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The Resonant Icon of the Romanians, Tatăl Nostru (Our Father) by Ciprian Porumbescu

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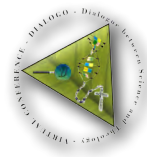
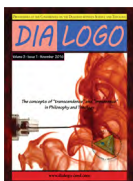
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The Resonant Icon of the Romanians, Tatal Nostru (Our Father) by Ciprian Porumbescu

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ABSTRACT

Ciprian Porumbescu was the Romanian composer who brought his contribution to the national cultural gallery, serving the art of sounds through his faith. In the course of his short life (1853- 1883), he brought into the hearts of Romanian people a warm creation, with a gentle touch, but full of powerful emotional force. His style is part of the Romanticism, revealing ways of expression and musical languages endowed with strong emotional feelings, the love of God, of people, of family. His work, often pictorial, creates musical images through natural and harmonious bindings, that are, also, simple, suggestive and easy to be perceived. Ciprian Porumbescu decided to dedicate his life to serving God through his music. The valuable sacral works of the composer are the expression of his everlasting love for God Almighty. The lyrics of the Prayer to God, selected by the composer, are those from the Gospel of Matthew 6- 9-13. The content of the prayer, with a two-dimensional structure, carries a genuine symbolism through its messages. The work has 40 measures, this meaning the 40 days in which our Savior Jesus Christ, spent on earth, after His Resurrection, revealing himself to all, until His ascension to Heaven on the mount Tabor.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Ciprian Porumbescu was the Romanian composer who brought his contribution to the national cultural gallery, serving the art of sounds through his faith. He was born on the 2nd of October, 1853, in Sipotele, a small village near Suceava. The composer was the son of the Romanian orthodox priest Iraelie Golembiovski [1] and Emilia, born Klodnitzki. According to the Austro-

Hungarian legislation of that period, the name of Porumbescu was changed into Golembiovski. "He, Iraelie Porumbescu, was one of Bucovina's most important political and cultural figure, who fought against denationalization; the drama from Boian, caused by it, is one of those moments this old oak of the Bucovinian culture went through." [2]. Young Ciprian's musical talent, cultivated due to his father, the priest Iraelie Golembovski, developed

due to the experienced teachers, such as S. Mayer, Stefan Nosievici, Karol Miculi (Cernauti), Franz Krenn and Anton Brukner (*Konservatorium für Musik und darstellende Kunst*, Vienna).

After the graduation of the secondary school, Ciprian Porumbescu attends the classes of the Theological Seminary in Cernauti (1873-1877), where he will be under the guidance of the professor and composer Isidor Vorobchievici. Here, he conducted the choir of the cultural society *Arboroasa* (one of the old names of Bucovina), society which he founded in 1877 together with Zaharia Voronca, Constantin Morariu, young men animated by noble thoughts and attitude. The young musician composed the anthem of the Society, and in the last year at the seminar he was elected its president. "Porumbescu will contribute at the spreading of these musical urges for the accomplishment of the national unity by being, himself, the conductor of the choirs *Arboroasa* from Cernauti and *Romania Juna* (Young Romania) from Vienna, then of the Romanian Gymnastics and songs union from Brasov and of Saint Nicholas Church Choir from Scheii Brasovului." [3]

In October 1877, after signing and sending a telegram to Iasi, on the occasion of the manifestations organized in the memory of the ruler Gheorghe Ghica, the Austro-Hungarian authorities decide to take stand against these protests (Romanian manifestations), the members of the *Arboroasa* society are arrested on the charge of high treason and a trial is set up." Ciprian was taken to prison from his house in Stupca. A small cold rain, fell all the way to Cernauti, and the cold water went through his clothes to the skin and he got sick. The freezing cold prison and the poor food made his tuberculosis incurable. Only the violin, that he was allowed to take with him when he was arrested, brought him some comfort. Ciprian was set free bearing

the death in his chest." [4]

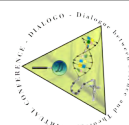
After 11 weeks in prison, the composer was declared innocent as a result of a three-day trial. One of the most enthusiastic fighters in the media of that time, who fought to obtain the release of those emprisoned, was Mihai Eminescu. Being back from Cernauti, Ciprian Porumbescu found a job in Brasov as a music teacher at the Romanian Central Schools and continued to be the conductor of Saint Nicholas Church Choir, in Scheii Brasovului.

In the fall of 1879, he heads to Vienna for studies, with a scholarship obtained with the help of the archbishop Silvestru Morariu Andrievici. Here, the composer led the choir of the Students' Society *Romania Juna* (Young Romania). "He played on an Amatti violin from 1626 which he called "my bride" Thanks to the information received from Nina Cionca, the daughter of Romulus Cionca, we have, unfortunately found out, that the violin disappeared on the first day of war on 6 August 1916." [5]

At the age of 29, suffering from tuberculosis, Ciprian Porumbescu dies on the 6th of June 1883, under the sad look of his father and sister, in the house from Stupca. In 1953, the Romanian authorities decide to change the name of the village Stupca into Ciprian Porumbescu, in honor of the great composer. The tomb of the composer, which in 2004 was included on The Historical Monuments List from the Suceava County, is to be found in the cemetery of the village Stupca, near the shrine of the Church "Saint Demetrius".

II. MEANS OF EXPRESSION IN THE WORK OF CIPRIAN PORUMBESCU

In the course of his short life (1853- 1883), he brought into the hearts of Romanian people a warm creation, with a gentle touch, but full of powerful emotional force. His style is part of the Romanticism, revealing



ways of expression and musical languages endowed with strong emotional feelings, the love of God, of people, of family. His work, often pictorial, creates musical images through natural and harmonious bindings, that are, also, simple, suggestive and easy to be perceived.

Ciprian Porumbescu's musical creations consist of 250 works, according to the musicologist Vasile Vasile, including instrumental and vocal music of chamber, theatre choral music, operetta, symphonic music, religious music: "The 250 works, finished or not, were written in less than ten years, the first one being composed in 1874, when the composer was only 20 years old, and in the summer – autumn of the year 1882 his composition activity was almost finished." [6]

Some of the most well-known and appreciated works are: *The Nocturne (solo violin)*, *Ballad for piano and violin*, *Reverie for piano and violin*, *the operetta New Prince*, *the Romanian Rhapsody for orchestra*, *On the Shores of the Prut River*, *Putna Monastery's Altar*, *Hymn to the Romanian soldiers*, *Collection of social songs for the Romanian students*.

Ciprian Porumbescu composed in Romanian, "he lived intensely, uniting himself with our national goals and taking part in all the troubles of the Romanian people" [7]. His works contain the word Romanian or its derivatives: *Heart of a Romanian*, *Hymn to the Romanian soldiers*, *Romanian Language* and so on.

About the Romanian origin of Ciprian Porumbescu's compositions, the musicologist Nina Cionca said: "his songs, like an old wine, inspired generations after generations to dream and accomplish what they wanted. They have a vitality springing out from their simple melodic structure, without anything artificial. They are ours as they have always been, since our existence, and so is the language that we speak". [8]

In 1880, he published a collection of twenty choral songs and unison songs, brought together into the Collection of social songs for the Romanian students, the first work of this kind in the entire musical literature in the Romanian space, from which we mention: *Spring Song*, *The Tricolor*, *On our flag*, *Latin Nation's Song* and so on.

III. SACRAL MUSIC

Ciprian Porumbescu decided to dedicate his life to serving God through his music. The valuable sacral works of the composer are the expression of his everlasting love for God Almighty. The composer was under the guidance and received advice from the priest Isidor Vorobchievici, an experienced teacher from Bucovina, who was, also, a composer, folklorist, conductor and writer in Cernauti. His secular musical studies and then his theological ones were the sources of inspiration for his sacral musical creations. They are religious works of great value for the Romanian cultural patrimony, being included in the thesaurus of some important libraries: The Library of the National University of Music Bucharest, The Romanian Academy Library, The Ciprian Porumbescu Museum in Suceava, The Bucovina Museum in Suceava, Ieremia Oprisanu Typography, Ioan Vicoveanu Collection.

The artist served the art of sounds through faith. The choral genre is the one to which the composer dedicates a good part of his religious creation. The sacral works, expressions of an enormous faith, bear the signs of his personal style. The melody is clear, with minimalist harmonies, proper to the Liturgical act. The musicological researches have revealed simple, but, also, complex works, such as *Liturgies*, "considering in this way that the musician composed the music for more than six *Liturgies*, most of them being composed for

the male choir, probably, as a result of his conducting and componistical experience at the Arboroasa Society from Cernauti” [9]

The musician composed his works both for male voices, in the spirit of the Byzantine manner, as well as for the mixed choir, allowing in this way the female voice to make the evangelical message clearer. According to the researches of the musicologist Titus Moisescu (*The religious musical creation of Ciprian Porumbescu*) [10] they are distinct choral pieces, which can be sung in a concert or can be adapted for the daily Liturgy. And which art is closer to God than music?

A second category of Ciprian Porumbescu's works, separated by the complexity of the Liturgies, is being grouped into: theotokions, psalms, koinonikons, troparions, pricesne (folk religious songs).

One of the most important books from the Academy Library reunites “the four male choirs, seen by Andreescu Scheletty and printed in Cluj, in 1933 (BAR –M/3737):

-It Is Truly Meet – The Theotokion of St. John Chrysostom

- Praise the Lord from the Heavens– the kinonikon from Sunday

- Our father – sung during the Liturgy

- I called to mind the prophet who shouted – fifth voice sticheron at the funeral service of the laymen” [11].

From this collection, the work Our Father is the one that has caught our attention, and which will be subjected to a two-dimensional analysis: semantical sense – musical creation and musical creation – mathematical sense, under the golden section.

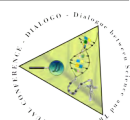
IV. THE ANALYSIS OF THE WORK OUR FATHER

This research tackles the natural, organic law, which governs, ab initio, the esthetical forms.

It is a contention that was stated in the realm of antiquity, of the architecture, of sculpture, of fine arts. The first mathematician, to whom we owe the definition of the harmonious proportion in the artistic thinking, was Euclid (325 B.C – 265 B.C). But the theory was well-known before his existence, without having been stated according to the mathematical rules as this one was. Pythagoras (580 – 495b.C) and his school sustained that proportion (the rapport expressed by a number, is indeed rational) represents the essence of all things. According to his philosophy, “any thing is indeed a rapport, a limit, a number” [12]. This mathematical formula $AB/AC = AC/CBA$ was stated by Luca Paciolo from Borgo (1445– 1514) as being the divine proportion. It ends being named, as it is also today, the golden section, by Leonardo da Vinci. Again, we owe the Antiquity the name of the result of this proportion, Phi, the irrational number, which is an infinite number, 1, 61803. The beauty of the sculptures of the Greek artist Phidias (490 - 430 b.C) made an impression on another mathematician, this time belonging to the XXth century, Mark Barr, who noticed, as other art historians did, the proof of this proportion in the sculptor's works of art.

The formula itself is a symbol, through the three segments AB, AC, and BC. Number three by itself, symbolizes the unity of the components. It is, thus, revealed, that small numbers, small dimensions are contained by the main unity, that is part of a whole, and the unitary whole is the assembly of the well measured proportion. And as proportion is alike harmony, it results that it is an indicator, a sign of beauty. At the same time, Aristotelis stated the same idea” The multiplicity is unity, the unity is multiplicity.” [13]» [14]

In this study, our intention is to analyze the Bucovinean composer's work, Tatal Nostru (Our Father) from a stylistic, formal



and morphological point of view. The goal of this research is to bring out the osmoses between the Divine message and the musical creation. At the same time, this rapport of proportion, of the golden section, will be applied to the choral work *Tatăl Nostru* (Our father), proving what was stated in Antiquity, that “the beauty represents the number” [15]

The prayer is the request addressed to the Omnipresent Creator, through which we show our faith, our humbleness, our hope and love. It is a special human modality of revealing the certainty of the unlimited faith of Divinity.

The lyrics of the Prayer to God, selected by the composer, are those from the Gospel of Matthew 6- 9-13. The content of the prayer, with a two-dimensional structure, carries a genuine symbolism through its messages.

This work is a vocal miniature that belongs to the choral genre. This genre, harmonic by excellence, which is often present in his works, is the way in which the composer translates the Divine serenity. The artist creates the choral miniature, being inspired and protruded by the meaning of the prayer, taking into consideration the message of every line, of the emotional and physical vibration. The first part reveals the greatness and the authority of the Heavenly Father, emotions that occur on the vertical line of the unlimited faith. *Tatăl nostru/Care ești în ceruri/Sfințească-se numele Tău/Vie Împărăția Ta/Facă-se voia Ta/Precum în cer așa și pe pământ. (Our Father/ Who art in Heaven/ Hallowed be Thy Name/Thy kingdom come/ Thy will be done/On earth as it is in heaven).* In the second part, the pragmatic side of the prayer, or the horizontal plan, is revealed, importance being given to the material needs: *Pâinea noastră cea de toate zilele/ Dă-ne-o nouă astăzi/ și ne iartă nouă greșelile noastre/Precum și noi iertăm greșelilor noștri (Give us this day our daily bread/And forgive*

us our trespasses/As we forgive those who trespass against us). The ending part brings into light the complex dimension of the Trinity: *Căci a Ta este împărăția și slava/A Tatălui, a Fiului și a Sfântului Duh/Amin (For Thine is the kingdom/And the power and the glory/ For ever and ever. Amen)*

The work has 40 measures, this meaning the 40 days in which our Savior Jesus Christ, spent on earth, after His Resurrection, revealing himself to all, until His ascension to Heaven on the mount Tabor: “After he had said this, they watched as he was taken up, and a cloud hid Him from their sight ” (Facts_{1,9})

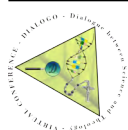
The musical sounds have a specific lyricism, proper to solemn and hieratic feelings, but also to Romanian revivals, symbolizing the Romanian field and the feeling of longing. “Leca Morariu has discovered a specific element of great importance for the Romanian musical creation, which is, that Porumbescu felt the importance of the Romanian element in *Doina* songs before Enescu did ...” [16] Thus, the symbols are revealed through the graceful and divine music.

The architecture of the work mirrors the literary structure, taking the shape of a bipartite song, A (the measures 1-24), B (the measures 25-40), having constitutive phrases.

A (a, varied a, a')
Measures 1-24

B (b, b')
measures 25-40

The two articulations of the Prayer to God are included in the subsections A. The last part, B, contains the repentance of the soul for its sins and the hope in the forgiveness by loving our fellow: *Si ne iartă nouă greșelile noastre/ Precum și noi iertăm greșelilor noștri/ și nu ne duce pe noi în ispită/ și ne mântuie te de cel rău (And forgive us our trespasses/As we forgive those who*



trespass against us/ And never lead us into temptation/ And save us from the evil one).

In analyzing this work, we have chosen a version written in a program recognized by the computer, in F minor – F major, without having the original musical score, while in the original one of the two tonalities are A minor – A major. The tonal plan reveals the profound thinking of the theologian who constantly raises his eyes up to the sky. The three subsections a (measures 1-8) varied a (8-16), a' (16-24) are elaborated in F minor, a solemn, dry tonality full of spiritual meaning. The contrasting part B (measures 25- 40) is presented in a major tonality. The modulation of the homonyms through the alternation minor- major, unveil the true and intense feeling of being alive, the consciousness of living with and through God, because here is the key of human ascension, in his determination of not committing sin again.

The harmonic plan is a seraphic one, through the clarity of transparent harmonies. The four voices have an isochronal movement, inspiring the common will to form a communion with God. The voices, spaced at consonant intervals, allow the soprano to lead the vocal discourse.

The metric is homogenous composed, 4/4 remaining constant along the whole piece.

The dynamics is intense in the first two sections, having the nuances p and pp. Section B bears the signs of ascension, of fulfillment and resignation through the vocal climax, harmonically and dynamically underlined through nuances such as mf, f and ff,

The first line *Tatăl nostru care ești în ceruri*, chain a sinuous melodic line, alike the troubles one can feel during the prayer. The harmony is clear and serious, chaining itself along the four measures, first level, fourth level, semicadance being on the fifth level.

Example 1

Tatăl nostru

Ciprian Porumbescu



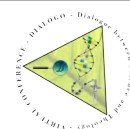
The second line reveals a melodious expansion, followed by the prosodic background: *Sfințească-se numele Tău, Sfințească-se numele Tău!* The rhythm is slightly dynamical, crotchet with augmentation dot that have an outcome in being noticed in quaver, paced quavers and exceptional formulas of triolet that can be found along the melody

Example 2



In the second period, varied a (measures 8 –16), one can notice the intention of the composer to vary not only melodically but also rhythmically. Half of the quaver, that come along the anacrusis (measure 8) and then the triolet (measure 10) reveal the increasing of the hope accomplished in the Divine will: *Vie imparatia Ta, Faca-se voia Ta*. The Harmony sustains this moment ending in an open cadency (measure 13 -14) on the fifth scale.

At the end of the two periods, the bass has a short intervention, coda, on the lyrics *Precum in cer asa si pe pamant*, revealing the philosophical idea about the meaning of life. The severe voice, as well as the descendent



meaning, symbolizes the material plan.

Example 3

8 *p* Vi-e m'pă-ră-ți - a Ta, făcă-ao
12 vo - ia Ta. Precum în cer și pe pământ.
15 Precum în cer și pe pământ.

The character of the third period is closed, the phrase beginning and ending in the initial tonality. Starting from the measure 20, the ascendant sense is sustained by the harmonic plan, here, the composer introducing the modulation to the major homonym. The lyrics are the ones who have built the modulating thinking: *Pâinea noastră cea de toate zilele dă-ne-o nouă astăzi.*

Example 4

17 *pp* Pâi - nea noas - tră cea de toa - te zi - le - le, pâi nea noas-tră cea de toa te zi-le-
20 *p* le dă-ne-o no - uă as - tăzi!
24 *pp*

The second section, B, bears the signs of repentance, of asking for forgiveness, and the feminine voices are the one suitable for the prayer. The duet, at the interval third, sustained by the composer through the term of *dolce* expression, has a descendent path, as well as the sense of solicitation: *Și ne iartă greșelile noastre precum și noi iertăm greșitălor noastre.* The words *Gresitilor nostri*, through their semantical importance, are

present in equal triplets of quavers. The second part (measures 29-32) reveals a discrete return to the initial melodic line and to the rhythmic format.

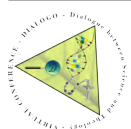
Example 5

25 *Duet dolce* Și ne iar - tă gre-se-li - le noastre pre-
29 cum și noi ier-tăm gre-și-ți - lor noștri Și nu ne du - ce pe noi în is - pi - tă,

In the last period, the composer, slowing the rhythm, builds an ascendant melodic path. The text, *Ci ne mantuieste, ci ne mantuieste de cel rau, Amin* develops a short inflexion (measures 33-34) in C major (the dominant of the section B tonality) and then in D minor tonality (measures 35-36). The last phrase (measures 37-40) chains the fifth scale and the first scale of the restored tonality, F major. The harmony of this phrase has been built through the return to the major mode, at an equal rhythm, having an ascendant melodic meaning. The nuance *ff* represents the culmination and the acknowledgement of the whole text of the prayer.

Example 6

25 *Duet dolce* Și ne iar - tă gre-se-li - le noastre pre-
29 cum și noi ier-tăm gre-și-ți - lor noștri Și nu ne du - ce pe noi în is - pi - tă,

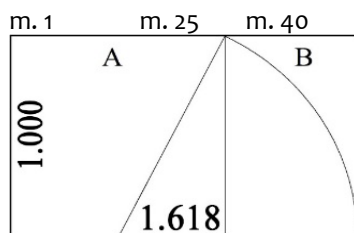




The choral part is realized in gentle harmonies, immersed in the first section A, having the culmination in the second, B. The Christian orthodox background of love can be felt by singing the word *iartă* (forgive), and this aspect can be felt in the beginning of the second part, the golden section.

V. THE GOLDEN SECTION OF THE WORK TATĂL NOSTRU (OUR FATHER)

The whole piece has 40 measures; the first section is paced between the measures 1-24, and the second B, between the measures 25- 40. As a result, the whole work has been given the dimension AC, and the first section A, being defined by AB, the formula of the golden rapport could be applied: $AC/AB=AB/BC$: $40/24=25/19$. The difference between the two rapports is a very small one, and comes up due to some paces along the way, that make this approximation possible: $40:24=1.66$ and $25:19=1,315$. The mathematical result is quite esthetic one, being decoded by the golden number, 1.16.



CONCLUSIONS

Ciprian Porumbescu served the Romanian music and literature. The musicologist Titus Moisescu has stated that "he dedicated his entire creation and activity to his country and to the Romanian people." [17] That is why, the composer's last wish was "watch over so that my sons are never lost. They must go on living...! give them as a gift to people...our Romanians." [18]

The European value of Ciprian Porumbescu not randomly has its correspondence in the militant national attitude of the great Italian composer Giuseppe Verdi. It is not a forced comparison and not by chance, not only Giuseppe Verdi, but also Ciprian Porumbescu, being contemporaneous and representatives of the Latinity, stood up against the same enemy, the Habsburg Monarchy, and fought for the national unity of their countries. Giuseppe Verdi composed the Nabucco opera, the well-known work with its so mobilizing choral moment *Va pensiero*.... that would encourage the Italians to unify their counties into a single kingdom, the same way as Ciprian Porumbescu did with his song *Crai Nou* (New Prince) from the operetta with same name, as well as with his other already mentioned patriotic songs. If in 1866 in Milan and in the whole Italy *Viva Verdi!* could be heard, this having meant not only the recognition of the composer, but also *Viva Vittorio Emanuele re D'Italia*, in the same manner Ciprian Porumbescu, while composing *Crai Nou* (New Prince), dreamt about the state unity of his people in their historical borders.

Two musicians united in the same faith to see their countries united, free and prosperous. The great creative minds met each other on the ideal field of beauty.

Ciprian Porumbescu remains one of the noblest figures in the history of Romanian music, being an example through its nobility of his character, through his courage

and dignity with which he protected and promoted the spiritual values of the Romanian people. He had an authentic Romanian soul that was dressed in the clothes of the European musical language, thus, becoming part of the eternity.

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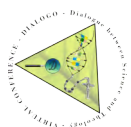
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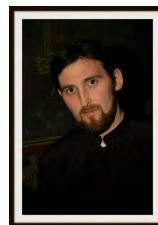
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BIOGRAPHY



Ruxandra Mirea has graduated from George Enescu Highschool of Music, from Bucharest, piano specialization, and afterwards Faculty of Music, and Music Composition, Musicology, specialization Vocal and Instrumental Music, from Ciprian Porumbescu Conservatory of Music, Bucharest. She has a PhD in Music, from George Enescu Academy of Arts, Iași, Musicology specialization (2008). She has taught piano, at Queen Marry National College

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Ciprian Savin graduated from The Faculty of Orthodox Theology at the Ovidius University in Constanta – specialized in Pastoral Theology (2011) and Sacred Art (2012). In 2015 he graduated from his Master courses at the same faculty – specialization Practical Theology. At present, he attends the courses of the Master Program at The Art Faculty at the Ovidius University in Constanta, and will obtain the specialization in Musical Educational Art and also he is a Ph. D. Candidate at The George Enescu Art Faculty at the Alexandru Ioan Cuza in Iași, specialization Musicology. In 2012 he began his activity as a teacher of music at the Pre-university learning level in Constanta.

Now, he is a permanent teacher of music at the gymnasium school number 39 *Nicolae Tonitza* in Constanta.

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