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## Composite

The apparent heterogeneity of this issue is not so much due to the variety of topics it brings together,<sup>1</sup> as to the completely different perspectives of the authors – a musicologist, an ethnomusicologist, a philosopher, a pianist and a composer of pop music.

Valentina Sandu-Dediu refers to the cases of two representative composers of post-war Romanian music, Miriam Marbe and Dan Constantinescu. Analysing the theoretical works they jointly wrote and exploring the compositional laboratories of the two, the author highlights their efforts to build bridges to the Western avant-garde in communist Romania, where ideological boundaries condemned artistic creation to isolation and provincial mentality. Sandu-Dediu shows how the so-called *tension between the national and the universal*, one of the hallmarks of Romanian communist nationalism, was ingeniously exploited by Marbe and Constantinescu – as well as by other colleagues of their generation – to justify the adoption of “cosmopolitan”, serial and aleatoric techniques, without denying the “national” belonging of their music.

John Plemmenos looks at the effects of a different kind of nationalism than the communist one in Romania, namely that propagated by the Orthodox Church in Greece between 1921 and 1992. The author explains the

<sup>1</sup> The studies by Valentina Sandu-Dediu and John Plemmenos were presented at the International Musicological Conference *National Discourses on Music in Central and Eastern Europe (late 19th c. – 2000)*, organized by the National University of Music Bucharest on November 25-26, 2021 (coordinated by Prof. Nicolae Gheorghîță) and supported by the project of the Doctoral School of the National University of Music Bucharest, *MUSICAL CONSTRUCTIONS OF NATIONALISM. Effects of nationalist ideology on music education and culture in communist Romania* (Fondul de Dezvoltare Instituțională: CNFIS-FDI-2021-0171).

phenomenon by the very close relationship between state and church in modern Greece, where Orthodox Christianity is constitutionally recognised as the “official religion”, although the two authorities are technically separated. Plemmenos illustrates through several case studies how ecclesiastical hymnography transformed church martyrs into *national symbols*, marking at the same time the most distinctive phases of the religious nationalism in modern Greece: Gregorios, patriarch of Constantinople; Chrysostomos, bishop of Smyrna; Theotokos, the holy protection; “Greece for Christian Greeks”.

Using a wide arsenal of concepts from the field of cultural philosophy, Andreea Stoicescu examines the impact of two radical and diametrically opposed perspectives on artistic creation and reception in modernity: that of transgressive art, associated with the avant-garde, and that of art imbued with extreme nationalism. After setting some milestones in the debate on modernity from Martin Heidegger to Heinrich Schenker, the author focuses on the ambiguous reception of Arnold Schönberg in the 20th century, who is usually regarded as an emblem of radical musical transgression. As far as contemporary music is concerned, Andreea Stoicescu advocates overcoming radical modern oppositions, such as those related to the aesthetics of originality and transgression.

As a performer, pianist Oxana Corjos focuses on an early concertante work by Richard Strauss, namely *Burleske* for Piano and Orchestra (1885), revealing not only the young composer’s previous stylistic accumulations, but also “an imperative conversion to program music, where profound musical image seems to be forever recalibrated, recycled and transfigured by a monk habit-wearing Till”. Corjos’ performing vision of this opus is revealed by a detailed and nuanced analysis of the score, which also highlights its role as a *turning point* in Strauss’ compositional development.

At the end of this issue, Andrei Tudor gives an overview of a very popular musical genre in 20th century Romania, the so-called *light music*, the local equivalent of pop music. Despite the few bibliographical sources available, but based on his own experience as a composer in this field, Tudor clarifies aspects such as: specific terminology – which he explains also through the lenses of communist censorship –, the history of Romanian light music and influences from other genres, the formal structure and its relation to the text and, last but not least, the promotion of these musical works, especially during the communist period. The internationally visible compositions that the author mentions at the end seem to be rather the exception, as the extent of this genre remains essentially local.