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**NEW MEANS OF EXPRESSION
AND PERFORMANCE TECHNIQUES OF ACCORDION
IN ACADEMIC MUSIC
AT THE CONFLUENCE OF THE 20TH-21ST CENTURIES**

DOCTORAL THESIS ABSTRACT

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The thesis was developed within the Doctoral School *Arts and Cultural Studies* of the Academy of Music, Theatre and Fine Arts

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The thesis and abstract can be consulted at the National Library of the Republic of Moldova (Chișinău, 78A 31 August 1989 Street), at the Library of the Academy of Music, Theatre and Fine Arts (Chișinău, 87 Mateevici Street), and on the websites <http://www.cnaa.md> and <https://amtap.md>.

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CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE THESIS

The relevance and importance of the addressed issue. The reconsideration of the accordion's role within contemporary academic creation is determined by the evolution of musical language and the deepening of its timbral, dynamic, and expressive possibilities. Initially associated predominantly with the folk sphere and with functions of accompaniment or solo entertainment, the accordion was long perceived as an aesthetically limited instrument. The development of the academic interpretation school, as well as the emergence of an original repertoire, have contributed to overcoming these stereotypes. In contemporary compositional creation, the accordion is valued for its timbral flexibility, the finesse of dynamic control, and the ability to sustain a nuanced expressive discourse. The integration of specific techniques of modern performance art has allowed for the expansion of the instrument's sound palette and expressive functions. Thus, the accordion today asserts itself as an academic instrument capable of participating in complex artistic manifestations and large-scale compositional constructions, in full consonance with the trends of contemporary music.

The relevance of the theme. The accordion, as the musical instrument we know today (in structural-constructive terms), appeared at the beginning of the 20th century. Compared to other "classical" musical instruments, we can consider it a relatively young instrument, which initially asserted itself spectacularly in the traditional music of the peoples of the world, including Romanian music. Throughout the century, we can note two important stages in the development of accordion art – the interwar period, in which the instrument asserted itself in the context of the "golden age" of tango, being quickly adopted in the traditional music of a whole series of peoples from both the European and American continents; and the post-war period, when the accordion came under the spotlight of academic music composers, starting in the 1980s, leading to the so-called "explosion" that expanded the repertoire for this instrument, impressing with its stylistic multitude and the wide spectrum encompassing all musical genres and forms. The authors of new creations for the accordion represent different compositional schools: S. Gubaidulina, V. Semionov – Russia, F. Angelis – France, V. Runchak – Ukraine, S. Mossenmark – Denmark, etc. Additionally, in recent years, important composers from the Republic of Moldova have written original pieces for the accordion: we note here the creations of Ghenadie Ciobanu, Vladimir Beleaev, and Vlad Burlea.

The artistic value of this contemporary academic repertoire for the accordion, which is distinguished by stylistic and genre diversity, impressing with innovative compositional techniques, means of expressiveness, and interpretative approaches, necessitates its scientific

study, considering that there are still relatively few studies focused on this issue in the specialized literature.

In the same vein, it is worth mentioning a whole series of factors that have contributed to the spectacular "leap" made by the instrument, especially from the second half of the 20th century to the present, transitioning from popular music and café-concert to contemporary academic music: the perfection of its technical construction, academic professionalization, the development of accordion art, and the emergence of new techniques, reflected in the contemporary repertoire for accordion, the emergence of an original academic repertoire written for the accordion, etc. Today, the accordion is part of the group of the newest academic instruments, and the art of this instrument has reached the highest peaks of professionalism and virtuosity.

This instrument also has a special role in the national musical culture, enjoying wide popularity in both folk and academic environments. The proposed research theme in the doctoral thesis addresses the factors that have contributed to the academic affirmation of the instrument, one of the arguments for its relevance being determined by the lack of research in this field, both in our republic and in the Romanian space.

The relevance of the theme addressed in the thesis is all the greater as this new repertoire presents numerous innovations in the field, based on a multitude of sound effects, timbral and contemporary technical procedures, which have not been addressed in the specialized literature and require detailed research, the results of which will allow for the identification of new perspectives in approaching the issue of musical expressiveness and the valorization of the artistic potential of the instrument.

The modernization of the accordion, technical and performance progress, the widening of the repertoire, and the development of the national accordion school necessitate the research of the proposed theme from several perspectives: as a complex artistic phenomenon; creative, consisting of the collaboration and dialogue between the performer and composers, where the performer becomes a co-author, transforming the performance process into an original, innovative artistic event, which stimulates the process of discovering new possibilities of the instrument, directly leading to the expansion of the contemporary academic repertoire of the instrument.

In this context, the research required a selection of the proposed repertoire for analysis, based on the artistic value of the works, the originality of technical and compositional procedures, the multitude and diversity of means of expressiveness, etc. Arguing for the selection of the repertoire analyzed in the thesis, we note that initially the research endeavour was oriented towards including a broader contemporary international repertoire for accordion, with a view to outlining a comprehensive comparative framework regarding the evolution of means of expression and

modern performing techniques. However, the emergence of original creations for accordion signed by some of the most renowned native composers (Ghenadie Ciobanu, Vlad Burlea, Vladimir Beleaeu) during the writing of this thesis necessitated a reconsideration of the direction of the investigation. This fact provided the opportunity to shift the focus of the research towards the contemporary national repertoire, whose artistic value and musicological relevance fully justify its integration into a doctoral thesis. Therefore, the change of perspective did not represent a narrowing of the object of study, but, on the contrary, a natural adaptation to the current dynamics of compositional creation in the Republic of Moldova and the necessity for scientific valorisation of some recently composed academic works for accordion.

The purpose of the thesis: the research aims to highlight the role of the evolutionary processes of the performing language of the accordion in contemporary compositional and musical practice, through the investigation and systematization of the new technical, timbral, and dynamic resources of the instrument. To achieve this purpose, the following **objectives** are proposed:

- determining the processes of consolidating the contemporary academic status of the instrument, from the perspective of its organological evolution, elucidating the main milestones of the development of accordion art, professionalization, and the development of interpretative schools;
- elucidating the specific techniques and means of expression, timbral aspects, etc. of the instrument;
- interpretative and structural analysis of representative creations from the universal and contemporary national repertoire;
- highlighting the particularities of the development of the national repertoire dedicated to the accordion, in the context of new techniques.

Methodological basis. The thesis presupposes a multidimensional analysis of the research theme, from the perspective of musicological science and the theory of musical interpretation, which has determined an appropriate approach to achieving the proposed goal and objectives. The musicological research has integrated methods such as analysis and synthesis, diachronic and comparative-historical analysis, etc., which determine the reflection of the complex components and connections of the musical phenomenon. In this sense, a fundamental support has been provided by the works *Methodology of Research in Musicology* by Victoria Melnic and *Choices, Attitudes, Affects. About Style and Rhetoric in Music* by Valentina Sandu-Dediu, renowned researchers in the Romanian space.

At the same time, according to some fundamental principles of musical interpretation research, such as the unity between theory and practice, contextualization, subordination of

technique to musical expressiveness, integration of aesthetic and psychological elements in performance, etc., as well as methods of historical-stylistic, comparative, organological, axiological research, etc., it has been possible to approach the original scores for accordion in a complex manner, including aspects of creative artistic treatment, structural analysis, and aspects of interpreting extended techniques, in the context of the contemporary compositional language of the analyzed creations. A special place is occupied by the synthetic approach of the creator-composer-interpret binomial, which plays an essential role especially in contemporary music.

The theoretical basis of the research focuses on fundamental scientific works in the field, referring to issues of musicology, composition, performing art, as well as various aspects from related fields such as artistic pedagogy, creativity psychology, cultural studies, etc. A separate group consists of English-language literature that targets contemporary works for accordion, as well as that dedicated to prominent composers or accordionists, such as S. Gubaidulina or F. Lips.

The specialized literature dedicated to the accordion is vast and consistent, largely developed by authors who combine the dual role of researchers and performers. In the "schools" of accordion, we find essential scientific information regarding the history, structure, and mechanisms of the instrument, notation systems, and acoustic particularities, aspects that, although not directly related to interpretative study, constitute an indispensable foundation for a deep understanding of the artistic phenomenon. For this reason, in this research, we did not operate a strict delimitation between scientific and educational sources, but opted to utilize them based on their relevance to the investigated issues.

A fundamental reference is the work of Friedrich Lips, *The bayan art*. The author's conception of instrumental technique – defined not as an autonomous goal, but as the "infrastructure" for realizing artistic intent – has guided our methodological approach towards subordinating technical analysis to the expressive dimension. Treating the bellows as the "respiratory organ" of the instrument, the analogy with the sound emission of wind instruments, and the emphasis on controlling the bellows' pressure, with direct implications for timbre and phrasing, constitute principles integrated into the analysis of contemporary works addressed in the thesis.

A current and multifaceted perspective on the status of the accordion in contemporary academic music is offered by the volumes *Modern Accordion Perspectives* vol. I-IV, coordinated by Claudio Jacomucci, which bring contributions from renowned performers and educators. The materials gathered in these volumes address technical innovations (microtonality, expansion of the timbral palette), the integration of the accordion in ensemble music and electroacoustic contexts, as well as the issues of professional identity and the development of interpretative schools. The

idea of strengthening the status of the accordion through cultural openness, interdisciplinary collaboration, and integration into university programs constitutes an important methodological element of our research.

The work *The Techniques of Accordion Playing* by Bettina Buchmann provides a rigorous systematization of modern and extended techniques, including notation standards and examples from the contemporary repertoire. This contribution has supported the analysis of current compositional techniques and the relationship between the constructive parameters of the instrument and the sound result.

The historical and sociocultural dimension of the accordion is grounded in Marion Jacobson's study, *Squeeze This! A Cultural History of the Accordion*, which traces the identity transformations of the accordion from a popular instrument to a legitimate instrument of academic music. This perspective has allowed for the organological and repertorial contextualization of the researched phenomenon.

Of particular relevance for current innovative directions is the article by Fanny Vicens and Jean-Étienne Sotty, dedicated to the microtonal accordion XAMP, which highlights the expansion of timbral capacities through microtonality and electronic processing. This contribution supports the methodological dimension oriented towards analyzing the interaction between the evolution of instrumental construction and contemporary compositional exploration.

Major contributions in the North American space belong to Joseph Macerollo and Joseph Petric, whose works address the evolution of the accordion in modern music and develop comprehensive interpretative concepts. In the French context, Pierre Monichon has grounded the historical and cultural research of the instrument, contributing to its academic "legitimization."

Recent doctoral research, such as that of Jean-Étienne Sotty and Vincent Lhermet, confirms the emergence of a new sound identity for the accordion starting in the 1990s, marked by the expansion of the repertoire and the integration of electronic technologies. In the Republic of Moldova, the doctoral theses signed by accordionists and professors Petru Știucă and Dumitru Calmîș complete the theoretical framework through approaches dedicated to academic transcription and the establishment of genres for solo accordion.

Thus, the theoretical and methodological basis of the research is structured interdisciplinarily, at the confluence of organology, pedagogy, interpretative analysis, and cultural studies, aiming to correlate the constructive evolution of the instrument with its identity and expressive affirmation in contemporary music.

A special place in the bibliographic support of the research is occupied by sources dedicated to the composers and works analyzed in the thesis. Thus, the monograph by Valentina

Holopova, *Sofia Gubaidulina*, constituted an essential musicological reference in researching her work *De profundis* for solo accordion, as it offers both a broad perspective on Sofia Gubaidulina's compositional universe regarding her aesthetic principles and the spiritual dimension of the musical language, as well as essential data about this creation, which constitutes a major reference in the contemporary academic repertoire for accordion. One of the arguments for selecting this creation for the present research is that the work represents one of the first consecrations of extended techniques in the original literature for this instrument, not as mere timbral effects, but as constitutive elements of musical drama and expression. Signed by an internationally renowned composer, the piece confirms the integration of the accordion into the sphere of high-level academic creation and highlights its capacity to sustain a complex spiritual and symbolic message. In this sense, we relied on the central thesis of V. Holopova, according to which the extended techniques of the instrument are treated as a complex expressive system, in which register, timbre, density, cluster, glissando and the gesture of the bellows do not function as isolated effects, but as means of configuring a symbolic, dramatic, and spiritualized discourse. The author considers the given work to be representative not only for the academic repertoire of the accordion, but also for the aesthetics of contemporary music with philosophical and religious substratum.

Another remarkable work from the solo accordion repertoire selected for this research is the Suite *Five Pictures of the Gulag County* by Victor Vlasov, which has undeniable artistic, dramatic, and technical-interpretative value, confirmed, among other things, by the place it occupies today in the contemporary academic repertoire for this instrument. The work (written in 1991, published in 2004) marks an important stage in the development of original literature for accordion, both through the profound programmatic concept and the expressive strength of the discourse, as well as through the valorization of innovative techniques specific to the accordion, organically integrated into the framework of images, ideas, and dramaturgy of the work, in which the accordion becomes a determining factor of the artistic message, capable of expressing complex psychological states and historically intense contents. Among the few musicological sources dedicated to this creation are the articles by researcher S. Borodavkin, in which the suite is analyzed quite thoroughly and which has been of real help in developing the respective subchapter.

The selection of the third creation from the universal repertoire for accordion chosen for research – *Fragilissimo Entera* by Gorka Hermosa – is justified, on the one hand, by the complexity of the artistic message, and, on the other hand, by its representative character regarding the affirmation of the sound and expressive identity of the instrument in contemporary music. The work reveals how modern compositional writing valorizes the timbral, dynamic, and technical resources of the accordion, transforming it into an autonomous means of artistic expression. In the

case of the work by the well-known Spanish composer and accordionist, one of the difficulties of the research was the limited nature of Romanian or Russian musicological sources dedicated to it, especially in the Republic of Moldova, where information regarding the composer's creation and analysis of this piece is almost nonexistent. In these conditions, the documentation was primarily based on the official website of the composer, which represented the fundamental source for biobibliographic data, the catalog of works, available scores, and some audio materials related to his creation.

A relatively similar situation is observed regarding the accordion works signed by local composers, which were the subject of research in this thesis. The author of the thesis has published articles specifically dedicated to two of these works. However, in the local musicological literature, we find reference works such as the monograph *Harmony of the Spheres: The Creation of Composer Ghenadie Ciobanu* by Elena Mironenco, which has constituted an essential reference for our research, providing a musicological foundation for the compositional universe of the author. At the same time, we will mention that although the monograph was published before the appearance of the cycle for solo accordion analyzed in the thesis, the theses presented by the renowned researcher allow for the inclusion of these works in the continuity of the composer's aesthetic concerns regarding sound spatiality, philosophical dimension, symbolism, and timbral expressiveness. Important references regarding the compositional, stylistic, ideatic aspects, etc. of the cycle analyzed in the thesis are provided by the well-known musicologist Irina Ciobanu-Suhomlin, in an article dedicated to the composer's works for solo instruments. In this sense, the author mentions that *Expanding Space I-II* can be treated not only as explorations of contemporary instrumental techniques, but as manifestations of a profound compositional conception, in which sound, silence, register, density, and performing gesture participate in configuring an artistic discourse with cosmic and existential meanings. The creations of composers Vlad Burlea and Vladimir Beleaev have also been of interest to musicologists in the Republic of Moldova, whose articles have been useful in outlining the compositional profile of the composers.

All these sources compensate for the existing gaps in musicological research in the Republic of Moldova dedicated to the contemporary repertoire for accordion and the issues of extended techniques. The selection and inclusion of these creations in the scientific circuit respond to the need to integrate essential samples of the contemporary universal and national repertoire for accordion into musicological research in the Republic of Moldova, which has been insufficiently explored so far in specialized literature.

The scientific novelty of the thesis lies in the systematization and conceptualization of modern techniques and means of expression on accordion in academic music at the confluence of

the 20th and 21st centuries. The research proposes a systemic approach to extended techniques and highlights the relationship between contemporary compositional language and the transformations of musical practice. Additionally, the work contributes to redefining the expressive role of the accordion and offers practical references for performing and music pedagogy. The originality of the thesis is also determined by the synthesis of musicological and interpretative approaches with those from related fields.

The practical value of the work lies in the possibility of using and integrating the research results into the performing and pedagogical practice of the accordion. The study provides performers with concrete references for approaching the original repertoire for this instrument, from the confluence of the 20th and 21st centuries, facilitating the understanding of the relationship between compositional writing and sound realization. At the same time, the conclusions can be integrated into the curriculum of specialized disciplines in higher and secondary artistic education, contributing to the updating of study programs in relation to the demands of contemporary music. The work can also serve as a methodological support for composers and researchers interested in expanding the technical and expressive possibilities of the accordion.

Approval of results. The doctoral thesis was developed within the Doctoral School of *Arts and Cultural Studies* of the Academy of Music, Theatre and Fine Arts. The work was discussed in the meetings of the Guidance Commission and the Defense Commission on April 9, 2026, minutes no. 1, being recommended for public defense. The scientific results of the research have been approved in communications at seven national and international scientific conferences held in the Republic and abroad (Romania). The content of the thesis is reflected in 5 scientific articles and 4 theses published. Additionally, the research results are implemented in the teaching process, in the author's accordion class at the Academy of Music, Theatre and Fine Arts and at CEEA "Șt. Neaga", as well as in the solo performing practice and promotion of accordion art, as the initiator and organizer of the *Moldova Accordion Days Festival*.

SUMMARY OF THE THESIS

The work includes an introduction, three chapters, general conclusions and recommendations, and a bibliography comprising 166 titles. The main text is presented in a volume of 146 pages, including musical examples.

The introduction highlights the timeliness and relevance of the proposed research topic, the purpose and objectives, the scientific novelty, as well as the important scientific issue addressed

in the field. It also elucidates aspects related to the theoretical and methodological framework, the theoretical importance, and the practical value of the results obtained; information regarding the approval of research results at scientific conferences and in scientific publications is also presented.

Chapter 1, The Art of Contemporary Accordion as a Research Object: Musicological and Performing Dimensions, contains four subsections, which address the art of contemporary accordion as a complex research object, analyzed from the perspective of musicology, pedagogy, organology, and performance. In **subsection 1.1, The Art of Accordion Performance in the Specialized Literature**, research dedicated to the accordion art examined, while in **1.2, The Development of the Accordion from an Organological Perspective: From Initial Constructive Concepts to Contemporary Innovative Trends**, the impact of the accordion's constructive structure on the expressive and technical possibilities of modern performance is emphasized from a diachronic perspective. In the third subsection, **1.3 – Milestones in the Evolution of Accordion Art on a National and Global Scale: The Role of Professionalization and Virtuoso Performers**, the evolution of accordion art is examined, focusing on the process of professionalization and the contribution of virtuoso performers to the affirmation of the instrument as a means of autonomous artistic expression. These three perspectives play an essential role in reflecting the current situation in the field of the thesis's issues, as the development of accordion performance cannot be separated from the institutional, pedagogical, and artistic context in which it has occurred. Subsection **1.4** contains **Conclusions**, which can be summarized as follows:

Although relatively young compared to other established instruments of the academic tradition, the accordion has undergone rapid and complex evolution, generating a theoretical and interpretative corpus that is still in a process of consolidation and critical re-evaluation. The analysis of the specialized bibliography reveals that the musicological literature dedicated to the accordion is heterogeneous, encompassing works on organology, research oriented towards the aesthetics and stylistics of interpretation, etc. Sources regarding the art of accordion also include pedagogical methods, technical guides, reflections of performers on stage practice, and theoretical contributions that problematize the relationship between the musical text and the interpretative act. The correlation of these two directions – musicological and interpretative – is essential for the theoretical foundation of the theme investigated in the thesis. At the same time, the critical and comparative reading of existing sources aims to highlight the current state of research in the field and their relevance to the research objectives.

The approach to the organological dimension of the accordion represents an indispensable step in understanding its artistic and interpretative evolution, as the constructive particularities of

the instrument have decisively influenced both the repertoire and the performing techniques developed over time. In this context, the given subsection analyzes the essential stages of the accordion's development, from its emergence in the 19th century to contemporary forms, highlighting the relationship between organological innovations and transformations in musical discourse. The first types of accordions, marked by the simplicity of the mechanism and by timbral and dynamic limitations, determined a predominantly functional and entertainment repertoire. Subsequently, the perfection of keyboard systems, diversification of registers, stabilization of tuning, and the introduction of free bass contributed to the emancipation of the instrument and its progressive integration into the realm of academic music. These organological transformations should not be viewed merely as technical achievements, but as determining factors in the expansion of expressive possibilities and the redefinition of the accordion's status in the universal musical landscape.

The analysis of the instrument's constructive evolution also allows for a better understanding of the changes in performance and compositional paradigms. Each stage of organological development has generated new technical and aesthetic requirements, influencing the way works for accordion are conceived and how performers relate to the instrument. Therefore, in this subsection, the aim was to provide a theoretical framework to support the analytical endeavour of the thesis and to substantiate, from a historical-organological perspective, the issues addressed in the following chapters.

The process of professionalizing the instrument and the contribution of virtuoso performers to its affirmation as a means of autonomous artistic expression represents an essential perspective for reflecting the current situation in the field of the thesis's issues, as the development of accordion art cannot be separated from the institutional, pedagogical, and artistic context in which it has occurred. Thus, the professionalization of accordion art has occurred gradually, with the inclusion of the instrument in music education institutions, the establishment of study programs, and the emergence of national performing schools. This process has allowed for the crystallization of technical and stylistic principles, while also favouring the emergence of a concert repertoire adapted to the requirements of the academic stage. In this framework, virtuoso performers have played a decisive role, not only as promoters of the instrument but also as true creators of interpretative tradition, influencing both composers and subsequent generations of accordionists.

Prominent figures in accordion art have contributed to the expansion of the repertoire and expressive boundaries of the instrument. Nationally, the evolution of the accordion reflects specific cultural and educational particularities in which the art of accordion art has developed and legitimized as a field of research and artistic practice with established traditions in the domain.

Thus, the determining role of professionalization and virtuoso performers in consolidating the accordion's status has been highlighted, integrating the interpretative dimension into the overall issues of the thesis and naturally complementing the theoretical and organological perspective previously addressed.

Chapter 2, titled The Accordion – Exponent of Contemporary Compositional Language, contains five subsections. The first subsection, **2.1, titled Extended Techniques for Accordion at the Confluence of the 20th and 21st Centuries**, reveals the role of the accordion as an exponent of contemporary compositional language and in shaping modern musical discourse. Extended techniques developed at the confluence of the 20th and 21st centuries are investigated, with an emphasis on the diversification of expressive means and the expansion of the instrument's timbral palette. The next three subsections are dedicated to three relevant works, in the author's opinion, for revealing the issues of the research theme. Subsection **2.2, The Accordion as an Exponent of Spiritual Message in the Creation *De Profundis* for Solo Accordion by Sofia Gubaidulina**, is dedicated to the analysis of the work *De Profundis* by Sofia Gubaidulina, highlighting the spiritual and symbolic dimension of the accordion in one of the most profound and well-known creations for this instrument. Subsection **2.3, The Accordion as a Determining Factor in Realizing the Programmatic Concept in the Suite *Five Pictures of the GULAG county* for Solo Accordion by Victor Vlasov**, reveals the determining function of the instrument in realizing the programmatic concept and the musical dramaturgy of this impressive creation through its emotional force and the disturbing character of some tragic images of history. Another aspect of the sound and role of the accordion is revealed in subsection **2.4, *Fragilissimo Entera* for Solo Accordion by Gorka Hermosa as a Model for Affirming the Identity of the Instrument in Contemporary Music**: the piece *Fragilissimo Entera* by Gorka Hermosa is analyzed from the perspective of highlighting the instrument's ability to generate and sustain an autonomous and innovative contemporary discourse. Chapter 2 concludes with **2.5, Conclusions**, which can be summarized as follows:

In contemporary music, extended techniques mark a deliberate overcoming of traditional performing conventions, aiming to expand the timbral, gestural, and expressive possibilities of instruments, and in the case of the accordion, these are not purely experimental, but form a coherent set of expressive procedures, straining to the specifics of its organological nature. The instrument, characterized by its own "breath," asserts itself as an autonomous sound entity, capable of sustaining complex musical structures in which sound, noise, and gesture unite in a unified discourse, where the technical and semantic dimensions become inseparable. By exploiting the bellows, sound instability, noise components, performing gesture, and timbral masses, the

accordion asserts itself as a representative instrument of contemporary creation, capable of expressing existential, symbolic, and dramaturgical meanings, decisively contributing to its affirmation as an academic instrument, its integration into the avant-garde and post-avant-garde repertoire, and the redefinition of the relationship between composer, performer, and instrument.

Numerous composers, sensing the rich sound and technical potential of the contemporary accordion, have approached the instrument to convey artistic messages with profound meanings. Often, the composers themselves, being virtuosos of the instrument (among them, Victor Vlasov, Gorka Hermosa, and others) have created original works, deeply understanding the possibilities of the accordion and demonstrating brilliant inspiration in their artistic pursuits, have propelled the development of the repertoire and the art of modern accordion, bringing it to the highest peaks of artistry. At the same time, achievements in the field of contemporary repertoire for this instrument would not have been possible without the contribution of great performers such as Friedrich Lips, who, through fruitful collaboration with authors, made an essential contribution to the emergence of valuable creations written for this instrument.

In *De Profundis* for solo accordion, Sofia Gubaidulina, a reference name in the universal music of the 20th and 21st centuries, gives the accordion the "function" of conveying content with profound spiritual symbolism. The innovative effects take on a sacred dimension that creates the image of a prayer, of an inner spiritual ascent, through suffering and pain. Thus, the dramaturgical conception of the work is closely aligned with and determined by the specificity of the accordion. In this work, the accordion is treated as a symbolic instrument, capable of suggesting both human suffering and the aspiration for purification. Extended techniques, such as the use of the bellows without sound or the brutal attacks of the keyboard, contribute to the creation of a dramatic and introspective sound language. Thus, *De Profundis* becomes a musical meditation on faith, sacrifice, and spiritual rebirth. The author not only utilized innovative techniques on the accordion, which offered this instrument new perspectives in academic music in the second half of the 20th century, but also reconceptualized its sound essence, discovering new possibilities for expression, which placed it on the most prestigious stages in the world. However, the contribution of composer Sofia Gubaidulina lies primarily in the spiritual approach to this instrument, treating the accordion as an exponent of the essence of the human soul, which can express the most profound experiences, and the creation *De Profundis* abundantly demonstrates this fact.

Works such as the Cycle of Pieces for *Solo Accordion Five Pictures of the GULAG County* by Victor Vlasov mark, in the recent history of contemporary academic music, a new stage in the development of the repertoire for this instrument, both through the creative interest manifested in images inspired by the tragic pages of the history of peoples still imprisoned in "ice Siberias" (and

addressing this theme at the time of the work's appearance constituted an act of civic courage in a society that had just emerged from the walls of communism), as well as through the original conception and dramaturgy of the given creation. With astonishing depth, V. Vlasov, himself a virtuoso accordionist, utilized a variety of expressive means and innovative techniques specific to the accordion. In this sense, in the analyzed creation, the accordion appears as a decisive factor in promoting the artistic message, playing the role – alongside the performer – of an "intermediary" between composer and audience, endowed with strongly characterized, original qualities, capable of fully expressing complex human states and experiences: from tragicness, pain, loneliness, to contrasts and psychological dramas caused by the vulnerabilities of contemporary society.

Fragilissimo Entera, a work by Spanish composer Gorka Hermosa, represents a sample of the contemporary repertoire for solo accordion, an example of the organic integration of the extended technical possibilities of the accordion into musical discourse, constituting an important contribution to affirming the role of the performer in contemporary music. The work demonstrates a professional approach to compositional and performing techniques, integrated into a meditative, philosophical, coherent, and deeply conceptual discourse where technique becomes language, and language becomes message. Thus, it is unequivocally demonstrated that the specific techniques of the accordion in contemporary music, exemplified by the analyzed work, acquire a clear semantic dimension, becoming an essential structural element of the artistic message. Therefore, in contemporary music, the specific techniques of the accordion hold an essential semantic function, being direct "bearers" of meaning and artistic message.

Chapter 3, titled New Performance Techniques for Accordion Reflected in Contemporary Compositional Creations from Republic of Moldova, contains four subsections that reflect the new performance techniques for accordion in contemporary compositional creations from the Republic of Moldova, highlighting the authors' contributions to the development of modern instrumental language. Subsection **3.1, Original Creations for Accordion in National Music (1970-present): An Overview**, presents a brief review of samples from the local repertoire for accordion, in a diachronic perspective, emphasizing the diversification of expressive means and the consolidation of the academic status of the instrument. Subsections **3.2, 3.3, and 3.4** are dedicated to the analysis of the works *Konzeptstück* by Vladimir Beleaev, *Expanding Space* by Ghenadie Ciobanu, and *Clepsidra* by Vlad Burlea, revealing the ways in which extended techniques, timbral explorations, and innovative compositional concepts contribute to the affirmation of a distinct interpretative identity in the local musical space. Conclusions are inserted in subsection **3.5** and reveal the following:

The evolution of the national repertoire for accordion from the Republic of Moldova highlights a distinct path, marked by the contribution of local composers. Initially created for educational purposes or belonging to the field of folk music, the national-origin accordion repertoire has played a crucial role in the development of performing art and in the process of ascension and affirmation as an autonomous soloistic instrument. At the same time, the diversification of compositional language and the expansion of performance techniques, especially in recent decades, have allowed for the exploitation of the instrument's expressive potential and, through this, the consolidation of the accordion's status in the circuit of contemporary academic music.

Konzeptstück for solo accordion by Vladimir Beleaev stands out as a significant contribution to the national contemporary repertoire for this instrument, both through the originality of the message and the complexity of the compositional means used. In the panorama of 21st-century accordion creations, the piece occupies a special place, being an example of chamber instrumental music engaged in a social context. While many works for accordion explore the inner world or technical aspects, *Konzeptstück* extends the sphere of address to the outer world, transforming the accordion into a collective "voice" that denounces the horrors of war and advocates for peace.

In general, the writing for accordion in this piece denotes a profound knowledge of the instrument's possibilities – both its orchestral qualities (polyphony, multiple registers, dynamic richness) and its unique characteristics (the bellows and air button, the ability to instantly switch from one timbre to another, air effects), which the composer does not hesitate to highlight. This approach aligns with the general trend in contemporary music to treat the accordion as an "equal" instrument to others in the academic sphere, by reconceptualizing the sounds offered by the instrument and discovering new possibilities for expression. Among these "pioneers" is composer V. Beleaev, who, exploiting the expressive resources of the accordion, conveys a strong and expressive message against war. Thus, V. Beleaev aligns himself with the generation of Eastern European composers who, stimulated by virtuosic performers, have transformed the accordion into a versatile soloistic instrument capable of communicating profound ideas and extreme states.

The *Expanding Space I, II* cycle by Ghenadie Ciobanu represents a reference contribution to contemporary literature for accordion, illustrating how a composer values instrumental tradition and projects it into the sphere of artistic innovation. Through its free fantasy-scherzo structure and the organic evolution of sound material, the work attests to an original auditory universe, where sound and silence, dissonance and timbre, gesture and contemplation coexist in a subtle balance. The single-part musical form of the pieces denotes the evolutionary character of the discourse in

which silence plays a formative role. The modern compositional techniques used by the author – from continuous variation to *senza metro* insertions – have an important dramaturgical role, and the atonal language, with an accentuated symbolism, gives the works both a deeply expressive dimension and an abstract austerity specific to contemporary music.

An essential aspect is the integration of extended accordion techniques, which Gh. Ciobanu puts at the service of expressiveness: *clusters, tremolo, bellow shake, glissando, note bending, and percussive techniques* are not mere effects, but true means of semantic dynamization of the sound discourse. Their expressive impact – from the shock and turmoil of climaxes to the subtlety of lyrical nuances – demonstrates the potential of the accordion as a versatile instrument in contemporary music.

Gh. Ciobanu's compositional approach consolidates the position of the accordion as an instrument of postmodern sound experimentation. The composer maximally exploits the acoustic micro-universe of the accordion, demonstrating that it can be a perfect medium for investigating ideas related to eternity, the universe, and time. Through his cultural and scientific references (from acoustic physics to mythology, such as the evocation of the poles of sound – pure consonance vs. white noise – an idea also present in his theoretical works), Ciobanu elevates the accordion to the rank of a partner in sound research, alongside other instruments of contemporary music.

For performers, the approach to these pieces broadens the horizon of skills: it is no longer just about playing well, but about entering the laboratory of sounds, about being co-creators of the atmosphere alongside the composer. In the local context, the fact that a composer of Ciobanu's stature writes pieces specifically dedicated to the accordion (and collaborates with performers such as Radu Răţoi) gives the instrument increased visibility in the world of cultured music, inspiring other local composers to experiment. Thus, *Expanding Space* can be seen as a landmark of the early 21st century, where the accordion conquers previously unimagined artistic dimensions.

Clepsidra for accordion, cello, and piano by Vlad Burlea marks the introduction of the accordion into the context of chamber ensembles, highlighting how the composer exploits the expressive potential of the accordion within a suggestive instrumental composition, fully in accord with the Bacovian poetic universe. The integration of the accordion alongside cello and piano contributes to the creation of a complex sound, capable of sustaining the lyrical-philosophical and meditative dimension of the musical discourse. The extended accordion techniques used do not serve a purely aesthetic role, but become symbolic means of conveying the inner experiences and dramatic states traversed by the lyrical hero. Thus, the work gains expressive coherence and a well-defined stylistic identity, imposing itself as a representative creation for the contemporary

orientation of national music, in which the accordion is treated as an instrument with profound expressive valences.

The importance of the emergence of such valuable works for accordion in national music is significant, as they contribute to the consolidation of the instrument's status within contemporary academic creation. These creations substantially enrich the national repertoire, offering performers works with an artistic and technical level comparable to that of international specialized literature. The fact that works signed by Ghenadie Ciobanu, Vladimir Beleaev, and Vlad Burlea have already been performed abroad confirms their artistic relevance and viability. The presence of this repertoire on international stages promotes the national accordion school and Moldovan composition in competitive cultural contexts. Thus, local composers align themselves with the most valuable traditions of contemporary literature for accordion, demonstrating the ability to engage in dialogue with current trends in musical art.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The accordion has undergone a complex process of identity redefinition, academic consolidation, and expressive expansion in recent decades, becoming an authentic exponent of modern compositional discourse. This doctoral thesis, dedicated to the theme *New Means of Expression and Performance Techniques for Accordion in Academic Music at the Confluence of the 20th and 21st Centuries*, aimed to elaborate a complex picture of the affirmation of the accordion in contemporary times, as an instrument of high technical and artistic virtuosity, which has determined transformations in contemporary instrumental language and artistic life in general.

The important scientific problem solved in the thesis is defined by the theoretical foundation of new means of expression and performance techniques for accordion, by correlating the organological evolution of the instrument with the development of contemporary universal and national repertoire. The research proposes an integrative approach that demonstrates the interdependence between the construction of the instrument, compositional explorations, and the formation of a new interpretative paradigm.

Following the research, several conclusions were synthesized:

The identification and selection of a relevant corpus of original creations for accordion from the last approximately 50 years have highlighted the scope and diversity of contemporary repertoire for this instrument, which has definitively surpassed the previously attributed peripheral status and has affirmed itself as a mature academic instrument capable of supporting complex musical discourses of high expressive and conceptual density. The exponential growth of original repertoire in the contemporary period reflects the constant interest of composers in its expressive

potential. The analyzed works confirm that the instrument has become a "privileged medium" for timbral, microtonal, and dramaturgical explorations, being integrated into contemporary music.

Investigating the processes of consolidating the academic status of the accordion has highlighted the interdependence between organological evolution, professionalization, and the establishment of interpretative schools. The perfection of the instrument's construction – the diversification of registers, improvement of mechanisms, emergence of microtonal models, and integration of electronic components – has considerably expanded its technical and timbral possibilities. These transformations have, in turn, generated new requirements and stimulated the development of specialized pedagogy. The institutional consolidation of accordion studies in academies and universities has decisively contributed to its legitimization in the field of cultured music, and the activity of virtuosic performers has accelerated the process of international recognition.

Another essential result of the research is the highlighting of the achievements of contemporary accordion art through the analysis of specific techniques and means of expression. The study has demonstrated that modern technique is not limited to mechanical virtuosity, but involves fine timbral control, complex management of the bellows, and the use of extended techniques (unconventional glissandos, percussions on the body of the instrument, breath effects, micro-intervals, etc.). The expansion of the sound palette confirms that the contemporary accordion functions as a timbral laboratory, capable of producing varied sounds, from ethereal transparency to broad orchestral densities. At the same time, it has been demonstrated that these techniques are not mere artifices, but structural elements of modern musical discourse, marking the affirmation of a distinct sound identity specific to the accordion in the context of current music.

The interpretative and structural analysis of representative creations from the contemporary universal original repertoire has highlighted the determining role of the accordion as an exponent of compositional concept, dramaturgy, spiritual message, or programmatic texture of the works. By expanding its means of expression and innovative techniques, the instrument "demonstrates" superior qualities related to supporting musical discourses with profound symbolic content, as well as complex dramaturgical constructions, in which timbre becomes a bearer of meaning. At the same time, the research has demonstrated that the sound identity of the accordion is not static, but is permanently redefined in dialogue with current compositional languages, in the context of collaborations between virtuoso accordionists and composers.

Nationally, highlighting the particularities of the development of the repertoire dedicated to the accordion in the Republic of Moldova has emphasized the creative integration of new techniques and their adaptation to local cultural specifics. Moldovan composers have capitalized

on the modern possibilities of the instrument, contributing to the diversification of the repertoire and the consolidation of a distinct interpretative identity. The synthesis between local musical tradition and technical innovation demonstrates the vitality of the national interpretative school and its capacity to engage in dialogue with universal trends in contemporary compositional art. Highlighting the particularities of the development of the repertoire for accordion in the Republic of Moldova demonstrates not only the creative integration of modern techniques into local composition, but also its contribution to the international value circuit. In this sense, the emergence of valuable new creations for accordion, signed by established composers such as Ghenadie Ciobanu, Vladimir Beleaev, and Vlad Burlea, during the elaboration of the thesis, demonstrates this fact.

Overall, the conclusions of the research confirm that the contemporary accordion stands at the confluence of tradition and innovation, between technical exploration and profound artistic expressiveness. The organological transformations, repertoire development, and professionalization of performing have contributed to its affirmation as an instrument with a consolidated academic status and a distinct sound identity in music, at the confluence of the 20th and 21st centuries. The work demonstrates that new means of expression and performing techniques do not represent just a technical progress, but constitute the foundation of a new aesthetic paradigm, in which the accordion assumes an active and relevant role in shaping contemporary musical discourse.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Promotion of contemporary original repertoire for accordion by organizing workshops with virtuoso performers, competitions, festivals, concerts, and other events at the institutional level.
2. Encouragement of the valorization of original national creations for accordion in the international artistic circuit.
3. Continuation of the systematization of contemporary terminology and notations related to extended techniques and means of expression of the accordion.
4. Development of principles and teaching methods for studying extended techniques, based on the inclusion of contemporary original creations for accordion in the educational repertoire.
5. Inclusion of contemporary original creations for accordion in the curricula of specialized disciplines and study programs.

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LIST OF SCIENTIFIC WORKS ON THE THEME OF THE THESIS

New means of expression and techniques of performing of the accordion in academic at the confluence of the 20th and 21st centuries

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2. Articles in Scientific Journals:

2.3. in journals from the National Register of professional journals

2.3.1. Tehnicile extinse la acordeon ca repere conceptuale și interpretative esențiale în ciclul *Expanding Space* pentru acordeon solo de Ghenadie Ciobanu În: *Revista de Știință, Inovare, Cultură și Artă „Akademos”*, 2026, nr. 1 (80), pp. 189-195

2.3.2. Tehnici inovative la acordeon ca procedee de exprimare a mesajului artistic contemporan: *Fragilissimo Entera* de Gorka Hermosa În: *Studiul artelor și culturologie: istorie, teorie, practică*, nr. 2 (49) 2025, p. 53-59

2.3.3. Abordări moderniste și tehnici inovative în creația *De profundis* pentru acordeon de Sofia Gubaidulina. În: *Studiul artelor și culturologie: istorie, teorie, practică*, nr.3 (40) 2021, p. 46-57.
Coautor: Bunea D.

3. Collections of Scientific Articles:

3.2. Collections of Works from International Conferences

3.2.1. *Clepsidra* pentru acordeon, violoncel și pian de Vlad Burlea: aspecte compoziționale și ale tratării acordeonului. În: *Cultura și arta: cercetare, valorificare, promovare: conf. șt., 9 dec. 2022*, Chișinău. Chișinău, 2023, p. 23-30

3.2.2. Tehnici inovative specifice acordeonului în suita *Cinci tablouri ale Gulagului* de Victor Vlasov În: *RoAct, Cultură, artă și tradiție în spațiul intercultural al românilor din diaspora*. Nr. 1/2021, p.52-60

4. Materials/Theses Presented at Scientific Forums

4.3. International Conferences held in the Republic of Moldova

4.3.1. *Klepsydra* de Vlad Burlea și noile tehnici interpretative pentru acordeon în creațiile compozitorilor autohtoni. În: *CULTURA ȘI ARTA: cercetare, valorificare, promovare*, Ed. 1, 9 decembrie 2022, Chișinău. Chișinău: 2022, p. 8

4.3.2. *Fragilissimo entera* de Gorka Hermosa și noile tehnici de interpretare la acordeon în contemporaneitate În: *Cultura și arta: cercetare, valorificare, promovare: Conferința științifică națională a doctoranzilor și conducătorilor de doctorat*, 10 decembrie 2021, Chișinău : S. n., 2022, p.10-11

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4.3.4. Contribuția lui Friedrich Lips în afirmarea acordeonului pe scena academică în cea de-a doua jumătate a secolului XX. In: *Învățământul artistic – dimensiuni culturale*, 15 mai 2020, Chișinău. Chișinău, Republica Moldova: 2020, Vol.1, pp. 89-91

ADNOTARE

Mîrzac Sergiu. Mijloace de expresie și tehnici de interpretare noi la acordeon în muzica academică la confluența secolelor XX-XXI. Teză de doctor în arte, specialitatea 653.01 Muzicologie (cercetare), Chișinău, 2025.

Teza include : adnotări, introducere, trei capitole, concluzii generale și recomandări, 146 pagini ale textului de bază, bibliografia din 166 de surse, 83 exemple muzicale.

Cuvinte-cheie: acordeon, organologie, artă interpretativă, tehnici contemporane, repertoriu original pentru acordeon.

Domeniul de studiu: organologie, teoria și istoria interpretării instrumentale.

Scopul și obiectivele cercetării. Cercetarea își propune să evidențieze rolul proceselor evolutive ale limbajului interpretativ al acordeonului în practica componistică și interpretativă contemporană, prin investigarea și sistematizarea noilor resurse tehnice, timbrale și dinamice ale instrumentului. **Obiective:** determinarea proceselor de consolidare a statutului academic contemporan al instrumentului, din perspectiva evoluției organologice, a artei acordeonului, a profesionalizării și dezvoltării unor școli interpretative; elucidarea tehnicilor specifice și a mijloacelor de expresie, a aspectelor timbrale etc. ale instrumentului; analiza interpretativă și structurală a diferitor creații reprezentative din repertoriul universal și național contemporan; relevarea particularităților dezvoltării repertoriului național dedicat acordeonului, în contextul noilor tehnici de interpretare.

Noutatea științifică a tezei constă în sistematizarea și conceptualizarea tehnicilor interpretative moderne și a mijloacelor de expresie la acordeon în muzica academică de la confluența secolelor XX – XXI. Cercetarea propune o tratare sistemică proprie a tehnicilor extinse și evidențierea relației dintre limbajul componistic contemporan și transformările practicii interpretative. De asemenea, lucrarea contribuie la redefinirea rolului expresiv al acordeonului și oferă repere aplicative pentru interpretare și pedagogia muzicală.

Problema științifică importantă soluționată se definește prin fundamentarea teoretică a noilor mijloace de expresie și tehnici de interpretare la acordeon, prin corelarea evoluției organologice a instrumentului cu dezvoltarea repertoriului contemporan universal și național. Cercetarea propune o abordare integratoare, care demonstrează interdependența dintre construcția instrumentului, explorările componistice și formarea unei noi paradigme interpretative.

Importanța teoretică a tezei rezidă în elucidarea particularităților și a rolului limbajului instrumental în contextul muzicii contemporane, oferind un cadru coerent de comprehensiune a fenomenului acordeonistic contemporan, prin argumentarea teoretică a corelației dintre evoluția sa constructivă, explorările componistice și noile realizări în domeniul artei interpretative. Cercetarea sprijină consolidarea unui cadru metodologic necesar studiului acordeonului, integrarea instrumentului în discursul științific general al muzicii contemporane, contribuind la definirea identității sale sonore și estetice în contextul muzicii universale de la sfârșitul secolului XX și începutul secolului XXI.

Valoarea aplicativă a lucrării constă în posibilitatea utilizării și integrării rezultatelor cercetării în practica interpretativă și pedagogică a acordeonului; în curriculumul disciplinelor de specialitate din învățământul artistic de nivel superior și mediu și pot servi drept suport metodologic pentru compozitori și cercetători interesați de extinderea posibilităților tehnice și expresive ale acordeonului.

Aprobarea rezultatelor a avut loc în cadrul comunicărilor la șapte conferințe științifice naționale și internaționale, reflectate în 9 publicații: 5 articole și 4 rezumate. Rezultatele cercetării sunt implementate în procesul didactic, în clasa de acordeon a autorului, la AMTAP și CEEA „Șt. Neaga”, cât și în practica sa interpretativă.

ANNOTATION

Mîrzac Sergiu. New means of expression and techniques of performing of the accordion in academic music at the confluence of the 20th and 21st centuries. PhD thesis, specialty 653.01 Musicology (research), Chisinau, 2025.

The thesis includes sections: annotations, introduction, three chapters, general conclusions and recommendations, 146 pages of the basic text, bibliography from 166 sources, 83 examples.

Keywords: accordion, performance, extended performance techniques, organology, technical improvement, original repertoire for the accordion.

Field of study: art of musical performance, organology.

Purpose and objectives of the research. The research aims to highlight the role of the evolutionary processes of the interpretative language of the accordion in contemporary compositional and performing practice, by investigating and systematizing the new technical, timbral and dynamic resources of the instrument. **Objectives:** to determine the processes of consolidation of the contemporary academic status of the instrument, from the perspective of its evolution, of the art of the accordion, of the professionalization and development of performance schools; to elucidate of specific techniques and means of expression, timbral aspects, etc. of the instrument; performing and structural analysis of representative creations from the contemporary universal and national repertoire; to reveal the particularities of the development of the national repertoire dedicated to the accordion, in the context of new performance techniques.

The scientific novelty of the thesis consists in the systematization and conceptualization of modern interpretive techniques and means of expression on the accordion in academic music at the confluence of the twentieth – twenty-first centuries. The research proposes a systemic treatment of extended techniques and highlighting the relationship between contemporary compositional language and the transformations of musical practice. The work also contributes to the redefinition of the expressive role of the accordion and offers applicative landmarks for musical performance and pedagogy.

The important scientific problem solved in the research is defined by the theoretical foundation of the new means of expression and techniques of accordion performance, by correlating the evolution of the instrument with the development of the universal and national contemporary repertoire. The research proposes an integrative approach, which demonstrates the interdependence between the construction of the instrument, the compositional explorations and the formation of a new interpretative paradigm.

The theoretical importance of the thesis lies in elucidating the particularities and the role of instrumental language in the context of contemporary music, providing a coherent framework for understanding the contemporary accordion phenomenon, through the theoretical argumentation of the correlation between its constructive evolution, compositional explorations and new achievements in the field of performing art. The research supports the consolidation of a methodological framework necessary for the study of the accordion, the integration of the instrument into the general scientific discourse of contemporary music, contributing to the definition of its sound and aesthetic identity in the context of the universal music of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.

The applicative value of the work consists in the possibility of using and integrating the results of research into the musical and pedagogical practice of the accordion; in the curriculum of specialized disciplines in higher and middle level artistic education and can serve as methodological support for composers and researchers interested in expanding the technical and expressive possibilities of the accordion.

The approval of the results took place within the communications at seven national and international scientific conferences, reflected in 9 publications: 5 articles and 4 abstracts. The results of the research are implemented in the teaching process, in the author's accordion class, at AMTAP and CEEA "Șt. Neaga", as well as in his performing practice.

MÎRZAC SERGIU

**NEW MEANS OF EXPRESSION
AND PERFORMANCE TECHNIQUES OF ACCORDION
IN ACADEMIC MUSIC
AT THE CONFLUENCE OF THE 20TH-21ST CENTURIES**

SPECIALITATEA 653.01 MUZICOLOGIE (CERCETARE)

DOCTORAL THESIS ABSTRACT

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