

BEYOND THE EAST-WEST DIVIDE  
Balkan music and its poles of attraction

*Edited by*  
*Joana Medić and Katarina Tomašević*



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Belgrade, 2015

Cover image: An extract from *A New Map of Turkey in Europe, Divided into its Provinces, from the Best Authorities* by John Cary (1754–1835). Prepared in 1801.

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## PREFACE

In its engagement with Balkan music, musicology has largely conformed to the dominant cultural historiographical model of a divide between ‘East’ and ‘West’. Marked by core binary concepts, under the spell initially of theories of modernity, and subsequently of critical theories that aimed to deconstruct these oppositions, musicology on Balkan music still remains within the confines of the ‘East-West’ paradigm. Theories such as Edward Said’s Orientalism and Maria Todorova’s Balkanism have served as key methodological tools in conceptualizing Balkan music and analysing the ways in which stereotypical and ideologically-charged images of ‘the West’ and ‘the East’ are reproduced in musical praxes. Powerful as they have been, analyses of the Balkans solely with reference to ‘East’ and ‘West’ surely do not do justice to the diversity of relationships that have shaped its variegated musical space, and have inevitably rendered a distorted image of its musical landscape.

This book aims to contribute to a widening of our critical understanding of a historically and spatially diverse cultural network that embraces Balkan music, and therefore invites proposals for papers that challenge and/or move beyond the ‘East-West’ paradigm. An examination of a network that would not be restricted to the West-East perspective should lead to a richer and more complex understanding of the Balkans and its interconnectedness with other regions, such as the Mediterranean and Russia. By analysing these as well as other spheres of influences, we hope to reveal affinities that have rarely been explored, and will yield a richer understanding not only of Balkan music (‘art’, ‘traditional’ as well as ‘popular’) but also of music history in general.

Contributions fall under the following subtopics:

– Musical Relations between the Balkans and Russia

Russia has acted as an influencing agent on the Balkans over several centuries and ties between these two regions were often highly charged politically. Importantly, Moscow was perceived as the ‘Third Rome’ by the Orthodox Balkans, while the Russian Empire was deeply involved in matters of the so-called ‘Eastern Question’. The great influx of Russian émigrés following the Russian revolution played a significant role in shaping the Balkan cultural elite. Last but not least, the Russian national school and the Soviet model of socialist realism had a profound impact on Balkan music over the last two centuries.

– Interactions with the Mediterranean

Both the Balkans and the Mediterranean figure more as imaginary cultural spaces than firm geographical entities. Yet the way these spaces correlate musically has barely been explored. How did the culture of the Mediterranean, with its shifting

empires and perpetual migrations, engage with the Balkans musically? What could be learned, for example, by exploring the great hub of Constantinople, which has been perceived both as a gateway to the Balkans and a symbol of the Eastern Mediterranean? Could a scrutiny of Balkan music's interaction with Mediterranean music enrich our understanding of musical life of the broader area of South Eastern Europe?

Jasmina Huber writes about the musical physiognomy of melodies that belong to the Sephardic vocal (liturgical and paraliturgical) heritage in the western Balkans. The author shows that the Jewish musical tradition in the Balkans was a symbiosis of Hebrew poetry and oriental(ised) melodies.

Valentina Sandu-Dediu has contributed a very interesting, introspective and often self-deprecatory account on the past and present state of Romanian musicology, the discipline that has long been torn between shifting ideologies, the Riemann-inspired grandiose ambitions of music historians who singlehandedly wrote monumental but often error-laden books, and the long-standing focus on domestic output, caused both by ideological restrictions, language barrier and the fact of external i.e. foreign interest in Romanian music. The author concludes that the history of Romanian music must be rewritten from next prespectives, but also warns that a compromise must be reached between two opposing extremes - the unscrupulous political engagement on the one hand (which has influenced the boys written in communist times) and avoidance of any ideological involvement the other (which has been a recent tendency).

Ivana Miladinović-Prica writes about Milimir Drašković who, in the later phase of his career, Drašković, seemingly surprisingly, turned towards Byzantine heritage and Serbian orthodox church chants of the Octoechos as a source of inspiration and combined it with his already established avantgarde procedures, but also with popular music genres such as rock and jazz. Drašković and Miloš Petrović held workshops titled Byzantium and Today in Germany, where they brought the experiences of the cultural "Other" to German audiences, but also deliberately "invented" tradition in accordance with their artistic goals.

Iva Nenić addresses the dichotomy of the East-West and its ideological implications using the example of the slowly expanding world music scene in the former Yugoslav region and, more specifically, with the specific (re)interpretation of the sevdalinka genre of popular folk song, as interpreted by the young Bosnian singer Damir Imamović, an heir to a well-known Bosnian musical "dynasty", and his Sevdah Takht band. The author discusses the origins and development of the sevdalinka genre, its "politically correct" interpretations in the socialist Yugoslavia, mostly purified of overt Oriental influences, and compares it to Imamović's contemporary interpretations, where remnants of its Oriental origin (such as aksak rhythms, melismatic singing, oriental modes and instrumentation that resemble maqam practices etc.) have been reinstated and even emphasised.

Russian and other non-phonetic Slavic languages written in Cyrillic script have been transliterated using the simplified Library of Congress transliteration system, with some exceptions which have been duly explained in the footnotes.

We must express our sincere gratitude to Srđan Atanasovski and Katerina Levidou who originated the idea of rethinking the cultural and artistic ‘poles of attraction’ in the Balkans and without whom this volume would have not been possible.

Moreover, we are grateful to all contributors to this volume, for their patience and cooperativeness during the long process of preparing this book.

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In Belgrade, October 2015  
Ivana Medić and Katarina Tomašević



Timothy Rice

## **Musical practice and the experiential power of place**

The terms 'East' and 'West', so crucial to this volume, suggest that the concepts of place and of space will be of utmost importance. These terms also provide the ground for a third concept I would like to explore, the notion of 'lived musical experience.' Finally I will apply these concepts to three case studies from my research on Bulgarian traditional music.

### **The phenomenology of place**

The most common applications of the terms 'East' and 'West' are as coordinates on maps. Maps are the product of a modern sense of space indebted to scientific thought and Enlightenment philosophy. Maps suggest the preexistence of a space in which our lived experience occurs: Sofia is east of Berlin. London is west of Belgrade. I use the word 'space' to refer to this objective, mapped world. In Slavic languages 'space' might be translated as 'prostranstvo' or 'prostor'.

However, East and West are not only spaces or positions or directions on a map. They are places of lived experience. In Slavic languages the English word 'place' is translated as 'myasto' or 'mesto'. Mapped spaces are devoid of experience. Spaces are thought to precede experience. Place in this formulation is where 'lived experience' occurs. Again in Bulgarian, 'lived experience' might be translated as 'prezhivavane', in Serbian 'proživljeno iskustvo', in Russian 'zhiznennyi opyt'. From the perspective of lived experience, space is not the *a priori* unmarked ground on which places are mapped. Rather, the experience of place is primary. Place precedes in our lived experience any abstract notion of space. Only from our experience of place do we eventually create abstract ideas of space, including notions of East and West.

These ideas about the primacy of place over space are borrowed from the postmodern philosophical tradition of phenomenology.

Phenomenology argues for the primacy of ‘lived experience’ over ‘contemplated experience.’ When we are born into a world, or as the phenomenologists put it, thrown into a world, our initial perceptions are not precultural. From the very beginnings of life, our perceptions are ‘emplaced.’ They are filled with the culture of that place. As the philosopher Edward Casey has written, humans

are ineluctably place-bound. More even than earthlings, we are placelings, and our very perceptual apparatus, our sensing body, reflects the kinds of places we inhabit. [...] [P]lace, rather than being a mere product or portion of space, is as primary as the perception that gives access to it. [...] Place is the generatrix for the collection, as well as the recollection, of all that occurs in the lives of sentient beings. [...] Its power consists in gathering these lives and things, each with its own space and time, into one arena of common engagement (Casey 1996: 19).

If we accept this distinction between space and place, then it seems clear that we are writing about places redolent of and filled with lived experiences. If you live in Croatia, then you may live between an Austrian or Mediterranean west and a Balkan east. If you live in Serbia or Bulgaria you may live between a Croatian or Central European west and an Anatolian east. And if you live in Turkey, you may live between a European west and an Arab and Persian east.

Place is not easily defined. Places come in a huge variety of forms that defy easy reduction to a single archetype. Again, to quote Edward Casey, there is no

determinate concept that rules over its instances. [...] [Place is a] ‘kind of something, rather than a definite sort of something. [...] [Place] ‘has its own mode of abstractness: that is, in its relationality (there is never a single place existing in utter isolation) and in its regionality (whereby a plurality of places are grouped together). [...] Even when prediscursively given (and prereflectively experienced), neither body nor place is precultural (Ibid.: 26; 27; 46).

These two ideas of relationality and regionality seem particularly appropriate to considerations of East and West and to the question: can we get beyond the East-West dichotomy?

To think phenomenologically in this way about place immediately invites us to consider the question of time as yet another ground of lived experience. Our experience of place will necessarily change through time. Our experience of place may begin in our mother's womb, and then our mother's arms, and then the house in which we spend the first years of our lives, and then the neighborhood and the homes of our relatives, and then school and the school playground, perhaps the church, or temple, or mosque, the concert hall, the city centre, and the village square, our visits to foreign lands, and so on throughout our lives. Each of these places will be filled with experiences and symbols and memories that give meaning and emotion to those places. Edward Casey suggests that the phenomenological notion of place deconstructs the space and time dichotomy of modern philosophy into a single space-time, which becomes an event. Each of these place/time events exists in our experience in *relation* to other place/time events. As the number of places multiplies in our experience, places may change from those with a physical reality, like a mother's arms or a practice room at school, to more abstract kinds of places that we may call regions.

Applying this logic to the East-West dichotomy, it seems that East and West are abstract kinds of places that would fall into Casey's category of region. This may seem an obvious conclusion. The more important phenomenological questions are the following:

- When and where or in what places does the regional distinction between East and West become part of lived experience for people?
- How, or in what manner, does the distinction between East and West become part of lived experience?
- When and how do people become aware that they are living in the East, or in the West?
- What is the role of music in the lived experience of East and West?
- Do those living in this part of the world experience East and West in music prediscursively, that is, before they reflect on it?
- Does the East–West experience occur in other domains of life first and music composition and performance flow reflexively from those prior experiences or does it work the other way around?

Both the phenomenological approach and the authors of articles gathered in this volume suggest that the answers to these questions will be different in different places. Even within a single place the answer may be different from person to person and from time to time.

Let me try to answer some of these questions by suggesting that music and architecture may provide some of the earliest prediscursive experiences of the East–West dichotomy for people living in or near the Balkans. In other words, phenomenologically, people growing up in some parts of southeastern Europe are thrown into a world that seems to be brightly lit with symbols that reference the East and the West. Think, for example, about the following things:

- a child growing up in a city or a village with both churches and mosques, either scattered in different neighborhoods or together in the centre;
- a child staring up at glass-and-steel skyscrapers in the city and sitting on the wooden balcony of her grandmother’s home in a village;
- a child seeing some women wearing dresses and other women wearing baggy pants (*shalvari*, in Bulgarian);
- a child being taken to a performance of European concert music and on the way home enjoying a treat in a sweet shop where local and foreign versions of Turkish-derived styles of music are playing on the radio.
- a child at a wedding with music provided by musicians playing synthesiser, drum set, bagpipe, and saxophone;
- a child hearing pop music on the radio at home and her uncle, the *guslar*, at her grandmother’s house on summer vacation;
- a child taken to a church where polyphonic choral music alternates with beautifully ornamented monophonic solo chant;
- a teenager at school where some of the kids are listening to the latest hits by hip-hop artists from the UK and the USA, some are going after school to new folk dance clubs, a third group is drinking coffee, smoking, and talking to the accompaniment of the latest singer of local ethno-pop music, a fourth group is taking violin lessons and practicing long hours each day, and maybe a few kids are enjoying all four kinds of music in different places or at different times of their lives.

In this kind of symbolic world, the East and the West are not places over in that direction somewhere, over to the East of here or over to the West of here. They are immediately and prediscursively here and there and over there and up there. These experiences are emplaced in a vibrant world of visual and aural lived experience, a place that is my place, my world. This place full of symbols is not exotic; it is familiar. It is a place filled with feeling and memory, not a space for abstract thinking about the nature of the world and its divisions. It is a place that feels natural, because it is so filled with culture in the form of shared symbols experienced over and over again through the passage of time.

Now in the course of a child's life, someone (a parent, an older friend, a teacher perhaps) will start giving names, and values, to these prediscursively experienced and emplaced symbols: this is your chair; this is mother's chair; these are vegetables and they are good for you to eat. This tall building is modern and it is good. This tall building is modern and it is bad. This old village house is old and useless and should be torn down and rebuilt. This old village house is old and falling apart and should be restored as a sign of our history and heritage. This music is Western and of high artistic value. It is ours or it is theirs. This music is Eastern and a sign of our Ottoman legacy. It is ours or it is theirs. Slowly but surely the child learns that different people living in her place attach different meanings and values and labels to the symbols in her place. And she learns through this sort of labeling that the many places of her lived experience belong to a wider world of regions and relations. And she learns that values have been attached to those regions and relations and thus to the symbols in her place, in her world. She learns that her world, her place, is suffused with symbols that reference a place called the East and another place called the West. Phenomenologically, she learns that her place of lived experience may exist in **relation** to a place called the East and another place called the West. Or, alternatively, she may learn that her place is part of a **region** called the East, or a part of a region called the West. Or is it possible that it is part of both? In any case, symbols from both these places, the East and the West, seem to be an intimate part of her lived experience in at least some of her places.

At this point, I suppose that a person, acting as an agent of her own life and as an artist, intellectual, or activist, has two choices, choices that move

her beyond prediscursive lived experience to the contemplation of experience: celebration and nullification.

To choose **celebration** is to celebrate the diversity of the preexisting symbols in one's world, to embrace the richness of the world one has been thrown into, and to create new symbols that enrich and enliven that world, that world we might call 'my place.' These symbols could be:

- new works of art in the form of compositions, improvisations, choreographies, or performance practices;
- new scholarly contributions to music pedagogy and musicology; or
- new social action and community organising that rejoices in the symbolic richness of 'our place.'

Would such celebration in the Balkans require 'bridging the gap between East and West?' I am tempted to argue that early in life a sense of 'gap' is altogether missing. Perhaps for some the sense of a gap never appears. But for others, we can ask: when does this sense of a 'gap' between East and West in lived experience appear? Probably, in either case, the result is conceptually similar: artists, scholars, and activists take the preexisting symbols and symbolic practices of their place and mash them together in a variety of forms. In both cases they attempt to make sense of 'my place' in relation to my history and to my understanding of the way my place exists in a set of relations and regions. I suppose that this work of making sense of 'my place' may sometimes take on the character of joyous affirmation; in other cases such acts of celebration may help to overcome anxiety about my place in the world. Beyond the intention of the artist, the interpretation of the work will inevitably vary from individual to individual, from place to place, and from time to time.

The other choice that an agent acting as artist, scholar, or activist has is **nullification**. By nullification I mean the rejection of one or more of the symbols in the world one is thrown into. In terms of the poles of East and West, it may be the rejection of symbols of the East or symbols of the West. I suppose nullification results when an artist, scholar, or activist comes to believe that the 'gap' between the meaning and values of symbols referencing East and West is so great that the idea of bridging that gap seems absurd or beyond imaging or simply undesirable.

Such nullification reminds us that, according to Edward Casey, the lived experience of place has a temporal dimension, that it is an event. One can imagine, in other words, that nullification follows contemplation of a lived experience in which all the symbols of East and West are co-present in various regions of 'my place' and at various times in my life. We can also imagine that contemplated experience may result in celebration at one moment in one's life and nullification in another moment. Or perhaps even that celebration may occur in one place of one's life while nullification occurs in another place of one's life.

It is not my goal to favour celebration over nullification or nullification over celebration. Both are honourable choices that different people living in the same place make. Both are also honourable choices that one person makes at different periods in his life. What interests me as an ethnographer and historian of music is to observe the kinds of choices being made at particular times and places by particular individuals and the reasons behind those choices.<sup>1</sup>

### **A model of lived music experience**

An interest in the phenomenological notion of 'lived experience' suggests that the individual human subject, thrown into a world, would be the object of investigation. This would be a common and unremarkable tactic for music historians. Ethnomusicologists, however, usually create musical ethnographies of groups of people. The usual approach in ethnomusicology is to create musical ethnographies of what is socially and culturally shared among a group of people. Phenomenology suggests that ethnomusicologists also need what I call 'subject-centred musical ethnographies.' So how can we model this subject-centred ethnography? What would it consist of?

My original proposal for subject-centered musical ethnography posited for each subject, person, or individual a three-dimensional space of musical experience. The three dimensions of this imaginary, ideal space are **time**, **place**, and **metaphor**.

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<sup>1</sup> In order to help me make those observations, I published in 2003 a model that helps me analyse and think about the lived experience of music. Much of what follows is taken directly from my article 'Time, place, and metaphor in musical experience and ethnography' (Rice 2003). It has been repurposed somewhat to allow for a discussion of the East and West as 'poles of attraction.'

Lived musical experience occurs in a material world of sonic vibrations, interacting bodies, and socially organised physical places. This model creates an abstract representation of the 'space' of musical experience in order to analyse what goes in the 'real' place-time world of musical experience. I will explain briefly each of these three dimensions.

**Place** is the first axis in this abstract 'space' of musical experience. Along this dimension I position the places where musical experience occurs. Some of them are rather concrete and some of them are conceptual. Such a dimension might work well for discussing the regionality of places. So, in terms of my previous discussion of the places where symbols of East and West exist, we might have places arrayed along an axis in something close to their biographical, chronological, experiential order. For my studies of Bulgarian music, I found it useful to think of places in a slightly different way, including the intimate place of the individual human being, a gendered subcultural place, a local village, a region of the country, the nation, and places beyond the nation, global places perhaps. The point is that my model is an abstract one intended for anyone to use, and the place dimension can be filled in many ways, depending on each particular study.

**Time** is the second axis of lived musical experience. Like the place axis, the time axis can be used in many ways to think about musical experience. We could use this dimension to think microscopically about differences in experience between the beginning and the end of a piece of music. Or we could think about the different experiences between a first hearing of a piece and a second hearing. We could also use it to periodise history into longer spans, as I did for my work on Bulgarian music: the precommunist period before 1944, the communist period from 1944 to 1989, and postcommunist period from 1989 to the present. The lived experience of people will be quite different in each of these historical periods. Older people who have lived through all three periods will have quite different experiences from younger people who have lived through only one of the periods.

These dimensions of time and place provide a very flexible framework for the study of lived experience. But to account for lived musical experience, we need a third axis. This axis consists of **metaphors** that make fundamental claims about the nature of music. Such metaphors bring music closer to other domains of human experience. Metaphors

take the linguistic form 'A is B', where A and B represent different domains of lived experience. A common metaphor in English is 'time is money'. When we make this metaphor, we conceptualise and behave toward time and money in the same way. If time is money, then we 'save time', 'spend time', 'invest our time', 'waste our time' and so forth, just as we do with money. If we did not believe that time was money, then these very common English expressions would make no sense. To understand musical experience, the metaphors I am interested in take the form 'music is x.' These are truth claims about the nature of music, and these beliefs become the basis for discourses about music, musical behaviours, and strategies for deploying these beliefs and behaviours in self-interested ways. Such metaphors guide all aspects of creativity, reception, performance, and institutionalisation of music.

Musicologists base their studies of music on metaphors that make fundamental claims about music's nature and significance. And the people we study also use metaphors to account for their experience of music. A number of common metaphors are in current use among scholars and can be applied cross-culturally in our studies:

- music is an art;
- music is a form of cognition;
- music is entertainment;
- music is social behavior;
- music is a commodity;
- music is a system of signs; and
- music is a text for interpretation.

Though in many cases these metaphors are left unspoken, I believe that our analyses in every case are predicated on the truth of one or some of these metaphors. Furthermore, when we try to think about the lived experience of those whom we study, we can understand them better if we analyse which of these metaphors is driving their creative activities in music and their interpretations of the symbols in the world into which they have been thrown.

**Three stories of lived musical experience in (and out of) Bulgaria**

I would like to end my article by telling three stories that illustrate how this model might be applied to lived musical experience in Bulgaria. In each case I will show how these stories illustrate the experience of East and West in some particular place.

*Story No. 1: A female bagpiper*

The performance of music is also the performance of some aspects of social structure and social relationships. For example, traditional Bulgarian music was and still is used to enact traditional gender roles. For this story the crucial aspect of gendered musical behavior is that men traditionally played musical instruments and women did not.

In the 1960s, a villager named Maria Stoyanova decided to play her father's bagpipe. In doing so, she shocked her family and everyone in her village. Though she was born in the 1950s and raised during the communist period, her parents still used precommunist ideas about gender to justify taking the instrument away from her. Not only was the bagpipe an instance of male social behaviours, its physical appearance (its phallic pipes) was iconically male as well. So her parents and local villagers and male bagpipers interpreted her playing as some sort of public sexual display inappropriate for women. For Maria, her playing has nothing to do with her sexuality or with male social behaviours. It has rather to do with art. The bagpipe made the sound she loved. She, as an individual, was determined to play this instrument for its artistic value even if it meant contradicting older subcultural and local values about proper behaviour for a woman. This conflict over the significance of music occurred in a place where precommunist and communist attitudes toward female music making existed at the same time.

The conflict, or experiential tension, between Maria's individual ideas about bagpipe music as art and local ideas about bagpipe music as a social behaviour acceptable only for men was resolved with the passage of time from pre-World War II traditionality to postwar communist modernity. In the 1960s Maria auditioned on the bagpipe to study at the newly formed national high school for folk music. The jury of educated urbanites was as shocked as the people in her village had been. They understood bagpipe playing as a male tradition, and so they were reluctant to admit her to a school founded to preserve a tradition she seemed to be flouting. In the

end, a Marxist ideology of equality for women won out, and she was admitted. She eventually became the principal bagpipe teacher in a new place: the national conservatory devoted to folk music. In a place called the nation during the communist period, her playing functioned metaphorically as both a symbol of women's equality of opportunity in a socialist state and a social enactment of women taking a leading role in the previously male domain of instrumental music. New values in the national place trumped older values in the village place, empowering Maria in ways denied to her by tradition.

This story does not need to be interpreted in terms of East and West as poles of attraction. This is a story about the lived musical experience of Maria, her parents and other villagers, and educated urban music professionals. They are not caught between the poles of attraction of East and West. They are, rather, trying to understand one another in a place where individual desires, traditional social norms, and modern social ideas have come into conflict. I suppose one could claim that modern social ideas and the possibility of individual agency stand for the West and traditional social norms stand for the East, but I do not think such an interpretive move is necessary to understand this story.

*Story No. 2: Powerful voices*

The second story begins during the communist period when 'refined national music' (*obrabotena narodna muzika*) was firmly in place and had for the most part eclipsed local, precommunist values and practices. These national transformations of local music traditions became commodities during this period. For the first time, musicians, singers, and dancers could make a living wage ('feed a household,' as they said) from their performances on stage, for the radio, and in commercial recordings. These recordings were then sold in the market for music recordings and slipped through a metaphorical 'space hatch' from a Bulgarian place of lived musical experience into foreign places of lived musical experience. In these foreign places, Bulgarian nationalised folklore, which had been commodified on recordings, was interpreted first of all as art. For many non-Bulgarian listeners (shall we call them Westerners?), including myself, Bulgarian women's choirs made wonderful sounding music with no cultural referents except to the largely empty label 'Bulgarian.'

This movement of Bulgarian recorded musical commodities began in the 1960s, when I first heard them. It reached its apotheosis in the United States during the late 1980s with a set of recordings released on Nonesuch Records with the title *Le mystère des voix bulgares*. People loved these recordings as art. But many tried to interpret the cultural meaning of these recordings by asking questions about the symbolic significance of these recordings and performances. Significantly, people in America and Western Europe did not interpret these recordings in terms of Bulgarian lived musical experience. They interpreted these recordings in terms of their own lived musical experience in the places where they lived. Their interpretations were unconnected to the meanings given to these recordings in Bulgaria. The political context of the production of these recordings and the formation of these choirs did not travel with the recordings. Producers and presenters in Western Europe and the United States intentionally hid from view their relative newness as arranged, refined music. In countless newspaper articles and in notes accompanying the recordings and the concerts by these Bulgarian choirs, this state-sponsored, modern arranged choral singing was read as exotic, ancient, authentic, traditional, unearthly, and 'cosmic'. In other words, it was not read as coming from the East; it was read as coming either from outer space, from the cosmos, or from some deep, mythic past, both places normally cut off from modern, 'Western' life.

Another interpretation without justification in local practice read the undeniably powerful female voices as the performance and symbolic representation of powerful females. The females lived experience, on the other hand, involved negotiating the realities of a patriarchal society, although the professionalisation of local musical practice at the national level gave the singers in these choirs a new social status and a quasi-independence denied to them in local, patriarchal society. In one of the more amusing of the interpretations, or misinterpretations, of this arranged, state-sponsored choral singing, the syndicated television serial *Xena, Warrior Princess* used, in early episodes at least, this Bulgarian style as a leitmotiv to accompany its heroine, Xena, into battle against her exotic and otherworldly foes. The producers of the TV show had heard the *mystère* recordings and thought that this powerful female sound would be an ideal symbol for their powerful heroine. In other words, they mapped a powerful female sound onto the sound of a powerful female.

In yet a third interpretation of this Bulgarian musical practice in American and Western European places, some women formed their own amateur groups to sing this music. They too understood it as a powerful way of being female in a place where women were struggling to liberate themselves from centuries of patriarchy. In such choirs they could perform without male leadership or participation. Bulgarian singing provided them with a new model for performing femaleness in their own place.

One way to interpret this story in terms of the place of lived musical experience is to argue that the recordings moved from East to West. However, I think we can move beyond an East–West interpretation to a better one that argues that these recordings moved from a specifically Bulgarian national place into a global place. In both these places the recordings are commodities with artistic, symbolic, and social significance. In the Bulgarian space they model new forms of social behaviour in which women have relatively more equality of opportunity than they had at the local level, and they have a symbolic meaning associated with the propaganda goals of the party controlling the nation-state. However, when the recorded commodity passed into the global node of musical experience, the Bulgarian symbolic meanings and social significance were filtered out; it was appropriated as art; and all manner of new meanings and behaviors were attached to it. Although ethnomusicologists have tended to be critical of this process, lamenting the loss or distortion of the original meaning of recorded music and critiquing the rather odd orientalist and *new age* takes on *world music*, we also must acknowledge and study the social utility, cultural production, and individual lived musical experience that occurs in the ‘global’ place or, more precisely, in the new local and subcultural places made possible by travel and shuttling media.

*Story No. 3: Postcommunist popfolk*

The third story occurs in Bulgaria’s postcommunist period. During this period, since 1989, Bulgarians seem to be preoccupied with the question of place, specifically with their place in the world. During the summer of 2000, I talked to many Bulgarians about music popular in Bulgaria at that time and about their musical preferences. Their answers led me to believe that in their musical choices they were answering the question, where is Bulgaria and where are Bulgarians located in today’s world. I ended up

concluding that there were three different subject positions in that place and time: there were nationalists, Balkanists, and Europeanists.

During the communist period Bulgarian village music, in arranged forms, became – and still is – a symbol of Bulgarian national identity. It put into practice an ideological bracketing of ethnic minorities within the country and an emphasis on differences between Bulgarians and their neighbours on the other side of the country's borders. In 2000, Bulgarian nationalised folk music (*narodna muzika*) had virtually vanished from the airwaves and recorded media in the new, capitalist, commodity market for music. What was popular was a new form of music called by various names, but most commonly in the year 2000 *popfolk* and *chalga*, a word whose connotations and implications might be captured in the expression 'Bulgarianised "Gypsy" music'. It consists of Bulgarian-language cover versions and newly authored texts set to Serbian, Rom (Gypsy), Turkish, Greek, and Romanian folk and popular melodies. It is a kind of pan-Balkan, Rom-influenced popular music, commonly interpreted, both by its proponents and opponents, as a symbol of Bulgaria's areal location in the Balkans. Proponents celebrate that fact, arguing that Bulgarians should not deny that part of their history and 'nature'.

Opposition to this style comes from two sides. Bulgarian nationalists are deeply offended that this style has eclipsed music that has identifiable, ethnically Bulgarian features and, even worse, that it glorifies a scorned ethnic minority, the *Tsigani* (to use a somewhat derogatory Bulgarian term), who originated the style and provided many of the most popular singers and instrumentalists in this new genre. In addition to being hated by nationalists, *popfolk* is also criticised by intellectuals, bureaucrats, and well-educated youth invested in moving Bulgaria away from its East, that is, its Ottoman and Soviet past, both of which isolated Bulgaria from cultural and economic centres in Western Europe. They hope to insert themselves and Bulgaria into the so-called 'European family' and to consume Western European and American images and products. They favour classical music and Europeanised and Americanised forms of popular music.

While the symbolism of the music is clear to all, arguments for and against it tend to be couched in aesthetic and commodity terms. Opponents call it 'cheap' music, made solely for its commercial potential without redeeming artistic value. On the other hand, ethnic Bulgarians who participate in its making defend its artistry, pointing to some respected

poets who have contributed song lyrics and to the university music education of some of the musicians. Opposing the Europeanists, one of them defended his musical choice by saying: 'We may be Europeans, but we are not Germans'. Bulgaria today, in transition from socialism to capitalism, from totalitarianism to democracy, and from a regional 'comecon' to access to global markets, is a place filled with different subject positions colliding over the meaning and value of music in this place and time.

In this story, East and West do seem to be poles of attraction and repulsion for Bulgarians. Nationalism seems to occupy a middle ground between these poles. In this story we can clearly see celebration and nullification of lived experience in action. Some of the most interesting music seems to celebrate all three spatial positions in popular forms that speak very directly and effectively to people who want to keep in touch with the lived experience of growing up in this place.

### **Conclusion**

The three-dimensional space of musical experience I have proposed here was first of all an attempt to model the encounter of ethnomusicologists' subjects with modernity. Modernity understands itself in contrast to tradition. It is the space in which scholars, musicians, and audiences experience the passage of time, savour music's differing essences, meanings, and metaphoric connections to other domains of culture, and feel the gradations of power as they move (if at times only conceptually) from place to place. It is a tool for analysing the lived music experience of everyone living in a particular place. I suggest that this model of the space of lived musical experience might provide us with an analytical tool to aid our understandings of individual encounters with modernity and of individual lived musical experience. It might also provide a way to interpret the actions of individual musical artists, scholars, and activists in ways more subtle than an East–West dichotomy. Finally, it might provide a framework for comparisons of the particular, idiographic studies published in this volume. In the present time, in the global place of commodified forms, where new meanings eclipse older ones, the experience of music takes on an enormous array of meanings more complex than an East–West dichotomy can handle. Musical ethnographies and histories that trace the movements of subjects in place, in time, and in metaphorical

understandings of the nature of music, will record the different and conflicting lived musical experiences of those we study. Such ethnographies and histories would have a dynamic character responsive to the new or newly understood complexities of today's modern world.

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Danica Petrović

**Southeastern Europe through the centuries:  
paths of liturgical music<sup>1</sup>**

Southeastern Europe (or the Balkans) has captivated politicians and political scientists, historians, sociologists, and those interested in the culture and arts of this region. The views are varied and have therefore given rise to a wide range of approaches.

At the time when I went to school in Belgrade, in the years following the World War II, the Balkan peninsula was, in our textbooks and in our naive minds, one of the three peninsulas of the Southern Europe, politically divided between the two blocks of the super-powers of that time – the capitalist countries of the Western bloc (West European countries and the USA) and the communist Eastern bloc (the Soviet Union and the countries of the Warsaw Pact). The socialist Yugoslavia, founded on the ideas of the Communist International, had to some extent moved away from the Soviet-type communism, and was looking for a middle way in this sharply polarised world. During this time all Balkan peoples were reassessing their own histories and cultural heritages, striving to make them ‘fit’ into the new ideological framework. All eyes were on the new political and ideological leaders and models. There was almost no interest in the inevitable interaction of historical circumstances in the Balkans.

The dramatic events of the final decade of the twentieth century – the fall of communism, the collapse of the country and the wars in the former Yugoslavia, the altered political and social status of (South) Eastern Europe – had an enormous impact on the revival of Balkan topics, and on questions such as ‘What is the Balkans?’, ‘Where are its borders?’ and ‘How are they determined?’. And the borders moved depending on the

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author, topic, personal interests or intentions (Bakić-Hayden, 1992; Luketić 2013). There has been a surge of historical and anthropological studies on the Balkans published over the last two decades (Stojanović 1994; Todorova 1997; Bakić-Hayden 1992, 1995; Golswordthy 1998; Gleny 2012; Šijaković 2004). Many of these works – often translated into Serbian – have become very popular among Serbian readers.

Although the title of my chapter mentions ‘liturgical music’, considering the number of different religions present, both historically and today, in the Balkans, I shall limit my discussion to Christian liturgical practice, predominantly among those Slavs who adopted Christianity (and its liturgical practices) from the East (from Byzantium). I shall provide some examples from other Christian denominations (such as the catholic tradition of ‘glagoljaši’ in Croatia) and non-Slavic cultures in the Balkans (the chant traditions of Romania and Albania) in an attempt to give a more complete picture of this region.

Over many centuries church music has become, first through oral, and later through written tradition, a part of the traditional and cultural heritage. This vacillation between oral and written musical practice has to a certain extent been preserved until the present day, especially as regards traditional church chant. The reason for this is to be found partly in the relatively slow development of musical literacy, but above all in the complex and variable liturgical order of church services dependent on the day of the week, the day of the month (church year), and the relation between the movable and immovable feasts in that church year.

I will overview briefly what determines the form, content and function of the liturgical music of the Eastern Rite:

- *dogmatics and liturgical canons* which set a firm basis of faith and establish a system of services linked to the daily, monthly, weekly and annual cycles of services;
- *calendar of set movable and immovable annual feast days*, which to a large extent are common to all Eastern Orthodox church, although there are certain differences created by different local traditions;
- *typicon*, church rules, which regulates both the daily order of services, and the order of hymns in each particular service depending on the day of the week and the date;

- *hymnography* – hymns which comprise the Psalms and other Biblical verses, the works of various Byzantine and other local hymnographers (writers), form the basis of every church service. Liturgical music is a musical expression, a musical aid in understanding and presenting these texts;
- *liturgical languages* are the old historical church languages which most congregations find difficult to understand today. In the Balkans these languages are: New Testament Greek/koine – used in the churches of the Ecumenical patriarchate and the Greek Archdiocese; and Church Slavonic, used in the churches of the Serbian and the Bulgarian patriarchates (and in the yet unrecognised Macedonian Orthodox Church). The Romanian church used the Greek and Church Slavonic languages until the eighteenth century, when it switched to Romanian (initially written in Cyrillic, and since the nineteenth century in Latin alphabet). The Russian church (and the more recently established Ukrainian church) also use Church Slavonic as their liturgical language, although Russian and Ukrainian speakers do not understand it fully. It is interesting that the Orthodox Christians in Albania, the only officially atheist country (1967–1992), today have their services in Albanian and modern Greek. There have been movements to introduce modern languages into church services among the Orthodox for several decades. In this respect most has been done in the parishes in the distant diasporas (USA, Australia) where church services are often held in the language of the surrounding society (i.e. English). Orthodox congregations throughout Europe in countries which are not traditionally Orthodox and where parishes are ethnically mixed (in England, France, Hungary...) have been developing their own liturgical practice using modern languages and different musical models. As the structure of church melodies is directly influenced by the text, the language determines to a great extent the melodic movement and creates a specific sound picture. I have dwelt on all of this in order to draw your attention to the different local practices which have always existed, and which are even being multiplied today;
- *architecture* – the space where church music is performed and listened to is also an important formative factor. There are intimate connections between liturgical rules, church architecture and liturgical singing, in which the sequence of cause and effect is difficult to establish.

We can follow the history of liturgical music of the Orthodox Slavs in the Balkans through three (somewhat overlapping) key historical epochs:

- the period of Eastern Roman Empire (Byzantium), within whose borders the medieval Slavonic states and independent local Orthodox churches were created (Bulgarian, Serbian, Wallachian...);
- the period of the Ottoman rule (from the mid-fifteenth century to the second decade of the twentieth century) during which the Orthodox in the Balkan peninsula came under the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical patriarchate, although the Serbian Patriarchate of Peć was re-established in 1557. After the abolition of the Patriarchate of Peć (1766) and the Archdiocese of Ohrid (1767), all Orthodox subjects of the Ottoman Empire came under the jurisdiction of the Constantinople/ Ecumenical patriarchate. In the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century, two large migrations took two patriarchs of Peć and hundreds of people to the territories of the Habsburg Lands where, protected by the privileges granted by the Emperor Leopold I, they organised the Orthodox Metropolitanate of Karlovci (1708\*1713–1920), which is still remembered today in the title given to the Serbian patriarchs;
- the period of the modern nation states (from the nineteenth to the twenty-first centuries); these nation states have retained the inherited church organisation, while the creation of new national churches is still a source of conflict(s) among various Orthodox churches.

These historical periods will now be discussed in detail.

### **The Eastern Roman Empire and the medieval Balkan states**

This period is marked by the arrival of the Slavs to the Balkan Peninsula, at the periphery of the powerful and culturally highly developed Eastern Roman Empire, later known as Byzantine Empire. As is well known, the area inhabited by the Slavs was the territory of the Christian mission (*terra missionis*) where missionaries from Rome and Constantinople met during their efforts to Christianise the local Slavs. In the second half of the ninth century (after A.D. 863) the Byzantine Emperor Michael III and the Patriarch of Constantinople Fotius I sent two Greek brothers from the

environs of Thessaloniki, Cyril and Methodius, to work as missionaries among the Slavs. They brought the Gospel to the Slavs in their own Slavonic language and created the first Slavonic alphabet – the Glagolitic alphabet. Their disciples continued translating works into Slavonic language all the way through the tenth century, while at the same time creating Cyrillic alphabet.

As a liturgical language Slavonic was undoubtedly attractive even for the Slavs who had adopted Western (Latin) liturgical practice. Thus the Croats on the Adriatic coast and on the numerous islands in the Adriatic preserved in secret the old Slavonic Glagolitic alphabet and church services in Slavonic. These services were accompanied by the so-called ‘glagoljaši’ singing, a type of singing preserved in oral tradition until the second half of the twentieth century. There are several sound recordings and studies by Croatian musicologists which testify to this (Bezić 1973; Martinić 1981; Doliner 2011), and I could still hear the examples of this type of singing in various places on the Croatian coast during the 1970s and the 1980s (Prevlaka, Zadar, Vrbnik on the island of Krk).

The deeply rooted Mediterranean influences, transmitted through the Byzantine model of Christianity, governed for a long time the spiritual and cultural development of the Balkan peoples (Meyendorff 1982). Liturgical books in Church Slavonic were translated word by word from Greek and copied with the greatest care. Church chant was, I believe, learnt from Greek chanters and adapted to the Slavonic language. At that time even the Byzantine church chant had not yet been written down using neumatic notation. It is difficult to imagine who the church chanters were and which melodies could have been adopted by the Slavs situated at the periphery of the Byzantine Empire. The renowned Slavist Simon Franklin is right to assert that ‘this *translation* of a complicated cultural model brought at the same time both gains and losses’ (Franklin 1986: 385). Slavs established the most immediate ties with Byzantine culture primarily through the monasteries at Mount Athos. Which part of that rich culture reached their compatriots is not easy to guess.

Hymnographers must also have been competent church chanters. Among the Serbs these would be the people like Saint Sava (1174–1236), the first Serbian Archbishop, the biographers and authors of Services in

honour of Serbian Saints:<sup>2</sup> Hilandar priest monk Domentianus († after 1264) and Theodosius († ca. 1328), then Danilo from Peć (†1337), Danilo from Banjska (†1396), Grigorije Camblak (†1419) and Constantin Philosopher († after 1431), both of Bulgarian origin, unknown monks (XIII–XVI centuries), up to Pajsije Janjevac (†1746/1749) and the monks of the monastery of Rača near the river Drina in Serbia who worked and wrote according to the old medieval models at the end of the seventeenth and in the early eighteenth century (Bogdanović, Petković, Trifunović 1971). Both monks and the church hierarchy (bishops, archbishops) were mentioned as church singers. Some nobles also showed interest in religion and the life of the church and were instructed in church chant, as were some boys from a lower social background (Petrović 2011).

It is interesting that despite very widespread and productive translation and copying activities among the Bulgarians and the Serbs, there are no surviving Cyrillic liturgical manuscripts containing neumatic musical notation until the very end of the fourteenth century. In contrast to this the Russians, who had adopted Christianity a century later (the end of the tenth century), and had then for two centuries copied South Slavonic translations of church books (Moshin 1963; Zagrebin 1998), have a liturgical music manuscript written already at the end of the eleventh century (Uspenski 2007; Mayers 2011). This prevalence of oral tradition would continue among the Southern Slavs during the following centuries as well.

There is no evidence that Serbs went to study in Constantinople, although close ties with the Byzantium were established particularly during the reigns of King Milutin and Emperor Dušan. When Dušan conquered the city of Zihna, the see of the local metropolitan, a Greek named Raul from Zihna became the ‘domesticos of Serbia’, meaning ‘the person responsible for church music in Serbia’ (Stefanović 1975: 21). The neumatic manuscripts from this period also contain compositions by well known Byzantine musicians Ioannis Koukouzelis and Ioannis Laskaris with texts in Greek and in Slavonic (Jakovljević 1970; Stefanović 1975: 17–18). The migrations caused by the advance of the Ottomans brought

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<sup>2</sup> *Srbijak* is a collection of liturgical Services in honour of Serbian Saints, written down for the first time as a separate collection in the mid-eighteenth century in the monastery of Rakovac, Fruška Gora (first printed version, Rimnik 1761).

learned musicians from Constantinople to Serbia. The title ‘domesticos of Serbia’ would also be given to Joachim Charsianitos (Velimirović 1964), a monk from a monastery in Constantinople, while the famous church musician Manuil Chrisaphis wrote one of his compositions in Serbia (Veis 1967: 481–483). Greek church musicians brought various neumatic manuscripts to Serbia, and with that most probably musical literacy. Following the example of Constantinople, the Patriarchate of Peć established, at the time of the Serbian Despotate (1402–1459), a school where the pupils could get instruction in music. One of the best known pupils of this school was Constantine the Philosopher (Bulgarian by origin), who was to become the main aide to despot Stephen Lazarević in the scriptorium of the monastery of Manasija (Petrović 2011).

The final decades of the medieval Serbian state were marked by numerous artistic works – buildings, frescoes, literary works and even music. Three church musicians (Kyr Stephan, Nikola and hieromonk Isaiah) who worked in the region between the monastery of Matejče (today in Macedonia) and Smederevo on the Danube and maybe as far south as Mount Athos, have left their works in bilingual Greek–Slavonic manuscripts written in late Byzantine neumatic notation and using the Serbian redaction of Old Church Slavonic (Stefanović 1975; Jakovljević 2004). All three of them put the qualifier ‘the Serb’ next to their names, probably in order to explain the bilingual hymns and to stress their Slavonic background. Their works are the crown of the music written in the regions of the Patriarchate of Peć (1346–1463) under the direct influence of the Byzantine tradition. Dimitry Conomos writes that ‘each chant is unique in some particular way, and even a passing familiarity with the musical conventions of the time makes it possible for us to appreciate many of the individual features’. In his view, investigation of the existent but little known sources from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the works of diligent scribes from Constantinople, Mount Athos, Cyprus, Crete, Serbia and later in Moldavia, would help us to analyse, understand and evaluate the style of the epoch (Conomos 1988: 84).

### **The Ottoman rule (XV century – early XX century)**

The Ottoman conquest caused a great migration of the Christian population from the Balkans both towards the Western European countries and towards Russia. The contacts between the South Slavonic

lands and Russia were renewed at the end of the fourteenth and in the fifteenth centuries. It was at this time that Grigorije Camblak, a follower of the Bulgarian patriarch Euthymius, and subsequently the abbot of Dečani monastery (Kosovo), went to Kiev, to metropolitan Cyprian (1330–1406), who was also of Bulgarian descent and who had spent his youth as a monk on Mount Athos. During his time at the monastery of Suceava in Moldavia Camblak wrote a service in honour of Saint John the New of Suceava, while in Dečani he wrote a service in honour of St. Stephen of Dečani. In one sticheron praising St. John Camblak proclaims: ‘Let all the North rejoice’, while in the service to St. Stephen of Dečani he modifies this to ‘Let all the West rejoice’ (Petrović 1971: 558). A well known writer, Pachomius the Serb (†1484) was another hagiographer from the Balkans who lived and worked in Moscow and Novgorod after 1430 (Markova 2000). Whether and to what extent these migrations towards Russia influenced liturgical music is impossible to determine. It was certainly a precondition which led to the introduction of Serbian and Bulgarian saints into the Russian church calendar in the following century. Unfortunately, monks from the Balkans were to continue travelling to the Russian lands primarily in order to seek help for their impoverished monasteries.

Churches, with their surviving frescoes, icons, and liturgical manuscripts, are also a visible testimony of the presence of the Byzantine culture in the Balkans. Unique among these is the scriptorium and church chant school run by hieromonk Eustathius founded at the monastery of Putna in Moldavia in the sixteenth century. Here the monks wrote, in late Byzantine notation, music manuscripts, primarily Anthologies – collections of selected liturgical hymns, with the text of the hymns written in Greek and Church Slavonic or Bulgarian redaction. The authors of the music were well known Byzantine musicians from the fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries, among them kyr Stephen the Serb (Pennington 1986; Stefanović 1978; Ciobanu, Ionescu, Moisescu 1980, 1981, 1985). Dimitry Razumovski says that at that time young men from Galicia and Lviv/Lvov also came to Moldavia to ‘learn Greek and Serbian chant’ (Razumovsky 1868: 174). A century later a whole collection of liturgical hymns marked ‘Greek, Bulgarian or Serbian chant (*raspev*)’ was to appear in Ukrainian and Russian music manuscript written in ‘hammer-headed’ notation (Tončeva 1981, 2005; Iasinovskii 2003; Kaplun 2008). These sources have attracted

the attention not only of the Ukrainian musicologists who have studied the manuscripts, but also of musicologists in Bulgaria. Serbian chant is represented by the smallest number of examples (Petrović 1972; Shevchuk 2006). Despite all research done on this subject, the question still remains whether these melodies were transcriptions of older neumatic melodies into new notation, or they were newly written down examples of the seventeenth century chant practice.

Conditions of life in the Balkans were changing depending on the organisation and power of the Ottoman Empire. Great efforts were made to preserve the spiritual heritage. The cultural and social elite had either fled or perished in battles, and the circumstances of the remaining monastic communities only deteriorated with time. The Cyrillic printing shops which opened in Cetinje (1494), Venice, and after that briefly in other smaller towns (Goražde, Rujno on Zlatibor mountain, Skadar, Belgrade) and monasteries (Mileševa, Gračanica) were isolated attempts to keep up with the cultural advances that were taking place in Europe. Serbian despots from the Branković family managed for a while to exert some influence from their new base in Hungary (Srem). They built several Orthodox monasteries and encouraged the copying of liturgical books.

The reestablishment of the Patriarchate of Peć in 1557 had without doubt an important impact on the renewal and development of the religious life primarily among the Serbs in the Ottoman Empire. In time, the living conditions and the position of the Orthodox, especially those on the periphery of the Ottoman state, deteriorated dramatically because of wars and the beginning of a general decline of the central administration of the Ottoman Empire.

The Turks in the Balkans lived predominantly in the towns together with small groups of Jews, Armenians and merchants from Dubrovnik. Orthodox peasants ('raja') lived outside the fortified cities and in villages. The scarce information available on their way of life comes mostly from the descriptions of numerous emissaries who travelled between western European courts and the Porte in Istanbul. All of them mainly described festivals, ethnic costumes, dances and songs, and the beauty of the girls; sometimes we also get descriptions of mourning following some tragic event. These accounts also provide descriptions of official Turkish music, which was met with disapproval by the Western travellers as it seemed loud and aggressive to them (Petrović 1975). The church singing of priests

and monks is only mentioned as a quiet prayer in some isolated, remote church. In such conditions, folk music of the Balkan peoples was undoubtedly influenced by the Turkish music, but it is difficult to say whether and to what extent the new circumstances had an impact on church music. Greek musicologists consider the traces of oriental influence that can be heard in modern Greek chant as authentic orientalism of Byzantine origin.

Within the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical patriarchate, the Greeks continued to use traditional chant, music (neumatic) notation was being perfected, and neumatic music manuscripts were produced especially intensively in the eighteenth century. During the last decades of the eighteenth century Bulgarian monks also developed this type of activity, adapting traditional Greek melodies to the Church Slavonic texts. Especially noticeable were the efforts of the monks of the monastery of Rila, and of Zograf (Tončeva 2009) and Serbian Hilandar monastery on Mount Athos (Stefanović 1970; Petrović 1998; 2000: 423–424; Peno 2008). After the Patriarchate of Peć was abolished (for the second time in 1766) this trend spread to the territories inhabited by the Serbs. Hence the metropolitan of Sarajevo, Seraphim, invited a learned monk Peter (Petar) from the Peloponnese, in order to have him write a neumatic music manuscript/collection (Yale fragment) with Church Slavonic texts for the local believers (Stefanović and Velimirović 1966). Many Greek chant melodies were completely accepted and probably attained noticeable popularity a whole century later. Gavriilo Boljarić, teacher and a church chanter, put together a collection of popular Greek church melodies still in use in Sarajevo. Unfortunately, his manuscript was destroyed during the World War I (Boljarić 1887).

At the end of the seventeenth century, due to various geo-political changes, Serbian church and people came under the rule of the Habsburgs, a situation which was to bring numerous innovations and which would in time also affect church chant as a direct expression of the life of the Church, its hierarchy and its believers. In addition to monasteries, now schools also became centres where church chant was taught. As there were not enough local teachers, the metropolitans of Belgrade–Karlovci brought teachers simultaneously from both Mount Athos and Russia and Ukraine. Church chant became one of the standard school subjects. Admittedly, until the mid-nineteenth century, it would

exist only as a part of the oral tradition, but a part sedulously cultivated by the church hierarchy, priests and monks of the Metropolitanate of Karlovci. Thus here in the borderlands of central Europe, the Serbian Church constituted a dynamic meeting point of Greek–Mediterranean, Russo–Ukrainian and West European aesthetic influences.

The Lands under Habsburg control also offered asylum to other Balkan peoples. Greeks and Serbs often shared churches, and occasionally in some cities even choir-bays (Vienna, Trieste, Zemun...). Greek motifs can be recognised in the melodies of Serbian hymns, as well as in the structure of the modes of Serbian chant (Peno 2001). We also have manuscripts (without music notation) from this time in which some of the church hymns in Greek were written phonetically using Cyrillic letters. As a rule these were hymns from the liturgy (Cherubic hymn, Communion hymns) which were sung in parish churches on every Sunday and on Feast days. We assume that they were sung to the melodies of the Greek chant.

Russian influence on music was most obvious in the adoption of the new redaction of Church Slavonic, which in the middle of the eighteenth century replaced the old Serbian redaction. The appearance of spiritual songs and school dramas, as new poetical and musical forms, opened new areas of artistic expression. Today we often hear disapproving comments about the widespread Russification of the visual arts and theology in the Metropolitanate of Karlovci. Yet it is almost impossible to find any direct trace of Russian influence in church chant. The adoption of the Russian redaction of Church Slavonic could have influenced church melodies to some extent, although not much, since both the Serbs and the Bulgarians adjusted the pronunciation and accents to local practice. Musical illiteracy was another obstacle in adopting Russian music/chant. Thus the opportunities were limited to immediate contacts and musical memory which, in practice, meant contacts with rare Russian school teachers and monks who worked in the region (Čubrilović 1986).

### **Modern nation states (XIX century – early XXI century)**

As the Greek historian Speros Vryonis writes, for Greeks in the Ottoman Empire Hellenism and Orthodoxy became far more intertwined than they had ever been in the times of the Byzantine Empire (Vryonis 1988). By increasing its power in secular matters the Church ‘reduced its universality to the limits of individual nation states, the fact that would become fully

obvious only after the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire and the creation of various Balkan nation states (Greece, Bulgaria, Serbia, Montenegro, Romania and Albania) in the second half of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries (Bakić-Hayden 2006: 151). The Ecumenical Patriarchate wanted to introduce its version of liturgical chant, reformed and written down in manuscripts and printed books according to a 'New method', in reformed Chryzantine notation (after 1821), in all regions under its jurisdiction. There were also attempts to introduce this practice among the Serbs in the Habsburg lands. The Bishop of Buda, Dionisije Popović, Greek by origin, founded in Szentendre a school of 'Greek chant', and in 1822 he suggested to Metropolitan Stefan Stratimirović that the Octoechos of hieromonk Makarios which contained Greek melodies with adapted Church Slavonic texts should be published. The metropolitan did not object to the idea but, as there was not enough interest in such a book, ultimately it was not published (Petrović 1992). Two decades later, however, things turned into an open conflict when the Serbian communities in Vienna, Trieste and Petrinja expressed their wish to have choir singing at church services. On that occasion (1846–1847) the Ecumenical Patriarch Anthimus VI sent a stern letter to the metropolitan of Karlovci, Josif Rajačić, in which he rebuked him not only because he had allowed choir music in the church in the Metropolitanate, but also because they were not using the chant of the Ecumenical patriarchate in Serbian churches (Petrović 1982).

At the time when Central European peoples were beginning to adopt the ideas of the German philosopher Johann Gottfried von Herder about the importance of national identity and to show interest in traditional folk art, the liturgical musical practice of the Balkan peoples was developing under several influences: Greek chant in Greek and Church Slavonic (in the regions under the jurisdiction of Ecumenical patriarchate), traditional Bulgarian chant about which we have insufficient information (Krstev 1966: 57–59), and Serbian traditional chant which was in use among the Serbs and, to a certain extent, Romanians who lived under the jurisdiction of the Metropolitanate of Karlovci, and also in the Metropolitanate of Serbia. European influences were often transmitted indirectly through Russian and Ukrainian intermediaries, who had adopted them much earlier. In contrast, the Greeks, especially those on the islands, adopted these influences directly, during the period of Venetian rule.

Serbian church hierarchy (metropolitans of Karlovci and metropolitans of Serbia) believed it was their duty to protect and preserve the traditional Serbian variant of Orthodox chant, and for that reason supported the idea of writing it down and thus preserving it in its original form. Their primary aim was to protect the church chant from the influence of secular music. The large corpus of traditional church chant was written down for the first time by Kornelije Stanković in Sremski Karlovci in the mid-nineteenth century. Stanković harmonised these chants for four voices, although some hymns have remained in their original monophonic form. Stanković published a small part of his work in Vienna (1862–1864). During his studies in Vienna, Stanković had the opportunity to hear some Russian church music in the Russian church in Vienna. Yet his harmonisations follow the rules of classical harmony, even when he struggled to apply them to traditional melodies (Stefanović 1985; Petrović 2014). His followers would mostly restrict themselves to writing down church chant, and only a few would attempt to harmonise the monophonic melodies.

Among those who wrote down church chant there were musicians, seminarians, priests (Petrović 1997). Of those who worked in the Kingdom of Serbia the most important was Stevan Mokranjac (Mokranjac 1996, 1998). Mokranjac went a step further towards individual artistic activity even in those works in which he used traditional chant. Both in his secular and in his sacral choral works Mokranjac left some of the most beautiful examples of the blending of various influences and traditions which overlap in the Balkans. His music contains traditional folk and church melodies (written down *in situ*), distributed among the voices according to the tradition of vocal polyphony (which he adopted during his studies in Rome) and combined with the harmonic language which he had learned from examples of Bach's music during his studies in Leipzig, and which he then adapted to the modal character of the melodies he was using.

The adoption of (Western) European music notation and choral singing in churches were two biggest novelties among the Orthodox inhabitants of the Balkans in the nineteenth century. That is, however, not to say that monophonic liturgical chant was completely abandoned. On the contrary, the old practice continued at the services, while choirs sang mainly at the Liturgy. Nevertheless the Ecumenical patriarchate did not approve the abandonment of the tradition of exclusively monophonic

church singing (Romanou 1990). Similar conditions also prevailed in the parts of Romania which were under the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. In Bulgarian church, which became autocephalous in 1870, choirs continued to exist and choral music continued to be developed (Balareva 1992). I will not go into the details of the development of choral liturgical music here. I only want to point out that for decades traditional church melodies represented the core of this music. It was only in the twentieth century that the composers started to write free compositions to church texts, often without any expectations that the music would be used in church services (Đaković 2007).

The political divisions of the Balkans after World War II greatly magnified religious divisions. Churches (and religion in general) were treated differently in different communist countries, and were generally not supported. Orthodoxy, as a denomination common to various Balkan peoples, did not become an element of unity. State and political borders meant significantly more. In these circumstances there were no comparative studies or joint research projects, and therefore our knowledge of the similarities and differences between church music traditions of different Balkan peoples remains fragmented and unclear. Political changes at the end of the twentieth century brought new surprises. The creation of new states brought to the fore old questions and opened new ones about the autocephalous positions of Orthodox churches in the region. There have also been attempts to create a new 'tradition' in the sphere of liturgical music in the Former Yugoslav republic of Macedonia (Golabovski 1993).

The absence of church music from public life which was characteristic of the Eastern bloc countries and Yugoslavia was reversed towards the end of the 1980s. The dynamic political changes of the last decade of the twentieth century gradually reintroduced choral church music to the very centre of public interest, so that it became the basis of the repertoire of numerous choirs. It is interesting that these changes have not stimulated interest in research on the Orthodox Church music, as it has never become a separate subject (either theoretical or practical) in music schools and academies.<sup>3</sup> The level of performance of liturgical church music (both

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<sup>3</sup> To my knowledge, the only Department for Church music in the whole region, except Greece, is to be found at the Music Academy in Eastern Sarajevo.

monophonic and polyphonic) has not been raised simply because professionally educated musicians have started conducting church choirs. Only some individual conductors have managed, with the help of parish priests and other ‘invisible’ mentors, to acquire fundamental knowledge of liturgy and hymnography, and to learn about the sources and find choral music of good quality; free websites with Russian choral music have been crucial in this. Traditional church chant is mostly left to the individuals, monasteries and secondary-school-level seminaries, whose teachers have usually not gone through the modern music education system.

In the 1990s choral church music, and even the traditional Serbian church chant has come into competition with ‘Byzantine’ Greek chant in Church Slavonic language. The performers, who at first gave concerts, and then also the monks of some monasteries, obtained material from Bulgarian neumatic manuscripts and printed books (from nineteenth and twentieth centuries), while some even went to Mount Athos or to study in Athens or Thessaloniki in order to learn this chant. This broadening of the repertoire and a step into a related, but different, tradition could have been a significant enrichment, if the Byzantine chant had not been represented as supposedly older, more authentic, more Orthodox – which has caused both confusion and a sense of unease among those who, in earlier times, had known the traditional Serbian chant either as experts or as church goers. A further surprise was the *Octoechos*, taken from a Bulgarian late nineteenth century manuscript, which was printed under the title of *Old Serbian Chant* (Popmihajlov and Ašković 2011). And I must mention one, albeit non-academic, source here just in order to give a full picture of the situation which causes much unpleasantness: on various internet forums one can follow inappropriately aggressive debates, entirely devoid of arguments, between groups and individuals who call themselves ‘Byzantines’ and ‘Mokranjčevići’ (supporters of the chant noted down by Stevan Mokranjac). It is difficult to explain how all this came to happen during the decades of increasing Serbian nationalism in both politics and culture, when everything that was a part of the national tradition was praised and given prominence. Everything except the church chant. The sources and causes, and perhaps also the consequences of these changes must await treatment by some future generations of anthropologists, sociologists and historians, especially church historians.

## Conclusion

I have attempted to overview the development of one fairly specific form of religious and artistic expression through dynamic changes over a long period of time. Traditional and new, general and specific, religious and secular, from the East and from the West, for centuries all of these factors have been combined in the work of generations of people who dedicated their time to the church chant, an important but sidelined part of religion and culture. The rich musical heritage of the Southeastern Europe comprises numerous local traditions, all of which developed over centuries on the foundations laid out by the Byzantine tradition, which also continued to change and develop throughout the time of the Byzantine Empire and in the post-Byzantine period. This complex picture should by no means be simplified and made to fit into boxes and within the frameworks either of our age or of certain political tendencies.

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Ivan Moody  
**Turning the compass**

*A Europa jaz, posta nos cotovelos:  
De Oriente a Ocidente jaz, fitando,  
E toldam-lhe românticos cabelos  
Olhos gregos, lembrando.*

*O cotovelo esquerdo é recuado;  
O direito é em ângulo disposto.  
Aquele diz Itália onde é pousado;  
Este diz Inglaterra onde, afastado,  
A mão sustenta, em que se apoia o rosto.*

*Fita, com olhar esfíngico e fatal,  
O Ocidente, futuro do passado.*

*O rosto com que fita é Portugal.<sup>1</sup>*

Fernando Pessoa, 'O Campo dos Castelos', from *Mensagem* (Lisboa: Parceria António Maria Pereira, 1934 [Lisboa: Ática, 10<sup>a</sup> ed. 1972]).

While conventional historical narratives have usually posited East and West as recent traditional geographical demarcators of identity in the arts, almost no attention has been paid to the construction of a Southern, as opposed to a Northern identity. This has to do in part with the political history of the twentieth century, and its opposing ideologies, in part with religious-cultural divides (Greek/Slavic-Latin, Hellenic-Roman, Orthodox-Catholic-Protestant), and in part with the conventional image

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<sup>1</sup> [The Field of Castles  
Europe lies, reclining upon her elbows:/From East to West she stretches, staring,/And romantic tresses fall over/Greek eyes, remembering.  
The left elbow is behind;/The other laid out at an angle./The first  
says Italy where it leans;/This one England, where, set afar,/The hand sustains,  
supporting the face.  
She stares, sphinx-like and fateful /Towards the West, the future of the past.  
The face with which she stares is Portugal.]

of a ‘central’ European musical tradition surrounded at greater or lesser distance by ‘peripheries’. In addition, the East–West divide has obscured the potential to discover and assess common features of the search for a Southern identity, or Southern identities, along a line stretching from Portugal to Greece, and including Spain, Italy, Croatia and Serbia, along the Mediterranean, a cultural common denominator.

As the first part of an extended new research project investigating Southern European identities, and their intersections with other identities, especially those of Eastern Europe, though without yet arriving at anything that may resemble a conclusion, I shall in this chapter merely begin to examine potential parallels and differences between the simultaneously nationalist, cosmopolitan and modernist projects of the Yugoslav Josip Slavenski (1896–1955), the Portuguese Luis de Freitas Branco (1890–1955) and the Italian Gian Francesco Malipiero (1882–1973), all three undertaken within the context of profound political changes which would themselves have a huge impact on these very ideas.

Slavenski’s repositioning of the cultural heritage of the Balkans in such works as *Balkanofonija* [Balkanophony (1927)] and *Religiofonija / Simfonija Orijenta* [Religiophony / Symphony of the Orient (1934)], Malipiero’s search for an identity rooted in pre-nineteenth century Italian art as represented by his series of *Sinfonie* (1933–1969) and Freitas Branco’s attempts to construct a Latin symphonism over the course of his four symphonies (1924–52) represent very specific conceptions of the national identity of music at a time of deep international uncertainty; the present chapter presents an initial attempt to understand the cultural contribution made by different Southern identities as part of the context of what was so memorably described by cultural historians Peregrine Hordern and Nicholas Purcell as ‘the corrupting Sea’ (Hordern and Purcell 2000).

### **Josip Slavenski**

The idea of Serbia as part of Mediterranean culture has been slow to be explored. The Croatian historian Predrag Matvejević included the Serbs in his extraordinary book *Mediterranski brevijar* [Mediterranean breviary] (translated into English as *Mediterranean: a cultural landscape*), published in 1987, and the Serbian historian Boris Stojkovski has also endeavoured to situate Serbian identity within a Mediterranean framework. Stojkovski has written:

Serbia is a Mediterranean country. A large number of our people have historically lived, and still live, in the area that belongs in every way to the Mediterranean. If we compare Braudel and his writings related to the Mediterranean and the features which go to make up a Mediterranean people, we will find a number of anthropological and characterological parallels with the Serbs. [...] The complexity of the identity of the people, who at a given moment of history were under the Islamic Empire, Central European monarchy and the Mediterranean, under the mark of Venice, inevitably left quite specific indications. It is therefore very important that the problem of identity be seen through a prism (Stojkovski 2012).

While the specific inclusion of Mediterranean elements has not always necessarily been part of any broader creative vision in Serbia, it has undoubtedly been present in the background when such visions have sought to bring together the whole of Balkan culture. Josip Slavenski is an intriguing figure even outside the broader context in which I wish to view him. He was born as Josip Štolcer, in Croatia, in Čakovec, but his mature musical studies were in Budapest, where one of his teachers was Zoltán Kodály, and in Prague, under Vítězslav Novák and Josef Suk. After a period teaching in Zagreb, he moved to Belgrade in 1924, where he remained for the rest of his life. It was at this time that he changed his name legally to Slavenski, indicative of his pan-Slavic ideals. These ideals were also reflected in his omnivorous interest in folk music from all over the then-Yugoslavia, repertoires which influenced to no small extent his own compositional work.

Slavenski's vision of the Balkans as a cultural repository was wide, and necessarily took in not only the pan-Slavic nature of the geographical area of the Balkans, but the situation of that same area in relation to other Slavic countries and to the culture of the Mediterranean. He spent a short period in Paris (1925–1926), but apart from that remained in Yugoslavia, which makes the breadth of his imaginative vision the more remarkable.

The composer's Balkan credentials are carefully demonstrated in such works as the symphonic suite *Balkanofonija* and the *Slavenska sonata* [Slavic sonata] for violin and piano (1924), a veritable sublimation of Balkan folk scales and modes, in which such performance indications as 'Sauvage, balkanique' may be found. The piano part later contains the indication, in the composer's inaccurate French, 'Sauvage extasie des Balkaniques'.

Similarly, the third movement of the quintet *Sa sela* [From the village (1925)], a work entirely derived from folk music, bears the indication 'Presto balcanico, furioso'.

While *Balkanofonija* is an obvious manifestation of the Yugoslav spirit, in *Religiofonija / Simfonija Orijenta* Slavenski spreads his inclusive net much wider, its first four movements dedicated to Pagans, Hebrews, Buddhists and Christians respectively. Its subject matter being unacceptable during this period of rising Nazism, the Schott publishing house inevitably rejected the work. In fact, its generalised approach to religion is foreshadowed in the earlier, exploratory *Sonata religiosa* for violin and organ, the opening performance direction of which is 'Allegro agitato gigante', and which Schott had no difficulty in publishing in 1926. Wider still is Slavenski's cosmic vision as expressed in the hugely complex and dissonant symphonic work *Haos* [Chaos (1932)], in which the 'sauvage extasie' of Balkan folk rhythms and modes is sublimated into a remarkable celebration of the power of the natural world and of the universe. Without the score to hand, it would be almost impossible to detect that the work is notated in an unvarying 4/4 throughout (Slavenski 1986).

Interestingly, Matvejević notes of Balkan rivers that they 'rise from the hinterland, the mainland, the nature of their ties with the Mediterranean being diverse and often quite tenuous' (Matvejević 1997: 69). One wonders whether this observation might not serve as a metaphor for Balkan peoples, and by extension Balkan artists, much as the entire book is a metaphor, diverse and multi-layered. In the case of Slavenski, one might argue that he was endeavouring to trace the sources of the metaphorical Balkan river in which he found himself swimming.

### **Gian Francesco Malipiero**

While Italy's Mediterranean credentials have never been in doubt, the deeper investigation of that culture in the case of Malipiero resonates with Slavenski's attitude. Malipiero viewed the Mediterranean not merely geographically, but as densely layered cultural history, stretching from Ancient Greece into the future.

While as early as 1902 Malipiero had begun to rediscover and transcribe early baroque Italian music from the Biblioteca Marciana in Venice, it was his meeting with Casella and D'Annunzio and attending the première of *The Rite of Spring* in Paris in 1913 that really brought about a

creative transformation. Though he learnt much in a technical sense from Stravinsky and Debussy, his perception that pre-romantic repertoires could provide new solutions to what he saw as the impasse at which nineteenth century traditions of German symphonism and Italian operatic style had arrived, and his writing became progressively clearer and contrapuntal, and had increasing recourse to his Italian heritage, while simultaneously endeavouring to broaden its frame of reference.

Such a procedure is well demonstrated by his string quartet *Rispetti e Strambotti*, written in 1920. It is written in twenty 'stanzas', and its formal precedents are to be found in early Italian poetry; the composer spoke of 'escape from the atmosphere of chamber music to that of the open air in street and country' (Malipiero 1921).

His series of symphonies dealt with such themes in a more abstract fashion; in the preface to the Seventh, which he viewed as a culmination, he wrote:

The First Symphony (in four movements like the four seasons) dates from 1933. Originally it was meant to be: *First and Last Symphony*, but this title was too great a pledge, it hindered any future developments and thus would have become a negative programme.

Realising a form of musical expression (the symphony) pre-eminently Italian, it was more than probable that other symphonies should follow. Notwithstanding these wise considerations, today it can be definitively stated that the Seventh Symphony closes the cycle which extends from 1933 to 1948.

In June 1936 the Second Symphony (elegiacal) came to light and on 14 February 1945, after nine years, five of which were the very difficult war years, the Third Symphony (of bells) appeared. The subtitles do not represent a programme, they only reveal a state of mind; the intonation of the Second Symphony recalls an elegy and in the Third the sound of bells is not an onomatopoeia, but is nostalgia for bells of rejoicing and peace.

The Fourth Symphony (in memoriam) dedicated (1946) to Natalia Koussevitsky is not an epitaph but yet it expresses a sense of loss. In the Fifth Symphony (concertante, in echo) there are two pianos in pursuit; they superpose, they yield to one another, from time to time they rest only to resume afresh their chase without ever joining each other. It is not a concerto but the character of the work is 'concertante'. The Sixth Symphony (of strings) was written in 1947 and might appear to be a Concerto grosso if in its structure the same characteristics as in the other symphonies were not evident.

Finally, the Seventh Symphony (1948) bears the subtitle of songs, because this symphony is absolutely linear. Here and there a kind of song obtrudes, it might be the voice of some antique poet singing from the heights of the sacred Mount Grappa, while beyond far away, always further away, lies Venice (Malipiero 1969).

The ‘Antique Poet’ implicitly surveys his country from the heights of the origins of Italian and Mediterranean culture: even though Malipiero himself places the geographical limitation as Venice, it lies ‘always further away’. The Malipiero scholar John Waterhouse has noted memorably that ‘one repeatedly gets the impression that not only Italian early music but the whole of early Italian civilization, from the Middle Ages to the seventeenth century inclusive, had become transmuted in Malipiero’s imagination so as to take on the air of a remote Golden Age, unsurpassably beautiful and irremediably lost’ (Waterhouse 1999: 91).

The Seventh Symphony was not Malipiero’s last. His true valediction may be found in the sparely-scored Tenth, subtitled ‘Atropo’, which is prefaced by words taken from his own opera *L’Orfeide*, the last words, in fact, of Orfeo:

e in quest’ultimo/grave esilio/brama ch’Atropo/a la linea/del suo vivere/  
che dee scorrere/tutti i secoli/ponga termine [and in this last, grave exile,  
a yearning that Atropos may put an end to the line of his life, passed by the  
goddesses through the centuries].

With these words, Malipiero in a sense takes his own leave of the tradition (Malipiero 1967).

### **Luis de Freitas Branco**

Portugal, at the westernmost point of Europe, has something in common with Balkan culture in its simultaneous connection with, and turning away from, the cultural heritage of the Mediterranean. Where Serbia turned landwards to complement its position as a southern culture, Portugal turned seawards; its relationship with the Atlantic Ocean, and the establishing of links with countries beyond it, proved decisive. It also proved ruinous, the cost of maintaining an empire in the twentieth century being one of the deciding factors in the subsequent political and economic trajectory of the country.

While the great literary prophet of modernism in Portugal, Fernando Pessoa (1888–1935), achieved, uniquely, a synthesis of possibly every direction in which the modernism for which he is acclaimed could go, this chameleon-like versatility (expressed through his heteronyms) is hardly reflected in any other artist, of his generation or after. This is not to say, however, that the arts in Portugal during the first years of the twentieth century lacked strength: far from it. But it would have been an impossible task to imitate the range of Pessoa – in his cosmopolitan breadth he perhaps resembles only the similarly inimitable Cavafy (1863–1933) – and, fortunately, nobody attempted to do so, though this meant that Pessoa remained a *vox clamans in deserto*.

The renaissance in Portuguese music that had been initiated by such composers as Alfredo Keil (1850–1907), Vianna da Motta (1868–1948) and Óscar da Silva (1870–1958), was, inevitably, very much built on Franco-German models. There was no space in the musical world of the time for an apparent anomaly such as Pessoa. Luís de Freitas Branco, therefore, traditionally hailed as the herald of modernism in Portuguese music, while he was a contemporary of the poet's, had neither his independence from the artistic *milieux* of the time, nor his international background.

Pessoa spent a substantial part of his childhood in Durban, in South Africa, and throughout his life wrote in English and French as well as Portuguese; nevertheless, to say simply that he was a cosmopolitan would be to ignore his highly private and reclusive nature. Freitas Branco, on the other hand, came from an aristocratic family, his musical education was conventional and rigorous, and the cultural awareness in his family background meant that the young composer was given an enviable education.

It was the Belgian composer Désiré Pâque who introduced Freitas Branco to the music of César Franck, and his influence was to be paramount. Further instruction in composition was received from Humperdinck in Berlin, and his first experience of Debussy's *Pelléas et Mélisande* provoked Freitas Branco later to observe that hearing 'that masterpiece of modern music' was the most important event in his artistic development, hitherto 'essentially Germanic' (Vieira Nery and Ferreira de Castro 1991: 157).

The conflict between the German and the Latin in him was, in fact, to be the spark that gave rise to Freitas Branco's most important and lasting work. His earlier pieces meld the influences of Wagner and Liszt and at the same time show the results of his time spent abroad: it was a relatively short step from the quite Franckian Sonata for Violin and Piano of 1907 to the shimmering harmonic world of the utterly remarkable Debussy-influenced symphonic poem *Paraísos Artificiais* (1910), whose première under Pedro Blanch in 1913 scandalised the Lisbon public. Equally astounding is another symphonic poem *Vathek* (1913), particularly remarkable for its third variation, a fugato for strings in 39 parts, foreshadowing Ligetian 'micropolyphony'.

Rather more radical, in the context of the period, was Freitas Branco's lack of interest in folk music (or, to be more exact, his suspicion of the propagandistic uses to which it could be put), and his increasing return to the classics, most clearly manifested in his Violin Concerto of 1916, with its constant glances back towards Beethoven. By the time he came to write his First Symphony, in 1924, Freitas Branco had run the gamut of avant-garde techniques and had exhausted what the older Vianna da Motta described in a speech on the centenary of the death of Beethoven as 'wearisome impressionism and orientalism', an opinion which may well have caused the latter to cease composing earlier than he would otherwise have done (Freitas Branco 2005: 296–297).

The search for a genuine Portuguese nationalism meant, for Freitas Branco, not simply disappearing into an exotically coloured Iberian sunset, but dealing with the classical past, and if Vianna da Motta emphasises rather too much, later in the same speech, the debt his younger contemporary had to Beethoven, one can understand that such a posture must have seemed at the time, to this protégé of Liszt, to represent a bastion of traditional compositional values.

Nationalism in the context of the fascist dictatorship of Salazar could mean various things; in the case of Freitas Branco, it meant, as in that of Malipiero, an appeal both to the broader cultural context of Portugal, as part of an avant-garde Europe, and to the immemorial traditions of the country itself. The outward-looking symphonic poems *Paraísos Artificiais* and *Vathek*, and the two inward-looking *Alentejo Suites*, from 1919 and 1927, serve as paradigmatic examples of this dichotomy.

There are many Beethovenian qualities in the First Symphony, but they lie in Freitas Branco's sense of formal poise, of balanced phrasing, rather than any out-and-out attempt at neoclassicism. Franck is a different matter. The Portuguese composer is very clearly indebted to him in this work, both structurally (Franck's use of cyclic structure is very audibly reflected here, in the theme that recurs throughout the work) and harmonically, but it is equally clear that this is not a case of mere imitation: like Chausson, Freitas Branco absorbed Franck's symphonic thought and processed it through his own compositional personality. In addition, both his melodic style and his rhythmic vocabulary are substantially different – precisely because of the classical equilibrium innate to the composer. Freitas Branco falls into no convenient category (that, at least, he had in common with Pessoa), and yet he was viewed, as I have said, as a herald of modernism in Portugal. Of the three composers under discussion, he is by far the most anchored in Western classical music tradition when his output is viewed as a whole; it was the series of four Symphonies that was to be Freitas Branco's lasting contribution to the idea of a Lusitanian musical vocabulary.

### **Concluding remarks**

As I said at the beginning, this area of research is at present completely open. While it would be idle to pretend that there are exact equivalents between artistic movements, or individual artists, in countries as diverse as those that border the Mediterranean Sea or partake of its culture, it is also increasingly clear that that same culture has produced ways of being and approaches to creative thought whose resonance is indeed wider than the space occupied by any specific present-day nation-state – not least by thinking about the relationship of the cultural establishment with the cultural Other. By extending our vision of what the Mediterranean is, and at the same time what the Balkans are, it is possible to see the apparent extremes of Slavia Ortodoxa and Catholic Lusitania as estranged neighbours. To quote Matvejević once more, 'The Mediterranean [is] a sea of propinquity' (Matvejević 1987: 14).

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Jasmina Huber

**On the appropriation of oriental music by the  
Sephardim in the western provinces of the Ottoman  
Empire**

**Introduction**

This chapter presents an attempt to illuminate the tight connections between the music of the Sephardim of the Balkans during the Ottoman times and the music of the Turks of yore which itself was indebted to Arabic influence in its infancy. The Sephardim, having arrived to the Ottoman Empire during the sixteenth century, were heavily influenced by the oriental music. This led to a gradual change in their musical practice, eventually leading to having almost the same music as their Turkish rulers. This argument will be proved by utilising three main sources that reveal deep connections between Sephardic music even from the regions far away from Constantinople (Istanbul), Smyrna (Izmir), Thessaloniki and Adrianople (Edirne) with music from these main centres.

I will argue that the musical expression of the Sephardim of the Balkans was closely related to the rise and fall of the Ottoman Empire and that with its demise and the disruption of its sociopolitical mesh Turkish influence disappeared. It is vital to understand in this context that classical Turkish music was in many ways an elaboration and refinement of Arabic and Persian music, so that the continued use of Arabic music by the Sephardim of the Balkans (as will be argued in this chapter) does not contradict the statement of the disappearance of Turkish influences. This article will focus primarily on the cities of Sarajevo and Belgrade in the development of its initial premise.<sup>1</sup> I will put special emphasis on *bakashot*

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<sup>1</sup> As to the reason why the entire region is not covered within the scope of this article, for example Greek or Bulgarian cities, there are major differences which merit a separate discussion. A further elaboration on this topic is found in my doctoral dissertation (Huber 2012: 26–34).

(sg. *bakashah*; in Hebrew ‘prayers of supplication’) which are sung by the congregation before the dawn on Shabbat. In some cases the melody of a particular *bakashah* has been retained in some other part of the Sephardic liturgy even though the original usage has been lost.

Due to the oral nature of the musical tradition of the Sephardim only a scarce supply of documents that outline the development of their music is available. Three specific documents shall be considered in chronological order to demonstrate partial continuity of traditions that have been preserved fragmentarily within the religious service until the present day.

### **Ottoman influence on Sephardic music**

Upon hearing the music of the Sephardim of the Balkans for the first time one instantly recognises oriental influences (with ‘oriental’ used as an umbrella term for Turkish–Arabic–Persian music): both in its melodic-rhythmic character and in performance practice. This impression is not to be ignored, for sometimes unbiased ears hear more objectively than musicologists who have specific objectives.

During the reign of the Ottomans, dominant societal and cultural characteristics emanated from the Turks. The first sound documents within the realm of music of the Sephardim are to be found in Joel Bresler’s collection of commercial recordings hailing from the beginning of the twentieth century (Bresler 2008). Early documents on the music of the Sephardim of the Western Balkans found in the archives include the recordings made by Julius Subak in 1908 (Seroussi 2009), the recordings by the Deutsche Grammophon-AG in 1907 and 1908 in Sarajevo (Pennanen 2007) and Abraham Zvi Idelsohn’s collection from his phonographic fieldwork in Jerusalem and Palestine conducted between 1911 and 1913 (Seroussi 2005). These documents clearly showcase influences of the Turkish repertoire on Sephardic music manifested in several elements of the music, particularly in the use of the *maqam*<sup>2</sup> system and the performance practice, both in sacral and secular music.

Verbal expressions within Judeo–Espanyol (historical vernacular language of the Balkan–Sephardim), too, did not remain immune to

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<sup>2</sup> Arab. *maqam* (pl. *maqāmāt*) / türk. *makam* (pl. *makamlar*) is a term for modal practice and tonal system in the traditional Arab music, Turkish art music and other musical cultures in the Near and Middle East.

Turkish influences (Harris 1996: 73–87; Papo 1995: 241–253). On the contrary, some Sephardic songs of this region were either totally or partially sung in Turkish. An example is a verse of the liturgical poem *mi kamokha* [Who is like You?] found by Eliezer Papo in a *pizmoniero*<sup>3</sup> from Sarajevo and which is today sung by the Belgrade Ensemble *Shira u'tfila* in its original four languages (Shira u'tfila 2008; 2010). Turkish was not used in the religious service and for sacral music, however, which was solely the realm of Hebrew, the holy language of the Jews.

Starting from the observation that Sephardic music of the Balkan Jews persevered in a virtually unchanged state over the centuries, researchers attempted primarily to stress the continuity and inertia of this music (particularly as compared to the Ashkenazi development). This thesis has already been considered dubious for some time as it contradicts the notion of tradition as something changeable. Idelsohn was already inspired by this idea: his aim was to prove the common geographic origin and antiquity (preferably from the time of the second temple) of those melodies that he extracted by comparing melodies collected from various regional traditions and showing their mutual compatibility (Idelsohn 1914–1932). Musicologist Israel Katz initiated a departure from the dubious hypothesis on the Spanish origin of the Sephardic music of the Sephardim of the Balkans (Katz 1969). In the Western Balkans, it was Ankica Petrović who championed the abandonment of this hypothesis. As an authority on regional actualities she sought, however, a compromise with respect to the definition of the style of the analysed music and made a case for a symbiosis of new Islamic elements with an older Spanish substrate (Petrović 1990: 167).<sup>4</sup>

The tradition of the Sephardim of the Balkans was – after their arrival in the sixteenth century – rather continuous. Their music lasted for the entire duration of the Ottoman culture. With the retreat of the Ottomans, traditional Sephardic music of the Balkan Jews started vanishing as well. Whereas in terms of language the secular and religious languages of the

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<sup>3</sup> *Pizmoniero* is a collection of *pizmonim* (sg. *pizmon*). *Pizmonim* are extraliturgical *piyutim* or melodies with choruses. They are traditionally associated with Middle Eastern Sephardi Jews and sung during religious rituals and festivities such as prayers, circumcisions, *bar mitzvahs*, weddings and other ceremonies. They can be inserted almost anywhere in the liturgy.

<sup>4</sup> On her work see Huber 2012: 94–95.

Sephardim remained Judeo-Espanyol and Hebrew respectively, the music was adapted to that of their neighbours.

#### *Sources and historical background*

Three documents from three centuries witness the enduring popularity and preservation of specific paraliturgical customs within the area of the contemporary states Serbia and Bosnia–Hercegovina that will be discussed in the following:

- the manuscript of *hazan*<sup>5</sup> Mosheh ben Mikhael HaKohen (1644–c. 1726), initiated in 1702 containing *piyutim*<sup>6</sup>, sorted according to the ten Turkish *maqamat*, liturgical events and events of a life cycle;
- the publication of *Zemiroth Yisra'el* by the famous *paytan*<sup>7</sup> Israel Najarah (c. 1555–c.1625) in Belgrade in the years 1837–1839;
- the letter of Rabbi Daniel Danon from the year 1928 in which he mourns the disappearance of the *bakashot* tradition.

#### **Rabbi Mosheh ben Mikhael HaKohen's manuscript<sup>8</sup>**

An eighteenth-century proof of a continued involvement with Turkish music in the Jewish culture of the Western Balkans can be found in the already mentioned manuscript *Sefer shirot ve-tishbahot* containing *piyutim* and other poems. The compiler Mosheh ben Mikhael HaKohen was an important scholar of the Talmud and an accomplished author. The poem *Kantiga de Belgrado kvando veno el Nemci aj* found in his collection of songs *Shirot ve-tishbahot*, gives a detailed description of the distress of the Belgrade Jews in 1688. Arrested in Belgrade and sent marching to Osijek, he waited there for his ransom with 400 other people. After two years of captivity in Nikolsburg (Mikulov in Moravia) he was eventually ransomed, never returning to Belgrade. First he left for Fürth, where he published the book

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<sup>5</sup> *Hazan* (pl. *hazanim*) is a Jewish cantor, a person that leads the congregation in public prayers.

<sup>6</sup> *Piyut* (pl. *piyutim*) is a Jewish liturgical poem, usually designated to be sung or recited during religious services, but some *piyutim* are reserved for particular life cycle events.

<sup>7</sup> *Paytan* (pl. *paytanim*) is the Hebrew term for the author of liturgical hymns and poems. The term *paytan* is derived from the Greek word Πουητής.

<sup>8</sup> The manuscript is to be found in the British Museum in London; see the description in Margoliouth 1915: 263–264.

*‘Et sofer* [The quill of the penman], a painful account of the days of yonder. In Venice, his last abode, he continued writing about his former community (Lebl 1990: 12–13). The manuscript was given to his sons and close people after his death. They added their own poems to the collection, detectable by the occurrence of different handwritings within the manuscript.

The *piyutim* were written in Hebrew, Judeo-Espanyol and Turkish. There is a high probability that Najarah and Avtalyon ben Mordekhai Bekhor Avtalyon are among the authors whose *piyutim* can be found in the collection. Other *piyutim*, however, hail from unknown authors of whom only their first name has been preserved.

HaKohen’s manuscript followed the traditional *maqam* organisation of Najarah’s *Zemiroth Yisra’el* and consisted of two parts: *Ne’im zemiroth* [sweet songs] and *Navah tehilah* [beautiful praise] (Benayahu 1994: 297–342). Both the partial ordering according to ten Turkish *maqamat* (in the first part), as well as the use of musical terminology found in the manuscript, reveal an active involvement of the cantor with music based on Turkish sources (Ibid.: 306). The musical terminology itself was borrowed (although corrupted) from Turkish music for the description of form and rhythm. HaKohen lived in Belgrade, Sarajevo and Venice (having arrived there in 1696), where he died. It is to be presumed that during Rabbi HaKohen’s time Najarah’s work was already popular in the Western Balkans. Rabbi HaKohen’s collection, published in Venice, was probably based on his own experiences in Sarajevo and Belgrade during his youth. It is therefore plausible to view it as a first proof of oriental influences on Sephardic music in the Western Balkans.<sup>9</sup> It is also noteworthy that the aforementioned *pizmon*, *Mi kamokhah*, is to be found in M. HaKohen’s manuscript where it is listed to be sung during the Shabbat (Ibid.: 308).<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> *Hazan* David ben Mosheh HaKohen compiled a manuscript that contains the *pizmonim veshirot vetishbahot* and the Sephardic *copla* ‘El debate de los frutos y el vino’. He was probably the son or grandson of Mosheh ben Mikhael HaKohen. He compiled his manuscript during his time as *hazan* in Sarajevo (around 1794), thereafter moving to Venice. This proves the continuous use of oriental melodies within the Western Balkans (see Romero 2011: 491–524).

<sup>10</sup> Under 150 Aleph: ‘Pizmon für Shabbat, verfasst vom großen Gelehrten [Rabbi David Pardo], dem Autor von *Shoshanim le David*. Rabbi D. Pardo (1719–1792) was born in Venice and lived for some years in Sarajevo, Bosnia, where he was elected chief rabbi (*hakham bashi*) and devoted himself to teaching (Levy 1911: 29–30).

### The publication of Israel Najarah's Diwan in Belgrade

Compared to the known publications from Safed in 1587, Venice in 1599 and Thessaloniki in 1599 of Israel Najarah's Diwan *Ẓemiroṭ Yiśra'el*<sup>11</sup> the Belgrade publication is less known.<sup>12</sup> This anthology of *piyutim*, *pizmonim* and *bakashot* was printed between 1837 and 1839 by *Kinjaževska srpska pečatnja* in Belgrade (*Istamparia del Principe dela Serbia* [Printing house of the Serbian Prince]) in Judeo-Espanyol. The late reeditions of his work in the nineteenth century showcase its popularity within the Western Balkans, in this case Serbia.

The edition was published in three parts, running a total of 324 pages in Hebrew square script and Rashi script: *'Olat tamid* (early morning *piyutim*), *'Olat shabat* (Shabbat *piyutim*) and *'Olat ḥodesh* (*piyutim* for the new moon). It is the most famous collection of songs that developed according to the procedure described above, and it has served as an inspiration to generations of Sephardim thereafter. Most of Najarah's *piyutim* were based on the melodies of already existing songs (two thirds of these were Turkish), whilst some were composed by the author himself. The majority of the melodies were, in all probability, written in Arabic *maqamat* since in the sixteenth century the Turkish theory of the tonal system was not as developed and differentiated as nowadays.<sup>13</sup> In the prologue for the first tome of the Belgrade edition, the editor Ḥayim ben David Ḥayim describes the custom of the Belgrade Jews of gathering early in the morning (before the *shaḥarit*) in the synagogue and singing songs from

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<sup>11</sup> *Diwan* is the Persian term for collections of poetry and prose in Arabic, Turkish, Persian, and Urdu literature.

<sup>12</sup> Israel Najarah published his first collection of poems in 1586 in Safed. After the plague hit this town, he resettled to Gaza where he was as chief rabbi until his passing. Almost all of his 800 songs are influenced by the kabbalah of his time, describing the people of Israel from the perspective of a longing after God and Zion through the then widespread metaphor Israel = Bride, God = groom. There is plenty of literature on this eminent poet and musician and his anthologies: Rozanes 1930 [in Hebrew]; Gaon 1930–1932 [in Hebrew]; Yahalom 1982 [in Hebrew], 1995; Avenary 1979.

<sup>13</sup> Idelsohn considered the use of *maqamat* theory for the musical accompaniment of Hebrew poems as an 'Arabization of Jewish song, as well as musical sensibility' that was no less an act of assimilation than the use of European singing in Ashkenazi synagogues (see Idelsohn 1913: 323).

Najarah's *Zemirot Yisra'el*. As the congregation possessed only two songbooks, which they had to share, he decided to print a new edition. The Belgrade edition from 1837–1839 (similar to the second Venetian edition from 1599) was published in three volumes and contained 439 songs, whereas the first edition only contained 108 songs. The existence of these publications, although mentioned and described by the Belgrade historian Ženi Lebl (1927–2009), has remained hitherto unknown (Seroussi 1978: 50; Yahalom 1995: 9; Shiloah 1992: 123 and 149).<sup>14</sup>

### **On *Bakashot* and Rabbi Daniel Danon's letter<sup>15</sup>**

In the second half of the nineteenth century the power of the Ottoman Empire started eroding at a quick pace in its European lands. The emergence of new nation-states in the Balkans and new dominating powers led to a change in the way of life of the Sephardim. One major change was the growing assimilation into the dominant cultures of the newly developed nation states, as it happened in Serbia. The *haskalah*<sup>16</sup> on the Balkans led to the flourishing of modern literature and press. On the other side, centuries-old historical ties to other Balkan territories were severed, hindering the widespread exchange that characterised the Ottoman days. A solution was found in the restructuring of Jewish life along national lines. These factors resulted in the gradual weakening of traditional Sephardic cultures, which was further accelerated by the influx of other Jewish groups into the lands in which Sephardim used to be the only Jews, as it happened in Bosnia with the advent of Habsburg power in

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<sup>14</sup> All three authors only mention three editions that appeared during the author's lifetime: Safed (1587), Venice (1599–1600) and Saloniki (1599).

<sup>15</sup> Daniel Isak Danon was born in Sarajevo in 1888 where he finished his religious education at a local religious school (*yeshivah*) and became a religious teacher. From 1918 to 1926 he was Rabbi of the Ashkenazi–Sephardic community of Tuzla. The fact that as a Sephardic Rabbi he worked in a partly Ashkenazi synagogue is a proof of the merger of these distinct traditions in the Western Balkans already taking place in the first half of the twentieth century. From 1928–1932 he was Rabbi in Travnik, whereupon he lived and worked as Rabbi in Sarajevo (*Kal di Bilava* synagogue) until he was deported in 1942 to the concentration camp Jasenovac where he died (Danon 2007: 36).

<sup>16</sup> *Haskalah* is the term for Jewish Enlightenment, an intellectual movement in Europe between ca. 1770 and 1880, inspired by the European Enlightenment.

1878. It was especially the Sephardic youth that fully delved into the nascent modernity (Elazar 1884: 1–11).

Given the steady disappearance of these traditional songs, in his 1928 letter ‘*Bakashot* – The disappearance of our traditional synagogue chants’ (Siddur Tefilat bene Tsiyon 2005: 946–947) Daniel Danon requested a written record of the *bakashot* melodies and the integration of these melodies into the teaching subject music of the newly founded Jewish theological seminary in Sarajevo:

Every Sephard immersed in the tradition of his people knows the term *bakashot* for chants recited in the synagogue before the Morning Prayer. [...] Just one or two decades ago every synagogue in Sarajevo had one or two singers (*bakašadžiš*) chanting *bakashot* with their soft and melodic voices and dispelling every heavy thought with prayer full of humility and warmth. These people have mostly disappeared without bequeathing successors so that there are now only two or three such singers left who can sing the chants of Najara (*neim zemirot Israel*), all of them very old men. [...] Considering the fact that this year the seminary in Sarajevo is to be opened I think that right now is the most favourable moment to realise the most earnest desire of nearly all Sephardim and set Najara’s tunes to music.

The *bakashot*, mentioned by Danon above, are a special type of *piyut* being part of an old tradition inherited from Spanish times but brought to its fullest expression after the expulsion of Jews from Spanish lands in 1492 and Jewish settlement in the Ottoman Empire, with the centre of this musical tradition being Aleppo (Yayama 2003; 2009). Their Hebrew lyrics dwelled on themes close to the heart of the Sephardim, especially on the relationship between God and the Jewish people. *Bakashot* were generally performed after midnight and before morning prayers. They became thoroughly established through the mystical, cabbalistic movement in the Holy Land during the sixteenth century. After the resettlement of Jews, a major community developed in Upper Galilee in Safed from which the entire cabbalistic material, particularly that of the school of Isaac Luria (1534–1572), spread into the Mediterranean area, soon finding its way into the synagogues of the entire Ottoman Empire. Luria’s ideas emphasised the importance of music in spiritual life, influencing Sephardic services until the present day. *Bakashot* were sung by Luria’s successors in Syria, Turkey, Egypt, Greece, Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco and the Sephardic communities of the Western Balkans.

Throughout the centuries, an influential constituent of Jewish-Moslem interrelationship were small vocal ensembles that consisted of *maftirim*-singers. These ensembles developed in Turkey and Greece in the sixteenth century and can be regarded as an outcome of a musical exchange between Sufi mystics (Hammarlund et al 2001) and Jewish *maftirim*-singers. The Moslem singers visited Shabbat concertos, their Jewish colleagues participated in return visits to Dervish lodges (Shah 2006; Schweizer 1984) to draw inspiration from the mystics for the paraliturgical early morning gatherings where *bakashot* were sung. Groups of *hazan* and educated Jews gathered early in the morning to sing religious Hebrew poems before the *shaharit*. These were by no means simple folk melodies but rather complex songs, performed in a refined style of singing that could only be mastered by the very musical and educated men. The centre of Jewish *maftirim*-singers during the sixteenth century was Edirne, whence this collective singing *a capella* and *unisono* spread after World War I to Istanbul, where it is still nourished nowadays. Besides the poet Shlomo ben Mazal Tov who, according to Salomon Rosanes (1936–1938: 12) was the first person who wrote Hebrew hymns in the style of Ottoman music during the sixteenth century,<sup>17</sup> the already mentioned Israel ben Moses Najarah worked for a while in Edirne.<sup>18</sup> Vidaković-Petrov mentions this town in her study of the culture of the Yugoslav Sephardim, pointing to a possibly close relationship between Belgrade and Edirne.<sup>19</sup>

Regional collections of *piyutim* developed by means of adding new Hebrew lyrics to secular melodies, since the Judeo-Spanish romances, *kantigas* (love songs), *coplas* (paraliturgical songs) or gentile songs heard, for example, in coffee houses, required the text of at least the first verse to be similar to the original poem in terms of meter, phonetics and subject

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<sup>17</sup> Shlomo Mazal-Tov's book *Sefer shirim u-zemirot ve-tishbahot* (The book of songs, hymns and songs of praise, published in Constantinople in 1545 [in Hebrew]) includes Hebrew songs sung to 'melodies of the Sephardim and the Ishmaelites' (Merkon 1950: 321–349).

<sup>18</sup> On Najarah's influence on Maftirim see Seroussi 1993.

<sup>19</sup> According to Vidaković-Petrov, a close connection between these two towns developed through the migration of Sephardim from Adrianople to Sofia and thence to Belgrade in the first half of the eighteenth century after the restoration of the Sephardic community of Belgrade thanks to immigrants from Bulgaria in 1739; see the analysis of the romance *Morir se quiere Alexandre* in Vidaković-Petrov 1990: 202.

matter, so that the origin of the melody remained recognisable. Besides these requirements, the entire text had to be cleared of erotic elements and infused with religious spirit. Every *piyut* in these collections of songs was furnished with an indication of its *maqam* and a specification of its original melody which was, in all probability, known to the congregation (Shiloah 2007: 425).

### **On the making of Sephardic tradition in modern times**

In the Sephardic communities of the Western Balkans, the *bakashot* genre was sung continuously until the 1920s.<sup>20</sup> Daniel Danon's concern about the disappearance of this custom in the region has proved to be true considering the present state of the Sephardic communities of the former Yugoslavia. The chants have, however, only partially survived within the religious service, but bereft of their primordial function, for some of the poems owe their survival to the integration into the liturgy. Meanwhile, the path that this genre of music has treaded is far from straightforward. Around the turn of the century the *bakashot* became – in the wake of the arrival of Syrian Jews in Jerusalem – an integral part of the religious practice in many synagogues of Jerusalem (Seroussi 1993), whence they found their way back into the Belgrade synagogue, for example, through the spread of the Sephardic–Jerusalemite rite in the last century. Most melodies that nowadays enter the Belgrade synagogue from Arab sources do it via Israel and can therefore not be regarded as belonging to the original tradition.

Musical expression of the Sephardim living in the Balkans did not change due to cultural pressure from ruling societal groups, but through a conscious adoption of new musical elements. Although the Sephardim of the Balkans lived (both in societal and cultural sense) as a closed ethnic and religious community until the end of the Turkish occupation, the style of singing of their Moslem neighbours influenced them profoundly, hence

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<sup>20</sup> In his book *Jewish Musical Traditions* Shiloah describes the spread of this genre, providing as proof the translation of the account of Mosheh D. Gaon which deals with the nurture of this musical custom in the Western Balkans: 'It is of interest to note briefly that from Morocco and Syria this custom spread to many other places, one of them being Yugoslavia. In an article entitled "R. Israel Najjara and His Hymns," M. D. Gaon records having found evidence of the custom in Sarajevo' (Gaon 1930–1932: 145–146, quoted in Shiloah 1992: 150–151).

they absorbed the musical features of Moslem prayers, as well as their secular melodies. After the Turkish downfall this profound influence waned, disappearing almost entirely and leading to a congregation that is nowadays quite detached from its own musical past. However, the Belgrade synagogue is still profoundly influenced by oriental music, including Turkish and Arabic sources. It is, however, a new material, as the old regional music had faded away. The new musical influences can therefore be regarded as the commencing of a new musical tradition, which is, contrary to its predecessor, used only in a liturgical function.

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Katy Romanou

## The Greek community of Odessa and its role in the 'Westernisation' or 'progress' of Greek music

*The Greeks have the most monstrous taste in their pictures,  
which for more refinery are always drawn upon a gold ground.  
You may imagine what a good air this has,  
but they have no notion either of shade or proportion.*

Lady Mary Wortley Montagu  
Constantinople, 29 May 1717

### Introduction

This chapter is on taste. It highlights the ambiguity of the meaning of 'progress' (or 'Westernisation') in the development of Greek music; ambiguity deriving from the ill-timed encounter (or, rather, collision) of the Western trend for restoring past music, and the (Greek) goal to arise from a distant past. It focuses on the contribution of the inhabitants of the prosperous city of Odessa to the progress of Greek musical life and education and follows their fluctuating adaptation to the prevailing trends and tastes.

During the greatest part of the nineteenth century the Greek diaspora was much more pivotal in the development of the Greek state than its local inhabitants. It would be unwise to attribute some general characteristics to the Greeks inhabiting the areas with such diverse cultures as Western Europe and Northern Turkey, more so because the knowledge of the latter is disproportionately small. Due to the troubled history of the eastern areas inhabited by the Greeks, the language reforms in Turkey, the negative feelings between the two peoples over the long periods of time, as well as the slow development of Turkish scientific historiography,<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The voluminous history of the Ottoman Empire by Ahmed Cevdet Pashas, known as *Tarih-i Cevdet*, was written between 1854 and 1884; it is considered representative of the Tanzimat historiography and a turning point towards the westernisation of Turkish historiography (Çakır 2009).

historical research has been much more effective on the Greeks living in Europe.

On the other hand, towards the end of the twentieth century, Western historiography developed a fallacy that was propagated as objectivity: namely, the historians described the cultures of past epochs according to criteria developed during the latest phases of those cultures. Hence, in many texts from that period, the Greeks who had lived in Constantinople and Asia Minor in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were called the Ottomans. However, the ethnicities were very clearly distinguished among the inhabitants of the Ottoman Empire. William Eton, an English diplomat who had lived in Russia and Turkey for many years, remarked at the end of the eighteenth century: 'A Turk is never called a Greek, although his family should have been settled for generations in that country; nor is a Greek called a Turk, though his ancestors had lived centuries in a Turkish province' (Eton 1799: 358–359). It is noteworthy that he is speaking about a Greek country before the Greek Revolution and the foundation of the modern Greek state.

I was prompted to introduce my topic with the above comments as a monition to the readers. The enthusiasm, optimism, energy and ingenuity exhibited by the Greeks living outside Greece who aimed to bring the country closer to Europe by introducing Western thought and ideology, makes for a remarkable story. The focus of the zealous efforts toward the resurgence and progress of Greece was the heredity of the Ancient Greek culture and the secularisation of education. The Greeks, including those living in the East, had for long before the Revolution been aware of the heritage of the Ancient Greece. It was expressed in tales and songs, fused with their Christian past and their Ottoman present, in a way that is characteristic of Eastern traditional literature and poetry.<sup>2</sup> Describing the Greeks in Constantinople, William Eton says: 'Their ancient empire is fresh in their memory; it is the subject of their popular songs, and they speak of it in common conversation as a recent event' (1799: 350–351). That the 'ancient empire' is not Byzantium, but Ancient Greece is clear from other points of the text where contemporary Greeks are compared to the Ancient Greeks; and it is thus that a French translator of the book

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<sup>2</sup> Examples of the fusion of cultures, religions and periods in Eastern poetry are the numerous epics about Alexander the Great. Alexander is an enemy, a conqueror, a local hero, a Christian, etc. (see Stoneman et al. 2012).

understood: 'Ils n'ont pas oublié leur ancienne gloire. Toutes leurs chansons populaires la rapellent, et ils en parlent comme d'un événement tout nouveau' [They have not forgotten their ancient glory. All their popular songs remember it, and they speak of it as if it were a new event] (Eton 1801: 74). Speaking of the Phanariots, whom he dislikes, Eton claims that 'they are all people of very good education' and that 'they are the only part of their nation who have totally relinquished the ancient Grecian spirit' (1799: 352–353).

There was an important difference between the education of the Greeks in the East and the West. The Ancient Greek culture was prominent in Western education, hence the Greeks who lived in Western cities developed a pronounced interest for its history and culture. The interrelationship between the ideas of ancient Greek heredity, secularism, Western philhellenism, the Greek Revolution and the European orientation of the new state was tightly woven. Realising the immense gap that the new state had to bridge in order to survive in the European environment, many saw the heredity of ancient Greek culture as an asset and believed that its exploitation was the only means to bridge the gap. Starting from the final decades of the eighteenth century, a web of Greek publications that secularised knowledge and introduced both the Western achievements and Ancient Greek writers to the Greeks themselves spread over Europe. Between 1780 and 1820, one may count 205 names of authors appearing for the first time. A majority of them were young and wrote on secular subjects (Ēliou 2003: 9–26:14). Between 1801 and 1821, 1373 new books were published, mostly in Venice, Vienna, Constantinople (Istanbul), Corfu and Paris, but also in Leipzig, Moscow, Iași and other cities (Ibid). Although religious subjects still dominated the catalogues of publishers in the cities such as Venice and Constantinople, many publications on science, history, archaeology, geography and linguistics appeared for the first time in modern Greek language. Judging from the lists of subscribers who financed and bought the books (a method applied to many of those publications), the cities where they had the best circulation were Vienna, Iași, Bucharest, Odessa, Trieste, Constantinople, and the monasteries of Mount Athos; this list gives us the picture of the distribution of educated Greeks in Europe (Ibid.: 16).

Communication between the Greeks participating in the resurgence, from the cities listed above, was effective thanks to the commercial

activities developed by the most energetic Greeks of the diaspora. It was three young Greek merchants in Odessa, Nikolaos Skoufas, Manōlēs Xanthos, and Athanasios Tsakalōv who, influenced by Freemasonry, founded the secret Filike Etaireia ('Friendly Society') in 1814 – a society that contributed much to the preparation of the Revolution. Secularisation changed the apportionment of education in society. It was the merchants – and not the clergy – who were at the forefront of Greek scholarship.

Since the late eighteenth century, a majority of secular publications in Greek were published in Vienna, after the Emperor Joseph II's reform (1781) which introduced the freedom of press and religion. Two widely disseminated periodicals were printed in Vienna: the *Hellēnikē Ephēmeris* (Greek Daily, 1790–1797) and the periodical with the perfectly eloquent title *Hermēs ho Logios* (Hermes the Scholar, 1811–1821).

Introducing Western music to the Greeks was a natural repercussion of this movement. There are two extended texts on music in *Hermēs ho Logios*, unveiling the reason why the Westernisation of music was not introduced so smoothly as other subjects. The first, entitled 'Mousikē' [Music] was a translation of a text by Johann Georg Sulzer (1816/1–6), most likely extracted from his book *Allgemeine Theorie der schönen Künste in einzeln, nach alphabetischer Ordnung der Kunstwörter auf einander folgenden, Artikeln abgehandelt* (Sulzer 1771–1774). Although the name of the translator was not stated, it must have been Kōnstantinos Kokkinakēs, one of the two editors of the periodical in 1816 to 1819, who had studied in Constantinople, Bucharest and Vienna and translated a number of texts on various subjects from German and French. In a short introduction Kokkinakēs writes on the important role of music in the societies of Ancient Greece and Western Europe; he believes that this is now beginning to be understood in 'contemporary Greece, the country that requests that her lights are regenerated, in order to be detached from the precipice of unmusicality' (Ibid). The translator, who admits that he does not know either Western or Byzantine music, has tried to use in his translation the corresponding terms applied in Byzantine and Ancient Greek music, but his ignorance of all three systems and of their differences is obvious. He expresses his optimism for the future of Greek music, noting that the patriarch in Constantinople has consented to establish a music school for

the instruction of the New Method of Byzantine notation.<sup>3</sup> The second – and the last – lengthy text on music published in the periodical is the (pedantic) questionnaire given to students at the final exams of this music school, sent from Iași by a graduate (Chrysantos 1817). After that, nothing else was published on music, except some news about music taught in some Greek schools, especially of the diaspora.

In the nineteenth century, the Greeks in European cities, had no doubt whatsoever that harmony and stave notation should be taught in Greece and that monophonic chant represented an underdeveloped art, at a low cultural level, from which it should rapidly rise. Their assurance started to crumble towards the end of the nineteenth century and especially in the early twentieth century, when the ideas that supported the restoration of the monophonic Gregorian chant were propagated, thus transforming the meaning of progress in the arts.

### **The Greek community of Odessa**

Odessa is a port in the Black Sea, founded in 1792 by the Empress Catherine the Great, that quickly rose to prosperity. In the nineteenth century it was the largest city in Ukraine and one of the four largest Russian cities. Nearly a half of its population was foreign. The Greeks formed the fourth largest foreign community in Odessa, after the Jews, the Polish and the Germans. Gregorios Maraslēs (1831–1907), who was born in Odessa, was elected the Major of the city in 1878 and served in that post for more than 15 years.<sup>4</sup> With his wealth he contributed both to his native city and to the Greeks in Athens, Constantinople and elsewhere.

A majority of his benefactions had to do with education. *The Maraslēs Library* was a series of over 120 high quality editions of translations (mostly of Shakespeare and Russian writers) and original works selected for their perceived efficacy with respect to the desired progress of the Greeks. The books were printed in Athens and sold at low prices or donated for free. The project was initiated in 1897 and ended in 1909, two years after Maraslēs' death. However, only a few books related to music were

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<sup>3</sup> On the influence of Western 'enlightened' writers onto the inventors of the New Method, and on the short period that the Patriarchate in Constantinople encouraged such directions, see my introduction to the English translation of Chrysanthos of Madytos' *Great theory of music* (Romanou 2010: 10–25).

<sup>4</sup> On the Greek community of Odessa see Karavia 1998.

published in the series. All of them are in stave notation and it is known that at least one book in Byzantine notation that was proposed to be included in the series, was not published. It was P. G. Kēltzanidēs' *Kleis tēs Archaías Methodou* (Key to the Ancient Method), an explanation of music notation, written about 1870. Kēltzanidēs died in 1896, and the book was proposed by the Music Society of Constantinople. It should be noted that the society's greediness played a role in the cancelation of the project (see Rōmanou 1996: 143).

Anastasios Maltos (1851–1927), who had settled in Odessa in 1894 and lived there until 1915, was in charge of the series after 1905. Maltos was a philologist who held a doctorate from the University of Zurich and who had also studied music at the Universities of Munich and Leipzig. Maltos wrote a number of works aiming at the Westernisation of music education in Greece. He published translations of two historical works, a *History of Ancient Greek music* by Weitzmann (*Geschichte der griechischen Musik*; Berlin, 1855) that was printed in Athens in 1893, and the *History of music in outline* by H. A. Köstlin (*Geschichte der Musik im Umriss*; Berlin, 1889). Maltos also began writing a book *Historia tēs mousikēs en Helladī apo tēs ethnikēs paliggenesias* [History of music in Greece since the national rebirth], however it is likely that it was left incomplete. The extracts from the introduction to this book were published in the periodical *Mousikē* (April 1912) in Constantinople. Maltos says that in Greece 'the Muses were silent during many centuries, having moved to other countries together with Liberty, their protecting Goddess.' He asked: 'When our beloved country [...] rose again in the small corner of our great and glorified Greece, did the Muses return [...] where they were born and adored for thousand years?' In his opinion, although in the sciences important achievements have been made,

one could not say the same thing about Apollo's magic art [...] The musical sun of modern Greece, the patriarch of our new musicians, Nikolaos Manzaros, around whom new planets rotate, is certainly well known to us, having connected firmly his name with the poet of the *Hymn to Liberty*,<sup>5</sup> but in the West he is practically unknown. Nevertheless, lets not get disappointed! Their efforts will bring results soon. In the Ionian islands but also in the rest of Greece music is already cultivated. Conservatories

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<sup>5</sup> The 'complete work' of Dionysios Solomos, to whom Maltos refers, was published in Maraslēs Library in 1901, edited by the poet Kostas Palamas.

and philharmonics are today in rivalry to bring music to all the social classes of Greeks.

Maltos was well informed on Western music and wanted Greece to participate in its achievements. In the following issue of *Mousikē* he published a chapter of his *History of music in Greece*, namely the biography of Nikolaos Augerinos born in Taganrog (1803–1889), a violinist who owned a precious ‘Amati’ instrument, and whose harmonisations of Greek church music were performed in Taganrog and Odessa.

Aside from these historical works, Maltos also published several collections of children’s songs. One of them, *Terpsichorē*, came out in 1884. It was written for beginners and contained preliminary instructions on solfège reading, as well as songs in one or two parts. There was absolutely no intention to give a national flavour to the collection. There were many German, Russian, Irish, French, Italian, English, Hungarian and Greek melodies, including melodies written by Maltos himself, then, by Alexandros Katakouzēnos, Mozart, Haydn, Beethoven, Schubert, Weber, and many lesser known composers. In the second edition, published in 1894, four Greek folk songs in 7/8 meter (and a Serbian melody) were added. It is interesting that the verses of the four Greek songs, as well as the Serbian song, are by Katakouzēnos. The same sources, roughly, have provided Maltos with the songs gathered in his more advanced collections, such as *Melpomenē* (Odessa 1887) and his *Sylogē Diphōnōn, Triphōnōn kai Tetrphōnōn Asmatōn eis chreisin Hellēnikōn Scholeiōn kai Gymnasiōn* [Collection of songs in two, three and four voices to be used in Greek schools and gymnasia], published by Breitkopf & Härtel in 1881.

Of special interest (though deviating from our central subject) are songs by Dēmētrios Lalas (1848–1911) in both these collections. This composer’s entire opus was lost in 1917, in the wreck of a ship carrying his manuscripts to Italy to be published. Dēmētrios Lalas, whom Maltos called a friend and ‘a man proficient in music’, had studied in Austria and Germany. He was acquainted with the Wagners and helped with the preparation of the premiere of the *Ring* in 1876. Cosima Wagner wrote about him in her diaries in a very friendly and tender tone. Her last entry on Lalas was on Friday 6 April 1877: ‘Today’s stranger is our good Lalas, coming here from Salzburg to say goodbye – he is returning to Monastir. Memories of the Nibelungen days!’ (Gregor-Dellin and Mack 1978: 956).

### **The Repatriates**

Alexandros Katakouzēnos (1824–1892) lived in Odessa from 1861 to 1879. A perfect representative of the diaspora, he was born in Trieste, his parents having fled from Smyrna during the Greek Revolution. It seems that he received his first music lessons in Athens (from Dēmētrios Digenēs, a teacher from Corfu); then, he studied in Paris, and finally in Vienna. In Vienna he directed the polyphonic choir of the Greek Orthodox Church, for which he composed (or harmonised) the music. His fame spread fast, and in 1861, he was invited to Odessa, where he directed the polyphonic choir of the city's Greek Church of Holy Trinity. In 1870 Olga, the Russian Queen of Greece (who reigned from 1867 to 1913), invited him to Athens where he established and conducted the choir of the royal chapel. In 1880 he offered his service and experience to the newly founded Conservatory of Athens, which would become the leading music conservatory since 1891.

Katakouzēnos wrote hundreds of children's songs, which were taught in Greek schools for many years. Many of those were his own melodies with verses written by himself or by others, however, even more songs were his own poems adapted to familiar Western melodies (by Schubert, Mozart, Mendelssohn et al.).

Katakouzēnos died in 1892, one year after the Reform of the Athens Conservatory (Motsenigos 1953: 326) that effaced his contribution as old-fashioned and ineffective, and introduced the methods, programmes and repertoires mainly 'borrowed' from the French Conservatoire. Katakouzēnos shared the fate of a considerable number of musicians who had gathered in Athens from the Ionian islands and Western cities and were involved in popularising Western music through choirs and bands in the church, at schools, and in the open air. The culture of the 'great composer', of the integrity of the work of art and of the stable repertory was now modernising Athens. Most Greeks were not qualified to teach in the reformed conservatory, the staff of which included several foreign musicians, such as Paul Miersch, Franck Choisy, Désiré Pâque, Armand Marsick – to name but a few.

Among the waves of Greeks repatriated around 1900, Iōannēs Prōios was another musician who came to Athens from Odessa. A graduate of

the Imperial Music School of Odessa, Prōios translated a music dictionary by A. Garras from a Russian translation by Vladimir Feodorovich Odoyevski (1803–1869), one of the founders of Russian classical musicology, and the first respectable music critic, who was in favour of a historical treatment of Russian chant. Prōios' translation was published in Leipzig in 1910. In the Introduction, he wrote of the difficulties he had faced, and of his choice to leave certain terms (such as *sonata*) in the original language, rather than attempt to hellenise them. He listed a number of Russian and Western European writers that he had consulted (including N. D. Kashkin, A. F. Kazbiriuk, P. I. Tchaikovsky, N. A. Rimsky-Korsakov and A. S. Arensky, as well as E. Hanslick), and he ended the Introduction by expressing his wish that his work would 'induce others to write more perfect and systematic works, specialised in our national music' (Prōios 1910).

Prōios' collection of choral songs for one to four voices 'for schools and families' also appeared in 1910 with the same publishers. Reflecting the latest trends of that time, it is titled *Phēmios kai Damascēnos ētoi Syllogē Dēmotikōn kai Ekklēsiastikōn Asmatōn* [Phēmios and Damascēnos,<sup>6</sup> or A collection of Greek folk and church chants]. No more Schubert melodies and Katakouzēnos' verses. It was the double roots of Greek tradition that would make modern Greek music flourish; or, maybe, they *were* modern Greek music in full bloom. Progress and westernisation acquired another face.

In the Introduction to his collection, Prōios seems to criticise Maltos. He says that the benefits of music are well known to everybody. 'But what has not yet been understood' he comments,

is that in the education of our youth, the music that should especially be used is our national music. The Greeks have failed to understand this, because of the irrational prejudice against the music of our fatherland. Unfortunately there are many who either totally deny the existence of Greek music, and pretend that since we get dressed in European clothes, we should also sing the European way, or believe that even if some Greek music has been preserved, it must have been corrupted and therefore useless. But both are awfully deceived, because Greek music exists and its particular beauty has been preserved unspoiled (Prōios 1910).

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<sup>6</sup> Phēmios is a singer mentioned in *Odyssey* and Damascēnos is Saint John of Damascus.

Then Prōios gives the ‘proof’ of his assertion: ‘This has been recognised by famous musicians of the West for a long time’ and explains in the following reverse route the absence of Greek art music: ‘Yes, Greek music does exist but, unfortunately, it was forced to retreat into the church and the village’ (Ibid). Then he gives his opinion on church and folk music, which is an opinion often expressed at that time by the Greeks who had no contact with either church or village culture. Church music, he says, is badly performed by chanters who are uneducated and have poor taste. But church music, preserved in manuscripts, is not endangered. On the contrary, folk music is seriously in danger of extinction. Hence he called for a systematic recording of Greek folk music in order to protect it from Western influence.

It is noteworthy that it was in the environment of the reformed Conservatory of Athens that monophonic church chanting was incorporated in official music education. A well-presented collection of folk songs from Peloponnese and Crete was also prepared by the Conservatory in 1910 and 1911; however, the collection only appeared in 1931, due to disagreements between the persons involved (Rōmanou 1996: 255–263). Geōrgios Nazos, who, after studying in Munich, replaced Katakouzēnos in the directorship of the Conservatory, and introduced the methods, the aesthetics, and the repertoires taught in German music schools and at the Paris Conservatoire, went to Constantinople to find the person who would teach ‘pure’ monophonic church music in Athens. The right person turned out to be Constantinos Psachos who, after arriving to Athens from Constantinople in 1904, contributed to a *progressive* treatment of church music, helped expand the established repertory, and secured its systematic and uniform teaching and performance.

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Melita Milin

## **Images of Eastern Other in Serbian art music<sup>1</sup>**

Since the title of this chapter indicates an orientalist framework for the chosen subject, it is necessary to explain my understanding of the term Eastern Other. Given that the period under inspection is the early decades of the twentieth century, when the memories of the long Ottoman rule over the Balkans were still quite vivid – all the more so since in some parts of the territories inhabited by the Serbs the Ottoman presence was felt until 1913 – the Eastern Other will, quite predictably, be the Ottoman Turk, as represented in the works such as operas, ballets and suites of different kinds. It will not come as a surprise that the musical pieces that will be discussed below do not belong to those numerous works of Western music in which orientalist features are clearly discernible, for the simple reason that Serbia itself has not been – and still is not – a part of ‘the West’; moreover, Serbia’s relations to the Ottoman Turks have been basically different throughout history, due to the fact that the Serbs had lived for almost five centuries under Turkish rule. Therefore, I will attempt to highlight the Serbian perspective on the topic of the Eastern Other, which will show certain overlappings with orientalist discourses, although the differences between them will prove to be evident.

Edward Said based his work on Orientalism mainly on the Near East where he himself originated from, whereas the Bulgarian-born Maria Todorova placed the Balkans at the centre of her research. In her important book *Imagining the Balkans* she argued that, unlike the impalpable Orient, the Balkans exist as a historically and geographically rounded whole, and that Balkanism is by no means to be regarded as a variation of

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<sup>1</sup> This chapter was written as part of the project *Serbian musical identities within local and global frameworks: traditions, changes, challenges* (No. 177004 (2011–2014)) funded by the Serbian Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development.

Orientalism – as has been suggested by Milica Bakić-Hayden. Todorova views Orientalism as a discourse on the imputed East–West opposition, whereas Balkanism is a discourse on imputed ambiguity and contradictions. The in-between position of the region and its liminal character are the main factors that led Todorova to argue that the Balkans are not perceived by the West as an opposite Other (as is the case with the ‘true’ Orient), but as its incomplete Self (in the state of transition towards ‘completing’ the Western Self). According to her, the Balkans are culturally constructed as an ‘inner otherness’ of Europe which serves to absorb many ideological and cultural contradictions existing in the regions outside the Balkans (Todorova 1997).

This liminal zone, coinciding basically with the region as a whole, is also a space which mirrors the East–West tensions in specific ways: Milica Bakić-Hayden’s idea of ‘nesting Orientalism’ is useful for understanding the logic of ethno-national auto-identification in the Balkans. One may wonder whether all the peoples in the region really view their eastern (and southern) neighbours as culturally inferior and less developed. Although such a perspective may seem clear and evident, things are not as simple as they may seem, one of the reasons being that religious identities are the strongest markers of national identities in the region. Both Orthodox Serbs and Muslim Slavs were Eastern Others to Catholic Croats; Muslim Slavs and Turks were Eastern Others to both Serbs and Croats, whereas only Muslim Slavs did not have an Eastern Other (at least in this context). A number of Romanians, Bulgarians and Greeks (together with other minority populations) have lived in the Eastern and Southern parts of Serbia, but they would not qualify as Eastern Others because of Orthodox Christianity which is a strong cultural link. The Ottoman Turks were their common Eastern Others, which also applied to the Western nations (though they were not *the only* Eastern Others to them). Of course, the nature of those oppositions is quite different, and it is especially the relation between Serbian (or Balkan Christian) population and Ottoman Turks that is marked by ambiguity and contradictions. Whereas the distance between the Western empires and their colonies resulted in sharp distinctions in many aspects, in the case of Balkan Slavs and Ottoman Turks, living side by side in the Balkans for several centuries resulted in an alternation of periods of relatively successful coexistence and of periods

filled with fear, hate and brutal conflicts. The Nobel prize winner Ivo Andrić wrote convincingly about that very issue in his novels.

In order to define this relationship more precisely it would be useful to say a few words on the political character of the Ottoman imperial rule. Until relatively recently it would have been unthinkable to call the Balkan territories in the period between the fifteenth and twentieth centuries *colonies* of that empire, since it was assumed that colonialist powers were only Western European states that had conquered vast overseas territories on different continents. However, the expansion of post-colonial studies questioned such views, and empires other than West-European began to be observed as colonial, among them the Ottoman. Maria Todorova is not the only one to be strongly opposed to that interpretation as well as to designating the Habsburg empire as a colonialist one – she gives her argumentation (Todorova 2006: 16) which I agree with. On the other side, Andre Gingrich, an Austrian historian, has written extensively on the Balkans as a colony of both the Ottoman and the Habsburg empires (Gingrich 1998), seeing those powers as representatives of the East and the West in the period between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries and the Balkan colonies as spaces of the contact zone between them. Said coined the term ‘frontier Orientalism’ in 1996, and Gingrich began to use it soon afterwards. That term refers to the concept (or a myth) of ‘*ante murale Christianitatis*’ – the protective wall of Christianity, that is the conviction held by both Orthodox and Catholic Christian populations in the Balkans that they had been a powerful obstacle to Islam’s expansion into Europe (it should be added that, aside from the Croats and Serbs, the Hungarians and Poles consider themselves as having served the same mission in the past). Whereas Said’s Orientalism focuses on high culture, Gingrich’s ‘frontier Orientalism’ is mostly concerned with everyday life among those who live on or near a frontier – real or imagined, present or historical – with the Other (Wolff 2011).

Whether one chooses to observe the Balkan lands and states as former colonies of both Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian empires, or as territories having been occupied for centuries and having gained freedom and independence relatively recently, one should not be surprised that the Eastern Other, more specifically the Ottoman Turk or the Islamised Slav is deeply ingrained as negative figure in the consciousness of the Serbian people. It should be added that the Serbs used to (and probably still do so

in some regions) designate the islamised Slavic (Serbian or Croatian) population as the 'Turks'. Religion has always been a determining factor of ethnic differentiation in the Balkans. The term Eastern Other therefore needs to be understood in a wider, metaphorical context, since although the centre of the Ottoman Empire was the east of the Balkans, the Serbs lived within that empire, having as their neighbours the people who, by virtue of their religion, were representatives of the imposed imperial power. At any rate, their main feature was a threatening Otherness, but different from the one confronting Western colonial empires – it was viewed from a weak, subordinate position, so the relations are opposite to the usual orientalist tensions. The Eastern or Islamic superior Other is sharply contrasted with the Orthodox Christian oppressed Self; the power relations in which Serbs were in the position of victims fearing for the preservation of their lives and Christian identity were the fundamentals on which such images were constructed in Serbian popular and high culture. Needless to say, this concerns the period of the Ottoman rule over the Balkans, until 1913: although the Serbian state, the first one with an autonomous status within the empire, and then independent (since 1878), the hostilities between those states persisted because a large number of Serbs still lived outside Serbia, in the regions under the Ottoman rule – Kosovo and Macedonia – and they were still fighting for liberation.

So, it was to be expected that the Eastern/Islamised Other would often be thematised in Serbian literature and visual arts, and (to a lesser extent) in music of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The Serbian playwrights for dramatic theatre of that period were often inspired by epic folk poetry, whose motives were usually found in heroic battles against the Ottoman Turks as invaders on their lands. It could be expected that the first Serbian operas would also look for inspiration in those thematic spheres. However, the first performance of a Serbian opera, which took place in 1903, did not use an epic subject, but it did build its plot on the antagonism between the Turks as oppressors and the Serbs as a conquered and mistreated population. It was Stanislav Binički's one-act opera *Na uranku* [At dawn], composed on the libretto with veristic overtones written by Branislav Nušić, a distinguished Serbian playwright. The dramatic events are set in a Serbian village during the Turkish rule (an indefinite period between the fifteenth and nineteenth centuries). A Serbian girl Stanka rejects the declaration of love by the Turk Redžep-aga, the local

representative of the empire, because she loves Rade, to whom she is about to marry. Desperate because of that, Redžep-aga tells the girl that it is unknown who Rade's father was. The young man, who was raised by his mother alone who had told him that his father had died when he was small, is extremely offended when he hears that accusation. However, his mother who is also present confirms the story and then Rade, emotionally distressed, takes his gun and kills her.<sup>2</sup> Obviously, a Serbian character could have been easily assigned a negative role in the libretto, but at the beginning of the twentieth century the Turk still fitted well as a negative *dramatis persona*.

The next opera that merits our attention is Isidor Bajić's *Knez Ivo od Semberije* [Prince Ivo of Semberija (1911)], based again on Branislav Nušić's play, a 'historical scene' inspired by a real event that happened in eastern Bosnia at the beginning of the nineteenth century. At the time Nušić wrote his piece, at the end of the nineteenth century, both the epic poem created and sung with the accompaniment of the gusle (a bowed folk instrument) by the famous blind singer Filip Višnjić, and a poem by Sima Milutinović, which thematised the event, were widely known. The story is about the Serbian slaves captured by Kulin-beg, being led through Semberija in Bosnia. Ivo, whose title 'prince' designates a head of the local Serbian community, was offering all his money and possessions in order to free the slaves, but Kulin-beg kept asking for more and was especially obstinate regarding releasing the beautiful girl Stanka. Ultimately, Ivo brought his icon depicting the patron-saint of his family, and a cresset (candle) – strong symbols of national identity – thus finally persuading the Turk to free the girl. However, the event was so shocking for Ivo's mother, that she fell dead.

Milenko Paunović's opera *Čengić-aga* (1923) was conceived more ambitiously but it has been left unorchestrated. The author of the libretto was the composer himself who wished to put more nuances into the action in order to avoid stereotypical dramatic situations. Eponymous character, a Turk, has a Serbian slave Anđelija, who is torn between love for him and the dark past, as the aga murdered her brothers and blinded her father. At

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<sup>2</sup> In the staging of the opera in 1968, and again in 1999, the directors decided to omit such a brutal act, so Rade does not kill his mother.

the end, both Čengić aga and Anđelija are killed by a Serbian young man who is in love with the enslaved girl.

The opera *Robinja* [Slave girl (1964)] by Ljubomir Bošnjaković also invites observation of the images of the Eastern Other. It appeared surprisingly late, at the time when such themes were completely outdated, but the composer was known for his traditionalist orientation. The dramatic plot takes place in (what is today) western Serbia, then under the Ottoman rule, shortly before the outbreak of the First Insurrection (1804). Anđa, a beautiful Serbian peasant girl who is about to marry Rade, is captured by the Turks and taken to Rašid-beg's residence in Belgrade. Eventually she succeeds to escape thanks to a plot organised by Rade, his gardener friend and a woman from Rašid-beg's harem who happens to be Anđa's aunt.

Two more works should be mentioned: operas by Petar Krstić whose subjects are untypical. *Žulumčar* [The oppressor (1927)] is based on a drama by the Serbian writer Svetozar Ćorović and is set in the Bosnian Muslim milieu, all the characters being Muslim. The story unfolds as Emina is playing games with Džafer-aga and Selim-beg who both court her, the outcome not being what she had hoped to achieve. Krstić's other opera *Ženidba Stojana Jankovića* [The wedding of Stojan Janković (1948)] was inspired by an epic folk poem. It is a love story between a Muslim girl whose family is against her marrying the Serbian hero, but with a happy end.

Looking at the plots of those operas, one can notice that with the passing of time, they tend to be less tragic and conflicting, which can be easily understood given the new political/social circumstances after the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire and the founding of Yugoslavia in 1918. Whereas Binički's *Knez Ivo od Semberije* is a typical expression of the frustration growing among the Serbian (and other Christian) populations in the decades before the Balkan wars, portraying the Turks as merciless tyrants, Krstić's *Ženidba Stojana Jankovića* mainly elaborates the love story between the Serbian young man and the Turkish girl Hajkuna with exciting action and resolution. It is not easy to understand the motive of the latter composer for working on that opera after 1945, in the unstable early years of the communist rule in Yugoslavia, when there was no hope that the opera would be performed (and indeed, it has remained

unperformed). A special case is provided by Bošnjaković's *Slave Girl*, which was the most anachronistic both in its subject and style.

These examples of Serbian operas are certainly not numerous enough in order to draw firm conclusions, but it is possible to get an idea of the dominant attitudes towards depicting the Eastern/Ottoman Other. In most cases those are male characters, representatives of Turkish ruling order, ruthless (Kulin-ban in *Knez Ivo*; Rašid-beg in *Robinja*) or just malicious (Redžep-aga in *Na uranku*) and there is only one instance of a Muslim female character who is brave and who breaks religious rules (Hajkuna in *Ženidba Stojana Jankovića*). On the other hand, the Serbs are portrayed as generous and self-sacrificing for the national and personal dignity and welfare (Knez Ivo, Rade in *Robinja*), emotional and violent (Rade in *Na uranku*), fearless (Stojan in *Ženidba Stojana Jankovića*); Serbian female characters are mostly passive and suffering (*Na uranku* and *Knez Ivo*), but sometimes active and taking risk (the slave girl and her aunt).

Contrary to orientalist depictions, the Eastern Other in those works is not portrayed as inferior, irrational and backward, which is all too natural, given that he is observed from the Serbian subordinate position – and therefore he is seen as threatening, brutal, taking advantage of his position of power.

The same applies to the characters of the ballet *Ohridska legenda* [The legend of Ohrid (1947)] by the distinguished Serbian composer Stevan Hristić. In that work too we can find the motives of abuse of power from the side of the Eastern Other, but also motives of abduction, captivity and harem – which are connected, because both in Bošnjaković's *Robinja* and Hristić's *Ohridska legenda*, Christian girls are forcefully removed from their families and destined to live in harems. In *Ohridska legenda*, janissaries kill the bridegroom during the wedding festivities in a Christian village; they capture the bride Biljana and take her as a slave to the sultan. She is freed thanks to a magical sword and flower obtained by young Marko.

If we turn our glance to the ways the Ottoman Turks/Muslims have been *musically* portrayed in those works for the musical stage, we shall notice stereotyped procedures reminiscent of the western composers' approaches. The main signifier of the Eastern Other was, of course, the marked presence of augmented seconds in melodies, mainly as a raised fourth degree of the minor scale. As was the case in the West, Serbian composers employed 'spiced-up major-minor tonality rather than music

based on a different ethnic scale pattern – unorthodox augmented seconds, but an orthodox modulation’ (Scott 1997: 3). On the other hand, the appropriation of old church modes for representing the East, as observed in some works by Western composers, those modes being treated as if they belonged to major-minor tonality, was not adopted by Serbian composers because those were the markers of their own, Serbian musical identity, a part of it at least with more ancient roots, so that a contrasted sound sphere could not be created (cf. Marković 2005: 187–191).

It is important to note here that Stanislav Binički and Isidor Bajić belonged to the generation of composers who were not preoccupied with ‘authenticity’ of folk melodies which they incorporated into their works, and they were inclined to use urban folk songs which had oriental/Turkish/Muslim elements in them. Such elements are more frequent in Binički’s *Na uranku*, for instance in Rade’s aria based on the popular urban song ‘Kad bi znala, dilber Stano’ [If you knew, dear Stana] and a little later in a *sevdalinka*-styled ‘Majka ga neće’ [Mother does not want him]. In Bajić’s *Knez Ivo od Semberije* there are no songs of urban character, but there are some oriental colourings nevertheless (Ivo’s arioso at p. 47 of the piano reduction). In the latter opera, the Turkish characters and milieu are illustrated with some typical markers such as a ‘marziale pomposo’ oriental sound landscape with a marked use of wind instruments and percussions. The atmosphere is well painted in scene 6 – when in the divertissement of a *čoček* a brass band plays typical oriental dances in 9/8 time signature. In both those early Serbian operas one finds also two of the most direct sound symbols of ethnic differentiation along the religious line: muezzins’ calls for prayer and Orthodox church singing, in very short appearances, adding colourful notes to the dramatic actions.

The ‘case’ concerning the augmented second – the main orientalist signifier – in Serbian (and Balkan) music deserves to be commented on at least very briefly here. During the first decades of the twentieth century the majority of Serbian composers stressed the importance of creating a national style based on Serbian folk music, which they understood as ‘authentic’ folk music, free from foreign influences – which they believed was possible to detect. The renowned composer Petar Konjović expressed his belief that folk music was not equal as regards purity and value, and that composers should be able to identify what was a ‘supplement’ (in Serbian: *nanos*) that distorted and falsified music whose kernel was healthy

and original (Konjović 1947a: 30). It should be said that Konjović was however inclined to orientalist folklore, although he highly appreciated the purity of Serbian old folk songs, and he was a real master of art songs in the style of *sevdalinka*, which he called ‘Balkan chanson in which short and precise Slav motives are combined with oriental motives that are decorative and nostalgic’ (Konjović 1947b: 109).

Miloje Milojević, who belonged to the same generation of composers as Konjović, also searched for some specific features of Serbian folk music ‘which should be differentiated from that which has been acquired or that has been able to impose itself’ (Milojević 1926: 143). Milojević considered urban folk music in Serbia as having preserved an older, ‘lower’, more profound layer upon which the elements from Western and, even more pronounced elements – from the Eastern cultural sphere are juxtaposed (Milojević 1939: 441) – he called them ‘our Balkan songs’ (Ibid).

Returning to the ‘controversial’ augmented second, I shall first quote Vlado Milošević, an authority on *sevdalinka*, who maintained that ‘The augmented second is a feature common to all urban songs of the Levantine type’ (Milošević 1964: 22), and that ‘*sevdalinka* was created when the augmented second became prevalent in Bosnian urban singing, because that interval goes always together with an excessively sinuous melismatic line and a broad sentence” (Milošević 1964: 38). Often identified by Serbian scholars as ‘exotic’ (Mosusova 1977: 784) and avoided as much as possible in art music, in some periods at least, it has nevertheless become appropriated by different social strata and observed as a feature shared by all Balkan peoples. Therefore in some of the aforementioned works of Serbian composers, the contrast between the Serbian and Ottoman/Turk characters could not be expressed as sharply as desired and for that reason some stronger markers of nationality, i.e. those linked to religion, were sought and introduced (Orthodox church chant, muezzin calls to prayer). A very recent example of that is found in the piece called...*hold me, neighbor, in this storm...* for string quartet, gusle, two-sided drum (tapan), and tape, written for the Kronos Quartet by the US-based Serbian composer Aleksandra Vrebalov. The gusle, the folk bowed string instrument used to accompany ‘singers of (epic) tales’, and thus being a powerful marker of Serbian national identity, is added to the string quartet. At certain points short inserts with recordings of church bells and, separately, muezzin calls for prayer, are introduced.

A similar wish for integration of the Eastern Other seems to emanate from instrumental works in the form of suites which were popular among Serbian composers in the first decades of the twentieth century. Inspired probably by the success of *Balkanofonija* [Balkanophony (1927)], *Četiri balkanske igre* [Four Balkan dances (1938)] and other similar works composed by Josip Slavenski, an ethnic Croat living in Belgrade, Serbian composers such as Miloje Milojević and the Croatian-born Marko Tajčević composed suites for piano with the adjective 'Balkan' stated in the title (Tajčević, *Sedam balkanskih igara* [Seven Balkan dances (1927)]; Milojević, *Melodije i ritmovi s Balkana* [Melodies and rhythms from the Balkans (1942)]). Among the movements of these suites there was always at least one piece with oriental overtones. In those interwar times the formerly antagonistic feelings towards Turkey had almost completely calmed down and the Ottoman heritage was accepted more easily and was even beginning to get integrated into a wider Yugoslav and/or Balkan frame, as demonstrated by these works.

Slavenski's *Religiofonija / Simfonija Orijenta* [Religiophony / Symphony of the Orient (1934)] also deserves to be mentioned in this context, although it is not so much centred on the East as seen from the Balkans, but on different religions originating in the East. Movements Nos. 4 and 5 of that cantata evoke Christian and Muslim spirituality respectively, embracing religious/cultural diversity, without references to national or ethnic belongings. A rather different approach can be observed in the *Suite Orientale* for symphonic orchestra (1931), composed by Ladislav Grinsky, Slavenski's pupil. Inspired perhaps by Rimsky-Korsakov's *Scheherazade*, the four-movement piece (1. Arrival. Turkish fair; 2. Turkish evening. Dance; 3. In the mosque; 4. Turkish wedding) is stylistically dated, with picturesque evocations of oriental milieus, but with modest invention as regards melody (which uses augmented seconds moderately), rhythm and harmony.

This overview of the ways the Eastern Other was represented in Serbian art music indicates that the ethnic and religious distance, together with the long history of hostility between the Ottoman Turks/Muslims and the Christian Orthodox Serbs, were expressed in ways that had much in common with similar portrayals in works by composers from other nations during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, such as the Russians. The composers aimed at differentiating the Serbian and the

Ottoman characters and milieus, which was not a difficult task at the textual (dramatic) level, but it was more demanding with respect to the music, the main reason being that Serbian folk music that they used often belonged to urban repertoires, which had assimilated certain features typical of *sevdalinka* and related genres. In that way the projected sharp differentiation of the Serbian and Ottoman sides could not be fully achieved. Hence, on occasions when really strong markers of identity were needed, they were found in the religious sphere – Orthodox church chanting, church bells, muezzin's calls to prayer. In the beginning of this chapter I have mentioned Maria Todorova's important idea on the Balkans as 'Inner Otherness' of the European West, containing many contradictions and paradoxes. In the case of Serbian art music, those features could be perceived in simultaneous distancing from the Ottoman legacy (involving a certain atmosphere of self-occidentalisation) and accepting some orientalist markers as part of their own national identity. Living in a liminal zone has thus brought a specific variety of the East-West tensions which are reflected in a number of compositions, some of which are successful artworks and not just documents of the past.

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Manolis Tseiragakis and Ioannis Tselikas  
**Greek operetta between East and West:  
the case of *Chalima***

‘Dío kósmous ékhi i psikhí mou, Dísi kai Anatolí’<sup>1</sup>

**Introduction: operetta in Greece**

In his comedy *Le donne de casa soa* (1755), the great Italian playwright Carlo Goldoni tried to place an invisible border between East and West. Therefore, he claimed that we can imagine a vertical line on the map from North to South that passes right over the island of Corfu and divides West from East (Chatzēpantazēs 2007: 20). Greek music found itself in the midst of such controversy after the establishment of the Greek state. And the dispute lasts until today.

Operetta is one of the genres in which the different paths between East and West are most evident. The first acquaintance of the Greek public with the genre was made through a French operetta troupe that had been invited to Athens by the Greek Royal Court in 1871. However, substantial contact with the new genre was made twelve years later, in 1883, when a touring Armenian operetta troupe presented, in the chic and cosmopolitan seaside theatre of Neo Phaliro, a dozen French and Ottoman operettas in Turkish language. Among them there was a play *Leblebidji Hor-Hor Agha* [Hor-hor the chickpea vendor] that was to become a model for a long series of similar ones, both in Greece and in the wider region of the Eastern Mediterranean. Indeed, performances of the play were not given only in the aforementioned areas, but also in Vienna, Paris, the USA, and Cairo until World War II; there have also been contemporary revivals in

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<sup>1</sup> ‘East and West are two realms in my heart’, verse from the song *Mes sta dyo tis matia* [Inside her two eyes], lyrics by Giōrgos Gkikodimas, sung by Charis Alexiou.

Passadena, New York, Paris and Yerevan. A distant descendant of the play found its way to the West End in 1897, under the title *Yashmak, a story of the East*.

After *Leblebidji Hor-Hor Agha*, the acceptance that the genre of operetta gained in Greece was amazing. Due to the successful experiment of mixing light and art music, western and oriental tunes, while offering a spectacle that could be characterised both by cosmopolitanism and local colour, theatrical and musical entertainment, classy and popular, the genre radically changed Greek theatre.

*Leblebidji Hor-Hor Agha* is the third operetta in Ottoman Turkish composed by the Armenian Dikran Tchouhadjian. It was staged in November 1875, at the theatres of Peran (Mestyan 2011: 219–352 and passim). Its plot is a blend of Molière's theatre and Ottoman traditional theatre, mainly the Orta Oyunu. During the years that followed, the play was performed hundreds of times, indicating that something new had happened in the theatre and perhaps in the social life of the Ottoman Empire. This leads us to argue that the history of operetta is neither merely musical, nor solely theatrical, but also social (Seiragakēs 2012).

The interesting thing about the reception of the play in Greece is that, from its Greek premiere in Turkish in 1883, until the composition and performance of the first Greek operetta, this play not only functioned as a model for the creation of Greek vaudeville, but its music was also gradually assimilated and became inseparable from Greek traditional music. Three years after its Greek premiere, the audiences of the military band open-air concerts in Athens had noted the lack of Greek music in the repertoire of those events and persistently asked for Greek songs like *Leblebidji Hor-Hor Agha*, and a march entitled *Black is the night on the mountains* (Mparoutas 1992).

The latter was written by Andreas Scheiler, a musician of the military band whose father, also a military band musician, came to Greece when two battalions of military music followed the arrival of King Otto in the 1830s. In other words, the audience asked for these as the most representative Greek songs, although the former was a song from an Ottoman operetta and the latter a Bavarian march.

The footprint of the East remained very strong in the cultural life of Greece throughout the nineteenth century. The ultimate Greek best-selling book of the period was also a comedy with disparate songs: the famous

*Babylonia* had thirty editions until 1900 and the title clearly implies the coexistence of different cultures and elements in Greece during the construction of what we conventionally call ‘national identity’. The play is also an amalgam of the elements of Western and Oriental theatre, as it also has its roots in the Orta Oyunu, a traditional Ottoman genre (Solomōnidēs 1954: 184). The latter genre with its stock characters bears a strong resemblance to the Shadow Theatre, a genre which was widespread both in the Ottoman Empire and in Greece.

At the dawn of the twentieth century, Greek actors felt up to attempting an operetta performance. The oriental operettas, with the advantage of familiarity, functioned as the ideal stepping stone in order to gain the audience’s applause upon the stage of a demanding genre. In 1889, the folk comedian Kostakis Kalitsis presented *Leblebidji Hor-Hor Agha* translated into Greek (Chatzēpantazēs 1981) and, in 1906, an orientalist Greek operetta following in the footsteps of *Hor-Hor Agha* appeared in Athens under the characteristic title *Pharaoh Pasha* (Seiragakēs 2009). Soon, a new adaptation of *Leblebidji Hor-Hor Agha* was used by the more significant Greek operetta troupes that had been established from 1909 onwards. The actor who made the translation, Nikos Paraskevopoulos, possessed skills that proved extremely useful: his pursuit of Shadow Theatre during his childhood and his experience of touring in Smyrna with the prose theatre troupe of Dionysios Tavoularis, where the success of *Hor-Hor Agha* forced them to use the only corresponding Greek play they had in their repertoire, *Babylonia*, which we have already mentioned.

The conscious effort to eliminate from the narrative of the birth of Greek operetta the contribution of the Eastern element is impressive. Greek scholars never refer to Greek ‘oriental’ operetta performances before the interwar period, and even the actors themselves who excelled in *Hor-Hor Agha* underestimated this success, rather considering it a necessary sacrifice to public taste. In this respect, the case of the actor Yiannis Papaioannou is characteristic, as he never included *Leblebidji Hor-Hor Agha* in the printed list of plays of his troupe’s advertising poster, although he was one of the three actors who best incarnated the old Ottoman peddler.

### **The case of *Chalima***

*Chalima*, ‘a spectacular operetta in three acts’ (a subtitle in the score), is probably the most representative example of an operetta that lies between

East and West. Its composer, Theophrastos Sakellaridēs, was born in Athens in 1883 and is regarded as the most successful Greek operetta composer, having completed more than 80 such works. He became familiar with Eastern church music through his father, who was a composer himself and a chanter in church. Even though there is no evidence of formal music education, Theophrastos claims that he studied music in Germany and Italy. His most renowned work *O Vaphtistikos* [The Godson] was written in 1918 and has been staged in Athens almost every year until today.

*Chalima* was first staged in Athens at the Mondial Theatre on 31 August 1926 and became an immediate success. Until World War II, it was staged more than 200 times. After World War II, however, it was staged only once, but some highlights were recorded around 1956, by the Radio Symphony Orchestra. On 15 February, 2013, *Chalima* was staged again at the Greek National Opera. For this new production, the music score was restored and edited by Ioannis Tselikas, therefore the following part of this article is an outcome of this enterprise. The full score had to be prepared from the manuscript parts of a 1928 production. The problem was that 1/3 of the parts was missing, namely the oboe, bassoon, horns, second violins and violas; they had to be recomposed from scratch, following a few directions found in the manuscript vocal score. The text had also to be edited and be compared with the published version of the sung text of 1927 that was mentioned earlier. Also, some parts of the vocal score had to be compared with the published versions of several ‘hits’ extracted from the operetta.

The spoken parts of the libretto were written by journalist and author Spyros Potamianos (1877–1935) and the lyrics of the singing parts by the composer himself. Here is a short synopsis of the plot: Princess Chalima, on her wedding day with Nouredin (a prince from a different kingdom), falls in love with Prince Shah Rouman, who is believed to have killed her father, and has therefore been captured and condemned to death. In order to postpone his death penalty for some time, he persuades the cook of the palace (Ali Mousaka) to disguise himself as Nouredin and marry Chalima in his place. After a series of comic events, Chalima’s father turns up alive: Since Rouman is not guilty, he is allowed to marry Chalima and together they live happily ever after.

To Greek audiences, *Chalima's tales* is a substitute for the well-known *One thousand and one nights* folk tale collection. Even though the plot is not based on any particular story of this folk tale collection, Potamianos (the librettist) borrowed most of the names of his heroes from it. Chalima, the feminine form of the common name Chalim, meaning soft or calm, appears in the first Greek translations titled *Aravikon mythologikon* [Arabic folk tale collection (Venice, 1757–1762)] (Kechagioglou 1988) and *Nea Chalima* (Vienna, 1791–1794), as another name for the Persian storyteller Scheherazade. Through these translations, these folk tale collections became known in Greece and later in the wider Balkan area as the *The fairy tales of Chalima*, and at the same time this phrase acquired a proverbial meaning used until now, especially in the political arena. Three years before the premiere of the operetta, a scholar by the name of Kostas Trikoglidis published a new translation of the collection directly from the Arabic language (Trikoglidēs 1921–1923). The rendering and spelling of the names Potamianos used for the script of the operetta are very similar to those that appear in the Trikoglidis edition, which became an immediate publishing success, and one could guess that this was one of the reasons that led Sakellaridēs and Potamianos to choose this subject. The only name that does not come from the collection is that of the cook who is called Ali Mousakas after the famous dish ‘moussaka’, made with ground beef and eggplants, meaning ‘chilled’ in Arabic. Besides the names, what Potamianos and Sakellaridēs borrowed from the collections was the spirit, the sensuous and luxurious atmosphere, as well as their mixture of comic events.

Two more allusions are worth noting with regard to the plot. The first is the ballet in the second act titled ‘The dance of the seven veils’, after Oscar Wilde’s *Salome* and, subsequently, Richard Strauss’ opera. The second allusion is a song from the second act entitled ‘Leila’s ballad’. In the published version of the libretto for the 1927 performance, which contained only the singing parts, there was a note explaining that the theme of the song was based on the legend of the *Florentine tragedy* – another Oscar Wilde play. *Florentine tragedy* was staged in Athens on 23 April 1916 (Skrip 1916) and *Salome* on 21 March and 22 October, 1925, a year before *Chalima's* premiere, thus linking the operetta with current theatrical life in Athens (Vasileiou 2005).

As one might expect from the title of the work, Sakellaridēs' composition is full of oriental-type melodies, which, along with the libretto, the scenery and the costumes, leads the imagination of the spectator into the magic world of the orient – hence the subtitle 'spectacular operetta'. All the musical techniques that we now consider as stereotypes in order to depict the East within a Western musical idiom, are present. Most melodies are constructed upon oriental modes, and they are either simply orchestrated over a drone, or more fully through the use of impressionistic chord progressions. The small orchestra that was usually used for the operetta staging does not provide a wide scope for exquisite orchestral colours. Nevertheless, through the excessive use of the oboe, the solo violin and the harp (the prominent instruments in Korsakov's *Scheherazade*), Sakellaridēs manages to create an 'oriental' sound. It is not difficult to trace further musical allusions that come from other 'exotic' operas that were successful on the Athenian stage, including George Bizet's *Les pêcheurs de perles*, Camille Saint-Saëns' *Samson et Dalila* and Giuseppe Verdi's *Aida* (Example 1).

Example 1. Allusions to 'exotic' operas

Sakellaridēs, *Chalima*, Act I, m.498. (ballet music)  
Ob. Solo  
*mp*

Saint-Saëns, *Samson et Dalila*, Act III, Bacchanale  
Ob. Solo  
*f*

Verdi, *Aida*, Act III, Romanza "O cieli azzurri"  
Ob. Solo  
*p*

As to the non-exotic musical sections, found mostly in the melodramatic parts of *Chalima*, one finds influences from Bizet's *Carmen* and Puccini's *Tosca* (Example 2).

Example 2. *Non-exotic music section*

Sakellaridis, *Chalima*, Act I, Finale, mm. 883-885.

Puccini, *Tosca*, Act I, mm. 9-14.

A general trait of Sakellaridis' musical style is an avoidance of melodic types found in the Viennese operetta, as Sakellaridis was trying to achieve a more personal operetta idiom. Another feature is the attention to the correct setting of the Greek language into music. The most interesting aspect of the music, however, is that these oriental-type melodies are set to European and American dance rhythms such as foxtrot, one-step and tango (Example 3).

Example 3. *Cosmopolitan dances in Chalima*

Sakellaridis, *Chalima*, Act I, mm. 711-716.

Two-Lento

Sakellaridis, *Chalima*, Act II, mm. 495-500.

Tango

Here we find the ‘marriage’ of the ‘cosmopolitan’ with the ‘exotic’ element by a Greek composer geographically lying between the East and the West. This musical blending, as unorthodox as it might initially appear, reflects the quest for a European identity by the Athenian bourgeoisie, which started in the early twentieth century. Furthermore, the musical style of *Chalima* became a model for future operettas with similar oriental subjects, and later on for musicals for the stage or the screen (Seiragakēs 2009).<sup>2</sup> Additionally, it was one of the seeds of a popular urban folk genre known as *Archontorebetiko* [A higher class *rebetiko*] that flourished in the following decades initially in Asia Minor and later in urban centres in Greece, in which *rebetiko* melodic types were combined with European dances. Therefore, we believe that *Chalima* is a unique case in European music of the early twentieth century, since it is very difficult to trace oriental melodies set to European popular dances in that period.

A question that could be raised regarding *Chalima* is whether it is an ‘exotic’ or ‘oriental’ work, using the latter term with respect to Edward Said’s definition (Said 1996: 13–15). As the ‘Western power over East’ is one of the most prominent features a work of art should present in order to belong to the orientalist’s discourse – *Chalima* would not be a strong candidate. As we mentioned earlier, all the traits used by Europeans to depict the East in the nineteenth century, such as sensuality, luxury, and sometimes violence and brutality, are present in *Chalima*; nevertheless imperialistic connotations are not. Such connotations, abundant in the Greek operettas of the first two decades of the twentieth century,<sup>3</sup> have ceased to exist after the defeat of the Greek Army in Asia Minor in 1922. The exotic setting of *Chalima* reflects an Athenian bourgeoisie that melancholically contemplates the lost power and the evaporation of the ‘Great idea’ that would create a huge Greek empire. Characteristically, the very last chord – even though the operetta has a happy ending – is a dramatic minor chord.

The very successful production of *Chalima* in 2013 (all performances were sold-out) makes one wonder why this work had to wait for almost

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<sup>2</sup> The following are titles of operettas and reviews based on exotic subjects: *A night in the harem* (1927), *Nasterdin Chotzas* (1928), *Maharajah*, *The beautiful girl of Baghdad* (1932), *The fairy of the Nile* (1934), *Rosa Ispahan* (1937).

<sup>3</sup> Spyridon Samaras’ (1861-1917) three operettas *War in war* (1914), *The princess of Sason* [Sazan] (1915) and *The Cretan girl* (1916) are characteristic examples.

seventy years to be revived after its last performance. This unfortunate situation applies to the entire repertoire of Greek operetta, which consists of a vast amount of works, with the exception of three or four of them. Nevertheless, we are optimistic that, in the near future, new ‘treasures’ will be brought back to light after a long hibernation.

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Ivana Vesić

**The role of Russian emigrants in the rise of popular culture and music in Belgrade between two world wars<sup>1</sup>**

A large number of Russian refugees who feared the persecution as a result of a defeat of the anti-Bolshevik military troops located in the southern parts of Russia (nowadays Ukraine) started to settle in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes in May 1919. According to historian Aleksej Arsenjev<sup>2</sup> (2011), the first large wave of refugees was formed from May to November 1919 and included 1,600 persons, a majority of whom were offered residence at the periphery of the Yugoslav capital of Belgrade. Afterwards, there were several far bigger waves during the 1920 that consisted of both civilians and military personnel who fled in thousands to the ports of the Adriatic Sea and, finally, in November 1921, February 1922 and May 1923 that consisted mostly of the parts of Russian army military corps commanded by the general Pëtr Nikolaevich Vrangel'. The historians who conducted research on the number of Russian emigrants in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes estimated that between 40,000 and 70,000 refugees crossed the Yugoslav border from 1919 until 1923, while around 30,000 to 40,000 settled permanently in its territory. A majority of Russians were located in the so-called Serbian parts of the

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<sup>1</sup> This chapter was written as part of the project *Serbian musical identities within local and global frameworks: traditions, changes, challenges* (No. 177004 (2011–2014)) funded by the Serbian Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development.

<sup>2</sup> Russian names and titles are transliterated using the simplified Library of Congress romanisation system. However, the name of Aleksej Arsenjev (an author of Russian descent who was born and raised in Serbia) is written phonetically, as it is pronounced and spelled in Serbian language (which uses both Cyrillic and Latin alphabets).

Kingdom, in Vojvodina and Central Serbia.<sup>3</sup> Of among 300 Russian colonies established in the first Yugoslavia, 215 were located in the territory of Serbia with the largest one located in the capital city, Belgrade, consisting of 10,000 refugees (Arsenjević 2011, 29, 89).

Although the Russians experienced great hardship as a result of displacement, experiencing poverty, hunger, disease and often inhuman living conditions, they created exceptionally rich and multifarious cultural life in their host countries including the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (later the Kingdom of Yugoslavia) soon after their settlement. Early in the 1920s they started organising their own scientific, professional, artistic, humanitarian and cultural associations and publishing numerous journals and magazines (Đurić 1990; Sibinović 1994; Kačaki 2003). At the same time, they sponsored many public events in order to promote Russian cultural, scientific and artistic achievements and to foster the cultural emancipation of the local population (Đurić 1990; Sibinović, Mežinski, Arsenjević 1994; Arsenjević 2011).

There are several factors that can be regarded as critical in the process of cultural engagement of Russians in the Yugoslav regions. First of all, Russian refugees were focused on preservation of their national identity, hoping to return to their homeland in the near future. The idea of temporariness of their status led them to concentrate on the activities that helped the safeguarding of their cultural habits and lifestyle, sometimes leading them into social and cultural isolation from the host community. Moreover, some of the Russian refugees aimed at the continuation of their professional careers and improvement of individual accomplishments. Secondly, willingly or not, many Russians decided to conform to the specific character of Yugoslav social, economic, cultural and political reality trying to achieve some level of social integration.

The fact that Serbian parts of the Kingdom suffered massive destruction during the World War I, which heavily affected its economy, population and infrastructure, had a dual effect on the Russian refugees. On the one hand, the low standard of living in Serbia of that time contributed, to a certain degree, to the deterioration of their already fragile economic position. On the other hand, due to enormous

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<sup>3</sup> On the results of research on the number of Russian refugees in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes and the phases of their settlement see: Maliković 1993; Jovanović 1994; Sibinović 1994; Jovanović 1996; Arsenjević 2011.

depopulation, Serbian regions increasingly needed human resources as a crucial factor for the economic recovery. Therefore, it is not surprising that a large part of Russian community, because of the prevalence of the individuals with higher and secondary education, with sufficient work experience and multilingual abilities, had easy access to the growing bureaucracy of the newly formed state, including the posts in the academic, artistic, scientific and cultural institutions. Moreover, many Russian emigrants, by virtue of their knowledge and areas of expertise, helped the instalment of diverse scientific, economic and artistic practices.

The contribution of Russians in the field of music was investigated by many authors in the past three decades, including the ones who participated in the very influential scientific conference in 1993 organised by the Department for Slavic Studies of the Faculty of Philology of the University of Belgrade, dedicated exclusively to the research of different aspects of life of Russian diaspora settled in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes/Kingdom of Yugoslavia (Mosusova 1994; Pavlović 1994; Petrović 1994; Šukuljević-Marković 1994). Majority of them, including, Roksanda Pejović (2001), Aleksej Arsenjev (1994, 2011), Milica Jovanović (1994) and Melita Milin (2003) focused on the activities of Russian emigrants in the National Theatres in Belgrade and Novi Sad, or, more precisely, on their role in the establishment of opera/operetta and ballet ensembles, as well as opera/operetta and ballet productions. Based on the data collected from the press of the interwar period and from the published testimonies of the contemporaries, these historians and musicologists gave insights on the accomplishments of individual Russian opera singers, ballet dancers, directors, costume designers and choreographers, discussing in detail the comments and views of the local music critics and music specialists.

Because of the specific objectives of the aforementioned research, the diverse music activities of Russian emigrants that took place outside the state-funded institutions were excluded from the authors' perspective. In order to examine more closely the scope and characteristics of the music activities of Russian emigrants in the sphere of commercial or popular culture, it was necessary to go through a number of archival documents and published sources, including music scores, press articles, music reviews, memoirs, etc. Most importantly, I surveyed the collection of archival documents of the Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of

Yugoslavia and its Artistic Department which is the property of the Archive of Yugoslavia. To be precise, a part of the fund number 66 which consist of folders Nos. 359, 599, 617, 619, 623, 624 and 625 came under detailed scrutiny.

After analysing the data collected from both archival and published sources it was possible to partially reconstruct the types of musical forms and genres that occupied a prominent place in the field of commercial culture in the interwar Belgrade. Using the results of my previous research on the music programme of Radio Belgrade between two world wars (Vesić 2013) and the music publishing house founded by Jovan Frajt (Vesić 2014) that, among other things, appoint to the tendencies in music consumption of the inhabitants of Belgrade, as well as the results of the historians' research on the sociocultural and socioeconomic phenomena in the capital during that period (Marković 1990; Dimić 1997), I was able to assess the factors that influenced the participation of Russian emigrants in the emancipation of commercial or popular culture in Belgrade, and, also, their contribution to the processes of transformations and differentiations of Belgrade's urban culture.

### **The activities of Russian emigrants in the spheres of popular and commercial culture**

The cross-examination of data shows the prevalence of four types of musical and theatrical genres among the Russian emigrants that could be classified as belonging to the commercial culture. One of them was the early twentieth-century operetta of Franz Lehár, Emerich Kálmán and a number of other Russian, Czech, French, Austrian and Yugoslav composers that resembled in many aspects the so-called 'boulevard theatre plays'. Although Lehár's and Kalman's works with their colourful and brilliant orchestration, skilled vocal arrangements and masterful use of popular dances differed profoundly from the less ambitious forms of musical theatre of that time, they were not attributed artistic value, due to the strict aesthetic criteria adopted by the music professionals and officials in the interwar Belgrade. A negative view of the operettas from the beginning of the twentieth century was common among Belgrade music professionals and critics in the interwar period (see Pejović 1999: 80–87, 135–140, 179–185). According to them, none of the modern operettas, including the Viennese ones, were considered as artistically valuable, and,

therefore, they were not perceived as appropriate for the repertoires of serious theatrical institutions.<sup>4</sup> For example, Stevan Hristić, the director of Opera of the National Theatre in Belgrade, gave an opinion on the possibility of opening private theatrical companies in the Kingdom of SCS and proposed to the Artistic Department of the Ministry of Education to radicalise their cultural policies by not letting the Austrian and Hungarian operettas spread throughout Yugoslav regions.<sup>5</sup>

Apart from operettas, Russian emigrants often took part in the production of cabarets that contained musical parts along with dancing acts, comedy sketches etc. Finally, Russians were involved in the production and distribution of popular songs or the so-called *schlagers*, as well as the performances of Gypsy and Russian folk songs and folk dances that were popular in urban centres of the pre-revolutionary Russia.

The archival records reveal a number of individuals, mainly Russian operatic singers, ballet dancers and pianists who participated in the productions of operetta works in Belgrade and other urban centres of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. These artists were gathered in small private theatrical companies that gave performances in popular Belgrade restaurants, hotels and halls, as well as the concert halls and theaters in Vojvodina, Croatia and Central Serbia and many spa centres. Relying on the data from archival documents, I made a list of companies in chronological order with the names of their owners/managers, members and repertoire (Table 1).

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<sup>4</sup> Many negative remarks on the operetta and cabaret performances made by the officials can be found in folders Nos. 599, 619 and 623 of the Fund 66 – Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Archive of Yugoslavia.

<sup>5</sup> 'A Note to the Artistic Department of the Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of SCS', 2 August, 1925. Archive of Yugoslavia, Fund 66 – Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, folder 599. Hristić argued that the modern operettas only served as mediators for the so-called *schlagers* – 'the latest product from Vienna'. He understood the economic reasons that governed the work of private companies, but, at the same time, warned about the devastating effect of Austrian operettas on the local culture. The same remarks can be found in a letter from the management of the National Theatre in Belgrade to the Artistic Department of the Ministry of Education (1 August, 1926. Archive of Yugoslavia, Fund 66 – Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, folder 619). While giving an insight into the repertorial policies of the regional theatres of the Kingdom of SCS, the management warned against 'frivolous operettas from Budapest and Vienna'.

Table 1. *List of operetta companies owned by or employing Russian emigrants*

<p><b>Slobodno pozorište [Free theatre]</b>, address: unknown owner: <b>Vojislav Turinski</b> (opera singer); members: unknown; period of activity: <b>January 1925–?</b>, repertoire: unknown</p> <p><b>Operetta company</b>, address: Jakšićeva 11 owners: <b>Vera Burago Balaban</b> (operetta singer, director and producer) and <b>Ivan Dinulović</b> (operetta singer); members: 10 professional musicians; period of activity: <b>June 1925–?</b>, repertoire: <i>The Csárdás Queen</i> (E. Kálmán), <i>A Night of love</i> (Valentinov), <i>The geisha</i> (S. Jones), <i>The Countess Marry</i> (E. Kálmán).</p> <p><b>Operetta company</b>, address: restaurant <i>Ruska kruna</i> [Russian crown], Belgrade owner: <b>Sergije Strahov (Sergei Strakhov)</b>; members: female singers – Elsa Radomskaia, Ol’ga Ianchevetskaia, Ekatarina Dej-Avrampenka, Lydia Ivanova, Milica Enwald, Ivanka Rajković, Nada Petrović, male singers – Viktor Stajnić, Aleksandar Cvetković, Vladimir Volzhskii, Sergei Strakhov, Vladimir Konchakh; Margareta Froman (ballet dancer), Antipov and Mamontov (painters), Meshcherskaia and Zaidado (pianists); period of activity: <b>November 1928–?</b>; repertoire: unknown</p> <p><b>Vodvilj opereta [Vaudeville-Operetta]</b>, address: travelling theatre owner: <b>Alexei Orlov</b>; members: female singers – M. Ercegović, M. Kralj, G. Istomina, Z. Zorina, J. Polyremin, K. Potemkina, I. Rajković, A. Sanuarskaia, male singers – V. Volzhskii, I. Gorskii-Horak, I. Gudara, V. Masl, A. Orlov, A. Ostrovskii, V. Smolniakov, A. Tamarov, A. Topornin; period of activity: <b>March 1929–?</b>; repertoire: <i>The volunteer Zoro</i> (Aleksin), <i>Chump lady</i> (Bremau?), <i>Waves of passion</i>, <i>A night of love</i> (Valentinov), <i>The apartment of Madam Emeraldine</i> (Varney), <i>The geisha</i> (S. Jones), <i>Susanne</i> (Giloda), <i>Vagabond</i>, <i>The csárdás Queen</i> (E. Kálmán), <i>Count of Luxembourg</i> (F. Lehár), <i>Polish blood</i> (O. Nedbal), <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> (Nelson), <i>Sweet nightmare</i> (Sarmatov), etc.</p> <p><b>Kooperativna beogradska opereta [Cooperative Belgrade Operetta]</b>, address: terrace <i>Kleridž</i> [Claridge] owners: <b>Iraida Komarevskaia, Ivan Đurđević, Božidar Vranicki, Anton Žunić</b> and <b>Milivoj Nikolić</b>; members: 45 musicians and technical personnel (12); period of activity: <b>July 1937–?</b>; repertoire: <i>Little Florami</i> (Ivo Tijardović), <i>Bosnian Love</i> (domestic composer), <i>Song of Tahiti</i> (domestic composer), <i>The Countess Marry</i> (E. Kálmán), <i>Saint Anton</i> (J. Beneš), <i>Kiss and nothing more</i> (foreign composer), <i>Silva/The csárdás Queen</i> (E. Kálmán) etc.</p>
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What is noticeable from the above list is the fact that various operetta companies mainly relied on a very similar repertoire. A majority of them shared an affinity for modern European operettas including French, Austro-Hungarian and Slavic as the most prominent. ‘The Cooperative Belgrade Operetta’ company certainly held a unique place among other companies, considering the sheer number of works on its repertoire and the orientation towards Yugoslav operetta composers. The archival documents that I have examined reveal that most of the companies were short-lived, being active in average from several months to one year.

Except for the operetta companies, Russian emigrants were also members of many private theatrical companies dedicated to the performances of cabaret or variety plays. There are archival records that confirm the existence of several companies of that kind: ‘Be-Ba-Bo’, ‘Firebird’, ‘The Jolly Theatre Kri-Kri’, ‘The Jolly Hen’ and ‘Russian Grotesque-Artistic Theatre’ (Table 2).

Table 2. *List of theatre companies dedicated to cabaret and variety plays owned by Russian emigrants*

<p><b>Vesela kokoška [The Jolly Hen]</b>, address: unknown owner: <b>Evgeni Gabaev</b>; members: 14 artists; period of activity: <b>August 1926–1929?</b>; repertoire: concerts and variety shows</p> <p><b>Bi-Ba-Bo [Be-Ba-Bo]</b>, address: restaurant <i>Zagreb</i>, traveling theatre owner: <b>Iasha Iakovlev</b>; members: unknown; period of activity: <b>December 1926–1929</b>; repertoire: cabaret-like plays</p> <p><b>Ruski groteskni-umetnički teatar [Russian grotesque-artistic theatre]</b>, address: the hall of palace <i>Lukso</i> owner: unknown; members: unknown; period of activity: <b>October 1926–?</b>; repertoire: cabaret plays</p> <p><b>Žar-ptica [Firebird]</b>, address: travelling theatre owner: <b>Petr Shtrunov</b>; members: Borovitskaia and Velbitskaia (female opera singers), Tarakanova (actress), Pashkova (ballet dancer), Enwald (ballet dancer), Bajdarov and Vladimirov (male opera singers), Leonskii (actor) and Potekhin; period of activity: <b>April 1927–?</b>; repertoire: dramatic works by foreign and domestic writers for chamber theatres and fragments from operas, operettas, dramas and ballets.</p> <p><b>Veselo pozorište Kri-Kri [The Jolly theater Kri-Kri]</b>, address: unknown owner: <b>Alexei Orlov</b>; members: male – M. Minyin, D. Orlov, V. Turoverov, A. Orlov, A. Tamarov, A. Toparnik, female – M. Enwald, L. Aksenovaia, E. Potemkina, I. Charskaia, V. Istomina; period of activity: <b>April 1927–1928</b>; repertoire: unknown</p>
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The ‘Firebird’ theatre was focused on the ‘family-friendly pieces including the dramatic works of foreign and domestic writers for chamber theatres and fragments from operas, operettas, dramas and ballets’.<sup>6</sup> On the other hand, ‘Russian grotesque-artistic theatre’ produced cabaret-like performances. Table 3 shows the example of a typical play performed by

<sup>6</sup> ‘A plea to the director of the artistic department’, 20 April 1928, Archive of Yugoslavia, Fund 66 – Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, folder 617.

that company. It consisted of two parts which were based on the musical segments (songs, folk songs and a fragment from opera), dancing numbers, musical parodies and short dramatic sketches. Unlike operetta companies owned by Russian emigrants, the troupes dedicated to cabaret-like performances were active for a longer period – from one to several years in average. This can be explained by the less-demanding character of cabaret performances, both in aesthetic and economic terms. Actually, the lesser requirements in the performance process, in addition to a flexible and eclectic structure of cabaret plays, made it easier for the companies to change performance venues and the performance structure itself and, therefore, to adapt to the audience's preferences.

Table 3. *Content of a cabaret play performed at 'Russian grotesque-artistic theater' [Ruski groteskni-umetnički teatar]*

**Part I:** 1. The arrival of aeroplane, the song of Russian grotesque theater (singers: Sara Lin, R. Raitch, V. Kirasnov, A. Dolinin, N. Lukashevitch, V. Konchakh, 2. The dream of a child (acting), 3. Balangatchyk (acting), 4. Sailors at Volga (Russian folk song), 5. Russian village festivity

**Part II:** 6. Dwarfs (male dance ensemble), 7. Kozakhs of Don (male dance ensemble), 8. Spanish fan (dancing by E. Arison), 9. In the moonlight (acting), Italian painting (fragment from an opera), 11. Our choir (parody)

announcer: Anna Morozova; director: M. Minin; music director: V. Lakhnovskii; ballet master: E. Arison

Apart from contributing to the development of popular/commercial music theatre in many Yugoslav regions, Russian emigrants took part in other spheres of popular culture. According to the available data from the historical study by Ostoja Đurić (1990) and preserved published music scores from the interwar period, Russian emigrants had an important role in the production and distribution of popular music of that period. Among them the distinguished place belonged to Sergei Strakhov [in Serbian: Sergije Strahov], one of the most prominent members of the Association of Russian writers and journalists between two world wars. Strakhov wrote the lyrics of the majority of popular songs/or *schlagers* composed by authors from the Kingdom of Yugoslavia and also adapted

numerous texts of foreign popular songs (mainly German, Italian or Russian) to Serbian language.<sup>7</sup> For instance, Strakhov collaborated with Jovan (Jan) Frajt and composers like Nikola Butaš, Jovan Urban, Lav Veselovski, etc. and, at the same time, adapted texts of many popular *schlagers* of that time. Apart from that, Strakhov dedicated himself to the publishing of popular songs/*schlagers* through his own 'Edition Strahov' and 'Muzičke novosti - Strahov' [Musical novelties – Strakhov]. Dozens of volumes from his collection are preserved at the National Library of Serbia and the Library of Matica srpska in Novi Sad.<sup>8</sup>

In Strakhov's published collection one finds numerous arrangements of Russian urban folk songs that gained popularity in Yugoslav urban centres in interwar period with the help of famous Yugoslav and Russian singers of that time. Among them, an important place belongs to a Russian emigrant, Ol'ga Ianchevetskaia [in Serbian: Olga Jančevecka], who performed regularly on Radio Belgrade shows, as well as at some popular Belgrade's venues. Her repertoire consisted exclusively of Russian romances. Except Ianchevetskaia, Russian urban folk song heritage was spread in Yugoslav towns owing to interpretations of Iurii Morfessi, Anna Stepovaia, Nadezhda Plevitskaia and others. There are records of their performances in Belgrade (Morfessi), Zemun, Zagreb, Sarajevo, Ljubljana, Niš, Subotica, Veliki Bečkerek, Šabac, Negotin (Stepovaia) and Zemun and Novi Sad (Plevitskaia) in the archival documents.<sup>9</sup>

Beside chamber-like character of performances of Russian urban folk songs typical, for example, for Stepovaia's and Plevitskaia's concerts, there are testimonies of a more spectacular type of performances of the same

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<sup>7</sup> Strakhov also composed many popular songs in Serbian in the rhythm of tango or foxtrott and published them through his own edition – for example, *Ta idite u peršun!* [Damn you!], *Sunce, more i ti* [Sun, sea and you], *Dve, tri suze* [Two, three teardrops], *Još pet minuta* [Five more minutes], *Ni jedna, ni druga, ni treća* [Neither the first, nor the second, nor the third], *Čik pogodi* [Just guess], *Pod južnim suncem* [Under the southern sun], *Šta ćeš, takav je život!* [What can you do, that's life], etc. It is important to notice that Strakhov was the owner and member of operetta company founded in the late 1920s (see Table 1). See also: Vesić 2014b.

<sup>8</sup> Strakhov's published music scores that have been preserved can be browsed at the so-called Virtual Library of Serbia (Cobib.sr) available at: <http://www.vbs.rs/scripts/cobiss?ukaz=BASE&bno=99999&id=2324086982943347>.

<sup>9</sup> Archive of Yugoslavia, Fund 66 – Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, folders 624, 625.

repertoire characteristic for the exclusive bars in Belgrade and other Yugoslav urban centers of that time. The published memoirs of Dimitrije Knežev (1987: 41–66, 119–122) suggest that some elite Belgrade bars ('Kazbek' and 'Kasina') promoted a specific type of entertainment shows based on the performances of Gypsy and Russian urban folk music and dances by the famous amateur and opera singers, balalaika orchestras and dance groups. Unfortunately, there are no available records on the form and content of these shows, including the titles of songs, genres of the instrumental music, costumes, scenery, etc.

### **Conclusion**

The results of the analysis of the collected data on the involvement of Russian emigrants in the commercial activities in the fields of music and theatre suggest a number of possibilities for further generalisations. They are valuable primarily for the broadening of existing insights on the socioeconomic position of Russian community in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia as well as its socioeconomic and sociocultural reality in interwar period. Namely, it is clear that, beside their proper education and experience, many Russian artists were unable to become full members of the ensembles in state-funded theatrical institutions, which could guarantee them a certain financial security and social privileges as well as a better basis for a more profound social integration. The reason for this was the fact that number of available posts in these institutions was limited and even tended to be reduced since the beginning of the economic crisis in the early 1930s. Therefore, numerous Russian opera singers, ballet dancers and musicians who found themselves outside the state-sponsored sphere and sought to secure regular incomes had two options – either to continue with their artistic careers, finding profitable ways to use their skills and talents or to reorient themselves professionally.

A number of Russian artists opted to risk, using their existing professional knowledge, by focusing on commercial segment of music and theatre, that is, to the genres of operettas and cabarets which gave them promising prospects. The dissolving of the regional operetta house in Osijek (Croatia) – the only established operetta ensemble with regular performances in the Kingdom of SCS/Yugoslavia in 1927, as well as the reduction of subsidies for central and regional theatres, brought on crisis

in the sector of commercial music theatre.<sup>10</sup> The result of it was the scarcity of commercial theatrical productions for which there was a great demand according to many sources. For example, Vojislav Turinski, in his pleas to the Ministry of Education on 5 January and 22 April, 1925 for the foundation of 'Free theatre' company, claimed that Belgrade 'lacked one such (commercial, added by I.V.) theatre' and that 'the programs of state-funded theatres were too strict and purist'. He concluded that the 'expansion of "light" music was inevitable' and that the large part of the audience 'rightly requested the foundation of theatres dedicated to comedy and more commercial music genres'.<sup>11</sup> At the same time, reviews of the operatic performances in the National Theatre in Belgrade in the 1920s and 1930s showed that the audiences preferred to listen to 'less serious' works with comic or vaudeville-like content, thus showing more interest in the performances of operettas and *opera buffa* than the works of other kind (see Pejović: 1999, 80–87, 135–140, 179–185). A preference for more commercial products in the sphere of music and theatre is also confirmed by the polls and programmes of Radio Belgrade, published memoirs, press articles, etc. (Vesić 2014a).

Both the decrease in number of performances in the sphere of popular/commercial music theatre and an expansion of the need for more commercial products among consumers in Yugoslav urban centres since the mid-1920s created the opportunity for many Russian artists to resolve their financial problems, at least for the short period of time, by founding private theatrical companies dedicated to operetta or cabaret performances or becoming their members. Because of the growing interest of Belgrade citizens for commercial products as well as the diversification of their taste throughout 1920s and 1930s, the possibilities for the employment of Russian artists were widening, which also affected their socioeconomic status in a positive way. Actually, Russian artists could find a new job opportunity more easily after the bankruptcy or dissolving of the private theatrical companies they belonged to, owing to the increasing number of private theatrical companies from the mid-1920s onwards, as well as their diversification, including companies oriented

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<sup>10</sup> On the effect of removing the Osijek operetta house from the Osijek regional theatre see Dragutinović 1928.

<sup>11</sup> See: Archive of Yugoslavia, Fund 66 – Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Archive of Yugoslavia, folder 617.

exclusively to classical operetta repertoire, then, companies oriented to both classical and modern operetta repertoire, to merging popular opera and operetta fragments, to looser types of performances with the elements of spectacle (cabaret, music hall, music review, etc). This is also confirmed by the comparison of the lists of employees of different private companies which show the existence of the same artists. For instance, singers Milica Enwald, Ekaterina Potemkina, Alexei Orlov and Vladimir Volzhskii were members of several companies with operetta and cabaret repertoire in successive seasons.

On the other hand, the analysis of archival documents points to the financial fragility of the private music theatre companies which was probably the result of unstable economic standard of Yugoslav population and the state's cultural policy. The economic downfall caused by the World War I in the Serbian part of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes and, later on, the global crises in the first half of the 1930s that struck heavily the whole Yugoslav economy, had an overall negative impact on the sphere of urban entertainment by reducing the consumption rates and profits. Besides, the repressive cultural policy of Yugoslav officials contributed to the destabilisation of the 'entertainment sector' and, concurrently, threatened to prevent the gradual improvement of the socioeconomic position of Russian artists in the interwar period.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> For example, when Iasha Iakovlev, the owner of the private company 'Be-Ba-Bo' (see Table 2) asked for permission to give performances, the director of the Artistic Department of the Ministry of Education imposed some restrictions – the company should not bear in its name the term 'theatre', it should focus to cabaret-like instead of dramatic performances and should not start the performances before 9pm (12 December, 1926. Archive of Yugoslavia, Fund 66 – Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, folder 617). The answer to Iakovlev's plea was probably affected to a great extent by the director of the National Theatre in Belgrade, Milan Predić. In a letter to the director of the Artistic Department written on 30 October, 1926 Predić asked for the ban of the private theatre 'Be-Ba-Bo' and other companies that held performances in the famous taverns 'Takovo' and 'Slavija', because they were giving both cabaret-like and dramatic programmes. Predić saw them as threats to the National Theatre because the audiences preferred their informal atmosphere. 'It is known that tables where food and beverages are served attract the audience and damage the National Theatre, which has a role to emancipate the audience to a more noble type of entertainment' (30 October, 1926. Archive of Yugoslavia, Fund 66 – Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Archive of Yugoslavia, folder 599).

According to available archival records, state bureaucrats as well as the management of the National Theatre struggled continually against the products that stood outside the high-art aesthetic and creative norms. Pointing to their ‘inadequate’ ethical, aesthetic and political content, they were trying to discourage their distribution and consumption by restrictions and bans. In that way, they also fought to secure the financial stability of state-funded theatres aiming at monopolisation of the sphere of entertainment and, at the same time, strict control of the field of cultural production. The elitist approach of the state officials, whether motivated by ideological or financial reasons, or both, indisputably restricted in a part the development of commercial culture and its diversification in Yugoslav urban centres in the interwar period.

Since there are no comprehensive studies of popular culture in the Kingdom of SCS/Yugoslavia, it is not easy to valorise the importance of reduced and fragmented data on the activities of Russian emigrants. Comparing and merging the results of different types of research on the popular culture of that period (both Yugoslav and European) and dispersed data on that topic from both unpublished and published sources could facilitate this undertaking. Based on my hitherto research of popular culture in the interwar Belgrade and Serbia, I may conclude that, thanks to their professional abilities and experience and their knowledge of a wide variety of popular musical and theatrical products of that period, Russian emigrants contributed thoroughly to the differentiation and sophistication of the local commercial culture, enriching the existing repertoire of genres and works with the inclusion of creations of their compatriots, as well as a large number of domestic and foreign composers.

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Olga Otašević

**Musical life of Belgrade in the Russian language  
periodicals published by the first wave of Russian  
emigration**

An example of Belgrade newspaper *Novoe vremia*<sup>1</sup>

Bibliographical index is one of the most important sources of information on Russian emigration, because in some way it reestablishes continuity disrupted by historical circumstances. The importance of this genre was noted promptly, and as early as 1931 and 1941 corresponding member of Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts (SASA) and a Russian emigrant Evgenii Spektorskii published the first editions of his *Materialy dlia bibliografii russkikh nauchnykh trudov za rubezhom (1920–1940)* (Spektorskii 1931, 1941). There are also valuable bibliographies and publications prepared by Jovan Kačaki (Kačaki 2002) and by Aleksej Arsenjev<sup>2</sup> from Novi Sad, a descendant of Russian emigrants, who is also the owner of one of the biggest private collections on Russian emigration in Serbia. In the last few years, several institutions in Russia have hosted bibliographical projects covering different fields and relating to many of the countries where Russian diaspora made their influence.

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<sup>1</sup> This chapter presents my interpretation of the data gathered for the project hosted at Gosudarstvennyi institut iskusstvovedeniia Ministerstva kul'tury RF (State Institute of Art Sciences founded by the Russian Ministry Culture) and developed by Liudmila Korabel'nikova. I would like to thank L. Korabel'nikova for her dedication and support, as well as the former Dean of Faculty of Music, Dubravka Jovičić, who approved my trip to Moscow, which was of vital importance for collecting the material and preparing my chapter.

<sup>2</sup> Russian is transliterated using the simplified Library of Congress romanisation system. The name of Aleksej Arsenjev (born in Serbia) is written phonetically, in Serbian language, except when referencing a book published in Russian. Also, exceptions have been made for the names of some well-known composers that have taken on conventional spelling (e.g. Tchaikovsky instead of Chaikovskii).

Musical culture, nevertheless, in every sense remains the least covered area of Russian diaspora culture, even on a global level. Liudmila Korabel'nikova cited several examples of lexicographical editions about significant Russian emigrants (by Mark Raev, Karl Schlögel, etc.) which take into account a very small number of musicians - about 1.5% of all listed individuals, although, in reality the number of musicians, among the Russian emigrants, was considerably larger (Korabel'nikova 2000: 10).

The texts dedicated to the music of Russian emigrants in Serbia mostly deal with Russian artists from Belgrade Opera and Ballet, due to the fact that the performing artists from Russia among whom 'there were first-rate individuals (especially among ballet dancers and choreographers), came in considerable number' (Milin 2003: 69). Nadežda Mosusova writes about the development of Yugoslav musical theatre under the influence of Russian emigrants (Mosusova 1994) and Roksanda Pejović also takes into account Russian musicians when writing about the concert life of Belgrade between the world wars (Pejović 2004). Melita Milin provides significant contribution in assessing and reviewing a wide range of activities of Russian emigrants (Milin 2003). Similar texts by Russian authors are scarce and usually published as conference papers or small chapters dealing with Russian opera in Belgrade, or as parts of books covering a wider area of research about this region.

Furthermore, no bibliographical editions focusing on Russian musical emigration were published in Serbia or elsewhere. In order to compensate for this lack of data about music emigration, there is an ongoing long-term project in Russia named *Slovo o muzyke v Russkom zarubezh'e (émigratsiia pervoi volny: annotirovannyi ukazatel' statei ruskoiazychnoi periodiki russkogo zarubezh'ia)* [Considerations about music in Russian diaspora (emigration of the first wave: An annotated catalog of articles about music in the Russian-language periodicals of Russian emigration)], developed by Liudmila Korabel'nikova of the Gosudarstvennyi institut iskusstvoznaniia [State Institute of Art Sciences] in Moscow (Table 1). The goal of this project is a creation of an integral electronic bibliographical source of data about articles published in all of the countries that accepted a large number of Russian migrants or where they had a significant impact. Because of a large volume of data, the project is restricted to the research of the third decade of the twentieth century (namely, the first wave of emigration). As a participant in this project, I was responsible for processing information

from articles on music in Russian-language periodicals published in Serbia. I prepared comprehensive tables with bibliographical data from the reviewed articles. Those tables serve as preparations for an electronic catalogue to be developed as an outcome of the abovementioned project. I was mostly focused on processing and analysing Russian daily newspaper *Novoe vremia* (New Times) in Belgrade. Hence in this chapter I present a broad overview of articles on music in this Russian journal. I shall begin by outlining general assumptions that have governed this research.

Table 1: *An extract from the catalogue*

<i>Дата</i>	<i>Страна и город печати</i>	<i>Орган прессы</i>	<i>Заглавие/информационный повод</i>	<i>Автор</i>	<i>Упомянутые имена/лица</i>
1924 4 января	Королевство СХС, Белград	НВ №810 С.3	<b>Маленькая хроника</b> 54-ый «Субботник» [Сплендид, 54-й субботник; Ракигин, Марьящец, Дракули, Шумский; Мусоргский, Даргомижский, Чайковский, Манькин- Невструев, Рубинштейн]	Р. С.	Дракули Марьящец Ракигин Шумский  Даргомижский Манькин- Невструев Мусоргский Рубинштейн Чайковский
1924 11 апреля	Королевство СХС, Белград	НВ №888 С.3	<b>Театр и музыка</b> Концерт С. П. Потоцкой [6 апреля, зал «Станкович», Потоцкая и Папкива; Глинка, Даргомижский, Римский- Корсаков, Чайковский, Василenko, Гуно, Берлиоз, Делиб, Сен-Санс, Кюи]	Конст. Шум.	Папкива Потоцкая  Берлиоз Василenko Глинка Гуно Даргомижский Делиб Кюи Римский- Корсаков Сен-Санс Чайковский

### **Historical context of the Russian language periodicals in Belgrade**

Among all Slavic countries, Vladimir Maevskii singled out Yugoslavia as a country with the best treatment of the emigrants, due to its Russophile national policy (Maevskii 1966, 7).<sup>3</sup> According to different sources it is noted that by 1921 between 29,000 and 70,000 (Arsen'ev 1996: 3) Russian immigrants settled in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, arriving directly from Russia, or from Turkey, Greece and Egypt, countries where they originally found asylum. In 1921 the entire Belgrade population was 114,000 residents, 7,000 of which were Russians; eight years later there were 8,374 Russian inhabitants (Arsen'ev 2009: 141). They came to Serbia without paying any fee, or bringing any visa or documents. Qualified Russians promptly found jobs as teachers, professors, doctors, musicians, since at that time 79.5% of Serbian population was illiterate (Arsen'ev 1996: 3); moreover, there was a lack of educated people in Serbia due to the immense human casualties in World War I. Not all countries were willing to fully utilise the potentials of educated Russians; for example, Russian professors and scientists were leaving Turkey, Greece or Romania in order to find better conditions for life and work in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes or in Bulgaria (Jovanović 2006: 410). Some 75% of Russian emigrants who settled in Serbia until 1922 had a high school diploma or an university education (Sibinović 1996).

Once in Serbia, the immigrants established the Russian Orthodox Church outside Russia and founded their own institutions, schools, media. Thanks to numerous meetings of writers, as well as various gatherings and tours, Belgrade had a chance to accommodate many Russian artists and scholars as guests, including Sergei Prokofiev, Anna Pavlova, Tamara Karsavina, Nikolay Berdiaev, etc. Various printed editions available at that time in Belgrade included sokol's journals, periodicals about church life, aviation, army, and even four editions of daily newspapers.

When I started reviewing those periodicals, certain difficulties arised from the fact that some of them were published a long time ago. For example, my first step was to review *Svodnyi katalog periodiki russkogo zarubezh'ia* [A Joint Catalogue of the periodicals of Russian emigration] on

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<sup>3</sup> Maevskii wrote this book from a personal experience; namely, in the early 1920s he fled to Belgrade, and in 1945 he moved to New York.

the internet site <http://emigrantica.ru>. This site emerged as a result of a project hosted by Dom russkogo zarubezhia Solzhenitsina; it hosts titles of editions sorted by countries and cities. This site also contains (for now) incomplete information about sources, i.e. it provides data on libraries in which certain periodicals can be found. However, the printed catalogues of certain libraries are much more detailed and informative in this aspect (although they have a local character). For example, the catalogue published by the Department of literature of Russian diaspora (Russian State Library) clarifies in which exact Moscow libraries specific periodicals can be found (Bardeeva, Briankina and Shumova 1999); a similar edition is made about Saint Petersburg.

According to <http://emigrantica.ru>, there were 128 different editions in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (later Kingdom of Yugoslavia), 107 of which were published in Belgrade. On the other hand, Arsenjev mentions that there were more than 230 editions of Belgrade's Russian newspapers and magazines,<sup>4</sup> without listing these editions (Arsen'ev 2009: 141). Unfortunately, in the National Library in Belgrade, which stores the largest collection of Russian periodicals, only thirty-five editions remain out of those listed on abovementioned site, with twelve additional ones which are not listed on <http://emigrantica.ru>. Of course, this site and project are open for any updates and corrections; it is a 'work in progress' because the catalogue is constantly expanding and, one day, it will be completed. However, this incompleteness confirms that there is an abundance of disparate material and information, because no library in the world stores the complete collection of any periodical. Some libraries have just one or two numbers of certain volumes. Information is scattered all over the world, because some titles are moved to different countries as parts of certain archives and such.

In this way, a bibliography appears useful because it creates a virtual database which transcends space and time by connecting contrasting information, and enables us to observe Russian emigrants as a united population, not just as an 'archipelago of emigrant colonies', as Boban Đurić has called them (Đurić 2011: 32). Making this kind of connections is always a long-term process and a result of team effort.

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<sup>4</sup> If one could include other towns and provinces of Serbia in this statistics, this number would probably increase by about 50–60 titles.

### ***Novoe vremia* as a chronicle of cultural events in ‘Russian Belgrade’**

The newspapers proved to be very useful for our purpose, because they contained regular information about the musical life of Russian emigrants. Among four Russian newspapers published in Belgrade, *Novoe vremia* was the longest lasting daily newspaper, published for ten years (1921–1930). It was named after a Saint Petersburg newspaper of the same name, which was published from 1868 to 1917. It was printed every day except the days immediately after holidays (Plate 1). The political orientation of the newspaper was moderately right. In today’s literature the opinions on this newspaper vary from the ones considering it a ‘modest edition of the original newspaper in emigration’ (Maevskii 1966: 79), to the ones claiming that this newspaper was ‘one of the most famous and influential conservative daily newspapers of Russian immigrants in Europe’ (Arsen’ev 2009, 143). The National Library in Belgrade stores editions of the newspaper covering the period from 1922–1925, while in Moscow I obtained some data about other years (parts of 1921, 1926 and 1927).

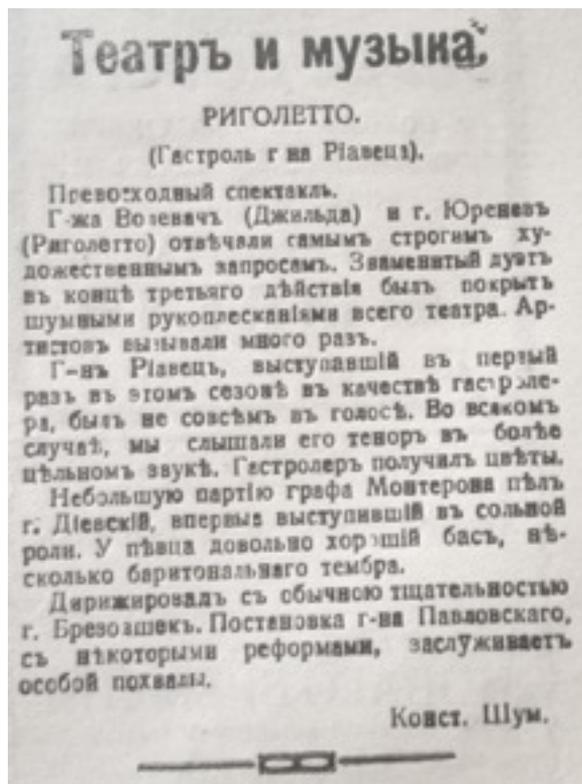
Plate 1. *The title page of the first issue of Novoe vremia, 22/04/1921, from the Russian State Library, Moscow*



Each issue consisted of four pages on nineteen-inch paper. The text is written in an old orthographic style which was abandoned in Russia in 1918, but continued to be used in editions of Russian emigrants based in other countries. Regular columns were mostly of political nature: 'Telegrammy', 'Vneshnie izviestii', 'Vnutrenniia izvestiia', 'Na rodine', 'Malenkii fel'ton', 'Posledniia izviestii', 'Russkaia emigratsiia' [Telegrams, Foreign news, Local news, In the homeland, Small feuilleton, Latest news, Russian emigration]. The newspaper often included stories or novels published in sequels, as well as poems written by the emigres.

The role of music critics in *Novoe vremia* was taken by non-musicians/non-musicologists (Plate 2). Not all articles are signed; the full name of the author, his initials or pseudonym can be found only in articles in which a strong personal voice is present. Konstantin Shumlevich (a poet) and Rene Sans (obviously an alias) are among the most prolific authors of these reviews.

Plate 2. A concert review by Konstantin Shumlevich



In almost every issue one finds information on musical events, mostly in the column 'Teatr i muzyka' [Theatre and music], sometimes called 'Teatral'naia zhizn' [Theatrical life], 'Teatral'naia khronika' [Theatrical chronicle], or 'Teatral'nyia vesti' [Theatrical news]. Information about music can also be found in other, regular columns. Besides data about theatrical performances, information on music can be found in the shape of concert announcements, critics' reviews and information on concert performances and charity events (Plate 3).

Plate 3. *A concert announcement*



In addition, the journalists have reported on current tours of Russian artists abroad. They mainly followed the events in Paris and Italy, and with an exception of articles which contained an abundance of data (in order to introduce the reader to a musical culture abroad), they often presented very conservative attitudes towards the interpretation of operas. For example, an author (who lived in Paris and sometimes reported on musical events) shows concerns with respect to the status of Russian opera in France, when writing about the staging of Mussorgskii's opera

*Khovanshchina* in Paris (an article from 10/05/1923):<sup>5</sup> ‘An ignorance about the qualities of our national talents will cost us a lot in the future [...] Sanin’s directing is problematic, actors even do not take their hat off when they come to someone’s house’. Articles about the contemporary situation of musical culture in the USSR are also not uncommon. They often voice strong political opinions, especially when writing about ‘classical’ operas such as Mussorgskii’s *Boris Godunov* or Glinka’s *Žizn’ za Tsaria* [A life for the Tzar].

It is interesting to mention here the activity of the society ‘Soiuz revnitelei chistoty russkogo iazyka’ [Society of zealots for the purity of Russian language],<sup>6</sup> based in Belgrade, which published programme books and organised readings of Russian poetry and prose, in order to prevent the supposed decadence of language. This society was also publishing collections of texts covering various areas of arts and music, extracted from the periodicals published in Paris, Riga, Rome, Prague etc. These articles have not been subjected to an analysis as a whole, but in comparison to the articles covering similar areas in *Novoe vremia*, it is obvious that music criticism was much more developed in other countries of emigration. However, it is possible that articles organised in collections (named ‘sbornik’ in Russian and numbered) served not only as an example of pure Russian language, but also as a library for those who wanted to learn more about Russian art and music. This tracking of contemporary articles in other countries indicates a strong desire to preserve national identity and, in the case of music, to compensate for the lack of analytical articles in Serbian newspapers.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> All dates in brackets refer to certain issues of the newspaper *Novoe vremia* (format dd/mm/yyyy).

<sup>6</sup> The entire collection has been transferred to microfilms and is available at the Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi arkhiv literatury i iskusstva (Russian State archive of literature and arts) in Moscow. Namely, before World War II this collection was transferred from Belgrade to Prague (Russian historical archive abroad), and in 1945 it was moved to the USSR by the Red army.

<sup>7</sup> Among the articles from other countries, one finds those dedicated to famous Russian composers, usually written on occasion of their anniversaries. These texts sometimes contain valuable information and are clearly result of studying literature on subject in focus, as they are often problematised and reflect critical thinking.

Plate 4. A part of the article from French newspapers and the title page of one item from the collection (taken from a microfilm stored at the Russian State archive of literature and arts, Moscow)



This aspect suggests another possible explication of this matter: we can understand concert activity not only as an artistic expression of Russian artists, but also as an essential activity for protecting national spirit. This tendency probably created a strong determination to follow musical events in the city and abroad, both in collections of ‘Soiuz revnitelei chistoty russkogo iazyka’ and in Belgrade periodicals.

As Roksanda Pejović notices, Russian musicians ‘had their own intense musical life which was developing in parallel with the concert activity of Serbian musical artists’ (Pejović 2004: 106). It seems appropriate that the phrase ‘Russian Belgrade’, widely used on various occasions and in different contexts, could also be applied in the domain of music, because

Russian immigrants made their own cultural life and institutions, without adapting them to local circumstances, thus creating some kind of 'parallel Belgrade', i.e. 'Russian musical Belgrade'. Namely, in articles one often finds the opinion that the Russians' stay in Belgrade was only temporary, and that the return to the tsarist Russia would soon take place, which is why it was necessary to preserve Russian culture and language.

In accordance with the presumed existence of this 'Russian musical Belgrade', reports in *Novoe vremia* almost exclusively referred to Russian musicians in Belgrade. Serbian musicians were mentioned only if they performed in 'Russian' concerts, or on occasions of the anniversaries of Serbian musical institutions or individuals – but always mentioning Russian artists and their role in those events. For example, the publication of an article concerning the fiftieth anniversary of the National Theatre in Belgrade (12/01/1923) is probably related to the large number of Russian artists employed by the opera and ballet ensembles. Also, in a short review of the twenty-fifth anniversary of Stanislav Binički's work, it is mentioned that during the time of Tsar, in 1912, the composer was a guest in Odessa (03/02/1924). An article about the second concert of the newly founded Belgrade Philharmonic orchestra includes a short analysis of P. I. Tchaikovsky's symphonies which were performed on that occasion, even mentioning the theme of fate, often emphasised in the specialised literature (30/06/1923). One of the few exemptions from this 'Russian rule' was an interview with Stevan Hristić about his new opera *Suton* (27/11/1925). Also, one finds reviews of the Belgrade concerts of famous guest musicians, not only Russian immigrants residing in the USA, France etc., but also from other countries, such as concerts of Robert Goldsand (06/03/1926), Alfred Cortot (16/04/1924), Pietro Mascagni, who visited Belgrade to conduct two opera performances in National Theatre (07/11/1925) et al.

The events which were addressed in the articles include concerts of both 'serious' and 'non-serious' music – concerts of balalaika, gypsy songs and events which included ballet. Based on brief announcements or reviews which include basic information about some musical event, one concludes that concerts were held in many locations in the town, which makes it possible to reconstruct 'Russian musical Belgrade' of the 1920s. Plate 5 shows the main locations where such cultural events took place.

Plate 5. *The map of Belgrade city centre – part of the city plan (Navoev 1925)*

One of the longest-lasting concert series, which existed for several years, starting from 4 February 1922, is certainly *subbotnik*. These were organised by the Literaturno-khudozhestvennoe obshchestvo [Literar-Artistic Society (LHO)], in order to ‘entertain Russians and Serbs, on Saturdays, in the charming hall of Grand Hotel in Zemun’ (21/10/1922). Apart from music (instrumental or vocal), *subbotniks* hosted melodic declamations, stories and poetry readings, and sometimes even ballet dancers took part in the events. Iurii Rakitin and Iuliia Rakitina were regular participants, while several musicians were taking turns at these events: the Slatin brothers, Svehinskaia, Mariashets, opera singers Strizhakov, Tantsurin, Troitskii. Critics were very benevolent towards this concert series; Rene Sans explains his positive attitude with the fact that LHO is a young society which needs support and its own concert hall. However, a proper concert hall was never obtained and the concerts soon moved to the restaurant Russkii restoran, i.e. Russkaia sem’ia. The musical part of *subbotniks* consisted of songs or instrumental works by Russian composers, or arias from famous operas (by Mussorgsky, Glinka, Tchaikovsky, Rimsky-Korsakov, Rakhmaninov, Leoncavallo, Mascagni, Puccini), sometimes in

combination with balalaika or gypsy music intermezzos. Sometimes more comprehensive articles can be found such as the one published on occasion of the fifteenth anniversary of Rimsky-Korsakov's death (21/06/1923), and the article on Bortnianskii, published at the centenary of his death (08/09/1925).<sup>8</sup>

Many singers and musicians were highly rated: N. G. Volevach, E. I. Popova, M. N. Karakash, S. Davydova, E. S. Mar'iashets, L. B. Zinov'ev, K. E. Rogovskaia, A. P. Svechinskaia, N. D. Gukasov, the Slatin brothers. A positive response is also often reflected by emphasising the qualities of certain performances of the musical work which is being reviewed.

Nevertheless, one should not assume that Russians always observed musical events organised by Russian immigrants without any criticism. On several occasions they wrote in a very conservative way about the current state in music and ballet. In an article about the opera singer Anna Stepovaia (15/10/1922), a journalist writes that 'together with the wave of immigrants, some rubbish came ashore. It is difficult to recognise authenticity and true value of the object that lies beneath external rust. When it comes to the arts, the situation is even more difficult. All stage artists – from cabaret, variety – rushed from Crimea to Europe, holding the banner of "Russian art"'. Also, in a review of the performance of a Russian-Bulgarian operetta company, a journalist expressed an opinion that 'if those singers showed up in Russia, they could sing only under the bridges of Saint-Petersburg'.

Russian immigrants were very united. Many concerts were organised by Serbian-Russian Society or other institutions or even individuals for charity purposes – for Russian schools, students, and disabled people. On one occasion, a concert was organised with the purpose of helping the Serbs affected by the flood. The singer V. M. Andreeva, who performed gypsy songs, often participated in such concerts, and so did Iurenev, Volevach, Strizhakhov, performing opera arias. Balalaika orchestras were very popular (for example, the orchestras conducted by A. N. Kuz'menko, Chernoiarov, M. V. Ostrovskii, Sobchenko), and *Novoe vremia* always reviewed their concerts. Orchestras often played fragments or arias from operas (both Russian and foreign) arranged for them, as well as Serbian national songs (19/10/1924), which they sang in Belgrade restaurants or

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<sup>8</sup> This article was written by V. Nelidov, a composer.

concert halls. Sometimes balalaika orchestras were taking part in *subbotniks*, and generally they performed with opera and operetta singers (V. D. Shumskii, V. I. Przheval'skii, A. Stepovaia, etc.)

The Slatin brothers – Aleksandr, Vladimir and Il'ia – formed a piano trio, and with the help of other artists (usually Jovan Zorko) they also performed as a piano quartet. They played with success in Belgrade in the 1920s, mostly in the series of historical chamber music concerts. The newspapers announced that the second season of these series – 10 chamber concerts<sup>9</sup> should be held starting from September 1921. At the concert dedicated to Serbian music, they intended to play works by Serbian contemporary composers Binički, Konjović, Manojlović, Milojević, and Hristić. On the ninth concert, held on 30 April 1922, Russian music was performed – works by Taneev, Tchaikovsky, Rimsky-Korsakov, Mussorgsky. On that occasion, the author of the accompanying article in *Novoe vremia* (identified only by initials Iu. K.) presented a short historical overview of Russian opera, considering also the opera singers who performed on that concert.

The author V. D. compares the Slatin brothers to their father, whose symphonic concerts were developing the audience's taste in music and educated entire generations. He considers the first Belgrade performance of Taneev's Trio in D major 'very daring' and concludes that 'the audience is not used to such complex and rigorous pieces' (20/11/1924). However, it is not clear whether it was a purely Russian audience, or some locals also attended these events. Pejović expresses doubts in this aspect and claims that the Serbs probably did not attend Slatins' concerts (Pejović 2004: 93). In that case, we can understand V. D.'s observation as a 'critic' about the 'lighter' kind of musical works that were found on some repertoires.

Bearing in mind that it was noted in several articles that opera arias were often sang in Serbian, it is plausible that at least vocal concerts were attended by Serbian audience. It must be remarked that many concerts were initiated by the Serbs – in particular the charity events.

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<sup>9</sup> Ten concerts had the following programs: 1) J. C. Bach/Handel/Gluck/Haydn; 2) Mozart; 3) Beethoven; 4) Schubert/Schuman/Mendelssohn; 5) Wagner/Brahms/Liszt, 6) Czech music, 7) Scandinavian music, 8) French music, 9) Russian music and 10) Serbian music.

In an article from 1924, a journalist observes that the repertoire of Belgrade National Theatre did not include any Russian operas except for *Evgenii Onegin*, while the situation was different in Zagreb and in other countries. But soon *Pikovaia dama* was staged (at the end of the season 1923/24), and journalists frequently wrote about the plans to stage *Boris Godunov* in the future. The author Iu. K. describes the day when *Pikovaia dama* was staged as 'a festive day of Russian art' and considers that the performance sophisticatedly transmitted the spirit of the époque, bearing in mind also some imperfections of the performance – uneven tempo, weak sound of the choir, which did not spoil the overall impression (27/06/1924). He also remarks on the sensitivity and vitality of Pinterovich's role as well as the qualities of the ballet, Brailovskii's decorations, Pavlovskii's direction and Hristić's conducting. *Les contes d'Hofmann*, directed by Feofan Pavlovski and *Traviata* by Rakitin, were well received, but in several occasions Shumlevich expresses dissatisfaction with the fact that no new, contemporary operas were staged in Belgrade.

Occasionally some longer articles were published discussing various aesthetic problems, thus enabling us to learn more on the aesthetic principles of some artists of that time. For example, in the article 'About the setting of Gounod's *Faust*' (19/03/1922) Iurii Rakitin offered his response to some opinions which were dissenting with his ideas. He wrote that the director and the artist could not stay in the same place, but always had to seek for new paths and that traditions were bad when only when they were automatically accepted without any questions. He claimed that there was no actual tradition in opera, but only banality which had to be fought. Beside the information on Rakitin's own principles, this article also testifies to the esthetical turbulences in Russian art circles, whose battles were fought on the pages of the newspapers.

It should be pointed out that in the column 'Bibliografija' the author S. A. reviews three books by Igor Glebov (a pseudonym of Boris Asaf'ev), published in St Petersburg – the biographies of Tchaikovsky, Rimsky-Korsakov and Scriabin which contain critical observations of their work. Although these are Asaf'ev's early works, they very much reflect his style of writing. Some observations made by S. A. could apply to many later works by Asaf'ev, written in a similar style. The author of the article states that 'Glebov is hardly a historian and theoretician of music. He is a lyricist and he writes lyrical feuilletons about music [...] He expresses himself in a

colourful and pseudo-philosophical dialect'. Nevertheless, S. A. assesses the books about Tchaikovsky and Rimsky-Korsakov as 'interesting', but opines that the one about Scriabin lacks purely musical observations, at the expense of 'unrestrained lyrical philosophising' (11/02/1923).

There was always a tendency to summarise events in the field of arts; in 1924 a journalist writes that Russian emigrant artists acted insecurely at first, but that by 1924 it was clear that the success of Russian artists worldwide should be perceived as 'a victorious path' of Russian art and acknowledged by the entire Western Europe. He expresses an opinion that, although Belgrade was not as big a musical centre as Paris or Berlin (the cities with the highest concentration of Russian artists), the work of Russian immigrants who settled in Belgrade would inevitably be praised in the future.

### Conclusion

'Russian musical Belgrade' is an interesting cultural phenomenon. It certainly played a big role in the Russian emigrants' efforts to preserve their national identity, but also gave a new dimension to Belgrade. The bibliographical resources will certainly become useful for studying Russian emigration, because they will provide an easier way to obtain information on any given subject or individual from primary sources. The project *Slovo o muzyke v Russkom zarubezh'e (émigratsiia pervoi volny: annotirovannyi ukazatel' statei russkoiazychnoi periodiki russkogo zarubezh'ia)* creates an enormous database for analysing musical culture of Russian diaspora in Europe during the 1920s. This chapter offers an insight into the musical life of Russian emigrants as represented in one periodical and I hope that this topic will receive further discussion in the near future.

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Sonja Zdravkova-Djeparoska  
**The route Russia–Serbia–Macedonia:<sup>1</sup>  
intercultural communications**

**A brief overview of interculturalism in performing arts**

The term *interculturalism* began to be commonly used in the 1970s and 1980s by a number of vanguard performance directors and theorists (Peter Brook, Eugenio Barba, Richard Schechner, Ariane Mnouchkine, Patrice Pavis). In his essay ‘Intercultural theatre today’, Pavis notes that there are some changes in the way interculturalism is currently perceived and applied in performing arts, compared to twenty years ago (Pavis 2010). Yet, no matter how the model of intercultural performing modes changes, it still contains some fundamental and fairly constant features. In their essay ‘Toward a topography of cross-cultural theatre praxis’ Jacqueline Lo and Helen Gilbert assert that ‘one of the most popular manifestations of this generative conception of cross-cultural encounter is the idea of the hybrid (art form, culture, and/or identity)’ (Lo and Gilbert 2002: 32).

Contrary to the trend favored by some political, ruling and strategic centres (which have been active in this area even nowadays) to promote the idea of mono-cultures, a concept which is both historically and semantically rather narrow, I wish to talk about a dynamic culture that accepts and makes influences, that is, which is constantly under the impact of an ongoing process of transformation. This tendency has been noticed by an increasing number of cultural analysts. The interaction among various cultures and culture-related phenomena, issues and performers – regardless of whether such interaction occurs between performing techniques, performing media, levels of cultural production (low/high,

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<sup>1</sup> In this text I refer to the Socialist Republic of Macedonia, which was one of the six constituent republics of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia between 1945 and 1991.

global/local etc.) is an inexorable, unstoppable and generally natural process. Schechner, who meticulously studied and theoretically elaborated on this model for his own need of this type of performance, states: ‘There were lots of national exchanges, but I felt that the real exchange of importance to artists was not that among nations, which really suggests official exchanges and artificial kinds of boundaries, but the exchange among cultures, something which could be done by individuals or by non-official grouping, and it does not obey national boundaries’ (Schechner 1996: 42). The essence of an intercultural theatre ‘is a hybrid derived from an intentional encounter between cultures and performing traditions’ (Lo and Gilbert 2002: 36). As a rule, this leads to innovation: ‘Interculturalism is an area of interaction where new forms are created’ (Martin 2004: 2). One may draw a conclusion that the fundamental features of this model are hybridity, interaction and intercommunication, all of them resulting into a new product, the original parts of which are still easily recognisable, visible and present, and yet, they are interwoven into a different context bearing an utterly new and dissimilar semantic capacity.

One might wonder why I elaborate so enthusiastically on a performing model typical for the last quarter of the twentieth century and the present time, to address issues related to cultural events that occurred in the beginning and the middle of the twentieth century. The answer is simple – because the model in question has been implemented as a format in the analysis of the events at the core of my interest and attention. Pavis writes about the nature of the theatre as a place where meetings, influences and constructive confrontations, as well as relations and alliances, all happen: ‘So theatre, whether called intercultural or not, is made of composite materials, is made of body and mind. This is the reason why the intercultural mix happens almost automatically. All theatre production is an intercultural production, which makes its analysis so difficult’ (Pavis 2010: 14). Macedonian theatre features events and happenings that are immanent to intercultural models. Macedonian theatrologist Jelena Lužina observes: ‘The idea of interculturalism which rests predominantly on the issues shared by various cultures, i.e. the things that are bound to and inevitably do happen to these cultures, sounded thrilling and provocative enough to me, at least when talking about theatre-related phenomena, particularly when these phenomena are considered in a Macedonian context’ (Lužina 2004: 276). This interculturalism, implicitly found in

performing arts related to Macedonia in some way, has been initiated by a number of social processes. I will restrict my analysis to the path from Russia to Serbia to Macedonia, and to dance performances only. These relations and influences considerably affected the processes that shaped Macedonian dance arts.

### **Macedonian cultural context in the early twentieth century**

A phenomenon resembling an intercultural project occurred in Macedonia in the years following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire in 1912 until the second half of the twentieth century, and was influenced by a number of separate socio-political processes that complemented each other. One of these processes was the signing of the Bucharest Treaty, as well as permanent changes in the ruling authorities in Vardar Macedonia, which were happening at this quite challenging period.<sup>2</sup> Simultaneously, but independently from the events in the Balkans, there were drastic geopolitical changes in Russia triggered by the February and October Revolutions in 1917, which resulted in many Russian leaving their country, some of whom found their new home in Yugoslavia.<sup>3</sup>

The first theatre in Vardar Macedonia was built in Bitola in the year 1894, commissioned by the Turkish ruler Abdul Kerim. Afterwards, the Turkish Theatre of Shefket Pasha was built in Skopje in 1906, and it was aimed at improving the cultural environment in the city. After signing the Bucharest Treaty on 10 August 1913, Vardar Macedonia became a part of Serbia. In this period, one of Serbia's greatest playwrights Branislav Nušić introduced the dramatic arts to the Macedonian region. On 1 October 1913 Nušić was appointed the manager of the theatre, and he remained in this position for the next two years. The theatre operated in extremely unfavourable conditions, lacking appropriate facilities (they had started performing in the ruins of the Turkish Theatre of Shefket Pasha, which

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<sup>2</sup> In the Treaty of Bucharest, the geographical territory of Macedonia was divided into four parts. The current territory of the Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) which at that time was known as Vardar Macedonia, became a part of Serbia. The area known as Pirin Macedonia was given to Bulgaria, and now constitutes the western portion of Bulgaria. The region south of Vardar stretching to the Aegean Sea, known as Aegean Macedonia, was given to Greece. Lastly, a small area west of Vardar Macedonia was given to Albania.

<sup>3</sup> Officially: The Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenians (abbr. SCS), 1918–1929; the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, 1929–1941.

had unfortunately caught fire and burnt to the ground after only forty days of operation), trained staff, equipment and the like. Nušić, who had returned to the Skopje theatre in 1919 and worked there for almost a year, is credited for providing funds for the construction of a new theatre building. The relations with the Belgrade artistic societies from that period were very close and intensive: ‘With the actors, directors and other artistic and administrative personnel who had been brought from the Belgrade National Theatre with the purpose of assisting the Skopje theatre, although the latter had in fact been both artistically and administratively completely independent, the Skopje theatre at that time quite resembled a branch of the Belgrade National Theatre, until it became self-sufficient and strong enough to continue operating independently’ (Mazova 2004: 279). It is obvious that the geo-socio-political circumstances at that time had made such cultural fluctuations possible, such as the transfer of experiences and artistic know-how from Belgrade to Skopje, as well as a return transfer from the young, newly-formed Macedonian theatre to Belgrade, in search for education and affirmation.

In the first decades of the twentieth century there was another very important process affecting directly or indirectly the creation of a majority of European cultural spheres, especially regarding the area of high arts. Namely, as a result of domestic political turbulence, many Russians left their native land, a movement referred to as ‘white emigration’ in the years between 1917 and 1922, when, according to some estimates, 1.5–3 million people emigrated (Polian 2005). Although most of them settled in Western Europe and later in the USA, quite a few found their new home in Yugoslavia. Therefore, affirmation and promotion of dance arts in Yugoslavia at that period is largely attributed to some of these immigrants. Among those involved in ballet were: Jelena Poljakova [Elena Poliakova], praiseworthy for the development of ballet art and education in Belgrade; Margarita Froman (involved in the creation of Zagreb ballet theatre), Nina Kirsanova, Aleksandr Dobrokhotov, Anatol Joukowsky [Anatolii Zhukovskii; Anatolij Žukovski], Yania Wassilieva [Ianya Vasil’eva; Janja Vasiljeva], and many others.<sup>4</sup> Later, especially after World War II<sup>5</sup>, some

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<sup>4</sup> These artists’ names were spelled differently in the countries where they worked.

<sup>5</sup> Some of the Russian ballet-theatre staff left Yugoslavia before or during World War II and settled in the North and South America. Among those who left were Poliakova, Joukowsky, Wassilieva and Froman.

of them, and in particular their students, would continue to develop and transfer their acquired knowledge, thus ensuring continuity in the aesthetic forms, educational processes and repertoire of the Russian ballet school.

### **Dispersion lines**

Belgrade was the administrative, economic and cultural centre of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia (and later, of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia), hence it created and shaped artistic trends and cultural policies for the entire state. Through Belgrade, Macedonian ballet performers kept in touch with current artistic events, made guest performances and received staff support. The impact of Belgrade on Macedonian dance arts can be divided into two spheres of influence: education and artistic production.

#### *Education*

The quality of a ballet production is dependent primarily on the type and quality of ballet pedagogy. The significance of proper education was also noted by one of the major Russian ballet pedagogues of all times, Agrabina Vaganova, who said: ‘Whatever type of dance elements are contained in classical ballet, it is the ballet itself and the way of practicing it that is the fundament of the art of choreography’ (cited in Amirgamzaeva and Usova 2002: 47).

The name of Elena Dimitrievna Poliakova (1884–1972) was a synonym for ballet art and pedagogy in Serbia in the 1920s and 1930s. Poliakova is rarely associated with Skopje<sup>6</sup>, for which there is a quite logical explanation. She lived and worked in Belgrade from 1922 to 1942, and after that she emigrated to Chile. Macedonian ballet<sup>7</sup> was established in 1949, i.e. seven years after Poliakova’s emigration from Yugoslavia. However, she was indirectly involved in the establishment of Macedonian ballet through her connections with the founder of Macedonian ballet Gjorgji Makedonski (1919–1998), who was one of her students in

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<sup>6</sup> Poliakova had a performance in Skopje in 1923, which was reviewed in an article in the daily *Privredni glasnik*.

<sup>7</sup> As part of the idea to establish operatic repertoire in the Skopje theatre, the ‘Ballet Choir’ was established in 1924. However, this ensemble did not have any independent ballet performances, i.e. its existence was strictly related to a few opera performances on Macedonian stage before World War II.

Belgrade. After completing his education in Belgrade, Makedonski worked as a member of Belgrade National Theatre Ballet until 1941. After the end of World War II and the creation of the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia (renamed as the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in 1963), he continued his professional career in a few towns, where he held various positions. Gjorgji Makedonski independently choreographed the ballet *Bahchisaray fountain*, and co-choreographed (with Jitka Ivelja) 'The Evening of Opera Arias and Ballet Performances' at the Croatian National Theatre in Split, both events taking place in 1947. From 1953 to 1963, Makedonski worked for the National Theatre in Novi Sad, where he staged, prepared and pedagogically worked on more than ten ballet productions, including *Ballet impression* (1953), *Swan lake* (1955), *Bahchisaray fountain* (1957) and *Romeo and Juliet* (1962), among others.

In the season 1948/9, Gjorgji Makedonski was invited to establish a ballet ensemble for the Macedonian Opera and the newly established Macedonian National Theatre (MNT). He was the first director of Macedonian ballet and he held this position between 1949–1952 and 1956–1957. The first official performance of Macedonian ballet as a professional ensemble was on 29 November 1948 as part of the opera *Traviata*, whereas the first full ballet performance took place on 30 December 1949. Soon afterwards Makedonski established a ballet studio within the theatre. The same year, a Decree by the Education Council of the National Republic of Macedonia transformed the studio into a Primary Ballet School, where the first dance instructors were Gjorgji Makedonski, Analize Asman and Relja Vizner. During the 1951/2 academic year, the Ballet High School was established, thus completing the educational system. By implementing the experiences from his own ballet education, Gjorgji Makedonski soon established relatively high professional standards for Macedonian ballet.

Another extremely important person both for the development of ballet in Macedonia and the Russian immigrant community was Aleksandr Aleksandrovich Dobrokhoto (1909–1983). He was born in Vilnius to a noble family and, after the revolution, his family emigrated from Russia and settled in Belgrade. He acquired his ballet education in Belgrade, and in 1928 he became a member of the Ballet Ensemble of the

Belgrade theatre. His repertoire of *demi-caractère*<sup>8</sup> roles is particularly striking. In 1938 he was ranked as the first character dancer. He danced as a partner of Nina Kirsanova, Nataša Bošković, Vera Kostić, Mira Sanjina, and others of similarly high caliber. Independently or as a member of Belgrade theatre, he had guest performances in Czechoslovakia, Germany, Belgium, France, and Switzerland.

After dancing for 24 years, Dobrohotov arrived in Skopje in 1952. He remained in Skopje and was professionally active there for the rest of his life, leaving behind his offspring who also developed careers as theatre artists. He was the director of the Ballet Ensemble within Macedonian National Theatre twice: from 1952–1955 and 1958–1959. Alongside these activities, he also worked for a decade, starting from 1952, as a teacher in the ballet school. Concerning Dobrohotov's work, Kirsanova said: 'With his arrival, the Skopje ballet school became a school in a true sense of the word' (Kirsanova 1985: 47). In addition to giving lessons in classical ballet, he devoted a lot of time and effort to upgrading the lessons on character dances. He was the one who initiated the introduction of this subject into the curriculum as a mandatory one. A host of young Macedonian ballet dancers were taught by him. As acknowledged by Lidija Lazarevska in the monograph dedicated to the fiftieth anniversary of the Music and Ballet School in Skopje, 'Gjorgji Makedonski, Nina Kirsanova and Aleksandr Dobrohotov played a significant role in the education of the first generation of students of the Skopje ballet school' (Lazarevska 1995: 26).

#### *Artistic production*

After developing an educational system, the second important element contributing to the development of a ballet ensemble is the choice of repertoire and the involvement of choreographers. Aside from giving instruction to prospective ballet artists, Makedonski and Dobrohotov were also present on the Macedonian ballet stage with their own pieces. Makedonski was choreographer of the first ballet performances on Macedonian stage – *Walpurgis night* (27 January 1949), *Bahchisaray fountain*

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<sup>8</sup> The *demi-caractère* role in a ballet always depicted a 'folk' character and employed traditional folk dance combined with classical ballet technique. This type of roles was especially common in ballets at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century.

(30 December 1952), *Bolero* (23 May 1951) and others in the early years. In addition to these, he is the author of the first staging of *Swan Lake* (15 January 1958), as well as of one of the versions of *Ohridska legenda* [The legend of Ohrid] staged at MNT. Dobrohotov was developing and working on the improvement of incorporating *demi-caractère* works in the repertoire of Macedonian ballet. He staged the performances of *The second rhapsody* and *Polovtsian dances* (3 December 1952), *A Ballerina and the bandits*, *At the ball* and *Scheherazade* (4 November 1953). He is the author of the national ballet performance *Labin and Doyrana* (11 June 1958) composed by Trajko Prokopiev, into which he masterfully incorporated elements of Macedonian folklore.

With respect to staging classical pieces on the Macedonian ballet stage in its early years, another Russian ballerina, pedagogue and choreographer played a crucial role for Yugoslav ballet in general – Nina Vasil'evna Kirsanova (1898–1989). In her fascinating life and career, she had the opportunity to combine the tradition of the strict Russian performing style of classical pieces, with the innovative approaches of the young choreographers such as Fokin, Nizhinskaia and Pavlova.<sup>9</sup> In the early years of the Macedonian ballet, Kirsanova staged the most often-performed classical ballet pieces – *Coppelia* (25 February 1954); *Sleeping Beauty* (29 January 1955); *Giselle* and *Straussiad* (7 November 1956); and *Les Sylfides* (3 October 1957). Aside from staging these ballets in their original form, she contributed immensely to the quality of the performances.

The first ballet staged in Macedonia by Kirsanova was *Coppelia* by Léo Delibes, which was, in a way, a herald of the sequence of performances to follow. Regarding this piece, the critics emphasised the role of the choreographer for the quality of the performance: ‘There is no doubt that most of the credit for the overall success of this performance go to the choreographer and director Nina Kirsanova’ (Jovanovska 2007: 158). The following piece staged by Kirsanova, one of the fundamental classical ballet pieces, was a real challenge for the relatively young ensemble. Kirsanova herself had a special affection for this performance: ‘Afterwards I staged *Sleeping Beauty* about which I am deeply convinced that I was able to create the most successful choreography for the ensemble of the

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<sup>9</sup> There are records on Kirsanova performing in Skopje in the prewar period: *Ballet singer-night* (14 May 1935), *Ballet evening with Nina Kirsanova and Anatol Joukovsky* (21 December 1939).

Macedonian ballet. They all danced remarkably, technically perfectly, with an extraordinary stage setting prepared by Cico Popović' (Kirsanova 1985: 47). A major indicator of the significance of Kirsanova's staged performances was the choice of repertoire for the first performances of the Macedonian National Theatre outside Yugoslavia – in Greece in 1955, because the repertoire included both *Coppelia* and *Sleeping Beauty*.

Kirsanova's final choreographies for the Macedonian ballet were staged on 19 March 1960. In one evening, the audiences were able to see two pieces, *Čovek i kob* [The Man and his fate] on the music of the fifth symphony by P. I. Tchaikovsky, and *Fantastičen dućan* [The fantastic toyshop] by Gioachino Rossini. This, however, did not signal an end to Kirsanova's professional career. She returned to Skopje as an archeologist<sup>10</sup>. In her words: 'I visited Macedonia on two more occasions, after finishing my ballet career and after becoming a Bachelor of Archeology. In the vicinity of Skopje there is an archeological site which was researched by professor Garašanin. He invited me to join him in the archeological excavations, and I gladly accepted his invitation' (Ibid.: 48)

### **Inversion of influences**

So far I have outlined some major influences on the development of Macedonian ballet and Macedonian high culture in general, which had spread directly from Belgrade, by the activities of Russian and Serbian ballet artists. Nonetheless, as I already pointed out, culture is a dynamic matter that both accepts and 'reflects' influences. 'Interculturalism could be viewed a "two-way" street, based on a mutual reciprocity of needs' (Bharucha 1993: 2). Thus, when talking about one of these directions, we must also consider the other. So, the question is, how much and in which segments did Macedonian culture affect this two-way process? To start with, I must accentuate the fact that folklore has always been a source of inspiration for a great number of non-Macedonian authors, and it had been present in many of their artistic creations. One of those who studied Macedonian folklore, the ballet pedagogue, performer and choreographer Anatol Joukowsky (1906–1998), said:

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<sup>10</sup> Nina Kirsanova enrolled at the Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade, Archeology Department and graduated in 1964. In 1969 she received her MA degree.

During my stay in Belgrade, particularly in 1938 when I became the director of Belgrade Opera and Ballet, I was imbued with the desire to enrich the ballet repertoire with national dances, choreodramas from the life of the peoples living in Yugoslavia, in particular the Macedonian people, as I consider their folklore the richest among all the other peoples living in Yugoslavia at that time (Žukovski 1986: 83).

With that goal in mind, he and Aleksei Butakov, Oleg Grebenshchikov and Yania Wassilieva organised field trips throughout Macedonia during the summer. Joukowsky wrote that they had ‘traveled from the Sharplanina mountain to the Ohrid lake, from the Korab mountain to Kumanovo city, down the Vardar river valley to Kozuv mountain, climbing hills, reaching remote villages, looking for a chance to see, to experience, to feel, to admire’ (Ibid.: 84).

Why did these Russian artists so meticulously and passionately study Macedonian, and, more generally, Balkan folklore? Apart from the curiosity related to these folklore pieces, new choreography had in fact necessitated excellent familiarity with the material that would be implemented or remade into the respective ballet performance. One of the creators and the driving force of the great ballet reformation in the twentieth century was Mikhail Fokin, the choreographer of the first ballet performances in Diaghilev’s *Ballets Russes* in Paris, and a contemporary of Poliakova, Froman, Kirsanova, Fortunato, Joukowsky. Fokine promoted the principle of verisimilitude and authenticity of the performances and in his paper titled ‘New Ideas’, he wrote:

In order to be able to create a stylistic image, a choreographer is supposed to study national dances of the peoples presented in the piece, dances which clearly distinguish one from another depending on the people, and which very clearly depict and picture the very spirit of that people; moreover, the choreographer must get acquainted well with the arts and literature existing at the period considered in the performance (Fokin 1981: 312).

Some of the Russian choreographers working at that time were directly involved with and performed in Sergei Diaghilev’s troupe, including Anna

Pavlova and Bronislava Nizhinskaia,<sup>11</sup> which means that this way of working was nothing new to them. First Aleksandar Fortunato,<sup>12</sup> later Joukowsky and, according to the composer Stevan Hristić, even Kirsanova herself, studied folklore of the southern parts of Yugoslavia (Šukuljević-Marković 1999). Their research influenced a few of their pieces that contained Macedonian folklore, which will be discussed later.

Their choreographies contained the so-called ‘model of synthesis’<sup>13</sup> which is equivalent to intercultural aesthetics, and it is particularly applied in the national genre line of choreographic pieces. Namely, the standard classical ballet structure with its clearly defined rules, which strive to introduce specific national and ethnic attributes, is supplemented with material originating from and belonging to national dances. It means that a symbiosis between classical ballet language and national dances exists, whereupon the extent of embedding elements from different systems varies and can range from the domination of ballet aesthetics to an almost complete folklorisation. As a result of this type of approach, some genuine ‘raw’ folk dance materials were implemented in the pieces of ethnic character, such as *Oganj u planini* [Fire in the mountains], *Iz zbirke jugoslovenskih igara* [From the collection of Yugoslav national dances], *Simfonisko kolo* [Symphonic round dance], *U dolini Morave* [In the Morava river valley] and *Ohridska legenda*.

In one of the books dedicated to the problems of reworking folk dance material, *The choreographer’s art*, the author Smirnov insists that the stage interpretations of folkloric dance require its further development:

When staging a piece, the dance language, dance movements and their proper remake are most important. It is one of the most complex and difficult stages of the process, because it involves finding the single and common logic when developing the dancing language and image, an

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<sup>11</sup> Prior to being hired by Yugoslav ballet, Elena Poliakova and Margarita Froman were members of Diaghilev’s company (Poliakova in 1912, Froman from 1914 to 1916). Between 1927 and 1931 Nina Kirsanova danced in Bronislava Nizhinskaia’s *Grand Compania Lirica*, as well as Anna Pavlova’s company.

<sup>12</sup> In the summer of 1924, Aleksandar Fortunato travelled ‘throughout the villages surrounding the towns of Veles, Skopje and Prishtina’ (Mosusova 1989: 68), gathering material for the next ballet performance with folklore motifs.

<sup>13</sup> Beside the ‘model of synthesis’, there is also the ‘model of replication’ and the ‘model of transformation’.

artistic approach which will enrich the technical expressions and movements, but at the same time will not harm the aesthetics and character of the original dance; it means selection of procedures and actions that will enhance and enrich the movements (Smirnov 1986: 157).

The ballet *Ohridska legenda* by Stevan Hristić and its symbiosis of a variety of elements with different ethnic and national materials has been discussed many times. Regarding the music itself, Nadežda Mosusova wrote: ‘The two major sources of Hristić’s inspiration were the folklore of the Balkan peoples and Russian ballet music from the second half of the nineteenth century’ (Mosusova 1989: 67). Macedonian folklore has a multi-level presence in *Ohridska legenda* including folk music, stories, costumes and other elements. Because these elements are not the subject of this paper, I shall only discuss the choreography. As for the choreographic composition as an outcome of cultural interaction, a synthetic approach and treatment is obvious. It is, however, almost impossible to reconstruct the choreography from the premiere, therefore I will have to consult the available sources relating to this element.

Regarding the first performance choreographed by Nina Kirsanova in 1933,<sup>14</sup> the critic Miloje Milojević gave the following comment in the Serbian newspaper *Politika* on 7 April 1933, writing that Kirsanova ‘had staged the dances based on our south-Serbian folk dances [...] it gives everybody satisfaction to see new movements and combinations of gestures on our ballet stage’ (cited in Šukuljević-Marković 1999: 37).

In his critical review published in the newspaper *Vreme* (7 April 1933) Kosta Manojlović discusses choreography from a stylistic aspect and asserts that ‘the dance of the stars was the best, as well as the Sun round dance from part one’ (cited in Šukuljević-Marković 1999: 37). Choreography and the manner of applying folkloric elements in this first version of *Ohridska legenda* were also commented on by the leading male character in the ballet, Marko, performed by Anatol Zhoukowsky. He said:

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<sup>14</sup> *Ohridska legenda* was first staged on 5 April 1933 at the National Theatre in Belgrade and was choreographed by Nina Kirsanova. At that point the ballet only had one act. The expanded four-acts ballet, choreographed and directed by Margarita Froman, premiered on 29 November 1947. In Macedonian National Theatre *Ohridska legenda* has been staged by four choreographers: Maks Kirbos (25 May 1956), Gjorgji Makedonski (20 December 1966), Franjo Horvat (12 November 1969) and Dimitrije Parlić (12 July 1979).

‘I helped her [Kirsanova] in finding choreographic solutions for the dancing problems, relying on the experience we gathered in the previous years of studying the folklore. Yet, it was the first attempt and it should not be overestimated’ (Žukovski 1986: 84). With the last note, Joukowsky most likely had in mind the degree of stylisation and the input of authentic material.

Judging by the remaining photographs of this performance, which predominantly show the leading dancers, we might conclude that in most cases the choreography applied a standard ballet language. The poses (ex. *pas attitude*) do contain some positions of the legs typical for traditional dances, but they fully meet the standard requirements set by classical ballet dance. In addition, the tiptoeing (*en pointe*) performed by the starring character Biljana (Nina Kirsanova) is very typical for ballet dancing technique. In this case, stylisation primarily takes place by inputting specific positions (particularly regarding the position of the arms) which the choreographer had found to be representatives of national dances. I will digress briefly to give an opposite example where folklore dominates.

The first national ballet *Makedonska povest* [A Macedonian story (21 June 1953)], by the Macedonian composer Gligor Smokvarski, was choreographed by the Serbian choreographer Dimitrije Parlić. He turned to what was seen as a primordial or natural impulse: folkloric material. In addition to the fact that the performance was danced in almost authentic folk costumes, the dancers danced in *opinci*<sup>15</sup> (which is almost unimaginable in a ballet performance). It was assumed that the ballet would be utterly consistent with the unique dance matrices, not diverging from them at all. ‘I had a feeling that the folk dances took too long, there were too many of them (male, female, mixed-gender round dances)’ (Makedonski 1953: 32). With regard to the reconstruction of the original version and its analysis, the critic Milica Zajcev made a significantly critical comment, writing: ‘There were, however, some choreographic inconsistencies. Namely, apart from Macedonian dancing steps, Parlić also inserted elements from Serbian and Bulgarian folklore’ (Zajcev 1994: 11). This example confirms the inclination towards a nearly complete overlap with folk dance aesthetics, unlike the case of the premiere of *Ohridska legenda*.

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<sup>15</sup> *Opinci* – homemade leather footwear worn by villagers as part of Macedonian traditional clothing.

Joukowsky himself staged a ballet performance in which Macedonian folklore formed the foundation for further development of the ballet. The ballet performance *Fire in the mountains* with music by Alfred Pordes was premiered on 15 February 1941. The plot, a love story, is set in a small dairy farm on Bistra mountain and in the monastery of St. Jovan Bigorski. This accurate location of the ballet setting was given by the choreographer himself (Žukovski 1986). *Fire in the mountains*, together with other two units, was welcomed by the audiences, and the critics declared Joukowsky ‘to be the best connoisseur and expert of artistic stylisation of our folk dances’ (*Politika*, cited in Šukuljević-Marković 2000: 38). However, despite the fact that Joukowsky had thoroughly studied the folk dances from various regions, among which he had highlighted Macedonian folk dances, he could not transfer the material to the stage authentically enough, as he had other objectives. The critics themselves singled out the moment of stylisation. He confidently mixed the two initial styles (i.e., ballet and folk dance), due to his great familiarity with folk dance. Yet he stayed within the boundaries typical for a ballet performance, that is, the choreographic language of ballet language was the basis for further development.

Elsie Ivanchich Dunin is the author of the best known book on the Macedonian state ensemble of folk songs and dances, *Tanec*, which contains about 50 kinetographies and texts on various Macedonian folk dances. In my personal correspondence with Dunin, she explained some of the relationships between music and dance for Joukowsky, as she had been demonstrator for some of the dances that he choreographed. She made it clear that the folk dances taught by him in his workshops and courses were danced not to the original, initial music, but to recordings available to him in the 1950s that he had been able to obtain after his settling in the USA. This had triggered Joukowsky to make creations based on music available to him. The dances contained a certain degree of stylisation, and, as Dunin says, were ‘with a sense of ballet’. His approach likely had not changed substantially and could not have been drastically different from the way he had created his *Fire in the Mountains*, which is a stylistic, aesthetic and folk symbiosis of ballet lexicology with steps from folk dances.

As the examples listed above testify, Macedonian traditional folk dances have appeared on the ballet stage, but when used for these purposes, they had to be modified.

## Conclusion

The aforementioned route – from Russia to Serbia to Macedonia – has had a significant impact on shaping Macedonian ballet. The aesthetics of classical ballet, the teaching methods and the contents of the most well-known classical pieces all formed the foundations on which postwar artistic expression would rest. After World War II, as a result of cultural proximity to the USSR (even if political relations were not always close), these trends continued in the same direction throughout the socialist period. Almost without exception, the activities of the first generation of creators of Macedonian ballet were taken as foundations for further developments, since this first generation of artists were directly or indirectly in contact with the Russian emigrants active in this area (predominantly in Belgrade).

As argued by Hollidge and Tompkins, ‘culture is not an isolated concept of empty sign; rather it is the way in which we construct our sense of self and others. Intercultural performance, therefore, constantly renegotiates this relationship’ (2000: 177). The example of Macedonian culture seen in relation to the others clearly showcases this interactive and dynamic relationship. As previously mentioned, a great number of ballet choreographers used Macedonian folk dances in their choreographies. The model immanent to this type of production is *synthesis*, which fully reflects the intercultural principle. The model applied to the first ‘national’ performances would continue to be implemented in the pieces to follow. The route Russia–Serbia–Macedonia, which was a result of political and social movements, gave birth to a rich, productive and active realisation of its constituents and resulted in a true dialogue and cultural exchange.

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Gergana Panova-Tekath

**On the ‘own’ and the ‘common’ and their  
representation: rethinking the Soviet model *vis-à-vis*  
Bulgarian professional folk choreography**

**Introduction**

Reading Timothy Rice’s chapter in this volume, I was fascinated by his three-dimensional model of a ‘lived musical experience’ (Rice 2015). I believe that we could implement his approach in order to create a three-dimensional model of a ‘lived dance experience’. This is why I would like to propose a theoretical ‘matrix’ for dance as well, before I begin commenting on the creation of the concept of professional folk dance in Bulgaria.<sup>1</sup>

In an earlier publication I called this three-dimensional model (which I would now like to correlate with Timothy Rice’s idea) the *semantic star* (Panova-Tekath 2010: 201–208). I have studied and compared different dance phenomena by means of this construct. It has been particularly helpful in predicting or explaining successful or unsuccessful communication between people, who supposedly dance one and the same Bulgarian dance. I will now apply this theoretic matrix for the first time for the purpose of restoring the old political definition of the Bulgarian artistic folk dance.

**Theoretical matrix**

At first glance my *semantic star* is reminiscent of Rudolf von Laban’s *icosahedrons model* and resembles his vision of the relationship between the moving human form and the space which surrounds it (Laban 1991). In the process of dancing the three-dimensional human body can be

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<sup>1</sup> The ‘Matrix’ is expanded and explained in my book *Der Körper als symbolische Form. Tanz nach der Wende. Band 1* (Panova-Tekath 2010).

positioned along three basic axes: 'backward-forward', 'left-right' and 'down-up' and defines its position at points within them, at the same time "painting" and searching for harmony. I interpret the axes in the following semiotic and phenomenological discourse:

- *The axis 'backward-forward'* represents the connection between tradition and innovation. It has the strongest relation with the dimension of *time* in Timothy Rice's model, because it represents motion as a progression and reveals the dancing individual's attitude towards *past* and *future*. It is remarkable that, as the Bulgarian ethnomusicologist Lyuben Botusharov claims, Bulgarian national culture considers itself a descendant of the *ethnos*, hence any exemplification of the ethnical – including the insertion of the folklore heritage – is accepted as a folk event (Botusharov 1996: 81). Thus, whilst reviewing the Bulgarian folk dance repertoire along the axis 'backward-forward', we identify 'backward' with the exemplification of the preserved so-called 'spring folklore' and moving forward along the axis we reach the phenomenon associated with concepts of a 'talented new', postmodern, post-traditional folk art.
- *The axis 'right-left'* is associated with the balancing of the body in space and I frequently interpret it as the personal positioning in society, something close to the *place* axis of Rice's model. In the case of Bulgarian choreography it works very well as an interpretation of collectivism and individualism. I now suggest that we place on this axis the 'opposition' EastWest. By viewing East and West as the poles of one and the same axis we realise that they cannot exist without one another. Moreover, I am not speaking only of territorial, but also of cultural contexts and their interpretation. An individual or a folk dance group in Bulgaria do not define their dance repertoire as 'Eastern' or 'Oriental' just because they live in South Eastern Europe and/or use Roma music. They have to begin with the realisation and thematisation of cultural markers of the East and West as differences, in order to discover their political contours and conflicts.

Until 1989, within the dance circles in Bulgaria the notion of 'East' was limited to its European definition and was associated with the cultural-political confrontation between the USSR and the USA. In the times of the 'iron curtain', it was predominantly our 'Slavic' roots that were emphasised, while nowadays we are turning more and more to

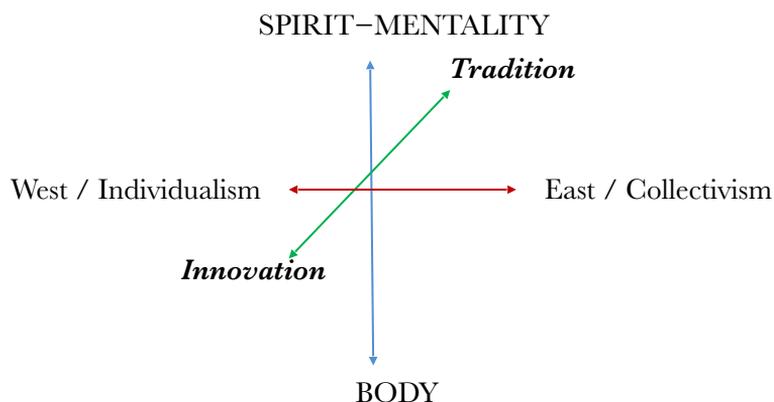
our proto-Bulgarian and Turkic roots or even the idea of Thrace as the originator of European culture.

- *The axis 'down-up'* is related to the material and spiritual in dance. I use it to analyse the relation between dancing and mental processes. It best exemplifies the fundamental categories of human existence: starting with the sensitivity of the body (*firstness* – according to Peirce (1931–1935: 2/87)), going through the process of accumulating experience through action and the emergence of secondary connections (*secondness*) and reaching the metaphoric and abstract interpretation (*thirdness*). This axis divides the 'pure' hedonistic movement as a physical activity (the 'down') from the culturally rationalised movement and political mission of the Bulgarian folk dance (the 'up'). With respect to a dancing individual, the axis has a direct bearing on the philosophy of dance and is close to the dimension which Rice calls 'metaphorical understandings of the nature of music' (2015: 23–24). At the same time, with the help of this axis we can study the mechanisms of instrumentalisation and manipulation of the folk dance.

The model of the *semantic star* (Plate 1) bears ample fruit when it comes to analysing identities and predicting their communicative capabilities. In my view, dance is always an expression of identity. That is why everyone dancing Bulgarian folk dances and every dance group can be positioned as an identity at any one point within the three-dimensional space formed by the three axes as 'me, here and now'. By defining this position further comparisons can be made. Hence, I propose such study of the first state-owned ensemble in Sofia, because I share the view of Lyuben Botusharov (1996: 84) that Bulgarian professional ensembles for folk music and dances had a very important social mission in the process of educating and forming personalities in the very centre of civil culture in Bulgaria. The amount of trust placed in this mission by the former socialist state is demonstrated by the fact that from 1951 to 1989 there were 17 well-positioned state-owned professional ensembles for folk songs and dances. I will not dwell here on the various paradoxes of professional Bulgarian folk dance<sup>2</sup>, but I will open the door for a further discussion on this topic.

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<sup>2</sup> In terms of deciphering the positioning between East and West and the political power of music of the Bulgarian professional ensembles, my approach is very similar to Donna Buchanan's (2006).

Plate 1: *Three axes (semantic star)*

### **The axis 'Tradition–Innovation'**

#### *The state-owned ensemble as a laboratory for traditional artistic dance style*

The emergence of the undoubtedly most important genre of dance art in Bulgaria dates back to the creation of the state-owned Ensemble for Folk Songs and Dances in Sofia in 1951 and was strongly influenced by the Soviet Union's cultural policy. Nevertheless, it was not a direct result of a political instruction from 'above'. The 'Pyatnicki' chorus visited Bulgaria and enthused many Bulgarian composers and conductors, who had been discussing the introduction of a national artistic musical style since as early as the 1920s and 1930s.

As one of the coryphaeus of Bulgarian musical thought, Stoyan Dzhudzhev wrote in 1932: 'Bulgarian music should end once and for all the blind mimicking of the West, in order to create its own style and school!' (1932: 100). In 1934 Dzhudzhev continued on the subject of a new Bulgarian opera: 'The multitude of folk plays and performances, accompanied more often than not by dialogues, music and dances, are perfect subjects for a musical-dramatic and choreographic interpretation. (...) How is that to transpire – it is a matter of personal artistic preferences of the author' (Ibid.: 453).

In the days of the socialist regime in Bulgaria, Philip Koutev, the founder of the first state-owned ensemble and a talented composer, drew

the culturological lines for the formation of a Bulgarian academic musical style; 'his ambition was that the song, despite being polyphonic and sung by a choir, should remain close to the consciousness of the village performer and listener' (Kaufman 1972: 25). Koutev himself generalised the prerequisites for the future development: 'The aim is not to demonstrate our ability to "construct form", but to supplant its richness' (1974: 18).

It was in this very same spirit that the first choreographer Margarita Dikova (1916–1996), who was appointed assistant to Philip Koutev in the Ensemble for Folk Songs and Dance as the head choreographer at the time, approached her task. Her dance arrangements are still the norm and are highly acclaimed and respected as the 'classics' of Bulgarian folk choreology. I had the honour to be accepted by Margarita Dikova as an actor-ballet dancer in the Ensemble, to be encouraged by her to produce my own choreographies, to write and research and to visit her home. I will now discuss the concepts of this remarkable woman whom many colleagues in Bulgaria regard as their 'mother' and an icon (Plate 2).

Plate 2: *The dance group of the State Ensemble for Folk Songs and Dances; today National Ensemble 'Philip Koutev' (Gergana Panova-Tekath's private collection, 1992)*



*Margarita Dikova on the divide between past and present*

Dikova paid a lot of attention to finding and selecting the most talented and attractive performers at regional folklore festivals. She searched for the most impressive, original and regionally specific village dances. In her choreographies she diligently preserved the sounds of village dance performances, including the very specific yells and cries of the dancers. Many of her choreographies (similar to those of Pina Bausch) are almost entirely inspired by individual dancers. Despite the fact that Dikova's choreography was intended for the modern theatrical stage, she never the less strived to remain as faithful as possible to the old traditions. That is why her approach to staged folk dances was extremely circumspect:

The first and foremost aim is a thorough and attentive study of the local dance folklore and, only after that, of other areas with all their specifics, peculiarities and details. One has to be familiar with the basic characteristics of the Bulgarian male and female from any particular area, their behavioural patterns in their everyday lives, their age and gender specifics, their relationships and the motivational undercurrents. Only then the dance performed on stage would be a true and living reflection of the lifestyles of the people (Dikova and Maslarski 1958: 58).

Dikova did not allow innovations to deviate and evolve uncontrollably (along my time-frame axis). In 1992, when I was presented with an opportunity to discontinue my career of the soloist and ballet-master of the Philip Koutev Ensemble and become a researcher in the field of ethnochoreology at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (BAS), I visited Dikova to seek her advice. She stressed two arguments in favour of the proposed career move, which perfectly illustrated her attitude:

We need those who write about dance and the people associated with folk dance choreology to understand us, to be knowledgeable of what this is all about [...] to have experienced firsthand the exultation of the folk dance [...] and you know it at its best.

I do not want Bulgarian choreographers to distance themselves from the simple village dances and forget them. This is the source, which has turned us into what we are [...] The people will not trust them otherwise.

As early as 1958, Dikova was not oblivious to the artistic, as well as theoretical achievements of the so-called 'capitalist world'. Almost

unnoticeably, she refers to the West when dealing with the issue of signs and the tertiary analysis of motion, when she states:

The recording and deciphering of the dances is a very interesting aspect, not solely for the leading choreographer, but for the performers as well. Lately the Laban system is gaining ground in the West as the most widespread and well-founded system. At the same time, the descriptive approach dominates in the Soviet Union, the other Socialist countries and Bulgaria (Dikova, Maslarski 1958: 41–42).

### **The axis 'Down-Up' (body-spirit)**

#### *Realisation of the form*

As a pioneer and originator of the professional presentation of Bulgarian folk dance, Margarita Dikova had two missions. One was to unravel the specific forms that would denominate a certain local or national identity, i.e. the forms that would convince and make the Bulgarian audience accept them as 'our own' and 'folk', and accordingly take pride in them. The second task was to make these same dance forms comprehensible to foreign (usually Western) audiences in a way that would express human individuality and common human values, whilst insisting on the highest quality of performing art. In the pursuit of this exceptional quality of performance, in the same year that the State Ensemble was established (1951), the State Choreographic High School opened its doors. In addition to the Department of Classical Dance, a Department for Bulgarian Folk Dances was also established, and Dikova would teach there for more than 20 years.

Turning back to the 'down-up' axis and the preparation of the body for the spiritual mission of professional Bulgarian folk dancing, some choreographers used classical ballet training, but this proved ineffective when teaching Bulgarian folk dances. Others relied on gymnastic exercises, which also did not bring in positive results. In order to learn and teach correctly the great assortment of movements, forms, rhythm and character of Bulgarian folk dances it was essential to create a special set of exercises, whose elements were derived from the dances themselves. Dikova and Maslarski wrote: 'In this respect we were aided by Soviet experts – the ballet-masters N. Holfin and Vl. Belii. Belii was invited to organise the State Choreographic High School' (1958: 49). As to the initial attempts to apply their sets of exercises in the National Ensemble, Dikova

wrote: "The beginning was hard [...] Some were skeptical, others literally protested: "I am here to dance folk dances and not some fantastic things like these"" (Ibid.: 50). However, Dikova remained unrelenting in her determination to create a new stage art of the highest quality.

In her book *Directives for the leaders of dance collectives* (published with the assistance and collaboration of her colleague Maslarski in 1958), but also in her conversations with me, many years later, Dikova generously shared many of her principles for the creation of new folk dances intended for the stage, the difficulties she had encountered in the process as well as her artistic insights on the subject of 'composition' and the secrets of its artistic success. At some point Dikova had worked with the Sofia Opera house and had at all times insisted on the close cooperation between directors, costume designers, and composers. One cannot but notice from every line of the above publication the ever-growing professionalisation of Bulgarian traditional dancing: "The leader and the performers should work on the "composition" at full speed and total concentration to achieve the true logical outline, the correct connection and correlation between the separate moments and parts, the length of the dance, etc." (Ibid.: 55).

Moreover, Dikova always emphasised the importance of the dancer's personality and strongly encouraged the lived dance experience. She wrote: "When dancing, one should not only use their legs and feet, but should also speak with their hands and arms, with gestures; one should think, feel and live it out. The dance should exude plausible naturalness, which should fascinate the spectator" (Ibid.: 58). Dikova did not tolerate 'cheap acting and the use of cut and dried models...' In her view, there were four main prerequisites to which the artistic staged dance should conform: idea, style, taste and moderation (Ibid.: 64). She underlined that:

The most important part when selecting the repertoire is the definition of the 'idea', which should infuse every dance, and its convincing revelation within the means and strength of the dance itself. The 'idea' can be achieved by emphasising on the connecting themes – the reflection of the joy of productive labour, the demonstration of some of the typical traits of our people – strength, temperament, agility, ingenuity, etc. of the male and the coy graciousness of the Bulgarian female, the themes of youthfulness, friendship, etc. The dance technique, behaviour and physical state of the dancers, as well as the special forms, should all serve the 'idea' (Ibid.: 62).

### **The axis 'East–West'**

#### *The importance of Moscow*

According to Margarita Dikova, the fact that Bulgaria was part of the Eastern Bloc and had an almost familial link to the Soviet Union was not detrimental. Dikova and a majority of her most significant followers in Bulgaria highly valued the Soviet model of professional ensembles for folk music and dances, the way performers were trained and the well-developed theoretical approaches to acting, choreography and directing.

Dikova's assistant Kiril Dzhenev (1922–2006) and three other talented grassroots choreographers attended a several month long course in Moscow in 1951–1952. As I have learned from his daughter, Daniela Dzheneva, he would often recall with pleasure the days spent in Moscow and the 'very best' in 'culture, dramaturgy, choreography, directing...' that he had seen and learned from Moiseyev and others. Following in Dikova's footsteps, in 1965 Dzhenev and his colleague Kiril Kharalampiev created a complex *kinetography* (notation system), well-suited for the Bulgarian dances. In 1974 Kiril Dzhenev founded the State Academic Ensemble 'Trakiya' in Plovdiv and established the course in Bulgarian folk choreography at the Higher Musical-Pedagogical Institute (currently the Academy for Music, Dance and Arts), which has been instrumental in enhancing Bulgarian dance pedagogy and directing (Plate 3).

Daniela Dzheneva, who succeeded her father as the Director of the 'Trakiya' ensemble and Vice-chancellor of the Academy for Music, Dance and Arts, has this to say about the impact of Moscow on Bulgarian folk choreography: 'This is the archetype of all ensembles in all the former Soviet republics and the Eastern Bloc. The trilateral construction – chorus, orchestra and dancers, the schooling, the training, the way everything is staged... has not changed over time. The nice part in all of this was that each and every ensemble very quickly assumed and continued to maintain their own character and style.' I should remark here that the image of the Soviet Union as the centre of the Eastern Bloc has always been viewed favourably in Bulgaria, contrary to most of the other socialist states in Europe. The texts of Bulgarian folklore often reflect on the times of the Ottoman occupation and it is understandable that Bulgarian folk choreography would be open to the influence of the 'bratushki' (brothers at arms) – i.e. the Russian liberators and protectors.

Plate 3: *The Dance Group of the State Academic Ensemble 'Trakiya' (B. Kalcheva's private collection, 1998)*



At the end of her 1958 book Dikova felt obliged to write that our entire professional art was 'national in its form and socialist in its content', that it was intended to 'indoctrinate our people in the spirit of a fiery socialist patriotism and proletarian internationalism. Particularly the dance groups with their crystal-clear folk art content inspire the working class in its aspirations for a new and happy life' (1958: 76). We can see how folk dance was instrumental in promoting leftist political agenda in Eastern Europe. However, Dikova herself never set a single choreography inspired by a historical or political event. As a choreographer of the first and foremost professional ensemble of Bulgaria, which was invited to perform in many of the Western countries, Dikova was well aware of her mission of an ambassador. The 'business card' of socialist Bulgaria, which her girls and boys personified on stage, was supposed to be beautiful and full of vitality.

As I have just shown, the danger of political instrumentalisation and manipulation of Bulgarian folk choreography lurked beneath the surface level of folk dance. On the other hand, if we recall the concepts of *firstness* and *secondness*, Bulgarian cultural areas such as dance and music managed to preserve the continuous link with forms and essences not entirely typical of socialism. Namely, Dikova's choreographies which strengthened and expanded national tradition in its fullness and beauty were aligned with the thinking of the first and foremost Bulgarian ethnochoreologist Raina Katsarova. In 1960 Katsarova encouraged village folk groups not to fear the association of certain forms of folklore with religious festivities because they were, above all, 'joyful hymns to youthfulness, beauty, fertility, human virtue' (1960: 31). By means of her masterful choreographic recreation of numerous Christian festivities for the stage, Dikova granted Bulgarian choreographers the freedom of action.

While analysing the phenomena along the upward axis of the *semantic star*, one more event will help understand the relative freedom of Bulgarian staged folk dance from political innuendoes. Here, I will put in relative terms the already mentioned rapturous and reverential stand of Kiril Dzhenev towards Moscow, because the choreographer and manager of the professional Varna ensemble, Peter Angelov has told me that when he, as a young man, applied to study choreography in Moscow, Dzhenev dissuaded him by saying: 'Peter, whatever might happen after you have come back – at best you will be the Minister of Culture – you will detach yourself from our folklore and you will never be a true choreographer and artist again.'

In conclusion, I would like to stress that all the graduates-performers and adherents-choreographers remember with the kindest of feelings the very strict, but just and talented artists Margarita Dikova and Kiril Dzhenev. None of my informants was ever conscious of the political mission associated with the defense of communism while performing on Western stages. All speak of and define in different terms the 'highest of arts' that has transcended time and carried with itself from days bygone the markers of a 'proprietary' Bulgarian tradition and 'truth' and which has heightened their personal self-esteem, experience and sense of happiness. Whilst interviewing the performers and spectators and analysing their responses, I have come to realise that the professional folk choreography has helped many Bulgarians preserve the sense of a

collective national identity and pride for being a part of it in today's multicultural reality. More importantly, Bulgarian folk dance continues to successfully balance and to be indisputably accepted as the 'people's' dance. Apparently, the phenomenon of Bulgarian staged folk dance does not exist at one or another of the poles of the three axes, but at the intersection of the three axes. Maybe that is why it has survived to this day.

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Vesna Bajić-Stojiljković

## **Links between the Moiseyev Dance Company and the Folk Dance Choreography production in Serbia<sup>1</sup>**

This chapter presents an attempt to examine the links between Serbian choreographic dance tradition with the often highlighted influence of the Moiseyev Dance Company<sup>2</sup> from Russia. At this point it is important to observe to what extent its impact could be seen in the choreographic pieces of the choreographers who were involved with the State ensemble Kolo since its inception, these being Olga Skovran and Dobrivoje Putnik, and other choreographers engaged in semi-professional<sup>3</sup> and amateur folklore ensembles from Beograd, these being Dragomir Vuković, Branko Marković and Desanka Đorđević in the period after World War II until the mid-1990s.

Using a comparative method of structural and formal dance/music analysis<sup>4</sup> of the available Moiseyev choreographies and the choreographies

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<sup>1</sup> This chapter arises from the research conducted for a doctoral dissertation *Processes of (re)defining the structural, dramaturgical and aesthetic aspects in the stage presentation of traditional dance and music in Serbia*, registered in 2009 at the Faculty of Music in Belgrade, which is still in progress.

<sup>2</sup> According to the simplified Library of Congress transliteration system, the choreographer's surname should be transliterated as 'Moiseev'; however, a common Western spelling is 'Moiseyev', which has been retained here.

<sup>3</sup> The term *semi-professional* is used in Serbia for folklore ensembles which are not directly funded by the state, but by the city councils. These usually employ at least several people (artistic director, leader of the orchestra, administrators) and do not function exactly as amateur folklore groups. Their repertoire is based on more complex choreographies of folk dance, with serious dance training. The dancers are usually amateurs, they are not employed as in the professional ensembles, but their skills and dance technique is greater than that of the amateur dancers.

<sup>4</sup> In my doctoral thesis I develop the method of structural and formal dance/music analysis of FDC as the main methodological tool. I have published several papers on this topic (see Bajić-Stojiljković 2011; 2012; 2014a; 2014b; 2015).

of folk dance by the authors mentioned above, I will try to answer the following questions: How are folk dance and music treated? Is there a related choreographic structure between them? What kind of kinetic expression do they promote? What does their spatial composition look like? Are there links between Moiseyev's approach and Folk Dance Choreography (abbr. FDC) production in Serbia?

Before I turn to the aforementioned issues, I will introduce Moiseyev and his professional Dance Company and the Folk Dance Choreography production in Serbia from the historical viewpoint.

### **On Moiseyev and the Moiseyev Dance Company**

The State Academic Ensemble of Folk Dances of the Peoples of the USSR [Gosudarstvennyi Akademicheskii Ansambl Narodnogo Tantsa S.S.S.R.], known in the West as the Moiseyev Dance Company (Shay 2002: 10) was founded in Moscow in 1937 by its artistic director and choreographer Igor Alexandrovich Moiseyev (1906–2007), after his successful organisation of the 'all-USSR folk dance festival' held in Moscow in 1936 (Ibid.: 66–67).

Moiseyev was a professional dancer of the Bolshoi ballet company from 1924 to 1939 (Ibid.: 66), 'sympathetic to the efforts of innovative Soviet choreographers of the 1920s and 30s' (Anderson 2007) with the aim to enrich the Soviet ballet. As Chudnovsky said, 'a close integration with the folk dance has been one of the fundamental principles underlying the development of the Soviet ballet' (Chudnovsky 1959: 11), which Moiseyev recognised and 'grew more and more obsessed with the idea of wholly devoting himself to the folk dance and even of creating a folk ballet' (Ibid.: 16). Because of his invention of a revolutionary synthesis of classical ballet and ethnic dance, Moiseyev was widely acclaimed as the greatest folk dance choreographer of the twentieth century (Anderson 2007). Within his Dance Company he created 'a new form of theatrical folk dance in Russia' and his troupe was one of the most popular dance companies of the twentieth century (Ibid.). The Moiseyev Dance Company's energy, virtuosity, precision and ingenious distillation of folk styles from various regions set audiences cheering worldwide. Chudnovsky noted that the company 'strove to revive the best examples of the folk dance, to bring out the beauty, heroic elements and optimism inherent in

them' (Chudnovsky 1959: 19) and 'a wealth of feeling, joy, merriment, a beauty and harmony of sound and movement' (Ibid.: 21).

A majority of Moiseyev's works were inspired by the traditions of the various regions of the Soviet Union. But he also created dances with Chinese, Cuban, Sicilian, Spanish, Polish, Argentinean, Bulgarian, Mexican, Venezuelan, Hungarian, Mongolian, Czech, Slovak, Japanese, Vietnamese and, of course, numerous Russian ethnic groups. In the early 1960s his dancers entertained American audiences by performing the *Virginia Reel* and a parody of rock and roll (Anderson 2007). Moiseyev used to say that 'bringing various peoples closer together is the bottom line of our efforts' (Pushkova s.a.). And so it was – even in a time of ideological confrontation between the West and the East.

Throughout his life Igor Moiseyev choreographed about 300 performances, more than 170 of which he created for his Dance Ensemble. From his first ballet productions, such as *The footballer* (1930), *Salammô* (1932) and *Three fat men* (1935) Moiseyev searched for new means of expression (Chudnovsky 1959: 15). Beside a vivid dance with emotional expressiveness, he gave much attention to the dramatic content. Almost every choreography was created around important themes, for example wedding, historical scenes, rounds, marital dances and spring and winter youth dance-games (Ibid.: 20). Moiseyev continued to work with traditional ballet companies throughout his career. His last choreography, *Spartacus* at the Bolshoi Ballet, was staged in 1954 (Pushkova s.a.) After 1955 the Ensemble toured France, England, Egypt, Japan, and the USA; it continued to perform into the early twenty-first century (Britannica 2013).

The impact of this company was barely visible in the ensemble's early years. Following World War II, however, the impact of the Moiseyev ensemble was immense in every republic of the USSR and throughout the Eastern bloc (Shay 2002: 67).<sup>5</sup> After several successful tours throughout the entire Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, all of the states of the USSR formed companies that emulated the Moiseyev model.

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<sup>5</sup> Philip Koutev, one of the first Bulgarian choreographers, was also inspired by the Soviet folk ensemble 'Pyatnitski', as he established the first professional, state-supported Bulgarian folk ensemble in 1951 (Buchanan 1995: 388). Similarly, the 'folklorismus era' in Poland was started by the formation of ensembles such as Piatnicki, Alexandrov, Moiseyev, Bierzka and others (Dąbrowska 2002: 95).

The USSR's direct political domination over Eastern Europe, and its popularity and influence in other regions of the world led to the widespread emulation of Soviet models of different types of institutions, including the formation of the state sponsored dance companies. (Shay 2002: 10)

Moiseyev's professionalism allowed him to stay apolitical in a highly politicised society – more than once he was summoned to various Communist Party members' offices to be questioned on his refusal to join the Party. But as his performances were favoured by Josef Stalin, no one dared to interfere with the ensemble (Britannica 2013). He received many honours and awards from the Russian state and numerous other countries, including SFR Yugoslavia.

### **Moiseyev's approach to Folk Dance Choreography**

Moiseyev used typical movement patterns, especially the motifs of particular ethnic groups or nations, based on their traditional dances. Sources say that Moiseyev spent his childhood and adolescence travelling around Russia with his father, thus becoming acquainted with the cultures of various ethnic groups (Shay 2002: 66). According to Darya Pushkova, 'His free time was devoted to roaming the Russian provinces. Traveling on foot or on horseback, he trekked across the country learning its traditions; all the local dances he observed in places such as Pamir, Belarus, Ukraine and the Caucasus, eventually made their way into the repertory of his own folk ensemble' (Pushkova s.a.). 'Later, when his fame as a choreographer was firmly established, he constantly pursued his studies of various peoples and their dances, wherever he might be – in all parts of his own country, in the towns of China, amidst the ruins of ancient Greece, in the European capitals', wrote Chudnovsky (1959: 15). Moiseyev's idea was not to transpose folk dances *literally* to the stage; instead, he studied music, history, traditions and customs of a nation or a region and then selected the details that most vividly reflected their characters and thus managed to create his own unique theatrical interpretations (Ibid.: 32).

He was able to find in a dance 'a new depth and content' (Ibid.: 19), thus opening a new world of thoughts, emotions and moods that spectators never suspected existed in it (Ibid.). Very often, people from other countries were astounded at how sensitively he captured their cultures (Pushkova s.a.). His work was especially admired, however, for the

balance that it maintained between authentic folk dance and theatrical effectiveness. Thus, although the ensemble became famous for its spectacular and acrobatic leaps and jumps, Moiseyev's choreography consistently derived from what he called 'root movements', the basic steps characteristic of a particular type of folk dance (Britannica 2013).

Moiseyev developed 'a total and complete movement vocabulary that is extremely unique and is emulated by many companies throughout the Eastern bloc' (Shay 2002: 72). His dance vocabulary, as Anthony Shay also notes, is based on ballet techniques, with simple footwork, spectacular and highly athletic virtuosic solo figures, rapid spinning, miming elements, mass scenes, highly precise and disciplined formations based on basic geometric elements, with a very fast tempo (Shay 2002: 68–73). Moiseyev attributed his dancers' virtuosity and versatility to their knowledge of classical ballet, which he described in an interview in 1970 as 'the grammar of movement' (Pushkova s.a.) While criticising the classical ballet, Moiseyev maintained that it had many good traditions to be studied and assimilated. Among these he singled out its high professional standards, technical virtuosity and great potentialities for expressing human thoughts, feelings and moods (Chudnovsky 1959: 24). Moiseyev believed that 'with ballet technique as a base, one can do anything' (Pushkova s.a.)

Moiseyev's intention was to present a certain type of character, hence he created as so-called 'character dance'.<sup>6</sup> This type of stage dance developed into an independent dance form within the genre of classical ballet, with the origin from the folk dance (Chudnovsky 1959: 27). With the aim to portray national features, Moiseyev reshaped and extended it to create, as Anthony Shay said, 'a unique movement vocabulary' (Shay 2002: 68). His choreographies always attempted to present characters which would represent a member of a certain ethnic group. These

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<sup>6</sup> Andriy Nahachewsky emphasises the very strong relationship between character dance and ballet in Soviet Union. He said that character dance was established in the Soviet Union as a separate genre of dance by the 1930s and 'developed as a combination of the classical ballet tradition, as well as the many ethnic and national dance traditions that the Soviets inherited from the Tsarist Russian empire' (Nahachewsky 1997: 142). According to Nahachewsky, similar movements developed in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and other countries under Soviet influence, gathered around the term 'folk-staged dance' which came into common use to identify the genre (Ibid.).

characters are generally one-dimensional – they are not individual people, but rather types of people, noted Shay (Ibid.: 70).

According to the systematisation of the principles of staging proposed by Ukrainian choreographer Kim Vasylenko in 1983, which was also promoted in ethnochoreology by the Ukrainian ethnochoreologist Andriy Nahachewsky some years later (Nahachewsky 1997, 2012), Moiseyev's approach is classified into the third, the highest principle of staging (Nahachewsky 1997: 145) or, in my conceptualisation, on the third level of *stylisation*, which I named *composition* (Bajić 2006: 62–66).<sup>7</sup> That means that, although Moiseyev used 'root movements' from traditional dances, he was not interested to preserve its original form or step pattern, but he used only elements of the form of a particular dance, composing a new dance and trying to keep its, let us use Nahachewsky's formulation, 'spirit of the original culture' (Nahachewsky 2012: 210). Nahachewsky explained that the 'character of [the] music, costumes and/or dance lexicon are generally urban, contemporary and theatrical. These dances often develop a theme or story, or perhaps evoke another genre such as ballet or contemporary dance' (Nahachewsky 1997: 145).

It is important to note that the Moiseyev's approach is, in the first place, a response to classical ballet – a striving to develop classical ballet with new elements and new character to express a wider range of human feelings and activities, with the aim 'to bring to the stage as complete a picture as possible of contemporary life' (Chudnovsky 1959: 23).

Besides determining the levels of stylisation, another important parameter in defining Folk Dance Choreography (FDC) is its genre classification (Bajić 2011). Considering the form and the content of FDC, I classified Moiseyev's choreographies in two genres: *dramatisation* (because of the presence of the narrative) and *variation* (because of intense variation and invention of step patterns). It is important to note that Moiseyev did

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<sup>7</sup> Relying on ideas of Vasylenko and Nahachewsky, who conceptualised three *principles of staging* in the process of theatricalisation (Nahachewsky 2012: 192), I tried to apply it on Serbian choreographed dance tradition, involving the term *stylisation*. I proposed *three levels of stylisation: adaptation, modification and composition* (see: Bajić 2006).

not create *suites* or *medleys*,<sup>8</sup> as one of the widespread genres of FDC in Serbia (in Serbian: *splet*), often related with the first and the second level of stylisation.

In favour of this, Chudnovsky noted that Moiseyev's first choreographies were individual dances (for example *Kalmyk dance*), which were after a while replaced by more complex choreographic pieces and one-act ballets, for example, Russian suite *Seasons of the year*, Ukrainian suite *Vesnyanki*, Moldavian Suite, and many others (Chudnovsky 1959: 20).

As Shay quotes, Moiseyev's intention was to raise the performance skill to the highest artistic level in order to influence the creation of new national dances (Shay 2002: 71–72). On the other hand, he wanted to improve upon dances that peasants actually performed in the field, 'reinterpreting them, enriched by professional art and imbued with an expressive contemporary flavour' (Ibid.: 70). Because of his interpretation and approach to choreography, Moiseyev's artistic work is highly valued. In this context Georgi Abrašev, the Bulgarian ethnochoreologist and choreographer cited that Moiseyev thought that choreography should develop the potential of dance elements already created by the people, because they were unable to develop their dances to their fullest potentials themselves (Abrašev 1989: 183).

As Irina Kozlova wrote in her article 'Folklore and Art' (Kozlova 1997), for Russians the aesthetic, ethical and educational functions of folklore are the most important, because it (folklore) has gradually lost much of its applied function (Ibid.: 208). She adds that different types of adaptation and transformation of traditional folklore have become more expressive and have significantly begun to override the original authentic forms (Ibid). Throughout the entire article Kozlova emphasises the idea of folklore as the 'living power of modern original amateur culture' (Ibid), which is very evident in the case of Moiseyev who advocated for contemporary interpretation of folk art.

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<sup>8</sup> The composition of the *suite* or *medley* implies merging several dances, usually from one region, in a single unit or form, without any narrative or plot. Although the terms *suite* and *medley* are often used as synonyms, the differences between them are quite evident, because the *suite* refers to the form of music/dance composition, while I have conceptualised *medley* as the first genre category of FDC (Bajić-Stojiljković 2015: 37–38).

Ethnochoreologists agree that stage folk dance has to correspond not only with folklore, but with the stage dance tradition as well. László Felföldi highlights the importance of the correspondence with the cultural politics of the revival movement as well as the pedagogical expectations (Felföldi 2002: 115).

Moiseyev's activities were extremely important in the development of education in dance and in improving the literature on choreography. As observed by Shay, 'a spate of books appeared throughout the Soviet Union and several satellite states that showed how to perform Moiseyev-style dances for the stage, including movements, steps, formations, and finally, sample choreographies appropriate to each ethnic group' (Shay 2002: 67). In the capital city of every republic of the former Soviet Union special dance schools, called *Koreografski instituti*, similar to high schools for the performing arts, were established, where one could learn classical ballet and folk dance. These exhibited a very serious approach with a defined strategy in the development of artistic folk dance. Moiseyev wrote a number of articles in which he set out to evolve a theory of the folk dance (Chudnovsky 1959: 22).

For his pioneering approach to traditional dance, Anthony Shay described Moiseyev as the 'ancestor of the genre' (Shay 2002: 57–81), because he has created a new and parallel dance tradition or genre (Ibid.: 70). Andriy Nahachewsky is even more precise in saying that Moiseyev is the 'father' of the third principle folk-staged dance genre (Nahachewsky 1997: 145).

### **Folk Dance Choreography in Serbia**

When it comes to the production of stage folk dance in Serbia, it is noticeable that the third principle of staging or the third level of stylisation existed in Belgrade in the early 1920s, through the unique approach of a choreographer and a dance teacher, Maga Magazinović (1882–1968). Upon attending courses by Emile Jaques-Dalcroze and Mary Wigman in Germany, she founded a School of rhythmic and modern dance ('Škola za ritmiku i plastiku') in Belgrade, in 1910 (Magazinović 2000: 21, 25). Her early choreographies, partially influenced by Serbian folk dances, included their original names, such as *srbijanka*, *vranjanka* and *đurđevka*, from 1921 (Ibid.: 523), *koknješte* and *vranjanka* from 1922 (Ibid.: 524), *Neda grivnu*, *zaplet* and *trojanac*, from 1923 (Ibid), *šumadinka*, *slavjanka*, *vranjanka* and *đurđevka*,

from 1924 (Ibid.: 525), *gružanka*, *šumadinka*, and *vrzino kolo* from 1929, were described as scenes with folk motifs (Ibid.: 527), then *bojerka* from 1930 (Ibid) and *Kosidba na planini* from 1935, described as a scenic view of stylised folklore (Ibid.: 529).

It remains unknown today what those choreographies looked like or how they were performed on stage, but according to their names and the author's explanations, they must have included the elements or motifs of the traditional (original) kinerhythmic models which Magazinović then brought to the principles of the modern dance. We cannot be sure whether she used kinerhythmic patterns of traditional dances for her choreographies *Jelisavka, majka Obilića* [Jelisavka, Obilić's mother (1926)], *Molitva Kosovke devojke* [Prayer of the girl from Kosovo (1927)], *Smrt majke Jugovića* [The death of the Jugović's mother (1927)], but she was certainly inspired by Serbian history and tradition.

Magazinović was undoubtedly familiar with Serbian traditional dancing as she danced as a pupil and later student in a folklore group (Mosusova 2012: 9). She was also acquainted with the work of the Janković sisters, the first ethnochoreologists in Serbia, and later with Olivera Mladenović (née Živković), all of which enabled her to gain a deeper insight into the field of traditional dancing (Magazinović 2000: 25, 26; Mosusova 2012: 14).

Around the same time, in the mid 1920s, Russian dancers and choreographers contributed to the production of the so-called folk-ballets for the Yugoslav ballet stage. They created choreographies which included elements found in traditional folk dances (Milin 2003: 75). As Melita Milin argues, Russian contribution to the evolution of ballet in Serbia was very important, although modern dance, the so-called plastic-ballet, had already existed in Serbia before the introduction of classical ballet, principally thanks to Maga Magazinović (Milin 2003: 73).

When Magazinović closed her school in 1935, there was nobody to continue her work in modern dance. A new approach which led to reviving rural traditions became more evident through the activities of rural and urban folklore groups. From this point it becomes evident that the third level of stylisation, found in the work of Maga Magazinović and her folk ballet, almost disappeared in the years after World War II, only to

reappear later, in the late 1950s, in a new and different form of Folk Dance Choreography.<sup>9</sup>

Although Serbia was under a strong Soviet influence only for a short period of time (1943–1948), many new trends that were established in those years could directly contribute to the development of the dance choreography in the region. Dance ethnologist Elsie Ivancich Dunin [Elzi Ivančić Dunin] and choreographer Stanimir Višinski state that ‘the Moiseyev company toured the Slavic countries in the fall and winter of 1945–1946, providing the first post-war exposure to his approach to folk dance choreography’ (Ivančić Dunin and Višinski 1995: 8). During one of their concerts the amateur folklore group ‘Ivo Lola Ribar’ from Belgrade performed as hosts, under the artistic direction of Olga Skovran, who became the first director and choreographer of the Serbian state ensemble ‘Kolo’ two years later (Mladenović 1962: 22).

The scenic representations were not a novelty in Serbia at the time of the Moiseyev Dance Ensemble’s visit to Yugoslavia. During the pre-war period, in the beginning of the 1930s, in different parts of the former Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenians the concept of the scenic representation of traditional dances appeared and started to develop with ‘villagers demonstrating their own dances to an audience of ‘outsiders’ out of village’ (Ivančić Dunin and Višinski 1995: 5). The sisters Janković wrote that the first festival of dance was held in Ljubljana in 1934, then a year later in Croatia, Southern Serbia and Macedonia, and in 1938 in Belgrade (Janković 1939: 298–303). These festivals chiefly promoted the traditional village dance, in its non-stylised form, but at the same time featured performances of various balletic and rhythmic stylizations by some of the urban dance groups (Ibid.: 298).

During the late 1930s some Serbian amateur folklore groups participated in several important international folk programmes in Western Europe (Janković 1939: 194–195, 299; Ivančić Dunin and

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<sup>9</sup> The need to create an artistic form of dance based on traditional dance forms was very strong during the post-war period. Also, the sisters Janković emphasised the importance of, but also cautiousness in creating scenic art based on traditional dance (Janković 1949: 65). Being very versatile personalities, whose scholarship was accepted worldwide, they both had the opportunity to observe various examples of scenic interpretation of traditional dance in different countries, presumably including Moiseyev’s approach, but neither of them was involved in the creative choreographic process, nor did they write about it.

Višinski 1995: 6). In the pre-war years there were many events presenting traditional village dances on the stage by village groups and some urban folklore groups, but there were not that many expressive authorised choreographies, and the idea of an actual scenic presentation in the form an elaborate choreographic piece had yet to be developed; this happened in the late 1940s.

From that period we can consider the beginnings of Folk Dance Choreography production in Serbia. Through the work of five key choreographers – Olga Skovran, Dobrivoje Putnik, Dragomir Vuković, Branko Marković and Desanka Đorđević, whose creative work covers the second half of the twentieth century, we can reconstruct the choreographic activity in Serbia and identify policies for its development. All of the aforementioned choreographers had different approaches and visions, striving to achieve their own originality. But, in general, their heterogeneity still relied on common postulates for presentation of traditional dance from Serbia.

### **The influence of the Moiseyev Dance Company**

The Moiseyev Dance Company was an exemplary prototype for establishing a state-sponsored professional folklore group, which was immediately accepted by three Yugoslav republics – Serbia, Croatia and Macedonia. Regardless of the fact that in 1948 Yugoslavia became politically independent from the USSR, many cultural organizations continued to promote folk dance and music by organising festivals and other such events. That same year the State Ensemble ‘Kolo’ was founded in Serbia, and a year later ‘Lado’ in Croatia and ‘Tanec’ in Macedonia.

However, Moiseyev’s approach to folk dance and music material was not directly transposed onto these ensembles, as was the case, according to Anthony Shay, in other countries under Soviet control. Because of this, in the case of Serbia I will not use the term *model* which is used in many discourses explaining the influence of the Moiseyev Dance Company (Shay 2002; Ivančić Dunin and Višinski 1995; Maners 2002), but rather describe it as, to use Grażyna Dąbrowska’s formulation, an *example* that would be followed (Dąbrowska 2002: 95).<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> The term *model* implies transferring the entire system of functioning, from repertoire, training, technique, ways of choreographing, education to all the administration and state support.

*Comparative analysis of the repertoire of the Moiseyev Dance Company<sup>11</sup> and Folk Dance Choreography production in Serbia*

Upon analysing some of the available video examples of Moiseyev's Folk Dance Choreographies on YouTube (namely: The Ukrainian dance *Gopak*, The Russian Dance Suite *Summer*, The dance of Kalmyk, The Romanian Dance *Briul*, Tatar dance, Moldovan dances, Gypsy dances, The fleet suite *Yablochko*, Greek dance, Sicilian *Tarantella*, Egyptian dance, Jewish dance, *Malambo*, Partisans), some basic differences could be seen between their repertoire and Folk Dance Choreography production in Serbia. The main difference relates to the kinetics: the use of the body in dancing and the use of step patterns of traditional dance in creating the kinetic dimensions of the entire choreography (see Table 2). Another big difference is in connection with the spatial composition and its parameters, alongside differences in the level of stylisation and the choreographic genre (see Tables 1 and 3).

In the early years of the Ensemble 'Kolo' the main way of creating choreographies was to collect and to present traditional dance in a suite form with the first and second level of stylisation.<sup>12</sup> Choreographies from Serbia basically do not contain many highly virtuosic elements, especially not those that originate from ballet technique. If there are some technically complex elements, for example, squats, twists, fast repeated motifs, they appear occasionally, especially in choreographies that consists of dances from Southeastern Serbia. Regarding the kinetic dimension, choreographies are based primarily on the 'original' step patterns of traditional dances, slightly varied. Although in a small number of examples, variations are present also in the early years of Ensemble 'Kolo' in choreographies created by the first Serbian choreographers Olga Skovran and Dobrivoje Putnik, but it would also become evident later, in the work of Dragomir Vuković and Branko Marković, both very popular

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<sup>11</sup> I do not have the information of the exact year when some of Moiseyev's choreographies were created. However, at this point the most important thing is to observe the specific features of his choreographic approach, which are evident in every choreography, regardless of when they were created.

<sup>12</sup> While Olga Skovran's choreographies were 'textbook example' of the form of suite, Dobrivoje Putnik loved to experiment with form by means of including and composing different variants of step patterns.

and world-renowned choreographers.<sup>13</sup> The way of performing choreographies on the stage is not really ‘authentic’ – in choreographies of the Ensemble ‘Kolo’ (especially in its early years, but also later) movements are refined, subtle and stylised, sometimes resembling the ballet.

The spatial dimension is solidly designed and includes traditional dancers’ formations, mainly in group, rather than solo formations (see Tables 1, 2, 3). In relation to the kinetic dimension, the spatial dimension is more developed.

Character roles for individuals or a group of dancers are not often presented. Serbian choreographers normally used dramatic elements taken from rituals and customs, interweaving them with traditional dance and music, which is not the case with Moiseyev. The choreographer Branko Marković<sup>14</sup> had a unique approach which resulted in very complex choreographic compositions which included dramatisations with programme titles, but these were unlike Moiseyev’s despite the fact that both Marković and Moiseyev’s choreographies of folk dance were rooted in ballet technique.<sup>15</sup> The differences could be observed in the way they combined ballet and folk dance elements, precisely, from which point of view they approach the FDC. Branko Marković enriched folk dance with

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<sup>13</sup> Dragomir Vuković was the only choreographer from Serbia whom Moiseyev himself hired to set his two choreographies *Shopske dances* and *Dances from Serbia* in his Dance Company repertoire (Kuzmanović-Tubić 2008: 13).

<sup>14</sup> Branko Marković, ballet dancer and choreographer, worked in the semi-professional ensemble AKUD ‘Branko Krsmanović’ from Belgrade. His choreographic production is nowadays considered a gem of Serbian choreography, a unique and somehow isolated approach in-between others.

<sup>15</sup> The term *ballet technique* is widely used in many ethnochoreological and other dance narratives, but without precise explanation. Ballet technique consists of special leg and arm positions, the position of the whole body and the specific movement of the whole body. Moiseyev did not use all the elements of ballet technique for his choreographies, but he concentrated on those movements with clearer expressions. His dancers are very often in low, *demi-plié* positions; the dancers’ legs are frequently bent. There are not many high positions, except in some virtuosic elements (pirouettes, leaps, jumps etc.). The feet are in the position of forced arch or on the whole or half-foot. Movements are clearly performed. A high amplitude of raising gestures of legs could be seen as well as some other elements from ballet technique: pirouettes and other turns, rotations, gestures, positions of arms, posture of the torso, movement of the whole body.

ballet elements, while Moiseyev enriched ballet with folk dance – both of them in their own unique ways.

With regard to the music, the difference is evident, because the music for all Moiseyev's choreographies is composed and dramaturgically related to the dance, with very few exceptions. As Chudnovsky pointed out, 'the choreographer and the composer soon learned to think and create in perfect concord and to grasp not only the general concept of the dance but its various parts and details, both dramatic and choreographic' (1959: 61). Moiseyev's choreographies are usually accompanied by a full symphony orchestra, but the usage of some instruments that reflect the specific tradition is very evident (for example, the accordeon *bayan*, which is assigned with significant solo parts in many arrangements and can accompany even the entire choreography without the orchestra, as it is in *The dance of Kalmyk*). For the musical accompaniment of the dances of the Caucasus and Central Asia some special instruments are used (for example, *tar*, *kyamancha*, *duduk*, *tambourine*, *zurna*, and others) (Ibid.: 62; 63). As to arranging folk melodies Chudnovsky noted that the Company's composer 'neither mechanically copied what had been recorded nor relied too much on their imaginative powers. They tried to retain the original harmonic or polyphonic style, to integrate it with new elements and create something new out of it' (Ibid.: 67). He further added that the composer tried to capture the essence and colour of the melody and visualise the harmonic and polyphonic potentials with the orchestration. In concordance with the dance, composers also used dramatic elements borrowed from symphonic music, such as the system of leit-motifs (Ibid).

The music for FDC in Serbia is based on traditional melodies, which are used in their original forms but arranged for the 'classical' orchestra. The relationship between music and dance is not, in a majority of the examples, dramaturgically conceptualised, because a dramatic relationship between them does not exist. In the orchestra some traditional instruments, such as *frula*, *tambura* or *tapan* can be heard, but the overall sound is orchestral.

There were also big differences in the system of the dancers' education and training. In the early years, the dancers of 'Kolo' were given some lessons in classical ballet, but they were not trained in it from their

childhood as Moiseyev's dancers were.<sup>16</sup> The highly informative and practical values of the dance training of 'Kolo' dancers consisted of inviting village dancers from whom they would learn step patterns and, especially, the movement, i.e. the style of dancing (Skovran 1965: 435–436). The formal education in folk dance and FDC did not exist then and still does not exist in Serbia.

The first artistic director of the Serbian professional dance ensemble 'Kolo' Olga Skovran and her dance collaborator Dobrivoje Putnik were not trained in the choreographic institutes in Russia like many of the choreographers from the Soviet Union and other countries – for example, Bulgarian choreographers who 'had attended a choreographer's course in Bulgaria where the Moiseyev model had already been introduced (Ivančić Dunin and Višinski 1995: 14). Therefore, their idea on how to adapt traditional dance for the stage in a professional ensemble was stimulated neither primarily from inside, nor from outside the SFR Yugoslavia.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> When Moiseyev founded the State Academic Folk Dance Ensemble, which featured 35 dancers, they were principally amateurs, and performed dances from the 11 republics of the USSR. Subsequently he built a company of about 100 professional dancers trained by either the Bolshoi Theatre School or its National Dance Department, which Moiseyev headed; all ensemble dancers had a background in classical ballet (Chudnovsky 1959: 16; Britannica 2013).

<sup>17</sup> Both Olga Skovran and Dobrivoje Putnik trained as gymnasts and worked as teachers in schools. Olga Skovran took some additional courses in choreography in Czechoslovakia, while Dobrivoje Putnik was a well-known teacher in summer folklore schools or seminars. Both of them were choreographers and directors in Ensemble 'Kolo'.

Table 1: *The structure of the Folk Dance Choreography*

<b>CHOREOGRAPHIC STRUCTURES</b>		
<i>Parameters</i>	<i>Moiseyev's Approach</i>	<i>Approach of Serbian choreographers from 1948</i>
Dance part	+	+
Instrumental part	+	+
Vocal part	-	+
Spoken part	-	+
Play-act part	+	- (+)
Costume	+ stylised traditional	+ traditional
Stage design, lighting	+	-
Time	2–10 min	3–14 min
Level of stylisation	third	first and second, rarely third
Choreographic genre	<i>dramatisation, variation</i>	mainly <i>suite</i> , but also <i>dramatisation</i> and <i>variation</i>

Table 2: *Analysis of the dance part of the Folk Dance Choreography*

<b>THE DANCE PART</b>		
<i>Parameters</i>	<i>Moiseyev's approach</i>	<i>Approach of Serbian choreographers from 1948</i>
Kinetics	Movements of the whole body (legs, arms, head); ballet technique, virtuoso elements (high leaps, pirouettes), elements or motifs of step patterns of folk dances; changes of levels (from low to high position); energy of movement; prominent soloists.	General movements or movement focus is on legs; no ballet elements, although some virtuosic elements can be seen; movements are stylised with regard to the traditional way of performing; step patterns are used, with variations; collective performing with some solo roles.
Space	<i>See table 3: Spatial composition</i>	
Time	2–8 min	5–8 min

Table 3: *Spatial composition*<sup>18</sup> of the Folk Dance Choreography

<b>SPATIAL COMPOSITION</b>		
<i>Parameters</i>	<i>Moiseyev's approach</i>	<i>Approach of Serbian choreographers from 1948</i>
(1) <i>Mise-en-Scène</i>		
<b>Formation</b>		
1. <i>Grouping of dancers</i>	one, two, three, group	two, three, group
2. <i>Number of dancers</i>	two to group	two, three, but mainly group
3. <i>Gender of dancers</i>	male, female, mixed	male, female, mixed
4. <i>Geometric configuration</i>	circle, line, point	circle, semi-circle, line
5. <i>Reciprocal body orientation of dancers</i>	face-to-face, side-by-side, face-to-back, back-to-back; markedly facing the audience, even in a circle	face-to-face, side-by-side, face-to-back
6. <i>Connection between dancers</i>	With or without connection; with arms down and up, by the shoulders, with crossed arms forward and backward	Always connected by hands with arms down and up, by the shoulders, with crossed arms forward and backward, by belt
<b>Spatial motive</b>	The line, the solo, the duo, the trio, the open circle, the closed circle	The line, the solo, the duo, the trio, the open circle, the closed circle
(2) <i>Pathway</i>	Straight, curved, subsequent, individual; direct, indirect, dialogue	Straight, curved, subsequent, less individual; direct, indirect, dialogue
<i>Spatial complexity</i>	Monophony (single, multiple), polyphony; spatial canon, spatial imitation	Monophony (single, multiple), less polyphony

<sup>18</sup> The term *spatial composition*, which I propose, consists of separate scenes, the so-called *mise-en-scènes* and *pathways*. Inside *mise-en-scènes* different formations can be observed with *pathways* inside them (see Bajić-Stojiljković 2014b: 406–425).

## **Conclusion**

It is evident that Moiseyev's impact was not strongly felt in the Serbian choreographic dance tradition because the system of presenting traditional dance and creating choreographies, as well as the education of dancers and choreographers, was very different from the approach of the Moiseyev Dance Ensemble in Russia. A school for choreography did not exist in Serbia (and still does not exist), and Serbian choreographers went their own way by observing other ensembles and trying to apply what they saw for the creation of Serbian staged folk dance, as well as presenting some new aspects of the staged style of choreographing. On the other hand it is unquestionable that Moiseyev's influence was felt, especially in terms of creating the form of the choreography and its spatial composition.

The acclaimed and famous Moiseyev Dance Company did not directly guide Serbian choreographed folk dance production from the beginning, since it had been developing independently, through the original approaches of individual authors of choreographies of folk dance. However in later years some connections could be observed, especially in the development of *dramatisations* and *variations*, two different genres in FDC. Whether or not those were direct influences, I cannot say at this point. On the other hand, the introduction of ballet into the Serbian folk-stage tradition can be found only in one semi-professional folklore ensemble – AKUD 'Branko Krsmanović' from Belgrade (as well as other ensembles, such as AKUD 'Španac', to which the same choreographies were transposed). The programme orientation of AKUD 'Branko Krsmanović' was mainly based on the unique artistic work of Branko Marković, a ballet dancer and choreographer. The others, including the professional Ensemble 'Kolo', did not accept the importation of ballet technique in the presentation of FDC.

The crucial difference between Russian, precisely Moiseyev's, and Serbian approach to the stage folk dance is in the different contexts from which they originated – ballet tradition (Russian) vs. village tradition (Serbian). This fact is confirmed by Olga Skovran, the doyen of FDC production in Serbia, who said that folk tradition was of primary importance (Skovran 1965: 434).

The only similarity that could be found between Serbian choreographed dance production in the second half of twentieth century and the Moiseyev Dance Company is the programme orientation. In Yugoslavia the programme policy of the repertoire of the Ensemble 'Kolo' was to represent dances from different Yugoslav republics, and that policy was preserved until the late 1980s. This was also the case with the Moiseyev Dance Company, whose repertoire included dances from all of the nations of the former Soviet Union (Shay 2002: 75–77). Being state-sponsored professional dance ensembles, both 'Kolo' and the Moiseyev Dance Company were powerful tools for a 'representation on a wide variety of levels – political, historical, ethnic, economic, gender, and aesthetic, among others' (Ibid.: 10).

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Valentina Sandu-Dediu  
**Writing on music in post-war Romania:  
Soviet sources, nationalism, structuralism**

Romanian musicology lacks a thoroughgoing discussion of the directions that have defined it over the last sixty-five years and of the way in which it was influenced by communist ideology, on the one hand, and movements in Western thought, on the other.<sup>1</sup> Even today the area lacking is that of translations; Romanian musicologists have by their own efforts caught up with the current stage in world research in various fields, from historiography to aesthetics and Byzantology. The ability to read source materials in the original language has obviously been an advantage, but connecting with novelties, as well as the teaching of musicology as an academic discipline, has been made more difficult. The fact that both before and after 1989 there have been extremely few titles from the international bibliography translated into Romanian has led to a focus of research on native music, which was in any event encouraged by the nationalist ideology of the communist government. Works on native folk music (collections, transcriptions) and on the history of Romanian music, and monographs on Romanian composers (of greater or lesser importance) were provided with stimuli (not least from the financial point of view). Nevertheless, a number of major works on universal music were still published, which have remained exemplary for the depth of their materials, research and ideas; but it is not such works that are the subject of the present study.

While some translations were nevertheless published, they were, at least in the 1950s and 1960s, mostly from the Soviet space, and Romanian readers were educated to view Western music through the distorting lens

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<sup>1</sup> A single exception examines music criticism: Vasiliu 2007.

of Soviet ideology (see Alšvang 1960a, 1960b; Gruber 1963).<sup>2</sup> I shall make a brief case study of the monograph *Bach* by Georgi Khubov (1960),<sup>3</sup> which for decades was read and quoted by Romanian musicians as their main source for Bach studies. The impact on the cultural mentality of a Romanian reader from 1960 and on one from 2013 is of course very different, but just as pernicious. Before 1990, the discourse on Bach's 'ideological and artistic physiognomy', based on the 'unshakable laws of Marxist-Leninist aesthetics' (as the author puts it in his Foreword), was part of the everyday language, thanks to the habit of using the official jargon, and was taken seriously by many professors of music history, while being mocked in secret by others. The problem it poses in the present seems to me more serious: when this book falls into the hands of a music pupil, who discovers it on the shelves of a public library, he takes it seriously and reproduces it in his own essays, without being aware of Khubov's gross distortions. A combination of such sources with those discovered first-hand on the Internet results in a grotesque image of the composer. I shall examine a few examples, starting with this one:

If the genius Bach had not been endowed with a healthy and robust working-class nature, that of a musician linked to the people [...] perhaps he would have been content to live in the stagnant swap of the German petty bourgeois reality of the eighteenth century (Khubov 1960: 31).

The author goes on to tell us that Bach constantly struggled against the clergy, his parishioners and choirs of amateurs, that he distanced himself from the nobility and was close to the people and folk music. It is no wonder that in a avowedly atheist society, Bach's profoundly religious beliefs<sup>4</sup> are turned on their head to the point of being dismissed. Thus, in the cantatas Bach is 'popular', 'humanist' and 'progressive', because he is opposed to the old religious dogmas. The *Magnificat* is a 'symphony of joy':

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<sup>2</sup> All these were printed in multiple editions in the early 1960s.

<sup>3</sup> Translated from Russian by Liviu Rusu and Paul Donici, from the 1953 edition published in Moscow (a revised and expanded version of the 1936 edition).

<sup>4</sup> '...damit dieses eine wohlklingende Harmonie gebe zur Ehre Gottes und zulässiger Ergötzung des Gemüths und soll wie aller Music [...] nur zur Gottes Ehre und Recreation des Gemüths seyn. Wo dieses nicht in Acht genommen wird, da ist's keine eigentliche Music sondern ein Teufflisches Geplerr und Geleyr' (Bach 1738).

It seems that the traditional religious text, which is foreign and in a foreign language, is inscribed as a joke between the lines of this classic score. In any event, the arid scholasticism of the text is completely dominated by the unbridled joyousness of the people's choirs, which are full of strength, brilliance and upsurge (Khubov 1960: 131–132).

Nor do the *St Matthew Passion* and *St John Passion* escape such analyses, in which the sacred text is belittled and mocked. The manipulation is obvious to those with any knowledge, but effective when it comes to those unfamiliar with Bach's music. To negate the text of the *Passion* means to deliberately throw away the key to an understanding of Bach's music. And this is what happens throughout Khubov's monograph, as the author criticises the concepts of bourgeois musicology, represented (in his day) by Albert Schweitzer and André Pirro who ascribed mystical ideas to Bach 'inappropriately' and 'without evidence'.

Khubov's attitude is explicable, in a society in which the author conforms to the official ideology: Bach's music cannot be excluded from the history of music, despite its sacral content, but it can be redefined, reinvented via the explanations of Soviet musicology, in such a way that it will convey the message of a humanist, revolutionary and in fact atheist (!) composer. Unfortunately, however, we cannot view Khubov's book merely as a dated catalogue item; such texts had a direct influence on Romanian musicology for decades. Even if in the Ceaușescu period (1965–1989) translations from Russian diminished almost to the point of disappearance (due to well-known political reasons, namely Ceaușescu's distancing himself from Moscow), those that were already in circulation were widely read and influenced mentalities and styles of writing. Clichés such as those mentioned above abound in the historical musicology, which was thenceforth mainly focussed on Romanian subjects. The impact of ideological jargon on the thinking and methods of approach shared by an entire generation of musicologists is difficult to assess, but is obvious to whoever might browse otherwise respectable works written up until 1989 (and even afterwards, in some cases, I also might venture to argue).

Other musicians (whom we might include in the category of those who represent systematic Romanian musicology) took refuge in structuralist analyses in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. In this way they were able to avoid reference to any particular ideology or social context. An analysis of the abstract forms of a piece of music (if it had a literary, programmatic

substratum, this was usually disregarded) was equivalent to the way in which students at the Conservatory practised polyphonic composition by inventing, according to a given framework, motets 'in the Palestrina style' for eight voices, but without a religious text. Paradoxically or not, such a tendency in Romanian musicology has two highly different sources: the flight from ideology, in other words refuge in an abstract world of sound structures, on the one hand, and the fashionable trend of structuralism, derived from the Russian formalists, on the other. The ahistoricism characteristic of this method was convenient to composers who were beginning to explore types of text (the case of Ștefan Niculescu, in the definition of musical syntaxes, of heterophony), music's relationship with mathematics (Anatol Vieru, in the set-theory applied to composition; Wilhelm Georg Berger and the organisation of modes according to the golden section and Fibonacci's sequence; Aurel Stroe and the computer generating of musical composition classes), and the morphological modes of oral compositions (Tiberiu Olah, Corneliu Dan Georgescu).

In the minds of Romanian musicologists, the idea has gradually taken root that analytical, exploratory musicology, which operates with interdisciplinary concepts, could apply to the majority of composers. One such musicologist, Pascal Bentoiu, who wrote the most substantial and original book on Georges Enesco (Bentoiu 1986), elegantly explains this idea:

It seems to me that there are two polarised situations: one in periods of stability, one in periods of change. In periods of stability musicologies/musicologists have a decisive word to say. When, at the end of the last century, it seemed that tonality had been established once and for all on the global map, there emerged major theoreticians such as Riemann, Kurth and Adler, who all constructed superb edifices upon this foundation, either on the subject of the history of music or by systematising problems of harmony and form: these were in fact interpretations of an established universe. On the other hand, in periods of change, the major theorists are composers, those 'in the firing line'. And so at the beginning of the new century, new propositions emerged (rather than explorations of a given universe), such as Schoenberg's *Treatise on harmony* and then Stravinsky's *Musical Poetics* and Hindemith's *Unterweisung im Tonsatz*. This also explains why in Romania today the 'hot' questions of musicology are raised by composers; and I do not at all wish to minimise the central component of musicology, which writes the history of a culture, relativises it, and ultimately examines that culture's links with the rest of the world (Sandu-Dediu 2004: 262).

Hence a significant direction in Romanian musicology, chosen both by composers and some theorists, took shape between 1960 and 1990, based on the analysis of scores, avoiding as much as possible their historical, social and aesthetic context, whatever their period of provenance. The situation in Romania was by no means unique in this respect, since it was characteristic of all the former communist countries. Here is how one author evaluates the problems and perspectives of Baltic historical musicology:

Scholars studying some neutral theme were much freer in their reconstructions and evaluations than those who chose to study some ideologically sensitive problem (like the role of Baltic-Germans in recent local history, Baltic composers living in the West, the years of 'bourgeois republic', and similar themes) (Lippus 1999: 55).

Likewise, such nationalism imbues the writing style of the histories of music in Central and South-Eastern Europe. A musical composition is declared to be all the more valuable the more it is national in its attributes, the chief among these being so-called 'folk inspiration'. The nationalist spirit in historiography, in folklore studies, is reflected in the glorification of Romanian musical figures, and more often than not the past is distorted in the same way as Khubov distorted Bach. One particular situation is the way in which nationalist ideology can be exploited for noble ends, for instance in the recuperation of Byzantine music: namely, the communist authorities banned anything that could be connected with the sacral, but looked kindly upon the ethnic argument of the 'centuries-old wellsprings' of the Romanians. Thus, Byzantinology developed within Romanian musical research, with numerous notable contributions.<sup>5</sup> In addition, study of folk music was encouraged and highly regarded in the same nationalist terms. The nationalist manner was not necessarily reflected in folk music research or in every author, however. It is sufficient to mention Constantin Brăiloiu, who had no connections with communist Romania (he settled in

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<sup>5</sup> It seems that Romanian Byzantinology (and musicology in general) has had difficulty in reaching a European readership. An article by Dragotin Cvetko (1978: 151-160), describes the situation of research into religious music and oral traditions in Eastern Europe in the late 1970s. The author notes the absence of Romania in the context of articles on the countries of this region in the prestigious *Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart* encyclopaedia.

Switzerland in 1944) and who established a system of analysis and scholarly standard that remain valid even today (Brăiloiu, 1984).

In various branches of Romanian musicology – music theory, historiography and lexicography – one may observe a certain tradition: a single person takes upon himself an enormous task, which ought to have been shared among a team; rare are the cases in which a research team works together to compile a lexicon, dictionary or treatise. Romanian musicologists prefer to be the sole authors of monumental works (do we find here the model of a Hugo Riemann, or quite simply individualism allergic to collaborative effort?).

I shall take a few examples valid for the period before and after 1990, given that at stake are obviously projects that stretch over a long period of time. The main bibliographical landmark in Romanian music history is the nine-volume *Chronicle of Romanian music* by Octavian Lazăr Cosma, which runs to almost 4,500 pages, supplemented by wide-reaching volumes on musical institutions (from the Union of Romanian Composers and Musicologists to the National University of Music in Bucharest and the National Operas in Cluj and Bucharest: additional thousands of pages, which further volumes in the offing) (Cosma 1973–1991, 1995, 2003, 2004–2010, 2010–2011, etc.). We have here a labour of historiographical research involving various archives, carried out with remarkable patience and tenacity, a work of scholarship that thereby becomes our primary source of information. However, we cannot overlook some of the subjective choices and interpretations of the data collected (although this is all but unavoidable when a captain is sailing the ocean without a crew), and nor the lack of care when it comes to the style of the writing. For this reason, today's reader ought to be trained to read such volumes with an appropriate amount of caution.

Of the more than one hundred volumes published by Viorel Cosma, I shall refer here only to the ten-volume dictionary *Musicians from Romania*, containing more than three thousand pages and compiled partly from record slips collected from Romanian musicians contemporary to the author, and partly from historiographical investigations.<sup>6</sup> The usefulness of

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<sup>6</sup> Viorel Cosma commenced this endeavour with *Muzicieni români. Lexicon*, published in 1970 (Bucharest: Editura Muzicală), and continued, from 1989 to 2011, to develop the first volume in ten volumes with the title *Muzicieni din România* (Bucharest: Editura Muzicală).

the dictionary as a working tool is undeniable, but is attenuated by its countless omissions and errors (again, probably explainable because of the enormous amount of information collected by a single author).

A third example, of a different kind, is the *Treatise on the theory of music* by Victor Giuleanu (1986). This work of more than nine hundred pages systematically includes every aspect of the musical phenomenon and is still the cornerstone of Romanian musical education. Such a treatise, compiled by a single author, would be unimaginable in the Western tradition, as is demonstrated by the volume edited by Thomas Christensen, *The Cambridge history of Western music theory* (2002), which includes articles by thirty-two authors (in a work of 1,022 pages).

Can we speak of a Romanian tradition imbued by an ideology in this tendency for individual authors to write monumental works single-handedly? The authors mentioned above (who are not the only ones) have cleared virgin territory for Romanian research into the fields in question and, in the case of Giuleanu, have made up for the lack of translations from major international languages. The works by Octavian Lazăr Cosma and Viorel Cosma remain primary sources of information for every musicologist, particularly within the boundaries of Romanian music. The fact that they are one of a kind is valuable in itself, as nobody for a long time to come will attempt to repeat their encyclopaedic labours, not even as the editor of a research team.

Our dilemma, as Romanian musicologists today, when the gates to every part of the world seem to have opened, but the language barrier and general lack of interest in Romanian music (outside Romania, but also in Romania itself), can be simply put: shall we continue to study our own culture, our own past, adapting ourselves to the new directions in musicology, or shall we deal with universal music in the topics we broach? We have rid ourselves of Soviet influence (at least from the historical point of view). We have moved beyond structuralism and nationalism. We have become part of Europe, while we are both inside and outside the Balkans,<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> 'Romanians have usually insisted on their direct connection to the Western world (not even via Central Europe) and on their missionary role as outposts of Latinism and civilization among a sea of (Slavic and Turkic) barbarians. (...) The theme of Romania's uniqueness was continued in the post-war period and reached its frenetic culmination under Ceausescu, as a compensatory mechanism for the self-conscious and troublesome feeling of being trapped in an ambiguous status, the in-betweenness of East and West' (Todorova 1997: 46–49).

but our voice has not gained any wider, international renown in the last two decades. Nor has anybody attempted to analyse from the inside post-war Romanian musicology; we need to begin by learning what and how to read from the existing corpus, to gauge the treatment of certain subjects appropriately, as well as the different styles of the authors, with shades ranging from the lumbering to the ecstatic, from the convoluted to the pellucid, from the clumsy to the pedantic, from the saccharine to the objective. All these have left a deep mark at least upon us, the middle generation of musicians, educated both before and after 1990.

We ought to be aware, today at least, that we can no longer ignore the political and the ideological, that the history of Romanian music (especially that of recent times) in fact needs to be rewritten from new perspectives. Between the two extremes – unscrupulous political engagement (the Khubov model) and avoidance of any ideological involvement – a common sense compromise can be found. Personally, I would take as my motto the way in which Edward Said defines the researcher's attitude in general:

No one has ever devised a method for detaching the scholar from the circumstances of life, from the fact of his involvement (conscious or unconscious) with a class, a set of beliefs, a social position, or from the mere activity of being a member of a society. These continue to bear on what he does professionally, even though naturally enough his research and its fruits do attempt to reach a level of relative freedom from the inhibitions and the restrictions of brute, everyday reality (Said 2001: 37).

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Ana Petrov

**‘A representative of Western culture’,  
‘a true Slavic artist’, or ‘a Yugoslav legend’?  
Đorđe Marjanović between Yugoslavia and the USSR**

In this chapter I wish to discuss the issues related to those former-Yugoslav cultural practices that have been regarded as being between (or beyond) the poles of East and West, by looking into the life and career of Đorđe Marjanović as a case study, since he is one of the most famous Yugoslav pop singers of all time and a representative figure of Yugoslav culture. This essay deals with the twofold and ambiguous reception of Đorđe Marjanović’s performances both in Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union. Starting from the recent developments of popular postcolonial musicology and sociology of popular music, I analyse the data found in the printed and online press, Internet forums, fan pages and similar online sources.<sup>1</sup> I also refer to a very informative book edited by Dimitrije Panić (2001) which contains the singer’s recollections, as well as texts taken or transcribed from the newspapers, radio and TV shows and interviews.<sup>2</sup>

I began this research wishing to provide an overview of the entire period in which Marjanović was active, but I decided to focus on the period of his greatest popularity – the 1950s and 1960s, but taking into consideration the changes that happened later. I am not discussing how Marjanović was situated between the concepts of East and West, but

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<sup>1</sup> Marjanović’s official website <http://www.djordjemarjanovic.com/> and Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Djordje-Marjanovic-%C4%90or-%C4%91e-Marjanovi%C4%87/143289395741251> contain reliable information and photos that could not be found elsewhere. The Facebook page is edited by Marjanović’s friend and fan from Russia, to whom Marjanović’s family gave a number of original documents and other sources.

<sup>2</sup> Since Marjanović had a stroke in 1990 his speech and singing have been somewhat affected. He considers this book to be an autobiography that he narrated to his friend Dimitrije Panić.

rather asking what were the conditions for creating such labels, with respect to his performances and his overall position in the Yugoslav pop scene of the time. I will start by overviewing the singer's career; then, I will discuss the issue of Marjanović's role in the development of Yugoslav 'zabavna muzika'; finally, I will focus on the notions of 'East' and 'West' as related to his career and highlight the moments that were recognised by the press as being 'Western' or 'non-Western'.

### **The story about Đorđe**

Đorđe Marjanović (1931) is one of the most famous Yugoslav *schlager* singers.<sup>3</sup> His official biography is a romanticised 'sob story' about a poor guy from the sticks studying pharmacy in Belgrade, living in squalor, doing numerous jobs to survive and singing occasionally, mostly at student dance parties (Savić 2007). However, he was talented enough to be noticed and asked to perform as a guest at the concerts of already famous musicians Dušan Jakšić and Zorana-Lola Novaković, after which he started appearing at a number of festivals. Furthermore, Marjanović appeared in the film *A whistle at 8pm* (Zvižduk u osam, 1962), which divided audiences and critics. Having released his first album in 1959, which sold 11,000 copies in its first month, in a country where there were no more than 20,000 gramophones at that time (Ivačković 2013: 26), Marjanović attracted hordes of fans thanks to his participations in popular Yugoslav music festivals, most notably the Opatija Festival.<sup>4</sup> He was never praised for his voice or the songs he performed, but he attracted fans with his dynamic performance style and physical gestures on stage that were not typical for the time, at least not in Yugoslavia.

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<sup>3</sup> *Schlager* is a German term for a type of popular music, usually referring to highly sentimental ballads with simple melodies and melancholic romantic lyrics.

<sup>4</sup> The Opatija Festival, founded in 1958, was the premier showcase for Yugoslav popular music, attracting composers, musicians, singers and songwriters from the entire federation; it was the first all-Yugoslav popular music festival. Its location also had a geopolitical significance; situated in a region that had been a part of Italy, the Opatija Festival symbolised the intensification of cultural relations between Yugoslavia and the West in the 1950s, and it was even modeled on Italy's leading popular music festival in Sanremo (Vuletic 2011: 270).

**Yugoslav cultural politics**

In the 1950s Yugoslav popular music culture developed by means of local festivals, radio programmes and recording industry. At that time, popular music was usually referred to as ‘dance’, ‘entertainment’ or ‘light’ music, with jazz, pop and, by the end of the decade, rock and roll, the styles of that were popular both in Yugoslavia and around the world. However, the development of Yugoslav popular music was not conditioned solely by international cultural trends, but also by domestic and foreign policies pursued by the Communist Party of Yugoslavia. Through its cultural, economic and foreign policies, the party sought to define Yugoslavia’s position in the international relations during the Cold War, develop a sense of Yugoslav identity among its multinational citizenry, and rebuild and modernise the country that had suffered some of the greatest losses in Europe during World War II. However, it was the Yugoslav communists’ behavior in international affairs that was politically decisive for the development of Yugoslav popular music in the 1950s. The most important event was their split with the Soviet Union and its Eastern European satellites in 1948, when the Communist Information Bureau expelled Yugoslavia from its ranks and withdrew all of its economic and technical aid after Yugoslav leader Josip Broz Tito refused to submit to Soviet political domination. Soon afterwards, the party abandoned a Soviet-style cultural politics that had condemned popular music as a cultural, political and social threat from the West, and it opened Yugoslavia to Western cultural influences, as it sought economic and political support from the West (Vuletic 2008: 861–862). Hence, during the 1960s, 1970s and the 1980s Yugoslavia was more open to the West than the other socialist countries, going through the process of ‘Americanisation’ (Vučetić 2012).

Popular music developed thanks to the infrastructure consisting of radio programmes, festivals, record companies and entertainment magazines that were set up in the late 1950s and launched the careers of Yugoslav popular music artists who served as domestic alternatives to the Western ones. As observed by Vuletic, unlike some of their counterparts who had been unable to advance their popular music careers in the previous decade due to limited opportunities and financial constraints, the economic growth and expansion of cultural industries in the late 1950s provided them with a framework through which their work became increasingly professionalised (Vuletic 2011: 277).

Yugoslav popular music scene was characterised, on the one hand, by composition and performance style that was recognised as ‘typical,’ ‘expected’ or even ‘appropriate’ for Yugoslavia, and, on the other hand, by music labeled as being under ‘foreign,’ ‘Western’ and ‘inappropriate’ influence. Rock and roll reached Yugoslavia via foreign radio stations and gramophone records that were brought in from the West. The end of the 1950s witnessed the first instances of rock and roll influences, and in the 1960s a large number of beat bands appeared on the Yugoslav music scene, becoming enormously popular with the younger generations. Rock bands attracted public attention, which was followed by the emergence of the first rock music magazines, radio and TV shows (Vučetić 2006). Rock and roll influences are also noticeable in the performances of some *schlager* singers, including Đorđe Marjanović.<sup>5</sup>

While the acceptance of Western cultural influences in the 1950s had numerous positive effects on the perception of Yugoslavia in the West, it was not entirely unproblematic in the Yugoslav cultural sphere. As the agents of foreign policy were softening their attitudes towards Western popular music, Yugoslav cultural and political elites continued to question its impact as it achieved increasingly widespread popularity throughout the country. On the one hand, these elites tolerated Western popular music as the government sought assistance from the West and regarded it as a symbolic marker of openness and modernity. Yet they also had to confront it with the cultural loyalties of Yugoslav citizens at a time when they were attempting to develop a Yugoslav transnational culture, which was meant to bond all of Yugoslav nations and nationalities without suppressing their individual cultures, as epitomised by the official slogan of ‘brotherhood and unity.’ Throughout the 1950s these elites called for the development of a genuinely Yugoslav popular music culture with domestically produced songs that would meet popular demand for entertainment and better reflect the everyday life in Yugoslavia, but also remain in accordance with the state ideology (Vuletic 2008: 861–862).

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<sup>5</sup> Marjanović’s repertoire included *schlager* and *canzone*-like ballads, Russian songs, as well as faster rock and roll dance songs.

### **Marjanović as a ‘Western social phenomenon’**

The reception of Đorđe Marjanović’s performances in both Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union was ambiguous. Nowadays he is famous, respected, known as a ‘legend’ of Yugoslav *schlager* scene and commonly referred to as ‘the most popular Yugoslav singer of all times’ (Ivačković 2013: 23) and ‘an urban legend’ (Savić 2007: 11). Marjanović was initially criticised in Yugoslavia as a ‘social phenomenon’ that could not be ‘an idol’ to Yugoslav youth with ‘his questionable voice and behavior’ (Panić 2001). Marjanović’s performances included spontaneous body movements, dancing and coming down from the stage to the audience; these gestures were ecstatically adored by the audience and sometimes publicly marked as ‘European,’ but mostly construed by the critics as a ‘Western import,’ an example of ‘bad taste’ that represented ‘a step towards anarchy and undermining of socialist values’ (Panić 2001). However, in the Soviet Union, the same behaviour brought Marjanović the recognition of being both ‘a true Slavic artist’ with ‘heart and soul’ and a performer who represented ‘a window towards the West’ (Panić 2001). Unlike in Yugoslavia, in the Soviet Union the ‘Western’ quality in Marjanović’s performance was something this singer was highly praised for. However, the critical reception in Yugoslavia would not last; at some point, Marjanović became synonymous with Yugoslav pop culture as its most recognisable star. While it may seem that it was a sudden change, I will argue that it was a continual and ambivalent process of labeling him both as problematic and as a phenomenon that would become one of the most quintessential and well-known Yugoslav brands.

What was it that made Marjanović so provocative and even problematic in the eyes of the exponents of Yugoslav state ideology? The reviews regarding his performances from the beginning of his career commonly contained statements such as: ‘he threw his jacket into the audience and it just happened, the king was born’ (Panić 2001). The critics wrote that he had no vocal talent while the audience supported him claiming that there was no similar phenomenon in the world. Historically, he was the first singer in Yugoslavia who took the microphone into his hands and moved freely on the stage. He was dancing, jumping and sitting, which was highly uncommon at that time. In 1961, at the festival *Žlatni mikrofon*, Marjanović did not receive any awards from the jury, which led to the first peaceful demonstrations in Belgrade. Members of the

audience reacted angrily, left the concert hall, found Marjanović, carried him on their shoulders and protested in the streets. The whole *Zlatni mikrofon* event was interrupted. Terazije (a central Belgrade street) and the Marx and Engels Square (in front of the hall *Dom sindikata*) were blocked because ‘đokisti’ [Đoka’s fans] protested against the decision of the jury. Eventually, according to the reports, Marjanović sang together with 7,000 people in the streets (Panić 2001).<sup>6</sup>

From that moment, the Western component panned by critics was recognised not only in his very performance, but also in the fact that he had hordes of adoring fans, received numerous letters, had a fan club and was fawned over by women.<sup>7</sup> This audience reception was influenced by Western models such as Elvis Presley or the Beatles. In addition, his jumping around the stage was not approved and was seen as inappropriate, and his very acceptance by the audience was regarded as a bad influence, especially on women who ‘lost their minds’ because of him.<sup>8</sup> Thus, in this case, the label ‘Western’ mostly referred to a supposed Americanisation, which was regarded as something that should be under control. Marjanović was openly mocked by the press, which even contained suggestions that he should go back to study pharmacy and leave the microphone to those who can sing (Panić 2001). For instance, the newspaper *Komunist* criticised the music scene in August 1965, pointing to Marjanović and demanding that the scene should be watched carefully so that the performers with ‘good taste’ could be separated from those with ‘bad taste’. In April of the same year, regarding the news that the fan clubs

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<sup>6</sup> See also: ‘Demonstracije na Terazijama.’ <http://www.djordjemarjanovic.com/biografija/4.html/>

<sup>7</sup> The advances in the Yugoslav popular music industry between 1957 and 1961 were also reflected in the emergence of entertainment magazines whose content focused on popular culture, and which promoted popular music artists by means of articles and photos. With the emergence of this visual medium, the physical appearance of domestic popular music artists became an increasingly significant factor in their appeal, as illustrated magazines and, later, television shows brought images of them to a growing number of consumers (Vuletic 2011: 276).

<sup>8</sup> Marjanović’s effect on women has been often commented on. It was claimed that there was ‘hysteria’ in the audience in his concerts and that women considered him to be a ‘supernatural being’ and ‘God-like creature’ (Ivačković 2013: 23).

of ‘dokisti’ had been spreading throughout the country,<sup>9</sup> a worried author in *Borba* asked ‘why aren’t there fan clubs of [Petar Petrović] Njegoš, [Ivo] Andrić or [Miroslav] Krleža in this country.’<sup>10</sup> In the 1960s Marjanović was also singled out as a representative of a melodramatic or pathetic style, poor taste and wrong (read: Western) values (Panić 2001).

### **Marjanović as ‘a true Slav’**

Marjanović was not the only Yugoslav singer who performed in the Soviet Union; in fact, there had been many concert tours, usually given by a few Yugoslav performers together. Nevertheless, he quickly stood out as an individual artist, attracting attention that was different from that usually given to Yugoslav artists. Since his first performance in the Soviet Union in 1963, Marjanović gave concerts annually, often as a part of the group tours of Yugoslav musicians, but he also gave solo concerts (Luković 1989: 86–87). It has been stated that he was accepted in the Soviet Union as one of ‘their own’, the acceptance helped by the fact that he married a Russian woman and his first daughter was born there, so that he was regarded as a ‘Russian son-in-law’. Even the officials, such as the minister of culture, claimed that ‘we, the Slavs, have our own music scene’ whilst referring to Marjanović (quoted in Panić 2001). For instance, a 1963 article in *Pravda*, a Kiev newspaper, reported on the sincerity of his performance, as well as his talent and excellent voice (Ibid). His gestures were interpreted as Italian, and his spontaneity as French. Furthermore, Marjanović was labeled (very differently from how he was perceived in Yugoslavia at that moment) as the pride of Yugoslav *zabavna* music, as a typical socialist artist and as a ‘socialist God’ in numerous Moscow reviews.<sup>11</sup> Thus, he was marked as ‘Yugoslav,’ ‘socialist’ and ‘Slavic,’ and his passionate singing and

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<sup>9</sup> The clubs were founded in Belgrade, Niš, Zagreb, Ljubljana, Sarajevo, Titograd, Kotor, Dubrovnik and many other cities. The Belgrade fan club alone had 10000 members.

<sup>10</sup> Quoted in: ‘Kritičari i kritizeri.’ <http://www.djordjemarjanovic.com/biografija/7.html/>

<sup>11</sup> I could not find many reports on how Marjanović’s success in the Soviet Union was perceived in Yugoslavia; from what I could gather, it was either mentioned neutrally or ignored. As to Marjanović’s colleagues, it is alleged that his enormous success was received reservedly and even dismissed as not being truly important.

stage behaviour were regarded as the expression of a ‘Slavic soul’.<sup>12</sup> Seemingly in contradiction, he was also seen as ‘a window towards the West’, since he performed in the way that had not been seen in the USSR before.<sup>13</sup> However, Yugoslav cultural products were generally popular and appreciated throughout the Eastern Europe as they were experienced as ‘windows’ to modern art currents of the West (Marković 1996: 471).<sup>14</sup> Paradoxically, in the Soviet Union Marjanović was the Western ‘window’, Slavic ‘soul’, Russian ‘son-in-law’, and generally seen as ‘their own.’ Within a couple of decades, he entered the Russian elite, socialised with academic citizens, ministers, and artists, and was widely recognised as a true star in the USSR. In 1968 he was awarded a prize for improving the international relations between Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union.<sup>15</sup>

### **The making of a Yugoslav legend**

Finally, I want to discuss how Marjanović gradually became a Yugoslav brand. I would like to point to three moments. First, the fact that he was not officially accepted in the beginning did not affect his popularity, which led to a dichotomy between the official critique and his actual popularity. Second, he rose to fame at the time when Tito’s statement about the type of music, a genre (such as jazz) or anything else that he liked or disliked could lead to a change regarding the given phenomenon (see Vuletic 2008: 868–

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<sup>12</sup> ‘Prva ruska iskustva.’ <https://www.facebook.com/notes/djordje-marjanovic-%C4%91or%C4%91e-marjanovi%C4%87/prva-ruska-iskustva/148010145269176>.

<sup>13</sup> In addition to his own songs, he also performed popular songs recorded by The Beatles and Bob Dylan, as well as French and Italian traditionals. Thus, his repertoire attracted a special attention in the USSR, being interpreted as a tool that enabled the Soviets to see through the Soviet musical curtain and entertain in the way that had not been familiar to them before. They were ‘ecstatic’ because of his songs and his ‘light gymnastics’ on the stage. See: ‘Prva ruska iskustva.’ <https://www.facebook.com/notes/djordje-marjanovic-%C4%91or%C4%91e-marjanovi%C4%87/prva-ruska-iskustva/148010145269176>

<sup>14</sup> Marjanović’s international achievements followed in the footsteps of one of Yugoslavia’s first musical exports, Ivo Robić, who began a successful career in the West Germany in the late 1950s. His biggest hit *Morgen* (1959) was censored in Yugoslavia when Radio Zagreb refused to broadcast it because the lyrics ‘Morgen, Morgen, wird das Leben endlich wieder schön’ [Tomorrow, tomorrow, life will finally be beautiful again] were deemed ‘revanchist’ (Vuletic 2008: 872–873).

<sup>15</sup> ‘Na Istoku ništa novo.’ <http://www.djordjemarjanovic.com/biografija/6.html/>

869). This was precisely the case with Marjanović. In the 1970s, he performed many times in official events that honoured Tito and it was also often remarked that Tito's wife Jovanka Broz highly appreciated and enjoyed his songs, often giving him official support in the public sphere. In 1972 the state awarded him a silver medal, which marked an official acceptance of his work at the highest level. Between the 1960s and the 1980s Marjanović evolved from being perceived as a problematic Westernised singer with a bad voice, to being acknowledged as a Yugoslav legend (Panić 2001).<sup>16</sup> Finally, Marjanović's personal brand reached its final stage – he was 'exported' to the 'real' West. Namely, Yugoslav press started reporting on his international success and it was occasionally mentioned that even American press wrote about him, and that Italians regarded him as a Yugoslav hippie.<sup>17</sup>

**Conclusion: Marjanović as a quintessential Yugoslav product, a true (Slavic) legend or an 'urban myth?'**

The case of Đorđe Marjanović should not only be regarded as being in-between Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union, but can also be interpreted as a symptom of Yugoslav culture as a complex, multilayered and often compromising culture between East and West and, in addition, as a symptom of changes that were taking place from the early 1950s to the 1970s. In the 1950s Tito called for the educational measures to be used to persuade young people to be less fond of jazz and the ruling party's cultural politics continued to both emphasise the educational function of culture and, in musical life, prioritise the development of genres that it considered to be more enlightening than entertaining, such as classical music. There were, however, tendencies that urged the party to pay more attention to the ways that Yugoslav citizens were entertaining themselves, particularly through their consumption of popular music. In time, the construct of Yugoslav popular music was gaining more importance for the production of the state ideology (Vuletic 2011). The role of music at that

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<sup>16</sup> At that time, he was giving as many as 11 successive concerts in the Belgrade concert hall *Dom sindikata*.

<sup>17</sup> For instance, in 1969 Italian papers *La stampa* wrote about 'a young Yugoslav' who was 'an idol for the Soviets' and 'looked like a hippie' and his performances were considered to be equal to the ones by the Rolling Stones, Bob Dylan and other Western stars (Ivačković 2013: 38).

time was more than just a cultural phenomenon. Music was a legitimate means of political and social change (Vučetić 2006: 71).

Even though Yugoslav musical scene witnessed many examples of the censorship, and in the 1950s the officials exerted their influence on one of the most successful Yugoslav pop singers of any era, Marjanović still became one of Yugoslavia's most popular musical exports. By the late 1950s, the institutional foundations for a Yugoslav popular music culture were set: radio and television stations, festivals and record companies were ready to produce and promote the soundtracks that would accompany the subsequent decades of Yugoslav history. At some point, Yugoslav cultural and political elites accepted popular music as an essential element of their citizens' cultural and social life. 'Young people should have fun,' as Tito stated in 1964 regarding the development of jazz and rock and roll in Yugoslavia (Tito 1978: 130). However, as the continued censorship of popular music would show, popular music was not only for 'fun' and it remained an arena for the negotiation of cultural and political identities in Yugoslavia. According to certain interpretations, official Yugoslav politics made a change when decided to tolerate the 'decadent sounds' and to allow different pop-music genres, including the potentially problematic ones, to flourish without much interference from the regime (Vuletic 2008: 874). In this respect, a variety of pop-music genres shared a socially and politically important feature: the capacity to group people in categories other than the national ones (Ramet 1994: 5). Thus, a broader platform of identification emerged, appearing depoliticised and providing a field of experience shared transnationally. Yugoslav *zabavna muzika*, as well as rock and roll from the 1970s onward, were among the most enduring transnational frameworks of popular culture, creating the feeling of being a part of a common Yugoslav pop culture (Pogačar 2008: 820–821). Moreover, Marjanović was seen as a result of the urbanisation of Yugoslav society, a 'forerunner' of rock and roll in general or of certain musicians that were not known in Yugoslavia, such as Elvis Presley (Savić 2007: 15).<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Luthar argues that the political and economic processes in Yugoslavia were accompanied by social and cultural transformation, including a rearrangement of social groups, so that differentiation, urbanisation, and industrialisation brought with them new modes of community, new forms of social etiquette in the cities, and a distinctive new sociality, as well as new forms of self-understanding and self-cultivation and individuality (Luthar 2006: 236).

In addition, Marjanović became an ‘urban legend’, since he is sometimes connected with the entire process of the rise of urban culture in Yugoslavia (Pogačar 2008). For example, the very first graffiti in Yugoslavia was allegedly spray-painted by his fans on the building where he lived (Savić 2007: 15).<sup>19</sup>

When the time was ripe and the institutional field was set, this singer transformed from a problem into a brand. While his position had originally been construed as something strange and subversive in the Yugoslav culture, after he was accepted by a collective conceptually known as the Yugoslav youth<sup>20</sup> and began to be seen as relevant for Yugoslav society and culture, he was incorporated into the official discourse as something representative and typical for Yugoslav popular culture. Hence he became a symbol of modernisation, Westernisation (seen in a positive light) and urbanisation of the Yugoslav society. He has held that status until the present day and there remain many potential avenues for the construal of the ‘phenomenon Marjanović’ in scholarly discourses.

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<sup>19</sup> The graffiti entailed the statement ‘Đoka fans of the world, unite’ – an ironical rephrasing of the famous slogan ‘workers of the world, unite,’ which can be construed as ‘a penetration of the urban culture and its ironical discourse into the capital’ (Savić 2007: 15).

<sup>20</sup> According to Laughey, understanding youth as a social rather than biological concept is reinforced by the changing historical values, beliefs and attitudes of the young members of a society. The concept of ‘youth’ is actually a relatively recent one and it has been regarded as relevant in the research of popular music practices (Laughey 2006: 5–6). Here I wish to point to the importance of the concept of the Yugoslav youth as the one in relation to which the entire popular music culture was shaped.

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Ivana Medić

## ***Zora D. and Isidora Ž. between East and West***<sup>1</sup>

### **Introduction**

Born in 1967, Isidora Žebeljan is one of the most distinguished Serbian contemporary composers. She studied with Vlastimir Trajković at the Belgrade Faculty of Music and since 2002 she has taught composition at the same institution. She has won several prestigious national awards, and in 2006, aged only 38, she was elected to the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts. Although Žebeljan has written vocal, orchestral and chamber music, she is best known for her operas. As of 2015, she has written five operas, all of which have been performed, some of them multiple times: *Zora D.* (premiered in Amsterdam, 2003), *Eine Marathon Familie* (Bregenz, 2008), *Simon, der Erwählte* (Gelsenkirchen, 2009), *Due teste e una ragazza* (Siena, 2012) and *Nahod Simon* (Gelsenkirchen, 2015). Aside from her operatic output, Isidora Žebeljan has written music for more than 40 theatre productions, orchestrated Goran Bregović's music for films *Dom za vešanje* [The time of the Gypsies], *Arizona Dream*, *Underground* (all three directed by Emir Kusturica), *Queen Margot* (Patrice Chéreau) and *The Serpent's Kiss* (Philippe Rousselet) and scored the film *Kako su me ukrali Nemci* [How I was stolen by the Germans], directed by Miloš Radivojević.

Although Žebeljan's operas have been commissioned by international festivals and opera houses, with their plots inspired by stories and legends reaching as far as India, Žebeljan has always strived to infuse them with the sounds of her native land. A classically trained composer, who once singled out Sergei Prokofiev as her main musical influence, Žebeljan has nevertheless stated:

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<sup>1</sup> This chapter was written as part of the project *Serbian musical identities within local and global frameworks: traditions, changes, challenges* (No. 177004 (2011–2014)) funded by the Serbian Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development.

The basis of my musical language is a merger of a yearning for the beautiful, angelic, divine melodies on the one hand, and the ritual, demonic, exhausting, crazy energy of the pagan dance and Gypsy melancholy, which my forefathers have absorbed through the centuries of constant migrations across Armenian mountains, Romanian and Serbian swamps, puddles and podzols (Žebeljan 2011).

Žebeljan has also spoken of her fondness for the archaic layers of Serbian traditional singing, which she had heard and absorbed as a girl in the village of Perlez in the Central Banat, where her father's family originated from:

I would be awoken by the ear-bursting singing of the choir, whose only members were these Perlez villagers, the scorched old men. Their coarse throats and voice chords would emanate a song so frighteningly powerful, as if it was being sung at the Golgotha itself [...] My operas *Žora D*, *The Marathon Family*, *Simon, the Chosen One*, are reflections of these musical memories (Ibid).<sup>2</sup>

Although Žebeljan has acknowledged these influences, the extent of their actual impact on her, essentially Western compositional methodology, has not been properly investigated. Thus, my aim is to try to locate these influences and determine whether they modify or overrun her Western training. In doing so I will focus on her breakthrough opera, *Žora D*.

In an attempt to situate *Žora D* between or beyond the East–West divide, the first and the most obvious Western feature is the very employment of the operatic genre. I should note that Serbian operatic tradition is only a century old, and not a single Serbian opera has entered the standard repertoire. In fact, a majority of Serbian operas have only been performed a handful of times and then shelved, or not performed at all. Moreover, none of the three Serbian cities that currently have operatic ensembles – Belgrade, Novi Sad and Niš – actually has a dedicated opera house; instead, their opera productions are hosted by national drama theatres. Due to economic constraints, there is not much hope that this unfavourable situation will change in the foreseeable future.

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<sup>2</sup> This is, probably, the composer's liberal interpretation of her childhood memories, since there are no records of the existence of such choirs in Perlez.

In spite of this, in recent years there has been a surge of new Serbian operas and, except for Miloš Petrović's (unperformed) opera *Mihailo from Peć* [Mihailo from Peć (2002)], Ivan Jevtić's *Mandragola* (2009) and, very recently, Svetislav Božić's *Melanholični snovi grofa Save Vladislavića* [The melancholy dreams of Count Sava Vladislavić (2015)], all of them have been written by female composers, members of the generation born in the late 1960s and the 1970s. Aside from Isidora Žebeljan's five operas, the list comprises the works by Jasna Veličković (*Dream Opera*, 2001), Aleksandra Anja Đorđević (*Narcis i Eho* [Narcissus and Echo], 2002), Branka Popović (*Petrograd* [St Petersburg], 2012) and Tatjana Milošević-Mijanović (*Ko je ubio princezu Mond* [Who killed Princess Mond], 2012), as well as Dragana Jovanović's operatic 'work-in-progress' (*Žvezdani grad* [Star City], 2013–ongoing). All of these 'female' operas have been performed, some of them multiple times, both in Serbia and abroad.

On the other hand, the fact that none of these, except of Jovanović's unfinished work (Medić 2014d) and Žebeljan's latest opera *Nahod Simon* (Mihalek 2015) are of monumental proportions has more to do with budget constrictions than with the composers' lack of ambition. Namely, smaller operas are more likely to get staged, usually as part of the BEMUS festival, which has also experienced considerable hardship recently (Medić i Janković-Beguš 2015). Moreover, several Serbian female composers who are permanently resident abroad have also written operas, some of which have been performed in Serbia – for example *Svadba* [Wedding (2010)] by a Montreal resident Ana Sokolović and *Mileva* (2011) by a New York-based composer Aleksandra Vrebalov.<sup>3</sup> These works confirm that the opera has become a predominantly 'female' genre in the twenty-first-century Serbia; this is a phenomenon that merits a separate analysis.

### **Zora D. and the ghosts of the past**

The opera *Zora D.* by Isidora Žebeljan unfolds in seven scenes; the libretto (based on a TV script by Dušan Ristić) was written by the composer herself, together with her husband Borislav Čičovački and sister Milica Žebeljan. The opera was supported by the Genesis Foundation from

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<sup>3</sup> In the meantime, the composer Jasna Veličković has also left Serbia for the Netherlands; however, at the time when her *Dream Opera* was performed, she was still in Serbia. I have discussed the status of Serbian émigré composers in: Medić 2014b.

London and the original production was directed by David Pountney and Nicola Raab. After the 2003 Amsterdam premiere, the opera was performed in Vienna (2003, 12 performances), Belgrade (2004 and 2007), Sombor (2007), Zagreb (2007) and Rijeka (2007), and the score was published by Ricordi-Universal. The opera is scored for a chamber orchestra and four singers:

Mina / Zora D. / Woman with a silver scarf (Ghost of Zora D.) – Soprano  
 Jovan / Stranger / Prof. Kostić / Shop owner (Ghost of Jovan) – Baritone  
 Young Vida – Lyrical mezzo-soprano  
 Old Vida – Dramatic mezzo-soprano<sup>4</sup>

In his book *Music in the Balkans*, Jim Samson describes Isidora Žebeljan as ‘a genuinely gifted composer, with a recognisable voice’ (Samson 2013: 583–584) and calls the Pountney production ‘an imaginative interaction between the emotionally charged worlds of a present-day young woman and a 1930s poet named Zora Dulijan’ (Ibid). The plot of *Zora D.* has been summed up in the sleeve notes for the CD release (ed. Janković 2011):

The opera *Zora D.* gives a highly atmospheric insight into the emotional legacy of the tragedy which took place more than sixty years ago. A brilliant young poet Zora Dulijan suddenly disappeared without explanation, leaving behind one and only song – a creepy description of the location where she was last seen alive. Today, another young woman called Mina, whose self-identification with the mysterious poet seems quite extraordinary, finds this poem and embarks on a quest for the truth. Or perhaps she is found by the poem, which uses Mina as a medium to silence the spirits of the past. The piece constantly intersects modern day Belgrade with the same city in the 1930s – an era of feverish artistic creativity – while the complex interactions of Mina and Old Vida today, and of Young Vida, Zora and Jovan in the past, are interlaced on the stage.

When asked why he selected Žebeljan’s opera among more than fifty entries that competed for the Genesis Opera Prize, Pountney responded:

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<sup>4</sup> In the aforementioned production by Pountney and Raab, these roles were sung by Aile Asszonyi, Martijn Sanders, Rachel Ann Morgan and Margriet van Reisen respectively.

When I was trawling through the entries [...] amidst an absolute welter of indistinguishable representatives of what one might call ‘academic modernism’, Isidora Žebeljan’s music struck me immediately as something original, fresh and, above all, emotionally expressive – a rare commodity, but an essential one for interesting theatrical story telling (Čičovački 2004: 231).

The emotional expressivity is indeed what the composer was striving for; in the self-penned theoretical text titled ‘On a possible way of writing opera today’, which was read when Žebeljan was awarded a MA degree at the Faculty of Music and later published with the programme notes for the Belgrade premiere of *Zora D.*, the composer elaborated on her artistic aims and creative methodology and stated that ‘the main goal of art, and music in particular, is a sensual experience, rather than an intellectual one’ (Žebeljan 2002). She considers opera ‘a supremely artificial form’ (Ibid), while the essence of opera is ‘representation’ (Ibid). When it comes to the relationship between music and drama, or music and text, she argues that all constitutive elements of an opera must be highly aestheticised and poeticised; however, she gives a clear primacy to music, because she believes in the ‘self-sufficient value and autonomy of a purely musical gesture’ (Ibid). Thus, in her view, the opera should unfold as a series of musico-poetic states, somewhere between an opera with numbers and a Wagnerian musical drama.

Žebeljan’s music for *Zora D.* is predominantly tonal, very expressive and capable of evoking many emotional states – as one would expect from an experienced composer of theatrical and film music. In terms of melodic and harmonic invention, rhythms, orchestration and a spontaneous approach to artistic creation, she has identified Leoš Janáček, Sergei Prokofiev, Igor Stravinsky and Manuel de Falla as her role models, while she has bluntly (and, as we shall see, quite unjustly) dismissed the operas by Arnold Schoenberg and Alban Berg (Ibid). Surprisingly, Žebeljan argues that atonal music cannot be representative because of its relativity; she believes that the fact that atonal music does not have a tonal centre leaves the listener ‘disoriented’ (Ibid).

In *Zora D.*, the great Western operatic tradition is referenced by the employment of trained operatic voices. A peculiar feature is the fact that the opera which is set in Belgrade and whose musical language contains Serbian/Balkan overtones is sung in – German. Although the score

published by Ricordi does contain the lyrics both in German and Serbian, the opera is yet to be performed in the composer's native language.

The libretto that deals with tragic love, betrayal, jealousy and murder, has been dubbed by Zorica Premate as 'an imitation of a romantic operatic melodrama... the melodrama itself being the supreme operatic genre' (Premate 2006/7: 36). The libretto makes use of the verses written by Jovan Dučić (1871–1943), Miloš Crnjanski (1893–1977) and Milena Pavlović-Barilli (1909–1945) – the artists (poets and painters) who lived and worked at the time evoked in the opera, i.e. the 1930s, when Serbian artists had many strong international connections and some of them were prominent exponents of European modernism. The employment of the verses written by Dučić, Crnjanski and Pavlović-Barilli contributes to the melodramatic atmosphere of the work, but also situates the imaginary poet Zora D. within a certain cultural milieu. The only poem 'written' by the imaginary poet Zora D. that was 'preserved', *Poplars*, was actually written by Jovan Dučić; this poem is well-known to Serbian audiences, therefore, the reference is quite obvious. Coincidentally or not, Zora's secret lover from the opera is called Jovan; hence the entire opera can be read as Žebeljan's 'love letter' to the great Serbian modernist poet. Without wishing to read too much into this, one should also observe the similarity between the names of the composer and her protagonist:

(Isi)DORA ŽEBELJAN  
ZORA DULIJAN

This may suggest that the composer self-identifies with the imaginary poet, who burned her poems after reading. Perhaps, in this way, the composer protests against the fact that a vast majority of Serbian operas and other musical works have only been performed once or never, and that hardly anyone would notice (or care) if they were burned.

Throughout this opera, Isidora Žebeljan employs some recognisable Western codes of musical representation, including musical illustrations of the nature (the poplar trees, the water, the moon), some tone painting (for example the words 'without the shadow' on p. 53 of the Ricordi score are sung without instrumental accompaniment), very dissonant music to depict some dramatic scenes of betrayal, murder, feelings of guilt and unrest, in line with the tradition of *verismo* and early expressionism. While

the composer does not employ the technique of leitmotifs consistently, there are some hints at leitmotifs, leit-rhythms, or leit-intonations throughout the opera. According to Borislav Čičovački, there are only three recurring motifs in the opera, representing ‘the poplars’, ‘Zora’s mysterious disappearance’ and ‘Mina’ (Čičovački 2004: 237–241). Zorica Premate also identifies the motif of ‘Zora’s silver scarf’ (Premate 2006/7: 40–41). To these I would add another leitmotif associated with Vida (see below).

Although Isidora Žebeljan dismisses expressionist opera, Vida, the main antagonist in *Zora D.* is a typical expressionist character.<sup>5</sup> The entire dramatic plot of *Zora D.* can be understood as Vida’s hallucination (akin to Schoenberg’s *Erwartung*). Vida is haunted by the crime that she committed sixty years ago – she killed her best friend Zora in a fit of jealousy. Vida is a split personality,<sup>6</sup> even literally, because she is portrayed by two singers – the young Vida is a lyrical mezzo-soprano, while the old Vida is a dramatic mezzo-soprano. On the other hand, both Zora from the past and Mina, her present-day reincarnation, are portrayed by the same singer, thus emphasising the fact that Mina is Zora and vice versa.

The vocal part of the old Vida is particularly interesting, because it contains heavily distorted coloratura and melisma, *sprechgesang* and other effects that emphasise her disturbance. Vida returns from Lisbon to Belgrade and arrives to her old flat, haunted by the ghosts of her past. She imagines that she can hear Jovan’s voice on the radio, reading Zora’s poem *Poplars*. Vida’s ‘leitmotif’ is actually a leit-rhythm of Stravinskian complexity, first found on p. 169;<sup>7</sup> it reappears several times to depict the old Vida, tormented by guilt. Vida finds a silver scarf that belonged to Zora (p. 196): we hear the leitmotif of the scarf, first heard in the second scene (p. 34). As noted by Premate, this motif is a self-quotation from

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<sup>5</sup> In expressionist theatre, the imitation of life is replaced ‘by the ecstatic evocation of states of mind’ (Britannica 2014); an expressionist character ‘pours out his or her woes in long monologues couched in a concentrated, elliptical, almost telegraphic language’, and his or her inner development is explored ‘through a series of loosely linked tableaux’ (Ibid). For a comprehensive analysis of expressionist characters and topoi see: Konstantinović 1967: 21–67.

<sup>6</sup> On ‘split personalities’ in expressionist theatre and film see Valgemae 1973: 193–197; Coates 1991: 74–75.

<sup>7</sup> All page numbers refer to the score of *Zora D.* published by Ricordi in 2003.

Žebeljan's music for the theatre play *Mileva Einstein*, about another tragic female figure from the early twentieth century (Premate 2006/7: 41).<sup>8</sup> Then Vida sings a song in which she remembers Jovan, her long lost love: the song is written in a sentimental manner of *starogradska muzika* (old urban music)<sup>9</sup> that is very prominent in Zora's vocal part and employed with the purpose of depicting the 'good old Belgrade' of the 1930s. Vida's song is another self-quotation from *Mileva Einstein*; in fact, as noticed by Premate, all motifs that resemble the urban folk idiom have been taken from Žebeljan's incidental music (Ibid). On the other hand, Vida's leit-rhythm has been borrowed from Žebeljan's music for the theatre play *Prokleta avlija* [The damned yard] (Ibid.: 46). Just like Sergei Prokofiev, Dmitri Shostakovich, Alfred Schnittke and many other composers who wrote a lot of incidental music, Žebeljan does not 'waste' her musical themes, and she freely transfers melodies (and even entire scenes) from her incidental music to her 'serious' works.

Another interesting example of musical storytelling is found at p. 217, in the scene in which the young Vida reads the poem that Zora wrote for her. Although we never hear the actual poem, the instrumental accompaniment consists of a simulation of a salon piece for the piano, thus indicating that the poem had a sentimental character; the music 'fills the gap' and enables us to imagine what the poem might have sounded like (Example 1):

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<sup>8</sup> Mileva Marić Einstein (1875–1947) was a Serbian physicist and the first wife of Albert Einstein. While the issue of whether Marić contributed to Einstein's early work has been the subject of debate, she never received any credit for assisting him. The aforementioned opera *Mileva* by Aleksandra Vrebalov is also inspired by her life.

<sup>9</sup> According to Marija Dumnić, *starogradska muzika* [old urban music] is a hybrid genre that contains the elements of folk, popular and art music. As a type of folk music, it belongs to the urban tradition (which has often been neglected by the ethnomusicologists because of their tendency to focus on rural/village practices). The artistic component is emphasised by the fact that many prominent Serbian poets and composers from the eighteenth, nineteenth and early twentieth centuries wrote these songs 'in folklore spirit'. On the other hand, the way this music was performed, distributed and consumed situates it firmly in the realm of popular music (see Dumnić 2012: 3).

Example 1. *Zora D.*, p. 217, rehearsal No. 117 — *Sentimental piano*

*senza rubato*  
 Piano  
 Mlada Vida uzima list papira sa paketa od Zore i čita je u sebi.  
 Dek ona čita, Zora vadi spajal iz torbice i puši cigareta.  
 Junge Vida nimmt das Zoras Gedächtnis, legt es in ihre Hand und liest es.  
 Zora nimmt aus ihrer Tasche ein Feuerzeug und zündet sich eine Zigarette an.

*Zora D.* by Isidora Žebeljan. © 2003 CASA RICORDI - BMG RICORDI MUSIC PUBLISHING S.p.A. All Rights Reserved. Reprinted by Permission.

The leitmotifs of old Vida and the scarf reappear whenever the object is seen, either in the past or the present-day events, and Vida's vocal part becomes even more distorted when she retells the events of that fateful night when she killed her friend (p. 326 and onwards).

On the other hand, Žebeljan uses many musical symbols that help her achieve a decidedly 'national' atmosphere. However, in spite of her alleged fondness of the archaic layers of folklore, she does not use folklore material to achieve the national 'flavour'. The very beginning of the opera is based on one of the so-called Gypsy modes (Phrygian mode with an augmented second between the second and third notes). The melody sung by a Woman with a Silver Scarf (i.e. the Ghost of Zora D.) is also in an oriental mode with augmented seconds, accompanied by strings, which instantly evokes the *starogradska muzika* i.e. the urban folk music of the early twentieth century (Example 2):

Example 2. *Zora D.*, p. 2, rehearsal No. 1 — *Woman with a Silver Scarf*

[1]  
*poco rall. / Tempo Primo*  
 Zora se  
 vr. izlazi  
 Pove mi dan  
 u č. Sufal  
 Pe - va - ti, kaj, si - ka - te, sta - ka, nosi, stis - ka, i, gila  
 Sing also (and) about where we are - about here, Koto, Gogara - ka, ka, Aha, Lada - ka -

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Scene 1 begins with an instrumental prelude, which is based on an ostinato in harp and percussion; a frequent employment of ostinatos is the main constructive principle throughout the entire opera. The combination of a harp (imitating the *tamburitza* – the small long-necked lute), woodblocks and strings, simulates the small tavern ensembles typical of Skadarlija, the famous bohemian quarter in Belgrade city centre.

At rehearsal 16 the vocal part is again melismatic and in an oriental mode. Another typical marker of Serbian music is a half-cadence with an applied dominant V/V before the dominant chord, which is very typical of the urban vocal and instrumental idioms. Žebeljan also employs irregular rhythms and complex rhythmic changes, which may or may not be related to folklore. For example, in the beginning of the Scene 2 (which takes place in the library) the rhythmic pulse constantly shifts from 6 to 3 to 4 to 5 quavers. The first appearance of the Stranger (i.e. the ghost of Jovan) is also melismatic, with a melody of a narrow ambitus (Example 3):

Example 3. *Zora D.*, p. 39, rehearsal No. 31 — *The Stranger*

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Ostinatos in various rhythmic combinations can also be found in the scenes in which Mina (i.e. Zora reincarnated in the present day) browses books at the library (p. 72), then, when she receives a book from the ghost of Jovan (p. 78), the instrumental intermezzo when Mina walks through the town (p. 98), when Professor Kostić describes Zora Dulijan, the poet who has disappeared (p. 112 and further), when Kostić notices a similarity between Zora and Mina (p. 163), when Zora burns the song that she has written for Vida (p. 221), the second instrumental interlude at p. 236, etc. While Žebeljan dislikes Schoenberg's operas, the treatment and role of ostinatos in *Zora D.* is akin to what Schoenberg had done in his musical drama *Die glückliche Hand* (1910–1913) (see Medić 2005: 112–113).

The orchestration is one of the most striking features of *Zora D. Žebeljan* often simulates ‘national’ (Serbian, Balkan) instruments such as *klepalo* – the wooden percussion instrument that is used in Orthodox churches (p. 67), *goč* – the big drum (p. 107), the flute imitating the *frula* – a smallfolklore woodwind (p. 121), etc. All these features – simulations of *starogradska muzika*, the employment of irregular rhythms, gypsy modes, melismatic vocal parts, instrumental ostinatos, with the instrumentation that imitates either folk instruments or old tavern ensembles – successfully evoke the spirit of Belgrade of the 1920s and 1930s, the city that was undergoing speedy urbanisation and modernisation, while still preserving many remnants of its oriental past.

An operatic work such as this one has provoked different reactions. Jelena Novak believes that

although the plot of the one-act chamber opera *Zora D.* is set in Belgrade of the 1930s, the subjects of Isidora Žebeljan’s work are not the dominant ideologies in Serbia at the time. The context of the Serbian musical and theatrical scene with which this opera ‘networked’ concerns Serbian post-socialist society in transition, at the end of the twentieth and beginning of the twenty first century, in which culture was to a great extent subordinated to the favoured phantasm of tradition. That phantasm is most explicitly projected to those institutions of society that support it the strongest – the church and the army’ (Novak 2005: 50).

Such a heavy-handed statement is complemented with Novak’s view that ‘political shifts towards the ideals of traditional and national values led to an establishment of artistic production that may, in terms of many of its features, be regarded in analogy with the thriving of romanticism and ideals that were defended by it in the nineteenth century’ (Ibid). Novak also argues that ‘Folklore has always been an analogue of the ancient, traditional in music and the use of folklorisms and their signifiers is certainly proof of the desire to reinvigorate, in this case, the music tradition of the Balkans’ (Ibid.: 53). However, it is very difficult to regard Žebeljan’s employment of ‘national’ musical codes as a mere reflection of her ‘traditionalism’ or ‘Romantic fascination’, since the instances of her actual employment of folklore material are quite rare, as admitted by Novak herself (Ibid). As we have seen, in *Zora D.* Žebeljan does not simulate, reconstruct or revive Balkan folklore, but a tradition of

*starogradska muzika*, i.e. the music of the nascent urban populace of Belgrade between two world wars. Therefore, I would argue that the composer, having had experience with orchestrating Goran Bregović's music for foreign films, has clearly understood that her unique selling point at the Western musical market would be precisely her ability to create music that would have a distinctive Balkan flavour, to an extent that it would be acceptable to Western ears and yet sound sufficiently different and original. As can be deduced from Pountney's already cited confession, it was precisely these vaguely orientally-tinged melodies, vivid orchestration orchestration, and an unrestrained expression of different emotional states, that attracted him to Žebeljan's opera.<sup>10</sup> Thus, Novak is right in understanding the opera as 'a collage of meta-folkloric elements which, compared to Western contemporary music, nowadays hold a somewhat exotic position' (Novak 2005: 53–54).<sup>11</sup>

In contrast with Novak, Zorica Premate inscribes into Žebeljan's opera some postmodern features and wonders about its true meaning:

Is *Žora D.* a melancholic interpretation of the national romantic opera understood as a symbol of the culture of the urban, bourgeois populace, the culture that barely exists today, or a parodic pantomime achieved by means of a romantic opera, in order to show that the cultural power of the citizens has been long lost? (Premate 2006/7: 40).

A correct answer would probably be that it is – both; however, the nostalgic/melancholic yearning prevails, while the moments of outright parody are quite rare. Premate finds them in the instances where melismatic decorations linger on for too long and turn into their own parody (pp. 39, 131, 139, 156, 209, 210, 229, 258, 269, 292, 316, 336...), or when a melodramatic moment turns kooky, for example when the pawn

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<sup>10</sup> Žebeljan is not the only Serbian composer who has utilised musical stereotypes associated with the Balkans and the Orient in order to boost her selling proposition in the West: see Medić 2014b, 2014c.

<sup>11</sup> Novak cites Dahlhaus's observation that 'Any folklore music of local or regional origin [...] that was transferred to the urban bourgeois milieu where fantasies about national style are born will not, when removed from evocative theatrical or literary contexts [...] essentially be less exotic than an orientalism, which relates to it, but is known more widely because it has been adjusted to key schemes and instrumental colours of European artistic music' (Dahlhaus 1980).

shop owner lists what he has on offer in a buffo manner (pp. 252–258, 267–269, 276–277) (Ibid.). Premate dubs this ‘the aesthetics of uncertain quotation marks’ (Ibid.: 45), since the boundaries between quotations, self-quotations, the author’s true voice and a mimicry of something else are constantly blurred. On the other hand, the scenes in which Vida’s singing part turns from melancholic into ugly or distorted, as well as the hallucinatory scenes in which the past and the present collide, are anything but parodic.

With this opera, Žebeljan has established herself as a major voice in Serbian contemporary music and achieved considerable international success, which is all the more interesting because, unlike many of her colleagues who have emigrated westward, she remains Belgrade-based. As observed by Jim Samson: ‘Belgrade may not be the centre of new music, but it provides Žebeljan with a clearly focused identity as a Serbian composer [...] and a base for a highly skilled Europe-wide networking that has made her one of the most widely performed Serbian composers today’ (2013: 565). As Samson correctly observes:

For this generation, the main cultural centres are no longer quite the passport to fame they once were [...] In the end, a clear local identity, such as that carefully cultivated by Žebeljan, may prove more valuable than an allegiance to cosmopolitan modernism (2013: 568).

Isidora Žebeljan understands this very well, and she has been able to put to good use her knowledge of various musical idioms of her native land, including the newer layers of urban folk music, which can serve both as a point of immediate identification for domestic audiences and as markers of her ‘originality’ and ‘Otherness’ in the West.

It is particularly striking that Žebeljan’s own statements on her influences and preferences do not entirely match what is found in the scores. Firstly, as we have seen, although Žebeljan dismisses expressionism, her opera shows some similarities with Schoenberg’s early (pre-decapronic) musical language, as well as expressionist drama and film. Moreover, while Žebeljan allegedly prefers the oldest layers of Serbian folklore, in *Zora D.* she merges Western early twentieth-century opera (*verismo* and the early Viennese school) and the idioms of Serbian urban popular folk music from the same period, which has survived to this day

and is, therefore, easily recognisable. These urban folk inflections, reinforced by imaginative orchestration, provide melodic, harmonic, rhythmic and timbral enrichment to Žebeljan's musical language, without influencing her basic, Western compositional procedure on a deeper level.

By merging her expressive and highly evocative melodic gift with, as Samson puts it, 'the carefully calculated quota of guarded modernism, the modern folklorisms and blatant historical associations' (Samson 2013: 568), Isidora Žebeljan has found her own unique voice that has captivated diverse audiences worldwide.

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Ivana Miladinović-Prica  
**The background of Milimir Drašković's  
communication with the cultural Other<sup>1</sup>**

The idea of a radical break with the past and that of an identical repetition of the past are two consequences of one and the same concept of time. What was the *other* in modernism has become the model for postmodernist revision.<sup>2</sup> In his book *The return to the real* Hal Foster reveals a significant shift in discourse on the cultural *Other* in three pivotal periods of the twentieth century: the culmination of high modernism in the 1930s, the advent of postmodernism in the 1960s, and the mid 1990s. Applying the term *correct distance* Foster explains that 'the other has returned at the very moment of its supposed eclipse: delayed by the moderns, its return has become the postmodern event. In a sense the modern incorporation of this otherness allowed for its postmodern eruption as *difference*' (Foster 1996: 207; 214; 217). French philosopher and cultural critic Catherine Clément has described structuralist preoccupation with *distance*; 'a negotiation of the proper distance between the anthropological observer, his home culture, and the culture under observation' (cited in Burris 2010: 177).

Milimir Drašković (1952–2014) belonged to the circle of Serbian composers who were willing to step *outside* of the dominant discourse, outside the known and the safe, who reframed a question of *correct distance* from the Other and problematised the positing of *difference*, which is why

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<sup>1</sup> This chapter is written as part of the project *Identities of Serbian music in the world cultural context* (No. 177019 (2011–2014)), funded by the Serbian Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development.

<sup>2</sup> The notion of the *Other* is used here to refer to cultural, ideological, geographical, and religious difference (Otherness) from the West (compare Foster 1996; Todorova 1999; Lock 2009). The treatment of folklore as the *cultural Other* in Serbian (post)minimalist works is thoroughly discussed in: Masnikosa 2010.

they were isolated and 'unread'. In the early 1990s Drašković made a postmodernist shift in relation to his *avant-garde* past and returned to the Balkan or, rather, Byzantine musical sources which, throughout history have been objects of *difference* or *otherness*. In other words, he refused to remain at a *correct distance* from the past.

### **The Other New Music – on radical Otherness**

The work of Milimir Drašković and those composers who shared his ideas – namely members of the OPUS 4 group Miodrag Lazarov Pashu (1949), Vladimir Tošić (1949) and Miroslav Savić (1954) – during the 1970s and 1980s was radically innovative both in Serbian and Yugoslav artistic context. At first, these authors promoted themselves as *Nova generacija* [The new generation], which also included composers Miloš Petrović (1952–2010) and Miloš Raičković (1956). The group OPUS 4 had been active informally since the mid-1970s, during their studies at the Faculty of Music, University of Arts in Belgrade. The group was formalised in February 1980 with the institutional backing of the Belgrade Student Cultural Centre; they had a number of appearances nationally and internationally, and officially dissolved in September 1983. After its dissolution, members of the group continued to be active within the *Ensemble for the Other New Music* [Ansambl za drugu novu muziku], founded in 1977, of which they formed the core, alongside composer Miloš Raičković and pianist Nada Kolundžija. Given their isolated position, Milimir Drašković and the other members of OPUS 4 were unable to directly influence their surroundings, which meant that the reception and dissemination of their achievements was in decline in the late 1980s (Lazarov Pashu 1979, 1990; Tošić 2001; Masnikosa 1998).

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s their experimental works of minimal music, electro-acoustic music, performance art, video art, musical graphic, conceptual art and meta-music were dismissed as an *anational* creation that owed too much to the West and the USA (precisely American experimentalism and minimalism) and was rooted too shallowly in the Balkans (or not at all). These highly individual personalities advocated for a *new musical pluralism* and worked with the institutional backing of the Student Cultural Centre in Belgrade, which during that period represented the *alternative scene* in relation to the mainstream cultural model, and the place that provided exposure to local and international

conceptual artists, experimental composers, as well as Fluxus, multimedia explorations, and American experimental art.

The *other/different new music* as Drašković and the other members of the OPUS 4 used to describe their practice, emerged on the margins of the recognised and accepted narratives in Serbian/Yugoslav music and *in spite of* the social circumstances and centres of power. The group's key artistic tenets were 'an effort to counter anything that may be labeled as dogmatic and conservative', and the 'creation of nonconformist systems for the constitution of a musical work', which resulted in its activity being linked to a number of incidents and confrontations with the Belgrade artistic establishment (Lazarov Pashu 1979: 1). One could even say that it was a type of *anti-canonical activism*, because since the mid-1970s, by means of criticising the institution of music and its autonomy, they acted against the musical canon, and it was in this period that the polarity between the established music and its radical Other was the strongest in Belgrade.<sup>3</sup>

Inspired by American experimentalism and John Cage's anarchism, the composers of OPUS 4 viewed musical practices not as fixed historical and stylistic categories, but as 'an ongoing musical strategy that [is] continually being adopted and reshaped for new contexts' (Cox and Warner 2004: xv), and developed their conceptions of an artistic form between music, action, performance art, happening, and video art. Milimir Drašković and Miša Savić, the creators of the festival *Druga nova muzika* [The Other New Music], held at the Student Cultural Centre from 1984 to 1986, explained in the text of the first festival programme the notion of the *different, other new music*, which

encompasses those current music tendencies with underlying designations such as reduction, repetitiveness, processuality etc. (concerning the composition procedure), then, media expansion, ambience, time-space limitation etc. (concerning the form of realisation) and conceptualism, meta-approach etc. (concerning the character of musical thinking and experience) (Savić and Drašković 1984: 2).

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<sup>3</sup> One of the paradigmatic examples of the critique of the institution of music was Milimir Drašković's conceptual work *Muzika u Beogradu* [Music in Belgrade (1978)] which consisted of a blank sheet of music paper or the action entitled *Rođendan* [Birthday] with twenty-seven blank cassettes, performed at the *Happy Gallery* of the Student Cultural Centre in 1979.

These artists believed that music had to rely on exploratory work and experimentation with the phenomena of the *expanded sound* and *expanded media*, hence their works were based on a typically experimental, avant-garde rejection of historical paradigms and musical canon, the lack of causality in musical flow, heterogeneity of structure etc. On the other hand, members of OPUS 4 subsumed all those potential influences and principles under clearly recognisable compositional expressions.

### ***Octoechos (Berlin–Belgrade) – on cultural Otherness***

While the first part of Milimir Drašković's career can be situated in the final chapter of modernism, his work from the late 1980s onwards 'illuminates the degree to which the definition of his artistic projection no longer depended on the modernist paradigm of a radical dismantling of traditions' (Buchloh 2000: 145). Having reached the pinnacle of reductionism, Drašković broadened his aesthetic discursive field and composed pieces in which the cultural Other was established as the area of an 'ideological escape from Western rationality' (Foster 1996: 217). In other words, there was an overlap of his individual aspirations and the overall effort of the 'Eastern European subject' to determine one's own Otherness in the context of multiculturalism (Groys 2002: 304). He delved deep into the Balkan musical past and brought ancient models back in a manner that opened new possibilities for their interpretation. As the result of his need for escapism and his disagreement with the stereotypes on the Balkans and the Byzantine (music) tradition as the non-European religious and cultural Other, Drašković created a series of works, by fusing Serbian Orthodox church chant, e.g. melodies of the *Osmoglasnik* [Octoechos] notated by Stevan Stojanović Mokranjac (1856–1914) in 1908, with improvisation, jazz and rock music – *Prva nedelja* [First week] for three saxophones (1992), *Osam nedelja* [Eight weeks] for jazz ensemble (1995) and *Nedelja* [Week] for electric guitar (1996)<sup>4</sup> (Example 1). Therefore, the composer selected those elements from the global musical archive which are mutually related in terms of musical characteristics, but not by their social, geographical, historical origin and function. Improvisation is the point at which his immediate avant-garde past meets with jazz, folklore

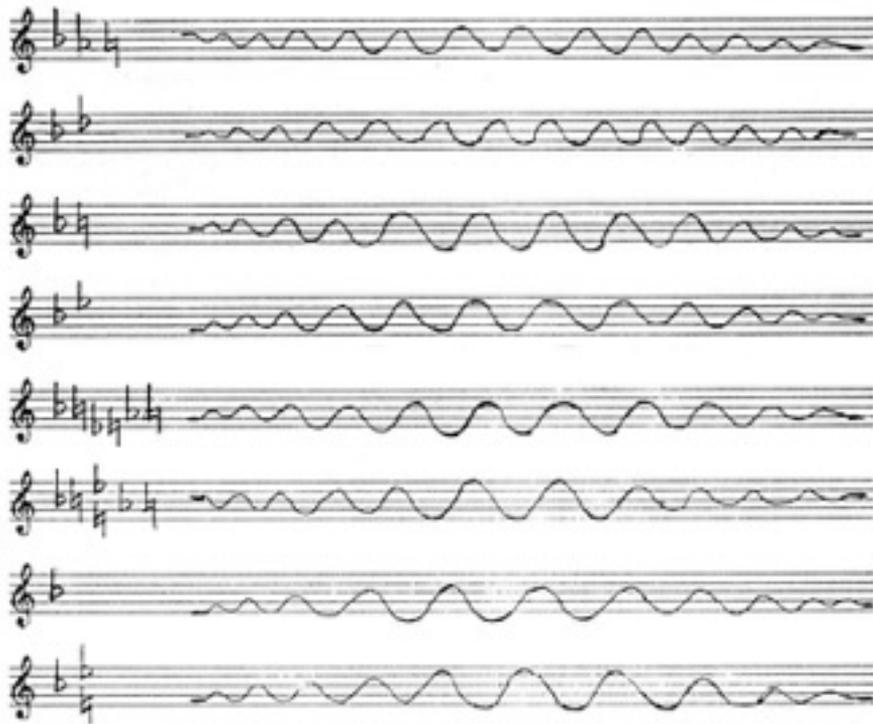
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<sup>4</sup> CD *Octoechos Berlin–Beograd (1992–1996)* released by Vertical Jazz in 1997, contains recordings of these works.

tradition and church chant, but it is also the symptom of the blending and softening of the lines between popular culture and high art. In doing so Drašković demonstrated that the differences between the music of the East and the West could be bridged.

Example 1: Milimir Drašković, *Octoechos*

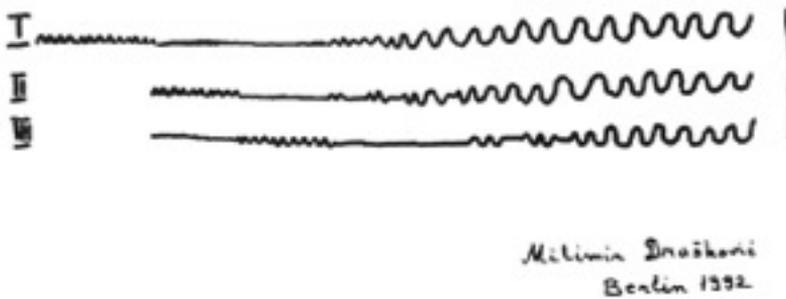
# Octoechos



Milimir Drašković  
Berlin 1995

In 1992 Milimir Drašković and Miloš Petrović conducted a workshop *Byzantium and today* in Berlin. As 'artists-ethnographers', they brought the experience of the cultural Other – Serbian *Octoechos* constructed as a symbol of the (imaginary) Byzantine heritage – to the Western musicians.<sup>5</sup> This is where the piece called *First week* for three saxophones was created and performed by participants of the workshop at the final concert (Example 2).

Example 2: Milimir Drašković, *First week*



After the Berlin experience and collaboration with Gerhard Scherer, an accordion player and anti-war activist, Drašković composed a large work *Eight weeks* for accordion, horn, bass clarinet/alto saxophone, harpsichord/piano, percussion/pipes, and double bass (Examples 3, 4). He opted for the accordion in the *Eight weeks* because of its 'specific, marginal role in this type of music' and its connection with the 'lower categories of music, and consequently, the lower strata of society'. In his view, the accordion is a cultural signifier whose signified is a medium of voicing *cultural Otherness (difference)*: 'this may be because the accordion is actually an imitation of an instrument, designed to imitate other instruments through various registers [...] Compared to the organ, the accordion is an imitation of an imitation' (Drašković and Savić 1995: 19).

<sup>5</sup> Serbian *Octoechos* confirms its extraordinary inspirational power in the works of a number of other Serbian composers, most notably Ljubica Marić who composed the cycle *Muzika Oktoiha* [Music of the Octoechos (1958–1963)] (Perković 2010).

Example 3: Milimir Drašković, *Eight weeks*

OKTOBR: Osmu nedelju

Milimir Drašković  
Beograd 1987

By applying the postmodernist procedure, Drašković created works which travelled backwards through different styles, from ‘the end of the history’ towards ‘the great beginnings’ – working to *invent tradition* (a borderless cultural discourse) based on the same principles and methods that he had used in his earlier music. For example, *First week* is a part of the cycle under the umbrella title *Mala istorija muzike* [A short history of music], which Drašković was composing from 1988 until his death. In this cycle he began with atonality, then moved on to tonal harmony (*HPSCHD* op. 2) and the basic elements of harmonic structure (the patterns of chords progression) (*HPSCHD* op. 3) to *pure linear melody* (Ibid.: 18). Thus, in the early 1990s, he came to the end of his retro-evolutionary path, i.e. to a (new) beginning, from where one could set off in any direction.

Example 4: Milimir Drašković, *Eight weeks*, fifth section

The remark written at the bottom of the example indicates that the performers are free to choose which parts they want to play.

8 nedelja - 5. glas

izvođači bирају делове које свирају

What inspired this staunch modernist to seek his musical roots in Byzantine tradition? According to Drašković, Byzantine music was an *impression* for him. He did not wish to explore the roots of this tradition, but to *use* it in a (post)modern context and *fuse* it with contemporary musical practices. Drašković noticed that Serbian church chants (melodies of the *Octoechos*) are based on the constructive principle of ‘tailoring’ and improvisation, which also plays an essential role in jazz music, which is why he chose a jazz ensemble to perform his work. Of the many aspects of church chant that had the potential to influence him, the repetitions of

melodic formulas of the modes of the *Octoechos* were the feature that first attracted Drašković's attention. In the monophonic melodies of the *Octoechos* he observed the qualities and principles of organisation which he had strived for in his early minimalist works:

There is a formula of lengthening and shortening in the chants, which suggests a minimalist procedure. I think this is typical of primordial forms of music, that it is related to its origins. Repetition and reduction. Reduced material repetitively exposed and placed in a particular process, a very slow process, this, for me, is the definition of minimalism (Ibid.: 19).

The composer and his performers took advantage of the absence of precisely defined musical parameters in the *Octoechos*. In each section, Drašković employed a special procedure, in terms of the tempo, dynamics, articulation, colour – those quasi-marginal elements of composition which, according to him, 'are an important feature of minimalism' (Ibid). As we can see in Examples 1–3, the composer has also shown the Serbian church chant graphically, alongside the conventional notation: the lines indicate the volume of melody and the key signatures indicate the notes that may occur in a particular mode (if there is a flat or a natural sign, this means, for example, note A and A minor).

Unity and coherence are achieved through a continual presence of one mode or one type of instrument. In composing *First week* he used melodies from the fifth mode of the *Octoechos* (e.g. 'fifth singing'), while *Eight weeks* is based on melodies from all eight modes (one for each section of the composition) that are sung on Sundays. The articulation of time (rhythm) is open, floating, *beyond* the mechanical constraints of the chronometer, creating a new fluidity in terms of temporal relationships (Example 4). It is a situation of what Jean-Francois Lyotard called 'the *liberation* of sound-time from metronomic constraint' which 'modifies a great deal the sensitivity of the ear (I mean mind) to rhythm' (1991: 169). The feeling of endless repetition in a slow tempo, the desire to get the maximum expression out of each note, contribute to the creation of a spiritual, meditative atmosphere, as if 'promising infinity'.

The performers are guided by the composer's *directions*, which call for a spontaneous, creative act of improvisation including branching, dissolution and deviation from the chants. Their manipulations of the previously existing material in these *intertextual games* blur the division

between the composer and his performers, through the use of improvisation and collaboration. These melodies are provided as an invitation to communicate, thus making a true dialogue possible; the ordering of events is relatively clear, while the exact content is left to the performer. It could be said that the real existence of a composition is not in its score, but in its sound realisation:<sup>6</sup>

*Eight weeks* [...] transforms motifs from the *Octoechos* into the music that surrounds us. Byzantine chant, European musical styles, American jazz, they all come together to build the Tower of Babylon – albeit not made of stone, but of particles of time [...] The quotations from *Octoechos* are but particles of imagination handed by the composer to the performers. The *Eight weeks* might as well be improvised music, its authorship ceded to them. But restricted by the composer's *orders*, the piece retains its stern form, 'ordained' by the author's signature (Petrović 2001: 55).

Each performance is unique and creates its own timbral combinations and its own individual sound world. Due to the fragmentation of the texture, especially in the improvisational segments, the instruments gain a greater independence. The performers approach the *Octoechos* as 'a multi-layered text' in which *modes* of different eras are juxtaposed. According to Derrida, there is always openness left to the freedom of the other, but also opening as exiting before the other, or as a call to the other. The performers access melodies as 'a never-ending play of meanings, a grafting of pieces of the text onto other texts [...] changing context, implanting other texts, etc.' (cited in Cobussen 2002: 8). The sounds from the periphery are now audible; they are now presentable in a sensory manner in the public social sphere. This approach could serve as a model of how to transform the traditional position of Byzantine chant as cultural Other ('protective covers' of 'immortal' art), into places where exploration is possible through interactive communication (i.e. improvisatory co-authorship). The composer and performers invoke the Other in the *Octoechos* through their interpretations. They respect the monodian essence of the chants but, also, they listen/reveal the polyphony of a text/*other* voices. In the fixed

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<sup>6</sup> It is important to note that the score for *Week*, with its melody and guitar riffs is already a form of performance. Namely, the main musical theme that Drašković had written for Zoran Solomun's film [*Tired Companions*, ZDF – zero film] served as a basis for a new interpretation of the *Octoechos*.

segments, the melodies of the *Octoechos* speak *for themselves*; the plan of the 'signified' is very clear. The improvised segments represent a (post)modern musical discourse and, within them, the perspective of these chants changes significantly. The sections placed as such indicate intertextual musical connections, where the diachronic perspective of modernism gives way to a synchronic postmodern perspective of the *shared image*.

Which term is appropriate to label this process? The *cross-cultural encounter* or, rather, the *multimedia variations*,<sup>7</sup> as Drašković himself explained, which involve the manipulation of something exterior? In fact, the Serbian *Octoechos* is 'a point of departure'. One could interpret the use of church chant as a case of searching for an expansion of the Self in the Other, as well as an act of appropriation, of dialectical movement between own and other, between difference and repetition, text and intertext, past and present. Therefore, these works are based on the concept of an *open work*, which presupposes that the author and the performers are equally responsible for formulating meanings. As opposed to the modern work of art which involves the stable union of the signifier and the signified, these postmodern works are presented as a multidimensional space in which a multitude of languages mix and collide, leading to the dissolution of signs and the free play of the signifiers in social and ideological representations (Foster 1985: 129). The outcomes of the actual procedures are *readings with a difference* – reinterpretations of certain aspects and meanings that were previously ignored or considered problematically provocative. Milimir Drašković showed that there were as many unforeseen originalities in quoting and transposition, as in invention. The *composer as ethnographer* translates the experience of the cultural Other: Byzantine music in the minimalist landscape that represents 'the possibility of a difference', *Octoechos* as return to unused semantic potential, that interrupts Western logocentrism and confounds the musical canon (Foster 1996: 217). Boundaries are arbitrary and changeable and music in the post-modern era no longer places emphasis on production of new but on reception of the existing, thus formal innovation gives way to repetition which, according to Derrida, implies identity and difference simultaneously.

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<sup>7</sup> From my e-mail correspondence with Milimir Drašković, 12 September 2013. I am grateful to the late composer who provided me with additional explanations and materials.

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Ersin Mihci

**The Gallipoli song:  
folk song and Turkish memorial culture**

Memorial culture is a significant pillar of national history. Memorials are central places of commemoration where the authoritative voice of the state honours fallen heroes and stresses their bravery and willingness to die for posterity's freedom and peace. Folk songs dealing with victorious battles and other crucial historical events are bearers of commemorative symbolism and a powerful medium to show authenticity and originality. Whereas a memorial is a static object the visitor has to go and see, a song is a travelling object; it reaches the people through media, state-run *institutions* and through individuals performing it. The Gallipoli song, also known as 'The ballad of Çanakkale' [in Turkish: Çanakkale türküsü], a well-known folk song in Turkey, became one of the symbols commemorating the fallen of the Gallipoli Campaign. Taking the Gallipoli song as a case study, I aim to explain how Turkish scholars standardised and nationalised folk songs by using a Western concept of folk culture. After a short introduction to the historical events the song is dealing with, I will explain how the song was rediscovered and became part of Turkish memorial culture. Furthermore, variations of the Gallipoli song in the Greek diasporic community underline the mutating and travelling character of folk songs and challenge the narrow and fixed concept of national folk song studies.

During World War I, the Triple Entente, consisting of Russia, France and United Kingdom, fought against the Central Powers: Germany, the Ottoman Empire and Austria-Hungary. From 1915 to 1916, Australian, New Zealand and French divisions under English command tried to conquer the Dardanelles Strait at Gallipoli [in Turkish: Gelibolu], the northern peninsula of the Dardanelles, and use this strategic position for future operations. Because the straits were mined, they had to bring the

Gallipoli peninsula under control before pulling the mines out of the water. Despite all their efforts, the Entente failed in the Dardanelles Campaign and both sides suffered horrendous losses. In the landings and trench warfare, British and French casualties totalled 252,000, one thousand more than the Ottoman forces (Erickson 2001: 94). Today, farmers still find remains of the fallen. In Turkey, Australia and New Zealand, Gallipoli became, like Verdun, a symbol of horror and suffering.

After World War I and the Greco-Turkish War (1919–1922), the Ottoman Empire collapsed and the Turkish Republic was proclaimed. In subsequent years, scholars and politicians redefined the young nation's identity and discovered memorial culture as an efficient device to write a common, shared history. Turkey turned the former Gallipoli battlefields into a memorial space where posterity could commemorate the fallen soldiers. In 1954, the Gallipoli memorial was founded and expanded throughout the twentieth century. During this period the government established many institutions to recall the campaign, such as the Gallipoli museum. In Çanakkale, the city across the strait, the University named 'Çanakkale 18 March University' and the 'Centre for Atatürk and Çanakkale war studies' were founded. The official victory day, March 18<sup>th</sup>, was determined for memorial ceremonies which were held every year.<sup>1</sup> The Dardanelles Campaign also became an interesting topic for popular culture. In the past three years the movies *Çanakkale yolun sonu* [In Çanakkale the journey ends] (2013), *1915 Çanakkale* (2012) and *Çanakkale çocukları* [The children of Çanakkale] (2012) were released. In the Gallipoli memorial culture, only one song embodies the events of 1915: the Gallipoli song.

The Gallipoli song has a particular position within the Turkish folk song repertoire and is one of the most popular in today's Turkey. Since the 1950's this song has been recalling the 'Turks' legendary victory at Gallipoli, although it also reflects on the experience of mass death. Unlike the cheerful soldiers' songs which animate the soldier to fight against his enemy, the Gallipoli song expresses the hopelessness and sadness of an unnamed soldier facing the truth of a bitter war. He knows that he and his comrades will die in this war. The lamentation 'Woe to my youth!' at the

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<sup>1</sup> For the Turks, the date 18 March 1915 marked the first milestone in the Gallipoli Campaign. On that day, three of the Allied battleships sank after having struck mines.

end of each verse underlines his depressive mood. In this way, the Gallipoli song recalls the difficult battle the Turks had to wage at Gallipoli.

When the Ottoman Empire entered World War I, men from all its regions were mobilised. This mobilisation had an appreciable impact on cultural convergence: thousands of soldiers from all over the Ottoman Empire gathered, each of them bringing their individual, traditional and regional background. In the camps, those who were musically gifted had a platform to meet and come into contact with other traditions (Saatçi 1993: 11). These traditions also included those of non-Turks like Ottoman Greeks and Ottoman Armenians who were assisting with the campaign.<sup>2</sup> In such multi-ethnic camps, popular songs and traditions could be negotiated and spread easily among the regiments. The bards used verses and melodies of songs they were familiar with and constructed new verses which corresponded to the campaign. This way of generating songs was customary in the Ottoman Empire.

Over the course of time, Turkish folk songs developed an extensive repertoire of topics. The Turkish folk song, as a performative art, is unique and cannot be performed exactly the same way twice. The bard makes use of an existing repertoire of verses and melodies he has become acquainted with. These structures help him to improvise new verses and melodies while singing. The topics and verses he makes use of may vary; he may pick up verses from other songs which reflect his own mood or deal with topical events. Willi Heffening, a German orientalist, became aware of this mutating character inherent in Turkish folk songs. Right at the beginning of his article about the Turkish folk song he points to the song's character:

The folk song is always vivid and lithe, it is steadily widening, here it drops verses, there it takes new ones and deals with new events. It is a continuous up and down, it lives and moves. Those are things which are well-founded in the soul of a people (Heffening 1923: 236).

The Turkish folk song is a continuously changing and traveling object. A gifted bard is recognised for his creativity and ability to play and sing to his contemporary aesthetics and principles. For the bards, the idea of an

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<sup>2</sup> Willi Heffening mentions in his article an Ottoman Greek officer called 'Jorgi Čauš' who was very popular among the Turkish soldiers (Heffening 1923: 245).

'original' and 'correct' version of a song did not exist. The Gallipoli song derived from other folk songs and travelled through different regions due to military mobilisation and mass migrations.

During the era of nation- and state-building, this fluid understanding of the folk song was gradually replaced by a new concept from Western folk culture. The question of originality and authenticity of Turkish folk songs arose in the 1930s and continued until the 1990s (Tekelioğlu 1996). By collecting songs from different regions of the nation, folklorists and musicians sought to compile a national folk song corpus. Subsequently, they standardised the songs that they found and legitimised one version of each song which was then printed in school books and broadcasted in radio and TV programmes. The idea of one true and correct version of a folk song is a result of this standardisation process, which changed the reception of the folk song throughout the twentieth century. As a result, people perceived the one authoritative version as correct, whereas variations were seen as incorrect or impure. The fact that Turks presuppose the Gallipoli song to be a 'genuine' Turkish folk song is therefore due to the government's efforts to introduce it as such.

In 1952, the Gallipoli song entered the public sphere thanks to M. Sarisözen's folk song compilation (Sarisözen 1952). He became famous with his radio program 'Voices of the Homeland', where he, together with an ensemble, performed folk songs from different regions of the country. Under the auspices of the Turkish Radio and Television, his work had a considerable normative and authoritative effect on the nationalisation of the folk song repertoire. Since then, the Gallipoli song has been printed in several books, performed by folk and art song celebrities, and played by military bands in commemorative ceremonies. Sarisözen wrote in the Foreword that his folk song collection was also designed for school classes where children would be taught national tunes. Pupils grew up in the belief that the Gallipoli song was originally Turkish because it dealt with the historical events at the Dardanelles. Even the song's title, 'Çanakkale türküsü', referring to a Turkish city, left no doubt that the Gallipoli song embodied Turkey's history, which is true: the Gallipoli song as known today belongs to Gallipoli because it came into being due to the circumstances of the campaign.

Since the 1930s, the question of origin has been gaining considerable importance in Turkish culture studies. In particular, research on well-

known national songs entices scholars to conduct popular scientific studies. Onur Akdoğu ‘discovered’ and published the oldest score of the Gallipoli song known today (Akdoğu 1991). According to his source, in 1915, the editor Şamlı Selim printed a score with the title *The Çanakkale March* (in Turkish: *Çanakkale Marşı*) in the music journal ‘Risale-i Musikiyye’, where he identified Kemani Kevser Hanım as the composer. Akdoğu is confident that Kevser Hanım is the original composer of the Gallipoli song. He explains that the march mutated over the course of time into a folk song. This claim fails to explain the song’s popularity at that time, however. It seems much more likely that it developed out of the Çanakkale Campaign topos as a self-contained score. It had its heyday in the year of 1915, the same year Kevser Hanım published her score. Akdoğu’s argument becomes even more doubtful if Seyfullah’s letter is taken into consideration, where he cites the song’s first verse already in 1914 (Öztürk 2013). This shows that the song must have been known before Kevser Hanım’s composition.

The Gallipoli song’s fame went even beyond the Turkish speaking groups. The song’s verses were even printed in a German soldiers’ newspaper which aimed to inform the comrades fighting at the different fronts during World War I (Krüger 1918). The Gallipoli song’s popularity induced two German officers, Willi Heffening and Dr Karl Hadank, to write an article about it. Hadank published a study about the songs of the Young Turks in which he comments on the Gallipoli song. He writes that the Gallipoli song was the most popular song of all (Hadank 1919: 72). During his stay in the southern Marmara region, in the years 1917 and 1918, he became aware of the Dardanelles’ song. The score Hadank provides is identical with Kemani Kevser Hanım’s. Thus, one may conclude that he knew her score and only noted down the verses himself.

In 1923, Willi Heffening claimed that the Gallipoli song was much older than the campaign and derived out of other martial and love songs (Heffening 1923: 245). His assumptions were based on a philological analysis of the song’s verses in which he identifies parallels and connections. He used the singing of four Turks as a source to write down the song’s score with 22 verses; all are provided in his article. Whereas in today’s version, some of the verses are still existent, the melody shows only very rough structural similarities.

These examples show that this song became fashionable as well as a transcultural phenomenon. But for some reason, the song seemed to disappear from the consciousness of the Turkish people until Sarisözen discovered it again in 1952. Mahmut Ragıp Gazimihal, a Turkish musicologist, seemed to be the only one who mentioned the Gallipoli song in the time before Sarisözen. In 1936, he wrote a handwritten score which corresponded to today's official version (Kösemişal [Gazimihal] 1935). Like Heffening, he remarked that the song was much older than the campaign and derived from a love song. With that, the discussion about the song's origins died down but was not resolved.

In 1965, Etem Ruhi Ungör integrated the Gallipoli song into his pioneering study of Turkish marches (Üngör 1965: 183). He claims that a certain 'Destancı Mustafa' is the song's author, but he explains neither his assumption nor how he came to this conclusion. Nevertheless, the folklorist Ihsan Ozanoğlu, Sarisözen's former colleague, trusts Ungör's claim (Ozanoğlu 1982: 8–11). He writes that Sarisözen had been looking for a Gallipoli-related song for a memorial ceremony. Ozanoğlu sent him the Gallipoli song he had collected in 1948 in Kastamonu, a city in northern Turkey, close to the Black sea. Both concluded that, due to the fact that they did not find any other version at that time, the song's region of origin must have been Kastamonu.

In Turkey, the Gallipoli song seemed to fall into oblivion soon after World War I. In former Ottoman communities however, it remained popular throughout the twentieth century. It is no surprise that during the Gallipoli song's first heyday from 1914 to 1923 it found its way to other ethnic groups living in the Ottoman Empire. Çanakkale and Gallipoli are situated in Asia Minor, where many Ottoman Greeks lived. When the war was over, the belligerents saw hardly any perspective for the remaining ethnic groups to live together peacefully again, due to the atrocities committed against both Muslims and Christians. Therefore, the treaty of Lausanne, signed by Greece and Turkey, included an extensive official population exchange. Up to one and a half million Ottoman Greeks and 300,000 Ottoman Muslims in Greece were consequently deported to their respective 'nations' though they had never seen them before (Hirschon 2004). Especially the high number of Ottoman Greek refugees in Pireus entailed an infrastructural, social and political challenge for Greece. Many of them saw no future in their new homeland and emigrated to the United

States, where a Greek minority had already existed. The increasing number of Ottoman Greek refugees in the USA led to the construction of a diasporic identity and, on the other hand, to the creation of a market for the growing ethnic groups. Record companies, for example, which had already carried out ethnic recordings in Greece and in the Ottoman Empire from 1910 on, discovered a new domestic market to sell their records.

Those recordings with famous, polyglot singers which were known in the diasporic group are a significant historical source today. Maybe the most intriguing recording, for this study, dates back to 1923: Marika Papagika sings the *Channacale Canto* in Turkish in a so-called *Smyrna-style rebetiko*<sup>3</sup>, accompanied by an ensemble consisting of a violin and a santur (Spottswood 1990). Almost ten years later, during the Great Depression, the Gallipoli song's melody appeared in the song *Katinaki mou gia sena* [My dear Katina, because of you] on the following records:

- Roza Eshkinazi: *Katinaki mou gia sena* (1932)
- Rita Abatzi: *Katinaki mou gia sena* (1933)
- Adonis Dalgas: *Katinaki mou gia sena* (1933)

In the Turkish version, the protagonist is on his way to the front and knows that he will die; in the *Katinaki* song, the protagonist is murdered in a bar because of his love for Katina. The topic of the latter song fits into the *rebetiko* repertoire which often deals with scenes of the underground and refugees life. The notion of a love song, as W. Heffening and M. R. Gazimihal remarked, is also evident.

Another intriguing recording is Amalia Bakas' *Dōse mou tēn euchē sou* [Give me your blessing] from 1946. While the Gallipoli song's melody is recognisable on this recording, interestingly, the lyrics take up a martial topic again. In this case, the protagonist asks his mother for her blessing to go to war and fight for victory. In contrast to the Gallipoli song, which reflected the soul of a depressive soldier, *Dōse mou tēn euchē sou* is a war-affirming song which aims to animate and motivate soldiers. Considering the release date, it is possible that the song alludes to the liberation of Greece from Nazi Germany or to the Greek Civil War which followed World War II. In both cases the traces of war are evident.

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<sup>3</sup> The term *Smyrna-style rebetiko* was coined later.

The Gallipoli song arose out of the circumstances of the Gallipoli Campaign and gained considerable popularity during and after World War I as a symbol of victory. It sank into oblivion, however, and was rediscovered in the light of Turkey's memorial culture. Towards the fortieth anniversary of the Gallipoli Campaign, the government seemed to have an increasing interest in looking for objects linked to the events of 1915. The song became an artefact symbolising the 250,000 dead and wounded during this campaign and the self-sacrifice they made for posterity's freedom. As an immaterial object it could reach the whole nation through broadcasts and centralised education.

Having found a historical song dealing with a national matter, scholars tended to appropriate it by searching for its origins. They failed, however, to consider the Gallipoli song as a continuously changing object, so crucial in the Turkish folk song tradition, but sought instead to prove its origins and standardise its history. In spite of vague information, the history of folk songs was standardised and legitimised by the state-run institutions such as the Turkish Radio and Television. This opened the way to appropriate the song and present it as a genuine Turkish folk song from Kastamonu, embodying the very soul of Turkey's sacrifice during World War I. Ali Osman Öztürk remarks that this claim led to local patriotism which was evident during a memorial ceremony in Çanakkale. Without questioning the verisimilitude of the authoritative Turkish Radio and Television, a group of people from Kastamonu held up placards quoting the first line of the song's verse and claiming that this song was originally from Kastamonu (Öztürk 2013). By now the song has gained such a startling importance that even citizens tend to appropriate it.

But this was only half of the truth, as the recordings of Ottoman-Greek singers proved. The five recordings made between 1923 and 1950 show that the song's popularity during these thirty years was unbroken. Of course, the song did not gain the same national connotation abroad as in Turkey: whereas in Turkey it is well established in the national memorial culture, in the Greek-Ottoman diaspora it recalled the popular voices of their lost homeland. To contextualise this song's popularity and history further research into the government's efforts to organise the fiftieth anniversary of the Gallipoli Campaign and their models and motives is needed. In today's globally connected research, scholars can overcome the

boundaries that the national and conservative folk studies have set and approach folk songs from a broader, transnational perspective.

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Dafni Tragaki

***Rebetiko* cosmopolitanisms: questions for an ethnography of musical imagination**

**Introduction: the place of the genre**

*Rebetiko* song has hitherto been conceptualised and studied as a genre that represented the ‘oriental’ heritage of Greek music associated with the Ottoman past. Debated as a music of contested Greekness, it has been imagined and analysed as a genre in-between the so-called *alaturca* and *alafanga* modalities, celebrated as a product of Mediterranean/Ottoman cosmopolitanism.<sup>1</sup> Its definition as a genre has therefore been a discourse of encounters between the opposite Aegean coasts, considered as ‘East’ and ‘West’, a discourse of mobility from and to specific places that has largely been determined by violent events: the Asia Minor war, the subsequent population exchange and forced migration to Greece and abroad. *Rebetiko* was historicised and periodised both in the realm of scholarly discourses and in the collective memory, while its musical production has been canonised in styles and generations of composers and its musical properties have been analysed in terms of origins, development and diffusion. Disciplining *rebetiko* has been part of the modern epistemological project of inventing taxonomies in Greek music, in which ‘place’, among other things, has been an instrumental criterion for classification (‘urban’, ‘nisiotiko’, ‘Cretan’, ‘ipiroitiko’, etc.). *Rebetiko* was ascribed spatial and temporal boundaries encapsulating a constellation of musical features, agents, places, cultural practices, events and social enclaves. Essentialised notions of place (‘Oriental’, ‘Western’, ‘Balkan’,

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<sup>1</sup> See Petropoulos 1968; Damianakos 1976; Holst 1977; Gauntlett 1985; Pennanen 1997. I should also mention the various fictionalisations and popularisations of *rebetiko* from the 1980s onwards in Greek TV series, fiction films, documentaries and novels (Tragaki 2007: 124–138).

‘Mediterranean’, ‘European’) have been investing the project of its identification and explanation, in which ‘place’ has additionally connoted ‘culture’, commonly perceived as a coherent whole where music is created, performed and ascribed meanings.

Describing what *rebetiko* is and what it is not has contributed to the localisation of the music, its ‘organic’ attachment to specific geographies. It has been identified as the sound of particular localities: the urban underworld, *les misérables* of the city-ports, the Asia Minor refugees. Locality has nourished its legitimacy in the world of musics, while it was essentialised as an innate feature of the music itself determining and justifying its forms and structures. As such, it has invested the notion of belonging, the association of music to a collectivity, a nation, a country, a minority or a class (see, for instance, Bohlman 2000: 654–659). Place has also authorised the genre’s authenticity, both in narrations of origins and emplacement, as well as in the recent ‘world music’ universalist discourses, where it has been fetishised in the enthusiastic marketing of fusion, hybridities and blissful globality (see Erlmann 1996; Bohlman and Radano 2000: 29). The poetics of musical typologies in geographical terms have also fostered the ordering of musical cartographies as well as the commodification and disciplinary control of *rebetiko*.

Moreover, the narrativisation of *rebetiko* as a genre with a certain life-cycle implies an axiological distinction between the music’s ‘real life’ and its afterlife, its re-inventions, revivals and remixes that are taking place against its supposed originality. This originality is legitimised in emplaced narrations of *rebetiko* as a cosmopolitan genre that has its roots and routes in the Mediterranean networks of music circulation highlighting the Eastern Mediterranean of the early twentieth century – the topos *par excellence* of its formation. Such topocentric perspectives of *rebetiko* genre, histories of its ‘birth’, diffusion and ‘death’, have paid limited attention to the transcultural musical encounters, the chance meetings of diasporic individuals coming from diverse musical backgrounds, or the fate of *rebetiko* recordings as once immaterial and material objects circulating beyond the stereotypicalised *rebetiko* world. Diasporic music-making, for instance, such as the *rebetiko* performances and recordings in the U.S. have mostly been investigated in terms of their impact upon the Greek homeland (see Smith 1991; 1995; Chianis 1988).

In the rest of this article I am going to look closer at some ephemeral and accidental *rebetiko* musical encounters and exchanges as phenomena that could perhaps contribute to a rethinking of conventional musical cartographies of the genre. My aim is to provide a point for critical reflection upon the narrativisation of its various emplacements and displacements, which have produced and reproduced mythologies of roots and trajectories ascribing to music ‘a natural justification’ (Barthes 1972: 142). *Rebetiko* has been mythologised as an endemic music of the ‘Mediterranean’ and the ‘Balkans’, once mediating, reaffirming and codifying the ensounded European alterity of those so-perceived ‘cultural areas’ in music. Such an objectification of the genre has promoted its constant ‘othering’ in the scholarly and *world music* imagination still haunting our horizons of experiencing *rebetiko*.

My goal, however, is not to discredit the concept of genre. Genre is a useful category that serves our need for cognitive distinctions, no less the epistemological quest for ordering knowledge. It becomes a necessary tool in the context of our communicative conventions and for our navigation in the world of musics. Nonetheless, it is perhaps important to re-think the enduring power of the ‘genre’ concept (next to the constant invention of new genres) today, one that inevitably continues to engender and reiterate our musical mappings of the world ‘as harmonious displays of essences’ (Barthes 1972: 142). Both the emerging and old genre categories are currently thriving in multimedia musical environments and serve the taxonomies of virtual musical markets. The world wide web is full of typologies and genre nomenclatures, less or more hyphenated, which are pregnant with ideations and fixities defining our soundworlds.

Popular music scholarship has addressed the issue of genre categorization by suggesting more flexible and culture-sensitive theories of genres (see Fabbri 1982; Middleton 1990; Frith 1996; Negus 1999; Holt 2007). At the same time, the notions of ‘subculture’, ‘scene’ and ‘tribe’ have intrigued scholars who have problematised their adequacy as analytical categories for the description of music collectivities (see, for instance, Mafessoli 1996; Straw 2001; Hesmondhalgh 2005; Bennet 2006). Frith has alternatively proposed the term ‘genre worlds’ drawing our attention to human interactions, while Negus suggested the notion of ‘genre cultures’ drawing further our attention to the politics of corporate music industry. More recently, Holt emphasised the construction of genre

in association to music practice and experience proposing an ethnographically-grounded theory of genre aimed at ‘*understanding* rather than *defining* genres’ (Holt 2007: 8).<sup>2</sup>

Following those veins of thought, my ideas on the poetics and politics of genre are also largely inspired by hermeneutic phenomenology that could perhaps inform the ways genres are constructed as absolute ‘truths’.<sup>3</sup> ‘Genre’ is primarily an idea, a fiction that presupposes the reductionist process of objectifying music into a coherent, and therefore meaningful and translatable, static whole. Rather than approaching genre as a bounded object of knowledge, we could perhaps reconsider the poetics of genre as an ever shifting, intersubjective process of interpretation, always contingent to change, occurring within our ever expanding ‘horizon of understanding’ (Gadamer 1992 [1975]). In this process of interpretation our prejudices, preconceptions and anticipations are constantly reworked in relation to our historical situatedness. Among those preconceptions emplacement has been instrumental in museumising genre, often paralysing our appreciation of its intrinsic fluidity, transparency and constant ability to defy geographies.

My exploration of the place of locality and its legitimacy in the poetics of genre is therefore departing from abstractionist definitions, suggesting a ‘subject-centered’ (Rice 2003: 156) interpretation of the trajectories of genre as trajectories embodied in the life-worlds of the musicmakers themselves. To that extent, I am interested in locating genre in the realm of musical imagination, specifically in the creative processes of *rebetiko* appropriations, now and in the past. My discussion is based on the investigation of three musical examples: Shantel’s remix ‘Manolis o Hasiklis’, Slim Gaillard’s jazz adaptation of ‘Ti Se Melei Esenane’ and Yiorgos Batis’ *rebetiko* song ‘O Boufetzis’. The focus upon those three paradigms is intended to highlight *rebetiko* trails and encounters as products of intentionality and agency, where ‘pleasure’ and ‘play’ in music-making are taken seriously, hoping to ‘extend our understanding of ‘the political’ and the ‘cultural’ in useful and interesting ways’ (Stokes 2007: 15).

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<sup>2</sup> Similar ideas applied on the study of Greek folksong have been expressed by Caraveli (1982).

<sup>3</sup> For applications in the field of ethnomusicology see Barz and Cooley 1997; Rice 2003.

***Rebetiko fragments / Rebetiko beat****Dj Shantel's 'Manolis o Hasiklis'*

Shantel's 'Balkan-beat' or 'ethno-beat' belongs to the universe of hyphenated genres that have flourished since the 1990s in the context of the growing popularity of the generic category *world music*. His CD *Disco Partizani* was released in 2007 by his own label 'Essay Recordings', and included the electronic remix of a *rebetiko* hashish song, 'Manolis o Hasiklis'.<sup>4</sup> The song also featured on the soundtrack of the film *Soul kitchen* by the renowned German-Turkish director Fatih Akin (2009; see Hillman and Sylvie 2012). Elsewhere I have discussed Shantel's digital compositional practices as a phenomenon of contemporary music technoculture and the production of hybridity through techniques of fragmentation, sampling and the production of postcolonial hyper-exoticism (see Tragaki 2012). Here, I am going to expand my thoughts towards processes of place-making and Shantel's diasporic subjectification through musical production.

The 'East meets West' discourse and the fusion of places has been an enduring banality in the celebration of *world music's* globality and its perceived power to undermine boundaries and successfully endorse liberating convergences, like the *rebetiko*-Balkan brass ensemble-electronic dance beat-gypsy clarinet mixing. According to Shantel's Virtual Womex webpage, 'this is the sound of new Europe, centred in the middle of our old continent, but incorporating vibrant influences from the emerging new frontier which stretches all the way to Mitteleuropa, the South East, Greece, Turkey and beyond.'<sup>5</sup> His music 'works as an interface between East and West.' This 'trans-European pop' is thus welcomed as an 'alternative to some of the more worn-out Anglo-Saxon musical models.' Ironically, the mixing of dichotomies reinvigorates and legitimises them anew as fragments of scattered realities. While centres and peripheries are apparently fused, they are reworked, performed and experienced anew as sensibilities of 'the Western', 'the Oriental', 'the Gypsy', 'the Balkan'. More than a product of blissful pluralism, or a postmodern phenomenon of pastiche, therefore, this negotiation and invention of musical places in

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<sup>4</sup> One of the most famous recordings of this song features I. Dragatsis and A. Dalgas and is available on YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mS70mhM2fK0>.

<sup>5</sup> [http://www.womex.com/virtual/essay\\_recordings\\_gmbh/shantel](http://www.womex.com/virtual/essay_recordings_gmbh/shantel).

Shantel's 'Balkan beat' encapsulates current neoliberal notions of difference and sameness featuring the enlarged, yet increasingly fragile, postcolonial Europe whose unity is perpetually in question. They are sonic intimacies of a Europe apparently featured by the political paradox of, on one hand, imperial inclusiveness (the one that celebrates, for instance, the music of its 'internal others', the Roma, the Muslims, the Jews, or the *miserables* of its metropolitan suburbia), while living in the fear of being destroyed by alien influences. Perhaps, we could listen to Shantel's 'multicultural' music in those terms.

Yet I think that there is more in this, or there is also another perspective of analysis, which could depart from an investigation of the musician's imagination as a cultural practice. Shantel encountered those musics whilst travelling: at 'a railroad station in Romania, a highway stop in Greece, an airport terminal in Istanbul, an Arabic Cafe in Tel-Aviv, a taxi stand in Sofia, the back seat in a Mercedes Benz belonging to a Macedonian gypsy king, backstages in London, Paris and Rio de Janeiro.'<sup>6</sup> His imagination of 'rebetiko-Balkan-beat' works, following Ingold, as a 'wayfaring' process continually evolving in his embodied movement to and from place, around places and along paths (Ingold 2011: 148). Mixing and sampling become ongoing 'place-binding' rather than 'place-bound' practices of music-making occupying an enclosed space. They are forged along his trails, always to somewhere else. Shantel's place is narrated and sonified as 'a knot of stories' woven in the lines of his trajectories (Ibid.: 150).

Ever since the Berlin wall fell down continental Europe changed very fast, and, I think, [it] became much more interested in cultural things... There are places like Berlin, for example, which... is located somehow *in the middle* of Europe, which are just in the middle of East and West and there you have a generation of young people, of older people, I mean, you have a mosaic culture. And, of course, myself, in the morning the Berlin wall fell down, I took a chance to visit [for] the first time in my life that mystic area called Bukovina. Bukovina is an area located *between* Romania and Ukraine and this place used to be one of the most colourful, cosmopolitan... societies before World War II. Suddenly, this place got destroyed by nationalism, by Stalinism, and, of course, by human stupidity.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Emphasis mine. Transcribed from DJ Shantel's interview, 15 October 2009, Aarhus, Denmark; <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ar32uqPdJCY>

As a 'wayfarer' Shantel acquires musical experiences while moving along soundscapes that, at the same time, are integrated in his own soundworlds which are imaginarily emplaced 'in the middle': 'in the middle of Europe', 'in the middle of East and West', or 'between Romania and Ukraine'. The positioning 'in the middle' simultaneously defines both his idealised memories of past and present cosmopolitanisms – 'the colourful' prewar city of Czernovitz, his mother's homeland, a post-wall 'mosaic culture' of Berlin, perceived as an emblem of the enlarged, multicultural Europe – and his own diasporic subjectification. Sampling and mixing as 'place-binding' and place-fusion practices unravel along his family's Jewish routes from Eastern Europe, Eastern Mediterranean and the Balkans to Germany. As transtemporal and transpatial subjective imaginaries taking place 'in the middle', they recall what Bhabha termed as the 'third space' of cultural hybridity. 'The intervention of the beyond... which captures something of the estranging sense of the relocation of the home and the world – the unhomeliness – that is the condition of extra-territorial and cross-cultural initiations' (Bhabha 1994: 9). We could perhaps think of this 'third space' as a defining modality of Shantel's creative invention of 'Balkan beat'.

His return, a sort of pilgrimage to the ancestral homelands, is integrated in the knot of stories emplacing his diasporic self in a constant state of movement occurring in memories of uprootedness, while disclosing 'some of the furtive pleasures of exile' (Boym 1998: 500).

It was, like, 1995 to 1996... We drove down from Kiev. It was really an adventure... We took little streets. I found the house of my grandparents. It was a very intense thing. But when I came back to Germany, my whole kind of feeling... I was totally shaken, you know. But I recognised immediately that you cannot rebuild this. Or you cannot, let's say, make a sentimental story out of it. It is finished. You have to find your own way to deal with this – or you leave it, you keep it as a memory (Rigney 2010).

His dream of the once vividly cosmopolitan ancestral homes was dismayed by the bitter realities of fast capitalism in the post-socialist world. Feeling disenchanted, he soon realised his hitherto 'romantic view' of Eastern European countries which have been 'disconnected from their own roots.'

I walked into the old house, smelled familiar smells, the winter apples and samovar-made tea, and was reminded of my past. I went into the garden and rang my mother, in tears. Then a neighbor shouted that I was in the wrong garden. I stopped crying, walked next door, then started wailing all over again (MacLean 2011).

When I arrived there first I thought I would find something very romantic, very authentic. I mean, we have a picture of Eastern Europe, a cliché, a stereotype... we have a kind of romantic view, but today, Eastern Europe is not like that, is not a cliché, is not a stereotype, it is just something which has lost somehow a big part of its own identity. I mean all those countries became very Western-focused, which is natural, in the way that there is a big economic problem, of course, even culture-wise. During the communist era these countries, they got really disconnected from their own roots. So, for myself, when I came back after visiting Bukovina, of course, I was kind of disappointed, because I found out that all the mythos of Bukovina and South-Eastern Europe which I knew from my family, because they were simply born there, is not existing anymore.<sup>8</sup>

Diasporic nostalgia guided his desire to find the ‘lost’ and/or ‘forgotten’ sounds, his own vanishing past. ‘Discovering’ local recordings and musicians became an archaeology of his diasporic origins and routes and, at the same time, an archaeology of the self.

Very quickly, I started to research. I had old records from my grandparents and I took a lot of mine with me when I came back. And I felt that the sound was an old sound. It wasn’t really happening anymore. That kind of music is not so popular in Romania, Ukraine or Balkan countries anymore. Maybe there are some little villages where you can find some great musicians. But it’s not like the [filmmaker] Kusturica stereotype: that is a fantasy. And what I thought I would do is, well – I liked the mythos of the Bukovina as an idea, but I also wanted to be a part of the pop or rock’n’roll circus (Rigney 2010).

However, his dream was not to restore the past, but to create a ‘new sound’ out of it enflaming the enthusiasm of worldwide audiences. Thus,

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<sup>8</sup> Emphasis mine. Transcribed from DJ Shantel's interview, 15 October 2009, Aarhus, Denmark; <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ar32uqPdjcY>

he unearthed ‘Manolis o Hasiklis’, among other popular tunes,<sup>9</sup> which through its osmosis with diverse ‘Balkan’ sounds goes through a process described as ‘genre-bending’ (Cords 2011). It participates in the interpolating soundscapes featuring *Planet Paprika*,<sup>10</sup> a fantastic conglomeration of places, Shantel’s own multicultural paradise where ‘we are all just people’:

My music is a kind of a patchwork... In creating it I try to find a balance between acoustic, analogue and digital elements, combining them to create something soulful. One cannot program music out of a computer. It needs an emotional touch. But there is definitely no master-plan, no recipe... I always start from zero, and that is what makes this job so thrilling (MacLean 2011).

By declaring ‘I am a citizen of the world’, Shantel often struggles to deny any notion of identity and locality refusing thus any nationalisation and localisation of his music and himself. Yet, his musical cosmopolitanism is coauthored in claims of a ‘new’ post-wall supra-national German identity which sanitises the traumas of the past, while imagining new musical cartographies made of memories of places and visions of euphoric togetherness now and then.<sup>11</sup> Although his mother, of Jewish origin, was born in an Austrian refugee camp, Shantel today proudly declares: ‘I am a German musician. My music is an expression of a lifetime’s feeling. It’s a part of the new German culture’ (Cords 2011).

Shantel’s imagination is that of a ‘new’ German/European musician identified as a ‘world citizen’ whose music intimates what Holmes (2009) has described as ‘experimental identity’ in the post-Maastricht pluralist process of European integralism. For Douglas R. Holmes, ‘the imperatives of European integration are inciting experiments, often involving dissonant and unstable forms of consciousness, that defy or exceed familiar categories of analysis [...] Identities are coalescing on the level of

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<sup>9</sup> Shantel has also produced remixes of several Greek urban popular songs, such as ‘Soura kai Mastoura’, ‘Tha Spaso Koupes’, ‘Mangiko’, ‘Fyge ki Ase Me’, and has collaborated with the Thessaloniki-based musician Yiannis Karis.

<sup>10</sup> *Planet Paprika* is the title of his album released by Crammed Discs (2009).

<sup>11</sup> For the counterformation of musical cosmopolitanism and nationalism in music see Turino 2000.

intimate encounters, expressed in obscure and arcane cultural vernaculars, by which experience gains highly pluralistic articulations posing unusual analytical challenges' (Ibid.: 52). Shantel's musical cosmopolitanism appears as a gesture against history defined by the pleasure gained from 'telling my own story' (MacLean 2011) – a story itself inventing his cosmopolitan/diasporic subjectification which, after all, 'is fun' as a play of trails unraveling along memories of multicultural paradises, migrations and returns. It is a successfully marketable story in the contemporary world of music production.

### **Past cosmopolitanisms**

*Slim Gaillard's 'Tee Say Malee' and Yiorgos Batis' 'O Boufetzis'*

Musical cosmopolitanism is, however, neither a recent trend nor a product of the contemporary globalised capitalism. Musical encounters and exchanges have been a defining aspect of the complex life of *rebetiko* song and have creatively challenged its boundaries and norms, as it becomes evident, for instance, in the jazz remake of the Asia Minor (*smyrneiko*) tune 'Ti Se Melei Esenane' [What do you care about?] by Slim Gaillard's quartet released in 1946.<sup>12</sup> The available information on the story of the song and the context of its live recording is rather limited. However, by taking into account aspects of Gaillard's biography, it is perhaps possible to raise a few questions on the place/genre-making processes of his musical imagination.

Slim Gaillard's father was either of German or Greek origin (this is a matter of dispute) and he worked as a steward on a cruise liner.<sup>13</sup> Occasionally, Slim accompanied his father to his cross-Atlantic trips. At the age of twelve, during one of those cruises he was allegedly accidentally left behind on the island of Crete (see Mikul 1999: 60). Having spent six months on the island, around 1928, he worked as a merchant seaman, looking to find his way back home. On the long journey to Detroit (USA) he learned words and phrases of several languages, including Greek,

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<sup>12</sup> The term *smyrneiko* refers to the urban popular song from Smyrna. The song 'Tee Say Malee' is included in the LP *Slim Gaillard and his friends, the absolute Voutest!* '46, Hep Records. It is available on YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9SNVVCpBkXw>

<sup>13</sup> Gaillard's birthplace is also a matter of dispute, located either in Cuba or Florida (USA).

Spanish, Yiddish and Arabic, as a result of his encounters with people of diverse origins. Did he also come across some of the popular tunes that he later ‘jazzified’ in his music? Or, was it Crete where he originally heard the *smyrneiko* song?

During the 1930s Slim Gaillard formed the jazz group ‘Slim and Slam’, which soon became famous for producing several ‘hip jazz’ songs. He became known for his glosopoetic slang invention that he called ‘vout’, improvised in a word-sound play using his voice more as an instrument – known as ‘scat-singing’ – combining original lyrics with self-invented, ‘nonsense’ words and phrasing.<sup>14</sup> Gaillard’s ‘Tee Say Malee’, a fast tempo swing that could be danced in a 1930s ballroom, is one of his several adaptations of ‘ethnic’ popular tunes forged in the cosmopolitan (or, in Gaillard’s terms, ‘globe-o-vouty’)<sup>15</sup> encounters of an Afro-American musician occurring in the metropolitan centres of the New World (see Polack 2011). Interestingly, Gaillard’s adaptation failed to attract the interest of *rebetiko* music scholars and was only recently mentioned in journalistic publications and various web fora as a phenomenon of ingenious hybridity (see Savvopoulos 2012).

In this New World, in New York City, one could also enjoy Marika Papagika, a renowned singer of the *café-aman* repertory during the 1920s and 1930s touring and performing in various venues of the Greek diaspora, whose voice thrived in the early recordings of urban popular songs made in USA. Papagika moved from her birthplace, the island of Kos (Aegean) to Alexandria (Egypt) and from there, in 1915, she emigrated to the US. She married Gus (Kostas), a musician and the owner of ‘Marika’ nightclub, which was frequented by a cosmopolitan clientele attracted to Papagika’s voice (see Frangos 1994). Between 1918 and 1929 she made almost 232 recordings (Vernon 2008). Some of the orchestral accompaniments of her recordings were directed by Nat (Nathaniel) Shilkret, then an active arranger, director and composer in the American music business. As a ‘director for light music’ for Victor Talking Machine (later RCA Victor) record company, he made numerous recordings and collaborated with almost every musical star of his era. Was it through the

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<sup>14</sup> See Gaillard’s ‘Vout-O-Reenee Dictionary’ published by Atomic Records (1946).

<sup>15</sup> ‘Globe-o-vouty’ is a word invented by Gaillard, which, according to his dictionary, means ‘world’, <http://www.pocreations.com/vout.html>

music industries' networks that Gaillard came across Papagika's recording and enjoyed it so much that he decided to make a jazz adaptation? Or, did he accidentally hear the tune in one of the Greek diasporic venues?

There is also the reverse phenomenon that is the adaptation of the gospel/spiritual song 'How dry I am' by the famous *rebetiko* musician Yiorghos Batis in his song 'O Boufetzis' [The buffet man], recorded in 1935. 'How dry I am' became famous in Irving Berlin's recording under the title 'Near Future' (1919), yet its tune is probably much older.<sup>16</sup> The American song gained popularity during the alcohol prohibition era (1920–1933), while illegal 'boozing' was prospering, as a humorous song of 'dryness', i.e. alcohol deprivation. According to the limited available information, Batis never travelled to the US (see Kounadis 2012). Besides his extended military service (from 1909 to 1919), he spent most of his life in the port city of Piraeus, during the years of its demographic explosion following the Asia Minor war, also mythicised as the legendary topos of *rebetiko* bohemian underworld. How did Batis come to know the tune? Did he happen to hear it by the 'dry' British soldiers who embarked together with the Allies on the seaport of Piraeus during the first World War? Was it though an accidental listening to one of its recordings or, perhaps, though its various appropriations in popular film soundtracks also then screened in the Greek metropolis?

### **Afterword: on ethnographies of musical imagination?**

The formulated questions above are largely inspired by critical writings on globalism seen as a panoramic discourse that stresses the importance of economic, cultural or otherwise global forces in accelerating the – by now a cliché – 'space-time compression' (see Harvey 1989).<sup>17</sup> For Tsing, 'the task of understanding planet-wide interconnections requires locating and specifying globalist projects and dreams, with their contradictory as well as charismatic logics and their messy as well as effective encounters and translations' (Tsing 2000: 330). The three examples discussed here are

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<sup>16</sup> There is a recording of 'O Boufetzis' available on YouTube introduced by the original American version proving the similarities between the two tunes. See <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S91FFscVm80>

<sup>17</sup> For a theoretical discussion on globalisation and cosmopolitanism in music see Stokes 2007; White 2012.

addressed as phenomena of *rebetiko* creative and playful ‘wayfaring’ in the world of musics that suggest the reconsideration of essentialised emplacements of the genre by looking closer at the life-worlds of its various agents, and the circulation of its recordings as disembodied mediations with often unpredictable destinies. They invite us to move beyond the globalist rhetorical framework of cultural hegemony zooming into the nuanced microhistories of individual soundworlds, as well as the songs’ encounters themselves, constantly woven into the people’s experiences, sensibilities, intimacies. To that extent, they challenge us to explore processes of musical cosmopolitanism in people’s imagination.<sup>18</sup>

The more or less random and coincidental encounters they narrate are, perhaps, more than exceptions, or more than bizarre phenomena of otherwise impossible contacts. They are suggestive of the intricacies of our interpretations and the possible risks we take when privileging global music politics and commoditisation over the study of the subjectivities involved in the workings of musical flows and hybridities, by often treating them as passive producers of capitalist aesthetics of interconnectedness. At the same time, the three song-stories challenge culturalist conceptualisations of genres and music truisms (‘black American’, ‘Greek oriental’, ‘Western capitalist’, ‘multicultural European’, ‘Balkan gypsy’, ‘urban lumpen’) reminding us of the shifting performativity and multiplicity of ‘genre’ itself. Such appropriations, remixes or adaptations, primarily occur in the musicians’ affective worlds, in the culturally-sensitive practices of improvisation, inspiration and the desire to translate and integrate diverse and unforeseen musical experiences into one’s own stories.

While embedded in particular historical moments, the *rebetiko* cosmopolitanisms described above, at the same time, evade history, generating randomness and irregularities that undermine master narratives and cartographies of the world of musics, or history itself. We could perhaps, therefore, think of creative imagination – with its pleasures and playful experiments, as the starting point for the study of the eventful poetics of constantly deterritorialising genres and songs, of digital or analogue cosmopolitanisms, occurring either within the racing capitalism of the New World or the late-liberal multiculturalism of the New Europe.

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<sup>18</sup> See, for instance, Feld’s ethnography on jazz cosmopolitanism in Ghana (2012).

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Iva Nenić

***World music in the Balkans and the politics of  
(un)belonging***<sup>1</sup>

The distinction between cultural traditions and legacies perceived as ‘Western’ and ‘Eastern’, whether real or imagined, had a substantial impact in the development of contemporary *world music* in Serbia and throughout the Balkans since the 1990s (Čolović 2006; Nenić 2010). Historically, narratives, values and interpretations surrounding this ‘West vs. East’ dichotomy as well as ‘West/East vs. local’ set of social and cultural relations, changed considerably and had no fixed or single meaning, due to various ruling ideological formations that brought profound changes in the context of the tumultuous history of the Balkan societies. However, since the nineteenth-century formation of the nation-states in the Balkans and their gradual modernisation, Western features were predominantly presented as progressive and more desirable, while, on the other hand, Eastern (Oriental) elements were perceived in the dominant cultural and political discourses as detrimental remnants of the past Ottoman rule.

In terms of the symbolic geography, ‘Orient’ served as an ambiguous construct representing alien, exotic and sometimes despised (backward and ‘old-fashioned’) cultural Other (Said 1977), at times seen as a threat to the establishment and protection of ‘pure’ national cultures in the Balkan peninsula. Yet it was an inextricable part of the Balkan culture and history that was and still is hard to erase from collective memory and everyday enactment of certain cultural practices that persisted despite the efforts to thoroughly modernise Balkan societies. The ‘insertion’ of this foreign

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element within the bodies of allegedly ‘pure’ national cultures directly relates to the very ambiguity of the Balkans in terms of an imagined sociocultural space. As Maria Todorova puts it, this position could be described as ‘in-betweenness of the Balkans’ that draws precisely from the ‘East-West dichotomy’ (Todorova 2009: 18), and it also relates to the conceiving of Orient in terms of a ‘nesting Orientalism’ (Bakić-Hayden and Hayden 1992: 4), namely a tendency to view regions, cultures and religions ‘to the south and east (...) as more conservative or primitive’ (Ibid).

The distinction West/East translated into discourses surrounding musical practices as *alaturca* vs. *alafringa* (it. *alla turca*, literally ‘in Turkish style’; *alla franga* – in Western or European manner; for further discussion see Pettan 2007: 371–372 et passim): while the *alaturca* concept referred to the overall influence of Oriental culture and music within Balkan cultures,<sup>2</sup> it also signifies the common heritage of Balkan people(s), a shared reference point that nowadays – in the context of rediscovery of the common sentiments, intentions and goals taking place in the post-Yugoslav space, could serve as a basis for the ‘preservation and renewal of human musical resources’ (Pettan 2007: 375), and, if one may add, for the wider rekindling of the forgotten or ignored parts of shared collective memory in the context of reestablishing cultural and other links beyond national borders of the Western Balkans, and the Balkans in general. The so-called ‘Oriental’ features of music were commonly associated with the Ottoman legacy in Balkan cultures throughout the twentieth century, and even the most basic musical and stylistic elements, such as an augmented second or melismatic singing were often essentialised and turned into embodiments of loathed cultural Other. Sometimes the ubiquity and popularity of those ‘foreign’ elements led to scholarly quests to find and document their ‘true’ (e.g. national or racial/Slavic) source and disclaim

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<sup>2</sup> The negative connotations of *alaturca* expression, and more broadly, of the Orient as a cultural construct, are related to a purist search for the intact or ‘most authentic’ national tradition, characteristic of several historical ideological formations: the establishment of the national cultures in young nation-states of the Balkans and the reshaping of the tradition towards more ‘Western’ features during the nineteenth century; the ‘return’ of the threatening cultural Other in terms of ubiquity of Serbian and Balkan pop-folk polygenre named ‘turbo folk’, based on tunes, scales and citations of popular music of various Eastern origin in the late twentieth century.

their Oriental origin. Certain musical traits were presented as if they had not stemmed solely or originally from Turkish culture during the longue durée of the Ottoman rule in the Balkans: for example, Bosnian scholar Vlado Milošević argued that highly ornamented and melismatic singing was not only typical of Islamic musical traditions, but also of the Byzantine, Serbian and Greek Orthodox chants, boldly concluding that the Oriental traces in the folklore of Balkan peoples are a product of belonging to the ‘Levantine circle’ (Milošević 1964: 13). Milošević was not alone in limiting the scope of possible or real Oriental influences: some prominent members of the early generation of folk music researchers who established the canon of national musical cultures in the Balkans were also questioning the origin of the elements of Ottoman legacy in music.<sup>3</sup> Croatian scholar Franjo Kuhač claimed that the augmented second<sup>4</sup> was not a typical trait of Arabic and Turkish music, but an authentic feature of ‘Slavic minor scale’ and the music of the Southern Slavs: ‘not knowing that the augmented second is a attribute of Slavic music, the Turks and Slavs of the Mohammedan faith utilise it abundantly, reasoning that it is the most suitable expression of the melancholy and the courtship [*ašikovanje*]’ (Kuhač 1898: [19] 193).

### **East, West and world music in the Balkans**

The attitude towards the Oriental cultural influence in the Western Balkans became an issue once more at the very end of the twentieth century when, after the violent break of the SFR Yugoslavia, each of the newly formed nation-states sought to rekindle its ‘forgotten’ or ‘most authentic’ musical and cultural heritage. Singer of Neo-byzantine and Serbian Orthodox chants, Pavle Aksentijević, for example, regarded

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<sup>3</sup> For a detailed and critical discussion of representational discourses of local scholars regarding *sevdalinka* song, see Pennanen 2010.

<sup>4</sup> In urban Balkan traditions, the melodic step of an augmented second is indeed often a trace of a *maqam* scale: many popular songs of urban origin most probably are reworkings of the popular tunes of Oriental origin, and therefore, they represent the shared regional inheritance from the period of the Ottoman Empire. However, one must be cautious not to fall into the trap of essentialism and to project some ‘cultural essence’ on a simple musical feature that solely (that is, isolated from the intramusical relations of a given piece/repertoire and also wider extramusical context) does not represent a pure embodiment of some unchanging and predetermined Culture, whether foreign or one’s own.

‘Oriental elements’ in music as something that degraded Serbian cultural heritage, and many members of the middle upper class in Serbia during the nineties condemned the popular music genre of *turbo folk* precisely on the same grounds (Đurković 2004; Nenić 2005). Yet one cannot pin down the conceptual network of ‘West’ and ‘East’ as a fixed set of images, associations and attitudes, since the meanings fluctuate in overlapping neo-traditional and *world music* genres that occupy the same (conceptual) space.

The meaning of these labels also changed considerably in the course of the last two decades, with the rise of the *world music* subculture in the post-Yugoslav space. *World music* scenes in the newly-established countries of former Yugoslavia emerged around two separate ideological pillars during the nineties: one direction led to the revival of rural folk music as an emblem of regional and national identity, and another towards blending of ‘strange and forgotten’ music sounds with contemporary music genres, in a fashion typical of transnational *world music* superculture at the time. Both trends were actually in line with the dominant politics of Balkan post-communist states, where the processes of reinvigorating separate and distinct national and ethnic identities by reaching to the past, also included the competition in terms of being the first to sell out the image of ‘exotic Balkanness’ to the West and the rest of the world. However, as *world music* cultural formations in the Balkans initially did not belong to the mainstream culture (and frequently opposed models and values of the 1990s regimes), world music movements took a different approach towards musical traditions and their various elements than dominant cultural mechanisms did. The music – be it ‘ethnic’, traditional or simply old, was constructed in terms of authenticity and celebrated as the *exemplum primum* of the distant past, the often romanticised *long-ago* that had more appeal to the audience than the more recent historical periods right before and during the rise of communism.

During the last decade, a new generation of neo-traditional artists and amateur performers turned their attention to the research and promotion of regional urban and folk music with a visible Oriental influence. As a part of the region’s historical legacy, this kind of music was underrepresented in the early days of local *world music* rise, as the scenes were chiefly focused on the authenticity, universality and ancientness of the village folk traditions. In contrast to that, a performative claim that ‘our music’ is actually all historical and contemporary music enjoyed by

intertwined communities of the Balkans, has recently gained much popularity among the regional world music audiences. This change of attitude is linked to the revivals of local traditions such as Bosnian *sevdalinka*, popular songs from Vranje region in Serbia, Jewish musical heritage (to name a few), or to the new fusions of local traditional folk music with middle- and far-Eastern sound that, for example, explore mutual grounds of modality and the *maqams*. If a rough periodisation could be made, the short history of Serbian and, partly, ex-Yugoslav *world music* formations could be divided into three periods. The initial phase in the mid-1990s was characterised by a search for the roots of national culture, with a substantial focus on rural folk traditions. At the time, *world music* scene functioned as a subcultural space, and to an extent, also as a form of counterculture. The early 2000s brought an appropriation of *world music* by the mechanisms of dominant culture, resulting in the commodification and the emergence of a prominent concept of *ethno music* that drew heavily on popular arrangements of rural folk music traditions. The last and ongoing phase of *world music* development led to a tighter networking of *world music* scenes in the Balkans. This fragile, yet thriving transregional network functions as a multicultural and intercultural space where not only musical forms of rural traditions, but also other, previously neglected parts of musical historical legacy such as the urban music with visible Oriental influence, receive more attention.

Starting approximately from the turn of the century, the otherwise insulated world music initiatives and industries of former Yugoslav countries opened up to collaboration. Individual performers began to work together and both well-known alternative festivals and newly formed world music venues drafted artists from the neighbouring countries, under the slogan of a common Balkan heritage and shared passion for the rediscovery of the roots. Two processes are at work here: linking across the national borders of ex-Yugoslav cultural space, with the institutions such as *Ring Ring* festival (Belgrade, Serbia), *Druga godba* and *Terminal* festivals (Ljubljana, Slovenia), *Ohridsko leto* festival (Ohrid, Macedonia), *Ethnoambient* (Solin, Croatia) that promote transregional cooperation, and bottom-up networking that involved both various artistic collaborations and the growing interest of local audiences for *world music* and ethno artists from the neighboring countries (for example, the recent and ongoing collaboration of Bosnian *sevdalinka* performer Damir Imamović and

Serbian singer of traditional music Svetlana Spajić). This newly formed interest actually marks a subtle, but important turn in the dynamics of the *world music* scenes of the region. The trope of ancientness and the affirmation of national identity in music declined, as they became just a few among several ideological discourses of Balkan *world music* socio-cultural formation. The change in the audiences' taste and the official politics of media apparatus gradually redirected the attention towards the parts of music heritage that displayed the traces of multicultural past of the region. That change was marked by several overlapping processes:

- the process in which the hegemonised forms of local, regional, national folk and post-folk music are challenged and redefined, in the passage from the economically and politically shattered late post-communism to the present-day neoliberal economic and political transition;
- the ongoing process of reconnecting the peoples of the former Yugoslavia on the grounds of shared historical instances of popular folk music (that had been neglected during the last two decades in order to affirm separate national cultures);
- the process of making visible musics of diverse ethnic and other minority groups.

All the aforementioned processes rely on the idea of a shared cultural experience and sometimes take the form of social activism by promoting the ideology of multiculturalism or even taking the side of the nascent political options, such as the New Left movement in several former Yugoslav states. This emerging structural juncture of musical practices, new cultural sentiments and worldviews opposes both the mainstream politics and the dominant paradigm of musical 'rediscovery of the roots' across the national borders in the Balkans. In order to describe this change more accurately, one may employ Raymond Williams' famous coinage 'the structure of feeling', the term chosen over more convenient phrases such as 'world-view' or 'ideology' in order to describe those impalpable but effective meanings, values and behaviors that are actively put into practice and made a part of a shared social experience (Williams [1977] 2009: 132). The 'structure of feeling' is an active process of choosing and living certain elements of social and cultural life characteristic of a generation or a period, 'a specific structure of particular linkages,

particular emphases and suppressions' (Ibid.: 134). So the recent turn in the growing sphere of Balkan world music, where different genres of traditional music that contain more 'Oriental elements' began to outpace previously popular rural traditions, materialises specific version of the Balkans-as-interculturalism, that stands in opposition to the dominant ideologies of insular national cultures. As such, Balkan world music network indeed carries the seeds of an emerging 'structure of feeling', linking altered cultural conceptions of 'Us' and close and distant 'Others'.

### **New approach to the past – new visions of the future**

#### *Novi sevdah*

The transregional popularity of the Sarajevo-based singer Damir Imamović and his 'Sevdah takht' trio could serve as a good reference point for the new affective turn towards previously despised Oriental elements within Balkan music heritage. The rekindled popularity of *sevdah*, in terms of the contemporary reworking of *sevdalinka* genre, sprang during the last decade in Bosnia and very soon spread all over the Balkans. The performers of *novi sevdah*, as it is popularly labeled, belong to a new generation of traditional music performers that extensively research *sevdalinka*, pursue long-term artistic projects and sometimes also strive to do social activism through music. Imamović performs *sevdalinka*, Bosnian and Balkan popular urban song whose melody, arrangements and lyrics express or bring about a concept called *sevdah*: the complex emotional state of intertwined love, longing and sorrow.

Damir Imamović comes from the family of *sevdah* performers, as his grandfather Zaim was a highly popular singer of *sevdalinka* in socialist Yugoslavia, and father Nedžad, an excellent instrumentalist, also took a part in the development of the genre. Damir's *Sevdah takht* trio (with Serbian bass player Ivan Mihailović and Croatian percussionist Nenad Kovačić) plays contemporary *sevdah* or 'fusion sevdah' as they sometimes call it. Their music inherits traditional styles of *sevdalinka* by paying meticulous attention to the smallest stylistic details especially in Damir's vocal renditions, but also re-frames the songs by adding careful cross-genre imprints (jazz improvisation, folk fusion, guitar rock, blues) to classic *sevdalinka* repertoire (Plate 1). In a recent conversation, Damir stated that, although *sevdah* is most often associated with the Muslim people of Bosnia, it does not exclusively belong to a single ethnic community, since this trend

of claiming the sole rights over the music became particularly strong during and right after the 1990s. Instead, it is the music of socially deprived classes and groups, ‘the music of humiliated and insulted’, to use his exact phrase.

Plate 1. *Damir Imamović performing alongside Hašim Muharemović, a renowned Bosnian saz player (sazlija), performer and the author of many sevdalinka songs. Photo by Almin Žrno.*



Imamović acknowledges different historical shapes that the *sevdalinka* tradition took, from love songs with a strong Oriental features, to folkish popular songs ‘for the people’ popularised by state radio and television during the communism, to present-day *new sevdah*, that structurally comes close to the status of similar *world music* genres already rooted in some folk traditions, such as *fado*. *Sevdah* is thus no longer a single genre (if it ever was), but a layered body of overlapping historical variants, put into place by the processes of selective tradition that successfully combine and alter the idioms of ‘Oriental’, ‘Occidental’ and ‘ours’ in different sociocultural formations. That being said, the labels of ‘Oriental’, ‘Western’ or ‘Balkan’ still play an important role in *sevdah* tradition and also serve as powerful

social and cultural lenses that have a considerable impact on the imagining of 'Us' and 'Others' in post-Yugoslav societies. But, their meaning is relational, changing and also able to be charged with different ideological contents. As Damir Imamović points out, when musicians from the West play with him, they frequently highlight his 'Oriental' identity in music, while to the Eastern musicians' ears he sounds 'too white' or 'too tempered' (Nenić 2013). But the audiences of the former Yugoslavia that today listen to new *sevdalinka* do not highlight either its 'Oriental' or 'Westernised' features: rather, they regard it as a form of shared regional legacy that is also a strong and nowadays readily evoked symbol of the happier and not-too-distant past.

*Sevdalinka*, just like some similar Balkan forms (urban songs from Vranje, Serbia; urban *chalga* music of the Balkans) often carries the traces of Turkish and Arabic *maqamat*, and sometimes the structures of maqams such as *hijaz* and *nikriz* are easily discernible. In order to disassociate *sevdalinka* from present-day ethnic appropriations, Imamović first turned to the less known or even deliberately neglected part of the *sevdah* heritage, and then started to experiment with the traditional forms firstly by trying 'Western harmonies', and then by exploring the *maqam* potentials of *sevdalinka*. However, both approaches proved not to be sufficient, so Damir came to the conclusion that the Balkan *sevdah* tradition is 'a kind of *maqam* thinking within the tempered context' (Nenić 2013). This kind of interplay between the tropes of East and West is evident in the contrast between the name and structure of his music group: while *takht* is a term for Middle-Eastern ensemble consisting of 2 to 5 musicians, Imamović's trio comprises acoustic guitar (instead of Bosnian *saz*), electric bass and a whole variety of world's percussions. But the choice of *takht* is not merely a return to Eastern roots of *sevdah* music: the structure of trio and the way music is conceived also has to do with something very local, namely with the return to the chamber atmosphere of *sevdalinka* before its transformation into local pub (*kafana*) song in the interwar period.

By insisting on *sevdah*'s intercultural roots and the equal importance of its various historical layers, Damir Imamović's *Sevdah Takht* creates a unique reading of well-known local tradition, a reappropriation charged with a new ideological content. For a large part of its audience, *new sevdah* springs from the gap between the bitter reality of 'deprived' people of post-Yugoslav nation states and the strong sentiments evoked by the shared

popular culture of the Balkans frequently associated with the 'happier times' of the Yugoslav socialism. In their reception, Orient is no longer a synonym for worn out or despised spectre of a foreign culture that had violently invaded our own. This turn surely has seeds of something new, as the fear of Oriental features lingered throughout the twentieth century: Damir stresses out that some of the early *sevdalinka* sub-genres were put aside in the sixties and seventies, precisely because of their 'Oriental' character. For example, uneven rhythms were frequently erased, although they seemed to be an important part of *sevdah* legacy (Nenić 2013). In the early music folklore studies, uneven rhythmical patterns and the intervals such as the augmented second were treated in the prevailing positivist discourse of the time as musical features that denoted a direct link to Oriental or Ottoman music. However, the ascent of *world music* in the Balkans during the 1990s gave a new glow to the aforementioned elements, turning them into something uniquely local, but with a hint of an internal exoticism that still resides in the popular trope of 'Balkan music' as an eclectic 'melting pot' of musical cultures. Finally, a new ideological and material turn, as practiced by Damir Imanović, consists of acknowledging and praising the links with the Oriental traditions, but at the same time discovering the abundance of local (Bosnian and neighboring) traditions and the re-polishing of their unique and less known features.

The interplay of old and new tropes of West, East and local is especially evident in Sevdah Takht's popular song and music video 'Razbolje se lijepa Hajrija' [The lovely Hayriya was taken ill]. Released on Imamović's ninth and the band's first album *Sevdah takht* (2012), the song and the accompanying artistic video quickly went viral and gained much popularity throughout the region. The song about the girl Hajrija who is tended by three young lads has been a part of the *sevdalinka* repertoire for a long time. A famous interpretation of the song was recorded in 1976 by Himzo Polovina, Bosnian popular singer, composer and devoted collector of songs belonging to the *sevdalinka* repertoire. His interpretation echoes the character of then-popular song interpretation style nurtured by radio institutions with the singing in soft voice and modest use of vibrato at the end of the verse. Instrumental accompaniment is predominantly in minor mode and there are changes in meter between 2/4 and 3/4 measure. In Sevdah Takht's rendition, the underlining harmonies are completely

changed when compared to the versions that were popular before the 1990s: while Himzo Polovina's song leans toward well-established practice of radio arrangements of folk songs, Imamović's accompaniment echoes the modal atmosphere of *maqam*, thus evoking both the neglected history of *sevdalinka* and the present-day popularity of Oriental and middle-Eastern music. More specifically, the melody derives from the *maqam hijaz*, with the characteristic augmented second between hyperfinalis and the third step of the scale: a feature that is both in popular and scholarly discourses often cited as an epitome of the Oriental influence on the Balkan folk music (Plate 2). The even metrical distribution is transformed into the complexity of changing rhythmical patterns within the 8/8 bar, and the rhythmical division of 3 + 2 + 2, sometimes labeled as 'Oriental' in musicians' jargon, is highlighted (Imamović 2013). Singing also changed from the soft *naïveté* of Polovina to Damir's tighter vocal rendition, achieved by an Eastern technique called singing 'on the hard palate', according to the singer (Nenić 2013).

Plate 2. *Members of Sevdah Takht performing in Split (Croatia) in 2013. Photo courtesy of Damir Imamović / Facebook.*



Instead of a typically Yugoslav version of the oriental modernism characteristic of the *sevdalinka* repertoire before the 1990s, Imamović's interpretation comes close to a postmodern bricolage, where the tropes of Oriental and Western are infused with a new meaning, while stepping back in favour of celebrating the locality and hidden potentials of ideologically different readings of *sevdalinka*. However, not only are the melody and the arrangement significantly transformed, but the changes in tone and mood also take place in the overall cultural pretext of the work, transforming its ideological basis into a statement of contemporary rendering of tradition and, at the same time, the *re-reading* of the very same tradition in non-canonical manner. The playful sexual overtones already present in the original lyrics are additionally highlighted by the visual means, as in the music video, the role of Hajrija is cast as an urban girl who walks, rests and does fire *poi* art.<sup>5</sup> Her intense stare into the camera and the way she is dressed and styled suggest that she belongs to an urban alternative subculture; moreover, her mimic and style suggest also an identity out of the traditional gender patterns, the identity that might be perceived as queer or even post-gender. So this 'new vision' of female sexuality and identity radically breaks with the patriarchal trope of humble pretty girls, and also shows that the 'postmodern' identities, sometimes mocked or despised as imports from the West, go along well with 'our' heritage.

I shall conclude by briefly returning to some of the remarks previously discussed. The tropes or constructs of 'Eastern', 'Western' and 'local' and their employment in discourses surrounding musical practices of the Balkans might seem elusive and hard to pin down, in contrast to the common idea, found both in non-critical scholarly interpretations and in everyday discourses, that the divisions between 'East and West' are easily drawn, both in cultural and musical terms. However, the elusiveness of the concepts is not a problem of ethnography (or a product of poor theory, for

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<sup>5</sup> [Lovely Hayriya was taken ill / Beneath a lilac and a walnut tree.  
All the young lords visited in turn / But three young gallants kept on coming.  
The first one told her: / 'Hayra, does it hurt?!' / The second: 'I'd suffer instead of you!' / The third: 'I'd die for you!'  
Lovely Hayriya replied: / 'Neither suffer nor die for me, / Take off that shirt and lie beside me! / Seems like I'd be feeling better'.]  
(Translation partially based on 'A green pine...', E. D. Goy, 1990; Source: Damir imamović's Facebook account.)

that matter), but a consequence of the fact that such discursive constructions tend to get anchored in a prevailing ideology while at the same time the actual social practices nurture several competing meanings that are overshadowed by a dominant metaphor, and therefore sometimes omitted from the 'official' cultural and academic accounts of music. My case study, envisioned as a sketch of a recent historical turn that takes place in world music formation throughout the post-Yugoslav space, hopefully shows that the imagery of East and West is evoked by both relying and contesting the common cultural habitus, when different readings of 'Us', 'Others' and 'Others-as-us' create a new ideological point not only for reshaping the well-known music such as *sevdalinka*, but also for reenacting different identities and affections not confined to the solitary spaces of post-war national cultures. Hence the metaphorical play of '(un)belonging': I believe that this new turn, this budding 'structure of feeling' (Williams 1977) within the *world music* network in post-Yugoslav space, weaves a new tapestry of both old and much-worn tropes as well as the new ones, thus allowing new political, identitarian and cultural possibilities or 'realities' for the people of the Balkans.

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Jelena Jovanović and Sanja Ranković

**Reception of Serbian traditional rural singing in  
‘the West’, ‘the East’ and beyond: the experiences of  
neo-traditional ensembles from Belgrade<sup>1</sup>**

This chapter is an attempt to contribute to the latest research trends in European ethnomusicology by looking into the issue of a relationship between the terms *music* and *familiarity* (Stobart 2013). Stobart offers an innovative approach to this issue in the light of a direct experience in intercultural contacts and intercultural listening from the perspective of researchers and performers of traditional Balkan music. This topic concerns with the aspects of reception of *familiar* or *unfamiliar sounds* of Serbian rural vocal music, depending on the cultural milieu in which they have been presented.

Since the 1980s, there has been a growing interest for performances of traditional rural songs in urban conditions (Nenić 2009), especially for their concert performance (Åkesson 2006: 3). In this respect, the neo-traditional vocal ensembles have played a decisive role since they, according to Tamara Livingston, follow a concept of music revivals defined as ‘social movements which strive to restore and preserve traditional musical systems believed to be disappearing or completely relegated to the past and which are therefore to be brought back from archive and collective memory’ (Nenić 2009: 73; Zakić and Nenić 2012: 170). This tendency was reinforced in many countries during the 1990’s ‘with the rise of identity politics’ (Stobart 2013: 117). In Serbia, or to be precise, in Belgrade, this type of activity commenced with the foundation of a female vocal group ‘Paganke’ [Pagan women (1983)], while

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traditional rural/country singing has also earned substantial popularity thanks to the work of singing group 'Moba' [Husking bee (since 1993)], as well as the Ethnomusicology Department at 'Mokranjac' Music School in Belgrade (the establishment of which, in 1995, introduced traditional singing into the framework of Serbian educational system). Both authors of this chapter played important roles in these developments. Together, we founded the singing ensemble 'Moba', remaining its members and artistic directors until the present day, while we also participated in creating a curriculum for traditional singing to be studied a high school subject. Sanja Ranković also established the Ethnomusicology Department at 'Mokranjac' and became its first teacher; she remains active with the School as a performance instructor. Moreover, she has been a Professor of traditional singing at the Belgrade Faculty of Music since 2011; in 2015 this subject became compulsory for all ethnomusicology students.

Since we, as performers, are in 'a relationship to the body of music / the style *and* the process / the movement' (Åkesson 2006: 8) and, in turn, these are 'part of this process themselves', this study is based on our 'insider' viewpoint. Also, this chapter is a contribution to other, relatively recently established sub-disciplines: *ethnography of performance* and *ethnography of experience* (Kisliuk 2008: 193).

The ensemble 'Moba' gathers together women and girls with university education. Three of them are ethnomusicologists (two of them hold a PhD degree in ethnomusicology), one member holds a PhD in ethnology and anthropology, another one is an ethnomusicology student, whereas other members come from different walks of life. On the other hand, the vocal ensemble of 'Mokranjac' music school consists of female students aged 15–23, belonging to different social classes and coming from Belgrade and other parts of Serbia.

'Moba' usually performs in small groups (2–6 singers), sometimes accompanied by one or two instrumentalists. When performing abroad, 'Mokranjac' school ensemble usually gathers 5 to 14 singers and instrumentalists. The repertoire of both ensembles comprises songs that belong to traditional rural culture, preserved by being orally transmitted to the present day. The concert programmes of both groups include the songs of chronologically older and younger rural vocal layer originating from all Balkan regions where the Serbs live, or used to live. Both groups make efforts to faithfully interpret these songs, that is, as close as possible

to the original model. The orientation of ensembles that are the subject of discussion here, as Iva Nenić succinctly explains, 'requires some previous listening experience and a profound acquaintance with a folk song's aesthetics' (Nenić 2009: 72). Several ethno-musicological studies reported on the activities of 'Moba' (see, for example, Mijatović 2003; Jovanović 2005), especially an article dedicated to 'heuristic traits of the concepts of traditional music and dance in contemporary Serbian culture' (Zakić & Rakočević 2012). The importance of the group's engagement for public presentations of Serbian culture abroad was well noticed by linguists (see Ratković 2013).

Beside the musical events that they organise in Serbia, the vocal ensembles 'Moba' and 'Mokranjac' also present their repertoire abroad. Since the artistic directors of both ensembles are ethnomusicologists, a deliberate attention is paid to the educational side of their performances so that the audiences may have an insight into a vividly heterogeneous musical images of Serbian rural vocal practice. Their programmes are conceived with an intention to be at the same time informative (i.e. to present characteristic vocal dialects and forms of vocal practice) and attractive, so that their dynamics may contribute to forcibleness of certain styles and examples, following either the principle of contrast or similarity. That implies that songs of various character and musical texture, including semantics, ethos, and emotional tension, are combined in a concert programme. It is customary that a song consisting of chords based on the interval of second is followed by melodies/tunes in which harmonies based on the intervals of thirds and fifths prevail. Relying on the pitch of specific songs as a criterion when creating concert programs is of secondary importance: the predominantly high-pitched songs are usually performed either at the climax of the concert or at its end, but sometimes even at the very beginning of the concert, with respect to the entirety of the concert programme.

The duration of the performance is changeable, depending on the organiser's requirements; it can last from 10 to 90 minutes (compare to Ober 2007: 72). In order to achieve a greater comprehensiveness of the programme during the longer performances of both ensembles, instrumental music is inserted between two *a capella* performances, alongside dances accompanied by singing or playing instruments; moreover, the 'Mokranjac' ensemble achieves additional contrast and

enhances the attractiveness of its stage performances by wearing different folk costumes.

The act of uprooting rural vocal practice from its ritual context and original habitat in order to present it on the stage resulted in the fact that specific traditional texts become exposed to the audience for evaluation. The very fact that in the case of neo-traditional ensembles, the primary way of presentation is a stage performance, and not the original context in which the songs had originated, implies conforming to formal requirements of concert performances regarding the overall concept, duration, the use of traditional costumes etc. All of these are aimed at maintaining a better communication with the audience, as well as meeting their expectations with respect to the type of repertoire.

We will now focus on the issue of reception of the repertoire that the aforementioned ensembles present abroad, that is, to the members of other national, ethnic and in particular, cultural matrixes. It is commonplace that the issue of aesthetics of music in some cultures actually corresponds with the issue of cultural constructions, and so is the fact that aesthetic appraisal and valuation stem from the social and cultural environment, hence the musical expressions and experiences of *familiar* or *unfamiliar* are also socially constructed (Stobart 2013: 111, 118, 119). It is also shown that certain learnt perceptive dispositions, including different bodily responses and hearing habits (Ibid.: 124, 126, 127) participate in different responses to the music. On the basis of both positive and negative experiences that the two ensembles had while abroad, it is possible to discern what other cultures recognised as ‘culturally unfamiliar sounds’ (Stobart 2013: 112), that is, ‘desirable’ or *culturally correct* (Ober 2007: 73). When the listeners cannot recognise certain expression patterns, it may provoke the feeling of insecurity and disorientation, further leading to a negative perception (Ibid.: 110). It is also interesting to what extent the grasping of musical messages from other culture is possible and which segment of Serbian vocal practice is familiar to whom. Moreover, much more complex issues could be raised in relation to ‘agency, opportunities, motivations of the listeners, identity, power, politics, ideology, and gender’ (Ibid.: 110), however these exceed the scope of this chapter.

Since we are discussing intercultural contacts here, a fundamental question to be raised is related to the possibilities of surmounting cultural

and musical barriers, as well as to the permeability of the barriers in the case of Serbian rural vocal tradition (compare to Zakić 2012: 1). On the basis of the selected case studies, we will present the ways in which Serbian vocal practice, as a part of Balkan musical tradition, communicates within other cultural matrixes in Western and Eastern Europe and in the Balkans.

The questions thus raised address an issue of *aesthetic valuation* within the framework of traditional music, valuation parameters, as well as the manner of pronouncing the ultimate *value judgement*. Traditional music performed in concerts implies the relationship between the performer and the audience in the same context as any other musical genre. Contemporary studies in aesthetics and communication consider every musical or artistic event as a communicative act that ultimately pronounces the aesthetic judgment as an intellectual category. A positive or negative judgment with respect to a performance of traditional music arises. The aesthetic evaluation made by the listeners is the result of a specific interrelation that is established among the properties of the musical form, the artist's specific inspiration, artist's performing skills and the audience's own experience. It is necessary to identify and define *aesthetic experiences* as indicators of responses to a certain musical text (Đemidok 1984: 56) in order to enable a listener to make an aesthetic valuation of a specific traditional musical text. In this case, the aesthetic experience can be measured by describing certain affective gestures and emotional responses and pronouncement of listener's verbal, aesthetic judgments. The cornerstone of this approach is Meyer's discourse on emotional response to music (Meyer 1986: 22) which is defined by:

- self-observing descriptions of listeners and their verbal reactions, and
- the behaviour of both performers and audiences and the psychological changes that accompany music cognition.

The methodological procedure applied in this chapter stems from the fact that this is the very first contribution that examines the reception of Serbian traditional music abroad. Hence this is a pioneering step in envisaging the communicative potential of Serbian traditional singing and a fundamental premise for future reasoning on the subject. It is important to highlight that at the time when the specific cases, which will be discussed later on occurred, we did not yet have an idea to write an article

on this topic. However, we were aware of the reception of the music that we performed: we noted and memorised the audience's responses and individual comments. Furthermore, it was already then that we shared our experience and discussed it with the listeners, so we learned about the aspects of reception that were completely new for us at the time. Owing to the fact that among the members of the ensemble 'Moba' there are ethnomusicologists and anthropologists, we analysed and discussed certain situations and shared our impressions over a period of time. Our several days long stays in other communities in particular contributed to creating a general impression on the intensity, presence or absence of cultural contacts and processes that take place in relation to this contact. Therefore, the participant-observer position of the authors of this text in this respect can be considered only tentatively.

Psychology of music also attempted to define musical meaning, but was often criticised. Leonard Meyer specified three basic fallacies of these studies, all of them mutually related: hedonism, atomism and universalism (Mejer 1986: 20). Even though researchers sometimes interpret emotional responses to a particular musical stimulus as inadequate for an objective interpretation of the meaning and impact of music, nevertheless, they have been inevitable in narratives looking into the reception of musical text (Ibid.: 16–35). Recent studies indicate that 'emotions play a crucial role in the "surfacing" of individual and collective bodies' (Ahmed 2004: 25); according to Ahmed, emotions 'work to align individuals with collectives – or bodily space with social space' (Ibid.: 26), and take part in 'what we feel about the others is what aligns us with a collective', which takes into account the 'emotionality of texts' (Ibid.).

We will now analyse several cases that point to specific phenomena in the processes of reception of Serbian traditional rural music by foreign audiences. The cases illustrating positive and negative reactions on the level of collective will be scrutinised; it is necessary to mention that these are the most striking, paradigmatic cases. It is important to highlight that individual responses largely corresponded the collective ones; in other cases, individual reception substantially differed from the collective judgment. Situations featuring negative reactions proved indicative suggesting the existence of cultural barriers that emerged when a particular part of the repertoire was being performed. With respect to a type of response, described in this paper, the following cultural units may

be recognised: those of Western Europe, Eastern Europe and the Balkans, and the Mediterranean. In addition, one of the conclusions to be drawn here is that the members of today's younger generation, being heavily influenced by the Internet and the media, are more inclined to participate in intercultural interactions. However, an important question is raised here: to what extent is the 'foreign' musics that they hear from the radio, TV and other media actually perceived as something 'familiar' (Stobart 2013: 123).

### **The West**

In 2003, the female singing group of 'Mokranjac' Music School took part in *Voix mêlées* festival in Paris, held at the Conservatoire Hector Berlioz. The idea of the organisers was to prepare a musical and cultural event for their students, giving them a chance to get acquainted with diverse music practices. The concert was attended not only by students of the Conservatoire, but also by their parents and many others. The programme included songs of both older and recent rural practices, singing with the accompaniment of the *gusle*, as well as instrumental compositions for *frula* (an end-blown flute with 6 fingerholes) or *gajde* (bagpipes). The audience response was utterly positive: each song was followed by thunderous applause. At the end, the audience was standing and applauding for a long time whereas the performers returned to give multiple encores.

### **The East**

The female singing group of 'Mokranjac' music school had a remarkable experience in communication and cultural contact in a small Russian town of Kozalsk where a competition in traditional singing of Orthodox countries (Russia, Ukraine, etc.) was held in 2012. The competition was specific in a sense that the participants were supposed to sing one song of ecclesiastical content and another from the realm of traditional singing. The audience consisted of members of various generations, but all of them belonged to Russian urban society. For the competition, songs of a wide ambitus were chosen because they enabled dynamic shading and were reminiscent of Russian songs in terms of their structure. Songs in non-tempered tuning system were avoided as well as the songs based on the intervals of seconds, considered by Sanja Ranković as inadequate, due to presenting a greater challenge for intercultural listening (as indicated

also in Stobart 2013: 118). This tentatively chosen repertoire was well received by the listeners who responded with ovations and acclaim, but also individually, with verbal and nonverbal expressions of other kind. Some listeners approached the members of the jury demanding that the Serbian singers win the first prizes. Immediately after the performance, in the backstage, the girls received many gifts from their admirers: flowers, chocolate and other, while after the announcement of the winners (since they won two first and one second prize) a long-lasting photo shoot with the audience of all generations ensued.

An example of negative response happened during a ceremonial opening of the International seminar for Russian traditional singing that was held in Podolsk, Moscow region, in January 2007, under the auspices of the Centre for traditional culture 'Istoki'. The seminar was named international: it summoned Russian ensembles from various towns and regions in Russia, as well as the neighboring countries (mainly former Soviet republics in which the Russians nowadays constitute a national minority group). Jelena Jovanović was the sole representative of other ethnicities at this seminar (or at least she was the only one introduced as such). On the occasion of ceremonial opening, it was planned that each of the twenty-ish ensembles-participants introduce themselves, firstly by a welcoming address of an ensemble director and then by a performance of a song. Therefore, Jovanović had an opportunity to introduce herself as a soloist, which was an exception compared to other participants who all sang in groups. Although she had reckoned, just as Sanja Ranković did in the above described case, that in such a situation the best effect could have been achieved with a song of a wide range and diatonic tonal structure, she made a decision not to cater to the audience's taste and to do the opposite, at her own peril. She made a personal choice by choosing one of her favorites, and, simultaneously, one of the most striking examples of archaic solo singing from Central Serbia (the region of her intensive field research). The song in question was *Čarna goro, puma li si lada* [Magic mountain, you are full of shade] – a traveller solo song, belonging to the older rural vocal layer, and, at the same time, an example of a virtuosic, demanding performance, with respect to the non-tempered tone scale of a relatively broad range, abundant in ornaments. The choice of this song was therefore somewhat provocative.

The audience responded with silence and obvious bafflement. The song was so different from what they had heard before and afterwards; compared to all others it sounded off-key, in a voice impostation that emanated significantly different aesthetic criterion regarding the quality. A tepid applause showed bewilderment and disapproval together with moderate hubbub that accompanied the ending of the song. It is a specific example of a 'musical incorrectness' in a context in which the central place was dedicated to the affirmation of a national identity through music; maybe it could be said that this performance even compromised 'cultural and perceptual consensus and stability' (Stobart 2013: 111). For a while, an issue was raised on how the presence of such a considerably different element among them could be justified. Such singing was collectively perceived as 'unskillful' or even 'unattractive' (though individual reactions showed there are also another ways of intercultural listening).

### **The Balkans**

The cases of both positive and negative audience feedback/responses were recorded when 'Moba' performed at the festival *Polifoniká tragóúdia* [Polyphonic songs] in Epirus, Western Greece, in the summer of 2001. The concerts were held over seven evenings in various villages and smaller towns, in the open air, usually at central squares and in amphitheatres. The audience consisted of the local inhabitants, mainly the Greeks, but in some places, depending on the population structure, there were also the Aromanians [Vlachs] and the Albanians. It comprised people of different generations, usually families. These concerts signified a kind of cultural, but also social summer happenings: performers coming from those very places also participated at the concerts.

The main programme included songs from the Epirus region, so the idiom of this region was prevalent, whereas the key element of these encounters was communication within the codes of musical tradition between the performers and the audience. This was confirmed by the unequivocal signs of approval coming from the audience, their loud and apparent response to the lyrical content or reactions to some particularly good song performances. In such a context, the repertoire of 'Moba' was a thematic and structural breakthrough and thus presented a potential challenge before the listeners. It turned out that the community had an

intensive emotional response to one particular song, so the organisers requested that it be performed every night, in each of the places visited, as they recognised that the communicational code of this song was the closest to the traditional music idiom of the Epirus region. It was the song titled *Ova brda i puste doline* [These hills and deserted valleys] that belongs to the category of *hybrid* forms, a fusion of older and more recent singing, coming from central Serbia (Šumadija). The ‘links’ with Epirotan idiom were found in tonality, a relatively narrow tone range in intervals that are close to diatonic, an occasional appearance of a unison and a major second in melodic stanzas and in cadences, a free (*rubato*) rhythm; so, it could be seen that several important *familiar sounds* were present that provided the positive reception. It could also be said that the supposed *unfamiliar* within the same song was framed, or balanced, by the *familiar*, thus providing feelings of security, control, and orientation (Stobart 2013: 110, 131).

Nevertheless, on this very occasion, a negative response from the audience came when a duo of the ‘Moba’ ensemble sang a song *Žaspala Joka Bogutovka* [Joka Bogutovka has fallen asleep], an example of old diaphonic, heterophonic-bourdon singing that originates from North-Eastern Bosnia. Apart from being sung in full, high voice, a distinctive feature of this song is a sharp contrast between, on the one side, the parts featuring long-lasting chords in seconds, untempered singing and ‘clucking tones’ as embellishments, and, on the other side, a long sliding *glissando* on the final tone of each verse; this *glissando* is a ‘trademark’ of such songs. ‘Moba’ decided to include it in the programme because we wanted to bring something brand new into the repertoire chosen for that evening. The audience, accustomed to diatonic structures, with far more ‘lyrical’ content, responded to such a ‘wild’ song firstly with silence and afterwards even with laughter. It is peculiar that they did not feel like hiding their reaction, as they reacted naturally, which clearly showed how inadequate was the performance of such a song in their cultural surroundings.

### Conclusion

The case studies presented here reveal that the reception of Serbian rural vocal practice, that is, the extent to which recipients can accept *unfamiliar sounds* varies, depending on the context and traditions of the community where cultural contact occurs (Stobart 2013: 110).

Western European audiences perceive Serbian rural singing as something 'other', different from their own, and therefore 'exotic'; this refers to the elements that are considered to be entirely 'non-Western' (we use this term tentatively, as its usage has arguably been susceptible to criticism; Ibid.: 111–112). It pertains to the musical phenomena that are more challenging for listeners during intercultural listening (Ibid.: 118); this particularly refers to older rural vocal forms in which specific musical structures (e.g. untempered scales, the intervals of seconds, texture etc.) prevail. It is precisely that 'distinctiveness' and the skill of a performer that Western European audiences recognise as signifiers of foreign traditional music. It is exceptionally interesting that the same qualities are unveiled by Loran Ober in the reception of Indian music in the West European cultural milieu (Ober 2007: 154).

Audiences in Eastern Europe and the Balkans respond most favorably to the songs which bear a close resemblance to their own musical practices; the reason for this lies in the fact that in such cultural environments, traditional music is still recognised as a significant element of culture. The cases described as negative responses indicate an emergence of *cultural noise* in the reception of *unfamiliar* Serbian singing in such surroundings.

On this occasion, the focus was on the reception of Serbian traditional rural vocal music in Europe. We have not taken into account experiences with non-European audiences whatsoever that could indeed point to a broader, more globally oriented stratigraphy of the elements of Serbian tradition.<sup>2</sup>

Along with the development of the Internet technology, traditional music has become more available, which resulted in the widening of the circle of those who know and admire this music genre, but whose critical view has become substantially sharper and who have formed their aesthetic judgment. This particularly refers to members of younger generations in different parts of Europe and in the Balkans, too. In a quest for their own identity, they reach out to various kinds of traditional music, therefore to Serbian music too, as they find support for modeling of their

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<sup>2</sup> This topic merits further investigation. For example, on one occasion we heard two interesting, separate remarks made by an American and an Indian listener who, independently from one another, reached a similar conclusion – that Serbian rural singing could best be compared to Indian vocal tradition.

own music taste and identity exactly in the traditional music elements (Laušević 2002). Given the aforementioned considerations, it can be said that the interest in 'foreign' traditional music implies that its fans have reached the elements of universality in it, even though they are expressed through diverse forms in each society respectively (according to: Dumont 1966: 16). Save these, we could have particularly taken into consideration types of responses of different audience groups (depending on age, education, gender etc.) towards traditional singing forms.

The cases described above should not be taken at face value. A future research exclusively focused on these problems will, complemented with new methodological procedures and the experiences of colleagues from abroad dealing with similar issues, provide more accurate answers to the complex set of questions on intercultural relations. Moreover, research shows that a gap between academic and practical activity may be bridged by an ethnomusicologist's engagement (Sheehy 1992: 335). Therefore, ethnomusicology can be active, socially responsible and productive in equal measures.

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## CONTRIBUTORS

**Timothy Rice**, Professor of Ethnomusicology, USLA Herb Alpert School of Music, University of California Los Angeles, USA  
trice@arts.ucla.edu

**Danica Petrović**, Principal Research Fellow (retired), Institute of Musicology SASA, Belgrade, Serbia  
mdmjpet@gmail.com

**Ivan Moody**, Researcher, CESEM / Research Centre in Sociology and Aesthetics of Music, Universidade Nova de Lisboa, Portugal  
ivanmoody@gmail.com

**Jasmina Huber**, Research Associate, Institut für Jüdische Studien, Heinrich-Heine-Universität Düsseldorf, Germany  
jhuber@phil.hhu.de

**Katy (Ekaterini) Romanou**, Associate Professor of Musicology, Nicosia, European University Cyprus  
k.romanou@euc.ac.cy

**Melita Milin**, Principal Research Fellow and Director of the Institute of Musicology SASA, Belgrade, Serbia  
musicinst@music.sanu.ac.rs

**Manolis Tseiragakis**, Assistant Professor of Theatre Studies, University of Crete, Greece  
seiragakis@uoc.gr

**Ioannis Tselikas**, Associate Professor of Music, Hellenic American University, USA / Greece  
itselik@bu.edu

**Ivana Vesić**, Research Assistant, Institute of Musicology SASA, Belgrade, Serbia  
distinto\_diferente@yahoo.com

**Olga Otašević**, Librarian, Faculty of Music, University of Arts, Belgrade, Serbia  
olga\_jokic@yahoo.com

**Sonja Zdravkova-Djeparoska**, Associate Professor, Faculty of Music, University Ss. Cyril and Methodius, Skopje, Macedonia (FYROM)  
z.djeparoska@gmail.com

**Gergana Panova-Tekath**, Associate Professor of Ethnochoreology, Institute for Art Studies, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Sofia, Bulgaria; Professor, Institut für Zeitgenössischen Tanz, Folkwang Universität der Künste, Essen, Germany  
gpanova@yahoo.com

**Vesna Bajić-Stojiljković**, Lecturer at the Dance Academy, Ljubljana, Slovenia  
vesnaetno@gmail.com

**Valentina Sandu-Dediu**, Professor, Department of Musicology and Education, National University of Music Bucharest, Romania; Permanent Fellow, New Europe College, Bucharest, Romania  
dediusandu@gmail.com

**Ana Petrov**, Lecturer, Academy of Arts, University of Banja Luka, Bosnia and Herzegovina; Lecturer, Faculty of Media and Communications, Singidunum University, Belgrade, Serbia  
anapetrov82@gmail.com

**Ivana Medić**, Research Associate, Institute of Musicology SASA, Belgrade, Serbia  
ivana.medic@music.sanu.ac.rs

**Ivana Miladinović-Prca**, Teaching Assistant, Department of Musicology, Faculty of Music, University of Arts, Belgrade, Serbia  
ivanamila@gmail.com

**Ersin Mihci**, PhD candidate, Cluster of Excellence 'Asia and Europe in a Global Context', Heidelberg University, Germany  
ersin.mihci@asia-europe.uni-heidelberg.de

**Dafni Tragaki**, Lecturer at the Department of History, Archaeology and Social Anthropology, University of Thessaly, Greece  
daphnetr@otenet.gr

**Iva Nenić**, Teaching Assistant, Department of Ethnomusicology, Faculty of Music, University of Arts, Belgrade, Serbia  
genije@gmail.com

**Jelena Jovanović**, Research Associate, Institute of Musicology SASA, Belgrade, Serbia  
jelena.jovanovic@music.sanu.ac.rs

**Sanja Ranković**, Professor of Traditional Singing, Department of Ethnomusicology, Faculty of Music, University of Arts, Belgrade, Serbia  
sanjaetno@gmail.com

CIP



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