

**THE PROCESS OF FOLKLORIZATION IN CONTEMPORANEITY:
THE POPULAR STYLE SONGS OF THE COMPOSER DUMITRU GHEORGHÎĂ**

**PROCESUL DE FOLCLORIZARE ÎN CONTEMPORANEITATE: CÂNTECELE ÎN
STIL POPULAR ALE COMPOZITORULUI DUMITRU GHEORGHÎĂ**

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CZU 78.071.1(478)

784.4(478)

DOI <https://doi.org/10.55383/amtap.2024.1.02>

Dumitru Gheorghîță (1917-1987) is a distinct personality of the musical culture of Bessarabia. He established himself as an instrumental performer (accordion, trumpet player) and as a composer. He did fundamental studies in the field of music during the interwar period at the Unirea Conservatory in Chisinau (1927-1933). His creation includes symphonic works, pieces for folk music orchestra, choral pieces, lyrical songs, for children, etc. Vocal and instrumental folk music had a special place in his activity as an accordionist and composer. We are particularly interested in his folk-style songs, written on the lyrics of well-known poets from those times or by Dumitru Gheorghîță himself. A large part of these songs, such as Struguraș de pe colină, Frumoase-s nunțile-n colhoz, Cine vine de la deal, Cîntecul miresei, Lung îi druul pîn` la tine etc., became folklorized, that is, they started the path of oral circulation, often the interpreters not knowing who the authors are and supporting their folkloric origin. Studying the folklorization process of these songs reveals interesting aspects of popular culture in contemporaneity.

Keywords: Dumitru Gheorghîță, composer, songs, folklore, folklorization, contemporaneity

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Dumitru Gheorghiuță (1917-1987) este o personalitate distinctă a culturii muzicale din Basarabia. S-a impus ca interpret instrumentist (acordeon, trompetist) și în calitate de compozitor. Studiile fundamentale în domeniul muzicii le-a făcut în perioada interbelică la Conservatorul Unirii din Chișinău (1927-1933). Creația lui include lucrări simfonice pentru orchestra de muzică populară, piese corale, cântece lirice, cântece pentru copii ș.a. Un loc aparte în activitatea de interpret acordeonist și cea de compozitor l-a avut muzica populară vocală și instrumentală. În mod deosebit ne interesează cântecele în stil popular, scrise pe versurile poezilor cunoscute din acele timpuri sau de însuși Dumitru Gheorghiuță. O mare parte dintre aceste cântece, precum Struguraș de pe colină, Frumoase-s nunțile-n colhoz, Cine vine de la deal, Cântecele miresei, Lung îi drumul până la tine ș.a., s-au folclorizat, adică au pornit calea circulației orale, deseori interpreții neștiind cine sunt autorii și susținând proveniența folclorică a lor. Studiarea procesului de folclorizare a acestor cântece relevă aspecte interesante ale culturii populare în contemporaneitate.

Cuvinte-cheie: Dumitru Gheorghiuță, compozitor, cântece, folclor, folclorizare, contemporaneitate

Introduction

The repertoire of popular/folkloric songs includes creations belonging to different strata, having varied provenance. Thus, “developing on the basis of older forms and structures, the actual song experienced a pronounced zonal differentiation, during the period of the medieval “closed economies”. (...) Later on - through the stronger action of some evolutionary factors, such as the interpenetration between languages, the influence of cultured or foreign creation the modern style - took root” [1 p. 320].

In all this contemporary kaleidoscope of popular/folkloric creations we will discover songs that belong to an old layer (quite a few we could say), to a pre-modern layer, author’s works, which entered the traditional environment, being accepted as folkloric productions. In fact, the process of hybridization of popular music culture starts from the middle of the 19th century, increasing in the 40s of the 20th century. Speranța Rădulescu remarks: “The songs change and diminish but quantitatively at an alert pace only after the Second War and after the establishment of the “popular democracy” regime, when the village is subjected to immense and continuous pressures, with reverberations on its music. Starting from that moment, the natural transformation and in a relatively moderate tempo – transformation which constituted, in fact, the very way of existence - becomes strong and leads to the destruction of a substantial part of the traditional musics and the emergence of new or renewed musics” [2p.173].

The songs inspired by the folk melos of Dumitru Gheorghiuță were released in the 50s-70s of the last century by renowned performers of popular music, big names of the Bassarabian musical culture, such as Nicolae Sulac (1936-2003), Tamara Ciobanu (1914-1990), Maria Bieșu (1935-2012), Angela Păduraru (1938-1995), Gheorghe Eșanu (1927-1996), Teodor Negară (1943-2012), Anastasia Istrati (1942-2016), Valentina Cojocar (b. 1947) and others. They became in demand, being promoted through the media, performed not only in rural areas by amateurs, lovers of popular music, gradually turning into anonymous folkloric productions.

Dumitru Gheorghiuță. Biographical references

The musician Dumitru Gheorghiuță was born in a district of Chișinău, Republic of Moldova, so-called – the blacksmiths’ slum. Simion Mircea describes that place in the following way: „Fierarilor” Street in the old part of the city breathes peace. (...) In old times, blacksmiths lived here. The workshops, which formed a common body with the residential houses, were located right on the side of the road. Peasants streamed here from the neighboring villages. From dawn until late in the evening, the street roared with the sound of sledgehammers, the neighing of horses, and the peppered talk of the villagers. (...) After a day of toil, voices of violins and harmonicas rose above the slum, songs rang out.” (S.Mircea, 1980:3). The blacksmith Efim Gheorghiuță, who played the harmonica and sang quite well, lived and worked here. Thus, the future musician Dumitru Gheorghiuță, the son of a blacksmith and fiddler, grew up in a fertile artistic environment, absorbed the beauty of folklore and the music of the interwar years, forming his way of artistic thinking, later materialized in his own musical creation,

including songs in popular style. From various sources we learn that the first serious musical experience was his participation in the primary school marching band, being highly appreciated by the school management, also „at primary school Dumitru befriended the son of the well-known doctor from Chisinau, Ustinov. In his particularly cultured family, he heard for the first time a string quartet, made up of amateurs. The impression was one of the strongest.” [3p. 6]. He studied at the B.P. Hașdeu high school, at the Unirea Conservatory, the trumpet class, which he graduated in 1933. In order to pay for his studies at the Conservatory, he sang at parties, weddings, in different conditions, including cold and rain, which affected his health, having repercussions on handling the trumpet, so he gradually switched to the accordion.

After completing his studies at the Conservatory, he sang in restaurants for a while. In the 40s of the 20th century, the first Radio Orchestra was founded in Chisinau under the leadership of Petru Bacinin, which predominantly performed popular music. The activity in this orchestra determined Dumitru Gheorghîță to create. Among his first compositions were works written for the accordion that denote great virtuosity.

In the years after the war from 1940-1945, the musician continued his interpretive activity, leading his own folk music orchestra. He does not abandon the compositional concern either. His work includes academic music, such as instrumental miniatures, pieces for oboe, violin and orchestra, for dulcimer, accordion, choral works, he writes songs for children, light music, but especially instrumental songs and melodies in popular style. Dumitru Gheorghîță's songs such as *Mână, Gheorghe, Boii bine, Cănațuie, cănațuie, Frumose-s nuntile-n kolhoz, Struguraș de pe colină, Cine vine de la deal, Drumule, drumule, Bădiță, bădișor, Lung îi drumul pîn la tine, Frunză verde de salcîm, Frunza verde lămăiță, Cîntecul mireșii, Bădița fricos, Cucușor ești bun de gură, În adînc de codru verde*, etc. have become true folklore pearls. They are performed by folklore lovers and established singers, and are performed at folklore festivals and competitions. When creating music, Dumitru Gheorghîță penetrates into the core of folklore creativity, identifying himself with it. In fact, for him, who was in contact with a fiddlers' environment since childhood, in whose home folk music was performed, for whom music was his way of existence, it was natural to write such songs and instrumental melodies.

The phenomenon of folklorization in the context of social-cultural transformations of traditional communities

In order to understand the essence of the folklorization of the songs of the composer Dumitru Gheorghîță, we will highlight some aspects of the „life” of popular culture, including traditional music. It is known that an author's creation can enter the area of folklore circulation, if it meets certain conditions: it corresponds to the norms of popular aesthetics; it circulates orally and in variants. Such creations have always become integrated in the sphere of folklore, some have lost their authors/author, others with known authors, are for the popular pedlar „theirs”, heard from the mother, grandmother, etc., such as the romances created in the 19th century on Mihai Eminescu's lyrics *Pe lângă plopii fără soț, Mai am un singur dor, La oglindă, Pe lângă boi*, lyrics by George Coșbuc etc.

So, the first aspect refers to the natural process of popular creativity. We know that one of the characteristic features of folklore, in addition to its orality, syncretism, etc., which differentiates it from literate music, is the collective-individual character. That is, a folklore work being an anonymous production (we do not know the author) and collective (different generations participate in its chiseling and transmission), it is not impersonal. In any collectivity, in all times, there have been talented people, endowed by God with a voice and the gift of creation, a Marie or an Anica, whom they met at the right time, who were talked about, admired in the community for a period of time, but that were gradually forgotten, a natural process determined by the collective takeover and transmission, orally, from generation to generation, but also the appearance of other „Marii”. Similarly, Dumitru Gheorghîță, if he lived somewhere a hundred years earlier, his songs would remain, transmitted orally, and his name

would probably have disappeared. Another aspect resides in the morphology of the songs written by Dumitru Gheorghiuță, we refer to the versification, the musical language, which mostly reflects the specific features of the popular sung verse, the melodic, rhythmic and architectonic characteristic of musical folklore.

An important aspect, which determined the acceptance of the folk-style songs created by Dumitru Gheorghiuță as folklore creations, consists in the social and cultural phenomena that occurred at the beginning of the 20th century. The rapid development of market economy, technologies, the amplification of the cultural dialogue between the large urban society and the small rural community led to the transformation and hybridization of traditional music. The ethnomusicologist Vasile Chiseliță reports the findings of the folklorist Petre Ștefănuță (head of the Chisinau branch of the Social Research Institute of Romania in the interwar period), made as a result of field research: „the musical repertoire of the villages was subject to an intense process of urbanization and that it was not far behind that of the cities in terms of novelties. The old fiddlers' bands (with violin, cymbal, kobza, whistle and/or panpipes) were gradually replaced or assimilated by the new popular bands, the peasant brass bands, very popular in interwar Bassarabia. (...)through the fiddlers, various Romanian songs and romances, written by composers on European rhythms (waltz, polka, quadrille), North American and Latin American rhythms (foxtrot, tango, rumba), came to life at the „cultural celebrations” in the country, in schools and „national houses” (cultural centers), at the „balls of the intellectuals”, but also at the „village circle dances”, where they were in great demand, especially among the youth” [4 p. 22].

Thus, through the 20s-30s of the 20th century, a new environment of village life begins to be created, in which the elements of modern civilization, such as schooling, technical innovations, transport, the gramophone/record player, western musical instruments, especially the brass winds and others, were easily assimilated, and they, in turn, left their mark on the cultural life of the peasantry. Constantin Brăiloiu, who undertook field research in the interwar period, including in localities in Bassarabia, finds that „at the meeting of the old world without an alphabet with the new world of the book and machinery, an unexpected spontaneous process takes place in our rural society: a double effort of assimilation and integration, which tries, on the one hand, to include the attributes of modern civilization in the framework of tradition, and on the other hand, to prolong the life of tradition, forcing it to take on the forms of modern civilization” [5p. 36].

Therefore, the modernization of the peasant social life had major repercussions on the musical repertoire „A good part of the modern Romanian folk songs was the work of arrangement, imitation and stylization of the national folklore, carried out by real corporate networks of urban creation, made up of agents and factors of the cultural market of the time, including: composers, lyricists and folk singers, professional instrumentalists, fiddlers, urban folk music bands, theater, vaudeville, comedy, salon and even jazz groups, record companies, radio and outlet stores. Under the impulse of the economic and commercial interest, all these elements formed a real cultural industry” [4 p. 23]. Vasile Chiseliță delimits six categories of new folk song in the structure of the types of peasant folk music from interwar Bassarabia:

1. the military song in measured rhythm;
2. the song of recruits;
3. the new, „conventional folkloric” lyrical song;
4. the theatrical song, the couplet and the revue refrain, creations with a pronounced social, satirical and humorous character;
5. the national romance;
6. the folk song in choral arrangement [4 p. 24]

In our case, we are particularly interested in the new popular lyrical song „conventional folkloric” and in the theatrical one. The first category, of urban origin, „surprises with the thematic richness, the endless variety of forms, the diversity of melodies, the tendency to move in a measured (fixed) rhythm

and the predilection for refrains. For some examples, the authors, performers and release chronology are known in the discography of the time. We selectively quote the following titles: Măi, Ionele, tu erai; Cu calul bălan; Ușor, puiule, ușor; Drag mi-a fost pe lumea asta; Păsarică mută-ți cuibul; Tinerel m-am însurat; Ilenuta de la munte; Pădure, dragă pădure. [4 p. 25].

As for the theatrical song, the couplet and the revue refrain, it can be considered a replica of „the famous comedy shows, embellishments of rustic variety shows, an assortment of ‚bizarre songs‘, some broadcast through the radio or „spurred ” from the funnel of some period gramophone. (...) Focused on a simple, poetic and musical language, quasi-folkloric, this song was always liked by the country people, who embraced it as a new form of entertainment and fun at various gatherings („companions”), being assigned the social function „joke song” [4 p. 26].

These two categories of the new popular lyrical song - „conventional folkloric” and the theatrical song, can be found in the repertoire of folk-style songs created by Dumitru Gheorghiuță and fully reflect the modernization process of the traditional musical repertoire signaled in the sphere of popular culture in the interwar years, entering naturally the folklore circuit alongside productions from old layers. From the first category we name, for example, the works *Frunză verde de salcîm*, *Struguraș de pe colină*, *Frunză verde lămăiță*, from the second - *Cănățuie*, *cănățuie*, *Bădiță fricos*, *Bădiță, bădișor etc.*

Aspects of morphology in the popular songs written by Dumitru Gheorghiuță

Emilia Comișel, making a characteristic of the actual new style song, highlights a series of specific features, which we find in the musical-poetic structure of Dumitru Gheorghiuță's songs, among them we highlight: „the tendency to simplify the melody which usually becomes almost syllabic, (...) the melodic stanza (...) sometimes reaching simple structures: the couplet-refrain; songs with two or more refrains; the amplification of the ambitus and of the sound material that is organized in natural ways, with a pentatonic substratum, (...) in the western major-minor, or in chromatic ways or chromatinized, under the influence of urban music and that of the fiddlers, (...), the tendency of the organization of rhythmic formulas according to the principle of the distributive system” [6p. 87].

In Dumitru Gheorghiuță's songs inspired by folklore, we observe the preservation and respect of the specifics of popular versification. We refer to the octosyllabic pattern, the successive rhyme, the presence of regular or irregular refrains, often in the form of onomatopoeic repetitions of the type la lala, tra la la or, newer, the thematic refrain, which completes the content of the poetic stanza, such as in the song *Cănățuie, cănațuie* (example no. 4) or *Frumoase-s nunțile-n colhoz* (example no. 6). The rhythmic structure is the one also mentioned by Emilia Comișel with reference to the actual new style song - the distributive system predominates, although in some songs specific elements of the giusto-syllabic system appear - rhythmic formulas of the type: dipiric ♪♪♪♪, tribrach ♪♪♪, sapphic ♪ □ □ and others. As for the sound system, we note, in addition to tonal structures, the presence of a modal foundation, such as the mixed bichord mode: dorian + chromatic tetrachord – acoustic three (example no.1) sound combinations (ratios) often encountered in dance music; chromatic 2 (example no. 3) or natural Mixolydian (example no. 4). The architectural form is based on melodic stanzas with or without refrain, which fall into the binary types – ABr (example no.6), □ A + B r (example no. 4); ternary – AABC (example no. 1) or more frequently the quatrain ABCD. Therefore, the folk style songs, written by Dumitru Gheorghiuță, fall through their musical-poetic structure into the morphological criteria of the actual new song, thus facilitating their folklorization process.

Conclusions

The relationship between folklore and literate music has a projection in both directions. There are many researches on the ways of using the folkloric source in the creation of composers, being a phenomenon that manifests itself at different levels, with different intensity and accessible to study, having the written work and its author(s) available. Regarding the process of assimilation of the productions

of composers and other musicians well-known in the sphere of folklore, starting the way of oral circulation, we can follow it with the popular creation becoming an object of research, the appearance of the radio, television and other means of recording. At the same time, in the traditional environment, we admit the existence of a first “author” of the folklore production, who became anonymous over time. As I pointed out before, in a traditional community not all its members had the gift of creating, which is natural. In this sense Speranța Rădulescu mentions: “Songs are a community heritage. All the people of the village have the ability, and to a good extent the obligation, to know them, to understand their meanings and sense, to sing them in the right circumstances. The foundations of their musical competence are laid in childhood and adolescence, when they listen and memorize everything that is sung around them and practise the ability to perform. On the threshold of youth, they have already divided themselves into two categories: the gifted, who will sing a lot all their lives, and those with modest or no gift, who will sing a little, only constrained by the obligation of minimal social integration through music „ [7p. 19].

Thus, even a folklore work, hypothetically speaking, has an author of the so-called “first variant”, which, being taken over by the community, starts the path of oral circulation and the creation of variants, and the name of that first “author” is lost over time. Today, in the same way, there are creators of popular songs and melodies, some come from an environment where the norms of traditional music are respected, others have not known the folklore environment, they are self-taught or schooled in music education institutions, but they feel the folk melody, they are permeated by it and materialize their feelings, experiences, life experience through the song created in folk style. Obviously, there is also a lot of vulgar amateurism in the field, but at the moment we are referring to valuable creations.

In his songs, the composer Dumitru Gheorghiuță [8] gets so close to the sources of folklore creation that he almost identifies himself with it. In fact, in most cases he capitalized on the distinct elements of the folkloric melos, that melodic arsenal that he assimilated from fiddlers from the blacksmiths’ slum or from the peasants who used to come there. So, several factors contributed to the folklorization of his songs: the social-cultural context, the fiddlers’ environment in which he grew up, his musical talent, awareness of his actions in the creative process, in-depth knowledge of the norms of traditional creativity and the morphology of the folk song, all of these arranged on a fertile ground of unconditional love for folklore.

Musical examples [3]

Lyrics by P. Zadnipru

1. După mire și mireasă

Hai, nun - tași, de du - pă ma - să, tra - la - la
 la să scoa - tem nun - ta din ca - să, tra - la - la
 la. Că și lu - mea, din o - gra - dă tra - la - la -
 la. Pe mi - rea - să vrea s - o va - dă tra - la - la la.

Lyrics by G. Vieru

2. Nunta noastră

Su - pă - rați flă - că - ii ta - re, Că trec pe la
poar - ta na - nei. D' a - poi eu cu ce - s de vi - nă,
măi, măi. Da - că na - na mi - i ve - ci - nă!

Lyrics by P. Cruceniuc

3. Cântecul miresei

Ma - mă, ma - mă și iar ma - mă nu - mi da zestre
nu - mi da mul - tă că nu sunt o
fa - tă slu - tă măi - cu - li - tă dra - gă ma - mă.

Lyrics by Ș. Barcari

4. Cănațuie, cănațuie

Po - lo - boa - ce, măi bon - doa - ce, ian pof - țim cu
vra - na 'n coa - ce, în - fo - ca - ta că - nă - țu - ie,
vi - nu 'n sla - vă să țî - l su - ie, că - nă - țu - ie,
că - nă - țu - ie, vi - nu 'n sla - vă tu ni - l su - ie!
Că - nă - țu - ie, că - nă - țu - ie, vi - nu 'n sla - vă
tu mi - l su - ie! Măi!

Lyrics by P. Zadnipru

5. Struguraș de pe colină

Stru-gu-raș de pe co-li-nă
 Spu-ne-i ba-dei când să vi-nă
 când frun-zi-șu-i plin de ro-uă
 ori când lu-na in-tră-n
 no-urii
 ori când lu-na
 in-tră-n no-urii

Lyrics by D. Gheorghiuță, N. Sulac

6. Frumoase-s nunțile-n colhoz

Foa-ie ver-de foi de boz, măi, măi! fru-moa-se-s nun-
 țile-n col-hoz, măi, măi! Toa-mna când sclipe-ște ro-ua
 ve-se-lă-i toa-tă Mol-do-va, tra-la-la la-la-la
 la-la-la-la-la-la la-la tra-la-la la-la-la la-la

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