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Pratarmė

Ši mokslinių straipsnių rinktinė – tai periodinis leidinys, skirtas kelti ir tyrinėti aktualius muzikos komponavimo klausimus. 24-asis *Muzikos komponavimo principų* tomas kviečia nagrinėti etniškumo vaidmenį šiuolaikybėje. Leidinio tikslas – permąstyti etniškumo reikšmę XX–XXI a. muzikoje ir išryškinti estetines bei technines jo raiškos galimybes. Žvelgdami į profesionaliosios Vakarų muzikos istoriją galime pamatyti, kad etniniai aspektai neretai buvo redukuojami iki atpažįstamumo funkcijos, o jų raiškai dažnai pasitelkiami bendrakultūriniai struktūriniai principai. Vis dėlto, kintančios mąstymo paradigmos skatina pergalvoti šiuolaikinio žmogaus ar kūrėjo santykį su etnosu ir ieškoti naujų funkcinių bei struktūrinių sprendimų. Vertėtų pabrėžti, kad šiuolaikiniuose kontekstuose etniškumas gali skleistis netikėtais asambliažais: nuo vienijančio ar segreguojančio tapatybės veiksnio iki į masinį vartojimą orientuotų komercinių apropriacijų; nuo jau įsitvirtinusių tradicinių etniškumo raiškos būdų (derminių, ritminių, tembrinių) iki kompozicinių sprendimų, atliepiančių XX–XXI a. (psicho)akustinius garso tyrimus. *Ethno- in Contempo* problematiką šiame leidinyje atskleidžia skirtingas kultūrines ir etnines terpes atstovaujančių autorių straipsniai, sugrupuoti į tris potemes.

I potemė. Etniškumo apraiškos šiuolaikybėje: teorija ir praktika. Pirmame skyriuje tyrinėjami teoriniai ir praktiniai etniškumo raiškos aspektai skirtinguose šiuolaikiniuose kontekstuose. Pavyzdžiui, Daiva Račiūnaitė-Vyčinienė straipsnyje nagrinėja sutartines kaip lietuviškos tapatybės ženklą, analizuodama šio reiškinio raidą nuo XIX a. pabaigos iki jo apraiškų XXI a. alternatyviosios muzikos projektuose. Autorė kelia klausimą, ar visos šiuolaikinės sutartinių interpretacijos ir modifikacijos išsaugo autentiškumo ir tapatybės branduolį. Yusuke Ishii aptaria lietuvių išeivijos kompozitoriaus Jono Švedo kūryboje naudojamų liaudies dainų transformacijas. Autoriaus straipsnyje atskleidžiama, kaip laikui bėgant liaudies muzikos elementai tampa vis labiau abstrahuojami ir įgauna kultūrinės hibridizacijos procesams būdingų bruožų. Marius Baranauskas gilinasi į gamelano orkestro veikimo specifiką ir galimybes struktūrinius gamelano principus pritaikyti šiuolaikiniuose muzikos kontekstuose. Autorius pristato savitą analitinį metodą, leidžiantį tuos principus geriau suvokti, palyginti juos su kitomis orkestrinėmis tradicijomis ir adaptuoti kūrybinėje praktikoje.

II potemė. *Ethno- in Contempo* (re)interpretacijos: paieškos, įtakos, sintezės. Antrame skyriuje aptariamos įvairios etniškumo sklaidos formos, jų adaptacijos ir transformacijos skirtinguose muzikiniuose kontekstuose. Paula Mladin straipsnyje apžvelgia rumunų Klužo kompozicinės mokyklos raidą ir jai būdingus folkloro integracijos į profesionaliąją muziką principus. Tekste pabrėžiama, kad folkloras, derinamas su šių dienų kompozicinėmis technikomis ir Vakarų Europos muzikos tradicija, išlieka svarbiu kūrybinio originalumo šaltiniu šiuolaikinėje rumunų muzikoje. Janas Bielakas tiria, kaip arabų kultūra ir muzika paveikė Karolio Szymanowskio kūrybą, ypač jo dainų žanrą ir brandžiojo laikotarpio stilistiką. Straipsnyje teigiama, kad arabų muzikos principai (monodinė melodika, ornamentika ir *tarab* estetinė idėja) tapo reikšmingais kompozitoriaus muzikinio atsinaujinimo veiksniais. Gvantsos Ghvinjilios tyrimų objektas – Sulkhano Nasidze'ės simfoninė kūryba, kurią autorė apibūdina kaip kartvelų archajiškų ritualų, liaudies muzikos elementų ir europinės muzikos tradicijų sintezę. Sanna Iitti išsamiai aptaria suomių kompozitoriaus Kimmo Hakola'os Koncertą klarnetui, kuriame stilizuoti klezmerių muzikos bruožai pasitelkiami įsivaizduojamam Rytų įvaizdžiui kurti. Pasak autorės, kompozitorius kūrybiškai imituoja klezmerių muzikos stilistiką, per daug nenutoldamas nuo vakarietiškos egzotizmo tradicijos. Nanos Amowee Dawsono straipsnyje Okyeame'ės Kwame'ės ir Kofi Kinaata'os kūrinys „Sika" analizuojamas kaip tarpkultūrinis projektas, jungiantis Ganos muzikos tradicijas su populiariosios muzikos stiliais. Autoriaus pateikta analizė atskleidžia, kaip vietinės muzikinės idiomos yra derinamos su šiuolaikinėmis globaliomis tendencijomis.

III potemė. Kūrėjo perspektyva. Trečiame skyriuje siūloma pažvelgti į etniškumo problematiką ir jo raiškos galimybes iš pačių kūrėjų perspektyvos. Aistės Vaitkevičiūtės tiek teorinio, tiek kūrybinio tyrimo objektas – varpo skambesys kaip tarpkultūrinis ir tarpdisciplininis reiškinys. Autorė jo specifiką analizuoja pasitelkdama psichoakustinę, lingvistinę ir etnomuzikologinę prizmes, kurios susipina jos pačios kūrinyje *I Ring This Bell*. Desislava Dobreva, remdamasi kūrėjos ir atlikėjos perspektyva, nagrinėja, kaip bulgarų folkloro elementai adaptuojami ir transformuojami etnopopuliariojoje muzikoje. Autorė teigia, kad tokios kūrybinės strategijos prisideda prie kultūrinės atminties išsaugojimo ir kartu aktualizuoja nacionalinę tapatybę globaliame muzikos kontekste.

Baigdami apžvalgą pažymėsime, kad leidinio straipsniai gali būti diferencijuojami pagal jų pobūdį – mokslinį teorinį ir praktinį. Nors griežtų ribų tarp jų brėžti nereikėtų, vieni straipsniai yra labiau išsiskiriantys

moksliniu teoriniu požiūriu (Daiva Račiūnaitė-Vyčinienė, Yusuke Ishii, Marius Baranauskas, Paula Mladin, Gvantsa Ghvinjilia, Sanna Iitti), o kiti – praktiniu (Janas Bielakas, Nana Amowee Dawsonas, Aistė Vaitkevičiūtė, Desislava Dobreva). Žurnalo mokslinis komitetas straipsnius atrenka remdamasis šiais kriterijais: a) straipsniams taikomi aukščiausi kokybės standartai; b) autorių pasirinktos temos turi atitikti bendrą konkretaus tomo temą. Visi leidinio straipsniai yra recenzuojami (*peer-reviewed*).

Tikimės, kad 24-asis *Muzikos komponavimo principų* tomas sulauks skaitytojų dėmesio ir bus aktualus kiekvienam, besidominčiam etniškumo sklaidos šiuolaikiniuose kontekstuose problematika. Redakcinė kolegija tikisi skaitytojų dėmesio tiek čia, Lietuvoje, tiek užsienyje. Būsime dėkingi už visas pastabas ir atsiliepimus apie leidinį.

Prof. dr. Rimantas Janeliauskas ir redakcinis kolektyvas

Foreword

This collection of scholarly articles is a periodical dedicated to raising and exploring fundamental issues in music composition. The 24th volume of *Principles of Music Composing* invites readers to explore the role of ethnicity in contemporary contexts. The aim of the publication is to reconsider the significance of ethnicity in the music of the 20th and the 21st century with a focus on highlighting the aesthetic and technical possibilities of its expression. A survey of the history of Western professional music reveals that ethnic aspects have often been reduced to a function of recognizability, while their realization has typically relied on broadly shared cultural and structural principles. However, shifting paradigms of thought encourage a reevaluation of the relationship between the ethnos and the modern creative individual and prompt a search for new functional and structural solutions. It is noteworthy that in contemporary contexts ethnicity may manifest itself through highly diverse and sometimes unexpected assemblages: from a unifying or segregating factor of identity to commercially oriented appropriations aimed at mass consumption; from established traditional modes of expressing ethnicity (modal, rhythmic, or timbral) to compositional strategies informed by the (psycho) acoustic explorations of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. The spectrum of issues encompassed by the theme *Ethno- in Contempo* is explored in this volume through articles by authors representing diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds, which are grouped into three thematic sections.

Subtheme I. Ethnic Consciousness in Contemporary Approaches: Theory and Practice. The first section examines the theoretical and practical aspects of the expression of ethnicity in contemporary contexts. Daiva Račiūnaitė-Vyčinienė investigates Lithuanian *sutartinės* as a marker of Lithuanian identity, tracing their development from the late nineteenth century to their presence in contemporary alternative musical projects. The author raises the question of whether all contemporary interpretations and modifications of *sutartinės* retain their core authenticity and identity. Meanwhile, Yusuke Ishii discusses the transformations of folk songs incorporated into the works of the Lithuanian émigré composer Jonas Švedas. His analysis reveals how, over time, elements of folk music become increasingly abstract and begin to exhibit characteristics associated with processes of cultural hybridization. Marius Baranauskas, in turn, explores the functioning of the gamelan orchestra and the possibilities for adapting its principles within contemporary musical contexts. The author introduces a distinctive analytical method that facilitates understanding of the gamelan's structural principles, enables comparison with other orchestral traditions, and supports their application in creative practice.

Subtheme II. (Re)interpretations of Ethno- in Contempo: Explorations, Influences, Syntheses. The second section addresses various forms of ethno-cultural dissemination, as well as their adaptation and transformation across different musical contexts. In her paper, Paula Mladin discusses the development of the Cluj compositional school and the principles that characterize the integration of Romanian folklore into professional music. She emphasizes that folklore, when combined with contemporary compositional techniques and the Western European musical tradition, remains an important source of creative originality in contemporary Romanian music. Jan Bielak examines the influence of Arab culture and music on the oeuvre of Karol Szymanowski, with particular attention to his songs and the stylistic features of his mature period. The article argues that principles derived from Arab music—such as monodic melodicism, ornamentation, and the aesthetic concept of *tarab*—became significant factors in the composer's musical renewal.

Gvantsa Ghvinjilia's study focuses on the symphonic output of Sulkhan Nasidze, which the author characterizes as a synthesis of archaic Kartvelian ritual traditions, elements of folk music, and European musical practices. Sanna Iitti offers a detailed discussion of the Clarinet Concerto by the Finnish composer Kimmo Hakola, in which stylized features of klezmer music are employed to construct an image of the imagined East. The author argues that the composer creatively imitates klezmer stylistic idioms while remaining largely within the Western tradition of musical exoticism. Meanwhile, Nana Amowee Dawson analyzes the song "Sika" by Okyeame Kwame and Kofi Kinaata as an intercultural project that combines Ghanaian musical traditions with styles of popular music. The author's analysis demonstrates how local musical idioms are integrated with contemporary global trends.

Subtheme III. From the Perspective of the Creator. The third section offers an opportunity to examine the issues and expressive potential of ethnicity from the perspective of the creators themselves. Aistė Vaitkevičiūtė explores the sound of the bell as an intercultural and interdisciplinary phenomenon that constitutes both the theoretical and creative focus of her study. The author analyzes its specificity through psychoacoustic, linguistic, and ethnomusicological perspectives, which converge in her own composition *I Ring This Bell*. Drawing on the perspective of both composer and performer, Desislava Dobreva examines the ways in which elements of Bulgarian folklore are adapted and transformed within ethno-pop music. The author argues that such creative strategies contribute to the preservation of cultural memory while simultaneously rearticulating national identity within a global musical context.

We would like to conclude this brief introduction with an observation that the papers in this issue can be differentiated into two main categories. Even though no clear boundaries can be set, we can discern the articles that stand out for their theoretical value (Daiva Račiūnaitė-Vyčinienė, Yusuke Ishii, Marius Baranauskas, Paula Mladin, Gvantsa Ghvinjilia, Sanna Iitti) and the ones that shine with their practical (artistic) insights (Jan Bielak, Nana Amowee Dawson, Aistė Vaitkevičiūtė, Desislava Dobreva). The selection of articles relies on these basic criteria: (a) only papers of the highest quality show up in the journal; (b) individual topics must correspond to the overall subject of the particular issue. All papers in the publication are peer-reviewed.

We hope that the 24th volume of *Principles of Music Composing* will attract the attention of readers worldwide interested in questions of ethnicity in contemporary music. All comments and criticism are welcome. The editors are grateful to all who contributed to the preparation and publication of this issue.

Prof. Dr Rimantas Janeliauskas and the editorial team
Translated by Aistė Vaitkevičiūtė

1

ETNIŠKUMO APRAIŠKOS ŠIUOLAIKYBĖJE: TEORIJA IR PRAKTIKA

ETHNIC CONSCIOUSNESS IN CONTEMPORARY APPROACHES: THEORY AND PRACTICE

Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre

Daiva Račiūnaitė-Vyčinienė

Sutartinės as a Sign of Lithuanian Identity: The Interaction Between *Ethno-* and *Contempo*

Abstract. The article briefly discusses the history of the emergence of *sutartinės* as a Lithuanian symbol in contemporary musical culture. It begins with the prophetic insights of the famous folklorist, Canon Adolfas Sabaliauskas. More than 100 years ago, he identified *sutartinės* as a possible basis for Lithuanian professional music. Although there were controversial opinions about the survival of *sutartinės* in 20th-century culture, the characteristics of *sutartinės* music (sharp harmonies of seconds, syncopated rhythms, rhythmic motorism, ostinato, etc.) became the essence of the work of many 20th-century composers. In the work of several composers—Juozas Gruodis, Julius Juzeliūnas and Bronius Kutavičius—*sutartinės* emerge as a particularly important symbol. The individual style of these composers is consciously constructed from Lithuanian folklore (*sutartinės*) and modern means of musical expression.

The article discusses various manifestations of the use of *sutartinės* in music creation and their existence in contemporary culture. It draws attention to how *sutartinės* act as a "sign of Lithuanianness" in alternative music projects of the early 21st century. In some of them, a *sutartinė* is presented as a single work, preserving its characteristic structure, melody, and text, while in others, the melodic inflections of *sutartinės* are unrecognizable, their characteristic metro-rhythmic structure is destroyed, *sutartinės* are sung in a "pop" voice, etc.

This article invites us to discuss: can we still recognize or evaluate *sutartinės* as a sign of Lithuanian identity in each of these cases? Does the distorted image of *sutartinės*—as a certain musical and spiritual whole—reflect a Lithuanian mentality? Does it reveal the uniqueness of Lithuanian music and its national identity?

Keywords: *sutartinės*, binary construction, refrains, Lithuanian identity, *contempo*, ritual.

1. Introduction

The dominance of *sutartinės* in today's living folklore tradition, their clear breakthrough in pop culture, as well as the peculiar echoes of *sutartinė*-like thinking in the work of today's composers allowed me to describe this genre as one of the most prominent symbols of Lithuanian national identity (Račiūnaitė-Vyčinienė 2011a, 371).[1] Incidentally, foreign ethnomusicologists and composers also tend to consider *sutartinės* a symbol of Lithuanianness. One of the best examples confirming this is *Sutartinės* for string orchestra and percussion (1991) by the internationally famous composer Alfred Schnittke, which he created in shock after the January Events.[2] Although the work treats *sutartinės* metaphorically (as the idea of the unity of the Lithuanian nation, overall concentration, resisting brute force), it is nevertheless based on the development of the specific *sutartinės* melodies of the Ukmergė region.

In the 21st century, the living tradition of *sutartinės* is experiencing a new wave of revival.[3] Their inclusion in the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity has undoubtedly contributed to the new revival of *sutartinės*.[4] I have personally been a part of the living tradition of *sutartinės* for many years, observing the renewal of this tradition "from the inside," and have also made significant contributions to the inclusion of *sutartinės* on the honorable UNESCO list, yet I am concerned about the various ways in which *sutartinės* present in today's culture.

In this article, I will only very briefly review the work of Lithuanian composers, one way or another related to *sutartinės* (or features of *sutartinės*). Much has already been written about this by Lithuanian musicologists (see Gaidamavičiūtė 2006, 2010; Gruodytė 2018, 2024; Apanavičienė 2002, etc.). Moreover, I will not delve into the very important issue of musical nationality in the 21st century, which becomes especially relevant in the conditions of globalization, cosmopolitanism, and homogenization. It has been observed that the aforementioned conditions seem to provoke artists to create certain self-preservation mechanisms. Nationality is becoming more prominent, revealing important value aspects, encouraging individual expression,

[1] More than 100 years ago, folklorist Canon Adolfas Sabaliauskas marked *sutartinės* as a potential foundation for the identity of Lithuanian professional music (Sabaliauskas 1904).

[2] The January Events took place in Lithuania between January 11 and 13, 1991 in the aftermath of the Act of the Re-Establishment of the State of Lithuania. As a result of Soviet military actions, 14 civilians were killed and 702 were injured.

[3] The first revival wave, which began after the lifting of the ban on the Lithuanian press in 1904, took place in the first decades of the 20th century; the beginning of the second wave is associated with the Folklore Theatre concert in the late 1960s (for more details, see Račiūnaitė-Vyčinienė 2014). Vocal and instrumental *sutartinės* were performed at a concert of the Folk Music Theatre troupe (later called the Lithuanian Folklore Theatre) led by Povilas Mataitis, which took place in Vilnius on April 13, 1968.

[4] *Sutartinės* were added to the UNESCO List on November 16, 2010.

and the search for identity (Repšienė 2010). *Sutartinės* are becoming one of the important value "pillars" in today's music world, encouraging various forms of expression. However, the broad question of nationality in today's professional music remains beyond the scope of this study—it would, of course, require a much more in-depth and broader perspective.

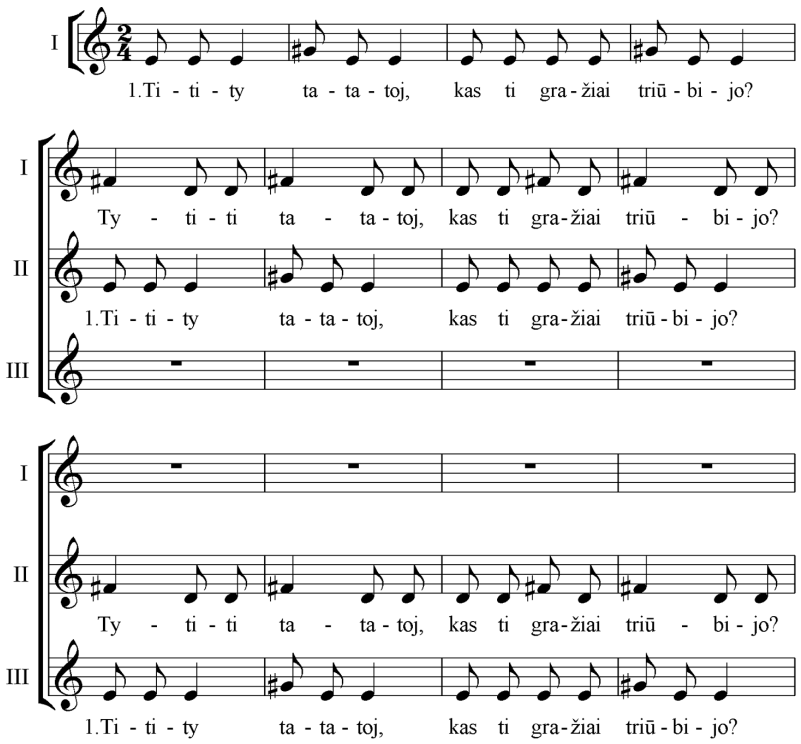
I am most interested in the current changes in the living *sutartinės* tradition and the trends of *sutartinization* of other musical genres, which have not yet been consistently studied. There are only a few works devoted to discussing the contemporary processes of development of the *sutartinės* tradition. The book *Nuo tradicinės polifonijos iki polifoninės tradicijos* (From traditional polyphony to the polyphonic tradition) by Austė Nakienė (2016), the article "Keturi pokalbiai apie sutartines" (Four conversations about sutartinės) by Agota Zdanavičiūtė (2015), as well as my own articles "The Revival of Lithuanian Polyphonic *Sutartinės* Songs in the Late 20th and Early 21st Century" (Račiūnaitė-Vyčinienė 2012) and "Sutartinių giedojimo tradicija postmodernioje visuomenėje: perėmimas, perdavimas ir raiška" (Tradition of singing sutartinės in a post-modern society: adoption, transmission, and expression) (Račiūnaitė-Vyčinienė 2015) are worth mentioning. Therefore, in attempting to encompass the various processes of the manifestation of *sutartinės* in today's culture and to discern the prevailing trends, I will mainly rely on my own personal experience, as well as the participant observation method.

A fanatical loyalty to tradition, for one, stops its renewal. However, novelties dismantle tradition and push it away. Philosopher Bronius Kuzmickas observes, "A certain selectivity characterizes conveyance of tradition. Each historical era establishes a specific relationship with the past. Each generation accepts what it finds most meaningful from the heritage it discovers passed down" (Kuzmickas 2011, 9). Today *sutartinės* are singled out from the entire rich heritage of Lithuanian ethnic music, haphazardly being made into one of the most prominent signs of Lithuanianness. The code word "*sutartinė*" helps local artists win funding for various innovative projects. I would like to analyze in more depth whether *sutartinės* always express Lithuanian identity.

Before discussing the phenomenon of *sutartinės* as a sign of Lithuanian identity, I will briefly describe the main features of these *giesmės* (chants). The name for ancient polyphonic chants, called *sutartinės*, derives from the verb *sutarti* "to agree/attune" with another person or "to reach an accord." The noun *sutartinės*—"polyphonic Lithuanian folk songs"—correspondingly means "conformity/harmony/rhythmicity in doing something" or, simply, "harmony/concord."

Summarizing the insights of other scholars and my own long-standing dual experience as a scholar and singer (Ambrazevičius 2014; Račiūnaitė-Vyčinienė 2011b; 2024; Slaviūnas 1958–1959),[5] I would like to highlight the following essential characteristics of today's *sutartinės*:

- linear polyphony, imitative polyphonicity;
- the cellular creation of the whole from small, constantly recurring elements of rhythm and melody (similar compositional principles are also characteristic of traditional textiles: the creation of small, constantly recurring elements, a strictly symmetrical structure, etc.);
- cyclicality (for listeners and singers, a sense of dissolved time and space);
- an abundance of onomatopoeic words such as *tūto*, *dauno, tititi*, *totata*, and the like;
- bi-textuality (parallel sounding of both the meaningful text and the refrain text);
- a syllabic relationship between music and text ("chopping", "clucking/cackling");
- polyrhythms and rhythmic complementarity with frequent syncopation;
- active syncopated dance rhythms reminiscent of *sutartinės* syncretism;
- binary melodic structure;
- intertwining voices with regular or frequent harmonization with intervals of seconds;
- achieving maximum roughness by "beating" different voices (vocal parts);
- good "striking," or "throbbing" of voices = *sutarimas* "harmony";
- *sutarimas* "agreement/concord" (the creation of musical/social/world harmony) as a process (the birth of the *sutartinė* each time anew—here and now).

[5] I have been investigating *sutartinės* since 1981 (Račiūnaitė-Vyčinienė 2024b), as well as heading a group of *sutartinė* singers named Trys Keturiose (see Račiūnaitė-Vyčinienė n.d.). The merger of these two fields has revealed nuances involved in singing these hymns by qualifying them, by grasping their essence.

Example 1. "Titity tatatoj", a *trejinė* (threesome) *sutartinė* sung in canon.
Recorded by a hymn-singer group from Biržai, 1935. Melody transcribed by Jadvyga Čiurlionytė. Printed: SlS 484a

2. The interaction of *ethno-* and *contempo* in 20th-century musical culture

The musical characteristics of *sutartinės* (sharp harmonies of seconds, syncopated rhythms, rhythmic motorism, ostinato, etc.) are woven into the works of many 20th-century Lithuanian composers (Stasys Vainiūnas, Vytautas Montvila, Teisutis Makačinas, Vytautas Barkauskas, Feliksas Bajoras, Algirdas Martinaitis, and others). However, only a few composers—Juozas Gruodis, Julius Juzeliūnas, and Bronius Kutavičius—have made *sutartinės* a significant feature of their creative programs. The individual styles of these composers are consciously constructed from Lithuanian folklore (primarily *sutartinės*) and modern means of musical expression. I will talk a bit more about the work of these composers in subsection 2.1. Subsection 2.2. will discuss the new wave of *sutartinės* in the works of composers at the end of the 20th century. The latter is directly related to a new approach to *sutartinės* in the folk ensemble movement and the emergence of concerts/rituals. Subsection 2.3. draws attention to yet another interpretation of *sutartinės* in the works of composers. Some composers tend to create generalized "*sutartinės*-like" music (a certain meditative state), while others find it important to understand the archaic articulation of *sutartinės*, their untempered harmony, involving *sutartinės* singers who sing in an authentic manner in the creation/performance of their works.

2.1. Traces of *sutartinės* in the works of Juozas Gruodis, Julius Juzeliūnas, and Bronius Kutavičius

Combining elements of *sutartinės* music with modern means of musical expression, Gruodis (1884–1948) eventually developed an individual style, which, as Šarūnas Nakas notes, is quite close to the stylistics of Béla Bartók and Leoš Janáček (Nakas n.d.). However, not all contemporaries accepted this conception of Gruodis' nationalism in music. Teodoras Brazys condemned Gruodis for his use of folk themes in the *Simfoninis prologas* (Symphonic prologue) (1923) in the context of the musical stylistics of the first half of the 20th century. "In the mixture of dissonance, chromaticism and 'atonality,' the pure 'diatony' of our folk songs cannot be found," wrote Brazys. "Our folk melody … cannot have any connection with elements that are foreign and opposite to it" (Brazys, under the pseudonym Daužgirietis (1928), quoted from Ambrazas 1981, 145).[6]

[6] Incidentally, according to musician and musicologist Donatas Katkus, the composer Stasys Vainiūnas was once criticised for using *sutartinės*, i.e., characteristic intervals of seconds! Katkus recalls how around 1960, among young Lithuanian composers there was talk of "fresh" harmony, which meant that "somewhere a seventh chord or a tiny second could already appear" (quoted from Stonytė 2012).

Juzeliūnas (1916–2001) also sought to explore what lay at the core of Lithuanianness in his work. Juzeliūnas shared his conception of the interaction between *ethno-* and *contempo* in his theoretical work *Akordo sandaros klausimu* (On the question of the structure of chord, 1972). The composer observed that "the national uniqueness of Lithuanian folk music is most evident in the peculiarities of the intervallic structure of the ancient Lithuanian monodic melodies and *sutartinės*" (Juzeliūnas 1972, 32). It is no coincidence that the analysis of the structure of *sutartinės* occupies a special place in this work. The phenomenon of bitonality, found in vocal *sutartinės*, helps the composer to justify the principle of binary construction, which became the central axis of his innovative theory.[7] In his theoretical work, Juzeliūnas substantiates the principles of the juxtaposition of two closed musical systems—*sutartinės* and dodecaphony—creating, according to the composer, a new special type of structure.

Based on his theory, Juzeliūnas composed the sonata for voice and organ *Melika* in 1973. If up to that time, the characteristic sign of the *sutartinės*-like nature of the Lithuanian music of that era was the harmony of seconds, combined with active syncopated rhythms, then *Melika* marks a turn to a completely new concept of *sutartinės*. In this work, a different—spatial and multidimensional—expression of *sutartinės* is evident, combined with lyrical meditation (Landsbergytė 2008, 167).[8] The sound of onomatopoeic words in *sutartinės* with obscure meanings became the idea and content of the work. Onomatopoeic words, phonetically expressing a certain emotional state and sound colour, feature as the titles of the movements: Movement I "*Linagauda*. Concentration", Movement II "*Judabra*. Anxiety", Movement III "*Sadula*. Longing". This kind of perception of *sutartinės* is close to the state experienced by today's practitioners of these chants: when singing a *sutartinė*, one overarching emotion tends to dominate.

Juzeliūnas's concept of *sutartinės* and their theoretical generalization probably laid the foundation for Kutavičius's (1932–2021) cellular minimalism, which originated from the sound of *sutartinės* (Gruodytė 2019, 192). Kutavičius himself linked minimalistic aesthetics and *sutartinės* as follows: "in ancient Lithuanian songs, there is the minimum number of sounds, reserved rhythm, small range. The form is open, without a beginning and end—a segment of time..."[9] (Jasinskaitė-Jankauskienė 2001, 211). By combining the principles of Lithuanian folklore (asceticism, archaism), repetitiveness, and multi-layeredness in a unique way, Kutavičius created a special sense of time and space, and in many cases, the image of a ritual taking place here and now.

For example, in the oratorio *Magiškas sanskrito ratas* (Magic Circle of Sanskrit, 1990), the infinite canons of many parts (and, of course, the archaic ways of producing sound employing peculiar formations of the voice or particular musical instruments such as *skudučiai* (Lithuanian type of panpipes), metallophones, "kutaphones," violin bows, etc.) entirely suit the aesthetics of *sutartinės*. Each part seems to be open, as though there was neither a clear beginning nor ending. Thus, Kutavičius, while striving to add universality to the musical language of this oratorio, did not escape from the concept of Lithuanian *sutartinės*. Like the *sutartinės*, the essence of this work is "a circle—as in Oriental philosophy, everything repeats itself after many centuries and millennia" (Jasinskaitė 1991, 30).

2.2. A new approach to *sutartinės* by composers and folklore practitioners after 1990

Musicologist Rūta Gaidamavičiūtė's observation about the further development of how *sutartinės* are expressed in the works of Lithuanian composers is important:

> After the restoration of Lithuanian independence, it has been more and more boldly argued that *sutartinės* are not just polyphonic Lithuanian folk songs with a peculiar structure and special sonority and rhythm, but perhaps hymns with a sacred purpose, performed by groups of well-sung women. After a long history of post-war integration, when authors highlighted the lively and playful origins of this genre, composers began to delve more freely into their true nature. (Gaidamavičiūtė 2010, 252)

The musicologist notes that at that time, *sutartinės* began to be heard in the programmes of many folklore ensembles, and composers changed how they approached them in their works (Gaidamavičiūtė 2010, 252).

At this point, it is necessary to mention the new approach to *sutartinės* in the Lithuanian folklore movement (for more details see Ramonaitė 2011). For some time (1985–1995), separate *sutartinė* concerts were

[7] The theory of binarics (binarity) is further developed successfully by composer Rimantas Janeliauskas (2001, 2016, etc.).

[8] Meditation as a concept is frequently associated with the contemporary practice of *sutartinės* chanting in online outlets.

[9] These and upcoming translations are by the author.

held during the international folklore festival Skamba Skamba Kankliai (Kanklės ringing out), and *sutartinės* were played in various courtyards of the Old Town of Vilnius and in the courtyards of the Vilnius University. Eventually, I found myself growing tired of seeing the same few groups, each demonstrating varying degrees of comprehension and interpretation. I felt the need to "present" *sutartinės* in such a way that the listener would feel the full power of their sharp sound, the magical-hypnotic effect, and the suspended flow of time. This demanded an attempt to return from the *profanum* of *sutartinės* to their inherent *sacrum* by choosing a suitable and completely different space. This was the Vilnius Bernardine Church, where a concert was held in 1996 and was followed by the audience's deep and poetic feedback (Šorys 1997, 50).[10]

Figure 1. Trys Keturiose, the Bernardine Church, 1996, Vilnius. Unknown photographer

Today, I think that my own idea to organize other kinds of *sutartinė* concerts—veritable musical rituals of *sutartinės*—could have emerged under the influence of the ritualized oratories of Kutavičius.[11]

2.3. Interpretation of *sutartinės* in the work of Lithuanian composers of the post-minimalist period

When thinking about the work of today's composers, one can notice another interpretation of *sutartinės*—on the one hand, there is a shift away from the specific musical material,[12] but, on the other hand, we are approaching the essence of *sutartinės*, coming to a deeper understanding of them, as if reproducing a distant image of *sutartinės*. It is a kind of continuation of the creative trajectories displayed by Juzeliūnas and, especially, Kutavičius.

Gaidamavičiūtė talks about similar things when discussing the work of Lithuanian composers of the post-minimalist period (Remigijaus Merkelys, Justė Janulytė, Egidija Medekšaitė, etc.) (Gaidamavičiūtė 2010). The time-space concept of *sutartinės* is also reflected in the works of Ričardas Kabelis (b. 1957). For example, the musical expression of his piece *Kalno sutartinė*[13] (2020) is at first glance close to minimalist,

10 Recalling the first Sutartinės Evening held at the Bernardine Church in 1996 (as part of the international folklore festival Skamba Skamba kankliai), composer Algirdas Martinaitis said, "Even today, the clean and consonant sound of *sutartinės* at Bernardinai Church persists as a mystical experience to me. Such a crowd and friction of sounds, but the sound is clean and sacred" (Martinaitis 1996, 28).

11 For about 10 years (1984–1996), I participated in The Vilnius New Music Ensemble, which performed Kutavičius's oratorios *Iš jotvingių akmens* (From the Yotvingian Stone), *Magiškas sanskrito ratas* (Magic Circle of Sanskrit) and others.

12 Sometimes *sutartinės* become only an inspiration for expressing new conceptual ideas. One of the latest works inspired by *sutartinės* is Arturs Bumšteinas's and Žygimantas Kudirka's *Brave New Body* (Puikus Naujas Kūnas), a performance for voices, electronics, and video. You can listen to the project on YouTube (Operomanija 2023).

13 The piece for seventy-two flutes, performed by Manuel Zurria (flute), Saulius Auglys-Stanevičius (tam-tam), premiered in 2020, October.

but the usual experience of the flow of time is changed here by a strange state of lingering unity. Using the *cantus prius factus* polyphonic technique, the composer conveys the impression of the presence of a polyphonic texture, the ephemerality of which is enhanced by mysteriously "smashing" phantom melodies (which do not exist in the score). Listening to the barely perceptible changing flow of this music reveals the unity of boundless space and time—without a beginning or end.

Paying attention not only to the already known features of *sutartinės*, but also to the special articulation of these chants, the distinctive timbres of the singers, and various creative projects that combine the archaic and the modern cannot be avoided today. Composers collaborate not only with professional musicians but also with groups of *sutartinė* singers, representing the authentic *sutartinė* sound.[14]

However, I will leave the work of art music composers aside in order to discuss, at least briefly, the various directions of the use and existence of *sutartinės* in modern culture. As a representative of the living *sutartinės* tradition, I am particularly interested in phenomena related to various alternative forms of *sutartinė* manifestation.

3. Alternative forms of *sutartinė* manifestation in the 21st century

I will pay attention to the different ways *sutartinės* manifest as a "sign of Lithuanian identity" in the 21st century and classify them into five groups (see table 1). Of course, this division is not very strict or final—this "classification" is only preliminary and very conditional.

(1) Authentic forms of *sutartinės* in projects combining different ethnic musical cultures

In the projects assigned to this group (see table 1), *sutartinės* obviously become a sign of Lithuanian identity and Lithuanian mentality. Often, they are a place where contrasting musical traditions representing Eastern and Western cultures meet, highlighting the distinctiveness of each and possible points of contact. For example, in the project *Mugam and Sutartinės: Dialogues*, completely different traditions are united by meditativeness. According to the author of the project, Teymur Nadir Kerimov, "the introversion, contemplativeness, strictness of the form, cyclicity, and natural femininity of *sutartinės* create a magical formula that can be opened by an extroverted, ecstatic, free, masculine mugam" (LMIC[15] 2015). In this way, an innovative language is created with elements of modern music: fusion, free jazz, and electronic music.

Figure 2. *Mugam and Sutartinės: Dialogues* (Loftas Art Factory, Vilnius, 2015). Photo: Vytautas Daraškevičius

(2) *Sutartinės* as a marker of ethnic music in interdisciplinary projects—alternative music, visual arts, jazz

I will briefly introduce a few projects in which *sutartinės* were integrated into different interdisciplinary realms. The audiovisual performance *Waft* (2010) was created by the electroacoustic band Fusedmarc together with the *sutartinė* ensemble Trys Keturiose. The harmonies of the *sutartinės*, their cyclicality, their multilayeredness, their trance elements, and their perception of time seemed to the members of Fusedmarc to

[14] *Bienenmesch* by Algirdas Martinaitis for a string quartet and the *sutartinės* singers' group Trys Keturiose, 2003 (for more information, see Janatjeva 2003), *Vilnius Chronicles* (Vilniaus kronikos), oratorio by Gediminas Rimkus-Rimkevičius for the Lithuanian National Symphony Orchestra, opera soloists, state choir Vilnius and *sutartinė* singers group Ūtara, 2017 (Rimkus 2017), *Ancestors*, live performance by Abraham Brody and Trys Keturiose (Brody 2015), *Dances of Cranes* (Gervių šokiai) audiovisual project by Milda Venckutė for the *sutartinė* singers group Siulingėla and various ethnic instruments (Venckutė 2024), etc.

[15] Music Information Centre of Lithuania.

have many points of contact with the music they themselves create (Bareikytė 2011). I think that this project managed to surpass time—to harmoniously merge music and mindsets from different eras into one conceptual composition. The project did not distort the essence of the *sutartinės*, but supplemented them with new emotions, and audio and visual imagery.

The project *Circle of Rasas* (2016) brought together various Lithuanian artists from across various disciplines, including a singer, actress, jazz musician, and others (see table 1). The elements of Lithuanian, Indian, and Spanish cultural traditions inspire live improvisation and facilitate a portrayal of particular human feelings or contemplative states embraced by the Indian concept of *rasa*.[16] *Circle of Rasas* is thus constructed around *sutartinės* because of their structural semblance to a circle.

Figure 3. *Circle of Rasas* at Anykščiai Arts Incubator on September 24, 2016: Dominykas Vyšniauskas, Brigita Bublytė, and Trys Keturiose. Photo: Dmitrijus Matvejevas

By combining his music with *sutartinės*, Lithuanian award-winning guitarist Martynas Kuliavas sought to preserve the archaic, sacred nature of these chants in *Undiscovered Sensations* (2017). According to the musician, it is very difficult to create an accompaniment for *sutartinės* because they are beautiful in themselves as they sound alone (Nagytė 2017).[17]

Figure 4. *Undiscovered Sensations*. Martynas Kuliavas and Ūtara, the Bernardine Church, Vilnius, 2017. Photo: Linas Jonušas

Despite the fact that *sutartinės* are combined with music of various styles, most projects attributed to this group preserve their essence. *Sutartinės* are often sung for a long time, without being divided into parts or cut into short segments. This allows the singers to better immerse themselves in a particular emotional state and create a special atmosphere around them, which the musicians complement with new emotions and audio/visual imagery.

16 There are nine principal *rasas* arising from corresponding human feelings like love, joy, sorrow, anger, courage, fear, disgust, astonishment, and serenity.

17 Listen to the project on YouTube (priormusica 2018).

(3) Monophonic "layouts" of bitonal melodies of *sutartinės*, or just parts of melodies, in various stylistic contexts

The representatives of this group have abandoned perhaps the most important feature of *sutartinės*: their polyphonic nature.[18] There are quite a few works that can be attributed to this direction of *sutartinė* manifestation (see table 1). For example, pieces by the *Electronic Sutartinės* project (2021) are widely heard not only in Lithuania, but also throughout the world. According to the performer and producer Victor Diawara, this project can boldly perform anywhere in the world and represent Lithuania and Lithuanian culture (LMIC n.d.). However, it is worth noting that a "pop style" vocal manner dominates in most of their compositions, which is far from being a typical articulation of *sutartinės*.[19] In some of them ("Sidabro Lakiūtė"), the metre rhythm is completely changed, final cadences uncharacteristic of *sutartinės* appear, etc. (Elektroninės Sutartinės, 2021).[20]

(4) "Collage" projects: sound recordings of *sutartinė* singers groups are used / groups singing live at concerts (*sutartinė* sounds in their pure form / sections of them are "played")

The forms of *sutartinė* manifestation of this group can be referred to as a kind of musical collage—the use and fragmentation of pre-existing material. Published or made available on the internet, audio recordings of *sutartinė* singers become "draft" material that composers freely use in their compositions (usually without even consulting the *sutartinė* singers beforehand or without informing them at all about the use of their audio recordings). It is important that *sutartinė* singers themselves, actively participating in such "collage" projects, do not feel like "creators" of *sutartinės* here and now, or as project co-authors, but merely as cut—lighter or shorter—"fragments" of that collage.

For example, in the modernized folklore project titled *Sutartinė Party* (2003, see table 1), authentically singing *sutartinė* singers, such as Veronika Janatjeva, aptly observed, "[we] must obey the development of the music conceived by the composers, enter and fall silent at the right places, as if becoming another track in a multilayered electronic instrumentation" (Janatjeva 2017). Various types of modern electronic rhythms are heard in this project. According to Linas Paulauskis, "this was the idea of *Sutartinė Party*: authentic *sutartinės* are combined with house, trance, bigbeat, acid jazz, triphop, dub, etc. styles, as if checking their compatibility with the old tradition (by the way, the word '*sutartinės*' itself comes from 'agreement,' i.e., to correspond, to agree/attune...)" (Janatjeva 2017).

Evaldas Azbukauskas (Girių Dvasios), the creator of the album *Ratu* (2015), said that he chose *sutartinės* because he wanted to learn as much as possible about ancient Lithuanian spiritual traditions. In his opinion, the function of *sutartinės* is spiritual, meditative. Therefore, both listening to and performing them should be done with an appropriate attitude. In this project, Azbukauskas used audio recordings of *sutartinės* sung by Trys Keturiose and Kūlgrinda because they helped him feel the Baltic spirit (Kunčinas 2015).

(5) Associations with *sutartinės* due to the use of onomatopoeic words

In this group, I will discuss a few songs that have become widely known (see table 1). When discussing the song "Čiūto Tūto" by Guoda Isado (2011), it is worth noting that this particular combination of two refrains—*čiūto* and *tūto* (*čiūto tūto*)—does not exist among authentic *sutartinė* texts (almost 2,000 have been recorded). For many, it may seem that there is little difference whether one hears *čiūto tūto* or *čiūto rūto* (the original)—after all, these onomatopoeic words no longer mean anything to modern Lithuanians, apart from their supposed connection to *sutartinės*.[21] Even more interestingly, more than 10 years later, the exact same combination of onomatopoeic words—*čiūto tūto*—becomes the "*sutartinės* (Lithuanian)" code of another composition—"Stay" by Monika Linkytė (Eurovision 2023).[22] Although Linkytė's song caused a great

[18] As mentioned earlier, group, rather than solo, performance is one of the most important features of *sutartinės*. Commonality is one of their essential "codes."

[19] Traditional performances of *sutartinės* feature the expression of a peculiar timbre ("as cranes", "as chickens", "as *skudučiai*" and such), as well as ways of articulation ("clucking", "tooting", glissando sounds, etc.) (Račiūnaitė-Vyčinienė 2011b).

[20] Incidentally, the absence of final cadences in *sutartinė* music was immediately noticed by composer and musicologist Edwin Geist, who arrived in Lithuania during the 1930s from Berlin: "*Sutartinės* have no cadences!" (Geist 1940, 73). This is a feature of *sutartinės* (their distinctive, musical *perpetuum mobile*) that this musicologist noted is indeed unique, differentiating it from all other Lithuanian folk music.

[21] For more on the possible meanings of the refrains of *sutartinės* see Rimantienė (2024).

[22] Linkytė said that this phrase came naturally, apparently it was ingrained in her from earlier, listening to folk songs and folk songs in general (Griniūtė 2023).

deal of discussion, there was more praise for the singer in the media, saying that her Eurovision song is very Lithuanian, because it is based on elements taken from *sutartinės*.

How can this be explained? Is it plagiarism of a newly created refrain? Again, the question arises, is there a connection with the world of the *sutartinės* in this song? Or maybe this is just an episodic characteristic of onomatopoeic words with a typical syncopated rhythm formula? More generally, does the refrain *čiūto tūto* in the last two compositions have the same deep, mysterious meaning as in *sutartinės*? Or does it become the basis, the central axis of the composition? This does not seem to be the case. To me, it is more like an external effect, giving the impression of a certain exoticism to a foreign listener. Moreover, the artificial combination of words (*čiūto tūto*) can hardly be a symbol associated with *sutartinės*. It can only allude to *sutartinės*.[23]

Table 1. Classification of manifestations of *sutartinės* in the musical practices of the 21st century

	Forms of *sutartinė* manifestation	**Title of project/piece**	**Creators/performers**	**Place and year of performance**
1.	**Authentic forms of sutartinės in projects combining different ethnic musical cultures**	*A Marriage of Sutartines and Flamenco* (Flamenko ir sutartinių jungtuvės) (Sutartines – Flamenco 2015)		Anykščiai Art Incubator, 2015
		Mugam and Sutartinės: Dialogues (Mugamas ir sutartinės: dialogai) (Kerimov 2015)	Teymur Nadir Kerimov (guitar and keyboards), Trys Keturiose, Mugam trio: Elshan Mansurov, Malik Mansurov and Ehtyram Huseynov, Evaldas Vyčinas (kanklės), string quartet "Chords", and others	Loftas Art Factory, 2015
		The Sun Plants a Garden (Saula sodų sadina) (Sur Sadhana 2019)	Composer Anatoly Lomonosov. Ensemble Šalavija, Agota Zdanavičiūtė (kanklės), Jūratė Adlytė (tampura), Tomas Drunga (tabla), AnatoAli (sitar)	The festival SurSadhana, 2019
2.	***Sutartinės* as a marker of ethnic music in interdisciplinary projects—alternative music, visual arts, jazz**	*Waft*[1] (Bareikytė 2011)	Fusedmarc and Trys Keturiose	Europäisches Zentrum der Künste Dresden, 2010
		Circle of Rasas (Rasų ratas) (Sutartines – Flamenco 2016)	Brigita Bublytė, Dominykas Vyšniauskas, Trys Keturiose	Anykščiai Arts Incubator, 2016
		Undiscovered Sensations (Netikėti prisilietimai)	Martynas Kuliavas (guitar) and Ūtara, St Catherine's Church, Vilnius, 2017	
3.	**Monophonic "layouts" of bitonal melodies of *sutartinės* or just parts of melodies**	*Sutartinė*[2]	Veronika Povilionienė (voice) and Petras Vyšniauskas (saxophone)	2017
		Saulala Sadina, Lylia (Sabulytė 2021)	Agnė Sabulytė (voice and electronic music)	2021
		Saulala Sadina (Līlā 2017)	Agota Zdanavičiūtė (voice and traditional nine-string *kanklės*	2017
		Electronic Sutartinės (Elektroninės sutartinės)[3]	Sutartronica: Victor Diawara (producer, musician) and Laurita Peleniūtė (vocalist)	2021
4.	**"Collage" projects: sound recordings of *sutartinė* singer groups are used / groups sing live at concerts (*sutartinė* sounds in their pure form / sections of them are "played")**	*Sutartinė Party*	Linas Rimša, Linas Paulauskis and Trys Keturiose	Contemporary music festival MaerzMusik, 2003
		Ratu	Girių Dvasios (Evaldas Azbukauskas), Trys Keturiose and Kūlgrinda (audio recordings)	2015
		Narovsky x Ratilio (feat. Elektroninės Sutartinės) (Narovski 2023)	Narovsky (Danielius Narauskas) and folklore ensemble Ratilio	2023
5.	**Associations with *sutartinės* due to the use of onomatopoeic words**	"Čiūto Tūto"	Guoda Isado	National Eurovision selection of Lithuania, 2011
		"Stay (Čiūto Tūto)"	Monika Linkytė	The Eurovision Song Contest, 2023

[1] Listen to the project on YouTube (Fusedmarc 2012; Žak 2014).
[2] Listen to the project in LMIC (Kučinskaitė n.d.).
[3] Listen to the project on YouTube (*Elektroninės Sutartinės*).

[23] One sutartinės-singer told the 19th-century linguist Mykolas Miežinis that "Mothers knew the kind of hymns, which were kept secret and very rarely sung. The words were held in high esteem and considered irreplaceable" (Русское географическое общество [Rusijos geografijos draugija], Inv. 1, No. 31, p. 89). Keeping hymns secret along with the honor of never replacing word choices indicates special meaningfulness and sacredness as being inherent to *sutartinės*.

Having briefly discussed the various possible ways that *sutartinės* manifest in today's musical projects, I would like to emphasize that this is only a conditional classification. Moreover, today we can also talk about a completely new approach to *sutartinės*, with creators not being tied to either authentic *sutartinė* texts nor quotes from original music.

Conclusions

Without questioning the artistic value, viability, and longevity of these various projects, I would suggest considering whether in all the discussed cases of the use of *sutartinės* (or their elements) they can still be recognized as *sutartinės* and seen as a sign of Lithuanianness?

Maybe it would be worth reviewing how many of the essential features of *sutartinės* listed at the beginning of my report remain in today's alternative, electronic, and popular music projects? After all, many of these features have been (and still are) important for composers of different generations (perhaps without directly linking them to *sutartinės*)—from Juzeliūnas, Kutavičius, Kabelis, Janulytė, Medekšaitė, and Venckutė to the stylistically various projects of the 21st century.

It is clear that today's concept of *sutartinės* is shaped by a wide variety of factors:

1) the prevalence of club, electronic, and popular music;
2) the numerous audio and video recordings of various *sutartinė* singers groups (Youtube, Soundcloud, etc.) and live performances at concerts;
3) various forms of *sutartinė*-singing training for the general public;[24]
4) new research into *sutartinės* (cognitive, psychoacoustic, etc.) and popularization of this research in lectures at the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre, as well as in public lectures, seminars, courses, etc.

Some artists are more influenced and attracted by the rhythms of club music, electronic music (*Sutartinė Party*; *Electronic Sutartinės*; *Narovsky x Ratilio*; *Saulala Sadina, Lylia*; *Ratu*), while others tend towards meditation, dissolving the boundaries of time and space in "*sutartinė*-like" music, creating cosmic harmony (Kabelis; Girių Dvasios), and still others lean towards ritualism, or the creation of peculiar musical rituals (*Ancestors*, *Dances of Cranes,* etc.).

In some of the creative projects I have discussed, the musical environment characteristic of *sutartinės* no longer exists at all (*Saulala sadina*); in others, the melodic inflections of *sutartinės* are changed beyond recognition (*Sutartinė*; *Saulala Sadina, Lylia*); their characteristic metrorhythmic structure is destroyed, and the cyclical structure becomes irrelevant (uncharacteristic cadences appear, destroying the *perpetuum mobile* of *sutartinės*) (*Electronic Sutartinės*). Moreover, very often the melody of a *sutartinė* is sung not by a group of singers but by one person, which is already inconsistent with the very name and concept of a *sutartinė* (meaning "agreement"), and violates the essence of these chants (*Sutartinė*; *Saulala Sadina, Lylia*; *Electronic Sutartinės*, *Saulala sadina*), or it is sung in a "pop style" voice (*Saulala Sadina, Lylia*; *Electronic Sutartinės*), etc.

The question arises: can this distorted image represent the uniqueness of Lithuanian music and, in general, the Lithuanian mentality? It is obvious that in the rotating eternal circle of *sutartinės*, every time period brings a different concept of *sutartinės* and a different interpretation of them in musical creation—we can observe this in the work of composers of the 20th and early 21st centuries. The *sutartinė*, as my research has shown, can be modified in various ways: by breaking up its melody into sections, by changing certain melodic and rhythmic features, harmony, the character of the singing, by repeating only a certain melodic/textual motif, and so on. Creative freedom should not be restricted. And yet, based on my long experience of singing and researching *sutartinės*, I am trying to evaluate contemporary projects from the perspective of "*sutartinės* as a symbol of Lithuanian identity" (of course, over the many years of practicing the *sutartinės*, I have developed my own "standard" image of the manifestation of *sutartinės* in contemporary culture, so I may not be entirely objective). In my opinion, it is important that *sutartinės* do not lose their essence, which is still linked to Lithuanianness. In this sense, I would agree with ethnologist Eglė Gelažiūtė-Pranevičienė's statement that it is very important to consider on what levels a folk song can be decomposed before it disintegrates (Gelažiūtė-Pranevičienė 2021). While acknowledging that there are various possible forms of using *sutartinės* in alternative music projects today, it is important to keep in mind the nature of these chants, and to not violate their identity.

[24] *Sutartinė* Circles; Women's Circles; *Sutartinė* Exercises; *Sutartinė* Meditation; *Sutartinė* practice and Yoga; *Sutartinės* and Cacao; Psychedelics in *Sutartinės*, etc.

After all, hymn-singing is not simple singing but a special means for interacting with the transcendental world, with the universe, and becoming part of it while singing. Hymn-singing, when empathizing with the tradition, is impossible without repetition. Doubts could arise as to whether the accurate performance of an old hymn's form (repeating not only the melody with words, but also its special manner of singing) leaves enough room for creativity. Without this, as we know, no tradition would be able to develop any further. And yet, the meaning of hymn-singing is gradually realized—through repeated repetition. At this point, I would like to recall the countries of East and South Asia, with which the search for spirituality and experiences is still associated in the wider world. One of them is Japan, which is characterized by respect for old traditions and their transmission through repetition. Perhaps it is for good reason that the Japanese rebuild their Shinto temples every 20 years? This is not only part of the transmission of the belief in death and regeneration, but is also a way to pass down the secrets of temple construction to future generations.

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Sutartinės kaip lietuviškumo ženklas: *ethno-* ir *contempo* sąveika

Santrauka

Jau daugiau kaip prieš 100 metų žymus tautosakininkas kanauninkas Adolfas Sabaliauskas įženklino sutartines kaip galimą lietuvių profesionaliosios muzikos pagrindą. XIX a. pab. atradęs sutartines, Sabaliauskas teigė: „jos gi bus lietuviui kompozitoriui neišdžiūstąs šaltinis tonų veikalams, kurie lietuvio dušią lig gilumai sujudins ir lietuvio būdą nemirštančiu užlaikys" (Sabaliauskas 1904). Sutartinių muzikai būdingi bruožai (aštrūs sekundų sąskambiai, sinkopiniai ritmai, ritmikos motoriškumas, *ostinato* ir kt.) įsipina į daugelio XX a. kompozitorių (Stasio Vainiūno, Vytauto Montvilos, Teisučio Makačino, Vytauto Barkausko, Felikso Bajoro, Algirdo Martinaičio ir kt.) kūrybą. Vis dėlto tik keleto kompozitorių – Juozo Gruodžio, Juliaus Juzeliūno, Broniaus Kutavičiaus – kūryboje sutartinės iškyla kaip itin svarbus kiekvieno jų kūrybinės programos žymuo. Šių kompozitorių individualus stilius sąmoningai konstruojamas iš lietuvių folkloro (visų pirma, sutartinių) ir modernių muzikos raiškos priemonių. Juzeliūnas savąja *ethno-* ir *contempo* sąveikos samprata pasidalija teoriniame veikale *Akordo sandaros klausimu* (1972), kuriame pagrindžia dviejų uždarų muzikinių sistemų – sutartinių ir dodekafonijos – sugretinimo principus, sukuriančius, anot kompozitoriaus, naują ypatingo tipo struktūrą.

Straipsnyje aptariamos įvairios sutartinių panaudojimo ir gyvavimo šiuolaikinėje kultūroje apraiškos. Atkreipiamas dėmesys į skirtingus sutartinių, kaip lietuviškumo ženklo, pasireiškimo būdus XXI a. pradžioje:

- į autentišką sutartinių pavidalą projektuose, jungiančiuose skirtingas etnines muzikines kultūras („Flamenko ir sutartinių jungtuvės" (2015), „Mugamas ir sutartinės: dialogai" (2015), „Saula sodų sadina" festivalyje „SurSadhana 2019" ir kt.);
- į sutartines kaip etninę muzikos žymę tarpdalykiniuose – alternatyviosios muzikos, džiazo, vaizdo – projektuose (grupės „Fusedmarc" ir muzikinio ansamblio „Trys keturiose" projektas „Waft" (2010); Brigitos Bublytės, Dominyko Vyšniausko ir sutartinių giedotojų grupės „Trys keturiose" projektas „Rasų ratas" (2016); Martyno Kuliavo (gitara) ir sutartinių giedotojų grupės „Ūtara" projektas „Netikėti prisilietimai" (2017) ir kt.);
- į vienbalses bitonalių sutartinės melodijų *išklotines*, melodines atkarpas, paskiras intonacijas (Veronika Povilionienė ir Petras Vyšniauskas „Apynys auga" (1993), Agota „Saulala sadina", Agnė Sabulytė „Saulala sadina lylia" ir kt.);
- į sutartines (arba jų atkarpas), įterptas į elektroninę muziką (Linas Rimša, Linas Paulauskis „Sutartinės Party" (2003); Girių dvasios „Ratu" (2015), Narovski ir Ratilio projektas (feat. „Elektroninės sutartinės"));
- į garsažodinių refrenų naudojimą (Guoda Isado „Čiūto Tūto" (2011), Monika Linkytė „Stay (Čiūto Tūto)" (2023) ir kt.).

Sutartinių raiška šiandieniniuose alternatyviosios muzikos projektuose be galo įvairi. Vienuose jų sutartinė pateikiama kaip vientisas kūrinys, išlaikant jai būdingą struktūrą, melodiją, tekstą, kituose neatpažįstamai pakeičiamos sutartinių melodinės intonacijos, suardoma joms būdinga metroritminė struktūra, sutartinės dainuojamos vienos dainininkės, *popsiniu* balsu ir pan.

Šiuo straipsniu norima pakviesti diskutuoti: ar sutartines vis dar galima atpažinti ir vertinti kaip lietuviškos tapatybės ženklą kiekvienu jų panaudojimo atveju? Ar visada sutartinių modifikacijos sietinos su lietuvių muzikos išskirtinumu ir lietuviškumu? Ar gali pavieniai elementai (melodija, melodijos motyvai, teksto nuotrupos, refrenai ir kt.) atstoti sutartinių, kaip archajinio mąstymo sistemos, pagrįstos visa apimančia darnos idėja, visumą? Ar pernelyg iškreiptas sutartinių vaizdas atspindi lietuviškąjį mentalitetą? Vienareikšmių atsakymų, matyt, gali ir nebūti.

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Reframing the Folk Song—the Compositional Approaches of Jonas Švedas (1927–1981)

Abstract. This paper discusses how Lithuanian composer Jonas Švedas (1927–1981) incorporated folk songs into his composition. Throughout his life, he created multiple works based on the same folk songs. This paper analyzes several works works by Švedas (Suite, 1954–1955; *Musical Sketches* for piano, 1959; *Trys Posmai* for voice and piano, 1960; *Four Unsingular Pieces* for piano, 1968–1971) and aims to highlight how his relationship with folk music and creative approach to it evolved over time. The analysis revealed that, as time passed, the elements of folk songs in his works became increasingly abstracted, and one of Švedas's masterpieces—*Four Unsingular Pieces*—embodies the process of cultural hybridization by merging components from various different cultures. In his compositions, Lithuanian folk songs are transformed through Western modernist techniques. In this way, Švedas occupies a unique place in the context of Lithuanian émigré culture.

Keywords: Jonas Švedas, folk song, piano, Béla Bartók, chromatic completion.

Acknowledgement

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Introduction

In the realm of Lithuanian music history, it is noteworthy that two individuals named Jonas Švedas were simultaneously active at the same time. The achievements and life of Jonas Švedas (1908–1971), who remained in Soviet-occupied Lithuania, have been well-documented and thoroughly examined in the literature. Conversely, the legacy of another Jonas Švedas (1927–1981), who left Lithuania due to Soviet occupation and emigrated to the United States, has been unjustly neglected, rarely performed, and faded from public memory. To date, only two scholarly works have been devoted to the US-based Švedas in the musicological domain:

1. An outline of Švedas's biography is presented in a monograph by musicologist Dana Palionytė, *Jonas Švedas—egzodo kompozitorius* (2012). Drawing on the recollections of contemporaries, the composer's correspondence, and material gathered by the author, Palionytė reconstructs the essential episodes of Švedas's life, identifies the main features of his creative output, and evaluates his work in the context of Lithuanian musical culture. However, given the limited access to US archives and the musical manuscripts preserved there, the book relies primarily on recollections and the composer's epistolary legacy held in Lithuania.
2. In 2023 and 2024, I published two papers in which I divided Švedas's creative output into two periods according to stylistic changes: the early period (up to 1960) and mature period (after 1960). Both papers aimed primarily to elucidate the overall biographical and creative trajectory of Švedas's works—from his early to late stylistic developments and his engagement with modernist idioms—while also supplementing the gaps in Palionytė's monograph by providing information derived from lost autographs and other previously unavailable sources.

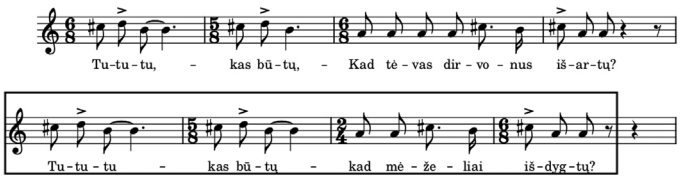
Based on previous studies, in the present study, to examine the treatment and transformation of folk material as it manifests throughout Švedas's entire compositional output, biographical details and general stylistic characteristics of the composer will be left to Palionytė's monograph, while the discussion of the historical context will be kept to a minimum.

Švedas's compositional output is by no means extensive and most of his works are limited to piano and chamber music. This can be attributed not only to the fact that the composer was an accomplished pianist but also to two additional factors: the first was pronounced as self-criticism. In his letters, he frequently voiced dissatisfaction with his works and contemplated rewriting them. This is confirmed by the existence of multiple versions of the same piece, which in some cases appeared decades apart (for example, the song "Skęstanti serenada" [Drowning serenade], 1952/1980, and the poem "Pokalbis su mirusiais vaikais" [Conversation with dead children], 1965/1976, have two versions).

The second factor was his compositional method, which was highly variable and inconsistent. On more than one occasion, he would abandoned works even at an advanced stage of development and never return to them. His correspondence and other sources also contain references to works that were contemplated but

never undertaken, such as Requiem.[1] In cases where the composition remained incomplete, he often reused or directly transferred the material into another piece. Švedas's Suite (1954–1955), *Two Musical Sketches* (1959) for piano, and *Trys Posmai* (Three stanzas) (1960) for voice and piano are good examples. The unfinished third movement of the Suite was extracted and reworked as "Musical Sketch" No. 1 (the fourth movement of the Suite was reworked as "Musical Sketch" No. 2). Furthermore, "Musical Sketch" No. 1 served as the basis for the third movement of *Trys Posmai*. These three works can be regarded as recompositions in terms of their musical content; in particular, Suite and *Musical Sketches* may be considered revisions of the same work. Similarly, Švedas's masterpiece from his mature period, *Four Unsingular Pieces* (1968–1971) was later reworked into the aria from his opera *J.S.B.* Unfortunately, despite extensive searches, the score was not found, and thus it could not be included in the present study. This study focuses mainly on Švedas's piano and vocal works based on folk material from each period (early: Suite, *Musical Sketches*, *Trys Posmai*; later: *Four Unsingular Pieces*) to elucidate the development of Švedas's compositional techniques, fusing folk song elements throughout his entire creation.

Recomposition from Suite to "Musical Sketch" No. 1

Švedas's Suite for piano consists of four movements. The first movement has a laconic neoclassical texture, whereas the other three movements are attempts at adaptation or stylization. The second movement is modeled on the ostinato motif from Sergei Prokofiev's (1891–1953) Piano Piece Op. 4, No. 3. In this movement, the composer attempted to adapt and develop the musical idea of Prokofiev's piece. Based on the same motif, he also tried to develop the fourth movement, that is, a playful *perpetuum mobile* (although this movement remained incomplete). The third movement is an example of stylization, in which the melody of a Lithuanian folk song is overlaid with expressionist harmony. Either because of his dissatisfaction with the incoherence of Suite or because of a change in the composer's thinking, the third and fourth movements were later designated as a new musical opus: *Two Musical Sketches*. The recomposition from Suite to *Two Musical Sketches* is evident in their musical identity. The monothematic "Musical Sketch" No. 1, which was previously the third movement of Suite, is based on the Lithuanian folk song "Tu tu tu, kas būtų" (Tu tu tu, what would it be) (see example 1).

Example 1. Lithuanian folk song "Tu tu tu, kas būtų" (Slaviūnas 1959, 531)

Before analyzing Suite and "Musical Sketch" No. 1 in parallel, we examine the original folk song itself. "Tu tu tu, kas būtų" is a cheerful piece celebrating a bountiful harvest and has a simple strophic structure. Like many folk songs, it features a straightforward melodic design: consisting of only four notes, and the melody contains an ambiguity that allows it to be perceived as either major or minor. It is built from two repetitions of a simple motif and a cadence phrase, forming a strophe of four bars.

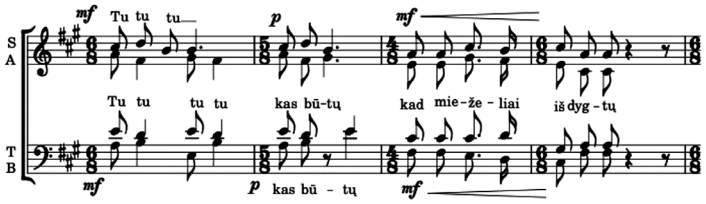
Švedas extracted only the second strophe, where the meter successively shortens from 6/8 to 5/8 to 4/8, and used this melody as the basis for the third movement of Suite as well as for "Musical Sketch" No. 1. In Švedas's manuscript, neither the title of this melody nor its source is indicated, and he never mentions the name of this folk song in his letters.

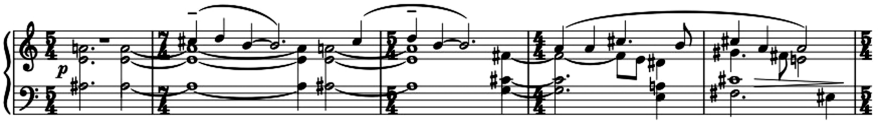
Judging from the distribution of repeated phrases across different registers and the similarity of harmonization, Švedas most likely drew on Kazys Viktoras Banaitis's (1896–1963) collection of choral arrangements, *100 liaudies dainų* (100 folk songs) (1951).[2]

In Banaitis's elegant choral arrangement (example 2), created for a choir, the main melody is effectively distributed among all voices except the bass, thus avoiding monotonous repetition. The first four measures of Švedas's Suite—with its chorale-like four-part texture and the way the main melody is distributed across various

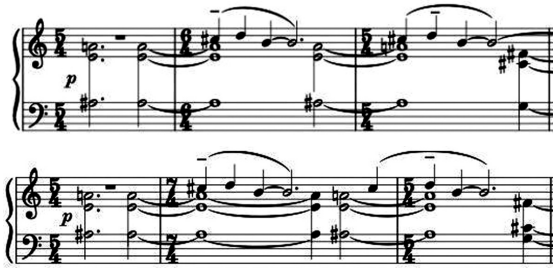
[1] This work is mentioned in Švedas's letter to his friend, dramaturge Kostas Ostrauskas dated February 14, 1950 (Palionytė 2012, 93).

[2] Kazys Viktoras Banaitis. *100 liaudies dainų*. Prel. P. M. Juras, 1951.

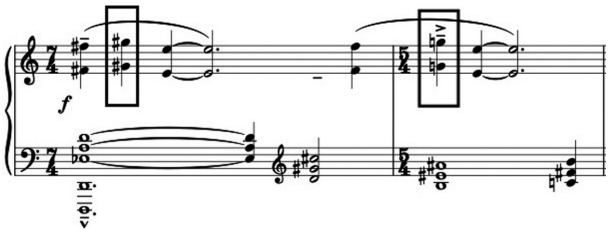
registers upon each repetition—closely resemble Banaitis's arrangement. Nevertheless, although Švedas's Suite and "Musical Sketch" No. 1 go beyond mere arrangement, they cannot be considered as fully independent works that extensively develop their themes. Rather, they may be described as stylizations of distinctive folk melodies.

Example 2. Kazys Viktoras Banaitis. "Tu tu tu, kas būtų," bb. 12–15 (Banaitis 1951, 69)

Banaitis harmonized this folk song with A major, whereas Švedas separated the second phrase of the song and embedded it within an F♯ minor harmony. Unlike Banaitis's harmonization intended for amateur choirs, Švedas gave his piece an expressionist color by employing his favored quartal harmony (tritone + perfect fourth; see example 3). Furthermore, Švedas's accompaniment chords are consistently placed on the upbeat (*Auftakt*), omitting the downbeat, thereby making the subtly changing meters (6/4–5/4–4/4) even more ambiguous.

Example 3. Jonas Švedas. "Musical Sketch" No. 1, bb. 1–5 (transcribed by Yusuke Ishii from Švedas 1982, 8)

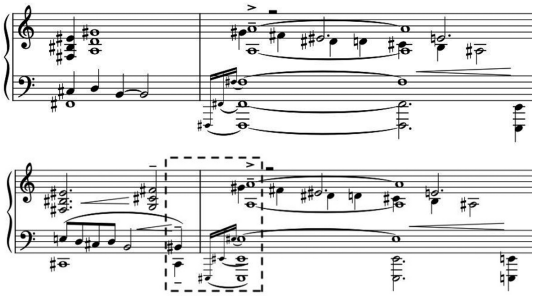
Although the third movement of Suite and "Musical Sketch" No. 1 can be regarded as a revised version of the same piece in terms of musical content, a closer comparative analysis reveals Švedas's meticulous compositional manipulation. In the opening of both pieces, the highest note, D, of the phrase serves as the melodic accent. Interestingly, as the changing meter indicates, the melodic motif "Tu tu tu" becomes slightly shorter in its second appearance (b. 3), implying that the intonation of this motif is not entirely identical each time throughout the phrase.

To convey this subtle nuance of intonation, Švedas marks a tenuto sign on C♯ instead of D in the first appearance of the motif, and then places the tenuto on D in the second appearance, aligning this D with the first beat of the bar. In "Musical Sketch" No. 1, he further alters the meter (while the Suite uses 6/4–5/4, "Musical Sketch" No. 1 employs 7/4–5/4; see example 4), adding another layer of rhythmic refinement to the music. Thus, within what seems to be a monotonous repetition of the melody, Švedas seeks to draw out to the fullest extent those ineffable nuances that cannot be notated, doing so within the framework of Western music language. This becomes clearer when the melody is varied.

Example 4. Jonas Švedas. The third movement of Suite, bb. 1–3 (above, transcribed by Yusuke Ishii from Lithuanian Archives of Literature and Art (henceforth LLMA), col. 757, inv. 1, fol. 3, p. 6); "Musical Sketch" No. 1, bb. 1–3 (below)

From b. 5, the main melody moves to the tenor voice, an element that recalls Banaitis's choral arrangement. In this tenor rendition of the main melody, a grace note is added to the first beat of measure 6—precisely to the note that Švedas marked tenuto in his score. This grace note collides with the E♯ from the chromatic line in the right-hand part, creating additional musical tension.

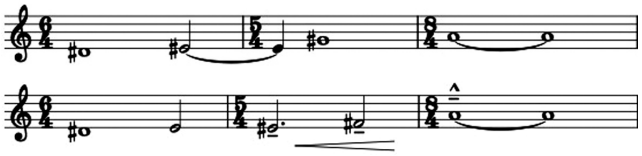
From b. 10, the main melody is transposed at an interval of perfect 4th. Here, Švedas raises the second note—originally G—to G♯, resulting in a sound almost like that of the Lydian mode in D major (see example 5). This creates a striking contrast with the dark color of the opening in F♯ minor. Compared with the harmonization at the beginning, where the same chord is held during bars 1–3 and the downbeat is left unarticulated, from b. 10, each bar begins with a quartal chord—one of Švedas's preferred sonorities—thereby reinforcing the expressionistic color in combination with the melody's chromatic inflections.

Example 5. Jonas Švedas. "Musical Sketch" No. 1, bb. 10–11

After the fortissimo climax in b. 15, when the main melody is presented for the fourth time in the bass, harmony shifts from b. 17 to B minor. This can be understood as conventional plagal motion, where the subdominant (IV) is introduced before the final cadence. In other words, Švedas consciously worked within the framework of harmonic functionality, enriching it with quartal harmony. Thus, subtle manipulations are made to avoid monotonous repetition, not only in meters but also in harmony. Indeed, it is precisely in the harmonic domain that a decisive evolution can be observed between the two works.

The tonal functionality is mostly confirmed by the bass F♯–C♯ (or C♯–F♯) movements in bb. 7–8 of "Musical Sketch" No. 1, which clearly marks a tonic-dominant relationship. (In the third movement of Suite, the basses are based entirely on F♯.) One of the fundamental changes in harmony from Suite to "Musical Sketch" No. 1 is bb. 8–9, where note A in the melody is maintained as an axial tone throughout the bar. This place remained F♯ minor throughout the third movement of Suite, while in "Musical Sketch" No. 1, when the bass shifts down a semitone, the F major triad can be heard enharmonically (see example 6). Švedas likely discovered the possibility of bitonality while maintaining axial tone in the works of Béla Bartók (1881–1945), with whom Švedas had the opportunity to become acquainted while studying at the American Conservatory in Chicago.[3]

Example 6. Jonas Švedas. The third movement of Suite, bb. 8–9 (above); "Musical Sketch" No. 1, bb. 8–9 (below)

These harmonic shifts also alter the elements beyond the theme's melody. In b. 7, a countermelody with a longer note value (semibreve or minim note) appears on the right side. The countermelody of Suite in bb. 7–8 is D♯–E♯–G♯, and that of "Musical Sketch" No. 1 uses a gentler chromatic scale (D♯–E–E♯–F♯) without G and G♯ (see example 7). This chromatic scale not only broadens the texture and range, leading to the forte in b. 10, but also incorporates the omitted G and G♯ from the main melody in bb. 10–11. As mentioned previously, these two notes are the result of Švedas's manipulation of intervals to highlight the subtle nuances of the folk-song melody. By deliberately removing these two notes, bb. 8–9, G–G♯ of the main melody

[3] In 1958, Švedas orchestrated Bartók's *Allegro barbaro* (1911) for piano (LLMA, col. 757, inv. 1, fol. 13). In this piece, the same melody is harmonized in two different tonalities—F♯ minor and F major.

in bb. 10–11 sounds particularly refreshing. Similarly, G is omitted in the chromatic scale of b. 14 to avoid repeating the emphasized G from b. 9.

Example 7. Jonas Švedas. The countermelody of the third movement of Suite, bb. 7–9 (above); "Musical Sketch" No. 1, bb. 7–9 (below)

Musicologist Paul Paccione refers to this type of twelve-tone organization as a chromatic completion (Paccione 1988, 85–93). According to musicologists, such phenomena occur in both tonal and early (free) atonal music; in the latter, chromatic completion becomes the ultimate musical goal, equivalent to a cadential function in tonal music. However, Švedas applied this technique to highlight structural relief. He used it in the same way in the third movement of his Sonata for Violin and Piano (1961). Švedas also employed this technique in his later works, including *Trys Posmai* for voice and piano.

It seems that Švedas did not consciously use this technique but rather acquired it intuitively while employing an expressionistic idiom based on free atonality, similar to the early works of Arnold Schönberg. In this way, he skillfully connects the subtle pitch manipulations of folk melodies with chromatic completion, although this does not appear to be directly related to Bartók's influence on him. This can be considered an affinity with Bartók in terms of his creative philosophy; at the same time, it is also a common issue for other 20th-century composers who tried to draw on the potential in folk material. The pitch manipulation of the folk song is more relevant in *Trys Posmai*, in which Švedas further developed the technique of chromatic completion, reaching a nearly original twelve-tone technique.

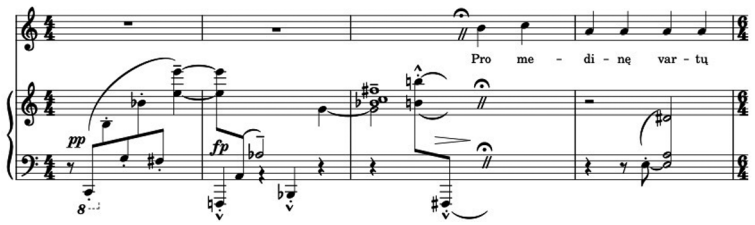
Recontextualized folk material—*Trys Posmai* (Three Stanzas)

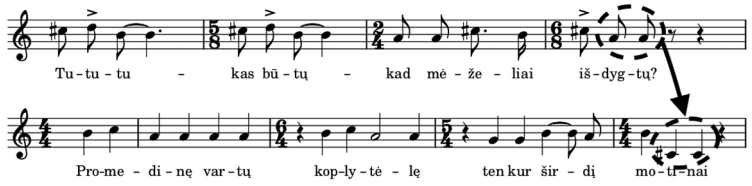
From a dramaturgical perspective, the chromatic completion technique is used effectively in "Mergaitės" [The Girls], the third movement of Švedas's masterpiece *Trys Posmai* [Three Stanzas] (1960) based on Lithuanian poet, Kazys Bradūnas's (1917–2009) poem *Maras* (Plague, 1947). Here, Švedas's skillful compositional manipulation is revealed not only through the introduction of the piano (bb. 1–3), based on this technique, but also through the subsequent entrance of the voice, which is notable for its diatonicism. The use of diatonicism is not incidental in this movement. Within the spatially dispersed, pointillistic texture of the piano, one can easily discern a complete correspondence between melody and musical progression in "Musical Sketch" No. 1. Although the music is transposed a whole tone lower and somewhat expanded, Švedas incorporated the musical material from "Musical Sketch" No. 1 into "Mergaitės." The song "Tu tu tu, kas būtų" is here transformed into a dark, almost decadent poem revealing "siuntančios mirties šešėliai" [the shadows of raging death] (see table 1). Švedas achieved an almost ironic recontextualization of folk melodies by incorporating a naïve folk song within a pointillistic texture constructed using the chromatic completion technique.

Opening bb. 1–3, which are absent from the plan of "Musical Sketch" No. 1, utilize the chromatic completion technique. In these bars, nearly all 12 tones are dispersed throughout the piano's pointillistic texture, evoking the twelve-tone technique[4] (C–B–G–B♭–G♭–E–F–A–A♭; see example 8). Here, the composer intentionally leaves out the tones E♭ and C♯, which appear elsewhere in the vocal lines. C♯ first appears in b. 7, at the end of the folk song phrase. Originally, this closing tone would have been G, but Švedas substituted it with C♯. This insertion into the diatonic melody, along with the preceding B, creates a descending minor seventh, adding heterogeneity. This alteration of the melodic contour reflects the poem's underlying meaning, while simultaneously removing the folk-like quality inherent in the melody (see example 9). The other omitted tone, E♭, is introduced only at the climax of the work (b. 21–24). The climactic moment (b. 24) is highlighted by a strikingly resonant E♭, which was originally an A in the folk melody. Through this use of chromatic completion, Švedas dramatizes Bradūnas's expression of death.

[4] Since the exact same pitch pattern that appears at the opening reoccurs in b. 30, the passage could be interpreted as a partial use of the twelve-tone technique. However, as the composition cannot be said to be derived from the initial series, it is more appropriate to interpret it here simply as an instance of chromatic completion.

Table 1. Texts from the Lithuanian folk song "Tu tu tu, kas būtų" (left); "Mergaitės" from Kazys Bradūnas' poem *Maras* (right)

Language	Lithuanian folk song "Tu tu tu, kas būtų"	"Mergaitės," based on Kazys Bradūnas poem *Maras* (1947)
Lithuanian	Tu tu tu, kas būtų, Kad tėvas dirvonus išartų? Tu tu tu, kas būtų, Kad rugius miežius pasėtų? Tu tu tu, kas būtų, Kad mieželius iškultų? Tu tu tu, kas būtų, Kad salyklą sumerktų? Tu tu tu, kas būtų, Kad alutį padirbtų? Tu tu tu, kas būtų, Kad svetelius sukviestų? Tu tu tu, kas būtų, Kad alutį išgertų? Tu tu tu, kas būtų, — Dainelių pridainuotų. Tu tu tu, kas būtų, Kad mieželiai išdygtų? Tu tu tu, kas būtų, Kad mieželiai užaugtų? Tu tu tu, kas būtų, Kad mieželius nupjautų? Tu tu tu, kas būtų, Kad mieželius suvežtų?	Pro medinę vartų koplytėlę, Ten, kur širdį Motinai sugėlę Septyni skausmingi kalavijai, Ji nutolsta begaliniame kelyje… O aplink šešėliai siuntančios mirties Ieško žemėje gyvybės paslapties...
English	Tu tu tu, what if the father were to plow the land? Tu tu tu, what if he were to sow barley? Tu tu tu, what if he were to winnow the barley? Tu tu tu, what if he were to drown the malt? Tu tu tu, what if he were to make some beer? Tu tu tu, what if he were to invite the guests? Tu tu tu, what if he were to drink the beer? Tu tu tu, whatever, —we would sing songs. Tu tu tu, what if the barley were to sprout? Tu tu tu, what if the barley were to grow? Tu tu tu, what if he were to harvest the barley? Tu tu tu, what if he were to bring the barley?	Within the chapel's wooden gates, Where mother's heart was hurt— Seven swords of pain. Into the endless distance she fades, While shadows of raging death Seek life's secret upon this earth.

Example 8. Jonas Švedas. "Mergaitės", bb. 1–4 (transcribed by Yusuke Ishii from LLMA, col. 757, inv. 1, fol. 9, p. 4)



Example 9. Lithuanian folk song "Tu tu tu, kas būtų" (above); Jonas Švedas. "Mergaitės", bb. 3–7 (below)

At this point, it can no longer be regarded merely as stylization but rather as a fully independent composition. There are numerous examples of this technique recontextualizing musical material from the past into entirely unrelated settings. For instance, one may recall the incorporation of the sequence *Dies irae* in the second movement of Ottorino Respighi's (1879–1936) *Impressioni brasiliane* (Brazilian impressions) (1928, Versekėnaitė 2004, 32), or the use of the Korean folk song *Mân-tâi yep* as the basis for "La parole toute-puissante" (The all-powerful word), the twelfth movement of Olivier Messiaen's *Vingt regards sur l'Enfant-Jésus* (Twenty contemplations on the Infant Jesus) (1944, Balmer, Lacôte, Murray 2017, 388–392). Nevertheless, no precedent can be found in the history of Lithuanian music for such a folklore recontextualization. This approach differs greatly from the conventional adaptation of folklore that Lithuanian composers have employed for many decades. Švedas treats folk elements as musical material in a different way, akin to Bartók's approach.

Compositional approaches to transforming folk material

In the 2023 paper, I discussed the influence of Bartók on Švedas's early works as well as the aesthetic similarities between them. In the earlier Hungarian period of Bartók's career, the protagonists of his major compositions all seem to possess a "face"—that is, a distinct personality or narrative that represents Bartók's identity as an East European (for example, *A Kékszakállú herceg vára* (Duke Bluebeard's castle), Sz. 48), 1908–1911; *A fából faragott királyfi* (The wooden prince), Sz. 60, 1914–1917; *Der wunderbare Mandarin* (The miraculous mandarin) Sz. 73, 1918–1919). However, from the 1930s, this tendency underwent a radical transformation. Works such as *Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta*, Sz. 106 (1937), the Sonata for Two Pianos and Percussion, Sz. 110 (1936–1937), and Concerto for Orchestra, Sz. 116 (1943) bear impersonal and austere titles—works, so to speak, "without a face." In this evolution of titles and genres, one may discern Bartók's gradual turn from programmatic and character-centered expressions to an abstract and autonomous musical language.

Based on the ways in which Bartók treated folklore in his compositions, four compositional approaches can be distinguished, reflecting an increasing degree of transformation of folk elements: these approaches of abstracting folk music elements can be applied to a greater or lesser extent not only to Bartók's works but also to the works of composers who, particularly those from outside Western Europe, within the modernism of the 20th century, sought to incorporate and transform their own cultural backgrounds into their music.

1. Harmonization or adaptation of folk material without altering its original structure or harmonies (for example, Bartók's *Fifteen Hungarian Peasant Songs*, Sz. 71, 1920, etc.).
2. Stylization or harmonization using heterogenous or borrowed harmonies in contrast to the original melody (for example, Vytautas Bacevičius's (1905–1970) Piano Concerto No. 1, Op. 12, 1929; Joseph Cantloube's (1879–1957) *Chants D'Auvergne*, 1923–1930).
3. Fragmentation of folklore into elements of musical language—such as rhythmic patterns or melodic lines, which are incorporated episodically into a work, or only certain elements or their parts are employed (for example, Bartók's *Mikrokosmos*, 1926–1937; Akira Ifukube's (1914–2006) *Japanese Suite* for piano, 1933; Jeronimas Kačinskas' (1907–2005) String Quartet No. 3, 1993, and others).
4. The abstraction of fragmented musical-language elements into metaphysical components, such as numbers, proportions, and similar concepts, and their subsequent reconstruction within a composition (for example, Bartók's *Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta*, 1936–1937, and others).

Švedas's Suite and "Musical Sketch" No. 1 fall under the first approach. Meanwhile, the melody of the third movement of *Trys Posmai* by Švedas, which organically merges into a pointillistic texture, is completely decontextualized while retaining the original melodic intonation and syntactic structure. Although this compositional resolution does not entirely correspond to the third approach, it is closely aligned. What makes Švedas unique is his fusion of the deformation of diatonic folk melodies with chromatic completion techniques.

Švedas further developed the treatment of folk music in his later works, which increasingly abstracted its musical elements of folk music. The next chapter discusses the relationship between folklore and Šveda's works during the mature period, by applying the aforementioned compositional approaches.

Švedas's mature period—an "imaginary" folk song

During the 1960s, Švedas, who was highly self-critical in refining his own compositions, as well as in his early period, remarkably decreased his creative output. Only three works were composed in the 1960s—*Sonata brêve* (1965) for piano, the first version of the poem "Pokalbis su mirusiais vaikais" [Conversation with dead children] (1965) for three vocalists and two pianos, and *Four Unsingular Pieces* (1968–1971) for piano. This chapter examines the folk song melodies that recur in the latter two works and their treatment. The folk song used in Švedas's mature period is fictional rather than pre-existing, akin to being imaginary.

This melody appears for the first time in the poem "Pokalbis su mirusiais vaikais," the second time in *Four Unsingular Pieces,* and the third time in the aria of his opera *J.S.B.* (1975), because the latter is a recomposition of *Four Unsingular Pieces*. This melody accompanies Švedas's creative activity during this period as a kind of *idée fixe*—an omnipresently recurring motif. The composer made several remarks concerning this melody, which is based on a harmonic major scale, in his letters, and on the covers of his manuscripts. For example, in a letter dated September 20, 1967, this melody, alongside a twelve-tone series, was described as "Lithuanian" (figure 1).

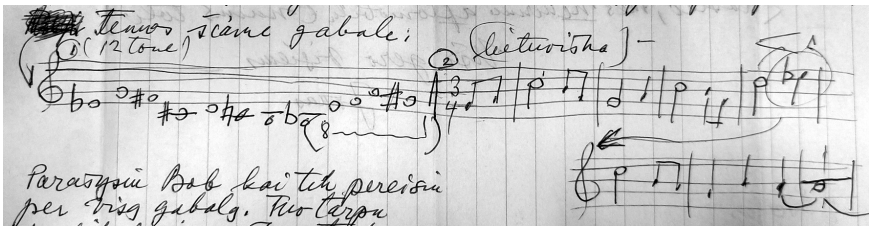
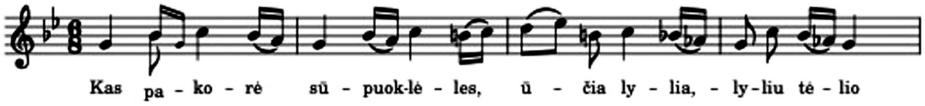


Figure 1. Švedas's letter to Kostas Ostrauskas dated September 20, 1967 (MLLM GEK 93956)

Indeed, it bears resemblance to Lithuanian folk songs such as "Sūpuoklinė daina" (Swing song) (see example 10). However, the author of this article has not found an identical melody in the collections of Lithuanian folk songs; thus, it is more likely to be Švedas's original collection. Švedas also noted the same melody on the cover of the manuscript of *Four Unsingular Pieces* (figure 2).

Example 10. Lithuanian folk song "Sūpuoklinė daina" (Četkauskaitė 1981, 214)

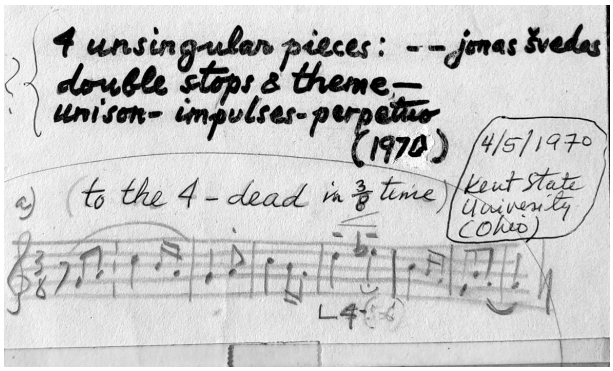


Figure 2. The cover page of the manuscript of Švedas's *Four Unsingular Pieces* (LLMA, col. 757, inv. 1, fol. 5)

The composer mentioned the melody once more in a note dated April 17, 1979, where he referred to it as a "Lopšinė ponui Šmicui" (Lullaby for Mr Schmitz) (see figure 3). Based on the designation of my previous study in 2024, this melody is hereafter referred to as "the lullaby theme." As the term "lullaby" suggests, the melody is characterized by an ascending and descending contour reminiscent of the gentle rocking of a cradle, similar to that found in the aforementioned pre-existing Lithuanian folk song, "Sūpuoklinė daina."

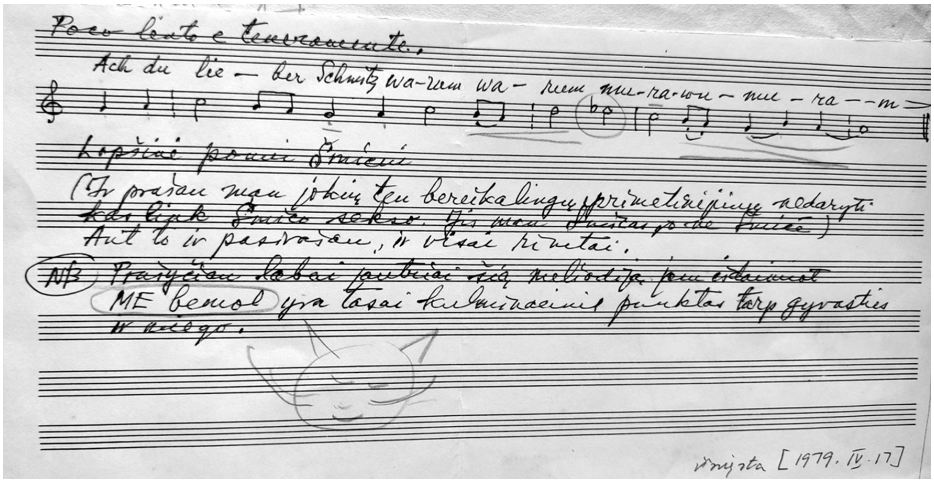


Figure 3. Švedas's notes on the lullaby theme (LLMA, col. 757, inv. 1, fol. 14)

Švedas's annotation of the lullaby theme reveals his particular attention to the climax of this melody, the note E♭. The composer even circled it in red and added an explanation: "I would ask that this melody be sung to him [Ostrauskas' cat—Y. I.] with great sensitivity.[5] The E♭ is that point of culmination between life and sleep." The term "sleep" here can be understood not only in the literal sense of slumber but also metaphorically, carrying the connotations of death. Indeed, E♭, which accentuates the expressiveness of the melody, plays an important role in all works in which this melody appears. In Švedas's "Pokalbis su mirusiais vaikais," he combines this lullaby theme with chromatic completion and the twelve-tone technique in part. However, in terms of folk song treatment, this does not go beyond the techniques used in *Trys Posmai*. Since I have analyzed this in detail in my earlier publication (Ishii 2024), here I will focus on Švedas's unique treatment of folklore in his *Four Unsingular Pieces* for piano, for which I was unable to conduct a detailed analysis in my previous paper.

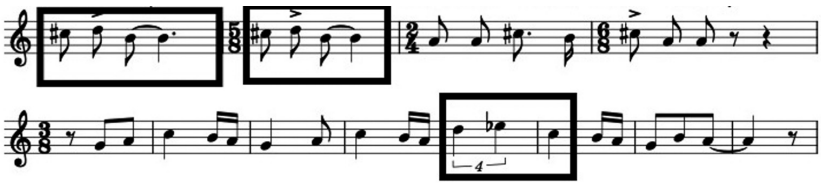
Transformation and abstraction of folk elements in *Four Unsingular Pieces*

Švedas composed *Four Unsingualr Pieces* between 1968 and 1971. During this period, an event profoundly affected the composer. In May 1970, at Kent State University, a violent confrontation broke out between students protesting the Vietnam War and mobilized soldiers, resulting in the deaths of four students—two men and two women (see figure 4). Upon learning of this tragic incident, Švedas composed a four-movement work[6]—apparently dedicating each movement to one of the four victims—entitled "Introduction and Theme," "Unison," "Saraband" and "Perpetuo." Therefore, it is unsurprising that in a work dedicated to the memory of the dead, Švedas incorporated the previously mentioned lullaby theme, which implies communion between the living and the dead. It is worth recalling that the song "Tu tu tu, kas būtų," discussed in the first part of this paper, also came to symbolize death through its recontextualization.

Figure 4. The poster *Dare to Struggle / Dare to Win! / Strike / May 4th,* which called for a nationwide student anti-war strike in 1970 (Cat. No: 219166)

Švedas wrote the lullaby theme on the cover of his manuscript of *Four Unsingular Pieces*, where he deliberately emphasized the D–E♭ of b. 5 as the "culmination between life and death" by deforming the rhythm to a quadruplet, even going so far as to indicate a tenuto (see figure 2). One can reveal an interesting coincidence of the trichord consisting of these two notes and the C following with the opening motif of "Tu tu tu, kas būtų" mentioned earlier in the paper (see example 11). Furthermore, both melodies symbolize death in Švedas's work. This trichord, D–E♭–C, is symbolically folded into *Four Unsingular Pieces* in varied forms.

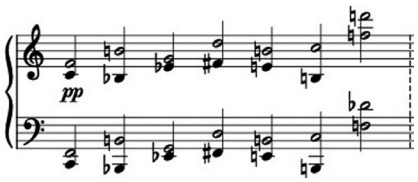
5 This refers to the female cat of Kostas Ostrauskas. Švedas called her "Šmicas" (a masculine name in Lithuanian) and therefore they often "disagreed" with one another. Wanting to win the favors of his cat, the composer wrote her a lullaby (Palionytė 2012, 185).

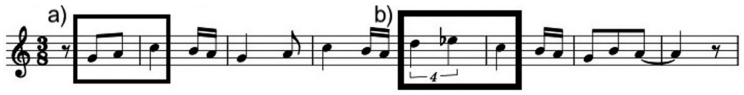
6 This work represents one of the few politically engaged works by a Lithuanian émigré composer, in which the focus is directed toward international rather than Lithuanian events.

Example 11. Lithuanian folk song "Tu tu tu, kas būtų" (above) and Švedas's lullaby theme (below)

The commemorative nature of this piece harks back to the musical genre *tombeau* (tom) tradition, exemplified by works such as Denis Gaultier's (1603–1672) *Pavane ou tombeau pour M. Racquette* (Pavane or tom for Mr. Racquette) (ca 1670), Louis Couperin's (1626–1661) *Tombeau de M. Blancrocher* (The tom for Mr. Blacrocher) (around 1660), and Johann Jakob Froberger's (1616–1667) *Tombeau fait à Paris sur la mort de M. Blancrocher* (The tom, composed in Paris on the death of M. Blancrocher) (1652), among others. Conversely, the four-movement arrangement of Švedas's composition—structured according to the Baroque principle of alternating slow and fast tempos—reflects the Baroque keyboard suite model. Froberger pioneered the four-part sequence model (allemande, courante, sarabande, and gigue). By adopting a similar formal structure, Švedas simultaneously alludes to the conventions of the *tombeau* genre. Nevertheless, he was not the first to blend elements of the tombeau genre with the Baroque suite. In the early 20th century, Maurice Ravel (1875–1937) explored a similar fusion in *Tombeau de Couperin* (The tom of Couperin) (1914–1917). Although *Four Unsingular Pieces* is modeled on the four-movement Baroque suite, Švedas organized the suite structure in an unconventional manner. In this work, he abandoned the traditional metric notation, marking measures with dotted lines. Double barlines are used between the first three movements, and *attacca* indications appear at the end of the first and second movements. Consequently, the first three movements were performed without interruption. The fourth movement, performed independently, establishes a relevant thematic relationship with the first movement, as I will mention later.

This peculiar structure of the work is suggested by its English title, which includes the word "unsingular" ("un"—negative prefix; "singular"—meaning 1) "extraordinary, exceptional, special"; 2) "indivisible, integral, inseparable"). This term may be considered as a neologism coined by Švedas. Literally translated, it means "divisible" or "non-unified." This interpretation contradicts the continuous *attacca* flow of the first three movements and the thematic coherence between the outer movements. However, the composer alluded to a certain discontinuity in the work by performing only the third and fourth movements rather than the entire set in sequence. This ambiguous expression is closely related to the unconventional structure of the suite in which one can discern the degree of self-irony on the part of the composer.

Although the first three movements are performed *attacca*, there is no evident consistency in their musical language or textures. This heterogeneity among movements is not unrelated to the lullaby theme being distinctly audible only in the first movement, with subsequent movements lacking any apparent thematic linkages.

We begin our analysis with the first movement. The seven chords in b. 1 seem to have no apparent relationship with the lullaby theme. This can be understood as the result of Švedas's distinctive approach in which he symbolically represents the four victims in an almost numerological way. Here, the same chords of the two notes are played simultaneously in both hands, with the upper notes notated as half notes and the lower as quarter notes (see example 12). Although it is impossible to determine which note represents men and which represents women, the simultaneous sounding of two identical dual chords symbolically refers to four people who were shot (two men and two women). Moreover, these seven chords played in b. 1 may further allude to the twenty-eight mobilized soldiers involved in the assault (seven chords of four notes). The introductory section (bb. 2–9) is derived from the intervals of these chords.

Example 12. Jonas Švedas. First movement of *Four Unsingular Pieces*, b. 1 (transcribed by Yusuke Ishii from Švedas 1982, 28)

However, this numerological symbol is limited to b. 1. From a thematic perspective, the lullaby theme in the first movement is treated simply. The entire theme is presented twice: the first time fortissimo in thickened sixths, and the second time pianississimo. From b. 24, the musical process develops with a) the initial trichord of the lullaby theme being replicated by b) a trichord containing the "culmination between life and sleep" (see example 13). Here, the composer effectively uses the piano's acoustic possibilities and specificity. For example, when the lullaby theme first appears in b. 10, it is harmonized by acoustically rich sonorities in the bass and sustained by the pedal, encompassing the spectra of higher overtones. Owing to this acoustic property of the piano, the same theme produces a very different impression when it reappears. Highlighted by an augmented octave from b. 14, the theme seems to sound from a distance or in the unreal world.

Example 13. Trichords a) and b) in Švedas's lullaby theme

Such an acoustic effect was particularly favored by postwar avant-garde composers, such as Olivier Messiaen (1908–1992) and George Crumb (1929–2022), who continued with the mysticism aesthetic. It is unknown when Švedas first became acquainted with Crumb's music. However, his admiration for this is evidenced by a letter he wrote between 1975 and 1979.[7] At the same time, although the strong affection for Bartók's works that characterized Švedas's early creative period seems to have faded, as Crumb clearly does not conceal his admiration for Bartók, it is still possible to discern the indirect implications of Bartók's musical idea in Švedas's mature works.

Crumb frequently incorporated the word "night" into the titles of his works, which alludes to Bartók's "Az éjszaka zenéje" (Night music), the fourth piece from his piano cycle *Szabadban* (Outdoors) (1926). This work is not only a masterpiece of 20th-century piano literature, but its originality also influenced many postwar composers, including Crumb. In Bartók's "Night Music," one can perceive the sounds of nature and the outdoors, with occasional snippets of naïve songs surfacing—not as they would in reality, but as echoes within the composer's mind or memory. These two heterogeneous elements develop side by side, blurring the line between reality and imagination. Consequently, the piece contrasts the elements of the present (real-time sounds) with those of the past (sounds from memory). Similar compositional techniques are evident in the works of Crumb, for example, *Ancient Voices of Children* for mezzo-soprano, boy soprano, and chamber ensemble (1970) or *Makrokosmos* for piano with extended techniques (1972–1979).[8] The first movement of Švedas's *Four Unsingular Pieces*, in which the lullaby theme symbolizing death is presented within the harmony structures that exploit the overtones specificity of the piano as described earlier, closely resembles Crumb's compositional style and aesthetics. Nevertheless, its conceptual origin can be traced back to Bartók's musical ideas.

The second movement is a toccata played on the same 16th note melodic line without synchronization of the two hands. In this movement, Švedas applied the entire melodic contours of the lullaby theme to the overall pitch contours of the movement. In bb. 1–2 of the lullaby theme, the melody ascends and descends. In bb. 3–5, it reaches its peak on note E♭, after which it descends again. This ascending–descending contour corresponds to the overall registral rise and fall of the toccata-like movement. Notably, b. 16, when both hands synchronize and play D, and b. 18, the culmination point of E♭ emphasized with fermata may symbolize the climax of the lullaby theme (see table 2).

Contour		**Ascending and descending**	**Ascending until E♭**	**Descending**
Lullaby theme		bb. 1–2	bb. 3–5	bb. 6–7
Second movement of *Four Unsingular pieces*	bb. 1–3 (Introductory bars)	bb. 4–10	bb. 11–20	bb. 21–32

Table 2. Correlation of melodic contour between Švedas's lullaby theme and the second movement of *Four Unsingular Pieces*

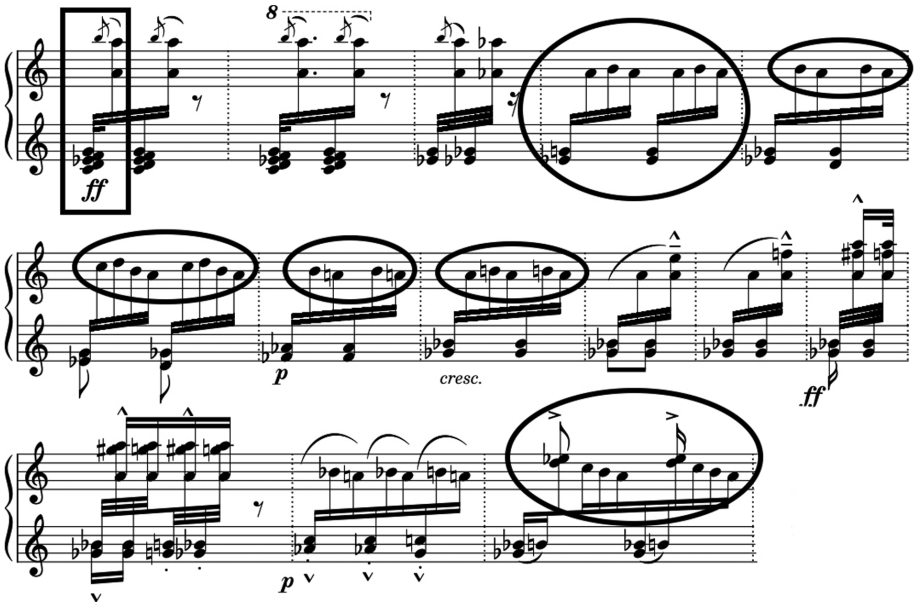
[7] Švedas sent a letter directly to Crumb, hoping to obtain the score of *Ancient Voices of Children* (Palionytė 2012, 28).

[8] Crumb's *Makrokosmos* clearly refers to Bartók's *Mikrokosmos*.

The composer's manuscript and the program of his concert held in Chicago on December 14, 1980, indicate that the third movement, "Saraband," was composed "pagal Händelį" (after Händel).[9] Although the rhythmic pattern of a Baroque dance is observed, it is "extremely difficult to hear or perceive traces of the great master on the keyboard" (Palionytė 2012, 40). The basic motivic cell of this movement is the trichord E–D♯–F and its variants, which can be regarded as derived from the retrograde form of trichord b) (see example 13). Švedas scatters this motif throughout the movement as an ornament, reminiscent of the Baroque keyboard appoggiatura, subtly integrating it into the motion of the sarabande.

The fourth movement evokes the style of Baroque keyboard music even more strongly than the preceding three movements. It is a toccata based on the continuous motion of sixteenth notes performed in a narrow register with overlapping hands. The origin of this technique may lie in the Baroque harpsichord texture, where a two-manual keyboard was used. Another factor that evokes the Baroque style is the piano texture, which requires clear articulation techniques. While the pedal was used extensively in the first movement, it is kept to a minimum in the fourth movement, allowing the continuous flow of sixteenth notes to stand out clearly. This type of texture is also found in parts of the second and third movements.

It should be emphasized that in the fourth movement, the lullaby theme is reworked in various ways, including its vertical "compression" in the opening chord (b. 1, see example 13) and the insertion of its fragments into the first bars (example 14). The trichord of the theme (b. 45) and its inversion (b. 35) also appear fragmentarily. Such transformations of the motif, contributing to the coherence of the composition, reveal that Švedas's compositional approach reaches the third one mentioned in the previous section of this paper.



Example 14. Jonas Švedas. Fourth movement of *Four Unsingular Pieces*, bb. 1–14

We now outline the treatment of the lullaby theme melody across each movement of *Four Unsingular Pieces*.

I: Exposition of the theme
II: Application of the contour of the main theme to the entire movement
III: Unification of the movement with a single motif, derived from the theme
IV: Transformation, variation, and fragmentation of the theme

The treatment of the theme in the first and fourth movements, although fragmentary, still allows the melody to be perceptible. In this sense, it corresponds to the aforementioned third approach to folk-element transformation. In contrast, in the second and third movements, only certain parameters of the thematic melody are employed and transformed to develop musical content, making it almost impossible to identify the original melody. This folk-element abstraction follows the fourth approach.

[9] LTC Musicology archive, biography section: Aldona Stempužienė—d. 1.

Through detailed analysis, it is clear that Švedas drew creative inspiration from Lithuanian folk songs. What is particularly intriguing is that he used a Lithuanian folk melody (albeit one of his own invention) as the principal theme of the work dedicated to the victims of an American political event while simultaneously adopting the formal model of the Baroque suite. This chimera-like fusion of heterogeneous components becomes evident when compared with similar works such as Ravel's *Tombeau de Couperin*.

Ravel's *Tombeau de Couperin* is a homage to his comrades who died during World War I and is also a tribute to 18th-century French Baroque music. Moreover, the *tombeau* genre belongs to the French musical tradition. Whether intentionally or not, this work reflects the composer's national identity. Švedas's *Four Unsingular Pieces*, which fuses components of differing cultural origins, can thus be seen as an instance of what cultural anthropologist George List calls hybridization (List 1964, 18–20)—a highly productive acculturation that gives rise to a new genre or style through the fusion of different cultures. Such a work can only be created in exile. This instance of hybridization can undoubtedly be considered a pinnacle of Švedas's mature period.

Conclusion

Exploring Švedas's creative legacy reveals a composer who transcended national boundaries by engaging with universal modernist ideas. It has been observed that the degree of abstraction of folk elements gradually increases from Švedas's early to his mature works. From Suite and *Musical Sketches* to *Trys Posmai*, Švedas's treatment of folk material evolved from stylization to recontextualization. In this process, we observed that Švedas gradually discovered and refined the chromatic completion technique while transforming folk material. Thus, his compositional approach allowed him to infuse naïve folk elements with modernist idioms. One pinnacle example of his evolving technique is evident in *Four Unsingular Pieces*. Folk songs, whether authentic or imaginary, serve as catalysts for compositional inquiry rather than tokens of national identity. The strong influence of Bartók, evident in his earlier works, became less pronounced during his mature period, detectable only indirectly, for example, through his affinity with Crumb's works.

In his *Four Unsingular Pieces*, Švedas fused the Baroque suite model, the *tombeau* tradition, and the expressive language of modernism into a single, hybrid form. We can say that by abstracting and transforming folk elements into structural and symbolic components, he created a unique musical language that blended Lithuanian heritage with contemporary compositional techniques. In this context, Lithuanian folk songs, whether self-invented or not, symbolize both death and memory, intertwining personal loss with broader cultural narratives. *Four Unsingular Pieces* may, therefore, be regarded as the culmination of his search for a modern musical language capable of reconciling individual expression, national heritage, and cultural hybridization born of the exile experience.

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Archive resources
LTC: Lituanistikos tyrimo centras (Lithuanian Study Center)
LLMA: Lietuvos literatūros ir meno archyvas (Lithuanian Archives of Literature and Art)
MLLM: Maironio lietuvių literatūros muziejus (Maironis Museum of Lithuanian Literature)

D. Palionytės-Banevičienės sudarytos knygos „Jonas Švedas – egzodo kompozitorius" rengimo dokumentai (prašymas Kultūros rėmimo fondui dėl knygos finansavimo, D. Palionytės-Banevičienės laiškų A. Stempužienei-Švedienei bei P. Jurkui juodraščiai, H. Bertels, P. Jurkaus, I. Nostytės, K. Ostrausko, A. Stempužienės-Švedienės, D. Švedienės-Šved laiškai D. Palionytei-Banevičienei ir kt.), 2008 10 14, 2012 04 23, LLMA, col. 757, inv. 1, fol. 24.
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Liaudies dainos perkūrimas. Jono Švedo (1927–1981) kompozicinis požiūris

Santrauka

Straipsnyje nagrinėjama lietuvių išeivijos kompozitoriaus Jono Švedo (1927–1981) kūrybos raida, sutelkiant dėmesį į liaudies muzikos medžiagos transformavimą jo kameriniuose kūriniuose. Per visą gyvenimą jis sukūrė ne vieną kūrinį, pagrįstą ta pačia liaudies daina. Straipsnyje analizuojami keli Švedo kūriniai (Siuita fortepijonui (1954–1955), Du muzikiniai škicai fortepijonui (1959), Trys posmai balsui ir fortepijonui (1960), Keturios pjesės fortepijonui (1968–1971)) ir siekiama išryškinti, kaip kito jo santykis su liaudies muzika ir kūrybinis požiūris į ją. Analizuojant šiuos aspektus paaiškėjo, kad laikui bėgant kompozitoriaus kūriniuose liaudies dainos elementai vis labiau abstrahuojami, o vienas Švedo šedevrų – Keturios pjesės fortepijonui – įkūnija kultūrinės hibridizacijos procesą, kai susilieja įvairūs skirtingų kultūrų komponentai. Jo kūryboje lietuvių liaudies dainos transformuojamos vakarietiškomis modernistinėmis priemonėmis. Taip Švedas užima išskirtinę vietą lietuvių išeivijos muzikos kontekste.

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Structural Elements of the Gamelan Orchestra: A Contemporary Approach

Abstract. In order to understand the principles of the gamelan orchestra, and to be able to apply them in creative practice, we need a special method of orchestral analysis, common criteria that can be used to reveal the essential features and principles of orchestras of different types and cultures. By using a common analytical tool, we can more easily compare orchestras with each other, anticipate the possibilities of their interaction, and see them in the context of different orchestral cultures. This study reveals a new approach to the structure and principles of the gamelan orchestra, based on the system of structural elements of the orchestra. As a result of this analysis, we are able to establish a number of important principles.

The structural unit of the gamelan serves as a model for the entire composition. *Balungan*, the structural-melodic core of the orchestra, could be seen as a structural unit. Unlike the symphony orchestra, the gamelan has a comprehensive structural unit that is divided both vertically (layered with the help of instrumental groups and textures) and horizontally (given a musical form) in the process of composition. Such a structural unit has the characteristics of a macro-unit and is seen through one main musical parameter—the melodic line. The instruments of this orchestra are grouped according to their musical function, so that the entire orchestra can be divided into standard, unchangeable groups.

The relationship among these groups is based on functional complementarity. The interplay between groups is determined from the beginning and maintained throughout the work. The functional distribution of the instrumental groups determines the layering of the texture according to its function. The texture is layered in a hierarchical manner, beginning with the most important layers and ending with the superficial, decorative ones. The overall timbre of the gamelan is dominated by metallic percussion instruments, which provide timbre stability. The timbral distribution of the orchestra is also very stable and almost unchanging. This brings us to the main principle of the organization of the gamelan orchestra, which can be formulated as *orchestra as an expansion of a melodic core*.

The paper discusses all the major aspects of the above-mentioned features and principles and suggests their systematic relationships.

Keywords: gamelan, orchestra, musical cultures, orchestral structure, structural elements, composition.

Introduction

The analysis of orchestras from non-European cultures holds great potential for revealing new structural models, compositional strategies, and possible ways of interaction with European orchestral models. Therefore, this is an important step toward a more comprehensive understanding of the orchestral phenomenon. However, this raises certain questions and potential challenges. When attempting to analyze the gamelan orchestra, the question arises as to whether the analytical methods and tools that are well-suited for analyzing the principles of a symphony orchestra can also be applied to an orchestra from another culture. Moreover, it is not clear that the gamelan can be analyzed as an orchestra in isolation, separated from the cultural framework that gives it meaning.

This issue is heightened by the fact that the very notion of "analysis" is rooted in a Western worldview. It is no secret that the gamelan orchestra has evolved and flourished in an entirely different cultural environment with a fundamentally different worldview. It is also important to consider that for many readers, the gamelan orchestra, its terminology, and musical concepts are relatively unfamiliar. When discussing a symphony orchestra, certain aspects are considered familiar and self-evident. However, when it comes to gamelan, such aspects practically do not exist.

To overcome these challenges as effectively as possible, the analysis of gamelan will be conducted in two stages. First, the fundamental concepts of gamelan music will be systematically discussed to facilitate an understanding of the structure, rules, and—most importantly—the key concepts and terminology of gamelan music. The second stage provides a detailed analysis of the orchestral elements based on the discussed contexts. A Javanese gamelan has been selected for the analysis, but for the purpose of broadening the context, some other gamelan regions are also included.

It is also important to emphasize that in order to understand the principles of the gamelan orchestra and to be able to apply them in creative practice, we need a special method of orchestral analysis—common criteria that can be used to reveal the essential features and principles of orchestras of different types and cultures. Using a common analytical tool makes it easier to compare orchestras, anticipate how they might interact, and view them in the context of different orchestral cultures. The *system of structural elements of the orchestra* is used to conduct a thorough and multifaceted analysis of gamelan. This system identifies the orchestra's

primary structural components and establishes systematic relationships between its elements[1]. The following elements are required to define an orchestra:

a) structural unit;
b) three elements of the orchestral vertical: the principle of formation of orchestral groups; the interrelation between orchestral groups; the layers of orchestral texture;
c) three elements of the orchestral horizontal: orchestral dramaturgy; factors of timbre stability; dominant musical parameters.

The following additional factors are provided to achieve a more comprehensive definition and to balance the elements of the system: intergroup interrelation between elements, intergroup shift, and the level of significance of the element (Baranauskas 2019, 22–34). A comprehensive view of the system is shown in diagram 1.

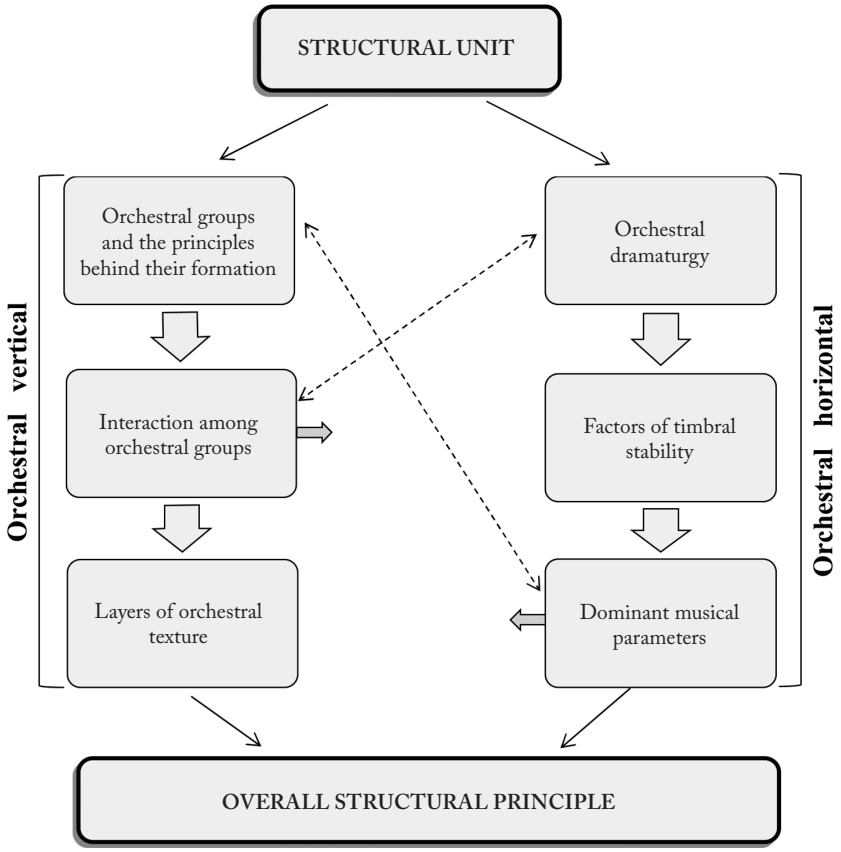


Diagram 1. A comprehensive view of orchestral structural elements

Using the aforementioned tools, this study aims to address the following key questions:

- Can a structural analysis of gamelan be effective and reveal the orchestra's fundamental principles?
- What are the traditional musical concepts and terms of gamelan, and how do they combine to form a coherent systemic picture? Do they relate to the structural elements of the orchestra?
- What are the main structural elements of the gamelan orchestra, and how do they combine to form a unified system?
- Is the proposed system of structural elements suitable for analyzing the gamelan orchestra? Can it reveal the orchestra's structure and principles, as well as illuminating compositional strategies that could inspire contemporary composers?

[1] The system of structural elements was developed by the author of this article as a tool for analyzing orchestral music, distinguishing between different types of orchestral concepts. It can also be used as a compositional tool. Despite the diversity of orchestral music and concepts, a universal system of orchestral structural elements may be possible. For more on this topic, see Baranauskas (2019, 22–34; 2020).

1. A framework of gamelan musical concepts and their influence on orchestral structure

In order to examine gamelan from the perspective of orchestral structure and function, and to apply the proposed model of orchestral structural elements, it is necessary to provide a brief, systematic overview of traditional gamelan musical terms and concepts. Only in light of their entirety can we discern the characteristics of gamelan as an orchestral phenomenon.

1.1. An overview of traditional gamelan musical concepts

Over the course of history, the gamelan tradition has developed a complex, highly distinctive, and unique system of music theory. A separate study could be devoted to the examination of this very broad topic; therefore, only the essential theoretical concepts of gamelan will be presented here, primarily based on the example of Javanese gamelan. They form the core of the entire theoretical system and help to better understand the structural principles of gamelan as an orchestral phenomenon.

One of the most fundamental aspects of gamelan is the concept of *lara*. This is a comprehensive system of instrument tuning and formation of modes, consisting of two main tuning systems: *slendro* (five-tone) and *pelog* (seven-tone).[2] In the 19th century, these two systems merged into a single orchestra, and today most Javanese gamelan orchestras are dual-system. To ensure a smooth transition between these two tuning systems, they must share a common tone, known as *tumbuk*. In figure 1 (Brinner 2001, 314), we see several possible relationships between the *slendro* and *pelog* sections of the orchestra, using different common tones.

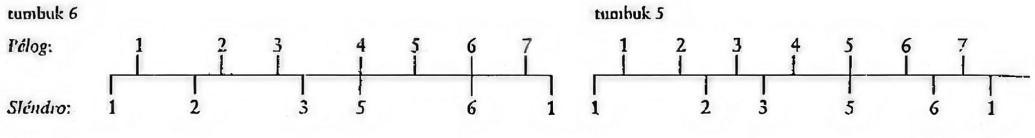


Figure 1. Several possible relationships between the *slendro* and *pelog* sections of the orchestra (Brinner 2001, 314)

In the following example (figure 2), we see the relationship between the different orchestral sections expressed as frequencies in hertz, with the underlined frequencies indicating the common *tumbuk* tones (Brinner 2001, 314). The figure presents examples from three different gamelan ensembles. In every pairing, there is at least one—and sometimes two—shared tones, which provide a point of connection between the tuning systems. The remaining tones, which do not coincide, create a contrasting effect.

	A: tumbuk 2		B: tumbuk 5		C: tumbuk 6	
Pitch	S	P	S	P	S	P
7		507		513		523
6	476	462	493	464	472	474
5	414	433	429	430	413	443
4		397		406		412
3	359	338	372	338	358	351
2	311	311	322	317	312	323
1	274	293	281	292	273	298

Tunings from Surjodiningrat et al 1972, pp. 51 and 53.
S = *slendro* P = *pelog*
A = Gamelan Landung, Universitas Gajah Mada
B = Gamelan Manisrenggo and Gamelan Kadukmanis, Kraton Surakarta
C = Gamelan Rarasarum and Gamelan Runingraras, Paku Alaman, Yogyakarta

Figure 2. Three pairs of combinations of *pelog* and *slendro* (Brinner 2001, 314)

[2] These tuning systems form a binary pair, where each member has its own distinct functional purpose, is associated with different contexts, and is perceived as the opposite of the other: masculine versus feminine, earthly versus heavenly principles. While *pelog* is more closely associated with the earthly sphere, *slendro* more strongly symbolizes the divine principle (Sorrell 1990).

The tuning systems described above, which serve as the tonal material, take on concrete musical form when organized into different *pathet*, a concept that partly corresponds to the idea of mode. The *pathet* are grouped into two sets of three: the *slendro* system includes *pathet nem*, *pathet sanga*, and *pathet manyura*, while the *pelog* system comprises *pathet lima*, *pathet nem*, and *pathet barang*. All six are shown in the table compiled by W. P. Malm (figure 3), where the tuning systems and their characteristic modes are also compared with European equal temperament (Malm 1977, 46). The *pathet* system itself reflects a binary mode of organization, which stems from the duality inherent in the concept of *lara*.

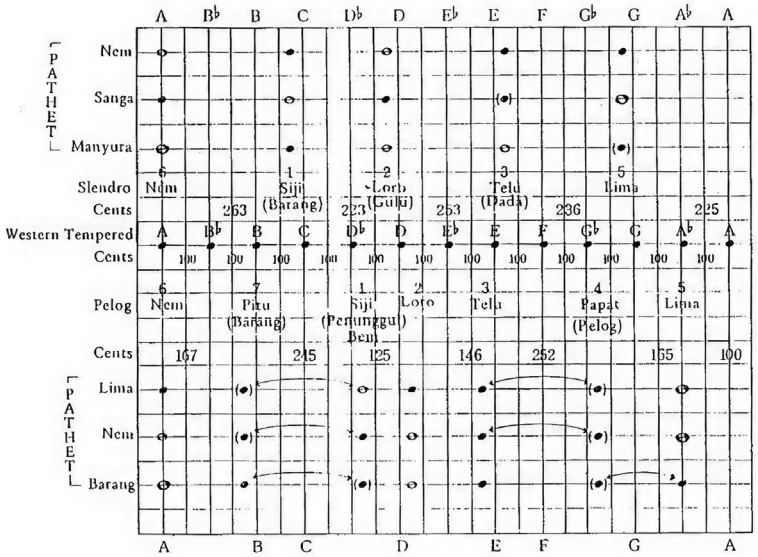


Figure 3. Gamelan tuning systems and their characteristic modes (Malm 1977, 46)

The third major concept in gamelan music theory, *balungan*, alongside *lara*, is one of the most fundamental. It represents a further, more detailed level of pitch organization: the concrete realization of a *pathet* (mode) based on one of the two tuning systems (*lara*) within a specific composition. *Balungan refers to the melodic core that functions as the structural skeleton and point of departure for a composition.* Sorrell notes that it serves as the central melodic thread that determines the parts of all instruments, and experienced musicians will know how to adapt their parts to the information provided by *the balungan*. Therefore, it is the only element that must be preserved. The notation in the written collections of gamelan pieces contains only the *balungan*, along with a few additional indications regarding form and accentuation (Sorrell 1990, 62). In a musical composition, the *balungan* is divided into groups (*gatra*), each consisting of four beats, with the fourth and final beat being the most significant. The concept of *balungan* is realized in the composition through the use of *gatra* groups, and this provides a natural transition from the first three concepts (*pathet*, *lara*, *balungan*), which describe the pitch system, to the next three, which concern principles of form and temporal organization.

The concept of *irama* describes the tempo relationships between individual orchestral groups. Drummond defines it as a concept of melodic tempo and relationships of density between the pulse of the elaborating parts and the beat of the basic melody and *gong* structure (Drummond n.d., 6). Simply put, *irama* is the tempo relationship between the instrument *peking* and the melodic core of the *balungan*. This relationship can be expressed through five levels of density (table 1) (Sorrell 1990, 66).

Table 1. *Irama* tempo relationships (Sorrell 1990, 66)

Rhythm	**Number of *peking* sounds per 1 *balungan* sound**
Lancar	1
Tanggung	2
Dados	4
Wiled	8
Rangkep	16

Another term used to describe musical form is *bentuk*, which refers to the organization of the melodic core (*balungan*) into larger sections and complete compositions. There are several standard forms (*bentuk*) that can serve as the basis for many pieces and that describe the type of melodic line, the structure of phrases, and the underlying colotomic[3] structure. Smaller forms have names, and the most common are: *lancaran*, *ketawang*, *ladrang*, *ayak-ayakan*, *srepegan*, and *sampak.* For clarity, let's look at one of them in more detail. *Sampak* is the densest form. Its pulse is maintained by the *kenong*, along with the melodic instruments *saron* and *slenthem*, which play parts that complement each other. In diagram 2, compiled by Drummond (n.d.), we can see the structure of this form.

	+	P	+	P	+	P	+	P	+	P	+	P	+	P	+	G
	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Saron:	2		2		2		2		3		3		3		3	
Slenthem:	3		3		3		3		5		5		5		5	
															1	
															2	
															1	
															2	
															1	
															2	

[Symbols representing instruments: **G** – *Gong*, **N** – *Kenong*, **P** – *Kempul*, **+** – *Ketuk*]

Diagram 2. Structure of the *Sampak* musical form (Drummond n.d., 10)

Without delving too deeply into the nuances of form, we can make a few important observations. The structural organization of the piece is colotomic, and the form is characterized by cyclicality. Lindsay emphasizes this point in particular, noting that the cyclical structure of the music is one of the most important concepts for understanding the structure of Javanese gamelan (Lindsay 1992, 47).

Another gamelan concept, *padhang-ulihan*,[4] describes the phrase structure of compositions. The *balungan* (melodic core) is organized so that its *padhang-ulihan* structure follows the rules of the *pathet* and determines the *bentuk* (form) (Sorrell 1990, 73). This reveals a close causal relationship between the different structural levels. While *bentuk* describes the type of overall form, *padhang-ulihan* shapes the structure of its smaller sections by organizing the melodic core (*balungan*) in time.

Another theoretical concept relates both to music theory and to performance practice. In short, the term *garap* describes the way musicians shape their individual parts on the basis of the melodic core (*balungan*).[5] Thus, *garap* can be understood as a form of improvisation based on certain rules. This process requires the ability to analyze music during performance. The concept of *garap* illustrates the organic and inseparable relationship between theory and practice within the gamelan orchestra. We can assume that in the syncretic thinking of gamelan culture, music theory, and performance practice cannot be separated and treated independently. The final concept worth mentioning is associated exclusively with performance practice. It is characteristic of the gamelan playing technique known as *kotekan*[6] in which two groups of instruments of the same type complement one another by playing interlocking rhythmic and melodic patterns that together form a single, fast, and unified texture or melody.

1.2. A systemic view of gamelan concepts

In summary, a brief overview of the main theoretical concepts of gamelan reveals several important points. We can identify a number of fundamentals in gamelan music theory:

1) There are two tuning systems (*slendro* and *pelog*), united under the concept of *lara* and organized according to a binary principle. The concept of *lara* serves as the starting point for the entire gamelan pitch system.

[3] The term *colotomic structure*, introduced by Kunst, describes the division of time according to the order in which specific instruments enter. In this way, musical time is divided into sections, and this also serves as a guide for the parts of other instruments (Kunst 1973).

[4] *Padhang-ulihan* can be translated literally as "what comes before—what comes after." This concept applies not only to music but also to many aspects of Javanese life, including dance, conversation, and social behavior (Sorrell 1990, 73).

[5] Sorrell notes that understanding *garap* means understanding how Javanese musicians approach music and ensure its enduring vitality and creativity (Sorrell 1990, 75).

[6] Although the concept of *kotekan* is characteristic of Balinese gamelan, Javanese gamelan uses a more or less analogous playing technique called *imbal*, making it a universal element of gamelan music.

2) The primary structural framework of a gamelan composition is the *balungan* (melodic core). Drawing on the *balungan* and established general principles, a composition takes shape, and the parts for all orchestral instruments—as well as the musical form—are derived from it. The musical form (*bentuk*) of a gamelan piece is characterized by a colotomic structure and cyclicality, which in turn partly determine the orchestral instrumentation.

It is also important to note that all the theoretical concepts discussed form a highly organic and causally interconnected whole. This is illustrated in diagram 3.

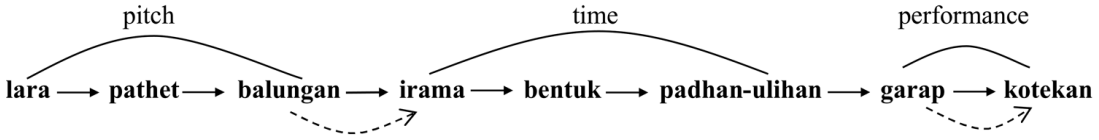


Diagram 3. An overview of the interrelationships among gamelan musical concepts

We can combine the theoretical concepts of gamelan discussed above into a single chain. Three groups are evident: concepts of pitch (*lara*, *pathet*, and *balungan*), concepts of time division or form (*irama*, *bentuk*, and *padhan-ulihan*), and concepts of performance practice—*garap* and *kotekan*. We can notice that the concept of *balungan* serves as a connecting link leading into the sphere of musical time, while the concept of *garap* leads into the realm of musical performance practice. A clear trend toward the standardization of theoretical systems is evident. Many of the concepts discussed present stable models and rules that have remained virtually unchanged throughout history. At the same time, within the boundaries of these rules, performers retain a considerable degree of interpretive freedom. It is likely that due to the standardization of the most important rules, gamelan culture did not require notation, and the essential core of the orchestra was preserved throughout its entire historical development.

Although the musical concepts discussed are not strictly aimed at describing the orchestral phenomenon but instead encompass virtually all stages of gamelan composition and practice, we can nevertheless observe varying degrees of correlation between these concepts and the *system of orchestral structural elements* applied in this study. First, it is important to note that the directions of orchestral vertical and horizontal expansion are embedded within the broader system of gamelan theoretical concepts: the pitch group expands primarily in the vertical dimension, while the time-division group underpins the horizontal expansion of gamelan. The first two concepts (*lara*, *pathet*) describe the pitch system and do not have a significant influence on the orchestral structure.[7] Meanwhile, the concept of *irama*, which describes the tempo relationships between individual orchestral groups, is directly linked to the elements of orchestral groups and textural layers, and most clearly reveals the nature of interaction among these groups. Its distinctiveness lies in the fact that *irama* describes interaction solely in terms of rhythmic relationships between sections and possesses a somewhat more horizontal character than the three aforementioned structural elements of the orchestral vertical with which it is associated (the formation of orchestral groups, the relationships between them, and the textural layers). Elements of orchestral dramaturgy are reflected in the concepts of *bentuk* (major sections) and *padhang-ulihan* (minor sections). Meanwhile, the performance concepts *garap* and *kotekan* reveal an even finer-grained organization of orchestral groups and the interrelationships among instrumental parts. Most importantly, all of the aforementioned concepts—except for the first two (*lara*, *pathet*)—develop the melodic core, *balungan*, in different ways and at different structural levels. Therefore, we can see that *balungan* serves as the foundation and point of departure for the entire system of musical organization, the axis around which all gamelan compositions are structured. Consequently, this concept could meet the criteria for an orchestral structural unit.

[7] Nevertheless, a certain influence on the orchestral structure can be observed in situations where dual tuning is present—when one half of the orchestra is tuned to the *pelog* system and the other half to *slendro*.

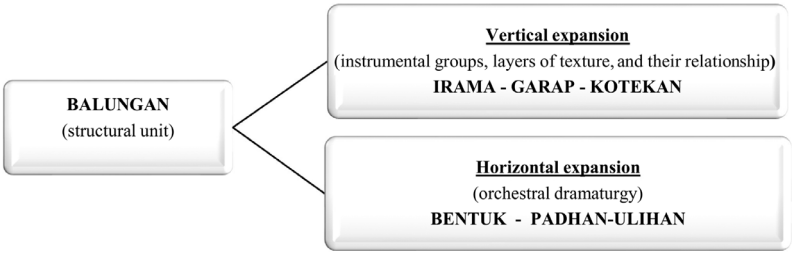


Diagram 4. The relationship between gamelan music concepts
based on correlation with the system of orchestral structural elements

Diagram 4 illustrates the relationship between gamelan music concepts based on how they correlate with the *system of structural elements of the orchestra*. Vertical *balungan* development is grounded in the concepts of *irama*, *garap*, and *kotekan*, while horizontal development reflects the concepts of *bentuk* and *padhang-ulihan*. It is worth noting, however, that in the context of gamelan musical concepts, the distinction between vertical and horizontal expansion is not entirely clear-cut. Most concepts encompass aspects of both directions, even though a certain predominance of one or the other can still be discerned.

2. Structural elements of the gamelan orchestra and the principles of its formation

A comprehensive overview of theoretical gamelan concepts and their correlations with the structural elements of the orchestra makes it possible to examine the functioning of these elements in a more precise, focused, and authentic manner, without departing from the essence of the orchestra itself. In this chapter, the system of orchestral structural elements will be employed as a tool for a multifaceted exploration and characterization of gamelan as an orchestral phenomenon.

2.1. The structural unit as a model of composition

The syncretic mindset characteristic of gamelan culture—the merging of all areas of music-making into an indivisible whole—and the specific ways in which musical concepts function within gamelan composition suggest that the structural unit should reflect the model of the composition as a whole, rather than a small detail of it, as is typical in European orchestral models. In this sense, the *balungan* may be identified as the structural unit of the orchestra: the melodic core from which the entire gamelan composition emanates.[8] It meets all the criteria of a structural unit:

a) it is a unified entity and functions as an indivisible unit;
b) it retains all its fundamental characteristics throughout the piece and is stable;
c) it clearly dominates the musical structure as the main element;
d) it serves as the foundation for the formation of the orchestral vertical and horizontal dimensions.

Here we see a fundamental difference from European orchestral models, in which the structural unit consists of a smaller element that is subsequently multiplied in various ways and according to various principles—the whole is constructed from its details.[9] In the case of gamelan, the structural unit encompasses the whole, containing within itself the complete outline of the composition. In the process of constructing the orchestra, this unit is unfolded both vertically—through the layering of instrumental groups and orchestral textures—and horizontally, as it unfolds into a musical form. Because gamelan's structural unit embodies the entirety of the piece and is subsequently divided into separate segments, it exhibits all the characteristics of a *macro-unit*.[10]

8 Sorrell notes that modern gamelan notation records only the *balungan* and its colotomic support, which is entirely sufficient to unfold the entire composition (Sorrell 1990, 107). This once again confirms the function of the *balungan* as the essential model for the entire work and as the point of departure for the composition as a whole.

9 More on the principles of the European orchestra: Baranauskas (2016, 33–42), Baranauskas (2020).

10 A *micro structural unit* is a relatively small formation, the multiplication of which allows the shaping of orchestral structure as well as a concrete work; i.e., this structural unit is much smaller than the entire work and is expanded using the principle of multiplication or repetition. A *macro structural unit* is a uniform formation that encompasses the entire scope of the work or its major part which is developed by the method of division; i.e., this structural unit holds the entire scope (or a major part) of the work and is divided into smaller sections. While the logic of a *micro* structural unit allows small details to form the entire work, in the case of a *macro* unit, one large detail is divided into smaller parts (Baranauskas 2019, 25).

The main component of this structural unit is a single musical parameter—a sequence of specific pitches that forms the melodic line. In this case, we can refer to it as a *monoparametric* element possessing a single melodic characteristic. The expansion of the structural unit is more pronounced in the vertical than in the horizontal direction of the orchestral texture, thus revealing a tendency toward vertical spread. In summary, the *balungan* structural unit can be characterized as a macro-monoparametric entity with a pronounced tendency toward vertical expansion. Such a structural unit serves as a concentrated model of the gamelan composition as a whole. One instance of a *balungan* is shown in figure 4. Here, the melodic core of the gamelan piece *Ladrang Wilujeng* is presented separately (Sorrell 1990, 80).

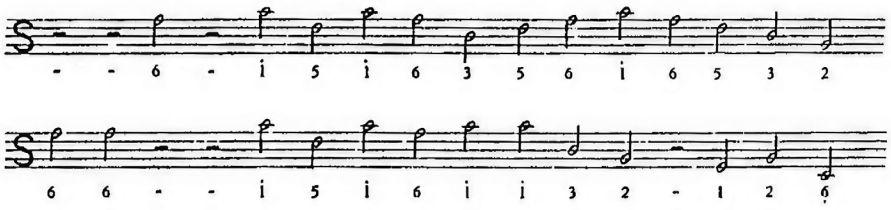



Figure 4. The melodic core of the gamelan piece *Ladrang Wilujeng*

This melodic sequence, in its concentrated form, contains the entire piece from beginning to end. It is performed by a distinct group of *balungan* instruments. As it develops further in the vertical dimension, additional orchestral instrumental groups emerge. At the same time, as it unfolds horizontally, it generates the distinct formal sections, thereby shaping the orchestral dramaturgy and the overall development of musical form.

It is important to note that gamelan orchestras from all regions, regardless of their function or instrumental composition, share the same foundational musical concepts discussed in the previous section. Consequently, they all follow the same principle of unfolding the melodic core. We may therefore assume that, despite the great variety of subtypes and forms of gamelan orchestras, their structures are based on a structural unit of the same nature. Since the definition of distinct types of orchestral structure presupposes the existence of fundamentally different structural units, in this case we can conclude that there is only one type of orchestral structure characteristic of the entire gamelan tradition, albeit with potentially numerous subtypes.[11] Additionally, it should be noted that highlighting individual gamelan subtypes would be difficult due to the vast number of orchestral forms. It would require too much space and would not contribute to achieving the objectives of this work. Therefore, this was not included in the scope of this paper. Meanwhile, the general trends in the development of the aforementioned structural unit are explored in greater detail in the following subsections.

2.2. Distribution of vertical and horizontal elements

The instruments in the orchestra are grouped according to their musical function rather than their timbral characteristics, resulting in clear and standardized groupings. The relationships among these groups can be described as functionally complementary. Each of the instrumental groups performs its own stable and unchanging function, coming together to form a unified orchestral fabric. Throughout the piece, these groups do not exert any obvious influence on one another, nor do they alter the nature of each other's functioning. Thus, the aforementioned interaction is established from the very beginning of the piece and remains stable throughout its course.

The instrumental structure of the gamelan orchestra is characterized by a binary duality. As already mentioned, the modern gamelan orchestra is often binary—one half is tuned to the *slendro* scale, the other to the *pelog*. An even more pronounced duality is evident in the fact that many instrumental groups themselves are

[11] Various criteria are possible for the potential differentiation of subtypes: structural (differences in vertical and horizontal expansion, different segmentation of the melodic core in Bali, Java, and other regions); instrumental (significant differences in instrumental composition and the resulting characteristics of the orchestral structure); functional (differences in the functional purpose of the orchestra); geographical (specifics of orchestra usage in individual regions).

dual. Some instruments are tuned slightly higher, representing the male instruments, and others are tuned slightly lower, symbolizing the female instruments. This creates a rough, vibrating "unison" effect.[12]

Nevertheless, one of the most significant features of the instrumental structure is the grouping of instruments according to their musical function. Moreover, there is a close relationship between these functional groups and the structure of the music being performed. The standard functions of the instruments remain largely consistent from one piece to another, and these functions are determined by the fundamental elements that constitute gamelan music (as discussed in the previous section).

Different researchers classify instrumental functional groups in slightly different ways. Sorrell distinguishes three main groups based on the role they play in the structure of a piece (Sorrell 1990):

a) instruments playing the *balungan*,
b) instruments that emphasize the colotomic structure,
c) instruments performing the function of melodic elaboration.

Susilo also identifies these three groups, while separately distinguishing the rhythmic group of drums (Susilo n.d., 1). Meanwhile, Sumarsam presents the following classification (Sumarsam 2023, 6):

1. Instruments and vocalists performing the melody:
   a) instruments and vocalists presenting elaborated melodies,
   b) instruments playing a melodic abstraction (*balungan*),
   c) instruments that melodically mediate between groups a) and b).
2. Instruments regulating musical time.
3. Instruments emphasizing musical structure.

As we can see, the aforementioned classifications of instrumental groups differ only in their details and the somewhat different sub-groups they distinguish. Meanwhile, the essential aspects based on the specific structure of gamelan music remain the same. Thus, based on researchers' data, we can classify the main instruments of the gamelan orchestra into three primary functional groups: melodic, collotomic, and rhythmic. All of this is shown in table 2.

Table 2. Gamelan instruments grouped by function

Melodic function	**Melodic core (*balungan*)**	*Saron, demung, peking, slentem*
	Elaborated melody	*Bonang, gambang, gender, siter, rebab, suling, human voice*
Colotomic function		*Gong ageng, kempul, kempyang, kenong, ketuk*
Rhythmic function		*Bedug, kendang*

All three groups perform fundamentally different functions. Instruments belonging to the melodic group play the core of the piece—the *balungan*—and elaborate or embellish it melodically. The colotomic group marks the essential structural divisions of the form. The rhythmic group functions as an audible conductor. The primary factor ensuring the orchestra's coordination is clearly the presence of this audible conductor (the rhythmic functional group). In addition, the colotomic instruments and the strict formal structure of the pieces also contribute to coordination among the players.

In figure 5 (Kunst 1973, 484–485), we see an instance of the functional distribution of instruments. Because the functions of the instruments remain constant, the textural layers of the music essentially correspond to the instrumental groups. The functional distribution of the groups determines the layering of the texture according to functions. The texture is organized hierarchically, from the most essential layers to the more decorative and peripheral ones, and each layer retains its stable function. There are four distinct layers: rhythmic, colotomic, *balungan*, and elaborated *balungan.* The latter layer is further divided into two groups: the first consisting of pitched percussion instruments, and the second of wind instruments. Complementarity in rhythm and harmony also becomes apparent when a group of instruments is split into two identical timbral

[12] Malm writes that the Balinese gamelan instruments *gender* or *gansa* are constructed in pairs or sets of four for each octave. Although all instruments in the set are in the same tuning, half are "female" instruments, which are tuned slightly lower than their "male" counterparts (Malm 1977, 48). This tendency is no less pronounced in the gamelans of Java and Madura. It is particularly characteristic of the gong and drum groups. Orchestras typically have "one *kenthuk bine* (large gong), one *kenthuk lake* (small gong), one *kendhang bine* (double-headed drum), and one *kendhang lake*" (Crawford 2001, 331). Here, *bine* means "feminine," and *lake* means "masculine."

parts that perform contrasting rhythms and harmonies. Although the textural layers generally correspond to the instrumental groups, additional micro-layers can be observed within each one—a form of internal textural stratification within a single instrumental group. For example, the *balungan* instruments form two slightly distinct layers, and the elaborating *balungan* group divides into at least five layers of differing texture and timbre. This reveals a subtle yet meaningful distinction between the formation of orchestral groups and the formation of textural layers.

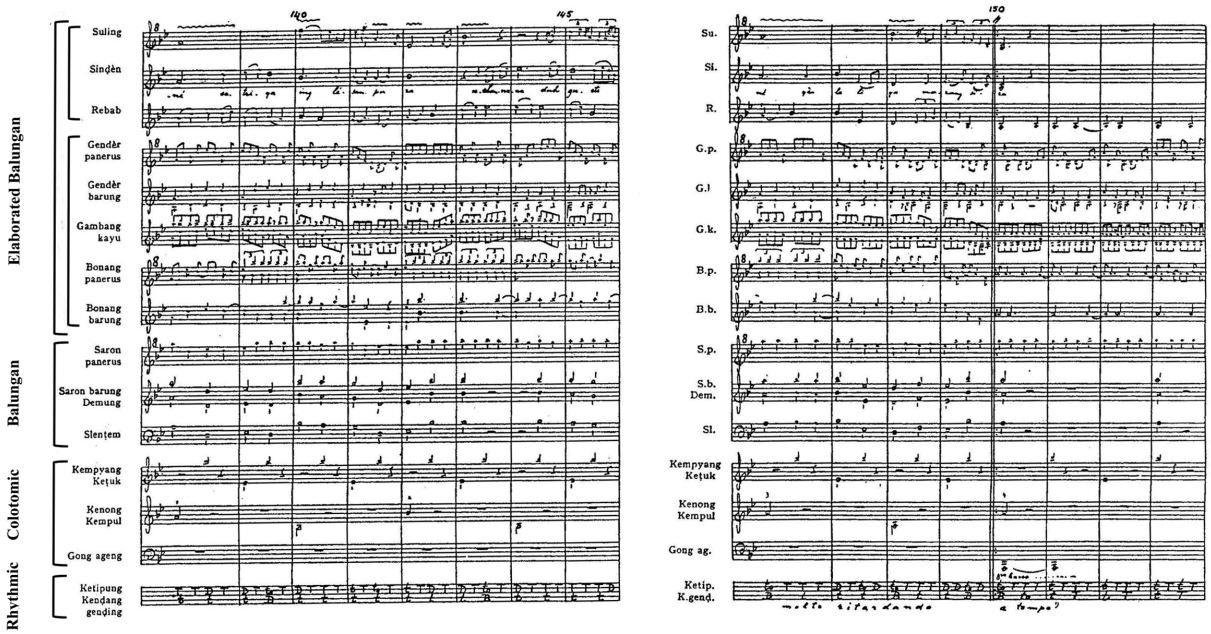



Figure 5. Gamelan Bawa (Sekar *Chondra wilasita*)

Dominant timbres and timbral stability are shaped by the fact that the overall timbral palette of the gamelan is dominated by metallic pitched percussion instruments (idiophones). All the main instruments of the Javanese gamelan are listed in table 3.

Table 3. Gamelan orchestra instruments by construction and timbre

Percussion	**Gongs**	Vertical: *gong ageng, gong suwukan (siyem), kempul;* Horizontal: *kenong, ketuk, kempyang;* Gongs-bells (*bonang*): *barung, panerus*
	Metallophones	*Saron: demung, barung, panerus (peking), slenthem;* *Gender: barung, panerus*
	Xylophones	*Gambang*
	Drums	*Kendang gending, kendang ketipung, kendang batangan (ciblon)*
String		*Siter* (citra), *rebab* (violin)
Wind		*Suling* (transverse flute)
Voice		*Pesinden* (female voice), *gerong* (choir)

The resulting sound clearly indicates the unambiguous dominance of percussion instruments. The groups of gongs and metallophones (pitched idiophones) stand out particularly here.[13]

Despite the predominance of percussion instruments in the orchestra's overall instrumentation, it is difficult to identify a single timbre that clearly dominates the ensemble. In some cases, the human voice (when

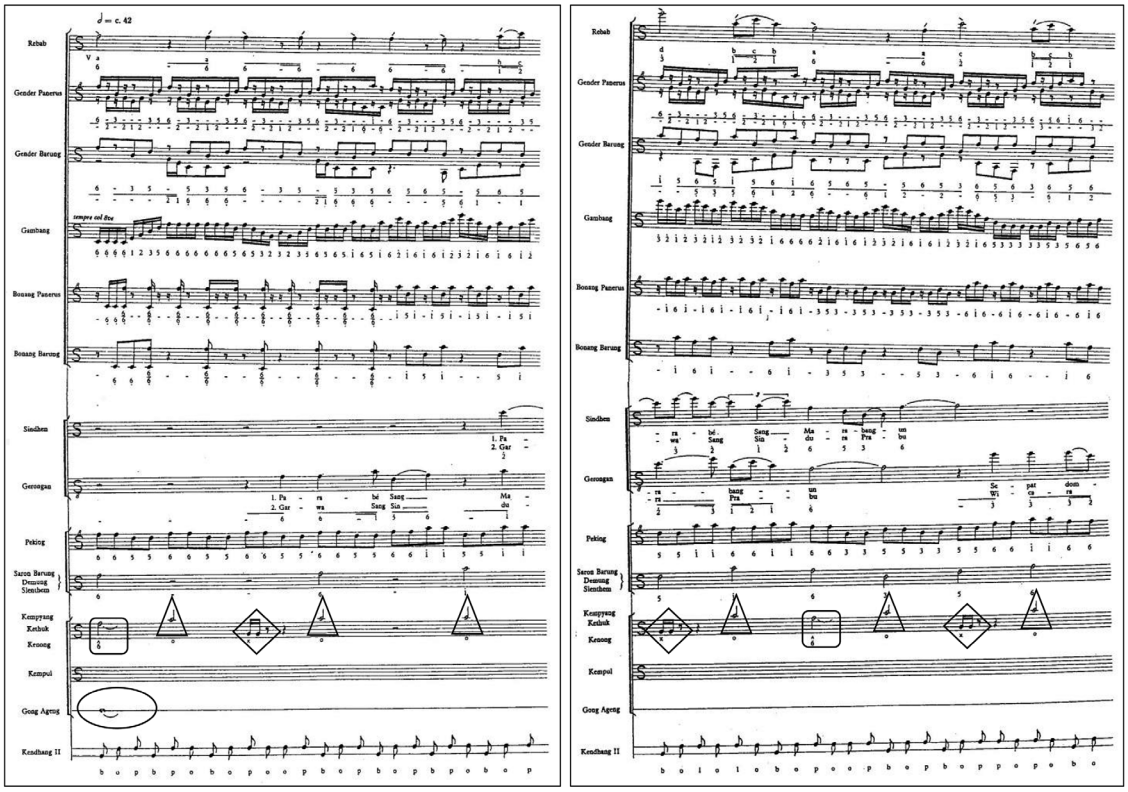
[13] Sorrell presents a slightly different idea for classifying instruments, which is likely closer to the understanding of instruments in gamelan culture. He suggests dividing instruments into two groups—those that are held by the performer and those that are not. In this case, held instruments serve as a sort of extension of the human body, while those not held are not associated with human individuality and carry a sacred connotation. He points out that the gamelan is, in fact, almost entirely untouchable. Contact is made through mallets, and hands are used only for certain instruments, mostly for a secondary muting function (Sorrell 1990, 20).

present) or certain wind instruments may stand out acoustically, even though their functional role—typically the elaboration of the *balungan*—is among the least central. Their timbres, however, are sufficiently distinct to be perceptible against the broader sonic context. To summarize the points made above, timbral dominance does not play a significant role in the structure of the gamelan orchestra. Likewise, timbral stability—which becomes important in musical contexts where active timbral change must be balanced over time—is not particularly relevant here, since the overall orchestral structure is already highly stable and undergoes minimal change throughout a performance. Thus, we constantly hear a slightly changing sound of the entire orchestra, a kind of *tutti,* which ensures stability.

The dominant musical parameter shaping the formation of the orchestral structure is the melodic line, or more broadly, the orchestral horizontal. This is evident both in the orchestra's structural unit, presented as a concentrated melodic core, and in the linearity of the parts that elaborate upon it, as well as in performance practice, where precise vertical alignment of instrumental parts is not required. It is horizontal thinking that predominates and determines the ways in which the orchestral groups interact.

The question of orchestral dramaturgy, just like the aspect of timbral stability, is not particularly significant in gamelan music. As previously noted, timbral stability and orchestral dramaturgy are most relevant in musical contexts where the sound changes significantly over the course of a piece. Because the gamelan orchestra maintains a high degree of sonic stability, these parameters become secondary. Nevertheless, they must still be taken into account. No matter how stable the gamelan's structure may be, a certain degree of variation does occur throughout a piece, and this variation follows its own specific principles. Two main features characterize the orchestral timbral dramaturgy.

The first feature is grounded in the colotomic structure—the periodic entry of instruments that measure time and articulate the formal divisions. In figure 6 (Sorrell 1990, 107–112),[14] we see how the strokes of the colotomic instruments divide the piece into sections of fixed length. The boundaries of the excerpt shown are marked by the strikes of the largest gong (*gong ageng*) at the very beginning and at the very end.[15]



14 Sorrell notes that this score should not be understood in the Western sense as a definitively fixed work, but rather as one of the possible variations of the performance. Just as two different gamelans are not tuned identically and each retains its own unique sound, similarly, different performances of the same piece cannot be identical and cannot be strictly notated (Sorrell 1990, 107).

15 The melodic core *balungan* of this fragment was shown in figure 4.

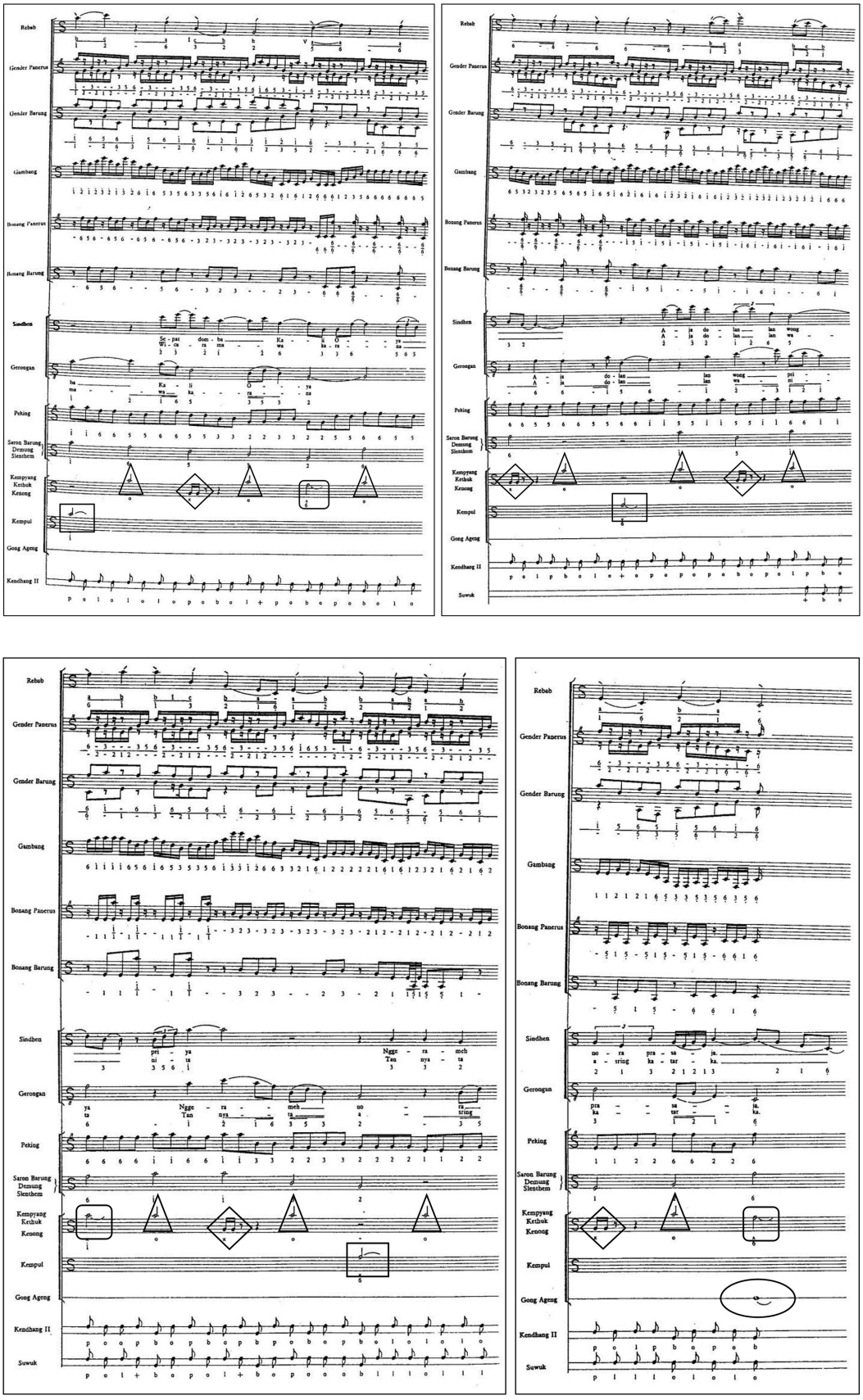



Figure 6. Gamelan *Ladrang Wilujeng* (second part *Lik*) (Sorrell 1990, 107–112).
Colotomic beats of different levels are marked using different shapes

Furthermore, this entire section is divided into four smaller sections, which are structurally identical in length (eight beats of the colotomic instruments). These sections are marked by strikes of the *gong kenong*. Meanwhile, the *kempul* divides this structure in half again (the duration of four colotomic beats), while the *kempyang* and *ketuk* provide the finest division of time. This is more clearly seen in diagram 5.

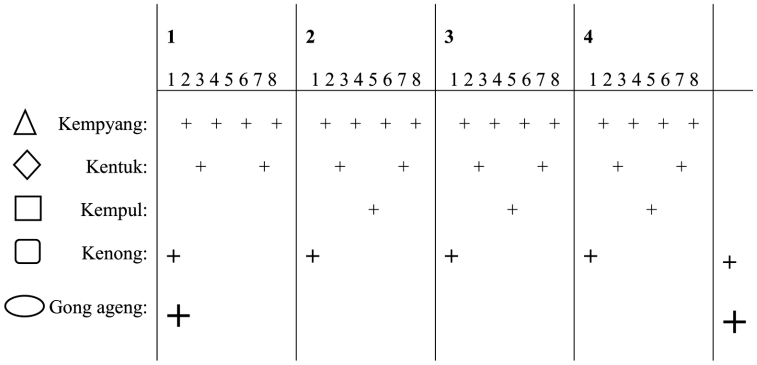


Diagram 5. *Ladrang Wilujeng* (*Lik*) colotomic structure

The second feature that reveals a degree of orchestral dramaturgy lies in the textural layers—or individual instruments—that enter and withdraw over the course of the piece. Although each instrument and instrumental group performs a stable textural function, they periodically fall silent and then re-enter, creating shifts in texture, timbre, and register. More pronounced changes occur at the boundaries between larger formal sections. Revisiting the examples discussed above (figures 5 and 6), we observe that the degree of change within these fragments is minimal—the full orchestra is employed throughout. However, as the episodes progress, certain textural layers are gradually withdrawn (for instance, at bar 150 in figure 5). Thus, the principle of removing and adding stable textural layers activates the process of orchestral dramaturgy and brings about a certain timbral change. It is also worth noting that the timbral changes produced through this principle do not function as a significant or consciously crafted dramaturgical device, unlike in the symphony orchestra. Instead, they appear as secondary effects arising from the musical structure itself and from the logic of performers' entries. Consequently, both the dramaturgical dimension of orchestral structure and the parameter of timbral stability should be regarded as secondary within the gamelan orchestra.

2.3. The overall structure of the gamelan orchestra

To summarize the points discussed above regarding the structure of the gamelan orchestra, we can present the following comprehensive diagram (diagram 6).

The foundation of the orchestral structure is formed by a structural unit *balungan*, characterized as *a macro-monoparametric unit with a tendency toward vertical expansion*. This structural unit, expanding in both vertical and horizontal directions, forms all the fundamental elements of the orchestra.

Within the structure, we observe that certain elements play a greater role (the principle of instrumental group formation, the nature of interaction between these groups, layers of texture, dominant musical parameter), while others become less significant (dominant timbre and timbral stability, orchestral dramaturgy). We see that vertical orchestral elements prevail, while horizontal elements appear to be less important. At first glance, this may seem paradoxical, given that the dominant musical parameter is the melodic line, which is primarily horizontal in character. However, although gamelan performance is fundamentally grounded in linear thinking, the absence of pronounced change over the course of a piece allows the orchestra to be described in greater detail through vertical parameters—parameters that are themselves the product of horizontal thinking and horizontally organized layers.

We can also observe certain patterns in the relationship between vertical and horizontal elements. Unlike the structural logic of the symphonic orchestra, in the gamelan the element of *orchestral dramaturgy* maintains a reciprocal relationship with the *layers of orchestral texture*. In other words, orchestral dramaturgy is shaped primarily by changes within these textural layers. Furthermore, the *dominant musical parameter* is closely tied to the nature of *interaction among the orchestral groups*. This is evident through the influence of the melodic line on the linear-melodic nature of orchestral group interaction. In many cases, an orchestral group also

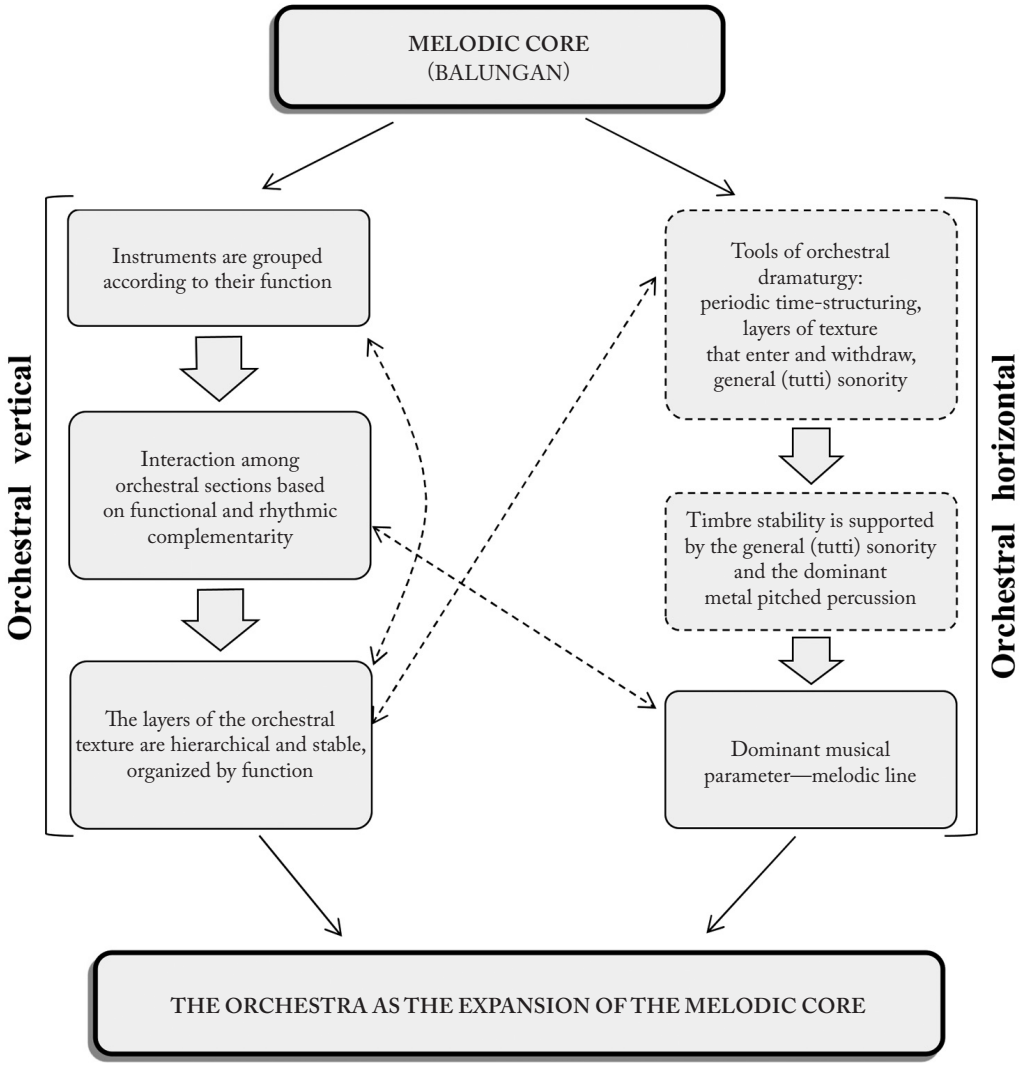


Diagram 6. The totality of gamelan's structural elements

corresponds to a textural layer, so these vertical elements tend to merge into a single unit (indicated in the diagram by an additional dotted arrow).

Overall structural principle of the gamelan orchestra: the orchestra as an expansion of a melodic core.

3. Concluding remarks

The structural analysis of the gamelan orchestra has yielded clear results. By applying an appropriate analytical approach and taking specific cultural contexts into account, it becomes evident that such a method can reveal the fundamental principles of the gamelan orchestra and integrate them into a coherent system.

Traditional gamelan theoretical terms and concepts can be linked into a single chain in which each element is connected to the one preceding it. Three conceptual groups have been identified: pitch-related concepts (*lara*, *pathet*, *balungan*); concepts of time division and form (*irama*, *bentuk*, *padhang-ulihan*); and performance-practice concepts (*garap*, *kotekan*). The directions of vertical and horizontal orchestral expansion are embedded within this theoretical system: the pitch group contributes primarily to vertical expansion, while the time-division group underpins horizontal expansion. Vertical *balungan* development is grounded in *irama*, *garap*, and *kotekan*, whereas horizontal development is reflected in *bentuk* and *padhang-ulihan*.

Two essential structural characteristics of the orchestra have emerged: *balungan*, which serves as the melodic core and generative model for the entire composition, and the colotomic structure, which organizes musical time.

The structural analysis method employed in this study has demonstrated its effectiveness. It can be applied not only to the symphonic orchestra but also to the gamelan orchestra, whose structure and principal elements can be described through the system of orchestral structural elements. All components of this system function, to varying degrees, within gamelan music.

One structural unit—the *balungan*—has been highlighted. It possesses macro characteristics and is monoparametric, with a tendency toward vertical expansion. On this basis, a single overarching structural type can be defined, one that may be subdivided into numerous potential subtypes. The structural unit in the gamelan orchestra reflects a model of the whole, which is then elaborated, divided, and distributed across other orchestral elements. The structure is dominated by elements of the orchestral vertical. The gamelan orchestra is thus characterized by a structural principle that simultaneously functions as a compositional strategy: the orchestra as an expansion of a melodic core.

It is likely that the model of gamelan orchestral elements formulated in this study can serve as a compositional tool for creating new orchestral concepts[16] and for seeking a distinctive orchestral sound—not through superficial means, but by engaging with deeper principles of structure and internal organization.

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Gamelano orkestro struktūriniai elementai: šiuolaikinis požiūris

Santrauka

Neeuropinės kultūros orkestro analizė turi daug potencialių galimybių atskleisti naujus struktūros modelius, komponavimo strategijas, taip pat galimus sąveikos su europiniais orkestro modeliais būdus. Todėl tai yra svarbus žingsnis orkestro, kaip reiškinio, išsamesnio suvokimo link. Šiame straipsnyje gamelanas nagrinėjamas dviem etapais. Pirmiausia, sistemiškai aptariamos pagrindinės gamelano muzikos koncepcijos. Tai daroma tam, kad būtų lengviau suvokti gamelano muzikos komponavimo principus, gamelano orkestro sandarą, taip pat pagrindines sąvokas ir terminus. Vėliau pateikiama detali orkestrinių elementų analizė, remiantis kontekstais, aptartais straipsnio pirmame skyriuje. Svarbu pabrėžti, kad, siekiant suprasti gamelano orkestro veikimo principus ir sugebėti juos pritaikyti kūrybinėje praktikoje, mums reikalingas specialus orkestrinės analizės metodas – bendri kriterijai, kuriais remiantis būtų galima atskleisti įvairių tipų ir kultūrų orkestrų esmines savybes bei principus. Naudodami bendrą analitinį įrankį, galime orkestrus lengviau lyginti tarpusavyje, numatyti jų sąveikos galimybes ir vertinti juos skirtingų orkestrinių kultūrų kontekste. Straipsnio autoriaus sukurta orkestro struktūrinių elementų sistema yra taikoma siekiant išsamios ir įvairiapusės gamelano orkestro analizės.

Teorinės gamelano bazės elementus galime sujungti į vieną grandinę, kurioje kiekvienas jos narys susijęs su ankstesniuoju. Matomos trys grupės: garso aukščio koncepcijos (*lara*, *pathet* ir *balungan*), laiko dalijimo arba formos koncepcijos (*irama*, *bentuk* ir *padhan-ulihan*) bei atlikimo praktikos koncepcijos (*garap* ir *kotekan*). Nors šios muzikinės koncepcijos nėra tiksliai orientuotos

[16] For more information on the creative application of this model and its potential interactions with symphony orchestra models, see Baranauskas (2023, 110–125).

į orkestrinio reiškinio apibūdinimą, jos aprėpia bene visas gamelano muzikos komponavimo ir funkcionavimo pakopas. Be to, galime įžvelgti minėtų sąvokų didesnę arba mažesnę koreliaciją su tyrime naudojama orkestro struktūrinių elementų sistema.

Vertėtų atkreipti dėmesį, kad gamelano teorinių koncepcijų visumoje slypi orkestrinės vertikalės ir horizontalės sklaidos kryptys: garso aukščio grupė daugiau skleidžiasi vertikalia kryptimi, o laiko dalijimo grupė pagrindžia horizontalią gamelano sklaidą. Pirmosios dvi minėtos sąvokos (*lara*, *pathet*) apibūdina garso aukščių sistemą ir ryškesnės įtakos orkestro struktūrai nedaro. O *irama* koncepcija, apibūdinanti tempo santykius tarp atskirų orkestro grupių, nors tiesiogiai siejasi su pastarųjų bei faktūros sluoksnių elementais, labiausiai atskleidžia būtent sąveikos tarp orkestro grupių pobūdį. Tam tikrą savitumą galima įžvelgti tame, kad *irama* apibūdina sąveiką tik ritminio santykio tarp orkestro grupių aspektu ir horizontalės charakteristikų turi šiek tiek daugiau nei visi trys minėti orkestrinės vertikalės struktūriniai elementai, su kurias ji siejasi (orkestro grupių susidarymas, santykis tarp jų, faktūriniai sluoksniai). Orkestrinės dramaturgijos elementai atsiskleidžia per sąvokų *bentuk* (stambiosios dalys) ir *padhan-ulihan* (smulkiosios dalys) sampratas. O atlikimą apibūdinančios sąvokos *garap* ir *kotekan* atskleidžia dar smulkesnį orkestro grupių organizavimo pobūdį ir instrumentinių partijų tarpusavio santykį. Svarbiausia yra tai, kad visos minėtos sąvokos, išskyrus pirmąsias dvi (*lara*, *pathet*), funkcionuoja vienu ar kitu parametru išskleisdamos melodinį gamelano kompozicijos branduolį *balungan*. Būtent *balungan* yra gamelano muzikos sistemų visumos pagrindas ir gamelano kompozicijų ašis. Todėl ši sąvoka atitinka orkestro struktūrinio vieneto kriterijus.

Gamelano orkestro struktūros pagrindą sudaro makrostruktūrinis vienetas *balungan*, kuris charakterizuojamas kaip *monoparametrinis*, turintis polinkį į vertikalią sklaidą. Šis struktūrinis vienetas, besiskleisdamas vertikalia ir horizontalia kryptimis, suformuoja visus pagrindinius gamelano orkestro elementus. Pastarojo struktūroje įžvelgiame, kad tam tikri elementai turi daugiau reikšmės (instrumentinių grupių susidarymo principas, šių grupių tarpusavio sąveikos pobūdis, faktūros sluoksniai, dominuojantis muzikos parametras) nei kiti (dominuojantis tembras ir tembrinis stabilumas, orkestrinė dramaturgija). Matome, kad vyrauja orkestrinės vertikalės elementai. Iš pirmo žvilgsnio tai gali atrodyti paradoksalu, ypač turint galvoje, kad dominuojantis gamelano muzikinis parametras yra melodinė linija, turinti horizontalią charakteristiką. Tačiau nepaisant to, kad gamelano muzikavimo pobūdis pagrįstas lineariniu mąstymu, dėl akivaizdesnės skambesio kaitos laike nebuvimo orkestras gali būti detaliau apibūdinamas vertikalės parametrais, kurie savo ruožtu yra horizontalaus mąstymo ir horizontalių sluoksnių rezultatas.

Struktūrinė gamelano orkestro analizė davė akivaizdžių rezultatų, todėl galime teigti, kad, taikant tinkamą prieigą ir atsižvelgiant į specifinius kultūrinius kontekstus, tokio pobūdžio analizė gali atskleisti esminius gamelano orkestro principus ir padėti juos susieti į vientisą sistemą. Išryškėjo dvi svarbios struktūrinės gamelano orkestro savybės: makromelodinis branduolys *balungan*, kaip kompozicijos ir viso orkestro ašis, ir *kolotominė* struktūra, kaip muzikinio laiko formavimo priemonė.

Straipsnyje naudojamas struktūrinės analizės įrankis pagrindė savo efektyvumą. Jis gali būti rezultatyviai naudojamas ne tik simfoninio, bet ir gamelano orkestro analizei. Gamelano orkestro struktūra ir visi pagrindiniai jos elementai gali būti apibūdinti taikant orkestro struktūrinių elementų sistemą, kurios visi elementai daugiau ar mažiau aktyviai funkcionuoja gamelano orkestre. Apskritai gamelano struktūrinis vienetas atspindi visumos modelį, kuris yra skaidomas, dalijamas ir skleidžiamas kitais orkestro elementais. Minėtoje struktūroje dominuoja orkestrinės vertikalės elementai. Gamelano orkestrui būdingas struktūrinis principas – orkestras kaip melodinio branduolio sklaida.

Tikėtina, kad straipsnyje suformuluotas gamelano orkestrinių elementų modelis gali būti naudingas kaip komponavimo įrankis kuriant naujas orkestro koncepcijas ir ieškant savito orkestro skambesio ne tik paviršinėmis priemonėmis, bet ir integruojant gilesnius struktūros bei vidinės sandaros principus.

2

ETHNO- IN CONTEMPO (RE)INTERPRETACIJOS: PAIEŠKOS, ĮTAKOS, SINTEZĖS

(RE)INTERPRETATIONS OF *ETHNO- IN CONTEMPO*: EXPLORATIONS, INFLUENCES, SYNTHESES

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Romanian Folklore: Transfer and Reinterpretations in Transylvanian Contemporary Music. The Cluj School of Composition

Abstract. The importance of the Romanian folkloric vein in the shaping of the modern school of composition was fully confirmed in the work of composer George Enescu (1881–1955), who achieved in his own music a synthesis of elements of national culture and European techniques. This is even more innovative as it implied overcoming a striking incompatibility between the monodic-modal characteristics of the local folklore and the international circuit of classical music.

The obvious contrast between the color of Romanian folkloric modalism and the norms of the Western idiom of the time proved to be, in the end, style generative. Later generations of composers, supported by increasingly specialized research in the field of ethnomusicology, were to integrate into their own works the determining characteristics of the autochthonous tradition, including modal language, the free *parlando-rubato* style, monodic character, dancing or swaying rhythms, archaic elements (such as the *ison* or the *bi-tertial* chord), timbral effects of specific instruments (alpenhorn, whistle, semantron), without excluding contemporary or even avant-garde techniques adopted in the rest of Europe.

At the confluence of tradition and modernity, the Cluj school of composition (located in the capital of Transylvania) was formed, with the composer Sigismund Toduță (1908–1991), an important promoter of local folklore, as its mentor. His last disciple, Adrian Pop (b. 1951)—also a student of Cornel Țăranu (1934–2023), a composer known for his avant-garde attitudes—like other representatives of the Cluj circle, shaped his own style in accordance with the sources of inspiration and the intended artistic message, turning to the resources of the autochthonous heritage, to the original aesthetic contributions of contemporary Romanian music (heterophony, spectralism,[1] etc.) as well as to Western techniques (such as texturalism, aleatorism). His choral, chamber, and symphonic works present the successful fusion of Romanian ethno in contempo.

Keywords: Cluj, Transylvania, Romanian folklore, folk tune, tradition, modernity, heterophony, texturalism.

Introduction

What is the role of local folklore in shaping the specificity and evolution of a school of composition? What is its significance in the vast stylistic landscape of modernity, and how can it be integrated into creative practice focusing both on meaning and originality? The development and recognition of Romanian composers, as well as representatives of local schools in the Carpathian-Danubian-Pontic region, offer, upon analytical examination, clues—especially of a stylistic nature—regarding the techniques and trends that have proven effective in achieving these artistic goals.

The establishment of the Romanian musical identity was achieved at the intersection of two trends: that of *compensation*, particularly related to the process of local recovery of cultural forms that appeared in the European art of the time and their placement "in tune with the local sensitivity and reality" (Herman 1977, 30), and respectively that of *affirmation*, consisting in the incorporation of popular art in forms of the West-European classical tradition, a process that resulted in bringing the specific Romanian essence among contemporary artistic values. In a unique way, the very incompatibility of the general monodic-modal nature of the inner structure of Romanian folk music with Western European musical forms of tonal-functional essence proved to be style-creating, the fusion of the two being manifested in a highly original manner in the work of the first representatives of the national school of composition.

Some of the key steps in the integration of peasant folklore (also highly appreciated by the Hungarian composer Béla Bartók) into Romanian cultured music coincided with the initiative—regarded as daring at that time—of the Romanian composer, musicologist and conductor Gavriil Musicescu (1847–1903) to process authentic tunes for choir, thus giving an impetus to the collection and harmonization of rural folklore by representatives such as Dumitru Georgescu Kiriak, Gheorghe Cucu, Ion Vidu, Tiberiu Brediceanu, Sabin Drăgoi, Constantin Brăiloiu, Gheorghe Breazul. The founding of the Society of Romanian Composers

[1] According to Romanian musicologist Valentina Sandu-Dediu (2002, 159) and composer Irinel Anghel (b. 1969), the spectralist movement has been cultivated since the 1960s by representatives such as Corneliu Cezar and Octavian Nemescu, Aurel Stroe, Costin Cazaban, Horațiu Rădulescu, Iancu Dumitrescu, Lucian Mețianu, Costin Miereanu, Mihai Mitrea-Celarianu, and Ana-Maria Avram, in clear opposition, however, "to the belated claim of primacy by the spectralists at IRCAM—Gérard Grisey, Tristan Murail and Jean-Claude Risset, members of the Ensemble l'Itinéraire, founded only in 1973". As in the case of heterophony, Romanian composers based their research more on "the exploration of profound content such as the acoustic and, above all, the archetypal, rather than on technical-savant deductions as in the case of Western serialists or spectralists" (Anghel 2018, 16).

(SRC) in 1920, of the Phonogram Archive of the Ministry of Culture and Arts (1927) and of the Folklore Archive of the Society of Romanian Composers (1928)—merged in 1949, with the establishment of the Institute of Ethnography and Folklore—facilitated the scientific knowledge, dissemination, and influence of the Romanian autochthonous dimension, intertwined with the compositional phenomenon of those years.

In addition to benefiting from an ever-expanding folkloric fund, the attitudes of exponents of the creative sector in cultivating these resources were decisive. The main impetus came from George Enescu, whose work was shaped at the intersection of Romanian authenticity and techniques specific to the Western European repertoire—with which he was also very familiar—providing a model worthy of inspiration for Romanian composition schools and establishing the valences of the native language as a reference point in shaping artistic identity.

A revealing example in this regard is the Cluj school, established, under the guidance of composer Sigismund Toduță, in the heart of Transylvania. Located between the two poles of tradition and modernity, represented by Toduță—a well-known adherent of established polyphonic practices, and Cornel Țăranu—a bold spirit in the realm of the most innovative techniques of the moment, the composers of Cluj have succeeded in maximizing not only Romanian tradition (represented by folklore in general) but also universal tradition (considered a landmark by their master composers) and local traditions (without which the search for authenticity would have been only partially resolved). The fusion of these factors, together with the specific sensitivities of each representative in relation to the intended artistic message, resulted in the emergence of some notable creative profiles. However, one of the primary resources in shaping national and personal identity was the autochthonous folklore. This study briefly presents some analytical arguments in this regard.

1. The role of George Enescu in the formation of the Romanian school of composition

The introductory chapter has drawn the context in which the personality of the composer George Enescu (1881–1955)[2] emerged. By combining the cultured heritage of the 19th century (let us not forget that Enescu was trained in Western Europe, in Vienna and Paris) with the impulses received from the popular musical substance (of an ethnic rather than academic-savant essence), he was to substantially influence the attitude of later generations of Romanian composers towards the autochthonous folklore. A few stylistic considerations that can be found in Enescu's compositions and which are worth mentioning are: the prevalence of the *parlando-rubato* improvisatory system, whose specificity lies in the free, asymmetrical rhythmic execution and a melismatic melody, originating in the ornamental cantabile style of songs and *doinas*;[3] the fondness for the instrumental recitative style, especially among the fiddlers; the "supremacy of melody over all other elements of language" (Niculescu 1980, 87) as a fundamental characteristic; the chromatic concept based on the general modal language; the cultivation of the rhapsodic form; etc. At the level of writing, some methods organically deduced from popular melodics can be noted, such as the pedal and *ostinato* technique, the major-minor oscillations specific to Romanian song, or "the intense use (often in the moments of climax in Enescu's works) of unison" (Firca 1974, 26).

In addition to enescian works featuring an autochthonous substratum, constituted by projecting an "imaginary folklore"[4] situated at the confluence of specific melodic-rhythmic elements with those coming from universal music, another technique intensively used by Romanian composers was that of processing the popular tune or "quotation," of enhancing its expressive valences by adapting it to various genres or stylistic settings.

Moreover, the Romanian folk essences also generated innovative techniques in the Romanian artistic landscape of the 20th century. Thus, starting from the need to create a polyphony that would correspond to the *parlando-rubato* structure of his folk-inspired melodies (and not to the divisional rhythmic system specific to the contrapuntal setting), Enescu developed the heterophonic syntax, manifested, in the general sense

[2] Some of the most illustrative enescian titles derived from the artistic-musical exploitation of the national folklore in his cult works are *Poème roumain* Op. 1 (1897), *Romanian Rhapsodies* (1901), the *Orchestral Suites*, Sonata No. 3 "dans le caractère populaire roumain" Op. 25 (1926), Suite for violin and piano "Impressions d'Enfance" Op. 28 (1940).

[3] A menlancholy song, whose intonations and melodic shape imprints the typical "dor" (longing) feeling—an untranslatable notion which most often implies the feeling of sadness or nostalgia.

[4] The invention of "imaginary folklore" melodies with an authentic character and a more complex melodic, rhythmic and modal structure, to which the status of "themes" could be attributed, allowing the natural derivation of transitional moments, development and coda was a frequent phenomenon in the creative work of the 1950s, in such composers as Sigismund Toduță, George Dumitrescu, Iancu Dumitrescu, Alfred Mendelssohn, Paul Constantinescu, Nicolae Buicliu, Marțian Negrea, Mihail Andricu, Tudor Jarda, and others.

of the term, by the pendulum between the mono-vocal and pluri-vocal states, respectively the alternation between unison and pluri-melody, generated by the overlapping of a basic melodic line with its variations. The theorization and definition of heterophony as a basic syntactic category (equal in importance to monody, polyphony, or homophony), with its origin in folklore, is attributed to another Romanian composer, Ștefan Niculescu (1927–2008), who also consistently applied it in his own work, "in forms of synchrony, but also in other ways, associated with the *ison* technique (see *Ison I, II*) or in complex combinations with the other '*syntaxic* typologies'" (Sandu-Dediu 2002, 108). In other words, the form is generated by the temporal organization of the music, by the successiveness (monody) or simultaneity (homophony, polyphony, heterophony) of the unfolding sound, in multiple possible combinations: polyphony in between a heterophony and a homophony, polyphony of heterophonies, heterophony of heterophonies, etc." (Sandu-Dediu 2002, 108–109). Thus, unlike Pierre Boulez,[5] who deduces heterophony from the equation of serial music, the Romanian school of composition approached the phenomenon in a broader and deeper way, from a modernist-avant-garde position, also evident in other conceptions, among which we mention spectralism—with "an emphasis on rediscovering the natural roots of music, primarily by the representatives of the Romanian compositional school, whose theoretical and practical primacy over the orientation is very little (almost none) known internationally" (Anghel 2018, 152), aleatorism—in variants closer to the radical model, or the controlled one, derived from an improvisatory approach with its origins in folklore, morphogenetic music,[6] etc.

At the same time, during the first decades of the second half of the 20th century, the modal intonational universe drawn from folklore evolves through the gradual acquisition of increasingly distant functional spaces, tending towards chromatic thinking, a fact that can be found in the middle and last stage of Enescu's oeuvre, where "a broad chromatic modalism imposes itself with certainty" (Popovici 1980, 33). Thus, in Romanian music, the chromatic total will be reached not by hyperchromatizing the major-minor, but through the diatonic modes and, especially, the chromatic ones. What is novel is that the intense chromatization of the modes does not contradict but, rather, intensifies the national coloring in a very subtle manner. The new scientific methods of investigation, and especially the mathematical ones, also confirm their role—both as a means of control and as a possibility of achieving new sound structures.

Although the Romanian compositional space undergoes a significant stylistic diversification, the broadening of the technical and expressive spectrum and the approach to the coordinates of a universal style does not invalidate the affiliation of the artistic products to the composers' mother language, the tradition permanently manifesting its dominance as a "style supra-coordinate" (Herman 1977, 144).

Against this effervescent artistic background, the Cluj school of composition developed, being established within the National Academy of Music "Gheorghe Dima," respectively around the paternal figure of the composer Sigismund Toduță. Finding their inspiration in the autochthonous musical heritage, as well as in the poetics and theorizations regarding the cultural determinants or the "stylistic matrix" (Blaga 2011, 141) of the Romanian "mioritic" space[7] outlined by the philosopher Lucian Blaga (1895–1961)—with whom Toduță was in a close artistic and spiritual connection—the generations of composers from the heart of Transylvania have, over time, brought to light valuable creations configured at the intersection of tradition and contemporaneity.

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5 As noted by Kóter Péter László, in his doctoral dissertation entitled *Heterofonia și problema categoriilor sintactice. Aspecte teoretice, terminologice și analitice* [Heterophony and the Problem of Syntactic Categories. Theoretical, Terminological and Analytical Aspects], completed in 2023 at the National Academy of Music "Gheorghe Dima" Cluj-Napoca, Boulez particularly captures the monodic substrate or principle of the phenomenon, seeing heterophony as "a distribution, on different dimensions, of identical sounds" (2023, 13).

6 Based on mathematician René Thom's thesis concerning the continuous accumulations of an organism in interference with its environment, which at a certain point cause erosion of its existence, leading to catastrophe, rupture and a change in its direction of evolution, morphogenesis refers, in music, to the processes by which forms are created or destroyed. Morphogenetic aesthetics aims to trace the genesis, evolution and death, respectively the laws and stages of existence of a sound organism, and the rupture at the level of musical composition becomes a reflection of a "broken" thinking with an effect on the semantic level. One of the main representatives of this orientation was the composer Aurel Stroe (1932–2008) (Anghel 2018, 168).

7 Starting from the word "miorița," which esentially indicates a young sheep aged 1 to 2 years, and from a Romanian narative song bearing the same title and featured in autochtonous folklore all over the country, the great philosopher, poet and playwright Lucian Blaga (1895–1961) links, in two parts of his *Trilogy of Culture*, namely *Horizon and Style* and *The Mioritic Space* (1936), the Romanian cultural creativity and ultimately style to the spiritual "mioritic" horizon. The text of the ballad *Miorița* describes an episode of transhumance in an idyllic Romanian setting, the plains, in which two shepherds plan to kill the third to take possession of his flock, as well as the surprising, peaceful attitude of the victim towards death, at the moment he learns about the conspiracy from one of his young sheep. This "mioritic fatalism" is one of the features that are highly imprinted in the "ancestral Romanian soul," manifesting itself universally in the autochtonous culture.

2. Folkloric source and the Cluj school of composition

Characterized by variety, rather than by imitative manifestations that would generate—through processes of teaching, learning, and reproducing a certain "way of doing things"—an artificial stylistic cohesion, the Cluj school consists of composers who trained at the Academy of Music in the capital of Transylvania, as well as those who, despite not having studied there, have maintained significant collaborations with the institution over time. It is very likely that they influenced each other—more at the level of emulation than at that of imitation—thus "becoming the authors of some 'made in Cluj' compositions" (Adrian Pop, in Temeș 2021). Representatives such as Sigismund Toduță, Cornel Țăranu, and Adrian Pop had a considerable impact on the way in which Western European and local traditions, as well as avant-garde developments, were reflected in Cluj-Napoca's compositional practice.

2.1. Sigismund Toduță

A leading figure of Romanian music, the first Romanian musician to earn the "Doctor of Musicology" title following his studies at the Pontificio Istituto di Musica Sacra in Rome (1936–1938) and also the founder of music doctoral studies in Romania, in Cluj, the composer, professor and musicologist Sigismund Toduță (1908–1991), brought a synthesis between West-European classical traditions and Romanian popular music, advancing a structuralist orientation,[8] achieved by exploiting the value of folk music (peasant music, or the Greek-Catholic vein) in a neo-Baroque spirit.

He consistently promotes polyphonic genres and forms such as madrigal, fugue, ricercar, passacaglia, etc. Relevant examples in this sense are the opera-oratorio *Meșterul Manole* (Master Manole, 1985, after Blaga's play with the same title)—a work with a massive architecture, which integrates "polyphonic variations on folk melodies" (Sandu-Dediu 2002, 125), Passacaglia for piano (1943), built on the theme of a carol, etc. We also identify in Toduță's music samples of "imaginary folklore," "invented," of "an authentic character and a more complex melodic and modal structure" (Herman 1977, 75) used as themes that allow "the natural derivation of moments of transition, development, coda" (Herman 1977, 75) etc. This is the case with his symphonies, as well as with the Sonatina for piano (1950), in which "forms such as sonata, passacaglia, rondo reach a real maturity, bearing the structure of 'sound crystals'" (Herman 1977, 75). Another Toduțian manner of processing melodic idioms from folklore is through cyclical development and melodic variation, a process that "demonstrates the vitality and malleability of autochthonous thematic material, while at the same time providing a link to the great values of universal creation" (Herman 1977, 76).

We could not miss from the list of Toduță's masterpieces the *Miorița* oratorio-ballad (1958), for three soloists (tenor, soprano, alto), girls' choir, male and mixed, and orchestra, a late work that, by the way it explores the Romanian folkloric background—including Byzantine intonations or vocal inflections suggesting microtones—"inaugurates a new creative phase that deepens the chromatic writing, without intending to enter the sphere of serialism" (Sandu-Dediu 2002, 127). The ways of revealing the folkloric dimension throughout the 13 movements of the work, based on the mioritic idea, vary from the heterophonic procedures and the extensive "melismatic roulades, on pedal-*ison* notes" (Țăranu 1969, 53), which are performed on the *Doinind, molto rubato* background that enhances the pastoral character of the text (in the first movement, "Heterofonia"), the ancestral resonances of the soloistic discourse dedicated to the flute (in the fourth movement, "Aulodia")—whose chromatic elements refer to specific sonorities of the pastoral instruments, the setting of popular intonations to the patterns of Renaissance or Baroque polyphonic forms (in the fifth movement, "Oița bîrsană") and even to the intonations of *doina*, *bocet* (lament), lullaby, carol, or dance. The overlay of contemporary techniques to the Romanian folk language, the structuralist trend so evident in Toduță's oeuvre, as well as his inclination towards regional, Transylvanian traditions constitute stylistic coordinates that can be found, in fact, in most of the representatives of the Cluj school of composition, each of them integrating them, however, in an original manner, according to their own artistic vision.

[8] This structuralist orientation, as well as the inspiration from Transylvanian oral traditions, can be found in most of the representatives of the Cluj school of composition, from Vasile Herman to Dan Voiculescu, from Hans Peter-Türk to Valentin Timaru and Adrian Pop.

2.2. Cornel Țăranu

Cornel Țăranu (1934–2023), a composer, musicologist and teacher, was another outstanding personality of the Cluj creative space.[9] His work embodies "a multidimensional space of world history and culture," a temporal concept in which "past and present are perceived simultaneously" (Ciobanu 2019, 25), as well as stylistic poles apparently in contrast. This is confirmed by titles such as *Saramandji*, *Lăutarul* [The fiddler], *Nomad Songs*, *Doina*, *Transylvanian Ballad*, *Modra Rijeka*, *Yang & Yin* on the one hand, and *Rime di Michelangelo* (Michelangelo rhymes), Madrigale, *Shakespeare Sonnets*, *Barroccoco*, etc., on the other.

Although he is known for the avant-garde attitudes that he displayed both in the creative sphere and in relation to his students—Țăranu being part of the "golden generation" that established itself after the 1960s as the "Romanian avant-garde," while his oeuvre integrates serial-dodecaphonic (*Sonata ostinato*, 1961) and post-serial stages, manifestations of aleatorism, electronic music, stochastic trends, or freedom of form (*Dialoguri II* (Dialogues II) for piano, *Intercalări* (Intercalations) for piano and orchestra, *Racorduri* (Connections)), etc.—specific elements of Romanian folklore—namely the two complementary styles, the lyrical (*parlando-rubato*) and the dance, kinetic one—are to be found as far back as his creative beginnings and are reflected later in some of his "most virulent opuses" (Mogoșan 2024, 79). Thus, in the String Trio (1952), written at the time when Cornel Țăranu was studying in the class of Professor Sigismund Toduță and dedicated to the master, the predominantly neoclassical style is complemented by the technique of processing popular quotations, the second movement (*Allegretto*) being inspired by the melody No. 158 from Béla Bartók's folklore collection from Bihor, while the fifth movement (*Allegro molto vigoroso*) is based on melody No. 1 from the same volume.

The second half of the 1950s will reveal a "lyric-contemplative" inclination, specific both to Enescu's music and to Romanian culture in general. Revealing in this sense is the Sonata for flute and piano (1960), the first part of which betrays "inspiration from ornamental genres of the *parlando-rubato* type (dotted rhythm preceded by appoggiaturas, ornaments which 'flourish' the long notes)" (Mogoșan 2024, 82), while the second part, featuring a pronounced chromatic language, "seems to allude to the second part of George Enescu's Chamber Symphony" (Mogoșan 2024, 83). The references to Enescu's work are not surprising, in the context in which Cornel Țăranu has established himself as a fervent researcher of the great composer's oeuvre, the volume *Enescu în conștiința prezentului: eseuri* (Enescu in the consciousness of the present: essays, 1969) being a landmark in Romanian musicology. Moreover, his theoretical endeavors were doubled by the completion of some of Enescu's compositions: *Strigoii* (Ghosts, lyrics by Mihai Eminescu), Symphony No. 5 (movements I and IV), the Piano Concerto *Caprice Roumaine* for violin and orchestra (1996, in collaboration with Sherban Lupu). Țăranu's exhaustive study of Enescu's legacy and his in-depth understanding of his compositional style have had an impact on his own creative horizon, reflected in the form of "artistic affinities" or "parallelisms of sensitivity."

> The maestro's artistic affinities can become pretexts for his own creative statements. Pretexts and not premises, because most often, in Cornel Țăranu's case, the shaping of a composition in relation to the musical cultural heritage is more a matter of personal style than of influence or borrowing (even temporarily) the creative idioms of his predecessors. On the one hand, this frequent reference to the past is also an imprint of the school of composition guided by Sigismund Toduță, who imbued his disciples with a creative orientation rooted in the European tradition. No wonder that Țăranu's older colleague, the composer and musicologist Vasile Herman, used to say that the new always grows from the old. Unlike the other members of his generation from Cluj, Cornel Țăranu had the advantage of a freedom of spirit that propelled him into the avant-garde zone of music, without, however, feeling the need to completely break away from the Transylvanian spirit. (Boancă 2024, 59)

A multifaceted personality, Cornel Țăranu also frequently referred to the artistic universe of other creators, musicians, poets, and writers. Besides the obvious "affective communion" with the philosopher and poet Lucian Blaga—emblematic for the creative school of Cluj and manifested in works such as: *Cetini negre* (Black Branches, 1958), the madrigals *Dorul, Dor* (Longing, Longing, 1964) and *Spune-o-ncet, n-o spune tare* (Say it slowly, don't say it out loud, 1964), the pieces for voice and piano *Epitaph* (1958) and *Întoarcere* (Return, 1967), or *Ușor nu e cântecul* for baritone and ensemble (Easy is not the song, 2010), which incorporates verses

[9] Cornel Țăranu studied with Sigismund Toduță in Cluj (1951–1957), with Olivier Messiaen and Nadia Boulanger at the Paris Conservatory (1966–1967, 1972), and attended the Darmstadt summer courses in 1968, 1969, and 1972.

from the poems *Catren* (Quatrain), *Glas de seară* (Evening voice), *Cântăreți bolnavi* (Sick singers), and *Cânele din Pompei* (The Dog from Pompei)—the last of them an unrealized project of Toduță, a "'testamentary' dream of the master" (Angi 2011, 16), fulfilled by Țăranu through his own artistic means—the works of the composer from Cluj pay tribute to different personalities, from Johann Sebastian Bach to Béla Bartók, from Michelangelo Buonarroti, William Shakespeare, or Stéphane Mallarmé to Romanian poets such as Mihai Eminescu, Ana Blandiana, Nichita Stănescu, Paul Celan, etc.

2.3. Adrian Pop

Composer Adrian Pop (b. 1951) studied under Sigismund Toduță, who instilled in him an admiration for the canonical repertoire and major historical styles. At the Cluj Academy of Music, Toduță's thorough examination of the stages preceding musical modernism became a fundamental method in the study of composition. Pop also studied under Cornel Țăranu, who produced in him "the revelation of the modern horizons, of the playful, innovative or simply provocative boldness" (Temeș 2021, 17). He has established himself in the artistic space of Transylvania not only by his refined creative endeavors, but also through his pedagogical and managerial activity, as rector of the "Gheorghe Dima" Music Academy Cluj-Napoca (between 2008–2012) or artistic director of the International Festival "Cluj-Modern" (starting with the 2013 edition until today).

Another revelation of his formative years, namely the "identitarian and cultural" (Temeș 2021, 17) one relating to the Romanian folklore—initiated by his mentor and teacher Traian Mîrza—was to materialize in a permanent passion for the autochthonous substratum. It manifested in the form of popular tune processing (in choral works, which actually brought him his first international recognitions, then, shortly after, in the symphonic-concerto genre), or as "composition in popular style"/"imaginary folklore" (the chamber genre being extremely revealing in this sense).

Defining the melodic parameter as "the minimum necessary and sufficient condition of music" (Sîrbu 2017, 34) and building his artistic language from the position of a "moderate modern," Adrian Pop achieves unique fusions of tradition and contemporaneity. He treats the folk quotation both "starting from mathematical models, employing a series of new sonorities, born from the osmosis of the archaic Romanian modal language with electronic technique" (Sandu-Dediu 2002, 130) in *Colinda soarelui* (Sun Carol) for flute, percussion and magnetic tape written in 1974 in the studios of Bayreuth, or in a heterophonic setting, in the choral piece *Vine hulpe de la munte* (Here comes the fox down from the mountains), also known under the title "Colindă[10] de pricină" (Reason carol), dated 1974.[11] We can also find the technique of processing popular quotations in the concert and symphonic sector. The Concerto for cello and orchestra (1975)[12] is based on an archaic Romanian melody (Figure 1) taken from *Colinda no. 180* (*Poruncit-a poruncit*, cannot be translated) included in the collection of *303 carols with text and melodies collected and notated by Sabin Drăgoi*, yet which is heard only in the second movement of the work, as a result of an extensive process of "accumulation" of the rhythmic-melodic material with the help of cell-motivic variations.

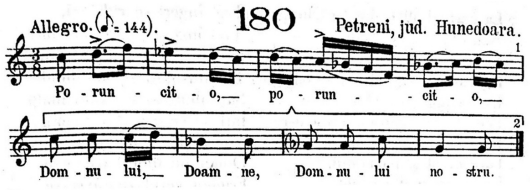



Figure 1. Adrian Pop—Concerto for cello and orchestra.
The original carol theme, *Colinda no. 180 (Poruncit-a poruncit)*, laying the foundation of the symphonic development

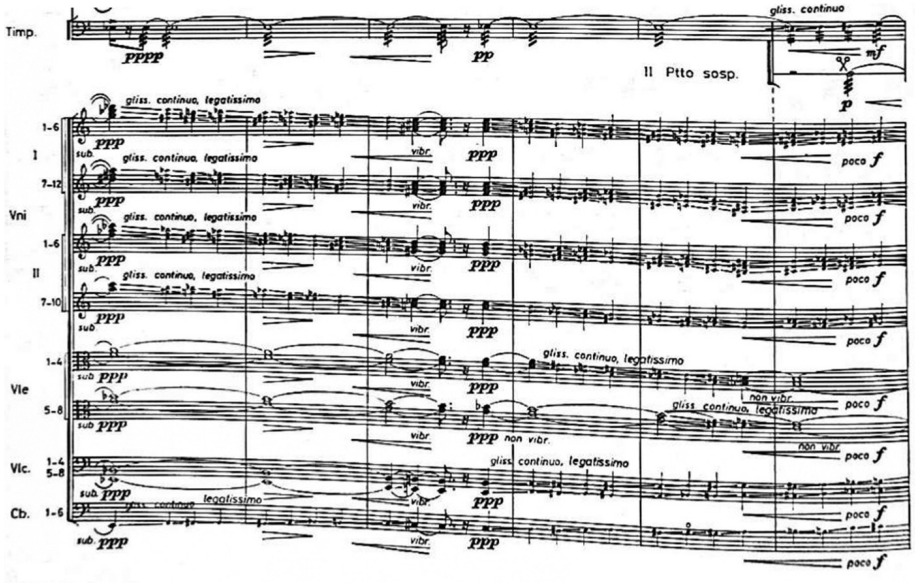
[10] The "colinda" (carol) genre—one of the most important in the Romanian folkloric repertoire, consisting of ancient songs of congratulations and greetings practiced especially during the winter holidays and which "presents the most important rhythmic of Romanian folk music" (Alexandru 2023, 12)—is one of the favorite genres of composer Adrian Pop, a connoisseur of old ritual customs and layers. "Colinda de pricină" (Reason carol) is, in fact, a sub-genre of the "colinda," namely its parody.

[11] The piece was awarded the grand prize in the "mixed choirs" section of the Concorso Polifonico Internazionale "Guido d'Arezzo" (1978).

[12] The results of the analytical approach undertaken on Adrian Pop's Concerto for cello and orchestra have been published under the title "Interferences between tradition and modernity in the symphonic and concerto works by Adrian Pop—(1) The Cello Concerto" (2023).

The soloist's virtuosic, highly improvisatory discourse will be assimilated, throughout the three movements unfolding *in attacca*, to the many different types of writing, from monody or accompanied monody to free, imitative polyphony, simple or layered *ostinato*, discrete heterophonic, pointillistic, or polymetric textures that highlight the "resonances" of the cellular or motivic components of the original carol. Timbre, as well as the various ways of sound articulation, represent one of the main resources in rendering the improvisatory character and agility specific to fiddlers—in the solo sector—while the orchestral apparatus amplifies or acts as a binder during the lyrical or more dramatic evolution of the protagonist cello.

Etos I (1976),[13] based on a "Miorița"[14] tune originating from *Sălaj*, is another work constructed by the technique of folkloric quotation. Throughout the three large sections arranged in a monolithic architecture we recognize the elements of an archaic world, such as the sounds of the shepherd's whistles, the natural resonances of the *tulnic*[15] (in the first movement), the virtuoso dialogue (second movement) of two *semantrons*[16]—instruments specific to Romanian folk organology—and the route of the flocks of sheep "ascending and descending mountain slopes" (third movement). In fact, the entire symphonic evolution is in line with the coordinates of the mioritic space, of the "undulating plain" described by Lucian Blaga, outlined here "by a series of sound waves resulting from accumulations/rarefactions within the musical parameters" (Adrian Pop, in Sandu-Dediu 2002, 130), realized with the help of contemporary language techniques such as heterophony, spectralism, and texturalism.

Textural blocks built on repetitive polyrhythmic layers but also on the basis of clusters—dynamized by continuous *glissandos* that follow the oscillating, ascending-descending, respectively *ppp/poco f* sense of the sound magma—are identifiable. The texture welding is enhanced, in the same time, by the insertion of suspended cellos, whose timbre and "approximate" pitches (with noise effects) contribute significantly to the syntonic[17] fusion (in the first part). (Figure 2)

[13] The results of the analytical approach undertaken on Adrian Pop's *Etos I* de Adrian Pop have been published under the title "Interferences between tradition and modernity in the symphonic and concerto works by Adrian Pop—(2) Etos I" (2023).

[14] Regarded as a collective work of the Romanian people, "Miorița" was collected by Alecu Russo in 1846 (from the Vrancea area), published—under the title "Mieoara"—in 1850 by the writer Vasile Alecsandri in the Romanian folk songs section of the gazette "Bucovina" (Chernivtsi) and included in 1852 in the volume *Poesii poporale* (Folk poems). While the "Alecsandri version" is associated with the ballad version, the carol version—as in the case of the "miorița" used by the composer Adrian Pop in *Etos I*—is specific to the northern area of Maramueș. Thus, it was not by chance that the Romanian philosopher and poet Lucian Blaga (1895–1961) was to develop his philosophical perspective on Romanian culture in relation to the "mioritic" space—"a high and indefinite undulating matrix-space, and endowed with the specific accents of a certain sense of destiny" (Blaga 2011, 141), considerations also captured by the ideational substrate of the work *Etos I*.

[15] A long wooden trumpet formerly used to convey warnings (as of invasion) between Romanian communities (Merriam-Webster n.d.).

[16] A wooden plank or an iron bar that gives a sound like a gong when struck with a mallet and that takes the place of a bell in Eastern Orthodox churches (Merriam-Webster n.d.).

[17] In his volume entitled *Texturalismul sau sintonia muzicii din cea de-a doua jumătate a secolului XX* (Texturalism or syntony of music in the second half of the 20th century, 2019), Andrei Cozma describes syntony as an inherent quality of textures, a result "of the association of several sounds, which are therefore perceived together" (Cozma 2019, 13).

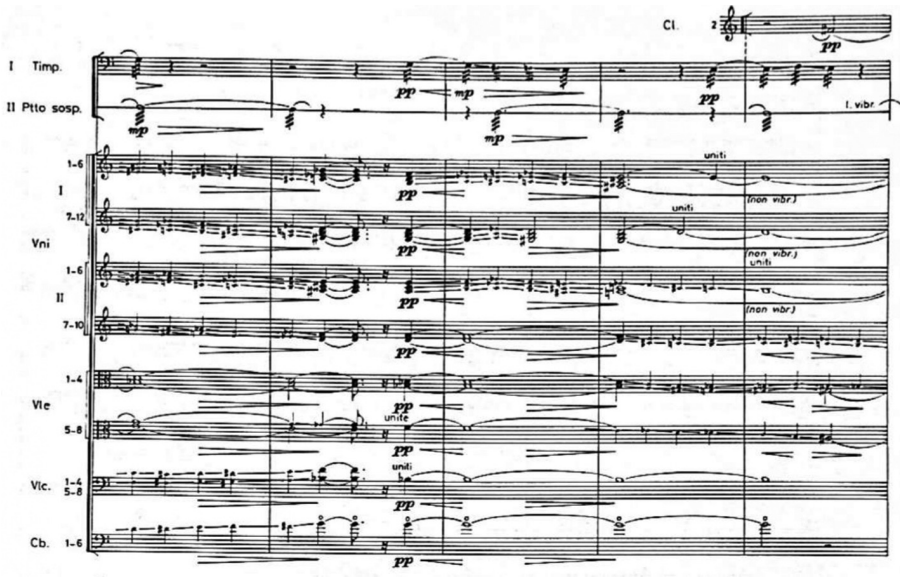



Figure 2. Adrian Pop—*Etos I*. Textural moments in Movement 1, mm. 69–79

A particularly expressive impact is then created by the compression of the symphonic apparatus, in the central section, to the configuration of a semantron couple, which engage in a rhythmic progression energized by a captivating play of accents—periodically or irregularly placed in relation to the metrical accent—against the background of a significant sound amplification. Clearly, this reduction of the symphonic apparatus to a duo of percussive instruments (Figure 3) specific to traditional Romanian organology and Orthodox liturgy facilitates, at the same time, the transposition, in the macro-structural level, of the "oscillation" movement associated with the "mioritic plain" and the tragic, funeral connotations of the folk theme.[18]

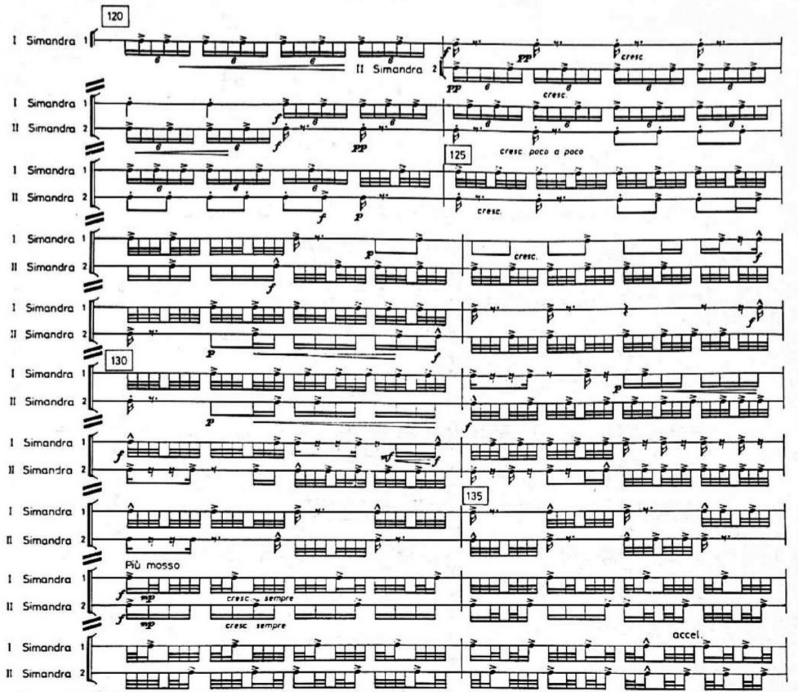


Figure 3. Adrian Pop—*Etos I*. Dialogue of semantrons in Movement 2, mm. 120–139

[18] The ballad *Mioriţa* also integrates a tragic dimension, which is, however, softened by the parallel "death-wedding", described with resignation and serenity by the protagonist—the Moldavian shepherd—who learns from one of his sheep that the other two shepherds—the Hungarian and the one from Vrancea—who accompanied him on the transhumance, were planning to kill him, in order to take over his flocks.

It is only in the final segment that the folkloric quotation is made explicit, signaled by the first appearance of the jingle bells. Its configuration—a heptatonic doric, with a generally descending line—will serve, both in the standard version and through processing, to render the almost "plastic" representation of the mountain plains, as well as the rising descent of the flocks of sheep. The successive exposures, in heterophonic settings, of the Mioriţa tune, as well as its inversion will evolve, as the orchestral density increases, towards a writing with textural features (Figure 4).

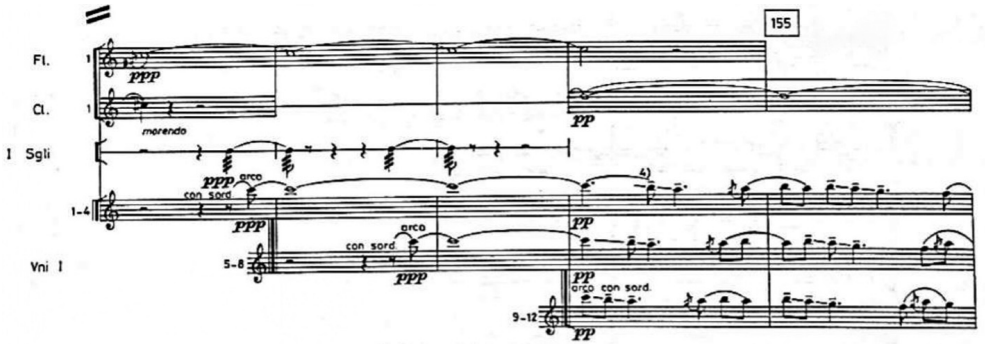


Figure 4. Adrian Pop—*Etos I*. First exposition of the "Mioriţa" theme at the beginning of Movement 3, heterophonically played by the violins in divisions, mm. 151–155

The overlapping or juxtaposition of descending-ascending lines, along with other figural motifs, prepare the idyllic, brilliant, consonant climax of the work, as well as its dramatic, dissonant replication—an evocation of the tragic dimension of the mioritic theme. Then, they are gradually resolved through the process of "sonorous deconstruction" of the symphonic apparatus, which leads to the final chord.

Not to be excluded from the list of Adrian Pop's works based on folkloric quotations is the *Solstiţiu pentru orchestră* (Solstice for orchestra, 1979) piece (Figure 5). Also starting from the melody of a carol—a carol "of the Sun," whose ancestral roots are linked to the celebration of the star of the day and the moment of its symbolic birth, preceding the Christmas celebration and crossing from pagan times into Christian times—the monolithic symphonic discourse renders, in a programmatic manner, the cosmic and telluric manifestations of the two solstice moments: the winter solstice, respectively, the moment of rebirth at the "New Year," and the climax of the energetic development of the symphonic magma—the summer solstice. The two key moments of the ideational substratum, situated in the beginning and in the end of the work, are marked by the exposure of the folkloric, diatonic tune by the wind section. The application of the principle of polyphony of attacks on it results in new effects of the brass and bassoon instruments. It also creates the sensation of a melody perceived as from a great distance, with almost dissolved contours and the rhythm subject to a slight distortion, "somewhat aleatoric due to the fact that there are no attacks" (Plăian 2022, 233).

The development is ensured by means of the variational technique, manifested at the motivic level, but we also find in the beginning of the middle, evolutionary section variations on a *chaconne* theme (consisting, in its turn, of cells of the initial generative motives). The timbral dimension, emphasized by writing techniques such as the polyphony of attacks, pointillist, textural, aleatoric, or heterophonic, is decisive in revealing the music program, particularly the relationships between night-day/dark-light or warmth-glaciality (e.g., wind sound, *frullato* in flutes, the glassy sound of the vibraphone). The same applies to the sound language, the modal-chromatic or chromatic propensities, often explicit at the level of the clusters, being counterbalanced by the pronounced diatonic character of the carol melody flanking the symphonic development. As for the folkloric roots of the composition, they are evident not only in the insertions of the folk tune, but also in the numerous idyllic interventions, derived from folkloric quotations or *oiseau*-like garlands (particularly in the woodwinds), clarinet *cantilena* (in the third evolutionary section of the Development) featuring the expression of an alpenhorn signal, heterophonic settings, in *rubato* or an aleatoric manner, etc.

If the symphonic genre offered the composer, from the very beginning of his creative path, a favorable environment for integrating the quite pronounced folklorism he cultivated, especially through the use of sound textures—which, according to Adrian Pop's confessions, matched his way of feeling and thinking music (Apostu 2017, 19)—the chamber works with a folk substance are dated later, after the 2000s. Just as in the case of the application of the technique of processing the popular quotation—in pieces such as *Cadenza*

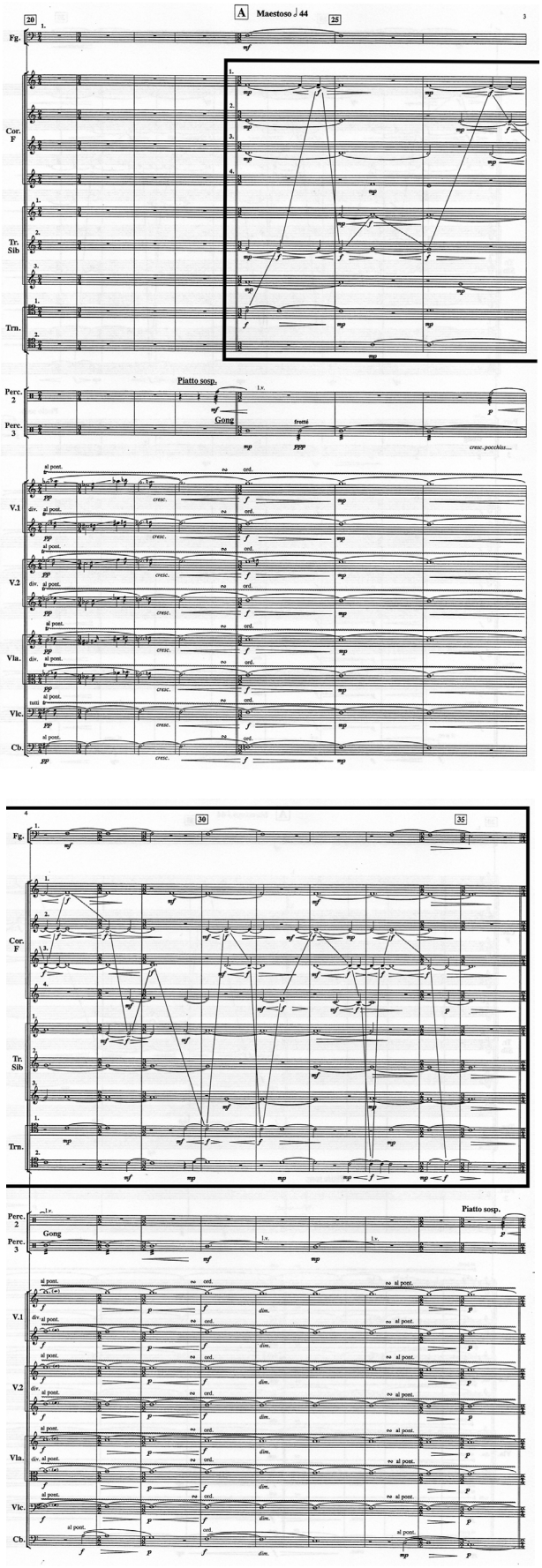


Figure 5. Adrian Pop—*Solstice* for orchestra.
First Movement—First occurrence of the folkloric tune, as a polyphony of attacks, mm. 24–35

for cello (2000), *Gordun* for solo cello (2005), or *Cântece de stea* (Transylvanian Christmas carols, 2006)—the composition in "popular character," that is, in the absence of a pre-existing folkloric quotation, "seems to be something natural and at hand for Adrian Pop" (Silaghi 2009, 149).

The work *Țiituri*[19] (cannot be translated) (2006) for violin and cello falls into the category of "imaginary folklore," its discursive evolution capturing, throughout the four contrasting movements, the atmosphere and spirit of Romanian dance in Transylvania, respectively the archaic universe, of the Romanian village, in the lyrical parts: I. *Allegro brillante e con fuoco* and III. *Vivace, quasi presto*, about which the author states that "they have a common air with some Bartókian pages" (Adrian Pop, in Németh, 2019, 70) / II. *Molto andante* and IV. *Molto andante, pocchiss. Rubato*, "closer to the enescian model, but in a less complex way than in Enescu" (Adrian Pop, in Németh 2019, 70). The sonorous translation of the title, which refers to the improvisatory capacity of traditional Romanian *tarafuri* (fiddler ensembles), is achieved through the efficient exploitation of sound registers and ostinato formulas. According to Silaghi (2009), "the need to use a great diversity of elements and technical procedures gives the instrumental performance a considerable degree of difficulty" (149).

The development of the organic discourse is supported by the variational process, while the return of the melodic theme from the opening of the work at the end of the third movement signals the use of the cyclical principle, with a unifying role on the whole architectural structure. As far as the sound universe is concerned, the modal language shows pronounced chromatic inclinations, resulting from the application of accidentals in the more ornamented or improvisatory sections, but also from the presence of some Romanian folkloric musical gestures, such as the *chromatic backward formula* (adapted to the modal system, the intervallics dominated by the presence of the minor second not following the path imposed by the leading note in tonal music) or the *bi-tertial chord* (the manifestation of the mobile third being considered an expression of the oscillation between the minor and major modes) (Figure 6).

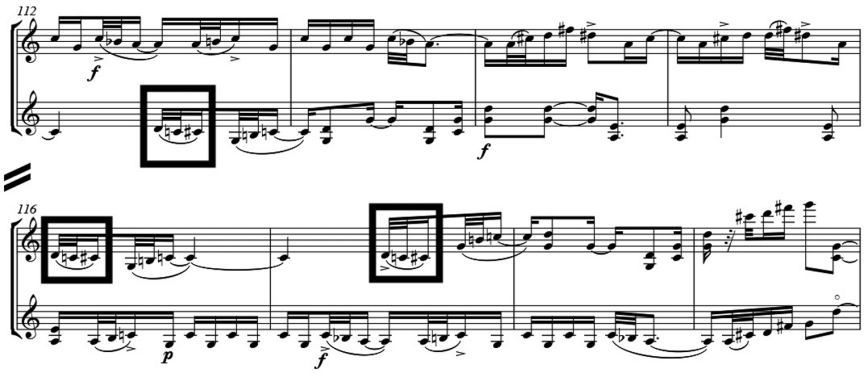



Figure 6. Adrian Pop—*Țiituri*. Third Movement—chromatic backward formulas, m. 112, 116, 117

The accompaniment is predominantly *ostinato* (specific to the *țiituri* formulas), often in the form of rhythmic pedals of perfect fifth or perfect fourth (intervals that enhance the archaic essence of the harmonic parameter). Moreover, the inflections and modal leaps amplify the impression of "waving," of mobility of the evolving material, a perception also supported by the meter-rhythmic configuration of the melodic-harmonic patterns, which vary from *giusto* (in the first movement) to asymmetrical (in the second movement) and the motoric sections (of the third movement). The final movement is under the sign of the *parlando-rubato* style, generated by "the stuttered execution…, by prolongation or acceleration of values," but also by "the lack of periodic accents and their replacement by expressive accents" (Niculescu 1980, 251). Last but not least, the thematic substance is emphasized by the timbral resources of the instrumental couple, the usual executions being constantly accompanied by unusual effects such as natural *flageolete*, *glissando*, or *harmonic glissandi* (used in the rendering of a "flight of doves" in movement III, stanza I), *col legno batutto*, *arco*, and *tremolo getatto* so intensely exploited in the achievement of the percussive character of movement III (stanza II), and so on.

[19] A more detailed analysis of the work *Țiituri* by Adrian Pop was published in the volume *Aspecte stilistice în creația camerală a compozitorului Adrian Pop* (Stylistic aspects in the chamber music of composer Adrian Pop), signed by the author in 2022 (106–123).

The multitude of facets of the Romanian folkloric universe, evoked in the choral, symphonic, or chamber music of the composer Adrian Pop from Cluj, attests his affinities with this remarkable background, affinities reaffirmed throughout his work in numerous settings, from quotations (under the dominance of the carol genre, for which the author has developed a marked predilection) to composing "in style," with obvious references to the specific techniques of the fiddlers' art or to aspects of popular organology.

Conclusion

Located at the confluence of the efforts to compensate for the gaps between the Romanian musical culture and the European tradition, respectively those of affirming the artistic originality of the Carpathian-Danubian-Pontic space, the autochthonous musical folklore is a constant element in the oeuvre of the main exponents of the national school, starting from the enescian example.

The Cluj musical school, shaped under the impulse of mentors such as Sigismund Toduță or Cornel Țăranu, is no exception. Without overshadowing their admiration for the stylistic heritage of the cultured musical past (still cultivated today in the formative process of young composers), or undermining the avant-garde trends—for which some representatives have shown a pronounced aptitude—the continuators of the musical tradition in the heart of Transylvania have preserved the musical folklore as an inexhaustible source of artistic value, ingeniously linking it to their own creative views. The fusion with the specifically Toduțian structuralist orientation, the serial tendencies of Țăranu or the textural ones of the symphonic-concert compositions by Adrian Pop, the use of quotation processing or "imaginary folklore" are just some of the countless compositional arguments that support the potential of the ethnic substratum, against the background of the "mioritic" space described by the great philosopher Lucian Blaga and in a novel, effervescent relationship with the various manifestations of musical contemporaneity.

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Rumunų folkloras: perkėlimai ir reinterpretacijos šiuolaikinėje Transilvanijos muzikoje. Klužo kompozicijos mokykla

Santrauka

Straipsnyje pateikiama pagrindinių rumunų folkloro integravimo į profesionaliąją muzikinę kūrybą strategijų apžvalga, pabrėžiant folkloro rinkimo, sisteminimo ir meninio įprasminimo veiklos reikšmę nacionalinės muzikos raidai bei jos įsitvirtinimui tarptautiniame kultūros kontekste.

Atsispirdami nuo George'o Enescu (1881–1955) kūrybinio impulso, kuris tapo svarbiu orientyru jungiant smuikininkų liaudies muzikos tradicijose slypinčias folkloro esmes su Vakarų Europos muzikos paveldu, rumunų nacionalinės kompozicijos atstovai ėmė ieškoti vis originalesnių būdų atskleisti rumuniškos stilistinės matricos savitumą. Enescu kūryboje šis sintezės principas reiškėsi naujomis kompozicinės raiškos priemonėmis, tarp jų – heterofonija, laikoma esmine sintaksine kategorija, būdinga *parlando-rubato* ir improvizaciniam liaudies melodijų stiliui. Šią koncepciją vėliau nuodugniau išplėtojo kompozitorius ir teoretikas Ștefanas Niculescu (1927–2008), interpretuodamas ją nepriklausomai nuo serijinės muzikos fenomeno, kurį tuo metu plėtojo ir Pierre'as Boulezas. Tuo pagrindu nacionalinės mokyklos kompozitoriai, priklausomai nuo pasirinktos konservatyvesnės ar labiau avangardinės krypties, formavo skirtingas, tačiau savitas stilistines strategijas.

Kompozitorių požiūrį į Vakarų Europos muzikinį paveldą, liaudišką pagrindą ir Transilvanijos etninę erdvę ypač reprezentuoja Klužo kompozicijos mokykla, susiformavusi apie kompozitoriaus Sigismundo Toduță (1908–1991) asmenybę. Būdamas nuoseklus polifoninių formų puoselėtojas, jis savo mokiniams perteikė struktūralistinę muzikinio mąstymo kryptį, kuri atsispindi ir jo paties folkloro inspiruotuose kūriniuose. Be to, didelę įtaką Toduță mokiniams darė jo intelektinis ir emocinis ryšys su poetu ir filosofu Lucianu Blaga (1895–1961). Pastarojo kultūrinė vizija, siejama su pasąmonės, begalinės, banguojančios, *mioritzinės* (nuo senovinės rumunų pastoralinės baladės „Miorița") erdvės samprata, įvairiomis formomis atsispindi ir Klužo kompozicijos mokyklos atstovų kūryboje.

Kitas svarbus šios mokyklos mentorius buvo kompozitorius Cornelis Țăranu, kurio avangardinės tendencijos nesutrukdė kūryboje nuosekliai pasitelkti etninės muzikos elementus. Net ir pereidamas per skirtingus stilistinius etapus – serijinę ir dodekafoninę, postserijinę, aleatorinę ar stochastinę kūrybos fazes – kompozitorius rėmėsi dviem pagrindiniais liaudies muzikos stiliais: lyriniu (*parlando-rubato*) ir kinetiniu (šokio).

Abiejų šių meistrų – Toduță ir Țăranu – mokinys kompozitorius Adrianas Popasas (g. 1951), pasirinkęs vadinamojo nuosaikaus modernizmo kūrybinę kryptį, savo muzikoje taip pat nuosekliai rėmėsi folkloriniais šaltiniais. Ypatingą vietą jo kūryboje užima archajinis žanras *colinda* (kalėdinė giesmė), interpretuojamas įvairiuose muzikiniuose kontekstuose: nuo chorinių ir simfoninių-koncertinių formų iki kamerinės muzikos. Tokiuose kūriniuose kaip Koncertas violončelei ir orkestrui, *Etos I* ar *Solstiții* („Saulėgrįža") folklorinės melodikos transformacijai pasitelkiamos įvairios šiuolaikinės kompozicinės technikos – tekstūralizmas, spektralizmas, aleatorika ir kt. Kamerinėje muzikoje (pavyzdžiui, kūrinyje *Țiituri*) kompozitorius taip pat plėtoja stilizuotą folklorinės raiškos kalbą.

Straipsnyje aptartos kompozicinės strategijos, susijusios tiek su minėtais kūriniais, tiek su kitais Klužo kompozicijos mokyklos atstovų darbais, leidžia teigti, kad etninis substratas išlieka svarbiu kūrybinio originalumo šaltiniu. Blaga'os apibrėžtos *mioritzinės* kultūrinės erdvės kontekste jis tampa vaisinga terpe naujas nacionalinės muzikos raiškos galimybes atveriančiam dialogui tarp muzikinės tradicijos ir šiuolaikinių kompozicinių tendencijų.

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Adhan, Tarab and Songs. On the Orient of Karol Szymanowski

Abstract. The Oriental current is one of the most intriguing aspects of Karol Szymanowski's music. Researchers argue about its nature and extent, taking different positions towards it. While some point to a direct and deep connection with Arab music and Middle Eastern culture, others question not only its importance in the evolution of the composer's style, but also the very fact of its existence. The biographical data provide arguments for both sides—Szymanowski took a keen interest in Middle Eastern civilization, but not in its music. As a result, the problem of the actual extent and specific manner in which Arab music influenced the Polish composer's work remains unresolved.

This paper explores the role of the adhan, which Szymanowski listened to during his travels to North African countries, as a source of the composer's inspiration. The author presents his own concept of adhan transcription and, based on it, a classification of the four basic features of Arab monodic musical thinking, which are then comprehensively shown in selected songs by Szymanowski from the years 1914–1918, or the period when the Oriental trend predominated. The choice of this genre is not accidental, since the other aim of the paper is to show that it was specifically in the songs that the birth and culmination of the described trend took place.

Keywords: song, adhan, tarab, Orientalism, exoticism, Arabic music, *Love Songs of Hafiz*, Op. 26, *Songs of the Infatuated Muezzin*, Op. 42, Karol Szymanowski.

1. Introduction

Tunis, April 1914. The time for prayer has come. When the muezzin calls from the minaret, 32-year-old Karol Szymanowski listens attentively. This is his first encounter with the Arab world and, as it would later turn out, his last. He is accompanied by his friend Stefan Spiess, thanks to whose account we know the exact course of this expedition, which also included Constantine and Biskra in Algeria, as well as Palermo and Taormina in Sicily (Chylińska 2008, 296). While the course of the expedition leaves no doubt, its effects certainly do. What impact did it have on Szymanowski's music? Did it initiate the Oriental current in his work, as most researchers suppose?[1] And if so, how?

Let's start by establishing what we know for sure:

a) Between 1914 and 1918, Szymanowski composed important works on Middle Eastern themes, such as *Love Songs of Hafiz*, Symphony No. 3 "Song of the Night", *Songs of the Infatuated Muezzin* (Tomaszewski 2019, 427–428). Yet:
b) All these pieces are not based on original texts, but merely on paraphrases or stylizations; moreover, Oriental motifs had already appeared in his works before, although to a much more modest extent (Wightman 2001, 147–152);
c) He was interested in Arab culture and when he returned, he produced several books of notes in which he distinguished sections such as geography, the history of Muhammad, the Qur'an, language, philosophy, literature, history, poetry (Chylińska 2008, 323–325);
d) His contact with Arabic music was incidental and did not encourage him to study it in depth (Żerańska-Kominek 2007, 116–117);
e) He listened to the adhan many times (Spiess and Bacewicz 1963, 57).

Zdzisław Jachimecki, the first monographer and a friend of Szymanowski, asked him about the authenticity of the Arabic dance from Act II of *King Roger* (Jachimecki 1927, 59). In response, the composer wrote: "Concerning the theme of dance, about which you ask, it is absolutely my patent. I am delighted that I so succeeded in counterfeiting its 'authencity' that you felt obliged to search out truly 'authentic' sources for verification. This is my triumph over mawkish East of the Rimskys e tutti quanti" (Szymanowski, ed. Chylińska 1997, 101). These words indicate that 1) he wanted to avoid superficial Orientalism; 2) he was aware of the

[1] The thesis about the presence of an Oriental trend in the middle period of Szymanowski's work (1914–1919) is shared by all monographers of the Polish composer: Jachimecki (1927), Łobaczewska (1950), Golachowski (1956/1948), Samson (1980), Palmer (1983), Zieliński (1997), Wightman (1999), Downes (2003), van Moere (2008), Chylińska (2008), Janicka-Słysz (2013), as well as authors of articles summarizing this period of his work: Zofia Helman (2001) and Tomaszewski (1997, 2019). The exception is Dąbrowski (2010), who remains neutral on this issue. The only attempt to refute this research tradition was made by Żerańska-Kominek (2007), but her radical proposal did not gain wider recognition. *The Szymanowski Companion* (2015), published several years after Żerańska-Kominek's article, contains the entry "Orientalism" and a number of other references to the Oriental trend in the Polish composer's work. Other publications—a monograph on the opera *King Roger* (Wightman 2015) and an article devoted to Szymanowski's connections with French music (van Moere 2017)—confirm the validity of this thesis.

limited possibilities of a European composer approaching Arabic music; 3) he had his own image of the Orient[2], which was part of his inner landscape (Samson 1979–1980, 71; Janicka-Słysz 2013, 186). Researchers disagree on the nature and extent to which this image influenced Szymanowski's music. Four main views can be distinguished:

1) Szymanowski included authentic Arabic music (Alicja Helman 1956, 101–104; Wightman 2001, 153);
2) Szymanowski included his recollections of authentic Arabic music, transformed by his own sensibility and European musical language (Janicka-Słysz 2013, 139; Neuer 1981, XVIII; Zofia Helman 2011, 17);
3) Szymanowski included his conception of Arabic music (Jachimecki 1927, 47; Chylińska 2008, 495; Zieliński 1997, 83);
4) Szymanowski did not include Arabic music (Żerańska-Kominek 2007, 117–120).

The fundamental problem, which remains unresolved, can therefore be summed up in the question: what is the actual connection between Arabic music and Szymanowski's works belonging to his Oriental trend? This article attempts to answer that question. Using the author's classification of the four basic features of Arab monodic musical thinking, it analyzes selected songs by Szymanowski from the years 1914–1918, or the period when the Oriental trend predominated. Its aim is to show that this trend has its basic and only source in the adhan.

2. Adhan

The *adhan* or *azan* is the call to prayer (*salat*). It is sacred to every Muslim because, on the one hand, it includes the profession of faith (*shahada*) and, on the other, it announces *salat*—so it is linked to two (of the five) pillars of Islam. Adhan is what Europeans colloquially call muezzin singing, but it is not music from a Muslim point of view; according to the Arabs, it would be sacrilegious to introduce music into this sacred activity (Touma 1996, 153–155). That said, the adhan is performed as a noble and dignified improvisation on a selected *maqam*.[3]

The cognitive dissonance that Europeans encounter here (the paradoxical "musical non-music") is overcome by the Arabs through the concept of *tarab*, one of the most mysterious terms in Arab culture. Its very name contains many different meanings. Referring to a specific state of heightened emotionality, it can mean both ecstasy and enchantment, as well as sadness and joy. At the same time, it signifies the delight of communing with a work of art, be it a painting, a poem, or a piece of music. But most revealingly, the term was originally associated mainly with the recitation of poetry and the Qur'an (Shannon 2003, 74). The deep emotionality of Muslims led them to chant recitations in order to experience the content of the sacred texts as powerfully as possible.[4] This need for a metaphysical experience, this ecstasy of joy and sorrow, thus pervades the adhan and results in the four basic features of Arabic monodic musical thinking.

These features are also present in the adhan in the *Hijaz* maqam (figure 1), which is performed by Mishary Rashid Alafasy from Kuwait (2016). I have selected this recitation for two main reasons. Firstly, the video has over 9 million views, 5586 comments and about 173,000 "likes", which shows that it is very popular and representative of adhan craft. Secondly, the *Hijaz* maqam is based on the *Hijaz jins*, which is made up of intervals of a minor second, an augmented second and a minor second. This creates a melodically distinctive motif that has been associated with the Orient since the 19th century, and which Szymanowski himself used several times.[5]

[2] Understood as a collection of references, a conglomeration of features derived from fragments of various texts and fantasies (Żerańska-Kominek 2007, 114). This is the meaning of the term Orient in this article. On the other hand, I understand "Oriental" as "viewed from a European perspective, containing certain elements of Arab culture". I define "to Orientalize" as "to give Oriental features".

[3] *Maqam*, literally "place", "position", is a traditionally established melodic pattern, a specific way in which the tones of a given scale proceed according to the register and phase of the presentation, based on 3–5 tone interval cells called *ajns*, and *jins* in the singular. Each maqam is made up of two main *ajns*, divided into a lower *jins* and an upper *jins* (Muallem 2010, 72).

[4] There was also a more pragmatic reason—musical praise of Muhammad's words and deeds was intended to help propagate them (Al Bakri, Mallah, Nuserat 2019, 170).

[5] The transcription has been produced with notation which I have devised myself and which reflects my observations and thoughts on the practical realization of the maqam.
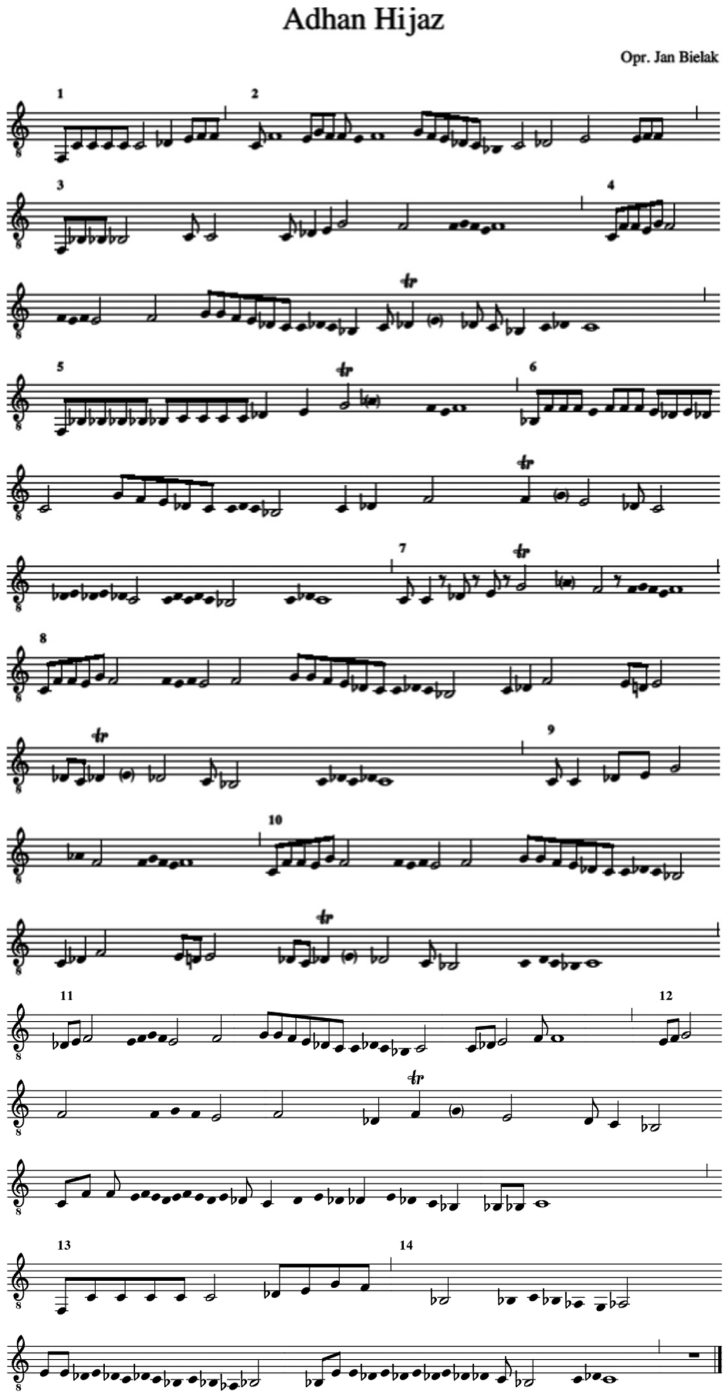
Figure 1. Adhan *Hijaz*

2.1. The first feature—Passage of time

On the one hand, the muezzin cannot afford showy improvizations and purely vocal displays, but on the other hand, his recitation should not be a mere reading. The result is something between singing and speech, and this is what determines the unique kind of passage of time in the adhan. There is no metre here, and the rhythm, shaped according to the structure of the individual words, consists of a free juxtaposition of long and short tones with no definite metric relationship to each other. Silence plays a big role as it separates the phrases/segments from each other—in the adhan described here, there are fourteen of them. In this way, the adhan is freed from any rhythmic regularity because, for that, a noticeable repetition of accents is needed—and they simply do not exist here. This creates a special sense of musical time that is not counted off, but rather unfolds between two moments of silence.

2.2. The second feature—Tonal centralization

The recurring silence is the key formal reference point. For the melodic dimension of the adhan, the tonal centre is the gravitational point. Each segment is built around one main tone, which returns frequently and which ends the entire phrase. In the adhan under analysis, the role of the center is played by tones C4 and F4. Usually, both appear in one segment. Then one of them plays the role of the main center and the other of the secondary center (e.g., in section 6, C1 is the main center and F1 is the secondary center). There is only one occasion when either of these major tones is missing in a particular section (F1 is absent in the last phrase). So we can see that in the analyzed adhan, the *Hijaz jins* (C1-D♭1-E1-F1) is the main formative element, because whatever the muezzin sings always refers to these two tones, which form the frame of this most important interval cell.

2.3. The third feature—Hierarchy of tones

The tones of the adhan may be classified as: (a) foreground tones, (b) background tones, and (c) episodic tones. The most important difference between them lies in the duration of the tone—the more important, the longer. This observation was the basis for the notation I adopted. The rhythmic values used are by no means equal, but express the importance, or position, of each tone in relation to the others.

(a) Foreground tones are put into whole notes and half notes. The former serve to definitively establish and confirm the tonal center. Let us note that they always appear at the very end of the phase/section, constituting its conclusion and summary. The exception is section 2, in which the whole note appears twice, and at the beginning of its progression. However, this is due to formal logic—it is only here that the muezzin fully begins its presentation, treating the first section as a kind of introduction. On the other hand, the half notes, placed slightly lower in the hierarchy, mark the main tones of the *ajns* maqam and the main syllables of the adhan lyrics.

(b) Secondary tones are written in quarter notes and eighth notes. They are the essential building blocks of the musical action and are performed in the same recitative manner as in speech. The difference between the two is only the slight extension of the tones included in the quarter notes, which serves to slightly emphasize them and is usually due to the effect of the neighbouring half notes.

(c) For episodic tones, I chose notation without beams. These are ornaments that the performer realizes ad libitum. They serve to embellish a specific important tone (half note). Their duration is very short, sometimes even close to vibrato. A trill is a frequent effect. The reciter has so much freedom in the use of embellishments that under the influence of the moment they can even use tones that do not belong to the maqam (e.g., in section 6 E♭4 instead of E4). In Alafasy's performance, the role of embellishments gradually increases over the course of the adhan to become the dominant construction element in the final section. Here they are so elaborate and yet distinctive that this prompts a new name for them: not embellishments, but arabesques. Episodic tones are always melismas, unlike secondary tones, which are built on individual syllables.

2.4. The fourth feature—Principle of repetition

It is the overarching structural idea in adhan. This follows naturally from two features of Arabic musical thinking—the lack of a vertical layer and developmental techniques. The muezzin has no chords at his disposal with which to construct a system of interrelationships, with solutions and cadences. At the same time, he is unable to create a musical narrative involving thematic evolution, because such a concept does not exist in his musical mentality. What is left for him, then? It's what the adhan I have transcribed demonstrates—a handling of recurring "musical motifs" (as Europeans understand them), which he subtly embellishes and expands. An example is the descending motif occurring for the first time in section two (from G4 to C4), which exposes the main *jins* of the maqam. At each repetition, Alafasy adds some new element to it, which often follows from the text used (e.g., section 4). So we see that the musical development runs independently of the verbal development, regulated precisely by the principle of repetition. Moreover, it is also fundamental in the macro-form. Let us note that the pair of sections 9 and 10 is virtually identical to the preceding pair 7 and 8. This is due to the similarity of the text used here, which is not included in the present transcript. Another example of the link between word and tone is shown by comparing the extreme pairs of adhan 1 and 2 with 13 and 14. Both pairs use the same text ("Allah Akbar"), although not in an identical way. While section 2 has the same words as the first one, the final phrase contains a different content ("There is no God but Allah").

This is accurately reflected in the music. Sections 1 and 13 are identical except for one tone, while 2 and 14 differ in every respect—the tonal center, the role of embellishments, and the construction of the melody. The principle of repetition thus serves here as a brace that binds the whole form together. It is precisely its important role in the adhan that creates for Europeans, accustomed to dynamic narrative development, that characteristic "Oriental" effect of monotony.

Someone might ask at this point: how can one be sure that there is a similarity between the adhan performed by Alafasy and those listened to by Szymanowski? Indeed, this would be a completely justified doubt. After all, there are neither transcripts nor recordings of these particular muezzins calling Tunisians to prayer in the spring of 1914. We are thus left here to speculate about how Szymanowski's creative imagination might have been influenced by something we can neither see nor listen to. In any other case, even an attempt to formulate any reliable conclusions would be doomed to failure from the start. Not, however, in the case of such an extraordinary sonic phenomenon as the adhan.

The uniqueness of the adhan results from the following two features: unchangeability and universality. The text of the invocation, in which every word is sacred and inviolable, has not changed since the time of Muhammad except for the addition of two verses by the Shiites in the first millennium (Aydar, Atalay 2013, 51–55). The method of recitation has been passed down orally through successive generations of muezzins, and therefore no significant changes have been made over the centuries (Al Bakri, Mallah, Nuserat 2019, 172). At the same time, the performances of the adhan, while obviously varying in detail from region to region, in their essence remain the same throughout *al-alam al-arabi*[6]—the adhan is too sacred to be experimented with. Muslim law strictly regulates the manner and circumstances of its recitation, and also describes a number of situations in which it may be invalid (al-Sistani, 2025). Thus, whether we take a Tunisian adhan, an Egyptian adhan or a Saudi adhan, each of them will be structured according to the same musical rules (Al Bakri, Mallah, Nuserat 2019, 172–175). This means that when listening to an adhan today, and regardless of the country, we are dealing with a musical phenomenon very close to what Szymanowski encountered in Tunis one hundred years ago. A phenomenon which, through the tarab, had a strong influence on his work. And it did so almost immediately.

3. *Love Songs of Hafiz,* Op. 26

When, in August 1914, on the "last normal train" (as he said—the Great War was already underway, Zieliński 1997, 79), he arrived in his hometown of Tymoshovka in present-day Ukraine, he devoted himself without delay to composing. Feeling a surge of inspiration and not wanting to waste time, he decided to create a song cycle on the text he had already used once—on paraphrases of Hafiz's poetry by German poet Hans Bethge.

Three years earlier, Szymanowski had experienced a deep fascination with these poems. He referred to Hafiz as a "wonderful Persian" whom "Allah Himself threw into my hands" (Szymanowski, ed. Chylińska 1982, 298). Never mind that Bethge's works actually had little in common with the original texts of Shamsuddin Mohammad (Hafiz is a nickname meaning "one who knows the Qur'an by heart"). Although the German poet did not adhere to the rules governing Hafiz's lyric poetry of elaborate *ghazal* form[7] and did not faithfully translate their meaning, he nevertheless managed to capture their metaphysical sense. In his paraphrases, which are admittedly constructed in accordance with the European metrorhythmic tradition, we can discern the outline of a mysterious Persian world in which purely sensual experiences merge imperceptibly with the mystical (Chylińska 2008, 238–240). Szymanowski found in him a passion and philosophical reverie so close to his own, which fitted perfectly into his idea of the Orient (Neuer 1981, XV–XVI). So when, in August 1914, with his impressions of the exotic journey fresh in his mind, he searched for a suitable subject, he returned without hesitation to his already familiar collection *Hafis: Nachdichtungen der Lieder und Gesänge des Hafis* (Wightman 1999, 136). The result was groundbreaking.

6 "The Arab World" (Arabic).

7 A *ghazal* is a lyrical poem of Arabic origin, usually on the theme of love, constructed according to strictly defined rules, comparable in complexity to the Italian sonnet (de Bruijn 2018). Each stanza is a self-contained thought, loosely connected to the previous and next ones, which often raises the issue of internal coherence. There is no Aristotelian logic of beginning, development and conclusion; instead, the structure of the work can be compared to a meditation on a specific topic, in which each stanza approaches the topic from a slightly different angle (Hafez et al. 2013, xxii; Avery and Heath-Stubbs 1952, 10–11). Hafiz is considered the most outstanding creator of *ghazal*s in history (Yarshater 2013).

In a nutshell: Szymanowski composed two cycles entitled *Love Songs of Hafiz*—Op. 24 for voice and piano (1911) and Op. 26 for voice and orchestra (1914). The earlier collection is in the late Romantic spirit of Wagner and Strauss, the later abandons it in favor of a musical sensualism inspired by Debussy and Ravel—but does so, one might say, gradually. Op. 26 is, in fact, heterogeneous. It contains orchestrations of three songs from Op. 24 and one old song from 1911 both written in his "old" style, and four new songs, composed after his return, opening a new chapter in his artistic work (Zieliński 1997, 84). The innovations concern all the most important aspects:

- Harmony—liberation from functional thinking
- Form—sequence dominates over transformation
- Colour—timbre as a criterion for shaping musical development
- Texture—multi-layering, overlapping of many smaller elements

The abandonment of functionality allowed for a wide freedom to achieve new tones and colors. However, it also meant the loss of the tonal system which guaranteed an internal sound order. Szymanowski rejected the atonality, so he had to find some other kind of referential point. Driven by this need, he decided to use the most natural way of organizing the sound material—tonal centralization. By choosing a particular tone as a reference point for the others, he gained a tonal basis on which he could place any motifs and color effects. But to achieve it, he turned to the simplest method of creating a tonal center—the principle of repetition. In fact, it is enough to perform a given motif/tone several times in an unchanged form for it to become the determinant for other musical phenomena. This method of structuring the sound course is present in all the new songs of Op. 26.

Yet all this was not enough. With so many new compositional means already at his disposal, Szymanowski needed one more—direct inspiration. An external stimulus was needed to direct the musical innovations I have described above towards a specific goal. And that key element turned out to be Arabic music.

A sequence of artistic stimuli emerges here, culminating in Op. 26. Most likely, it happened as follows: during his travels, Szymanowski listened to the *azan* and experienced tarab. He then discovered a new sound aesthetic—musical sensualism—which delighted him and opened up previously unknown compositional perspectives. Finally, he rediscovered Bethge's poems, which became a poetic complement to the impressions he had gained in the Middle East—note that the texts selected in 1914 contain names and images directly referring to Arab and Persian culture, which are absent from Op. 24.

All this initiated a creative process that ran, as it were, in reverse order. Poetry gave shape and inner meaning to the songs that were being created, allowing the composer to use a new way of shaping harmony, texture and color for a specific artistic purpose. And since the aim was to create an "Oriental" character (because that was the nature of the texts used), he drew on what he had heard and experienced when encountering the art of the muezzins. Monophonic art—and therefore exclusively melodic.

In Orientalizing *Love Songs of Hafiz*, Szymanowski understandably focused mainly on melodics. As a result, he invented a completely new variant, which clearly distinguishes the songs of 1914 from those of 1911. Unhesitatingly, it can be described as "Arabic." This is because its essence is the juxtaposition of long intense notes with a series of short notes, in which the former generally determine the tonal center, framed by the latter. Usually the melody is built from small motifs (sometimes of a few notes), which are either repeated unchanged and recur throughout the work, or are subjected to variational transformations based on expanding the original cell and embellishing it with melismas. This creates a characteristic effect of improvization, quite new in Szymanowski's work.

Thus, we can see that all the major principles of Arabic music underlie this type of melodics. Tonal centralization is used to create a hierarchy of tones, and the principle of repetition becomes the main way of constructing the musical narrative. The composer achieved this result thanks to his musical intuition, combined with his acquired experience and newly discovered methods of shaping the musical course. He would have applied the first and third principles independently of Arab music, but the need for Orientalization led him instinctively to reach the same conclusions as the musicians of the Middle East. In doing so, he achieved what constitutes the uniqueness of the newly composed songs—he created a distinctive kind of passage of time, much closer to Arabic music than European. Let us remember, however, that these were the beginnings, the first discovery of a new sense of musical time, and consequently each new song contains a different kind and degree of its impact.

The culmination of these innovations is the final song of the cycle, "The Tomb of Hafiz." Its beginning is innovative because the first nine bars are filled with an extended flute solo, whose selected single long notes are discreetly underlined colouristically by celesta and harmonics of both harps and soloists in a quintet (figure 2). In this way, the flute part is monodic—a novelty in Szymanowski's musical vocabulary. In addition, it is a monody in the Arabic style. Again, the *Hijaz jins* return (this time from tone D) as the main motif, forming the basis of a tone-hierarchical melody shaped in the spirit of improvization (the overriding principle of repetition, the extension of the main motif, modulation by a major third downwards in bar 7 and by another major third downwards in bar 9). To further achieve the impression of the flute's independence, the composer uses frequent changes of the meter and agogic fluctuations. He is clearly concerned with recreating the slowed-down passage of time typical of Arabic music.
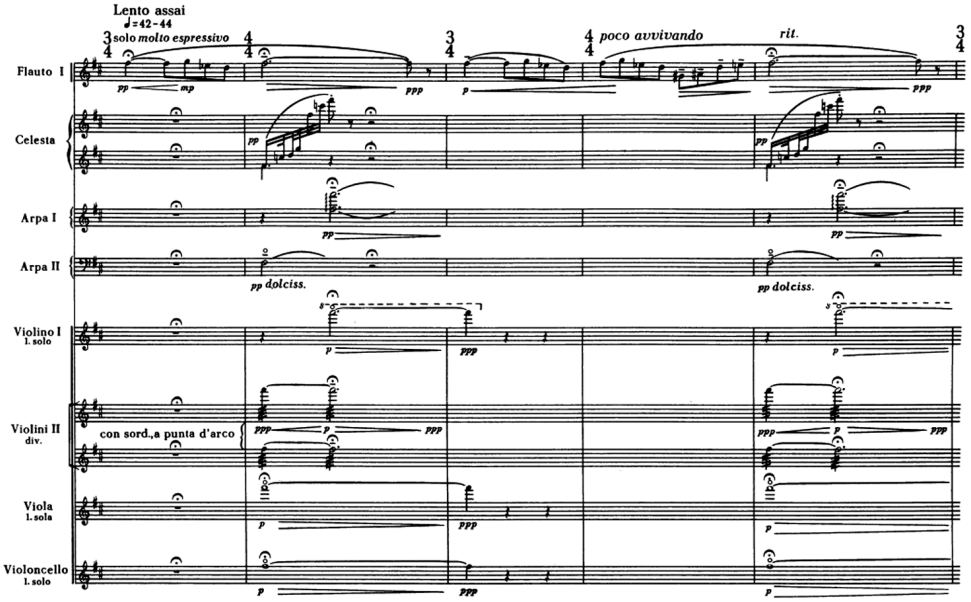
Figure 2. Flute melody in the Arabic style in Karol Szymanowski's "The Tomb of Hafiz" (bars 1–5)

Therefore, in the further course of the song (until the voice appears in bar 19), he also adds a hierarchical, ornamental (though metrically regular) clarinet melody to the flute part as well as a solo 1st violin part built from long rhythmic values, in which a characteristic triplet figure preludes the oboe solo (bar 14). This constitutes another novelty in Szymanowski's works, since it is a four-bar melody constructed in accordance with Arabic musical thought—a central tone (D5, then D♭5), recurring several times and embellished with tones of shorter duration. Such a melodic line could be arranged by a muezzin. It is followed by three bars, each with a *Hijaz* motif, in the horn (bar 18), horn and voice (bar 19) and both harps (bar 20) parts respectively. Musical time almost stops, accompanied by a gradual reduction in texture—bar 21 is almost entirely filled by the solo voice (and so, again, by monody). By means of a leap of a major seventh upwards in the *pp* dynamics, the composer introduces a repetition of bars 9–13 in the orchestra, while the voice independently develops its part.

The whole next section (bars 27–36), which is expressive and texturally elaborate, also bears an Arabian influence. It can be seen in the virtuosic, melismatic flute solo, the embellished oboe interludes based on a particular tonal center and the several-bar counterpoints of the 2nd violin and English horn, also constructed around a central tone. In the ending (bar 35), the 1st and 3rd French horns evoke the developed *Hijaz* motif. Shortly afterwards, another device typical of Arabian aesthetics appears. In bar 37 the composer achieves a new kind of musical silence (slightly broken by the timpani tremolo and the pedal note of the bass clarinet in *ppp*), which is an autonomous formal element and not just a necessary addition. It forms the boundary between two musical sections—as in the adhan.

In another fragment, in which there is an increase in tension up to the most important climax and its gradual resolution leading to the final return of the *Hijaz* motif (bars 38–51), Szymanowski uses similar Arabic means. Some examples are: the centralized and delicately embellished melody of the 1st viola solo (bars

40–41), the melismas and trills of the hierarchical melody in the flute part (bars 42–43) and the *Hijaz* motif in the voice and 1st clarinet (bar 40).

The ending of the song is based on the central motif that appears in the individual instruments, undergoing augmentation at the end (bars 58–59), which is combined with a gradual dying off of the musical action. The song is bound together by a formal brace—it ends with the same instrumentation and with almost the same material as at the beginning. This is how Szymanowski places the last note in the song, which not only contains all the orientalizing devices he used earlier, but also the musical solutions used in both the older songs (e.g., intense motivically regular melody in the climax) and the new ones (e.g., glissando of the harps). As a result, he achieved an interesting kind of time lapse here, on the one hand avoiding metrical regularity (frequent changes of meter, agogic fluctuations), but on the other, set within the framework of the bar order, not going beyond its mathematical strictness.

4. *Songs of the Infatuated Muezzin*, Op. 42

The Oriental current, inaugurated by Op. 26, reached its most mature form in *Songs of the Infatuated Muezzin*, Op. 42, composed in 1918. The circumstances in which they were created are unique—Szymanowski composed them to poems by his cousin Jarosław Iwaszkiewicz, which the latter wrote under the influence of the composer's stories about his exotic travels. Iwaszkiewicz, who had no knowledge or experience of Arabic culture, naturally followed the same path of associations and sensations as Szymanowski (Chylińska 2008, 490–493). In this way, a completely unusual situation was created—the poet provided the composer with poems completely in line with his imagination and sensitivity, enriched, of course, by his own personality, but discreetly enough to allow independent musical adaptation. In other words, Iwaszkiewicz provided Szymanowski with all aspects of this poetry, personally imparting only what the latter could not create himself—that is, the verbal layer and the corresponding lyrical image (Iwaszkiewicz 1981, 54; Boniecki 2015, 113–125).

For the poet, the character of the muezzin is only a pretext for creating a strong, if not controversial image of a passionate man addressing his male beloved. The Oriental context allows for an amplification of expression, containing a provocative vision of the muezzin who, instead of performing his sacred duty, indulges in forbidden affection and consciously commits blasphemy. It was this bold poetic image that so appealed to the composer, because he found in it exactly what he himself associated with the Orient—the power of sensuality, which places love and beauty above everything, even the fear of damnation (Downes 2003, 40, 52).

The kinship of thought and feeling between the poet and the composer meant that Szymanowski made relatively few changes to the texts (it was usually otherwise). However, apart from changing the order, title and addressee of the poems (Chylińska 2008, 491–492), there is one major intervention in the text that unexpectedly conclusively proves what Szymanowski's attitude to the Orient was.

Choosing Iwaszkiewicz's last poem as the lyrics for the first song of the cycle, the composer added the phrase "Allah Akbar" at the beginning and at the end of it. It is a *takbir*, an Arabic phrase translated as "God is great". It is this phrase that always opens and closes the recitation of the adhan, constituting its most characteristic part, easily recognizable even by non-Muslims. Having listened to the adhan on many occasions, Szymanowski undoubtedly stored this distinctive phrase in his memory and applied it to the initial four-note melismatic, identified by Alistair Wightman (2001, 153) as the *Saba jins*, which, according to Andrzej Tuchowski (2001, 177), is the structural source of the entire song. There can be no question of coincidence. The composer consciously supplemented the poem with a *takbir* because he wanted to give the song more authenticity, to make it more Arabic (Iwaszkiewicz naturally could not have known that the muezzin utters these very words).

At the same time, he was not concerned with stylization, that is, with making his music as close to Arabic music as possible, because he by no means intended to abandon the European way of thinking about music and the construction of a musical work. And this is where the whole problem of Szymanowski's Orientalism in music lies—it is difficult to determine where exactly the boundary between the Eastern and the Western runs. The key to solving this problem is to focus on composer's personality and spirituality (Downes 2003, 38–39).

Szymanowski had his own idea of the Orient, based on his numerous readings related to the Arab world (Żerańska-Kominek 2007, 109–111) and his own tourist trip to the Muslim countries of North Africa. In this subjective vision, the Orient was inseparably associated with mystery, beauty, strong feelings and sensual

love, as well as mysticism. For this reason, whenever these categories of experience appear in this period of his work, even in works seemingly unrelated to Arabic culture, Szymanowski introduces Arabic elements in the musical layer, both conscious and intuitive—the latter directly linked to the aesthetics of color and embellishment that he was discovering at the time, evolving over the years and penetrating ever deeper into his compositional mindset. *The Songs of the Infatuated Muezzin* is the culmination of this fascinating process. The use of the words "Allah Akbar" is an indication that Szymanowski remembered the adhan he had once heard and that this recollection was his main inspiration.

It is this song, "Allah Akbar," which constitutes the most Arab song among Szymanowski's works. It is here that the composer came closest to, and perhaps even touched upon, the mystery of the Arabic passage of time and the related ecstatic mysticism that sounds in the calls of muezzins. Apparently, it was the still vivid memories of adhan that enabled him to achieve such an authentic effect. Indeed, we can observe an evident creative process that took place here—the initial melisma, based on the *Saba jins*, became the structural basis of the whole song, influencing both the horizontal and vertical layers, and then song no. 1 determined the character and features of the whole cycle, which, after all, was written in a very short time and thus within a single creative act (Chylińska 2008, 490–491). This melisma would not have happened if the composer had not enriched Iwaszkiewicz's text with *takbir*—the melisma appears on the word Allah, which does not appear in the poem. This suggests that Szymanowski's imagination was triggered by the just-remembered initial fragment of the adhan. In this song, which combines all four features of Arabic musical thinking (as does the whole of Op. 42), it is possible to distinguish four stages of Szymanowski achieving an increasingly "Oriental" type of passage of time until the last one, which marks the final limit to which the European composer could possibly have reached in his search for Arabic musical effect.

The first type occurs in bars 10–15, and is particularly marked by the principle of repetition and tonal centralization based on an ostinato in the piano part. At the same time, it almost lacks a hierarchy of tones. The exception is the characteristic descending triplet figure, first appearing in bar 11, which gradually becomes more prominent and appears both in the voice part and in inversion in the left hand of the piano (without the first tone—bar 13). The melodics of the voice is similar, in a declamatory style and, apart from the aforementioned triplets, a several-note arabesque appears only once (in bar 14). Harmonically, there is a modulation in this section from the seeming G major to the tonal center of B (in bar 15). Its formal aim is to prepare for the appearance of a hierarchy of tones in the piano, which occurs in bar 16, beginning the second stage, bars 16–23 and bars 6–7. Its essence is the dialogue of the hierarchical melodicism of the voice and piano parts, which leads to the climax of the piece (bars 20–21). Bar 6 is especially notable, as both the harmonic layer and the expressive melodic motif in the voice part become a kind of refrain, which returns in various configurations, but always very audible, in bars 16, 18, and 22. This creates an impression of static action, similar to the effect achieved through the principle of repetition in the adhan. The Arabic-ness of this stage is disrupted by the all-too-important role of the harmonic factor.

But this changes in the case of the next, third type (bars 1–5 and 24–29). Here Szymanowski managed to get exceptionally close to the Arabic sense of the passage of time. The *takbir* words that form the song's brace[8] allowed the composer to give absolute priority to the voice, which is shaped in the Arabic manner—with a hierarchy of tones based on a clear tonal center E. Szymanowski was so successful in achieving an "Oriental melodics" that this has attracted the attention of various researchers. Alicja Helman (1965, 135) writes about the play of forces, characteristic of tonal regularity, which, however, is not a tonic action, characteristic of the major-minor system, but a regularity consisting in the formation of points of resistance which form the melodic skeleton. Andrzej Tuchowski (2001, 178) draws attention to the rhythmic shape of the initial figure, which suggests a hierarchy of importance of the constituent tones, of which the frontal, strongly emphasized tone E acts as the tonal centre in the first song. At the same time, the piano part is limited to the role of background or echo, in which the texture and chordal factor are reduced and whose primary purpose is to create the tonal center E, giving the impression of a fixed note (in bars 1–2 the piano realizes only one pitch, precisely E).

[8] Bars 24–29 are a slightly modified repetition of bars 2–7, except that the last two bars form the conclusion of the work and therefore do not count as stage two, in relation to which they are heavily reduced.

Finally, however, we reach the fourth stage, which is contained in bars 8–9 (figure 3). In bar 9 the melismas of the voice dominate the musical expression to such an extent that the piano falls silent for a moment, and the voice sings solo. However, it does not have such an Arabic spirit as the bar preceding it. This is because it is here, despite the written 5/4 meter, that Szymanowski manages for a brief moment to free himself from the European yoke of a regular pulse and immerse himself completely in musical time flowing independently of anything but a capricious hierarchical melody. While in the voice the intense long tones collide with processions of arabesques, the piano spreads out a wide arc-shaped passage, having its origin and end in the central tone E. In such a texture it is impossible to maintain a constant tempo, but this effect is carefully planned. The voice is to fall into a religious fervour on the verge of ecstasy, and this cannot be achieved with traditional metrical regularity. If the pianist only held the bourdon, the singer, trained on classical European repertoire, would most likely sing her part too rhythmically. The use of the passage prevents this and allows, in this particular bar, to capture the kind of passage of time that every muezzin, not just the infatuated one, feels.

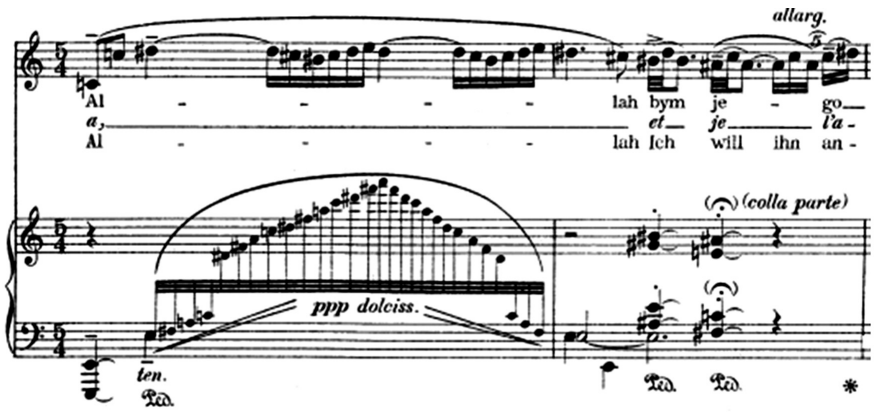

Figure 3. The fourth stage of the "Oriental" passage of time in Karol Szymanowski's "Allah Akbar" (bars 8–9)

5. Conclusion

Karol Szymanowski's Oriental current, despite being based on a fictional image of the Orient typical of the era, shows real and deep connections with Arabic musical thought. This is the result of the experience of the tarab, which Szymanowski must have encountered while listening to the adhan. This initiated the process of incorporating the four basic features of Arabic monodic musical thinking, which are present in the adhan, into his work. I have distinguished these features for the purpose of this study.

The process was inaugurated by *Love Songs of Hafiz*, Op. 26. In these songs, the influence of Arabic music is still limited to the melody of selected themes. It is most evident in the final song, "The Tomb of Hafiz." However, it took another four years for Szymanowski to compose a work that was closest to Arabic aesthetics. These are the *Songs of the Infatuated Muezzin*, Op. 42. Here, the experience of the tarab, transformed by Szymanowski's intuition and sensitivity, determined the character and expression of the whole cycle. This is evident in the first song, "Allah Akbar," in which four stages of achieving an increasingly "Oriental" type of passage of time can be distinguished. The last one marks the final limit to which the European composer could possibly have reached in his search for an Arabic musical effect.

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Adhan, *tarab* ir dainos. Orientas Karolio Szymanowskio kūryboje

Santrauka

Dainos žanras Karolio Szymanowskio kūryboje užėmė ypatingą vietą. Dainoje įkūnijamas glaudus poezijos ir muzikos ryšys šiam kompozitoriui, itin jautriai reagavusiam į žodį, tapo asmeniškiausia ir natūraliausia meninės raiškos forma. Todėl Szymanowskis dainas kūrė visą gyvenimą; būtent šio žanro perspektyva ryškiausiai atskleidžia jo muzikos stilistines tendencijas ir joje vykusius kaitos procesus.

Visgi kompozitorių įkvėpė ne vien poezija ir literatūra. Jo kūrybai svarbūs buvo ir kiti išoriniai impulsai, ypač kelionių metu patirti įspūdžiai, iš esmės pakeitę jo pasaulėžiūrą. Tokį poveikį turėjo 1914 m. kelionė į Italiją ir Šiaurės Afriką. Arabų kultūros patirtis, taip pat pažintis su naująja Maurice'o Ravelio ir Igorio Stravinskio garsine estetika lėmė naują kūrybinę kryptį, kuri ėmė ryškėti prasidėjus Pirmajam pasauliniam karui ir kompozitoriui grįžus į šeimos dvarą. Taip prasidėjo brandusis kūrybos laikotarpis, dažnai vadinamas Vidužemio jūros faze dėl jį apibrėžusių Antikos ir Rytų tematikos inspiracijų. Šis laikotarpis prasideda dainomis op. 26 ir baigiasi dainų ciklu op. 42.

Vidužemio jūros fazės kūriniams būdinga savita garsinė estetika, kurioje lemiamą reikšmę įgauna tembras, ornamentikos struktūrinė funkcija ir itin aukšta emocinė įtampa. Šios Szymanowskio stiliaus ypatybės jau numanomos cikle *Pieśni miłosne Hafisa* („Hafizo meilės dainos"), op. 26. Čia pirmą kartą išryškėja muzikinis sensualizmas, kuris galutinį pavidalą įgyja veikiamas arabų muzikos inspiracijų, nors jos šiuo atveju gana aiškiai stilizuotos. Orientalizacijos proceso kulminacija Szymanowskio kūryboje laikytinas ciklas *Pieśni muezina szalonego* („Susižavėjusio muedzino dainos"), op. 42, kuriame poetinis tekstas sąlygoja kūrinio formos ir raiškos principus, grindžiamus arabų monodinės muzikos savybėmis.

Svarbią reikšmę kompozitoriaus vidurinio laikotarpio kūrybai turėjo *adhan* (musulmoniškas kvietimas maldai), kurio giedojimo Szymanowskis ne kartą klausėsi. Nors kompozitorius nebuvo susipažinęs su arabų muzikos teoriniais principais ir neturėjo nei jos įrašų, nei notacijos pavyzdžių, jam pavyko išsaugoti stiprų emocinį įspūdį, kurį arabai apibūdina terminu *tarab*. Muedzino giedojimui yra būdinga savita ekspresija, kylanti iš pagrindinių arabų monodinės muzikos principų ir pasireiškianti hierarchiškai organizuota melodika.

Intuicija ir pastabumu pasižymėjęs, išoriniams impulsams itin jautrus menininkas šį ekspresijos tipą perėmė ir perkėlė į savo muziką. Todėl ornamentika, arabų garsinės hierarchijos sistemos esminis elementas, tapo neatsiejama ir naujosios Szymanowskio estetikos dalimi. Naudodamas europinės muzikos priemones, vėlesniuose kūriniuose kompozitorius tyrinėjo arabų muzikinės raiškos principus ir laipsniškai įvedė techninius sprendimus, vis labiau artėjusius prie arabų muzikos. Taigi arabų kultūros įtaka tapo svarbiu veiksniu, skatinusiu jo vaizduotę ir kompozicinę raidą. Siekdamas perteikti arabų muzikai būdingą laiko tėkmės pojūtį ir atkurti *tarab* efektą, Szymanowskis suformavo savitą muzikinę raišką. Ji matoma ne tik minėtuose dainų cikluose op. 26 ir op. 42, bet ir Trečiojoje simfonijoje, op. 27, Pirmajame smuiko koncerte, op. 35, bei operoje „Karalius Rodžeris", op. 46, todėl laikytina vienu reikšmingiausių kompozitoriaus kūrybinių rezultatų.

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Gvantsa Ghvinjilia

Synthesis of Georgian Ethnic Rituals and European Music Traditions in Sulkhan Nasidze's Symphonic Triad: A Study of National Identity and Universal Themes

Abstract. This article explores the symphonic triad—*Pirosmani*, *Passione*, and *Dalai*—by Sulkhan Nasidze, a distinguished 20th-century Georgian composer. His symphonies reflect the philosophical and aesthetic dimensions of ethnicity, particularly through the integration of archaic Georgian rituals and European musical traditions. This research is focused on two key aspects: (1) identifying the layers of ethnic culture that resonate with a 20th-century composer, and (2) examining how ethnic music and folk traditions can be integrated, transformed, and reinterpreted within modern compositional frameworks.

Using historical and comparative research methods, the study concludes that blending the traditions of European music and Georgian ethnic elements are fundamental to Nasidze's compositional style; *Pirosmani* depicts Tbilisi's multicultural musical backdrop. In *Passione,* Nasidze connects mourning and burial rituals from Georgia's mountainous regions with the European Passion genre. In *Dalai*, the composer focuses on the Tusheti funeral ritual, reimagining it through the features of the symphonic genre. Nasidze's works are centered on reviving ethnic rituals, not merely as cultural artifacts but as vehicles for exploring universal human themes such as life and death, thereby giving new global significance to local Georgian cultural practices.

Keywords: Sulkhan Nasidze, multiculturalism, European music, ethnicity, rituals, symphony, Georgian folk music.

Introduction

The significance of ethnicity and folk traditions in Georgian art music ever since its origination has been profound. On the one hand, ethnic-based music helps to preserve cultural heritage, while on the other hand, it allows Georgian music to establish a unique position within the cultural diversity of European music. Among Georgian composers of all generations who expressed the aesthetic and philosophical aspects of ethnicity and interacted with both local and global cultural contexts in their music, a prominent figure of the Georgian composing school, a representative of the "Sixtiers," Sulkhan Nasidze[1] stands out as one of the foremost. This article will highlight the aesthetic and technical possibilities of incorporating ethnicity into 20th-century Georgian music using the specific example of the symphonic triad:[2] *Pirosmani*,[3] *Passione*[4] and *Dalai*.[5]

Despite the significant contributions of Georgian musicologists to the study addressed in this paper, the synthesis of national and European musical traditions in Nasidze's music remains a key area of research, primarily explored by Givi Orjonikidze. His work emphasizes the idea that folklore is an artistic reflection of reality—it is both archaic and modern, containing universal archetypes, and can serve as a rich source of inspiration for contemporary composition. The theoretical methodology of this research is also grounded in the scientific articles from prominent Georgian musicologists, including Rusudan Tsurtsumia (2023), Dodo Gogua (2016), Marina Kavtaradze (2014, 2017), Tamaz Gabisonia (2023), Nato Zhghenti (2004), and Tinatin Dolidze (2012), providing a comprehensive framework for study analysis.

Nasidze profoundly combined the unique, distinctive compositional style precisely by synthesizing elements of both ethnic and European music. His perspective on European, national, and ethnic cultures is captivating. According to the composer, every national culture enriches global civilization and culture with its unique qualities. Nasidze says that "nationality is a constituent element of the composer's individuality. Within a single, universal human culture, each national culture finds its own distinctive expression" (Nasidze 2023b, 106).

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1 Sulkhan Nasidze (1927–1996), a renowned Georgian composer and pianist, received numerous honors, including the Shota Rustaveli State Prize and the title of People's Artist of Georgia, etc. He served as chairman of the Georgian Composers' Union (1992–1996) and artistic director of the Georgian Philharmonic (1974–1990). Nasidze excelled in symphonic and instrumental music, composing eight symphonies, five string quartets, concertos, the oratorio *My Homeland* (1967), and the ballet *Orpheus* (1973), along with film music.

2 In Givi Orjonikidze's book *ქვიშანი დარჩებიანთ* [The Sand Will Remain] and *Issues of Musicology: Essays on the History of Georgian Music of the 60s–90s of the 20th Century*, which is used as a textbook at the Tbilisi State Conservatoire, these symphonies are frequently referred to as the "Symphonic Triad" or, less commonly, as a triptych.

3 See RamShemqmnaAdamianad (2013) for the recording of this composition.

4 See Nasidze, Sulkhan (2021a) for the recording of this composition.

5 See Nasidze, Sulkhan (2021b) for the recording of this composition.

It should be emphasized that national roots play a fundamental role in shaping his compositional ideas. To realize them, Nasidze strives to harmoniously integrate national and European musical traditions, drawing on the experience of European music; ethnicity plays a pivotal role in shaping Nasidze's compositional style, as it provides a sense of belonging and continuity with the past traditions of Georgia. According to Gogua, Sulkhan Nasidze considered folk music as a powerful phenomenon that profoundly influences Georgian compositional thinking, permeating and shaping the entirety of Georgian musical thought (Gogua 2016, 126). For Nasidze, ethnic culture functions as source of inspiration, as a mode of being, as a sign of identity: "Georgian musical folklore is such a powerful phenomenon that it dominates Georgian musical thought. It has filled the space of Georgian musical thought" (Nasidze 2023b, 84). Nasidze asserts that it is impossible for a Georgian composer to overlook national folklore, which he regards as the richest source and an invaluable treasure of musical inspiration: "Georgian musical folklore is so powerful, distinctive, and unique that no Georgian composer can escape its profound influence during their creative development. It can be said that every positive creative endeavor in our country, regardless of its ambition to introduce something new, has, in one way or another, drawn upon the rich foundation of national musical folklore" (Nasidze 2024, 69). Along with folklore as a phenomenon in general, Nasidze was also inspired by specific artists and considered their art to be the basis of his creativity: "I consider Niko Pirosmanashvili,[6] Vazha-Pshavela,[7] and Georgian folk songs to be my teachers" (Nasidze 2024, 30). The symphonic triad, which is the subject of this article's research, was directly inspired by Pirosmani's paintings and Vazha-Pshavela's writings.

Drawing on his experience with European music, he chose the symphony genre to bring his artistic ideas to life, incorporating elements of the European Passion genre—such as dramaturgical construction around a narrative path of suffering, death, mourning, lamentation, and the search for the true meaning of life and death. Thus, he envisioned the modern ideal of Georgian music in the seamless fusion of national traditions with European musical genres and forms.

As Nasidze's Symphonic Triad has not been previously analyzed in this context, the article offers fresh perspectives on the work. To achieve the set goals, the analysis examines two key aspects: (1) identifying which elements of ethnic culture are significant to the Georgian compositional school as a whole, and (2) investigating how aspects of ethnic music and folk traditions are adapted, transformed, and combined with the traditions of European music in Nasidze's Symphonic Triad (*Pirosmani*, *Passione*, and *Dalai*).

Through historical and comparative research methods, the study concludes that ethnic elements play a pivotal role in Nasidze's style, fostering a deep connection to the traditional heritage of his homeland.

Since the synthesis of national and European elements in Nasidze's music embodies a defining characteristic of Georgian music as a whole, a brief historical overview will precede the analysis of the Symphonic Triad. This overview will underscore how Nasidze's work represents a remarkable phenomenon, deeply rooted in and emerging from the rich traditions of this synthesis within Georgian musical history.

1. The role of ethnic traditions in Georgian art music during its formation and the Soviet era

In the late 19th century and early 20th century, the formation of the Georgian art music school relied heavily on the synthesis of national and European musical thought. This fusion was crucial for establishing a European-style school of composition, while simultaneously grounding musical expressions in the rich traditions of Georgian ethnic music. This blend of traditional elements and European compositional techniques created a distinctive Georgian art musical tradition that honors both the ethno-based expressions of national identity and broader, international forms. In 19th-century Georgia, Aloiz Mizandari, Andria Karashvili, and Ilia Kargareteli were already actively engaged in composition; however, their music relied exclusively on European traditions, which hindered the emergence of an original national school of composition. The formation

[6] Nikoláy Pirosmanashvíli or Niko Pirosmani, referred to as Nikala (1862–1918) was a a self-taught Georgian painter and a prominent figure in the genre of naïve art. Renowned for his simple yet deeply evocative style, Pirosmani's works vividly captured the essence of Georgian culture and rich folk traditions. Pirosmani's works have been exhibited internationally, including in Kyiv, Warsaw, Paris, Vienna, Nice, Marseilles, Tokyo, Zurich, Nantes, Turin, Istanbul, Vilnius, and Basel, with notable shows at the Louvre (1969) and the Foundation Beyeler (2023–2024).

[7] Vazha-Pshavela, born Luka Razikashvili (1861–1915), was one of Georgia's greatest poets, writers, and public intellectuals. An active participant in the national liberation movement, he was a proponent of liberal ideology and a passionate advocate for the humanistic ideal of friendship between people of different nationalities. He collected and published examples of folk poetry, along with publicistic letters of ethnographic significance.

of the Georgian compositional school—commonly referred to as Georgian art music—occurred precisely through the fusion of European harmonic traditions with Georgian national musical stylistics, a synthesis that embodied the artistic aims and ideals of classical Georgian composers such as Meliton Balanchivadze, Dimitri Arakishvili, Niko Sulkhanishvili, Zakaria Paliashvili, and Viktor Dolidze.

First of all, we should emphasize that Georgia is a country with a rich *a cappella* tradition, a phenomenon of great significance for Georgian identity and the foundation of Georgian art music. As Tsurtsumia stated, for Georgians, singing is as vital a means of expression as language itself, as "it can express all human experiences—from joy to tragedy—all the while a part of existence from the birth of a new life to the end of life" (Tsurtsumia 2023, 8). Both branches of Georgian traditional music—folk songs and orthodox chants—are not important only by means of intonation as the basis of Georgian art music, but also for awakening national consciousness in 19th-century Georgia. According to Gabisonia: "Traditional Georgian music is distinguished by a clear, original expressiveness from among the stylistic manifestations of world ethnic music. Therefore, it is not surprising at all that the main arteries feeding general Georgian music culture are Georgian singing and chanting" (Gabisonia, 2023, 246). According to ethnomusicologist Brian Fairley, even the first Georgian professional chorus, *'ქართული ქორო'* (Kartuli Khoro), primarily performing Georgian folk songs and contributing to the development of Georgian art music, was formed as integral part of the 19th-century nationalist revival movement (Fairley 2023, 21).

In the 1920s–1950s, after the establishment of Communist ideology, individuals were viewed primarily as members of a collective communist society, rather than as autonomous beings with personal identities and desires. Under the conditions of total ideologization and standardization of art, the themes and methods of expression were unified within this collective socialist system. The musical tonal system allowed no alternatives, and the melody of a musical work had to be based either on the melodic and rhythmic-intonational formulas of the mass revolutionary song or on the obligatory use of folklore. In both cases, this highlighted the strong connection between art music and the ordinary Soviet citizen, as well as their peasant origins. Starting in the 1960s, when Soviet culture was granted more freedom and allowed to distance itself from the directives of artistic resolutions and the decrees of Marxist-Leninist ideology, Georgian composers, by bringing forth the deep layers of folklore, clearly expressed their national consciousness and overcame the influence of the Russian world. The use of rhythmic, melodic, and modal system characteristics of national folklore was, for Georgian composers, a means of expressing their national identity, which had been suppressed by Soviet ideology. Since the 1960s, as individualism gained prominence, Georgian composers have each adopted unique approaches to integrating folklore into their work, reflecting personal interpretations of national traditions. I find it difficult to disagree with Nasidze's perspective: "Folk music is a bearer of universal qualities, it appears to us from a different side at each new stage, and in this respect its potential possibilities are inexhaustible. Therefore, the creative attitude towards musical folklore is as diverse as there is individuality, and its standardization is completely impossible" (Nasidze 2023a, 70). Thus, famous representatives of Georgian "Sixtiers", including Nasidze, believed that by bringing forward its ethnic layers, Georgian composers could make Georgian music one of the most interesting tributaries of European music.

2. The importance of ethnic music in Nasidze's symphonic music

From the representatives of the sixties, Nasidze's compositional approaches reveal the significant potential of Georgian folk music within the contemporary musical ecosystem. Georgian folk music served as a source of his innovative creative ideas. Integration of folk rituals in Nasidze's symphonies demonstrates that when a composer deeply expresses the national roots of ethnic music through the language of contemporary music, the narrative of archaic rituals aligns harmoniously with the structure of classical genres and modern techniques. Moreover, this approach allows the composer to transcend ethnicity and create a global musical dialogue. To be more specific, I will say that a symphony turned out to be a suitable genre for conveying themes of general human relevance, through which he tries to continue certain traditions of European and Russian symphonic music. He was greatly inspired in particular by the symphonies of Gustav Mahler and Dmitri Shostakovich. Gogua perceives a connection between Nasidze's symphony and the works of Mahler and Shostakovich due to their shared focus on tragic and philosophical themes (Gogua 2016, 131). Orjonikidze believes that the tragic concept of symphonies is primarily rooted in Shostakovich's music, which deepened Nasidze's interest in psychological and philosophical issues. "Shostakovich introduced into Nasidze's creation

the idea of the struggle and opposition of good and evil dramaturgical layers, [he] introduced the theme of the face of musical symbols, specific types" (Orjonikidze 2023, 137).[8] Stravinsky's influence should also be taken into account, which is not surprising, considering the interest of the Georgian "Sixtiers" in Stravinsky's music. As Orjonikidze notes: "Nasidze was not indifferent to some of Stravinsky's principles (for example, the principle of ostinato). In his *Passion*, one can sense Stravinsky's intonational types, which remind us of *The Rite of Spring*. However, in this case as well, everything remains within the framework of Nasidze's style and is organic to his worldview" (Orjonikidze 2023, 137).

And what are the main markers of Georgian ethnic traditions used by Nasidze? Unlike Georgian Soviet music of the 1920s–50s, which relied heavily on direct quotes from folklore, the Georgian music of the 1960s, including Nasidze's works, employs rhythmic-intonational complexes, modes, and melodies, drawing from a new modal perspective rather than using explicit folkloric quotations. In terms of musical language, in the first symphony of the triad, the composer mainly relies on the melosphere of Tbilisi, as well as on elements of mountain folk songs, while in the other two symphonies, he draws entirely on the intonations of Georgian folklore from the mountain regions of Eastern Georgia. As a composer, Nasidze was especially captivated by mountain folklore, driven by his deep appreciation for the poetry of mountain regions. But what, ultimately, did this folklore represent? According to Gogua, "mountain folklore is characterized by an archaic-mythical tragic intonational concentrate, in which the psychological characteristics of the Georgian national soul are encoded, and this is reflected precisely in the mountain mode, which is a stylistic category, an intonational structure, and not simply a sound sequence" (Gogua 2016, 128). The melodies are characterized by the following features: the descending, metrically flexible melodic phrases, the minor key, an improvisational and declarative type of recitative, the excess of movements in seconds, the repetition of ending notes at the end of phrases. The theme based on downward movements is particularly interesting, symbolizing the descent of villagers from the mountain to the valley. The fact is that due to the harsh climatic conditions of the mountains, the villagers temporarily moved to the valley in winter, as the living conditions were easier there.

Nasidze was captivated by the inherent symphonic potential of mountain songs, and it is no surprise that he actively integrated this quality into his symphonies. He noted: "The seemingly simple melodic texture of Khevsurian Tushian, and Pshavian[9] traditions possess remarkable internal potential, offering extraordinary opportunities for its symphonic development. In these songs, the melodic line is independent and self-contained, providing an excellent opportunity for imagination to unfold within the harmonic sphere" (Nasidze 2023a, 70).

Interestingly, this metrically flexible melodic structure of mountainous folklore in Nasidze's music has a broader context. These melodies, with descending movements, a gloomy mood, slow tempo, minor key, and declamatory, improvisational style, connect Nasidze's music with themes of fate and destiny in Georgian, Russian, and European music.

The composer's attention was captivated not only by the elements of folk music but, first and foremost, by the philosophical dimensions of the burial and mourning rituals of the mountainous regions of Eastern Georgia. These rituals best reveal the nation's consciousness and cosmological ideas, while simultaneously echoing universal human themes such as vanity and eternity, life, and the mysticism of death. Thanks to these universal themes, these compositions transcend narrow national borders and acquire a global context. Due to

[8] The attempt of the Georgian Sixtiers to integrate more closely with the achievements of European music may appear to contradict the fact that they were also influenced by the music of Shostakovich. The following brief explanation may clarify this point. Liberation from the dominance of Russian music was a gradual process and, it must be admitted, did not occur overnight. The orientation toward 20th-century European music and its leading composers became possible once Georgian composers gained access to recordings of European works, and for a very limited circle of them, through participation in the festival Warsaw Autumn. Due to several circumstances, Shostakovich's music—unlike that of composers who openly expressed Party ideology, such as Isaak Dunaevsky, Georgy Sviridov, Tikhon Khrennikov, and others—was perceived as representing, in one way or another, opposition to the regime. In the minds of Georgian composers, he was associated with rebellion against indoctrinated Soviet art. The most significant factor was that his opera *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District* became the target of Soviet censorship, placing his career in jeopardy. It is well known that this opera was the subject of the article "Muddle Instead of Music: On the Opera *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District*," published in *Pravda* on January 28, 1936, where it was condemned as "formalist," "coarse," "bourgeois," and "vulgar." This episode marked a turning point in Shostakovich's career and remains a key example of Soviet censorship in the arts. It is also well known that in 1948 his works were again denounced under the Zhdanov Doctrine, leading to professional setbacks that lasted for several years. Even after his rehabilitation in 1956, performances of his music were still occasionally subject to state intervention, as in the case of his Thirteenth Symphony (1962).

[9] Khevsureti, Tusheti, and Pshavi are historical and geographical regions of Georgia, located in the mountainous area of Eastern Georgia, along the Caucasus Range.

the subtitles of the symphonies, they are examples of programmatic symphonism, distinguished by the tendency to visualize the music and serve as an example of the application of film montage principles in music. As Zhghenti notes: "The titles of his symphonies carry specific content and emotional landmarks" (Zhghenti 2004, 117). Due to the inherent tendency toward visualization in these symphonies, Zhghenti interprets them as musical scenarios, constructed from a sequence of film-like frames arranged according to a specific plot, where two types of narration alternate: action-like and psychological (Zhghenti 2004, 118).

In these symphonies, we not only listen to the human drama, but we also watch it, like film frames arranged according to the cause-and-effect principle. The main idea of the symphonies is related to the drama of human existence and is dedicated to themes such as decadence, burial, and mourning on the occasion of human burial. As Orjonikidze noted, Nasidze's hero is the archetype of a thoughtful individual, who is imbued from beginning to end with contemplation of the eternal theme of life and death (Orjonikidze 2023, 124).

2.1. Symphony No. 5, *Pirosmani* (1977)

This symphony in six episodes, which contains elements of rhapsody, sonata, and rondo, was defined by the composer as a symphonic poem. It is dedicated to a solitary artist, isolated from society, whose inner spiritual experiences unfold against the backdrop of Tbilisi's multi-ethnic musical environment. "'Pirosmani' is a story full of sadness about the fate of a genius, a lonely artist," as Orjonikidze has argued (2023, 141).

The prototype of the symphony's personified character is Pirosmani, a Georgian painter from the late 19th and early 20th centuries, who died in complete loneliness and poverty. To the shame of the nation, not even his grave remains. He is celebrated for his distinctive, folk-inspired style often described as naïve or primitivist art. Pirosmani's work is marked by a direct, unschooled quality that captures the simplicity and vitality of Georgian rural and urban life. His paintings commonly depict scenes of village life, animals, feasts, historical figures, and landscapes. Dimitri Shevardnadze, the founder of the National Art Gallery and the Union of Artists of Georgia, noted regarding his connection with folk roots, that he was the only artist who portrayed the entirety of 19th-century Georgian life through an authentic folk narrative (Tinikashvili 2015, 1).

Through the figure of Pirosmani, Nasidze broadly addressed the issue of the conflict between a genius artist and society, also alluding to the fate of artists during Soviet repressions. Pirosmani, originally from a village, created his masterpieces after moving to Tbilisi. It is no coincidence that the drama of his life unfolds both through the intonations of mountain folklore (Episode II, mm. 66–68, see figure 1) and against the vibrant backdrop of old Tbilisi—a multicultural city where music was played by all social classes. Asian music, Karachokheli music, urban songs with guitar accompaniment, Neapolitan songs, and even arias from Italian operas were heard in Tbilisi after the opening of the first opera theatre in Transcaucasia.

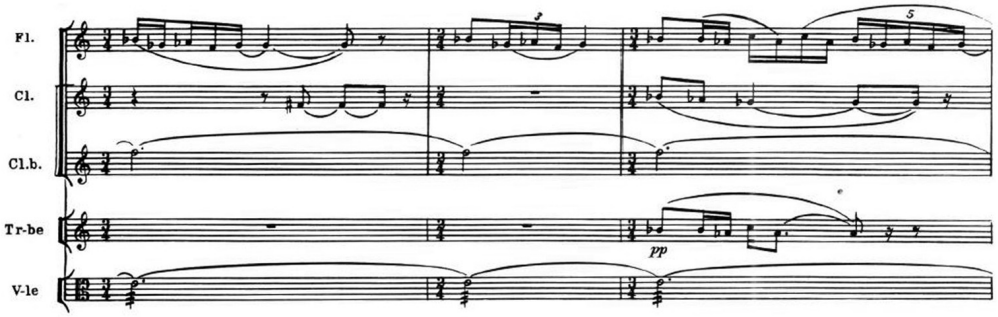

Figure 1. Sulkhan Nasidze's *Pirosmani*. An excerpt from the opening of Episode II, mm. 66–68

Pirosmani's life was deeply intertwined with a single city—Tbilisi. His paintings vividly depict only its landscapes, and the guitar—being the most common and popular instrument in Tbilisi for performing lyrical and romantic songs—can be regarded in this symphony as the embodiment of the gentle and luminous timbre associated with the image of Pirosmani's loneliness. Thus, Pirosmani's leitmotif, as the "main character," in my interpretation, is expressed through the guitar—this beloved instrument of Tbilisi—which also serves as a subtle reference to the artist's final place of residence and to his life marked by solitude. To the extent that the symphony vividly contrasts the artist's delicate spiritual world with the cruel and harsh environment

that failed to recognize Pirosmani's genius and ultimately condemned him to death by starvation, I suggest that this is precisely what Nasidze seeks to emphasize in his music; the artist's toxic environment in my interpretation is symbolized by dissonances, militaristic marching rhythms, and two collages that are presented in Episode III, which brings the grotesque into the music. The first collage incorporates the "March of the Pechora Regiment" (mm. 133–135, see figure 2), whose forceful entry adds a grotesque element to the music, along with the waltz from Gaetano Donizetti's "La Favorite" (mm. 174–179, see figure 3), thereby symbolizing the superficiality of the society surrounding the artist.
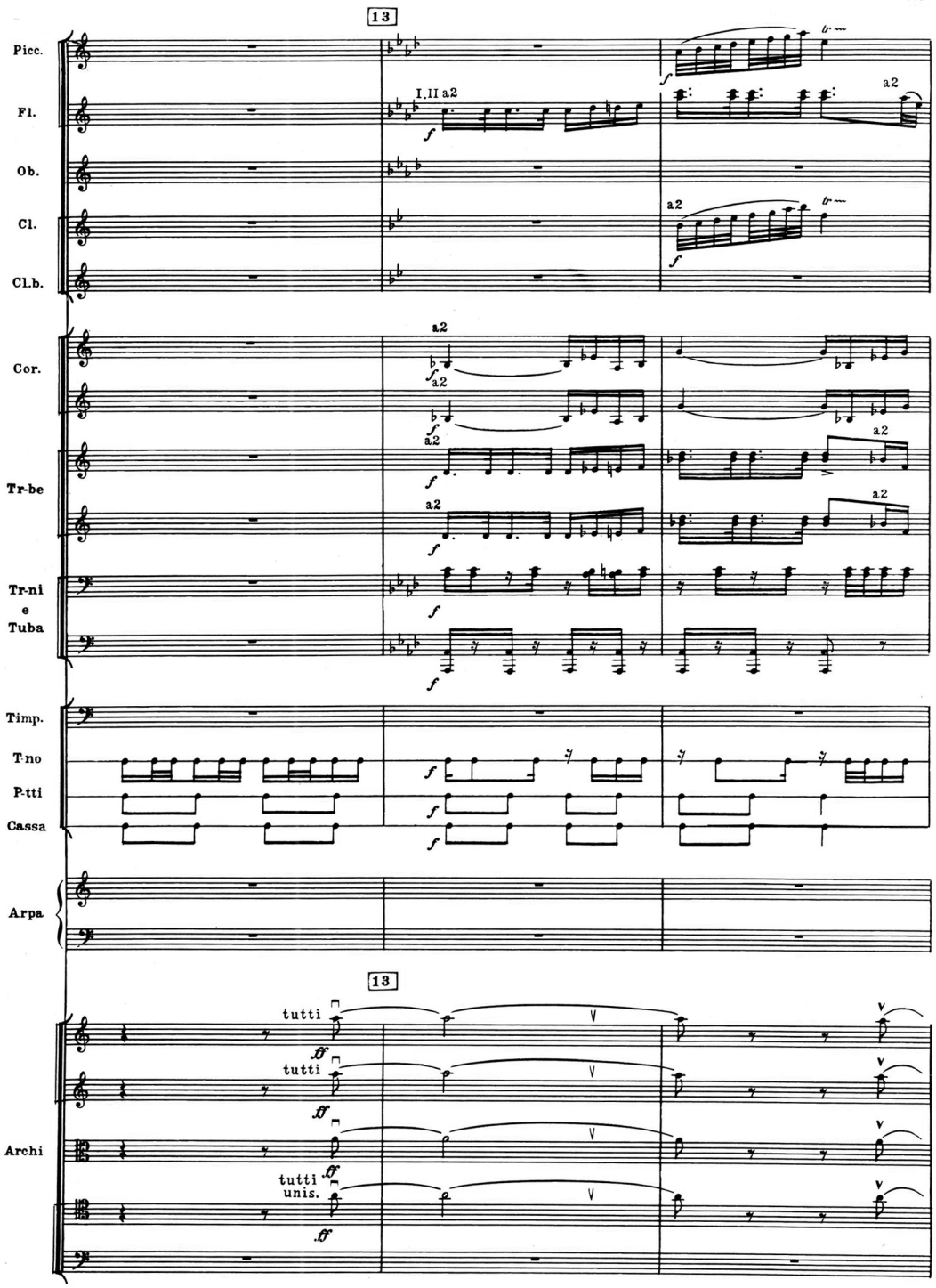
Figure 2. The beginning of the military march from Sulkhan Nasidze's *Pirosmani*, Episode III, mm. 133–135
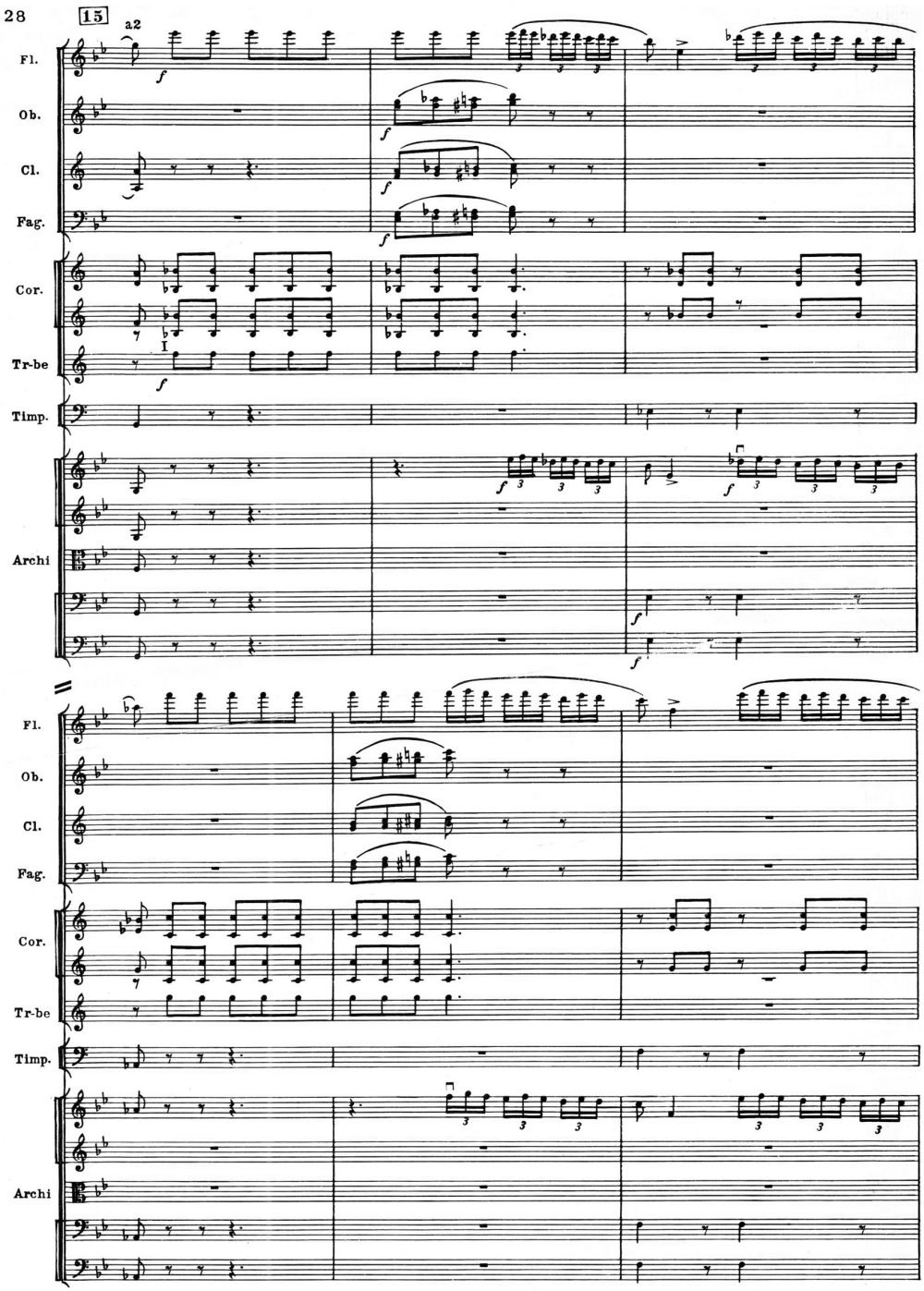
Figure 3. The beginning of the waltz from Sulkhan Nasidze's *Pirosmani*, Episode III, mm. 174–179

In my opinion, the finale of the symphony contains very interesting references. It is well known that during the height of Soviet repression, individuals deemed undesirable by the regime were interrogated in their homes and arrested, or pursued through the streets to be taken into custody, after which they were gathered and transported by train to various locations, where they were either executed or sent to labour camps and colonies. Given what we know of the composer's attitude toward the Soviet regime, I assume that in the fourth episode of the symphony, there is a direct reference to the Soviet repressive machine, which actively hunted down artists, capturing them in the streets and buildings, and sending them by train to their place of execution. In the fifth episode, the imitation of the train serves as yet another poignant reference to this matter. In the finale, the composer incorporates a guitar solo and drums to evoke the ethnic atmosphere of Tbilisi, alluding to the world-famous Georgian primitivist artist who died in loneliness in this multicultural city.

Opera became a source of spiritual nourishment and a cultural hub for Tbilisi's eclectic population in the second half of the 19th century. The excerpt from the Italian opera directly references the musical affinity Georgians showed towards Italian opera following the opening of the Opera Theater in Tbilisi in 1854. Dolidze examines a passage from review of an unknown author published in the *Kavkaz* newspaper on November 22, 1852, which suggests that Tbilisi would soon become an Italian city, as everyone, including the workers, sang in Italian (Dolidze 2004, 337).

According to Kavtaradze, "at the beginning of the 20th century there were, at least, four cultures in Tbilisi: 'Imperial' Russian, European (in the form of both 'western' in general and European subcultures), 'old Tifilis' and Georgian culture" (Kavtaradze 2017, 34). Pirosmani was an iconic artist of Tbilisi, vividly capturing the essence of the city's vibrant, multi-ethnic life through his unique and expressive works. Pirosmani's paintings are primarily depictions of the musical life of the inherently multi-layered and multicultural old Tbilisi. Indeed, in Pirosmani's works, one finds the everyday environment of Tbilisi streets, the life of the Karachokheli[10] and *kinto*,[11] a city of musicians, and musical instruments.

Kavtaradze provides a very interesting explanation of the function of collage in the symphony:

> The category of space and time is revealed in the symphony in the opposition of two musical layers: one layer is the musical material through which the composer creates a real artistic world, and the other layer is the artistic-illusory space, which he creates through the principle of collage. Through collage, not only two spaces are created in the symphony, but also two times—past and present, which are represented by three stylistic models: the march of the Pechory Regiment, the waltz from Donizetti's opera "La Favorita" and the imitation of the sound of the Zurna.[12] (Kavtaradze 2014, 216)

These two collages capture the musical atmosphere surrounding Pirosmani: the bold march of a military regiment noisily parading through the streets and a passage from the popular Italian opera, which was all the rage in Tbilisi at the time. This is how Nasidze creatively applied the European musical collage technique to portray the multiethnic atmosphere of Tbilisi.

2.2. Symphony No. 6, *Passione* (1978)

This work combines the characteristics of the oratorio, symphony, and Passion genres. The composer seeks to draw emotional and even visual parallels between the mourning and burial rituals of the mountainous regions of Georgia and the European Passion genre. As Zhghenti noted, *Passione* is a folk-inspired composition, an interesting example of stylistic synthesis, one that organically combines Baroque and Romantic traditions (Zhghenti 2004, 119).

Since this archaic Georgian ritual was traditionally performed by a men's chorus, the composer revives it by incorporating a male chorus into the first and third parts of the symphony. According to Gogua, the bass tessitura is relevant to the gloomy and meditative nature of the symphony (Gogua 2016, 133). The literary basis for the bass part is drawn from the poems of Vazha-Pshavela and explores themes of vanity and the natural cycle of one life replacing another. The chorus text in parts I and III serves both a commentator's and a sonorous function. To enhance the emotional atmosphere of mourning, Nasidze employs traditional elements of ethnic music from Eastern Georgian mountains, such as the recitative style, the predominance of descending melodic movements, and the characteristics of the so-called mountain modes.

In this way, Nasidze conveyed the mourning ritual of the mountainous region, embodying the intensity of the most painful human experience, through elements of ethnic music.

The idea of composition—depiction of an ancient folk mourning ritual with the monotonous psalmody in the chorus part presented in the form of a Georgian variant of *Lamento*, the ostinato in the orchestra and

[10] A Karachokheli was a traditional Georgian street performer in Tbilisi, entertaining passers-by with folk music and enriching the city's multicultural social and cultural life.

[11] A *kinto* is a term used in Georgia to describe a type of street musician or entertainer, similar to the Karachokheli. *Kinto*s often dance in public spaces, entertaining people. They were an important part of the urban setting of Tbilisi.

[12] The zurna is a traditional wind instrument, widely used in the music of the Middle East, the Caucasus, Central Asia, and parts of the Balkans and Sri Lanka. It is usually accompanied by drum in Armenian, Tbilisian (Georgia), Anatolian, and Assyrian folk music. The zurna typically has a conical wooden body and a double reed, which produces its distinctive sound. The zurna has a limited range of notes but can produce a strong, vibrant sound, making it ideal for outdoor performances or processions. Different regions may have slight variations in the instrument, such as the Turkish zurna, the Georgian zurna, and others, each with slightly different shapes or sizes.

chorus parts, the funeral march and catharsis in the finale—provokes allusions to the Passion genre of the Baroque era.

My interpretation is that the author uses sonorous effects through a funeral march in the third part to establish a connection between the archaic era and modernity, as the main theme of the work remains ever relevant. The timbral dramaturgy, in my opinion, adds more intensity to the presentation of this archaic ritual through symphonic dramaturgy. The trombone part introduces a tragic tone to the march rhythm, the bells suggest the gathering of people for mourning, while a transformed main theme in the oboe part features a catharsis in the finale.

2.3. Symphony No. 7, *Dalai* (1979)

The source of inspiration for this symphony in four episodes also relates back to Georgian ethnic traditions, although the direct impetus came from his attendance at a mountain poetry evening, as argued by Nato Zhghenti (2004, 121). This ethnic tradition was called *Dalaoba,* the ethnic ritual for mourning and commemorating the deceased. It was spread in Tusheti, a mountainous region of Eastern Georgia, and its neighboring Dagestan, Chechnya, and Ingushetia.[13]

This ritual was performed on the anniversary of a deceased person in a responsorial style of singing, in which a soloist, the main mourner *Modalave*, sang a line or phrase, and the congregation or chorus (mourners) responded with a repeated phrase or melody. *Modalave*, riding on a horse called the "horse of the soul," mourned in a recitative style. He was surrounded by five riders, known as *Amkolebi* ("followers" in Georgian), who alternated with him in unison. The text of the chorus refrain can be translated as follows: "Sing Dala, you riders, Dalaoba is very hard."

This folk tradition of responsorial singing between the mourner and a unison chorus is symbolically reimagined by Nasidze in symphonic dramaturgy as the alternation of different orchestral groups. In my interpretation, the composer uses the timbre of the trombone and elements of the aleatoric technique to convey a gloomy image of death (Episode II, mm. 71–72; the Episode III, mm. 186–190, see figures 4 and 5). I suggest that, in contrast, the composer employs the timbre of the celesta to symbolize the childish and innocent soul of the deceased.
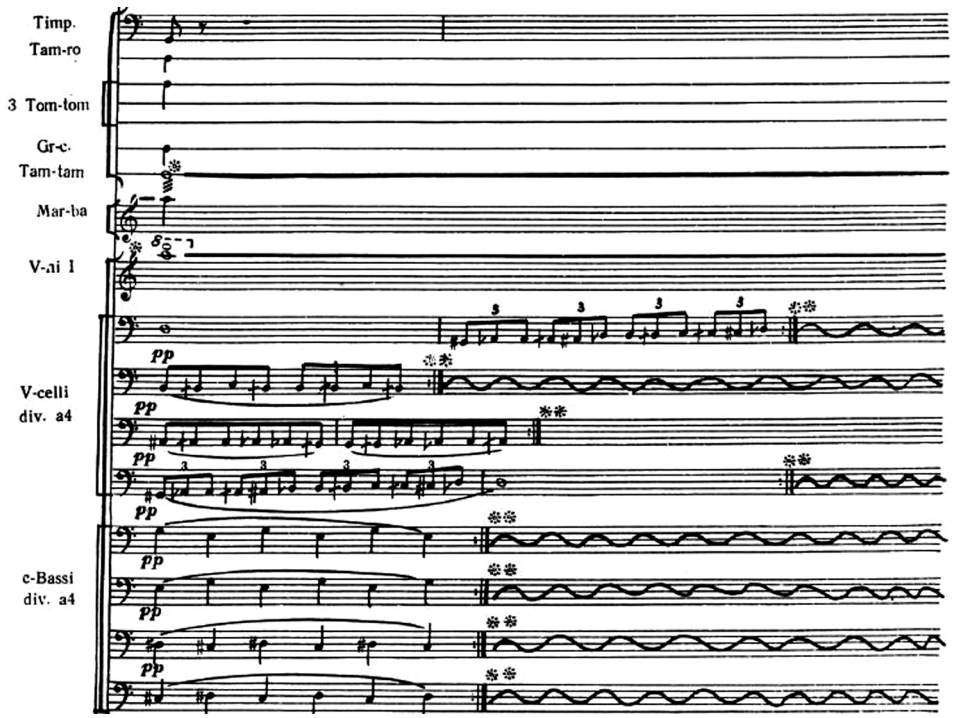
Figure 4. Sulkhan Nasidze's *Dalai*. An excerpt from Episode II, mm. 71–72

[13] Dagestan, Chechnya, and Ingushetia are republics in southern Russia, each with its own distinct culture, language, and history.

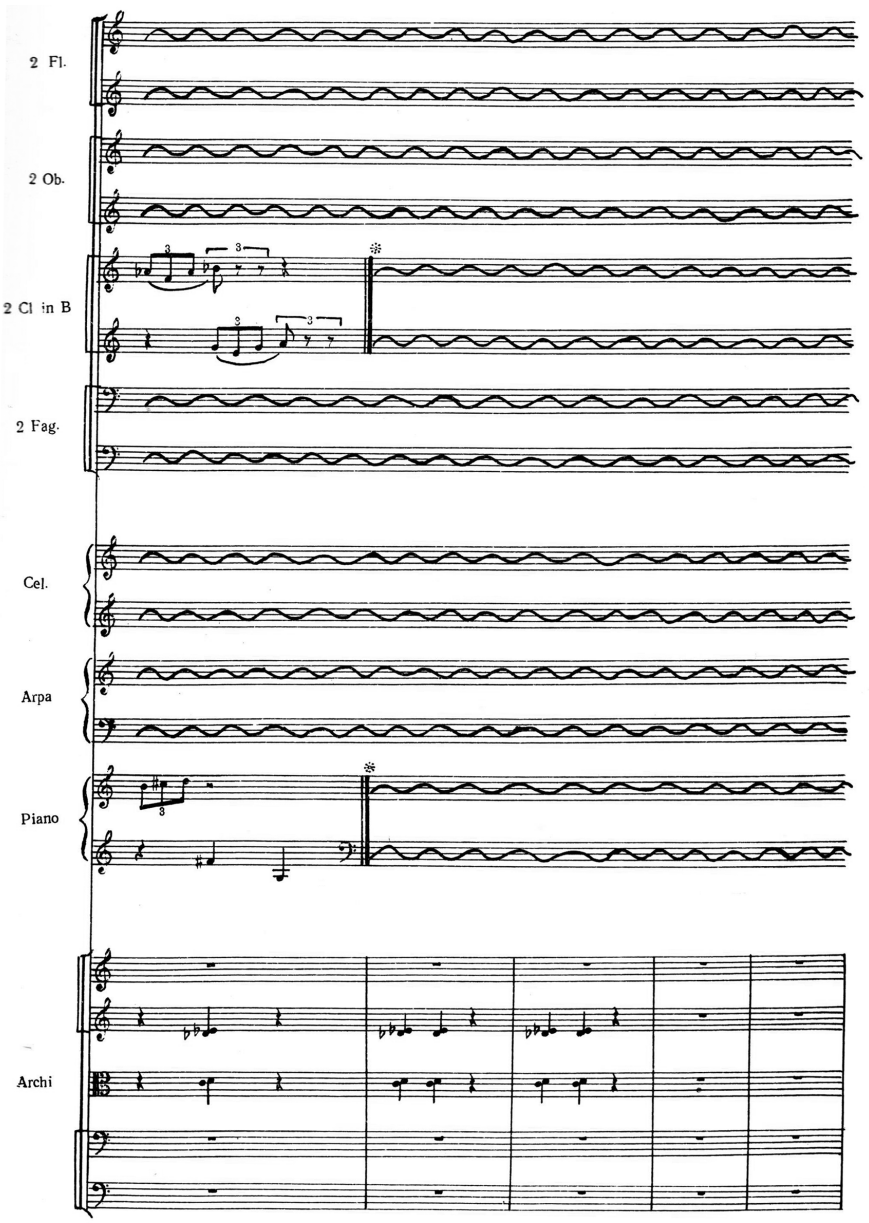

Figure 5. Sulkhan Nasidze's *Dalai*. An excerpt from Episode III, mm. 186–190

As Nasidze's penchant for vivid musical illustration is a well known feature of his compositional style, in my interpretation, in the fourth episode, he conveys the depletion of vital energy and the gradual cessation of the human pulse. And in the coda, the chromatic movements and the final E major chord reference the passage of the soul into the corridor and the light at its end. The threshold between death and life has been crossed. Through revival of this ritual, Nasidze presents a different interpretation of death—the physical death of the body is seen as an opportunity to enter a realm of mysticism. Consequently, the human, driven by curiosity, even seeks it out.

In my interpretation, Nasidze used this ethnic ritual, the purpose of which was precisely to show people what life and death are, to convey the significance of universal existential themes, such as death and eternal life, to the inhabitants of the Georgian mountain region, and to highlight how deeply the mountain people value the fate of an exceptional individual who endures a difficult and painful life. I cannot disagree with Zhghenti that reviving the ritual was not the composer's goal in itself, but rather the inner essence it embodies (Zhghenti 2004, 121). By depicting the arduous journey a person must endure—through death, mourning, and eternal remembrance—this passage suggests that the composer seeks to connect Georgian music with the European Passion genre in a meaningful way.

Judging by the example of this composition, I suggest that integrating the characteristics of Georgian national mountainous folk music with the musical traditions of Baroque Passions and European or Russian symphonism demonstrates how national traditions can operate within the broader framework of European musical heritage.

The significance of this and Nasidze's earlier symphonies in Georgian music lies in the composer's effort to revive national ritual traditions within the symphonic genre. In my view, through the intensive resuscitation of these rituals, Nasidze sought to renew the concept of the Georgian national symphony and to create original genre models. In this respect, his work had a profound influence on the contemporary multimedia project Symphony-Exhibition "Khma" (2018–2022) by Eka Chabashvili, a representative of the Georgian post-avant-garde. According to the composer, she drew inspiration from several sources, including Nasidze's ideas, when developing this project.

Conclusion

What new perspectives did the composer bring to Georgian music and particularly the symphony genre through his Symphonic Triad? His interest in national rituals went beyond their ethnic culture features; he explored the philosophical dimensions of rituals, which encode universal human dilemmas—the antinomy of life and death, and the problem of human existence and nonexistence.

Through the course of the research it was determined that:

—The development of Georgian art music reflects a synthesis of national traditions and European compositional techniques, creating a unique musical identity. Rooted in the rich *a cappella* tradition and influenced by Georgian folk songs and Orthodox chants, this music played a key role in awakening national consciousness during the 19th-century nationalist revival. Despite the constraints of Soviet ideology in the mid-20th century, Georgian composers used folklore as a medium to assert their national identity. From the 1960s, increased artistic freedom allowed them to creatively reinterpret folklore, showcasing individuality and enriching both Georgian and European music traditions.

—Nasidze's symphonies masterfully integrate Georgian mountain folklore and contemporary composing techniques, reflecting themes of life, death, and universal human experience. His music transforms traditional rituals and melodies into profound, globally resonant narratives, combining philosophical depth with a cinematic, programmatic approach. He expanded the cultural boundaries of Georgian ethnic traditions by framing them within the context of universal issues. The first symphony of the triad honors the Georgian painter's tragic life, using collage techniques to depict Tbilisi's multicultural essence and the tension between artistic genius and societal repression. The next symphony blends Georgian mountain mourning rituals and Baroque-era Passion elements. The male chorus, ethnic modes, and orchestral timbres evoke themes of grief and catharsis, connecting archaic traditions with modernity. Symphony No. 7 draws on the Georgian ritual *Dalaoba*, integrating its responsorial singing and symbolic elements with European Passion genres and symphonic traditions. Through carefully considered choices of orchestral timbres and dramaturgy, which are innovative for Nasidze's compositional style, the composer explores profound existential themes—death, mourning, and eternal memory—reinterpreting national traditions within a broader European musical context.

—In terms of the use of Georgian ethnic rituals, Nasidze had a great influence on the multimedia project, the symphony-exhibition *Khma* by Eka Chabashvili. This hereditary connection is evident in how Nasidze seeks to highlight the national consciousness rooted in ancient rituals, while Chabashvili similarly aims to revive a Georgian pagan healing ritual. In both cases, the symphonic genre undergoes transformation to serve as the medium for their creative experiments.

Thus, Nasidze created an immense stimulus for the subsequent development of national music. By juxtaposing Georgian national musical traditions with Western music techniques, he contributed to positioning Georgian music within a broader, particularly European, context. More so, he expanded the cultural boundaries of Georgian regional ethnic traditions by framing them within the context of universal issues. He heightened the importance of the ethnic within the context of his time, incorporating it into a modern compositional framework. Nasidze once remarked wittily: "While mastering the technical apparatus created by various styles of 20th-century music and adopting new compositional techniques is achievable by many composers, discovering a new world of emotions is the fate only of individuals" (Nasidze 2023a, 64).

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Kartvelų etninių ritualų ir europinės muzikos tradicijų sintezė Sulkhano Nasidze'ės simfoninėje triadoje: tautinės tapatybės ir universalių temų tyrinėjimas

Santrauka

Sulkhanas Nasidze'ė yra vienas ryškiausių kartvelų kompozitorių, kurio muzika persmelkta etniškumo estetika ir filosofija, išlaikant santykį su europinėmis muzikos tradicijomis. Jo simfonijos grindžiamos kartvelų archajiškų liaudies ritualų sinteze su europinio vėlyvojo romantizmo elementais (simfoninės poemos bruožais) bei XX a. muzikos tradicijomis. Šie etniniai ritualai kompozitoriui buvo svarbūs todėl, kad juose užkoduotos universalios žmogiškosios dilemos, pavyzdžiui, gyvenimo ir mirties antinomija, išliekanti aktuali visais laikais.

Tyrimo objektas – Nasidze'ės simfoninė triada *Pirosmani*, *Passione* ir *Dalai*. Straipsnyje nagrinėjama, kaip Nasidze'ė sintetina etninės muzikos elementus ir europinės muzikos principus, kokie kartvelų ritualų filosofiniai aspektai pastebimi kompozitoriaus kūryboje. Tyrimo tikslams įgyvendinti keliami šie uždaviniai: 1) nustatyti, kurie etninės kultūros sluoksniai yra aktualūs XX a. kompozitoriui, ir 2) išanalizuoti, kaip etninės muzikos ir liaudies tradicijų elementai gali būti integruojami, transformuojami ir perinterpretuojami šiuolaikinėje kompozicijoje. Straipsnyje pateikiama naujų įžvalgų, nes Nasidze'ės simfoninė triada iki šiol nebuvo analizuota šiuo aspektu. Taikant istorinio ir lyginamojo tyrimo metodus daroma išvada, kad etniniai elementai yra esminė Nasidze'ės stilistikos dalis, suteikianti jo muzikai ryšio su nacionaline tradicija pojūtį.

Išvadose pabrėžiama, kad *Pirosmani* dedikuotas vienišam, nuo visuomenės izoliuotam menininkui, kurio vidiniai dvasiniai išgyvenimai atsiskleidžia daugiatautės Tbilisio muzikinės aplinkos fone. *Passione* kompozitorius siekia sukurti emocines ir vaizdines paraleles tarp Sakartvelo kalnų regionų gedulo ir laidojimo ritualų bei europinio pasijos žanro. Kadangi šie ritualai tradiciškai atliekami vyrų choro, kompozitorius juos aktualizuoja į simfonijos faktūrą įtraukdamas vyrų chorą. Siekdamas sustiprinti gedulo atmosferą, Nasidze'ė pasitelkia Rytų Sakartvelo kalnų regionams būdingus etninės raiškos elementus – rečitatyvinį giedojimo stilių ir vietinių dainų dermes. Kūrinyje *Dalai* kompozitorius siekia perteikti Tušetijos (Sakartvelo kalnų regiono)

laidotuvių ritualą, tradiciškai atliekamą mirusiojo mirties metinių proga. Liaudies tradicijai būdingas responsorinis giedojimas tarp gedinčiojo ir unisonu giedančio choro Nasidze'ės simfoninėje dramaturgijoje simboliškai perinterpretuojamas kaip skirtingų orkestro grupių kaita. Derindamas nacionalinės kalnų liaudies muzikos bruožus su baroko ir romantizmo muzikos tradicijomis, Nasidze'ė siekia nacionalinę tradiciją interpretuoti platesniame europinės muzikinės kultūros kontekste.

Nacionaliniai ritualai kompozitorių domino ne vien kaip etninė medžiaga, bet ir kaip priemonė reflektuoti juose slypinčias universalias žmogiškąsias gyvenimo ir mirties temas. Integruodamas etninę kultūrą į savo epochos meninį kontekstą jis suteikė lokaliems reiškiniams platesnę, universalesnę reikšmę. Nasidze'ė ypač siekė atgaivinti kartvelų liaudies muzikos ir archajiškų ritualų bruožus šiuolaikinės kompozicijos kontekste, taip išplėsdamas Sakartvelo akademinės muzikos kultūrines ribas. Sintetindamas etninės ir europinės muzikos elementus, kompozitorius suformavo savitą kompozicinį stilių ir originalią simfoninės kūrybos koncepciją.

Finland

Sanna Iitti

Klezmer References in Clarinet Concerto by Kimmo Hakola

Abstract. My article examines references to klezmer music in Finnish composer Kimmo Hakola's (b. 1958) Clarinet Concerto (2001). I shall suggest that Hakola continues in the footsteps of 19th- and 20th-century Orientalists, constructing an imaginary East in musical terms. I shall reveal that his approach to klezmer music is fictitious and highly stylized. He invokes stylistic aspects of klezmer clarinet playing and utilizes scalar passages that suggest Middle-Eastern influences. However, his constructions are always original inventions instead of quotations of real klezmer music and his treatment is that of a Western Romantic. The main research question of the study is: what is the nature of Kimmo Hakola's klezmer references and what kinds of dramaturgical reasoning do they exhibit? We should also ask: what kind of an Orientalist is Kimmo Hakola, whose stylized invocations of klezmer playing lead one to asking about the composer's relationship with Jewish and Middle Eastern cultures?

I shall assess the nature of Hakola's exoticism in terms of examining writings by John M. MacKenzie, Ralph P. Locke and Edward Said, and shall argue that Hakola's application of Orientalism is imbued by a Romantic undertow, something that makes his music appealing and easy to listen to. Moreover, I shall regard the heterogeneous stylistic elements that the concerto incorporates and shall suggest that besides klezmer music these include the jazz ballad, Mozart's Clarinet Concerto and Bartók's Concerto for Orchestra. I shall discuss Hakola's standpoint regarding the distribution of power between him and klezmer music, and shall suggest that he does not adopt a patronizing attitude towards it. Instead of taking a colonialistic approach, his composition reveals curiosity about and respect for this traditional Jewish folk music.

Keywords: Kimmo Hakola, clarinet, klezmer, Orientalism.

1. Introduction

Finnish composer Kimmo Hakola was born in 1958. He studied at the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki under Einojuhani Rautavaara and Eero Hämeenniemi and entered the limelight at the end of the 1980s after his success at the Unesco Composers' Rostrum.[1] Hakola's music is known for its exciting dramaturgy and imagination. The Clarinet Concerto was finished in 2001, inspired by the virtuosity of clarinetist Kari Kriikku. It immediately became a huge success and has been performed several times since the premiere. Kimmo Korhonen characterizes the fourty-minute work as follows: "The panoply of styles in the concerto is complemented by a broad palette of expression, extending from Naivist pathos to irony and from passionate drama to side-splitting Beethovenian humour" (Korhonen 2005, 5).

In what follows, I shall examine Hakola's Clarinet Concerto as an Orientalistic work, arguing that he continued in the footsteps of 19th- and 20th-century Romantic artists who depicted the East using music, paintings, and literature. It is quite unusual for a Finnish composer to engage the cultural Other in his or her works, but this is exactly what Hakola has done in his Clarinet Concerto. It prompts one to consider the meanings induced by his approach, suggesting the need to uncover motivations for his deliberate exoticism that stands far apart from the mainstream of Finnish contemporary compositions.

The main research question of the study is: what is the nature of Kimmo Hakola's klezmer references and what kinds of dramaturgical reasons are there to them? We should also ask: what kind of an Orientalist is Kimmo Hakola, whose invocations of klezmer playing lead one to asking about the composer's relationship with Jewish and Middle Eastern cultures? How does his approach relate to the traditional power structure between East and West in which the West is the subjugator and East—the subject (see for instance Gandhi 1998, Jazeed 2019, Kaiwar 2014, Loomba 1998, McEwan 2019/2009, Nayar 2010 and Young 2020/2003)?

The Oriental influence in Clarinet Concerto is most apparent in its third and fourth movements, which reveal references to traditional Jewish klezmer music. I shall suggest that those allusions are nevertheless fictitious and highly stylized. Based on their examination, I shall propose that Hakola's treatment is an original commentary on ancient Jewish music, one that exploits the many possibilities of the clarinet as an instrument. I also suggest that Hakola's exoticism is imbued by a Romantic undertow, something that makes his music appealing and easy to listen to.

The main method of the study is style analysis. I shall examine Hakola's stylistic influences in the concerto and shall argue that besides klezmer music these heterogeneous elements include the jazz ballad, W. A. Mozart's Clarinet Concerto (1791) and Béla Bartók's Concerto for Orchestra (1943). I shall also discuss Hakola's

[1] In 1987 he won the Rostrum with his String Quartet and in 1991 with his piece Capriole for cello and clarinet. Hakola's music has been performed at several major music events and festivals, and concerts dedicated to his works have been held, e.g., in Los Angeles and New York.

concerto's place in the composer's output, comparing it with his other pieces that contain references to klezmer music such as *Diamond Street* and *loco* for solo clarinet and the Clarinet Quintet.

In addition, I shall take into account Edward W. Said's notions of Orientalism (Said 1994/1978), considering his claims about the implications related to power distribution in various Orientalistic representations. We of course need to keep asking: what is Hakola's relationship with the cultural Other that he invokes and engages through his music? Relying on the ideas of Jonathan D. Bellman (2011), Ralph P. Locke (2009), as well as on my own analysis, I shall propose that Hakola's approach is not a patronizing one but that of a curious Orientalist, who is eager to learn from other cultures and cherish their traditions.

2. On Hakola's treatment of exotic materials in Clarinet Concerto

In what follows, I discuss Hakola's engagement with klezmer music in Clarinet Concerto (2001). Firstly, I will analyze exotic traits in the concerto's fourth movement and compare it with a traditional klezmer piece "Odessa Bulgar." Next, I will discuss klezmer and other allusions in the first, second, and third movements.

2.1. The fourth movement "Khasene": A Jewish Celebration

Hakola's Clarinet Concerto is built in terms of a clear-cut overall form with dramatically shifting sections, which present major contrasts and constitutes an effective dramaturgy. The orchestration is block-like. Hakola has called his concerto's fourth movement "Khasene," a Yiddish word for wedding. Hakola's earlier compositions such as *Diamond Street* Op. 34 (1999) for solo clarinet reveal his ongoing interest in klezmer playing, something that he relates in his foreword of the score (Hakola 2009). Accordingly, the concerto's fourth movement is associated with the frolicking of Jewish folk and the music making of a klezmer band. Hakola begins the movement with a fifteen-second extract of taped noise of a crowd, followed by two words shouted by the trumpetists and the French horn players: "hai maestre". In Italian this means "you've got teachers" but in somewhat twisted English (as pronounced) it suggests a greeting: "hi maestro." This comment could be understood as encouragement to play for the klezmer group's leader.

Edward Said observes in his book *Orientalism* regarding Western conceptions of the Orient that

> Orientalism is premised upon exteriority, that is, on the fact that the Orientalist, poet or scholar, makes the Orient speak, describes the Orient, renders its mysteries plain for and to the West… The principal product of this exteriority is of course representation… My analysis of the Orientalist text therefore places emphasis on the evidence, which is by no means invisible, for such representations *as representations*, not as "natural" depictions of the Orient. This evidence is found just as prominently in the so-called truthful text (histories, philological analyses, political treatises) as in the avowedly artistic (i.e., openly imaginative) text. The things to look at are style, figures of speech, setting, narrative devices, historical and social circumstances, *not* the correctness of the representation nor its fidelity to some great original. (Said 1994/1978, 20–21)

Yet Hakola makes the Orient speak—to consider Said's description above—only partially, while klezmer music is transnational by nature and also incorporates Western influences. But Hakola's approach to the Oriental soundscape is akin to the stance of the Orientalist whom Said describes in the preceding extract. Hakola creates a representation of the Orient, transmitting his artistic impressions thereof, and engaging himself in transcultural composition. His imaginings are characteristically Romantic and maybe even a little bit nostalgic. The klezmer references play an important part in his composition, as I shall show in the following.

2.2. Invocation of the klezmer clarinet

The main stylistic influence in the concerto's fourth movement is klezmer music. To paraphrase Simo Muir, it was originally instrumental music, which was played in Jewish weddings, on festive holidays such as Hanukka and Purim, and as part of various religious occasions. Eastern European klezmer music obtained influences from old Central European dance music that had by the 19th century fused with the modes of Ashkenazi Jews' synagogue prayers and the tradition of *niginies* ("wordless songs") of Hasidic Jews. Aside from these influences, further ones were obtained from Greek-Turkish dance music (Muir 2006, 25).

Klezmer became the central instrumental music of Ashkenazi Jews that also involved virtuosic improvisation. In present-day klezmer music, the clarinet is the central melodic instrument along with the violin. It became established in klezmer bands by the middle of the 19th century. According to ethnomusicologist Zev Feldman, the typical klezmer *kapelye* (klezmer ensemble) that time involved the cimbalom and the bass alongside the clarinet and the violin (Feldman 2016, 111). Klezmer bands have ranged from large orchestras

to small ensembles, consisting mainly of woodwind, brass, and string instruments. After a period of decline in the popularity of traditional klezmer music, it has again been revived starting in the mid-1970s, especially in Europe and the USA.

Klezmer music involves various modes. Klezmer musicians employ melodies familiar from Jewish religious practice and the impact of the human voice is significant. Their music involves stylistic traits such as *krekhts*, which according to Henry Sapoznik "translates literally as 'sigh' or 'moan,' one of several borrowings from the cantorial tradition" (Sapoznik 1999, 8–9).

Klezmer music often entails a laughing and/or crying sound (Sapoznik 1999, 15), and is rich with various ornaments. Patricia Pierce Card describes klezmer compositions as follows:

> In a klezmer composition, the melody is the most important element. The simplicity of the harmony and bass line gives the performance a powerful interpretation. But it is the ornamentation played by the lead instrument(s) that bestows each performance a distinctive sound. Ornamentation should be tasteful and not overdone… Quick trills, mordents, bent pitches and glissandi are all common but each performer embellishes according to personal preference. Many of the ornaments are intended to mimic the voice … Imitated laughing … and crying are often incorporated as well even though there is no standard system of notation for some of these sounds … (Pierce Card 2002, 22)

The opening of the fourth movement of Hakola's concerto is slow and introductory in nature. The melody of the solo clarinet is nasally coloured and presents many of the characteristics of klezmer clarinet playing, such as glissandi, trills, and improvisation. After the start, Hakola creates an effective, vivacious show starred by the solo clarinetist, making him or her play a motif which involves progressions imbued with traditional Western markers of the Orient. These scalar progressions end with a long D of the first octave in mm. 29–30 and are accompanied by hypnotic rhythms by the tambourine and drums. The motif involves a distinctive use of augmented seconds (figure 1).

Ralph Locke characterizes this interval as follows: "…the melodic interval that was and is one of Western music's most unmistakable markers of Easternness" (Locke 2009, 162). Thus Hakola compellingly incorporates traditional signifiers of the East in his music.
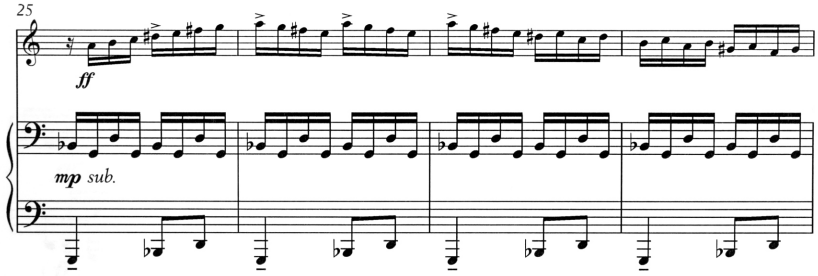
Figure 1. Kimmo Hakola: Clarinet Concerto, IV: mm. 25–28

The motif circulates into the strings, being accompanied by the trombones and the tuba. It is spun into lengthy progressions from the low to the high register. The taped noise at the movement's opening that ties it seamlessly to the third movement returns in measure 129, beginning the rapid motion: the energetic motif saturated with augemented seconds recurs as performed by the solo clarinet.

The core of the fourth movement is the slow Adagio section that begins in measure 73 and is in G minor. In this section, the clarinet plays a simple, plaintive tonal melody (figure 2).
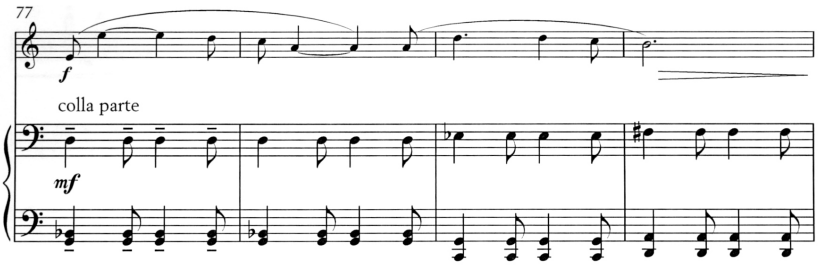
Figure 2. Kimmo Hakola: Clarinet Concerto, IV: mm. 77–80

This languishing melody is restated in the high register with the command to improvise in mm. 101–124. The sense of a klezmer clarinetist playing a traditional melody is thereby induced by simple and subtle means. This tonal section and the whole fourth movement presents a major contrast to the concerto's first movement, which is Modernist in character and does not contain any tonal elements.

The command to improvise reoccurs towards the end of the movement starting in m. 194 with the command "improvise birds" and continuing until m. 210. Thus the soloist is invited to invent sections which resemble bird song, something that locates the joyous festivities in the midst of a rural landscape.

2.3. Exotic traits in "Khasene"

Hakola's concerto's fourth movement evokes the sense of a Jewish wedding musically, with the crowd's noise that suggests the gathering of the guests, and with the playing of the virtuoso clarinetist on the scene. As observed, klezmer music has typically been played in various rituals such as weddings and Hakola's rendition points to that tradition.

The exotic traits are obvious in "Khasene." This music falls in the paradigm which Ralph Locke calls the Exotic-Style Paradigm. This paradigm "assumes that music is, by compositional intent, exotic—and that it registers as exotic to the listener—if (and, often, only if) it incorporates specific musical signifiers of Otherness" (Locke 2009, 48).

In "Khasene," those signifiers include scalar passages that incorporate the frequent use of the augmented second, the strong rhythmic background pounding of the drum that begins along with the fast progressions after the slow opening, and the imitation of a virtuoso klezmer clarinet player who improvises and creates typically nasal and shrill sounds, grace notes, trills, and glissandi in the high register.

2.4. The traditional klezmer: "Odessa Bulgar"

If we reflect on examples of real klezmer clarinet playing, we may be able to track down elements that are imaginary in Hakola's rendition. Let us for instance consider a traditional klezmer dance piece titled "Odessa Bulgar." Zev Feldman describes the dance type *bulgar* as follows: "… it was originally a dance for the young, with a fast tempo… The bulgar represented Jewish klezmer musicians interacting with the Gentile world, yet creating a Jewish meaning for both transitional and transnational repertories in accordance with a working-class, but traditional, Jewish worldview" (Feldman 2016, 349).

"Odessa Bulgar" has been performed by, among others, the klezmer-group The Burning Bush.[2] The similarities between the quickly moving sections in "Khasene" and "Odessa Bulgar" include the nasal sound of the clarinet in the high register, the embellished melodic figuration, trills, slides, rolling drum rhythmics, and sections based on improvisation. Yet Hakola's melodic lines are built into longer arches, comprising extensive scalar passages, and his employment of the clarinet involves an exceptionally wide ambitus that surpasses that which occurs in "Odessa Bulgar."

2.5. First, second, and third movements: further allusions

Let us now look at the concerto's other movements more closely. Kimmo Korhonen describes the first movement as follows: "The opening movement is dominated by the aggressive toccata-like pounding typical of Hakola. Here, the struggle between soloist and orchestra is at its most violent. Towards the end of the movement there is a virtuoso cadenza which begins like a classical etude but subsequently takes in other styles too" (Korhonen 2005, 5).

Korhonen continues to outline the second movement, which is titled "Hidden Songs," as follows:

> The slow movement … is a soaring, melodic and captivating piece of music. Hakola has cited the slow movement of Mozart's Clarinet Concerto as a remote influence. The clarinet is joined by a solo violin in singing the "hidden songs" of the movement's title. Towards the end, following a Romantic outburst from the orchestra, a section resembling a slow rock-jazz ballad emerges; Hakola has mentioned Sting in connection with this section. (Korhonen 2005, 5)

As Korhonen's description suggests, Hakola's Clarinet Concerto is rich with a heterogeneous set of allusions. The Mozartean influence in the second movement that he detects is most evident in the *Adagietto amoroso* section that begins in measure 15. It is suggested by the consonant and well-shaped melodic line of the

[2] "Odessa Bulgar" can be listened to on YouTube (see Traditional 2016).

solo clarinet, which is contrasted to the even orchestral accompaniment background and progresses gradually through different registers. At the beginning of the extensive cadence that ends the first movement there is also a passage suggestive of Mozart (Hakola 2001b, 29, mm. 342–43).

The second movement of Hakola's concerto also invokes traits suggestive of popular music. The final section of the movement that begins in m. 134 (*Andante amoroso*) introduces a simple, melodious tune for the solo clarinet that is set in A minor. The accompaniment is built around recurrent cadential harmonies: tonic, lowered seventh degree, subdominant, dominant. Before this section, the orchestral accompaniment harmony is built around seventh chords whose dissonant core consists of augmented triads. The final section elaborates the simple A minor melody, which develops in the high register into a rhythmically complex jazz ballad melody intensified by *forte fortissimo* volumes and flutter-tonguing (m. 169).

The third movement, which is titled *Allegro farara*, is according to Korhonen "a wild and whirling Oriental dance in a quirky 7/8 rhythm" (Korhonen 2005, 5). Hakola has used a motif from his own work *Diamond Street* Op. 34 for clarinet solo in this movement. Figure 3a presents this motif, which begins in m. 23 with the marking *con gioia* (with joy):
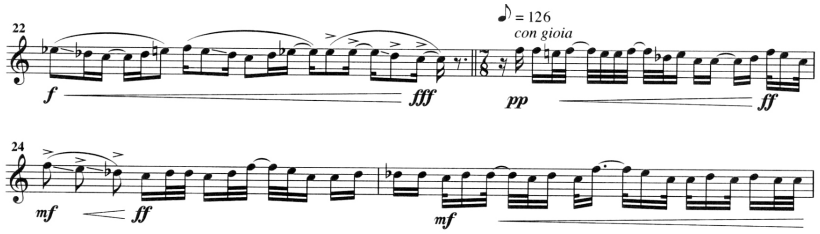
Figure 3a. Kimmo Hakola: *Diamond Street*, mm. 22–25

This restlessly moving main motif that originates in *Diamond Street* opens the concerto's third movement, being presented by the solo clarinet (figure 3b), and is spun into long melodic chains set into intricate rhythmic patterns that consist of fast syncopation. The 7/8 time signature induces an irregular, angular progression.

Figure 3b. Kimmo Hakola: Clarinet Concerto, III: mm. 2–5

Allegro farara further introduces the interplay of various groups of instruments in a manner that associates with the end of the second movement of Béla Bartók's Concerto for Orchestra, which is called *Giuoco delle coppie* (Game of Pairs). Like Bartók's setting, *Allegro farara* features couplings of wind instruments. Pairs such as the clarinets and the trumpets, the oboes and the clarinets as well as the oboes and the trumpets are being introduced and they present the opening motif in turns.

The movement's middle section (mm. 79–113) involves the solo clarinet playing rapid and rhythmically complex ornamental passages across the registers and especially in the high register as accompanied by a Turkish drum. This renders a shrill sound for the setting, which is characterized by heavy accents and *fff* dynamics in the clarinet part. This section connotes klezmer virtuoso's improvised playing, inducing a sense of the exotic. The orchestral tutti takes over in measure 142 with the violins, the high woodwinds and the trumpet repeating the main motif in unison.

3. Clarinet Concerto in the context of Hakola's output

Hakola's Clarinet Concerto was preceded by the aforementioned *Diamond Street*, a seven-minute piece for solo clarinet that seems like a preliminary sketch for it. This work was finished two years before Clarinet Concerto, in 1999. Even earlier, in 1995, Hakola had composed *loco*[3] for clarinet solo that features his characteristic stylized Orientalism at several points. The third composition that contains exotic traits is Clarinet Quintet, written in 1997 for the Crusell Music Festival held annually in the Finnish coastal town Uusikaupunki.

3.1. *Diamond Street* and *loco*

Diamond Street revolves around simulation of klezmer clarinet playing. On the opening page of the score, Hakola reflects on his trip to Antwerp and the ideas that it had invoked, stating:

> While musing upon Antwerp and the clarinet, I began to see a more and more vivid picture in my mind's eye of a lonely Jew dressed in black playing the clarinet as he wanders slowly down the [D]iamond street … The music is an allusion to the Klezmer tradition of Eastern European Jewish folk music, so all the techniques familiar to this tradition (glissandos, grace notes and singing the same notes while playing) are permissible.[4] (Hakola 2009)

Clarinet Concerto's idiom of klezmer clarinet playing originates in *Diamond Street*, which presents frequent glissandi and exploits both the low and high registers of the clarinet in full in terms of ornamental figuration. A sensitive treatment of the clarinet that entails detailed nuances characterizes this virtuosic piece.

The earliest point in *loco* for clarinet solo that features exotic influences occurs at fifty-three seconds after the start of the piece and continues until it has lasted one minute and fifty seconds.[5] This point seems like an evocation of the thematic that becomes more prevalent as the piece progresses. Like in Clarinet Concerto, the allusions to the Orient consist of fastly moving ornamental scalar passages that suggest non-Western influence.

The real beginning of the exoticist treatment in *loco* occurs around thirteen minutes from the start, and this approach continues until the end of the twenty-minute piece. Furthermore, at many points in both *loco* and the concerto the lingering, slowly-developing curves of the melody are imbued with glissandi and nasal sounds that colour the clarinet's intonations. The sound world thus evokes the sense of the Middle East.

3.2. Clarinet Quintet and *Capriole*

Clarinet Quintet (1997) suggests what Ralph Locke calls s*ubmerged exoticism*. He describes: "By this term, I mean the tendency (in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries) for general musical style to incorporate distinctive scales, harmonies, orchestral colors, and other features that had previously been associated with exotic realms" (Locke 2009, 217). This characterization seems useful also regarding present-day compositions that like Clarinet Concerto present tonal and Romantic elements.

In the second movement of Hakola's Quintet titled "Meditation" there is a lengthy section that smoothly incorporates exotic tone colours, suggesting a transcultural soundscape. It begins in measure 52 with the tempo indication *Andante*. The clarinet part at this point is equipped with the command "Alla Klezmer (gliss. e. vibr. ad. lib.)," which means "in the manner of klezmer with glissandi and vibrato *ad libitum*." This simulation of klezmer music lasts until the end of the section in m. 77. It entails glissandi and shrill sounds in the clarinet's high register as well as cackle-like sounds. Like in real klezmer music, there are commands

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[3] Antti Häyrynen describes the various meanings of the word *loco* as follows: "Firstly, it is a musical term referring to a return to normal after a temporary performing instruction; secondly, it is a word meaning a place or location. In Spanish, it means 'crazy,' which is also a relevant meaning." See Häyrynen (2002, 4).

[4] The English translation of the passage is by Susan Sinisalo.

[5] I have regrettably not had access to the score of *loco*. The recording I have listened to is Kimmo Hakola: *Clarinet Quintet*, *loco*, *Capriole*. Helsinki: Ondine CD ODE 960-2 (2002). The clarinetist featured on this recording is Kari Kriikku.

to "speak" with the instrument (*parlando*) starting in measure 66 and continued in measure 70. The exotic-sounding clarinet is accompanied by a slowly progressing chordal texture played by the strings that induces late Romantic connotations.

In this section, exotic materials have been seamlessly combined with a rather traditional harmony. As suggested above, simulations of klezmer clarinet playing are also manifest in the third and especially the fourth movement of Clarinet Concerto, and in the latter those simulations are in a lengthy section supported by a tonal harmonic background.

Capriole for bass clarinet and cello (1991) also contains exotic references. It is situated in the latter part of the eight-minute piece, which Antti Häyrynen critically describes as follows: "when the listener has finally managed to find a focus in the music, the flow is interrupted by a fantastic scene where the composer dishes out a generous helping of pseudo-Mongolian folk music" (Häyrynen 2002, 4). Hakola's transcultural style deviates from the mainstream of Finnish contemporary music, which is apparently why his work invokes such critical responses.

4. Discussion: Hakola's Orientalistic vision

Hakola's klezmer invocations could be characterized as a tribute to the compositional possibilities of the clarinet, which encourages improvisation and virtuosic displays from the clarinet player. Clarinet Concerto embraces the multifaceted history of the clarinet with its Mozart-citations and with its jazz ballad allusions. The composer's handling of the orchestra includes the effective use of the harp and the percussion. The latter's arsenal of instruments comprises the xylophone, tambourine, triangle, bells, and the tamtam.

Edward Said has stated that "[e]mpirical data about the Orient or about any of its parts count for very little; what matters and is decisive is what I have been calling the Orientalist vision, a vision by no means confined to the professional scholar, but rather the common possession of all who have thought about the Orient in the West" (Said 1994/1978, 69). Discussing Said's analysis of Verdi's *Aida*, Jonathan D. Bellman observes that "Said was much more careful when addressing creative works, admitting and even welcoming the play of artistic creativity in works that in certain ways reflected the imperial worldview" (Bellman 2011, 3).

Hakola's "Orientalist vision" with its imitations of klezmer clarinet playing could be criticized as clicheistic, while he picks much of his materials from the common Western musical corpus of Oriental representations. Augmented seconds, the nasal and shrill tone colours of the clarinet in the upper register, glissandi, grace notes, trills, as well as pounding, rapid drum rhythmics, and virtuosic improvisation all point to the exotic East in the Western imagination, constituting representations that ultimately reach beyond the scope of klezmer music.

Edward Said has defined Orientalism as the "corporate institution for dealing with the Orient," which entails "a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient" (Said 1994/1978, 3). It is true that Hakola's approach strengthens Western stereotypical imaginary of the Orient instead of encouraging one into looking closely at the varied social practices and cultural traditions that this wide set of geographical locations incorporates. Yet regarding the question of Hakola's power relationship with the Middle East one infers that it is not one of a cultural imperialist but rather simply that of a romantic, who builds on traditional Western representations of the East, using them creatively to suggest a distant, exotic milieu. As a representative of a small Northern nation, he himself obviously wishes to expand his horizon and reach out across the globe, exploring the possibilities of transcultural composition. Hakola's Orient points to that of composers such as Richard Strauss in *Salome* ("Dance of the Seven Veils") or Karol Szymanowski in his opera *King Roger*, Op. 46 ("Roxana's Aria" in Act II).

5. Concluding remarks: Hakola's positive conception of the Orient

Antti Häyrynen points out the anti-authentic nature of Hakola's exoticist composition and suggests that its traits such as "melismatic ornaments, hypnotic repetition and exotic sensuality are more indicative of a *joie de vivre* … than of a search for the roots of music in the folklore of indigenous peoples" (Häyrynen 2002, 4). Regarding such a search one should also keep in mind that the klezmer musical tradition itself is a mixture rooted in different cultures.

What motivates Hakola's choice of exoticist approaches might be illuminated by the following comments of John M. MacKenzie, who observes polemically regarding pictorial arts: "In fact, in looking at Oriental-

ist painting, we require not a theory of 'otherness,' but a theory of cultural cross-reference. European artists projected on to the East not only the fantasies and fears of the West, but also aspirations, renewed values and wished-for freedoms…" (MacKenzie 1995, 55).

Hakola fantasizes about the Middle East in terms of festivities and celebration, as the concerto's fourth movement suggests, and ends up presenting an image of the exotic Other that revolves around values such as communal action and togetherness. The twice-recurring taped noise of the celebrating folk is a distinctive trait of the concerto and acts as a gesture, which summarizes the composer's Orientalistic reflections in an unusual and effective manner. Not least due to this approach, Hakola's Orient is loaded with positive connotations throughout.

Although the ethnic materials in Clarinet Concerto are inauthentic, they are capable of invoking associations with klezmer music for the clarinet and with traditional Jewish musical culture, which constitutes the Oriental "Other" for Hakola. The clarinet's role is central to his invocation of the East. The concerto stands out as a piece, whose listening is rewarding, and invites the attention of a large audience.

To summarize: Kimmo Hakola constructs an exotic representation of klezmer music in Western terms, employing a number of traditional musical signifiers of the East. His stance is that of a curious contemporary Orientalist, whose "every interpretation, every structure created for the Orient … is a reinterpretation, a rebuilding of it," as Said observed (Said 1994/1978, 158). Hakola's transcultural composition presents heterogeneous elements, combining Modernism with Romanticism and klezmer simulations with jazz associations besides references to classical repertory (Mozart and Bartók).

Hakola's relationship with the cultural Other embodied by the klezmer musician is, in my view, a positive one, filled with great interest and appreciation. Hakola's standpoint regarding klezmer music and Jewish culture is neither colonizing nor patronizing but instead one imbued with curiosity and respect. His Clarinet Concerto presents an original commentary on klezmer music, one that fuses perceptions of traditional Jewish celebration with virtuosic contemporary music for the clarinet.

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Klezmerių stilistikos nuorodos Kimmo Hakola'os Koncerte klarnetui

Santrauka

Straipsnyje nagrinėjamos klezmerių stilistikos nuorodos suomių kompozitoriaus Kimmo Hakola'os (g. 1958) Koncerte klarnetui (2001). Teigiama, kad Hakola tęsia XIX–XX a. orientalizmo tradiciją, muzikos priemonėmis konstruodamas įsivaizduojamus Rytus. Parodoma, kad jo požiūris į klezmerių muziką yra fiktyvus ir itin stilizuotas: kompozitorius pasitelkia klezmerių stilistikai būdingus klarneto grojimo bruožus bei derminius pasažus, suponuojančius Artimųjų Rytų įtaką. Tačiau šios konstrukcijos visada yra pagrįstos originalia išmone, bet ne klezmerių muzikos citatomis, o pats požiūris atitinka vakarietiško egzotizmo logiką.

Keturių dalių koncertas, trunkantis apie keturiasdešimt minučių, pasižymi efektyvia dramaturgija, o jo forma grindžiama aiškiai artikuliuotomis struktūrinėmis padalomis. Ketvirtos koncerto dalies pavadinimas *Khasene* išvertus iš jidiš kalbos reiškia „vestuves". Straipsnyje analizuojami būdai, kuriais kompozitorius muzikinėmis priemonėmis konstruoja žydiškų vestuvių atmosferą, taip pat aptariama, kaip klarneto partija ir įrašyti balsai pasitelkiami kuriant liaudiškos šventės įspūdį. Teigiama, kad *Khasene* atitinka tai, ką Ralphas P. Locke'as vadina egzotinio stiliaus paradigma. Šioje koncerto dalyje egzotikos ženklais tampa derminiai pasažai su padidintąja sekunda, būgno kuriamas ritminis fonas bei virtuozinio klezmerių klarnetininko stilistikos imitacija. Pastarajai būdingas improvizacinis atlikimo pobūdis, nosinis, skvarbus tembras, triliai bei *glissando* aukštame registre.

Toliau straipsnyje nagrinėjamos kitos stilistinės įtakos aptariamame koncerte. Be klezmerių muzikos, antroje koncerto dalyje galima įžvelgti Wolfgango Amadeus Mozarto Koncerto klarnetui lėtosios dalies bei džiazo baladės stilistikos įtakas, o trečioje – sąsajas su Bélа'os Bartóko Koncerto orkestrui antra dalimi *Giuoco delle coppie*.

Taip pat aptariama šio keturių dalių koncerto vieta Hakola'os kūrybos kontekste, lyginant jį su kitais kompozitoriaus opusais, kuriuose aptinkama egzotinių stilistinių bruožų: *Diamond Street* (1999), *Loco* klarnetui solo (1995) bei Kvintetu klarnetui ir styginių kvartetui (1997).

Hakola'os egzotizmo pobūdis vertinamas remiantis Johno M. MacKenzie'io, Locke'o ir Edwardo W. Saido teorinėmis įžvalgomis. Teigiama, kad kompozitoriaus meninį požiūrį persmelkia romantinė pasaulėžiūra, lemianti jo muzikos patrauklumą. Pripažintina, kad Hakola'os kūrybinė strategija tam tikra prasme sustiprina Vakarų kultūroje įsitvirtinusius stereotipinius Rytų vaizdinius, užuot skatinusi jų kritinę refleksiją. Vis dėlto svarstant kompozitoriaus galios santykį su Artimųjų Rytų kultūra, galima teigti, kad jis nėra kultūrinio imperializmo atstovas. Greičiau jis pasirodo kaip romantinės estetikos kūrėjas, besiremiantis tradiciniais vakarietiškais Rytų reprezentavimo modeliais ir kūrybiškai juos pasitelkiantis egzotinio, nutolusio pasaulio įspūdžiui sukurti.

Apskritai šį koncertą galima laikyti savita klarneto kompozicinių galimybių demonstracija, kuriai būtinas aukštas virtuozinis meistriškumas. Hakola'os pasitelkiamos klezmerių stilistikos nuorodos išsiskiria šiuolaikinės suomių akademinės muzikos kontekste. Straipsnyje teigiama, kad kompozitoriaus Rytų vizija yra persmelkta pozityviomis konotacijomis: ketvirtoje koncerto dalyje ypač išryškinamos bendruomeniškumo ir kolektyvinio dalyvavimo šventėje idėjos.

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The Interplay of Genres: Ethno-Contempo Fusion in "Sika" by Okyeame Kwame and Kofi Kinaata

Abstract. This paper examines "Sika" (2024), a collaborative song by Ghanaian artists Okyeame Kwame and Kofi Kinaata, as a case study of cross-genre and intercultural collaboration in contemporary African popular music. Drawing on interculturalism, postcolonial hybridity, and African-centered music scholarship, the study situates "Sika" within the ongoing negotiation of tradition and modernity, local identity and global soundscapes. Using Philip Tagg's (2013, 2015) analytical framework, the analysis explores the song's formal structure, harmonic language, lyrical personas, and production techniques, showing how its fusion of highlife, hiplife, rap, drill, and brass band styles creates a complex cultural dialogue. The findings demonstrate that "Sika" functions not only as musical innovation but also as a cultural artifact that reflects socio-economic realities, preserves Ghanaian heritage, and expresses cosmopolitan identity. In doing so, the paper contributes to broader discussions of hybridity, interculturalism, and African popular music, emphasizing the transformative role of cross-genre collaboration in Ghana's musical scene.

Keywords: cross-genre composition, interculturalism, hybridity, Ghanaian popular music, cultural negotiation.

1. Introduction

Ghana's music scene has changed significantly, blending traditional sounds with global influences. This paper examines "Sika" (Kwame 2024), a collaboration between Okyeame Kwame and Kofi Kinaata. The song combines highlife, hiplife, brass band style, contemporary rap, and drill. This mix connects different generations and addresses wealth and economic uncertainty. Highlife is a genre that developed in early 20th-century Ghana. It features polyrhythmic structures, storytelling, and danceable melodies, influencing subsequent musical styles and reflecting cultural identity (Collins 2018; Graham 2021). Hiplife emerged later, merging highlife's storytelling with hip-hop rhythms, providing a platform for youth expression and social commentary (Oduro-Frimpong 2017a). Hiplife artists often tackle political corruption and social inequality through their music. Brass band music adds a communal aspect to "Sika," as these bands are integral to local celebrations and events (Bradley 2018). Their inclusion evokes a sense of heritage and community. Contemporary genres such as rap and drill resonate with younger audiences, addressing social issues and aspirations while linking local and global music trends (Boateng, 2023; Alim, Ibrahim, and Pennycook 2020).

The fusion in "Sika" serves as a transformative practice, enhancing artistic communication and cultural narratives (Stokes 2022). The combination of highlife's thematic richness with rap and drill creates a song that explores the complexities of economic life in Ghana, balancing traditional values with modern ambitions. This paper argues that "Sika" illustrates the relationship between traditional and contemporary music, showing how genre fusion reshapes Ghanaian music in a global context. The analysis employs a cross-genre compositional framework to understand how different musical elements come together. Insights from interculturalism highlight the cultural importance of these musical interactions and changing identities. Moreover, the collaboration between Okyeame (Kwame Nsiah-Apau) and Kofi Kinaata (Martin King Arthur) is examined through collaborative musicking, revealing how their partnership enriches the song and reflects cultural exchange. Philip Tagg's (2013, 2015) model provides a basis for analyzing the technical and thematic aspects of the piece. These approaches highlight the role of genre fusion in addressing contemporary themes in Ghana and beyond. "Sika" exemplifies the resilience of Ghanaian music, showing its ability to adapt and remain relevant amidst global changes.

2. Conceptual framework: cross-genre composition

Cross-genre composition involves blending various musical traditions and styles, creating new forms of artistic expression. It plays a significant role in contemporary music, as demonstrated in "Sika" (2024) by Okyeame Kwame and Kofi Kinaata. This song fuses traditional highlife and hiplife with rap, drill, and brass band elements, reflecting Ghana's changing musical landscape. This approach simultaneously expresses cultural identity and explores themes of economic aspiration and uncertainty. Cross-genre composition highlights the interaction between musical traditions, fostering innovation and opening cultural dialogue (Bradley 2021). By integrating distinct musical styles into a cohesive whole, it redefines cultural narratives and engages broader audiences. "Sika"'s blend of different genres produces a culturally multi-layered sound, combining traditional heritage with contemporary innovation.

2.1. Historical context of highlife and hiplife in Ghanaian music

Highlife, which emerged in the 19th century, represents one of Ghana's most influential musical traditions. Blending African rhythms with European influences from military and church brass bands, it is characterized by its polyrhythmic vitality and use of Western instruments. E. T. Mensah, known as the "King of Highlife," popularized the genre by incorporating jazz idioms, thereby shaping a distinctive West African sound (Collins 2018). By the 1920s, highlife had become central to social life in Ghana, embodying themes of celebration, storytelling, and community identity. Its adaptability has ensured its enduring relevance. In the 1990s, hiplife developed as a modern evolution of highlife. It fused rap, hip-hop beats, and Ghanaian vernaculars to capture the realities of urban youth. Reggie Rockstone, celebrated as the "Godfather of Hiplife," pioneered this blend by merging highlife melodies with hip-hop aesthetics, thereby aligning Ghanaian traditions with global musical currents (Oduro-Frimpong 2017b). Hiplife has since served as a vehicle for political commentary and youth expression, linking Ghana's musical past with its contemporary socio-cultural identity. "Sika" exemplifies this trajectory by drawing on highlife's narrative tradition while incorporating hiplife's urban sensibilities, producing a culturally layered soundscape that speaks to Ghana's evolving realities.

2.2. The role of brass bands in Ghanaian music history

Brass band music has a long history in Ghana, dating back to the 19th century when it was introduced by European missionaries and military ensembles. Initially associated with colonial and formal occasions, it was later embraced by local communities and became integral to social ceremonies such as funerals, festivals, and parades, symbolizing resilience and collective joy (Boateng 2023). Mensah's early innovations in highlife were profoundly shaped by brass band traditions, demonstrating their role in Ghana's modern musical foundations. Today, brass band music remains culturally relevant. It is still a central feature of community gatherings and public celebrations, while its stylistic influences surface in contemporary popular compositions, including "Sika". Through its celebratory tone and communal associations, brass band music provides continuity between past and present, reinforcing its importance in both Ghanaian society and modern musical creativity (Bradley 2021; Boateng 2023).

2.3. Contemporary influences: rap and drill

Rap and drill music have become prominent genres for expressing resilience, ambition, and social critique (Alim, Ibrahim, and Pennycook 2020). Drill, with its distinctive rhythmic drive and stark lyrical directness, appeals especially to younger audiences worldwide. Both genres have introduced new perspectives into Ghana's music scene, even though older generations often perceive their explicit and sometimes provocative lyrical style as unconventional or inappropriate. Rap, with its African-American origins, emphasizes storytelling and social commentary, while drill foregrounds raw depictions of urban struggle and survival (Alim, Ibrahim, and Pennycook 2020). In Ghana, both genres have been localized through the incorporation of indigenous languages, proverbs, and everyday themes, creating a distinct hybrid form. Within "Sika," the interplay of rap and drill enriches the musical and lyrical narrative, bridging generational divides and positioning the song within both local and global soundscapes.

2.4. Cross-Genre composition as a transformative practice

The transformative potential of cross-genre composition lies in its capacity to bridge cultural and generational divides. In "Sika," the fusion of highlife, hiplife, rap, drill, and brass band music simultaneously engages diverse audiences and preserves cultural heritage. This hybridity reflects the complexity of modern Ghanaian identities and socio-economic realities, illustrating how tradition and innovation can coexist in meaningful ways. Through this creative dialogue, Okyeame Kwame and Kofi Kinaata revitalize older traditions such as highlife and brass band music by recontextualizing them within a global soundscape, demonstrating the adaptability and resilience of Ghanaian music. "Sika" thus resonates with international trends of genre hybridity. Shakira's blending of Latin pop with rock and Arabic influences, the global rise of Reggaeton through artists such as Bad Bunny, and Yo-Yo Ma's (2016) *Silk Road Ensemble* exemplify how genre fusion can generate new cultural meanings and connect diverse audiences (Bradley 2021; Stokes 2022). Similarly, contemporary African popular music demonstrates this adaptability: Afrobeat and hip-hop fusions by Davido, Burna Boy, and Wizkid illustrate how African artists simultaneously maintain cultural roots and engage

global audiences (Adegoke 2020; Falola and Euba 2019; Emielu 2017). By placing "Sika" within this broader global trajectory, its intercultural layering emerges not merely as stylistic experimentation but as a transformative cultural practice. In this light, the song functions as both entertainment and as a cultural artifact that encapsulates Ghana's negotiation of heritage, innovation, and globalization.

3. Theoretical framework: interculturalism

Interculturalism provides a productive lens for analyzing "Sika" because it emphasizes cultural negotiation, transformation, and hybridity rather than static coexistence. The song's fusion of highlife, hiplife, brass band, rap, and drill exemplifies this intercultural process, where traditions are not simply juxtaposed but reconfigured into new forms of expression. By focusing on the dynamics of exchange, interculturalism highlights how "Sika" functions as a site of cultural dialogue that both sustains Ghanaian heritage and reinterprets it for a global soundscape (Matsunaga 2021).

3.1. Hybridity and the "Third Space"

Homi Bhabha's concept of the "Third Space" (1994) is especially useful here. He argues that hybridity emerges in the in-between spaces of cultural encounters, where new identities and meanings are negotiated. "Sika" operates within such a space, where traditional idioms like highlife and brass band music are reimagined alongside global genres such as rap and drill. This hybridity is not additive but generative: it produces what Bhabha describes as a performative act of cultural translation, destabilizing rigid distinctions between "traditional" and "modern." In this way, "Sika" embodies the postcolonial condition of Ghanaian music, creating an aesthetic that is simultaneously local and transnational.

3.2. Indigenous theoretical perspectives

While interculturalism benefits from postcolonial theory, it is equally important to draw on African-centered music scholarship. J. H. Kwabena Nketia (1974) emphasizes the inseparability of African music from its social and cultural contexts, reminding us that compositions like "Sika" must be understood in relation to lived experience. Similarly, Akin Euba's (1989) writings on intercultural composition and his advocacy for blending African idioms with Western techniques anticipate the genre hybridity evident in "Sika." Building on these perspectives, Willie Anku's (2000) rhythm theory further grounds the analysis in indigenous scholarship. His work on *geometrical set theory of African rhythm* demonstrates how African music is structured through cyclicality and polyrhythms, offering a lens for interpreting how highlife and brass band idioms are layered into "Sika." By weaving Anku's rhythmic insights with intercultural frameworks, we see how the song does not simply imitate traditional forms but reconfigures them within contemporary global idioms.

3.3. Interculturalism as a bridge

The intercultural perspective also clarifies how "Sika" bridges cultural and generational divides. As Toyin Falola (2016, 2020) argues, African modernity is shaped by the tension between tradition and innovation. "Sika" exemplifies this by simultaneously appealing to older audiences familiar with highlife and to younger listeners attuned to drill and rap. Intercultural music, in this sense, is not only an aesthetic phenomenon but also a socio-cultural practice that fosters dialogue across divides and enables shared narratives. A parallel can be seen in collaborations such as Yann Coppier and King Ayisoba's *Body Language XXI* (Djuma Soundsystem, Coppier, and Ayisoba 2019), which fuses electronic soundscapes with traditional *kologo* music to create a hybrid expression that resonates locally and globally. Branch (1999) notes that such fusions hold not only aesthetic but also economic potential, expanding the cultural reach of African music. Similarly, Austin Emielu's concept of *progressive traditionalism* (2011, 2022) affirms that African traditions remain vital precisely because they adapt to modern contexts. Artists such as Mr. Eazi and DJ Mix Master Garzy exemplify this adaptability, blending electronic production with indigenous idioms to showcase the creativity and resilience of African musicians. In "Sika," highlife and brass band idioms are not static relics but living traditions recontextualized within a global framework, underscoring interculturalism's capacity to explain the vitality of hybrid practices.

3.4. Critical and global perspectives

Complementing African theorists, perspectives from critical musicology also strengthen this framework. Lawrence Kramer (1990, 1995) insists that musical meaning is inseparable from its cultural performance, inviting us to interpret "Sika" as both text and social practice. Martin Stokes (1994, 2022) similarly foregrounds music's role in shaping identity and articulating cosmopolitan belonging. His notion of *musical cosmopolitanism*—where local sounds engage global forms without erasing their roots—directly applies to "Sika," which navigates Ghana's cultural heritage while resonating with worldwide trends.

3.5. Implications for Ghanaian music

Taken together, these perspectives position interculturalism as more than a descriptive tool; it is an explanatory framework that illuminates why and how "Sika" matters. Bhabha's Third Space helps us grasp the song's hybridity; Anku and Nketia ground it in African-centered scholarship; Kramer and Stokes frame its cultural meaning within broader critical discourse; and Emielu demonstrates its progressive traditionalism. Through this lens, "Sika" becomes more than a musical collaboration: it is a cultural artifact that encapsulates Ghana's negotiation of heritage, identity, and globalization.

4. Methodology: collaborative musicking

Building on the theoretical framework of interculturalism, this study uses collaborative musicking as its method for analyzing "Sika." While interculturalism emphasizes the cultural negotiations involved in genre fusion, collaborative musicking focuses on the creative processes where artists work together to create meaning. This view considers the song not just as a cultural artifact but also as the result of intentional artistic collaboration, allowing us to explore how individual contributions come together to form a shared musical story. Collaborative musicking provides a valuable framework for understanding the creative teamwork behind the song. This approach highlights the collective effort of artists who bring their unique strengths to create a unified musical narrative (Small 1998). In this collaboration, Okyeame Kwame's background in hiplife and rap blends with Kofi Kinaata's in highlife to produce a lively musical fusion that demonstrates the potential of genre-blending. Notably, Kinaata performed on a drill beat for the first time, showcasing his versatility and openness to experimentation (Dadzie 2024). His melodies, rooted in highlife rhythmic patterns, added an uplifting vibe, while Kwame's rap verses offered narrative depth by addressing hopes and economic challenges relevant to Ghanaian communities (Mends 2024; Stokes 2022). The collaboration also illustrates the broader impact of collective creativity in contemporary Ghanaian music. By merging different styles, Kwame and Kinaata expanded their musical horizons and enhanced the cultural significance of their work. Their partnership reflects the complexities of today's society, demonstrating how musicians can strengthen one another's talents while preserving their unique artistic identities. The result is a song that resonates with a wide audience and exemplifies the benefits of collaborative work in music.

5. Analysis of the composition in light of Philip Tagg's model

This study selectively adapts Philip Tagg's framework, drawing on his essay "Analyzing Popular Music" (2015) and his monograph *Music's Meanings* (2013). The following elements are most relevant for analyzing "Sika":

a) Mood and Semiotics (Hypothetical Subtext): Tagg emphasizes that music communicates affect and meaning through culturally embedded codes of connotation (Tagg 2013, Ch. 5).
b) Stylistic Features and Genre Markers: Genre conventions and instrumentation encode identity and cultural tradition, guiding interpretation (Tagg 2015, 11).
c) Structure and Form: Song structure (verses, chorus, bridges) guides emotional and thematic development (Tagg 2013, Ch. 5).
d) Intertextuality / IOCM: Tagg's interobjective comparison compares musical motifs with structurally similar examples to uncover meaning (Tagg 2015, 8–13; Tagg 2013, Ch. 7).
e) Semiotics and Connotation: Music carries meaning through semiotic codes (iconic, indexical, symbolic), which listeners decode through shared cultural understanding (Tagg 2013, Ch. 5).

This approach enables us to analyze "Sika" beyond its lyrics—considering melody, rhythm, instrumentation—and to trace how the fusion of highlife, hiplife, rap, and drill expresses broader socio-economic themes in contemporary Ghana.

5.1. Formal and layered structure of "Sika"

To understand the complex layers of "Sika," the song was organized based on its formal structure (Intro → Verse → Chorus → Bridge → Outro) and examined across various aspects: genre influence, mood, melody and rhythm, harmony, instrumentation, lyrical themes, and production effects. The table 1 below provides a schematic overview of these interconnected layers.

Table 1. Full Analytical Scheme for "Sika"

Song Section	Genre Influence	Mood / Atmosphere	Melody & Rhythm	Harmony / Chords	Instrumentation	Social / Lyrical Theme	Electronic Effects
Intro (0:00–0:15)	Establishes a drill/rap-influenced sound	Energetic, anticipatory	Minimal melodic content, syncopated drill rhythm	Static harmony (tonic pedal)	808s, hi-hats, electronic bass	Sets up the theme of money and ambition	Reverb on snare, stereo widening
Verse 1 (0:16–0:45)	Combines drill, highlife, brass band (percussion) elements, and introduces thematic content	Reflective, socially aware	Melodic highlife phrasing	I–IV–V with occasional ii chord creating tension	Highlife guitar riffs	Persona stresses financial independence, resilience	Auto-tune effects, subtle delay
Chorus (0:46–1:00)	Fusion of drill rhythm with highlife chorus delivery	Uplifting, communal	Singable chorus with a call-and-response feel	I–IV–V progression, bright tonal center	Mix of guitars, backing vocals, 808s	Shared aspiration, communal call for prosperity	Layered reverb for chorus vocals, wide mix
Verse 2 (1:01–1:30)	Rap vocals and singing merge with highlife influence and drill undertones.	Tense, urban, aspirational	Rhythmic rap delivery, accented syncopation	Alternation between tonic and dominant, V7 cadence	Drill beat, rap vocals, subtle guitar backing	City struggles, ambition, resilience amidst hardship	Compression, EQ emphasis on voice, delay
Bridge (1:31–1:45)	A varied refrain with added vocal improv and brass band plus highlife motifs.	Grand, celebratory, reflective	Brass band melodic riffs, cyclic rhythms	Inclusion of Ic and V7 for grandeur	Synthesizer, subtle pads, 808s	Cultural pride, bridging generations	Reverb and panning for grandeur
Chorus (1:45–2:00)	Repeat of chorus – highlife + drill fusion	Reaffirming, hopeful	Repetition of chorus melody, reinforcing unity	Return to I–IV–V, tonal stability	Layered vocals, guitars, electronic beats	Collective hope, emphasis on unity	Reverb-drenched chorus, fuller mix
Verse 3 (2:00–2:46)	Highlife + drill fusion	Advisory, hopeful	Speech-singing style to pure highlife	Static harmony (tonic pedal)	Drill/highlife beat, subtle electromusical effects	Hopefulness, satisfaction	Compression, EQ emphasis on voice, delay
Chorus (2:46–3:01)	Fusion of drill rhythm with highlife chorus delivery	Reflective, socially aware	Melodic highlife phrasing	I–IV–V with occasional ii chord creating tension	Highlife guitar riffs layered with rap vocals	Persona stresses financial independence, resilience	Reverb and panning for grandeur
Outro (3:01–end)	Highlife cadence with fading drill beat	Resolution, reflective closure	Guitar and brass fade-out, cyclic closure	Cadential closure on tonic	Highlife guitar, brass fade, percussion	Closing reflection on ambition and resilience	Fade-out with echo and reverb wash

A unifying feature across these sections is the thematic hook, first introduced in the chorus and repeated throughout the song. This theme serves as the anchor of the composition, blending highlife melodic contours with drill-inspired rhythmic elements. Figure 1 shows a transcription of the theme, emphasizing its pentatonic foundation, syncopated rhythm, and phrasing.

The transcription shows how a relatively simple melodic structure is enriched through rhythmic placement and harmonic context. The pentatonic framework connects the theme to highlife and folk traditions, while the beat and harmonic progression place it within common Afro-diasporic practices. This hybridity reflects the broader intercultural dynamics of "Sika": tradition and modernity are not just placed side by side but actively intertwined in a single melodic idea.
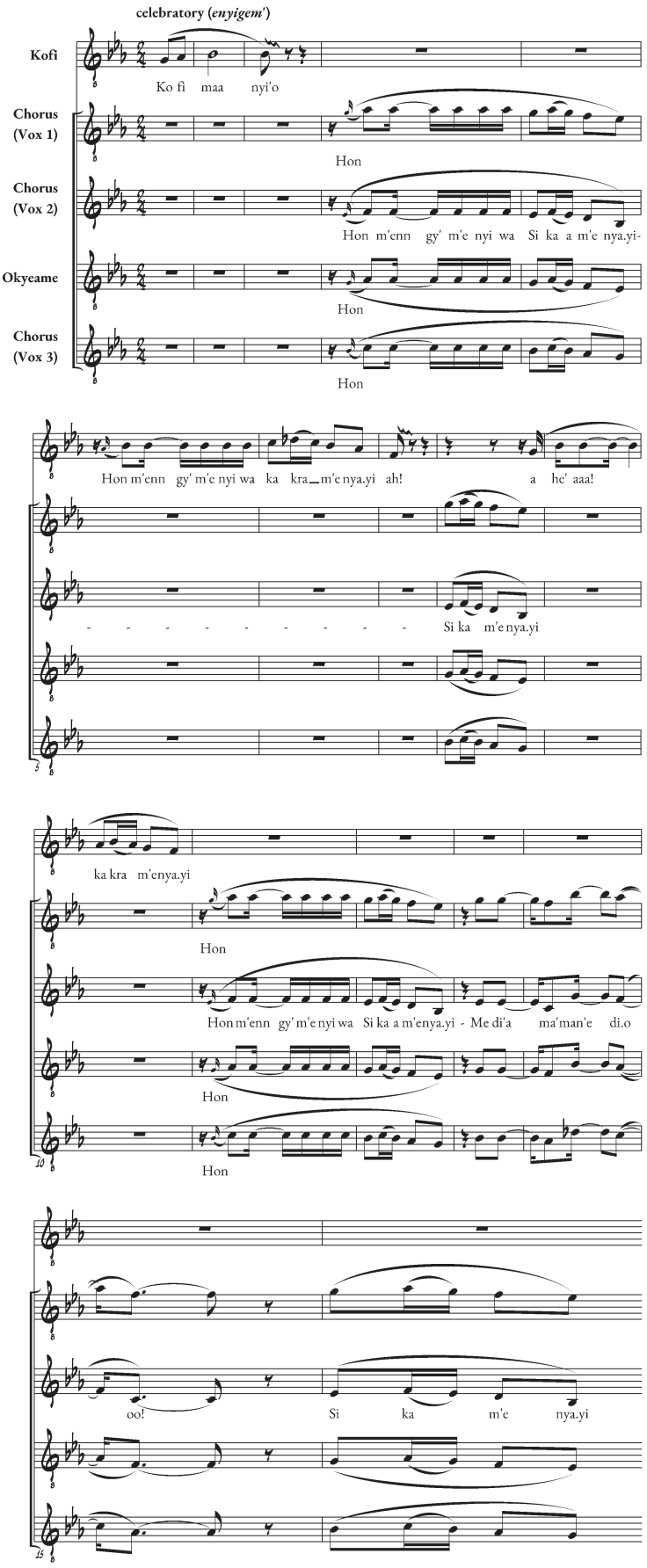
Figure 1. Transcription of the central theme from "Sika"

This analysis reveals several key patterns. First, the *genre shifts* match the thematic development: the drill-infused intro creates anticipation and ambition. At the same time, the bridge uses brass band and highlife traditions to highlight cultural pride and generational connection. Second, *harmonic changes* often match the lyrical tension. For example, the introduction of the ii and V7 chords in Verse 2 aligns with the persona's depiction of struggle and uncertainty, increasing a sense of instability. Third, *production choices* strengthen these themes: reverb and stereo widening in the intro make the sound more open, while heavy vocal processing in rap verses amplifies the urban, aspirational vibe. By combining these elements, the analysis shows that "Sika" is not just a mix of genres but also a carefully planned dialogue between sound, lyrics, and cultural meaning. The thematic hook and its recurrence across the formal structure play a central role in this process, creating coherence while simultaneously signaling cultural hybridity. The blending of drill, rap, highlife, and brass band styles is more than just style—it creates a semiotic interaction where musical techniques reflect the socio-economic and cultural stories told in the lyrics.

5.2. Harmony and semiotic layers

Sika's harmonic framework is primarily based on the I–IV–V progression typical of highlife, which creates a sense of tonal stability and accessibility. However, adding extra chords—such as the ii (F minor), Ic (Eb/G), and V7 (Bb7)—brings expressive nuance. These harmonic variations carry symbolic meaning when interpreted alongside the lyrics. For instance, the ii chord briefly disrupts the diatonic cycle, creating tension that reflects the protagonist's struggles with financial insecurity. The Ic chord smooths bass movement and adds continuity, symbolizing persistence and resilience. The V7, with its increased dissonance and expectation of resolution, coincides with lyrics about ambition and longing, embodying both the uncertainty and hope associated with economic aspirations. These harmonic choices do not act alone but interact with other musical layers. In the chorus, returning to the stable I–IV–V progression emphasizes the collective hope and desire for prosperity. Conversely, the bridge expands harmonic color through brass-band idioms, highlighting themes of cultural pride and continuity. Therefore, harmony in "Sika" functions symbolically: it signals shifts between stability and instability, aligning musical tension with social stories of hardship, ambition, and resilience.

5.3. Persona and lyrics

The lyrical dimension of "Sika" operates through distinct personae rather than through direct self-representations by the performers. Framing these voices as constructed identities helps avoid reducing the artist to the lyrical subject, while still acknowledging the cultural resonances they evoke. In Verse 1, the lyrical persona highlights financial independence and resilience, expressing values of hard work and dignity. This voice aligns with Kinaata's highlife-influenced melodic style, yet it also serves as a broader cultural archetype: a striving individual grounding ambition in moral responsibility. In Verse 2, the persona shifts to the perspective of an urban dweller facing precarity and social aspirations. The rap delivery intensifies the urgency of this voice as the lyrics explore themes of homelessness, ambition, and survival. Instead of viewing this as Kwame's autobiography, it is more productive to see the verse as representative of contemporary urban struggles in Ghana. The chorus, in contrast, universalizes these perspectives by framing them as collective hopes and communal affirmations. The repeated refrains function as a chorus of society itself, where personal struggles and ambitions become shared cultural narratives. Through these evolving lyrical personae, "Sika" creates a dialogue between the individual and the collective, between aspiration and uncertainty, and between tradition and modernity.

5.4. Sound production and effects

The production techniques in "Sika" are not just decorative elements but active parts of the song's meaning. Effects like reverb, delay, and auto-tune shape how listeners perceive space, emotion, and identity in the music. The intro uses reverb and stereo widening to create a sense of openness and anticipation, reflecting the song's central theme of economic aspiration. This spatial effect places the listener in a sonic environment of possibility, setting the stage for the narrative voices that follow. In the rap verses, subtle auto-tune and compression give the lyrical voice a more processed, urban sound, fitting the aesthetics of drill and hiplife. Rather than simply being stylistic choices, this sound world conveys the mediated, technologized experience of modern urban life—an aural metaphor for balancing authenticity and survival in the digital age. The chorus, on the other hand, features layered vocals with sustained reverb, creating a communal and resonant sound.

This treatment emphasizes the chorus's role as a shared statement of hope, giving it a choral feel that transcends individual performers. Finally, in the bridge, brass instruments are enhanced with reverb and panning, producing a sense of grandeur and public space. This spatialization highlights cultural pride and continuity, placing traditional idioms within a modern, global sound landscape. Overall, these production strategies do more than decorate the track; they reinforce the lyrical and harmonic themes, emphasizing ambition, uncertainty, resilience, and collective identity.

5.5. Synthesis of findings

The analysis of "Sika" shows how cross-genre collaboration creates a layered musical piece in which sonic, lyrical, and cultural elements support one another. By placing the song within Tagg's analytical framework, we see that its structure, harmonic changes, lyrical characters, and production choices come together to express themes of ambition, uncertainty, resilience, and cultural continuity. Several patterns stand out. The formal structure (intro–verse–chorus–bridge–outro) acts as a backbone, guiding changes in genre, mood, and lyrical themes. The harmonic language—based on highlife's I–IV–V cycle but expanded through ii, Ic, and V7 chords—matches moments of social tension and resolution. The lyrical characters' voices present individual and collective perspectives that highlight the realities of modern Ghana, while the production techniques turn these stories into spatial and emotional experiences. The result is a song that functions not just as entertainment but also as a cultural artifact. "Sika" demonstrates how Ghanaian musicians navigate tradition and modernity, local identity and global sounds, individual dreams and collective resilience. By blending drill, rap, highlife, hiplife, and brass band styles, the composition showcases intercultural dialogue in sound, transforming everyday social issues into an aesthetic of hope and continuity. Therefore, the analysis confirms that "Sika" is more than just its parts. It is a lively space of cultural negotiation where musical hybridity serves to express both the challenges and opportunities of Ghanaian modern life.

6. Conclusion

This study explores "Sika" as a cross-genre composition that illustrates the intercultural dynamics of contemporary Ghanaian music. By examining its formal structure, harmonic language, lyrical personae, and production techniques, the paper demonstrates how the song functions beyond mere entertainment: it acts as a cultural artifact negotiating between tradition and modernity, local identity and global connectivity, personal aspiration and collective resilience. Drawing on theories of interculturalism, postcolonial hybridity, and African-centered music scholarship, the analysis shows that "Sika" represents a living dialogue across generations and cultures. Its fusion of highlife, hiplife, brass band, rap, and drill confirms the adaptability of Ghanaian traditions, while its global impact highlights how popular music articulates cosmopolitan belonging. The main contribution of this paper is positioning "Sika" as a case study of how cross-genre collaboration in Ghana operates both aesthetically and socially: as a space for musical innovation, a reflection of socioeconomic realities, and an expression of cultural continuity. In doing so, it contributes to broader discussions on interculturalism, hybridity, and African popular music, while providing a framework for future analysis of similar musical practices. Future research could explore other collaborative works in Ghana and across Africa that use cross-genre strategies, especially concerning audience reception, digital media circulation, and economic sustainability. Such studies will enhance our understanding of how African music continues to negotiate its place in an increasingly interconnected world.

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Žanrų sąveika: *etno-* ir *contempo* sintezė Okyeame'ės Kwame'ės ir Kofi Kinaata'os kūrinyje „Sika"

Santrauka

Straipsnyje analizuojamas kūrinys „Sika" (2024), sukurtas bendradarbiaujant Okyeame'ei Kwame'ei ir Kofi Kinaata'ai. Tai skirtingus žanrus jungiantis muzikinis projektas, atskleidžiantis šiuolaikinės Ganos muzikos tarpkultūrinius procesus. Derinant *highlife* ir *hiplife* muzikos žanrus, pučiamųjų muzikos instrumentų orkestro stilistiką, repą ir *drill* požanrį, „Sika" kuriama kaip daugiasluoksnė garsinė struktūra, kurioje tradiciniai elementai interpretuojami šiuolaikinės globalios muzikos kontekste.

Remiantis Philipo Taggo analitiniu modeliu bei tarpkultūriškumo teorija, postkolonijinio hibridiškumo samprata ir į Afrikos kultūrą orientuotomis muzikologinėmis studijomis, tyrime atskleidžiama, kaip harmoninė kalba, ritminė daugiasluoksnė struktūra, lyriniai personažai ir postprodukciniai aspektai perteikia ekonominio nesaugumo ir atsparumo temas. Analizė rodo, kad „Sika" įkūnija Austino Emielu apibrėžtą progresyvaus tradicionalizmo sampratą: kūrinyje gaivinamos Ganos muzikos idiomos, kartu aktyviai įtraukiant globalios populiariosios muzikos kalbą. Tyrimas taip pat parodo, kad kūrinys atspindi Homi K. Bhabha'os hibridiškumo koncepciją bei Martino Stokeso kosmopolitinio priklausymo idėją, leidžiančias Ganos muziką suvokti kaip vienu metu lokaliai įsišaknijusį ir globaliai rezonansinį reiškinį. Straipsnyje teigiama, kad „Sika" yra daugiau nei populiariosios muzikos bendradarbiavimo rezultatas – tai kultūrinis artefaktas, dokumentuojantis Ganos visuomenės santykį su kultūriniu paveldu, tapatybe ir globalizacijos procesais. Ši analizė prisideda prie platesnių diskusijų apie tarpkultūriškumą, hibridiškumą ir Afrikos populiariosios muzikos raidą, kartu pabrėždama tarpžanrinio bendradarbiavimo potencialą kaip kultūrinio tęstinumo ir kūrybinės inovacijos formą.

3

KŪRĖJO PERSPEKTYVA | FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE CREATOR

Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre

Aistė Vaitkevičiūtė

Resonances of Bells in the Domains of Speech, Ethnomusic, and *I Ring This Bell* (2022–2024) by Aistė Vaitkevičiūtė

Abstract. The current artistic-research study focuses on the sound of a bell as a cross-cultural and interdisciplinary trigger, having a rich historical, cultural, and creative background. The author of the paper has endeavored to further explore this sonic phenomenon not only through theoretical inquiry but also through creative practice, culminating in a twenty-minute musical composition entitled *I Ring This Bell* (2022–2024), featuring five female vocalists, an instrumental ensemble, and a bell installation. The work integrating both research and art is mutually enhancing and has brought up certain questions and problems throughout the creative process. One of the major quests was how to efficiently connect three distinct sonic domains—bells (or bell-like objects), vocals, and instruments. The search for points of interrelation brought up contexts from the linguistic and ethno-related domains. Firstly, vocal imitations of bells in the linguistic sphere, known as onomatopoeia, were invoked as a source for creating and exploring the multilingual tapestry of the composition. Applying a spectromorphological approach and drawing on Ambrazevičius's research (Ambrazevičius 2011; Ambrazevičius and Balsienė 2010), a sonic network was created linking the spheres of bells, vocals, and instruments according to their spectromorphological characteristics. Secondly, the specific phenomenon called *Schwebungsdiaphonie* was invoked reflecting the rough quality of a bell's sound in the musical practices of several ethnic regions (the Balkans, Lithuania, and others) (Messner 2013; Ambrazevičius 2014–2016; etc.). This specific practice provided the impetus for the organization of pitches based on intervals characterized by a rough quality. The theoretical and creative exploration of the mentioned phenomena aims to showcase how the specific spectromorphological properties of a bell resonate across cultures and times via certain ethnic-grounded practices (linguistic onomatopoeia or musical *Schwebungsdiaphonie*) and continues to reverberate in contemporary musical contexts spanning the range of micro- to macromorphologies.

Keywords: bell, onomatopoeia, *Schwebungsdiaphonie*, spectromorphology, contemporary music.

Introduction

Without question, a bell is among the most evocative sound objects in existence, resonating across cultures around the world. Depending on the context, it can carry emotional or spiritual meanings such as awe, purification, mourning, warning, etc., which allude to multifaceted cultural entanglements with this unique acoustic phenomenon. It comes as no surprise that the bell has also been a recurring reference in the domain of Western art music since its early history. These allusions may relate to the distinctive motifs of bells in regard to rhythm or mode, or they may refer to the resonance of a bell in itself. Focusing on the latter, it is especially evident in piano music literature (or its close relatives, such as the harpsichord).[1] This can readily be explained by the similarity of the sound characteristics of a bell and its keyboard-evoked counterparts: the initial impulse gives rise to a natural resonance until the gradual fade-out, while the depth of sound may be reinforced by the manipulation of harmonic density. Meanwhile, technological advancements of the 20th century have had a crucial impact on the knowledge of sound, permeating its interior constitution at the microscopic level—and the bell is no exception. This has given rise to acoustically informed contemplations of bells, with the most notable exponents being referred to as manifestations of spectral music.[2]

Despite the richness of the bell's historical, cultural, and creative background, its sound continues to inspire further exploration of its acoustic and cultural resonances. It has stimulated my personal efforts as a researcher and composer to delve into the inexhaustible potential of this sonic phenomenon. These endeavors could be most accurately characterized as artistic research. The "research" part has included inquiries into the sonic properties of a bell, spectromorphological analysis, cultural references, and their reflections in the linguistic domain as well as in musical ethno-practices. The "artistic" part has materialized in the form of a

1 We can recall such masterpieces as Ferenc Liszt's "Les cloches de Genève" (The bells of Geneva) from *Années de pèlerinage* I (Years of pilgrimage), S.160 (c. 1837–1838), Maurice Ravel's "La vallée des cloches" (The valley of bells), the fifth movement of *Miroirs* (Mirrors) (1904–1905), Claude Debussy's "Cloches à travers les feuilles" (Bells through the leaves) from *Images*, Book 2 (1907), Arvo Pärt's *Für Alina* (1976), among many others.

2 The most prominent examples of this kind are Tristan Murail's *Gondwana* for large orchestra (1980), where the beginning is based on an orchestrally synthesized bell (Fineberg 2000, 107), Jonathan Harvey's *Mortuos Plango, Vivos Voco* (I mourn the dead, I call the living) for eight-track tape (1980), based on interpolation between sounds of the tenor bell at Winchester Cathedral and the voice of the composer's son (Harvey 1981), or *Speakings* for orchestra (2007–2008) by the same composer. Also, among Gérard Grisey's sketchbooks, a draft was found with the written phrase "Bell Strasbourg Cathedral," providing a sketched transcription of the compound sound (may be dated around 1994–1996), indicating the composer's deep interest in this sound and perhaps its reflections in his work (Cross 2018, 3).

twenty-minute musical composition entitled *I Ring This Bell* (2022–2024), featuring five female vocalists, an instrumental ensemble, and a bell installation.[3]

The cohesive nature of the work integrating research and art has proven to be mutually enhancing and has posed certain questions and problems throughout the creative process. One of the major quests was stipulated by the line-up of the composition: how can three distinct sonic domains—bells (or bell-like objects), vocals, and instruments—be efficiently connected and, even more, approximated in their spectromorphological properties? The search for points of connection between them has brought up contexts from linguistic and ethno-related domains. The most universal, let's say, "cross-substance" association in regard to a bell was firstly identified in the linguistic area—in the phenomenon known as onomatopoeia. This, in turn, opened up space for artistic exploration of a multilingual tapestry as a playground of sound qualities, as well as their interrelation with the instrumental domain. Another phenomenon featuring the mentioned cross-substance association was identified in the particular musical practices of distinct ethnic regions, characterized by the specific psychoacoustic property called *Schwebungsdiaphonie*. Unlike the former, the latter originates from the domain of musical practice.

My investigation will seek to showcase how the specific spectromorphological properties of a bell resonate across cultures and times via certain ethnic-grounded phenomena (linguistic onomatopoeia or musical *Schwebungsdiaphonie*) and how it continues to reverberate in contemporary musical contexts spanning the range of micro- to macro- morphologies.

1. "How they clang, and clash, and roar!" The spectromorphological nature of the sound of a bell

Given the multifarious emotional responses evoked by the auditory stimulus of a bell within diverse cultural contexts, it is noticeable that the prevalent thread among them is in one or another way related to the sense of awe.[4] The choice of the term is not coincidental; it amalgamates the sentiments of fear with those of reverence, respect, and admiration—elements that are inherently intertwined with the connotational cluster of the bell. Or to quote the well-known lines by Edgar Allan Poe, "How they clang, and clash, and roar! / What a horror they outpour …" (Poe 1903, written in 1848).[5] The most relevant inquiry within the scope of this paper is to discover what specific properties of the sound of a bell may give rise to such resounding affects.

Before delving into this, it is important to delineate the scope of the concept of a bell itself. Indeed, if we look up *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, a wide array of objects can fall under the "bell" category (Price, Rae, and Blades 2001). The diversity is evident when we review the distinct properties that characterize a bell:

- *regarding shape and material*:
  - in a broad sense, a hollow object, usually metal (but also clay, wooden, or glass);
  - in a more conventional sense, a bell would refer to a cup (known as an "open bell") or a hollow sphere (referred to as a "crotal") shape.
- *regarding production of sound*:
  - struck by an inner clapper or external hammer;
  - as all idiophones, when struck a bell emits "a sound by the vibration of most of its mass;"
- *regarding size*:
  - sizes of the types of bells may range from tiny pieces of metal (e.g., a sleigh bell) to huge church bells.[6]

It should not be difficult to imagine the wide range of objects that the listed characteristics would encompass. The composition *I Ring This Bell*, which will be discussed in detail shortly, expands this concept even

[3] The piece was performed at the Music Autumn (Vilnius) music festival, 2024 October, by the Melos New Vocal Music Collective and the Vertixe Sonora ensemble.

[4] Awe is defined as "a feeling of fear or dread, mixed with profound reverence, typically as inspired by God or the divine. Subsequently: a feeling of reverential respect, mixed with wonder or fear, typically as inspired by a person of great authority, accomplishments, etc., or (from the 18th century) by the power or beauty of the natural world" (*Oxford English Dictionary* 2024).

[5] It is interesting that Poe's poem covers a wide spectrum of situations and emotional responses associated with bells. They are even linked to the material from which the bells are made: silver bells are associated with Christmas merriment, golden—with wedding, brazen—with alarm, and iron—with moaning (Poe 1903).

[6] The list is compiled based on the information provided in the chapter of *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* titled "Bell (i)" (Price, Rae, and Blades 2001).

further by including homemade bells from recycled materials.[7] It is therefore incorrect to talk about a uniform, general sound of a bell—they can vary from soft chimes shimmering in the wind to tremendous sounds summoning people to church or warning of danger. We will address the various types later in the text, but for now, let us concentrate on the latter—the large bell, widely referenced in folklore, poetry, and other literature. At this point, a polemic discourse on the nature of their sound has to be touched upon. As described by Price, Rae, and Blades (2001), historically, bells were ascribed a social function rather than a musical one for a long time. The change in this respect has also altered the perception of the ideal sound of a bell. It is noted that as the bell became increasingly used in musical contexts, its sound quality, or timbre, was also adjusted. In short, the tuning of the bell became more and more harmonious, sacrificing its turbulent quality. In this way, the bell can better function in musical contexts at the expense of its outstanding extra-musical effect. The current paper, however, turns attention back to that awe-inspiring, turbulent bell's quality as the primary subject of interest, instead of exploring the possibilities provided by a clear sense of pitch.

For this representation, we will analyze the sound produced by the customized bell made from a recycled gas cylinder that is used in the composition being discussed.[8] In the spectrogram (figure 1), we can see a spectromorphological profile rather typical for a large metal cup-shaped bell, with the characteristic phases, which are as follows: (a) a sharp attack, incited by impulsive strike of a hammer (sometimes also a clapper), bearing the highest concentration of inharmonic partials which determines the momentous noisy quality; (b) the phase of decay features shifting content of the partials causing perception of unstable pitch; when the majority of the partials fade out, (c) a sustain phase may be detected with only the hum tone present, which then finally (d) turns into silence.[9] In summary, what we call a bell's sound—some sort of unity—appears to us as a processual phenomenon. In the timeframe of its resonance, the sound shifts from a rich compound to a single-component quality. This process evokes an ambiguous sense of both unity and dissociation, providing a space for compositional manipulation.[10]

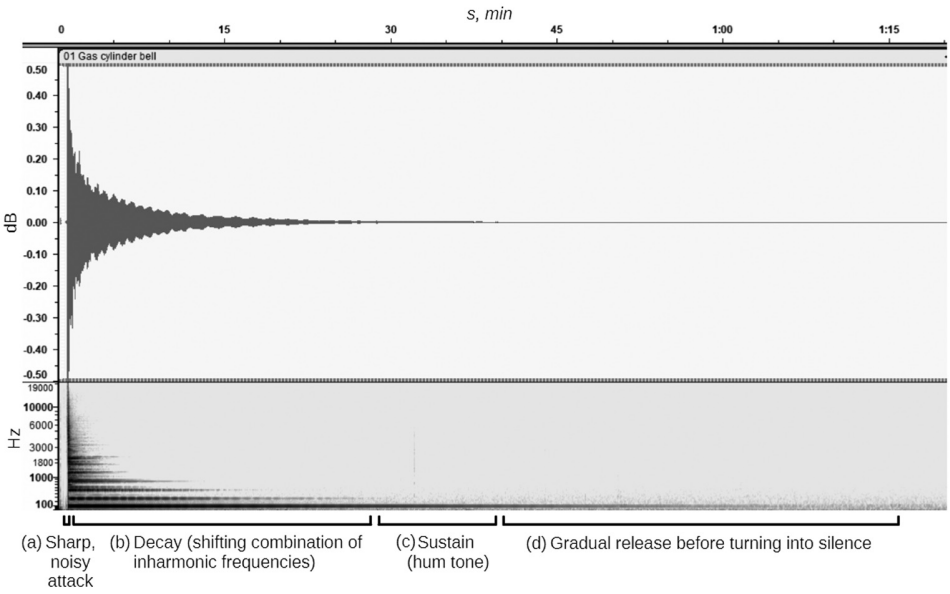

Figure 1. Multiple view of the waveform and spectrogram of a bell-like sound produced by a gas cylinder bell, used in the composition *I Ring This Bell* by Aistė Vaitkevičiūtė

7 The piece was part of the project *Old Things Resonate New*, the idea of which was to revive old objects, giving them a new life. Therefore, most of the bells used in the composition were repurposed from everyday items, such as flower cups, bowls, wooden and metal sticks. One bell was repurposed from a large gas cylinder.

8 Despite its somewhat individual characteristics, the sound is quite close to the classic large cup-shaped bell.

9 This is an obvious attempt towards the classical ADSR model representing the waveform, which is enriched with the dynamics of spectromorphological aspects.

10 The dialectical perception of a sound, both as a category and qualitative continuum, is thoroughly investigated in the doctoral artistic research by the author of the current paper. Applying this theoretical framework to the current subject, our cognitive habitude categorizes the whole sound continuum as a single "bell sound," although a qualitative change throughout its resonance is being perceived. For more, see Vaitkevičiūtė (2022).

It is quite evident that phases accumulating the more or less dense collections of inharmonic partials are most likely to be associated with the aforementioned emotions of awe, threat, etc. Firstly, the attack phase features the highest intensity of inharmonic frequencies, which results in the most discordant quality—a pronounced noise element. It is precisely this point that researchers describe as the most attention-arresting factor (Price, Rae, and Blades 2001). It is no coincidence that this aspect is given special attention in the composition under discussion (more in section 2). The second phase, the initial decay, indicates the stage when most of the initial partials fade away, while others fade more slowly at different times, thus creating ambiguity in the sense of pitch. It should also be added that the larger the bell, the more pronounced the sensation of inharmonic processes. Therefore, it is not surprising that awe-inspiring associations were most often associated with large bells of great local significance. The analyzed gas cylinder bell has become the source and model profile for both micro- and macro- morphologies in the composition under discussion. Further on, we will delve into how individual phases are explored in *I Ring This Bell*, as well as how they relate to the vocal and instrumental domains.

2. Connection of the bell's spectromorphological properties with the vocal and instrumental domains: traces of onomatopoeia and *Schwebungsdiaphonie* in Aistė Vaitkevičiūtė's *I Ring This Bell*

It is widely known that the particular characteristics of the bell sound have been invoked not only in professional music but in other fields of humanity too. The two phenomena that reflect the acoustic features of the bell's sound has informed the composition *I Ring This Bell* significantly. The first of these, which was employed to generate textual and sonic material, reflects the acoustic properties of the bell in the phonetic domain, which is referred to as onomatopoeia. The second one draws on the specific psychoacoustic effect that occurs during the clash of inharmonic frequencies and is called *Schwebungsdiaphonie*. We will discuss how each of them functions in the composition under discussion and how they end up intertwining with each other.

2.1. Reflections of onomatopoeia in the vocal material and its interrelation with the instrumental parts

It is probably safe to say that the sound of a bell is among the most common figures in the context of onomatopoeia. If taken straightforwardly, onomatopoeia refers to the formation of words that reflect environmental sounds by imitating them with voice and phonetic configurations. However, especially in poetry, the process can also be reversed: accidental words resembling particular sonic phenomena may be employed, while the semantics of the word may have nothing to do with the sound that is imitated.[11] The subject becomes even more intricate when we come to the onomatopoeic expressions of particular sounds across different languages.[12] These intricacies have become points of interest and are deliberately employed as textual and sonic material in the piece under discussion.

One of the initial phases of the creative process of the piece involved collecting words somehow relating to "a bell" (also, "ringing of the bell", "I ring this bell", and so on)[13] and variations of these (e.g., substituting bells with chimes) in different languages. It was soon observed that some of them are of particularly onomatopoeic origin, some of them are of unclear origin, but still resemble the sound of a bell, and some have nothing to do with the sound of a bell at all. The deliberate selection included words of onomatopoeic origin or words that resemble the sound of a bell. The collection of the selected words is provided in table 1. The procedure has made it possible to both acknowledge and examine the interrelationships and differences among languages for the same or similar sound objects.

[11] As Bredin observes, onomatopoeia encompasses a wide array of relations between sounds and words: imitating, echoing, reflecting, resembling, corresponding to, sounding like, expressing, reinforcing, having a natural or direct relation with (Bredin 1996, 555).

[12] The quote by Ernst Gombrich aptly illustrates how similar things are imitated differently in various languages: "To me, at least, the cock says not 'cock-a-doodle doo' as he calls to the English in the morning, not 'cocorico' as he says in French, nor 'kiao kiao' as in Chinese, but still 'kikeriki,' as he says in German" (as quoted in Bredin 1996, 558).

[13] The title of the composition, *I Ring This Bell*, is an excerpt from the Sanskrit mantra chanted while ringing the bell (skt. *ghanta*) to signify the invitation of divine forces and the removal of negative ones.

Table 1. A list of phrases in multiple languages used in *I Ring This Bell* by Aistė Vaitkevičiūtė (2022–2024)

Language	**Words or phrases containing the word "bell"** (words originally based on non-Latin alphabets are provided in transliterated versions)
English	ring this bell
Greek	*to koudouni* (the bell)
Thai	*rakḥang dạng k̄hụ̂n* (the bell rang)
Sanskrit	*ghanta* (bell)
Tibetan	*dril-bu* (handbell)
Hungarian	*harangszó* (bell, chime); *cseng a csengő* (the bell is ringing)
Lithuanian	*žvanga žvangučiai* (jingles jingling)
Latvian	*es zvana zvans* (I ring the bell)
Tajik	*man zang mezanam* (I ring the bell)
Ukrainian	*dzvonyty u dzvin* (ringing the bell)

Further analytical procedures involved an examination of words from the perspective of their acoustic characteristics. Ambrazevičius's research on the acoustic features of the onomatopoeic expressions of bells was employed as the analytical framework (Ambrazevičius and Balsienė 2010; Ambrazevičius 2011). After investigating both traditional Lithuanian vocal imitations of bells as well as nonsense syllables raised during imitation experiments, Ambrazevičius distinguished the most common features of the vocal imitations of bells and drew connections between them and the acoustics of bells. The findings are summarized in table 2.

Table 2. Summary of research on the characteristics of vocal imitations of bells (Ambrazevičius and Balsienė 2010; Ambrazevičius 2011). Phonetic symbols left as in the original papers

Initial phonemes (reflecting the attack phase)	**Further on phonemes** (reflecting the continuation of sound following the attack)		
	Single vowels / first in syllables	VV (vowel–vowel) diphthongs	VC (vowel–consonant) diphthongs
• Voiced plosives (most common). E.g.: *d* (most common), *b*, *g* (less common). • Unvoiced plosives (considerably less common).	• Back vowels for large bells. E.g.: *a* (most common), *o*. • Front vowels for small bells. E.g.: *i* (most common), *e*.	• More commonly decreasing in intensity. E.g.: *au*, *ai*. • More commonly decreasing in frequency. E.g.: *au*.	• VC diphthongs with nasal consonants. E.g.: *an*, *im*.

Let us make a brief examination of the selected words in table 1 through the scope of the framework based on Ambrazevičius's research. Although we can hardly find exact exemplars of the provided model in the list, some tendencies are apparent. Plosive consonants at the beginning of the word or a separate syllable are present in words such as *bell*, *dril-bu*, *rakḥang*, *kodouni*, *ghanta*. VC diphthongs dominate the majority of these words (*rakḥang*, *žvanga*, *zvans*, *dzvin*, etc.), but there is a lack of examples containing VV diphthongs. However, what is immediately noticeable is the significantly greater variety of consonants (including an initial phoneme). As mentioned earlier, the starting consonant corresponds to the beginning of the bell sound—an attack phase. In the given framework, we notice the initial consonants are almost limited with the voiced plosives [d], [b], or [g],[14] or unvoiced plosives (indicated as less common). However, the greater variety of initial consonants was seen as an additional potential for both associative and compositional exploration.

[14] As Ambrazevičius explained, "the prevalence of the voiced plosives is probably caused by the continuance and dominance of the 'tonal' components in the bell spectrum (i.e., the component of noise is negligible and there are no gaps of silence" (Ambrazevčius and Balsienė 2010, 12–13).

Starting from the attack phase in general, there is consensus among psychoacousticians for its significance in the identification of the sound source.[15] It seemed, then, that such variety in initial consonants among words as being related to onomatopoeic origin is not a coincidence.[16] A more specific association between the different types of bells (including size, shape, and material) and certain consonants seemed to be a decent inquiry into the creative process of a piece. While making associations between particular consonants and the types of bells, attention was mostly focused on the noise–pitch balance in the sound and range of frequencies, as well as the internal dynamics of these and other parameters. On the basis of these factors, specific correlations between the initial phonemes and particular bells or bell-type sound objects were drawn.

As already mentioned, voiced plosives [d], [b], [g] are considered the most common initial consonants for the vocal imitations of bells. However, in my exploration (also confirmed by Ambrazevičius's research), they mostly correspond to large or medium metal bell sounds. The reason for this is most likely the presence of the relatively strong pitch content in the sound (Ambrazevičius 2011): the pitch appears immediately after the short noisy attack in the case of a metal bell, and, according to Chen (2020), the vocal cords start to vibrate even slightly before the consonant is released. Similar dominance of pitch may also be observed in the case of medium or large clay bells, which can also correlate with voiced plosives.

However, different sorts of bells feature different spectromorphological characteristics. For example, the auditory experience as well as a spectrogram representation of wooden chimes bear different characteristics than do cup-shape metal bells: with the former there is a considerably shorter duration of resonance, also, there is a greater proportion of noise compared to pitch content in the sound. Consequently, the phonetic association should be different too. The mentioned characteristics of wooden chimes bear a stronger resemblance not to the voiced, but rather unvoiced plosives [p], [t], [k], because of the stronger noise element in the latter. It should be noted that different levels of aspiration can be initiated while pronouncing unvoiced plosives, which also affects the sonic characteristics. See figure 2 for a comparison of the sound of wooden chimes, different manipulations of aspiration while pronouncing [t], and pronunciation of [d]. An aspirated [t] possibly approximates the sound of wooden chimes most closely.

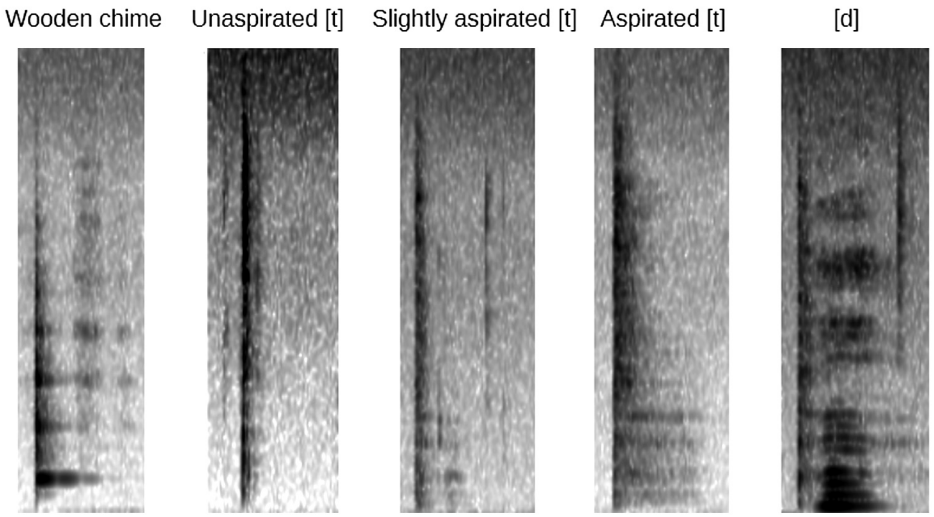

Figure 2. Comparison of spectrograms of wooden chime, differently aspirated [t], and [d].
Time spans of the excerpts ~0.5 s, spectral range 0–20 kHz

Another case worthy of discussion concerns potential phonetic associations with small metal chimes. The dominant sonic characteristics that distinguish small metal chimes from the sound of medium to large bells are their high frequency range and shorter duration. However, one additional factor should also be

[15] An overview of the impact of attack on the identification of musical instruments is provided in Ambrazevičius (2012, 9–10).

[16] As mentioned above, some of the words are definitely ascribed as having onomatopoeic origin, while others lack this clear association. However, the greater variety of initial consonants may be observed among onomatopoeic words of bells beyond this list, e.g., the English "dingle," "tinkle," "jingle", "ringing."

taken into account. In practice, we often encounter collections of chimes, i.e., we experience constellations of sounds of higher or lower density instead of individual sounds. Consequently, within the perception dimension, the aggregate characteristics of the group are of greater importance than the sound of an individual chime. The group of such sounds contains a comparatively high quantity of noisy attacks, meaning the sum effect is a noisier quality in general compared to the individual sound of a single bell. These characteristics (the sum quality of noise together with the high frequency range) have made assumptions for associating metal chimes with voiced fricatives [z], [ʒ] and affricates (mostly with voiced like [dz], [dʒ], but at times an unvoiced [tʃ] was also added). The reason for this correlation lies in the following features of the phonemes: strong turbulent noise, combination of both pitch and noise content, domination of high frequencies in the case of voiced fricatives and most of the similar features in the case of affricatives (Chen 2020); high frequencies in the case of unvoiced affricatives. Moreover, it seemed reasonable to initiate the collections of phonemes in the textual tapestry of the composition to resemble the constellations of sounds in the case of metal chimes. For this purpose, short phrases where voiced fricatives and affricates are dominant were chosen; other consonants present in the phrases were unvoiced affricates and nasals. You can see the juxtaposed spectrograms of the metal chimes used in the composition and one of the pronounced phrases[17] in figure 3.

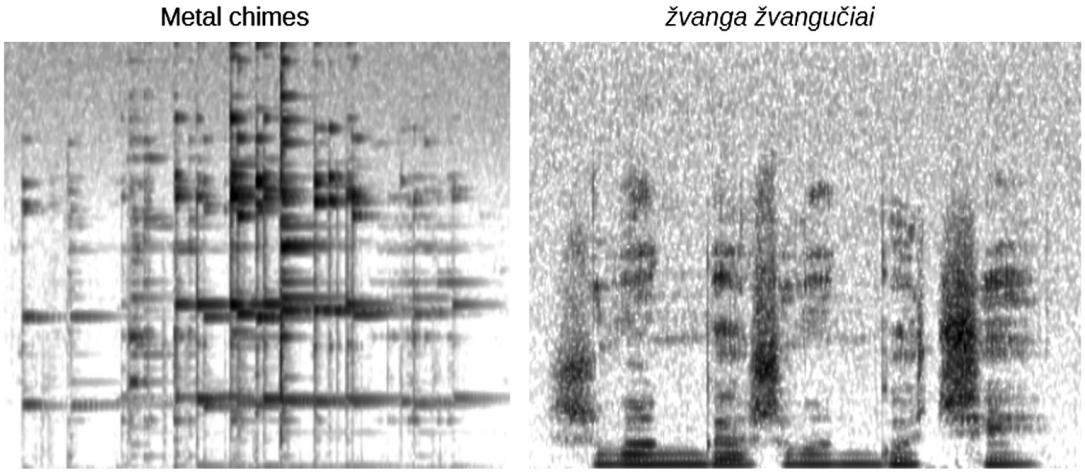

Figure 3. Comparison of spectrograms of metal chimes and the Lithuanian phrase *žvanga žvangučiai* (jingles jingling). Time spans of the excerpts ~1.5 s, spectral range 0–24 kHz

In addition to drawing parallels between specific types of bells and certain phonetic items, the progressive disposition of sound objects over time was also under compositional consideration. The chosen elaborative strategy was a slow progression from the least resonant, noisy, short-term sounds to the most resonant, tonal,[18] sustained sounds, followed by their fading dispersion. This process of elaboration involved all parties in the composition: bells, vocals, and instruments. An overall trajectory was drawn going through five qualitative stages, each featuring certain dominant spectromorphological characteristics: a) short term, limitedly resonant sounds with the noise element dominating; b) slightly resonant noisy sounds infused with tone quality; c) moderately resonant sounds of medium range tone quality infused with noise; d) highly resonant sounds with a wide range of complex frequencies; e) slightly to moderately resonant sounds of a high-frequency range; tone quality infused with noise. All parties of the composition were meant to approach the dominant characteristics of each stage as closely as possible. Figure 4 presents the overall map of how the indicated spectromorphological characteristics were implemented in each party of the performance.

[17] In the composition, the Lithuanian *žvanga žvangučiai* (jingles jingling), Latvian *es zvana zvans* (I ring the bell), Ukrainian *dzvonyty u dzvin* (ringing the bell), and Hungarian *cseng a csengő* (the bell is ringing) were used.

[18] The word "tonal" is used in an opposite sense to "noisy."

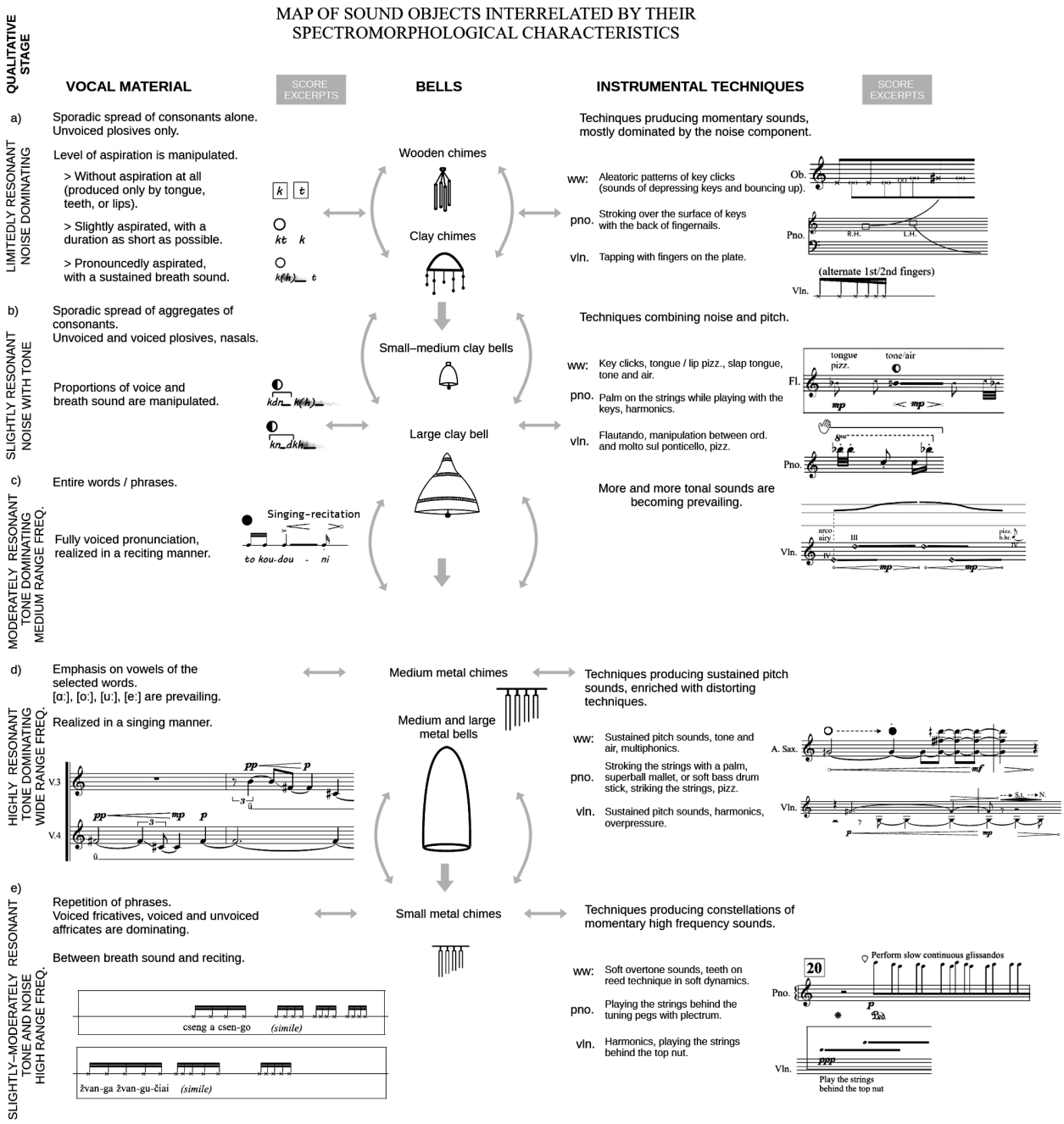

Figure 4. Map of sound objects interrelated by their spectromorphological characteristics in *I Ring This Bell* by Aistė Vaitkevičiūtė

A brief discussion of the implementation of each qualitative stage is provided below.

a) Short-term, limitedly resonant sounds with the noise element dominating.

In the first qualitative stage, the noisiest part of the sound, which is concentrated in the initial attack of a bell sound, is explored. This conceptual approach is realized through all the parties of the composition. The bell collection consists of wooden chimes, the least resonant type of bell, whose sound features the largest proportion of the noise-element.[19] These are later complemented by small clay chimes, featuring a short duration of resonance, but giving a little more tonal quality. The vocal part is limited to sporadic utterances of unvoiced plosive consonants alone. Their production is manipulated in great detail: the range of pronunciation covers all levels of aspiration (from a complete absence of aspiration—where only the tongue, teeth, and

[19] The wooden chimes used in the composition are homemade from wooden sticks and lack a clear pitch.

lips are used—to an exaggerated level of aspiration). The instrumental parts use techniques that allow them to approximate the spectromorphological characteristics of bells and vocals, which are as short as possible in duration and dominant in noise (e.g.: key clicks in the woodwinds, including sounds of a key being pressed down and released; tapping the soundboard of the violin; stroking the surface of keys with the back of fingernails on the piano; etc.).

b) Slightly resonant noisy sounds infused with tone quality.

The continued a) stage soundscape is enriched by the addition of medium-sized clay bells, which introduce a more tonal quality to the arrangement. In the vocal part, the collection of unvoiced plosives is complemented by voiced plosives and nasals. The qualitative manipulation also includes altering the proportions of breath sound and voice. Techniques that allow for combinations of noise and tonal sounds are employed in the instrumental parts (e.g.: voicing of consonants are included in key clicks textures for woodwinds; tapping the fingers on the strings of the violin; producing harmonic sounds on the piano; etc.).

c) Moderately resonant sounds of medium range tone quality infused with noise.

In this stage, there is a shift not only in terms of spectromorphological characteristics, but in the semantic level of the vocal material too. While collections of consonants alone were utilized in the first two stages, as the process progresses, the formation of entire words becomes evident. These are realized in a fully voiced reciting manner. As previously mentioned, the words possess onomatopoeic characteristics reminiscent of a bell sound, concurrently conveying the semantic meaning of "bell," "ringing of a bell," or similar, pronounced in different languages. The large clay bell introduced into the soundscape exhibits characteristics approximate to those of a standard metal bell. An increasing level of tonal quality is extended to the instrumental parts, where techniques for brief, noisy sounds are combined with those for sustained and more tonal sounds (e.g.: techniques combining pitch and breath sound in woodwinds; transitions between soughing sounds and harmonics on the violin; playing notes with strings damped with a palm on the piano; etc.).

d) Highly resonant sounds with a wide range of complex frequencies.

This stage focuses on the resonance phase of the bell sound, the process that extends to all parties of the composition. The resonance of large metal bells is reflected in the vocals in several ways. From the phonetic perspective, the focus is drawn not on the consonants as in previous stages, but on the vowels, especially [aː], [oː], [uː], [eː]. The fully-voiced quality is even more exposed by the transition into a singing manner, as compared to previous speech or recitation modes of performance. The tonal qualitative nature is also reinforced by instrumental techniques producing sustained tones, however, the distortive nature of the bell sound is reflected by distorting techniques in the instruments too (e.g.: multiphonic sounds in woodwinds; the overpressure technique on the violin; stroking the strings with a superball mallet on the piano; etc.). The structural aspects of the pitch domain require a separate discussion, which is provided in section 2.2.

e) Slightly to moderately resonant sounds of a high-frequency range; tone quality infused with noise.

After the humming nature of the d) stage, a process of reduction follows. The resonance of sounds grows shorter and shorter, and the range of frequencies becomes limited to high frequencies. The phrases characterized by the presence of dominant fricatives and affricates in the vocals, integrating breath quality and recitation, reflects the aggregation of high-frequency sounds reminiscent of metal chimes. These are extended to the instrumental parts by producing iterative high range sounds (e.g.: teeth-on-reed technique for oboe and a. saxophone, whistle tones for flute; playing behind the top nut on the violin; playing the strings behind the tuning pegs on the piano; etc.).

Returning once again to stage d), which reflects the decay phase of the bell's sound, the importance of the presence of inharmonic partials was emphasized. In the context of form, it marks a significant shift in focus from the phonetic domain to pitch relations. This is where the concept of *Schwebungsdiaphonie* was invoked, thus, a special discussion is developed in the following section.

2.2. Traces of *Schwebungsdiaphonie* in the pitch domain of the composition

As mentioned above, all the designated stages, except d), have emphasized applying the onomatopoeic principle in both the vocal and instrumental domains, which implies a primary compositional focus on the timbre parameter. Although stage d) shifts the focus to the pitch parameter, it is important to note that the overall intention remains unchanged—to reflect the sound of a bell in various qualitative manifestations. It is instead a transition from manipulation within the scope of an individual sound to the quality emerging through the interaction of sounds.

Here we can recall the phenomenon referred to as *Schwebungsdiaphonie*. It was coined by ethnomusicologists for traditional multipart singing practices, where the rough quality emerging because of the interaction between sounds at certain intervals is intentionally obtained. It should come as no coincidence that the ideal sound in these practices is often likened to the sound of a bell.[20] There is no strict consensus on the exact interval determining the desired quality, but it is agreed that it is somewhat around an untempered second. While Messner's research indicates intervals of about 80–165 cents, Ambrazevičius, who investigates *sutartinės* (a Lithuanian type of *Schwebungsdiaphonie*), denotes the ideal interval as approximately 1.7–1.8 semitones (Ambrazevičius 2014, 58–59; Ambrazevičius 2014–2016).

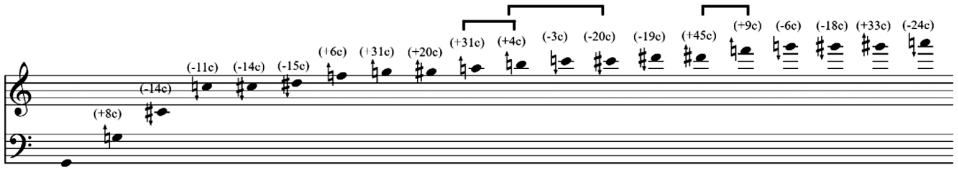

Figure 5. Transcribed version of the spectrogram of a gas cylinder bell. The markings indicate the distances between partials, which are close to the rough quality specified in *Schwebungsdiaphonie* practices

Now, if we return to the gas cylinder bell (figure 1), among many inharmonic partials, we can definitely find the intervals that approximate the distances referred to in *Schwebungsdiaphonie* in its spectrum. Figure 5 presents the transcribed version of the same spectrogram, with the corresponding distances marked. At the current point of the composition, the vocal line develops as if exploring different variations of the second, starting with a quartertone and gradually expanding them. The local climax in the vocal part is reached when the distance becomes approximately two-thirds of a major second, i.e., very close to the rough quality identified by Ambrazevičius in the case of Lithuanian *sutartinės* (figure 6).
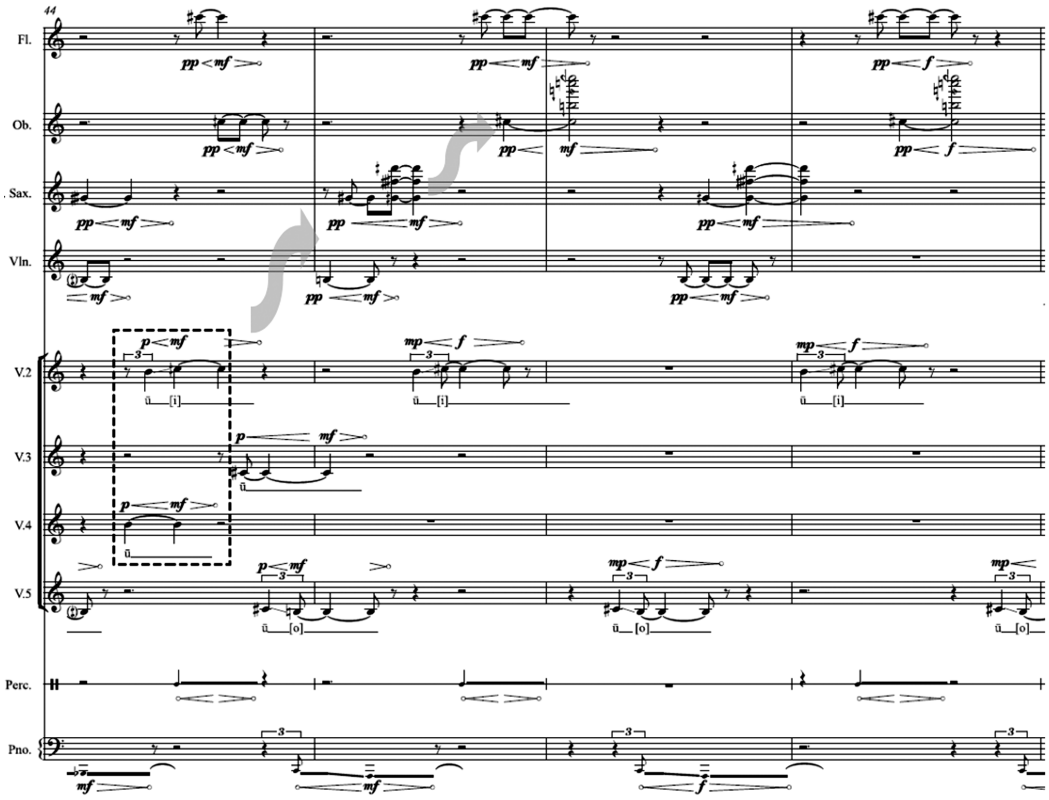
Figure 6. The local climax in the vocal part, when the interval between two voices reaches approximately two thirds of a major second; intensification is further increased via instrumental multiphonic sounds. Excerpt from *I Ring This Bell* (bars 44–47)

[20] "Do They Sound Like Bells ... ?" is an exemplary excerpt from the title of the monograph by Gerald Florian Messner, the author of the term *Schwebungsdiaphonie* (Messner 2013).

After this point, the intensification of the development passes to the instrumental parts by implementing multiphonic sounds and other distorted qualities (figure 6). The choice of multiphonics is not accidental: it is a technique where several frequencies are brought up in the sound, often resulting in untempered intervals. When obtained by one instrument, in a perceptual domain, they tend to create an effect as if it were a single sound rather than a composite one. Thus, it can be stated that roughness obtained by the clash of several voices transforms into the uniform rough quality within a single sound obtained by one sound source—just like in the case of a bell. In other words, vocal *Schwebungsdiaphonie* transforms into instrumental *Schwebungs-multiphonie*.

Further on, the material accumulates towards the final culmination by initiating interactions among all the parties—vocals, instruments, and bells. The soundscape expands not only in terms of musical parameters, but also in terms of physical space. The bells are installed in various locations around the room, and the performers are instructed to distribute themselves throughout the space and to move the bells while performing their vocal or instrumental parts. Ideally, all sound emitters should surround the audience, creating the perceptual effect of being inside a large, sonorous bell.

3. On the overall *morphopoiesis* of the composition

The spectromorphological profile of a bell (see figure 1) served as a source for an overall *morphopoiesis*[21] (Kokoras 2005) of the work. It was like looking through a microscope at the different phases of its resonance. As mentioned above, the attack phase is the densest in terms of its constitution, characterized by the highest noise element. The variation of this tiny (in the context of the overall sound) component, however, has a strong perceptual effect, which can affect our tendency to attribute sound to one or another source. Moreover, due to the strong noise element, the attack brings us very close to the realm of phonetics, or, in other words, the domain of speech. Not incidentally, it was precisely the exploration of the attack phase that was linked to the linguistic expressions reflecting the sound of a bell (the onomatopoeic sphere). The initial soundscape of the most multifarious sonic objects has gradually progressed towards more connected constellations, in parallel to the increasing presence of the pitch element. The process of integration reached its peak in the d) phase, when qualities began to be obtained not within the scope of individual sounds, but through their interaction. This culminated in the compositional realization of the sound of a bell, which, at the same time, is uniform and multi-layered. The processual nature of the work can be expressed in the scheme presented below (figure 7).

SPECTROMORPHOLOGICAL PROTOTYPE:	from attack phase towards resonance.
COMPOSITIONAL REALIZATION:	from speech to singing in vocal domain; from noise-dominated to tonal tehcniques in instrumental domain.
CULTURAL IMPLICATION:	from diversity to unity.

Figure 7. Scheme illustrating the *morphopoiesis* of the composition derived from the spectromorphological prototype (the sound of a bell)

Thus, the all-encompassing transformation (or *morphopoiesis*) is based on the spectromorphological prototype of the bell sound and creates balance between two oppositional poles of the composition: dispersion of individual multifarious sonorities at the beginning and a coalescence of macro-sonority at the climax. It is like a symbolic representation of cultural diversity, connected by a universal sound object—a bell.

Concluding remarks: universal sound resonating through cultural diversity

The artistic research presented above reveals how the same object—an awe-inspiring sound—can evoke a multitude of expressions, reflecting both ethnic specificities and a certain universality of sound. The sound of the bell was examined from a spectromorphological approach, exploring its (psycho)acoustic manifestation

[21] The concept of *morphopoiesis*, proposed by the composer and researcher Panayiotis Kokoras, "refers to music that concentrates its interest on changes in the intrinsic and extrinsic attributes of the sound in the flux of time" (Kokoras 2005, 66). *Morphopoiesis* is contrasted with other foundations of form as focusing on the parameter of timbre rather than rhythm, harmony, or melody.

down to the smallest nuances. These, in turn, were linked to linguistic expressions—the sphere of onomatopoeia. The framework of bell imitations described by Ambrazevičius was applied, but also was supplemented with a greater variety in terms of the attack phase (or initial phonemes), discovered during compositional exploration. The phenomenon of *Schwebungsdiaphonie* was also incorporated into the compositional fabric, interspersed with instrumental *Schwebungsmultiphonie*. All these procedures are united by the spectromorphological profile of the sound of a bell, which manifests as an overall *morphopoiesis* of the composition.

The concurrence of diversity and universality thus became an underlying idea of both the composition and the current paper. In *I Ring This Bell*, linguistic diversity is integrated into the textual and sonic tapestry, where the reflections of the bell's sound come from different languages through onomatopoeic expressions. Onomatopoeia itself, as a phenomenon, combines both a universal element—a common sound object—and the specificity of a particular language. When the pitch parameter begins to dominate over timbre, linguistic diversity begins to be unified by musical universality. *Schwebungsdiaphonie*, as discussed, is a marker of specific ethnic practices (as in the Balkans, Lithuania, and others), but also refers to the universal quality of sound (maximum roughness). At the climax of the piece, the sound merges into a unified macro-sonority, as if forming a large bell, unanimously resonating the abundance of cultural diversity.

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Varpų rezonansai kalboje, etnomuzikoje ir Aistės Vaitkevičiūtės kūrinyje *I Ring This Bell* (2022–2024)

Santrauka

Meninio tyrimo pobūdžio straipsnyje varpo skambesys nagrinėjamas kaip tarpkultūrinis ir tarpdisciplininis impulsas, turintis turiningus istorinį, kultūrinį ir kūrybinį kontekstus. Straipsnio autorė siekia šį garsinį fenomeną tirti ne tik teoriniu, bet ir kūrybiniu lygmeniu. Pastarąjį įkūnija straipsnio autorės kompozicija *I Ring This Bell* (2022–2024), skirta penkiems moterų balsams, instrumentiniam ansambliui ir varpų instaliacijai. Teorinis ir meninis aspektai komponuojant veikė abipusiškai – kūrybinė praktika kėlė naujus klausimus ir problemas, o teorinės įžvalgos formavo struktūrinę kūrinio koncepciją. Vienas pagrindinių kūrybinio proceso siekių buvo rasti būdą, kaip efektyviai susieti tris skirtingas garsines sferas – varpus (ar varpams artimus objektus), balsus ir instrumentus. Ieškant jų sąveikos taškų, buvo pasitelkti lingvistiniai ir etninės muzikos tyrimai.

Lingvistiniu aspektu tyrinėtos vokalinės varpų imitacijos, įvardijamos kaip onomatopėjos, tapo kūrinio daugiakalbio garsinio audinio formavimo šaltiniu. Remiantis spektromorfologiniais principais ir Ryčio Ambrazevičiaus tyrimais (Ambrazevičius 2011; Ambrazevičius ir Balsienė 2010), suformuluota skambesio sąveikos koncepcija, jungianti varpų, balsų ir instrumentų sferas pagal jų spektromorfologines savybes.

Antras tyrimo aspektas siejamas su specifiniu reiškiniu, vadinamuoju *Schwebungsdiaphonie* – tam tikrose tradicinėse vokalinės muzikos praktikose aptinkamas šiurkštus skambesys, neretai siejamas su varpo skambesio specifika (Messner 2013; Ambrazevičius 2014–2016 ir kt.). Ši praktika tapo impulsu nustatant garso aukštį, įtraukiant šiurkštumu pasižyminčius netemperuotus intervalus.

Pasitelkiant lingvistinius ir etnomuzikologinius kontekstus, straipsnyje atskleidžiama, kaip specifinės varpo skambesio savybės rezonuoja skirtingose kultūrose ir epochose per tam tikras praktikas – onomatopėjas ar *Schwebungsdiaphonie* reiškinį. Teorinės ir kūrybinės prieigų derinimas leido atrasti konkrečias perspektyvas, kuriomis minėti reiškiniai galėtų toliau skleistis šiuolaikiniuose muzikiniuose kontekstuose įvairiais struktūriniais lygmenimis – nuo *mikro-* iki *makro-* morfologinių darinių.

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Practices in Bulgarian ethno-pop music

Abstract. The study focuses on contemporary practices in Bulgarian ethno-pop music, examining compositional strategies for adapting traditional folklore to the global musical context. The relevance of the topic stems from the growing need to integrate cultural heritage into the dynamic landscape of the contemporary music scene without compromising its authenticity. The novelty of this research lies in the analysis of six previously unexplored examples: "Ah, Kade e Mojto Libe" (2004), "Djore" (2016), "DOS" (2018), "Slanchitse" (2018), "Omile Mi" (2019), and "Pusta Mladost" (2022)—performances and recordings in which I was directly involved as a singer, arranger, or co-writer. These works showcase innovations such as the transformation of asymmetric rhythms (e.g., 9/8 into 4/4), the blending of traditional and electronic instruments (e.g., oud, tupan, synthesizers), the preservation of local dialects, transferring a folk tune to a new genre, and the integration of genres such as pop, jazz, rock, and electronic music. The methodological framework employs the analysis and synthesis of musical structures, comparative analysis between authentic and adapted forms, as well as empirical work grounded in the author's practical experience as a composer, performer, and producer. This holistic approach illuminates the intricate interactions between tradition and modernity in the creation of musical works that preserve cultural memory while transforming it for contemporary audiences. The findings demonstrate that the adaptation of Bulgarian folklore within ethno-pop music harmonizes authenticity with innovation, rendering it a universal expression of cultural identity. The thesis posits that these adaptations not only preserve but also reconstruct cultural memory, embedding traditions as a vital component of the globalized world. Ethno-pop music emerges as a dynamic and sustainable phenomenon that strengthens Bulgaria's cultural identity while bridging the divide between the local and the global.

Keywords: Bulgarian ethno-pop music, folklore preservation, innovation, cultural memory, global-local synthesis, compositional strategies, interpretation, contemporary practices.

1. Introduction

"The Local as the New Global"[1] is a thesis that has generated significant research interest. Initiatives to preserve the world's tangible and intangible heritage have become a priority for the academic community today,[2] with the goal of safeguarding it from the ravages of time, systematizing it, making it widely accessible, and fostering a sense of community and identity.

Folklore can be sustained and made resonant in the present through multiple, complementary strategies. Foremost are recontextualization and adaptation—deliberate practices that rethink and relocate the folkloric idiom within new media, performance, and distribution environments. These practices can preserve the intonational inventory, modal organization, idiomatic ornamentation, and characteristic accentual profiles while relocating them within a frame that is perceptually familiar to the wide audiences of today.

For the local cultures of small nations with distinctive and recognizable features, such as Bulgarian folk music, this is particularly important as a factor of identity and community. Bulgarian folklore, alongside Bulgarian Orthodox music, continues to play a vital role not only as archival documentation but also as living symbolism in contemporary music. Most contemporary Bulgarian compositions revive the symbolism of Bulgarian cultural heritage,[3] achieving not only continuity but also identification. In the art-music domain, composers such as Dobrinka Tabakova and Vasil Kazandjiev exemplify nationally legible idioms without relying on direct folk quotation. In jazz/crossover, Milcho Leviev and Theodosii Spassov translate *aksak*[4] rhythm and modal thinking into improvisational and harmonic languages. In film/stage media, Penka Kouneva, Petar Dundakov, and Assen Avramov mobilize choral textures and folk timbres within global production frameworks. The popular/world sphere (e.g., Ku-Ku Band, Oratnitza, Ivan Shopov & Avigeya) renders these codes overt for mass audiences.

This article is dedicated to the ways and forms in which identity is expressed through folk music, asserting "local" belonging in a "global" musical world. This phenomenon is driven by many factors, primarily social: folk

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1 See the Project Local in the New Global (Kreislau-Initiative, n.d.).

2 The UNESCO Memory of the World program in 1992.

3 By "contemporary Bulgarian compositions" I am referring to a broad cross-genre field in which Bulgarian cultural codes are mobilized either explicitly—through folkloric or Orthodox references, asymmetric meters, and characteristic timbral features—or implicitly, via modal tendencies, phraseological patterns, dramaturgical structures, and the institutional frameworks of creation and reception.

4 *Aksak* (Turk., "limping") refers to asymmetrical metric patterns of Balkan and Middle Eastern music, built from unequal 2- and 3-unit groupings (e.g., 5/8, 7/8, 9/8). Introduced by Constantin Brăiloiu, the term describes both rhythmic structure and associated dance accents.

music has a large audience, is widely preferred in many places, is rich, original, and strongly identifying. We focus on one particular area where folk music has a prominent symbolic presence—popular music.

The theoretical foundation for this study draws upon Jonathan Friedmann's[5] observation that "folk music is a type of pop music, and vice versa" (Friedmann 2015, 58). This perspective challenges traditional distinctions between folk and popular music, highlighting their shared capacity to reflect collective identities and adapt to changing societal contexts. Friedmann's insights are particularly relevant to the Bulgarian ethno-pop scene, where folklore functions not only as a cultural artifact but as a dynamic, evolving practice. By examining this interplay, the study addresses the critical question of how tradition and modernity coexist, mutually enriching each other in a globalized world.

Through analysis of six case studies from the Bulgarian ethno-pop stage—performances and recordings in which I was directly involved as a singer, arranger, or co-writer—this article examines the mechanisms through which Bulgarian folklore is adapted into contemporary ethno-pop music and asks:

1. How can traditional folk elements be mediated in globalized musical forms?
2. What compositional strategies enable the retention of cultural specificity while ensuring accessibility to wide audiences?

To explore these themes, this research employs a comprehensive methodology, combining analysis and synthesis, induction and deduction, and comparative frameworks. Both scholarly and creative processes intersect in this work: analysis and synthesis guide the artistic deconstruction and integration of folkloric elements, while induction and deduction shape the theoretical generalizations derived from specific adaptations. Comparative analysis highlights the transformations between original folklore and its contemporary reinterpretations, revealing how these adaptations navigate the tension between authenticity and innovation. Practical experience as a composer, songwriter, performer, and producer further enriches the study, offering empirical insights into the creative process and its cultural implications.

The relevance of this study is underscored by the challenges of globalization, which simultaneously threaten and invigorate traditional forms. On one hand, commercialization and cultural homogenization risk diluting folklore's unique characteristics (Timothy Taylor 1997); on the other, globalization provides a platform for its revitalization and dissemination (Connell and Gibson 2004, 349–351). One way to conceptualize a response to this risk is through what Roland Robertson (1995, 25–44) terms "glocalization," a process that combines global trends with local characteristics, emphasizing the unique features of cultural heritage. On the other hand, ethnomusicologist Martin Stokes (1994, 1–27) emphasizes that globalization reshapes musical spaces, detaching local traditions from their geographic origins and embedding them into transnational networks of production and consumption.

This paradoxical process—innovation intertwined with risk—frames the research orientation of this study. Using the transformation of Bulgarian folk music into ethno-pop as a focal point, folklore is conceptualized as a negotiated space: one that sustains cultural distinctiveness while dialoguing with global currents. From early innovators like Bartók and Kodály to contemporary Bulgarian acts such as Oratnitsa, Ivan Shopov & Avigeya, and DJ Fabrizio Parisi, folklore emerges as both heritage and experiment. The guiding premise of this study is that folklore's survival depends on the process of its adaptation or hybridization, transcending the dichotomy of local and global. This position will inform the subsequent analysis of six Bulgarian ethno-pop compositions demonstrating how innovation, hybridization, and reinterpretation reaffirm folklore's dynamic cultural force in the global age.

2. Distinctive features of Bulgarian ethno-pop music

In recent years, Bulgarian folklore has been the subject of extensive academic and cultural research, particularly focusing on its adaptation and integration into the contemporary cultural context. This trend builds on a long-standing tradition of folklore studies in Bulgaria, initiated in the 19th century by scholars such as Petar Dinekov and Mihail Arnaudov, who laid the groundwork for understanding folklore as both a cultural and historical phenomenon (Dinekov 1980; Arnaudov 1968).

Contemporary studies on Bulgarian folklore adaptations encompass music, dance, and other forms of cultural expression, examining how these elements preserve cultural heritage while remaining relevant to

[5] Jonathan L. Friedmann (b. 1980), musicologist and cantor; Professor of Jewish Music History (AJR–California); author/editor of 30+ books on music, Judaism, and culture.

modern audiences. Researchers like Ventsislav Dimov and Claire Levy explore the interaction between traditional folklore and its reinterpretation in urban and global contexts. Their work emphasizes the transformative power of folklore in connecting the past with the present. For example, Dimov notes that "commercial recordings of folk music represent a new subject in ethnomusicology, shedding light on the interaction between traditional practices and modern media" (Dimov 2006, 176–194). Claire Levy has made significant contributions to the study of ethnojazz—a genre that fuses traditional folk idioms with jazz improvisation. She characterizes ethnojazz as "an innovative form of interaction between Bulgarian/Balkan folk and global jazz vocabulary," suggesting it represents both "a new development in music" and "a new horizon in mixing of musical languages". This synthesis, she argues, creates a bridge between the past and the present, a dynamic she evocatively terms "back to the future!" (Levy 2015, 159).

On an international level, Martin Stokes has provided valuable insights into the role of folklore in shaping identity across the Balkans. He observes that the folk music of the Balkans plays a key role in constructing national identity while simultaneously reflecting the complex historical and cultural interactions within the region (Stokes 1994, 1–27).

By integrating these perspectives, the study of Bulgarian folklore not only illuminates its historical roots but also highlights its dynamic role in contemporary culture, where tradition and innovation coexist. The current paper draws attention to the integration of folk elements into pop music, so it will be referred to as Bulgarian ethno-pop music. It denotes commercially produced music that foregrounds recognizable markers of Bulgarian folk idioms—such as modal inflections, timbral colorings, ornamentation, and additive accentual patterns—within pop, rock, or electronic frameworks aimed at mass, dance-oriented, and digitally mediated audiences. This working definition aligns with, yet expands on, earlier scholarly usages. Dimov (1996, 45–56) first introduced "ethnopop" as a media label for 1990s fusions, which quickly crystallized around pop-folk/*chalga*[6]. Buchanan (2007, 201–239) traced its genealogy to late Ottoman urban ensembles and 1990s Balkan industry circuits, positioning "Bulgarian ethnopop" as a locally branded node within transregional markets. Rice (2002, 25–46) analyzed *chalga* as a mass-mediated post-1989 genre negotiating nationalism, taste, and morality, while Statelova (2005) examined ethnopop cultures anthropologically, mapping their cultural politics and market structures. Building on these contributions, this study adopts a broader scope, extending beyond *chalga* to emphasize the programmatic integration of folk signifiers into pop production regimes—recording, staging, and distribution—as the defining feature of Bulgarian ethno-pop, rather than adherence to any single stylistic template.

Instruments and production. Ethno-pop mobilizes iconic Bulgarian timbres—*kaval* (wooden flute), *gaida* (bagpipe), *tŭpan* (drum), *gadulka* (fiddle), *tambura* (string instrument)—alongside the wedding-band palette of accordion, clarinet, trumpet, and saxophone. These sounds are embedded within studio-based arrangements of synthesizers, drum machines, electric bass, and guitar, merging folklore with global pop sonics. Production alternates between sampled or quoted melodies and newly composed hooks voiced in folk timbre, framed by contemporary mixing practices (compressed low-end, widened stereo fields) designed for clubs and streaming platforms.

Vocal style. Two main schools define vocal practice: (1) preserving of the guttural, open-throated timbre of traditional Bulgarian singing; and (2) pop-oriented delivery softened by melismas and ornaments drawn from village style. Lead vocals stylize folk techniques—sharp turns, tight ornaments, microtonal inflections—within close-miked pop production. Layered textures evoke Shop[7] diaphony[8] or heterophonic doubling, while call-and-response refrains and melismatic codas adapt communal participation to radio-ready formats. UNESCO's dossier on Bistritsa Babi (Santova 2008) highlights the diaphonic sonority that many producers reference, even when recontextualized in studio mixes.

6 *Chalga* is a Bulgarian pop-folk genre blending Balkan, Turkish, Romani, and Middle Eastern styles; popular post-1989, tied to nightlife and media, and culturally polarizing.

7 *Shop* (*Shopluk*) is an ethnographic region in western Bulgaria, known for its open-throated diaphony, asymmetrical dances, distinct white-wool costumes, and a characteristic dialect.

8 *Diaphony* is a traditional Bulgarian polyphonic style where a sustained drone supports a solo melody, often featuring sharp dissonances (seconds, sevenths).

Rhythm and meter. Additive meters remain a hallmark: for examples *rachenitsa*[9] in 7/8 (2+2+3), *daichovo*[10] in 9/8 (2+2+2+3), *kopanitsa*[11] in 11/16. Producers either retain these meters outright or project their accentual logic within a 4/4 substrate (e.g., 3+3+2 phrasing across quadruple bars), often with polyrhythmic layering. This strategy maximizes danceability while preserving idiomatic asymmetry. Buchanan (2007, 201–239) documents the prevalence of *kyuchek*/*çiftetelli*[12] grooves and Middle Eastern rhythmic cycles in pop-folk, while Rice (2002, 25–46) shows how additive meters circulate into mass-mediated styles after 1989. Together, they demonstrate how asymmetry and commercial form cohabit in post-socialist Bulgarian popular music.

Harmony. Ethno-pop harmony spans a continuum from modal-drone textures to jazz-inflected color and global pop loops. At one pole, village pitch practices persist through drone pedals, open fifths, and secundal clusters,[13] sustaining Dorian, Aeolian, or Phrygian centers without functional cadences, echoing Shop diaphony and the Kutev/Kyurkchiyski choral lineage. A middle stratum introduces jazz-derived voicings—quartal/quintal stacks, add-9/11/13 chords, modal mixture—associated with Milcho Leviev and Theodosii Spassov. At the pop end, globally legible loops (i–VII–VI–VII; i–VI–VII; I–V–vi–IV) dominate, foregrounding melody and groove while drones or synth pads maintain modal centers.

3. Creative approaches and compositional methods

This section presents a set of analytical case studies to demonstrate how Bulgarian folklore is adapted into modern ethno-pop compositions. The six examples analyzed below are songs in which I have participated directly as a singer, arranger, or co-writer. Each case highlights specific compositional techniques**,** structural transformations, and stylistic negotiations that serve the broader paradigm of ethno-informed mediation.

3.1. "Ah, Kade e Mojto Libe" (Ah, where is my beloved) (2004)[14]

Arranged by Ku-Ku Band, with whom I collaborated as an author and solo vocalist

The arrangement takes a folk melody that, prior to this treatment, circulated primarily among professional folk singers and regional ensembles. The Ku-Ku Band's version re-situates it for mass media consumption while safeguarding its core identity. The aim is not ornamental "crossover," but an affective deepening of the source through pop-era form, harmony, and production. This combination of stylistic fidelity and pop addresses catalyzed mass uptake: the track moved from niche repertory to nationwide sing-along status, becoming a signature number for Ku-Ku Band and, vocally, for me.[15]

Key compositional features:

1. Folk tune as a pop ballad: Compact verse–chorus structure with a hook-oriented interlude, steady backbeat, and modern production sheen.
2. Pop/Rock orchestration: Drum kit, percussions, electric bass, keys/guitars, brass section (flugelhorn leads the melody, while saxophone and clarinet add contrapuntal color).
3. 7/8 phrasing against 4/4 feel: The melody retains its original *aksak* (3+2+2) phrasing, while percussion implies 4/4 (hi-hat accenting weak beats).
4. Vocal framing: Lead vocals adopt pop delivery while preserving folk ornaments and modal inflections. Layered backing vocals thicken the texture toward the refrains, suturing folkloric timbre to contemporary ensemble writing.
5. Harmony influence: Harmonic language evokes bands like Toto or Earth, Wind & Fire, using extended chords and pop-era "lift" dynamics.

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9 *Rachenìtsa* is an emblematic Bulgarian dance/tune-type in asymmetrical 7/8 (2+2+3) with quickstep footwork and accent on the final (long) beat; widespread with regional variants (esp. Thrace).

10 *Dàichovo* is a Bulgarian chain dance/tune-type in asymmetrical 9/8 (2+2+2+3); widespread (notably in Thrace and Shopluk) and typically performed at a lively tempo.

11 *Kòpanitsa* is a Bulgarian chain dance/tune-type in asymmetrical 11/16, characteristically 2+2+3+2+2; brisk tempo with sharp off-beat accents, widely danced (notably in Shopluk) with intricate, syncopated footwork.

12 *Kyuchèk* (Turk. *Çiftetelli*) is a duple-metre Balkan dance with off-beat accents and melismatic improvisation, rooted in Ottoman-Romani traditions and now central to Bulgarian pop-folk (*chalga*).

13 Secundal cluster is a chord from stacked seconds, creating dense and often shimmering texture.

14 You can listen to the song on YouTube (Trifonov and Ku-Ku Band 2020).

15 The 2015 performance by Ku-Ku Band with Desi Dobreva, Neli Petkova, and Cvetelina Grahich has 9.3M+ views (Desi, Petkova, Grahich, Ballet Magadance 2016).

Cultural effect: Widely popular as a wedding song[16] and sing-along anthem,[17] the piece shows how stylistically faithful adaptation within pop structures can reintroduce folk repertoire to mass audiences. This arrangement operates as a gateway adaptation: it translates an insider's item of the folk canon into a broadly recognized emblem of Bulgarian musical identity and everyday ritual use, thereby expanding the tradition's expressive field without sacrificing its core codes.

3.2. "Djore" (2016)[18]

Based on the Shop folk song "Djore Dos"—arranged by Desi Dobreva and Julian Janev

This re-imagining transforms a traditional two-voice a cappella folk song into a full-scale pop-rock arrangement with elements of musical theatre and dance grooves. The adaptation preserves the core melody and text while transforming performance practice, harmony, vocal technique, and instrumentation**.**

Key compositional features:

1. A cappella to full ensemble: Expansion from two-voice a cappella (iso-drone) to full ensemble with rhythm section, brass, layered vocals, and electronics.
2. Contrasting textures: Sparse folk verses vs. lush, layered interludes evoking jazz-band energy and *horo*[19] dance motifs.
3. Two interludes: Interludes alternate between brass-band fanfare and festive dance rhetoric.
4. Symbolic percussion: *Tŭpan* ostinato mimics horse gallop (a folkloric metaphor of cosmic travel).[20]
5. Vocal delivery: Pop vocal delivery enriched by humorous ornaments such as the "hiccup" glottal catch, associated with village practice.
6. Harmony twist: Same chord progression in verses and interludes, but with a minor/major modal twist to evoke contrasting moods, i.e. "local" and "global."

Cultural effect: The rendition demonstrates playful hybridity, where folk is transformed rather than quoted. "Djore" exemplifies *ethno-informed mediation*: a calibrated translation of village a cappella song into a contemporary concert idiom that broadens reception while preserving identity.

3.3. "DOS" (2018)[21]

Based on two Shop folk songs (noted below)—arranged by Yavor Rusinov (Roussinoff)

The title itself plays on a linguistic pun: "dos" (a folkloric vocative) and DOS (early computer system), suggesting a bridge between rural heritage and the digital era. The song is arranged in a pure dance idiom, with electronic textures, risers, uplifters and an EDM-style form, and stands among the most popular pieces in the artist's repertoire.[22]

Key compositional techniques:

1. Merging two folk songs: Combines two folk sources—"Nakladoshe Sedenkutu" (Evening gatherings) and "Dos, Done Le" (Dona)—into a composite narrative, intertwining different aspects of folklore.
2. Meter adaptation: Reshapes 9/8 meter (2+2+2+3) into 4/4 for danceability, aligning with global EDM logics.
3. Oriental timbre: Incorporates *oud* timbre, signaling cross-cultural dialogue.
4. Authentic dialect: Preserves Shopluk dialect, adding exotic coloration, often misperceived as Turkish.
5. Vocal design: Verses retain the folkloric bourdon; choruses expand with four-part vocal textures, following EDM-style "drop"[23] logic.
6. Pop minimalism: Harmonic repetition echoes both folk statics and dance-music hypnosis.

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16 See Songs for the First Wedding Dance on YouTube.

17 Cover versions by mainstream and independent artists (e.g., Gloria; Nevena Tsoneva, Nikolina Chakardukova, etc.) further consolidated its status, indicating canonization through popular circulation.

18 You can listen to the song on YouTube (Dobreva 2021).

19 *Horo* is a Bulgarian folk dance in circular or linear formations, marked by irregular rhythms and communal celebration.

20 In Bulgarian folk belief, the horse symbolizes a link between earthly and celestial realms, rooted in the Thracian tradition and preserved in ritual and epic songs.

21 You can listen to the song on YouTube (Dobreva 2018).

22 "DOS" has attracted significant public attention, exceeding one million views on YouTube.

23 In dance and electronic music, the "drop" is the climactic re-entry of rhythm and texture following a build-up, intensifying energy and audience response.

Cultural effect: Irony, symbolism, and EDM energy coexist with high fidelity to Bulgarian phonetic, modal, and textual codes. "DOS" exemplifies folklore as dynamic material, its identity intact even as form and production recast it in a globally legible dance idiom.

3.4. "Slănchitse" (Little sun) (2018)[24]

Based on the Thracian folk melody "Slănchitse, milo mamino"—arranged by Desi Dobreva and Alex Nushev

This version draws on the rock-opera tradition, incorporating gospel, jazz, hard-rock riffs, and wedding-band gestures into a grand, dramatic arrangement. The result preserves the tune's recognizability while relocating it in a contemporary, theatrically scaled medium.

Key compositional features:

1. Monumental sonority: Layering of gospel choir,[25] Hammond organ, hard-rock riffs, accordion, and folk voices.
2. Thematic development: Structural development recalls classical techniques (sonata form with an extended recapitulation).
3. Antiphonal idiom: Call-and-response rhetoric links sacred gospel and Bulgarian village traditions.
4. Meter transformation: Metrical shifts (7/8 → 6/8 → 4/4) broaden accessibility while retaining idiomatic accents.
5. Modal change: Aeolian to Dorian heightens affective impact.
6. Intertextual references: Allusions to "House of the Rising Sun" and "Vecherai, Rado" (Have supper, Rada) stage dialogue between local and global.

Cultural effect: An epic ballad of national reflection. Its layering of local and global idioms exemplifies that authenticity is continually renegotiated. "Slănchitse" shows how rock-opera scale and intertextual layering can revitalize folklore for contemporary cultural reflection. The case thus substantiates structural translation as a viable method for renewing folklore without eroding its semiotic core.

3.5. "Omile Mi" (I long for you) (2019)[26]

Based on the *Trŭn*[27] folk song "Domile mi, Yagodo"—arranged by Desi Dobreva and Mihail Yossifov

This work translates a folk tune into a 1930s foxtrot aesthetic, drawing on the idioms of Benny Goodman and The Andrews Sisters. The piece proceeds from a conceptual premise: the folk song functions as ground material for a complete, concise form that does not merely add jazz touches but translates the source into a new genre.

Key compositional features:

1. Genre translation: The piece employs American energetic foxtrot rhetoric, matching groove, phrasing, and timbre to swing conventions.
2. Jazz harmony: Progressions with extended tertian color.
3. Big-band feel: Instrumental riffs, walking bass, "wah-wah" brass and tambourine create vintage theatricality.
4. Authentic dialect: Preserves *Trŭn* dialect, juxtaposed with jazz phrasing.
5. Andrew Sisters' style: Tight three-part vocal harmonies adapt the folk melodic contour.
6. Antiphonal idiom: Call-and-response between brass and vocals, while the clarinet plays a central role, providing soloistic commentary throughout the piece.

Cultural effect: The arrangement demonstrates glocalization—folklore migrates into global idioms while retaining identity even in completely foreign rhythmic-harmonic frames. "Omile Mi" shows a bridging strategy: how folklore can traverse genre boundaries and preserve its core, thereby expanding the expressive reach of both traditions.

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24 You can listen to the song on YouTube (Dobreva 2019).

25 The studio version includes a gospel choir, though not yet officially released; the analysis here refers to a live performance where a folk choir replaces the gospel ensemble.

26 You can listen to the song on YouTube (Dobreva 2020).

27 *Trŭn* is a folklore region in western Bulgaria near the Serbian border, known for its archaic dialect, asymmetric rhythms, and richly ornamented vocal style within the broader Shopluk area.

3.6. "Pusta Mladost" (Cursed youth) (2022)[28]

Inspired by the legend of "Pusta Mladost" as a healing song[29]—arranged by Desi Dobreva

This composition pursues a crossover-with-return strategy, integrating film scoring aesthetics: modern in sound, yet haunted by archaic modal lament and historical trauma. The goal is not stylistic collage but an affective deepening of the folk source.

Key compositional features:

1. Contrast-driven form: A cappella proem, followed by a massive percussive layering, orchestral "explosion" and a choral catharsis ending.
2. Drum and voice: Low-register drums and vocals are the protagonists. The ensemble of *tŭpani*, toms, taiko, timpani, double drum set, and auxiliary percussion forms a dark, weight-bearing foundation, while the layered vocals function as a parallel ensemble.
3. Vocal design: Shifting between solo, three or four-parts and a mixed choir at the end.
4. Cinematic orchestration: Swells, sub-bass, ambient risers, and spatial reverberation intensify affect.
5. Rhythmic Symbolism: Galloping patterns reference Proto-Bulgarian martial archetypes and cosmological cycles.
6. Intertextual references: Hollywood rhetoric, Native American vocables, Balkan wedding idioms, and 1990s dance cues situate folklore in a global soundscape while preserving its modal and textual depth.
7. Semantic turn: Final "male" (mother) functions as catharsis—a return to origin, memory, and self-recognition.

Cultural effect: "Pusta Mladost" resonates with Stokes's (1994) argument that music mediates cultural memory. It shows how crossovers can reassert folk essence within a transnational frame.

The following table synthesizes the main case studies analyzed in this paper, highlighting how each adapts traditional elements within modern frameworks:

Composition	Traditional Source(s)	Modern Adaptation Techniques	Meter	Vocal Style	Function / Cultural Effect
"Ah, Kade e Mojto Libe"	Folk melody	Pop ballad, studio sheen, brass & pop vocals, flugelhorn	7/8 phrasing in 4/4	Pop vocal with ornaments	Broadcast-ready folk anthem
"Djore"	"Djore Dos"	Pop/rock ensemble, dual interludes, harmony twist	7/8 + 4/4	Pop with humorous ornaments	Folk-modern hybrid
"DOS"	"Nakladoshe" + "Dos Done Le"	Meter adaptation, EDM genre, oud, dialect	9/8 → 4/4	Shopluk dialect, bourdon + layered vocals	Local-global synthesis
"Slănchitse"	"Slănchitse, milo mamino"	Rock opera, meter adaptation, accordion, gospel & folk, modal change	7/8 → 6/8 → 4/4	Antiphony, gospel + folk, improvisations	Epic ballad symbolic renewal
"Omile Mi"	"Domile mi, Yagodo"	Big-band swing orchestration, clarinet, jazz harmony, Andrew sisters' idiom, dialect	Swing 4/4	Close-harmony swing, *Trŭn* dialect	Genre translation
"Pusta Mladost"	Traditional lament	Cinematic scoring, percussion/vocal layering, contrasts, references	Free → groove → 4/4	A cappella to layered mixed ensemble	Cathartic affective depth

4. Conclusion

This study examined the key compositional strategies and aesthetic mechanisms through which Bulgarian folklore is adapted into contemporary ethno-pop, with a focus on sustaining cultural specificity while enabling broader accessibility through globalized musical forms.

Across all analytical cases, a central principle emerges: adaptational procedures function as ethno-informed mediation—a form of cultural and musical translation that preserves the idiomatic core of the source material (e.g., modal organization, vocal timbre, additive meter), even as it is reframed within mass-mediated,

[28] You can listen to the song on YouTube (Dobreva 2025).

[29] In Bulgarian folklore, "Pusta Mladost" is known both as a lament and a healing incantation, believed to ease suffering through ritual performance; its legend was later adapted in Iglika Trifonova's film *A Letter to America* (2001).

dance-oriented, or hybridized production regimes. This approach avoids both extremes of musealization (freezing tradition in time) and commodification (stripping tradition of context and depth for market appeal). Instead, it affirms folklore as a living process—a site of identity negotiation, stylistic innovation, and cultural continuity.

The case studies analyzed in Section 4—ranging from the dance-pop hybrid "DOS" to the rock-operatic "Slănchitse" and the cinematic lament "Pusta Mladost"—demonstrate a spectrum of techniques for bridging the local and the global, including:

- Meter transformation (e.g., reframing 9/8 as 4/4);
- Dialect and ornament preservation in pop vocal idioms;
- Cross-genre orchestration: jazz, gospel, rock, EDM;
- Structural layering (call-and-response, climax building);
- Intertextual references to canonical folk and pop works;
- Semantic and sonic metaphors (e.g., equine *tŭpan* rhythm, "mother" as the final utterance).

These adaptations not only preserve cultural memory but also generate new aesthetic possibilities. They allow for a dialogue between past and present, rural and urban, national and transnational.

Drawing on theoretical insights from Roland Robertson (1995, 25–44), who views "glocalization" as a process that combines global trends with local characteristics, and Martin Stokes (1994), who discusses the spatial detachment and reembedding of musical identities under globalization, I argue that authenticity is not a static essence but an emergent quality—produced through stylistic competence, community recognition, and meaningful mediation.

The findings also support Jonathan Friedmann's proposition that "folk music is a form of pop music, and vice versa" (Friedmann 2015, 58). In Bulgaria's case, the ethno-pop movement challenges genre hierarchies by demonstrating that folk codes can thrive in modern formats without sacrificing complexity, dignity, or cultural weight.

This research has aimed to contribute not only to the field of ethnomusicology and cultural studies, but also to ongoing debates about heritage, authenticity, globalization, and innovation. Bulgarian ethno-pop offers a compelling model for how small cultures can assert identity in a global marketplace—not through nostalgic retreat, but through stylistically informed, emotionally resonant, and technically skilled musical creation.

Rather than asking whether adaptation "dilutes" folklore, the more productive question is: What kind of future do we want folklore to have? The evidence presented here suggests that a future of creative hybridity, cultural rootedness, and global relevance is not only possible—but already underway.

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Bulgarų etnopopuliariosios muzikos praktikos

Santrauka

Straipsnyje analizuojamos šiuolaikinės bulgarų etnopopuliariosios muzikos praktikos, nagrinėjami iki šiol mažai tyrinėti pavyzdžiai, iliustruojantys kompozicines strategijas, pritaikančias folklorinę medžiagą globaliam muzikiniam kontekstui. Tema yra ypač aktuali globalizacijos ir skaitmenizacijos sąlygomis, kurios skatina ieškoti naujų kultūros išsaugojimo ir transformavimo būdų. Etnopopuliarioji muzika šiame kontekste atsiskleidžia kaip kultūrinio tvarumo modelis, jungiantis autentiškumą ir inovaciją bei reaguojantis į kultūrinės homogenizacijos ir technologijų tarpininkaujamos kūrybos iššūkius.

Tyrimo tikslas yra atskleisti, kaip bulgarų folkloro adaptacijos etnopopuliariojoje muzikoje išsaugo kultūrinę atmintį ir kartu transformuoja ją į naujas, šiuolaikinei auditorijai aktualias formas. Straipsnyje teigiama, kad folkloro adaptavimas etnopopuliariojoje muzikoje ne tik padeda išsaugoti, bet ir rekonstruoti kultūrinę tapatybę, paversdamas ją universalia kultūrinio dialogo priemone globalizuotame pasaulyje.

Analizė grindžiama šešiais reprezentatyviais pavyzdžiais, kurių kūrybiniame procese dalyvavo ir pati straipsnio autorė: *Ah, Kade e Mojto Libe* (2004), *Djore* (2016), *DOS* (2018), *Slanchitse* (2018), *Omile Mi* (2019) ir *Pusta Mladost* (2022). Šie kūriniai atskleidžia įvairias novatoriškas strategijas: asimetrinių ritmų transformaciją (pavyzdžiui, iš 9/8 į 4/4), tradicinių ir elektroninių muzikos instrumentų integraciją (tokių kaip ūdas, tupanas ir sintezatoriai), folklorinės melodikos perkėlimą į naujus žanrinius kontekstus, vietinių dialektų išsaugojimą bei popmuzikos, džiazo, roko ir elektroninės muzikos elementų jungimą. Kiekvienas iš analizuojamų pavyzdžių atskleidžia skirtingus būdus, kuriais tradicinė medžiaga transformuojama siekiant atliepti šiuolaikinės muzikos poreikius.

Metodologinį tyrimo pagrindą sudaro muzikos struktūrinė analizė, autentiškų ir adaptuotų formų lyginamoji analizė, taip pat indukcinis ir dedukcinis metodai. Svarbi tyrimo dalis – autorės kaip kompozitorės, atlikėjos ir prodiuserės asmeninė praktinė patirtis, suteikianti teorinėms įžvalgoms empirinį pagrindą. Toks kompleksinis metodologinis požiūris leidžia nuosekliai atskleisti sudėtingą tradicijos ir šiuolaikinių populiariosios muzikos žanrų sąveiką.

Tyrimo rezultatai rodo, kad šiuolaikinės folkloro adaptacijos sėkmingai išsaugo jo kultūrinę esmę ir kartu daro jį aktualų šiuolaikinei auditorijai. Analizuoti pavyzdžiai patvirtina, kad bulgarų etnopopuliarioji muzika peržengia geografines ir kultūrines ribas, jungia skirtingas kartas ir stiprina nacionalinę tapatybę globaliame kontekste. Tyrimas prisideda prie etnopopuliariosios muzikos kaip dinamiško reiškinio, jungiančio tradiciją ir inovaciją, sampratos plėtros. Analizuojant iki šiol mažai tyrinėtus pavyzdžius, pabrėžiamas folkloro, kaip universaliōs kultūrinės komunikacijos kalbōs, vaidmuo, atskleidžiama jo reikšmė šiuolaikiniame muzikiniame diskurse.

About the authors

Nana AMOWEE DAWSON is an ardent devotee of African music, entwined with the world of intercultural artistic exploration. Graduating from the University of Cape Coast, Ghana, in 2015, where he earned a master's degree in music theory and composition, he now sets his sights higher with an ambitious pursuit of a Ph.D. in the same realm. Driven by a deep-seated commitment, his academic journey is guided by a profound mission—to celebrate and uplift the rich mosaic of African musical arts, transcending boundaries and empowering communities through enlightening scholarship. Drawing inspiration from the heart of Africa's cultural heritage, Nana Amowee is resolute in unearthing the intrinsic musical treasures ensconced within, fostering creativity, and nurturing knowledge-sharing from the grassroots upwards. As an esteemed music tutor at the illustrious Ghana National College, nestled within the historic Cape Coast, he imparts his vast expertise, igniting a musical fervour within his pupils and shaping a generation of harmonious visionaries. Fuelled by an insatiable thirst for musical excellence and an unwavering reverence for Africa's bountiful legacy, Nana Amowee Dawson emerges as a steadfast custodian and fervent advocate of its musical heritage. With each resounding note and soul-stirring composition, he leaves an indelible impression, captivating hearts and inspiring a profound appreciation for the richness of African musical expression.

Marius BARANAUSKAS (b. 1978) is a composer and Associate Professor of orchestration and composition at the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre. He studied composition with Prof. Rimantas Janeliauskas at the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre from 1996 to 2002, continuing his postgraduate studies there in 2003–2005. In 2004–2005 he furthered his education at the Conservatoire National Supérieur Musique et Danse de Lyon (CNSMD de Lyon). He received his Doctor of Arts (D.A.) degree from the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre in 2020.

His music is performed and commissioned by major festivals worldwide. His works have been presented by orchestras and ensembles including Sinfonietta Leipzig (Germany), Ensemble *Les Temps Modernes* (France), Ensemble *Melos Ethos* (Slovakia), the Latvian Radio Choir, Kammerensemble Neue Musik Berlin, the Lithuanian National Symphony Orchestra, the Lithuanian State Symphony Orchestra, the Slovenian Radio and Television Orchestra, the Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra, as well as numerous chamber ensembles and soloists.

Baranauskas has received multiple awards for his compositions. In 2004 he won 3rd Prize at the Toru Takemitsu Composition Award (Japan) for his symphonic work *Talking*. His electroacoustic piece *NUNC* was recognized as the best Lithuanian electroacoustic composition of 2003. *The Molten Thought* (for symphony orchestra) was awarded Best Lithuanian Orchestral Piece in 2006, and *Alrediph* (for tam-tam and symphony orchestra) received the same distinction in 2020. He was also named Best Lithuanian Theatre Composer of 2006.

Since 2005 he has served as coordinator of the annual International Music Theory Conference "Principles of Music Composing" and was assistant editor of the peer-reviewed journal *Principles of Music Composing* from 2005 to 2020. He is the author of a number of scholarly articles.

Jan BIELAK is a lecturer at the Academy of Music in Wrocław. He holds degrees in music theory and conducting—both of which he completed with distinction. In 2023, he received an academic grant for realising the artistic creation project entitled *Songs of Karol Szymanowski. Development of a complete monograph and its international promotion* under the first edition of the program "Pearls of Science," organized by the Ministry of Education and Science. He held the post of resident conductor at the Józef Wiłkomirski Sudecka Philharmonic Orchestra in Wałbrzych in the 2023/2024 season under the Conductor-in-Residence program, organized by the National Institute of Music and Dance. He participates in academic conferences in Poland and abroad. He publishes among others in Kwartalnik Młodych Muzykologów and Notes Muzyczny.

Desislava (Desi) DOBREVA is a well-known singer and a TV host in Bulgaria with multiple concerts in Bulgaria and abroad. Desi graduated from the National School of Arts "Dobri Hristov" in Varna, where her major was in classical piano. In 2005 she graduated from the National Academy of Music "Prof. Pancho Vladigerov", Sofia, with two master's degrees—pop and jazz singing and musical pedagogy. In 2007 Desi graduated from Berklee College of Music, Boston, U.S.A., as a bachelor in voice performance. As an excellent student her name was entered in the annual almanac of the U.S.A.: The National Dean's List 2006.

Desi became famous with her participation as a lead singer in the nightly TV show Slavi's Show and as an author and a TV host of the Bulgarian National

TV's show Night Flight. Being a lead singer of Ku-Ku Band and Slavi's Show, she sang along with such stars as Manhattan Transfer, Dream Theater, Glenn, David Coverdale, Joe Lynn Turner, BOND, Incognito, Zuccero, Al Bano, Goran Bregović, Ishtar, Army of Lovers, Lou Bega, Moloko, to name a few.

Dobreva has participated in multiple projects such as: the dramatic plays *The Mistery of Enyovden* and *The Circus* with National Art, *The Legend* of Lili Ignatova, *The Comics* (bTV), the National Guards Orchestra and Bulgarian National Radio, *BalkanSky* with Theodosii Spasov, *Bulgaria's Got Talent* (bTV), *The Voice of Bulgaria* (bTV), *Kato Dve Kapki Voda* (Nova TV; Original show—*Tu cara me suena*), *Muzika Bezkrai* (Bulgarian National TV), Desi's author project Ludo Mlado, presenting Bulgarian folklore in a new modern vision; and others. She has worked with such talents as the cosmic voice Valya Balkanska, Ivo Papazov-Ibryam, Neshka Robeva, Slavi Trifonov & Ku-Ku Bend, Ishtar, The Mistery of the Bulgarian Voices, Filip Kutev Ensemble, and many others.

Desi has performed at such prestigious stages as the legendary Royal Albert Hall and Astoria Hall (London, U.K.), as well as at the famous jazz club Blue Note (New York, U.S.A.), Mann Auditorium (Tel Aviv, Israel), Copernicus Theater (Chicago, U.S.A.), Harvard University, Regent Theater and Berklee Performing Center (Boston, U.S.A.), National Palace of Culture (Sofia, Bulgaria), Arena Armeetz (Sofia, Bulgaria), National Stadium "Vasil Levski" (Sofia, Bulgaria). She has sung also in Russia, Italy, Slovakia, Switzerland, Germany, Greece, Turkey, Malta, Belarus, Lithuania, Czech Republic, Romania, Macedonia, China, as well as yearly tours in the U.S.A. and Canada. She has worked as a vocal teacher in the National Prof. Pancho Vladigerov Academy of Music and many times has been a jury member of musical contests. Desi has also taken part in Varna's Stoyan Bachvarov Drama Theatre as an actress and vocalist. Dobreva, together with associate professor Valya Manolova, is an author of a music manual for kindergarten (2013). In 2021 Desi wrote her book *Personal & Tasty* containing 87 of the author's recipes, along with 87 personal stories.

Desi Dobreva has received many awards both at Bulgarian and international contests. Desi is the first official Good Will Ambassador of the campaign "Bulgarian Youth Delegate" 2010/2011 to the UN. As a representative of the Bulgarian Cultural Center in the U.S.A. and throughout her career as a musician, Desi has been actively promoting Bulgarian culture across Europe and the U.S.A. Currently Dobreva is a Ph.D. student at the Institute of Art Studies at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Sofia, Bulgaria.

Gvantsa GHVINJILIA is a musicologist, Ph.D., Doctor of Art Studies, and Associate Professor at the Tbilisi State Conservatoire (Department of Music History). She is a member of the Academic Council and the head of the dissertation board at the Tbilisi State Conservatoire. Additionally, she is a member of the Georgian Composer's Union and a guest senior lecturer at Shota Rustaveli Theatre and Cinema Tbilisi State University. She served as a jury member for the Tsinandali Awards in 2022. Ghvinjilia has received scholarships from Zakaria Paliashvili and the President of Georgia. From 2006 to 2013, she was the PR manager and head of the literary department at the Tbilisi Zakaria Paliashvili Opera and Ballet State Theatre. From 2021 to 2023, she participated in the Erasmus+ Mobility exchange program in Belgium, France, and Poland. She has delivered public lectures in Georgia, Belgium, Poland, and Ukraine and is frequently invited as a speaker on Georgian television and radio programs. Ghvinjilia also works as a music critic for periodical publications in Georgia. She is an active participant in national and international conferences. Her scientific interests include eco-music; religion and music; transhumanism and music; multimedia hybrid musical genres; interdisciplinary studies; the European integration of Georgian music; Soviet ideology and music.

Sanna IITTI (Ph.D.) is a Finnish musicologist. She graduated from New York University and has carried out her research in the U.S.A., Germany and the U.K. besides Finland, Greece and Sweden. Dr. Iitti is a specialist of the vocal music of the long 19th century. Her research revolves around Lied and opera in tandem with feminist criticism and cultural history of music. She has also explored issues in the field of music iconography. Dr. Iitti's publications include books entitled *Reflections on Opera, Faith and the Orient* (Beau Bassin: Lambert Academic Publishing, 2018 [2016]) and *The Feminine in German Song* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 2006). She is currently an independent scholar.

Yusuke ISHII is a pianist, musicologist. After studying in Japan, France and Germany, he obtained a master's degree in musicology at the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre. From 2021 he continues doctoral studies focusing on his thesis "Development of Modernism of Lithuanian Music in Diaspora" (supervised by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Darius Kučinskas) at Kaunas University of Technology. In 2020 he was awarded the George Mikelis (Jurgis Mikelaitis) scholarship for the implementation of the project "Review and Editing of Manuscripts of Piano Etudes by Lithuanian Interwar Avant-garde composer Vytautas Bacevičius, Publishing

of a Complete Collection and Musical Presentation". As a pianist he won second prize at the 14th Xavier Montsalvatge International Competition in Girona, Spain, the Nadia Boulanger Special Prize in 2008, and the André Jolivet Special Prize in 2010 at the International Piano Competition in Orleans, France. Yusuke has released two compact discs featuring piano compositions by Jolivet and Varèse (ALM records, 2012), and works by Jolivet and Lenot (Lyrinx, 2013). He plans to release his third disc featuring piano compositions of Vytautas Bacevičius (Lithuanian Music Information Center).

Daiva RAČIŪNAITĖ-VYČINIENĖ, Ph.D., habil., Professor and Head of the Department of Ethnomusicology at Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre. The author of four monographs and over 100 articles in peer-reviewed journals and collections of essays, a compiler of as many as 15 CDs and DVDs. She is a renowned researcher of *sutartinės*, the singer and leader of group Trys keturiose, one of the organizers International Folklore Festival Skamba skamba kankliai. She has received two prestigious national recognitions in Lithuania—the Jonas Basanavičius award (2002) and the National Prize for Culture and the Arts (2021).

Paula MLADIN is a scientific researcher at the Gheorghe Dima National Academy of Music in Cluj-Napoca, Romania. She graduated from the musicology program of the same institution, obtaining her Ph.D. title in 2020 (*summa cum laude*), following the defense of the thesis "The Chamber Oeuvre of the composer Adrian Pop" (later published under the title *Stylistic Aspects in the Chamber Music of Adrian Pop*). Paula Mladin's musicological activity has been manifested, over time, through her presence at national and international scientific events—such as "Stylistic directions in contemporary music creation" or "Memory of the stage—music rewritten" (organized within the International Sigismund Toduță Festival, Cluj-Napoca, Romania), "The Science of Music—Excellence in Performance" (Brasov, Romania), International Music Therapy Symposium (Cluj-Napoca), the AEC Annual Meeting for International Relations Coordinators 2023 (Leuven, Belgium)—through publications in specialized journals as well as through the coordination of large-scale projects, the most recent being IncluMusic—Increasing skills for building more inclusive conservatories (KA220-HED-80543879), initiated in 2022.

Aistė VAITKEVIČIŪTĖ is a Lithuanian young-generation composer and researcher. In 2022, she was awarded a doctoral degree (D.A.) for her thesis "Perceiving Categories along the Timbral Continuum: Compositional Potentials" at the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre. From 2016, she is a co-editor of the annual peer-reviewed journal *Principles of Music Composing*. Aistė Vaitkevičiūtė's interests are not limited to compositional issues, but encompass such fields as cultural studies and aesthetics. She has a bachelor's degree in cultural history and anthropology from Vilnius University.