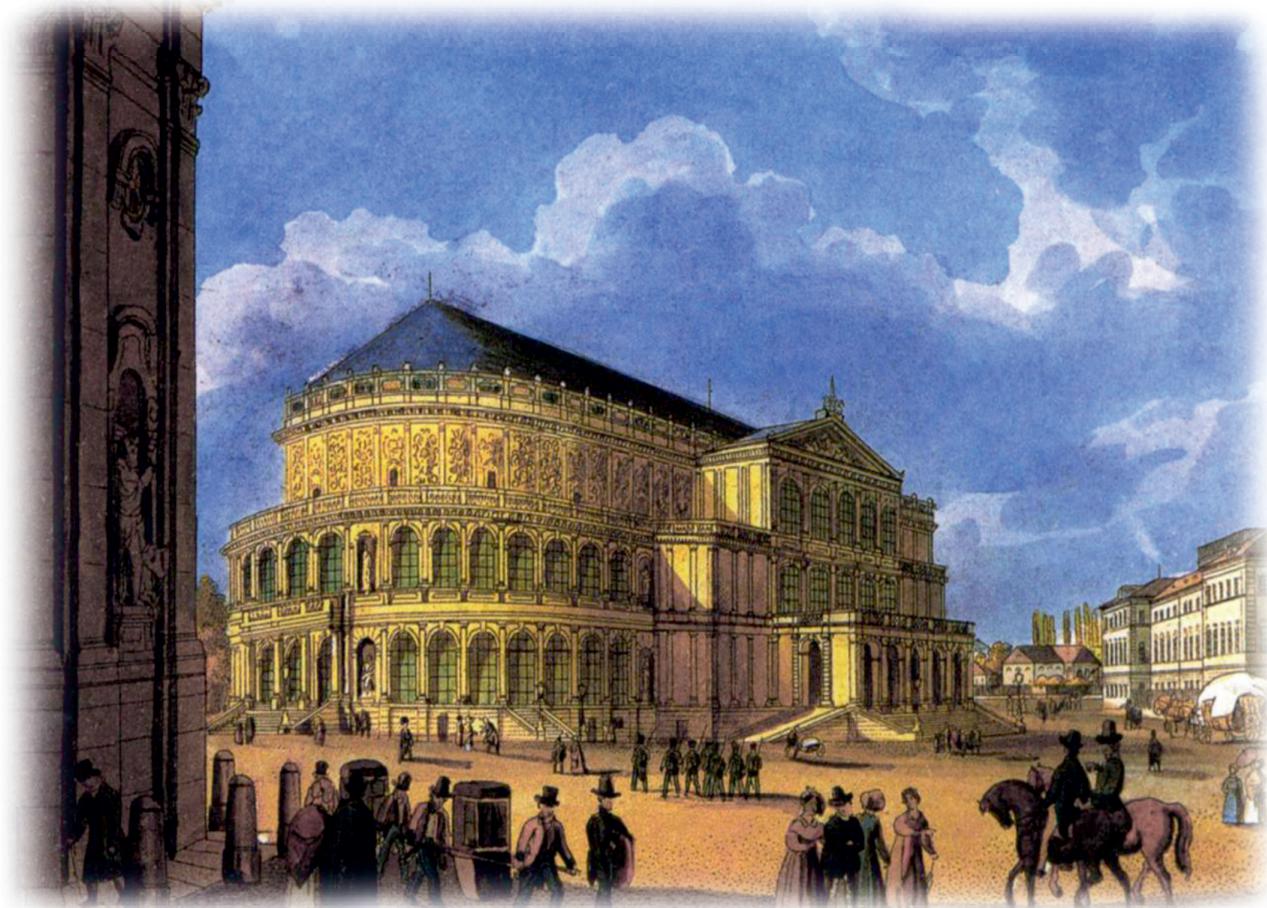




STUDIA UNIVERSITATIS  
BABEŞ-BOLYAI



# MUSICA

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Special Issue 2/2022

**STUDIA UNIVERSITATIS BABEȘ-BOLYAI  
MUSICA**

**Special Issue 2/2022**

**DECEMBER**

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# **S T U D I A UNIVERSITATIS BABEŞ-BOLYAI MUSICA**

## **Special Issue 2**

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## THE ORIGIN OF THE CONCEPT OF STYLE IN EUROPEAN MUSICAL THINKING

OLEG GARAZ<sup>1</sup>

**SUMMARY.** Essentially, the emergence of the concept of *style* in European musical thinking is the consequence of the shift produced at the end of the Renaissance. The trend towards the simplification of language and musical expression and the subordination of both to the notional-poetic discourse determines the unimaginable: the hegemony of rhetoric and, implicitly, of style as a rhetorical sub-category having the function of organizing and controlling musical suggestiveness – the taxonomy of musically expressible emotions. It is also during the period of the musical Baroque that the practical insertion of the concept of *style* begins by cohabiting with the idea of *genre* in all its three forms: as a specific habitat for the performance of the musical act, as a composition coefficient and equally as a type of ethos. This confusion will persist for the entire period of use of the concept of *style*, which gradually fades as the insertion of postmodernism gathers momentum. As a tool for functional and semantic dislocation, *style* also acts in relation to the term *canon*, the only value reference until the shift from the mathematical-cosmic quadrivium to the discursive-philological trivium (the Del Bene moment, 1586). Apart from taking over the attributions from the concept of *genre*, *style* also claims the function of *canon* as the exclusive value reference. Starting with the Baroque, we already speak of the *stylistic canon*. The complete absorption of the canonical function by *style* takes place during the Viennese Classicism, when *style* becomes a *personalizing-biological* reference, attached to the musical thinking of a prominent personality (Wilhelm von Lenz, *Beethoven et ses trois styles*, 1855). Musical Romanticism raises the understanding of *style* to the level of an almost absolute exclusivity, on a par with the transcendentalism displayed by the genius-musician (the Liszt-Wagner paradigm). The dissipation of Romanticism determines the return to the identification through ethos: verism, expressionism, impressionism-symbolism and naturalism, so that it is only during the first musical modernism (1900-1914) that we witness the return to the purely technical Renaissance acceptance: the

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<sup>1</sup> Associate professor dr. habil., “Gh. Dima” National Academy of Music, Cluj-Napoca, I.C. Brătianu street 25. E-mail: oleg.garaz@gmail.com



atonal style, during the second modernism (1918-1939) – the dodecaphonic style, the serial style, and further, during the third modernism (1946-1968) – the style of stochastic music, the style of aleatoric music, the minimalist style etc. The uselessness of the concept of *style* as a procedure of *identification through differentiation* (Boris Asafiev) and obviously as a *meta-narrative* is already revealed in musical postmodernism, with all the three anti-metanarrative “ideologies” of postmodernism: the ideology of distrust, the ideology of the fragment and the ideology of recovery.

**Keywords:** history of style, stylistic canon, style as a genre, style as a metanarrative, liberation from style

By virtue of its extensive historical use that has long become tradition, the phrase ‘musical style’ is taken as a given of an indisputable scientific value. In other words, musical style is regarded as a fundamentally strong concept, also acting as a generative epicentre for a distinct field of musicological research, namely musical stylistics.

### **1. Four “styles” of formulating the relationship between style and music**

The ways in which the concept of style is understood in European musical thinking and practice are spectacularly diverse in terms of typology: individual Beethovenian or Bachian style, the style of the vocal or instrumental, symphonic, oratorio or chamber genres, style as an aesthetic-periodizing term – Romantic, Baroque or Renaissance, performing or compositional style, style as an aesthetic-technical term – serial, stochastic, aleatoric or minimalist, the style of German, French or Italian music, group style – *Le Six* or *The Mighty Handful* etc.

Hence the diversity, but also an obvious “blurriness” of the definitions which, quite relevantly, are structured more like borrowings from literary analysis. To simplify things, only a few titles of some important monographs should be invoked, which conjointly could provide a useful mini genealogy for understanding the phenomenon of style over the course of its semantic evolution in relation to its parent field, which is musical thinking. American musicologist Leonard B. Meyer’s monograph titled *Style and Music: Theory, History, and Ideology*<sup>2</sup> will serve as a starting point. Both terms used in the title are placed in a relationship of equidistant neutrality guaranteed by the particle ‘and’, with no possibility of semantic interference.

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<sup>2</sup> Meyer, Leonard B. *Style and Music: Theory, History and Ideology*. University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London, 1989.

A second step is suggested by the title of Russian musicologist Mihail Mihailov's monograph – *Стиль в музыке*<sup>3</sup> (Style in Music). Here we already have an active semiotic relationship between signifier and signified, suggesting the possibility of adaptively embedding the concept of style into the pool of musical thinking as a conceptual dominant and a signifier of style, respectively. Both terms still retain their identity as nouns, as strong forms of semantic individuation.

A third option along this line could be *Stilurile muzicii* (Styles of Music), in which, even despite the genitival relationship of possession, we are still dealing with two nouns, which stand in a distant relationship guaranteed by the middle particle. The succession of these particles suggests a gradual closeness between the terms in the title – and, in, of –, as well as a passive, instrumental relationship between style and music as host concept. A final surprising aspect suggests a “coup d'état”, successfully carried out as a result of a plot. This is the most widely used form of relationship between the two terms, as illustrated by Richard L. Crocker's monograph titled *A History of Musical Styles*<sup>4</sup>.

By turning the noun music into an adjective, acting as an attribute and an identifier for the noun 'style', the semiotic relationship is inverted. In the new variant, the concept of style becomes a signifier and host for the entire heretofore autonomous field, and at the same time acts as a filter or sieve through which the meanings of music must be “sifted” to be understood according to their stylistic value. This last title concludes the process of ingraining music into the concept of style, although apparently things could be understood in the exact opposite way. This representation emerges from the very relationship between two concepts of different status: style – understood as a suggestive manner of discourse, serving as a secondary accompaniment to the dominant concept of rhetoric and discursive-linguistic in substance, – and music – an autonomous and exclusively sonorous type of artistic thinking and practice, generated in the pool of religious thinking and practice as a mystical-mathematical analogy of the universal order. The simple adjoining of these two terms reveals nothing but absolute heterogeneity and the impossibility of establishing even the faintest communication.

However, musicology now operates with the phrase 'musical style' as a legitimate analytical operator. The logical conclusion of the first three titles of integration of style into music, should have been 'stylistic music' (as opposed to 'canonical music') and not 'musical style', although as the reality of historical

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<sup>3</sup> Mihailov, Mihail - музыка, Стиль в. Muzika, Leningrad, 1981, and also Этюды о стиле в музыке [Studies on Style in Music], Muzika, Leningrad, 1990.

<sup>4</sup> Crocker, Richard L. *A History of Musical Styles*. Dover Publications, Inc. New York, reprint 1986.

evolution has shown, both variants are equivalent conceptual emulations serving to demonstrate a shift that had already occurred in European musical thinking around the turn of the sixteenth to the seventeenth century.

## 2. Giulio del Bene and the stylistic “invasion” in music

In terms of origin and identity, the concept of style is an attributive constituent of rhetoric as a discipline and art of persuasion, and linguistic-philological in substance. In other words, style refers to the suggestive quality of a spoken or written notional discourse. This strictly linguistic nature of style is validated by identifying style, as subordinate to rhetoric, as an element of the philological trivium as conceived by Martianus Capella (active around 400 A. D.) in his treatise *De Nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii*.

This differentiation of style as a constituent of rhetoric, a fundamentally secondary and conceptually weak element, in the trivium, and of music in the quadrivium of the cosmic-mathematical disciplines is a normative imperative only to the extent that the two constituent groups of the *Septem artes liberales* are subdivided into two ontologies or, more precisely, into one ontology (quadrivium) and a set of technical means with applied instrumental value, entirely non-autonomous and therefore weak in comparison with the autonomy and power of arithmetic, geometry, music and astronomy as strong conceptions, of direct knowledge and representation of reality.

The sciences of articulate language – rhetoric, grammar, and logic (or dialectics) – hold the well-deserved second place as discursive emulations of a causal precursory reference. This division faithfully reflects both the qualitative power – the number in opposition to the concept, discourse and interpretation –, and the quantitative one – four mathematical-cosmological sciences as opposed to three philological ones, the perfect imaginary order in the distribution of attributions, functions, meanings and generative potential. This order of things persisted as a norm throughout the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, until 1586, when an upheaval occurred with dramatic consequences both in the collective imaginary and, logically, in the subsequent historical evolution of artistic thinking. In that year, Giulio del Bene, a member of the Accademia degli Alterati, proposed transferring music from the quadrivium to the trivium, as described by Daniel KL Chua in his monograph *Absolute Music and Constructing of Meaning*:

Giulio del Bene said as much in 1586 when he gave a speech to another Camerata in Florence, the Accademia degli Alterati, proposing that music should be transferred from the quadrivium to the trivium, that is, from the immutable structure of the medieval cosmos to the

linguistic relativity of rhetoric, grammar, and dialectics. In the trivium, music becomes human and can be made infinitely malleable by the power or rhetorical persuasion. This shift allows man to bend music according to his linguistic will, twisting and distorting its intervals to vocalise his passional self. Monody deliberately breaks the harmonic laws of the cosmos to legitimise humanity as the new sovereign who creates his own laws out of his own being. This new *style* (our emphasis) of singing, by ‘transgressing through several forbidden intervals’ as Caccini puts it, articulates the heretical ego of the new humanity. [...] The shift from the quadrivium to the trivium signals a modern ontology<sup>5</sup>.

Thus, the positions of power are first reversed quantitatively – the original trivium turns into a new quadrivium –, philology takes over from ontology as a conceptual dominant, and the acoustic (Pythagorean) mathematical essence of music is replaced by the narrative-discursive one. Thus, an apparently formal proposal to mechanically transfer music from one place to another later reveals its function as a “leverage” whereby Del Bene practically reinvents the meaning of music, while also determining a reversal of the direction and content of the evolution of European culture for at least three centuries. This reformulation had a weakening effect, even though in the period immediately following the (musical) Baroque it was precisely this apparent “liberation” of music from the shackles of mathematical ontology that produced that playful and wild “orgy” of the invention of musical style. Music is taught to narrate in perfect harmony and obedience to the morphology and logic of the notional text, under the strictest constraints of rhetoric. In other words, music will have to learn to narrate with style.

### **3. Causes: from the fetishization of Antiquity to Giordano Bruno’s pyre**

One of the major causes of this shift was the predominantly philological quality of the Renaissance, given that at the core of Renaissance humanism was above all the discovery and research of the texts of Greek and Latin Antiquity. This preoccupation with the ancient texts gained great momentum during the Renaissance as the stage of accumulation, assimilation through transcription and translation, storage and conservation had already been achieved in the monasteries of the Middle Ages.

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<sup>5</sup> Chua, Daniel K. L. *Absolute Music and Constructing of Meaning*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge / New York / Port Melbourne, 1999, p. 34-35.

This preoccupation was amplified by the influx of Greek scholars in early fifteenth-century Italy, because of the ever-increasing Turkish pressure on Constantinople, which finally fell in 1453. Regarding music, this preoccupation with the text and especially with the clarity of the text in a musical work serves as an important argument in the debates of the Council of Trent, concluded in 1563, and Palestrina's *Missa papae Marcelli* is an exemplary model for resolving the dialectics between text and music in favour of the text, even at the cost of simplifying the polyphonic style. This case serves as an argument for understanding the tendency that led to del Bene's decision in both senses:

1. the option to treat music as a discourse and
2. the imperative need for semantic and suggestive-expressive accessibility, while the musical would have to be conceived based on the model of poetic suggestibility, which technically speaking determines
3. the emergence of homophony both as a departure from the complexity of contrapuntal writing, moving beyond the esotericism of religious expression and of certain doctrinal-symbolic contents, and as the emergence of opera as a genre and of the tonal functional harmonic style.

A second major aspect was the shift from the theocentric imaginary to the anthropocentric world-view, which, in general terms, would translate not only as the humanization of the divine faces in Renaissance paintings but also as the need for a different type of expression (than the dogmatic-conventional one) and for the expression of something else (than the narrow range of states determined by the Christic drama), of real human emotions that can be represented in a poetic-textual form as opposed to the biblical-textual or evangelical one.

The third aspect is the dichotomy between the irrational (mystical-Christian) and the rational (philosophical and intellectual), while the joining of two seemingly different facts – del Bene's proposal (the disenchantment of music) and Giordano Bruno's pyre (the disenchantment of the European imaginary) – reveals the same idea of demystification of thought and the break with both the religious mysticism and the dangerous esotericism of magical practices. This mutual weakening between the religious and the magical is a major step forward towards a rationalist-philosophical secularization. In fact, all these three elements – the preoccupation with philology and intellectualism, the option for the world of human experiences and emotions and the departure from mysticism through the exclusive focus on rationality – can be viewed as a solid causal argument for del Bene's idea to qualify as a milestone in the European artistic thought and as a starting point for a second cultural cycle in European history.

#### **4. The realignment of music: from the quadrivium to the trivium, from the canonical tradition to the free play of stylistic canons**

In the large pool of musical artistic practices, it is already relevant to join the del Bene moment – 1586 – and the activities of the Florentine Camerata, started by Giovanni de' Bardi as early as in 1573. The shift from polyphonic thinking to the principle of accompanied monody (homophony) and the development of a new technique – *stile recitativo* in accordance with the *afettata* manner of expression – could only be imagined as a consensus between the two intellectual actions unfolding in the same Florentine space.

The emergence of this orientation is predetermined by the dispute between Vincenzo Galilei and Gioseffo Zarlino and later amplified by the controversy between Claudio Monteverdi and Zarlino's student – Giovanni Artusi. Del Bene's proposal can in turn be considered as the effect of an implacable convergence of several determining factors, related to which the shift of music from the quadrivium to the trivium was the only compromise solution made under the immense pressure of a general process of paradigmatic change. In other words, all the cultural accumulations acquired until 1586 propelled the collective imaginary as well as the nature of social demand (even as a need manifested in a small circle of the Florentine intellectual elite) to a new level of the evolutionary spiral, while the nature of the qualitative changes of mentalities revealed that religious and magical thinking, and in the particular case of music – contrapuntal polyphony –, were already anachronistic (ancient) and consequently useless for the purpose of a cultural qualitative leap. Only thus can one understand del Bene's preference for a (modern) conceptual configuration offering real evolutionary potential, albeit at the price of a considerable weakening determined by the abandonment of ontological approaches in favour of the linguistic hermeneutic-speculative ones.

Giordano Bruno's pyre (February 17, 1600) is set aflame in the same year that Giulio Caccini publishes the manuscript of his opera *Eurydice*, both events coming as mediated/immediate responses to del Bene's idea. A third direct logical consequence would be the entire musical Baroque, a period which, even on a brief analysis, reveals the drama of a situation of an indecisive break with the religious-dogmatic and vocal contrapuntal past and of enthusiastic testing of an utterly unusual secularity through homophony, harmonic thinking, the opera and orchestral-instrumental genres and, perhaps, the most important consequence of del Bene's "revolution" – through the generalized implementation of the concept of style in music. In this regard, the moment of transfer of music to the old trivium can be viewed as one that separates a first properly stylistic artistic era – the musical Baroque – from a non-stylistic

past – the musical thinking of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. Russian researcher Marina Trubeţkaia offers a series of clarifications of this situation in her doctoral thesis on the concept of canon in music<sup>6</sup>.

A first idea refers to the closeness between the canonical version of Eastern Christianity and myth and the transformation of the Western Christian canon into style. A second idea highlights the fact that the Renaissance mass of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries represents a last page of the Western compositional canon as a musical accomplishment of a cosmogonic model seen as an uninterrupted tradition in the evolution of European musical thinking from Antiquity to the Renaissance. Thus, the “literaturizing” transformation of the myth in the Renaissance artistic consciousness determines the rethinking of the function of the canon in terms of a playful approach, while the increasingly pronounced revelation of the subjective subtext in the reading of the sacred text determines the emergence of the first signs of the concept of individual style. From this moment on, it will only be about the concept of stylistic canon or, for short, about style.

## **5. The beginnings of the Baroque: the new world of stylistic disorder**

Viewed from the perspective of the new placement of music in the linguistic-philological trivium, the entire musical Baroque appears as an era deliberately focused on aligning music with the figures of a poetic-notional rhetoric. A relevant parallelism could be drawn between the enthusiastic practice of the concept of canon by the ancient Greeks and the overwhelming enthusiasm of playing with the rhetoric of affects and especially with style in the musical Baroque. As Russian researcher Marina Lobanova states:

The very theory of style in music is an achievement of the age of Baroque. In the sixteenth century, a distinction was made between different types of counterpoint, and not styles. In the seventeenth century, numerous style classifications appeared. They were extremely diverse and sometimes rather odd. There was no unity between criteria, because they had not been formulated and therefore such unity could not appear during that time. The concept of “style” is the product of the Baroque culture, but under these conditions it does not receive

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<sup>6</sup> Trubeţkaia, Marina. *Канон в музыкальной культуре: к проблеме единства традиции* (*The Canon in Musical Culture: on the Problem of Unity of Tradition*), (culturology candidate's thesis), Saratov, 2006.

precise definitions. Originally, its meaning was extremely unstable. It was felt intuitively that a new musical dimension had been discovered, but the laws had not yet been formulated<sup>7</sup>.

And although Lobanova offers no causal arguments (the *del Bene* moment) and has a *per abrupto* approach to the invention of style in musical Baroque as a self-evident fact and a simple consequence of the evolutionary shifts in musical thinking, she continues with the presentation of an impressive panoply of stylistic variants of the musical Baroque: In the Baroque age, the traditional schemes were maintained – for example, the rhetorical division into high, middle and low styles, but at the same time new, individual and sometimes even surprising formulations were developed.

Thus, Monteverdi distinguishes between the “agitated” (*concitato*), “soft” (*molle*) and “tempered” (*temperato*) style, and, in his *Madrigali guerrieri, et amorosi*, libro ottavo – the warlike, amorous, and representative (*rappresentativo*) style. In Heinrich Schütz-Christoph Bernhard’s theory, there is constant reference to “*stilus gravis (antiquus)*” – “the solemn (old) style”, in which “the music is superior to the text” (“*Harmonia Orationis Domina*”) and “*stylus luxurians*” in two variants: the “the common luxuriant style” (“*stylus luxurians communis*”), in which “word and music are of equal importance” (“*Sowohl Oratio als Harmonia Domina*”) and the “comic luxuriant style” (“*stylus luxurians comicus*”), where “the text has absolute dominance over music” (“*Oratio Harmoniae Domina absolutissima*”). Marco Scacchi distinguished between the church, chamber and theatrical styles. Kircher mentions the “church”, “canonical”, “motet”, “madrigal”, “melismatic”, “symphonic”, “fantasy”, “theatrical” and “hyporchematic” styles<sup>8</sup>.

This quote clearly reveals two states of things. The former refers to the understanding of style as a coefficient of the relationship between text and music, which directly refers to the already accomplished act of placing music among the linguistic disciplines. The latter refers more to a generalized freedom in the elaboration of any and all interpretations of the concept of style as a coefficient of the concept of genre – church, theatrical, symphonic, canonical etc. This essentially philological origin of the concept of style

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<sup>7</sup> Lobanova, Marina. *Музыкальный стиль и жанр: история и современность (Musical Style and Genre: History and Modernity)*, Sovetski kompozitor, Moscow, 1990, p. 121.

<sup>8</sup> Lobanova, p. 122.

amplified by its radical novelty determines, already in the second half of the seventeenth century, the emergence of the concept of mixed or combined style, with the latter being imposed and advocated by musician-theoreticians such as H. Purcell, J. J. Fux, J. Mattheson, J. J. Quantz or C. Ph. E. Bach.

This conception involved the combination of techniques corresponding to several different styles such as the concertante and church styles, the old (Palestrinian, contrapuntal and vocal) and the new (homophonic, instrumental, or operatic) styles, or the combination of several national styles, hence a third meaning of style as (national – A/N) taste. All these become possible by virtue of the multiple identity of the musical Baroque which embraces the ecclesiastical and the secular alike, homophony and polyphony, the harmonic and the contrapuntal, all culminating in the “kaleidoscopic” and alternating several national dances (styles) in a single suite, inserting stylistically heterogeneous foreign fragments in author’s works, treating genres such as the chorale in several styles – church or theatrical, not to mention J. S. Bach’s *Mass in b-moll* which, according to Marina Lobanova, is a true anthology of Baroque styles.

Finally, worth mentioning is the role of the two “twins”<sup>9</sup> of the Baroque – J. S. Bach and G. Fr. Handel –, whom Manfred Bukofzer<sup>10</sup> defines as the achievers of the stylistic fusion (Bach) and of the coordination of national styles (Händel). The end of the musical Baroque also revealed the need for (co)ordination and fusion, for bringing a certain order to the meanings of the concept of style and for securing it a solid position in the European musical language and thought. In other words, Bach’s fusion and Handel’s coordination provide a strong operational understanding of the concept of style, allowing it to evolve towards those of Viennese classicism and Romanticism.

## 6. Conclusion

Essentially, the history of the so-considered stylistic period spans approximately three centuries and eight decades – beginning with the year 1600 until the establishment of postmodernism in the eighth decade of the twentieth century. After a first period – the musical Baroque (1600-1750) – in which music is “tamed” in its new, essentially discursive guise, the next qualitative leap occurs at the beginning of the nineteenth century, when

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<sup>9</sup> The two composers are thus represented in: François-Sappey, Brigitte. *Istoria muzicii în Europa (The History of Music in Europe)*, Grafoart, Braşov, 2007.

<sup>10</sup> Bukofzer, Manfred. *Music in the Baroque Era: from Monteverdi to Bach*. W. W. Norton & Company Inc., New York, 1947.

Ludwig van Beethoven abandons the elements of musical rhetoric in favour of an organic approach<sup>11</sup>, used for the first time in the Third Symphony, *Eroica*, in E flat major, Op. 55. At the same time, the meaning of the concept of style is pushed to the point of identification with the musician's personality, as revealed in Wilhelm von Lenz's monograph titled *Beethoven et ses trois styles* (Sankt-Petersburg: Bernard, 1852).

After Bach, who fuses the national styles under the "umbrella" of the German one, the meaning of the concept of style undergoes a "biological" shift, suddenly acquiring the ability of ageing and evolving in accordance with the stages of human biology.

A third element, bringing a sense of special nobility to the concept of style, is the Romantic theory of the artist-genius, whereby style becomes the mark of an indisputable value superiority, thus usurping the functional prerogatives of the concept of musical canon.

We are referring here to Chapter 8: *Fusion of National Styles: Bach* and Chapter 9: *Coordination of National Styles: Handel*, respectively.

However, with the emergence of atonal thinking at the beginning of the last century, the so-called normative definition of style undergoes a return to an almost baroque understanding, namely a technical one – dodecaphonic style (Schoenberg) or serial style (Webern), bruitist style (Varèse) – or an aesthetic one – neoclassical (Prokofiev and Stravinsky) –, and therefore can no longer be considered as properly stylistic. Furthermore, the attempt to define Alfred Schnittke's conception as polystylistic style clearly reveals the utter inoperability of such a phrase, whereas in terms of postmodern musical practices it marks the complete abandonment of this type of aesthetic-periodizing identification.

However, the deforming "irradiation" of music proposed by Giulio del Bene paved the way not only for the rhetoricization of music and the reformulation of the strong concept of musical canon into the weak one of stylistic canon, but also for the proliferation of a historical series of conceptions regarded as sciences even despite a vehement polemical resistance. The emergence of a new rhetorical conception of music is illustrated by Johann Mattheson's book titled *Der vollkommene Capelmeister* (1739).

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<sup>11</sup> Meyer, Leonard B. *Music and Ideology in the Nineteenth Century (The Tanner Lectures on Human Values)*, delivered at Stanford University, May 17 and 21, 1984. The text is available on the Internet and can be downloaded from: [http://tannerlectures.utah.edu/\\_documents/a-toz/m/meyer85.pdf](http://tannerlectures.utah.edu/_documents/a-toz/m/meyer85.pdf)

Later, in 1750, Alexander Baumgarten publishes the *Aesthetica*, his proposal for a new science of logical perceptions meant to describe the sensations of beauty and to educate the taste for beauty.

In 1902, Hermann Kretzschmar (who first used the word *Affektenlehre* related to the theory of affects in musical Baroque) publishes the text titled *Anregung zur Förderung der musikalischen Hermeneutik*, thus founding the science of "interpretation" of music, with applications in musical education, but also in the cultural studies embraced under the banner of the New Musicology (Joseph Kerman, Susan McClary, Lawrence Cramer, or Garry Tomlinson).

In 1867, Charles Sanders Peirce reinvents semiotics, and through the contribution of Gino Stefani, Jean-Jacques Nattiez, Mario Baroni or Eero Tarasti, the inventor of musical narratology, all heirs of del Bene, it becomes the science of signs and of the mechanisms of constructing meanings in music. The attempt to understand the meaning of ontological and, implicitly, canonical music, by restoring the meaning this type of practice and thinking had in the original quadrivium, will, first of all, require the deconstruction and removal of any linguistic-philological "alluviums" ( rhetoric, aesthetic, hermeneutic or semiotic) in the attempt to restore the pre-stylistic and pre-Baroque image of a practice whose authentic meanings could only be reached with great difficulty.

*Translated from Romanian by Marcella Magda*

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## CHINESE NATIONAL PIANO STYLE IN “TWO POEM CLASSICS OF THE TANG DYNASTY” BY XU ZHENMIN

OLEG BEZBORODKO<sup>1</sup>

**SUMMARY.** “*Two Poem Classics of the Tang Dynasty*” by Xu Zhenmin is a bright example of the Chinese national piano style. We analyze its main features using S. Tyshko’s theory of national style and the concept of the sound image of the instrument by L. Gakkel as the theoretical and methodological basis of our research. We introduce and define the concept of the national sound image of the instrument. Chinese piano music is characterized by the purposeful activity of composers both in stylistic adaptation and in stylistic generation. The European historical and stylistic sound images of the piano are adapted and act as the “foreign” material. The “native” material is generated both from folk and traditional Chinese music, its mode, intonation, and instrumental specifics, as well as from the rich artistic, philosophical and historical heritage of China.

**Keywords:** National music style, piano music, Chinese piano music, Chinese national piano style, sound image of the instrument, Chinese national sound image of the piano.

Almost the entire history of Chinese piano art was accompanied by the demand to create music with a pronounced national character. For example, “*Shepherd’s Pipe*” (“*牧童短笛*”) composed in 1934 by He Luting and considered to be the “China’s first mature piano work”<sup>2</sup> became famous after

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<sup>1</sup> *Ukrainian National Tchaikovsky Academy of Music, Arkhitektora Horodetskoho 1-3/11, Kyiv, 01001 Ukraine, PhD, Professor, E-mail: olegbezborodko@gmail.com*

<sup>2</sup> *Bian, Meng Бянь Мэн. Oчерки stanovleniya i razvitiya kitayskoy fortepiannoy kultury Очерки становления и развития китайской фортепианной культуры (Essays on the formation and development of Chinese piano culture). PhD thesis abstract. Saint-Petersburg, Saint-Petersburg Rimsky-Korsakov State Conservatory, 1994. p. 11.*



winning the first prize at the competition organized by Alexander Tcherepnin<sup>3</sup> with the support of Xiao Yumei (萧友梅), rector of The National Conservatory of Music in Shanghai. The goal of the competition was to create “a piano piece based on Chinese traditional music or folklore” and it was specifically stated that the competition was “freely open to all Chinese composers”<sup>4</sup>.

Since 1940s, the demand for a national coloring of art (including music) have been clearly articulated by Chinese social and political leaders. In his speech at the Literature and Art Forum in Yan’an in 1942 Mao Zedong defined the subordinate and functional place of art in relation to politics: “In the modern world, any culture, which means both literature and art, belongs to certain classes and adheres to a certain political direction. Art for art’s sake, art beyond class, art that develops apart from or independently of politics, does not really exist”<sup>5</sup>. Mao Zedong indicated that art should be a tool of the state and serve the broad masses (workers, peasants, soldiers). The task to create art for masses drew attention to folk songs and a special committee was organized to collect folklore<sup>6</sup>. In the 1950s this attitude was reflected in the statement by the musicologist Meng Wentao who expressed the general mood of that time: “We can only create Chinese music. Any modern composer should write music in the national style. Whatever instrument or musical form is used, you must under no circumstances write any music other than ‘Chinese’”<sup>7</sup>. For several decades this doctrine guaranteed the prevalence of the transcription genre which perfectly corresponded to the main idea of Mao’s cultural policy – subordination of art to politics.

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<sup>3</sup> Aleksandr Nikolayevich Tcherepnin (1899–1977) was a Russian and American composer, pianist, music theorist, son of composer N. Tcherepnin. He arrived in Shanghai in April 1934 planning to end his Chinese tour in three months but stayed in the country for three whole years. One of the reasons for such a long stay in China was his extraordinary interest in folk music in the music of the Far East.

<sup>4</sup> Korabelnikova, Ludmila Корабельникова, Людмила. *Aleksandr Tcherepnin. Dolgoye stranstviye Александр Черепнин. Долгое странствие (Alexander Tcherepnin. A Long Journey)*. Moscow, Yazyki russkoy kultury, 1999. pp. 145–146.

<sup>5</sup> Mao, Zedong 毛, Цзэ-дун. “Vystupleniya na soveshchanii po voprosam literatury i iskusstva v Yan’ani” Выступления на совещании по вопросам литературы и искусства в Яньани (Speeches at the conference on literature and art in Yan’an). *Mao Tsze-dun. Izbrannyye proizvedeniya Мао Цзэ-дун. Избранные произведения (Mao Zedong. Selected works)*. Vol. 4. Trans. from Chinese. Moscow, Izdatelstvo inostrannoy literatury, 1953, pp. 119–173. p. 150.

<sup>6</sup> It should be noted that until the New Cultural Movement, that is, until the 1920s a superficially contemptuous attitude towards folk music prevailed among the Chinese intellectual elite.

<sup>7</sup> Meng, Wentiao 孟文涛. “Zhongxi bingcin” yi jie “中西并存”一解 (The problem of the coexistence of Western and Eastern musical arts). *Renmin yinyue 人民音乐 (People’s Music)*, 1956, № 9, pp. 28–29. p. 28.

Since the beginning of the 1980s serial and other Western compositional techniques of the 20th century begin to appear in Chinese piano music. The genres of "absolute" non-program music become more frequent too. Most of these works, however, continue to be associated with Chinese national culture in one way or another. A good example is "*Tai Ji*" by Zhao Xiaosheng which won a prize at the First International Chinese Style Piano Music Competition held in Shanghai in 1987. The pitch organization of this piece is built on the system of 64 hexagram symbols from the "*Book of Changes*"<sup>8</sup>.

The very subject of this competition, as well as the titles of the works related to Chinese traditional culture in all its manifestations (folk and court music, mythology, classical literature, painting, and calligraphy)<sup>9</sup>, testify that contemporary Chinese music (including piano music) cannot dispense with the national originality. This main direction of the musical discourse in China is encouraged by state policy. Thus in 1980 at the celebrations dedicated to the 170th Chopin's anniversary the president of the Society of Chinese Musicians Liu Ji said: "A national musician should strive to create music with a true national character, to absorb the healing element of traditional and folk music based on his own experience of encountering it, to be unique in the general sound of world music"<sup>10</sup>. Despite familiarity with modern musical trends and absorption of them the slogan "serving the people", as Barbara Mittler claimed, "is still well-known to every Chinese composer, even the youngest"<sup>11</sup>. In the conditions of modern stylistic pluralism, which is also relevant for China, this call is realized not in its original class meaning, but in the nationalistic sense, in the desire to create music that is tangibly connected to the national roots.

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<sup>8</sup> Bian, Meng 卞蒙. *Zhongguo gangqin wenhua zhi xingcheng yu fazhan* 中国钢琴文化之形成与发展 (*The formation and development of Chinese piano culture*). Beijing, Nianhua le chubanshe, 1996. p.131–132.

<sup>9</sup> Among the most striking works of this period which have firmly entered the concert repertoire should be named "*Do Ye*" ("*多耶*" – a folk rite in Guangxi province) by Chen Yi (陈怡), "*Wu Kui*" ("*五魁*" – a dance of hunters from the North-Eastern China) by Zhou Long (周龙), "*Combination of the Short and the Long*" ("*长短组合*" – a suite in three parts, the title of which appeals to the rhythmic patterns in Korean folk music and the Korean language) by Quan Jihao (关捷昊).

<sup>10</sup> Zhang, Xian 张弦. Xiaobang danchen 170 zhounian jinian hui zaijing juxing 肖邦诞辰170周年纪念会在京举行 (Chopin's 170th Birthday Celebration Held in Beijing). *Renmin yinyue* 人民音乐 (*People's Music*), 1983, № 3, p. 35.

<sup>11</sup> Mittler, Barbara. *Dangerous tunes: The politics of Chinese music in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and the People's Republic of China since 1949*. Wiesbaden, Harrassowitz Verlag, 1997. p. 49.

Already in the 21st century, in 2013, Li Yundi<sup>12</sup> recorded an album with the telling name “*Red Piano*”, released for both the Chinese and international markets. It is noteworthy that the recording of this CD was timed to celebrate the 90th anniversary of the Chinese Communist Party. Several pieces were specially written by a contemporary composer Zhang Zhao (张朝). Their inclusion in this album reveals the purposeful efforts of the state to stimulate the development of stylistically recognizable and nationally colored Chinese piano music. According to the composer the first case of his cooperation with the pianist – the arrangement of a folk song – happened at the request of the President of China Hu Jintao for the BRICS summit “as a demonstration for China’s soft power to be introduced to the top leaders”<sup>13</sup>. The main idea of “*Red Piano*” for Zhang Zhao is that “no matter how many Chopin prizes we win, <...> only if our own music is being recognized by the world, <...> will we automatically become the maestros”<sup>14</sup>.

The requirement to create music with a pronounced national character always posed before Chinese composers the question how to adequately reflect in piano writing the national image of the world, specifically Chinese worldview and aesthetics. The extremely rich philosophical, religious, aesthetic and musical traditions of China provide contemporary musicians with inexhaustible material and a source of inspiration for creating compositions in which the national spirit of China is present. Different in its mental and aesthetic essence from European culture, Chinese culture possesses the unlimited potential of those “driving forces” for the development of any national style which Serhiy Tyshko calls “dynamic components of national style.” The Ukrainian scientist defines the dynamic components of the national style in music as “the evidence of the newly consolidated contents in it, the transition of extra-musical, extra-stylistic phenomena (mentality, traditions etc.) – for the first time or once more – into a style, innovative discovery of means of musical expressiveness adequate to these phenomena”<sup>15</sup>.

During its relatively short history the piano music of China gave rise to many examples of the consolidation of extra-musical specifically Chinese cultural phenomena in it, the manifestation of which in writing for the originally European instrument required special compositional solutions. Given the original foreignness of European musical culture in general, and piano culture, to the Chinese musical tradition, we believe that the functions of the

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<sup>12</sup> Li Yundi (李云迪, born 1982) is a Chinese concert pianist most well known for being the youngest pianist to win the 2000 XIV International Chopin Piano Competition in Warsaw.

<sup>13</sup> Li, Jingdi. Politically Influenced Music in Post-Reform China. PhD dissertation. University of York, 2014. p. 172.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., p. 173.

<sup>15</sup> Tyshko, Sergey Тышко Сергей. *Problema natsionalnogo stilya v russkoy opere Проблема национального стиля в русской опере (The problem of national style in Russian opera)*. Kyiv, Muzinform, 1993. p. 10.

national style distinguished by S. Tyshko – stylistic adaptation and stylistic generation – should have been particularly vivid in Chinese piano music.

Starting from the 1930s and until today Chinese piano music is characterized by the purposeful activity of composers both in terms of stylistic adaptation of piano writing, i.e., according to S. Tyshko, in the search for “points of contact between ‘native’ and ‘foreign’ material”<sup>16</sup>, and in stylistic generation – the creation of “new stylistic features based on one’s own national material in the conditions of its certain opposition to extra-national”<sup>17</sup>. The historical and stylistic sound images of the piano<sup>18</sup>, which represent all the diversity of the genre-style system of European piano music, formed at the time of acquaintance with them by Chinese musicians, act as “foreign” material. The “native” material is drawn both from folk and traditional Chinese music, its mode, intonation, and instrumental specifics, as well as from the rich artistic, philosophical and historical heritage of China, from the foundations of the national worldview, the uniqueness of which is determined, first of all, by religious and philosophical traditions.

“*Two Poem Classics of the Tang Dynasty*” (“唐人诗意两首”) was written by Xu Zhenmin<sup>19</sup> in 1998. Four years later, the work was awarded the Silver Prize of the most prestigious national music award, the Golden Bell (金钟奖), and in 2004 it was selected as the assigned piece for the Third China International Piano Competition in Beijing, one of the most important music contests organized by the Ministry of Culture of China. So, Xu Zhenmin’s minicycle became for most of the foreign participants of the competition (as well as for their teachers) a kind of Chinese piano music visit card which embodied the national Chinese sound image of the instrument<sup>20</sup>.

“*Two Poem Classics of the Tang Dynasty*” was written after the poems by Chen Zi-ang (陳子昂) and Chang Jian (常建) who lived in the 7-8th centuries. Chen Zi-ang’s poem is titled “*Upon Ascending the Parapet of*

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid., p. 7

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 7.

<sup>18</sup> The term “sonorous (sound) image of the instrument” was first introduced by a famous American composer Aaron Copland (Copland, 1953). Later the idea of “sound image of the piano”, or even simpler – “image of the piano”, became the main concept in the book by Leonid Gakkel “*Piano Music of the 20<sup>th</sup> century*” (Gakkel, 1990) which influenced many further Eastern-European studies in history and theory of piano performance. Gakkel, as his followers, concentrates mostly on describing images of the piano typical for different composers, although he also defines two general images of the piano in the 20<sup>th</sup> century (“percussive-pedallless” and “illusory-romantic”) and briefly states the existence of various national images of the piano (Russian, Polish, Bulgarian, Hungarian).

<sup>19</sup> Xu Zhenmin (徐振民, born 1934) is a composer, professor at the Central Conservatory in Beijing. The author of numerous orchestral and chamber works.

<sup>20</sup> We understand the national image of the piano as a certain collective unity of ideas about the sound and expressive capabilities of the instrument, which are capable of embodying nationally recognizable qualities, phenomena and characteristics, both musical and extra-musical.

*Yuzhou*: “Before me, unseen are the ancients, / Behind me, unseen those to come. / Thinking of this infinite universe / Alone, in my sorrow, I shed tears”<sup>21</sup>. Chang Jian’s poem describes the experience of visiting an abandoned temple: “First rays of morning sunlight / Stream through lofty bamboo groves. / I enter the old temple, following the path/ To where the meditation hall is hidden deep beneath the flowering trees. / As mountain scenes invite the song of birds, / Images in the pond empty the human mind. / Everything is vanished now into the heart of silence / Except the sounding of bell and chime”<sup>22</sup>.

As we can see the attention of the poets is focused on the incomprehensible secrets of the universe immensity, the inexorable flow of time and the beauty of the surrounding world. So it can be assumed that in both pieces the poetic program is inextricably linked with the concept of Dao (the way). Chou Wen-chung, considered to be one of the first composers who was able to combine authentic Chinese motives with the modern compositional techniques, understood Dao as “the identification oneself with nature or the universe”<sup>23</sup>. As musicologist Xiaole Li put it, “calm as a deep ocean, a Daoist would be alone without being troubled by worldly loss or excited by ordinary gain. The aloof attitude toward worldly desire and appreciation of natural things separates Daoists from the formalist doctrine of the Confucians”<sup>24</sup>. The demand for naturalness and dispassion in knowing the “way” is being transformed from art into images of carelessness and alienation. “*Two Poem Classics of the Tang Dynasty*” is one of the many examples in Chinese music of program piano works of a contemplative nature, the main theme of which is the unity of nature and man<sup>25</sup>.

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<sup>21</sup> Xu, Zhenmin. *Two Poem Classics of the Tang Dynasty*. Beijing, People’s Music Publishing House, 2003. p. 3.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., p. 7.

<sup>23</sup> Chew Seok-Kwee. *Analysis Of The Selected Music Of Chou Wen-Chung In Relation To Chinese Aesthetics*. PhD. dissertation. New York, New York University, 1990. p. 38.

<sup>24</sup> Xiaole, Li. *Chen Yi’s piano music: Chinese aesthetics and Western models*. PhD dissertation. University of Hawai’i, 2003. p. 50.

<sup>25</sup> Among other such compositions we can name the transcriptions “*Silver Clouds Chasing the Moon*” (“彩云追月”), “*Red Lilies Crimson and Bright*” (“山丹丹花开”), “*A Hundred Birds Paying Respect to the Phoenix*” (“百鸟朝凤”) by Wang Jianzhong (王建中), “*Flute and Drum at Sunset*” (“夕阳箫鼓”) by Li Yinghai (黎英海), “*Paintings of Ba-Shu*” suite (“巴蜀之画”) by Huang Huwei (黄虎威), “*In That Distant Place*” (“在那遥远的地方”) by Sang Tong (桑桐), as well as the piano poem “*Moonlit Night in Fuyang*” (“潯陽月夜”) by Jiang Wenye (江文也), “*Impressions of Paintings by Higashiyama Kai*” (“高山流水”) by Wang Lisan (汪立三), Preludes “*Bamboo in the Wind*” (“箏”) and “*Sound of Valley*” (“幽谷”) by Chu Wanghua (储望华).

In the formation of the Chinese national image of the piano Dao acts as a “driving force” that produces “native” material. Among the historical and stylistic sound images of the instrument which were already well established when Chinese piano music only began its development, we can highlight two most relevant to the Daoist worldview. One is the post-romantic sound image of the piano, distinguished by Natalya Ryabukha in Debussy’s work<sup>26</sup>. Close to it stands the other one – the illusory-romantic image of the piano of the 20th century according to Leonid Gakkel’s classification. These sound images of the piano became the key “points of contact” between the nationally determined intentions of Chinese musicians and all the riches of the European piano art thesaurus. As known, some features of the Debussy’s piano works language as well as their imagery were formed under the direct influence of Eastern (including Chinese) art and aesthetics. Chen Rongxuan singles out impressionism as one of the leading stylistic trends in Chinese piano art. But unlike European (French) impressionism which is characterized by an anthropocentric interpretation of “the embodiment of an artistic vision of the world with a pronounced dominance of the subjective (self) over the world”, in Chinese impressionism the researcher notes the dominance of a nature-centered interpretation where “a dialogue between man and the universe most often is accompanied by the dissolution of the subjective (self) in the universe”<sup>27</sup>.

The action of the dynamic component “Dao” in Chinese piano music caused the presence of a large number of program pieces of the pictorial type. Having a program is a property generally characteristic of Chinese instrumental music. It became one of the most important tools for the assimilation<sup>28</sup> of the sound image of the piano as a universal European instrument by the national Chinese musical consciousness. Many observers noted the fundamental thematic nature of Chinese music-making practice. For example, Han Kuo-huang states that «it is uncommon to find Chinese instrumental pieces without some sort of descriptive or suggestive title. In a printed concert program or a book containing instrumental compositions, nine out of ten pieces are fully annotated, some even accompanied with poems”<sup>29</sup>.

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<sup>26</sup> Ryabukha, Nataliya Рябуха Наталия. *Transformatsiya zvukovoho obrazu svitu v fortepianniy kulturi: onto-sonolohichny pidkhid Трансформація звукового образу світу в фортепіанній культурі: онто-сонологічний підхід (Transformation of the sound image of the world in piano culture: the onto-sonological approach)*. Doctor thesis. Kharkiv, 2017.

<sup>27</sup> Chen, Rongxuan Чень Жуньюань. *Mirovozzrencheskiye i stilevyye osnovy impressiionizma v muzyke Kitaya Мировоззренческие и стилевые основы импрессионизма в фортепианной музыке Китая (Worldview and Stylistic Foundations of Impressionism in Chinese Piano Music)*. Kharkiv, Visnyk Kharkivs'koyi derzhavnoyi akademiyi dyzaynu I mystetstv, 2012, № 14, pp. 159–163. p. 162.

<sup>28</sup> According to S. Tyshko the assimilation is the most general principle of national style formation.

<sup>29</sup> Han, Kuo-huang. *The Chinese Concept of Program Music*. Asian Music, 1978, Vol. 10, No. 1, pp. 17–38. p. 18.

In the piano writing of “*Two Poem Classics of the Tang Dynasty*” the concept of Dao is realized through such stylistic features as the improvisational nature of composition, many arpeggiated chord figurations, metrical ambiguity, the significant role of pedalization in creating coloristic effects of “dissolution”. The use of the pentatonic scale system plays an important style-forming role too as it soothes out the sharp tensions between tones that are characteristic of European music.

E.g. 1

The musical score is presented in four systems, each with a treble and bass staff. The first system is marked *Lento* (♩ = 52) and *pp*, with a *una corda* instruction. It begins with a 6-measure arpeggiated chord. The second system continues with a 3-measure arpeggiated chord, marked *pp* and *una corda*, and includes a *p* dynamic marking. The third system is marked *rit.* and *p*, featuring a 7-measure arpeggiated chord. The fourth system is marked *mp* and *rit.*, ending with a 3-measure arpeggiated chord. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, ties, and dynamic markings.

Xu Zhenmin. *Two Poem Classics of the Tang Dynasty*.  
2. “The Zen Meditation Hall behind Broken Hill Temple.  
Poem by Chang Jian”. Measures 1–11.

Moreover, tonal centers around which pentatonic scales are built change frequently. The appearance of additional tones that are not included in the pentatonic system is mainly related to the parallel movement of intervals and chords, mostly of a non-third structure, which also eliminates the harmonic functionality inherent in European tonal music. The change of tonalities occurs through arbitrary and improvisational movement of tonal centers and their corresponding scales.

The parallelisms call to mind the texture of Debussy's piano works, but the persistent use of pentatonics, primarily in fast arpeggiated figurations that resemble either the breath of a light breeze or the sound of the Chinese folk instrument *guzheng*<sup>30</sup>, appears to be the result of stylistic generation, a new specifically Chinese stylistic feature. The same applies to the arbitrary movement of tonal centers, which by its frequency and seeming illogicality contradicts the basic principles of European tonal-functional music. No tonality is maintained for more than a few measures, which is often emphasized by the change of key signatures.

However, such variability is connected not only with the desire to express the mysteriousness and elusiveness of Dao, but also with the specificity of Chinese traditional and folk music, first noticed by Alexander Tcherepnin, a kind of godfather for Chinese piano music. In his notes, the composer left an accurate description of its tonal, melodic, rhythmic and timbre features: "Chinese music is built on a natural pentatonic scale; it is very melodic, lyrical, and extremely diverse <...> In the national Chinese music there is no harmony or counterpoint how we understand it. In an orchestra, each musician must play the same melody, but taking into account the volume and register of his instrument. As a result, this leads to 'false duplication, which, together with many syncopated rhythms played by percussion instruments, forms a special kind of polyphony characteristic of Chinese music. The form of the local melody-motif is built on the constant variation of the same material, the musical phrase is never exactly repeated, the melody is always evolving, the change of basic tones replaces the modulation"<sup>31</sup>. In Xu Zhenmin's piece, as in many other piano works of Chinese composers, we can see how the "false duplication" as a characteristic feature of traditional music making transforms into many non-third parallelisms, and how the change of basic tones turns into a frequent change of modal-harmonic tonal centers.

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<sup>30</sup> Guzheng (古箏) or zheng (箏) is a Chinese string-plucked lute-type instrument. It has 16 to 21 strings.

<sup>31</sup> Korabelnikova, Ludmila Корабельникова, Людмила. *Aleksandr Tcherepnin. Dolgoye stranstvie Александр Черепнин. Долгое странствие (Alexander Tcherepnin. A Long Journey)*. Moscow, Yazyki russkoy kultury, 1999. p. 144.

The predilection of Chinese composers for various kinds of parallelism has roots both in folk music making and in the more general quality of Chinese artistic aesthetics – the brevity of expression. The origins of this property of Chinese art can be traced to the visual and sound brevity of the Chinese language. Chen Rongxuan points out the connection of hieroglyphic thinking with a specific vision of the world built on symbols. Thus, a composer symbolically interprets individual sounds in a special conceptual system, which differs from the main European principle of composing – the development of musical material<sup>32</sup>. One of the most important qualities of Chinese poetry is also meaningful brevity, symbolism, and incompleteness, which leaves room for the search for a hidden, mysterious meaning. Similarly, in Chinese painting, a large part of the canvas often remains unpainted. According to art critic Michael Sullivan, “the Chinese painter deliberately avoids complete statements because he knows that we never know everything”<sup>33</sup>.

In music, this quality of incompleteness manifests itself on the one hand in the brevity of music phrases, on the other – in the linearity of texture, which can also be observed in the above example. The theme is mostly presented in parallel chords, and the phrases last no more than two measures. Practically the entire piece lacks the wide-breathing phrases that are often found in European music.

Moreover, Chinese musical themes are characterized by the multiplicity and repetition of melodic peaks, which, again, can be traced to the peculiarities of the Chinese language and its tones. Since the tones of the Chinese language have a lexical meaning, the intonation curve of the Chinese language is more capricious than in European languages and rhythmically syncopated which affects the melodic patterns of Chinese songs and, as a result, those of instrumental music. A similar thematic structure (relatively short pentatonic phrases in a small range with repeated melodic peaks and syncopated rhythmic patterns) can be found in most Chinese piano works that are transcriptions of folk songs. The example from Xu Zhenmin’s piece is interesting because, not being a transcription and going far beyond the stylistic framework of traditional “pentatonic romanticism”, it shows that the composer was guided by the same principles of structure and textural presentation of thematic musical material.

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<sup>32</sup> Chen, Rongxuan Чень Жуньюань. *Mirovozzrencheskiye i stilevyye osnovy impressionizma v tuzyuke Kitaya Mirovozzrencheskiye i stilevyye osnovy impressionizma v fortepiannoy muzyke Kitaya (Worldview and Stylistic Foundations of Impressionism in Chinese Piano Music)*. Kharkiv, Visnyk Kharkivs'koyi derzhavnoyi akademiyi dyzaynu I mystetstv, 2012, № 14, pp. 159–163. p. 162.

<sup>33</sup> Sullivan, Michael. *A Short History of Chinese Art*. Berkeley, University of California Press, 1967. p. 103.

Therefore, Xu Zhenmin’s “*Two Classical Poems of the Tang Dynasty*” is a vivid example of the embodiment of the Chinese national sound image of the piano, which was formed in the process of perception by Chinese musicians of the sound images of the piano already formed at the time of their acquaintance with European musical culture. These sound images were modified under the influence of such defining phenomena for Chinese culture as the philosophical-aesthetic concept of “Dao”, the syncretic understanding of musical art, the brevity and incompleteness of expression associated with the laconism of Chinese language and writing. The musical factors of national style formation, namely traditional and folk music making, also had a huge impact.

In piano writing, the influence of these dynamic components caused the formation of the following stable stylistic features: textural linearity and parallelism, improvisational nature of composition, a large number of arpeggiated chord figurations, metrical ambiguity, a significant role of pedalization in creating coloristic effects of “dissolution”, non-third chordal structure, brevity and melodic capriciousness of music phrases, syncopation of the rhythmic patterns, the use of the pentatonic scale system, which is traditional for Chinese musical culture and which soothes out the sharp tensions between tones characteristic of European music, harmonic movement based on pentatonic scales that leads to the leveling of the harmonic functionality familiar to European music.

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## INDIAN RHYTHMIC GESTURE AND *TINTA* IN FRENCH OPERAS OF THE SECOND HALF OF THE 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY AND EARLY 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY

NOÉMI KARÁCSONY<sup>1</sup>, MĂDĂLINA DANA RUCSANDA<sup>2</sup>,  
MIHAELA BUHAICIUC<sup>3</sup>

**SUMMARY.** As part of a larger study which compresses three layers of analyses — dramatic, visual, and musical — the present article deals with the rhythmic component of the musical phenomenon in French operas within a half century timeframe, 1862–1923. Orientalism and exoticism were represented through melody, rhythm, timbre, and *libretti* in operas by F. David, G. Bizet, L. Delibes, J. Massenet, and A. Roussel. The melodic dimension, discussed in a previous study, offered perhaps more opportunities for the evocation of an allegedly oriental sound than rhythm and meter deliver within the operas, while the timbre of various instruments proposes the sensuality of the Orient — an accepted Western stereotype regarding the East. To identify certain rhythmic formulae of Indian inspiration and to understand the concept of *tāla*, several studies and works of Indian musicians and authors have been consulted, among these Sārngadeva's *Sangītaratnākara*, a thirteenth century treatise considered one of the most important Indian musicological texts. Whether invented or extracted directly from its original source, the article aims to identify composers' rhythmic gestures. The blend of personal musical language with the Indian *tinta* reflected in rhythmic patterns create a romantic texture cognoscible to the discussed French exotic operas: David's opéra-comique *Lalla-Roukh*, Bizet's *Les Pêcheurs de perles*, Delibes' *Lakmé*, Massenet's five-act grand-opéra *Le Roi du Lahore*, and Roussel's opéra-ballet *Padmâvatī*.

**Keywords:** Hindu rhythm, ethnomusicology, French opera, orientalism, Indian *tinta*, *timbre*

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<sup>1</sup> Univ. Assistant PhD, Transilvania University of Braşov (Faculty of Music), E-mail: [noemi.karacsony@unitbv.ro](mailto:noemi.karacsony@unitbv.ro)

<sup>2</sup> Univ. Professor Dr. habil., Transilvania University of Braşov (Faculty of Music), E-mail: [m\\_rucsanda@unitbv.ro](mailto:m_rucsanda@unitbv.ro)

<sup>3</sup> Univ. Senior Lecturer, D.M.A., Transilvania University of Braşov (Faculty of Music), E-mail: [buhaiciuc.mihaela@unitbv.ro](mailto:buhaiciuc.mihaela@unitbv.ro)



## Introduction — India as *the Other* and *the Exotic* in French Opera

The current study represents the second part of an investigation that deals with the influences of Indian culture and music in the devising of French operas from the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century. The first part of this study focused on the libretto, visual and melodic dimensions of Indian themed operas by Félicien David, Georges Bizet, Léo Delibes, Jules Massenet, and Albert Roussel, highlighting the way the visual elements were gradually absorbed by the musical discourse.

In the first half of the nineteenth century, the Orient was represented in Western music using certain melodic stereotypes, such as sinuous, sensual melodies, the employment of ornaments and melismatic fragments, as well as musical structures that strived to resemble certain modes pertaining to Eastern music (for example the Arab *maqam* scales or the Indian *ragas*). The melodic dimension suggested the composers' attempt to recreate exotic, faraway places, nonetheless the overall atmosphere of the musical discourse was rather Western, resembling the works of the period.

Until the last decades of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century, musical works of oriental or exotic inspiration were devised according to the rules and requirements of Western music composition. The sound of most of these works was subordinated to the expectations of the period, with only a few striking musical elements that were employed to emphasize the exoticism of the work: certain intervals, such as the augmented second, or the construction of modal scales that were incorporated within certain fragments. These means of representing the Orient could be compared to the stereotype images that were associated with the Eastern world: Locke speaks about the images of women, embodying a *topos obligé* of the Western world regarding the East,<sup>4</sup> while Oriental men are often portrayed as violent and fanatic despots.<sup>5</sup> The composers were not preoccupied with the idea of novelty, as would be the case in the first decades of the twentieth century, when foreign elements (melodic, rhythmic, or related to timbre) would be introduced with the purpose of creating a distinctive and new musical discourse, as well as the illusion of authenticity (as in the works of French composers Albert Roussel and Maurice Delage, for example).

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<sup>4</sup> Locke, Ralph P. "Constructing the Oriental 'Other': Saint Saëns' *Samson et Dalila*". Cambridge Opera Journal, Vol. 3 No. 3, Nov. 1991, (p. 261–302), p. 269.

<sup>5</sup> Idem, p. 280.

An extension of the previously mentioned study, the present analysis strives to reveal the way rhythm and timbre were employed by the composers of the aforementioned French operas, with the purpose of representing Indian themes and emphasizing the differences between the West (and the characters that represent *our world*) and the Orient (represented by characters that portray *the Other*).

Orientalism and exoticism were represented by composers of the nineteenth century through melody, rhythm, timbre, and plot of their works. Nonetheless, the melodic dimension offered more opportunities for the evocation of an allegedly oriental sound than rhythm and meter, while the timbre of various instruments was associated with the sensuality of the Orient (a Western stereotype regarding the East).

Often, the musical representations of the Orient are accentuated through various rhythmic elements employed by the composers. During the first half of the nineteenth century, the rhythmic dimension acquires great importance when associated with orientalist and exotic representations. Thus, the composers focus on repeated rhythmic motifs and structures, the use of rhythmic ostinato (with the purpose of recalling the ostinato in Middle Eastern music or the drone accompaniment in the music of India and Central Asia), the use of repetitive patterns (figurations) and well-contoured rhythmic figures in the accompaniment.

### **Rhythmic simplicity in Félicien David's imaginary Indian exoticism**

Félicien David (1810–1876), whose travels and sojourn in the Orient had a marking impact on his works, was concerned with the authenticity of his sound. In the opera *Lalla-Roukh* (1862) he strived to emphasize the exotic features of the theme using invented melodic ornaments that recall Oriental music. However, the Indian influences are rather related to the theme of the opera and the visual dimension. Nonetheless, rhythm and timbre play an important role in David's musical representation of his Mughal subject, even though the composer remained within the confines of early musical exoticism and orientalism.

The musical language employed by Félicien David in the opera *Lalla-Roukh* was inspired by the composer's previous works. Therefore, the representation of India is limited by the musical practices of early musical orientalism: the purpose is to create the musical depiction of an exotic setting, without striving for cultural authenticity, but at the same time aiming for a certain type of accuracy (related to the musical representation of a cultural group associated with the idea of *the Other*). The composer uses

certain rhythmic formulae (e.g. dotted eighth notes followed by sixteenths) that recall the evocation of the Orient in the *ode-symphonie Le Désert*. The exoticism of his opera can be observed within the scenes where the composer incorporated dance.

The *Allegro* from Act I, No. 4, *Chouer et airs de danse*, is written in cut time, with a *marcato* sign, where the quarter is indicated at 166 and the words are separated by a repeated rhythmic pattern (E.g. 1) of *short-short-long*, that recalls the *dvitiya tāla* formula (001), from Sārṅgadeva's thirteenth century system of Hindu notation.<sup>6</sup> The Greek equivalent of *Dvitiya Tāla* seems to be the anapest rhythm, adapted to the French metric. According to Kulshreshtha "*Tāla refers to the beat set for a particular composition (a measure of time) and is formed with three basic parts (called angas) which are laghu, dhrtam, and anudhrtam, though complex tālas may have other parts like plutam, guru, and kaakapaadam.*"<sup>7</sup> According to Kippen, the word *tāla* has two meanings: first, it represents the North (Hindustani) and South (Karnatic) Indian systems of rhythm; second, it can refer to a specific metric cycle.<sup>8</sup> In Sārṅgadeva's *Saṅgītaratnākara* 120 regional rhythmic patterns (deśī) had been catalogued.<sup>9</sup> These are rhythmical patterns gathered from various regions, ranging from one to twenty-one durations.<sup>10</sup>

E.g. 1



Félicien David: *Lalla Roukh* (1862) Act I, No. 4, *Allegro* (m. 10–11)  
David's rhythmic formula of *short-short-long*

<sup>6</sup> *Encyclopedie de la Musique et Dictionnaire du Conservatoire — Première Partie, Tome I*, Directeur : Albert Lavignac. Paris: Librairie Ch. Delagrave, 1914, p. 301; also explained in Rîpă, Constantin. *Higher Theory of Music — The Rhythm*, Vol. II, Ed. MediaMusica, 2002, p. 42.

<sup>7</sup> Kulshreshtha, Khushboo. *History & Evolution of Indian Music*. New Delhi: Shree Natraj Prakashan, 2010, p. 201–202.

<sup>8</sup> Kippen, James. R.: "*Hindustani Tala*" in Nettl, Bruno; Ruth M. Stone; James Porter; Timothy Rice. *The Garland Encyclopedia of World Music: South Asia: The Indian subcontinent*. New York and London: Garland Publishing, 2000, p. 110.

<sup>9</sup> Idem, p. 111.

<sup>10</sup> Rowell, Lewis: "*Theoretical Treatises*" in Nettl, Bruno; Ruth M. Stone; James Porter; Timothy Rice. *The Garland Encyclopedia of World Music: South Asia: The Indian subcontinent*. New York and London: Garland Publishing, 2000, p.37.

In the same number, the flutes create the Indian *tinta* through ornamental runs. Caroline Potter finds an *expansion of the exotic effects in the use of percussion and orchestral color*<sup>11</sup>. The composer's mission trip in the Middle East while a Saint Simonian brother contributed to capturing the colors and feelings of the music heard, yet his ability for musical invention was highly appreciated, *Lalla-Loukh* being on the opera roster for about 40 years.

Since the twenty-first century is preoccupied with authenticity, there was no surprise when *Lalla-Roukh* was revived by *Opera Lafayette* with *Kalanidhi Dance*, an authentic Indian dance group, and premiered with a modern authentic production in Washington D.C. and New York in 2013.

### **Bizet, the Pearls' Seeker — close to an exotic rhythm**

In the works of George Bizet (1838–1875) exoticism is evoked using certain harmonic constructions, chromatic scales, and specific intervals, as well as using rhythmic elements and particular timbres. In the opera *Les Pêcheurs de perles* (1863), Bizet relies heavily on the visual dimension of his subject, nonetheless he manages to transpose his audience to a faraway dreamland with the aid of certain timbres and the employment of fragments that have a pronounced modal sound.

During the nineteenth century the evocation of India was rather circumscribed by the means employed when representing the oriental and exotic. This may be observed regarding Bizet's opera, *Les Pêcheurs des perles*. Despite the fact that the plot of the opera takes place in Ceylon, this setting was often associated by nineteenth century artists and their audience with the Middle East, as Locke observes: "*In the European artistic imagination, the region (n.a. the «Middle East») sometimes stretches still further east, to India and Ceylon (...).*"<sup>12</sup> In his musical evocation of India, Bizet employs certain elements that are prevalent for nineteenth century musical orientalism – these particular features (rhythmic patterns, rhythmic ostinato in the accompaniment, unusual harmonic structures and musical intervals, the use of minor seconds, certain timbres employed with the purpose of emphasizing the sensuality associated with the Orient, etc.) were used by French composers of the period (David, Reyer, Salvador-Daniel, Saint-Saëns) in their musical depictions of Middle-Eastern or Arab

<sup>11</sup> Potter, Caroline and Langham-Smith, Richard. *French Music Since Berlioz*, London and New York: Routledge, 2016, p. 39.

<sup>12</sup> Locke, Ralph P. *Cutthroats and Casbah Dancers, Muezzins and Timeless Sands: Musical Images of the Middle East in 19th-Century Music*, Vol. 22, No. 1 (Summer, 1998), pp. 20–53, University of California Press, p. 21.

themes. The exoticism of Bizet's *Les Pêcheurs des perles* is accentuated using certain rhythmic patterns (like those employed by David in his orientalist works).

In Nadir's aria, "*Je crois entendre encore*", in act I, Bizet deepens the sensual and exotic atmosphere evoked by the Phrygian scale (built on E) and the accompaniment in A minor, by employing metric changes: from 9/8 to 12/8. Metric changes and undulating melodies are associated with the feminine, thus emphasizing the representation of India as female — in Bizet's opera this representation is also associated with the character of Leila. In his work, *Imagining India*, Ronald Inden argues that Western representations of India are based on metaphors, such as India depicted as female, or associated to the image of the jungle.<sup>13</sup> In Bizet's opera India is evoked through the desolate seashore and the Hindu temple in the background (act I), while the music emphasizes the sensuality associated by the Western audience with the East. French plays, poems, novels, paintings, and operas of the nineteenth century are dominated by the stereotype image of the *baydère* and Western adventurers<sup>14</sup> (as this can be observed in Delibes' opera, *Lakmé*, as well).

In the Prelude of *Les Pêcheurs des perles* the composer employs a rhythmic figure, repeated continually in the bass throughout the entire part, its construction like the rhythmic pattern of *ratilila tala* described in Sārngadeva's system<sup>15</sup>:

E.g. 2



### Rhythmic pattern of the excerpt

Andante. (M.M. ♩:66)

PIANO.

### Georges Bizet: *Les Pêcheurs de perles*. Prelude (Excerpt)

<sup>13</sup> Inden, Richard. *Imagining India*. Indiana University Press, 1990.

<sup>14</sup> Mohan, Jyoti. *Claiming India: French Scholars and the Preoccupation with India in the Nineteenth Century*. SAGE Publications, 2018, p. xxix.

<sup>15</sup> *Encyclopédie de la Musique et Dictionnaire du Conservatoire - Première Partie, Tome I*, p. 301; Rîpă, Constantin. 2002. Op. Cit., p. 42.

Unlike Félicien David's patterns, which are often sustained by the percussion ensemble and due to it can be abstracted, in Bizet's numbers the rhythmic pattern is often hidden within the melody, which makes the two of them harder to separate. It seems that Bizet is more aware or perhaps more convinced of his exotic rhythmic patterns than Félicien David was.

### **Hindu influences in Massenet's *Le Roi du Lahore* (1877)**

Oriental subjects offered Jules Massenet the opportunity (1842–1912) for lavish visual representations, as was the case with his opera *Le Roi du Lahore* (1877). The work alludes to Indian culture using certain names, deities, and locations in India. At the same time, Massenet aims for musical accuracy, incorporating modal constructions of supposed Hindu origin in his work. The oscillation between major and minor modes, in certain musical fragments, further emphasizes his desire to create an exotic discourse, of modal reminiscence.

In the third act of the opera *Le Roi du Lahore*, Massenet presents a *Divertissement* that offers the composer the opportunity to incorporate a modal melody which serves as foundation for the following variations. Julien Tiersot remarks the composer's endeavor to devise a melody that could be considered authentic by nineteenth century audience, due to its modal sound that resembles Indian music.<sup>16</sup>

Along with the modal sound, the rhythmic construction of the following fragment of the *Mélodie hindoue* (E.g. 3), with its dotted rhythm, asymmetrical patterns, and ornaments which evoke the melismas in Indian music, suggests the freedom and virtuosity of Indian music. The chords in the accompaniment (measures 8-11), recall the strummed drone strings of the sitar.

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<sup>16</sup> Tiersot, Julien. *Notes d'ethnographie musicale* — Première Série. Paris: Librairie Fischbacher, 1905, p. 73.

**Andantino tranquillo**

**Jules Massenet: *Le Roi du Lahore*  
Act III: *Mélodie hindoue* (excerpt)**

### Rhythm in *Lakmé's* dances

In the opera *Lakmé* (1883), Léo Delibes represented the Indian world through certain elements that are specific for nineteenth century musical exoticism: melismatic melodies, supported by static harmonic constructions or fragments that have a strong modal sound. Moreover, the composer incorporates certain musical fragments of Indian inspiration<sup>17</sup>, focusing on the predominantly melodic aspect of Indian music. His evocation of the Indian characters mirrors Delibes' desire to emphasize the differences between East and West.

Syncopated rhythm is employed several times in the opera *Lakmé*, notably within the scenes that feature Hindu characters. In the *Prelude* to his opera, Léo Delibes employs a syncopated musical motif that will later be incorporated in the scene *Blanche Dourga*, in act I. In the *Prelude*, the motif is first played by the flute, the timbre of which emphasizes the undulating character of the motif, due to its arpeggiated construction and direction of the phrase (ascending and descending):

<sup>17</sup> Tiersot, Julien. 1905. Op. Cit., p. 73–74.

## E.g. 4

The musical score for E.g. 4 consists of two staves. The upper staff is for piano, marked *pp*, and features six measures of chords with a rhythmic pattern of two sixteenth notes followed by an eighth note, each with a slur and a fermata. The lower staff is for flute, marked *mf*, and features a melodic line with a similar rhythmic pattern. The piece concludes with a *Ped* (pedal) marking and an asterisk.

Léo Delibes: *Lakmé*. Excerpt from the opera's *Prelude*

In the second act of the opera, Delibes includes three *Airs de danse* with exotic names: *Terâna*, *Rektah*, and *Persian*. In the *Terâna* the composer alternates the 6/8 and the 3/8 metres, and pays great attention to the rhythmic dimension: he employs powerful rhythmic patterns consisting of two (or four) sixteenth notes followed by eighths, which resembles the highly rhythmic character of the *Tarana* (E.g.5).<sup>18</sup> The rhythmic pattern in measures 3 and 4 of the following example (E.g. 5) is repeated through the entire dance, and may suggest the structure of the *kudukka tala*<sup>19</sup> (short-short-long-long). In accordance with the requirements of the period, Delibes endows the dance with the particular features of Western music and dance.

## E.g. 5

The musical score for E.g. 5 is in 6/8 time and marked *Andante. (♩. 50)*. It features two staves. The upper staff is for piano, marked *mf*, and the lower staff is for flute, marked *bien rythmé.*. The score shows a rhythmic pattern of two sixteenth notes followed by an eighth note, which is repeated throughout the excerpt.

Léo Delibes: *Lakmé*. Act II, *Airs de danse: Terâna* (Excerpt)

<sup>18</sup> The *Tarana* is a Hindustani vocal composition, in which Persian or Arabic phonemes are delivered at a medium or fast tempo. In the *Tarana* dance various rhythmic combinations are employed and expressed through various movements.

<sup>19</sup> *Encyclopedie de la Musique et Dictionnaire du Conservatoire — Première Partie, Tome I*, p. 301; Rîpâ, Constantin. 2002. *Op. Cit.*, p. 42.

The *Rektah* dance is also brief and based on a rhythmic unit of (001), short-short-long, starting on an up-beat which leads us again to the *dvitiya tĀla* (also seen in David's opera, E.g. 1), while the *Persian* dance surprises with its chromatic runs, brass support in the coda, but no specific repeated rhythm.

Up until the works of Albert Roussel, in nineteenth century French operas exoticism and the image of India was frequently represented through ballet, often devised using repeated rhythmic patterns. Other means were the use of syncopated rhythms and dotted rhythms, as well as shifting the accents off the main beats (which could be related to the asymmetries and improvisatory character of Indian music and dance). Composers were not aiming to formulate novel means of musical expression, as would be the case at the beginning of the twentieth century.

### **Influences of the *tĀla* system in the works of Albert Roussel — from the first works to *PadmĀvatĀ* (1918/1923)**

Just as his Italian contemporary, Puccini, who signs his *Turandot* (1924) with *chinoiserie*, exotic *tinte* and bitonal chords, Roussel similarly marks his compositional style with features such as bitonality and bimodality, as well as polyrhythms, encountered in most of his works.

Rhythm was one of the main elements employed by Roussel in the construction and formal development of his works. Some musicologists consider that the anapest, used by the composer in a vast number of his works, serves as unifying, signature-like figure.<sup>20</sup> To identify this rhythmic signature, other instrumental works prior to his opera were investigated.

Indian influences are clearly discernible in the *Suite pour piano*, Op. 14 (1909–1910), notably in the second and fourth movements (*Sicilienne* and *Ronde*). The work was completed after the Roussel's return from his voyage to India and South-Asia, which took place between 1909–1910 and offered the composer the possibility to enhance his knowledge on classical Indian music. The *opéra-ballet PadmĀvatĀ* (written in 1918 and first performed in 1923) was also composed after this voyage and bears the influence of the Indian music the composer had listened to.

The second movement of the *Suite pour piano*, the *Sicilienne* is inspired by the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Italian dance. The tempo of the movement is moderate, while the pastoral character incorporated

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<sup>20</sup> Pincherle, Mark. *Albert Roussel*. London: Wilhelm Limpert-Verlag, 1957, p. 147–148.

the traditional dotted rhythms of the Sicilian dance within a succession of measures that alternate the 6/8 and 12/8 meters. The metrical alternation emphasizes the rhythmic vitality and points to the lack of symmetry. The dotted rhythmic figure appears throughout the entire movement, thus acquiring the role of primary rhythmic motif, which generates the developing discourse. Popley made a correlation between the metric change (two beats followed by four — 6/8 and 12/8) and the Karnatic rhythmic pattern *Rupaka tāla*.<sup>21</sup>

The *Tāla system*, common to both Hindustani and Karnatic music, represents the metrical structure in Indian music and dance, the use of various types of beats and figures combined in metric cycles (patterns) that recur unchanged throughout the performance. *Tāla* also refers to the hand gestures (claps, taps, waves) made by Indian singers during their performances. As concept, *tāla* is analogous to meter in Western music.<sup>22</sup> According to Clayton, *tāl* refers to the cyclically repeating temporal structures within which music unfolds and continually develops.<sup>23</sup> Nonetheless, there are notable differences between the Hindustani and Karnatic *tāla* Systems. For example, the *Rupaka tāla* in Karnatic music (which served as inspiration for Roussel) is different from the Hindustani *Rupak tāla* (or *Roopak Taal*). The Karnatic *Rupak tāla* consists of 1 *Drutha* (2 beats) and 1 *Laghu* (4 beats), comprising a total of 6 beats. *Drutha* (or *Drutam*) and *Laghu* are two among the groupings of gestures called *Anga*, employed in the scheme of Purandara Dasa (1484–1564), who created exercises still used by Karnatic musicians.<sup>24</sup> *Drutha* is a clap followed by a wave of the hand, while *Laghu* is a clap followed by counts on the fingers.

In a similar manner, Roussel alternates the 6/8 meter (2 beats) with the 12/8 meter (4 beats):

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<sup>21</sup> Popley, Herbert A. *The Music of India*. Calcutta: Association Press, London: Oxford, 1921, p. 178.

<sup>22</sup> Nelson, David Paul: “Karnatak Tala” in Nettl, Bruno; Ruth M. Stone; James Porter; Timothy Rice. *The Garland Encyclopedia of World Music: South Asia: The Indian subcontinent*. New York and London: Garland Publishing, 2000, p. 138–139.

<sup>23</sup> Clayton, Martin. *Time in Indian Music: Rhythm, Meter, and Form in North Indian Rāg Performance*. Oxford University Press, 2008, p. 16.

<sup>24</sup> Nelson, David Paul. 2000. Op. Cit., p. 139.

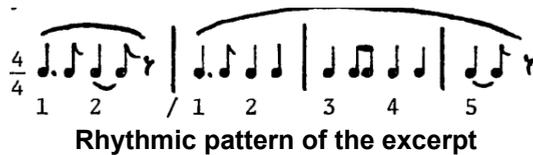
E.g. 6



**Albert Roussel: *Suite pour piano*, Op. 14, No. 2 (Excerpt)**  
 The alternation of 6/8 and 12/8 in the beginning of the work,  
 associated by Popley with the Karnatic rhythmic pattern *Rupaka tāla*  
 2 beats and 4 beats

The same rhythmic pattern, inspired by *Rupaka tāla*, is employed by Roussel in the fourth part of his *Suite*, the *Ronde*. In the following example (measures 27–30), the first measure of the theme (indicated by Roussel through the *legato* line) could be considered the 2 isolated beats (1 *Drutha*); the following measures (28-30) represent a second continuously flowing phrase consisting of 5 beats (pulsations of half-measure) — the *Laghu* is modified, comprising 5 beats instead of 4):

E.g. 7



**Albert Roussel: *Suite pour piano*, Op. 14, No. 4 (Excerpt, m. 27–30)**

The metric structures and rhythmic patterns employed by Roussel in his works contain numerous asymmetries and irregular divisions, dotted rhythms, and rhythmic divisions merged to render the musical discourse more expressive and original. The composition of the *Suite pour piano* represents an important milestone regarding the influence of Indian music on Roussel's musical expression and served as important precursor for the composition of the opera *Padmâvatî*, inspired by an Indian legend.

In *Padmâvatî*, Roussel employs complex rhythmic patterns and emphasizes the importance of dance and pantomime. Despite his Neoclassical attitude and respect for the French ballet tradition (as well as the requirements of French opera regarding the inclusion of ballet scenes within the work), Roussel uses dance as means of underlining the dramatic dimension of his work. Important ballet scenes are included in the first act of the opera, in scene two: *Danse Guerrère* (in 5/4 meter) and *Danse des Femmes Esclave* (in 6/8 metre).

The *Danse Guerrère* suggests the energy and violence of the warriors, due to the asymmetry of the 5/4 meter and the rhythmic and melodic constructions. The composer opposes the irregular, highly chromatic melody of the upper voice to the ostinato figure in the bass.

The second act contains the *Pantomime* and *Danse et Pantomime*, where the composer employs metric changes, asymmetries, and polyrhythm, as suggested by the following example:

E.g. 8

au Mouvt

Albert Roussel: *Padmâvatî* (1923)  
Act II, *Danse et Pantomime* (Excerpt)

Padmāvati's discourse in Act II is influenced and shaped by the music's rhythmic profile. As in the dances of the previous act, the tension gradually increases, culminating with Padmāvati's conjuration of the spirits.

Roussel's rhythm, as a component of his Indian space, plays a major role in conveying his works an expressive character and providing depth of meaning along with the variety of modes employed with the purpose of creating an authentic sound.

In the latter part of his creation, Roussel continued to compose in the Neoclassical style, emphasizing aspects related to rhythm, meter, and tempo. The style of the works composed in this period is remarkable, due to their forceful rhythmic energy and the use of motifs with prominent rhythmic characteristics.<sup>25</sup> Roussel often achieves thematic development through repetition of certain patterns that recur throughout the work, an aspect that may be related to the influence of Indian music and the tāla system. Nadia Boulanger admired the way Roussel handles the rhythmic dimension, referring to the *alternations of irregular meters, rhythmic persistence, dynamic development of a remarkable continuity, an almost total absence of "chains of harmony," of exact symmetry.*<sup>26</sup>

### **The Feminine as Indian *Tinta***

In many instances, the orientalist operas of the nineteenth century are devised with the purpose of evoking an imaginary world that offers the audience the prospect of escaping from the everyday reality, as Parakilas observes.<sup>27</sup> Into this category fall the operas *Lalla-Roukh*, *Les Pêcheurs des perles*, *Le Roi du Lahore* or *Lakmé*.

In his work *Orientalism*, Edward Said emphasizes the idea that the Orient was perceived by colonial powers as "*a locale requiring attention, reconstruction, even redemption*", thus pointing to the weakness, eccentricity, backwardness, and feminine malleability of the East.<sup>28</sup> Said also speaks about Michel Foucault's ideas on *discourse*, as means of structuring the manner in which reality is perceived, or determining what can be considered right or wrong.<sup>29</sup> Thus, Orientalism as a discourse offered the West the

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<sup>25</sup> Eddins, John Marion. *The Symphonic Music of Albert Roussel* — PhD. diss., The Florida State University, 1966, p. 209–211.

<sup>26</sup> Boulanger, Nadia. "L'œuvre théâtrale d'Albert Roussel," *La Revue Musicale*, 10/6-7 (1929), 104-12, 38–52.

<sup>27</sup> Parakilas, James. *The Soldier and the Exotic: Operatic Variations on a Theme of Racial Encounter, Part I*. *The Opera Quarterly*, Vol. 10, Iss. 2, 1993, (p. 33–56), p. 33.

<sup>28</sup> Said, Edward. *Orientalism*. London: Penguin Books, 2003, p. 206.

<sup>29</sup> Idem, p. 3.

possibility to rule over the Orient and create images associated with it, stereotypes that developed and evolved diachronically, and eventually became assimilated by its subjects.

Even though the West promoted an effeminate image of the East, it also supported the stereotype image of the despotic and fanatic oriental males. Orientalism as the Western perspective regarding the East, encouraged the male conception of the world, where women are the products of male power-fantasy.<sup>30</sup> Thus, *femininity* reveals itself as one of the most important characteristics of oriental cultural identity. This idea is also supported by the multitude of feminine depictions in orientalist and exotic works of art.

In numerous artworks of the nineteenth century the antithesis between East and West is portrayed through the relationship between the oriental woman (representing *the Other*) and the Western hero, which further emphasizes the representation of the East as essentially feminine and weak. At the same time, Western depictions of the Orient offer the possibility of addressing issues related to sensuality and carnal desire.<sup>31</sup> This perspective may be encountered in French nineteenth century operas with oriental themes, such as Camille Saint-Saëns' *Samson et Dalila*. Following this approach, French representations of India present a somewhat rigid image of a weak and feminine India, according to Kate Marsh.<sup>32</sup> The author points to the prominence of Indian women in French depictions of India, the stereotype representations of *bayadères* (temple dancers) and the *sati* (Indian widow who performs the act of self-immolation on the pyre of her deceased husband) contributing to the portrayal of India as a *site of sexual availability*.<sup>33</sup>

French operas of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century present a similar image of India. In the Indian themed operas of David, Bizet, Delibes, Massenet, or Roussel, a distinct perception regarding India may be observed, as well as the above-mentioned female stereotypes.

Leila (in Bizet's *Les Pêcheurs de perles*) and Lakmé (in Delibes' opera) are feminine characters representing the Indian *other*, both portrayed as *devadasis* (women who serve divinities in temples, who also dance and sing as part of their sacred religious ritual), priestesses of Brahma. In both cases the composers chose the soprano timbre (lyric soprano for Leila and coloratura soprano for Lakmé), which could allude to the virtuosic and ornamental singing of Indian women vocalists. A similar approach on

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<sup>30</sup> Said, Edward. 2003. Op. Cit., p. 207.

<sup>31</sup> Locke, Ralph P. 1991. Op. Cit., p. 269.

<sup>32</sup> Marsh, Kate. *India in the French Imagination: Peripheral Voices 1754–1815*. London: Pickering & Chatto, 2009, p. 42.

<sup>33</sup> Idem, p. 43.

behalf of the composer may be observed in Massenet's *Le Roi de Lahore*, where Sita (soprano) is priestess of Indra.

The image of the *sati*, the widow who joins her husband on his funeral pyre, is evoked in Roussel's *Padmâvatî*. However, in this case the composer prefers the timbre of the contralto voice. The tessitura of Padmâvatî's vocal part is situated in the middle and upper middle registers of the singing voice, a choice that emphasizes the expressiveness of the music and enables the singer to focus on the meaning of the words and the color used to convey the musical message. If the Indian female characters of nineteenth century operas suggest the image of a feminine and weak India, Roussel's *Padmâvatî* depicts the woman who chooses to die, rather than giving herself to the enemy, thus shifting the paradigm.

Following the tradition of nineteenth century French orientalism, in their operas based on Indian plots David, Bizet, Delibes, Massenet, and Roussel evoke India through the timbre of certain instruments, such as the double reed woodwind instruments (oboe), woodwinds (flute), or percussion instruments (tambourine, cymbals). Certain timbres that are characteristic for Indian music, such as the timbre of the sitar or the distinct sound of the drone strings are suggested through static harmonic constructions and the rhythmic ostinato in the accompaniment (contemporary of Roussel, Maurice Delage will venture further and evoke this sound using the prepared piano and certain effects demanded from the instrumental performers of his works). The timbre of the woodwind instruments, along with glissando phrases, melodic ornaments, chromaticism, and rapid rhythmic patterns emphasize the idea of sensuality and femininity associated with India (represented as female).

### The Creation of French Images of India — Conclusions

Eighteenth century clichés, regarding India as land of danger and sensuality, continued to dominate the visual and written representations of India in nineteenth century France, however academics and artists in search for authentic representations strove to follow a rigorous process of investigation, thus breaking away from the imaginary representations of their predecessors.<sup>34</sup> In her study regarding the preoccupation of French scholars with India in the nineteenth century, Mohan observes the following regarding the stereotype images associated with India: "*Whether or not these images embodied the 'true India' is not as important (...) as the*

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<sup>34</sup> Mohan, Jyoti. 2018. Op. Cit., p. xxxii–xxxiii.

*rationale behind the conception of a specific India. The lens through which different European powers like Britain, France, Portugal, Germany, and Denmark viewed India was as varied as the images of India which were created.*"<sup>35</sup>

This present study proposes the phenomenon of rhythm in Romantic and late Romantic French operas as the center point to musically paint an Indian image, an Indian *tinta*. Traces of *tāla formulae* were identified in each of the discussed operas. The lyric text is submissive to rhythmic intention and direction, as musical accents on unaccented French syllables may be found throughout the studied works. Although Roussel's bitonality not necessarily adds to the Indian rhythmic dynamic, it certainly contributes to the exotic attribute as well as to the French oriental image. The Feminine plays its role not only on microstructural level (through the invention of exotic female opera characters), but on macro level as well, since India, the Orient or the Exotic is a perceived as *She*.

In the analyzed works, authors' intention was not to hunt for rhythmic models to define them, prove them or box them for each composer. Except for Roussel, who visited India, David, Massenet, Delibes, and Bizet dreamed of it. The direction of the study is to identify a rhythmic gesture within a sonic context, where Indian colors and space are recreated musically on a very French background. *Tāla* system helped authors to identify this gesture, since a rhythmic unit is often repeated throughout an entire scene number. The French text adapts to this rhythmic gesture. Composers did not intent to comply musically to a set of Indian music rules, rather they were inspired dreamers who created through their work an image of the Orient that succeeded in convincing not only the composers' themselves but an entire Western audience.

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<sup>35</sup> Idem, p. xxi.

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## THE STYLISTIC FEATURES OF VASILIJE MOKRANJAC'S PIANO COMPOSITIONS

VIRĐINIA TOTAN<sup>1</sup>, PETRUȚA-MARIA COROIU<sup>2</sup>

**SUMMARY.** Vasilije Mokranjac can be seen as a paradigm for an entire generation of Serbian composers who started creating at an unfavourable historical moment. In time, he moved away from his initial stylistic ideas and, by constant transformation of his practically neoclassical style, he created a heterogeneous work. He dealt most intensely with piano music and, as a result, he contributed the most, both quantitatively and qualitatively, to this area.

**Keywords:** Vasilije Mokranjac, piano compositions, stylistic

### 1. Introduction

Vasilije Mokranjac can be seen as a paradigm for an entire generation of Serbian composers who started creating at an unfavourable historical moment. In time, he moved away from his initial stylistic ideas and, by constant transformation of his practically neoclassical style, he created a heterogeneous work. He dealt most intensely with piano music and, as a result, he contributed the most, both quantitatively and qualitatively, to this area.

“According to Mirjana Šuvaković, modernism is a mega-culture of the organization and development of culture and art from the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century to the 60s in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and it is determined by the

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<sup>1</sup> *PhD student, Transilvania University Braşov, E-mail: totan.v97@gmail.com*

<sup>2</sup> *University Professor PhD, Transilvania University Braşov, maniuțpetruta@yahoo.com*



modernity project, which means that it establishes itself as a culture occupied with the revolutionary or evolutive separation from tradition and progressive advancement”<sup>3</sup>. The same author states that moderate modernism transforms the excessive results of neo-avant-garde and avant-garde in a moderate, consumerist mass culture of the bourgeois class and of the medium social strata. After WWII, in USSR, Eastern Europe and the Balkans, in the countries with real socialism after the ideology of socialist realism weakened while the bourgeois class continued to exist, moderate modernism emerged as a decorative art, neutral from an ideological, expressive-figurative point of view. The author also underlines that modern modernism, as autonomous aestheticized and compromised art, is an expression of the aesthetic, artistic and cultural values of the bureaucratic and technocratic strata of post-revolutionary Europe.

## 2. Modern Serbian Music Tradition

When the questions relating to the relationship between the tradition of classical music and the modernist innovation are at the centre of musicology research, the answers are usually sought by examining those phenomena and creations which to a certain extent radicalize or completely redirect the relationship established in the given context between the traditional and the new. Hence, different types of evaluation and positioning of the phenomena under investigation, most often within the canonical musicological discourse which, also most often, favours those who, according to tradition, act in a radical manner. Even though some of the most “radical” artists of the last century indicated their links to tradition, a part of the musicological research of the last century concentrated on establishing the main current in the history of music according to the principles mentioned previously. It is precisely because of this legacy that the attempts to uncover “hidden” historical details and to prove the importance and the meaning that some of them, at first sight, not so radical phenomena in the music history of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, seem essential because they offer the chance of a more significant contextualization, complete and up-to-date, of the composer’s creation, especially when the composer belongs to “small” cultures, like the Serbian one.

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<sup>3</sup> Mikić Vesna. “Different types of modernism/neoclassicism by Dušan Radić, Belgrade”, *Journal of the Musicological Institute of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts*, 2006, p. 267.

Taking into consideration the circumstances and features of the development, as well as the artistic achievement of the Serbian music of the last century, it is understandable that considerable attention has been paid to the progress in the Serbian musical creativity in the sense of "closing the gap" between the current European music and the world music, usually accompanied by a radical disturbance or abandonment of tradition, while its other aspects, those whose connections to tradition were apparently stronger and more visible, are again slightly neglected in such interpretations.

On this occasion, we "defend" those phenomena of Serbian music of the last century, which, although significant from the point of view of the production volume, because of the apparently strong links with tradition, although acknowledged and respected, were somehow left aside in the debates. Namely, our "fight" here is meant to indicate the possible interpretations and contextualization of musical neo-expressionism as a modernist phenomenon specific to the history of (Serbian) music, and we will try to "evidence the evidence" in case of certain accomplishments which belong to the piano compositions of the Serbian composer Vasilije Mokranjac.

### **3. Vasilije Mokranjac: Musical Stylistic**

Vasilije Mokranjac stands out as one of the most important Serbian composers who dealt most intensely with piano music and, as a result, contributed the most to this music, both quantitatively and qualitatively. His creations for piano are still alive and current today. This is important because many creations by Serbian composers, even during their lifetime, were neglected, forgotten, considered uninteresting by the interpreters. Nevertheless, Mokranjac's entire piano work is still inspiring for both interpreters and listeners. His compositions did not have to wait the objective judgement (which is sometimes primitive) of time, because, since their creation, they were accepted warmly and assimilated in the small music fund by Serbian composers, which can be heard on concert stages regularly. This type of favourable reception of Mokranjac's compositions was facilitated to a certain extent by their traditional character – namely, these works did not have to create a special space in our environment, which means to fight for the acceptance of the "novelty" they introduced. Mokranjac moved within the standard compositional means, but he created piano compositions which managed to survive their historical moment and can be re-evaluated today.

Vasilije Mokranjac belongs to the generation of Serbian composers who started their composition studies immediately after WWII, in a creative environment which forced a distance from the pre-war avant-garde. The avant-garde period, represented by composers trained in Prague, lost its power right before the beginning of the war; after the liberation, this episode was completely ignored. This was followed by a return to the traditional compositional and expressive means. The tonality, as an intangible guarantee of order and harmony in music, was once again crowned; the continuation of strict formal models from previous stylistic epochs, firstly, classicism and romanticism; they were the mould in which to pour the music built on national foundations, full of quasi-folkloric intonations. Europe was looking for a new sound; our musical environment went back several decades. The training of the young Vasilije Mokranjac at the beginning of his career as a composer was influenced by a complex of social circumstances, academic rules, (lack of) cultural and artistic opportunities... From this point of view, he was in the same position as the other Serbian composers of that time. As stated by Vlastimir Peričić, soon after 1945, generations of composers wrote nearly in the same style, because of the “turn” of the representatives of modernity from before the war, which brought them closer to the older generation and, at the same time, constituted a starting point in the development of the young. In what follows we will discuss to what extent this can be seen in Mokranjac’s creativity, and which was his answer to it.

The musicologists who dealt with Mokranjac’s piano compositions reached the conclusion that there was a stylistic evolution, because the composer moved from neo-romanticism to neo-expressionism, which was then interpreted as gradual mastery of increasingly complex harmonic means and compositional procedures. At the same time, the compositions which were created in the same period, but outside this “mainstream” and incorporating elements from the objectivist neo-classical direction, were mostly neglected.

Based on the same construction, the neo-impressionism of the third stage in Mokranjac’s creation, after the neo-expressionism of the symphonic trilogy, has been interpreted as a return to the traditional means of expression, because, guided by the logic of the chronological development of historical styles, we would expect neo-impressionism to occur before neo-expressionism. Nevertheless, the term “stylistic evolution” must be understood very conditionally because its true meaning does not incorporate evolution – all the stages of Mokranjac’s development can be subsumed to the common denominator of neo-classicism. Within this unique term, we can notice certain

subcategories, we can say that Mokranjac's neo-classicism had its neo-romantic, neo-classical, neo-expressionist and neo-impressionist manifestations, and that, through each of them, elements of national music were interpreted, emphatically.

The composer communicates with the musical past, problematizes different styles, and occasionally infiltrates them or contrasts them. Also, we can follow the gradual conquest by Mokranjac of increasing areas of creative freedom, but also the consistent implementation of certain specific compositional procedures. The various manifestations of Mokranjac's neo-classicism can be seen as evolutive stages, but he is always aware of the road he took and occasionally he goes back to already conquered areas.

In the study dedicated to Mokranjac's symphonic compositions, Marija Kovač offers a detailed overview of the active musicologists of the time and takes into consideration the influence of the socio-cultural environment on their activity. Jasenka Anđelković describes Mokranjac as a moderate contemporary composer, and in her presentation, she seems to defend him in a way for not being more avant-garde. A similar position is adopted by Dejan Despić. Mirjana Veselinović-Hofman, in her text about Serbian music after WWII, offers an overview of the post-war stylistic directions of Serbian composers, with their interpenetration and mutual links. Like most of our composers, he defines Mokranjac as a neo-classicist, using the term neo-classicism in a broader sense – as any type of appeal to some of the styles in the musical past, not only the Viennese classic composers (which would be the narrow sense of the term). Vasilije Mokranjac's neo-classicism has various manifestations, because in his compositions he reinterprets many styles, he infuses them with popular music genres (such as jazz and blues) and creates new combinations.

In Mokranjac's late works, from the 70s and 80s of the 20th centuries, we can notice certain compositional procedures which can be interpreted today as post-modern. Nevertheless, as far as the ideas and concepts are concerned, Mokranjac remains mostly in a moderate mono-modernist position. Although in his compositions, he attempted to offer universal replies, believing in the possibility of men's spiritual progress and of the transformation of the world through art (or this is what the previous interpreter of his work states), there is nothing militant or radically avant-garde in it. On the other hand, behind Mokranjac there is no extremely modernist ideology, implicitly or explicitly defined, of aesthetic autonomy, or a self-referencing awareness of the role and function of his creation in the context of the development of the musical art and, eventually, of the artificiality and conditionality of the

acquired knowledge. During his formation, Mokranjac adopted musical understanding as an autonomous self-sufficient art, whose values are universal and sublime – and he never doubted it.

In the last stage of his creation, Mokranjac re-examines his own compositional activity, but he does not have the power to contradict himself declaratively, preserving his faith in intuitive knowledge, in the capacity to create and in the possibility of expression. Apparently, he acquires in the end a deep modernist self-awareness as an isolated and detached individual; he pursues self-reflexive searches, and projects his life convictions in music. However, Mokranjac does not want to transform his entire life in a total work of art, he is satisfied with the role of a composer who is preoccupied with the autonomous institution of music and is not involved in expanding the borders of the media. Although in Mokranjac's later works we can notice compositional procedures which resemble the post-modernist ones, they do not represent postmodernist ideology, the awareness of the end of history and the absence of final answers. In fact, the emergence of the first postmodern works in our country, mainly in the period of composers belonging to the generation born in the 40s of the last centuries, was in a way foreshadowed by the sounds and compositional techniques that Mokranjac applies in his later compositions for piano, orchestra, and concerts. Nevertheless, at the time Mokranjac implemented these innovations gradually and timidly, his work was not of interest for the first generation of Serbian post-modern composers – they did not see him as a leader or ideological predecessor and did not directly follow his achievements. In this respect, Mokranjac's late creation remained an impasse, and his achievements can be interpreted today only as postmodernist.

The third creative stage in Mokranjac's work coincides chronologically with the postmodernist turn in the Serbian music. M. Veselinović-Hofman highlights the former avant-garde representatives as supporters of this turn, which took place in the mid-70s of the 20<sup>th</sup> century; this determination resulted in the fact that the author identified the modern and avant-garde, that is the post-modern and post-avant-garde. In interpreting the post-modern turn, the author observes the following paradox: "making more dynamic the relationship between signified and signifier began in the Serbian music in the middle of the eight decade, after certain crucial facts of tradition were reinterpreted (such as, for example, the cell of motive, the chord, the formal and textural discipline of the baroque or the renaissance, the emotional refinement of Romantic origin...), and especially in the field of avant-garde itself, more precisely in the compositional, technical and semantic area of reaching the traditional musical concepts and data.

Mokranjac's Symphony No. 4 can serve as an example for this construction: in its linear compound structure, built in a series, whose vertical consonances come from horizontal movements, we encounter major and minor quintal chords. The introduction of the twelve-note system and of the diatonic system in 1972 can be seen as a post-modern procedure, namely as a return to certain traditional compositional means within the dominant avant-garde style. However, this is possible only if Symphony No. 4 by Mokranjac is seen as a musical artefact independent of the rest of his work; but, if we look at it in contrast to the works created before it, we can see that only in Symphony No. 4 by Mokranjac, the composer truly reaches serial procedures. This is not about a return to the diatonic language after a period of seriality, but about a combination to which Mokranjac arrived gradually and spontaneously. The paradox is reflected by the fact that, at the same time, the former avant-garde movements, in the world and at the national level, starting from completely different positions than those held by Mokranjac, reach analogous procedures and solid results.

The following postmodernist feature may be self-referencing, present in some of Mokranjac's later works; for example, in *Lirska poema* from 1974, the composer quotes a fragment from his overture, composed twelve years earlier; this motive is, again, an allusion to *Petruška* by Igor Stravinsky, thus the musical paradigm is double. And the *Poem for piano and orchestra* from 1983 was built in a sort of *déjà vu*, with allusions to some of Mokranjac's previous works.

Another post-modernist feature can be the presence of a musical paradigm from a different epoch or style, thus building a bridge over historical barriers – temporal, stylistic – and spatial. For example, in *Ođeci* from 1973, Mokranjac quotes a medieval melody. This allows him to face two spaces and two periods. The musical paradigm acts here as a sample, because it is a quote, but also as a model, because it is about converting the vocal melody to the piano, as well as to the predominantly neo-impressionist musical language of this composition. The above-mentioned melody symbolizes Mokranjac's search for spirituality, returning to the past, but it also serves as a general representation of our medieval music, tradition to which Mokranjac refers in this composition.

**ОДЈЕЦИ**

**В. МОКРАЊАЦ**  
(1973)

I. Lento, quasi improvisato (♩ = 60)

The musical score consists of three systems of four staves each. The first system shows the beginning of the piece with a tempo marking of 'I. Lento, quasi improvisato (♩ = 60)'. The second system continues the melodic and harmonic development. The third system concludes with a 'poco espress.' marking. The score is written in a traditional musical notation style with various ornaments and phrasing slurs.

Vasilije Mokranjac, *Odjeci*, m. 1-3.

To define theoretically various compositional methodologies and ideologies in the post-modern era, M. Veselinović-Hofman sets the logic of continuity for the composers who never participated directly in the avant-garde

adventures but wanted to develop musical means and the musical language of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and their poetics include avant-garde compositional and technical procedures. As the most impressive examples for this position, he quotes Rodion Shchedrin's "extended neo-classicism". In the same way, the author defines the theoretical problem of the overlapping of compositional directions: the one that moves from the avant-garde to restoring the tradition – the one consistently traditional and the one that moves from the traditional, thus moving away from the neo-context, towards the avant-garde – that uses tradition as a sample and understands avant-garde as tradition. Nevertheless, the author herself admits that, although these ways are clearer and more separable theoretically, based on the resulting musical features, it is difficult to distinguish them with certainty.

Thus, we can distinguish Mokranjac's stylistic positions: on the one hand, if we identify something modern and avant-garde, Mokranjac cannot be post-modern (that is post-avant-garde) because he was never avant-garde. Nevertheless, at the post-modern turn, his poetics was situated in one of the overlapping points of the compositional orientations. On the other hand, at exactly that moment, Mokranjac leaves his personal "avant-garde", and heads for neo-impressionism and the new simplicity, which is the personal "post-modern".

More precisely, Mokranjac's creative road from the national neo-romanticism to neo-expressionism can be understood as the conquest of his own avant-garde space – for this reason, neo-impressionism and the "new simplicity", his third creative stage can have the meaning of a post-modern turn (and accidentally, they coincide at the level of the sound with the first post-modern compositions). Thus, Mokranjac, who during his first and second creation stages in Europe, and in the 60s in our time, was a creator – a traditionalist, who did not follow the current compositional tendencies and innovations, was put at the beginning of the 70s in the position of keeping up with the modern world tendencies and preserved this position until his death.

In Vasilije Mokranjac's creation, the piano compositions occupy a very important place. The piano and the orchestra are the two media interpretation which occupied the composer's attention and inspired him to create. Besides the compositions for piano and orchestra, Mokranjac also composed very many applied musical pieces – for theatre, film, radio drama, etc. There are only very few chamber and vocal-instrumental compositions and are mostly compositions authored during Mokranjac years of training, when he had to fulfil the requirements of the curriculum when writing for certain interpretation groups. Mokranjac grew with the piano; to whom the young composer dedicated his first composition attempts. In addition,

Vasilije Mokranjac studied the piano: from 1932 to 1942, he studied piano with Aleksej Butakov, then he studied the same instrument in the class of Professor Emil Hayek at the Music Academy of Belgrade that he graduated in 1948. However, during these studies, he decided to devote himself to composing, so in 1946 he enrolled in the class of Professor Stanojlo Rajičić. After finishing his composition studies in 1951, his pieces for piano gradually became the central genre of his creation until the end of the 1950s. Although Mokranjac did not perform later as a pianist, all his compositions for piano, regardless of the creation period to which they belong, reveal the steady hand of an experienced pianist, who knows perfectly the instrument and its technical, virtuosic, agogic, timbral, factual possibilities, as well as other expressive possibilities. The fact that these compositions were skilfully created by a pianist help made them an indispensable part of the repertory of our pianists, and of that of piano students.

Many compositions for piano show Vasilije Mokranjac as a masterful improviser. It is usually claimed that Mokranjac composed slowly and with a lot of effort: "For Mokranjac, composition was never an easy emotional or intellectual game. He worked with fatidic gravity, filling carefully and minutely an area on the unique map of life and in the context of his creative impulses...". This observation is true to a certain extent, and it perhaps applies to the orchestral music by Mokranjac. Nevertheless, many piano compositions – studies, dances, fragments, preludes, intimate and even certain echoes – seem to have been created very quickly and easily... in fact, as if they were written improvisations. This does not mean that they have less value, but it underlines the fact that Mokranjac excelled around piano compositions and wrote with ease for his instrument.

Another confirmation of the thesis that improvisation was very important for Mokranjac is the fact that he loved jazz music, which he listened to and played long before he decided to compose. In a conversation, Mokranjac stated that during his studies at the Academy it was forbidden to play jazz – but this did not mean that the students did not play and improvise in their spare time. In many compositions for piano by Mokranjac – sometimes latently, other times explicitly – the influence of jazz can be noticed, a genre which at that time was the symbol of "trivial" popular music.

Vasilije Mokranjac's piano creations include approximately 20 compositions. The musicologists often discover unknown, unpublished, or unfinished works in the estate of late composers, so that the number of known piano compositions by Mokranjac sort of increased in the past years. This study takes into consideration all compositions by Mokranjac for piano solo, including the ones created during his studies, such as the three concertos for piano and orchestra. We refer here to the following creations, in chronological order: "1947 - Sonata Romantica - F# minor, theme with

variations; 1950 - Prelude, dance and march; 1951 - 1952 – seven studies: G minor, E minor, G minor, B flat minor, C# minor, F minor, F sharp minor; 1953 - 1954: two sonatas: A minor, C major; 1956: fragments; 1957: six dances: F sharp minor, E minor, G sharp minor, E minor, G# minor, G minor; 1958: concertino for piano, string orchestra and two harps; 1973: intimate and echoes; 1975: 5 preludes; 1976: music for the Concert for piano and orchestra; 1983: Poem for piano and orchestra; 1984: Prelude (added to the cycle in 1975)<sup>4</sup>.

When in time Mokranjac stopped performing as a pianist, other musicians interpreted his creations. There is virtual no pianist in our country who does not have in their repertory at least one of Mokranjac's compositions, and some of them perform his compositions regularly. As for the place that that piano music occupies in Mokranjac's creation, Vlastimir Peričić supports the idea of a global division of his creativity into music for orchestra and for piano, in which "symphonic music is the scene of dramatic conflicts and fatidic resolutions", while piano music reveals the "lyrical nature of his creative temperament"<sup>5</sup>.

The same position is supported by M. Kovač, who states that "a complete overview of the dimension of his personality is the symphonic music", and that the orchestra is the composer's musical universe, while the piano is a lonely friend, the instrument of the composer's intimacy. I would like to re-examine this vision, perhaps even reconsider it, in any case, I would like to shed some light on it from other possible angles. Firstly, it is worth noting that the composer's interest for the piano and that for the orchestra music do not run simultaneously: the first period of Mokranjac's creativity is dedicated mainly to the piano, the second one to the orchestra, while in the third the composer's treatment of the two media is identical. Also, we cannot agree with Kovač's statement, according to which Mokranjac made his main discoveries – expressive or compositional-technical – in the compositions for the orchestra, then he applied them to other areas of his creative interest. This statement is not even close to the truth because, during the entire first period of his creation, Mokranjac wrote almost no music for orchestra – and that period is not uniform at all. As for the third period, although Mokranjac's creative dislocation was announced in Symphony No. 4, the new sonorous language was defined explicitly in the piano cycles *Intima* and *Odjeci* from 1973 and was followed by *Poemska lirika*.

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<sup>4</sup> Medić Ivana, *Vasilije Mokranjac, music for piano*, Belgrade, National Library of Serbia Belgrade, 2004, p. 29.

<sup>5</sup> Peričić Vlastimir, *Portrait of the artist - Vasilije Mokranjac*, Belgrade, Pro musica, 1968, p. 12.

*Largo* (♩ = 52) **I.** В. Мокраняц, VI. 1973

The musical score is written for a piano and consists of eight systems of staves. The first system includes a piano (p) dynamic marking. The second system includes a pianissimo (pp) dynamic marking. The third system includes a mezzo-piano (mp) dynamic marking. The fourth system includes a pianissimo (pp) dynamic marking. The fifth system includes a pianissimo (pp) dynamic marking. The sixth system includes a pianissimo (pp) dynamic marking. The seventh system includes a pianissimo (pp) dynamic marking. The eighth system includes a pianissimo (pp) dynamic marking. The score features various musical notations including notes, rests, slurs, and dynamic markings.

Vasilije Mokranjac, Intime, m. 1-3.

According to the stages of Mokranjac's work, the compositions for piano created after 1958, which end with *Končertino*, belong to the first stage, and the compositions dating from the period 1973 - 1984 belong to the third stage of his creativity. This gives the impression that the composer did not play this instrument for 15 years; that the piano remained outside his interest during this period. Nevertheless, Mokranjac does not completely "abandon" the piano, he includes it in the set of large instrument ensembles. The piano is one of the most focused on instruments in Mokranjac's orchestra; in the symphonic trilogy of the 1960s, the piano plays a prominent role. Consequently, it cannot be said that Mokranjac completely neglected his instrument, to which he dedicated the most beautiful pages in his early creation stage. In fact, it could be said that: The piano was present, but there was no music dedicated to the piano.

Peričić classifies Mokranjac as a composer who started his career under the influence of late romanticism, full of folkloric nuances, as part of a group who modernized their means of expression in the 1950s by sharpening the emotional tone to the expressionist tensions; however, unlike the "original" expressionism, the expansion of the tonality is not accompanied by the dissolution of the form, on the contrary, it remains solid and compact, especially when it comes to the architecture of the sonata-symphony. Peričić admits that this is not simply a matter of personal compatibility with certain authors, but also about the mark left by the years of study at the Music Academy of Belgrade, when the teachers insisted that the students master the great formats of the classical model.

After an analysis of Vasilije Mokranjac's compositions for piano and of his concerts, a conclusion can be drawn about the composer's creative journey, the "evolution" of Mokranjac's expressive means in contrast to the most current stylistic directions in Western Europe, and about the fact that the postmodern dislocation of European music coincides chronologically with the composer's last creative stage which, as we have seen, brings certain compositional procedures close to postmodernism.

#### **4. Conclusion**

Composer of the broader vision (of the symphonic type), V. Mokranjac nevertheless invests affectively significantly in the piano repertoire, which ends up taking over the functionality of the orchestral discourse. Anchored only marginally in tradition and in tonality, the sparks of his speech cut through non-functional areas of sonic expression, thus leading his country's post-war music into modern territories at the end of the 20th century. "In

2009 we marked the 25th anniversary of the death of one of the most distinguished Serbian composers, Vasilije Mokranjac, whose diversified opus of predominantly symphonic and piano music, greatly influenced on composers of his and subsequent generations his anxiety over life and death, his wonder at the sense and absurdity of the things man does, the things he longs for and what he is preoccupied with. Written in a simple and clear form, the work carries traces of excitement, expressionism and neoromantic dualism which is the basic characteristics of Mokranjac's composing handwriting"<sup>6</sup>.

Pianist by vocation, V. Mokranjac stylistically synthesizes at a very complex level impressionistic suggestions (both on a sound level and on the level of the works'vision), romantic (through virtuosity and anchoring in well-grounded harmonic tonality), modern and postmodern (by the size of the dissonant extent and by the modal and rhythmic complexity).

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<sup>6</sup> Branka, Bugariska, "Al niente: The last opus of Vasilije Mokranjac: After a quarter of a century", *Muzikologija*, no. 9, 2009, p. 85.

## MUSICAL SYMBOLS IN THE OPERA *THE THREE SISTERS* BY PÉTER EÖTVÖS

KRISZTINA SINKA<sup>1</sup>

**SUMMARY.** Opera, as a stage and acting genre, also uses theatrical elements (costumes, dramaturgy, etc.) to convey the work. Opera composers typically use musical symbols as well. I collected these devices of Péter Eötvös' best-known opera in my study based on literature research. Dramaturgically divided into three sequences, the work always examines its relationship with the other two central figures from the point of view of the central figure of the given part. One of the musical cornerstones of this is changing the internal relationships of triads. The two extreme notes of the triad are always constant (distance of a fifth), but the note located between them characterizes not only the quality of the chord, but also the state of the character connected to it. The unstable balance and reorganization of relationships is well represented by this construction principle. The author also uses the third-parallel, known since Mozart, as a classical musical representation of love. The choices of instrument also have symbolic power. The Prozorov family is represented by the group of woodwind instruments. A kind of irony on the part of the author is the use of cow bells to depict the behavior of the disgusting and unbearable Natasha. Soldiers are naturally represented by brass. Although Solioniy is a soldier, he is not accompanied by brass instruments, but by percussionists, hinting at his personality. The characters speak in different ways of the human voice. From prose to sung speech through to the melodies, there are all kinds of expressions of emotion.

**Keywords:** Péter Eötvös, opera, Three Sisters, libretto, musical symbolism, triad, third-parallel, instrumental symbolism, prose, sung speech, song

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<sup>1</sup> *University Lecturer at University of Nyíregyháza (Hungary), Institute of Music. E-mail: sinka.krisztina@nye.hu*



Motto: "*There are moments in life when we must  
be unwaveringly true to ourselves.*"

Peter Eötvös

Born in Székelyudvarhely, Péter Eötvös had two important moments in his life. After graduating from the Academy of Music in Budapest, where he obtained a degree in composition, he received a scholarship in Germany (Cologne). He became a student of two giants of the musical avant-garde, Zimmermann and Stockhausen, whom he greatly respected, but did not follow in terms of composition. "...I laid down the burden of this heritage and found my own way of composing. From then on, I went my own way. And from then on, they began to recognize me as a composer."<sup>2</sup>

Péter Eötvös does not follow his scholarly predecessors, nor does he write studies on composition techniques or publish musical analyses. Eötvös considers himself a craftsman who creates a work of art from raw materials. Nomen est omen - His fate is in his name. [The old-fashioned spelling "Eötvös" in Hungarian language refers to the "goldsmith" profession. *Translator's note.*]

In addition to his studies in Germany, he gained important experience during his time in Japan. He did not write stage music for twenty years. He used to work as a tutor at the Opera House in Cologne, but he absolutely hated the genre of opera. The way he worked in the opera contrasted with his work with Stockhausen in the electronic studio, where concentrated attention prevailed. There was duality in him, he loved theater and film, but the genre of the opera, where both worlds were united, made no impression on him. The basic idea of *The Three Sisters* dates back to 1985, when a beauty queen election was held in Hungary 4 years before the regime change. The winner was Csilla Andrea Molnár, who could not bear the limelight, the burden of the public, the harassment, and therefore her severe anxiety and depression led to suicide. This tragedy shook Péter Eötvös so much that he definitely planned to set Csilla's story to music. As the author recalled this period: "...inside I clearly heard some really sad music, several female voices, which gradually die out, leaving Csilla's lonely voice alone on the scene."<sup>3</sup>

The same idea came to life, if only indirectly, in the prologue of *The Three Sisters*, where after Olga, Masha and Irina's tercet, Irina is left alone on the stage. The composer's encounter with the genre of opera was completely accidental, as Kent Nagano, the then chief music director of the Lyon Opera, approached the composer with the request to perform his

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<sup>2</sup> Eötvös, Péter, Amaral Pedro. *Parlando – Rubato*. Rózsavölgyi és Társa, Budapest, 2015. p. 15.

<sup>3</sup> Idem, p. 74.

Chinese Opera in the theater in 1986.<sup>4</sup> The misunderstanding arose from the fact that the piece, which had not been heard by the chief music director, was an orchestral piece written by Péter Eötvös for the ten-year anniversary of the Ensemble Intercontemporai, where he acted as music director. This is where Kent Nagano came up with the idea to ask Eötvös to write an opera, to which the composer said yes. To write the libretto, he asked the already famous Claus H. Henneberg to prepare a text book from the story of Csilla. Due to his modesty, the writer did not consider himself prepared to write a new story. He preferred to write the script from a ready-made drama. After many arguments, in the end it was Eötvös' son Gyuri who recommended this work to him, as he knew how many times Eötvös had seen Chekhov's drama in many different settings. This is how the choice was made for this special drama, which is not an ordinary operatic story, since it is a Chekhov drama without heroes and plot. In a drama without a hero, what is important is not what happened, but what did not happen. An authentic interpretation of the complicated mental processes taking place in the souls of the characters is a serious task for the performers. According to Eötvös, this is the ideal drama, melancholic, missed encounters that permeate the entire drama. Henneberg did not know Russian, but he was willing to work from a German translation. In the abbreviated story, the Chekhovian atmosphere and the melancholic tension between the characters disappeared. The drama is gone. Eötvös rejected this version. "No sir, I'm truly sorry, but that's really not what I want."<sup>5</sup> Henneberg was a wonderful person, an intelligent artist, he understood this and gave Eötvös free rein to rewrite the script even though he had already signed the contract. Claus H. Henneberg unfortunately died in 1998 two weeks before the premiere in Lyon. Eötvös's tribute is manifested in the fact that the name of Claus H. Henneberg is still displayed on the posters to this day. The text of the libretto was written entirely by Péter Eötvös with the help of his wife Mária Mezei.

### **The organizing principle of the libretto**

Eötvös reorganized Chekhov's four-act work into three sequences. The entire text was printed on separate sheets and the scenes that belonged to the main character of the sequence were collected. In the three sequences, the same event is shown from the perspective of Irina, Andrei

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<sup>4</sup> Grabócz, Márta. *Eötvös Péter Operái – Kelet és Nyugat között (The Operas of Péter Eötvös - Between East and West)*. Parlano 2013/1. 2013.

<sup>5</sup> Eötvös, Péter, Amaral Pedro. *Parlano – Rubato*. Rózsavölgyi és Társa, Budapest, 2015. pp. 76.

and Masha. We could ask why he didn't intend the third sequence for Olga, to which Eötvös's answer was that Olga doesn't have her own life because she lives for others, so she couldn't become the center of the play. There are scenes that appear in separate acts in the original Chekhov drama. A good example of this are the two love confessions belonging to Irina. The confessions of Baron Tuzenbach and Captain Solyony are given in two different acts (Tuzenbach's first act, Solyony's second act), but in Eötvös's opera, the two scenes take place one after the other in the first sequence belonging to Irina. In this form, the differences between the two characters stand out better, as he juxtaposes the two characters. Irina rejects both of them, Tuzenbach with her mind, and she is afraid of Solyony because he affects her physically. Between the two confessions of love, military doctor Chebutikin appears, who is probably Irina's real, biological father, since he was in love with their mother. This sign is not in the original work. During Tuzenbach's confession of love, the doctor grabs the baron by the shoulder and leads him off the stage, while looking into Solyony's eyes, he encourages the captain because he sympathizes with him. Solyony can provide Irina with a passionate and adventurous life, with Tuzenbach, Irina could only live a dull, gray life. Chebutikin wants to prevent Irina from her decision to support the baron.

### **Chekhov's special elementary form is the triangle**

One character always interacts with two other characters. Conflicts arise between three people. This organizing principle can be seen in every sequence. In the first sequence, Baron Irina Tuzenbach and Captain Solyony form the triangle. In the second sequence, Masha, Kuligin's high school teacher, Masha's husband, who adores his wife, but is a boring, passionless person. The third person in the triangle is the military officer Vershinin, who is a true skirt-wearer, a romantic figure who affects the female soul. In the third sequence, the persons or group belonging to Andrei are the three sisters themselves and his irresistible wife, Natasha. The number three can be seen as an editorial structure throughout the work. Péter Eötvös divides the four-act Chekhovian drama into three sequences. He describes the events of the characters in a specific order. He originally divided each sequence into scenes divisible by three. Irina's sequence of the first sequence was 12 scenes, Masha's sequence of the second sequence was 9 scenes, Andrei's sequence of the third was originally planned for 6 scenes, but in the end the composer left one scene. Thus, the work ends with a kind of levitation. The drama remains open. It is a special director's idea that at the very end of the opera, the curtain is not drawn according to the usual

order, only the lights go out. This also symbolizes the unanswered questions, the story is not closed, it remains open. In the original work, Chekhov reveals the diagnosis, raises the problems of humanity, but the questions remain unanswered. The young writer who died at the age of 44, who also practiced as a doctor, could not find a solution to humanity's problems.

"Because here they only eat, drink, sleep and... die..." Andrei's monologue (Chekhov Act 4)<sup>6</sup>.

### **The tripartite division of the scenes**

Two-thirds of the scenes take place inside the drawing room, one-third outside in the garden. In the first sequence, 8 scenes in the drawing room, 4 scenes in the garden, in the second sequence, 6 scenes in the drawing room, 3 scenes in the garden, in the third sequence, 4 scenes inside the drawing room, 1 scene in the garden. The composer composed acoustically differently for the two different locations. Inside the drawing room, Eötvös uses more concentrated instrumental effects, while outside in the garden he worked with longer time values, richer orchestral sound and echo effects.

### **The musical fabric based on the triad**

The three notes of the triad represent the relationship of three persons. The triad is divided into two different thirds, a major third and a minor third. The distance between the two extreme points of the triad is always the same, one perfect fifth, but the middle note moves. You can move the middle note further away from one to get closer to the other. If the middle note moves closer to one of the outer notes, a new interval is created. Major second and perfect fourth or minor second and augmented fourth. The unstable balance and reorganization of relationships is well represented by this editing principle. The configuration of the triad can be clearly perceived in the accordion sound that opens the prologue. Between the notes A-E as extreme poles, the middle note, which is constantly moving, forms the triad. The three notes personify the three sisters, but we find a D sharp note that forms a tritone with the fundamental note of the triad, which embodies Andrei. The distance between the extreme notes of the block is a minor ninth, which is exactly 13 semitones. This represents the 13 characters.

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<sup>6</sup> Chekhov, Anton Pavlovich. *Three Sisters* (translated by Dezső Kosztolányi). Ed. Akkord, Budapest, 1992.

The use of the parallels of thirds in the work is also a symbolic element, which on the one hand is linked to soldiers, who often sang in parallels of thirds, and on the other hand originates from Mozart, who was happy to use this element as a means of expressing the feeling of love, for example in the duet of Don Giovanni and Zerlina ("Andiam, andiam, mio bene ..."). In the penultimate scene of Eötvös's opera, the parallels of thirds of the two clarinets express Masha's feeling for Vershinin in the form of a final confess of love, to her sisters. The peculiarity of the rhythm is that it is connected to a character, to a psychological moment. Irina is left alone in the terrible silence after the baron says goodbye. In the tension, Irina suddenly talks about how she has never been in love, but always dreamed of it and that she will be a faithful wife. The music narrows to a single note while Irina taps a Morse code rhythm with nervous hand gestures. The mechanical movement of Irina's right hand is unconscious, because she is a telegraphist at the post office, so she expresses her state of mind with this physical gesture, just as a nervous person tics in a stressful situation. Olga and

Andrei is not changeable by nature, so a calm rhythm symbolizes their individuality. Solyoniy is unpredictable, as is Andrei's wife Natasha, so they are characterized by sudden, sharp rhythms, followed by unusual silence. As we can observe in the movement of wild animals.

### **The orchestration of *The Three Sisters***

The accordion is a typically Russian folk instrument, used besides by Péter Eötvös, other great composers as well in their works (e.g. Stravinsky: *Petrushka*). It is practically one of the symbolic instruments of Russia. Each character is represented by an instrument. The Prozorov family is represented by the group of woodwind instruments (Olga – flute, Irina – oboe, Masha – clarinet, Andrei – bassoon). Masha's husband, Kuligin, is represented by bass- and contrabass clarinet. Natasha, Andrei's wife, is personified by the saxophone. A kind of irony on the part of the author is the use of cow bells to depict the behavior of the loathsome and insufferable Natasha. Soldiers are naturally represented by brass. As a feature of the German opera sound, he uses horns to portray the German-born Baron Tuzenbach. He portrays Vershinin with a trumpet or flugelhorn, Chebutikin with the characteristic glissando of the trombone as an expression of his physical and mental instability and uncertain personality.

Although Soloniy is a soldier, he is not accompanied by drums, but by percussion instruments. This clearly shows the difficulties of establishing a relationship. He only sings during the confession of love, otherwise he

always speaks, but then he is accompanied by timpani, which can also play a melody. The special feature of the opera is that, in addition to the ensemble in the orchestra pit, there is also an orchestra behind the stage. The accordion is located in the orchestra pit, its sound is amplified on stage with two microphones, as if using the instrument as a musical décor. Apart from the tuba and the electric piano, there is a classical symphony orchestra behind the stage. The stronger sound is provided by the band behind the stage. For example, in the scene of the fire, the sounds of the firefighters and the commotion are shown. The two conductors follow each other via monitor. The lead conductor is located in the orchestra pit, but during the last sequence, the second conductor takes over the lead position for a moment.

### Human voices

The characters speak in different ways of the human voice. From prose to sung speech to melodies, there are all kinds of expressions of emotion. Eötvös was led to this solution by his memories of Hungarian folk culture.<sup>7</sup> During the funeral ceremony, the mourners tell the events of the deceased's life in prose, but later they switch to a sung speech while involving the emotions, which they express more and more loudly as if symbolizing crying. At the performance in Lyon, the female roles were also played by men. This solution is also symbolic, since universal human questions are independent of gender.

his is the most popular of Péter Eötvös' operas. This is an opera of farewells, at the very end an empty fifth is heard, the middle note is irreplaceably missing, the inevitable emptiness of existence. The personal tragedy of Péter Eötvös is what gave the work even more personal meaning. His son died in December 1994, and he began the work in January 1995.

*"The Three Sisters would certainly not have been the same work if it had not had such a personal meaning for me, if it had not echoed a pain I experienced. My music and dramaturgy helped to sublimate the personal tragedy."* (Peter Eötvös)

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<sup>7</sup> Tallián, Tibor. ...*És újrakezdjük az életünket...* (... *And we start our lives anew...*) in *Muzsika* 43/6. 2000.

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## TRADITIONS AND INNOVATIONS IN CONTEMPORARY VOCAL AND CHORAL ART

OLENA BATOVSKA<sup>1</sup>, NATALIA GREBENUK<sup>2</sup>,  
NATALIYA BYELIK-ZOLOTARYOVA<sup>3</sup>, YULIYA IVANOVA<sup>4</sup>,  
TETIANA SUKHOMLINOVA<sup>5</sup>, IANA KAUSHNIAN<sup>6</sup>

**SUMMARY.** The problem of traditions and innovations in vocal and choral performance is a large-scale, many-sided integral system. This phenomenon of musical culture combines the classical direction and modernization of interpretation processes, which determines the topicality of the research. The aim of the article was to reveal the phenomenon of traditions and innovations in vocal and choral art as a complex multi-vector phenomenon that includes components of different scales, content, and functions that they perform. *Methods.* The research involved theoretical and practical methods. *Problem:* theoretical methods are represented by the analysis and arrangement of materials; identification of the main elements of the problem; generalization of the data obtained during the research. The practical methods are based on the search for and collection of scientific concepts and empirical data

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<sup>1</sup> Doctor of Arts, Professor of Department of Choral Conducting, Faculty of Performing and Musicology, Kharkiv National University of Arts named after I. P. Kotlyarevsky, Constitution Square, 11/13, Kharkiv, 61003, Ukraine, olenamb1@gmail.com

<sup>2</sup> Doctor of Arts, Professor of Department of Choral Conducting, Faculty of Performing and Musicology, Kharkiv National University of Arts named after I. P. Kotlyarevsky, Constitution Square, 11/13, Kharkiv, 61003, Ukraine, ng29rebenuk@gmail.com

<sup>3</sup> Candidate of Arts, Professor of Department of Choral Conducting, Faculty of Performing and Musicology, Kharkiv National University of Arts named after I. P. Kotlyarevsky, Constitution Square, 11/13, Kharkiv, 61003, Ukraine, 1bueliikzolutava3i@ukr.net

<sup>4</sup> Candidate of Arts, Associate Professor of Department Choral Conducting and academic vocal, Faculty of Music Art, Kharkiv State Academy of Culture, 4, Bursatskyi uzviz, Kharkiv, 61057, Ukraine, Ivochkaulia@gmail.com

<sup>5</sup> Candidate of Arts, Senior Lecturer of Department Choral Conducting and academic vocal, Faculty of Music Art, Kharkiv State Academy of Culture, 4, Bursatskyi uzviz, Kharkiv, 61057, Ukraine, sukhomlinova1tety@gmail.com

<sup>6</sup> Candidate of Art, Senior lecturer of Department of Solo Singing and Opera Training, Faculty of Performing and Musicology, Kharkiv National University of Arts named after I. P. Kotlyarevsky, Constitution Square, 11/13, Kharkiv, 61003, Ukraine, yanina4kashubi2@ukr.net



from the fields of performance, history, pedagogy, philosophy, aesthetics, medicine; on the monitoring of educational, as well as concert and performing activities; creative collaboration with soloists and the choral group. *Results.* The problem of traditions and innovations in vocal and choral performance is based on the following blocks: preservation of classical principles of academic vocal performance; their synthesis with discoveries and achievements of other spheres; modernization promoted by the expansion and updating of the genre framework, as well as modern engineering equipment. *Conclusions.* The fact of significance of the phenomenon of traditions and innovations in vocal and choral performance for the culture of society was revealed during the research. Its universality as a many-sided, flexible, large-scale integral phenomenon which consists of many different elements that play a leading role in its formation and are closely related was proved. Its interaction with different areas of society is shown. *Prospects.* The issue of traditions and innovations in vocal and choral performance is constantly enriched with new content, expands the scope of its implementation and interaction with various forms of social consciousness, science, medicine, which necessitates further study of this phenomenon.

**Keywords:** academic vocal performance; performance software support; practice of vocal and choral art; educational and performance activities; breathing exercises; artistic directing; monitoring of educational and concert practice.

## Introduction

Vocal and choral art is one of the leading branches of human culture in general and music in particular. Throughout centuries of its history, it has accumulated the background of properties that are continuously modernized, expanding its framework and scope, while maintaining its classic version.

It is also a complex multi-vector and, at the same time, integral system, which includes a series of categories (main components) that ensure the integration of music and performing arts in society, the achievements of humanitarian thought and science. This fact determines the relevance of the study of traditions and innovations in the field of vocal and choral performance.

The aim of this article is to study the ways of preserving classical traditions of the past in the activities of soloists, vocalists, as well as choral groups, and update the interpretation principles, as well as the concert and performative environment, means of broadcasting music performance. It is important to achieve this aim from both practical and theoretical points of view, as the materials of this study can be used by choir artists, soloists and vocalists in their performing, pedagogical activities, as well as in the academic field regarding an in-depth study of this problem.

The aim of this research involves the following objectives:

- Find and collect sources that reveal the theory and practice of vocal, choral performance in the current realities;
- Analyse and arrange all available material related to the topic;
- Identify the categories — the main elements of the phenomenon of contemporary vocal and choral performance;
- Summarize the results of the study.

The first of these objectives is based on the formation of the academic and information background, which is the foundation of the research and successful fulfilment of the rest of objectives.

The second objective becomes the main link in the creation of this article, as it focuses on the analysis of academic information background, which allows presenting the problem of traditions and innovations in vocal and choral performance as a complex many-sided integral phenomenon.

The third objective derives from the first two, and allows outlining the range of components that constitute the background of the problem of contemporary vocal and choral art in general, and the synthesis of classical and innovative trends in particular.

Finally, the fourth objective set by the author of the article is providing a panoramic view of the phenomenon of tradition and innovation in contemporary vocal and choral art based on the research findings.

So, this research distinguishes by the topicality, as well as the variety and diversity of the objectives fulfilled in it.

## Literature review

The academic and pedagogical literature covers different segments of the problem of traditions and innovations in vocal and choral performance. Researchers focus on the study of historical periods of the formation and establishment of the vocal school, emphasize the importance of deep spiritual sources of domestic vocal culture of pre-classical times, which have made an invaluable contribution to contemporary vocal and choral creativity<sup>7</sup>.

The scholars study the life and career of prominent representatives of national performing schools. One of them is Modest Menzinsky, who founded his own vocal studio in the Swedish capital (Stockholm), which attracted not only soloists but also experienced interpreters of classical and folk vocal music<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> Rudenko, Olexandr. *Ukrainian school of vocal art: traditions and modernity*. Musical Arts and Culture, 2018. <https://doi.org/10.31723/2524-0447-2018-26-264-255>

<sup>8</sup> Turianskyi, Peter. *Vocal-performance creativity of Modest Mentsinsky*. Youth and the market, 2022. <https://doi.org/10.24919/2308-4634.2022.256049>

The great role of the performing activity of Oleksandr Hromysh, the outstanding bass of Ukraine, in preserving and popularizing the classical traditions of the cantata-oratorio genre on the contemporary opera stage is emphasized<sup>9</sup>.

Musicology also presents the performing and pedagogical activities of Zoia Khrystych, soloist (soprano) of Taras Shevchenko National Opera and Ballet Theatre of Ukraine. The role of her professional creative contribution both in maintaining the high level and popularization of the Ukrainian national academic vocal school around the world, and in educating new generations of opera performers is noted<sup>10</sup>.

Contemporary science of choral and vocal performance actively studies and describes the process of developing a singing voice in various works. In particular, subtle nuances of the nature of the voice, the language and voices that reproduce musical intonations are recorded with the help of speech therapists, as well as the latest computer hardware and software<sup>11</sup>.

The researchers monitor the condition of the vocal apparatus and the nature of the sounds it produces during a 40-minute rehearsal load. This process includes exercises for singing, performing works and reading aloud<sup>12</sup>.

Specialists in the field of vocal and choral art actively study the problem of ergonomics of performance and saving, as well as improving the singers' vocal health. Knowledge in this area contributes to maintaining the vocalist's ability to work longer<sup>13</sup>.

One of the main areas of musicology of vocal and choral performance deals with the methods of melodiousness development in junior school pupils in general, and the coordination between musical hearing and purity of intonation in particular. This approach improves the quality of musical training of school graduates<sup>14</sup>.

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<sup>9</sup> Siatetskyi, Cornell. *Creative and performance activity of opera singer alexander gromsh in the cantata-oratorial cycle*, 2021. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/354470526>

<sup>10</sup> Kirsh, Elliana, Leer, Eva, Phero, Heidi, Xie, Changchun, Khosla, Sid. *Factors Associated with Singers' Perceptions of Choral Singing Well-Being*. *J Voice*, 27, No.6, 2013, pp. 25-32. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvoice.2013.06.004>

<sup>11</sup> Rehder, Maria, Behlau, Mara. *Perceptual, auditory and acoustic vocal analysis of speech and singing in choir conductors*. *Pró-fono: Revista de Atualização Científica*, 20, No. 3, 2008, pp. 195-200. <https://doi.org/10.1590/S0104-56872008000300010>

<sup>12</sup> Trinite, Baiba, Blauzde, Olga, Barute, Dina, Ivane, Madara. *Choral Conductors Vocal Loading in Rehearsal Simulation Conditions*. *Journal of Voice*, 2022. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvoice.2022.01.025>

<sup>13</sup> Trinite, Baiba, Blauzde, Olga, Paipare, Mirdza, Valce, Ilze. *The investigation of voice ergonomic factors in conductors*. *Problems in Music Pedagogy*, 20, No. 2, 2021, pp. 71- 85. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/357406354>

<sup>14</sup> Ivane, Madara, Trinite, Baiba. *Development of coordination between hearing and voice in singing: review of methodical literature in the latvian language. society integration education*, *Proceedings of the International Scientific Conference*, 3, No. 223, 2020. <https://doi.org/10.17770/sie2020vol3.5080>

The impact of classes in the choral group on human health, the importance of the optimal zone for the performer are examined. This includes range, volume, and vocal performance technique<sup>15</sup>.

Vocal and choral creativity specialists study the factor of the influence of different genres and human participation in different choral groups on the state of the voice. As practice shows, this factor has a direct impact on the fatigue rate<sup>16</sup>.

However, research on the problem of tradition and innovation in vocal and choral performance as a whole system has not yet been conducted. As musicology has not covered this aspect of the cultural life of society, it is necessary to study it in depth and supplement it with updated information and discoveries in the future.

## Methodology

This section describes the structure of the research topic, the sampling process, the methods used in relation to the analysed problem. The methods used are described below.

### *Research procedure*

The research of the problem of traditions and innovations in vocal and choral performance involves a number of stages. Each of them is aimed at in-depth comprehensive study of this topic.

The stages of studying the problem of traditions and innovations in vocal and choral performance are the following:

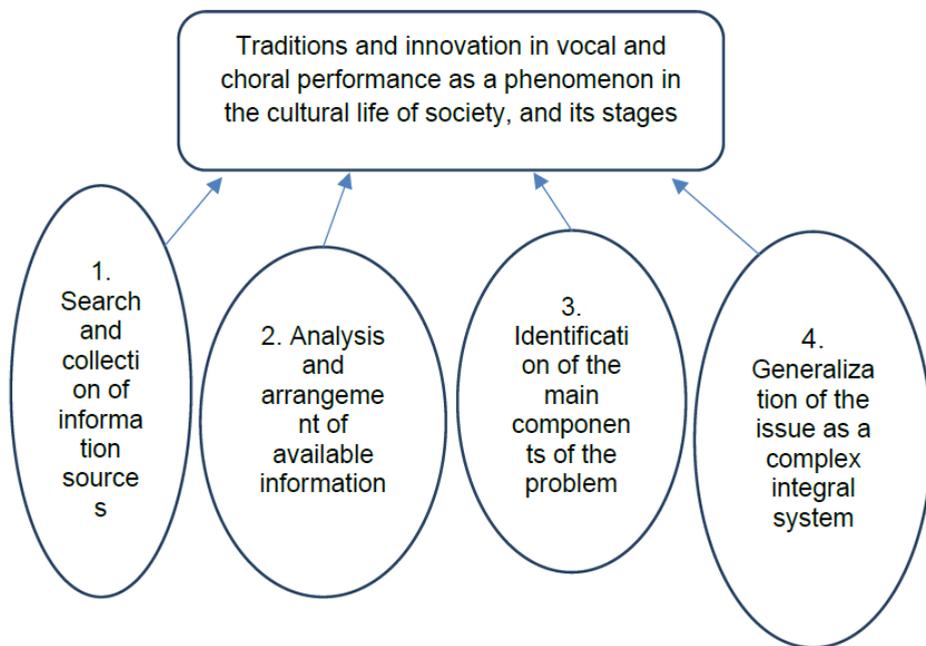
- finding and collecting sources of information covering this topic;
- analysis and arrangement of materials according to their content and function;
- identification of leading elements of the phenomenon, its description as a comprehensive many-sided and integral system.

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<sup>15</sup> Kirsh, Elliana, Leer, Eva, Phero, Heidi, Xie, Changchun, Khosla, Sid. *Factors Associated with Singers' Perceptions of Choral Singing Well-Being*. Journal of Voice, 27, No.6, 2013, pp. 25-32. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvoice.2013.06.004>

<sup>16</sup> Jolley, Morgan. *Vocal Health of Choral Singers from Kenya and the United States: Dysphonia and Vocal Fatigue in Relation to Musical Genres*. University of South Florida, 2020. <https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.30375.98722>

**Figure 1**



**Figure 1 illustrates the stages of studying the phenomenon of traditions and innovation in contemporary vocal and choral art**

**Stages of studying the problem of traditions and innovations in vocal and choral art. Source: developed by the author**

Finding and collecting sources of information that cover the problem of traditions and innovations in vocal and choral art creates a background for the analysis and arrangement of materials, according to their content. This allows identifying the main components that form an integrated system of the phenomenon and reveal it comprehensively.

So, all four stages of the research procedure that play key roles in the in-depth and comprehensive analysis of the phenomenon of traditions and innovation in vocal and choral performance are inextricably linked and contribute to its many-sided study.

### *Sampling*

The article examines materials on various aspects of the problem of tradition and innovation in vocal and choral performance. Those aspects apply to the areas related to music, in particular, performing arts, such as aesthetics and philosophy, history and psychology, as well as a less closely related field — medicine.

The objects of the sample were academic works and recorded observations of the artistic and pedagogical activity of masters of vocal and choral creativity, as well as the practical experience of specialists from different countries and cultural fields.

The author of the article studied 30 sources covering the problem of traditions and innovations in vocal and choral performance. The complexity, volume, multi-vector nature of the studied phenomenon and the importance of its in-depth comprehensive study determine the need to analyse a large number of materials. These sources, which were used as the background for the scientific understanding of the topic of the article, proved to be the foundation for the explanation and many-sided study of the phenomenon of traditions and innovation in vocal and choral creativity.

To achieve the main goal of the maximum coverage of the phenomenon of traditions and innovations in vocal and choral performance, the author selected scientific papers in various fields. They are represented by the following areas:

- aesthetic education of children, singing voice (including choral) therapy;
- teaching methods and principles of professional realization of outstanding opera singers and conductors on the stage in the context of certain historical periods;
- information and communication technologies that deal with expanding opportunities and modernizing the practice of concert performances of soloists, as well as choral groups.

### *Research methods*

Theoretical and practical research methods were used to cover the issue of traditions and innovations in vocal and choral performance of this phenomenon became the methods of research.

Analysis, arrangement of materials, identification of the main components of the analysed phenomenon are used as theoretical methods.

The practical methods included the search and collection of information related to the research topic, observation of teaching and learning the basics of academic singing in the educational institution, interaction with vocalists and choral groups in educational and concert-performing activities.

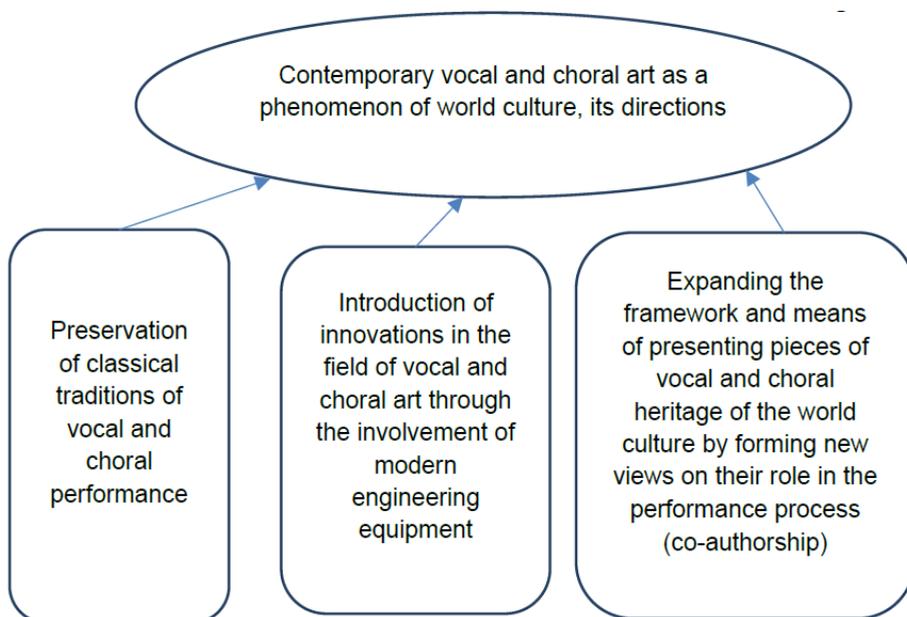
Search and collection of materials is based on the study of a large system of information from scientific and practical fields concerned with not only vocal and choral performance, but also related fields, as well as slightly related subject areas.

Observation of teaching and learning the basics of academic singing of soloists and choirs allowed revealing the principles of preserving traditions and updating the nature of educational and pedagogical practice, as well as the synthesis of these two areas.

Interaction with soloists and choral groups in the process of educational and concert performing activities of the author as a leader of an orchestra was aimed at obtaining information about the means of providing classes and performances to the audience, as well as methods of their preparation and organization.

## **Results**

The search for and collection of materials on contemporary vocal and choral art gives grounds to state that both classical methods of performing practice and new trends dictated by the current demands are presented in inseparable unity. The vocal and choral activity is universal because the property referred to above makes it a large-scale, many-sided, complex and, at the same time, flexible phenomenon. Its analysis contributes to the understanding and coverage of vocal and choral performance as an integral system that includes many components. Figure 2 illustrates three main blocks of contemporary vocal and choral practice, which form the foundation of this activity.

**Figure 2**

**Vocal and choral art and its main directions. Source: developed by the author**

According to modern practice in the field of vocal and choral performance, the classical traditions of academic vocal, the base of technical methods of interpretation, the development of the vocal apparatus and sound delivery as the main unit of performing vocal compositions remain topical.

The modernization of educational programmes in the majors: Vocal, Solo Singing, Choral Singing, Choral Conducting plays a significant role in the successful implementation of the performance of soloists and choral groups. It is based on the active use of the information and communication technologies, which include the latest developments in engineering software. It is equally important to consider the above subjects from a philosophical point of view as complex integral systems, where knowledge of related subjects and areas is closely intertwined.

The factor of improving performance skills among soloists and choral groups is the active application of the practical principle of co-creation of composers and performers, the introduction of improvisational blocks, as well as the creation (usually by a solo singer) of a vocal line in the choral or orchestral score performed at stage.

The analysis and arrangement of available information became the background for identifying the main components of the research problem. Table 1 lists the classical (traditional) elements of vocal and choral performance skills, as well as their characteristics.

**Table 1**

Breathing exercises	It contributes to maintaining and improving the professional health of singers, maintaining vital activity of the vocal apparatus
Vocal exercises - chanting	Used to prepare the vocal apparatus for the performance of works. They include a system of technical methods of interpretation that help improve the skills and quality of presentation of the author's idea
Formation of the voice timbre base	Highly artistic and professional approach to referring a voice to a particular timbre group and, accordingly, deep knowledge of its tessitura, range limits, development of singing capabilities and selection of repertoire in accordance with the above indicators
Creating a harmonious ensemble	The essence of this phenomenon is the coherence and purity of the sound of musical material, in terms of intonation, as well as constructive, highly professional interaction of all performers with each other, the ability to unite during the performance, while maintaining the expressiveness of their own performance. Such an ensemble can include small groups, as well as a choral group in general
Preserving works created in early times in the repertoire of soloists and choir	The essence of this principle is to support the technical apparatus of the means of interpretation accumulated over several centuries.

**Components of classical traditions of vocal and performing arts  
and their characteristics**

Table 2 lists the categories of innovative approach to the current vocal and choral practice.

**Table 2**

Interaction of vocal and choral art with other areas of artistic practice (drama, cinema, speech)	The method of using elements of dramatic acting skills (speech, facial expressions, gestures) by vocalists and choir in the course of performing works
Synthesis of technical discoveries in the field of interpretation belonging to different countries, styles and academic schools	Involvement of the elements of vocal and choral music performance used by different traditional national cultures and their adaptation to academic conditions
Application of the latest engineering and technical equipment in the field of sound directorial support of performances of soloists and choral groups	Modernization and expansion, as well as improving the quality in the field of vocal and choir performances
Expanding the boundaries of the environment where vocalists and choirs perform music	Inclusion of groups in the modernized format of the concert programme, where singers become participants in a big show, with the use of information and communication technologies that help increase the number of listeners around the world

**Categories of innovative approach to the field of vocal and choral performance, their characteristics**

Table 3 gives the names, descriptions of those areas where the classical traditions of vocal and choral art are preserved, on the one hand, while there is a modernization in this area on the other hand.

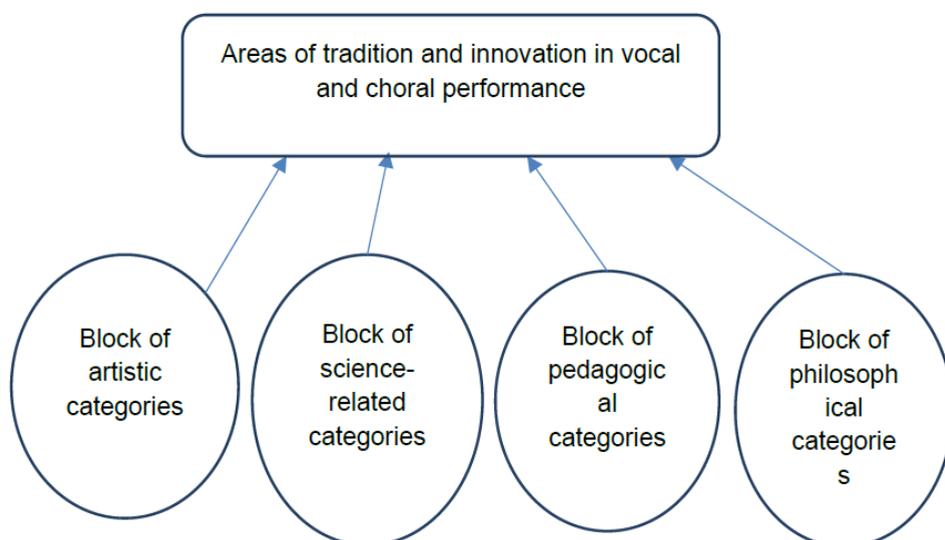
**Table 3**

Higher and mid-level educational institutions where future specialists study in the majors Vocal Art, Choral Art, Choral Conducting	Development of universal methods of teaching and learning according to the educational programmes, which synthesizes practical, as well as scientific and theoretical experience of outstanding masters of vocal and choral art of the past and innovative trends used in the activities of representatives of this professional field of the present.
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Material and technical support of vocal performers and choral groups	The provision of modern engineering equipment that provides not only high quality broadcasting, recording performances of vocalists, choirs, but also contributes to the implementation of special effects on stage designed for brighter, innovative display of images and content of vocal, choral compositions in general
Artistic realization of performance of soloists and choral groups	Individual director's approach to the interpretation of works performed by vocalists or choirs, accompanied by the author's concert and stage version, which becomes the idea and content of the parallel plan
Environment where professional activities of representatives of vocal and choral creativity are carried out	The principle of expanding the scope of the stage concert venue for vocalists and choirs is actively used as a phenomenon in its traditional sense. This principle implies the use of different options of acoustic space. This space can be both a room and an open-air stage, as well as an auditorium created by the latest means of video broadcasting, when online listeners in any part of the world have access to viewing the performances of vocalists and choir

**Areas of implementation of traditions and innovations in vocal and choral art, their characteristics**

So, traditions and innovations in the contemporary vocal and choral art are a complex many-sided and at the same time complete phenomenon. This is manifested in artistic, scientific, pedagogical and philosophical forms of expression of academic creativity. The figure below illustrates this problem as part of an integral system comprising a number of categories that differ in scale and function.

**Figure 3**

**Generalized demonstration of the problem of traditions and innovations in vocal and choral art as a complex integral system**

**Source: developed by the author**

The artistic block provides the author's individual versions of the stage concert design of vocalists and choral groups, which combine classical traditions and modernization techniques.

The science-related block involves monitoring the concert performance of soloists and choirs, collection of information about their practice, analysis of the resulting data and creating concepts about traditions and innovations in the field of vocal and choral art as a many-sided and complex phenomenon.

The pedagogical block is based on preparing flexible universal guidance manuals that promote the formation of choir artists and soloists-vocalists of the highest professional and artistic level, who have developed a deep national and world culture, along with a broad and thorough technical set of tools.

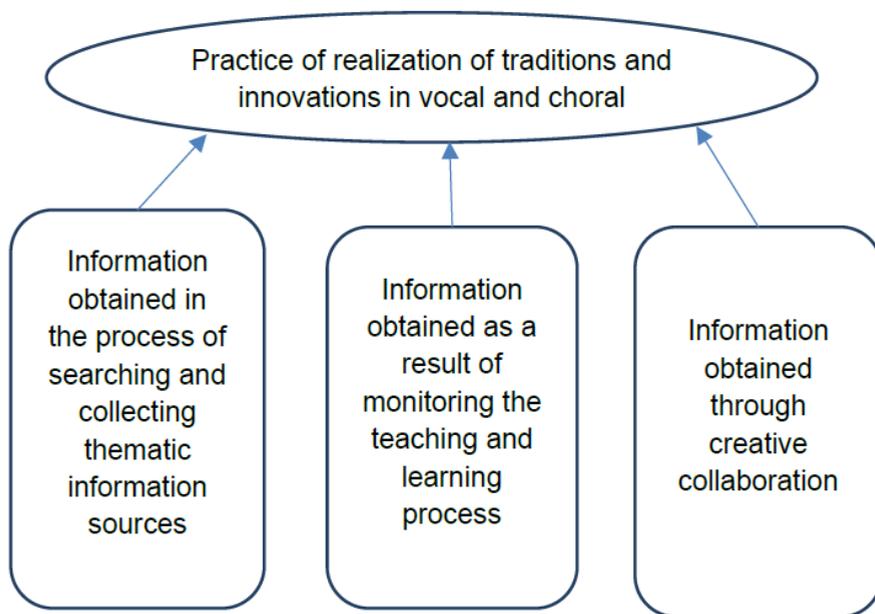
The philosophical block opens the widest prospects for the preservation and development of further vocal and choral creativity. It is a mechanism for understanding the deep value and necessity of this field of art for the life of society and its progress in general. This block gives

contemporary composers the opportunity to realize their own authorial ideas and make extraordinary, truly creative, innovative solutions to the tasks set while working in this field.

Practical methods of researching the problem of traditions and innovations in vocal and choral performance are based on three blocks:

- search and collection of information.
- observation of the process of teaching the basics of academic interpretation in an educational institution.
- interaction with soloists and choral groups in preparation for performances. Figure 4 illustrates the vector of the practical approach to the study of the research topic.

**Figure 4**



**Practical methods of studying the problem of traditions and innovations in vocal and choral art. Source: developed by the author**

The search for and collection of information sources is carried out by identifying the range of issues that are of scientific importance for the full-scale disclosure of the phenomenon of tradition and innovation in vocal and choral performance. These issues describe both the musicological aspects directly related to the research topic and the aspects that have an indirect and in some cases little relation to the art of music, but contribute to a deeper and comprehensive coverage of the problem under research.

The method of monitoring the process of teaching students of different ages the basics of academic solo and choral singing is based on recording pedagogical methods used by vocal performance teachers, as well as tools used to fully and effectively convey educational programmes to students and ensure quality contemporary concert performances of soloists and choirs.

The method of creative interaction with the leader of the choral group, its members, as well as soloists involves the direct participation of the author of the publication as a leader of an orchestra in rehearsals with them and performances on stage. This method concentrates the principles for:

- the formation of the “soloist — leader of an orchestra”, “choir — leader of an orchestra”, “soloist, choir — leader of an orchestra” ensemble.
- achievement of synchronous performance of parts by its participants.
- building a balanced sounding of singers and the accompanying musical instrument.
- artistic directing, which creates a relief of musical themes, which pass by turn from vocal performers to instrumentalists.

Table 4 presents the names of mechanisms for practical research on the problem of traditions and innovation in contemporary vocal and choral performance.

**Table 4**

<p>Identifying ways to study the problem</p>	<p>In-depth perception, understanding and consideration of the problem of traditions and innovations in vocal and choral creativity, as a complex, large-scale, multi-vector and, at the same time, integral system, which includes a series of the main components. They include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- methods of executive and pedagogical activity; the practice of using modern software in the design of classes and concert programmes.</li> <li>- implementation of the principles of vocal performing therapy in the treatment and rehabilitation of patients.</li> <li>- research of historiographical documents related to the names of prominent representatives of vocal and choral performance.</li> </ul>
<p>Recording pedagogical methods</p>	<p>Drawing up a map of the principles and mechanisms of presenting material related to academic vocal to students of different ages. These components include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- penetration into the content of the work being learnt.</li> <li>- outlining the images presented in it by the composer.</li> <li>- determining the set of performance techniques characteristic of the composition learnt.</li> <li>- training intervals that help to consolidate the material and increase the performance level.</li> </ul>
<p>Means of presentation of the educational programme</p>	<p>A series of mechanisms to ensure effective and high-quality students' learning of materials on Solo Singing, Choral Singing, Choral Conducting. It is based on such components as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- a variety of types of work during classes (exercises for the voice, learning the text of the work, finding information about the history of its creation).</li> <li>- acquaintance with different variants of interpretation of the work being learnt by other performers.</li> <li>- developing one's own authorial version of its in-class performance.</li> </ul>
<p>Supporting a concert performance</p>	<p>A set of methodical and engineering tools promoting creation of high-quality concert performance: rehearsals; the use of modern equipment that provides the process of sound transmission and its recording.</p>

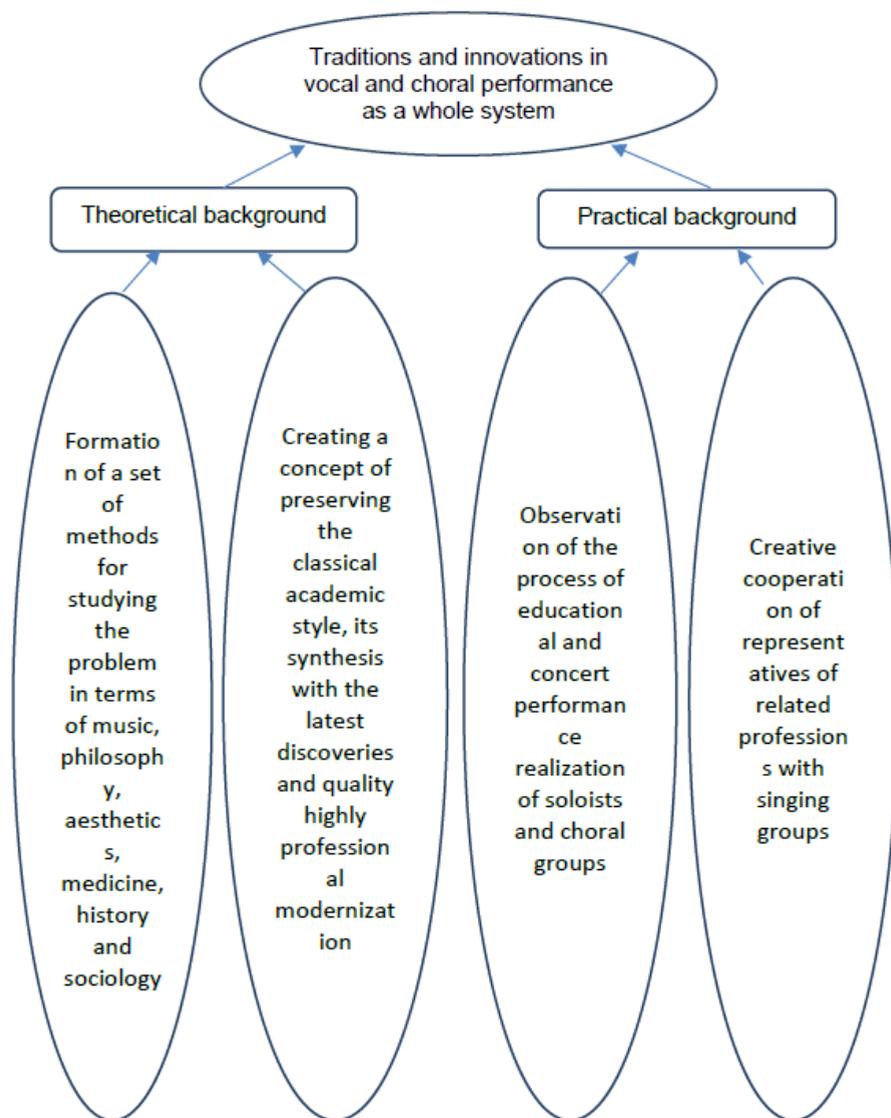
TRADITIONS AND INNOVATIONS IN CONTEMPORARY VOCAL AND CHORAL ART

Principles of ensemble formation	A series of methodological techniques aimed at making all members of the choir, as well as soloists and leader of an orchestra feel part of a large integral system, the components of which are interconnected, complement each other, and promote expressive performance of the material by other performers, while maintaining high artistic quality of their own part, to create a single comprehensive picture of the work being performed.
Formation of synchronous performance of the parts	Several principles of performing technique that allows musicians to maintain a single dynamic, tempo, the nature of the images of the work in general.
Building a balanced sound of singers and musical instrument	Finding the optimal map of timbre lines and dynamic inflections for a vocal or choral work that contribute to the relief presentation of its main material and more shaded performance of those layers of musical texture that serve as the background of the main theme, complementing and enriching it.
Artistic directing	A number of methods of individual author's solution of the stage concert version of vocal and choral works: - the plan of placement of performers on the stage. - introduction of software, including videos during the performance of singers. - the opportunity to build a dialogue of artists with the audience, which expands the genre framework and modernizes the classical principles of performing practice of soloists and choir.

**Principles of practical study of traditions and innovations in vocal and choral art, their characteristics**

So, the problem of traditions and innovations in vocal and choral performance is a many-sided integral system that includes a series of components of different scales. Figure 5 shows a panorama of this phenomenon.

Figure 5



**The system of traditions and innovations in vocal and choral art.**  
**Source: developed by the author**

The problem of this study is a phenomenon that combines theoretical and practical blocks, as well as the components that form their foundation: methodology and conceptuality, creative practice, and scientific discoveries. This topic is promising for further research, as it opens a wide field for the representatives of not only music culture, but also a number of other fields.

## Discussion

According to this research, the problem of traditions and innovations in vocal and choral performance is a many-sided, large-scale and, at the same time, integral system. It includes a number of categories (significant elements) that differ in scale, content and functions they perform. They include two main blocks: the theoretical and practical foundations of the study of the topic, as well as the components that make up each of these blocks. These components are related to performing, pedagogical, methodological activities. All of them are shown in an inseparable synthesis with each other, in deep communication with various spheres of social consciousness and science, which revealed the uniqueness, breadth and flexibility of the phenomenon under research.

The musicological literature on the problems of traditions and innovations in vocal and choral art emphasizes the importance of vocalist's individual approach to the performance of his/her part in the works, as well as the importance of talent in interpreting different styles, including postmodern ones<sup>17</sup>.

The focus on such an aspect of practical study of the nature of vocal sound as its recording by new software systems, in particular by spectral bifurcation diagrams, is significant from a scientific perspective<sup>18</sup>.

A valuable contribution to the study of the problem of traditions and innovations in the vocal and performing arts is the consideration of the composers' creative approach to the use of voice in the score. In particular, it becomes a means of expressing the human condition and its study<sup>19</sup>.

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<sup>17</sup> Karantonis, Pamela, Placanica, Francesca, Verstraete, Pieter. *Cathy Berberian: Pioneer of Contemporary Vocality*. Routledge, 2014. <https://doi.org/10.4324/>

<sup>18</sup> Neubauer, Jürgen, Edgerton, Michael, Herzel, Hanspeter. (2004, April). *Nonlinear phenomena in contemporary vocal music*. Journal of Voice, 18, No. 1, 2004, pp. 1-12. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0892-1997\(03\)00073-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0892-1997(03)00073-0)

<sup>19</sup> Shortis, Cob. *Distilling the Essence: Vocal Provenance in the Work of Jack Body*. 2020. [https://mro.massey.ac.nz/bitstream/handle/10179/2139/02\\_whole.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y](https://mro.massey.ac.nz/bitstream/handle/10179/2139/02_whole.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y)

Revealing the role of modern computer technology in the design of voice translations, both natural and artificial, and the study of its space, through the use of representative elements and their manipulation, is also important<sup>20</sup>.

The research on how composers and sound engineers use speech recordings, especially in technology-mediated works, is significant (21).

Scientific experiments and developments in the field of understanding microtonal music in vocal performance with the help of modernized versions of scales and instruments (homemade lyres) are being actively conducted<sup>22</sup>.

In musicology, the relationship between vocal performance and linguistics takes place through the observation of a system of semiotic patterns in the course of singing. In particular, the phenomenon of the voice sonority scale is considered, which clarifies the nature of the expansion of their range, stability and change<sup>23</sup>.

Researchers provide valuable scientific information related to the process of self-study of vocal-related educational programmes, where the mechanism of developing perception of high art in neural networks plays the main role<sup>24</sup>.

A major contribution to research on vocal and choral performance is the focus on testing a modernized structure to identify and build a separate model of the singer's part in the context of polyphonic songs by including a module of sound sources, which contributes to the effectiveness of engineering support for vocalists<sup>25</sup>.

This trend is also observed in the study of a model for the systematization of vocal performers through the WaveNet classifier, which modulates the functions of the raw audio signal<sup>26</sup>.

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<sup>20</sup> Wishart, Trevor, Emerson, Simon. *On sonic art*. Harwood Academic Publishers, 1996. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315077895>

<sup>21</sup> Lane, Caleb. *Voices from the Past: Compositional approaches to using recorded speech*. Organised Sound, 11, No. 1, 2006, pp. 3-11. <https://doi.org/10.1017/>

<sup>22</sup> Kilbane, Mariam. *A Speech-Musical Modernism: Harry Partch's Lyric Media*. Publications of the Modern Language Association of America 135, No. 3, 2020, pp. 511-529. <https://doi.org/10.1632/pmla.2020.135.3.511>

<sup>23</sup> Agha, Asif. *Voice, Footing, Enregisterment*. Journal of Linguistic Anthropology, 15, No. 1, 2013, pp. 38–59 <https://doi.org/10.1525/jlin.2005.15.1.38>

<sup>24</sup> Yakura, Hiromu, Watanabe, Kento, Goto, Masataka. *Self-Supervised Contrastive Learning for Singing Voices*. IEEE/ACM Transactions on Audio, Speech, and Language Processing, 30, 2022, pp. 1614-1623. <https://doi.org/10.1109/TASLP.2022.3169627>

<sup>25</sup> Sharma, Bidisha, Das, Rohan, Li, Haizhou. *On the Importance of Audio-Source Separation for Singer Identification in Polyphonic Music*. Interspeech, 2019. <https://doi.org/10.21437/Interspeech.2019-1925>

<sup>26</sup> Zhang, Xulong, Yu, Yongwei, Li, Li, Gao, Yi. *Music Artist Classification with WaveNet Classifier for Raw Waveform Audio Data*, 2020. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/340541309>

Obtaining information on scientific discoveries in the field of vocal and choral performance is facilitated by the analysis of methodological aspects of training music teachers in the vocal ensemble class, in particular, the principles of coherence, balance, harmonious sounding of parts of the vocalists and the whole group while singing<sup>2728</sup>.

A valuable contribution to the discovery of the phenomenon of traditions and innovations in vocal and choral art is the evaluation of the effectiveness of multimedia systems of teaching popular and classical music. It is also a revision of speech spectrum technology to create a multimedia device based on the broadcast of pop music, which is based on the mechanism for recognizing the features of the audio frame<sup>29</sup>.

The study of traditions and innovations in vocal and choral performance can undoubtedly benefit from the academic studies of the problems of the evolution of vocal culture in European academic schools at different historical stages<sup>30</sup>.

The position of masters of academic singing is progressive: in their scientific works they state that the successful vocal activity of a future teacher of music is based on stage culture, which is determined by highly artistic performance of a piece of music, artistic image, the performer's aesthetic taste, artistic behaviour, translation of aesthetic values<sup>3132</sup>.

The principles of formation of stage culture of future music teachers during their vocal training are the methodological background for structuring the content of professional subjects for vocal training, choice of forms and methods of teaching and learning in higher educational institutions<sup>33</sup>. The

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<sup>27</sup> Shapovalova, Liudmyla, Chernyavska, Marianna, Govorukhina, Nataliya, Nikolaievskaya, Yuliia. *Pastoral in Instrumental and Vocal Music 18-21 Centuries: Genre Invariant and Performance*. Ad Alta-Journal of Interdisciplinary Research. 11, No. 2, 2021, pp. 136-140. [http://www.magnanimitas.cz/ADALTA/110220/papers/A\\_23.pdf](http://www.magnanimitas.cz/ADALTA/110220/papers/A_23.pdf)

<sup>28</sup> Svitylo, Serhiy. *Preparation of lectures on musical arts in the class of vocal ensemble*. Bulletin of the National Academy of Managers of Culture and Arts, Vol. 3, pp. 180-184. <https://doi.org/10.32461/2226-3209.3.2021.244480>

<sup>29</sup> Zhao, Xuelin. *Evaluation of Multimedia Popular Music Teaching Effect Based on Audio Frame Feature Recognition Technology*. Advances in Multimedia, 4, 2022, pp. 1-11. <https://doi.org/10.1155/2022/1178100>

<sup>30</sup> Shelepnyska-Govorun, Natalia. *Periodization of vocal culture development of music art specialists in Europe, 2021*. <https://doi.org/10.36550/2415-7988-2021-1-195-49-52>

<sup>31</sup> Drach, Iryna, Cherkashina-Gubarenko, Marianna, Chernyavska, Maryna, Govorukhina, Nataliya, Mykhailova, Olga. *Francis Poulenc's Music through Screen Media*. European Journal of Media, Art and Photography, 9, No. 2, 2021, pp. 92-105.

<sup>32</sup> Kosinskaya, Natalia. *Methodological bases natalia kosinskaya of formation of scenically-shaped culture of future teachers of musical art*. Aesthetics and Ethics of Pedagogical Action, 2017. <https://doi.org/10.33989/2226-4051.2017.16.175972>

<sup>33</sup> Kosinska, Natalia. *Formation of the scenically-shaped culture of future teachers of musical art: methodological benchmarks*, 2018, pp. 109-116. <https://doi.org/10.24195/2218-8584-2018-9-109-116>

analysis of the organization of a pedagogical experiment on the formation of the stage culture of future music teachers when learning vocals is also important, it includes three stages: summative, formative, comparative<sup>34</sup>.

Observing the preparation of vocalists and choral groups for the performance plays an important role. In particular, the need to use voice warm-up during rehearsals is emphasized, which allows avoiding the risk of vocal cord injury while singing<sup>35</sup>.

The philosophical and pedagogical comprehension of communicative practices in the educational process of high school has practical value for studying the problem of traditions and innovations in vocal and choral art. In particular, a typology of dialogic interaction in the teachers' research space is proposed, which creates conditions for analysis, reflection and self-assessment of students in the organization of their educational activities<sup>36</sup>.

It is necessary to learn the content of a piece of music as a special cultural phenomenon, to consider it as a synthesis of spiritual, emotional and aesthetic experience of mankind based on the interpretation of its artistic and semantic dimension, to build its stage image and retransmit it to pedagogical, performing and vocal activities<sup>37</sup>.

Determination of the leading methodological approaches (cultural, axiological, competence, hermeneutic), which determine the essence of stage culture of music teacher and stage artist, plays a significant role in the study of traditions and innovation in vocal and choral performance<sup>38,39</sup>.

However, the problem of traditions and innovations as a comprehensive, many-sided and, at the same time, integral system has not been considered in the works referred to above. This determined the need to address this issue in this article.

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<sup>34</sup> Kosinska, Natalia. *Analysis of the results of experimental research of stage culture formation of future teachers of music art in the vocal training process*. Eureka Social and Humanities, 1, No. 1, 2020, pp. 56-61. <https://doi.org/10.21303/2504-5571.2020.001141>

<sup>35</sup> Onofre, Fernanda, Ricz, Hilton, Prado, Maria, Rojas, Vannesa. (2021, January). *Vocal resistance among choir singers*. European Archives of Oto-Rhino-Laryngology, 278, No. 3. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00405-020-06238-7>

<sup>36</sup> Oleksiuk, Olga, Bondarenko, Larysa, Cherkasov, Volodymyr, Kosinska, Natalia. *Innovative Model of Communicative Practices*. Journal of History Culture and Art Research, 8, No. 2, 2019, p. 244. <https://doi.org/10.7596/taksad.v8i2.2109>

<sup>37</sup> Kosinska, Natalia. *Formation of the scenically-shaped culture of future teachers of musical art: methodological benchmarks*, 2018, pp. 109-116. <https://doi.org/10.24195/2218-8584-2018-9-109-116>

<sup>38</sup> Kosinskaya, N. (2017, October). *Subject characteristic of scenic-image culture of future teachers of music art in the vocal training process*. ScienceRise Pedagogical Education <https://doi.org/10.15587/2519-4984.2017.112901>

<sup>39</sup> Klish, Iryna. *Stage activities of Zoya Christich in the context of the development of vocal art OF Ukraine*. Youth and the market, 3, 2021, pp. 133-139. <https://doi.org/10.24919/2308-4634.2021.234265>

This study is reduced to several educational institutions where the author carries out practical activities, as well as reliance on academic, methodological and empirical material of researchers who analysed the problem. Its results can be applied in both educational and performance practice of educational institutions and concert organizations.

The study of traditions and innovations in vocal and choral performance provides indisputable prospects for further research. In particular, the researchers can study such areas as the sociology of vocal and choral creativity; psychological aspect of the organization of choral groups; the role of vocal and choral performance in the progress of society.

## **Conclusions**

The research topicality is determined by its many-sided review, which includes, in addition to musical performance, aesthetic, historical, pedagogical, technological and medical aspects. This is evidenced by the coverage of a large number of elements which form the background for the issue of traditions and innovations in vocal and choral performance as an integral multi-vector system.

The study of the problem of traditions and innovations in modern vocal and choral performance reveals it as a complex multi-vector phenomenon. It is formed by components of different scales, content and functions. They include two major blocks of particular importance: theoretical and practical backgrounds; creation of the concept of preservation of classical academic style, its synthesis with the latest discoveries and quality highly professional modernization.

The foundation of the practical background is the observation of the process of educational and concert performing realization of soloists and choral groups; creative cooperation of representatives of related professions with singing groups.

The findings of this research can be used in educational institutions as a material of the educational programme on the following majors: Choral Conducting, Solo Singing, Choral Singing, as well as in the activities of creative associations, concert organizations as one of the links creating a stage version of works for soloists and choir.

The study of this topic opens up broad prospects for researchers due to its versatility, which indicates the deep relationship of music with philosophy and aesthetics, history and sociology, medicine and technical subjects. This forms the background for new discoveries about its complex and universal nature.

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## FUNDAMENTAL ANALYSIS OF CHICK COREA'S IMPROVISATION IN *SPAIN* (1972)

FLORIN BĂLAN<sup>1</sup>

**SUMMARY.** Modern jazz can be considered an equal part of modern music, owing to the numerous experiments, at times considered strange or not really agreed by the audience. When talking about modern musical life and the possibilities for making music in a proper manner, no doubt that the value and genius of composers like Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart or Ludwig van Beethoven must be recognized. However, one must also realize that modern life, with its modern, contemporary music is also needed. The great jazz saxophonist, Charlie Parker considered improvisation the middle of the earth, the place where, if only for a few brief moments, one can be the best and the greatest composer in the world. Furthermore, the idea of a song (theme) is the only reason for musicians to come and elaborate together, with variational spontaneity, a unique and maybe unrepeatabe musical manifestation. The works of Chick Corea reflect this point of view, as the analysis of the work *Spain* (1972), discussed in the article bellow, will demonstrate. The work represents the fusion between Spanish music and the compositional methods of modern jazz music, reflecting Corea's unique style. Improvisation lies at the basis of this composition, offering the musician a multitude of possibilities for expressing his ideas regarding freedom and human nature.

**Keywords:** jazz, piano improvisation, spontaneity, creativity, harmonical knowledge, contemporary

### Chick Corea – Personal musical skills

The purpose of the present article is to shed light on the work of Chick Corea, his vision about playing, improvisation, composition, and the fusion of various styles. Corea's unique style is mirrored in the work *Spain*

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<sup>1</sup> Assistant professor, PhD Student, Transilvania University of Braşov (Faculty of Music),  
E-mail: florin.balan@unitbv.ro



(1972), which was chosen to reveal the way the musician composed and understood music.

For at least 35 years Chick Corea<sup>2</sup> was the musician that had recorded, played, and composed jazz music in different styles, like Straight Ahead Jazz, Free Jazz, Jazz Fusion, Latin, with subtle influences of classical music and many ingenious variations. Corea can be regarded as one of the most complete and versatile players and creators of contemporary jazz, a source of inspiration for students and musicians alike.

On his real name Armando Anthony Corea was born on 12 June 1941 in Chelsea Massachusetts and died on 9 February 2021 in Tampa, Florida. His father was also a musician, he played the trumpet – he could be considered the first source of inspiration for Corea's musical career. After a few years, during which he played the drums and the piano (in a spontaneous fashion), he started to seriously study the piano with Salvatore Sulo, a well-known concert pianist in the USA.

After studying<sup>3</sup> at the Columbia and Juilliard Universities, he started to play in New York with Mango Santamaria, Willie Bob, Herbie Mann, Elvin Jones, Stan Getz, and many other established musicians of that time. Later, together with trumpet player Blue Mitchell, he recorded his first LP, with songs like *Chick's Tune* or *A thing to do*. In 1966, the next LP came out, recorded with musicians like Joe Farrell, Woddy Show, Steve Swallow, Joe Chambers. A mixture of styles (latin, bebop, free style) could be heard on the record under the name *Tones for Joan's Bones*. This was followed by the collaboration with the great Miles Davis in the *Miles Davis Group*, while together with Dave Holland and Jack DeJohnette the improvisation in free style was experienced and founded for the first time.

The musical education and knowledge gained in the Juilliard and Columbia Universities were the first premise for the artistic development of Corea's vision and creativity. His various bands, (like *Return to Forever*) were considered among the time the best jazz bands ever. Together with musicians like Stanley Clarke, Joe Farrell, Flora Purim, Airta Moreira, and lather with Bill Connors and Lenny White, they made the best LP recordings (pieces like *Light as a Feather* or *The Hymn of Seven Galaxy* became standards), according to the specialized music critics from Downbeat Magazine. Until 1985 he had numerous projects with Herbie Hancock, Gary Burton, John McLaughlin, Paco di Lucia, Michael Brecker, Eddie Gomez, Steve Gadd. In 1985, together with John Patitucci, Dave Weckl, and Scott

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<sup>2</sup> Corea, Chick. *A work in Progress...On being a Musician*. Milwaukee, MCA Publishing, 1999, p. 33.

<sup>3</sup> Corea, Chick. *Music Poetry by Chick Corea*. Los Angeles, Litha Music, 1980, p. 35-45.

Henderson the *Chick Corea Electric Band* was founded. New instrumental textures and colours, obtained through keyboards-synthesisers marked the beginning of a new era in musical thinking and playing.

Chick Corea proposed a special jazz language, with its own melodic vocabulary, organized according to rules that reflect the features of the most important element of jazz music, the *improvisation*. Improvisation lies at the basis of his solos as well, remarkable in their coherence and continuity. The following analysis examines the way the musician devises his works, with consideration to the process and product of improvisational performance. The methods employed by Corea are examined using the techniques of music analysis, with emphasis on elements pertaining to jazz music.

### 1. *Spain*<sup>4</sup> – harmonic and melodic analysis of the 1<sup>st</sup> improvisation

In his compositions Chick Corea offers valuable example regarding the assimilation of musical elements pertaining to other cultures, as suggested by the work *Spain* as well. To create this piece, the musician had to understand certain elements that are characteristic for Spanish cultural identity, assimilate these features, and harmoniously combine them with his musical perspective, thus creating a work in the genre of *fusion*.

Corea listened to the recordings of Spanish flamenco guitarist Paco de Lucia, which deepened his affinity towards Spanish folk music – an aspect that eventually took shape in the composition of *Spain* (1972). The work begins with a solo motif, performed by the piano, alongside the bass line accompaniment of the strings, inspired by the Adagio form Joaquin Rodrigo's *Concierto de Aranjuez* (1939).

The improvisation starts (in the first 8 measures) with the rhythmic development of an ascending/descending musical motif, based on major seconds (measure 3-7) and major and minor thirds (measure 9), as shown in E.g.1:

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<sup>4</sup> Corea, Chick. *The Essential of Chick Corea*, Los Angeles, Litha Music, 1982, p. 18-31.

E.g. 1

**Chick Corea: *Spain* (1972), m. 1-10.**

In measures 1-3 of first improvisation (E.g. 1) it is interesting to follow the upper and lower structure of the Gmaj7/11# chord, with added notes (note A in the left hand, or C# in the right hand, as an argument for the Lydian<sup>5</sup> mode in the right hand). At the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> measure, the harmonical anticipation for the next measure, the F#7/9 chord – structured only on two steps,<sup>6</sup> the 3<sup>rd</sup> and the 7<sup>th</sup>.

Between measures 5-8, (E.g. 1) by the right hand a line may be observed, based on the A minor pentatonic scale (represented A, C, D, E, G, the notes A, G are included in the left-hand chords structure). At the end of measure 8 there is another harmonical anticipation for the next chord, with added notes (the 4<sup>th</sup> and the 9<sup>th</sup> degrees) for the right hand, and the development with added notes (the 7<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>) for the left hand.

At the end of measure 10 (E.g. 1) another harmonical anticipation may be remarked, through the bipolar<sup>7</sup> chord of the V<sup>th</sup> degree (A7), with a bright distribution (G, C, Db/C#, F) chord, with (both) major and minor thirds (C#/Db and also natural C).

<sup>5</sup> Russell, George. *The Lydian Chromatic Concept of Tonal Organisation*, Concept Pub. Co., Brookline, Massachusetts, 2001, p. 46.

<sup>6</sup> Moody, Gregory. *Handbook of Harmony Substitution and Passing Chords*, Music Publish, Create Space Independent Publishing Platform, 2010, p. 87.

<sup>7</sup> *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Music*, Oxford Paperback References, Oxford University, 1996.

**E.g. 2**

The musical score for E.g. 2 consists of two systems of piano accompaniment. The first system covers measures 11 to 14. Measure 11 starts with a descending pentatonic line in the right hand (Eb minor scale) over an A7 chord in the left hand. Measures 12 and 13 continue this line, with the left hand moving to a Dmaj7 chord. Measure 14 ends with a whole note D in the right hand. The second system covers measures 15 to 19. Measure 15 has a Gmaj7/11# chord in the left hand. Measure 16 has a C#7alt chord in the left hand. Measure 17 has an F#7/9b chord in the left hand. Measures 18 and 19 continue the harmonic progression.

**Chick Corea: *Spain* (1972), m. 11 - 19.**

Measure 11 (E.g. 2) shows a descending pentatonic<sup>8</sup> line of the Eb minor scale, followed by chromatic passage, passing at an ascending half step, in measures 12-13, to tonic (root) Dmaj7, marking the end of a II-V-I relation (measures 9-14).

Measure 15 (E.g. 2) shows the Lydian mode (note C# in the right hand), at the end of measure 16, again the harmonical anticipation of the altered C# chord, bipolar, with added notes (minor 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>) for the left hand, in the right hand an A minor pentatonic sequence followed by an ascending transposition at the 4<sup>th</sup> in the next measure (D major pentatonic). The same 4<sup>th</sup> transposition for the left hand after C#7 alt. (altered) the move to F#7/9b in measure 20. (E.g. 3)

**E.g. 3**

The musical score for E.g. 3 covers measures 20 to 24. Measure 20 starts with a descending pentatonic line in the right hand (B minor scale) over a Bm chord in the left hand. Measure 21 continues this line, with the left hand moving to a B'alt chord. Measure 22 continues the line. Measure 23 continues the line. Measure 24 ends with a whole note B in the right hand.

**Chick Corea: *Spain* (1972), m. 20 – 24.**

<sup>8</sup> Fedele, Daniel. *The Pentatonic Scales Workbook a Step by Step Guide for Musicians*, Art Music, Hamburg, 2016, p. 67-69.

Measure 21 (E.g. 3) shows a B minor chord (based on major 7<sup>th</sup>, minor 3<sup>rd</sup>, and perfect 5<sup>th</sup> for the left hand) and an improvisational descending line for the right hand, based on the Lydian mode, starting from 3<sup>rd</sup> degree (D) of the same B minor chord. The end of the first solo will be marked through a bipolar chord, structured<sup>9</sup> from minor 7<sup>th</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>, major 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup> (or 13<sup>th</sup> over the bottom, same B minor).

## 2. Spain<sup>10</sup> – harmonic and melodic analysis of the 2<sup>nd</sup> improvisation

E.g. 4

### III.2.2. Solo 2 Spain

### Chick Corea: *Spain* (1972), m. 1 – 9.

Measures 1-3 (E.g. 4) of the second improvisation, start on the G7/11# chord, in the right hand an improvisational line may be observed, structured on degrees 3<sup>rd</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> # of the G scale.

Measures 4-8 (E.g. 4) are represented through repetitive formulas in mirror (recurrence)<sup>11</sup> on the same bipolar F#7/9b chord.

Measures 9-10 (E.g. 4/5) show a line in the right hand, based on the Ionian mode on D (D, E, F#, A, B, C#), and in the left hand the harmonic anticipation of chord A7 with bipolar structure (minor 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>).

<sup>9</sup> LaVerne, Andy. *Handbook of Chord Substitutions*, Ekay Music Inc., New York, 1991, p. 89-103.

<sup>10</sup> Corea, Chick. *The Essential of Chick Corea*, Los Angeles, Litha Music, 1982, p. 18-31.

<sup>11</sup> *Rudiments and Theory of Music* based on *The Syllabus of Theory Examination of Royal Schools of Music*, published by The Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music, London, 1958, p. 231.

**E.g. 5**

The musical score consists of two systems of piano accompaniment. The first system covers measures 10-13. Measure 10 starts with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 4/4 time signature. The right hand plays a quarter note G4, followed by a quarter rest, then a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4. The left hand plays a whole note chord of A7. Measure 11 shows a tritone substitution where the left hand chord changes to D#maj7. The right hand continues with a descending line: G4, F#4, E4, D4, C4. Measure 12 continues the descending line in the right hand: B3, A3, G3, F#3, E3. Measure 13 continues the descending line: D3, C3, B2, A2, G2. The second system covers measures 14-17. Measure 14 shows a tritone substitution where the left hand chord changes to C#alt. The right hand plays a descending line: G2, F#2, E2, D2, C2. Measure 15 continues the descending line: B1, A1, G1, F#1, E1. Measure 16 continues the descending line: D1, C1, B0, A0, G0. Measure 17 continues the descending line: F#0, E0, D0, C0, B0.

**Chick Corea: *Spain* (1972), m. 10 – 17.**

Measures 11-13 (E.g. 5) show a tritone substitution<sup>12</sup> of the A7 chord (in the left hand) with an improvisation development of the pentatonic scale Eb major, starting from the 6<sup>th</sup> degree of the pentatonic scale (for the right hand).

Measures 13-14, (E.g. 5) based on the 3<sup>rd</sup> degree of the scale, with added notes (the 6<sup>th</sup> and the 9<sup>th</sup>) for the left hand and a descending pentatonic sequence of the pentatonic scale (D) with added note (major 7<sup>th</sup> - C#), considered to be the passing note to the 3<sup>rd</sup> (B) for the next following chord (Gmaj7).

Measure 15 (E.g. 5) is important to follow due to the lower structure<sup>13</sup>/voicing on the left hand, structured on 2 short notes (harmonic reduction) on the second half of the first beat. At the same time, the right hand plays a descending pentatonic line of the F# minor scale, starting at the end of measure 14 through 15, on the 3<sup>rd</sup> degree.

In the end of measure 16 (E.g. 5) there is another harmonic anticipation of the chord C# alt. on the left hand.

<sup>12</sup> Pease, Ted. *Jazz Composition Theory and Practice*, Berklee Press, Berklee University Boston, 2003, p. 211.

<sup>13</sup> Levine, Mark. *The Jazz Piano Book*, Sher Music, Petaluma California, 1989, p. 46.

## E.g. 6

Chick Corea: *Spain* (1972), m. 18 – 24.

Measures 17-18 (E.g. 6) in the right hand show the typically jazz sequences<sup>14</sup> based on minor 2<sup>nd</sup>, major 3<sup>rd</sup>, and minor 3<sup>rd</sup>, in ascending movement, starting from the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> degrees of the scale C#. For the left hand, the bipolar chord without (elliptical) the root (tonic) and with the minor 7<sup>th</sup> added.

Measures 19-20 (E.g. 6) continue the same procedure of jazz sequences, again in ascending movement from the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> degrees of the scale, supported by F#7/9b in the left hand.

Measure 21 (E.g. 6) is based on a descending melodic line, strengthened by the inferior 6<sup>th</sup> for the right hand, and to contrast it (small cluster) voicings<sup>15</sup> structured on the 9<sup>th</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and the 5<sup>th</sup> degree of the scale on the left hand.

In measures 23-24 (E.g. 6) one may observe a left-hand harmonic structure of a bipolar B minor 7/9b chord, based on the 7<sup>th</sup>, major 3<sup>rd</sup>, minor 3<sup>rd</sup>, and major 6<sup>th</sup> (or 13), this time the 9b (from the chord structure) will be found in the right hand, upper structure (natural C).

<sup>14</sup> Richards, Tim. *Exploring Jazz Piano*, Schott Verlag, Mainz, 2005, p. 78 - 91.

<sup>15</sup> Waite, Brian. *Modern jazz Piano, A study in harmony and Improvisation*, New York, Hippocrene Books, Spellmount Publications, 1987, p. 241.

### 3. *Spain*<sup>16</sup> – harmonic and melodic analysis of the 3<sup>rd</sup> improvisation

E.g. 7

**III.2.2. Solo 3 Spain**

**Chick Corea: *Spain* (1972), m. 1 – 9.**

Measures 1-4 of third solo (E.g. 7) sounds like a calm beginning of flamenco,<sup>17</sup> supported by 6<sup>th</sup> intervals (extensions) with added notes in the left hand (2<sup>nd</sup> note A) in the 2<sup>nd</sup> bar. In the right hand, in measure 3, a pentatonic sequence of the C# minor scale, based on the tritone substitution with the left hand (Gmaj7/ - C# minor) starting on the 3<sup>rd</sup> degree.

Measures 5-6 (E.g. 7) are formed by pentatonic sequences on the scale for the right hand, and bipolar chord F#7/9b in the left hand.

In measures 7-8, (E.g. 7) in the right hand, Corea uses pentatonic sequences based on the C, again in tritone substitution relation with the left hand (F#7/9b).

E.g. 8

**Chick Corea: *Spain* (1972), m. 10 – 14.**

<sup>16</sup> Corea, Chick. *The Essential of Chick Corea*, Los Angeles, Litha Music, 1982, p. 18 - 31.

<sup>17</sup> Granadas, Manuel. *Manual didactico de la guitarra flamenco*, Ventilador Edicions, Barcelona, 1995, p. 46 - 71.

Measures 10-12 (E.g. 8) show a sequence of the A major scale with chromatic change<sup>18</sup> between root and the 7<sup>th</sup>, followed by a diminished descending line, half tone/whole tone, again with tritone relation (A7/Eb). Everything will be calmed down, when the root chord sounds in measure 14, (E.g. 7) the entire discourse is fulfilled by the right hand with the Dmaj7 arpeggio.

**E.g. 9**

**Chick Corea: *Spain* (1972), m. 15 – 24.**

In Measures 15-16 (E.g. 9) an F# minor arpeggio on the G maj7 chord is employed, in the left hand. It sounds dissonant,<sup>19</sup> but the hands are not playing at the same time! It means that the notes played by the right hand are considered extensions for the G maj7 chord (the raised 4<sup>th</sup>, typical for the Lydian mode, the 9<sup>th</sup> and the 7<sup>th</sup> as written for the left hand major 7).

Measures 17-24 (E.g. 9) are structured by the right hand through 3 note chords using the rhythmic formula that reminds us about the introduction, the beginning of the theme. No doubt, it is the end of the improvisation, everything will be calmed down again, and the next turn will be prepared. For the left hand the same open chords are used, structured on perfect tower 4<sup>th</sup>, bipolar or small cluster distribution.

The work reveals Corea's ability to assimilate elements of Spanish music in an original manner, harmoniously combining these with features of jazz music.

<sup>18</sup> Chinen, Nate. *Playing Changes Jazz for the New Century*, Pantheon Books, Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, New York, 2018, p. 28 - 31.

<sup>19</sup> Cook, Nicolas. *Music a very short Introduction*, Oxford University Press (OUP) Limited Company, Oxfordshire, 2000, p. 17.

## Final conclusions

A DownBeat Hall of Famer and NEA Jazz Master, 23-time Grammy Award winner, and keyboard virtuoso, Chick Corea has attained living legend status after five decades of unremitting creativity and an artistic output that is simply amazing. Chick Corea is the fourth-most-nominated artist in the history of the Grammys, with 63 nominations. He's also earned 3 Latin Grammy Awards, the most any artist in the *Best Instrumental Album* category has ever won. From straight-ahead jazz to avant-garde, bebop to fusion, children's songs to chamber music, along with some far-reaching forays into symphonic works, Chick has touched an astonishing number of musical bases in his illustrious career, while maintaining a standard of excellence that is awe-inspiring. Even after his death (in 2021), the musician is still an inspiration, a model of creativity for musicians all around the world. A tirelessly creative spirit, Corea continued to forge ahead, continually reinventing himself in the process of creating music.

The present analysis, a homage to Chick Corea, offers the opportunity for discovering and understanding concepts related to modern jazz. The analysis of the work *Spain* aimed to reveal the way the musician's ideas regarding freedom and creativity have manifested in his music, based on his knowledge of the principles that govern jazz music. At the same time, Corea managed to assimilate elements pertaining to Spanish music, thus creating a fusion of styles, at the core of which lied the concept of improvisation.

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## SPECIFIC SOUND PRODUCTION TECHNIQUES IN ACADEMIC GUITAR MUSIC

TYMUR IVANNIKOV<sup>1</sup>, TETIANA FILATOVA<sup>2</sup>

**SUMMARY.** The article is focused on the problematic research area in the borderline between performance, musical and composer's interests in academic guitar music. Modern growth trends have been identified in the sound production experimental reserves being not typical for the classical guitar performance stroke in concert practice until the early 20th century. A specific method typology of sound production has been proposed: using the technical performance parameters, phonic and visual sound effects, the origin, and primary, authentic realms of life. The connections with similar processes in other instrumental areas have been traced. The light has been thrown on technical and aesthetic facets. The specific methods in sound production stroke, the tone quality and acoustic characteristics varying in range, the expanded visual noise sound effects, and graphic images in the score have been examined. The artistic music samples of the whole generation of experimental composers, namely the French ones: Maurice Ohana, Roland Dyens, Francis Kleynjans and the Chilean ones: Juan Antonio Sánchez, Gustavo Becerra Schmidt analyzed through specific methods of guitar sound extraction have resulted in marked imaginative connections and associations with the content core of musical works.

**Keywords:** guitar music, specific methods of sound extraction, modern guitar concert practice

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<sup>1</sup> *Dr. habil. of Arts, Associate Professor, Head of the Department of Theory and History of Music Performing, the Tchaikovsky National Music Academy of Ukraine, Kyiv, Ukraine. E-mail: premierre.ivannikov@gmail.com*

<sup>2</sup> *Ph.D, Professor at the Department of Theory of Music, the Tchaikovsky National Music Academy of Ukraine, Kyiv, Ukraine. E-mail: filatova.tanya@gmail.com*



## 1. Introduction

A guitar player is challenged a lot professionally by modern guitar concert practice: it requires him/her to be highly masterful, to greatly cover musical stylistic horizons, to accept the instrument sounding in an aesthetic way, to possess a wide range of its expressive characteristics, to perform as a meaningful intonation. The problem of new, extraordinary ways of sound production using an acoustic guitar can be categorized as a secondary one among these priorities. However, the rapidly growing repertoire presents many score samples with copyright marks that require additional transcription, notes, detailed comments, diagrams, and pictures. They mostly deal with the specific features of sound production techniques: a search direction trending to extend the usual tone quality range when playing the piano, strings, folk, wind, and percussion instruments. This trend is facing a current progressive development without being a mainstream but acquiring a systemic phenomenon characteristic. As a result, a scientific literature frame (including articles, monographs, reference books) about “extended performance techniques” with relevant explanations and a systematic presentation of empirical experience is being formed. The most serious of them are Matthew Burtner’s works “Making noise: Extended techniques after experimentalism”<sup>3</sup>, Hugh Davies “Instrumental modifications and extended performance techniques”<sup>4</sup>, Nikolay Khrust “The Extended Instrumental Techniques. The Experience of Classification”<sup>5</sup>. The lack of such scientific research in the realm of academic guitar art makes the purpose of the article updated, namely, to cover the technical, artistic, and expressive reserves of specific guitar sound production techniques in line with the general experimental tradition. The article presents a comprehensive, systematic review of new phenomena in this area based on the ideas included in the monograph by Tymur Ivannikov “Guitar art of XX century as a phenomenon of creativity”<sup>6</sup> as well as publications by Tetiana Filatova<sup>7, 8</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> Burtner, Matthew. *Making noise: Extended techniques after experimentalism*. New music USA. 2005. Link: <https://nmbx.newmusicusa.org/making-noise-extended-techniques-after-experimentalism/>

<sup>4</sup> Davies, Hugh. *Instrumental modifications and extended performance techniques*. Grove Music Online. 2001. Link: <https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.47629>

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<sup>6</sup> Ivannikov, Tymur. *Guitar art of XX century as a phenomenon of creativity*. Zvoleyko Ed., Kamianets-Podilskyi, 2018.

<sup>7</sup> Filatova, Tetiana. *Academic Performing Traditions of Chilean Guitar Art*. Scientific herald of Tchaikovsky National Music Academy of Ukraine, vol. 131, 2021, pp. 26-37.

## 2. Typology of specific classical guitar sound extraction techniques

The whole range of guitar performance techniques can be conditionally divided into two strokes: the first one includes performance techniques that have long ingrained into the concert use and are described in detail in methodical literature; the second one includes innovative, search resources in the realm of modern guitar performance. Let's take a closer look at each stroke.

Academic guitar performance practice has formed a few *traditional*, recognized, standard, generally classical performance techniques that have been in practice for several centuries. They are well known to academic guitar players: free stroke (*tirando*); rest stroke (*apoyando*); stringing technique by beat, arpeggio, *rasgueado*; hitting the strings with the border of the hand at the bridge (*tambora*); harmonic tone (*natural or artificial harmonics*); ascending, descending legato and others. Some of them, including body hitting (*golpe*), playing with the thumb (*pulgar*) have been borrowed from the Spanish flamenco technique and have become ingrained in the classical academic music repertory. Among them there are as follows:

- *rasgueado*: stringing by alternating percussive sweeping with the right-hand fingers (“a”, “m”, “i”) down or up along several strings.

- *pulgar*: playing with the thumb on the right hand characterized by a hitting strike on the string due to rotating the hand for a strike and subsequent rest on the string below; used for an expressive accent sound production and melodic performance mainly on bass strings.

- *golpe* (translated from Spanish, meaning to strike) is a flamenco technique, meaning a strike, using the fingers or nails on the right hand to tap on the soundboard.

One of numerous examples of such used strokes is the world-famous Concerto “Aranjuez” (1939) by Joaquin Rodrigo being the twentieth-century Spanish composer. The introduction is built on *rasgueado* strokes (rhythimized stringing sequence and passage technique). Its genre is based on the Andalusian bulerías dance rhythms symbolizing the main features of flamenco guitar:

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<sup>8</sup> Filatova, Tetiana. *Chilean Guitar Music: Modern Reconstructions of Genre Traditions*. Scientific herald of Tchaikovsky National Music Academy of Ukraine, vol. 132, 2021, pp. 166-181.

## E.g. 1



## Joaquin Rodrigo. Concerto Aranjuez. I part.

The first part of the concerto *Allegro con spirito* includes the *rasgueado* stroke that corresponds to this ancient art of musical Spanish traditions. The cascade of dance melodies interchanges like a carnival procession, celebration, siesta: with orgiastic lively rhythms, emotional outbursts, expressive gestures, strong and intense emotions of joy, laughter, jubilation as well as playful scenes that accompany the theatrical performance. The first two combined measures allow us to catch the hemiolism of the meter-rhythmic dance frame, the so-called “compás” being typical of flamenco.

The *pulgar* sound production being characteristic of flamenco is found in the famous *Adagio* solo cadence, namely the second part of the Concerto (lower bass line):

## E.g. 2

*a tempo*

The musical score for E.g. 2 is written for guitar in 6/8 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It features a solo cadence with a *pulgarcito* sound. The score includes fingerings and a circled 5. Dynamics include *mf* and *ben marcato il canto*.

## Joaquin Rodrigo. Concerto Aranjuez. II part.

This is one of the most inspired pages of mournful lyrics in the 20<sup>th</sup>-century guitar music. It causes the empathy of deep feelings, either elevating to tear-jerking reverence, or plunging into the depths of the almost unbearable pain of compassion. One of the most famous melodies composed by Rodrigo heard by the composer when experiencing intuitive insight is attributed to the whole layer of cultural interactions coming from the merger of popular folk and canonical Spanish traditions.

The primary subject genre of the second part is based on the Andalusian paraliturgical song, namely, the flamenco *saeta*. The *saeta* is associated with the “*cante jondo*” singing being a fusion of gypsy, Muslim, Jewish melodies. The echoes of melismatic oriental ornaments can be

heard in the bottom guitar part, The stressful articulation of phrases intoned by supplication, suffering is emphasized by the expressive pulgar performance technique.

The golpe stroke includes clapping or finger hitting on the soundboard (hitting on the fingerboard is less common) that is also often found in modern academic guitar music. The original combination of traditional golpe and its modified versions can be seen using the example of “Vranyanka” being one of the music pieces from the cycle “Six Balkan Miniatures” (1991) composed by the famous Serbian composer Dušan Bogdanović.

The author combines the Balkan vranyanka’s song and dance elements in the miniature, the rhythmic dance flexibility is characterized by the slowness of plaintive vocal and speech statements. The guitar imitates the darbuk performance representing an oriental instrument, an attribute of the Balkan peoples’ musical life. Bogdanovich uses the golpe stroke indicating it at the beginning of the piece. The first two bars are played with a modified “golpe” namely by hitting the right thumb on the strings near the fingerboard, resembling the modern “slap” technique. This creates the effect of the low membrane darbuki sound “dun”. All subsequent thematic compositions end with a more traditional “percussion” that is palm slapping on the guitar fingerboard associated with a high sonorous “tek” stroke on the edge of the oriental drum:

E.g. 3

**Pesante** ♩ = 132  
(Golpe)  
6th = D (3+2+2)

Dušan Bogdanović. Six Balkan Miniatures. Vranyanka, bars 1-6.

Flageolets (from French: petite flute, a small flute) or “Natural and artificial harmonics” meaning a playing technique being typical not only for folk, but for all stringed instruments, it is a technique when acoustic resonances, side tones, overtones are extracted. The guitar effect of *natural harmonics* is created when the finger of the left hand slightly touches the open string at certain frets (fret No. 12, 7, 5, etc.) that respectively divide the string into

half, third, quarter and recreate the natural overtone scale. The *artificial harmonics* can let you extract an octave overtone of almost any sound on stopped strings that results from using two fingers of your right hand simultaneously. One of them only touches the string higher the sound beyond the 12<sup>th</sup> fret, an octave higher than the pressed note, while the second one produces the sound itself. The flageolets are traditionally published as diamond-shaped notes in music sheets, however, if there's a huge number of them in the text, the composer can title them with the typical abbreviation "fl.". As an example, let's take a piece of the guitar miniature "Southern Night Sweet Smells" from the cycle "Night Sea" (2010) by Ukrainian composer Mikhail Shukh:

## E.g. 4

## Mikhail Shukh. "Night sea". Southern Night Sweet Smells. Bars 1-10.

The artistic effect of using this technique is the illusion of a distant echo, echoes of bells, sound vibration. Such sounds have a gentle, ghostly, fabulous shade. This element is represented in the play "Southern Night Sweet Smells" as a tone painting, a picturesque landscape of the night sea. The composer uses this technique to create an impressionistic canvas, multitert arpeggiated verticals along with colorful overtone trails serve as its colors. Flageolets freeze among soft sound overflows and grazes. Acoustic resonances are formed in the low end of the overtone range and create perfect consonance ripples over the bass pedals. There is a state of contemplation, meditative reflection, and the listener dives into the world of statics, subtle vibrations, peace, and silence.

New, *specific*, and experimental resources of guitar performance were discovered due to the search channel of the last-century musical creativity, mainly its avant-garde aesthetic paradigm. The 20<sup>th</sup>-century musical culture focuses its increased attention on the new phonic, coloristic, sound-imagery instrument reserves due to various factors: first, the organological updating of European and American guitar types; secondly, the general avant-garde trend of the experimental search for a new sound, its microtonal and noise non-musical spectra; thirdly, to attract technical innovations from non-academic areas of music making (jazz, rock, fusion). The developed academic repertoire resulted in the resources of the classical six-string guitar being significantly enriched by composers' and masterful performers' efforts. The guitar concert practice has extended through a variety of specific extended techniques in the same way as other instrumental areas. All kinds of percussion techniques: rattles, plucks, claps, hits on different parts of the guitar body imitating the sounds of Latin American, Asian, African instruments, including a "harp sound"; prepared sounds of pre-twisted "cow bell" strings, damped sounds using foam plastic, as well as a group of strokes borrowed from the jazz and rock like slapping, bending, Bartok-pizzicato, tapping, sliding.

The most common strokes will be briefly described as follows:

- slapping is a strong strike on the string with the edge of the thumb "p"; a slap is produced mainly by hitting over the sound hole in contrast to the traditional "tambora" technique performed at the bridge.

- bending is a common technique of non-tempered sound elevation due to the transverse pulling of the pressed string with the finger of the left hand; the academic practice also includes an original technique for performing a band by quickly twisting the sounding string tuner and returning it to its previous position.

- tapping is a sound production with the fingers of both hands on the fretboard by strongly striking the strings on the frets.

- Bartok-pizzicato is a string plucking with a large amplitude of their tension, creating a snap with an acute metallic phonic color.

- sliding is a string sliding along the fingerboard using a metal or glass slide ring.

- "cow bell" is a sound effect of bells created by sound production of adjacent twisted bass strings being fixed at a certain fret.

- "harp sound" is sound effect of a harp achieved by playing the strings near the fingerboard tuners.

It's possible to systematize a variety of specific guitar sound production strokes by their technical performance parameters; phonic and sound-visual properties; origin and primary life areas.

**1. If classified by technical performance parameters** all specific guitar sound production strokes can be classified into percussion (drums), plucked (strings), sliding and preparation.

1.1. **Percussion (drums)** techniques differ in *sound production areas* and *sound production methods*. Sound production areas can be a) a fingerboard; b) a soundboard and a back; c) a body side (an instrument side); d) a bridge for fixing strings. The sound production methods include a) palm or edge of the hand strikes; b) fist of one or both hand strikes; c) fingers, fingertips, finger pulps or nails strikes; d) various devices (wooden or metal ones, like sticks, rods).

1.2. **Plucked (string)** specific techniques include a) Bartok-pizzicato meaning a string plucking with a large amplitude of their tension, creating a snap; b) bending meaning a string bending with a finger on the fretboard or adjusting the pitch with tuners creating a microtonal floating sound effect.

1.3. **Sliding** techniques involve string sliding or fretting along the fingerboard using metal or glass finger slide rings on the left hand.

1.4. **Preparation** techniques combine various pre-prepared external devices that affect the timbre change of sound characteristics (metal and glass objects, damper materials, twisted strings).

**2. If classified by phonic and sound imaginary parameters** specific performance techniques depend on the timbre function: a) sound imitation of other instruments (harps, bells, percussion idiophones); b) noise imitation of non-musical sounds (squeaking, grinding, palpitation, rustling, whistling, footsteps); c) signal imitation (warning bells, shot).

**3. If classified by origin and primary life area** specific techniques can be associated with a) the folk environment; b) jazz and rock environment; c) experimental avant-garde area of composer's creativity.

### **3. Specific sound production techniques in the 20<sup>th</sup>-century academic guitar music**

The most active experimental creative locations were formed in French culture as part of European academic guitar repertoire inherited by us from the music of the last century. An individual innovative development segment of new guitar sound production methods was generated through an avant-garde aesthetics effect. It was based on the search for a new sound and the discovery of its noise acoustic and electro-acoustic resources. It deals with a general trend for experiments in the sound modifications realm in the compositions by Pierre Boulez "The Hammer without a Master" (1955), "Éclat" (1965), "Domains" (1969). Guitar music

was added to the search by revealing the microtonal and sonorous guitar capacity in the Concerto for Guitar and Orchestra “Three Structures” (1950-1956), the cycle “If the Day Comes” (1963) by Maurice Ohana. Innovations in sound production often accompanied organological changes in the design of the guitar (in this case, the ten-string guitar by Narciso Yepes).

Maurice Ohana’s seven-movement guitar cycle “If the Day Comes” (1963) is full of original performance techniques. They involve specific metal devices for sound production: rods for striking the strings with the right hand and various slides for sliding on the fretboard that partly echoes with the performance practice Hawaiian slide guitars.

E.g. 5

Glissez lentement sans interruption du son  
(rasg) ————— (rasg) ————— (rasg) ————— (rasg) —————

Enchaînez les sons glissés approximativement sur les accords marqués de façon à produire une progression onduante et ininterrompue jusqu'au suraigu.

*ff* sons suraigus indéterminés sur les cordes 1. 2. 3.  
Toujours avec la barrette appuyez sur les cordes dans la région au-dessus de la rosace  
*durée ad lib.*

### Maurice Ohana. Si le Jour paraît. II part.

The term slide (from English to slide) means the guitar performance technique using a smooth left-hand finger slide ring made of hard materials (copper, steel, brass). They provide a smooth slide along the strings and a characteristic buzzing metallic repercussion. It is appropriate to have a horizontal guitar position when playing the Hawaiian slide guitar. The composer is not interested in the national style of playing, but in individual specific acoustic and timbre effects in the mentioned composition. In this case, they make the experimental field of the author's avant-garde thinking more complete.

Specific percussion techniques implemented to recreate an oriental sound imitation of African percussion instruments as well as the fusion culture aesthetics are used by a French composer-guitarist with Maghrebi (Tunisian) ethnic roots Roland Dyens’s music.

Tunisian motifs create “an orientally flavored environment” in the guitar quartet “Hamsa” suite (1998) being characterized in such a way by the composer himself in the annotation to the printed music edition. The cycle finale of “Tunis, Tunisie” is the Arab exotic eye, namely, the old customs of the Maghreb Nubian instrumental performance. The old Nubians are based on improvisation practice in Arabic music of the oral tradition. Each improvisation keeps to an ostinato rhythmic formula and a certain mode (makam). The Nubians are usually played with the lute group instruments (oud) and a bowed rabab. The percussion is charged with the rhythmic function. The composer combined the voice functions in the guitar quartet, he divided them into parts.

The Tunisian percussion (tar, dafa, darbuki) sound is imitated in the lower voice part, the sound of by hitting the guitar sides and the soundboard. The structure of the rhythmic formula corresponds to one of the well-known Middle Eastern rhythms (maqsum in Egyptian folklore, düyek in the Tunisian one).

The upper voices reproduce the structure of one of the Middle Eastern maqams (nev'eser) with a characteristic microtonal intonation when played the oud. The guitar is not designed for the quarter-tone performance practice however, the oud playing is imitated due to the introduction of scordatura, sliding, melismatics and the bending technique (vertical tightening of the pressed strings with the left hand).

E.g. 6

Roland Dyens. Hamsa. V part «Tunis, Tunisie», bars 1-4.

Another composer's work includes a whole complex of specific simultaneous sound-producing techniques: Bartok-pizzicato plucking (the letter "B" on the stroke) and striking the strings, namely, slapping (traced notes) in the third part finale of "Libra sonatine" (1986).

E.g. 7

avec l'index de la main gauche  
jouer les cordes aiguës sur  
la tête de la guitare (J)

secco

(m. droite) *p* *p* *p* *p* *p* *p* *p* *p*

(m. gauche) *p* *p* *p* *p* *p* *p* *p* *p*

x = percussion sur l'éclisse avec l'ongle. (grave aigu)

vif. *sfz*

**Roland Dyens. Libra sonatine. III part «Fuoco»**

This example also includes percussion techniques, namely, slapping the strings on the fretboard with the palm edge of the right hand (traced crosses instead of notes), the "harp sound" effect, as well as board finger tapping of different altitude under and above the fretboard (crosses instead of notes).

Specific techniques are designed to reflect the composition program, namely, the events and emotional reactions to them in Francis Kleynjans' music. For example, the play "At the Dawn of the Last Day" (1988) illustrating the night before the execution includes several special guitar techniques at once. The plot includes such fluctuating states as: anxiety, fear, despair, hopelessness depicted with almost cinematic accuracy in the composition. The event line turns into reality through decorative and theatrical, sound and visual signals with the stage visualized features of the composition plot. The composer appeals to a huge resource of specific performing techniques to achieve these aims. Two 5th and 6th bass strings twisted with each other demonstrate the "cow bell" technique

and create the effect of a clinking bell: a glimmer of dawn is marked by exactly six of its ringing bells. The dynamically increased finger-nailing on the sides of the guitar turning into booming fist strikes on the soundboard, imitates the approaching and marching jail servants. It's impossible to distinguish the fingernail sound along the bass strings from the prison cell door when being opened.

E.g. 8

♩ = approximativement 152

⑤  
⑥

*f* pesant et regulier

étouffer sub. *p*

(percussion régulière en crescendo)

perc. *i m*  
*x x*

Lent.....Accel.....rall.....très lent...  
Crissements ongles

A tempo pesant et pathétique

*ff* *ff* *pp* presque imperceptible *pp*

**Francis Kleynjans. A l'Aube du dernier Jour. II part. Bars 1-7.**

The author appears as an ambitious experimenter in the realm of onomatopoeic instrument resources in this composition. Their imitation is so realistic that the listener's imagination easily completes all the tragic event shades reflected in the music.

In some cases, the printed percussion techniques may include additional staves to indicate strikes with the right hand (from Spanish: mano derecha or M. D.) and left hand (from Spanish: mano izquierda or M. I.). The crosses are put instead of notes to distinguish the conditional strike pitch (mainly on the soundboard and the side) in rhythmic patterns and their graphic layout on the staves is intended to have a high-frequency sound: finger-nailing on the soundboard or the side, or a low-frequency sound achieved through striking the soundboard with the edge of the thumb.

As an example, let's take a piece from "Sonata para guitarra" (2004) by the famous Chilean composer Juan Antonio Sánchez. The sonata finale includes a detailed percussion section in the rhythm of the Chilean dance cueca: its main rhythmic formula is played on the guitar with both hands in different places by tapping the soundboard, sides, frets on the fingerboard.

E.g. 9

Juan Antonio Sánchez. Sonata para guitarra. IV part.

The tradition of percussion noise atmosphere as read in conjunction with a lively Latin American dance plasticity reminds of non-stop dancathon sounds at festive ceremonies in Santiago de Chile.

The Sonata III for Guitar (1979) by another Chilean composer Gustavo Becerra Schmidt is one of the most technically complex solo compositions of this genre. Grant Gustafson being the German masterful player was its first performer and editor who deciphered many playing techniques imitating the Afro-Brazilian dance tradition “batucada” (basic rhythm 3 + 3 + 2) in the annotation to the printed music and the author inscribed his sonata to him. The ensemble percussion basis included at the end of the cycle is played by the “tapping” technique used as double signs (note + cross on the note stem) in the text and resembles samba with rhythmic patterns.

E.g. 10

Gustavo Becerra Schmidt. Sonata № 3. III part «Batucada», bars 12-19.

#### 4. Conclusions

It is possible to classify specific playing techniques in accordance with three parameters: technical, phonic, authentic when using modern surveys for experimental reserves of guitar sound production. They technically differ due to the touch nature: a strike (percussion), pluck (strings), sliding (glissading); damping (preparation with external objects).

According to the phonic (the timbre coloristic coloring) and sound imaginary parameters, the experimental methods of guitar performance are divided into imitating the timbre of other instruments (harps, bells, percussion) and creating non-musical analogues (squeaking, grinding, rustling, whistling). The first ones extend the guitar timbre amplitude, the second ones are used as a sound imaginary function in the artistic illustration of the piece of music program. Both of them increase extra-musical associations, for example, with the noise of the wind (nail string grinding with a changed pitch) or, alternatively, with the timbres of other instruments: “cow bells” (twisting of two strings on the same fret); a small harp “harp sound” (playing the strings behind the neck on near the tuners); a side drum (strikes with the fingers of the right hand on the bridge with the sound changed by the palm of the left hand on the soundboard).

Authentic, immanent parameters of performance techniques taken from a non-academic environment being of a different genealogy, add elements of folklore life, ritual practices, jazz music-making to the concert atmosphere of philharmonic halls or create outrageous happenings, avant-garde experiments created while performing them.

The modern guitar repertoire includes a great number of music pages with experimental methods of sound production. Composers discover new horizons of guitar timbre, combine the academic concert performance practice with the electro-acoustic and folk instrument traditions, consolidate the ways of cross-cultural interaction. The indicated trends can be observed in the works composed by Leo Brouwer, Mathias Duplessy, Carlo Domeniconi, Alberto Ginastera and others in addition to the investigated compositions. The music composed by these authors offers challenges for further investigation.

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## THE CONNECTION BETWEEN A PROFESSIONAL SINGER'S INTONATION AND THE COORDINATION OF THE CYBERNETIC CIRCUITS OF THE EAR

ANDA OLIMPIA POP<sup>1</sup>, IGNÁC CSABA FILIP<sup>2</sup>

**SUMMARY.** This article is addressed to pedagogues, students, and professional singers and draws attention to the tight connection between the functionality of the larynx and the cybernetic circuits of the ear. During the training periods of a singer, and then throughout one's career, we deal with sound intonation flaws very many times. These are due not only to a flawed vocal technique or amusia<sup>3</sup>, but also to flaws of audio-vocal feedback circuits many times. If they are discovered and corrected, the voice can be completely regained. It is very important to be aware of the difference between hearing and listening, dealing with the listening posture when singing and the medical check of a specialized doctor in hearing impairment.

**Keywords:** voice, singer, connection between ear and voice, cybernetic circuits, audio-vocal feedback, control loop.

### Introduction

In his view, the ear plays a major part in vocal production, both as an organ regulating reception mechanisms of a vocal sound and as an organ that initiates the gestures necessary for a singing act. *Man is nothing else than an ear; an ear that speaks and sings*<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Associate professor, doctoral candidate Transilvania University of Braşov, Faculty of Music, [andaolimpiapop@gmail.com](mailto:andaolimpiapop@gmail.com), [anda.pop@unitbv.ro](mailto:anda.pop@unitbv.ro)

<sup>2</sup> University professor, Transilvania University of Braşov, Faculty of Music, [filipignac@yahoo.com](mailto:filipignac@yahoo.com), [f\\_ignac@unitbv.ro](mailto:f_ignac@unitbv.ro)

<sup>3</sup> Amusia is the inability to recognise musical tones or to reproduce them. Amusia can be congenital (present at birth) or be acquired sometime later in life (as from brain damage). Amusia is composed of a + musia and literally means the lack of music. Also commonly called tone deafness.

<sup>4</sup> Tomatis, Alfred A., *Come nasce e si sviluppa l'ascolto umano. Psicologia e neurofisiologia di una funzione vitale*, trad.it g Cimino, Como, RED, 2001, p.57.



All research conducted on patients who suffered from professional deafness, related to hearing traumatism, lead Tomatis to check the theory according to which there is a parallel between the auditory flaws and various alterations of the vocal function. It could be noted that there precisely lacked those frequencies from the voice spectrum of his patients, that the subject could not perceive any longer because of trauma they had suffered. From here, he formulated a principle called the 'Tomatis effect', according to which a voice can reproduce only those frequencies that the ear can perceive and where there is no damage at an organic level, the modification of hearing can determine an immediate and unconscious modification of the vocal emission.

According to Tomatis, the recoverable loss of frequency areas of hearing can derive, in fact, from unconscious mechanisms of self-protection that are triggered not only when an individual is assaulted and stressed in a concrete manner by forms of sound pollution, but also when they feel psychically menaced by certain sounds or voices. The ear, that is the brain, can thus decide not to listen, selecting the frequencies that it intends to exclude. In this case, we are dealing with a psychogenic deafness consisting of a lack of analysis at a cortical level of the rejected frequencies. Very often in his writings, Tomatis underlines the difference, that he considers fundamental, between **hearing**, which is a passive way of sound reception and **listening**, which is a conscious act that reveals the will and wish of a subject to communicate and so, to extract all possible information from a received acoustic message.

For this reason, singing needs a clearly defined wish for listening and any hearing impairment, regardless of its origin, will manifest in the voice as a weak quality of timbre or difficulties in intonation, expression, articulation, or as dysphonia. The ear participates in the singing act not only through the cochlea, with its activity of frequency analysis, but also through the vestibule, that controls verticality and balance as well as organization and coordination of muscles implied in the phono-respiratory act.

In comparison both with listening and singing, according to Tomatis, the labyrinth, that is the cochleo-vestibular ensemble that constitutes the inner ear is considered the only one responsible for its functionality. Activating listening and so, voice, implies preparing the body for reception, assuming a posture that favors the verticalization of the spine and the opening of the body towards the space, conditions considered necessary for the communication dynamics. In singing, the body is implied wholly. We know that in singing the instrument is made up of the human body and it is, undoubtedly, one of the most complex from the point of view of its structure. It is true that certain parts seem to be more strained than others;

nevertheless, these remain functionally integrated into a whole and do not reach the stage of performance unless they are integrated and act according to the dynamics of the entire body<sup>5</sup>.

### **1. Voice control through the cybernetic circuits of the ear**

If we look at the mechanisms through which the ear controls the instrument of the singer – the voice – we can extrapolate the fact that everything that exists, from the smallest cell to the entire universe, is coordinated and controlled. Cybernetics is the science that deals with control mechanisms. Even if it is considered a new science, it is based on some principles as old as the world. Plato guided himself with these laws in his writings about the govern. It is impossible to transgress as they are ageless.

In cybernetic terms, a system is regulated when its function is subjected to control. Each organ of the human body controls a certain function. When intonational problems occur, this means that certain circuits and bodily reflexes are not well mastered cybernetically. As we head towards efficient listening, uncontrolled behavior occurs more rarely. Theoretically, singing does not imply anything complicated. Each sound emitted by a singer follows rules that are submitted to the listening function. Art and the ability to sing consist in abandoning the body that vibrates in the loops of the cybernetic circuits and of the regulating processes that work automatically. A cybernetic loop is a circuit that starts and finishes in the same place, the initial system determining a response that returns and conditions again (feedback).

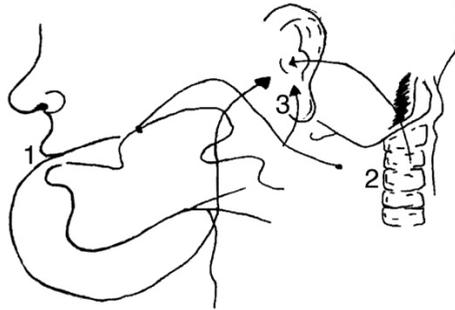
The act of singing is controlled by the ear through more circuits of this kind. They need to be identified, coordinated, and freed by the flaws installed through a use that attacks the larynx (for instance, through a flawed technique) or through different lesions to the hearing or the brain. Once we go back to the automatic and original functioning, these circuits will function without constraints, creating countless and infinite possibilities for the voice. At the same time, through correct functioning, the voice will stay healthy and protected.

Intonation in singing is controlled by the ear and the entire system is supervised by its listening function.

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<sup>5</sup> Tomatis, Alfred A., *The Ear and the Voice*, Maryland, Toronto, Oxford: The Scarecrow Press, Inc. Lanham, 2005, p. 67.

### Auditory vocal loops



1. From the mouth to the external ear through the auricle or pavilion.
  2. From the larynx to the cervical spine to the ear.
  3. From the mouth through the muscles and tendons to the ear.
- Ultimate control resides in the inner ear

E.g. 1 (Auditory vocal loops) shows how the intention to sing is processed by the brain and then, through feedback, determines the act of singing. Once we emit a sound, the auditory control is set to motion, collecting a part of the sound produced to maintain control.

In fact, the sound emitted by the subject mobilizes inner sensations and those of the mucous, even visceral tissues, more than the perception of a sound from the exterior could do. And due to conscious listening to these sensations, the singer can control and modify the vocal gesture. The awareness of being a body able to vibrate underlies the training of the vocal instrument, so that each experience that develops and intensifies this awareness has a priority value.

As we said, the ear selects the frequencies and transmits them to the brain so that singing unfolds according to the initial intention. In short, a feedback loop is configuring.

Sequentially, it takes place as follows:

- I intend to sing
- I sing

The ear tells me that I sing precisely what I wish to sing. I continue to sing and monitor myself. A continuous feedback loop is created. The auditory control is activated and fitted with the ability to select what a singer wishes to hear when he mentally previews what he will sing and knows to answer to what the brain planned.

In concerts, the ear acts together with the nervous system, which also requires auditory control, adding related motor impulses to guide the motor system. Each part of the body that is activated responds at a centralized level, so that the sensory-motor control complies with the requirements of the ear.

## 2. The Audio-Larynx Loop

This is the most important cybernetic circuit of the ear because the sound is formed in the larynx. All other circuits<sup>6</sup> depend on it functioning correctly. The artist who is a virtuosic handler of his body instrument improves the vocal production by adding various colors, inflexions, and modulations to it.

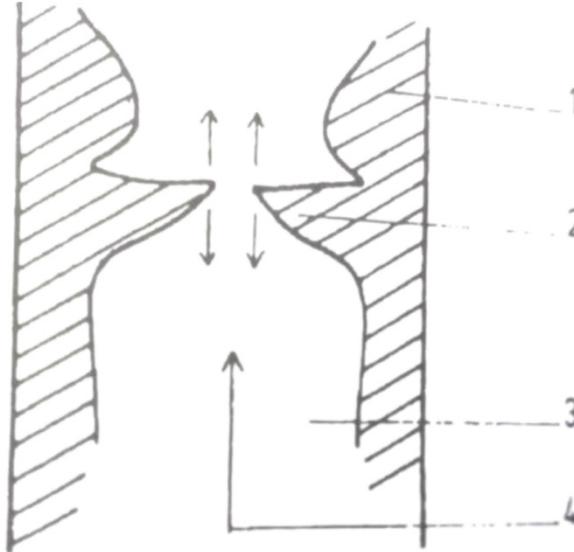
The larynx is a musculo-cartilaginous organ that sits at the top of the trachea. Although we can identify two sets of vocal cords, only the lower two are involved in singing. The upper cords are commonly called ventricular bands or false vocal cords. The two lower vocal cords are drawn together and vibrate throughout emission. The vibration is caused by air passing across the cords. The volume of air is so small that it seems almost spontaneous and automatic as with speech. The brain essentially regulates the tension of the vocal cords to keep the flow of air at a minimum, so that the vibration corresponds to the desired pitch<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>6</sup> A. Tomatis describes eleven cybernetic circuits between the ear and audio-vocal tract: The Audio facial loop, The Audio-Mandibular Loop, The Audio Larynx Loop, The Audio Pharyngeal Loop, The Audio-Lingual Loop, The Audio-Thoracic Loop, The Audio Mouth & The Audio Nasal Loop, The Audio Recurrential Loop, The Audio-Lumbar Sacral Loop, The Audio-Cervical Loop, The Audio Corporeal Loop.

<sup>7</sup> Larsen, William J, *Anatomy: Development, Function, Clinical Correlation*. Philadelphia: Saunders, Elsevier Science, 2002, p.235

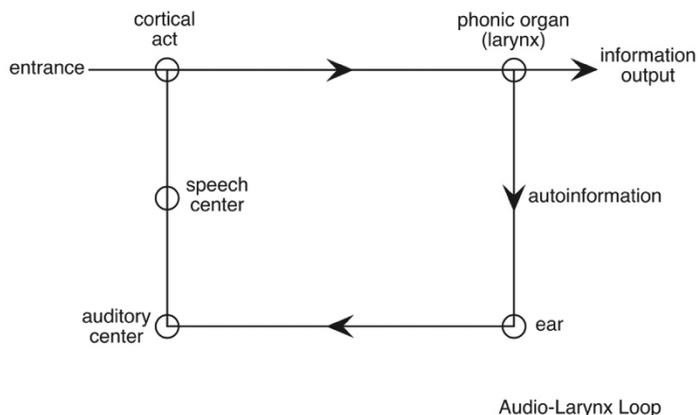
**E.g. 2**



**Larynx (1. Ventricular bands of false cords;  
2. Lower vocal cords;  
3. Trachea;  
4. Puff of breath)**

There are many theories of phonation, but what helps a singer in the understanding of the process is the auditory awareness combined with skilled control of the air column through conscious breathing. This process is described at length in my PhD thesis 'Conscious breathing – the connection between repertoire versatility and vocal health'.

The sound produced in the larynx is immediately controlled by inner circuits of the ear. Two circuits are at work, one through bone conduction, the other through air conduction. These circuits meet in the ear, which can absorb both kinds of information, one devoted to articulation of consonants of words, the second essentially concerned with phonation of vowel sounds. The ear – larynx loop permits the regulation of audio-vocal reaction, which means that sound intonation is regulated here.



### Audio-Larynx Loop

The stimulus for entering this cybernetic loop is the intention to sing. This decision sends an impulse to the phonation organs, especially the larynx, and when exiting the circuit, we benefit from the sound emitted by the system. However, part of the acoustic energy released is assigned to the organ of control, the ear. Its purpose is to send the information to the auditory center in the brain that controls phonation. The return impulse then produces singing.

Following his research, Tomatis postulates that „*The voice only contains what the ear can hear*”. This statement applies exclusively to the right ear; there are no exceptions.

So, any disorder of the right ear hearing, for various reasons, will determine intonation flaws and over time, voice deterioration. Maria Callas saw A. Tomatis, signaling the fact that she could no longer control singing with her right ear. The therapy for a minimum of three months was recommended to correct the situation. Unfortunately, she was not aware of the importance of the disorder of this circuit and left on a journey with Aristotle Onassis. Few people know that she lost voice control and her voice deteriorated because of the audio-larynx cybernetic loop.

### 3. The Concept of ordering

Singing responds to the need of expression and self-knowledge and allows man to have a dialogue with the environment through sound vibrations and acoustic feedback and due to the high frequency voice components helps nurture the nervous system, offering it sensory stimuli that are essential for its vitality. So, a beautiful voice is a voice that, due to its acoustics, especially high harmonics, offers well-being both to those emitting it and to those listening to it. The vocal function, in its complementarity with the listening function, contributes to the awareness of sensory and communication nature of man in the context of the environment and the universe.

Starting with the laws of synergism<sup>8</sup>, the Lichtenberg team from Institut für Gesang und Instrumental spiel, led by Gisella Rohmert<sup>9</sup>, studied the functionality of the singing voice, investigating the connections and methods of interaction between sound, body, psyche, sensory organs, and the environment.

Among the most significant aspects of Lichtenberg research, I would like to underline here especially that related to the **concept of ordering**, a fundamental synergy concept theorized by the physicist Hermann Haken. He states that in the processes of self-organization that characterize complex systems, various parts of the system known to let themselves guided by an invisible hand, but at the same time, the same parts are those that, in turn, by coordination, create this hand. This type of invisible entity is called **orderer**<sup>10</sup>. By applying this point of view to the singing system, Rohmert identifies the vocal sound as a potential orderer that, once produced through the coordinated action of the elements of the system, becomes an autonomous entity, able to guide and organize the system, optimizing its resources. As with the light in a laser (one of the physics models studied by Hasken), through the action of mirror reflection, feeds back with the electrons that generated it, thus nurturing its own energy, transferred then as a light concentrated and directed in the beam,

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<sup>8</sup> The term 'synergic' that literally means the science of combined effects was invented by Hermann Haken to indicate as study field that aims at discovering the laws that regulate the birth of ordering structures within complex systems.

<sup>9</sup> Gisella Rohmert, author of a canto method that is based on the idea that the whole body is an instrument that vibrates, and it is subjected to self-organisation and self-regulation rules.

<sup>10</sup> Haken, Herman, *Sinergetica, Il segreto del successo della natura*, trad.it. G. Longo, Torino: Boringhieri, 1983, p.125-127.

equally the voice sound, reflected against the walls of the resonance cavity, feeds back to the larynx, which, stimulated in its vibrational activity, is fed in its turn and receives quality and power with minimal energy loss. This phenomenon can take place when the air column is coordinated consciously with the help of breathing. It is also the phenomenon Husson talks about in 'The Voice in Singing', namely the impedance returned on the larynx<sup>11</sup>.

Essentially, it is a matter of triggering a virtuosic circuit due to which the larynx, through acoustic feedback, can use the sound energy to organize its own mechanism of sound production, thus saving the muscle and air energy. Of course, for this circuit to be activated, it is necessary that during emission, there should be certain particular conditions, namely no dispersion of sound energy in the vocal tract (and this depends on the setting of the oropharyngeal cavity of resonance) and that this energy be permanent.

According to Rohmert, a permanent sound energy can be guaranteed only through a frequency interval that remains stable, regardless of the pitch of the fundamental sound in singing. This stable frequency interval is identified throughout the auditory stimuli of the singer<sup>12</sup>. These are harmonic groups, situated around the value of 3000, 5000, and 8000 Hz, whose presence in the vocal sound manifest not as a superior supplementary voice, but as an energetic timbre quality, defined as the voice shine.

It is very important that those who train singers perceive the correspondence of these sounds, found by Lichtenberg researchers, with the frequencies of resonance of external ear cavities (3000 Hz), middle ear and inner ear cavities (5000 and 8000 Hz). In virtue of this correspondence, a vocal sound that contains these stimuli represents a biological key of access to the ear and through it, to the nervous system and so, to the entire body. Shining becomes thus a trait of the voice whose importance surpasses by far the aesthetic dimension and receives a functional value from the moment it assumes the role of orderer of the inner system of singing. Through its shining, the sound organizes its own inner structure, integrating harmoniously the other acoustic parameters (fundamental, vocal, and vibrato) and it influences positively the organization of the body, the breathing and articular activity on the psyche, and consequently, on the musical expression. In short, all functional levels are ordered with a self-regulation mechanism.

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<sup>11</sup> Husson, Raoul, *Vocea Cântată (The Voice in Singing)*, Bucharest: Editura Muzicală, 1968, p.92.

<sup>12</sup> Rohmert, Gisela, *Il cantante in cammino verso il suono*, Diaste Libri, 1995, p.29.

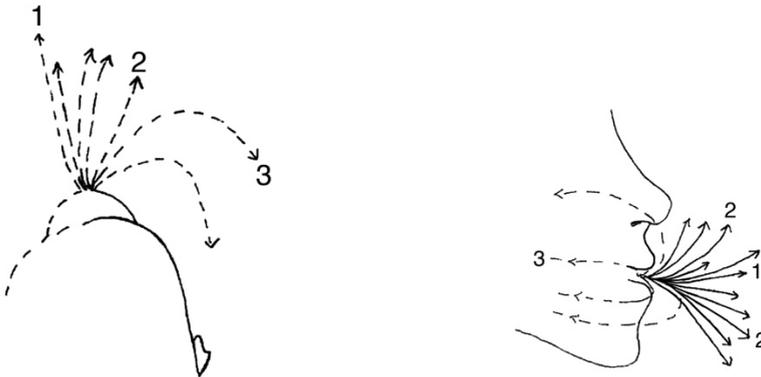
It is obvious that the identification of the auditory stimuli of a singer represents a development and a clarification of the theories of Tomatis regarding cortical recharging, to which Rohmert specifically refers. While the French physician talks in general about high frequencies, the research conducted by the Lichtenberg team mentioned exactly the frequency intervals and further developed the functional view of singing<sup>13</sup>.

Any emitted sound is very complex and contains both fundamental tones as well as the entire scale of associated harmonics. Once launched into the air, the sound is scattered and cannot be controlled any longer. High frequencies spread in a straight, directed line. Low frequencies, contained in all emitted sounds, propagate in a circular manner, bathing the outside of the ear. Therefore, when we hear our voice, we hear mainly the low frequencies of the sounds we emit.

Therefore, we are always surprised when we hear our recorded voice. While making sounds in the room with good reverberation, the feedback we get allows us to control high and medium frequencies as well as low ones.

E.g. 4

#### Production and Distribution of Frequencies



A: From above B: Profile  
1. Heights 2. Mediums 3. Lows

This is an example of cybernetic control when **hearing** becomes **listening**.

<sup>13</sup> Tosto, Ida Maria, *La voce musicale, orientamenti per l'educazione vocale*, Torino: EDTsrl, 2009, p. 11-12.

Not only is the importance of the ear and the listening function for the voice confirmed, but the sound itself becomes part of the singing system as an autonomous entity that interacts with the other elements that compose it. The role of the *auditory awareness* remains fundamental. In fact, Rohmert says about the auditory stimuli that only when singers listen to and recognize these elements in a conscious manner, can they then become new teachers.

#### **4. Pitch sound depends on listening posture and bone conduction**

*“A singer needs to accomplish the ability to move from pitch to pitch in the middle register without the throat moving. This needs to first be accomplished on a hum function.”*

*Giovanni Battista Lamperti*

An efficient alignment of the body activates listening, and the listening posture in the ear is the most important in singing. We can talk of a posture of the ear in full connection with the body posture.

The forward stretch of the sternum is the key to a healthy onset<sup>14</sup>.

Sounds are differentiated in the cochlear duct or organ of Corti. Each frequency is perceived in its own location along the duct, where it is distributed to the hair cells, which are specialized according to pitch. The vestibules use sounds, preparing the body to adjust the posture for listening. The cochlea breaks sound into its various elements and sends its analysis to the brain, thus extending its reach throughout the nervous system. The brain begins the process of differentiating the frequencies and sending them to pitch receptors. Then, after gathering in the temporal cortex, they are distributed throughout the most recent part of the brain. Finally, the entire information is redistributed to the whole body.

To sum up, the vestibule follows the directives of cochlea to achieve the best possible posture for efficient listening.

After we succeed in aligning the body according to physiological curves, relaxing the muscles of the face and mouth, we shall note that the sounds that we emit become purer, the timbre enlightens and the effort we make when singing diminishes. Your voice will acquire the resonance in the bones that is the mark of a great singer. Good posture reduces the impact of gravity, allowing muscles to work more efficiently.

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<sup>14</sup> Jones, David L., *A Modern Guide to Old World Singing*, Milton Keynes UK: Lightning source UK. Ltd, 2017, p.31.

In the singing posture, the larynx sends resonance to the bones that touch it. The spinal column then sets all structures that touch it into resonance. Once the bones begin to sing, they cause the cavities to vibrate. The voice becomes vibrant and more harmonious. It is resonance emanating from every bone in the body that causes this change.

Laryngeal vibrations form fundamental tones, while the harmonic shower of sparks associated with the fundamentals, rich in higher frequencies and reinforcing the initial sound, considerably depends on the skeleton.

Once you can listen for highs you have to find your real voice the same way by seeking the high harmonics. This is very subtle and when you begin to perceive the voice this way, it is an entirely new experience. It feels as if you are far away from yourself with your **right ear** leading until you feel your sound emanating from a point located just behind the vertex – the center of the head – see E.g. 4<sup>15</sup>.

**E.g. 5**

### Ear system



**External ear**

**Middle ear**

**Internal ear**

I draw attention here to the vocal techniques that encourage the thickening of the voice by creating a supplementary open space towards the pharynx. Due to it, low harmonics of the sound will propagate towards the

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<sup>15</sup> Tomatis, Alfred A., *The Ear and the Voice*, Maryland, Toronto, Oxford: The Scarecrow Press, Inc. Lanham, 2005, p.68.

spine, and then, mainly towards the ear. A continuous stimulation of hearing through low harmonics will inevitably lead to increasingly impaired intonation over time.

As we have seen, the voice deprived of high harmonics does not represent a sufficiently good stimulus for the ear. Their lack of an interpreter's voice will determine over time a sound that amplifies under the optimum position of resonance. Therefore, it will be flat, but the ear will recognize it as being correct. The interpreter even avoids the sounds with high harmonics that he considers high-pitched<sup>16</sup>.

The conclusion is that if this habit is not corrected in time, the inner ear loses its capacity to generate correct sounds from an intonational point of view. One enters a loop circuit, in which a slightly dissonant sound will come to generate persistent pitch problems.

Also, the voices that sing a repertoire inappropriate to the vocal 'fach' are tempted to overbid the pressure that they exert on the air column to sound more consistent. The vocal cords on which too high air pressure is constantly exerted will prematurely become weary. Addressing a difficult repertoire when the breathing and vocal technique is not well mastered can cause muscle fatigue. If neglected, the fatigue of vocal cords will gradually turn into dysphonia.

Unnecessary efforts cause disharmony. The larynx moves around and makes habituation automatically, needing only the vigilant control of the right ear. Every muscle in the body, including the larynx, is under the control of the vestibule cochlear labyrinth.

Thus, the law according to which "*The larynx does not emit what the ear does not control*" is proved.

In Romania, the law of opera houses stipulates that all vocal soloists perform an audiogram at least once a year. It is much better to prevent the installation of flaws than to discover them too late.

A famous case of dysfunctionality of hearing that reflected in a disharmonious and falsetto voice over her entire career is that of the singer Florence Foster Jenkins. In her period of glory, she sold Carnegie Hall. She would address the most difficult opera arias, but she would sing falsetto badly, flat notes or even high-pitched ones. It is not clear if fans would like her despite her lack of musicality or precisely due to it. It is a typical case of amusia, described by Oliver Sacks in the chapter - 'Things Fall Apart: Amusia and Disharmonia' from the book *Musicophilia*<sup>17</sup>.

<sup>16</sup> Leeds, Joshua, *The Power of Sound*, Rochester, VT: Healing Arts Press, 2001, p. 75.

<sup>17</sup> Sacks, Oliver, *Totul se destramă: amuzie și dizarmonie (Everything falls apart: Amusia and Disharmony)* from book *Muzicofilia (Musicophilia)*, Bucharest: Humanitas, 2009, p.114.

The awareness of listening and its coordination with an optimum subglottal pressure, that will not attack the larynx, will considerably extend the life of a professional singer, because *we sing with our ears*.

## Conclusions

- The ear coordinates all the other perceptions like the conductor of an orchestra, assembling and directing the many stimuli upon us into patterns that we can accurately perceive.
- Clearly singing is important. It energizes the singer as well as the listeners.
- The vocal sound works like an inner orderer of the audio-vocal system.
- Sound energy, transmitted through the audio-vocal circuit, makes an important contribution to peak function.
- It is important to be aware of the existence of the cybernetic circuits of the ear and the connection between them and the listening posture.
- The study of the voice must always be supervised by an external ear (of a teacher) or by regular recordings.
- A professional singer must perform an audiogram at least once a year to prevent the installation of flaws in the cybernetic circuits of the ear. This preventive act can save many voices from progressive deterioration.
- The larynx does not emit what the ear does not control.

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## ZOLTÁN KODÁLY, SEVEN PIANO PIECES OP. 11<sup>1</sup>

JUDIT CSÜLLÖG<sup>2</sup>

**SUMMARY.** Zoltán Kodály is mostly known for his pedagogical concept, however he was also a respected composer. The *Seven Piano Pieces* is one of his most popular series amongst piano teachers. The compositions are very colourful following different trends of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century such as the styles of Debussy and Bartók and take inspiration from Hungarian folk music. This article focuses on the presentation and analysis of each piece and points out the connections between them based on the style in which they were written.

**Keywords:** Zoltán Kodály, piano pieces, 20<sup>th</sup> century, Béla Bartók, Hungarian folk music, impressionism

### 1. Musical Currents of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century in Europe and Hungary

The turn of the century was an important period in the history of Hungarian culture, as for the first time since the Reform Era, it brought a revival of intellectual life concurrently affecting several branches of the arts both in Budapest and the larger rural towns. At the same time, in Europe as a whole, it was a period in which the moral and ideological message of individual works of art gestured beyond the artwork itself. In Hungary, the art of the turn of the century is significant in two respects: on the one hand, it explored Hungarian folk culture, and on the other, it caught up with the rest of Europe.

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<sup>2</sup> *Eszterházy Károly Catholic University, Music Department, 3300 Eger, Eszterházy tér 1. Hungary, Email: csullog.judit@uni-eszterhazy.hu*



In Europe, Debussy's oeuvre marked the arrival of the twentieth century. Impressionist influences from the fine arts led the French composer into a new realm of possibilities for the musical language. As an advocate of sensualism, "he restores the pure value, light and weight of sound and tone" in his works.<sup>3</sup> At the same time, Debussy continued the trends stemming from Romanticism in some respects, as evidenced by the idea of a single main theme (e.g. *The Sea*) and the use of cyclic variation (e.g. *String Quartet*). Alongside France, Germany was the other country that saw the emergence of a prominent new musical current at the beginning of the century, with Richard Strauss at its vanguard. In German territories, it was impossible to fully break away from the more deeply rooted Romantic traditions. Therefore, innovations were very limited there, and even those introduced tended to be rather further improvements on Romantic music.

In Hungarian music, the folksy art song, which flourished in the Romantic period, was ousted from its prominent position. Instead – thanks to Béla Bartók and Zoltán Kodály, primarily – the exploration of the treasure trove represented by the genuine folksong commenced. "Kodály and Bartók recognised that they had acquired a national treasure by discovering authentic peasant music. From that moment on, their entire musical activity served the goal of making this treasure the basis of modern Hungarian musical culture. One aim of this endeavour was the creation of modern national art music, and the other was to put music pedagogy on a new footing, closely linked to the creation of national music."<sup>4</sup> Through their compositions, they gradually made the national public accept and love folksongs. Beginning from adding piano accompaniment to song material, they went on to integrate folk music into their compositions. With their work, Hungarian music took a completely new direction.

## 2. Kodály's works for the piano

People immediately associate Zoltán Kodály's name with the Kodály concept, which not only laid a solid foundation for Hungarian music education, but also brought him international fame. In addition to his efforts to develop

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<sup>3</sup> Szabolcsi, Bence. *A zene története* (The History of Music). Ed. Kossuth, Budapest, 1999, 339.

<sup>4</sup> Várady, Krisztina. "Dobszay László: *A hangok világa szolfézs könyv-sorozat megjelenésének korabeli időszerűsége* (VI/1) *A 'kodályi elvek' megjelenése a korabeli szolfézs kiadványokban.*" (The Contemporaneous Timeliness of the Publication of László Dobszay's Solfege Book Series *The World of Tones* (VI/1) *The Manifestation of the 'Kodály Principles' in Contemporary Solfege Publications*). *Parlando* 59, no. 2 (2017): 1.

music education, he was a well-known and respected composer, even if not as prolific as for example his contemporary, Béla Bartók. Kodály is known to have been a vocally inspired composer, but he also wrote piano works, albeit less widely known.

After the piano works of his youth, which were never performed before an audience, his first published compositions were written in 1907. One was his *Méditation sur un Motif de Debussy*, the other his *Valsette*. *Méditation* was created originally and continued to exist as a stand-alone piano piece; both its premiere in 1924 and publication in 1925 were belated. The composer unfolded the opening theme of Debussy's *String Quartet* into a rich fantasia, using a variety of registers. This is the first piece in which Kodály used the whole-tone scale in addition to diatonicism.

*Valsette* was originally the opening piece of Kodály's *Piano Music* (Zongoramuzsika) cycle. Later Kodály omitted the piece and renamed the cycle *Nine Piano Pieces* (Kilenc zongoradarab) Op. 3. The series was published in 1910, but its exact date of origin is unknown. The date is only given at the end of the final piece, '17 III 1909' (Emma Sándor's birthday), but it is uncertain whether all the works were written in that year. *Piano Music* was first performed exactly one year later, on 17 March 1910 in Béla Bartók's rendition<sup>5</sup>, still including *Valsette*. Each piece in the cycle has a different motivation, and the frequent use of rhythm and harmony ostinato is an indication of a new approach to handling the piano.<sup>6</sup>

Kodály's next piano work was also a cycle, not originally intended as such, but the composer happened to compile six pieces in a series, to which a seventh was added later. *Seven Piano Pieces* (Hét zongoradarab) Op. 11 was composed between 1910 and 1918 and published in 1921.<sup>7</sup> It was again premiered by Bartók in 1921, but for unknown reasons he omitted the last piece, *Rubato*; later he played the unabridged series at his concerts.

Among the piano pieces, mention also must be made of the rarely played piano version of *Dances of Marosszék* (Marosszéki táncok), which preceded the more popular orchestral version. Its origins are uncertain, but its idea probably dates back to 1923, while its premiere took place in 1927.

After this, there was a pause of many years in the line of Kodály's works for the piano. The last of the *Seven Piano Pieces* was composed in 1918, and other piano works were to follow only in 1945–46. These are *Children's Dances* (Gyermektáncok) and *24 Little Canons on the Black Keys*

<sup>5</sup> Eősze, László. *Forr a világ (The World in a Commotion)*. Móra Kiadó, Budapest, 1970, 29.

<sup>6</sup> Eősze, László. *Örökségünk Kodály (Kodály, our Legacy)*. Osiris Kiadó, Budapest, 2000, 55.

<sup>7</sup> Breuer, János. *Kodály-kalauz (Kodály Companion)*. Zeneműkiadó, Budapest, 1982, 334.

(24 kis kánon a fekete billentyűkön), two series for instructional purposes.<sup>8</sup> The special feature of both volumes is that they were written for the black keys exclusively, which makes performing some of the pieces a considerable technical challenge. While the works in *Children's Dances* can be found in the music school repertoire, the *24 Little Canons* are very rarely heard. Afterwards, Kodály composed only a few short pieces for beginners for various piano methods and collections, which were compiled for publication in 1973 under the title *12 Little Pieces for Piano* (12 kis darab zongorára).

The influence of both French Impressionism and Hungarian folk music can be felt in Kodály's piano music, as well as impulses from the works of Bartók.

He first heard a work by Debussy in Berlin late in 1906, soon to buy his music in print as well, during the next leg of his study trip in Paris. Kodály described the French composer's importance as follows: "...the most distinctive and influential musician of his, generation... In harmonies he often renounced the advantages of combining chords in a customary way, thereby increasing the expressive force of the chords he used. His melodies move in the fresh currents avoiding chromatics. At this point his music touches both ancient and folk music. But it is the culture of tone colours which owes most to him."<sup>9</sup>

Much has already been said about the folk song collecting work that he did with Bartók. The fundamental difference between them is that while Bartók studied and collected music from many different ethnic groups, Kodály – with few exceptions – adhered to Hungarian folk music all along. Another interesting difference is that, while Bartók usually arranged the folksongs that caught his imagination as a composer very soon after collecting them, and used them in his compositions, Kodály often did the same only years after collection. One example is *Transylvanian Lament* (Székely keserves), which was collected in 1910 and composed in 1918.

Bartók's piano works published in 1908, *14 Bagatelles* and *Ten Easy Pieces for the Piano* (Tíz könnyű zongoradarab), also had a great influence on Kodály with their innovations in form and structure, as well as with their uniquely modern tone and sonority. Kodály's Op. 3 series is reminiscent of these pieces by Bartók in some respects.

The reception of Kodály's piano works was not always positive. Even the renowned music critic and piano educator Sándor Kovács criticised *Piano Music*, writing of the cycle as follows: "...Kodály was wrong to publish this volume. To call it piano music is far from the truth. It is not music. It's not

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<sup>8</sup> Breuer, János. *Idem*. 350.

<sup>9</sup> Kodály, Zoltán. *Claude Debussy*, in *Nyugat* 11 no. 8 (April 1918).

music yet, it's just music-gimmick, music-possibility, some of which has actually turned into great things: the beautiful string quartet, the wonderfully exquisite cello sonata..."<sup>10</sup>

The press response to the cycle is eerily similar to the reception of Bartók's *14 Bagatelles*, since their modernity also received the sharp critique of his contemporaries. The poor reception of Kodály's works in Hungary is best exemplified by the fact that not a single Kodály work was performed in the country between 1912 and 1917.

*Seven Piano Pieces* found a much more appreciative ear in the ranks of the Budapest public. Favourable reviews ranked it above the foreign novelties of the time. They made special mention of the poignant tragedy of *Epitaph* and the two Transylvanian folksong arrangements.

Kodály's piano works soon became known not only in Hungary, but also abroad, with some of them even published in print. In 1911, the *Allegro giocoso* movement of *Nine Piano Pieces* Op. 3 was published in Paris as an appendix to Sándor Kovács's study "La jeune école hongroise" [The New Hungarian School], alongside Bartók's *Bear Dance* (Medvetánc). Then, in 1921, the fifth of the *Seven Piano Pieces*, *Tranquillo*, was published in print, with a Bartók work again, the 4<sup>th</sup> movement of *Improvisations on Hungarian Peasant Songs* (Improvizációk) Op. 20.

After its premiere in Budapest, *Nine Piano Pieces* Op. 3 were also performed in Paris, and there they met a much more appreciative audience. The Paris premiere took place thanks to pianist Tivadar Szántó, who kept including the cycle or its pieces in his programme later, as well. In 1914, for example, he gave a piano recital of contemporary works, performing *Lento* from Kodály's Op. 3 along with compositions by Debussy, Ravel, Schoenberg, Enescu, Casella, Busoni, Bartók, Weiner and works of his own.<sup>11</sup>

Even with his success abroad, it should be noted anyhow that Kodály's piano compositions did not become as widely known as his orchestral or chamber works. This was mainly because, unlike their Hungarian confreres, foreign pianists did not often perform his pieces. Although Bartók often played Kodály works abroad, they still did not become known to a wider international audience.

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<sup>10</sup> Kovács, Sándor. *Kodály Zoltán: Zongoramuzsika (Kodály Zoltán: Piano Music)*. In: *Renaissance* 1 no. 10, (25<sup>th</sup> September 1910).

<sup>11</sup> Breuer, János. *Kodály-kalauz (Kodály Companion)*. Zeneműkiadó, Budapest, 1982, 338.

### 3. Seven Piano Pieces, Op. 11

The cycle's significance in music history lies in the fact that its pieces trace the different trends of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and their influence on Kodály. These seven pieces of moderate length put the composer's whole palette on display.

Regarding the history of piano literature, this series is outstanding because the pieces can be incorporated into the piano teaching curriculum, although they are of full artistic value. In Hungarian music history, primarily Bartók and Kodály are associated with pieces serving both purposes.

Although *Seven Piano Pieces* was not written as a cycle and does not have the specific formal features of a cycle, it exhibits a very coherent dramaturgy. The seven pieces are arranged concentrically in pairs, thus framing the 4<sup>th</sup> piece in their axis, which calls for an analysis along the lines of the same system.<sup>12</sup> Since Kodály makes occasional references to the ideological message of each piece, it is worth taking these also into account when scrutinising the works.

The opening piece, *Lento*, is arguably one of Kodály's most modern works with its daring harmonies. At first glance, we see a very airy notation of chords and long note values. It begins with a descending tritone, which returns at the end of the work, but in an upward leap, repeated like a sigh, as if leaving the message open. The characteristic harmonies of the work, such as the D F# Bb C opening chord of the fourth bar, as shown in the musical example, will recur in the final piece of the cycle.

E.g. 1

Extract from *Lento* (bars 7-11)<sup>13</sup>

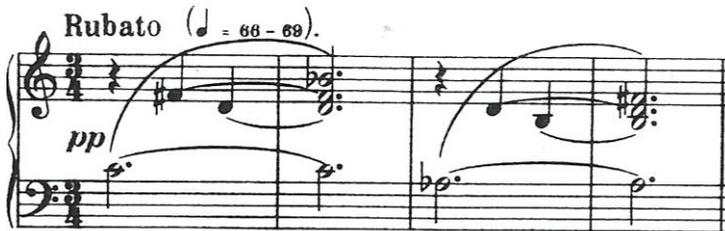
<sup>12</sup> Based on János Breuer's system.

<sup>13</sup> Source for the examples: Kodály, Zoltán. *Hét zongoradarab (Seven Piano Pieces)*, Op. 11. Zeneműkiadó Vállalat, Budapest, 1955.

On the first encounter already, hidden melodies and melodic fragments emerge, and it is also clear that they are spread out over several voices. The dynamic range in this merely one-page-long work is wide, moving from *ppp* to *f*. The challenge for the performer is to bring together musical arcs moving at a slow tempo, on sustained notes, and to create a colourful world of timbre.

This slow introduction is echoed in the final movement, *Rubato*, which uses harmonies from the first piece (for example, the first C D F# Bb chord), its folk-inspired melody coloured by whole-tone scales and pentatonic elements.

E. g. 2



The beginning of the last piece, *Rubato* (bars 1-4)

The tritone opening and closing can also be found here, but after a calm introduction of 4 bars, musical material of improvisatory spirit follows, which makes the impression of folk tunes. Whole-tone scales, their fragments, and the pentatonic soundscape that blends with them provide a special experience. The melody, alternating between the right and left hand, is full of elements typical of folk instrumental ornamentation and reaches its climax with broad *arpeggio* chords, concluding the first section. Here the composer expands the score to three staves, a sign of Debussy's influence, which remains characteristic throughout the next section, marked *misterioso*.

The image shows a musical score for three staves. The top staff is in treble clef and contains a melody marked 'pp misterioso'. The middle and bottom staves are in bass clef and provide harmonic accompaniment. The score consists of seven measures. A fermata is placed over the first measure of the top staff. The music features a pentatonic melody in the upper register, which expands and then returns to a similar motif in a lower register towards the end.

### Three-staff notation in *Rubato* (bars 29-37)

The part shown in Figure 3 begins with a pentatonic melody, where the folk music influence can clearly be felt again. It is played in 4 parallel octaves over sustained octave and chord accompaniment. Then the pentatonic tone-set expands, recalling the initial soundscape of the work. After a whole-beat decay under a fermata, the introductory motifs of the piece follow again, but shortened, with a different continuation, changing the tonic of the improvised melody. This section again ends in the familiar pentatonic melody, although this time the D tonic is replaced by G#. We reach the end of *Rubato* through expanding the registers, finishing with the opening motif with one varied note, in two ascending tritones.

The concluding piece is extremely complex, with an interesting blend of folk influences with Debussy's impressionism and Bartók's soundscape. Together with the opening piece, they provide a quasi-frame for the cycle.

A kinship can also be recognised between the second and the sixth pieces, which are both Transylvanian folksong arrangements. Kodály collected the melody of the second piece, *Transylvanian Lament* in Gyergyószentmiklós (today: Gheorgheni, Romania) in 1910 ("Mourn for me dear mother...").

E. g. 4

Parlando ♩ = 76–72. Muz. Fo. 1272a). Gyergyószentmiklós, (Csík vm.) 1910. K.

Aj, Si-rass él-des-a-nyám, mig e-lőt-ted já-rok,  
 Mer az-tán si-rat-hatsz, ha tő-ved el-vá-lok. Aj,  
 A jó is-ten tud-ja, hol tör-tén ha-lá-lom,  
 A jó is-ten tud-ja, hol tör-tén ha-lá-lom.

2. Istenem, istenem, hol lészén halálom,  
 Erdőn-é, vaj mezőn, vaj pedig tengერen?  
 Ha erdőn veszék el, ki temet el engem,  
 Ha tengერen veszék, ki sirat még engem.
3. El is eltemetnek az erdei vadak,  
 Meg is megsiratnak az égi madarak.  
 Tengերnek nagy habja szemfedelém lészén,  
 Tengերnek zúgása harangszóm is lészén.

The original folksong<sup>14</sup>

Kodály added the first two lines of the folksong's lyrics above the melody at the beginning of the piece. The piano composition covers all three verses of the song, with short transitions in between. In the first verse, mood-depicting sustained piano chords accompany the melody played with the right hand. Its dynamics gradually increase, and its accompaniment becomes denser up until the last melody line.

<sup>14</sup> Example: Kodály, Zoltán. *A magyar népzene (Hungarian Folk Music)*, ed. Lajos Vargyas Editio Musica, Budapest, 1991, 179.

E. g. 5

Rubato, parlando (♩=104-112)

Si - rass éi - dēs a - nyám, míg e - löt - ted já - rok,

The beginning of *Transylvanian Lament* (bars 1-5)

After a syncopated connecting passage, the melody is transferred to the left hand in the second verse, whereas the syncopated accompaniment continues in the right hand, reinforcing the *agitato* character. Thus, the music expresses the message of the verse's lyrics to extreme effect.

E. g. 6

*rallent.* - *molto* - *Agitato* (♩=126) - *a tempo* *rit.*

*pp* *fsubito*

*molto espr. e sempre marcato*

The appearance of the second stanza in the left hand  
(*Transylvanian Lament*, bars 17-21)

After a more tranquil transition, Kodály splendidly symbolizes the message of the last stanza: “*Tengernek zúgása harangszóm is lesz*” [The roar of the sea shall be the bell tolling for me]<sup>15</sup>. The melody and accompaniment now appear concurrently in both hands, alternating between the robust accompanying chords and the folk song rendered in four parallel octaves.

<sup>15</sup> Kodály, Zoltán. *A magyar népzene (Hungarian Folk Music)*, ed. Lajos Vargyas. Editio Musica, Budapest, 1991, 179.

E. g. 7

The third stanza in four octaves (*Transylvanian Lament*, bars 31-35)

Kodály concludes the piece with an ascending pentatonic run, which finally finds resolution on the opening G minor chord.

The sixth work, *Székely nóta* [Transylvanian Song], treats the melody of the folk song “Az hol én elmenyek” [Whereabouts I depart], which Kodály collected in 1912 in Kászónimpér (now Imper, Romania).

E. g. 8

Poco rubato. ♩ = 63. Fo. 252b) Kászónimpér, (Csik vm.) 1912 .K

Az - hol én el - mē - gyek, Még az fák és sír - nak.  
 Gyēn - ge já - ga - i - ról Le - ve - lek le - hull - nak.

2. Hulljatok levelek,  
 Rejtsetek el ingēm,  
 Mert az én éldéssem  
 Sirva keres ingēm.

3. Sír az út előttem,  
 Bánkódik az ösveny,  
 Még az is azt mondja:  
 Áldjon meg az isten.

4. Áldjon meg az Isten  
 Minden javaival,  
 Mint kerti violát  
 Drága illatokkal.

The original folksong<sup>16</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Kodály, Zoltán. *A magyar népzene (Hungarian Folk Music)*, ed. Lajos Vargyas. Editio Musica, Budapest, 1991. 109.

The folksong originally had four verses, but the piano piece contains only three, and like in *Transylvanian Lament*, the musical material is enriched gradually. An interesting feature of the piece is that it incorporates elements of instrumental improvisation from the folk tradition, thus displaying a colourful range of ornamentation. The first stanza is intended to introduce the melody.

**E. g. 9**

The musical score for Example 9 shows the beginning of the first verse. It is written in 3/4 time with a tempo marking of 'Poco rubato. (♩ = 88.)'. The right hand plays a melody starting with a quarter note G4, followed by quarter notes A4 and B4, then a half note C5. The left hand provides a simple accompaniment with a half note G3 in the first bar, followed by a whole note chord of G3-B3-D4 in the second bar, and a half note chord of G3-B3-D4 in the third bar. The dynamics are marked 'f molto cantabile e sonoro' and 'pp'.

**The beginning of the first verse (*Transylvanian Song*, bars 1-5)**

At this point, the melody is yet characterised by clean simplicity, with accompaniment only during the resting points at the end of the phrases (e.g. bar 3 in the example). Then, at the end of the verse, an improvisatory repetition of motifs appears.

In the second verse, folk improvisations of highly diverse form begin, with ornamentation not only at the end of phrases, but also incorporated into them. The melody is thus somewhat interrupted but appears in a still recognisable variation. In the following musical example, one of the closing ornaments is shown.

**E. g. 10**

The musical score for Example 10 shows the closing ornament. It is written in 3/4 time with a tempo marking of 'sempre cresc.'. The right hand plays a melody that becomes increasingly ornate and rhythmic, featuring many sixteenth and thirty-second notes. The left hand provides a simple accompaniment with a half note G3 in the first bar, followed by a whole note chord of G3-B3-D4 in the second bar, and a half note chord of G3-B3-D4 in the third bar. The dynamics are marked 'sempre cresc.'.

**Closing ornament (*Transylvanian Song*, bars 33-35)**

Here again, the final verse widens to four octaves, a process already prepared by the opening ornamentation of the second verse, which widens

into two. The improvisation becomes increasingly rapid, the demisemiquaver runs of the *stringendo* section opening with broad arpeggio chords. After the weighty octaves, the piece finally winds down and ends *pianissimo*, with an embellishment of the final motif.

The symmetrical structure of *Seven Piano Pieces* is realised through yet another parallelism between the third and fifth piano pieces. These two works evidence the influence of Debussy and French Impressionism the most, with such specific musical solutions reminiscent of the latter as the typical harmonies of Impressionism, *arpeggio* accompaniment, three-line notation, the use of music to convey colours and moods, and the blending of harmonies.

The complete title of the third piece, *Esik a szívémben, amint esik a városban* [“il pleut dans mon cœur comme il pleut sur la ville-” / Tears fall in my heart as rain falls on the town]<sup>17</sup>, has been shortened to *Esik a városban...* [Rain falls on the town...] in colloquial usage. The title points to a French origin in several ways. The (mis)quotation itself is from Verlaine, who used a line from a lost Rimbaud poem as an epigraph [“*Il pleut doucement sur la ville*”, / The rain falls gently on the town). Furthermore, Debussy also adapted Verlaine’s poem in his series *Ariettes oubliées*. The third piece was the first to be written in Kodály’s cycle. Its inclusion in *Seven Piano Pieces* is completely justified dramaturgically, although it would also fit into the idiom of Kodály’s Op. 3 series. The composer employs the ostinato technique to create a vivid sense of falling rain. In the right hand, the accompaniment consists of only two chords, which appear in three different forms throughout the piece: played homophonically, arpeggiated and broken into quaver movements. The following three musical examples illustrate this.

### E. g. 11

Allegretto malinconico (♩ = 188 - 144)

The musical score shows the first three bars of the piece. The right hand (treble clef) plays a series of chords, while the left hand (bass clef) plays a simple bass line. The tempo is marked 'Allegretto malinconico' with a quarter note equal to 188-144. The dynamics are marked 'pp' and 'p'.

### Homophonic accompaniment (*Rain falls on the town...*, bars 1-3)

<sup>17</sup> Kodály, Zoltán. *Hét zongoradarab (Seven Piano Pieces) Op. 11*, Editio Musica, Budapest, 1952.

E.g. 12



**Arpeggiated accompaniment (*Rain falls on the town...*, bars 11-14)**

E.g. 13



**Accompaniment broken into quavers (*Rain falls on the town...*, bars 28-31)**

With these accompaniment variations, Kodály gives an excellent sense of the different manifestations and degrees of rain and symbolizes human emotions in a figurative sense, as is apparent from the title borrowed from poetry.

The melody, divided into 4-bar motifs, runs in the left hand all along. At the end of each motif, Kodály directs the performer to slow down, and then at the beginning of the next one, the original tempo returns with a slight *stringendo*. Consequently, a slight undulation can be felt throughout the piece.

E. g. 14



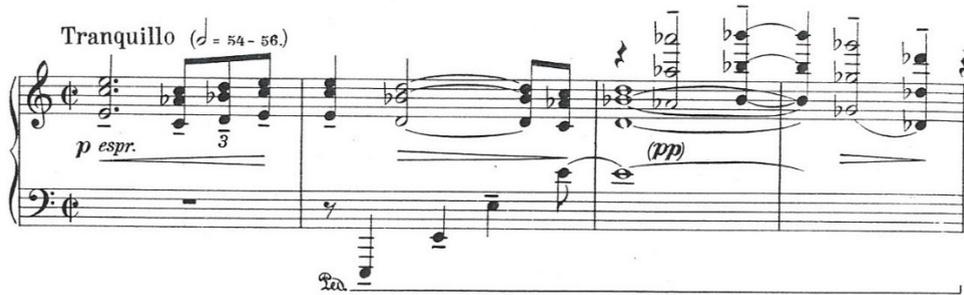
**Tempo undulation (*Rain falls on the town...*, bars 4-6)**

In the written-out dynamics, we find nothing but *ppp* and *pp*. However, the aforementioned tempo fluctuation is matched with a *crescendo–decrescendo* indication, so we can approach a very subtle *mezzoforte* nuance.

Of the cycle, this piece can be found the most often in music school children's repertoire.

The fifth piece, marked *Tranquillo*, and its symmetrical pair are complete opposites in their means of expression, yet the two are akin in involving the stylistic features of the mature Debussy. Two musical materials, first appearing consecutively, are contrasted throughout the work: a chordal mixture of characteristic rhythm is followed by a pentatonic melody in syncopated parallel octaves.

**E. g. 15**



**The statement of the two musical materials (*Tranquillo*, bars 1-4)**

The tension between these two musical materials is present in the whole work. The influence of Impressionism is also evident in the score, expanding from two staves to three, as justified by the musical material. As is typical of many of his piano works, Kodály uses wide registers of the instrument to express musical ideas.

Only one piece remains to discuss, the fourth composition in the cycle's axis, *Epitaph* (Sírfelirat). Although it is not proven, the material and sonority, as well as its 1918 date of composition suggest that Kodály most probably intended the work as Debussy's epitaph, since this was the year of the French composer's death.

The improvisation entwining the recitative Hebrew funeral hymn that begins in the fourth bar of the example unfolds from a single note.

The image shows a musical score for the beginning of Epitaph, bars 1-5. It consists of two systems of music. The first system is in 4/4 time and features a piano (p) dynamic with a crescendo (cresc.) and a rubato tempo. The melody is marked with a 3/4 time signature and includes a triplet of eighth notes. The bass line features a triplet of eighth notes. The score is marked with 'Rubato. (♩ = 104-108.)' and 'p cresc.' in the first system, and '5/4', '3', 'accel.', and '6' in the second system. The second system is marked with 'tempo' and '9/4' time signature, and 'ff' dynamic. The third system is marked with 'p' dynamic and 'accel. appassionato'.

### The beginning of *Epitaph* (bars 1-5)

József Ujfalussy's research has revealed the composition's relationship with the second piece of Debussy's first *Images* series, which also pays homage to a composer, namely Rameau.<sup>18</sup> Aladár Tóth, Kodály's contemporary, had little regard for *Epitaph*, as his article in the literary journal *Nyugat* [West] attests: "Work IV is perhaps the least noble of the collection. Its barbaric power is not always convincing and its *meno mosso* mood setting is not entirely sincere. The great rhythm can only warm you up momentarily, and the aesthetic precocity of the whole work only dissolves into a truly profound lyric in the final section: there we have the complete Kodály again."<sup>19</sup> This is the lengthiest piece in the cycle, and it is very colourful both dynamically and in terms of tempo changes. The opening note and the tonic note of the funeral dirge are a tritone apart (Eb–A). The same relation appears at the end of the work, but the sonority is finally tamed to a perfect fifth by momentarily lowering A to Ab. Due to the free structure of the melody, there are frequent changes of metre, especially at the beginning of the work, and in some places the composer indicates the separation of the bars only with a dotted bar-line. Later, Kodály organises this *rubato* melody into a more concrete framework.

<sup>18</sup> Breuer, János. *Kodály-kalauz (Kodály Companion)*, Zeneműkiadó, Budapest, 1982, 349.

<sup>19</sup> Idem.

This is perhaps the most technically challenging of the seven pieces. Kodály frequently uses not only the written-out accelerando but also the diminution of rhythmic values as a means of increasing the tempo, as can be seen in the following musical example.

**E. g. 17**

**Written-out accelerando and diminution (*Epitaph*, bars 93-97)**

By the end of the piece, the tension is released with moderation in tempo and dynamics.

*Seven Piano Pieces* are only rarely performed in their entirety on the concert podium; yet some of the pieces are often performed by Hungarian artists and a few are also included in the music school repertoire (*Rain falls on the town...*, *Transylvanian Lament*). It is part of the history of the cycle that, after its premiere in 1921, Bartók often performed excerpts from it in concerts at home and abroad, to introduce Kodály's works to the public.

#### 4. Conclusion

Kodály's *Seven Piano Pieces* are of music-historical significance, as they form an integral part of Hungarian music's renewal at the turn of the century. The cycle combines the stylistic features of Debussy with the

characteristics of Hungarian folk music, while the influence of the early piano works of Kodály's contemporary, Bartók is also evident. *Seven Piano Pieces* plays an important role in the mission of promoting Hungarian folk music, which Kodály and Bartók considered to be a labour of love. In addition to the music-historical aspects, the applicability of the pieces to piano pedagogy is essential. The pieces in the series allow piano tutors to enrich their students' repertoire with the treasures of national art.

Kodály's style provoked controversy in his lifetime and beyond. His pieces have often been criticised for their lack of originality and for being only compiled of musical elements that had made an impression on him. It is true that the various stylistic features and influences can be traced easily in Kodály's piano works, but his particular national musical language could not have developed without those.

Although the piano was not his main compositional medium, he created valuable and lasting works for the instrument. *Seven Piano Pieces* are an important part of his oeuvre in particular, because all the influences on the composer are reflected in the cycle. It is a compendium of Kodály's stylistic features, his attempts at finding his path, as well as the first tokens of his later accomplishment.

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## CONSTRAINT AND FREEDOM. KODÁLY: CHILDREN'S DANCES AND 24 LITTLE CANONS ON THE BLACK KEYS<sup>1</sup>

KRISZTINA VÁRADY<sup>2</sup>

**SUMMARY.** The main goal of the article is to examine the constraints and freedom of the composer while using exclusively the notes of the pentatonic scale. For this purpose, we present Kodály's two piano cycles written on the black keys from different perspectives. In connection with the cycle *24 Little Canons on the Black Keys* the use of one-line letter notation pieces in solfège lessons will be introduced. From the other cycle, *Children's Dances*, we analyze pieces in which elements from Hungarian folk music or verbunkos can be detected.

**Keywords:** Kodály method, pentatonic scale, piano pieces, Hungarian folk music

### I. Foreword<sup>3</sup>

Kodály and Bartók's achievements marked a new epoch in Hungarian music pedagogy, a change triggered by their folksong collection in 1905–1906. They recognized authentic peasant music as a national treasure with

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<sup>2</sup> *Eszterházy Károly Catholic University, Music Department, 3300 Eger, Eszterházy tér 1.*  
E-mail: [varady.krisztina@uni-eszterhazy.hu](mailto:varady.krisztina@uni-eszterhazy.hu)

<sup>3</sup> The chapters "Foreword," "Relative sol-fa and tonal experience" and "Folksong and musical value" are taken over from the author's doctoral dissertation entitled "Dobszay László: A hangok világa c. szolfézs-könyv-sorozat alkalmazása a zeneiskolákban" (Using László Dobszay's *The World of Tones Solfège Book Series in Music Schools.*) (UKF Nitra, 2008).



the capacity to become the foundation of a new, modern musical culture. That, in turn, would be created predominantly from a newly emerging *modern national art music*, on the one hand, and on the other from a new music education based on folk culture. Kodály dedicated his complete lifework to the realization of these two fundamental goals. The year 1925 marked a significant turn in his pedagogy: it came to be focused on the idea that musical culture must be made available to the broad masses.<sup>4</sup> To this effect he identified such important tasks as the introduction of daily singing classes in schools, the composition and use of reading exercises based on *relative sol-fa*, the establishment of audience education and of a wide-spread choral culture – all in all, he meant to put together a general musical reform programme to extend the results of professional music education into public education. The principles established with these objectives in mind are the basis of the *Kodály concept*.

Kodály's music pedagogy concept can be examined from diverse approaches, but *László Dobszay's* theory provides its most comprehensive and rigorous thematic classification.<sup>5</sup> He differentiates five main thematic concerns, wherein, beside the elements of musical education, Kodály's ideas on general human education are also represented. These five topics are: 1) Relative sol-fa and tonal experience, 2) Folksong and musical value, 3) Vocality and musical invention, 4) School and humanistic education, 5) Culture and personality.

What follows is a brief outline of those two topics out of the five which are tightly connected to the main argument of the present study.

### **Relative sol-fa and tonal experience**

Relative sol-fa was integrated into the *Kodály concept* comparatively late, in the 1930s, after the formation of Kodály's major pedagogical principles. It fitted the concept perfectly as an excellent tool in the realization of his ideas on musical education. Kodály saw the greatest benefit of relative sol-fa in the development of tonal hearing, musical thinking, inner hearing and just intonation. Relative sol-fa creates associations with every note during music-making. The impressions made by musical notes and relations between notes are not tied to prior theoretical theses, but rather to actual

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<sup>4</sup> As he stated: "Until about 1925 I lived the normal life of a professional musician, i.e. I didn't bother about the school, believing that everything was fine there, they were doing what they could, and the ones without musical hearing were lost to music anyway." Zoltán Kodály, *Vidéki város zeneélete*, (*Music Life of a Rural Town*). Nyíregyháza: lecture, 1937.

<sup>5</sup> László Dobszay. *A Kodály-módszer és zenei alapjai* (*The Kodály method and its musical foundations*). *Parlando* 10, no.11 (1970): 15–26.

musical experiences, thus facilitating tonal perception.<sup>6</sup> Relative sol-fa is used the most efficiently when it is tied to characteristic melodic patterns. The repetition of these patterns characteristic of any given style reinforces the development of tonal sensation.<sup>7</sup> Their internalization promotes just intonation and stylistic knowledge in a perfect alignment with pentatonic musical material. Relative sol-fa contributes to the achievement of the following three main objectives: *“Just vocal intonation, pentatony-based motivic content and the establishment of musical thinking.”*<sup>8</sup> Not even does the end of the Classical and Romantic periods limit the application of relative sol-fa. After a convincing theoretical refutation of this idea, *Dobszay* also presents actual examples of solmisation on folksongs and passages from Viennese Classicism, as well as on two short *Bartók* quotations in one of his articles.<sup>9</sup> Even though in the latter case only micro-tonalities and 6-7 note tonal sections are present, *Dobszay* proves that solmisation has its rightful place even in the interpretation of modern music.<sup>10</sup>

### Folksong and musical value

*“The folksong is Hungarian classical music par excellence<sup>11</sup>, the remnant of an ancient, general and universal Hungarian culture; thus, it is destined to become once more the basis of the whole nation’s musical culture – and its musical education in the first place”<sup>12</sup>*

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<sup>6</sup> *“Ultimately, solmization is a system of expression which reveals the true logic of the tonal relationships, which gives a truer picture of the relationship between pitches than does the measurement of intervals. It is no more and no less than TONALITY. It is not just an interval, but a relation.”* László Dobszay. *A szolmizáció* (Solmisation) *Parlando* 3, no.7–8 (1961): 17.

<sup>7</sup> To this end were Kodály’s reading exercises created, which offer teachers and students alike countless opportunities to practise the use of music reading and relative sol-fa, from the simplest two-note examples to exercises for two and three voices requiring serious skill.

<sup>8</sup> László Dobszay. *Kodály Zoltán zenepedagógiai eszméi és népzene kutatásunk* (Kodály’s Ideas on Music Pedagogy and Folk Music Research in Hungary) *Parlando* 24, no.2 (1968): 3–10.

<sup>9</sup> László Dobszay, “A szolmizáció.” (Solmisation) *Parlando* 3, no.7–8 (1961): 17.

<sup>10</sup> In the article, Dobszay publishes quotes from the music of the third door scene of Bartók’s *Duke Bluebeard’s Castle* and from the second movement of his *Sonata for Two Pianos and Percussion*, illustrated with different possibilities of solmization.

<sup>11</sup> Zoltán Kodály, *A magyar népdal művészi jelentősége* (The Artistic Significance of the Hungarian Folksong.) In: *Visszatekintés* (Retrospect) *vol. I.*, ed. Ferenc Bónis (Budapest: Zeneműkiadó Vállalat, 1982), 35.

<sup>12</sup> Zoltán Kodály, *Százéves terv* (A Hundred Year Plan.) In: *Visszatekintés* (Retrospect) *vol. I.*, ed. Ferenc Bónis (Budapest: Zeneműkiadó Vállalat, 1982), 288–289. Kodály, *Magyar Népzene* (Hungarian Folk Music.) In: *Visszatekintés* (Retrospect) *vol. II.*, ed. Bónis, 135.

The two fundamental characteristics of Hungarian folksongs are their monophony and unaccompanied rendition. Their simplicity ensures their extensive usability in musical education. They are easy to perceive and understand, thus “*they can function as an excellent kind of musical alphabet.*”<sup>13</sup> Kodály did not want to stand up against art music and he propagated priority rather than exclusivity for folk music at the early stages of learning music: “*our goal must not be to push schools to the other extremity with folk material...<sup>14</sup> we must open the gates for foreign masters, regardless of their nationality.*”<sup>15</sup>

## II. Kodály’s works for the piano

Kodály was a prolific composer, but an overview of his works shows without doubt that the significance of his oeuvre is hardly based upon his works for the piano. He wrote very few works for this instrument, and they constitute only a minute segment of his creative activity both in scale and importance.

1907	Méditation sur un Motif de Debussy
1905–09	Nine Piano Pieces Op. 3. (without <i>Valsette</i> to be published independently)
1910–18	Seven Piano Pieces, op 11.
1923–27	Dances of Marosszék
1945	Children’s Dances
1945	24 Little Canons on the Black Keys

It is apparent that *Children’s Dances* and *24 Little Canons* were written after a 20-year break, and Kodály did not compose anything else for the piano after that.<sup>16</sup> His reason for turning to piano pieces for one last time was one of the fundamentals of his pedagogical concept:

<sup>13</sup> József Újfalussy. *Zeneoktatás és nemzeti hagyomány* (Music Education and National Tradition.) *Parlando* 26, no.1 (1984): 6–16.

<sup>14</sup> Zoltán Kodály. *Megjegyzések a ‘Szó-Mi’ népiskolai énektankönyv bírálóinak viszontválaszára* (Remarks on the Latest Reply from the Critics of the ‘Sol-Mi’ Music Coursebook for General Education). In: *Visszatekintés* (Retrospect) vol. I., ed. Ferenc Bónis (Budapest: Zeneműkiadó Vállalat, 1982), 152.

<sup>15</sup> Zoltán Kodály. *A magyar karének útja* (The Path of Hungarian Choral Singing). In: *Visszatekintés* (Retrospect) vol. I., ed. Ferenc Bónis (Budapest: Zeneműkiadó Vállalat, 1982), 53.

<sup>16</sup> After 1945 Kodály only wrote miniatures for the volumes of Mrs. Komjáthy’s piano method, which were all, however, arrangements of melodies from his 333 *Reading Exercises*. The piano method was published in 1966, whereas the Kodály pieces therein were only published on their own after Kodály’s death, in 1973, under the title *Twelve Little Pieces*.

*“Our public education has officially switched over to the folksong since 1941. Slowly, our instrumental music education also needs to be aligned to that. A homogeneous musical culture can only be built in a sole language. Children must be taught the simplest of Hungarian folksongs which avoid the semitones. There is a need for little pieces in letter notation which do not exceed the difficulty of folksongs in finding the rhythm and pitch and which move solely on the black keys.”<sup>17</sup>*

The interaction between the content and the device of teaching is the basis for every educational system. One of the most important fundamentals of the Kodály concept is that every child should first get acquainted with the music of their own nation and should foray into the world of European music only afterwards; that is why the musical education of a child starts with mastering children’s songs and folksongs. Thus, if we make those the subject for initial education, we cannot teach the related music theory along the so-called scalar approach, which focuses on the sequentially of notes, either.<sup>18</sup> In accordance with the folk material, a sequence has been developed, which first reaches pentatonic through expansion from a two-note tone-set.<sup>19</sup>

Kodály wanted to establish pentatonic also as the starting point for instrumental music education. This leads us straight to the piano, since pentatonic is a given on its black keys. Kodály also thought it fortunate to develop technique by starting on the black keys.<sup>20</sup> This view is debatable, to say the least, and generated serious controversy as early as in 1946. Opponents cited excessive tension in the hand and the possibility of ‘slipping off’ the black keys. Nevertheless, there are attempts in this direction even today, e.g., this trend also features in Tünde Aszalós’s three-volume piano method, *A zongorázó gyermek* (Child Playing the Piano). *“Aszalós recommends playing children’s songs for a long time only on the black keys. Her goal is to first teach the child to make the instrument sing and to establish*

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<sup>17</sup> Zoltán Kodály. *A magyar hangszertanítás* (Instrumental Music Education in Hungary). In: *Visszatekintés* (Retrospect) vol. III., ed. Ferenc Bónis (Budapest: Zeneműkiadó Vállalat, 1989), 59-66.

<sup>18</sup> One of the arguments against scalar instruction is that intonation difficulties are usually caused by the intonation of the minor second in diatonic music, so it is worth practising the melodic turns without it at the beginning.

<sup>19</sup> Kodály also composed four volumes of his *Pentatonic Music*, serving identical pedagogical goals, at the time when these two piano volumes were published.

<sup>20</sup> *“Only those may speak of the effects of starting on the black keys on hand development who have tried it many times. I am convinced that it is far more beneficial than spending a long time on the white ones. And the mental benefits are invaluable.”* Zoltán Kodály: *24 Little Canons on the Black Keys – Foreword*, (Budapest: Zeneműkiadó Vállalat, 1961).

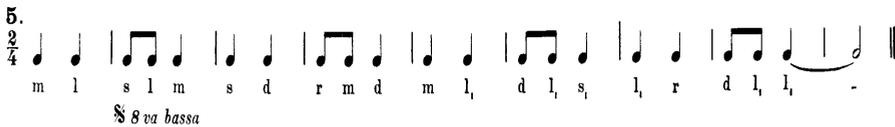
the connection between the two hands and the piano only afterwards.”<sup>21</sup> The little songs for alternate hands at the beginning of the first volume are played entirely on the black keys.

The very same considerations called into being Kodály’s two volumes written for the piano, *Children’s Dances* and *24 Little Canons*.

### III. 24 Little Canons on the Black Keys

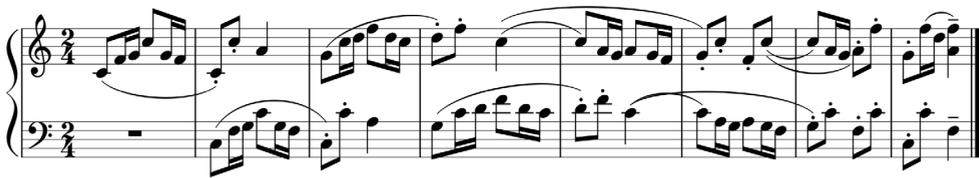
This volume, written in June 1945, is an organic continuation of and a methodological preparation for *Children’s Dances*. It contains 24 short pieces, 16 of which are in one-line letter notation, and 8 of which are notated in canon form in pairs of five-line staves.

E.g. 1

5.  
 $\frac{2}{4}$    
 m l s l m s d r m d m l, d l, s, l, r d l, l, -  
 § 8 va bassa

Canon in letter notation<sup>22</sup>

E.g. 2



Canon in five-line notation<sup>23</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Judit Csüllög, *A népdal szerepe a kezdők zongoraoktatásában Magyarországon* (The Role of the Folksong in Teaching Piano to Beginners in Hungary). Eger: Líceum Kiadó, 2009).

<sup>22</sup> Source for the example: Zoltán Kodály, *24 Little Canons on the Black Keys* (Budapest: Zeneműkiadó Vállalat, 1961).

<sup>23</sup> Source: Kodály, *24 Little Canons*. (my edition)

No key signature is written in the staff, but the reference in the printed music, the title and Kodály's preface all indicate that the tonality of the pieces is to be comprehended with F# for do and D# for la in mind. The volume contains 22 canons at the unison, one canon at the fifth and one mirror canon.

Although written for beginners, the *24 Little Canons* are not generally used for teaching the piano. Apart from the methodological controversies mentioned above,<sup>24</sup> one of the reasons for this is that the volume is not fit for use as a piano method.<sup>25</sup> Therefore, the focus below shall be on some of the possibilities for using the pieces in letter notation in solfege lessons.

### Unison processing

Occasionally containing even challenging leaps, the pieces in the *24 Little Canons* are excellent examples for reading music. The pieces in letter notation also develop transposition skills effectively by combining the relative and absolute sol-fa systems, as well as facilitate practicing the circle of fifths.

Because of their simplicity, these pieces are well-suited for use in dictation. In the more commonly used, traditional form of dictation, after providing the clef, key and time signature and the starting note, the teacher sings or plays the whole piece for the children to notate. The other option is the so-called *framed dictation*. In this version of dictation, information is provided in the form of frames to facilitate the notation of the piece according to the skill level of the class. These can include relatively difficult rhythmic patterns or melodic motions but can also involve so much information that the child's sole remaining task is to notate the rhythm of the piece, or a single note or melodic motif here and there. It is a very good method and can be used as early as the beginning of the learning process. The higher the grade and the better the skills of a class, the less information is given about the piece in advance.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> See: note 17.

<sup>25</sup> Just for comparison: in the first volume of his *Mikrokosmos*, Bartók has the children play in a pentachord's range, carefully observing the 'one note per finger' rule. The tone-set is always expanded by shifting the hand position, thus the child does not face a problem finding the correct fingering. In the *24 Little Canons*, the first piece already has a range of an eleventh, necessitating a considerable effort in fingering.

<sup>26</sup> In line one of fig. 3, the child only has to write down the rhythm of the piece. In lines two and three, the child is given less information about the piece, and has to notate both rhythm and melody. Line four shows the blackboard layout for a traditional dictation exercise.

## E.g. 3



**Framed dictation opportunities – blackboard layout**

Their brevity and good articulation make these pieces excellent examples for memorization even at the initial stage of learning solfège.

Their simple rhythm makes them suitable for singing from hand-signs. They can even be used at the beginning of a lesson for vocal warm-up.

Some folk music-inspired pieces are excellent for improvising the ends of lines.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> The Hungarian folksong material provides an excellent opportunity for an early introduction of improvisation in solfège teaching. The improvisation of line-end variants can be introduced at an early stage of learning. Subsequently, by gradually improvising larger and larger musical units, the skill can be well developed. Certain skills, such as the sense of form, can only be assessed through improvisation. The pedagogical 'rules' established for dictation also apply to improvisation. Only improvising a well-known element or musical unit can be expected, after building preparation and consciousness through a sufficient number of listening experiences. Otherwise, instead of ensuring the child's musical freedom, we create an experience of failure with a task that seems insurmountable. In the first couple of grades, the principle of 'guided improvisation' should be applied. In this case, as in the case of framed dictation, the improvisation is given a framework, so that only a certain part of the music, such as rhythm, melody, or the last bar of a phrase needs to be improvised. An improvisation task is only corrected if its solution does not fit within the framework of the given style.

## Two-voice processing

The easiest way to process a piece in two or more voices is to perform it in canon. This can be done in several ways:

- The teacher sings the first part or plays it on an instrument, the children sing the second part.

- The children, divided into groups, sing in several parts.

- The children sing and then tap the rhythm of the piece in canon with themselves, all children sing and tap.

- For the most skilled classes, it is an excellent exercise (though dependent on piano skills) for the child to sing the first and play the second part of the canon. This is most useful when the work is not notated in two staves, but in only one line. In this case the child reads two bars simultaneously (e.g., sings bar 2 while playing bar 1).<sup>28</sup> The pieces included in this volume in letter notation are excellent for this type of processing.

- The most difficult way of singing in canon is when the children have no written music in front of them at all and must imitate the melody after the teacher's singing or playing. In this form, three brain activities take place simultaneously. The children intone their own musical material while observing and simultaneously memorizing the melody sung by the teacher.<sup>29</sup>

Another possibility for two-voice processing is to add a rhythmic ostinato to the melody. This method can be used from the very beginning of music learning, starting from tapping the beat. Rhythmic ostinato can be made more difficult in several ways: the length of the ostinato can be increased, the rhythms can be made more difficult, an ostinato can be composed that does not follow the lilt of the melody, or a two-part ostinato can be used. These techniques develop the sense of rhythm and meter, divided attention, and coordination.<sup>30</sup>

Canons can be turned into a chain of intervals very easily. The easiest way to do so is to transcribe the canon's voices into a two-part setting and use the harmonic intervals between the parts for dictation. Figure 4 shows the letter-notation of the intervals on crotchets.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> The development of divided musical attention is one of the fundamental aims of music education. The development of this skill is essential in all forms of music-making, and its development should be a task in both instrumental and solfège lessons.

<sup>29</sup> For example, if a child is singing bar three, he or she should listen to and remember bar four, which the teacher is singing simultaneously.

<sup>30</sup> The principle of rhythm ostinato is also the basis of the 'body percussion' method, where listening to or singing the music is accompanied by rhythmic patterns using the body as an instrument.

<sup>31</sup> An interval chain exercise is traditionally notated in a five-line staff; in this case the chain of intervals was created while keeping the canon's original notation.

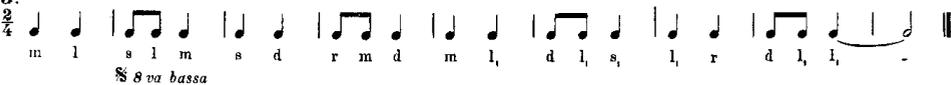
**E.g. 4**

m l s m s d r d m l, d s, l r d l, l,  
 m l s m s d r d m l, d s, l r d l,

**Canon turned into chain intervals in letter notation**

The quodlibet is another interesting way of two-voice processing. In the series several pieces are composed with the same tempo, character, beat and number of bars. Reviewing these, we can find several quodlibet possibilities, one of which is, for example, in pieces 5 and 6 (fig. 5).

**E.g. 5**

5. 

6. 

**Quodlibet possibilities in 24 Little Canons**

There have been but a few possibilities for using in solfège lessons the pieces written in letter-notation in *24 Little Canons*. Depending on the teacher's creativity, their range can be further extended to offer countless possibilities for developing musical skills.

**IV. Children's Dances<sup>32</sup>**

*Children's Dances*, written nearly at the same time as *24 Little Canons*, points beyond the pentatonic-based pedagogical goal discussed above. It also reflects another important aspiration of the time, namely the desire to create a 'modern', new national music by incorporating folk material into art music.

<sup>32</sup> The analysis of *Children's Dances* is based on Mihály Ittész. *Pedagógiai művekről* (About Pedagogical Works). In: *22 Zenei írás* (22 Writings on Music). (Kecskemét: Kodály Intézet, 1999).

As happens at every turn of an era, people of the modern age needed a modern way of self-expression, having completely turned away from Romanticism in terms of their sense of life. The musical world also tried to free itself from the grip of over-indulged Romanticism, and Bartók and Kodály saw the path to creating a specifically national music in integrating folk music into art music.

They saw a potential for the renewal of Hungarian music not only in the choice of themes, but also in the novelty of the treatment of folk material. Bartók distinguished three levels or methods for the integration of folk music into art music.<sup>33</sup>

1. the folk song is played in its entirety, with accompaniment, possibly with prelude and postlude
2. the composer invents folk music motifs and develops them in the work
3. there is no folk song present in the piece, yet it has folk music features<sup>34</sup>

*Children's Dances* was written in May 1945. It contains 12 purely pentatonic dances, ranging from very light little pieces to technically demanding works. The notation is without key signature or accidentals, but Kodály requests that each piece be played half a note higher or lower, so that each piece is played exclusively in the range of pentatonic notes inherent on the black keys of the piano. All five modes of pentatonic are represented in the volume, with six *la* pentatonic, three *do* pentatonic and one *re*, *mi* and *sol* pentatonic dance each.

The pieces are varied in both technical challenge and character and can be interpreted as a kind of composer's exercise in style. In the volume, we can find a piece resembling a Mari folk song, one referring to Hungarian music of the 1790s, one with the subtitle 'in the Székely manner', reminiscent of parlando rubato folk songs. All the pieces in the volume are ambitious, well composed works, proof that composing in the pentatonic tone-set is no compromise for the composer.

Below, four dances are presented which can be clearly linked to Hungarian folk or art music (verbunkos – recruiting music) material. When a style/genre is imitated (Bartók's type 2 and 3), characteristics specific to that style/genre necessarily appear in the work. If, for example, the composer

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<sup>33</sup> Source: Béla Bartók. *Mi a népzene?* (What is Folk Music?) (Budapest: lecture, 1931).

<sup>34</sup> This third type requires the most thorough grounding and the most complete knowledge of folk music. "It can be said in such cases: the composer has learned the musical language of the peasants and has mastered it as perfectly as a poet has mastered his mother tongue." Béla Bartók. *Mi a népzene?* (What is folk music?) (Budapest: lecture, 1931).

writes a melody like a certain Hungarian folksong type, he may borrow its melodic line, structure, rhythmic features, or some other definitive characteristic of the given type.

These 'borrowed' features are presented in the four children's dances to follow.

#### Children's Dance no. 4

E.g. 6



#### Children's Dance no. 4, verse 1 (1-8 m.)<sup>35</sup>

The C pentatonic piece is much more song- than dance-like. Its melodic contour and rhythm show a close relationship with the folksong type starting with *Aki szép lányt akar venni* (He who wants to marry a pretty girl).

E.g. 7

A - ki szép lányt a - kar ven - ni Har - ma - ton kell azt ke - res - ni Sze - gény le - gény

6  
Har - ma - ton járt El is vet - te a leg - szebb lányt.

#### He who wants to marry a pretty girl – Hungarian folksong<sup>36</sup>

The identical characteristics 'borrowed' from the folksong type are very striking, even by looking at the notation alone.

The biggest difference between the two melodies is that the scale of *Children's Dance no. 4* is C pentatonic, as opposed to the Dorian tone-set of the folk song.

<sup>35</sup> Source for the examples from *Children's Dances*: Zoltán Kodály. *Children's Dances* (Budapest: Zeneműkiadó Vállalat, 1961). (my edition)

<sup>36</sup> Source: László Dobszay. *A magyar dal könyve* (The Book of the Hungarian Song.) (Budapest: Zeneműkiadó, 1984), 226. (my edition)

Their melodic contour and line structure are identical, the fifth shift is real in the folk song and tonal in Kodály's piece, the difference being justified by the urge to remain in the pentatonic tone set.

Metrically, they are perfectly identical. Both melodies are bipodic, their time signatures are 3/4, with the 2<sup>nd</sup> bar in the 3<sup>rd</sup> musical line reduced to 2/4 due to rhythmic compression.<sup>37</sup> Rhythmically, the two pieces are almost perfectly identical, the only difference being that in the folksong's two-bar motives both bars contain identical patterns of two quavers followed by two crotchets, whereas in the children's dance, the two crotchets in every second bar are replaced by a minim.

We can conclude that when Kodály wrote *Children's Dance No. 4*, he adopted all the characteristic features of a Hungarian folksong type, except for its scale, which he changed. The exploration of analogies in teaching is important, because by the time of learning to play the children's dance on the piano, the child has already had a considerable auditory experience of this folksong type. Comparison helps to build dynamics, to articulate form and to have a correct concept of tempo.

*Children's Dance no. 4* has three verses. In verse one, the melody is accompanied by dyads in thirds. Verse two is a perfect canon started by the right hand; the imitation starts on the third beat of the bar. In verse three, the right hand plays the melody in a quaver repetition supported by pentatonic chords, thus, despite the imitation, the lower voice played in the original rhythm stands out. The piece concludes with a three-bar coda consisting of repetitions of the closing turn of the melody.<sup>38</sup>

### Children's Dance no.5

E.g. 8



<sup>37</sup>A typical folk music phenomenon is that the variation at the end of line three induces a melodic change at the beginning of line four. A textual expansion can often be found here in folksongs.

<sup>38</sup> See appendix 1 for verse three and the coda.



**Children's Dance no. 5, verse 1 (1-8-m.)<sup>39</sup>**

*Children's Dance no. 5* is also a song-like work composed in la pentatonic, related to the eleven-syllable folk song type, one of which is the folk song beginning with *Azt hittem, hogy nem kellek katonának* (I thought I wouldn't be conscripted into the army)].

**E.g. 9**

 A musical score for a Hungarian folksong. It consists of two staves, both in treble clef. The key signature has two sharps (D major) and the time signature is 4/4. The melody is written on a single line. The lyrics are written below the notes. The piece starts at measure 5, indicated by a '5' above the first measure.
 

Azt hit-tem hogy nem kel-lek ka - to-ná-nak, gond-ját vi-se-lem az é-des a-nyám-nak,  
de már lá-tom ka - to - ná-nak kell men-ni, ha - tos ez-red csá-kó-ját kell vi-sel - ni.

**I thought I wouldn't be conscripted into the army – Hungarian folksong<sup>40</sup>**

The folksong is Aeolian in tonality, tempo giusto in rendition, while Kodály's work is la pentatonic and rubato.

The folksong's line structure is A B C D with a descending melodic contour, while the children's dance has A B Bvar C for line structure with an arched melodic construction.

Both pieces are bipodic (two 4/4 bars belong together) with a very distinctive rhythm. The two-bar motives start with eight even quavers in the first bar in both the folksong and Kodály's piece. The second bar consists of a quaver, a dotted crotchet, a crotchet, and a crotchet rest in the folksong, while in Kodály's piece there is a minim instead of the latter two. In the third musical line of the children's dance (measure 6 in fig. 8), the 'textual

<sup>39</sup> Source for the examples from *Children's Dances*: Zoltán Kodály. *Children's Dances* (Budapest: Zeneműkiadó Vállalat, 1961). (my edition)

<sup>40</sup> Source: László Dobszay. *A magyar dal könyve* (The Book of the Hungarian Song.) (Budapest: Zeneműkiadó, 1984), 374. (my edition)

expansion' mentioned above can be observed, with two additional 'syllables' added to the line.

Even though the two works do not have the same tonality, rendition, melodic contour or line structure, the strong association of the identical metrics and characteristic rhythm creates the sense that this work is still the closest of all to this particular group of Hungarian folksongs.

It should also be noted that in the corpus of Hungarian folksongs there is also a song type with eleven syllables but with *parlando rubato* rendition, yet this group is little known. Such a folksong is, for example, the one starting with *Ha felülök a bugaci halomra* (When I sit upon the mound in Bugac – fig. 10]. Comparing the children's dance to this folk song, the initial octave leap is identical in both works, in addition to their line structure and *parlando rubato* rendition.

**E.g. 10**

The image shows two staves of musical notation in 4/4 time, with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The first staff contains the first two lines of the melody, with lyrics: "Ha fel-ü-lök a bu-ga-ci ha-lom-ra, On-nan né-zöm,mer-re le-gel a csor-da,". The second staff contains the next two lines, with lyrics: "On-nan né-zöm,hogy űk me-re le-gel- nek, Abal-szá-ra meg-for-dul a cse-rény-nek." The notation includes various rhythmic values such as quarter, eighth, and sixteenth notes, as well as rests and fermatas.

**When I sit upon the mound in Bugac -- Hungarian folksong<sup>41</sup>**

*Children's Dance no. 5* has three verses. The accompaniment in all three verses is based on syncopation. The right hand plays the melody in verse one. The fermata in brackets that appears in several places in the music notation is an interesting phenomenon. Kodály may have had the text of a specific folksong in mind when composing, the crowns presumably indicating an emphatic (emotionally colored) prolongation.<sup>42</sup>

In verse two, the melody moves to the lower register and the accompaniment changes slightly. The accompaniment of lines two and three of this verse is syncopated, with the addition of the melody's imitation entering with a one-bar delay.<sup>43</sup> In verse three the melody returns to the upper voice.

<sup>41</sup> Source: Lajos Vargyas. *A magyarság népzeneje* (Folk Music of the Hungarians.) (Budapest: Zeneműkiadó, 1983). (my edition)

<sup>42</sup> Source: Mihály Ittész. *22 zenei írás.* (22 Writings on Music.) (Kecskemét: Kodály Intézet, 1999).

<sup>43</sup> See: appendix 2 line two bar four and line two bar two.



The most important point in comparing these two melodies is the sameness of their rhythmic-metric features. However, an equally important criterion for discovering kinship may be the identity of the notes constituting the melodic skeleton of two pieces, which can ensure similarity between songs showing rhythmic differences. One would perhaps not immediately associate the children's dance with the folksong beginning with *Kis kertemben uborka* (Cucumber in my backyard], even though their melodic outline is identical, and their syllable count differs only because of the syncopation in the third bar of each tripodic unit.<sup>46</sup>

**E.g. 13**

The image shows two staves of musical notation in 3/4 time. The first staff contains the first six bars of the melody. Above the notes in bars 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 are 'X' marks, indicating the 'melodic skeleton'. The lyrics below the staff are: 'Kis ker - tem - ben u - bor - ka Re - á - ka - pott a ró - ka'. The second staff contains the next six bars, starting with a '7' above the first note. Above the notes in bars 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12 are 'X' marks. The lyrics below are: 'Várj meg ró - ka, meg - les - lek, Ko - má - rom - ba vi - tet - lek.' The melody consists of quarter and eighth notes, with a key signature of one flat (B-flat).

**Cucumber in my backyard – Hungarian folksong<sup>47</sup>**

In *Children's Dance no. 6*, the melody receives a bagpipe-style accompaniment in verses two, three and four after its unison exposition in verse one. In between each verse there is a three-bar (tripodic) transition section building from the bagpipe accompaniment material. In the 25-bar coda, the third and fourth lines of the melody return.

<sup>46</sup> The 'X' signs mark the notes that constitute the 'melodic skeleton' common to the folksong and the children's dance.

<sup>47</sup> Source: Zoltán Kodály. *A magyar népzene* (Hungarian Folk Music). (Budapest: Zeneműkiadó, 1971), 127. (my edition)

**Children's Dance no. 8****E.g. 14**
**Children's Dance no. 8, verse 1 (1-8. m.)<sup>48</sup>**

In this melody of instrumental character, the two-bar motives contain a syncopé in the first beat and a semiquaver figuration in the second one. This specific instrumental figuration is typical of verbunkos music. Around 1800, several booklets of Hungarian national dances were published in Vienna. The melody of the children's dance shows kinship with the dances in those booklets.

**E.g. 15**
**Hungarian National Dance – excerpt<sup>49</sup>**

<sup>48</sup> Source for the examples from *Children's Dances*: Zoltán Kodály. *Children's Dances* (Budapest: Zeneműkiadó Vállalat, 1961). (My edition)

<sup>49</sup> Source: Mihály Ittész. *Pedagógiai művekről* (About pedagogical Works). In: *22 Zenei írás* (22 Writings on Music.) (Kecskemét: Kodály Intézet, 1999). (my edition)

Kodály used these national dances in *Dances of Galánta* with the greatest mastery. The typical verbunkos rhythm of the syncopé followed by semiquaver figuration can be observed in the two examples below. In this case, there is only a rhythmic similarity between the motives of the children's dance and *Dances of Galánta*.

E.g. 16

Verbunkos rhythm – Dances of Galánta – excerpt<sup>50</sup>

E.g. 17

Verbunkos rhythm – *Dances of Galánta* score – excerpt<sup>51</sup>

<sup>50</sup> Source: Zoltán Kodály. *Galántai táncok zongorára* (Dances of Galánta for Piano.) Budapest: Editio Musica, 1970).

<sup>51</sup> Source for the score: excerpt from *Galántai táncok zenekarra*:  
<http://petruccimusiclibrary.ca/files/imglinks/caimg/5/58/IMSLP508294-PMLP822489-KodalyGalanta.pdf>

Another motif in *Dances of Galánta* is reminiscent of the children's dance in its melodic contour, in addition to their characteristic rhythm.

E.g. 18

*Dances of Galánta* for piano – excerpt<sup>52</sup>

E.g. 19

*Dances of Galánta* score – excerpt<sup>53</sup>

## V. Conclusion

Kodály's music education focused on piano pieces are based on the principle of the Kodály concept, which states that all children must first become acquainted with their own folk music. Therefore, music education in Hungary builds up the acquisition of theoretical knowledge from two-note relations through pentatonic to the diatonic tone-set. Kodály wanted to extend this structure, which had already been introduced in public education, to instrumental education.

Two pedagogical piano cycles were written for this reason in 1945, *24 Little Canons on Black Keys* and *Children's Dances*.<sup>54</sup> The altogether 36 pieces are without exception pentatonic and meant to be played on the black keys of the piano.

<sup>52</sup> Source: Zoltán Kodály. *Galántai táncok zongorára* (Dances of Galánta for Piano.) Budapest: Editio Musica, 1970).

<sup>53</sup> My edition

<sup>54</sup> Another volume was published in 1973, entitled *Tizenkét kis darab* (Twelve Little Pieces), also containing pentatonic works to be played on the black keys. This volume brings together short pieces written by Kodály for other collections and piano methods.

The volumes are little used in piano teaching, but their pedagogical importance and usefulness cannot be questioned. They are also suitable for all-round skill development in the piano classroom, going beyond the solution of specific technical problems. The little canons provide a broad scope for consolidating theoretical knowledge, practicing the relative-absolute system, developing divided attention, and learning the rules and possibilities of canon construction. The observation of stylistic features and analogies in any one piece in *Children's Dances* not only develops a sense of style, but also strengthens 'knowledgeable piano playing'. The discovery of equivalencies helps to choose the right tempo, articulation, and dynamics, and to consolidate the rhythmic, metric, or melodic characteristics of a given style. All these options are complemented by the encounter with a special mode of playing, where the child plays only on the black keys.

If we believe that we need to teach more than just primary 'motor' skills in our piano lessons, it is worth exploring the volumes and looking for opportunities to incorporate them into our piano teaching.

Appendix 1 – Children’s Dance no. 4, verse 3<sup>55</sup>

The musical score is presented in three systems, each with a treble and bass clef. The first system (measures 1-4) is in 3/4 time, starting with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The right hand plays a series of chords, while the left hand plays a simple bass line. A crescendo (*cresc.*) marking is present in the right hand starting at measure 3. The second system (measures 5-8) continues the piece, with a decrescendo (*dim.*) marking in the right hand starting at measure 6. The third system (measures 9-12) concludes the piece, with another decrescendo (*dim.*) marking in the right hand starting at measure 10. The score ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

<sup>55</sup> Source for the examples in the appendices: Zoltán Kodály, *Gyermektáncok (Children's Dances)* (Budapest: Editio musica, 1947). (my edition)

**Appendix 2 – Children's Dance no. 5, verse 2**

The musical score is presented in two systems, each with a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) in 4/4 time. The first system begins with a piano (*f*) dynamic. The right hand features a series of chords, with some notes beamed together. The left hand plays a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. A first ending bracket labeled '8' spans the final two measures of the system. The second system starts with a measure marked '5' in the treble clef. It continues with similar textures, including a second ending bracket labeled '8' in the right hand. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

Appendix 3 – Children’s Dance no. 6 – coda

Musical notation for measures 1-6. The piece is in 2/4 time. The right hand plays a melody of quarter notes: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5. The left hand plays a bass line of quarter notes: C3, D3, E3, F3, G3, A3, B3, C4. Dynamics include *sf* and *dim.* with a dashed line.

Musical notation for measures 7-12. The right hand plays a melody of quarter notes: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5. The left hand plays a bass line of quarter notes: C3, D3, E3, F3, G3, A3, B3, C4. Dynamics include *p*.

Musical notation for measures 13-18. The right hand plays a melody of quarter notes: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5. The left hand plays a bass line of quarter notes: C3, D3, E3, F3, G3, A3, B3, C4. Dynamics include *f* and *dim.* with a dashed line.

Musical notation for measures 19-24. The right hand plays a melody of quarter notes: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5. The left hand plays a bass line of quarter notes: C3, D3, E3, F3, G3, A3, B3, C4. Dynamics include *p dim.* with a dashed line and *pp*. The piece ends with a fermata over the final chord.

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## ZOLTÁN KODÁLY: HUSZT – A CHORAL WORK COMPOSED ON A POEM BY FERENC KÖLCSEY

GABRIELA COCA<sup>1</sup>

**SUMMARY.** Zoltán Kodály has composed two choral works to the poems of Ferenc Kölcsey: *Huszt* and *Bordal*. Both were composed for male choir. *Bordal* was composed between 1913 and 1917, followed by Kodály's *Huszt* in 1936. In this paper I will present an analysis of the *Huszt* choral work.

**Keywords:** Zoltán Kodály, Huszt, male choir, Kölcsey Ferenc, harmony, musical forms

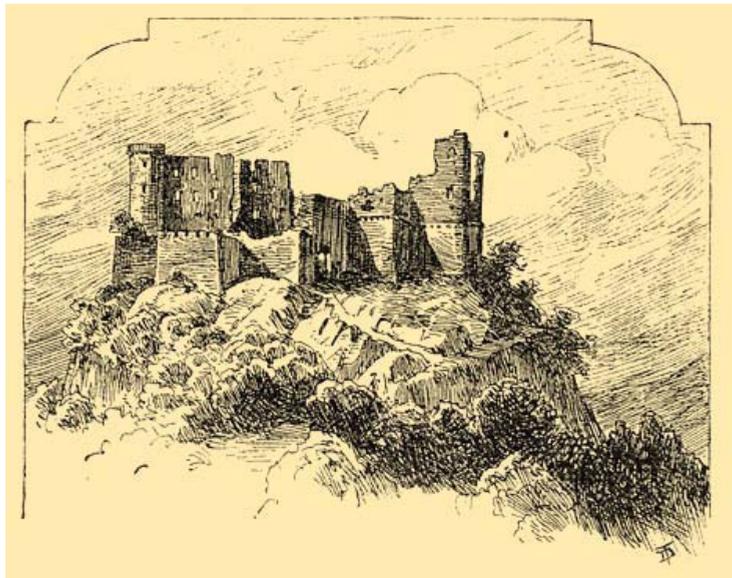
By way of introduction, let us see what the work is about, its basis, its background, and the biographical framework of its composition. The following images illustrate the castle ruins of Huszt and a drawing from its heyday, this one by Tivadar Dörre.

E.g. 1<sup>2</sup>



<sup>1</sup> University professor dr. habil., Babeş-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca, Faculty of Reformed Theology and Music, Music Department. E-mail: [gabriela.coca@ubbcluj.ro](mailto:gabriela.coca@ubbcluj.ro); [gabriela.coca.66@gmail.com](mailto:gabriela.coca.66@gmail.com)

<sup>2</sup> khust castle - Bing images (accessed in October 2022)



The fortress of Huszt is located in present-day Ukraine, in Transcarpathia, close to the current triple border. It is also where the Tisza leaves the Carpathians and becomes a slower, lowland river. The castle was built in the 11th century (under King Ján Ezder) and was then a very strong and important fortress, which played a major strategic role. It defended several towns, protected the Torun, Lehioniv and Yablunetskyi passes and controlled the road to the salt mines of Solotvyno. Over the years it was besieged by the Tatars, the Turks, and the Habsburgs. After 1541 it was taken over by the Transylvanian Principality. It had a troubled history rich in battles. In 1773, lightning caused a fire that destroyed the castle and was never rebuilt.

Ferenc Kölcsey visited Huszt Castle in May 1825. He was inspired by the sight even then and wrote an epigram entitled *Régi várban* (*In the Old Castle*). He later adapted this poem and thus his poem *Huszt* was born on 29 December 1831, in Cseke.

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<sup>3</sup> Huszt-Dörre - Huszti vár – Wikipédia (wikipedia.org) – The Huszt Castle, a work by Tivadar Dörre (accessed in October 2022)

*“Bús düledékeiden, Husztnak romvára megállék;  
Csend vala, felleg alól szállt fel az éjjeli hold.  
Szél kele most, mint sír szele kél; s a csarnok elontott  
Oszlopi közt lebegő rémalak inte felém.  
És mond: Honfi, mit ér epedő kebel e romok ormán?  
Régi kor árnya felé visszamerengni mit ér?  
Messze jövővel komolyan vess össze jelenkort;  
Hass, alkoss, gyarapíts: s a haza fényre derül!”<sup>4</sup>*

\*

*(I stand on the sad crumbling walls of the Huszt Castle ruins.  
Night moon has arisen from the clouds, silent was the world  
The wind starts to blow, like wind from the grave; from the depths of the hall  
a ghost comes to me and asks me: my friend  
what are you looking for among these sad ruins?  
Why are you looking to days long-long gone?  
Look to the future and measure the present with by what you wish to achieve  
Do, create, enrich, and the country will arise.)<sup>5</sup>*

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Zoltán Kodály composed his choral work *Huszt* in the spring of 1936, at the age of 54, when he was already a world-renowned composer. It is interesting to see what else happened to the composer in the same year.<sup>6</sup>

On 15 January 1936, Herbert von Karajan - then still a young conductor - conducted Zoltán Kodály's *Psalmus Hungaricus* in Aachen. The same day, in Vienna, the piece *Dances of Galánta* is performed under the baton of Oswald Kabasta.

On 20 February, Kodály falls ill and is unable to attend the ceremony at which he is elected an honorary member of the János Vajda Society. Hugo Kelen will convey his message of appreciation. In February, his article entitled *“Excelsior”* was published, promoting the development of the choral movement. During the spring of 1936, the author gives lectures on folk music at the Free University. In parallel with a commission from the

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4 Kölcsey Ferenc: HUSZT | Verstár - ötven költő összes verse | Kézikönyvtár (arcanum.com) accessed in October 2022.

5 Source of the poem's English translation: <https://creativecommons.org/2007/04/28/day-2-cc-hungary/>, accessed in November 2022.

6 See: László Eöszé. *Kodály Zoltán életének krónikája (The Chronicle of Zoltán Kodály's Life)*. Ed. Zeneműkiadó, Budapest, 1977, pp. 154-158.

mayor of Budapest to write an *in memoriam* for the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the recapture of Buda from the Turks, he composes several choral works, such as: *Hét könnyű gyermekkar* (7 Easy Children's Choruses), *Hat tréfás kánon* (6 Humorous Canons), *A 150. genfi zsoltár* (The 150<sup>th</sup> Genevan Psalm), **Huszt** choral work, followed by the folk song arrangement entitled *Molnár Anna*, a four-voiced canon named *A magyarokhoz* (To Hungarians) and *Forr a világ* (The World Is Boiling Over).

The latter work had its premiere on April 25 at the third Budapest Festival of Éneklő Ifjúság [Singing Youth]. The work became a symbol of the movement.

On 11 May, Kodály's arrangement of the folk ballad *Molnár Anna* is presented in Kecskemét, and three days later, it is also performed in Budapest. Also in May, the 4th volume of Kodály's *Népszerű Zenefüzetek* [Popular Music Sheets] series by Antal Molnár (a long-time student of Kodály) was published, which includes the first biography and a catalogue of the Maestro's works.

At the end of June (28-29), in Szombathely, the National Federation of Hungarian Singing Associations organized a song competition to mark the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Liszt's death, with a performance of Kodály's work for mixed choir entitled *Liszt Ferenchez* (To Franz Liszt).

In July and August, the *Te Deum of Budavár* (the commissioned work) is completed, with its premiere in the Coronation Church of Buda on September 2.

At the same time, he also studies Jeppesen's *Counterpoint* and proposes a Hungarian edition of it, with notes to the author.

On October 18<sup>th</sup>, one of his early works, *Ave Maria*, is performed in Budapest at the organ inauguration of the Rákóczi College.

Next month, on November 13, the London Radio broadcasts *Te Deum of Budavár*. He is invited to conduct the Gloucester premiere of his work the following year. Also in November, the composer's *Jézus és a kufárok* (Jesus and the Traders) and *Mátrai képek* (Mátra Pictures) are presented in Frankfurt to critical acclaim, followed by a successful American concert series of the University Choirs with the premiere of the *Karádi nóták* (Songs from Karád) and his choral work **Huszt**.

In broad outline, these are Kodály's life events in 1936. It was an eventful year, both musically and socially. Compared to the *Te Deum of Budavár*, the choral piece **Huszt** is a small work, but like everything else, Kodály gives it meticulous treatment, special attention, and logical editing.

### Zoltán Kodály: Huszt (1936). Analysis of the work

The choral piece entitled *Huszt* by Zoltán Kodály has a pentastrophic structure with a coda, which the composer wrote in variation form for a male choir with bass, baritone, and tenor voices. The **formal structure** of the piece is as follows:

E.g. 2

A	Av1	Av2	Av3	Av4	Coda
9 bar G.P. (1-9.)	9 bar G.P. (10-18.)	10 bar (19-28.)	12 bar ( <i>Half choir</i> ) (From bar 29 <i>Baritone solo ad libitum</i> ) (From bar 37 = <i>Tutti for all voices</i> )	8 b. (41-48.)	9 bar (49-57.)
B pedal – F# pedal α motif Raises it to the level of a leitmotif x-y	α crab α crab augm. var.	x var – y var. mysterious	G pedal – B pedal polyphonic α var.		Summary of the music thus far
<b>pp</b>	<b>ppp</b> < <b>mf</b> >	< > < >	<b>pp</b> <i>misterioso</i> < <i>Tutti</i>	<b>f</b> <i>stable</i>	<b>ff</b> <i>stable</i>
<i>Maestoso</i> ♩ = 88	<i>Poco più mosso</i>		<i>Tempo I</i>	<i>Poco a poco accel. ... sostenuto ... più mosso</i>	
<i>E minor</i> ~ <i>nat. B minor</i> ~ <i>mel. B minor</i>	<i>A minor</i> ~ <i>F major</i>	<i>F major</i> ~ <i>E minor</i> ~ <i>G major</i>	<i>C minor</i> ~ <i>melodic E minor</i>	<i>Natural E minor</i> ~ <i>C major</i>	<i>C major</i> ~ <i>F# minor</i> ~ <i>A major</i> ... <i>V. degree</i> = <i>E minor I#</i>
Meter = 4/4 – stable until the end of the piece					

The duration of the work, as defined by the author, is 3 minutes.  
The verses fit into the above structure in the following way:

E.g. 3

Bús düledékeiden, Husztnak romvára megállék; Csend vala, felleg alól szállt fel az éjjeli hold.	<b>A</b>
Szél kele most, mint sír szele kél; s a csarnok elontott Oszlopi közt	<b>Av1</b>
oszlopi közt lebegő rémalak inte felém. És mond:	<b>Av2</b>
Honfi, mit ér epedő kebel e romok ormán? + (Ó) Régi kor árnya felé visszamerengni mit ér?	<b>Av3</b>
Régi kor árnya felé visszamerengni mit ér? Messze jövendővel komolyan vess özsze jelenkort;	<b>Av4</b>
Hass, alkoss, gyarapíts: s a haza fényre derül!	<b>Coda</b>

Of course, there are textual repetitions within the framework of the form sections, especially in the polyphonic sections.

### Description of the formal sections:

#### Section A

E.g. 4

The image shows a musical score for Section A, featuring vocal lines (T., Bar., B.) and piano accompaniment. The score is marked 'Maestoso' with a tempo of 88. The key signature is E-minor (e-moll). The score is divided into several formal sections, each with a label and a red box highlighting the corresponding musical material:

- A**: The first section, starting with the lyrics 'bús dü-le-dé-ke-i-den, Husztnak rom-vá-ra, meg-ál-lék,'.
- av1**: The second section, starting with the lyrics 'Szállt fel a hold'.
- av2**: The third section, starting with the lyrics 'Csend vala, fél-leg a-lól'.
- av3**: The fourth section, starting with the lyrics 'Szállt fel az éj-je-li hold.'
- av4**: The fifth section, starting with the lyrics 'Szállt fel az éj-je-li hold.'
- α**: A label for the first vocal line in the first section.
- α transzp.**: A label for the first vocal line in the second section.
- β**: A label for the piano accompaniment in the second section.
- βv**: A label for the piano accompaniment in the third section.

The score also includes the tempo marking 'Maestoso' and the tempo value '♩ = 88'. The key signature is 'e-moll' (E-minor) and the instruction '(Főhanggal mélyebben is énekelhető)' is present. The year '(1936)' is noted in the top right corner.

melodic B minor



composer makes the tempo a little more agile with *Poco più mosso*. The key of the Av1 section is *A minor* and only in bar 15 does it modulate to *F major*. This modulation corresponds to the dynamic climax of *mf* of the section.

Just as the composer separates the A and Av1 sections with a *General Pause*, he similarly separates sections Av1 and Av2 in bar 18.

## Section Av2

E.g. 6

Section Av2 repeats the *oszlopi közt* (between the columns) excerpt from section Av1, thus creating a link. The *oszlopi közt* excerpt is also solved musically here in a homophonic manner, with perfect fifths being sung by the tenor and baritone voices. Further, Kodály solves the word *lebegő* (floating) with an anapest that repeats the same note, with the third note of the *anapest* being prolonged (by a half and whole notes). Thus, musically, it suggests floating. And the word *rém* (spook) is sustained in the bass for nine quarter notes (see bars 21-24). The word *rém*, emphasized, is also sustained, not only in the bass, but in the above voices as well, whenever it appears. The words *inte felém* (beckons to me) also have a distinctive musical form, in the shape of a descending perfect fifth, and a distinctive rhythmic pattern (see bars circled in green). Musically, the x and y cells presented in bar 2 are varied, both melodically and rhythmically, mainly in their permutation (crab inversion) - based on the rhythm of the syllables. The basic dynamics of the section is *pianissimo*. From this, the composer establishes slight *crescendos* and *decrescendos*. Tonally, he begins in *F major*, and from bar 21 onwards he composes the figure of the floating spook ("rém") in *E minor*. In bars 27-28, he concludes the section in *G major*. Kodály also separates this section from the following Av3 section using *General Pause*.

## Section Av3

E.g. 7

The image shows a musical score for Section Av3 of Huszt. It consists of three systems of music. The first system (bars 26-32) features vocal parts (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "és mond: Hon - fi, mit ér e - pe - dő ke - bel e ro - mok". The second system (bars 32-36) continues the vocal parts and piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "ór - mán? Ré - gi kor ár - nya fe - lé visz - sza - meréng - ni mit". The third system (bars 36-40) features vocal parts and piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "Hon - fi, mit ér e - pe - dő ke - bel e ro - mok or - mán?". The score includes dynamic markings such as *ppp*, *misterioso*, *(Solo ad lib)*, *cresc. poco a poco*, and *tutti*. It also includes tempo markings *Tempo I* and *(tutti) cresc.*. The score is in C minor and modulates to E minor in bar 37.

There are several striking changes to section Av3. Firstly, the original tempo of the choral work returns. *Tempo I*, indicated by the composer. Kodály inscribes *misterioso* for the bass and baritone voices alongside the *pianissimo*. The bass voice sings a G pedal for 8 bars short of a quarter note, then slides the pedal up to B by a passing note from bar 37, and holds this for 3.5 bars. To this suggestive pedal note on the O vowel, Kodály adds a baritone *Solo ad libitum* (= at will), which varies the  $\alpha$  (alpha) motif in *ppp* dynamics and slow *crescendo*, and a tenor voice, which requires only one half of the choir to sing. The dynamic markings are the same for all three voices. It is not until bar 37 that the *tutti* chorus is heard again, in *crescendo*. Before this *tutti*, bar 36 matches the positive golden ratio of the work ( $57 \times 0.618 = 35.22$ ). A crucial question is asked here: „... visszamerengni mit ér?” (*Why are you looking to days long-long gone?*). The section is composed in *C minor* and then modulates to melodic *E minor* in the bar that includes the golden ratio. A complex musical phrase is heard in bars 37-40, which Kodály enriches by composing the tenor voice in *divisi*. Elsewhere in the choral work, he rarely uses a voice division for such a long phrase. „Honfi, mit ér epedő kebel e romok ormán?” (*My friend what are you looking for among*

these sad ruins?)”, in our literal translation: “Patriot, what is your bosom worth on the face of these ruins?” - is the sad but real question. Through its *crescendo*, these few bars set the stage for the *forte* dynamics of the next Av4 section.

### Section Av4

E.g. 8

**α transposition**

**α var.**

41 Ré - gi kor ár - nya fe - lé viz - szá - meréng - ni mit ér? Mesz -  
 Ré - gi kor ár - nya fe - lé meréng - ni mit ér? Mesz -  
 ár - nya fe - lé meréng - ni mit ér?

45 Mesz - sze jö - ven - dő - vel ko - molyan vess ősz - sze je - len kort,  
 - sze jö - ven - dő - vel ko - molyan vess ősz - sze, vess ősz - sze je - len kort,  
 Mesz - sze jö - ven - dő - vel vess ősz - sze je - len kort,

The Av4 section starts with an up-beat in bar 40. The bass voice utters the opening motif of the work in variation, and in bar 41 the baritone and tenor take it up simultaneously, the baritone in variation on a E3 and the tenor in transposition on E4. All three voices continue to weave the motif's variation, in the first phrase in natural E minor, closed by a 1st degree Picardy third in bar 44, and then in the second phrase in C major. Kodály gradually extends the range of voices throughout the work, reaching a climax here in Av4, with the tenor voice's A4 (see bar 45). From the beginning of the section, the composer gradually raises the tempo with *poco a poco accelerando*, then switches to *Più mosso* - or a more moving tempo - through *sostenuto* at the end of the first phrase. The whole section is in *forte*. It is the verse lines here that justify the *forte* dynamics:

“Régi kor árnya felé visszamerengni mit ér?  
 Messze jövővel komolyan vess őszve jelenkort;”

(Why are you looking to days long-long gone?  
 Look to the future and measure the present with  
 by what you wish to achieve;)

\*

The Coda

E.g. 9

47 *ff* Hass, al - koss, gya - ra - pits, a ha - za fény - re - de - rül!

48 *ff* Hass, al - koss, gya - ra - pits, a ha - za fény - re - de - rül!

49 *ff* Hass, al - koss, gya - ra - pits, a ha - za fény - re - de - rül!

**C major** **F# minor**

50 Hass, al - koss, gya - ra - pits! A ha - za fény - re - de - rül!

51 Hass, al - koss, gya - ra - pits! A ha - za fény - re - de - rül!

52 Hass, al - koss, gya - ra - pits! A ha - za fény - re - de - rül!

53 *ff* Hass, al - koss, gya - ra - pits! A ha - za fény - re - de - rül!

**F# minor** **A major** **V. = E minor I#**

The nine final bars of the work, the Coda, take the idea of the previous section further and develop it, not only formally, but also in terms of the musical material and dynamics. Composed in *C major*, then in *F# minor* and *A major*, it is entirely homophonic. The sense of the pole-counterpole shift from *C major* to *F# minor* is in fact to emphasize the *A major* final bars even more brightly. It creates contrast. The work closes on *A major*, 5th degree, which is also the Picardy 1st degree third chord of the main key *E minor*. The modulations in this form are created by tonal jumps, which is even more surprising than a chromatic modulation. Melodically, the A4 climax appears 3 times here in the tenor voice, and highlights the words *Hass* (*Do*) and *fény* (*arise*) in the text. “*Hass, alkoss, gyarapíts! A haza fényre derül!*” (*Do, create, enrich, and the country will arise!*) - the composer repeats the verse. The effect of the verse is enhanced by the frequent use of *General Pauses*. There are no less than 6 of them in 9 bars (see the framings in the musical example).

In brief, Kodály’s choral work *Huszt* is very unified in terms of its musical material. The rhythm of the melody is determined by the text. The composer builds his music in a very logical way, expressing the dramatic charge of the lines of verse through illustrative programatism (naive programatism). He uses tonal-functional harmonization in his chorus,

which is also logical, because the author of the poem, Ferenc Kölcsey, lived in the early musical Romanticism, was a contemporary of Franz Schubert and thought in that period.

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## IN SEARCH OF “THE MORE IMPORTANT” IN STRING QUARTET NO. 1 BY DIETER ACKER

IULIA MOGOȘAN<sup>1</sup>

**SUMMARY.** Dieter Acker’s String Quartet No. 1 represents a turning point in the composer’s output, being an opus composed in his last year of study in Sigismund Toduță’s composition class (1964) and one which brought him international recognition, winning second prize at the 1966 Prague Spring International Festival. This study presents biographical, historical, and analytical aspects of the work which are reflected in its musical structure, revealing both a respect for the historical tradition of past centuries and the search for new orientations of the musical avant-garde. Through arguments related to the biography of the young Dieter Acker, trained under Franz Xaver Dressler and Sigismund Toduță, the study presents the unity of meaning and content that is directly reflected in String Quartet No. 1.

**Keywords:** Dieter Acker, String Quartet No. 1, Sigismund Toduță, Anton Webern reception, Palindrome

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<sup>1</sup> *Scientific researcher, PhD, Gheorghe Dima National Music of Academy, Cluj-Napoca, Music Theory Faculty, Department of Musicology. E-mail: iulia.mogosan@amgd.ro.*



String Quartet No. 1 represents the first time that Dieter Acker's unquestionable creative cogency was acknowledged beyond the Romanian border. It was a valuable moment in the composer's career that made the young Acker, then 36 years old, not only a renowned composer in the eyes of his masters and colleagues in Romania, but also in the eyes of the international world. Composed in 1964, the year in which Dieter Acker completed his studies in Sigismund Toduță's composition class, it was immediately afterwards that Acker was hired as the maestro's assistant at the Cluj Conservatory (today the Gheorghe Dima National Academy of Music). In 1966 this first quartet won second prize at the composition competition organized by Prague Spring International Music Festival, where it was also performed by the Dvořák Quartet Ensemble, and the work can be regarded as the composer's first opus of creative maturity; a compositional mastery based on tradition can be observed and, at the same time, peculiarities of style can be grasped that will go on to become constant in his output.

### Biographical Outline

Dieter Acker (1940-2006) was a composer of Transylvanian Saxon ethnicity whose remarkable career reveals talent of uncompromising tenacity and character of unquestionable morality. Until his departure from Romania, he struggled in a world of unequal opportunities as a renegade of the communist regime, being considered *persona non grata* in public life after his emigration to West Germany. After the fall of the Ceaușescu regime, Acker's personality was recovered in Romanian public life, and those who kept him in their thoughts were able to find opportunities for collaboration again.<sup>2</sup>

Acker's interview with Stephan Schmitt on 19th May 2004 passes over, in oppressive silence, the tragedy of the Acker family,<sup>3</sup> but when the subject switches to music, we discover that in his hometown Acker was supported by Franz-Xaver Dressler, a distinguished musician, organist, teacher and conductor settled in Sibiu. Dressler's merit is nowadays considered of historical importance: in his desire to ensure a professional musical life, he founded vocal ensembles (the Bach Choir, the Brukenthal Choir), organised concerts and tours, and brought music performance up to

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<sup>2</sup> In 2000 Dieter Acker was awarded the title of *Doctor honoris causa* of the Gheorghe Dima National Academy of Music in Cluj-Napoca.

<sup>3</sup> Acker spent his childhood with his grandparents, Professor Wilhelm Georg and his wife, a priest's daughter, Helene Georg. His father, Michael Acker, fell in the battle at Stalingrad in 1943, and his mother, Helene-Friederike Acker (1914, born Georg) was deported in Russia from 1944 until 1948 in a labour camp.

modern standards. The Bach Choir, founded in 1931, has become an emblem of Sibiu;<sup>4</sup> and Dressler went on to adopt the model of Leipzig musical life: in 1934, he was the founder of the Brukenthal Choir, a boys' choir like the Thomanerchor, which enriched the musical life of the city until 1948, when the authorities decided to disband it.<sup>5</sup>

Acker's talent was discovered by Dressler, who became his piano, organ, and music theory teacher; equally, Acker found in Dressler an early model of a professional musician, one who was dedicated to the community. Dressler's lessons were accompanied by notions and exercises in music theory, harmony, and counterpoint, so Acker learned these skills long before he arrived at the Conservatory in Cluj.<sup>6</sup> With Dressler, Acker had invaluable artistic experiences<sup>7</sup> that would be reflected in his later creative and organisational activities, which were equally concerned with artistic exigency and the importance of music's role in the community. From Acker's interview, we learn that Dressler discovered a rare talent in the eleven-year-old student: absolute hearing and the ability to identify simultaneously up to twelve sounds.<sup>8</sup> Along with choral singing – a common activity in the Transylvanian Saxon community in church, in public life, at school, even in the family's inner circle – Acker also learned to play several instruments. He learned to play the piano and the recorder as a child, later taking up the organ and the trumpet, and his curiosity led him to other brass instruments also.

After turning 18, Dieter Acker headed for Cluj. Despite his talent and training being well above the average for students entering the Conservatory's composition class, Dieter Acker was initially rejected for admission to Transylvania's highest music institution in 1957. The reasons were not connected to his musical education, but instead the "unhealthy" origins of his family, both on his father's and mother's side. While the grandfather on his father's side had been a landowner in the past, the family on the mother's side also included priests and teachers active in Reformed churches.<sup>9</sup> The

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<sup>4</sup> The existence of the Bach Choir was saved by reorganising its belonging to various state institutions: in 1959, it was separated from the church, being declared a choral ensemble of the House of Culture; in 1963, it became a choir of the State Philharmonic of Sibiu, where it could contribute to the continuation of the public concert secular and sacred repertoire (oratorios).

<sup>5</sup> See Stieger 116.

<sup>6</sup> See Schmitt 14.

<sup>7</sup> „Mit vier Jahren saß ich bereits als stiller Beobachter bei den Proben zwischen Chor und Orchester und habe selber später dann jahrelang auch mitgesungen und viele wertvolle Erfahrungen gemacht.“ (At the age of four I already sat as a silent observer at the choir and orchestra rehearsals, and later I also sang with them for years and gained many valuable experiences.) Schmitt 13.

<sup>8</sup> Schmitt, 14.

<sup>9</sup> Schmitt, 15-16.

following year, however, his attempt to become a student at the Conservatory was successful; the credit for this surely must go to Sigismund Toduță – renowned for his “immunity” from all political interference and for his impartiality<sup>10</sup> at a time when “social origins” outweighed competence – who must have recognised the young Acker’s prowess in the fundamental musical subjects (harmony and counterpoint) already acquired under Dressler’s supervision. Between 1958 and 1964 Acker studied at the Music Conservatory in Cluj, in Toduță’s composition class, a period marked also by his starting a family with Heyde Roth in 1963.

The Communist regime’s harassment of Dieter Acker continued in the following years. The most telling example was the refusal to award him the George Enescu scholarship because he had an uncle living in West Germany (although the uncle had left Romania before the Second World War, before Dieter Acker was even born, and that the family left in Romania did not keep in touch with him). Acker’s desire to leave Romania became more and more deeply ingrained.<sup>11</sup>

Despite the impediments caused by his “unhealthy” origins, Dieter Acker had achieved remarkable successes for a “representative of the Saxons” in Romania: his admission to the Cluj Conservatory (after a first failed attempt), the Second Prize at the Prague Spring International Music Festival for his String Quartet No. 1 (and its printing by the only publishing house in Romania – the state one), and his success in obtaining the position of university assistant at the Cluj Conservatory immediately after graduating in 1964, a post which he held until he left abroad. Following a string of unsuccessful attempts, Dieter and Heyde Acker were accepted to participate at the famous Darmstadt Summer School in 1969, and they used this opportunity to emigrate. Their two daughters were left in the care of their grandparents, and it was a year before the family reunited.

The uncertainty of a new beginning in Germany was certainly real, and it manifested itself in the difficulty of making a living; but after the first year he had already obtained a position at the Düsseldorf Conservatory, and from 1972 he was employed at the Munich Conservatory. He was soon accepted into the German Composers’ Union and the GEMA, and international awards over the years confirmed the promising start from Prague.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Türk, *Mein Lehrer Sigismund Todutza*, 104-105.

<sup>11</sup> Schmitt 17-18.

<sup>12</sup> Stamicz Prize (Stuttgart, 1970), City of Stuttgart Composition Prize for *Texturae I* for large orchestra (1971), *Marler* Composition Prize at the *Jugend musiziert* Competition for the *Stigmen* piano trio (1971), *Lions Club International* Composition Prize for String Quartet No. 4 (Düsseldorf, 1972), International *Stroud Festival* Prize for Clarinet Quintet (United Kingdom, 1973), Hitzacker Prize for Duo for Violin and Cello (1974), *Henriette Renié* Prize of the Académie des Beaux Arts for *Music for Strings and Harp* (Paris, 1988), Stamicz Prize (Mannheim, 1990).

## Cultural and Musical Background

Acker was trained in the spirit of German musical culture, as Hans-Peter Türk, Acker's friend and colleague at the Cluj Conservatory, points out:

Seine rumänischen Musikerkollegen glauben ihm ein besonders erfreuliches Kompliment machen zu können, indem sie in einigen seiner Werke Anklänge an rumänische Volksmusik herausgehört haben wollen. Die biedere Höflichkeitsgeste hat aber in Wirklichkeit mit Ackers Musik nichts, aber auch gar nichts zu tun. Für gewöhnlich quittiert er solche Bemerkungen mit einem etwas verständnislosen Lächeln, denn dies wäre sein entferntestes Anliegen.<sup>13</sup>

Indeed, Acker's interest in German and Saxon culture is reflected not only in the music itself, but also in his investigations of music history and musical analysis, in which he focuses on figures from the history of the Transylvanian Saxons (Gabriel Reilich<sup>14</sup> and Norbert von Hannenheim, "our country's first composer of serial music"<sup>15</sup>), and he also wrote about modernists such as Anton Webern.<sup>16</sup>

Acker's student life was marked by the cultural vicissitudes of the communist period. Acker mentions Bartók, Stravinsky, Hindemith, Webern as his role models, and he showed a particular attraction to the latter. Training in Sigismund Toduță's composition class laid solid classical music foundations, culminating in his analysis of modern works from the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Bartók, Enescu, Schoenberg, Webern, Stravinsky, Lutosławski, etc.) in his sixth, and final, year of study. The Sigismund Toduță Foundation still preserves detailed unpublished analyses which must have been presented in the maestro's composition classes, with up-to-date

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<sup>13</sup> Türk, Dieter Acker – Wie ich ihn sehe, wie ich ihn höre, 33.

<sup>14</sup> Acker, Un manuscris transilvănean din secolul XVII: „Neu-Musicalische Concerten” de Gabriel Reilich (A Transylvanian Manuscript from the 17th century: „Neu-Musicalische Concerten” by Gabriel Reilich), 153-170.

<sup>15</sup> Acker, Un discipol din Sibiu al lui Schönberg: Norbert von Hannenheim (A Disciple of Schoenberg in Sibiu: Norbert von Hannenheim), 182. Dieter Acker is the author of an article about Hannenheim in *Melos* (1969, Norbert von Hannenheim. *Melos* 1: 6-8), as well as of the article from MGG (see Acker, 1979. Hannenheim, Norbert Wolfgang Stephan von. In Fr. Blume (ed.), *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart. Allgemeine Enzyklopädie der Musik*, 16. Kassel – Basel – Paris – London – New York: Bärenreiter: 588-589.).

<sup>16</sup> Acker, Trăsături ale creației vocal-instrumentale a lui Webern (Features of Webern's vocal creation), 36-40.

bibliographical resources.<sup>17</sup> Among these is a manuscript containing an analysis of Anton Webern's Piano Variations Op. 27, dated March 1966.<sup>18</sup> In the second half of the 1960s the publication of analyses of Webern's work was facilitated,<sup>19</sup> as a clear sign of "canonisation" of his aphoristic style among the younger generation of composers anchored in the European cultural circuit.<sup>20</sup> Dieter Acker was, in turn, an assiduous analyst of Webern's work.<sup>21</sup> He acknowledges in a statement that his maestro brought it to his attention,<sup>22</sup> and it was from Toduță that he received the scores which he copied entirely by hand in order to study it in detail,<sup>23</sup> as did many of his colleagues.

Acker's only study published in Romania on a modern European composer is the one on Anton Webern. It saw the light of day in the same year his String Quartet No. 1 was awarded and published. We discover in his analytical study a penetrating and synthesising spirit, a comprehensive survey of Webern's work, with illustration of specific stylistic issues, then known only in informed circles of contemporary composers, with up-to-date bibliographical references on Webern's music (Leibowitz, Eimert, Kolneder). At the time Webern was, as Ligeti put it, "*die Vaterfigur (...)* der

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<sup>17</sup> „Unzählige bibliographische Auszüge, Notenbeispiele, schriftlich fixierte Analysen waren allein dem Kompositionsunterricht zugeordnet, den er übrigens in jedem Jahr im Hinblick auf die Fähigkeiten und Neigungen seiner Studenten neugestaltete.“ (Countless bibliographical excerpts, note examples, and written analyses were dedicated solely to composition lessons, which he incidentally redesigned each year regarding the abilities and inclinations of his students.), in Türk, *Mein Lehrer Sigismund Todutza*, 103.

<sup>18</sup> The manuscript is preserved in the „Sigismund Toduță” Foundation Archive, and is published in the volume Sigismund Toduță, *Inedite. Conferințe – Interviuri* (Unpublished. Conferences – Interviews), 46-90.

<sup>19</sup> On the short period of relaxation of the communist regime, see Valentina Sandu-Dediu, *Rumänische Musik nach 1944*, 29.

<sup>20</sup> Niculescu. (1965). Anton Webern. *Muzica* 4: 29-36, republished in Niculescu. (1980). *Reflecții despre muzică* (Thoughts on music). Bucharest, Editura Muzicală, 208-223.

<sup>21</sup> Acker, Trăsături ale creației vocal-instrumentale a lui Webern (Features on Webern's vocal creation), 36-40.

<sup>22</sup> Acker, Maestrul Toduță în amintirea unui discipol din München (Master Toduță in the memories of a disciple from Munich), 7.

<sup>23</sup> „Bei Nacht und Nebel habe ich mir zum Beispiel alle Werke von Anton von Webern besorgt, abgeschrieben und studiert (Kopiergeräte gab's ja noch keine). Man musste dies auch heimlich machen, denn die junge westliche Moderne, vor allem aber die ganze zweite Wiener Schule, war von Staats wegen verpönt. Sie galt als dekadente Musik des späten Bürgertums.“ (In the dead of night, I got hold of all the works of Anton von Webern, copied them and studied them (there were no photocopiers yet). This had to be done secretly, because the young Western modernism, especially the entire Second Viennese School, was frowned upon by the state. It was considered the decadent music of the late bourgeoisie), in Schmitt, 17.

*Komponistengeneration.*"<sup>24</sup> The mindful analysis of Webern's style suggests a considerable amount of time was devoted to Webern's oeuvre on a regular basis,<sup>25</sup> and that there was a critical absorption of the style's novelty.

### **String Quartet No. 1 by Dieter Acker**

String Quartet No. 1 was the result of a decisive stage in the young composer's career, completed at the end of his composition studies under Sigismund Toduță. With its firm and expressive writing, it is valuable beyond the level of "schoolwork", and reaches a first degree of compositional maturity, both in terms of acquired technical skills and in assimilating the novelty of style with judiciousness. Our analysis aims to observe which contemporary orientations were pursued by Acker, and to what extent the new was assimilated by this young composer, whose musical education was based on the tradition of European musical culture.

The preface to the String Quartet, signed by Doru Popovici, is the only published text about this piece. Here is also a brief description of the musical content, which places the work in a tradition of academic classicism of the string quartet genre, permeated by a cyclical musical idea:

The work is structured in four strongly contrasting parts: slow Introduction, Sonata Allegro, Intermezzo and Finale. The whole quartet has as its intonational basis an initial cell, made up of 5 sounds, exposed in the very first bars of the first movement. With its help, the composer will create the idea of the introductory part, the first and second themes of the sonata Allegro, the leading idea of the Intermezzo, and the two themes of the concluding part. In this respect, the work is faithful to the principle of the cyclic sonata.<sup>26</sup>

The Quartet's description entails aspects of formal structure and anchors the piece in the Western classical tradition, with stylistic similarities to Paul Hindemith's work, with certain specific writing techniques, and with "an affinity for polyphony, for sober, almost austere melody, with classical

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<sup>24</sup> Krones, *Webern, Anton Friedrich Wilhelm*, in *MGG Online*, <https://www.mgg-online.com/article?id=mgg13669&v=1.0&rs=id-ebb0600c-fb56-f4a2-73b6-632d93e8f4f4&q=anton%20webern>, accessed on 15 July, 2022.

<sup>25</sup> Schmitt, 17.

<sup>26</sup> Popovici, 3.

rhythm.”<sup>27</sup> Essentially, the Quartet is in line with tradition, “but (it is) often enriched by appealing asymmetries in the formulas used.”<sup>28</sup> Indeed, the author of the preface indicates as the first part a “meditative Lento,” which precedes a “traditional sonata form”. About the *Intermezzo*, the slow part of the Quartet, Popovici notes veiledly that it “brings a strong reassurance of the soul’s turmoil,” using at the same time a technique similar to a “cantus firmus”. The finale, the third part of the Quartet, has the traditional role of a rondo to provide “metrical vivacity”. Despite all the clues about the music’s relationship with Western tradition, Popovici concludes that “Dieter Acker attracts attention not so much by the novelty of the elements of form, which he develops logically and with a fine musicality, but rather by the renewal of expression itself,”<sup>29</sup> without referring, or without being able (due to communist censorship) to refer to the innovative elements in the score. The preface places this work within the limits of traditional forms, and the pointers to its innovative aspects – as we shall see below – are exposed to us through euphemisms to bypass communist censorship.

### **1<sup>st</sup> Movement. INTRODUZIONE. Moderato – SONATA. Allegro**

The first movement is structured according to the Classical model of sonata form with slow introduction (Table 1). Although regarded as an “academic” musical model, the genre and sonata form, though pretentious and elitist, is still of interest to 20<sup>th</sup> century composers because of its functional and effective principles: “Sonatendenken nun ist im frühen 20. Jahrhundert integraler Bestandteil des Formbewußtseins (...). Wird der Formtypus Sonatensatz eliminiert, so sind doch Züge von sonatenhaftem, dialektisch-prozessualen Denken in neuen Konzeptionen verankert.”<sup>30</sup> At the same time, in Sigismund Toduță’s school of composition in Cluj there was a solid training in the tradition of “academic” forms, which had to be mastered with virtuosity before any search for individual compositional style commenced.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Popovici, 3-4.

<sup>28</sup> Popovici, 3-4.

<sup>29</sup> Popovici, 4.

<sup>30</sup> Mielke-Gerdes, *Sonate 20. Jahrhundert*, <https://www.mgg-online.com/article?id=mgg16076&v=1.0&rs=id-98a55f97-99f2-28a2-a0d0-d3bc67c9f60c&q=sonate>, accessed on 14 July, 2022.

<sup>31</sup> Türk, *Mein Lehrer Sigismund Todutza*, 102-103.

**Table 1**

<i>Introduzione. Moderato</i>	<i>Sonata. Allegro</i>						
	Exposition			Development	Recapitulation		
	T <sub>1</sub>	bridge	T <sub>2</sub>		T <sub>1</sub>	bridge	T <sub>2</sub>
1-28	29-64			81-126	127-158		

Exposition					
T <sub>1</sub>	T <sub>1</sub> inversion	T <sub>1</sub> rhyth. var.	transition	T <sub>2</sub>	T <sub>2</sub> , T <sub>2</sub> inversion.
29-44	45-52	53-58	59-63	64-75	76-80

Development				
T <sub>1</sub> , T <sub>2v</sub> dim.	T <sub>2v</sub> , T <sub>2v</sub> inversion	T <sub>1v</sub> stretto	T <sub>1v</sub> reverse	α cadenza
81-83	84-89	90-103	104-120	121-126

**Dieter Acker, String Quartet No. 1, first movement (formal scheme)**

***Introduzione. Moderato***

The first five measures of the introduction set out the motivic material of the entire section, which will be repeated in various formulations. Hans-Peter Türk's discovery, that the generative essence of this Quartet is a solid motivic base which stands as the principle of the whole work,<sup>32</sup> is reflected in the score by the cyclic element, and this is also noted by Popovici. The Introduction has, therefore, an additional role exposing the musical motto (α-cell), which will run through the whole piece.

<sup>32</sup> Türk, Dieter Acker – Wie ich ihn sehe, wie ich ihn höre, 32.

Moderato

3 2 1 2 1

*pp* < > *p* < > *mf*

$\alpha$

*molto p* 5 *p* 5 *pp* < > *p* < > *mf*

*mf* *poco f* *f cresc.*

*p* < > *mp* *poco f* *f* *f cresc.* *pizz.* *arco* *f* *p*

*mf* *poco f* *f cresc.* *f* *f* *pizz.* *f*

*cresc.* *poco f* *f cresc.* *f* *f* *pizz.* *f*

### Dieter Acker, String Quartet No. 1, First movement, measures 1-7

Regarding the pitch configuration, we observe in the structure of the cell-motto ( $\alpha$ ) a rigorous intervallic construction (perfect 4th, minor 2nd, and minor 3rd), in which the perfect fourth plays a determining role. From the very first page, one notices the double role of the rest synthesised by Sigismund

Toduță, as "function of punctuation",<sup>33</sup> but also as a factor to use for the aforethought imbalance of the metre, a constitutive element that generates a "space of silence"<sup>34</sup> characteristic of Webern's style. In his analysis of Webern's vocal creation, Acker also notes the role of the rests, which "become more than ever a constructive, tectonic, logical element framed in fine, oscillating lines",<sup>35</sup> and in his Quartet, too, the rest has two defining roles: the unstressed beat and separation of the opening gestures by a considerable rest create the illusion of a beginning *ex nihilo*, generating indefinite "spaces of silence", and the subsequent motivic development with asymmetrical constructions are separated by short rests, which manifest themselves as "punctuation" signs, masterfully delimiting the constituent cells and motifs, sometimes even with a rhetorical role. Using the rest, the composer creates vast sections of metric imbalance throughout the Quartet:

**E.g. 2**

**Dieter Acker, String Quartet No. 1, First movement, measures 24-27**

The  $\alpha$ -cell at the beginning of the Quartet is set to an anacrusis, reiterated after a long pause. The following harmonic progression is placed on the stressed beat, but its rhythmic arrangement – the note lengths being

<sup>33</sup> Toduță, Anton Webern, Variațiuni pentru pian op. 27, p. I (Anton Webern, Piano Variations Op. 27, 1<sup>st</sup> mov.), 73.

<sup>34</sup> Toduță, Anton Webern, Variațiuni pentru pian op. 27, p. I (Anton Webern, Piano Variations Op. 27, 1<sup>st</sup> mov.), 73.

<sup>35</sup> Acker, Trăsături ale creației vocal-instrumentale a lui Webern (Features of Webern's vocal creation), 37.

3, 2, then 1 semiquavers – again creates the illusion of metrical imbalance, especially as the chord sequence is altered when it resumes after a new rest by eliding the first of the three chords. In this case, the rest has a rhetorical role, delimiting the two chord progressions (3-2-1 and 2-1 respectively). Variation techniques through subtraction and addition are common as patterns in developing musical material, both in moments of transition and as thematic developments (see E.g. 1).

### **Sonata. Allegro**

The sonata form following the slow introduction is combined with contrapuntal techniques specific to the fugue. While the sonata form retains its three main sections (Table 1), there are only references to the fugue form in terms of contrapuntal technique used (the theme is joined by a figurative counterpoint that follows it closely, but the inconsistency of its use does not allow us to consider it a countersubject), and only as an exception do small clues to the tonal plan appear, one example being the characteristic alternations between *dux* and *comes* (E.g. 3).

### **E.g. 3**

### **Dieter Acker, String Quartet No. 1, first movement, measures 114-116**

Both the sonata form themes are produced from the  $\alpha$ -cell, but they follow the expressive binary contrast one would expect from the form: a first theme which is vigorous, even aggressive, with a rhythmic presence and leaping melodic outline, and a lyrical second theme, with undulating melodic profile and a rhythmic configuration which supports the melodic continuity. The differences in expression are complemented by the structure-related antinomy: while the first theme displays the  $\alpha$ -cell in the original, the second theme displays it in reversed form.

E.g. 4

**Dieter Acker, String Quartet No. 1, first movement**  
**T<sub>1</sub> (measures 28-29) with respect to T<sub>2</sub> (measures 63-65)**

The whole first part is composed with thematic economy and the cyclical idea in mind, interests shared by Sigismund Toduță's musicological investigations.<sup>36</sup> The two themes of the sonata form are subject to variation techniques characteristic to polyphonic forms: inversion and retrograde, rhythmic diminution and *stretto*. Of course, the rhythmic developments are much more diverse and not limited to the rigorous versions of Baroque polyphony (diminution and augmentation). One can find structural elements of the  $\alpha$ -cell in both the main themes and transitional material: from illustration of sonata form in Table 1, we can also observe the density of thematic material throughout the first movement of the Quartet.

String Quartet No. 1 preserves Classical notation and posture, reflected in the thematic contrast (the melodic and rhythmic profiles of the themes) and the choice of Classical (one could see them even as obsolete) forms, in some moments even outlining *dux-comes* relationships a perfect fifth apart (just as they would be in a fugue form).

### ***Intermezzo. Andantino***

The middle movement of Dieter Acker's String Quartet No. 1 continues the Brahmsian tradition of the intermezzo, having a lyrical, intimate chamber tone, in which the musical texture remains sparse (like pieces such as

<sup>36</sup> Toduță, *Ideea ciclică la Enescu* (Cyclic idea by Enescu).

Intermezzo, Op. 116/4), composed as a permanent responsorial dialogue between the violin/cello and the ensemble's harmonic progressions. The lightness of the *Intermezzo. Andantino* movement is also reflected in the free developments of the cyclic cell: unlike the first part, in which it becomes the generator for the two themes of the sonata form, worked on contrapuntally with a wide variety of procedures, here only the first sounds of the cell are preserved, in a free, pseudo-improvised variation of the main intervals (minor 2nd, perfect 4th, and minor 3rd).

## E.g 5

The musical score is for the second movement of Dieter Acker's String Quartet No. 1, measures 1-8. It is in 8/8 time and marked 'Andantino'. The score consists of four staves: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello. The music is characterized by long, sustained notes and a gradual fall in pitch. Dynamics include *pp*, *molto p*, *p*, and *mf*. Performance instructions include 'sempre in rilievo' and 'pizz.' (pizzicato).

## Dieter Acker, String Quartet No. 1, second movement, measures 1-8

The main melodic line in the middle part illustrates a gradual fall of the soloist instrument, as slow as it is inexorable. Towards the end of the movement, the viola hands over the falling melody to the cello, the lowest-pitched instrument of the ensemble. The piece begins in the high-pitched register of the violin ( $G^2$ ), as a suspended emergence of sound, a sound image also found in German works, for example in Brahms' *Intermezzi*, Op. 118/6 or 119/1. On the long notes of the solo instrument conversing interventions from the other three string instruments appear, in a responsorial development, of which a famous example in the Classical tradition is the second part of Ludwig van Beethoven's Piano Concerto in C minor, Op. 37.



Table 3

measures:	13	14	15-16	16-18	19	20
semitones:	(1 1 5 1 1) 3 2	(1 5 1) 1 3 3	2 1 3 2 2 1	(1 2	1 5	1 2) 3

## Intermezzo, section b, micro-palindrome series

E.g. 7

m. 13

m. 14

m. 16-20

Fingerings: [1 1 5 1 1] 3 2, [1 5 1] 1 3 3 2, 1 3 2 2 1, [2 1 5 1 2] 3

Dieter Acker, String Quartet No. 1, second movement, measures 13-20.  
palindromic series

The intervallic structure of the melody in the final section also follows the mirrored form of the palindrome, initially in small gestures and then in phrases that display the full palindromic series.

Table 4

measures:	20	20-21	22-23
semitones:	(2 1 2)	(1 5 1)	(2 1 2 1 2 1 2)
measures:	24-31	31-32	
semitones:	(1) (1 5 1 1 3 3 1 1 5 1)	2 3	

Dieter Acker, String Quartet No. 1, second movement, measures 20-32  
Section a<sub>v</sub>, palindromic series

The analysis of the palindrome indicates a relatively free management of the basic structure (set out in section a and repeated in a<sub>v</sub>). However, even guides to the use of serial-dodecaphonic music describe small deviations from the rigid “corset” of the abstract scheme as desirable, to retain the expressive content of the music and the natural shaping of musical lines, indicating, in fact, a much more effective assimilation of the rules than a sterile and unconvincing takeover.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>38</sup> Křenek, 8.

### **Finale. Molto allegro**

We can elaborate on Doru Popovici's description of the finale as "a music of metrical vivacity, with a rondo character" by noting the scherzo disposition (suggested by the *pizzicato* playing technique, the ternary rhythm, and the playful specificity of the melodic content), and the cyclical role the finale plays within the string quartet genre by evoking the introduction from the first movement. The "metrical vivacity" perceived by Popovici can be observed in the rests of the four-bar introduction, in which, like the incipit of the first movement, the harmonic cell (two chords) is subjected to a metrical phase-shifting process in order to create the illusion of metrical disorientation; thus the initial cell begins each time on a different beat of the 3/4 measure: first beat one, then beat three, and then beat two. The hemiola metrical play is complemented by the pitch structure, where two chords are subject to an intervallic exchange: the two minor 7ths separated by a perfect 5th in the first chord are followed by two perfect 5ths separated by a minor 7th.

**E.g. 8**

### **Dieter Acker, String Quartet No. 1, third movement, measures 1-6**

The extraordinary variety of metre and rhythm is then counterbalanced by homogeneity at the pitch level. On the same chord (C Bb Eb), a passage of no less than 14 bars unfolds, in which variety and contrast are achieved through hemiola, contrasts of playing techniques (*pizzicato* and *arco*) and dynamics (between *forte* and *pianissimo*). It is a vibrant, robust music, in which Doru Popovici discovers "attractive asymmetries of the formulas used."

Table 5

sections:	Introduction	A	A1	B	A	A1	$\alpha$ (introd.)	A-A1
measures:	1-4	5- 24	25- 43	44- 74	75- 93	94- 124	125- 144	145- 163

### Dieter Acker, String Quartet No. 1, third movement (formal scheme)

Where the A section manages to create a magnetic rhythmic energy from a single chord, section A<sub>1</sub> transforms the same pitch material into a rigorous polyphonic discourse: viola and cello execute, in canon, a rhythmic dynamization of the C B $\flat$  E $\flat$  chord, a rhythmic construction that also follows the Fibonacci sequence (E.g. 9). Over this carefully constructed material, performed by the instruments in the ensemble's mid-low register, the two violins will display in varied imitations motifs originating from the  $\alpha$ -cell.

E.g. 9

The musical score for measures 24-34 of Dieter Acker's String Quartet No. 1, third movement, is presented in two systems. The first system (measures 24-28) shows the Violin I and II parts with dynamics *p* and *mp*, and the Viola and Cello parts with dynamics *mf* and *mp*. The second system (measures 29-34) shows the Violin I and II parts with dynamics *mf* and *poco f*, and the Viola and Cello parts with dynamics *mf* and *pizz.*. The score includes various rhythmic patterns and dynamic markings throughout.

### Dieter Acker, String Quartet No. 1, third movement, measures 24-34

In section B (bars 44-71), the cello presents a broad melodic line in the high register. The melody is a palindrome-like intonational development, "hidden" by brief interventions which disrupt the specific symmetry of the

form: a small break within the phrase "cleaves" the mirrored form, and the end of the phrase conclusively repeats the last three sounds; the axial sound, underlined by the tensest dynamic indication (*più forte*) in the entire musical phrase, confirms the composer's intention to configure the musical structure as a palindrome.

**E.g. 10**



**Dieter Acker, String Quartet No. 1, third movement, measures 44-71**

**Melodic palindrome, semitones between first 20 notes:**

**5 3 1 5 1 2 (2 2) 3 11 11 11 11 3 2 1 5 1 3 5**

In the kinetic energy of vitalizing expression, we discover other "gems", based on abstract principles generating form, from which we are able to understand what were, in fact, those "more important concerns" to which Acker referred when he recalled the period when he was in Sigismund Toduță's composition class.<sup>39</sup>

The three movements of the String Quartet are subject to the pattern of traditional musical forms in the Western classical music tradition (sonata form combined with fugue elements, ternary form, and rondo-scherzo) and are composed by means of traditional compositional techniques (polyphony, the cyclic principle, and motivic development based on simple additive or subtractive variations), but by delving into the morphology of musical phrases, we discover other structuring principles, taken from the modern conception of music (Fibonacci's sequence, and symmetrical palindromic structured melodies), which were integrated into Webern's serialism out of a need for unity and comprehensible laws of generating an opus. These laws are like the laws of organic nature, more specifically of the composing out of a single cell into a living organism.<sup>40</sup> While the analyses which reveal the principles of the golden section, in the work of composers who have been shown to

<sup>39</sup> „Als ich später zur Hochschule kam, waren mir diese Dinge alle schon längst geläufig. Ich konnte mich Wichtigerem widmen." (When I came to the university later, I was already familiar with all these things. I could devote myself to more important things) in Schmitt, 14.

<sup>40</sup> Krones, Webern, Anton Friedrich Wilhelm, in *MGG Online*, <https://www.mgg-online.com/article?id=mgg13669&v=1.0&rs=id-ca02b08d-7630-7666-f97d-cf0dd3a4e4a9&q=palindrom>, accessed on 25 August, 2022.

have arrived only intuitively at such results, were later criticized, since the 1950s composers have consciously employed principles of numerical proportion, following the theories of proponents of serial music.<sup>41</sup>

These creative principles are also reflected in String Quartet No. 1, but the stylistic imprint remains that of a composer rooted in tradition, who incorporates the new into Classical techniques, thus underlining the biographical training mentioned: both in the culture of the Transylvanian Saxons, under the guidance of Franz Xaver Dressler, and as an eminent student of Sigismund Toduță's composition class. If Dieter Acker's style had continued to keep within the same limits, we might have been tempted to classify the style of this opus in what Walter Frisch called Historical Modernism – which Valentina Sandu-Dediu identifies in the work of composer Wilhelm Georg Berger (in a relevant comparison with Max Reger) as “an attempt to bridge a historical gap without denying, destroying or overcoming it in order to return to the past.”<sup>42</sup> But instead Acker's later opus String Quartet No. 3, *Cantus lugubris* (1966, rev. 1968) was a creation contrary to all expectations, written in the characteristic notation of aleatoric music, as proof of the young composer's interest not only in the values of the past, but also in the novelty of the avant-garde.

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<sup>41</sup> Möller, Goldener Schnitt, in *MGG Online*, <https://www.mgg-online.com/article?id=mgg15434&v=1.1&rs=id-e3be402b-330e-0c07-9247-278ac082c49a&q=fibonacci>, accessed on 25 August, 2022.

<sup>42</sup> Sandu-Dediu, Înainte și după neoclasicism: Max Reger și Wilhelm Georg Berger (Before and after Neoclassicism: Max Reger and Wilhelm Georg Berger), 49.

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**FROM CHOIR TO STRING QUARTET – SOUND  
METAMORPHOSES IN THE COMPOSITION OF THE WORK  
OPT BAGATELE PENTRU CVARTET DE COARDE <sup>1</sup>  
BY ADRIAN POP<sup>2</sup>**

**CRISTIAN BENCE-MUK<sup>3</sup>**

**SUMMARY.** Among the three string quartets of the Cluj composer, we have chosen to focus on the opus *Opt bagatele pentru cvartet de coarde* [Eight bagatelles for string quartet] (1996), awarded with the “George Enescu” Prize of the Romanian Academy, and whose ideational, thematic, and dramatic ground is a previous choral cycle of the author, *Galgenlieder-Bagatellen* (1987), lyrics from *Galgenlieder / Gallows Songs* by Christian Morgenstern (1905). Notwithstanding the inherent differences between the instrumental and vocal versions, the musical attitudes preserve the predilection and appetite for the vocal composition that Adrian Pop holds so dear, including through the use of certain vocal phonemes, the chromatics of the chordophones in the third bagatelle. The instrumental and chromatic refinement of the eight bagatelles confirms the essential role they play in the creation of one of the most important contemporary composers of Cluj and Romania.

**Keywords:** Adrian Pop, bagatelle, version, transcription, rewriting, contemporary

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<sup>1</sup> *Eight Bagatelles for String Quartet* (our translation).

<sup>2</sup> The Romanian version of this study was published in the proceedings of the 2021 SIMN Conference titled “2021 - Intersecții în componistica românească – Mihail Jora. Myriam Marbe. Dan Constantinescu, Adrian Iorgulescu, Doina Rotaru, Adrian Pop” (“2021-Intersections in Romanian composing - Mihail Jora. Myriam Marbe. Dan Constantinescu, Adrian Iorgulescu, Doina Rotaru, Adrian Pop”), edition coordinated by Olguța Lupu, Ed. Muzicală, Bucharest, 2022, ISMN 979-0-69491-278-9, ISBN 978-973-42-1258-3, pp. 91-111.

<sup>3</sup> *Associate Professor Ph.D., “Gh. Dima” National Academy of Music, 25, Ion I. C. Brătianu St., Cluj-Napoca, email: cristianbencemuk@gmail.com.*



The well-known and distinguished composer and professor of Cluj, Adrian Pop, general director of the “Transilvania” State Philharmonic of Cluj-Napoca (1991-1995) and former rector of the National Academy of Music “Gh. Dima” (2008-2012), needs no vast preliminary introduction, therefore we shall succinctly synthesize only a few, in our vision, representative aspects that pertain to his activity and creation.

Adrian Pop began his studies of music under the paternal guidance of the renowned choir conductor and professor of Cluj, Dorin Pop, and the triad of the master composers that had a decisive contribution to his musical formation/education gathers incontestable names of the musical arts in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century: Sigismund Toduță, Cornel Țăranu, but also Ștefan Niculescu.<sup>4</sup>

Without entirely eluding the variety and the symphonic scope<sup>5</sup>, his musical creation, predominantly chamber music, offers an honoured place to the choral creation, by the 70 pieces written until now, which cover the entire range of choral combinations (mixed choir, male voice choir, women’s choir, equal voices choir, choir and piano).

“A modern composer but with traditional depth and consciousness”<sup>6</sup>, Adrian Pop confesses his affinity and obvious predilection for the principles and specificity of the vocal music (to the choral opuses also added are other orchestral works that address the voice, either accompanied by piano or in various vocal-instrumental combinations), encapsulating his artistic, musical credo in a memorable phrase: “to me [...] the melody is the minimum and sufficient condition required for music”<sup>7</sup>.

Among the three string quartets of the Cluj composer, we have chosen to focus on the opus *Opt bagatele pentru cvartet de coarde (Eight bagatelles for string quartet)* (1996), awarded with the “George Enescu” Prize of the Romanian Academy, and whose ideational, thematic, and dramatic ground is a previous choral cycle of the author, *Galgenlieder-Bagatellen* (1987), lyrics from *Galgenlieder (Gallows Songs)* by Christian Morgenstern (1905). Notwithstanding the inherent differences between the instrumental and vocal versions, the musical attitudes preserve the predilection and

<sup>4</sup> See the interview „De vorbă cu Adrian Pop” (*In Conversation with Adrian Pop*), by Andra Apostu and published in *Muzica* magazine, no. 3/2017, pp. 3-26.

<sup>5</sup> We recall the works *Etos 1* [Ethos 1] (1976) *Solstițiu* [Solstice] (1979) and *Triptic (Triptych)* (1998), as well as the *Concertul pentru violoncel și orchestră (Concert for cello and orchestra)* (1975, second, amplified version dating from 1987).

<sup>6</sup> *Opera Omnia. Autoportrete componistice – Adrian Pop sau despre ideal în muzică (Opera Omnia. Compositional self-portraits – Adrian Pop or About the ideal in music)* (Lecturer Anca Sîrbu, Ph.D.), in *Arta* (Journal of the Faculty of Interpretation, Composition and Theoretical Musical Studies, Iași), 2017.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibidem*.

appetence for the vocal composition that Adrian Pop holds so dear, as one can see also from the evocation of the Renaissance motel in the section *Chiesa del Palestrina*, from a different string quartet *Mătasea și metalul (The Silk and the Metal)* (2011-2013), or from the use of certain vocal phonemes which come to enrich the chromatics of the chordophones in the third bagatelle.

Founded on the same immutable aesthetic principles subjected to “the beautiful” (understood in the medieval key of Thomas Aquinas through clarity, luminosity, equilibrium, proportionality<sup>8</sup>), Adrian Pop’s musical creation offers a sense of homogeneity and continuity, all the while revalorizing the “thematic” and “poetical elements” of certain school works, old sketches or previous pieces<sup>9</sup>. Thus, the work we discuss in this study not only springs from a choral version, but without ending the series of its sound avatars, offers the starting point of one of the parts of the 1998 *Triptych* for orchestra [by transcribing and developing a movement of the *Opt bagatele pentru cvartet de coarde (Eight bagatelles for string quartet)*].<sup>10</sup>

Returning to the central focus of this study, we mention that our approach will not revolve around the analytical-aesthetic details of the eight bagatelles, already explored in the existing bibliography<sup>11</sup>, but we shall follow the reports and transformations of the original choir, in its process of vocal instrumentalization and recreation.

Considering that the composer himself believes that “the performer, as well as the listener, would benefit from knowing the lyrics”<sup>12</sup>, even in the case of the instrumental version (that resumes the thematic, poetical imagery, and the cycle dramaturgy of the initial choral), we will also accompany our comparative analytical journey of Christian Morgenstern’s lyrics, which “revitalize the anti-field of the aesthetic sphere at the divide of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, by responding to the polyvalent and diversified manifestation of the dormant values of the grotesque and the absurd present as significant alternatives of the human condition and its epoch.”<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Apostu, A. *Op. cit.*

<sup>9</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>10</sup> See the interview by Ecaterina Banciu - *Etosuri arhetipale - "Triptic" de Adrian Pop (Archetypal ethos: Triptych by Adrian Pop)*, in the STUDIA UBB MUSICA, LXI, 2, 2016 (p. 257 – 274).

<sup>11</sup> See Ștefan Anghi –*Fotografii la minut din creația compozitorilor clujeni (Snapshots from the creation of Cluj composers)*, Arpeggione Publishing House, Cluj-Napoca, 2008, pp. 289-306 and V. Jucan, N. Silaghi, M. Suărășan – *Opusuri camerale pentru coarde de Adrian Pop (Chamber opuses for strings by Adrian Pop)*, MediaMusica Publishing House, Cluj-Napoca, 2012, pp. 7-34.

<sup>12</sup> From the preface of the score *Opt bagatele pentru cvartet de coarde (Eight bagatelles for string quartett)*, MediaMusica Publishing House, Cluj-Napoca, 2012.

<sup>13</sup> Anghi, Șt. *Op. cit.*, p. 290.

**The first bagatelle**, *Moderato quieto*, corresponds to the choral piece *Apa (The Water)*<sup>14</sup> of the choral cycle and suggests “the continuity and discontinuity of wisdom, as two metaphorical hypotheses [...] encapsulated in two musical ideas”<sup>15</sup> or “two fundamental motifs”<sup>16</sup>.

The first eight measures are added to the initial choral version, representing an introduction which prepares the binary structure of the bagatelle (A A<sub>v1</sub>),<sup>17</sup> configuring the vocal space of the accompaniment, based on the perfect and augmented fourths (Ionic, Lydian but also Phrygian or Aeolian tetrachords) and suggests the fluidity of the water through *glissandos* overlapping with the pedals of the grave chords, by creating a “texture” that is instrumentally different idiomatically from the choral piece.

## E.g. 1

**1. Moderato quieto** (♩ cca 60)

Violin 1 con sord. via sord.

Violin 2 con sord. *pp sotto voce*

Viola con sord. *pp sotto voce*

Violoncello con sord. *pp sotto voce*

Adrian Pop – *Bagatelle 1*, m. 1-8.

<sup>14</sup> *Fără glas, fără glas/ curge apa ceas de ceas;/ dar oricât, dar oricât,/ tot n-ar spune ea decât:/ A mânca, a iubi, - / și nimica nou n-ar fi./ Așadar, așadar,/ apa ar vorbi-n zadar* (Voiceless, voiceless,/ Ran the clock water;/ Much as it did, much as it did,/ It would only say;/ Eating, loving/ Nothing new would bring,/ So in vain would water speak.) (Romanian translation by Adrian Pop – cf. note on the score, see volume *Adrian Pop – Coruri (Adrian Pop – Choral works)*, Ed. Muzicală, Bucharest, 1987.)

<sup>15</sup> Angi, Șt. *Op. cit.*, p. 295.

<sup>16</sup> Jucan, V., Silaghi, N., Suărășan, M., *Op. cit.*, p. 9.

<sup>17</sup> The three members of the “Transylvanian Quartet”, in *Opusuri camerale pentru coarde de Adrian Pop (Chamber opuses for strings by Adrian Pop)*, appreciate this means “a ternary form” (ABB song form), subsequently nuancing that, in fact, “the only possible cut-out appears in measure 43” (hence creating a binary structure), whereas the A in the inverted bar only has 8 measures (meaning the Introduction, in our vision) – see *Op. cit.*, pp. 9-12.

In fact, it is not only the introduction of the piece *Apa (The Water)* that is amplified, but the entire first bagatelle, by prolonging the pauses, the pedals, resulting in the end in 60 measures, compared to the 35 of the original choral, enhanced, arranged, and instrumentalized.

Therefore, in the musical example 2, we can see how the melody is transposed to the upper octave (compared to the original), in *pizzicato* (which suggests, presumptively, water drops). The measurement for the pause (m.7 to the choir) is tripled (m.17-19 in quartet), and the entire accompaniment of the melodic line is transformed, instrumentalized, liquefied, starting from the suggestions of the choral version. In other moments of the bagatelle we can encounter again the extended pedals, various repetitions with the framing of a different tempo of the measure, by acquiring new combinations in relation to the “texture” of the accompaniment.

**E.g. 2**

The image displays two systems of musical notation for a string quartet. The first system covers measures 10 to 19, and the second system covers measures 16 to 19. The instruments are Violin 1 (Vln. 1), Violin 2 (Vln. 2), Viola (Vla.), and Violoncello (Vc.).

In the first system (measures 10-19):

- Measure 10:** Vln. 1 has a whole rest. Vln. 2, Vla., and Vc. have rhythmic accompaniment.
- Measure 11:** Vln. 1 has a whole rest. Vln. 2 has a half note. Vla. and Vc. continue their accompaniment.
- Measure 12:** Vln. 1 has a whole rest. Vln. 2 has a half note. Vla. and Vc. continue their accompaniment.
- Measure 13:** Vln. 1 has a whole rest. Vln. 2 has a half note. Vla. and Vc. continue their accompaniment.
- Measure 14:** Vln. 1 has a whole rest. Vln. 2 has a half note. Vla. and Vc. continue their accompaniment.
- Measure 15:** Vln. 1 has a whole rest. Vln. 2 has a half note. Vla. and Vc. continue their accompaniment.
- Measure 16:** Vln. 1 has a whole rest. Vln. 2 has a half note. Vla. and Vc. continue their accompaniment.
- Measure 17:** Vln. 1 has a whole rest. Vln. 2 has a half note. Vla. and Vc. continue their accompaniment.
- Measure 18:** Vln. 1 has a whole rest. Vln. 2 has a half note. Vla. and Vc. continue their accompaniment.
- Measure 19:** Vln. 1 has a whole rest. Vln. 2 has a half note. Vla. and Vc. continue their accompaniment.

In the second system (measures 16-19):

- Measure 16:** Vln. 1 has a whole rest. Vln. 2 has a half note. Vla. and Vc. continue their accompaniment.
- Measure 17:** Vln. 1 has a whole rest. Vln. 2 has a half note. Vla. and Vc. continue their accompaniment.
- Measure 18:** Vln. 1 has a whole rest. Vln. 2 has a half note. Vla. and Vc. continue their accompaniment.
- Measure 19:** Vln. 1 has a whole rest. Vln. 2 has a half note. Vla. and Vc. continue their accompaniment.

Performance markings include *ord.* (ordinando) and *pizz.* (pizzicato) in the Vln. 1 part, and *mf* (mezzo-forte) and *f* (forte) dynamics. A slur is present over measures 16-19 in the Vln. 1 part.

Andantino *mp* semplice

S. *p* *bocca chiusa, sempre legato* *m* *Fă-ră glas, Oh-ne Wort,*

A. *m* *Fă-ră glas, Oh-ne Wort,*

T. *m* *Fă-ră glas, Oh-ne Wort,*

S. *m* *Fă-ră glas, Oh-ne Wort, cur-ge a-pa ceas de ceas; im-mer-fort,*

A. *m* *Fă-ră glas, Oh-ne Wort, cur-ge a-pa ceas de ceas; im-mer-fort,*

T. *m* *Fă-ră glas, Oh-ne Wort, cur-ge a-pa ceas de ceas; im-mer-fort,*

**Adrian Pop – comparison between the measures 10-21 of *Bagatelle 1* and measures 1-10 of the choral piece *Apa (The Water)*.**

The final cadence reveals a new modification, apparently minor, by eliminating the last key, leaving the discourse suspended, tensioned, preparing the „*attacca*” of the second bagatelle. By not solving the harmony tension on that key of “B-flat major” with an added *ninth*, the instrumental version is delimited even more from the choral original, even if in a subtle way, as we will proceed to explain. Thus, if the choral pieces could be interpreted in any order and combination (even if partial), therefore requesting a clear final to any of them, the string quartet version is a unitary whole, relinquishing the relativity of the order of its composing parts, which now converge, from one to another, by the end of the cycle, being welded through transitions, connecting units, and, especially, by eliminating the final cadences (except for the last bagatelle, articulating the end of the entire cycle).

The image displays two musical staves. The upper staff is a string quartet score with parts for Violin 1, Violin 2, Viola, and Violoncello. It includes performance instructions such as 'arco', 'pp', 'pp sotto voce', 'via sord.', and 'sul tasto'. The lower staff is a choral score for Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass, with German lyrics. A red rectangular box highlights the final cadences of both the string quartet and the choir, showing a transition to 'attacca'.

**Adrian Pop – comparison of the final cadences of the *Bagatelle 1* and the choral piece *Apa (The Water)***

The tonal appearance of the first piece (“noted with the key signature of the F major tonality”<sup>18</sup>) is shadowed, if not completely annulled “because of the cluster collision resulting from the overlap of the two motifs”<sup>19</sup> which are chief. The **second bagatelle**, corresponding to the choral piece *Marele Lalula (The Great Lalula)*<sup>20</sup>, has as starting point five abracadabra lyrics, based „solely on the euphonic-arbitrary expressiveness of the letters”<sup>21</sup>.

<sup>18</sup> Jucan, V., Silaghi, N., Suărășan, M., *Op.cit.*, p. 9.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>20</sup> *Kroklowafzi? Semememi! / Seiokronto – prafriplu: / Bifzi, bafzi; hulalemi: / Quasti basti bo... /Lalu lalu lalu la!*

<sup>21</sup> Șt. Angi, *op. cit.*, p. 294.

To the five lines of the first stanza of the poem *Marele Lalula* (*The Great Lalula*) correspond the five chief musical motifs<sup>22</sup>, the original choral is extended from 44 to 118 measures, and the movement become more alert (from *Moderato* to *Allegro*). Thus, an entire imitative, motoric accompaniment is added, with a *scherzando* character. The stamps of the feet (of the choral play) are replaced by the harmonic accompaniment, but also by the *col legno* effect, whereas the introductions and the sections of the bagatelle are extended, engaging new rhetoric moments, necessary to the new context, affecting the form of the part itself. Hence, if the choral piece had three sections (the last with two segments), the instrumental bagatelle has an elaborative four-part song form, of the A A<sub>v1</sub> (by involving a quadruple counterpoint) A<sub>1</sub> A<sub>2</sub> type.

In the beginning of the part, one can observe how the double alto pedal and base (the highlighted fragment in the following musical example)<sup>23</sup> is entrusted to the second violin, in double free strings, and the melodic intervention from the soprano (doubled by the tenor and alto) is rendered also by the second violin, in an isorhythmic intervention with the first violin (which attains mixes of the variable harmonic intervals). Alongside all these elements taken from the choral piece and augmented, we can see the imitative accompaniment in *pizzicato*, as a novel element of the instrumental version.

## E.g. 4

2. Allegro (♩ min. 120)

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

(ord.) pizz.

pizz.

*sf*

*pp*

*sf*

*pp*

<sup>22</sup> Cf. V. Jucan, N. Silaghi, M. Suărășan, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

<sup>23</sup> Note the unusual arrangement in the score for the choral voices.

FROM CHOIR TO STRING QUARTET – SOUND METAMORPHOSES...

7

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

arco (pressare l'arco, quasi non vibr.)

*f* *arco* (pressare l'arco, quasi non vibr.)

(ord.)

*f* *arco* (pressare l'arco, quasi non vibr.)

*mp* *pp* *mp*

col legno batt.

col legno batt. \*

*mp* *pp* *mp*

\* col legno batt. - le battute devono essere eseguite con l'arco caddendo direttamente sulle corde, senza nessun movimento laterale

Moderato

S.

T.

A.

B.

*f* *sf* *f* *sf*

*f* *sf* *f* *sf*

*f* *sf* *f* *sf*

*f* *sf* *f* *sf*

a

\* = bălăie din picior; se execută de către perechile de partide între care este notat (sopran / tenor, respectiv alt / bas). Perechile de optimi (♩) se vor executa cu picioare alternante.

♩ = ein Stampfen mit dem Fuß; es wird von den Stimmpaaren ausgeführt, zwischen denen es notiert ist (Sopran / Tenor, bzw. Alt / Baß). Die Achtel - Paare (♩) werden abwechselnd mit beiden Füßen gestampft.

Adrian Pop – comparison of m.1-12 from the second bagatelle to m.1-5 of the equivalent choral play

The comparison of the two new equivalent fragments in the two versions of the vocal-instrumental bagatelle (see musical example 5) highlights the variation of the harmonic elements (a second added compared to the choral piece, use of the new accompaniment with fourth chords, fifths, but also an added seventh), as well as the metric re-contextualising of the sound interventions (syncopé on the quarter note, instead of the eighth note).

second added compared to the choral piece

starts on a quarter note, instead on an eighth note

double stop, takeover from soprano and tenor

chords with 4, 5, 7+

*p*

*p*

Detailed description: This is a musical score for four instruments: Violin 1, Violin 2, Viola, and Violoncello. The score is in 4/4 time. The first three measures are marked with measure numbers 13, 14, and 15. The first violin part has a melodic line with a double stop in measure 15. The second violin part has a similar melodic line. The viola and cello parts play a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes. The score includes dynamic markings of piano (*p*) at the end of the first and second systems.

*la*

*lu*

*la*

*lu*

*la*

*lu*

*la*

*lu*

*la*

*lu*

Detailed description: This is a musical score for voices, likely soprano and tenor, with lyrics 'la' and 'lu'. The score is in 4/4 time. Three red boxes highlight specific passages in the first three measures. The first box highlights a melodic phrase in the first voice. The second box highlights a melodic phrase in the second voice. The third box highlights a melodic phrase in the first voice. The score includes dynamic markings of piano (*p*) at the end of the first and second systems.

**Adrian Pop – comparison of m. 13-18 of the second bagatelle to m.6-10 of the choral piece *Marele Lalula (The Great Lalula)***

The quadruple counterpoint used in articulating the section  $A_v$  means permuting the four instrumental voices, by assigning the melodic plan and pedals to the mission of the high pitch instruments.

E.g. 6

arco (pressare l'arco, quasi non vibr.)  
 (ord.)  
 arco (pressare l'arco, quasi non vibr.)  
 f rauco  
 f rauco  
 col legno batt. \*  
 col legno batt. \*  
 mp  
 mp  
 pp  
 mp

\* col legno batt. - le battute devono essere eseguite con l'arco cadendo direttamente sulle corde, senza nessun movimento laterale

pizz.  
 pp  
 col legno batt. \*  
 mp  
 col legno batt. \*  
 mp  
 arco (pressare l'arco, quasi non vibr.)  
 f rauco  
 arco (pressare l'arco, quasi non vibr.)  
 f rauco

**Adrian Pop – the quadruple counterpoint of the second bagatelle  
 (between sections A and A<sub>v1</sub>, m.7-12 vs. 27-31)**

Another relevant example in respect to the multiple transformations brought to the choral piece is found in the following musical example, where the sound material is transposed in the ascending minor third (*tenth*), rhythmically diminished (but also doubled, by the “stammered” semiquavers), spatialized and instrumentalized, while the end of the instrumental piece avoids the final sound gesture, just like the first bagatelle, by extending a double pedal in the acute and grave registers, as a connecting element to the following bagatelle.

Measure 110 quartet vs measure 41 choir -  
transposition, rhythmic variation, instrumentalisation

The image displays two musical staves side-by-side. The left staff is for a string quartet, with parts for Violin 1 (Vln. 1), Violin 2 (Vln. 2), Viola (Vla.), and Violoncello (Vc.). The right staff is for a choir, with four vocal parts. The quartet version is marked '110' and 'alla corda'. The choir version has lyrics 'la lu la' written below the notes.

The final cadence quartet vs choir,  
continuity and anticipation vs final gesture

The image displays two musical staves side-by-side. The left staff is for a string quartet, with parts for Violin 1 (Vln. 1), Violin 2 (Vln. 2), Viola (Vla.), and Violoncello (Vc.). The right staff is for a choir, with four vocal parts. The quartet version is marked 'sfpp'. The choir version has lyrics 'la lu' and 'attacca' written below the notes.

**Adrian Pop – the rhythmic diminution and the transposition used in the quartet version, comparison between the final cadences.**

**The third bagatelle**, “with symbolical and allegorical connotations”<sup>24</sup>, corresponds to the choral piece *Capra și năpârca (The Goat and the Adder)*<sup>25</sup> and it is until now the bagatelle closest to the original choral, with a total of

<sup>24</sup> V. Jucan, N. Silaghi, M. Suărășan, *op.cit.*, p. 20.

<sup>25</sup> *Năpârca-și cântă ruğa sa, / se uită capra fix la ea / și-și scutură bărbuța mult, / ca un profesor foarte cuit. / I-e cântecul necunoscut, / aude doar că e plăcut. / Năpârca-adoarme în curând. / Iar capra pleacă cugetând.* (The adder sings its prayer, / the goat staring at it / heavily shaking its beard, / similarly to an erudite teacher. / An unknown song, / that just feels good. / Soon the adder falls asleep / And the goat leaves pondering.)

56 measures compared to the 51 in the choral piece. The formal structure of the part sets off with the contrast between sections A and B, which are then elaborated within a median section (A+B, of 28 measures), and the movement is ended with a varied “reprise”, Av1 and a Coda. Among the arsenal of procedures used in the instrumental adaptation of the original choral, we mention spacing, by adding a supplementary register, transposing the melody to the higher octave (see musical example 8), using certain specific instrumental colours (*flageolet*), but also undertaking certain onomatopoeias from the tenor, suggesting the “prayer of the adder”.

E.g. 8

Quartet, measures 1-4

Vln. 1 (p)  
Vln. 2 pp  
Vla. pp  
Vc.

*poco in rilievo*  
*mp*  
*poco*

(ord.) al pont. ord.  
[sh]\* p poco

\* pronuciare (come in inglese) i fonemi iscritti fra parentesi, mantenendoli per la durata corrispondente alla linea orizzontale e colla dinamica indicata

Choir, measures 1-4

Andante molto

S. p  
A. m  
T. p  
B. m

*Andante molto*

Nä - ðir che - sj cîn fä  
Die Schlei - che singt ihr

[sh]\*

\* [ ] indică emisiunea șoptită. — bezeichnet das Flüstern.

### Adrian Pop – Third bagatelle, quartet incipit vs. choir incipit

The section A<sub>V1</sub> also contains novel supplementary imitations, evoking “the cultic atmosphere of the renaissance motets”<sup>26</sup> (see musical example 9). In both versions of the play, the coda strains a diminished chord by a seventh, whose sonority requires and ensures the continuity of the musical discourse in the subsequent play.

E.g. 9

Quartet, measures 46-50

The musical score for the quartet (measures 46-50) is presented in four staves: Violin 1 (Vln. 1), Violin 2 (Vln. 2), Viola (Vla.), and Cello (Vc.). The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. The score begins at measure 46. The Violin 1 part starts with a dynamic of *p* and includes the instruction "con sord.". The Violin 2 and Viola parts feature a melodic line with a dynamic of *ord.* and include the instruction "added imitation" in blue. The Cello part starts with a dynamic of *pp* and includes the instruction "con sord.". The score concludes at measure 50 with a dynamic of *pp*. The Viola and Cello parts also feature the instruction "added imitation" in blue.

Choir, measures 40-43

The musical score for the choir (measures 40-43) is presented in four staves: Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. The score begins at measure 40. The lyrics are in Romanian and German. The score concludes at measure 43 with a dynamic of *pp*.

Lyrics:  
 Mă - pir - eș - a - doar - me - în  
 Die Schlei - che fällt in cu  
 als

**Adrian Pop – supplementary imitations added to the cello, without correspondence in the choral version**

The atmosphere of the **fourth bagatelle**, corresponding to the choral piece *Suspînul (The Sigh)*<sup>27</sup> can suggest “the delicate irony touching on the

<sup>26</sup> Ș. Anghi, *op. cit.*, p. 296.

<sup>27</sup> *Pe luciul nocturn un suspîn patina / Visând fericiiri și iubire. / Cu alba ei mantie neaua / Caselor da strălucire. / O față frumoasă-și închipui, / Se-opri arzând de dor. / Atuncea ghețușul sub el se topi – / Înghițind visătorul suspîn.* (On the night gloss a sigh glided/

obsolete sentimental”<sup>28</sup> or “a bizarre and sympathetic musical tropology: the sigh is wavering to dance a waltz.”<sup>29</sup> And this movement is presented without major changes to the original choral, resorting only to the extension of the ambitus to the higher octave (more resonant and organologically accessible to the first violin, unlike the natural limitations of the soprano voice), whereas in the beginning of the play there is a new base, in *pizzicato*, that makes the sonant discourse more dynamic and emphasizes its dancing character.

E.g. 10

melody transposed to the higher octave  
con sord.

Vln. 1  
Vln. 2  
Vla.  
Vc.

Allegretto, molto leggiero  
mf

S.  
A.  
T.  
B.

Pe Ein  
lu - ciul noc - turn un sus - pin pa - ti -  
Seuf - zer lief - Schritt - schuh auf - nacht - li - chem

### Adrian Pop – beginning of the fourth bagatelle, in the two instrumental-choral versions of the movement

Dreaming of happiness and love. / With her white cloak, the snow / Irradiates all houses. / Fancying a beautiful girl, / It halts burning with longing. / Then the ice underneath melted – / Swallowing the dreaming sigh.)

<sup>28</sup> V. Jucan, N. Silaghi, M. Suărășan, *op.cit.*, p. 23.

<sup>29</sup> Ș. Anghi, *op. cit.*, p. 296.

In our view, the structure of the movement articulates a binary form A A<sub>v1</sub> and sums up 48 measures, but only by seven more than the choral version. The coda of the bagatelle represents a new material added, which ensures the transition to the following movement by anticipating the pedal rhythm on C# (from the viola, in the Coda part, the pedal will pass to the cello in the beginning of the following bagatelle). In the following musical example, we shall also observe the amplified short caesura (also emphasized through fermatas), preceding the final choral cadence, which becomes a measure for the general pause in the string quartet version (m. 38). For the reasons already presented, in all the changes made to the final cadences of the bagatelles, the major chord on G will be avoided. At the same time, we wish to also draw attention to the rearrangement of the voices in the chord of measure 32, without changing however the distribution in comparison to the choral version, but by seemingly choosing the most convenient instrumental combination of the double strings from the second violin (although it would have been possible to interpret the harmonious interval C#-G, resulting from the “mechanical” assumption of the alto and soprano 2 voices).

## E.g. 11

Quartet, measures 32-48  
rearrangement of voices  
tornando a... **Tempo I** *con slancio* **Più lento**  
*estando*

The musical score shows four staves: Vln. 1, Vln. 2, Vla., and Vc. The key signature has one sharp (F#). Measure 32 is highlighted with a red box. The score includes dynamics (p, cresc., f), articulation (gliss.), and tempo markings (Tempo I, Più lento). The score is for measures 32-48.



The **fifth** bagatelle becomes a new occasion to showcase the author's creative fantasy. Accordingly, the movement starts from the binary (A B) premises of the choral piece *Hermelina estetică (The Aesthetic Stoat)*<sup>30</sup> (with an extension of 20 measures) and is deployed in a movement of 120 measures (establishing a 6:1 ration), where the B section becomes only a Coda and the first section, A, is further augmented, rewritten, elaborated, diversified, generating the deployment: A (*scherzando*) A<sub>1</sub> (elaborative) A<sub>2</sub> (elaborative plus retransition) A<sub>v1</sub> (transposed to perfect ascending tetrachord) Coda, thus setting the "trajectory of an austere conducted stanzaic rhythm"<sup>31</sup>.

The initial, choral version is diminutively articulated, conditioned by the difficulty of the vocal execution of the semiquaver passages, leading to the numerous assumptions of the fractional pulsations by one voice and the other, when the pauses or long sounds ensure the equilibrium needed in the writing for each voice, revealing the remarkable experience of the author in choral writing. In exchange, the string quartet occasions a relaxation of these constraints, with *Allegretto* turning into *Presto*, measure 2/4 becoming 2/2, and the quaver pulsation is generalised and almost continuous for the violins and viola, at the beginning of the play.

If we compare the beginning of the two versions of the bagatelle, we notice the absence of the anacrusis in the instrumental version, replaced with the rhythmic pedal of the cello, and with the Phrygian tetrachord (or Locrian, but with unaccented tetrachord) from the second violin, imitated in *stretto* with a modified rhythm for the viola.

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<sup>30</sup> Based on the following verses: *O hermelină sta pe o tulpină / lângă o apă lină. / Știi voi de ce? / Mi-a spus-o vițelul cel din lună: / Jivina sta / așa / să iasă rima bună* (On a stalk sat a stoat / near a still water. / Do you know why? / The calf on the moon told me: / The critter sat so / to let the good rhyme flow).

<sup>31</sup> Ș. Angi, *op. cit.*, p. 297.

Quartet, measures 1-6  
without offbeat

Violin 1: *pp* Phrygian/Locrian tetrachord *al pont.*

Violin 2: *pp* *al pont.*

Viola: *ppp* melodic imitation, modified rhythm *pp* *al pont.*

Cello: *ppp* arco pedal point to the cello *al pont.* *ppp* sempre stacc.

Choir, measures 1-5

Allegretto  
*mp*

S. *mp*  
0 her-me-li-nā, li-nā, li-nā, li-nā, sta pe o tul-  
Wie-sel, Wie-sel, Wie-sel, Wie-sel, Wie-sel, Wie-sel, saß auf ei-nem

A. *p*  
her-me-li-nā sta  
Wie-sel, Wie-sel, saß

T. *p*  
her-me-li-nā sta  
Wie-sel, Wie-sel saß

B. *p*  
her-me-li-nā sta  
Wie-sel, Wie-sel saß

*cresc.*

S. *mp*  
pi-nā Kie-sel  
sta pe o tul-pi-nā sta lin-gā o a-pō li-nā sta o her-me-li-nā, li-nā  
Kie-sel, Kie-sel, Kie-sel saß in-mit-ten Bach-ge-rie-sel saß ein Wie-sel, Wie-sel, Wie-sel

A. *p*  
o tul-pi-nā sta  
Kie-sel, Kie-sel saß o her-me-li-nā, li-nā  
ein Wie-sel, Wie-sel, Wie-sel

T. *p*  
o tul-pi-nā sta  
Kie-sel, Kie-sel saß o her-me-li-nā, li-nā  
ein Wie-sel, Wie-sel, Wie-sel

B. *p*  
o tul-pi-nā sta  
Kie-sel, Kie-sel saß o her-me-li-nā, li-nā  
ein Wie-sel, Wie-sel, Wie-sel

Adrian Pop – *incipit* compared to the two versions of the fifth Bagatelle

Section A<sub>2</sub>, newly added, also plays the part of retransition, preparing the varied “reprise” and circulating descending scales (Bach’s minor melody, on the sounds G, A, B or, subsequently, C#, as a “dominant” of F#, the central sound to which section A<sub>v1</sub> is transposed), associated with the harmonic intervals of major and minor ninth. The transposition to perfect ascending tetrachord of the diversified “reprise” of the A (A<sub>v1</sub>) section cannot eschew the allusion to the “tonal” relations specific to the sonata form.

## E.g. 13

Descending Bach minor scales, on G, A, B and later on C# (the dominant of F#), associated with intervals of 9M and 9m

The musical score shows four staves: Vln. 1, Vln. 2, Vla., and Vc. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The time signature is 4/4. Measure 64 is marked with a fermata. The score contains descending scales in various parts, with dynamic markings such as *ppp*, *pp*, and *p*. A fermata is placed over the second measure of the Viola part.

Adrian Pop – section A<sub>2</sub>, fragment, also with a role retransition, m.64-70

The final cadences of the two versions reveal new changes ensued in the score of the string quartet, by using the rhythmic diminution, voice rearrangement, amplification of the *cluster* taken from the choir, as well as the transposition to the accented octave by the final musical gesture.

The final cadence, quartet, measures 116-120

rhythmic diminution

final gesture at the upper octave pizz.

sul tasto

pp

mf

transition to number 6

al pont.

rearrangement of voices, amplified cluster compared to choir

pp

attacca

The final cadence, choir, measures 18-20

S.

A.

*Ji - vi - na sta a - sa sa ia - sa ri - ma bu - na.*  
*Das raf - fi nier - te Tier tats um des Ret-mes wil-len.*

pp

mf

attacca

### Adrian Pop – the ending of the fifth bagatelle, with its two versions

In the case of the **sixth bagatelle**, for the first time in the instrumental version, we witness an abbreviation in comparison to the original choral, titled *Floare de tapet (Wallpaper Flower)*<sup>32</sup>, gathering 41 measures, compared to the 51 for the choir. Moreover, even the compressed existing measures, will

<sup>32</sup> *Sunt mândra floare de tapet; / corolele-mi cochete / nu-s într-al lunii mai buchet, / I ci numai pe perete. / Prin cameră oricât privești / nu poți a mă cuprinde, / I iar să mă numeri de-ndrăznești / I îți ieși curând din minte. (Wonder wallflower I am; / with coquettish corollas/as one in the month of May's bouquet, /but only on the wall, / However much you look around/ hardly you perceive me/ and should you deign to count me, /quickly will you'd go mad.)*

be differentiated in an emphasized manner compared to the initial version, proposing a first half of the completely different movement (22 measures), with *glissandos* on the harmony sounds, but also with a fragment of neo-renaissance choral (where, however, the accords are not traditional, but accords with seconds and fifths, delays that are solved on different other harmony structures, with added seconds). In this general sound context, the imitative musical material of the beginning of the choral piece is suggested only in passing, allusively.

E.g. 15

Incipit, quartet, measures 1-12 gliss. armonici

choral

Vln. 1 *pp*

Vln. 2 ord. *pp* *gliss. armonici* *flautato, smorzando*

Vla. *pp* *flautato, smorzando* *pp lontano, non vibr.*

Vc. *pp* *flautato, smorzando* *pp lontano, non vibr.*

\* tirare l'arco proprio sul ponticello, senza suono

Vln. 1 *pp lontano, non vibr.*

Vln. 2 *pp*

Vla. *flautato, smorzando* *pp lontano, non vibr.*

Vc. *gliss. armonici* *pp* *pp*

quasi allusion to the musical material of the choral piece

Incipit, choir, measures 1-3  
imitations

Musical score for choir (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and string quartet. The score is in G major and 3/4 time, marked "Moderato". It shows the first three measures of the piece. The choir parts (S, A, T, B) and the string quartet parts (S, A, V, C) are shown. The lyrics are: "Sint min-dra floa-re de-ta-pet, sint min-dra floa- pe-ten-blu-me bin ich fein, Ta-pe-ten-blu-me". There are blue arrows pointing to the first measure of the choir and the first measure of the string quartet.

Adrian Pop – *Incipit* of the two versions of the sixth bagatelle

As a natural consequence of the frailer rapports when compared to the initial choral premises, the form of the play is not changing. Thus, if the initial choir sections A, A<sub>1</sub> și A<sub>2</sub> naturally led the discourse towards the outlines contrasts in sections B and C, in the instrumental play we are left with only a heterogeneous quaternary (A B C), where the B seems an allusion to the musical material of the fifth bagatelle (by the *staccato* movements of eights, with the difference that the vertical superpositions of the eighth pulsations do not generate a *cluster*, as they do for the previous bagatelle; they do generate a sort of diminished hexachord, with a delay of 7-8). The obvious correspondences of section C to the homonymous choral section highlight, as well, some transformations (see musical example 16); such as the arpeggios of the first violin, distanced by one octave from the ostinato plan of the second violin (whereas for the choir, the divided soprano displays both plans in the same register), and, moreover, the oscillation in thirds of the tenor is more fully arched in the viola, by adding sixths (on the same general tendencies of amplifying the ambitus).





**The before last bagatelle, the seventh**, corresponds to the choral bagatelle *Pâlniile* [The Funnels] and the literary, poetic support strikes from the very beginning by the graphic, visual character of the arrangement of the verses in a “funnel” with its opening upwards.

*Prin noapte două pâlnii trec.  
Prin gâturi strâmte-ncet, încet,  
pe drum, în crânguri  
se prelingea  
lumina  
lunii  
e t  
c<sup>33</sup>*

The two versions of the play have an identical extension of 24 measures, suggesting, particularly through the external instrumental plans (first violin and cello), four sound “funnels”, the first two – and also the last – with the opening directed to the left (the sound discourse) evolves towards the contraction of the initial ambitus), while the third “funnel” has its opening directed to the right (the sound discourse of the ambitus is amplified). Considering the restrained extension of the four subcomponents of the shape, we opted for their codification in the scheme with a frame of lowercase and not uppercase:  $a_{v1} b a_{v2}$ <sup>34</sup>.

The transcription for string quartet uses minimal modifications, aimed at widening the ambitus (with both violins or only with the first violin transposed to the higher octave) and instrumental rearrangement of the sound plans (in musical example 17, the viola takes over the soprano voice, the second violin is equivalent to the divided alto, while the tenor identifies with the cello).

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<sup>33</sup> (In the night two funnels pass, /through narrowing tubes, /on the road, in the grove, / gently would/ the moonlight/ flow/et/c)

<sup>34</sup> V. Jucan, N. Silaghi, M. Suărășan, in op.cit., p. 30, propose the form AABA.

"funnel" b, quartet,  
measures 13-18

rearrangement of voices  
compared to choir

"funnel" b, choir,  
measures 15-18

1 Solo  
mp espress.

1 Solo

crin-guri se pre lin- ges lu mi  
Mond-licht still und hei- ter auf ih

lu mi  
auf ih

Adrian Pop – “Funnel” B, compared in the two versions of the bagatelle

In the final cadence of the instrumental movement, unlike the *attacca* ending of the choral piece, a connecting unit to the cello appears, welding the passage toward the end of the cycle, in the same way of ensuring continuity between the parts of the version for the string quartet.

**E.g. 18**

the "funnel" av2, quartet, measures 19-24

Vln. 1  
Vln. 2  
Vla.  
Vc.

ord.  
via sord.  
pp

the "funnel" av2, choir, measures 20-24

S.  
A.  
T.  
B.

nii et ce - te ra  
weg und so wei - ter.  
lu - nii et ce - te ra  
Wald - weg und so wa.  
lu - nii et ce  
Wald - weg und ce

(\*)  
attacca

**Adrian Pop – “Funnel” av2, compared in the two versions of the bagatelle**

The last instrumental bagatelle, the eighth, revisits the theme of “water” in the first bagatelle: “water purposefully spoke ‘in vain’... but spoke softly, playfully, to the satisfaction of us all.”<sup>35</sup> Thus, the ending reutters the musical contents of the first movement of the instrumental cycle, with the role of a shortened “reprise”, nevertheless guaranteeing the cyclic thought pattern of the entire composition. The corresponding choral piece is called *În zadar* (In Vain) and resorts to only two verses: *So, so, /water would speak in vain.*

<sup>35</sup> Angi, Șt. *op. cit.*, p. 299.

Considering the existence of a corresponding choral, but also that of a recapitulative relation compared to the first instrumental movement, the comparisons to which we subject the last bagatelle, will be consequently divided. The extension of the instrumental part by 37 measures, is almost identical to the one of the choral pieces (35 measures) and, what is more, in the instrumental version, too, we finally have a clear accord ending that offers a “tonic” sound sensation. On the other hand, considering the instrumental changes already described in the first bagatelle in relation to the original choral, the ending of the instrumental cycle can stand for a clearer comparison to the beginning of the string quartet piece, than to the ending of the choral cycle.

In this respect, the beginning of the final movement resembles measure 15 of the first bagatelle (only the first violin, the rest of the sound plans of the accompaniment proposing a different vertical overlap), but from measure 15 of the last bagatelle until measure 33 we see a faithful replica of measures 40-58 of the first part.

As we have already anticipated, the final cadence will be different from that of the first bagatelle and much closer to the cadence of the choral piece, in the sense of a major agreement on *B flat*, with a high ninth added, preceded by a kind of agreement altered by the "dominant seventh" (with the rising altered fifth, but also with enhanced tetrachord added), which can also be seen as a cut out of whole-tone scale system, but without the G sound.

**E.g. 19**

different cadence from bagatelle 1, similar to choral cadence

gliss. uguale e continuo

lontano, come eco

altered seventh dominant chord with added fourth

lontano, come eco

gliss. uguale e continuo

lontano, come eco

B flat major chord with added second

**Adrian Pop – final cadence of the string quartet version**

Now at the end of our analytical, comparative journey, we shall synthesize the main conclusions that emerge from our endeavour.

Hence the third, fourth and seventh bagatelle are close to the choral original, engaging only minimal changes in the instrumentalization process of the choral music. On the other hand, the other parts of the string quartet, namely bagatelles 1, 2, 5, 6, 8 are rewritten, with substantial modifications.

The minor transcription changes that we refer to above aim to reach the augmentation of the ambitus, transpositions to the higher octave, rearrangement of the instrumental voices, or changes to the accord distributions.

The substantial changes, on the other hand, resort to augmenting transitions, introductions and different musical sections, by adding new accompaniment formulas and new harmonies, the arrangement and addition of new sections, as well as the use of specific instrumental colours, applied to the existing or new materials.

The tonal suggestion provided by the presence of the armours in the case of bagatelles 1, 4, and 8, pleads only for the key existence of an enhanced tonal-modal sound centre (sanctioned by the final cadence of the last bagatelle), but in a generally heterogeneous and harmonic context, that is more current, which encompasses accords of fourths and fifths, accord with added sounds, accord engendered by the whole-tone scale and even *clusters*.

The instrumental and colour refinement of the eight bagatelles confirms their essential role in the creation of one of the most important contemporary composers of Cluj and Romania.

The depth, talent, and craft of composer Adrian Pop have gained not only the appreciation of the melomaniac public, of his Romanian peers, but also that of important contemporary composers, of whom we mention the one rife with relevance of György Kurtág, noted in writing on 20 September 2007, at his then home in Saint-André de Cubzac:

*„My encounter with the music of Adrian Pop was a genuine discovery: I found it fresh and virtuosic, highly idiomatic, simple and at the same time sophisticated. It shows a mastery of the art of composition and impresses with the way it explores rarely charted regions of the soul. [...] In the light of all this, I am convinced that Adrian Pop is not only an outstanding composer but is equally as remarkable as a teacher of composition.”*

*Translated from Romanian by Adina Fodor*

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## CONTRIBUTORS

**Olena BATOVSKA** - Doctor of Arts, Professor of the Department of Choral Conducting of I.P. Kotlyarevsky Kharkiv National University of Arts (Kharkiv, Ukraine), member of the Kharkiv Branch of the National All-Ukrainian Musical Union, co-founder, and member of the vocal ensemble of ancient music Cantus Firmus of the Department of Choral Conducting of I.P. Kotlyarevsky Kharkiv National University of Arts. The Cantus Firmus ensemble is a laureate of international festivals and competitions. The collective conducts an active concert activity, is a participant in art projects: «Dialogue of epochs, dialogue of cultures» (M.V. Lysenko Lviv National Academy of Music, Lviv, 2011), «Theater Day» (M.V. Lysenko Kharkiv National Academic Opera and Ballet Theater, Kharkiv 2012) and others. In her research, Olena Batovska focuses on the history and theory of academic choral art, Western European choral music. Olena Batovska is the compiler, editor and publisher of the collection of abstracts of the All-Ukrainian conferences «Conducting and choral education: synthesis of theory and practice». Her numerous publications (she is the author of over 30 scientific articles, textbooks, monographs) cover the history and theory of choral art, choral music.

**Florin BĂLAN**, PhD student, is currently collaborating teacher of Transilvania University of Braşov, the Faculty of Music. He graduated successfully the BA studies at the „Gheorghe Dima” National Music Academy from Cluj-Napoca (2006-2009) and continued with the MA studies at the Transilvania University of Brasov also at the Faculty of Music (2009-2011). He collaborate both (on stage and in the recording studios) with plenty of musicians, in Europe (Germany) and in the United States of America (German Blast at Minnesota, Chicago and Milwaukee). In Romania on stage at Kronstadt Jazz Festival (2011), Victoria Jazz Festival (2012), periodically concerts within private music schools (with docents and students) in Nuremberg/ Germany (Music No.1, Music Point or Musik-Forum Burgthann) (2015-2016). Additionally, the activity as arranger (or piano/keyboarder-player) for pop, rock, jazz, and Big-bands was crowned successfully in Germany with MS Allstar Band Vol.I (2016), Big Sound Orchester Burgthann PopMania, Live-Show (2017), second time with MS Allstar Band Vol II (2018). (All these are free on YouTube available for watching). In 2018 as musical coordinator, traveling with exchange of experience between University of Transilvania and the Universidad de la Habana / Cuba or University of FES Acatlan Ciudad de Mexico/ Mexico. The activity of musical coordinator and piano-player continued further together with students from University of Transilvania in United Arab Emirates-Dubai at Expo 2020 representing and playing at the Romanian Pavilion (dec.2021), again Dubai Expo 2020 (march. 2022), also Bramac Conference, organized by University of Transilvania, as arranger and player with students and PhD of the University (2022), AFCO Event of University Transilvania with students which compose Academic Music Factory Band, as musical coordinator, arrangements, and live keyboards (2022), also concept, planning and playing guidance for students to move to Iran (2022).

## CONTRIBUTORS

**Cristian BENCE-MUK** (born on 31st of August 1978, Deva) graduated Composition at Gheorghe Dima National Music Academy, Cluj Napoca, Romania with PhD Prof. Hans Peter Türk in 2002 and in 2005 obtained the Academic Title PhD in Music with the specialization „Musical creation” with PhD Prof. Cornel Țăranu. Currently Cristian Bence-Muk teaches „Forms and Musical Analysis” and „Composition” at Gheorghe Dima National Music Academy and holds the position of the Dean of the Theoretical Faculty within the same institution. His compositions include choral, vocal, chamber, symphonic, vocal-symphonic works, chamber opera and ballet. He was awarded various national prizes and his works were performed in concerts in Romania and abroad (France, Italy, Sweden, Portugal, Poland, Hungary, U.S.A., etc.) and were published in Romania and Switzerland. As a project manager, he coordinated two projects financed by the National Council of Research (2006-2007 and 2010-2013). These projects have stimulated composition, interpretation, and musicology research in the contemporary music domain. On June 11, 2022, he was elected vice-president of the Union of Composers and Musicologists from Romania.

**Oleg BEZBORODKO** is a Ukrainian pianist and composer. His works have been performed throughout the world: from the United States to China. Mr. Bezborodko is in high demand as an interpreter of contemporary music and as a chamber musician. He performed and premiered piano and chamber works of almost all major contemporary Ukrainian composers. After studying piano and composition in Ukraine and Switzerland he obtained a Ph.D. degree from the Ukrainian National Academy of Music and now holds a post of full-time professor at that institution. He conducts courses in piano as principal instrument, piano pedagogy, methodology of musicology, interpretation of music. The circle of scientific interests covers the problems of the theory and history of piano performance, interdisciplinary studies of language and music, Ukrainian music of the 20th-21st centuries. Mr. Bezborodko is a member of the National Ukrainian Union of Composers and of American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers. See also: Home - Oleg Bezborodko, composer & pianist (webs.com)

**Mihaela BUHAICIUC** is a senior lecturer D.M.A. at Transilvania University of Brasov, Faculty of Music, where she coordinates the vocal performance area. She was awarded the *Ackerman Award* by New York Foundation (2003), the *Neumiller Voice Scholarship Award* by the Stony Brook University, New York (2007); and the *Megginson Research Award* from the University of Mobile, Alabama (2010), where she was a full-time voice faculty for five years. She presented works at the *Royal Academy of Music* in London, UK; at the *International Academic Forum*, Osaka, Japan; at the *International Congress of Voice Teachers*, Paris (2009) and Vienna (2022); *George Enesco International Festival*, New York City (2005) and Bucharest (2021). Buhaiciuc holds a master's and Doctor of Musical Arts degrees in vocal performance, under mezzosoprano Elaine Bonazzi from Stony Brook University, New York, where she also taught as a teaching assistant for five years.

**Nataliya BYELIK-ZOLOTARYOVA** - Honored Art Worker of Ukraine, Candidate of Arts, Professor of the Department of Choral Conducting of I.P. Kotlyarevsky Kharkiv National University of Arts (Kharkiv, Ukraine). chief choir

## CONTRIBUTORS

conductor of the opera studio of I.P. Kotlyarevsky Kharkiv National University of Arts. Famous Ukrainian choir conductor, during her career she created more than 30 operas staging in Kharkiv. There were diverse performances from "Dido and Aeneas" by H. Purcell, "Le nozze di Figaro", "Die Zauberflöte" by W. A. Mozart, "La Traviata" by G. Verdi, "L'elisir d'amore" by G. Donizetti, "The drowned maiden" by M. Lysenko, "The bartered bride" by B. Smetana, "Natalka from Poltava" by A. Shchetinsky. Also, she made all-ukrainian premiers of great masterpieces like "Te Deum" by A. Bruckner, "Carmina Burana" by K. Orff, "Romeo et Juliette" by H. Berlioz, "Requiem" by A. Salieri. Made concerts with a cappella choirs by D. Bortniansky, M. Verbytsky, M. Lysenko, G. Sviridov, Y. Falik, V. Stetsenko, H. Havrulets. According to this she was awarded as Honored Arts Worker of Ukraine. Nataliya successfully combines opera performing with scientific research. Author of more than 50 scientific and methodological publications, including a monograph and tutorials.

**Gabriela COCA**, (b. 1966), PhD. habil., musicologist, university professor at the Babeş-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca, where she teaches musical forms, harmony, counterpoint, and the harmony evolution in the music of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, at the Music Department of the Faculty of Reformed Theology and Music. She is the initiator and Editor-in-chief of the musicology journal *Studia UBB Musica*. See: *STUDIA MUSICA* ([ubbcluj.ro](http://ubbcluj.ro)). Studies: Music High School of Cluj-Napoca, piano department (1981-1985); Music Academy "Gh. Dima" - bachelor's degree in musicology, piano teacher module (1990-1994); AMGD - advanced studies (1994-1995); AMGD - doctorate in music (2000), with thesis: Architectural conception of the sound process in Richard Wagner's opera "Lohengrin"; Habilitation in Music (2021). Creative activity in the field of musicology - monographs, courses, studies, analyses. See: <https://ubbcluj.academia.edu/GabrielaCoca>

**Petruța-Maria COROIU (MĂNIUȚ)**, PhD Prof. at the University of Transilvania Braşov (Romania). Areas of interest: Musical forms and analyses, Musical aesthetics, Semantics and musical hermeneutics, Stylistics of melodic art. She has three bachelor's degree in music (Musicology, Musical Composition, Musical Performance-Piano), is the author of dozens of studies and over 30 specialized musicological volumes, a series of musicological conferences (Conversations About Music, Musical Evenings), radio shows (Masters 'Confessions). Member of the Union of Romanian Composers and Musicologists.

**Judit CSÜLLÖG**, Dr. holds degrees from Eszterházy Károly College, Miskolc University and Liszt Ferenc Music Academy Budapest, Hungary. In addition to piano, Judit also studied history, music theory, solfège, chamber music, and choral directing. Since 1999 she has worked at the Music Department of Eszterházy Károly Catholic University, recently as an associate professor. She teaches piano, chamber music, score reading and music theory. In 2019/20 she spent two semesters in Ireland working as a piano and music theory teacher at Munster Music Academy (Killaloe) and Maoin Cheoil na Gaillimhe (Galway). In 2008, Judit Csüllög obtained her Music Pedagogy Ph.D. diploma in Slovakia, the title of her thesis was: 'The Role of Folk Songs in Teaching Piano to Beginners in Hungary'. Her favourite research area is piano methodology. However, she is also interested in Bartók

## CONTRIBUTORS

and Kodály's piano works. She has presented papers and publications in both Hungarian and English. Judit Csüllög leads an active performing career in addition to her academic and instrumental teaching. She particularly enjoys working with singers and has an extensive vocal repertoire in both classical and musical theatre genres. Judit has been the répétiteur, conductor, and music director of numerous musical productions in Hungary. Since 2013 she has been the Musical Director of Egri Pinceszínház Theatre. As an honor, Judit Csüllög was awarded the Eszterházy Károly Medallion in 2011, and the Academic Prize of Hungarian Academy of Sciences Regional Commission in 2016.

**Tetiana FILATOVA** is a Ukrainian musicologist, Ph.D in Art Criticism (1991), Head of Theory of Music's Department of the Donetsk State Music Academy named after S. Prokofiev (2011-2014), since 2015 – Professor of the Theory of Music's Department of the Tchaikovsky National Music Academy of Ukraine (Kyiv), member of Editorial board of the *Ukrainian musicology*, member of Editorial board of the *Kyiv musicology*, Scientific Editor of the collective monograph "Lectures on the theory of harmony" (2018). Her PhD thesis was defended in 1991 under the title "Atonality in the dynamics of renewal of the tonal system of the XX century: theoretical problems and research methods". She is the author of more than 30 articles published in Ukrainian and foreign editions. Her research interests include the problems of music harmony, genre and style, instrumental and choir music, Latin American guitar music of XX century. ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5869-631X>. E-mail: [filatova.tanya@gmail.com](mailto:filatova.tanya@gmail.com)

**Ignác Csaba FILIP** (Romania) - learnt to play the flute as a student of János Áment at the Art School in Târgu-Mureș. He graduated from the Academy of Music in Cluj-Napoca, in the flute class of Gavril Costea, his chamber music professor was Francisc László. He ended international master's courses where he acquired the techniques of flute and recorder from teachers such as Ulrike Engelke, Gerald Matschke, Anneke Boeke, and Peter Holtslag. As a member of the ensembles Cantus Serenus, Codex, Amaryllis, Georgius, Collegio Stravagante he performed at many national and international chamber music concerts. Between 2001 and 2003, he was the musical conductor of the Tamási Áron Theatre in Sfântu Gheorghe, where he also composed music for the stage. As a flute soloist, he collaborated with several philharmonic orchestras from Romania. In 1998, he published two methodology books, entitled *Furulyaiskola* (Recorder methodology) and *Furulyamuzsika* (Recorder music) which appeared in five editions. He has several CD, radio and television recordings. Since 1996, he has been working as a flute and chamber music teacher at the Transilvania University Brașov. In 2004, he received his doctoral degree at the Gheorghe Dima Academy of Music. Since 2008, he has been the artistic director of the Early Music Festival and Summer School in Miercurea Ciuc.

**Oleg GARAZ** PhD Habil. is an Associate Professor at the National Academy of Music „Gh. Dima” from Cluj Napoca. He was born in Soroca, in the Republic of Moldova, studied at the „Ștefan Neaga” High School of Music in Chisinau, at the „Gavriil Muzicescu” Conservatory in Chisinau, and then at the „Gheorghe Dima” Academy of Music in Cluj-Napoca, obtaining his doctorate in 2013 at the National

## CONTRIBUTORS

University of Music Bucharest, with the thesis entitled *The Canon of European Music in Postmodernity*. He has published numerous books (13): *Musical Contraideologies* (2003), *Musical Poetics in Conversations* (2003), *Musiconautical* (2007), *Territory* (2007), *Music and the Syncretic Meaning of Nostalgia* (2011), *Musicology Exercises* (2014), *The Canon European music. Ideas, Hypotheses, Images* (2015), *Genres of Music: The Idea of an Archetypal Anthropology* (2016), *Being and Tempo: On Music and Other Demons* (2019), *From Tannhäuser to Aida* (2021), *Treatise on Reading Vocal and Instrumental Scores* (2022) and *Tools of Musicology* (2022). His analytical studies (over 30) appeared in the magazines *Muzica* (Bucharest), *Studia UBB Musica* (Cluj-Napoca), *Musicology Papers* (Cluj-Napoca) etc. with themes related to the history of music, stylistics and musical forms, issues of postmodern music. He gave lectures on musical aesthetics, the history and aesthetics of jazz, as well as musical genres. He has published numerous articles (over 400, music criticism, essays, interviews) in *Tribuna*, *Kronica*, *Steaua*, *Balkon*, *Echinox*, *Caietele Echinox*, *Transylvanian Review* (Cluj-Napoca), *Aurora* (Oradea), *Astra* (Braşov), *Literatorul* (Bucharest), *Vatra* (Târgu-Mureş), *Literature and art*, *Bessarabia*, *Contrafort* (Chisinau). His presence in the mass media materialized in cycles of thematic shows, interviews, debates at local and national Radio-TV stations. For his work, he was awarded the Writers' Union Debut Award (Cluj, 2003), the Pavel Dan Prize of the Writers' Union (2007), *Muzica* magazine (2016). Since 1998 he is a Member of the Union of Composers and Musicologists from Romania.

**Natalia GREBENUK** - works as a leading professor at the department of solo singing and opera training at Kotlyarevsky I.P. Kharkiv National University of Arts. She defended her doctoral dissertation in 2000 on the topic «Vocal and Performing Creativity: Art History and Pedagogical Aspects». She has two monographs, 5 teaching manuals, and about 60 articles devoted to the specifics of the vocal-technical and vocal-performing processes. 19 Ph.D. theses and one doctoral dissertation were defended under her supervision. She is a member of two academic councils for doctoral dissertations, a leading opponent and expert in her field of art: opera and chamber performance and pedagogy. Having sung for 35 years on the opera and chamber stage, she has opera contracts in European theaters / Italy, France, Greece, Russia / and performances of chamber works with orchestra, organ, and piano. At present, she continues productive work on scientific research in the field of vocal performing and vocal pedagogical art.

**Tymur IVANNIKOV** is a Ukrainian guitarist, researcher, Dr. habil of Arts (2018), Associate Professor (2021), Head of the Theory and History of Music Performing's Department of the Tchaikovsky National Music Academy of Ukraine (Kyiv), Executive Editor of the *Scientific Herald of the Tchaikovsky National Music Academy of Ukraine*, member of Editorial board of the *Chasopys of the Tchaikovsky National Music Academy of Ukraine*, member of Editorial board of the *Ukrainian musicology*. He defended his doctoral dissertation "The European Guitar Music of XX Century: phenomenology of creativity" (2018) and published the monograph: "Guitar Art of XX Century as a phenomenon of creativity" (2018). He is also published more than 40 articles in Ukrainian and foreign scientific editions. Main research interests

## CONTRIBUTORS

are theory and history of music performing, phenomenology of music, guitar legacy of composers of XX century. ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7958-8799>. E-mail: [premierre.ivannikov@gmail.com](mailto:premierre.ivannikov@gmail.com)

**Yuliia IVANOVA** - Candidate of Arts, Associate Professor of Department of Choral Conducting and academic vocal, Musical Faculty of State Academy of Culture (Kharkiv, Ukraine), Art Director of the children's choir «Skvorushka» of the Kharkov Region Palace of Children's and Youthful Art. The high level of the art performing is also proved with the numerous winnings in various art competitions and festivals of different levels: The laureate of the II degree, II Open Festival-Competition «Battle of the choirs» (Kharkov, 2018) – The Grand-Prix winner; III international choir festival «Odessa Cantat» (Odessa, 2019). Ivanova Yuliia Ivanova is the art director of the women choir «Rozmay» of the Municipal Establishment “Kharkov Humanitarian-Pedagogical Academy”, of the Kharkov Regional Council. The choir is a regular member of the municipal concerts and a winner of many competitions; among them is the laureate of the III degree in VIII Mykola Leontovych Ukrainian Choir Competition. In her research Ivanova Yuliia focuses on the history and theory of academic choral art, methods of teaching choral disciplines. She is the author of over 20 scientific articles about the problems of choral performance.

**Noémi KARÁCSONY**, PhD, is Assistant Lecturer at the Transilvania University of Braşov, the Faculty of Music. She completed her BA studies at the „George Enescu” University of Arts in Iaşi (2010–2014) and continued with MA studies at the Transilvania University of Braşov, the Faculty of Music (2015–2017). She obtained her PhD in music in 2020 at the Transilvania University of Braşov. She appeared in aria and lied recitals, as well as concerts, in Romania and abroad (Italy, Bulgaria, Serbia, Mongolia, Kazakhstan). Among the works she performed the following can be mentioned: *Nisi Dominus* RV 608 and *Stabat Mater* RV 621 by Antonio Vivaldi, *Stabat Mater* by G. B. Pergolesi, or the *Cantata BWV 170* by J.S. Bach. She appeared as La Zia Principessa in the opera *Suor Angelica* by G. Puccini (Opera Braşov, 2016) and as Orfeo in the opera *Orfeo ed Euridice* by Ch. W. Gluck (Iaşi, Cluj-Napoca 2014). She was awarded first prize at the 8<sup>th</sup> edition of the *Victor Giuleanu* National Competition, the classical singing section (2017). In 2017 she won second prize at the 9<sup>th</sup> edition of the International Singing Competition “*Città di Pisa — Omaggio a Titta Ruffo*”, in Pisa, Italy. She participated in the masterclasses of the soprano Maria Slătinaru-Nistor (Iaşi), mezzo-soprano Liliana Bizineche (Braşov), soprano Cyrille Gerstenhaber (at the Summer University of the Early Music Festival in Miercurea Ciuc, 2016), soprano Mária Temesi (Braşov, 2018) and soprano Laura Niculescu (Italy, 2019).

**Iana KAUSHNIAN** works as a senior lecturer at the department of solo singing and opera training at Kotlyarevsky I. P. Kharkiv National University of Arts. She is a laureate of Ukrainian and international vocal competitions. In 2015, received a scholarship from the Wagner Society of Bayreuth. She defended her candidate dissertation in 2019 on the topic “Vocalization in Ukrainian music: traditions and genre and stylistic innovations”.

## CONTRIBUTORS

**Iulia MOGOȘAN** studied Musicology at the Gheorghe Dima National Academy of Music in Cluj-Napoca, Romania, earning a Bachelor's degree (2007), a Master's degree (2009) and a doctorate with a thesis on *Romanian Landmarks in György Kurtág's Works* (2018). Her training period in Romania was completed with Master's studies in Germany, at the Leipzig University and at the Martin Luther University in Halle-Wittenberg, as well as with musicological research activities at the Leipzig Bach Archive. Her studies have so far appeared in publications in Romanian, German, and English, both as studies in musicology journals and in the form of book chapters. Since 2021 she is a scientific researcher at the Gheorghe Dima National Academy of Music in Cluj. The fields of research approached so far, in specialised journals in Romania and abroad, are the analysis of mainly Romanian contemporary music, and the musical historiography of Transylvania.

**Anda Olimpia POP** is a very well known Romanian soprano, employed by Brașov Opera House since 2001. She has a degree in music, having graduated from the George Enescu University of Music in Bucharest in 2000, and also a degree in medicine, having graduated from the Carol Davila University of Medicine in Bucharest in 1996. As an artist, she addresses various vocal genres (opera, operetta, musical, lied, and oratorio), collaborating with theatres from the country and from abroad, proving originality and versatility in the musical and vocal approach. She has been an associate professor at the Faculty of Music within Transilvania University, Brasov, since 2017, and in 2018, she became a doctoral candidate of the same institution. As a pedagogue, she specialises in teaching fundamental elements of vocal technique and their handling with the aid of conscious breathing. The theme of her PhD thesis is 'Conscious breathing - the connection between repertoire versatility and vocal health'.

**Mădălina Dana RUCSANDA** is Professor PhD within the Department of Performing Arts and Music Education at the Transilvania University of Brașov, the Faculty of Music. Currently she is dean of this institution. She graduated from the Faculty of Music in 1995 and obtained a PhD in music in 2004 at the National University of Music in Bucharest. Professor Rucsanda has ample research activity in the following domains: ethnomusicology, music education, music theory. This activity has resulted in the publication of numerous studies and books (9 books, 10 ISI articles, 30 BDI articles, 32 articles published in volumes related to the music field and in the proceedings of international conferences). She participated as president in the juries of national and international music competitions. She is senior editor of the *Bulletin of the Transilvania University of Brașov*, series VIII – *Performing arts*, published by Transilvania University Press, Brașov, Romania and indexed in Ebsco and CEEOL. She is member of numerous professional and science associations and sits on the jury of specialist competitions in Romania and abroad.

**Krisztina SINKA** graduated with honors as a professional opera singer in 1995 from the Ferenc Liszt Academy of Music in Budapest. She studied with the renowned opera singer Éva Andor. Her teachers included director András Békés, opera singer Erzsébet Komlóssy and conductor Ádám Medveczky. In 1998, she continued her studies at the Santa Cecilia Academy of Music in Rome with a

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scholarship. She made her debut at the Hungarian State Opera as Mimi in Puccini's opera *La bohème*. She also played Norina in Donizetti's opera *Don Pasquale*, Irina in Péter Eötvös' *The Three Sisters*, directed by István Szabó, and Violetta in Verdi's *La Traviata* alongside the internationally renowned bass singer, József Gregor. She also performed as an excellent soloist in oratorios and church concerts, and toured with opera performances in Hungary, Romania, Croatia, Switzerland and in London in the UK. Awards: Margit Szilvássy Award (1995), Hungarian Academy of Rome Scholarship, London Scholarship, Artisjus Award, Annie Fischer Award, Opera Friends Scholarship.

**Tetiana SUKHOMLIANOVA** - Candidate of Arts, Teacher-methodologist of the highest category PPC «Choral Conducting», public institution «Kharkiv Musik Vocational College B. M. Lyatoshynsky» Kharkiv Regional Council (Ukraine). Senior Lecturer of Department of Choral Conducting and academic vocal, Musical Faculty of State Academy of Culture (Kharkiv, Ukraine). Choir conductor of the opera studio of I. P. Kotlyarevsky Kharkiv National University of Arts. Participated in productions «Le nozze di Figaro», by W. A. Mozart, «Dido and Aeneas» by H. Purcell, «Zaporozhets on the Danube» by S. Gulak-Artemovsky, «Natalka from Poltava» by O. Shchetinsky, «On the Mermaid Easter» by M. Leontovich. In her research Tetiana Sukhomlinova focuses on the history and theory of academic choral art, methods of teaching choral disciplines. She is the author of 9 scientific articles.

**Virõinia TOTAN** graduated from the music high school "Josif Marinkoviç" in Zrenjanin in 2016 in the specialization Artist performer - flute, pursuing undergraduate studies at the Faculty of Music and Theater at the West University of Timisoara in Music and master studies in Choral Conducting. She is currently a doctoral student at the Faculty of Music in Braşov, having as scientific director PhD. prof. Petruţa-Maria Coroiu. Since 2015 she has been a member of the choir of the Orthodox Church "Saint George" in Uzdin and in the Folk Music Orchestra of the Cultural Center in Uzdin. She is currently a teacher of singing and piano at the Arts Incubator in Timişoara.

**Krisztina VÁRADY**, PhD, completed her studies as a piano teacher in Conservatory of Liszt Ferenc Music Academy (Debrecen) in 1992. Her piano teacher was Prof. Dr. Mihály Duffek. She obtained her '*master of music in education*' degree from Liszt Ferenc Music Academy (Budapest) in 2003. In 2008 she got her Music Pedagogy Ph. D. diploma at Univerzita Konstantina Filozofa in Slovakia, the title of her thesis was: '*Using the solfège textbook series The World of Sounds by László Dobszay in music schools.*' Since 1995 she has been working at the Music Department of Eszterházy Károly Catholic University, recently as an associate professor. She teaches piano, chamber music, score reading, solfège and complex music practice. In addition to teaching, she regularly gives four-hands recitals with Erzsébet Marik (who has been her regular partner for more than 20 years), participates in other concerts, presents papers and publications in both Hungarian and English.

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E-mail: [gabriela.coca.66@gmail.com](mailto:gabriela.coca.66@gmail.com)  
/ [gabriela.coca@ubbcluj.ro](mailto:gabriela.coca@ubbcluj.ro)

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