the healer suggests the ill in the direction of surpassing the illness, the bad state, projecting him through symbols in a normal, healthy state. On the other hand, the ill self-suggests himself thanks to his belief in healer's power and in the efficacy of the dischant as a means of healing so he manages to surpass his anxiety state, the fear of illness and the distrust in his capacity to fight it. In fact, the role of dischant is to determine the reconsideration of stimulus situation and to overtake it through redimensioning the danger; the outcome of this change in optics referring to the dimensions of danger is the adoption of a new attitude towards illness and consequently the attenuation of his stress state.

It is our belief that from this perspective must be viewed the social role of dischant and its perpetuation till today even in forms more and more altered; in addition, it is probable that dischants would have applicability in our days as relaxing and stress attenuation method in urban medium because through the listening of the *dischant* (even without its specific ritual) it is achieved a temporary break from daily reality and a projection of the listener in another dimension, in another space governed by symbol and myth, a space that permits living states in another form and which satisfies at the same time the need for magic within us.

From the view of the findings that our research occasioned we conclude that the dischant is a form of ideo-affective influence of human suffering that is a form of archaic psychotherapy in which one can distinguish elements of unspecific therapies used frequently today and with acknowledged results namely elements of music therapy and logotherapy.

(Translation by Anca Spătar)

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