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The Synthesis of Balkan Folk Tunes in the Music of Vlastimir Nikolovski and Alexander Vladigerov

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THE SYNTHESIS OF BALKAN FOLK TUNES IN THE MUSIC OF
VLASTIMIR NIKOLOVSKI AND ALEXANDER VLADIGEROV

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ABSTRACT

The study of folk music from the Balkan countries proves to be a long and complex area of study, since the access to sources, scores and literature is quite limited. Distribution of accurate information in regards to Balkan folk music is of significant importance because it would provide a global opportunity for promotion and education on this topic. Without documented research, inaccurate presentations of Balkan music could cause an overall disinterest in this genre.

The original and alluring aspects of this style of music lie mostly in its meter. Moreover, it contains three fundamental metric structures: regular, asymmetric, unmeasured and their combinations. The melodic structure of Balkan folk songs does not portray complexity and it reflects the poetry which is generally uncomplicated. The three primary sources that highly influenced the evolution of folk melodies are oriental scales, church modes, and conventional scales from Western Europe (only towards the end of the nineteenth century).¹

The music composed in the Balkan countries is divided into three categories: works based on reflecting folk music; works that reflect the neo-Classical esthetic; works that reflect more “modern” practices, such as twelve-tone and serial music.² Composers such as Vlastimir Nikolovski and Alexander Vladigerov base their emphasis entirely on traditional folk themes, which is the main inspiration of their repertoire.


Sonata for piano Op. 28 by Vlastimir Nikolovski (also known as Folklore Sonata) was composed in 1965 and features three movements which are inspired purely by Macedonian folklore. Every movement in this sonata refers to the essence of Macedonian culture by incorporating typical folk songs and dances.

The first movement of the Sonata Op. 28 is based on a Macedonian folk dance called Teshkoto, which translates as “The Hard One.” This dance is an essential part of the culture in the country, and it originated in 1950. The second movement, Tazacka, which means “Sorrowful”, is inspired by a Macedonian ritual lament that was practiced mainly during the first and second World Wars. Tazacka differs from the other two movements and portrays a freer and more improvisatory character. The last movement, “Tanec” (Dance), incorporates a famous Macedonian folk song called Ogreala Mesecina or “The Rising Moon.” Vlastimir Nikolovski distinctively accentuates certain beats which are associated with the cheerful shouts of the people. Asymmetrical rhythms are densely assimilated in this Sonata, which is a significant part of Macedonian folklore.

Another example by the same composer is the Toccata for piano. This composition is comprised of two main parts. The first one has a standard form and shares the same properties as other toccatas composed by famous composers such as Sergei Prokofiev and Aram Khachaturian. However, in the second part of the piece, Nikolovski emphasizes a traditional folk melody in the right hand, imitating the phrasing of zurla-solo instruments that are extensively used in traditional Macedonian music practice. Furthermore, the left hand replicates Tapan (a traditional Macedonian percussion instrument) and sustains a steady rhythm, usually irregular (5/8, 7/8, 11/8, etc.).
Dilmano, Dilbero Variations for Piano Op.2, composed by Bulgarian composer Alexander Vladigerov, is an excellent example of a typical folk tune transformed and varied in numerous contrasting ways, such as use of jagged rhythms, pure jazz harmonies, and virtuosic piano techniques. In order to exploit a variety of rhythmic characteristics of Bulgarian folk music, Vladigerov alternates time signatures frequently throughout the entire piece. In some sections, he even does this in every single measure, creating a unique texture that is typical for Balkan folk music.

On the whole, studying a style of music that is culturally distant can be a great experience, but also a challenging task at the same time. The process requires research and analysis of the style. As previously stated, the sources that elaborate on this topic are extremely limited, creating challenges for non-native musicians. I am providing a document that will elaborate on the origin and characteristics of folk melodies composed in Macedonia and Bulgaria, along with analysis of folk elements in Sonata for Piano Op. 28 and Toccata by Vlastimir Nikolovski, followed by Dilmano Dilbero Variations for Piano by Alexandar Vladigerov.
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CHAPTER 1: ORIGINS OF FOLK MUSIC

“Anyone with a medicum of experience in the collecting and study of folk songs can recognize, classify, and analyze a folk song when he finds one, but very few of us should like to state unequivocally that we have achieved an absolute understanding of the source of any given song, its evolution, and its exact place in the musical life of the people who gave it birth. This aura of uncertainty which surrounds the study of all folk art is a natural outcome of the method in which folklore is transmitted.”

The opening paragraph of Boris Kremenliev’s book “Bulgarian-Macedonian Folk Music” raises a fundamental argument in the study of folk music. The process is very complex, and sources are limited due to the fact that folk music has been and is still changing. Furthermore, preservation was often achieved through oral communication, which makes it inaccessible to trace the real source of the music. Due to lack of sources and untraceable origin, the final composition is never “final” or “completed” because of its constant state of “unending flux”. In fact, many anthropologists and music historians have opposite theories of the ancestry of folk music.

One of the first arguments regarding the beginning of folk music and the music of primitive people is the “collective theory” created by A. W. Schlegel who claims that this type of music originated through “communal authorship.” The idea that folk songs are not composed by one person, but possibly by an entire community is a very acceptable argument according to Schlegel. Francis B. Gummere is another historian who believes in the collective theory, and claims that there is a satisfactory amount of evidence that supports the concept of primitive

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4Ibid.

5Ibid., 2
people expressing their feelings through singing and dancing collectively. That is how most of the folk music originated. In contrast, there are other scholars such as Dr. Louise Pound who finds the collective theory illogical. Dr. Pound deems it nonsensical to convey the idea that primitive people were only singing, dancing, expressing and creating music while being in larger groups, and that an individual also makes conscious decisions of his musical expression; as well as joining and being part of a group. Dr. John Meier, who is a known folklorist, also expressed his arguments against the collective theory. Kremenliev quotes Dr. Meier’s statement, “the process is now what it always has been, first an individual composition, then oblivion of the individual and popularity of the song, which is felt by the people —‘a necessary condition of folk poetry’— to be their own, with manyfold changes due in no case to any artistic purpose or deliberation”.

Moses Gaster is one among many other anthropologists and researchers who support this theory as well. He pushes the boundaries even further by stating that regular individuals were not the only ones composing folk music, but also people who were musically trained and belonged to higher ranking in society.

Phillips Barry, also argues against the collective theory. Mr. Barry claims that any time a song created by an individual was orally passed, slight variations occurred with every person who played or sang it. Kremenliev in his book on Macedonian and Bulgarian folk music, shares Béla Bartók’s opinion on the matter: “Thus he contends that folk music which has been transmitted orally from generation to generation, village to village, is actually a corruption of the

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7 Ibid.

8 Ibid.
art music of some earlier period, long forgotten in the towns where it was composed by trained musicians, but preserved by the peasants who adapted it to their own emotional contour and incorporated it into the great body of tradition which forms the folk art of a nation”. 9

The topic of the origin of folk music was not ignored in Great Britain either.

Apparently having examined all the evidence, the leading British folklorists, among them Ralph Vaughan Williams, Cecil Sharp and Sir Hubert Parry, have arrived at the conclusion that somewhere a folk poet-singer composed a song and sang it to his fellow villagers. Others sang the song after him, changing what they did not like. The changes which begin as soon as another singer performs the song are minor ones from individual to individual, yet in time they may alter the original so much that its inventor would not recognize it for his own. Nor is it, by that time, the property of any single author-composer, but rather a communal product which contains an indication of the soul and character of the folk who sing it and listen to it with pleasure.10

Studying and analyzing all these theories is significant due to the fact that it is still unclear what the authentic origin of folk music is. It is quite challenging to access literature that elaborates on folk music and its origin in depth. This subject deserves more attention because folk tunes are used in many genres, and more often than most musicians would assume. Providing new sources and research projects will certainly generate higher interest in the genre along with more precise information. Kremenliev states that people who spent most of their lives intensively studying and researching the procurement of certain types of composition might be surprised after discovering that those unique and alluring melodies were created by people who did not have any musical guidance or education.


10 Ibid.,
The creation and evolution of a certain musical language is a lengthy process that spans throughout the centuries and is shaped by numerous influences such as culture, language, tradition, temperament and many others. In fact, one of the most prominent factors in the growth and development of expression in folk music is the living condition of the majority of the population of a certain area or country. For instance, coastal communities would lean towards reflecting the sound of the ocean; the music from isolated places where people are often lonely may be characterized by sorrowful and melancholy expression; sociable environments may inspire lively and positive tunes.

Another significant influence for the development of folk music, especially in the countries from the Balkan Peninsula, is the expression of deep sorrow for the loved ones who left the country due to extremely difficult economic situations, and who never came back, or returned decades later. Additional folk songs expressed endless sadness for loved ones who were killed during both World Wars. Generally, music from the Balkan countries is characterized by sad text that is reflected in the shape of the melody.

Most of the territory in the Balkan Peninsula was under the Ottoman Empire for nearly five hundred years. It started in the 14th century and lasted until the 19th century in some areas. In the very early phase of the Ottoman occupation, the Turks demolished all the schools and eradicated the intellectual population just to prevent the spread and preservation of anything native. Composing folk music was one of the few forms of expression which enabled local people to create and preserve something native for future generations. However, five centuries is a very long period of time, and the presence of the Turks had a significant impact on the
evolution of Balkan music. Over the course of centuries people adopted properties from Turkish melodies and incorporated them into their own works. In fact, it is very easy to notice similarities between Turkish and Balkan folk music. Truly, even contemporary folk tunes composed by any Macedonian, Bulgarian, or Serbian composer have a strong and very noticeable oriental influence.

Folk music has always been a significant part of the culture in any Balkan country. The native peoples have close sentimental connections to the stories that inspired the tunes. Many songs elaborate on how music was one of the few enjoyments peasants had while under Ottoman occupation and how it inspired people during their difficult conditions of living. Music was the light, hope, and solace for a better future alongside the people’s religion and rituals which made life bearable. We have anthologies of thousands of folk songs which prove the significance of music in the Balkan countries during Ottoman occupation.

METER

Folk music from the Balkan countries, especially Macedonia and Bulgaria can sound quite complex and overwhelming to a non-native person who has never encountered this style before. The authentic and alluring features of this type of music lie mostly in its meter. Furthermore, it contains rhythmic components that are not part of Western music, but as we explore and analyze these elements in detail they prove to be absolutely coherent and logical. The concern in performing Balkan rhythms is having a full understanding of the meter by doing numerous repetitions in order to adapt to the asymmetric structures frequently used in this style.
Balkan folk music is characterized by three main metric layouts: regular; asymmetric; unmeasured; along with combinations of these layouts.\footnote{11}

**REGULAR METERS**

Despite the fact that Balkan folk songs are known mainly for their asymmetric meters, the repertoire contains numerous tunes that are based on regular meter. Composers from Macedonia, Bulgaria, and especially Serbia in this case, mostly use simple duple meter. Here are the most common structures:

**Figure 1**— The most common regular metric structures in Balkan folk music

One of the authentic signatures in instrumental music is the frequent use of triplets within a simple duple meter. The rhythm in these compositions is obviously steady and symmetric, but we certainly get a hint of the asymmetric feel and meter which plays a significant role in folk music. Here is an example:

**Figure 2**— Asymmetric hints within regular metric structure 12


\footnote{12}Ibid., 17.
In comparison to simple duple, triple meters basically do not exist in this type of repertoire and are extremely rare. The tunes that do use 9/8, 3/4, or 3/8, are most likely songs from the late nineteenth century because that is when the Balkan society started to develop a connection with music from Western Europe. An authentic and rare example for this type of repertoire is a Macedonian song called *Biljana Platno Beleshe* (Biljana was cleaning the linen), which includes triple meter.

Figure 3 — Macedonian traditional song *Biljana Platno Beleshe* in triple meter ¹³

---

Triple meters as the main time signature are rare; however, a combination of triple and other regular meters is a very common practice in Balkan music and can be done in various combinations:

![Figure 4 — Combinations of triple and other regular meters](image)

The highly extensive repertoire of Balkan folk music is founded and developed mostly on asymmetric meters. However, those songs that use regular meters are mostly composed in 2/4 or a combination of 2/4, 3/4, and 4/4. Only one-tenth of the repertoire incorporates strict 3/4 or 4/4.

---

ASYMMETRIC METERS

One of the most important characteristics of Balkan folk music, especially from Macedonia and Bulgaria, is the asymmetric meters such as 5/8, 7/8, 11/8, 7/16, 15/16, etc. The main difference between these two countries’ folk music is that Macedonian music uses mostly eighth notes as a basic time unit (5/8, 7/8, 11/8, etc), which is slightly different from Bulgarian repertoire that is mostly based on sixteenth notes as a basic time unit. According to Kremenliev, “these tunes are by far the most interesting, since the combination of five, seven, nine, eleven and fifteen in these instances are not septuplet, compound triple, and compound quintuple time, respectively, but are, instead, measure which contain three, four and seven asymmetrically combined beats, each beat containing two or three sixteenth notes.”15

The idea that the meter was founded strictly by Slavic people has not yet been entrenched. According to the sources elaborating on Bulgarian history, the country was populated by Thraco Ilirians, Tartars, and Petchenegs, who might possibly be the first inventors of this type of concept. Unfortunately, there is not enough research and proof on this topic so we cannot claim this as pure fact.

Many historians and musicologists from the Balkan countries researched and published broadly on the topic of authenticity and character that these rhythms give to the songs. Two of the most established musicologists are Dobri Christov and Dr. Stojan Djudjev.

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Dobri Christov (1875-1941) assumes that in Bulgarian music the sixteenth note is a basic time unit, and such is indivisible. Two such notes result in one measure unit, which lends itself to a dance step. Three such basic time units result in an elongated measure unit, \( \frac{\text{\small\text{\textfrac{1}{6}}}}{\text{\small\text{\textfrac{1}{2}}}} \) with approximately 400 sixteenth notes per minute. The relationship between the ordinary measure unit (\( \frac{\text{\small\text{\textfrac{1}{6}}}}{\text{\small\text{\textfrac{1}{2}}}} \)) and the elongated measure unit (\( \frac{\text{\small\text{\textfrac{1}{6}}}}{\text{\small\text{\textfrac{1}{2}}}} \)) is therefore 2: 3 (irrational relationship). The elongation is mathematical and not agogic. Thus 5/16, 7/16, 8/16, and so on are merely results of the combination of regular and elongated measure units.”

Stojan Dudjev is another musicologist who did a significant amount of research on the topic, and argues that Dobri Christov’s approach is a misconception of the unit of measurement. Moreover, he states that the unit cannot be modified so it contains different values within the same measure, comparing that to a situation where the dimensions of a certain item are written partially in inches and partially in centimeters. He says that measurement can be done by either structure, but a combination of both systems at once is not acceptable. Djudjev states that “We may not speak of regular and elongated measure units, but only of regular and elongated beats. The basic unit of measurement remains the same, while the beat might change so two or three measures in simpler meter make one measure of higher order.”

The time signatures in the anthology of Macedonian and Bulgarian songs can be quite complex as we have established already. One of the main factors that determine the time signature depends on where the elongated note is positioned within the measure. The elongated note can be at the beginning of the measure, end of the measure, first and last note of the measure, or within the measure.

\[16\]

\[17\]

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\[17\] Ibid.
*Pajdushka* is one of the most famous folk dances in Macedonia and a great example where the elongated note is at the end of the measure. The time signature of the dance is 5/16 including a variety of rhythmic combinations such as shown in the following figure:

Figure 5 — Rhythmic combinations of 5/16 time signatures

*Pajdushka* is usually performed in a moderately fast tempo with a heavy emphasis on the third sixteenth note which actually creates a sensation of two sixteenth notes plus three sixteenth notes (2/16 +3/16, ratio of 2:3). Here is an example of the opening section of the dance:

Figure 6 — Traditional Macedonian dance *Pajdushka* \(^{18}\)

---

COMBINATIONS OF DIVERSE ASYMMETRIC METERS

One of the crucial elements in the folk music that originated from Macedonia and Bulgaria is lyrics accompanied by dance steps. The way composers adjusted the music to the meter was peculiar. There are numerous examples where various metric combinations were integrated into the songs in order to portray the spirit and character by combining time signatures such as: 5/8, 7/8, 11/8, 11/16, and 18/16, the possibilities of metric synthesis are immense.

Figure 7 — Metric synthesis of different asymmetric structures 19

UNMEASURED METERS

The folk repertoire of Macedonia, Bulgaria, Serbia and other Balkan countries incorporates songs that are freely composed without any type of time signature. *Rubato Songs* is the term used to identify these types of tunes, and their main purpose is to either represent deep sorrow, or heroic events that occurred during the World Wars. They are usually performed in an intimate setting, such as the dinner table or a small gathering. The songs are characterized by limited range and an immense use of ornamentation.

Figure 8 – *Harvest song*, composed by Ladzii Svishtov in an unmeasured meter

\[\text{Ma-ri E -lé - no, trúg-na-la mi e E-lé - na.}\]

Folk music repertoire from the Balkans contains songs that have melismatic and unmeasured bars within a regular rhythmic structure. This is especially common in *Rubato Songs*.

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Figure 9 — Unmeasured bars within a regular or irregular rhythmic structure

MELODY

Melodies in Balkan folk songs are not characterized by complexity, but often reflect the simplicity of the poetry which is often melancholic. One of the most important melodic components besides rhythm and meter, are simple scalar passages.

Scales used in Balkan folk music are numerous, and may be demonstrated that they are a fusion of Eastern and Western Musical influences. Thus the three main sources from which music has drawn are, first, Oriental scales; second, church modes: the osmoglasie (eight-mode singing) of Eastern Orthodoxy, and the medieval modes; third, the conventional scales of Western Europe (only towards the end of the nineteenth century).


22 Ibid., 52
However, there are many instances where certain scales do not resemble any of these three sources which might lead to a theory that there are more influences involved. It is complex research and may lead to discovery of additional connections to other influences beyond the ones mentioned.

There is no doubt that the development and evolution of melodies were highly influenced by the sources mentioned, but the one origin that was the most influential is Oriental scales. Balkan Folk music and Oriental music have numerous properties in common, such as phrasing, sonority, shape, adoption of quarter tones, and perhaps the most important—extensive use of the interval of the augmented second. This interval is frequently used to express sorrow, and can also be labeled as a standard feature of the scale.

Figure 10 — Extensive use of the interval of the augmented second

It is not very common to come across songs that incorporate quarter tone technique. However, *Libe Dobrinke* (Sweet Dobrinka) is a Bulgarian folk song that contains a note which is notated and considered to be a half flat A.

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Of all the kinds of folk music in the world, Oriental music would be the most similar to Balkan Folk music. The frequent use of quarter tones and augmented seconds tie these two styles of music very close together, so even a musically untrained person would be able to hear the similarities.

BÉLA BARTÓK

“Béla Bartók birthed the field of ethnomusicology as an academic discipline through his tireless pursuits of folk music, his exposition of the sound of the rural people, and his incorporation of folk-style into his own personal compositions. His work revealed to the world that folk music exists, is important, and stands as an independent academic discipline.”

This opening paragraph of David Nelson’s article “Bela Bartok: The Father of Ethnomusicology” truly represents Bartok’s significance in the field of ethnomusicology. According to Benjamin Suchoff, “It has been estimated that Bartok collected more than 9,000

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24 Ibid.

folk melodies from 1905-1918: 2,700 Hungarian, 3,400 Romanian, 3,000 Slovak, and about 50 Arab, Bulgarian and Serbian.”

Bartok’s first contact with folk music from Balkan countries occurred entirely spontaneously. While visiting Romania in 1910, he was absolutely fascinated by a street musician performing a Serbian folk song on a fluer (old style recorder). This folk song is now part of Bartok’s “Nagyszentmiklos (Sannicolaul-Mare) collection.”

Figure 12 — Serbian folk dance written for the fluer

Bartok’s fascination of Yugoslavian folk music goes beyond this and he collected nearly fifty vocal melodies from the south part of Hungary that was populated by many Serbs. In 1943, Bela Bartok finished the first version of his *Serbo-Croatian Folk Songs* collection, but it was not published during his lifetime.

In 1951, six years after Bartok’s death, Columbia University Press published *Serbo-Croatian Folk Song*—the first full length scholarly study of that subject in the English language. And in 1976, the book was incorporated in the expanded, four-volume edition published by the State University of New York Press, including facsimiles of the

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26 Benjamin Suchoff, *Béla Bartók studies in ethnomusicology* (Lincoln: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 1997), ix.


28 Ibid., 198.
published and unpublished music examples comprising Bartok’s collection of Yugoslav folk music.²⁹

As Bartok explored folk music from the Balkan countries, he came across Bulgarian folk tunes which had a significant impact on his legacy as an ethnomusicologist. The fact that he transported the scored containing nearly 10,000 Bulgarian folk melodies to America speaks about the compelling interest in this style. Its influence is explained by Benjamin Suchoff in his book Béla Bartók: Life and Work.

Bartok’s own use of Bulgarian rhythm in his compositions can be found for the most part in the Mikrokosmos for Piano: nos.113 and 149: 2+2+3/8 (ruchenitza dance); nos 115: 3+2/8 and 2+3/8, and no. 150: 3+2/8; no. 148: 4+2+3; no. 151: 3+2+3/8; no. 152: 2+2+2+3/8; and no. 153: 3+3+2/8. In the Fifth String Quartet, the “Alla bulgarese” second movement shows 4+2+3/8 in the Scherzo and 3+2+2+3 the Trio. And in the third movement (“Sebes”) of Contrasts for Violin, Clarinet, and Piano, the unusual 8+5/8 schema can be interpreted as [3+2+3][2+3]/8. Eights, where the first group represents the 8b designation used by Bartok to indicate the quintessential Bulgarian folk text structure of 3,+2,3 syllables, and the second group represents the 2+3/8 dance genre.³⁰

CLASSICAL MUSIC IN THE BALKAN COUNTRIES

“Balkan music can be divided into three categories: works based on or reflecting folk music; works that reflect the neo-Classical esthetic (the first two categories are often seen in conjunction with one another); finally, works that reflect more “modern” practices such as twelve-tone and serial music.”³¹

²⁹ Ibid., 203.

³⁰ Benjamin Suchoff, Béla Bartók: life and work (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2001), 211.

http://www.jstor.org/stable/7409000
Today much of the music from these countries is assumed to be folk or popular music. Classical music such as operas, symphonies and ballet music is rarely associated with the Balkans. This, however, is not valid nowadays. Stjepan Sulek (1914-1986), Mihajlo Vukdragovic (1900-1967), Matija Bravnicar (1897-1977) and Jakov Gotovac (1895-1982), are just a few Balkan composers who have composed in these genres. For instance, “Gotovac, a Croatian composer achieved international success with his symphonic work, *Symphony Kolo* that was written in a thoroughly traditional style. Moreover, works composed by Stevan Hristic follow the same basic outline.”

Stevan Hristic (1885-1958) was a Serbian composer, conductor, and pedagogue. He was intrigued by contemporary western European music, as he adopted late Romantic compositional techniques and some impressionistic elements as well. Most of Hristic’s work was inspired by folk music while his sacred music was Russian-influenced; he has made major contributions to staged art, such as operas and ballets. Stjepan Sulek is one of the few Balkan composers that composed piano concertos.

In contrast, composers such as Vlastimir Nikolovski, Alexander Vladigerov, Pancho Vladigerov, Toma Prosev and many others, treat folk themes in a distinct way. The emphasis falls entirely on traditional folk themes, which serves as the main inspiration of their repertoire.

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32Ibid., 217.
CHAPTER 2: SONATA FOR PIANO OP. 28 BY VLASTIMIR NIKOLOVSKI

Vlastimir Nikolovski (1925-2001) is one of the most eminent and highly regarded Macedonian composers. His unique and creative compositional style, his innovative treatment of Macedonian folk music, and his accomplishments in research, made him very well respected among many composers in Macedonia and the entire Balkan Peninsula. His repertoire contains pieces of almost all musical forms: songs for children, short instrumental pieces, orchestral miniatures, as well as large vocal and symphonic works. Some of his most famous works include the Oratorio Klimentu, Oratorio Kirilu, Cantata Serdarot, and the Symphony Umana. His piano repertoire includes Sonata for piano Op. 28, Toccata, Album of 1960, Lyrical Preludes, and Variations. Nikolovski’s style is characterized by a unique treatment of folklore elements. He was able to use folk melodies to convey different emotions such as cheerfulness, sorrow, irony, grotesqueness, and sarcasm.

Sonata for piano Op. 28 (also known as Folklore Sonata) was composed in 1965 and features three movements inspired purely by Macedonian folklore. Every movement in this sonata refers to the essence of Macedonian culture by incorporating typical folk songs and dances. The first movement of the sonata is based on a Macedonian folk dance called Teshkoto, which means “The Hard One.” The second movement, Tazacka, is inspired by a Macedonian ritual lament, and the third movement, Tanec, is based on a Macedonian folk song called Ogrejala Mesecina (Rising moon).

Teshkoto, a war dance originating from antiquity, is an essential part of Macedonian culture. The choreography is highly complex which makes it difficult to perform. This traditional dance is accompanied by a tapan (drum), and two zurlas (traditional wind instruments). One of the zurlas is treated as the soloist, and the other as an accompanist.
There are at least ten additional pieces composed by Vlastimir Nikolovski which incorporate *Teshkoto*. A few of them are: *Teshkoto* for cello and piano and *Teshkoto* for mixed choir and soloist, *Teshkoto* for mixed choir and drum, *Teshkoto* for solo accordion. Macedonian traditional dance had a significant influence on the composer.

Every movement in the *Sonata Op. 28* represents and illustrates different aspects of what it was like to be a Macedonian during the Ottoman occupation. The first movement manifests separation, the second movement conveys a feeling of deep sorrow and mourning, while the third movement portrays a light and lively character representing hope for a better future for Macedonians. Nikolovski illustrates his national identity by unifying all three movements with an *attacca* marking at the end of each movement, creating a sense of unity. Since the composer viewed this piece as one unit, this sonata should be analyzed by others as one unit as well.

**FORM**

Figure 13 — The form of Nikolovski’s Sonata Op 28

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teshkoto- Binary form</th>
<th>Tazachka- Binary form</th>
<th>Tanec-Sonata form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction: mm. 1-50</td>
<td>Section A: mm. 110-121</td>
<td>Exposition: mm. 151-206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section A: mm. 51-81</td>
<td>Section B: mm. 122-144</td>
<td>Development: mm. 207-255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section B: mm. 82-109</td>
<td>Coda: mm. 144-150</td>
<td>Recapitulation: mm. 256-298</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Closing section: mm. 299-308</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the first movement *Teshkoto*, Nikolovski preserves binary form which is typical for Balkan folk tunes. According to Kolovski, “Nikolovski intentionally keeps the formal structure
of the original dance, a hard and slow first part which slowly evolves into a rhythmically organized and faster second part with an ecstatic *furioso* ending, because it reflects the symbolism regarding the Macedonian people’s unending struggle for freedom.”

The original version of the *Teshkoto* dance incorporates a distinct and lengthy *rubato* introduction before the substantive start of the A section. Nikolovski does not deviate from this layout and integrates the introduction section that spans from measures 1-36, followed by transitional material marked by *poco a poco ritmo* leading to the A section at measure 51.

Figure 14 — Introduction of the 1st movement of Nikolovski’s Sonata Op 28  

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33 Marko Kolovski, *All’infinito Esei za makedonskata muzika [Essays about the macedonian music]* (Skopje: Sojuz na kompozitorite na Makedonija), pp. 18-19

Measure 82, marked as the beginning of the coda, in fact correlates with the B section of the authentic version of Teshkoto dance.

The second movement of the sonata is called Tazachka (Sadness), which also preserves the binary form structure with an eight measure coda at the end.

The A section is relatively slow and ranges from measures 110-121. In the following bar, measure 122, Nikolovski abruptly changes the dynamic from ppp to ff, clearly defining that this is a new section.

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From this point in the movement, the composer exploits the range, dynamics, and tempo, creating a B section which is significantly different from the previous one. It concludes dramatically with an fff dynamic marking at measure 144, overlapping with the beginning of the coda. The coda elaborates slightly varied thematic material presented at the beginning of Tazachka and serves as a link to the final movement.

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37 Ibid., 11.
The final movement *Tanec* (Dance) contrasts the first two movements *Tashkoto* and *Tazachka* by representing agile and lighter characters. It also contrasts the first two movements by using a Sonata form with reversed recapitulation where the second theme emerges first, followed by the first one. The exposition of the movement spans from measure 151-206, and the development starts at measure 207. However, Nikolovski hints at the development section earlier in measures 203 and 205 by using segments of the thematic material that follows.

Figure 18 — Hint of the development section prior its entrance

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The next section represents the central part of the movement where the composer stunningly builds up the tension of the piece, which finally resolves at measure 256 and marks the beginning of the reversed recapitulation. Unexpectedly, the second theme precedes the primary melody, leaving quite an impressive impact on the audience.

Figure 19 — Beginning of the reversed recapitulation

The beginning of the recapitulation hints of the disrupted order of thematic material which is conveyed until the end of the piece. Nikolovski aims to surprise the listener with an unpredictable order of content leading to a *furioso* ending heavily relying on clusters, *ff* dynamic markings and an extensive use of long pedal.

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Figure 20 — Furious ending of Nikolovski’s Sonata Op. 28

Marko Kolovski writes that “Vlastimir Nikolovski conveys folk elements in his works in several ways. He creates the imaginary folklore in both a rational and an intuitive way. It means that in his works we find folkloroid motives that are a result of his immediate and intense contact with the folklore, but there are also such motives that reflect his rational view into the structure of the works of the folk genius.” Nikolovski does not limit his inspiration only to Macedonian folk music, but also incorporates complex transformation and synthesis of motives from different parts of the Balkan Peninsula such as Montenegro, Serbia and Bulgaria.

In some of Nikolovski’s earlier compositions, such as Folkfonia for Orchestra, cantata Serdarot, Teshkoto for clarinet and piano, Teshkoto for mixed choir, and Toccata, the use of folk melodies is more direct and apparent. However, in his Sonata Op. 28 the composer treats folk tunes in a nontraditional manner, often transforming them in something new. As a matter of fact, Nikolovski avoids adopting folk themes in their original form, instead constructing his own folkloroid motives. This stylistic feature is Nikolovski’s signature in a majority of his repertoire.

In all of his compositions based on the Teshkoto dance, Nikolovski transforms the authentic motif in its stylized version within the first few opening measures. For instance, the opening phrase in Sonata Op. 28 and Teshkoto for Mixed Choir, differ from the authentic motif in the original score.

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41Marko Kolovski, “Folklorot vo tvorestvoto na Vlastimir Nikolovski” [The Folklore in Vlastimir Nikolovski’s works] (Department of Music Arts, Skopje), pp. 79-80
Figure 21 — *Teshkoto*—original

Figure 22 — *Teshkoto* from *Piano Sonata Op. 28*

Figure 23 — *Teshkoto for Mixed Choir*

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FIRST MOVEMENT

The introduction in the first movement of Sonata Op. 28 replicates the improvisatory nature of the original version in 7/8, one of the most common time signatures in Macedonian folk music. However, Kolovski argues that Vlastimir Nikolovski does not intend to entirely replicate the zurla theme, but attempts to create a conceptual relation where an emotional unification is established. There are numerous sections throughout the movement where the composer clearly strives to replicate the traits of the zurla and tapan. For instance, the opening theme of the first movement imitates the sound of both instruments. The thirty-second notes represent a zurla, whereas the staccato eighth notes in both hands resemble a tapan.

Figure 24 – Replication of zurla and tapan

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45 Vlastimir Nikolovski, Sonata for Piano Op. 28 (Skopje, Republic of Macedonia: Composer’s Association of Macedonia, 1976), 1.
In the section from measure 20-29, Nikolovski integrates long unison notes representing the dancers’ choreography during *Teshkoto*. The dance is quite slow, heavy, strained, and exceeds the length of four measures until the dancers take the next step. In contrast, the staccato eighth notes in both hands replicate a tapan and its steady 7/8 pulse.

![Figure 25 — Representing the dancers’ choreography during Teshkoto](image)

The zurla, a traditional Macedonian instrument, has a unique sound, highly efficient for sustaining long notes or executing extremely fast and improvisatory passages. Measure 30-33 replicates a zurla and its ad-lib capabilities. In order to achieve this, Nikolovski alternates 6/8 and 7/8 along with septuplets and nontuplets, to create complex rhythmic structures. Rhythm is certainly an important factor in improvisatory sections like this; however, performers should mostly rely on their intuition and imagination to create improvisatory feel.

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In measure 51, the beginning of section A, the composer presents a typical Macedonian melody portraying a profound emotion and deep sorrow. It is a quiet section marked with $pp$ dynamics, but Nikolovski integrates heavy accents and $\text{subito } f-p$ in order to fully capture the agony of the Macedonian people.

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An excellent representation of Nikolovski’s folkloroid motives and imaginary folk melodies is the section starting at measure 70. The texture and sonority of this section does not contain a significant theme in the movement, but it does contain motives that create a sense of unending flux and direction towards a more substantial texture. The meter, however, is quite fascinating and it embodies $8/8$ ($3+3+2$), $7/8$ ($3+2+2$), $9/8$ ($3+3+3$), and $6/8$ ($3+3$).

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49 Ibid., 6
All of these folkloroid motives represent a bridge towards one of the most crucial segments of the movement. The section from measure 76-81 illustrates a significant part of the choreography from *Teshkoto* where the steps and music gradually speed up towards a fast, powerful, and dramatic finale of the traditional dance. The meter is mostly 7/8 (3+2+2) with an exception of measure 81, which is in 10/8 (3+2+2+3).

Figure 29 — Transition towards the final part of the *Teshkoto* dance

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The final part of the movement occurs at measure 82, the *coda* with an *Allegro* tempo marking. In this section, Nikolovski clearly places a heavy emphasis on the left hand, imitating the tapan; the most compelling element in the final part of the dance. It should be emphatic, prominent, and intense while carrying the music into a sensational and theatrical ending. The composer exploits the range of the piano along with heavy use of the damper pedal and a perpetual *ff* dynamic marking.

Figure 30 — Intense and percussive conclusion of the first movement

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SECOND MOVEMENT

In the opening two measures of the second movement, *Tazachka* (Sadness), Nikolovski introduces his own folkloroid motive representing a Macedonian lament and elegy. The melodic line is based on long notes held in unison to form a cluster. The goal of the composer is to evoke sadness by constructing thick, resonant, and chaotic dissonances resolving into one single note. The opening motive is in continuous development and variation throughout the whole movement.

Figure 31 — Folkloroid motive representing a Macedonian lament and elegy 52

Another compositional technique that Nikolovski practices is the frequent use of the interval of the second. He incorporates it in various ways, often appearing as part of a melody, accompaniment, or a chord.

The material presented in the B section of *Tazachka* contrasts from the opening and it exploits the range of the piano along with extreme dynamics. Dissonant suspended chords in the high register accompanied by deep octaves in the bass are often practiced in this movement along with *subito ppp – ff* dynamic markings.

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In general, Nikolovski’s repertoire possesses fast, loud and dramatic finales leading towards sensational endings. At the end of this movement, Nikolovski presents the opening motive in diminution and fast running chords, while always emphasizing the interval of the second. This development increases the intensity leading towards a climactic ending with $fff$ dynamics, overlapping with the final codetta section in measure 144.

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Figure 34 — Climactic ending of the movement, overlapping with the final *coda*.

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In the coda, Nikolovski deliberately dissolves the tension by moving away from **fff** dynamic markings and reviving thematic material from the opening. *Tazachka* concludes on a diminished third interval serving as a link to the next movement.

Figure 35 — Conclusion of *Tazachka* by gradual *decrescendo* from *fff* to *pp* \(^{56}\)

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THIRD MOVEMENT

The opening theme of the third movement, Tanec (Dance), is influenced by a traditional Macedonian song, Ogrejala mesecina (Rising moon), and representing cheerfulness and hope for a better future for the Macedonian people. Nikolovski does not replicate the traditional Macedonian theme completely, but disguises it within the running sixteenth notes of the opening phrase. Also, the composer paraphrases Ogrejala mesecina in a few other instances in the movement, such as in measures 169 and 265.

Figure 36 — Ogrejala mesecina in its original version

57 Boris Nachkov, Two Hundred and Fifty Macedonian Folk Songs (Skopje, Republic of Macedonia: Composer’s Association of Macedonia, 1996), 167.
Another unique feature of this movement is the replication of the original 7/8 melody into a 2/4 time signature making the bar line secondary, and provoking a sense of asymmetry within the simple duple meter. Moreover, accents in the right hand are placed on the off beats associating with the cheerful shouts of dancers which is common for the majority of folk songs. In contrast to the right hand, the material elaborated in the left hand is very rhythmical throughout the whole dance, again, replicating the *tapan* which plays such a substantial role in all Macedonian traditional dances.

Vlastimir Nikolovski establishes his original harmonic language by cultivating the original folk harmonic design. His tonal language contains a persistent use of dissonant intervals such as fourths and seconds, which is typical for Macedonian folk music, along with clusters and octaves with an added second. In addition, he persistently underlines the percussive element of Macedonian music, enabling him to explore the timbre of the instrument. Again, exploiting extreme dynamics is a significant feature in the character of *Tanec*.

---

Another important feature in this movement is the incorporation of a variety of meter changes typical for the style. For instance, in the section from measure 171-181, Nikolovski is able to integrate the following time signatures: 8/16, 9/16, 5/16, 11/16 and 2/4.

\footnote{Vlastimir Nikolovski, \textit{Sonata for Piano Op. 28} (Skopje, Republic of Macedonia: Composer’s Association of Macedonia, 1976), 14-15.}
The layout of the recapitulation is unconventional in that Nikolovski revives the second theme first, followed by the primary theme. Furthermore, the recapitulation elaborates previous thematic material, but the order is revised, initiating a sense of disorientation moving the piece towards a thundering and exciting ending. One of Nikolovski’s original compositional signatures is his extensive use of plunging motive patterns throughout different registers of the piano followed by thick clusters under a long, sustained pedal. This practice is also incorporated in the final section of his *Toccata* which will be examined next.

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Figure 40 — Use of plunging motive patterns to finish the piece 61

Vlastimir Nikolovski composed his *Toccata* in 1961, using a slightly different compositional approach than with his *Sonata Op. 28*. The treatment and input of folk elements is presented with more clarity and transparency. In other words, folk motives are more noticeable and distinct rather than obscured and blurred within the textures. Nikolovski places a heavy emphasis on the percussive aspect of Macedonian folk music along with the integration of folk tunes that are close to the authentic folk character. In fact, the melodies in the *Toccata* are folkloroids, inspired by the original folk music. Moreover, the influence of oriental scales is evident in the melodies that heavily rely on the interval of the augmented second. Nikolovski consistently sustains a strict and rhythmic pulse in the left hand, again, replicating the *tapan*.

### FORM AND FOLK ELEMENTS

The form of the piece is not extremely strict, but the structure is divided into three distinct sections followed by retransition towards a restatement and elaboration of the thematic material from the opening. The Toccata concludes with a coda, incorporating motivic transformation along with an extensive use of clusters under long a sustained pedal marking.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>Retransition</th>
<th>A1</th>
<th>Coda</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mm.</td>
<td>1-80</td>
<td>mm. 81-148</td>
<td>mm. 149-196</td>
<td>mm. 197-234</td>
<td>235-292</td>
<td>293-319</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the opening section of the piece, Nikolovski incorporates the standard percussive texture, typical for most toccatas. In fact, this piece is influenced by Prokofiev’s *Toccata*, and they have a very similar texture in the opening.

Figure 42 — The opening of Nikolovski’s *Toccata* ⁶²

Figure 43 — The opening of Prokofiev’s *Toccata* ⁶³


Nikolovski is extremely precise with his choice of dynamics, articulations, and pedal markings, creating vivid and distinct sonorities. In fact, accents and *subito p* dynamics are heavily incorporated in the first A section establishing sharp, rhythmically strict, and precise character of the piece.

Another common compositional technique of Nikolovski is his exploitation of the wide range of the piano, often creating motives that move rapidly through the registers. There are several instances of this in the Toccata, and its precise execution can only be achieved with a solid piano technique.

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In the last part of section A, the composer gradually slows down the pace from measure 73-80. The objective behind this idea is to gradually prepare the entrance of section B, which is quite significant and contrasting.

Section B of the *Toccata* opens with a graceful folkloroid melody in the right hand, representing the essence of Macedonian folk tradition. The melody is simple, clear and conspicuous which are some of the main elements in this tradition. Moreover, the melody very frequently uses the interval of the augmented second, which was adopted from oriental scales. The meter is 7/16 which is basically the same as a traditional 7/8, except it is used when composers create melodies with a more agile pace and character. The main distinctive theme is

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accompanied by a strict rhythmic pattern in the left hand, replicating *tapan*. Therefore, these two layers combined represent the core of Macedonian folk tradition. Moreover, Nikolovski pushes the boundaries even further and ventures into extreme dynamic shifts within short motivic fragments.

Figure 46 — Contrasting B section representing Macedonian folk tradition

In the section from measure 92-99 the composer modifies the melody by incorporating the harmonic minor scale, generating the interval of the augmented second in the melodic line.

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In measure 105, the composer revives thematic material from the opening section and translates it into the current metric unit 7/16. He creates a compelling combination of typical toccata style within traditional Macedonian folk style. Accented notes are still significant elements of the texture. He even includes a *col pugno* (with the fist) instruction in order to unquestionably emphasize certain notes.

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As shown, Nikolovski is extremely persistent with his compositional techniques and concludes the B section of the toccata by alternating thematic material from both the A and B sections.

The composer introduces new melodic elements in measure 149 marking the beginning of section C. The main melody introduces a cheerful and bouncy character, which is also one of the authentic elements of folk music from the Balkans. It heavily incorporates grace notes along

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with extreme dynamic shifts. The left hand persistently replicates *tapan* and utilizes various rhythmic patterns.

Starting in measure 173, the composer creates a variation of the main theme by changing the eighth-note pulse to a sixteenth-notes pulse, marked as *scherzando*.

---

Traditional Macedonian dance plays a significant role in most of Nikolovski’s compositions, and he does not make an exception in his *Toccata*. In fact, the composer makes a reference to *Teshkoto* by incorporating an eight-bar phrase which begins slow and gradually accelerates. As it was described in the analysis of *Sonata Op. 28*, this characteristic occurs in a very crucial moment of *Teshkoto* where the dancers and the music gradually speed up, leading the choreography towards an energetic and sensational ending. However, this eight-measure phrase does not conclude the piece, but links the previous section with upcoming transitional material.

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The following section elaborates material which is related to section A of the toccata, but also incorporates slightly different melodic structures, such as sudden and extreme shifts in dynamics along with abrupt accented notes.

This section is a retransition because it creates a sensation of instability and gravitation towards a more balanced texture. In measure 208, Nikolovski foreshadows the upcoming 2/4 meter, before

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71 Vlastimir Nikolovski, Toccata (Skopje, Republic of Macedonia: Composer’s Association of Macedonia, 1996), 11.

72 Ibid.
quickly returning to the 7/16 meter. The new meter, 2/4, is firmly established in measure 217, persistently developing the transitional material with similar characteristics.

Figure 53 – Part of the retransition foreshadowing upcoming material

In measure 235 Nikolovski finally returns to the opening material from the A section, shifting the harmonic center from D to G. This section elaborates on almost the identical material

from the opening, but with few slight alterations, accumulating in intensity resulting in a furious coda section incorporating loud, percussive accents under one long sustained pedal. Nikolovski concludes this piece in his authentic style by integrating quick hand-crossover technique, clusters executed with the fist (*col pugno*) and the rare dynamic marking of *ffff*.

Figure 54 — Quick hand-crossover technique executed with the fist (*col pugno*)

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CHAPTER 4: DILMANO DILBERO VARIATIONS BY ALEXANDER VLADIGEROV

Alexandar Vladigerov (1933-1993) was a Bulgarian composer, pianist, conductor, and son of one of the most eminent and influential Bulgarian composers, Pancho Vladigerov. He spent most of his life in Bulgaria and graduated from the Bulgarian Academy of Music where he studied composition and piano with his father, and conducting with Simeonov Vladi. He resided for two years in Kiev, Ukraine where he was under the guidance of Natan Rahlin, the conductor of the National Symphony of Ukraine and professor at the National Academy of Ukraine. Vladigerov’s conducting career was quite successful and he toured numerous countries in Europe, as well as Cuba and Japan. From 1958-1969 he was the principle conductor of three Bulgarian Philharmonic orchestras: Ruse, Pleven and Plovdiv. ⁷⁵

Alexandar Vladigerov’s compositional works include three plays for children, chamber works, vocal songs, symphonic compositions and piano works. Some of his most distinguished repertoire consists of: *The Little Red Riding Hood* (vocal-symphonic fairytale), *Rondo Concertante* for violin and orchestra, eight pieces for wind ensemble, *Romantic Poem* for cello and piano, *Musical Alphabet* for piano, *Toccata*, and *Dilmano Dilbero Piano Variations Op. 9*, which will be examined in the study. ⁷⁶

One of the most vital components in Vladigerov’s music is his direct input of traditional Bulgarian folk songs, incorporating three main features: rhythm, melody, and improvisation. Moreover, direct quotations of traditional folk songs distinguish him from his father Pancho

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⁷⁶ Ibid.
Vladigerov and many other composers who mostly just integrate the characteristics and spirit of the folk songs.  

*Dilmano Dilbero* is a famous Bulgarian folk song based on a cheerful and memorable melody which combines 8/8 and 11/8 metric structures. The authenticity and reputation of this folk tune was the main inspiration for Vladigerov to compose this set of variations, which is quite popular in Bulgaria. This set of variations starts with a direct quote of the original folk tune. Vladigerov does not make any kind of adjustments, but presents the melody in its original form.

Figure 55- Original version of *Dilmano Dilbero* folk song

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In the first variation of the set the main melody is preserved in its original form, although Vladigerov incorporates thick rich chords in the accompaniment. In order to retain the folk character of the melody, the composer accents the strong beats in the measure. The tonality of the set is A minor, but Vladigerov hints at a jazz harmonies by integrating minor seventh and ninth chords. In fact, he received some jazz education from his father, who was highly inspired by George Gershwin.

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80 Ibid.
Variation 2 opens with a slightly different melody than the previous variation. In fact, this is the second part of the original *Dilmano Dilbero* melody which Vladigerov treats as a consequent to the melody of Variation 1. The main theme is presented in a distinctive manner by shifting to a higher register of the piano and integrating the tune within full chords in the right hand. The material elaborated in the left hand sustains a steady rhythmic pulse which is crucial in this style of music.

Figure 58 — Consequent to the melody of Variation 1

In the third variation, Vladigerov takes a different approach. Although the right hand still accommodates the authentic structure of *Dilmano Dilbero*, the left hand establishes asymmetric eighth-note patterns accenting the strong beats to sustain a distinct rhythmic pulse. The tempo in variation three is relatively close to the previous one, but the motion in the left hand creates a sensation of a faster and more agile character.

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In measure nine, Vladigerov places both voices close to each other to form a cluster-like sonority which causes minor inconvenience during performance practice, since the hands are so close together.

This variation concludes on an accented and unconventional A minor suspended chord with a raised fourth. In fact, the ending does not sound conclusive and it serves as a point of transition to the next variation.

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83 Ibid., 2.
Figure 61 — Unconventional A minor suspended chord concludes Variation 3 \(^{84}\)

Variation 4 is the first variation that transforms the main melody into a simple duple meter with an *Allegro vivo* tempo marking and an integration of parallel fourths in the right hand. However, the symmetric structure is not sustained for long. In measure five (the beginning of the second part of the theme), the phrase incorporates 6/16, 5/16 and 3/8 meter.

Figure 62 — The melody presented in a simple duple meter \(^{85}\)

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\(^{85}\) Ibid., 3.
Vladigerov ends this variation in a *furioso* manner with plentiful use of accents and *sforzandi* along with quick register shifts in both hands.

**Figure 63** — Quick register shifts with many accents and *sforzandi* \(^{86}\)

Variation 5 carries over the furious mood and develops the thematic material in a *Presto* tempo. The composer establishes a virtuosic and flashy texture by combining the main melody, structured in simple-duple layout, with the accompaniment in triplets.

**Figure 64** — Simple-duple rhythm, with the accompaniment in triplets \(^{87}\)


\(^{87}\) Ibid.
In measure 17, Vladigerov introduces a slight variation of the theme, fusing the melody and the accompaniment within triplet patterns. These carry on until the end of the variation gradually moving upwards towards the highest register.

The sixth variation, serving as the center of the set, includes an introduction prior to the development of any thematic material. Vladigerov establishes a 9/8 rhythmic pattern in the left hand, which is typical for folk music from the Balkan countries. This rhythmic pulse spans throughout the entire variation with an exception at the changes of meter.

In measure five, the composer brings back thematic content from the second variation, using a 9/8 metric structure, which combined with the rhythmic figure from the introduction, represents the essence of Bulgarian folk music.

This texture is the basis of this variation and it is persistently carried throughout with few exceptions. In measure 21, Vladigerov alternates 7/8, 9/8 and 5/8 meters creating authentic and unique rhythmic shifts. Also, he incorporates non-related chords as passing harmonies obscuring the tonal center. This non-conventional harmonic design includes thematic elements elaborated


90 Ibid., 5.
in F major, B Major, D Major, B-flat Major, D-flat Major and C Major. All these harmonic changes occur within five measures.

Figure 68 — Non-related passing harmonies

During the entire variation, rhythmic patterns stay perpetual until the piece concludes fiercely with *molto vivace, poco a poco stringendo* and *molto crescendo* indications, ending on **fff** A minor chord.

Figure 69 — The furious ending of Variation 6

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92 Ibid., 8.
One of the crucial elements in Vladigerov’s compositional style is quasi-improvisation, which is extensively used in Variation seven. This variation embodies and transforms motives from the main melody into a free and improvisatory style using augmentation. In order to sustain a free and an unmeasured-like texture, the music extensively integrates the practice of arpeggiated chords. Moreover, some motives are based on jazz idioms which is Vladigerov’s musical personality.

Figure 70 — Quasi-improvisation

Starting in measure twelve, the texture becomes less improvisatory and more stable, but the motivic development in the right hand is portrayed in the same manner.

Vladigerov’s jazz influence appears again at the end of the variation where *Dilmano Dilbero* is fused within a pure jazz harmonic progression: D7#9, Db7#11, C7#9, B7, Bb7, A7#9, Ab7#11, Db7(9), Bb7(9), A7#9 and A7b9#11. The variation ends on an A7b9 chord.

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95 Ibid., 12.
Variation eight starts with a *pp* and *molto ritmico* hint of the main melody in the left hand followed by a restatement of *Dilmano Dilbero*. In measure 17, Vladigerov thickens the texture by alternating the main tune between both hands using *stretto* technique.

Figure 73 — *Stretto* technique

Most of variation eight develops the familiar thematic material, incorporating various virtuosic elements, such as thick harmonic textures, quick register shifts, extensive use of abrupt accents, and dynamic changes. Similarly to variation seven, variation eight involves jazz components as it approaches its closure. Starting in measure 64, the harmonic language contains numerous seventh chords with added ninths, which is very common in jazz music. This variation continues straight into the next variation.

Figure 74 — *Attacca* to Variation 9

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97 Ibid., 16.
Variation nine is the final variation of the set. It uses the main melody in augmentation combined with alternating chords in both hands, creating overwhelming sonorities.

This structure is persistently sustained until measure 20 where parallel arpeggiated chords in both hands lead to the coda. In this final section, the authentic version of *Dilmano Dilbero* is heard for the last time before concluding the piece in a sensational manner.

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In the closing section of the piece, Vladigerov distinctively exploits dynamics and the range of the piano, incorporating heavily accented beats, alternating octaves and arpeggiated chords in both hands. *Dilmano Dilbero Variations for Piano* concludes with a *glissando* and a resolution on an A minor chord with an added sixth.

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Figure 77 — The end of the set on an A minor chord with an added sixth.\textsuperscript{100}

\textsuperscript{100} Alexander Vladigerov, \textit{Dilmano Dilbero Variations for Piano} (Sofia, Bulgaria: Science and Arts, 1955), 19.
CONCLUSION

Through a deep and thorough analysis of Nikolovski’s *Sonata Op. 28, Toccata*, Vladigerov’s *Dilmano Dilbero Variations for Piano* and other original folk melodies, I am able to appreciate profound emotions of the pieces while illustrating the history and traditions of Macedonian and Bulgarian folklore. The original and specific rhythms, meters, tonalities, along with the richness and authenticity of the melodies, significantly contributed towards a higher personal comprehension of the musical style.

Consistent rhythmic and metric shifts, thematic transformations, motivic variations, improvisations, persistent percussive sonorities and the treatment of folk melodies, are the fundamental elements analyzed in these pieces. These two composers share multiple compositional techniques, but also differ in a few aspects as well. Nikolovski designs his personal folk vernacular by transforming the original tune, whereas Vladigerov’s music is mostly based and inspired by Bulgarian folk tunes in their authentic form. In other words, Vladigerov incorporates folk melodies as citations; Nikolovski creates his own folk-like melodies. The analysis of these three pieces serves as evidence that both composers are extremely proficient in illustrating every aspect of their native folk music.


Cicakovski, Timko.“Makedonski tradicionalni instrumenti” [Macedonian traditional instruments]. In Seminar za tradicionalna muzika i igra [Traditional music and dance seminar], 2009, 16-18.


Ilik, Blagica.“Obrednite povorki vo tradicijata na Makedoncите, нивното извorno значење и нивната функциjа во совremenata sredina” [The ritual processions in the Macedonian tradition and their authentic significance and function in the contemporary environment] in Seminar za tradicionalna muzika i igra II [Traditional music and dance Seminar II], 2010,26-31.

Kolovski, Marko. All’ Infinito Esei za makedonskata muzika [Essays about the macedonian music]. Skopje: Sojuz na kompozitorite na Makedonija, 2009.


CURRICULUM VITAE

Name: Dejan Daskalov
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PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Ambitious professional with excellent research, time management and problem solving skills. Current student working towards completion of Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Piano Performance. More than 20 years of experience as a performer and instructor.

LANGUAGES

- Fluent in English, Macedonian and South Slavic group of languages
- Spanish, intermediate level

EDUCATION

**Doctor of Musical Arts, Piano Performance**
May 2018
University of Nevada Las Vegas - Las Vegas, NV

**Master of Arts, Piano Performance**
2012 Florida Atlantic University - Boca Raton, FL

**Bachelor of Music, Piano Performance**
2010 Lynn University - Conservatory of Music - Boca Raton, FL

PERFORMANCE EXPERIENCE

**SOLO RECITALS:**
- Doctoral Recital, University of Nevada Las Vegas 2017
- Doctoral Recital, University of Nevada Las Vegas 2014
- Masters Recital, Florida Atlantic University, Boca Raton, Florida 2012
- Recital in Skopje, Republic of Macedonia 2011
- Recital in Radovis, Republic of Macedonia 2010
- Recital in Skopje, Republic of Macedonia 2010
- Recital at Lynn University, Boca Raton, Florida 2009
CHAMBER MUSIC:
- Doctoral Chamber Recital, University of Nevada Las Vegas 2016
- Chamber Recital in Strumica, Republic of Macedonia 2010
- New Music Festival at Lynn University, Boca Raton, Florida 2009

ENSEMBLES:
- Wind ensemble - University of Nevada Las Vegas 2014-2015
- Wind ensemble - Florida Atlantic University 2010-2012

CHOIR FESTIVALS WITH ACAA "MIRCE ACEV":
- Serbia 2010
- Italy 2010
- France 2010
- Spain 2010
- Portugal 2010
- Greece 2008
- Croatia 2009

SCHOLARSHIPS

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<td>Full Graduate Assistantship at University of Nevada Las Vegas for Doctoral</td>
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MASTER CLASSES

- Heather Coltman (USA) 2010
- Liliana Bojadjieva (Bulgaria) 2009
- Jeffrey Biegel (USA) 2009
- Victor Asuncion (Philippines) 2008
- Roberta Rust (USA) 2008
- Marchela Grudelli (Italy) 2006
- Rita Kinka (Serbia) 2004
- Marina Horak (Croatia) 2003
- Anton Dikov (Bulgaria) 2003
- Jokut Mihajlovic (Serbia) 2001, 2003
- Ženi Zaharieva (Bulgaria) 2001
- Boris Romanov (Russia) 2000, 2003
AWARDS

- National Sight Singing Competition (Solfege) 1-st prize-Bitola, Macedonia 2005
- International Piano Competition "Anton Rubinstein" 3-rd prize-Paris, France 2004
- National Piano Competition 3-rd prize-Skopje, Macedonia 2004
- National Sight Singing Competition (Solfege) 2-nd prize- Skopje, Macedonia 2003
- International Piano Competition “Gradus ad parnassum”-3-rd prize-Kragujevac, Serbia 2003
- National Chamber Music Competition , 1-st prize-Shtip, Macedonia 2002
- International Piano Competition "Manja" 1-st prize-Shabac, Serbia 2002
- National Piano Competition -3-rd prize-Skopje, Macedonia 2001
- National Piano Competition “Chopin”-2-nd prize-Skopje, Macedonia 1996
- National Piano Competition -3-rd prize-Skopje, Macedonia 1996

REPERTOIRE (Selected)

SOLO REPERTOIRE:

- J.S. Bach- Partita Nr. 4 in D-major, Italian Concerto, Selected Preludes and Fugues from WTC 1 and 2
- L.V. Beethoven Op.28 Nr.15 in D major
- L.V. Beethoven Op.2 Nr.3 in C major
- L.V. Beethoven Op.27 Nr.1 in E flat
- Robert Schumann- Carnaval Op. 9
- F. Liszt- Memphisto Waltz, Rigototto Konzert-Paraphrase, Dante Sonata Hungarian Rhapsody Nr.6, Hungarian Rhapsody Nr.4, Totentanz
- C.V. Alkan- Les Mois Op. 74
- Sergei Prokofiev Sonata Nr. 3 Op. 28
- C. Debussy- Selected Preludes Book 1, 2

REPERTOIRE FOR PIANO AND ORCHESTRA:

- Franz Liszt-Totentanz
- Franz Liszt- Piano concerto Nr. 1 in E flat major
- A. Arensky-Fantasy for piano, orchestra
- E. Grieg- Piano Concerto in A minor
CHAMBER MUSIC REPERTOIRE:

- DB. Bartok - Sonata for Two Pianos and Percussion
- F. Poulenc - Sextet for Piano and Wind Quintet Op. 100
- L.V. Beethoven - Piano Trio Op. 1 Nr. 3
- D. Shostakovich - Trio Nr. 2
- F. Schubert – Piano Trio Nr. 2 in E flat Major
- S. Reich - Sextet, percussion, keyboards
- D. Shostakovic - Concertino (for two pianos)
- F. Poulenc - Elegie (for two pianos)

SUMMER FESTIVALS

- La Croix - Valmer Summer Festival, France 2016
- Stip Summer Festival, Macedonia 2005
- Skopje Summer Festival, Macedonia 2003, 2004
- Ohrid Summer Festival, Macedonia 1998-2002

WORK HISTORY

**Solo Pianist**
Conventions in Las Vegas and the west coast organized by Japanese company “Square Enix” for the internationally known video game “Final Fantasy” 2016 to Current

**Renaissance Music Academy** 2016 to Current
- Piano, Theory and Vocal instructor
- Soloist and accompanist for all concerts organized by the Academy

**Cheyenne High School** 2017 to Current
- Assigned accompanist for concerts and competitions
- Assist in leading rehearsals

**Music Director**
**Rainbow Praise Church**- Las Vegas, NV 2013 to Current
- Main pianist for all church services
- Leading and organizing rehearsals
Graduate Assistant (Piano instructor)
University of Nevada Las Vegas – Las Vegas, NV 2013 to 2017
  • Teach group and solo piano lessons
  • Consistently receive positive evaluations from students.
  • Regularly perform in various concerts as a soloist and accompanist
  • Assist Music Theory classes

Pianist
Sunshine Cathedral – Fort Lauderdale, FL 2012-2013
  • Performed in all church services
  • Led and organized rehearsals

Piano instructor
"TOPS" SUMMER PIANO CAMP – Boca Raton, FL 2011, 2012
  • Selected music carefully in order to match each student's piano skills
  • Met with parents to resolve conflicting educational priorities and issues
  • Used children's books, poems, movies and themes to promote student interest
  • Operated summer sports day camp for children aged 5 to 13 years old

Graduate Assistant
Florida Atlantic University – Boca Raton, FL 2010 - 2012
  • Accompanist and solo pianist for numerous concerts on and off campus
  • Assigned pianist for the University's Wind ensemble
  • Taught group piano classes
  • Full participation in the college community
  • Supervised and evaluated students' laboratory work

Piano and Voice instructor
Private Studio – Boca Raton, FL 2008 - 2013
  • Maintained a private studio of fifteen students for five years
  • Planned and organized concerts and programs for the members of the studio

Preparatory School of Music
Lynn University – Boca Raton, FL 2007-2010
  • Piano and Voice instructor
  • Organized grade records to increase reference speed
Pianist and Vocalist

- Selected music carefully in order to achieve a balance of musical styles
- Performed regularly on a weekly basis
- Promoted events and performances by participating in media interviews
- Studied intensively with vocal coaches
- Arranged musical compositions to achieve a particular musical style