

ENESCU UNDISCOVERED

Jubilee Hymn for Choir, Military Orchestra and Harp

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From the beginning of the 20th century, George Enescu enjoyed a growing and sincere appreciation both in Romania and in the capital of France. He was only 24 years of age (1905), but the young composer had already become renowned, appearing as soloist in concerts conducted by Felix Weingartner, partnering with Gabriel Fauré on piano, and as a member of the examination juries of the Paris Conservatoire. His music, profoundly anchored in the national vein, was listened to and debated by the musicians' circles of the time with great interest, as if intuiting its guiding dimension in orienting the Romanian musical culture to the increasingly higher levels of universal spirituality.

In 1906 George Enescu's preoccupation with wind instruments seemed to be at its maximum. Out of the five pieces that he composed during the above mentioned year, four of them feature wind instruments¹: *Dixtuor for wind instruments, op. 14*, *Au soir for four divided trumpets*, *Legend for trumpet and piano* and *Jubilee Hymn for Choir, Military Orchestra and Harp*.

Far different from the others, *The Dixtuor* remains the most important, performed in years to come in numerous concerts and national and international festivals², being – as Octavian Lazăr Cosma asserts – “a fundamental creation in the domain of music destined to wind instruments”³. At its first performance in Paris (12th June 1906), the reviewer of the famous magazine *Le monde musical*, Jean Huré, wrote:

*On one of his last meetings, “The wind instruments society” performed an undiscovered “Dixtuor” by George Enescu. It really is a superb “symphony in re”, with an admirable form, but this perfection form is nothing compared to the profound emotion, intense life that the new Enescu's opera throbs. The first part, sweet and solemn, with beautiful, masterly composed melodies, is developed in harmonious proportions, without conventional regularity. It is followed by a slow “Menuet”: I will not describe this one; it is unimaginably charming. “The Finale” is a wonder of originality, of invention and masterwork, under an apparent spontaneity. The last measures are incomparable. I am searching, and I cannot find a single flaw in this extraordinary piece of work. What a sonorous variety, what a wonderful combination of timbre: these ten wind instruments sound as a huge orchestra. Who is the grand maestro who will ever dare to compose such a long symphony for relatively monotonous timbre, whose work of art will be able, for more than half of hour, to interest a little learned public and rather unwilling of new operas.*⁴

In the same year, George Enescu composed the *Jubilee Hymn for Choir, Military Orchestra and Harp*, a vocal-symphonic creation destined for the *The Jubilee* organised to celebrate the 40 years of King Carol I's reign. The festivities, prepared almost a year before the actual date, consisted of organising popular fiestas developed within the *National Exhibition*, where music, of course, could not miss⁵. In order to add glamour

¹ The fifth piece is *Piece of concert for viola with piano accompaniment*.

² We must also add to the List of performances and records gathered by musicologist Pascal Bentiou (*Enescu's Works of Art*, Bucharest – 1999, p. 127) the record made by a chamber orchestra of Representative Music of Minister of Defence in the concert hall of the Military Circle in Braşov 1983, conducted by the Music Inspector of that period, col. Emilian Ursu.

³ Octavian Lazăr Cosma, *Romanian Music Chronicle, 1898–1920, Music Creation (II). Symphonic and chamber*, vol. VIII, Bucharest 1988, p. 505.

⁴ *Literature and Music Magazine*, Year II, no. 22, July 1906, p. 335, heading *Various News. A New Opera for Wind Instruments*.

⁵ Nicolae, Gheorghîă, „Musical events at the Jubilee National Exhibition in 1906”, a study yet to be published in *Muzica* magazine.

to this political event, the organisers suggested, beside the daily concerts offered by the *Exhibition Orchestra*, a *Great Choral Festival*⁶, and a band concert, which would take place in the Roman Arena⁷.

These two musical events of *The Jubilee* were preceded by concerts presented on the very day The National Exhibition was opened: Tuesday, June 6th, 1906⁸.

This is the “musical picture” of that memorable day as it was presented in histories of the time:

The secondary schools’, the seminar’s and the normal school’s choirs will sing the hymns ‘Up with your hearts’ and ‘Long live the King’, conducted by Maestro Ștefănescu. Then, there will be a religious service when the Mitropoly and Domnița Bălașa Church choirs will sing... In front of the Romanian restaurant a group of fiddlers will play ‘Union’s circle dance’, and past the textile pavilion military musicians will sing ‘Mountain maiden’. In front of the great palace of arts (‘Our past’) a choir of the music society ‘Circle Dance’ composed by 300 persons, will sing the ‘Hymn for the Romanian Royal Dynasty’ being conducted by the music maestro Juarez Movilă⁹”.

Starting at 9 o’clock the royal family moved from the Palace to the Roman Arena, a moment announced by the 101 cannon gunshots. When the Queen cut the flowers garland this signalled that the *Exhibition* had officially opened,

100 trumpeters sitting on the Dorobanți’s stone, were sounding the welcoming, and the cannons of Calafat troop, inside the Exhibition, were shooting 21 blows, while the royal cortege was proceeding on Moldavia’s way, beautifully decorated, in order to go to the Roman Arena, where the inauguration ceremony was to take place... The precincts got occupied by the military music, choirs and schools... As soon as Their Majesties and their Royal Highnesses had sat on the estrade, all military music, conducted by the music inspector, played the Jubilee Solemn March, hymn of glory, to His Majesty the King and composed by Mr. Mărgăritescu¹⁰. On the moment of signing the commemorative document of the Exhibition, a choir composed by 500 singers, accompanied by the exhibition orchestra and two military music groups, was singing the Jubilee Hymn and the hymn of the Latin race, conducted by Mr. Ștefănescu¹¹.

The documents published in the press of that time reveal inconsistencies and confusions regarding on one hand the conductor of the *Hymn* and on the other hand the moment of its performance.

One of the elements that increased the confusion among the chroniclers of the time was the fact that, beside George Enescu, there were also other composers who wrote for that anniversary moment. The similarity of titles such as *Jubilee Solemn March* by Mihail Mărgăritescu, *Jubilee Chant* by I. Paschill, *Hymn*

⁶ Initiated by the *Carmen* society and its conductor D. G. Kiriac, the festival brought together 25 choirs from România, Ardeal, Banat and Bucovina, represented by over 1700 choir singers. They intended to form a general fraternity of choir singers, in order to annul the cultural borders between Romanians and to achieve ... *the blood brotherhood of the old ancestry*, in: Dan Sever, *Letters from Bucharest*, Tribune X, 190, Arad, 10th 20th October 1906, p. 5. For further details, see *The Choir Festival in 1906 in Bucharest*, in: Octavian Lazăr Cosma, *The Romanian Music Chronicle, Enescu’s Epoch. Music Life*, vol. V, 1898–1920, Bucharest, 1983, pp. 281–285.

⁷ „On Sunday June 11th, 1906, 4p.m. a great celebration will take place at the Roman Arena ... with the willing participation of the Choirs conducted by Professor Ștefănescu and the Military Music conducted by the Music Inspector Major Mărgăritescu.” The celebration also comprised a *military music concert* and a *Music Festival conducted by the Music Inspector, Major Mărgăritescu*, in: *the chronicle*, Year VI, no. 1465, Saturday 10th June 1906, p. 3, article *From the Exhibition*. Regarding the band contest, see Viorel Cosma, *The Army Fanfare Backstage (1906)*, in: *The Army Life*, Bucharest, 49, no. 2, February 1996, p. 18 and 26, republished in Idem, *Mars and Euterpe. Music and Army. Essays, studies, music chronicles (1946–1996)*, Bucharest, pp. 111–113.

⁸ *The Exhibition* was to be opened on Sunday, June 4th. Because of torrential rains it had to be postponed to June 6th, and in case of continuous rains, it would take place in the Royal Palace, in: *The Romanian General Exhibition Bulletin in 1906*, The Official Bulletin no. 10, Tuesday, June 6th 1906, p. 233. The event ended on November 23rd.

⁹ *The Truth at the Exhibition*, year I, no. 1, Tuesday June 6th 1906, p. 2.

¹⁰ *The Exhibition Bulletin...*, the Official Bulletin no. 10, pp. 233–234.

¹¹ Idem, p. 240. The press was confused in regards to the author and the conductor, but also concerning the number of wind performers who intone *The Hymn*. While *The Exhibition Bulletin...*, the Official Bulletin no. 10, pp. 233–234 records three bands, *The Exhibition Courier*, year II, no. 36, Sunday, 11th June 1906, p. 1, in the article *The National Exhibition Inauguration: At the Roman Arena* gives a number of seven bands: *When the royal family reaches the arena, the enthusiastic cheering burst in the chests of the people present at the event. The sovereigns together with the prince family go up to the estrade, and the seven military music formations gathered sing the jubilee hymn.*

by Ed. Hübsch, and particularly the *Jubilee Hymn* by G. Ștefănescu, caused many newspapers not to record the name of George Enescu or his presence as conductor of his own work.

Fortunately, there exists a remarkable testimony of that moment, offered by the conductor of the *Carmen* Choir Society, the composer I. D. Chirescu:

I was in the IV grade of the Central Seminary. In that year there was a great “Agrarian Exhibition” on the occasion of 40 years of reign of King Carol I. This exhibition, accomplished with great wisdom by Dr. Istrate, in Filaret park, was inaugurated in the king’s presence and the whole royal family. The king himself had an opening speech, after which the few hundreds instrument players and choir singers, who were on the Roman Arena scene, were to perform the Jubilee Hymn composed by maestro George Enescu, on this occasion especially. After the short opening speech, there comes maestro George Enescu, who, with the wand in his hand, turns towards us and gives the starting signal. He seems to me a ... Prince Charming from a fairy-tale and I could not keep my eyes away from him. After a long orchestra part, when we could hear a lot of national musical motives, he directed his view towards the choir formed by singers from “Carmen” choir, “Domnița Bălașa”, “Kretzulescu” and “Mitropolie” churches choirs, as well as the pupils in the last grades of “Central” and “Nifon” seminaries, who were to sing in the end the monumental “Jubilee Hymn” (“Put up your prayer, country”). Treating them more at unison, and from place to place separating the choir in 2 and 3 voices, had extraordinary results. In the end, when the trumpets located on the right side of the amphitheatre added to the orchestra, while far away cannon gunshots could be heard, the choir almost covered the orchestra with the screaming “hooray, hooray, hooray” thus ending the piece. The public, who was filling the amphitheatre up to the last seat, was cheering... in delirious applauds. We, the ones on the scene – and especially me – were shaking with joy for having really met him, the young but great Romanian music maestro, George Enescu. That night, instead of sleeping, almost all of us stayed up late talking and showing ourselves more than happy to have had the luck of being present at the “Exhibition” opening, and thus taking part to the faultless performance of the “Jubilee Hymn” composed by maestro George Enescu.¹²

One can notice in George Enescu’s letters during the spring of 1906, sent both in Romania¹³ and abroad¹⁴, his wish of taking part in the *Jubilee*. A letter he sent to his mother in Paris G. Enescu confirms his desire to participate in Paris in a series of concerts together with the Romanian artistic world:

*Tomorrow night I have a great soiree and the day after tomorrow another very important one at our ministry there, Grigore Ghyka. **This last one will take place on the occasion of the event in our country** (s.n.). Of course, almost all guests will be Romanian and I will make their music, while Miss Ventura will recite Romanian verses, plus other Romanian artists who will contribute each with something in order to achieve a beautiful programme¹⁵.*

Unfortunately, except for the statement made by I. D. Chirescu, according to which George Enescu conducted his own work at the “*Exhibition*” opening (June 6th) on the very moment of signing the commemorative document, we do not have other data to reflect the Romanian musician’s presence at the *Jubilee*’s musical events. One can only suppose that within the meeting he had in Paris on March 22nd/April 4th 1906 with Mihail Mărgăritescu, the Military Music inspector¹⁶, one of the subjects they discussed could

¹² Apud. Enescu’s first official meeting with the military musicians, in: Viorel Cosma, *Mars and Euterpe...*, pp. 114–115.

¹³ See, for example, the festive atmosphere in Craiova where Carol I High school troops and military units in the area marched, they had more *Te deum*, torches retreats and the musicians sang in the Mihai Bravul garden and in the post office yard until 12 o’clock at night..., in: *The alarm, Conservatory Organism*, year VIII, no. 181, Craiova, 15th May 1906, p. 3, article 10th May in the city.

¹⁴ The national festivities in the Capital and in the country on the occasion of the Jubilee were doubled by ones given by the Romanians abroad: Berlin, Brussels, Constantinople, London, Vienna, Sofia etc.

¹⁵ A Letter to Enescu Maria no. 238, Paris, 11th/24th May 1906, in Romanian, autograph, in: George Enescu, *Letters*. A critical edition by Viorel Cosma, vol. I, Bucharest 1974, p. 154. There is also a postcard he sent to his mother, too, which represents the National Exhibition (Bucharest 7th/20th September 1906, in: *Ibidem*, p. 156).

¹⁶ Letter to Enescu Maria nr. 237, Paris, 22nd March/4th April 1906, in Romanian, autograph, in: George Enescu, *Letters*. A critical edition by Viorel Cosma, vol. I, Bucharest 1974, p. 153.

have been the one related to the *Jubilee Hymn*, which was to be performed by the band conducted by Mărgăritescu.

Much more eloquent regarding George Enescu's wish for the *Hymn* to be known and sung by the entire audience present to the solemn end of the *Jubilee Exhibition* is the letter that young G. Enescu addressed to the *Exhibition* commissary, Dr. Constantin Istrati¹⁷, a few days before its opening:

*Dear Sir, I am writing to kindly ask you to dispose for tomorrow the distribution of numerous copies of the hymn words among the audience, and I believe to Her Majesty The Queen, as well as to their Royal Highnesses on especially imprinted paper.*¹⁸

One could conclude that the *Jubilee Hymn* was sung twice: on the signing of the commemorative document on the opening day of the *General Exhibition* (6th June) – being conducted by its very own author – and at the end of the *Exhibition* (November 23rd)¹⁹.

For almost a century this *Hymn* has been ignored by Romanian musicologists for fairly obvious reasons. After 1990 it was reported on by Constantin-Iulian-Dan Stih-Boos in a paper given in 1991 on the occasion of the International Symposium of Musicology “George Enescu”²⁰. Following his own testimony

*we are dealing with ... a work of art, about which we were not allowed to speak until yesterday, which overcomes ... in value the moment for which it was composed, representing even today an admirable example of “mass song” realised as it should be!*²¹.

The autograph manuscript is kept in the “Music Cabinet” in the Romanian Academy Library, MsR 7380, Special Collections 230/1974²² (Ex. no. 1). The author's signature – *Gheorghe Enescu* – is at both the beginning and the end of the document (19 pages) and the verses, in spite of the anonymous author indication (* *) seem to be written by G. Enescu, too²³:

Înalță-ți ruga, Țeară, cu neamul românesc
Și adă mulțămire aceluia ce e lege
Ursit și-a fost de dînsul ca-n binele obștesc
Traian să-ți stea la leagăn și Carol a-ți fi rege
Și hotărît pășește, ca toți cei ce muncesc.
Cu flori fie bătută cărarea vieții tale.
Poporul și cu tronul te-nalță, te iubesc,
Și an ca cel de-acum să-ți steie mulți în cale!,
Ura! Ura! Ura!....

Put up a prayer, Country, Romanian ancestry, too.
And thank the Law above, who destined there for you
Traian to be your cradle, and Carol be your King.
And step forward decidedly, as working people sing.
May flowers be embedded on your whole life's alley.
The people and their throne love you and wish you glory,
And many happy returns of the year today!
Hooray! Hooray! Hooray! ...

¹⁷ Constantin Istrati (1850–1918), Medicine and Chemistry doctor, university professor in Bucharest. Founder of the *Romanian Science Society*, the *Romanian Association for science promotion and development* etc. Commissar of the *General Exhibition* in Bucharest (1906), Bucharest mayor, minister of culture, public works, industry and commerce, etc.

¹⁸ Letter to Dr. Constantin Istrati no. 245, Bucharest, November 4th and 17th 1906, in Romanian, autograph, in: George Enescu, *Letters*. A critical edition by Viorel Cosma, vol. I, Bucharest 1974, p. 153.

¹⁹ Art. *What's new? The Exhibition Awards Ceremony in Bucharest was made with great solemnity. The Queen, the Prince Family as well as ministers, General Manu, Greceanu, Disescu, and I. Grădișteanu assisted all together. First the Carmen Society choir and the military orchestra performed the Jubilee hymn by George Enescu....* (s.n.). The newspaper *The family* records: *the Exhibition in Bucharest was opened in the presence of a small public. The Queen, the prince family member, ministers, parliament members, and foreign powers representatives Three military music groups intoned „The Jubilee Hymn”....*, in: *the family*, Oradea – mare, 3rd 16th Dec. 1906, no. 39, year XLII, p. 466; Also see the *Romanian General Exhibition Bulletin in 1906, The Official Bulletin* no. 15, December 1906, p. 559: *The scene was occupied by the military orchestra and the choirs conducted by the military music inspector. The solemnity was begun with the Jubilee Hymn, which opened several months ago the beautiful Exhibition...*

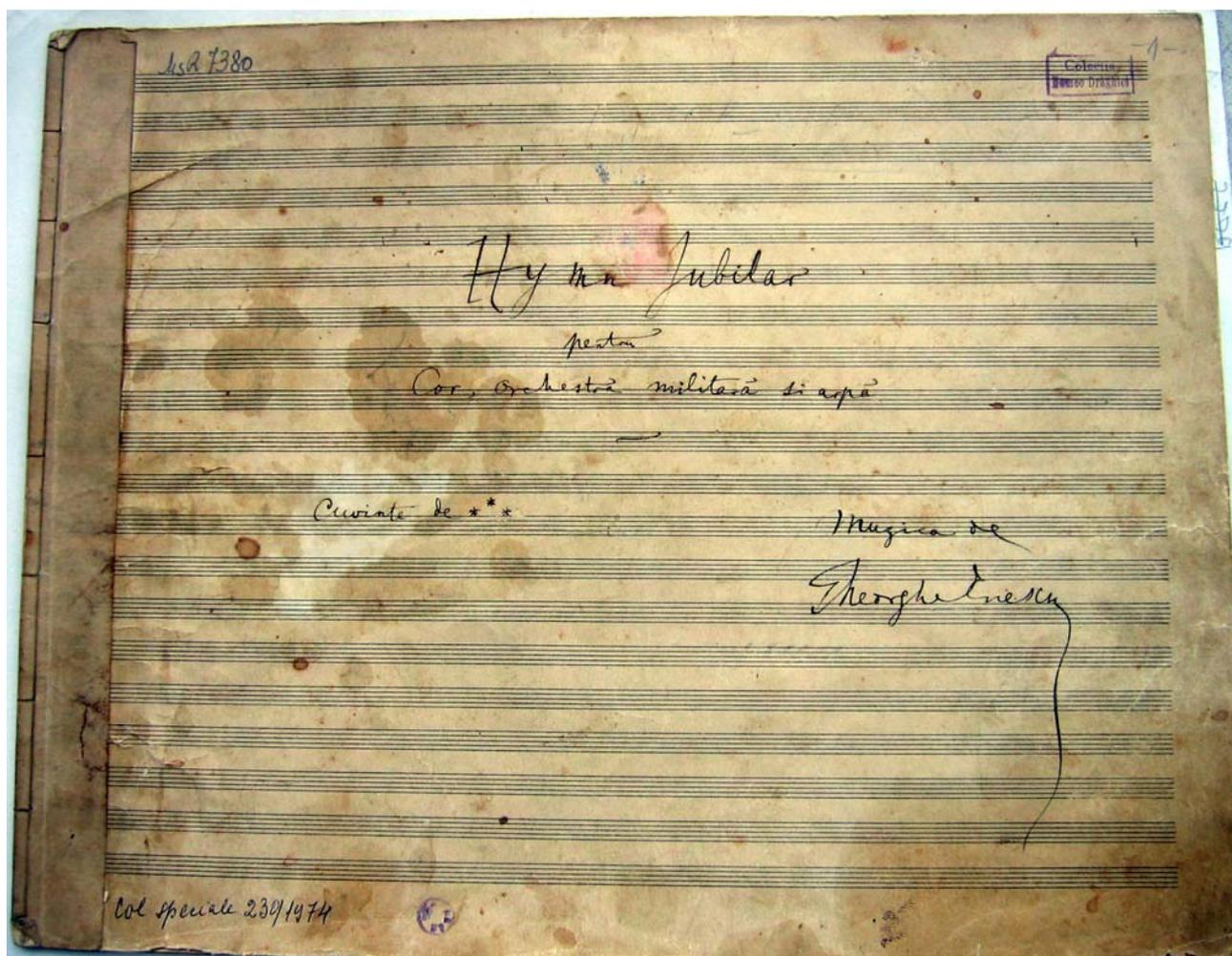
²⁰ Constantin-Iulian-Dan Stih-Boos, *Generalities upon some of Enescu's manuscripts*, in: *George Enescu and the XX Century Music*, „George Enescu” International Musicology Symposium in 1991, edition attended by Laura Manolache and Nadia Tozlovan, Bucharest 1998, pp. 76–78.

²¹ Idem, ibidem, p. 78.

²² It bears the stamp of the *Romeo Drăghici Collection*.

²³ Article *George Enescu – choir composer?*, in: Octavian Lazăr Cosma, *Romanian Music Chronicle, Music Creation I. Choir, song, vocal-symphonic*, vol. VII, 1898–1920, Bucharest, 1986, p. 162.

Ex. no. 1



From a musical point of view the undiscovered parts of this creation are the types of timbres that G. Enescu suggests. The orchestra is composed of 19 wind instruments²⁴ along with the harp (or piano)²⁵, and the choir and cannon gunshots at the end of the piece. Even in the score's organization one notices the division of the color instruments (the B-flat clarinets – 4) and especially “the middle” of the wind players formation (trumpets in E-flat – 4, horns in E-flat – 4, baritones – 3, trombones – 3), a gesture justified by the solemn and festive character of a work to be performed outside.

If for the *Dixtuor* G. Enescu preferred the key of D, the *Hymn* is written in a very convenient tonality for wind instruments made of copper: E-flat. Structured as one large part, the piece begins with an introduction of eight measures, a *fff* motive built on steps I – V – VIII of the E-flat tonality. This motive is played by cornetti in B-flat, trumpets in E-flat and trumpet in B-flat over a percussion pedal (Ex.1). The tempo – *Molto maestoso* – allows the exposure of theme 1 by flute and clarinet B-flat in a diaphanous and majestic diatonicism, accompanied by the indication *cantabile* (Ex. no. 2). Its grandeur and hymnal character are supported by dense writing in which one easily notices the rigor of each modification in agogics and dynamics.

²⁴ The Hymn was composed for an ensemble consisting of: flute in D-flat, (*flauto grande [ossia Flauto piccolo reb]*), flute in D, clarinet in E-flat (*clarinetto mib*), clarinet in B-flat (*clarinetti sib 1,2,3,4*), cornets in B-flat 1,2, bass cornet in B-flat, euphonium (*euphonium*), trumpet in E-flat 1,2,3,4, trumpet in B-flat, horns in E-flat 1,2,3,4, bass flugel horn/baritone (*baritoni 1,2,3*), trombones 1,2,3, tuba in F and B-flat (*bassi 1,2*), triangle (*triangolo*), small drum (*tamburo piccolo*), cymbals, bass drum (*grand cassa*), harp (*arpa [o Piano forte]*) and the cannon.

²⁵ Harp (*o Piano forte*).

Ex. no. 2

Musical score for Ex. no. 2, featuring four brass staves: Cornetti Bb 1, 2; Trombe E1 1, 2; Trombe Eb 3, 4; and Tromba Eb. The score is marked "Molto maestoso" and includes dynamics like "fff", "p dolce", and "p". It features triplets and a first ending bracket.

The second theme unveils all the glamour of Enescu’s spirituality and his exhaustive methodical approach, based on the vitality of the national popular vein (Ex. no. 3). The theme’s rhapsodic dimension is clearly stated by the wooden instruments through intervals of the second, with measures built up on irregular rhythmical structures (triolets), along with simple and double appoggiaturas of an obvious “Romanian character”.

Ex. no. 3

Musical score for Ex. no. 3, featuring a Flute staff. The score is marked "ff", "f cantabile", "ff dim.", and "mf". It includes a first ending bracket and a fermata.

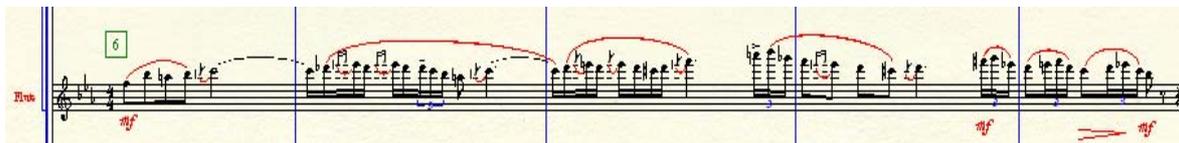
The *Hymn*’s second section – a true development – starts at Reh. #6 with a theme for flute and cornet in B-flat (pp), a theme which will constitute the bond for the entire section (Ex. no. 4). The basic cell (4p↑, 2m↓, 2m↑ and 2M↑) appears exactly in the beginning of the melodic section and, in all the situations in which it is involved, its intervallic design remains (with few exceptions) unmodified. Through the next 33 measures (Reh. # 6-12) we are dealing with a discourse that alternates chamber sonorities and dense tuttis, intensively transformed rhythmically and melodically, as appears at Reh. #8. The counterpoint, along with the above mentioned formula, confers organicism to a discourse inspired from the same rhapsodic character characteristic of so much of Enescu’s music. Further, on the staff destined for the harp (measures 56-57) G. Enescu notes a modal structure on which the hymn will be developed for ten measures: do becar, re#, mi becar, fa#, sol becar, la becar, and becar. The explicit change that the composer achieves constitutes another example of the second section’s harmonic ambivalence. The intended play between tonality and modality, creating harmonious balance, is underlined by the Maestro through a change of the harp’s tuning: it passes from E-flat to E.

Ex. no. 4

Musical score for Ex. no. 4, featuring a Flute staff. The score is marked "mf cantabile" and includes a first ending bracket.

As mentioned above, both the *Dixtuor* and the *Hymn* were composed in the spring of 1906. Besides the timbre conception and the year when both pieces were written (we believe that the *Hymn* was written, if not at the same time as the *Dixtuor*, at least immediately after it), the two compositions also have another common element: the first theme in the third part of the *Dixtuor* which becomes the basis for the theme on which the whole *Hymn* development is built (ex. 5). The transfer is so obvious that it does not need any further comments.

Ex. no. 5



The re-exposition's solemnity (in E-flat) is reinforced by the men's choir: *Put up your prayer, Country....* The coda, a majestic tutti, is marked *molto maestoso* and *ffff*. The choir's cheering is combined with the cannon gunshots that mark the first beat of each measure.

One of George Enescu's youthful creations, *The Jubilee Hymn* has had a tragic history so far. Being an occasional piece related to the emblematic figure of King Carol I, and at the same time unique in the Maestro's catalogue, the work was not performed in concert for one hundred years, and for political reasons it was even excluded after 1944 from being researched by Enescu specialists. A recent performance of the work thus came after over a century of neglect.

Bearing in mind that the *Jubilee Hymn* could no longer be performed by today's bands because of the original's instrumentation, the Military Music Inspector col. Ionel Croitoru arranged the work in the spirit and structure of a contemporary Romanian wind band. This symphonic interpretation of the work, having been dormant over the last century after its premiere, will reposition the Maestro's only composition for band in the national and universal circuitry. At the same time, it is a homage from military musicians to the great Enescu on a celebratory moment for army music: 175 years since Romanian military music appeared, 70 years since the *School for the Military Musicians Pupils* was founded by Egizio Massini, and 55 years since the *Representative Music for the Ministry of Defence* was established.