

# STUDIES AND ARTICLES

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*For the volume dedicated to the maestro  
on celebrating his 70th birthday*

## **Commentary on the written chorale works, harmonized and arranged by Fr. Univ.Prof. Dr. Nicu Moldoveanu, published in Choral Anthology, Religious and Secular, for Mixed Formations – Bucharest 2006**

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### **Abstract**

The commentary on the written chorale works, harmonized and arranged by Fr. Prof.Dr Nicu Moldoveanu, represents the underlining of some essential elements from the work of a dedicated composer to church repertoire, the awareness of some methods used in treating harmonic-melodic relations, an overview of the repertoire addressed and not least, the appreciation of valuable work that has been the foundation of the orthodox choral repertoire for decades.

### **Keywords**

way of wrapping the melodies, varied sound palette, interior harmonic structure, the enrichment of treating harmonic possibilities, byzantine melody, tonal influence

Father prof. Ph.D. Nicu Moldoveanu's activity involves voluminous aspects through many decades. In an impressive manner, it incorporates the teaching career and also the research, the publicistic one, and the pastoral serving at the Holy Altar, the support in conducting some concerts in front of the student choirs of the Orthodox Theology Faculty in Bucharest, as well as being invited to judge many competitions and his participation in many metropolitan and patriarchal juries. To all these we could easily add (but in no case lastly) the activity in writing, harmonizing and arranging of a vast repertoire of choral music works. Those pieces are included in the two grand volumes published by Father prof. Nicu Moldoveanu: 1) Choral Anthology, Religious and Secular, for Mixed Formations and 2) Choral Repertoire. Both those volumes appeared in the publisher The Institute of Biblical and Orthodox Mission of Romanian Orthodox Church. The first volume appeared in 2006 and the second in three separate editions: 1983 – Bucharest, 1998 – Galați, and 2003 – Bucharest (revised and added edition). The number of works under the father and professor's name has been raised to more than 130 and they represent "the daily bread" for all theology schools in the country, the seminars as well as universities, and at the same time the bibliographic base is the reference for thousands of church parishes where many conductors of different levels are in practice.

The current commentary aims to make observations on the majority of works published for mixed singing formations and also, will make references to the development of musical speech, on varied possibilities of the voices' exposure which the composer used and sometimes on their evolution from a harmonic perspective. Those choral works are ordered based on their purpose during the church year, so that some pieces that are sung during the Triodion, the Pentecostarion, the Octoechos and works of secular domain. I wish to mention that the total number of those are 26 and the rest are addressed to choirs of equal voices so they will need a separate, more extensive study as they are over a hundred works.

Therefore I will start with the choral works from the time of Triodion. The first that appears in page 16 in the extensive anthology is an arrangement for mixed choir with the title "Prayer" and it has as authors I. Popescu-Pasărea and Anton Runcu. Father Nicu Moldoveanu keeps the

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rhythmical development of the voices from the two authors mentioned above without interfering with the formal pattern structure of the work, keeping in this way the known character of it. The melody being exposed in the soprano, the other voices accompany it in parallel with other elements of the chords in the four voices. Their lead was designed in a way that the disjunct jumps are avoided and especially these of those of who don't have harmonic support to help with the singing and intonation. The accidentals that appear on the way respect the neighbouring and familial tonalities and those as well are supported by the harmonic thinking of intervals that are easily sung. The vocal ambitus of the accompanying voices is a small one, especially in the alto and tenor. In the bass part in order to embellish the sonority alternation in close and distant relation, the arranger enlarges it up to a tenth using the jumps only on important tonal notes, I, IV, V and so executing oblique movements or counter-singing versus the soprano. In the same manner is the next choral work at page 21, entitled "Prayer" as well but having as the author Teodor Teodorescu-Iași with verses by Mihai Eminescu. Being often sung by men-choirs, father Moldoveanu arranges it in a version for mixed choir, keeping the compact character of the voices where the original version requests it and he refreshes the sonority where the ambitus of a mixed choir allows it. We cannot but acknowledge that through the change of tonality, the ambitus of the voices has returned in a more accessible zone for the majority of choirs, in relation to the original tonality which raises serious problems, in special in the tenor one part. The next choral piece "The gates of repentance" from page 25 is not a transcription or arrangement from a men-choir version to a mixed choir, but it a harmonization of 4 voices based on a melody by D. Suceveanu and Ștefanache Popescu. The song is on Tone 8 and at the same time one of the most representative works of the Triodion, the harmonizer makes its debut with some sounds in unison with solemn character and later keeps the melody with soprano. Furthermore, the debut of the second vocal run is achieved in an entry step-wise, the order being S+A then same notes after two beats are taken in the tenor and then after two more beats in the bass there's an intervention with the tonic and dominant notes from the scale. Together with the entry of the bass there is also a part in the tenor that was split in two parts. Here they are:

The musical score consists of four staves: Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature changes from 2/4 to 4/4. The lyrics are "Dă-tă to -". The Tenor voice has a melodic line that is divided into two parts, with the first part in 2/4 and the second part in 4/4. The other voices (Soprano, Alto, and Bass) provide a harmonic support, with the Soprano and Alto voices having a similar melodic line to the Tenor, and the Bass voice providing a lower harmonic support. The lyrics "Dă-tă to -" are written below the notes.

For the third embellishment, the harmonizer chooses the tenor voice to sustain the melodic line by dividing it in two. In this circumstance the other voices have the only role of supporting the drone on the tonic note (S-A-B), offering it a rather important change in its sonority. Also in the next phrase he keeps the same sonority and what follows as the ending formula is that the melody will be brought back in the soprano so that the final chord will be complete, with third, fifth and doubled octave.

*“In the way of redemption”* is the verse which is sung during the Utrania service immediately after *“The Gates of Redemption”* also in Tone 8 (p. 28). The harmonizer maintains the same manner of presentation and enrichment of the musica lspeech. The debut is made again through some unison notes like an alert to the opening of the next verse and after which the soprano voice brings the first embellishment to Tone 8. By respecting the development of the sonority from the previous verse, Fr Nicu Moldoveanu distributes the melody again in the tenor voice, which is divided in two and the other voices remain on the tone’s tonic keeping the drone. This time for the third “sonority block”, the harmonizer chooses the unison to be in all four voices for it to be the most powerful and impressive way of underlining the two sonorities that appear now. It is about an accidental which modifies the tone’s mode, so *b flat* in G and an exceptional rhythmical formula (the triplet). Afterwards it comes back to the speech sound with the tenor voice being divided in two and then the final cadence is achieved with the melody in the tenor voice with the last chord containing all its components. If we tried to reproduce a type of “sketch” or “diagram” of the development of this choral work, it would look like this:

I.		II.		III.		IV.		V.
4 voices	–	mel. Tenori	–	unison	–	mel. Tenori	–	4 voices
		S+A+B=drone		SATB		S+A+B=drone		

About this “discreet” structure offered by Fr. Nicu Moldoveanu to this choral work we could claim many ideas that appear only by looking at this “structural map” presented above. The five vast segments found have their own purpose that is self explanatory. Thus, the first one opens the musical speech with a choral ample sonority confirming the beauty and greatness of the four voices singing, then immediately it refrains the number of voices to three in the second segment, the supporting drone giving to it a more “church character” and halfway through the piece, when the entire choir sings in unison makes a clear hint at communal singing. The return in reverse order is very well executed and one can say that practically only in this choral piece the harmonizer attempts to incorporate a varied sound palette that seems to capture in one unit hundreds of years of the church music’s realities.

The next harmonization offered by the author at page 74 is based on the traditional melody of Tone 7: *God of powers...* this time as well the musical speech debut is distributed to all four voices and it extends until the repetitive fragment: *God of powers, have mercy upon us*. When verse I appears, in order to create variety in the sonority, the melody is left only in the feminine voices and those in turn sing nearly the entire verse in unison, with the exception of the climax of the melody when they divide in two voices. It follows according to the method of development of the song again the fragment at 4 voices: *God of powers, have mercy upon us* and then verse II in tenor and bass. Those expose directly at the opening on 2 or 3 voices and in the climax moment as well from the tenor one to 4 voices, finishing on one voice alone in unison similarly to the end of the verse in the feminine voices. Finally, the fragment *The entire breath to praise the Lord* and *God of powers, have mercy upon us* are harmonized for 4 voices. Behold also this time the “discreet geometry” of the harmonizing of this choral piece:

I.	II.	III.	IV.	V.
4 voices	female voices	4 voices	male voices	4 voices
	I - II - I		II - III - IV - I	

The harmonizer's intention of trying to give more contrasting sonorities is clear and at the same time different sonorities to the matching systematic voices (feminine and masculine), remaining also simple in the "spirit" of the very well known piece.

Next piece is at page 127, *Your supper...* where this time the author (Fr. Nicu Moldoveanu) develops a choral work for four voices from the beginning until the end. We observe some aspects present here, like it would be the duplication sometimes of the bass in octaves or the contrary writing of it with the soprano or the four times appearance of the baritone. Also we notice in it many moments of close entries of the voices to emphasize the importance of the text. We provide below as an example:

The musical score consists of two systems. The first system shows the beginning of the piece with four voices (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "cã nu voi spu - ne" (I will not speak). The second system continues the piece with the lyrics: "Tãi, nici sã - ru - ta -" (Father, neither son nor daughter). The score includes dynamic markings such as *mp*, *f*, and *mf*, and a key signature of one sharp (F#).

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The arrangement of the piece *Until when, God...?* having Dimitrie Bortneanschi as the author, represents a demonstration of weaving to the simplicity in the leading of voices and at the same time the keeping at maximum the character and style from the original version. In order to maintain the original author's sonority, which is quite ample, this time professor Nicu Moldoveanu doesn't manifest "prudence" or "retention" in keeping some comfortable ambitus of the voices, which he had so far in the picture, but he divides the tenor in two, giving to tenor one more high pitch register sounds, (*G-2* and *A-2*) proving this way that when the reasoning and necessities of the piece demand, the more pretentious repertoire has to be respected exactly.

Another arrangement of a well known choral work it is found at page 134, *Have mercy on me God...* by Gheorghe Cucu. Being sung many times by the majority of equal voices choirs, the mixed formations coveted for the beautiful words of Psalm 50 but didn't have the right arrangement. The problem was that the arrangement of this known choral work hides in itself a dilemma. This consists of a choice of maintaining the original tonality (*A*) and in this case, the strain on the mixed voices in keeping the interior structure or... the choice of a different tonality and giving in an elegant manner the particular "airs" as closely kept to the original of the last century. The Fr. Professor chose the second through accepting the *E* tonality and his version of four voices has already entered in the execution by many mixed choirs, being extremely welcome add-on in the repertoire of four voices choirs.

Continuing with the content of the volume of choral pieces announced in the title, what appears in page 140 is the harmonization of *Lord, if we didn't have Your Saints*, on the traditional melody of Tone 8. Besides the fact that the voices were projected in such a way to avoid big jumps and particularly for the intonation to be easier, there are again sonority contrasting segments brought which give a special dynamism to the work and also capture and manage to maintain the attention upon the live musical text. It debuts with some notes in unison to assure an effortless beginning and at the same time it proves the unity of the voices when uttering the name of Him who it is addressed to, *Lord, Lord* following immediately the division of 4 voices with exposing the melody in the soprano part. The second phrase begins with a kneading in the feminine voices at a third interval on a double drone sung on the tonic and the fifth of the masculine

voice's tonality. The third fragment is a unison of all 4 voices and the final cadence is prepared and presented like the opening of the piece, so like the melody in the soprano and the other voices completing the rest of the chord elements. If we had to give in writing the structural development of the voices' distribution, it would look like this:

I.	II.	III.	IV.
Short unison + 4 voices	- mel. Female voices duble drone (T – B)	- unison SATB	- 4 voices

Starting with the next harmonization, we will go to mixed choral pieces from the Pentecostarion period. It may be found at page 189 and it has the title *Christ has Risen*. The verses as well as the melody belong to Florin Isar. As simple is the melody, we can claim that its harmony is just as beautiful as well as the design of the voice distribution in the musical speech. Having a quasi-square structural skelton, Fr. Professor has elaborated the harmony of it like it was a hidden dialogue between the voices. Thus the opening starts with the feminine voices (probably like the three women in the Bible who were first at the tomb!) who claim somewhat interrogatively "*Christ has risen from the dead*" and the answer comes ample and convincing from all f voices: "*Christ has risen!*" Immediately the next provocation is made by the masculine voices who likewise are given the same answer, ample, from the whole choir,... but this time it is thought of in two steps with an anacrusis entry in the bass then afterwards in all other voices.

The melodic idea that follows is conceived as a dialogue that is started and resolved with all voices singing at once. The finale of the piece is produced with a pseudo-chorus interrogatively started by the feminine voices and finalized by the entire choir. The text is the same, sung by soprano-alto: "*He is risen indeed*" and the final resumption of the same text is S-A-T-B. The sketch of the voice distribution of this harmonization would be:



I.	II.	III.	IV.	V.	VI.
Female voices	- 4 voices	- male voices	- 4 voices	- female voices	- 4 voices

The stunning words of the piece associated with this diverse elaboration and with the dialogue's character which is understood without saying from the evolution of its musical text, made already for it to enter in the repertoire of many choirs from the west of the country and probably entering the repertoire of the choir Army of the Lord who had their national meeting in Arad in 2010.

The penultimate work harmonized (p. 285) from Pentecostarion period is Verse IV from the Vespers of Tone 1, *Be happy heavens...* which debuts in the same way with the previous harmonies, so in unison and it ends in 4 voices. The second melodic idea is treated in a particular mode in bass and is one of the few moments when the harmonizer gives the responsibility to just one voice, obtaining this way different rather strong contrasts. What follows is an even more interesting processing of the word "Shout" many times in a step-wise motion and producing an emotional semi-cadence on the major of note VI, resulting a yet another (harmonic) contrast with the calm minor of Tone 1 conceived on note E. The effect of these replays of the word "Shout" is extremely powerful, becoming imperative for the listeners. Below is given this unique moment:

stri - gați, stri - gați,  
stri - gați, stri - gați,  
stri - gați, stri - gați,  
stri - gați, stri - gați,

The harmonization continues with other semi-cadences realized on the III step (the major chord being used with all its elements), then on the IV step and with an exotic semi-cadence on major IV step with the seventh in first inversion. The ending of the choral work is composed with an optimistic chord of I step but in major version, by adding the tierce de picardie. Understandably, Fr. Professor does not give up even this time the more ample development and he brings novelties to enrich the means and possibilities to process the sound material that is to be harmonized.

One of the shortest choral pieces of the anthology may be found at page 294 and consists of an elaboration of the Tone 8 troparion's melody from the Holy Sacrament of Baptism. It has "Give me clothing of light" and its length is 16 bars, the author writes it for 4 voices. The melody has a church character and it is remarked by the use of an extremely reduced ambitus,... especially in the accompanying voices. Thus, we observe in bass a maximum line interval of a *fifth*, for the alto *a sixth* and the same for the tenor, *a sixth*. In this situation we consider that the 4 voices writing is one of the most facile choral works offered by the composer, inviting in this way other modest conductors to include in their choir's repertoire, even at a semi-mediocre level.

To continue, Fr. Prof. Nicu Moldoveanu offers us three pieces written for the celebration of Three Holy Hierarchs. The first one is *Celebrate today the Church* on Tone 3 and it respects the principle of schematic projecting until nowadays. It debuts with some notes in unison after which two male voices continue followed by the female voices with drone support in the male voices, ending with 4 voices distribution. We realize a transcription or editing mistake of the person who found the material who put for the bass *treble clef* instead of *bass clef*, but the notes are perfectly valid if you calculate it properly, they will be read in bass clef. Here is the sonority sketch aligned like it appeared in this work:

I.	II.	III.	IV.
Short introduction + 4 voices - 2 male voices - 2 fem. Voices - at unison	2 male voices + male drone		The ending in four voices

The second piece for the celebration of The Three Holy Hierarchs is *The Light of Three Holy Hierarchs* on Tone 3 as well, at page 347. We give the exact scheme of sonority fragments, so that is the same as the voices were distributed and thought of in their evolution to observe similarities and differences that may interfere:

I.	II.	III.	IV.
Short introduction - unison + 4 voices - step wise entrance - The end in four			
at unison + 4 voices		S. T. B.	voices

As a capture of segment III, we provide below its realization by the father professor:

The musical score for segment III consists of three staves: Soprano (top), Tenor (middle), and Bass (bottom). The music is written in 4/4 time, with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The lyrics are 'și pre I - oan Gu -'. The score includes dynamic markings such as 'f' (forte) and '8' (octave). The melody starts with a few notes in unison, then branches into four voices. The bass voice has a notable jump to a 7th interval.

In the third coral work for the celebration of The Three Holy Hierarchs, Fr. Prof presents at page 349 Kontakion from the Akathist of The Three Holy Hierarchs on tone 8. Even this time the melody starts with few notes in unison, then being passed on to 4 voices. For a varied sonority we remark the jump to a 7th in the bass voices, which is sung twice, producing a specific tension of the fifth step exposed in minor-chord. Also to keep the sonorities ample, the composer divides the bass and tenor voices and achieves many times chords for five and six voices. Here are two of those as an example:

1.

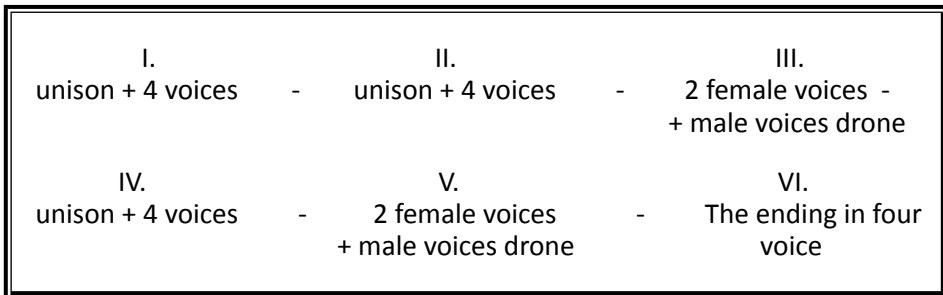
cei mari și sur - pă - to - ri - i e - re - zi -

cei mari și sur - pă - to - ri - i e - re - zi -

cei mari și sur - pă - to - ri - i e - re - zi -

cei mari și sur - pă - to - ri - i e - re - zi -

The diagram or geometry of the voices appearance is this:



2.

Bu - cu - ră - te, tre - i - me de ar - hi - e - rei prea

Bu - cu - ră - te, tre - i - me de ar - hi - e - rei prea

Bu - cu - ră - te, tre - i - me de ar - hi - e - rei prea

Bu - cu - ră - te, tre - i - me de ar - hi - e - rei prea

The intention to diversify, the offering of multiple possibilities of vocal treatment, the thinking behind varied schemes in the development of musical speech appear more than strongly during those schematic captures.

Apart from the church repertoire for mixed choirs, father professor ends the anthology explored in this commentary with three pieces of popular style, a choral poem with reciter and other two very well known works. First of them may be found at p. 707 with the title *I Doina, the Forest is Answering*. In presenting as closely as possible to popular manner, the harmonizer chooses a solution with having a soloist. So, the opening musical phrase is made by 4 voices with the melody in the soprano, followed by an intervention with humming a mute chord as preparation and then the soloist enters. At the end of the musical idea in the solo line, the choir retakes like an echo the last two words. Furthermore, the soloist enters first time thenn choir on a mute chord on IV step, then again the soloist and choir echoing the last two words. The last phrase belongs to the choir in 4 voices with a small game alternating IV step and I.

This time as well what is presented is a small structural map of the voices appearances, reduced as a orientational sketch.

I.		II.		III.		IV.
4 voices	-	muted choir Then soloist	-	dialogue beetwen Soloist and choir	-	The ending in four voices

The second work of popular character is the piece *I will go, the forest remains* (p. 710), when the father professor achieves an arrangement for mixed choir of the original of the author Timotei Popovici. This arrangement is among the shortest works of the anthology and by the simplicity of the voices' leading and keeping accessible ambitus, the arranger invites nearly every conductor to place it in the repertoire prepared for the right occasions.

In the last popular culture work, the father professor focuses on a melody from Anton Pann collection and he harmonizes it for 4 voices. It

is about *Bud, little bud* from p. 874. Because of the melody's beauty, the first musical idea is brought in unison by all 4 voices and only the answer of its question is harmonized in complete or incomplete chords from all voices. If we calculate up to now how the verse developed, to continue at the chorus the harmonizer inverts the harmonic roles and begins the chorus with 4 voices and finishes in unison. If we had to present it visually, this musical speech would look like this:

<u>Stanza</u>	<u>Chorus</u>
a) unison - b) 4 voices (4 bars)      (4 bars)	c) 4 voices - d) unison (4 bars)      (3 bars)

From the melodic content point of view we deal with all 4 intonational individual ideas, however based on the harmonic concept we could comment that we have a development in mirror image, during the stanza, the first idea is exposed in unison and the second for four voices and during the chorus is reversed.

What follows is the most complex arrangement of Fr. Prof. Nicu Moldoveanu written for mixed choir. This is the choral poem with reciter *At Cozia on Olt* which has Nicolae Lungu as the original author (p. 886). From the beginning one has to remark the interest of the father professor towards voices placing in an ambitus favorable to keeping it close to the wanted character by the original author. Thus, this time the arranger changes the initial tonality *E* to *A*. The step-wise entries are respected and moreover, to have the well known character, the two upper voices sing in unison during first four bars, the musical text actually having three voices like the original. The humming of the voices during the choir mute introduction prepares in fact in a very efficient way the effect of the reciter's entrance. After the first intervention of the reciter there appears like a "brick" or a choral mood binder in the last 4 measures hummed from the end of the introduction.

The fragment that follows, or the exposed theme in the initial variant is kept with the male voices also in the arrangement of the father professor, especially when Nicolae Lungu develops this segment to four voices, the

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arranger preferring to devide the tenor and bass to keep a coloristic stain more similar to the initial variant. Next is agaion the connecting fragment and then the reciter from which the two last words are taken by all choir voices as an extension in unison.

The development of the piece arrives in the next few moments to the sustaining of some short replies between reciter and choir, which gives drama and underlines poowerfully the name of voievode Mircea The Old.

What reappears in the speech of the link fragment, but this time in a more ample progress, are the extreme voices keeping a unison while the middle voices bring parallel movements in thirds and octaves. The last intervention of the reciter is one of greater stretch only to be followed by the choir bringing the important text from the ending of the piece in unison parts as well as in 4 voices.

At the end of the work the humming part of the mute choir returns and the resumption as an echo of the head topic: *At Cozia on Olt,...At Cozia on Olt*. From a structural point of view, the father professor respected at maximum possible the segments from the original version but through distrubuting some motives to the mixed choir voice offered to 4 voices version a type of originality which has its own value and meaning. Here is the segments succession from this work:

I.	II.	III.
Introduction 4 muted voices	- declamatory + acomp. cor mut	- muted choir + male voices I-II-III-IV
IV.	V.	VI.
Muted choir + declamatory	- dialogue beetwen solosit And choir	- muted choir
VII.	VIII.	IX.
Declamatory + acomp. Muted choir	- choir- 4 voices	- The end, muted choir Declamatory + echo effect

At the end of the edited anthology, the father professor presents three arrangements of some pieces from the classical Romanian repertoire. Those are: *Mother* by Ioan. D. Chirescu (p. 906), *The Altar of Putna Monastery* by Ciprian Porumbescu (p. 910) and *In the forest* also by Ciprian Porumbescu (p. 925). If in the previous arrangements I commented on the father's ability to modify tonalities in order to get closer to the original idea and to place the voices in a preferred ambitus, this time it is considered that remaining in the initial key is the best solution. Of course in this case, the distribution to certain voices of some melodic towers can offer a particular sonority specific to four mixed voices or on the contrary, to freshen up too much and to hinder the musical speech developing. In any case, keeping the first work in G offers the possibility to keep in solo line the same voice, the baritone and adding female voices as harmonic support will bring more sensitivity and gentleness. A consistent difference is also the comparison between the beautiful three note chord from the original version which sounded in sixth-chords or fourth- sixthchords compared to the extensive chords in the version for mixed choir brought this time in complete distributions to the four voices.

The same general aspects can be observed in the arrangement of *In the forest* (p. 925) by Ciprian Porumbescu. But, ... like an enormous difference one can emphasize that what it has in contrast to *Mother*, which has the melody taken from the male voices and processed in the soprano, in this case father professor takes tenor one from the male version and it places it also in the tenor voice in the moixed version. Even the last chord of the piece presents the octave in soprano and the third which in the male version was in the first voice, now it is in the tenor.

Another aspect which has to be remarked in this arrangement is the report between using extensive sonorities, rich in harmonies with deviding some voices. Iof Ciprian Porumbescu allows the divisi only in the bass and having a maximum of 4 male voices in a chord, father professor Nicu Moldoveanu feels the need of the musical speech to be within a special sound richness and uses the possibilities of the mixed choir and more times he achieves chords with six notes. Below there are two examples with the incorprated chords:



și frea-mă-tul ste-ja-ri-lor,  
și frea-mă-tul ste-ja-ri-lor,  
și frea-mă-tul ste-ja-ri-lor,  
și frea-mă-tul ste-ja-ri-lor,

Ho-la, ho-la, ho-la  
Ho-la, ho-la, ho-la  
Ho-la, ho-la, ho-la  
Ho-la, ho-la, ho-la

The third choral arrangement from page 910, The Altar of Putna Monastery is without a doubt the most challenging to approach. This time the father professor writes for choirs of intermediate and high level, addressing based on the initial melody, tonalities from one to four flats, some segments having different time signatures from 3 crotches, 4 crotches to 6 quavers. Sometimes the harmonic changes happen so abruptly to tonalities that require a certain musical education and a solid interval thinking in pitching the respective notes. In other words, this choral arrangement is addressed to mixed choirs with certain expectations and musical qualities and to conductors that have theory knowledge, teaching tact and great practical abilities in order to achieve all the demands of this work.

Arriving to the conclusion of the last pieces exposed in the title's anthology, there are certain final ideas conclusive of the overview picture. Before entering in detail of some observations made, I need to emphasize firstly the interest of father professor Nicu Moldoveanu in a vast repertoire for the use of the ministers of our church and not only.

In the volumes published along three decades, there are: liturgical answers, songs based on church tones, hymns and axions, special occasion works and for certain celebrations, orthodox songs of foreign composers, carols, patriotic songs, popular music pieces, works from classical and universal repertoire, other poems and preworks. The "daily bread repertoire" was thus provided for the orthodox Christians even during times when the practice of such repertoires would bring suspicions, lack of respect and sometimes even painful repercussions. The effort of the father professor encouraged many generations amongst the youth of the time and even nowadays and it maintained, as much as possible in the context, the

embers ignited of priceless values of the orthodox religious and Romanian cultural domain.

Regarding the manner of harmonization of father Nicu Moldoveanu we can confirm after putting into practice the pieces for mixed choir some observations which are emphasized. Firstly, one of the purposes of father Moldoveanu was to have the harmonizations as accessible as possible in their executions of higher number groups. For this, he used the major tonal steps (I – IV – V) and rarely the secondary, the appearance of those was developed in a facile distribution. The use of chords inversions enriches particular sonorities and at the same time gives an attractive variety for the executors. Here also we need to underline the extension and enlargement of the voices where it was needed through doubling some elements of the respective chords and arrivals from 4 to 5 or even 6 voices. The father professor knew to explore the existent possibilities of mixed choirs and to win breadth where it was needed.

Moreover, the leading of the voices is of extreme importance in obtaining certain ease for execution and it was projected in such a way to incorporate its natural melodic speech and the jumps to be supported from within the tonality. To support those intentions the accidentals use is also useful, despite having the tendency to make the intonation more difficult, those were used in such a way as if they are part of the “correct” speech of the becoming sonority.

Regarding the metrical and rhythmical perspective, the composer of the harmonies and arrangements found support most times in the meter and rhythm from the original versions and in other moments it got developed where the importance of text requested it. The step-wise entries and divisions of voices were well used through accentuation of the respective texts message. In the melodies written on the church tones what was kept is the rhythm of the specific embellishments and those were not suffocated or hidden by other possible developments.

Maybe the most important aspect found in the thinking of father professor Nicu Moldoveanu is the amazing care taking when offering the listeners always new sonorities, palettes and colours obtained through different associations between the voices that are possible. From all the described distributions and presented in the examples, during the above commentary, we can confirm that through these attempts what one wished to obtain a huge variety of different associations, even in the same vocal

*Commentary on the written chorale works...*

family (female and male voices), the novelties that capture and maintain the listener's attention. The limits of this process were used wisely (with reference to the speech of one voice or 6 voices). We can't ignore the preference of the father professor to use some notes to be sung in unison and only afterwards to divide in more voices in the beginnings of his works. This small or large detail hides in itself a vast conducting experience and only such conductors can understand that this artifice, that seems to be banal at first, hides a tremendous effort and offers safety to the opening of the piece. Only after the group finds a tonal centre through those notes and sounds, then leavens in many voices. Even if the analogy seems exaggerated, I wish to confirm it, in the sense that those notes in unison from the openings of the works are in a way, like a shadow of the opening formulae of the church tones. By knowing of their importance in the church singing, the father professor extends this in the multiple voices singing.

A particular aspect was the distribution of the unisons. In one way those offer a sonority contrast unique compared to other harmonic distributions and a more emphasis of the text and, ... in another way, it makes it clear connections to the moments of singing together with the whole congregation in the church. Those segments used wisely that we found in the works of the father professor, keep in a wonderful way the church manner and link to certain periods of the history of church music. In this sense the unison fragments appear. Those belong to the church style and manner being a clear specification of this work. The unison introduction to the fragments of the analysed works underline more and to seal the old byzantine flavour, maintaining alive the tradition of this music alongside the occidental tonal influence. The developed technique found in the works of the father professor is as simple as possible because of the same principle of being so accessible. Here as well, under the same principle, we found is the care for every voice's ambitus. When it is operated with more ambitus expansions and pushing the boundaries, there appears a pressure of responsibility, especially in keeping the equal vocal projection throughout what is requested. To avoid delicate moments, the father professor stays within the limits of the acceptable vocal ambitus in his repertoire, without making it more difficult to put it into practice due to such reasons.

Through the vast subjects covered, through the harmonized models offered colours obtained from different vocal combinations to his sonority, through the perseverance and consistence proved during the long de-

ades of activity, through the exactness that kept the characteristics of the church singing, father professor Nicu Molodoveanu is and will remain a role model for all the hard workers in this domain and not only, combining with promoting our church music's values also the values of life itself, making a connection between the quality harmony of the parts of his work with the harmony of spiritual experiences from day to day life.

Without daring to ask too much, I ask the Lord to bless the father professor in continuing to enrich his work with even greater and valuable material and to continue to be a supporter and mentor of the devout worshippers of this musical orthodox domain into the next decade.