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Ardian Ahmedaja (ed.)

Singing, Song, and Sound as Human Acts of Personal and Cultural Agency

European Voices VI

BÖHLAU

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Acknowledgments

The contributions to this book emerged from presentations and discussions of a symposium under the title *Singing, Song, and Sound*. The symposium marked a special moment for the European Voices series, because it was the first one to be held outside the premises of the University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna (MDW) and the Department for Folk Music Research and Ethnomusicology (IVE), home to the Research Centre for European Multipart Music (EMM), of whose activity the European Voices series is an essential part. There were practical reasons, which had been put forward at the Department, to search for opportunities to organise the symposium at a different location to the university. When corresponding with colleagues in Austria and other countries, several ideas for cooperation in relation to this project were suggested. One of them was a joint meeting with the Austrian Folk Song and Music Society (*Österreichisches Volksliedwerk*, ÖVLW) and the Viennese Music Society (*Wiener Volksliedwerk*, WVLW). I am grateful to Irene Egger, the managing director of the ÖVLW and Susanne Schedtler, the former managing director of the WVLW, for their cooperation in this project as representatives of their respective institutions and their personal commitment in different functions, including their positions as members of the programme committee. Indeed, the IVE has a long history of cooperation with these both institutions, including some of the previous European Voices symposia. Cooperation with the Elphinstone Institute of the University of Aberdeen in UK was a new initiative. I am very grateful to Thomas McKean, the director of that institution, for his collaboration as a member of the programme and organizing committee of the symposium. Similarly, I want to thank Ulrich Morgenstern from the IVE for his contribution as a member of the programme and organising committee.

At the first evening event, the audience was able to enjoy live performances of music held in the archives of the ÖVLW and WVLW. I want to thank Irene Egger, Norbert Hauer, Else Schmidt and Herbert Zotti for making this possible. On the second evening the audience was able to enjoy the performance of the group *Bergfex & Kuchihucker*. I am very grateful to all its members—Eva C. Banholzer, Hannes Maderebner, Willi Mayer, Kurt Speer, Claudia Zwischenbrugger—to Ulrich Morgenstern and Eva C. Banholzer for the idea of the event and for organising it, and to Eva C. Banholzer for acting as moderator throughout the evening. The closing event belonged to the ensemble *Mischwerk* with its members Maria Stippich, Helmut Stippich, Nikolai Tunkowitsch and Reinhard Uhl. I want to thank them all, as well as Susanne Schedtler, the Viennese Music Society and the *Stadt Wien, Kultur (Wissenschaft und Forschung)*, a department of the provincial government of the City of Vienna, for making it possible.

The entire symposium took place at the Viennese Music Society. Due to the COVID pandemic, online participation became a necessary element of the symposium and a challenge for the

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organisers. I therefore want to thank the technicians from the MDW: Robert Hofmann, Arik Kofranek, Lukas Friedrich Lützow, as well as Otto Wanke, from the IVE. The equipment and part of the infrastructure came from the MDW and the remainder from the Viennese Music Society. I want to thank both institutions for their fruitful cooperation. A special thank you goes to the IVE secretary, Martina Krammer, for all her tireless backstage work during the preparations for the symposium, the layout of the programme, and the booklet of abstracts. Other people ensuring that everything went well also played important roles backstage. I want to thank Daniela Fuchs, Susanne Rosenlechner, Abbigail Wagner, for taking care of many organisational aspects at venue itself.

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Ardian Ahmedaja

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Ardian Ahmedaja

Prolegomena

1. Personal and cultural agency

Philip Bohlman noted in 2017 that in the first edition of the two volumes of *Volkslieder* (Folk Songs), which were published in 1778 and 1779, respectively, Johann Gottfried Herder:

> looks beyond the historical and linguistic borders of Northern and Western Europe to establish age and oral transmission as qualities of song in cultures throughout the world. Realizing the confluence of age and oral transmission is the dynamic nature of singing—the transformation from *Lied* [song] as object to *Gesang* [singing] as subject. Critical for this transformation is the role of the singer, the human agency that is evident in each song and its many versions… Similarly, the origins of song and singing no longer depended on the theological premise of a *vox Dei* (voice of God), but rather the diversity of song spread across cultures and religions through origins as a *vox populi* (voice of the people). (Herder and Bohlman 2017, 47)

And further:

> in the years leading to the preparation of the second edition in 1807, he [Herder] increasingly describes the practice and agency of the collective creativity of human speech and music making. The second edition, posthumously published by Johann von Müller with the assistance of Herder's wife, Karoline, appeared under the name *Stimmen der Völker in Liedern* (Voices of the People in Song). It was this conscious juxtaposition of song and singing that became the most common name of the folk song project for the subsequent two centuries. (ibid.)

Two centuries after Herder, ethnomusicological research largely accepts the conviction that song and music in general is created by individuals (Merriam 1964, 165–166) but is "useful and effective only when it is heard by the prepared and receptive ears of people who have shared, or can share in some way, the cultural and individual experiences of its creators" (Blacking 1973, 54). The understanding of culture as experience and music as a device for its functioning was formulated in 2013 by the ethnomusicologist and anthropologist Bernard Lortat-Jacob in his study on multipart drinking (and singing) in southern Albania as follows:

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> For the anthropologist, it is clear that Mediterranean societies (whether in Morocco, Sardinia, Rumania, Albania) live their culture in a somewhat frenzied way. They are clearly dependent on the culture they produce; the latter must not be seen as a set of acquired knowledge [which can be objectivised inasmuch as it is "knowledge" and "acquired"], but as a drug whose absorption is realised within interacting cells, at the level of villages, groups, friends. What defines the cell is the fact that it exists only in its interactions. Otherwise it dies. A culture is a cellular network and Music is quite an efficient device for its functioning. (Lortat-Jacob 2013, 18)

Ethnomusicology and anthropology are not alone in the perspective of the mutual dependence between agency and culture. As it is known, in the philosophy of cognitive science, interrelations between individuals are considered to enable and shape "the individual agents on which they depend" (De Jaegher and Froese 2009, 444). Studies in cultural psychology specify similarly that people are shaped by their culture, and culture is shaped by its people (e.g. Fiske et al. 1998). Cultural psychology is of interest in this framework because of its interdisciplinary approach towards culture reflecting and shaping the mind and behaviour of its members (Heine 2012). Interestingly, the tradition of cultural psychology is traced back to Herder and the Italian philosopher Giambattista Vico, who lived in Naples between 1668 and 1744 (Costelloe 2022). "In his own time Vico's work was largely neglected and generally misunderstood", but today he is "widely regarded as a highly original thinker who anticipated central currents in later philosophy and the human sciences" (in Costelloe 2022), "including anthropology, cultural theory, education, hermeneutics, history, literary criticism, psychology, and sociology" (ibid.). Distinct in Vico's work is his definition of science as the "genus or mode by which a thing is made". Therefore, human science in general is a matter of dissecting the "anatomy of nature's works" (Vico 1988 [1710], 48). In this framework, Vico defined the *verum factum* (true fact) principle, which claims that the truth is verified through creation or invention: "The criterion and rule of the true is to have made it. Accordingly, our clear and distinct idea of the mind cannot be a criterion of the mind itself, still less of other truths. For while the mind perceives itself, it does not make itself" (Vico 1982 [1710], 55). This approach led Vico to the conclusion that "the truths of morality, natural science, and mathematics do not require 'metaphysical justification' as the Cartesians held, but demand an analysis of the causes — the 'activity' — through which things are made" (after Costelloe 2022).

The impact of Vico's work on cultural psychology can be discerned, inter alia, in models developed to explain the interaction between self and culture. They are helpful in discussions about personal and cultural agency in ethnomusicology, because they centre on the concept of "performance". A renowned model is that by Hazel Rose Markus and Alana Conner. It is based on four elements: "I's, interactions, institutions, and ideas" (Markus and Conner 2013, XIX). The links between these characterised in the introduction of Markus and Conner's book correspond to the previous quoted works: "your I (or self) creates a culture to which you later adapt… your culture shapes your I so that you think, feel, and act in ways that perpetuate this culture" (Markus and

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Conner 2013, XX). This view is familiar in ethnomusicology in general, all the more in studies on multipart music, which are at the centre of the explorations in this book.

Approaching the features of the links between agency and culture, cultural psychologist Carl Ratner emphasises that "agency makes and remakes culture through creating personal meanings about the significance of things and through acts" (Ratner 2000, 313). As forerunners of the cultural view on agency, he mentions studies in psychology, anthropology, political philosophy, and sociology. Their essence lies in the perspective that agency operates "within and through a social structure. Agency does not precede society and create it as a voluntary agreement of independent individuals" (Ratner 2000, 321). At this point, Bourdieu's concept of habitus and the position of the agent become pivotal: "the agent is never completely the subject of his practices: through the dispositions and the beliefs [the habitus] which are the basis of engagement in the game, all the presuppositions constituting the practical axiomatics of the [social] field find their way into the seemingly most lucid intentions" (Bourdieu 2000, 138–139).

Finally, but importantly, it should be emphasised that agency is "the temporarily constructed engagement by actors of different structural environments which, through the interplay of habit, imagination, and judgment, both reproduces and transforms those structures in interactive response to the problems posed by changing historical situations" (Emirbayer and Mische 1998, 970). The temporality of agency in diachronic and synchronic perspectives is therefore not surprisingly a further object of research in the contributions to this book.

2. *Topics*

The authors of the present book reflect on diversified realisations of personal and cultural agency based on three main topics: performing agencies and politics of sound, the dependence between individual and group, and various ways of sound production and perception. Through the diversity of the approaches, further issues are pursued in each contribution. For example, the main focus in Anda Beitāne's contribution lies in agencies of "ethnographic singing" as politics of sound in Latvia since the second half of the twentieth century. The coordination of the national system of ethnographic and folklore ensembles with the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) take on significant importance in these investigations. Thus, here is a connection to the third element of the Markus-Conner model, namely, institutions. These are characterised as "legal, government, economic, scientific, philosophical, and religious bodies" that allow "certain practices and products while forbidding others" (Markus and Connor 2013, XX). From an ethnomusicological viewpoint, cultural institutions, national and international legal bodies, and also institutionalized undertakings such as festivals, competitions, etc. are to be considered as well. They likewise promote certain practices and/or political agencies of the organisers, while living in oblivion or repressing other practices and agencies.

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The contribution by Kim Burton examines the question of whether human understandings of landscape and their place in it can be engendered and defined by interactive modes of musical performance or lost along with the loss of access to such landscapes, and whether such understandings can withstand a coercive separation from homeland environments and the resulting economic and social changes. The landscape in this case is Posavina in northeastern Bosnia, which has long been home to communities of different ethnic belonging. In her contribution, Jasmina Talam addresses the issue of redrawing the boundaries of patriarchal culture in female multipart singing in central Bosnia. Focusing on the musical activity of two female singers and their environments in the second half of the twentieth century, she discusses features of acoustic and aesthetic experiences in rural parts of the area in question.

The first contribution dedicated explicitly to the mutual dependence between individual and cultural agency is that by Erna Ströbitzer. Her investigations are based on an analysis of the activity of a singers' quartet in Austria. That activity was grounded in rebellion and music transmission. The singers tried to break with conventions of how folk music should sound and how it should be performed. Antonis Ververis, for his part, focuses instead on three new choral ensembles specialising in traditional music in Greece, taking into consideration a tradition established already in the late 1930s. According to Ververis, the new ensembles function more as community music ensembles concentrating on the joys of collective music-making and singing rather than pursuing authenticity. In the third contribution on this topic, Guido Raschieri addresses musical experiences centred on the creation of a soundscape museum in Piedmont, Italy. This expressive context has enabled and combined a complex network of relationships between individual and cultural agency, a long experimental application process, and theatrical and musical performance. The contribution by Susanne Schedtler and Herbert Zotti (see Addendum), who deal with the relationship and the mutual impact between Alpine song and *Wienerlied*, likewise belongs in this context. Based on long-time experiences with composers, performers, and audiences, the authors outline specific features of the relationship between individual and cultural agency during the emergence and establishment of this urban tradition.

As mentioned above, part of the explanations in the contributions to this book are also processes of acquisition and transmission. These are closely connected with the skills, habits, and tacit knowledge of the performers, who affect both each other's role and the cultural and contextual features of performance(s). Thus, these explanations offer further specificities from an ethnomusicological viewpoint to the fourth element of the Markus-Conner model, "ideas that inform our institutions, interactions, and, ultimately, our I's" (Markus and Conner 2013, XX). From this viewpoint, one of the particularities in music-making processes is that in them semantic references are possible even in the absence of the word. Furthermore, the interplay between singing and music performed on instruments and/or played for dancing affects social and cultural uses and understandings of sound. A case study in this framework is the contribution by Ulrich Morgenstern about mouth music as a practical substitution, an artistic niche, and an autodidactic method in Russia. This contribution is furthermore the first in-depth inquiry into this widespread and culturally meaningful performance practice.

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Another specific aspect of the production and perception of sound is emphasised by Blacking as follows: "…if the value of music in society and culture is to be assessed, it must be described in terms of the attitudes and cognitive processes involved in its creation, and the functions and effects of the musical product in the society" (Blacking 1973, 53). Here, psychoacoustic research on sound production and perception becomes substantial. Rytis Ambrazevičius offers in his contribution an insight into the local versus the universal in performance rules in singing in local practices in Lithuania, Belarus and Ukraine. He refers to these rules as systematic deviations (with a statistical scatter) of an actual live performance from a mechanically precise one. Paolo Bravi, for his part, directs our attention to interaction and the temporal dimension in the extemporary poetry of Centre-North Sardinia. One of the main questions he discusses is: In the course of a duel, do poets, whether consciously or not, tend towards a convergence in the temporal dimension or independence? The temporal dimension in music is a central issue in Lauge Dideriksen's contribution as well. However, his perspective lies in non-geometrical rhythm in European traditional music as conceptualisation, transcription, and notation. In this context, the "spatialisation of time" and hybrid phonetic/phonemic transcription become central.

3. Personal and cultural agency enacted musically

Broadening Vico's perspective towards science, Hans-Georg Gadamer states in the foreword of the second edition of his groundbreaking work *Method and Truth* that his concern is "not what we do or what we ought to do, but what happens to us over and above our wanting and doing" (1989, XXV–XXVI). One of the major arguments in the analysis is that meaning is created through intersubjective communication, which he describes as a "fusion of horizons" (Gadamer 1989, 390). Gadamer writes as follows about the concept of "horizon" used by Edmund Husserl and specified further in his own work:

Undoubtedly, the concept and phenomenon of the horizon is of crucial importance for Husserl's phenomenological research. With this concept, …, Husserl is obviously seeking to capture the way all limited intentionality of meaning merges into the fundamental continuity of the whole. A horizon is not a rigid boundary but something that moves with one and invites one to advance further. Thus the horizon intentionality, which constitutes the unity of the flow of experience, is paralleled by an equally comprehen sive horizon intentionality on the objective side.

Ohne Zweifel ist der Begriff und das Phänomen des Horizonts für Husserls phänomenologische Forschung von tragender Bedeutung. Mit diesem Begriff, …, sucht Husserl offenbar den Übergang aller ausgegrenzten Intentionalität des Meinens in die tragende Kontinuität des Ganzen einzufangen. Ein Horizont ist ja keine starre Grenze, sondern etwas, das mitwandert und zum weiteren Vordringen einlädt. So entspricht der Horizont-Intentionalität, die die Einheit des Erlebnisstromes konstituiert, eine ebenso umfassende Horizont-Intentionalität auf der gegenständlichen Seite. Denn alles als

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For everything that is given as existent is given in terms of a world and hence brings the world horizon with it. (Gadamer 2004, 237–238)

seiend Gegebene ist weltlich gegeben und führt damit den Welthorizont mit sich. (Gadamer 1990, 250)

Such diagnosis helps to widen the perspective of explorations on personal and cultural agency. The particularity that concerns multipart music traditions in this context lies in the duality each performer has to deal with: the will to assert personal intentions and the necessity to integrate them into those of the whole group. Only in this way it is possible to achieve the "fusion of horizons" that leads to a fruitful performance as the most important act of music-making.

Later in the text, Gadamer states:

The horizon is the range of vision that includes everything that can be seen from a particular vantage point. Applying this to the thinking mind, we speak of the narrowness of horizon, of the possible expansion of horizon, of the opening up of new horizons, and so forth. (Gadamer 2004, 301)

Horizont ist der Gesichtskreis, der all das umfaßt und umschließt, was von einem Punkt aus sichtbar ist. In der Anwendung auf das denkende Bewußtsein reden wir dann von Enge des Horizontes, von möglicher Erweiterung des Horizontes, von Erschließung neuer Horizonte usw. (Gadamer 1990, 307)

The contributions to this book draw on this understanding to reveal features of personal and cultural agency that are enacted musically.

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I. Performing agencies and politics of sound

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Anda Beitāne

Agencies of "ethnographic singing" in Latvia

The politics of sound[1]

Abstract

The term "ethnographic singing" was introduced in Latvia in the 1980s to designate the "authentic" way of singing represented by ethnographic ensembles. The majority of these ensembles were founded between the 1950s and 1980s. Singers of the older generations were brought together in order to both preserve and represent local traditions. It was expected that the repertoires and ways of performing of ethnographic ensembles should be directly inherited from previous generations without change. On the contrary, folklore ensembles, which began to appear in the late 1970s and 80s on a wave of national awakening, strived to learn and reproduce this "ethnographic" sound.

The system of ethnographic and folklore ensembles in Latvia is supervised by the National Centre for Culture (LNCC). According to the LNCC regulations, its function is to shape and coordinate cultural policy concerning intangible cultural heritage (ICH) and, in cooperation with local municipalities, promote the preservation and development of folk traditions.

In this framework, it is a matter of course that personal, cultural and political agencies come into interaction and affect local practices and sounds that emerge from them. Such an effect is particularly striking in multipart music practices. In this article the different levels of agencies will be explored based on two case studies. The first is connected with an ethnographic ensemble that began in 1953 on a Soviet kolkhoz. The second discusses attempts by a folklore group to achieve an "ethnographic sound" in order to qualify for the ICH list. This approach allows us to better understand the diverse dynamics of sound creation and perception within a group, the representative role of each group at the local and national level, and their effect on singing.

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1. *Introduction*

Different levels of personal, cultural, and political agency interact and affect the local practices and sounds that emerge from them. Such an effect is particularly striking in multipart music practices, which in Latvia have most often been associated with the diverse activities of so-called ethnographic and folklore ensembles — the groups of singers and musicians performing traditional music. Considered a folklore revival community and locally still called the "folklore movement",[2] all ethnographic and folklore ensembles in the country are institutionalized within a strongly administered amateur art system at the national level, which is supervised by the Latvian National Center for Culture (LNCC), an administrative institution under the direct authority of the Minister of Culture. In this amateur art system — which, agreeing with Jānis Daugavietis (2015, 8), continues the Soviet cultural policy and its implemented practices without significant structural changes — all amateur art forms, including folklore and folk music,[3] remain under the supervision, control and maintenance of the state and municipalities. In 2009, intangible cultural heritage (ICH) became part of this system as well, with the incorporation of ICH into the name and structure of the LNCC at that time (LVVA 2024, 32).[4]

The term "ethnographic singing" was introduced in Latvia in the 1980s to designate the "authentic" way of singing represented by ethnographic ensembles (see Klotiņš 1988a and 1988b; Rozenbergs 1998; Kapusts 2013). The majority of these ensembles were founded between the 1950s and 80s. Singers of older generations were brought together in order to both preserve and represent local traditions. It was expected that the repertoires and ways of performing of ethnographic ensembles should be directly inherited from previous generations without change. On the contrary, folklore ensembles, which began to appear in the late 1970s and 80s on a wave of national awakening, strived to learn and reproduce this "ethnographic" sound. In 1992, Andris Kapusts, a senior specialist in folklore at the LNCC (then called the Folk Art Center, FAC), began organizing regular "folklore schools", seminars at which such "ethnographic singing" was taught by singing teachers

2 In Latvia, the term "folklore movement" (*folkloras kustība*) is used to designate folklore revival processes and participants as well as folklore and ethnographic ensembles, which are institutionalized within the field of folklore in the Latvian amateur art system. This movement began in the late 1970s and later, in the late 1980s, became part of the Baltic Singing Revolution that led to the country's independence from the Soviet Union (more in Šmidchens 2014; Ahmedaja and Beitāne 2023; Weaver et al. 2023; Muktupāvels 2024).

3 Of course, it is debatable whether folklore and folk music can be considered amateur art. Within the Latvian amateur art system, the terms "amateur art" and "folk art" have been and still are used to designate fields for which the system is responsible. Since 2009, the term "intangible cultural heritage" appears in the framework of the system both in parallel usage and as an umbrella term.

4 Between 2009 and 2012, following the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, the name of the institution was renamed the State Agency of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.

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and analyzed by singing practitioners and researchers (FAC 2004). Such schools have also taken place under the auspices of the LNCC to the present day, only now the term "traditional singing" is used instead of "ethnographic singing" (LNCC 2024a). In 1995, the FAC (in the person of Kapusts) organized the "Ethnographic Singing" international conference, which was attended by several "music folklore researchers, including specialists in ethnographic singing" (Rozenbergs 1998) from Vilnius (Lithuania), Tallinn (Estonia), Moscow (Russia) and of course Riga (Latvia). According to Jānis Rozenbergs, the issue of an "ethnographic manner or style of singing" was very topical due to the activities of ethnographic ensembles (ibid.).

This article has been inspired by a desire to understand the processes and mechanisms of how and why local multipart music practices in Latvia transformed into ethnographic and folklore ensembles and moved onto the stage as part of the amateur art system. Why did the singers and musicians of such ensembles, positioned by agents of the system as bearers and/or representatives of (living) traditions, need (and still need) to be evaluated by a jury and to prepare special thematic performances according to festival themes and other events? Why do they need vocal teachers who teach them to sing ethnographically or traditionally correctly? What does "ethnographic" or "traditional" singing mean in this framework? What is this system and why it is still affecting almost all processes related to ICH in Latvia? When, how and why have ethnographic and folklore ensembles entered this system and how has it affected local multipart music practices? Answers to these questions are based on interviews with those involved in these processes, as well as information held in the Latvian State Historical Archive, the Latvian State Archive of Audiovisual Materials and periodicals. Finally, two case studies are examined in detail, as examples from two different historical periods. The first one is connected with an ethnographic ensemble that began its activities in 1953 on a Soviet kolkhoz, while the second discusses attempts by a folklore group to achieve an "ethnographic sound" in order to qualify for the ICH list in 2017–2018. This approach allows us to better understand the diverse dynamics of sound creation and perception within a group, the representative role of each group at the local and national level, and their effects on singing.

2. *Towards the system: Political agency*

The history of the Latvian amateur art system dates back to December 1944, when the Republican Folk Art House (RFAH) under the Administration of Art Affairs of the Council of People's Commissars of the Latvian SSR[5] was established along with the Soviet occupation of Latvia after the end of the Second World War (LVVA 2024, 2; Cīņa 1945). According to a historical reference from the Latvian State Historical Archive, the function of this institution was to promote the ideological and artistic education of working-class people and involve the masses in so-called "artistic self-activity". Martin Boiko describes this Soviet self-activity system, using the original Russian term:

5 Since 1948, the Council of Ministers of the Latvian SSR.

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> The Russian term *samodejatelnost* (literally "self-activity") is derived from Marx's term *Selbsttätigkeit*, which in the early works of Marx denoted the personality's free and self-determined development and activity (including artistic). In the slang of the Soviet Communist party, however, this term was degraded to something that could be roughly translated as 'amateur art', although there are some situations [in which] the terms *samodejatelnost* and 'amateur art' cannot be viewed as synonymous. *Samodejatelnost* was a typical Soviet phenomenon; it was financed and controlled by the totalitarian state. It was a predetermined social structure, the function of which was to bring the musical and other artistic activities of the people into a certain frame and to channel them in a way not dangerous for the regime. (Boiko 2001, 113–114)

After regaining independence in the 1990s, the term "artistic self-activity" was gradually replaced by "folk art" and "amateur art" both officially and in everyday practice in Latvia. These terms are still in use within the framework of activities administrated by the LNCC.

The RFAH provided "methodological assistance" to "artistic self-activity collectives" in choosing repertoire and preparing performance programs, issuing lists of recommended repertoire as well as organizing consultations, including consulting trips to the various regions of the country. It propagated the experience and achievements of the best artistic self-activity collectives and individual participants from Latvia and other Soviet republics, ensured training and the raising of qualifications for leaders of artistic self-activity collectives and individual performers, and organized various large-scale events (Song and Dance Celebrations,[6] festivals, competitions, exhibitions, etc.). Among its tasks was also the promotion of work by the creators of artistic self-activity (composers, choreographers, writers and artists) as well as materials for such activity and the publishing of "ideologically and artistically high value" repertoire, both original and translated from other Soviet and Socialist countries, called "people's democracies". The *skate* (from Russian *смотр*, literally 'show, review'), which was the regular judging of performances by a jury, was introduced in all the fields of artistic self-activity as the main form of control (LVVA 2024, 4–5).

Periodicals from that time show how the realization of these tasks manifested itself in reality. In April 1945, the official information and propaganda newspaper of the Latvian SSR *Cīņa* (The

6 The Song and Dance Celebration is a large choral festival, which was supplemented by dance groups after the Soviet occupation. Since the establishment of the RFAH, it has become a central event around which the entire system of "artistic self-activity" has gradually been built. Its history dates back to the nineteenth century, when choral singing festivals began to be organized according to models that emerged after the dissolution of the Holy Roman Empire in 1806 during the Napoleonic Wars (Herbers and Neuhaus 2005) and the establishment of the German Confederation in 1815 (Treichel 2000). In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, these celebrations can be understood as part of the efforts to unite the nation and become an independent state (about the history of this activity until recently see Ahmedaja and Beitāne 2023).

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Struggle) reported that, within four months after the establishment of the RFAH, around four hundred groups[7] had become involved in folk art, and group leaders had monthly meetings at which they had been instructed in various issues related to folk art (Brodelis 1946a). In May 1946, an article titled "How trade unions are preparing for the review of artistic self-activity" (*Kā arodbiedrības gatavojas mākslinieciskās pašdarbības skatei*) by Jānis Brodelis, the head of the Central Administration of Trade Unions, was published in *Literatūra un Māksla* (Literature and Art, 1945–1994), the literary, artistic and socio-political weekly newspaper of the Latvian SSR Association of Creative Unions for shaping and reflecting the cultural process of society. The following quotes from this article illustrate not only the activities but also the spirit of that era:

Artistic self-activity choirs, orchestras and dance collectives need serious help. The State Conservatoire, Philharmonic and music schools should come to the rescue here.	*Nopietna palīdzība vajadzīga mākslinieciskās pašdarbības koriem, orķestriem un deju kolektīviem. Te talkā jānāk Valsts Konservātorijai, Filharmonijai un mūzikas skolām.*
These days, brigades of art workers, who will provide practical help in organizing reviews, are traveling to each district. Artistic self-activity collectives should immediately contact the local departments for cultural education institutions and request the necessary assistance, which will be provided by the visiting art workers.	*Šinīs dienās uz katru apriņķi izbrauc mākslas darbinieku brigādes, kas sniegs praktisku palīdzību skates organizēšanā. Mākslinieciskās pašdarbības kolektīviem nekavējoties jāsaistās ar vietējām kultūras izglītības iestāžu nodaļām, pieprasot vajadzīgo palīdzību, ko varēs sniegt izbraukušie mākslas darbinieki.*
Trade union representatives must participate in the parish, city, county and district commissions that organize reviews. It is necessary to explain the workings of reviews to all artistic self-activity collectives and ensure that all self-activity collectives prepare the intended repertoire (mandatory songs for choirs).	*Arodbiedrību pārstāvjiem jāpiedalās pagastu, pilsētu, apriņķu un novadu skates organizācijas komisijās. Jāpaskaidro visiem mākslinieciskās pašdarbības kolektīviem skates organizācijas kārtība, jāpanāk, lai visi pašdarbības kolektīvi izstrādātu paredzēto repertuāru (obligātās dziesmas koriem).* (Brodelis 1946a)

In September of that same year, the same author wrote in *Literatūra un Māksla* about what Soviet folk art should be and what the main task of artistic self-activity is, stating that this art must not be left to its own devices:

7 The word "collective" (*kolektīvs*, from Russian *коллектив*) was still not often used in the periodicals from 1945 and 1946. Most often, the Latvian word *pulciņš*, which is the diminutive form of *pulks* ('troop'), was used when writing about "artistic self-activity" groups.

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We must not allow this mighty force of folk art, which continues to increase, to take its own course at the moment. We must not for a moment forget the main task of artistic self-activity, the fact that it must raise the ideological and cultural level of the working people, educate the working people in the spirit of communist ideas, and direct the energy of the masses to new achievements in the fields of economy and culture.

Šo vareno tautas mākslas spēku, kas kļūst arvien lielāks, nedrīkstam šobrīd atļaut pašplūsmei. Nedrīkstam ne brīdi aizmirst māksliniecis-kās pašdarbības galveno uzdevumu, to, ka tai jāceļ darba ļaužu idejiski kulturālais līmenis, jāaudzina darba ļaudis komunisma ideju garā, jāvirza masu enerģija uz jauniem sasniegumiem saimniecības un kultūras laukā.

Artistic self-activity collectives should never for a moment forget that Soviet art is not an end in itself, not art for art's sake, but it is closely related to the life of the nation, its needs and tasks. Therefore, it is a relevant, guiding and organizing art, which helps to raise the quality of life with its special means. This is the kind of art that artistic self-activity collectives must show.

Māksliniecis kās pašdarbības kolekīvi ne brīdi nedrīkst aizmirst, ka padomju māksla nav pašmērķis, nav māksla mākslai, bet tā ir cieši saistīta ar tautas dzīvi, tās vajadzībām un uzdevumiem. Tādēļ tā ir aktuāla, virzoša un organizējoša māksla, kas ar saviem īpatnējiem līdzekļiem palīdz celt dzīvi. Lūk, šāda māksla jārāda māksliniecis kās pašdarbības kolektīviem. (Brodelis 1946b)

Many publications in periodicals of the 1940s and 1950s testify to the fact that the newly introduced form of evaluation — the review — was a particularly important instrument of power, not only the preparation for such events but also for their progress and conclusions both at the national and local level were regularly referred to in newspaper articles. Here is an example from *Literatūra un Māksla* in June 1947, which reports that twenty seven choirs, nine orchestras, twenty dance and thirty five drama collectives — a total of one thousand seven hundred and forty participants — took part in that year's review, already announcing this kind of evaluation a "tradition of our cultural life":

The republic-wide review of artistic self-activity has begun — the third since the liberation of Soviet Latvia from the German occupiers. The best artistic collectives and individual performers of the republic, who had the best results in the regional city and county reviews, have been demonstrating their abilities and readiness for several days in Riga. We listen to choirs, soloists and musical ensembles, observe dance and physical culture [gymnastics — *A. B.*] groups, folk song stagings and drama group performances as well as creations of visual and applied self-activity art.

Sākusies māksliniecis kās pašdarbības republikāniskā skate – trešā pēc Padomju Latvijas atbrīvošanas no vācu okupantiem. Labākie republikas māksliniecis kās pašdarbības kolektīvi un individuālie izpildītāji, kuri ieguva vislabākos sasniegumus pilsētu un apriņķu skates, jau vairākas dienas Rīgā demonstrē savas spējas un gatavību. Mēs klausāmies korus un solistus, muzikas ansambļus, vērojam deju un fizkulturas kolektīvus, tautas dziesmu inscenējumus un dramatisko kolektīvu uzvedumus, tāpat skatām tēlotājas un lietišķās pašdarbības mākslas veidojumus.

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Reviews have already become a tradition of the cultural life of our republic, showing the annual flourishing of artistic self-activity and promoting its further development. This shows the care that the party and the government have for the continuous growth of the creative forces of the nation, for the rapid development of the culture of the Latvian people, [which shall be] national in form and socialist in content.

Skates jau kļuvušas par mūsu republikas kultūras dzīves tradīciju, uzrādot mākslinieciskās pašdarbības gadskārtējo uzplaukumu un veicinot tās tālāko attīstību. Te izpaužas partijas un valdības gādība par to, lai nemitīgi augtu tautas radošie spēki, lai strauji attīstītos latviešu tautas kultūra, nacionāla formā, sociālistiska saturā. (LuM 1947)

In the same article, the RFAH itself is referred to as the "general headquarters of artistic self-activity", whose task is to develop, lead and shape this kind of art. It is indicated here that through Folk Art Houses in other republics of the Soviet Union already "huge collectives of artistic self-activity representing various genres have been organized and have evolved, starting with drama collectives and choirs and ending with folklorists from the folk and *teicēji*[8] [this term is perhaps used to refer to rural people who know traditions — *A. B.*]" (*organizēti un izauguši milzīgi dažādu žanru mākslinieciskās pašdarbības kolektīvi, sākot no dramatiskajiem kolektīviem, koriem un beidzot ar tautas folkloristiem un teicējiem*, ibid.). This is followed by the sarcastic remark that "we do not want to believe that the Folk Art House of our own republic is incapable of doing the same" (*negribas ticēt, ka to pašu nebūtu spējīgs veikt mūsu republikas Tautas mākslas nams*, ibid.). The mention of folklorists, meaning not folklore researchers but instead performers from the folk,[9] as well as rural people (*teicēji*), allows us to conclude that there was a desire to develop artistic self-activity in this direction also in Latvia. However, for unknown reasons, the institutionalization of folklore and folklorists in Latvia still had to wait for a little more than three decades. This article also contains criticism by Brodelis aimed at the heads of the RFAH for leaving the work to its own devices and not providing methodological and ideological help. This is emphasized in a way characteristic of the Soviet era, that "artistic self-activity collectives of course have the right to demand that this situation be eliminated in the nearest future" (*Protams, mākslinieciskās pašdarbības kolektīviem ir tiesības prasīt, lai šo stāvokli tuvākajā laikā likvidētu*, ibid.) and "the Committee of Cultural Education Institutions

8 The term *teicējs* (in plural *teicēji*, literally 'teller, storyteller') is still used by Latvian folklorists to designate people, including singers and musicians, from whom folklore collectors have written down folklore materials, including folk songs and dances.

9 This practice has survived to the present day. Singers of ethnographic and folklore ensembles are called *folkloristi* (singular *folklorists*). There have been attempts to introduce a different form in Latvian — *folklornieks* (Muktupāvels 2024), but not everyone wants to accept this because of the second part of the word *nieks*, which is a suffix meaning 'person' but as a word on its own means 'little, trifle, nothing'.

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should immediately revise its relations with the Folk Art House, activating its work" (*Kultūras izglītības iestāžu komitejai nekavējoties jārevidē savas attiecības ar Tautas mākslas namu, aktivizējot tā darbību*, Brodelis 1946b).

In 1950, more than five thousand artistic self-activity collectives operated under the administration of the RFAH. The seminars for leaders of the collectives were systematically organized both in Riga and outside of the capital city (SA 1950). Writing in *Padomju Jaunatne* (Soviet Youth, 1944–1989), the daily newspaper of the Communist Youth League of Latvia (Komsomol), the new head of the RFAH (as of 1950) Osvalds Reichmanis rhetorically expressed a readiness to eliminate the deficiencies in self-activity organizations, once again emphasizing the importance of the upcoming artistic self-activity review, in which all of the collectives in the republic would have to participate:

In order to justify the care of the party and the government, the shortcomings in the organization of artistic self-activity must be immediately eliminated. Several Komsomol organizations, cultural education departments, trade organizations and leaders of cultural and folk centers pay the most attention to choirs and dance groups but completely ignore drama groups and individual performers.

Lai godam attaisnotu partijas un valdības gādību, nekavējoties jānovērš trūkumi mākslinieciskās pašdarbības organizēšanā. Vairākas komjaunatnes organizācijas, kultūrizglītības nodaļas, arodorganizācijas, kā arī kultūras un tautas namu vadītāji galveno vērību pievērš koriem un deju kolektīviem, bet pilnīgi izlaiž no sava redzes loka dramatiskos kolektīvus un individuālos izpildītājus.

One of the main tasks in order to prepare in an exemplary manner for self-activity reviews is to make self-activity groups work in all genres. Of course, cultural and folk centers will not be able to achieve this alone; it is necessary to pay the greatest attention to artistic self-activity at kolkhozes. Nowadays, as the small kolkhozes are uniting into large collective farms, all of the conditions are in place for a drama, dance and music group, as well as a choir, to operate in every kolkhoz.

Viens no galvenajiem uzdevumiem, lai priekšzīmīgi sagatavotos pašdarbības skatēm, ir panākt, lai pašdarbības pulciņi darbotos visos žanros. Protams, ka to panākt tikai kultūras un tautas namiem vien nebūs pa spēkam, nepieciešams vislielāko vērību veltīt kolchozu mākslinieciskai pašdarbībai. Tagad, kad sīkie kolchozi apvienojas lielās kolektīvās saimniecībās, radīti visi priekšnoteikumi, lai ikvienā kolchozā darbotos dramatiskais, deju un mūzikas pulciņš, koris. (Reichmanis 1950)

Thus, we see that the main focus of the system was on choirs and dance collectives, which are still the core of the Latvian amateur art system today. However, there was a desire to expand the range of self-activity genres as well as an understanding that regional folk and culture centers alone might not be able to achieve this, so it was necessary to pay more attention to kolkhozes. In fact, these kolkhozes had just recently been established on the site of former

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villages, completely changing not only the people's lives but also their way of farming. Moreover, a year earlier, in 1949, mass deportations had been carried out from the small kolkhozes, which now were being united into larger ones. All this had traumatized the villagers. Such was the context of the victory march of the artistic self-activity system five years after the Soviet occupation of Latvia had begun.

In 1951, a contract was signed between the RFAH and the Institute of Ethnography and Folklore. In accordance with this agreement, the RFAH undertook to print and distribute informative materials and provide the opportunity to copy the collected folklore materials; it also issued an order through the Committee of Culture and Educational Institutions of the Council of Ministers of the Latvian SSR to all folk and culture centers to expand the activities of folklore groups (Ķencis 2019, 65).

In 1953, the RFAH came under the direct authority of the Ministry of Culture of the Latvian SSR (LVVA 2024, 3). The number of participants in the artistic self-activity reviews increased to forty seven thousand people. The Ministry of Culture was finally partially satisfied about some results of its work, insofar as it concerned practical and methodological assistance to artistic self-activity through seminars for group leaders, the issuing of methodological materials and the provision of qualification tests and attestation for leaders of self-activity collectives. However, it still emphasized the insufficient compliance with the "tasks set by the party and the government" regarding the provision of assistance to rural districts and kolkhozes, pointing out that "the RFAH should pay maximum attention to the improvement of artistic self-activity groups in rural districts and kolkhozes" (*RTMN jāpievērš maksimāla uzmanība lauku rajonu un kolchozu mākslinieciskās pašdarbības pulciņu uzlabošanai*, LuM 1954).

In 1955, the institution's name was supplemented with the name of the famous Latvian composer and folk music collector Emilis Melngailis, who had died the previous year, and became the Emilis Melngailis Folk Art House (EMFAH) (LVVA 2024, 3). The collegium of the Ministry of Culture together with the presidium of the Committee of the Trade Union of Culture Workers made a decision on the leadership of urban cultural institutions over rural cultural institutions. As a result, the list of districts attached to leadership organizations was approved, with each organization leading the cultural institutions of one district.

In 1979, the name of the EMFAH was changed again, this time to the Emilis Melngailis Scientific Methodological Center of Folk Art and Cultural Education Work of the Republic (Centre) (LVVA 2024, 3). Liāna Ose, a student in the Department of Folk Celebration Directing at the Latvian State Conservatoire, began working in the Ministry of Culture. A year earlier, in 1978, while still working as an inspector of culture in one of Riga's municipal administrations,[10] she managed to involve Skandinieki, one of the first folklore ensembles in Latvia, in an evaluation review for vocal ensembles. Skandinieki had been established in 1976, with the intention of popularizing unarranged folklore—to care for this traditional and ethnographic matter (Ose 2024)—and its

10 At that time called the Riga Kirov District Executive Committee.

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leaders, Helmi Stalte and Dainis Stalts, to a large extent initiated and led the subsequent Folklore Movement. As Ose told me in an interview in 2024, she got her inspiration in Georgia, where she had accompanied a mixed choir as a concert program announcer and had had the opportunity to hear "real, live traditional singing" (*īsto, dzīvo tradicionālo dziedāšanu*, ibid.). In 1981, she graduated from the conservatoire, for her final exam organizing a folklore celebration in Ogre featuring one folklore ensemble from each district of Latvia as well as from the neighboring countries of Lithuania and Estonia:

It was one big moment of singing together that gave strength to all of us, and I was also pleased that there were so many people in the audience, that their interest was indescribable. It was truly a celebration. The first major celebration of regional singing traditions.

Tas bija tāds viens liels sadziedāšanās moments, kas deva spēku mums visiem, un mani iepriecināja arī tas, ka estrādē bija tik daudz tautas, ka tā interese bija neaprakstāma. Tiešām tie bija svētki. Pirmie lielākie kopā sanākšanas svētki novadu dziedāšanas tradīcijām. (Ose 2024)

Another student, Monika Praņevska, did something similar with ethnographic ensembles in the town of Preiļi in eastern Latvia:

It was the first major gathering of all ethnographic ensembles. The richness of the Preiļi district was shown, starting from the women of Sauna[11] and to all the folklore ensembles that had emerged in later years. But the leaders were all knowledgeable people, and this was confirmation that such things exist in our folk culture. And during the Soviet period it had perhaps existed underground or only in the villages, but this was a gathering of everyone and showcase to the wider community that we have such traditions.

Tur bija visu etnogrāfisko ansambļu pirmā lielākā kopā sanākšana. Sava rajona – Preiļu novada bagātības tika rādītas, sākot no Saunas sievām un beidzot ar visiem folkloras ansambļiem, kas bija radušies arī vēlākā periodā, bet vadītāji visi bija lietas zinātāji, pārzinātāji, un tas bija tāds apliecinājums, ka mums tautas kultūrā tādas lietas pastāv. Un padomju laikā tas bija dzīvojis varbūt pagrīdē vai tikai savā ciemā, bet tā bija tāda kopā sanākšana un parādīšana plašākai sabiedrībai, ka tādas tradīcijas mums ir. (Ose 2024)

In 1982, the Ministry of Culture, in the person of Ose and along with "hands" from the Folk Art Center, organized the first gathering of ethnographic and folklore ensembles, which took place in Aizpute, a small town in western Latvia. Before that, of course, a review had taken place, which was the first time for performers of this kind.

11 The Sauna Women, also known as the Sauna ethnographic ensemble, was established in 1953 as the Zhdanov kolkhoz women's ethnographic ensemble (more in section V of this article).

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Yes, working in the ministry, we organized a review for this genre, too. At that time, the director of the [Folk Art] Center was Arvīds Donass, who was quite conservative and resisted a lot. […] But the ministry had included it in the work plan for the Folk Art Center. I myself wrote this order to organize the review (…). The jury was chaired by Gunārs Ordelovskis. We had assistance from the Academy of Sciences, of course, and here I must praise [folklorist] Jānis Rozenbergs, who supported us then and onward. [He was] the professional representative who gave us advice and also knew how to deal with the instructions of the Academy of Sciences on ideology, and his wife, Velta Rozenberga, was in charge of folk costumes at the Museum of History and created exhibitions, and she also advised on the traditions of wearing folk costumes. And then the jury we had was such a knowledgeable, professional one that could give advice to folklore ensembles for their future work.

Jā, strādājot ministrijā, mēs rīkojām skati arī šim žanram. Tanī laikā centrā direktors bija Arvīds Donass, kurš bija diezgan konservatīvs un pretī daudz ko darīja. […] Bet ministrijā tas tika darba plānā Tautas mākslas centram uzdots. Es pati rakstīju to rīkojumu sarīkot skati. Žūrijas komisijas priekšsēdētājs bija Gunārs Ordelovskis. No Zinātņu akadēmijas, protams, [bija] palīdzība, un te jāuzteic Jānis Rozenbergs, kurš no tiem laikiem bija mūsu atbalsts. Profesionālais pārstāvis, kurš deva padomu, kurš prata arī tikt galā ar Zinātņu akadēmijas norādījumiem par ideoloģiju, un viņa kundze Velta Rozenberga bija tā, kas Vēstures muzejā par tautas tērpiem atbildīgā, veidoja izstādes, un viņa arī konsultēja par tērpu valkāšanas tradīcijām. Un tad tā žūrija mums bija tāda zinoša, profesionāla, kas varēja dot padomu folkloras kopām turpmākajam darbam. (Ose 2024)

In the interview, Ose admitted that such a possibility was due to the fact that she had support and understanding in the ministry from the secretary of the Communist Party and the deputy minister, without which nothing like this could have happened either (ibid.).

In 1984, Ose was invited by Jānis Rijnieks, the new director of the Folk Art Center, to work as his deputy. She was made responsible for the theater department, for which gatherings and reviews had to be organized. Her other area of responsibility was dancers, "where they managed themselves, I didn't have to interfere much" (*kur viņi paši tika galā, tur man daudz jaukties nevajadzēja*, ibid.). Her third department was that of applied arts and painting: "They also still had good specialists at the Folk Art Center. But there was no one for folklore. And so, that was like an additional duty for me, to supervise and help this field as well" (*Tās bija vēl arī ar labiem speciālistiem Tautas mākslas centrā. Par folkloru jau nebija neviena. Un tad tas tā kā bija man papildus pienākums arī šo nozari pārraudzīt un palīdzēt*, ibid.). Soon after, a position for a folklore specialist was created, but unfortunately the exact year is not known, as the documents regarding this cannot be found in the archives. Ose explains this as a result of a change in the political establishment at the time, when, due to certain "hiccups" in the system, the documents failed to be archived. What is known for sure is that in 1988, after the first International Folklore Festival "Baltica" held in Latvia, Andris Kapusts became the senior specialist in folklore issues and remained in this position for twenty years (ibid.; Kapusts 2014).

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In 1989, the long name of the Center was shortened again to the Emilis Melngailis Folk Art Center (EMFAC) (LVVA 2024, 9). However, people continued to call it simply the Melngailis House. In 1994, four years after Latvia regained its independence, only the name of the ministry was corrected to the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Latvia (LVVA 2024, 11). The name of the Melngailis House was changed only in 2000 to the State Folk Art Center (LVVA 2024, 12), and then in 2002 to the Folk Art Center (FAC), when it also changed its status from a state civil institution to a state agency, while maintaining its subordination to the Ministry of Culture and its function, namely, the implementation of cultural policy in the field of folk arts (LVVA 2024, 14).

In 2009, as a reaction to the UNESCO 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH), the FAC became the State Agency of the Intangible Cultural Heritage with the aim to implement the state cultural policy in the field of ICH and the corresponding field of amateur art. According to the agency regulations, its functions were to (1) preserve and develop the ICH and (2) ensure the continuity of the amateur art process. In order to implement these functions, the agency continued to organize the Song and Dance Celebrations and to ensure the coordination of its preparation within the country. Among other tasks were methodological work and its management, education, and cooperation concerning the ICH and the corresponding field of amateur art with the state, academic and educational institutions, municipalities, non-governmental organizations and private persons. The agency also participated in national and international programs and projects related to ICH and the corresponding field of amateur art. The collection and analysis of ICH, providing information about the processes of ICH and amateur art, and the coordination of the implementation of festivals and other events at the national level were also stated in the regulations of the agency (LVVA 2024, 32).

Since 2012, the institution has been called the Latvian National Center for Culture (LNCC). Now it is a direct administrative institution under the authority of the Minister of Culture. Its purpose is:

> to implement the national policy of providing for education in the cultural and creative industries and the availability of Latvian cultural values and contemporary expressions within the fields of intangible cultural heritage, the Song and Dance Celebration tradition and the related fields of folk art.
>
> *īstenot valsts politiku kultūras un radošo industriju izglītības, Latvijas kultūras vērtību un laikmetīgo izpausmju pieejamības nodrošināšanā, nemateriālā kultūras mantojuma, Dziesmu un deju svētku tradīciju un ar to saistītajās tautas mākslas jomās.* (LNCC 2024b)

According to the LNCC website, the fields of folk art are: choirs, stage folk dance, brass bands, *kokle* music, vocal ensembles, amateur theaters, folklore, folk music, folk applied art, minority collectives and cultural centers. The folklore field manages the activities of folklore and ethnographic ensembles. The folk music field includes instrumental and vocal-instrumental "collectives", which perform "interpretations of folk and traditional music" on "characteristic acoustic instruments" in various styles (LNCC 2024c).

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3. Ethnographic and folklore ensembles: Cultural agency

"Ethnographic ensemble" is a designation that needs to be clarified to avoid misunderstandings. In Latvia, such ensembles are seen as an agency that helps preserve and keep alive old traditions, including multipart singing. However, there has never been a discussion about what the term actually means or why it is still used, nor about its effect on multipart music. The term, which appeared in Latvia after the Second World War, is still used as a designation for so-called "bearers of traditions", who have inherited their repertoires and singing manners "in the direct way", that is, the way it was done, for example, in the first half of the twentieth century. This was the main criterion for an ensemble to be designated "ethnographic", because attention was focused on the past. So, what was singing like in earlier times? The same question was asked by folk music collectors and researchers during their "folklore and ethnographic expeditions".

In this framework, the term "ethnography" has a longer history than "ethnographic ensemble". This is connected with the fact that Latvia was part of the Russian Empire from 1772 until 1918, and also the fact that most of the later founders of Latvian national culture and research had received their educations in Russia, mostly Saint Petersburg. The Department of Ethnography, which was founded in 1849 as part of the Russian Geographical Society (1845) and which organized ethnographic expeditions in the second half of the nineteenth century in Siberia, Central Asia, the Caucasus and the Baltic provinces (Ķencis 2023), also played a role concerning concepts and terminology.

This "ethnography" has nothing to do with the term as we understand it in the social sciences. In Latvia, the term is still used for the branch of science that has a common origin with ethnology, anthropology and German *Volkskunde*, although right now the analysis and revision of these terms and concepts is taking place within the framework of publications and research projects of historians, ethnologists and social anthropologists (e.g. Karlsone and Boldāne-Zeļenkova 2021; Lūse 2023; Karlsone et al. 2024). Very briefly, this was a different path for the field of study that after the Second World War continued to exist behind the Iron Curtain with the same understanding as it had had in the late nineteenth century, and which had denied the contact with ethnology and social anthropology in the West until after the Iron Curtain fell. Instead, it had a strong link with the Marxist-Leninist methodology, which, as Laura Olson writes, already in the 1930s redefined folklore in the Soviet Union as "the creative expression of the masses" (Olson 2000, iii). Such processes in Latvia began after 1945. The Archives of Latvian Folklore were renamed the Institute of Folklore of the Latvian SSR. In 1950, this same institution became the Institute of Ethnography and Folklore and was supervised by the N. N. Miklukho-Maklai Institute of Ethnography of the USSR Academy of Sciences in Moscow. Interestingly, this same institute was renamed the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology of the Russian Academy of Sciences in 1992 (Ķencis 2023).

According to the *Latvian Soviet Encyclopedia*, an "ethnographic ensemble" is:

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a collective [from Russian *коллектив*] of performing artists that popularizes the literary, musical and choreographic creative output of indigenous peoples in a given region in the form of concerts or theatrical performances.

izpildītājmākslinieku kolektīvs, kas koncertu vai teatralizētu uzvedumu veidā popularizē kāda reģiona (novada) pamatiedzīvotāju lit., muz. un horeogr. daiļradi (LPE 1983, 235–236).

This same encyclopedia mentions that this type of ensemble was already forming in Europe in the second half of the nineteenth century, alongside the development of ethnography and folkloristics, and that before that there were concerts featuring rural people (*teicēji*) organized by societies of geography, archaeology and ethnography. It states that professional ethnographic ensembles arose in the late nineteenth century (apparently in Russia), and that before the revolution (1901–1913) a great deal of work had been done by the Commission of Music and Ethnography in Moscow. Regarding Latvia, it states that ethnographic ensembles began to form there in the 1880s, giving as an example the performances by the multipart singing ensemble of composer Ernests Vīgners at the Third Latvian Song Celebration (1888). According to the encyclopedia, several ethnographic ensembles were established in the 1920s and 1930s under the influence of composer and folklore collector Emilis Melngailis (ibid.). However, it is not possible to find documents or any materials confirming the use of the name "ethnographic ensemble" in this period. Instead, at least in periodicals, there are such designations as "singers of folk songs" (*tautas dziesmu dziedātājas*, Dailes Magazīna 1934), "singers of ethnographic songs" (*etnogrāfisko dziesmu dziedātāji*, Kurzemes Vārds 1936; Rīts 1935; etc.) or simply "singers" (*dziedātājas*, Vītoliņš 1934; Rīts 1934; etc.) from different villages. In these texts, the term "ethnographic" is used in relation to songs, events, data or regions, e.g. "an evening of ethnographic songs" (*etnogrāfisko dziesmu vakars*, Brīvā Zeme 1939). In the latest digital version of the *Latvian National Encyclopedia*, the activities of such singers are characterized as "the first evidence that foreshadows the emergence of folklore ensembles" (*pirmās liecības, kas priekšvēsta folkloras ansambļu rašanos*, Boiko 2023). It mentions that many ethnographic ensembles operated in the 1950s and 1960s (ibid.), as also evidenced by periodicals, where the designation "ethnographic ensemble" is used frequently and consistently up to the present day (e.g. Aivars 1955; Padomju Jaunatne 1966; Ļeņina Karogs 1975; Mežale 1987; Rozenbergs 1998; Vīksna 2006; Rekurzeme 2018; Diena 2022).

Boiko does not use the term "ethnographic ensembles" in his article "The Latvian Folk Music Movement in the 1980s and 1990s: From 'Authenticity' to 'Postfolklore' and Onwards", perhaps to not confuse the English reader. Instead he calls them either "folk singers in the countryside", "rural ensembles" or "rural performers who are untouched by art music and amateur art" (Boiko 2001, 114–115), meaning that they should not be considered part of the artistic self-activity system. Instead, he associates them with the folklore movement and indicates that this movement has played a significant role in raising the self-confidence of these singers, whose performance he describes as at least partially authentic:

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> Later the movement also involved rural ensembles that had already performed their music for a long time in a way at least partially related to the authentic idea. The idea of authenticity was hard to understand and strange to them, but they were happy that somebody was interested in their music and invited them to participate in festivals. It was also important that, through the movement, the members of such rural ensembles became aware of the value of their music and performance styles. (Boiko 2001, 115)

The musicologist Jēkabs Vītoliņš, the main figure in Latvian folk music research in the Soviet era, was of a similar opinion. In 1969, he wrote in the *Dzimtenes Balss* (Voice of the Native Land) newspaper that ethnographic ensembles in Latvia had developed especially in the Soviet era, with some of them arising and existing spontaneously and others in a more or less organized way:

> One of the ways in which the living tradition of folk songs manifests itself is through ethnographic ensembles, which form around the finest folk singers, most often women. Ensembles usually consist of four to ten, or more, singers. Unlike artistic self-activity choirs, which stage works composed by composers, ethnographic ensembles sing folk songs in the way that this music lives among the local folk, also in folk polyphony. The performance of folk songs in ethnographic ensembles is a vivid example of a creative process in which singers can be perceived as deliberate and talented preservers, transmitters and creators of folk art tradition.
>
> *Viens no tautas dziesmu dzīvās tradīcijas izpausmes veidiem ir (…) etnogrāfiskie ansambļi, kas veidojas ap teicamiem tautas dziesmu zinātājiem, visbiežāk sievietēm. Ansambļos parasti 4 – 10 un vairāk dziedātāju. Atšķirībā no mākslinieciskās pašdarbības koriem, kas iestudē komponistu sacerētus darbus, etnogrāfiskie ansambļi dzied tautas dziesmas tādā veidā, kā tās novadā dzīvo tautā, arī tautas vairākbalsībā. Tautas dziesmu izpildījums etnogrāfiskajos ansambļos ir spilgts radoša procesa paraugs, kurā teicējus var sajust kā apzinātus, talantīgus tautas mākslas tradīcijas glabātājus, tālāknesējus un veidotājus.* (Vītoliņš 1969)

Vītoliņš continues that "the biggest ensembles have produced special ethnographic stage performances—feasts, celebrations, work traditions—that include songs and dances connected with folk traditions" (*Lielākie ansambļi ir radījuši un iestudējuši īpašus savu novadu etnogrāfiskus uzvedumus – godus, svētkus, darba tradīcijas, kur ievītas dziesmas un dejas, kas saistītas ar tautas ieražu izdarībām*, ibid.). Finally, he states that "ethnographic ensembles are one of the very active ways that folklore exists in the present [and that] in such stage performances ethnographically traditional [content] often intertwines with contemporary content" (*Etnogrāfiskie ansambļi ir viens no ļoti aktīviem folkloras pastāvēšanas veidiem tagadnē. Šādos uzvedumos etnogrāfiski tradicionālais nereti savijas ar mūsdienu saturu*, ibid.). Vītoliņš also stressed that the role of artistic self-activity was growing, that this work was promoted by the houses of culture and houses of the people (meaning cultural centers), and that this was done with the help of the most outstanding professional artists—conductors, teachers and composers (ibid.).

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The *Latvian Soviet Encyclopedia* mentions folklore ensembles in continuation of the already mentioned definition of ethnographic ensembles, indicating in brackets that:

there are also folklore ensembles, which, unlike ethnographic ensembles, perform folk songs and dances not only of their own region but also from the literary, musical and choreographic heritage of the whole nation.

ir arī folkloras ansambļi, kas atšķirībā no etnogrāfiskajiem ansambļiem izpilda ne tikai sava novada tdz. un dejas, bet balstās arī uz visas tautas lit., muz. un horeogr. mantojumu (LPE 1983, 236).

Boiko writes on this issue that in the 1980s, "a large number of small folk music groups emerged which tried to copy the styles used by folk singers in the countryside: 'authenticity' and 'back to the roots' were the catchwords of the new [folklore] movement" (Boiko 2001, 114). Again, we see that Boiko does not use the term "folklore ensembles" but calls them "folk music groups". Performers in such groups, in turn, did not like the name "ensemble", which they considered as coming from the desire of the Soviet system of self-activity to professionalize folk music. So they chose the name *kopa*, which is related to the Latvian word for 'together', with the best English translation being 'group' or 'cluster'.

4. Folklore researchers and caretakers: Personal agency

…unlike our near and more distant neighboring nations, we do not have any ensemble attempting to carefully reproduce what is characteristic of folklore, presenting it in a manner as close as possible to the original. There are no ethnographic ensembles in the modern sense.

…atšķirībā no tuvām un tālākām kaimiņtautām mums nav neviena ansambļa, kas tiektos saudzīgi atveidot folklorai raksturīgo, sniegtu to pēc iespējas tuvu oriģinālam. Nav etnogrāfiska ansambļa mūsdienu izpratnē. (Klotiņš 1978)

This statement, written in 1978, the year considered a possible beginning of the Latvian folklore movement, introduces an article by musicologist Arnolds Klotiņš, who is one of the biggest authorities not only among Latvian historical musicologists but also within the framework of the folklore movement in Latvia. His publications devoted to folklore in the country's leading periodicals can in a sense be considered a kind of program according to which the names, functions and institutionalization of ethnographic and folklore ensembles have been gradually formulated and implemented within the Latvian amateur art system, with Klotiņš himself being one of the main protagonists in these processes.

In his 1978 article "Mūzikas folklora un mēs" (Musical folklore and us), Klotiņš writes that it is internationally accepted to divide all expressions of musical folklore in amateur art into three groups, and that this division is now followed by the folklore section of the All-Union Folk Art House,

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which has existed since 1969. Although not providing references, he points out that this division, which reflects the three main forms of folk music expression today, is also applied at international festivals. According to Klotiņš, the first group consists of authentic folklore, which is "spontaneously preserved, lives and develops in the consciousness and oral practice of professionally untrained singers" (*stihiski saglabājusies, dzīvo un attīstās profesionāli neapmācītu teicēju apziņā un mutvārdu praksē*, Klotiņš 1978). He writes that this group is poorly represented in Latvia, although this type of folklore is fixed in records and "an idea of it has been preserved by ethnographic observations and descriptions since ancient times" (*priekšstatu par to jau no seniem laikiem glabā etnogrāfiski novērojumi un apraksti*, ibid.). In the second group, Klotiņš includes "ethnographic ensembles of folklore stage performances, which learn the basic forms of folk art and imitate them or minimally arrange them" (*etnogrāfiskie folkloras iestudējumu ansambļi, kas apgūst tautas mākslas pamatformas, tās atdarina vai ļoti saudzīgi apdarina*, ibid.). He notes that there are almost no such ensembles in Latvia. The third group consists of "ensembles stylizing folk art, which practice the art of showcasing the elements of folklore that are effective on the stage and nationally representative. In them, dance usually prevails" (*tautas mākslu stilizējoši ansambļi, kas piekopj skatuviski efektīgu un nacionāli reprezentatīvu, uzspodrinātu folkloras elementu demonstrēšanas mākslu. Tajos parasti pārsvars dejai*, ibid.). Klotiņš believes this group is the richest and most dominant as well as "the only one enjoying the benefits of centralized organizational management (the republic's FAH)" (*vienīgā bauda centralizētas organizatoriskas vadības (republikas TMN) labumus*, ibid.).

Although periodicals had already since the 1950s been regularly reporting about the activities of a number of ethnographic ensembles, Klotiņš attributes such activities at least partially to the first form of folk music expression, or authentic folklore, which he calls "spontaneous expressions of folk art" (*stihiskas tautas mākslas izpausmes*), in which "propaganda must be understood first of all as promotion and protection of prestige" (*propaganda ir jāsaprot vispirms kā prestiža paaugstināšana un aizsargāšana*, ibid.). He writes that such sources of folklore should be identified, but one should be careful not to interfere with them, pointing out that organizing concerts of such folklore is a very delicate task:

(…) singers of authentic folklore brought out in front of a huge audience are natural only at first; each subsequent time they feel the audience's demand for the exotic and entertainment and soon release the "actors" within themselves. In addition, each performance on stage requires its own dramaturgy, which does not exist in folklore as the art of life situations, and the singers themselves feel this painfully. So how can these ensembles express themselves, how can they exist, if concerts are not suited to them?

(…) *autentiskās folkloras teicēji, kas izvesti milzīgas auditorijas priekšā, tikai sākumā ir dabiski, bet ar katru nākamo reizi izjūt publikas prasību pēc eksotiskā un izklaidējošā un drīz apjauš sevī "aktierus". Bez tam katra uzstāšanās uz skatuves prasa savu dramaturģiju, kādas nav folklorā kā dzīves situāciju mākslā, un to mocoši izjūt arī paši teicēji. Tad kā gan šiem ansambļiem izpausties, kā eksistēt, ja koncertēšana tiem nepiemērota?* (Klotiņš 1978)

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Two aspects of this quote attract attention. On the one hand, there is a concern for how the singers feel on stage, while on the other hand, there is a tendency to "know better", to decide for the singers what is right, including about where and under what conditions they should perform:

If we bring the few authentic folklore bearers in our republic under some centralized organizational care, then, in doing so, we will not repeat the mistakes made elsewhere. They should not have to comply with the usual repertoire renewal requirements for self-activity, nor should they have to organize (…) so-called thematic concerts, as has sometimes happened [according to the materials of the 8th All-Union Folklorist Seminar]. Local cultural departments must also guard against incompetent interference in the folkloristic activities of a functioning authentic ensemble.

Ja nedaudzos mūsu republikas autentiskos folkloras nesējus iekļausim kādā centralizētā organizatoriskā aprūpē, tad, to darot, neatkārtosim citur pieļautās kļūdas. Tiem nav uzstādāmas pašdarbībai parastās repertuāra atjaunošanas prasības, nav jārīko (…) t. s. tematiskie koncerti, kā tas [pēc 8. Vissavienības folkloristu semināra materiāliem] dažākārt noticis. (…) Arī vietējām kultūras nodaļām jāsargās no nekompetentas iejaukšanās funkcionējoša autentiska ansambļa folkloriskajā darbībā. (Klotiņš 1978)

Thus, on the one hand, Klotiņš talks about the inclusion of "authentic ensembles" in "centralized organizational care", but on the other hand, he warns against incompetent interference in the activities of such ensembles. Eleven years later, this same author will point out that the songs of the wonderful but rapidly aging rural singers completely lose their social context and turn into little more than a repertoire. He writes that the meaning of the traditions is sometimes better known by a university or conservatoire student than by the nation itself, which has forgotten it, suggesting that, therefore one should not shy away from "such a paradoxical figure as the scientific supervisor of an authentic folklore group" (*tādas paradoksālas figūras kā autentiskās folkloras kopas zinātniskais vadītājs*) (Klotiņš 1989).

In Klotiņš' opinion, the most important task was the formation of ensembles within the second group — ethnographic ensembles of folklore stage performances — which could be the most appropriate purifiers (*attīrītāji*), animators (*dzīvinātāji*) and forwarders (*tālākvirzītāji*) of the folklore tradition. He states that such collectives would have already been formed "if we did not feel such a sharp, tragic lack of folkloristically educated practicing musicians who would be able to take care of folk music life in society — [a lack] of leaders of such ensembles" (*ja mēs neizjustu tik asu, traģisku trūkumu pēc folkloristiski izglītotiem mūziķiem praktiķiem, kas spētu aprūpēt tautas mūzikas dzīvi sabiedrībā, – pēc šādu ansambļu vadītājiem*, Klotiņš 1978). It is interesting that Klotiņš called such ensembles, which "*stage* folk music [italics original], learning performance or improvisation skills from folk singers or scholarly sources" (*tautas mūziku* iestudē, *apgūstot izpildījuma vai improvizācijas iemaņas no tautas teicējiem vai zinātniekiem avotiem*, ibid.), ethnographic rather than folklore ensembles, and wrote that "in our republic [they] could be the PRINCIPAL KEEPERS OF FOLK ART

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[emphasis original]" (*mūsu republikā varētu būt GALVENIE TAUTAS MĀKSLAS GLABĀTĀJI*, ibid.). He justified this need with the "weakness of authentic expressions" of folklore, using other Soviet republics as an example, where such ensembles "play a much greater role in the propaganda of original folk music than the fragile groups of authentic folklore, which need safeguarding" (*ir daudz lielāka loma tautas oriģinālmūzikas propagandā nekā trauslajām, saudzējamām autentiskās folkloras grupām*, ibid). Klotiņš was disappointed by the fact that, in the system of self-activity in "our republic", ensembles of the third group were considered the only possible form of expression of folklore, and regretted that the Latvian FAH seemed to be the only one in the entire Soviet Union that did not have a folklore section:

This not only says something about the prestige of folklore in the republic and hinders its propaganda at home, but also causes difficulties for the All-Union FA House when planning events. I will remind readers again that the state not only protects folklore but also provides for its propaganda—this is also discussed in the 1978 decision of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union "On measures for the further development of artistic self-activity".

Tas ne vien kaut ko izsaka par folkloras prestižu republikā un kavē tās propagandu pašu mājās, bet sagādā grūtības arī Vissavienības TM namam, plānojot pasākumus. Atgādināšu vēlreiz, ka valsts ne vien aizsargā folkloru, bet paredz arī tās propagandu – par to runā arī PSKP CK 1978. gada lēmums "Par pasākumiem mākslinieciskās pašdarbības tālākai attīstīšanai". (Klotiņš 1978)

In his article "Atgriežoties pie folkloras avotiem" (Returning to the sources of folklore) published one year after that by Klotiņš, Dzintars Kļaviņš, then the vice-rector of the Latvian State Conservatoire, argued that regardless of whether the interest of these pioneers of the "folkloristic movement" (*folkloristiskā kustība*) was focused on the revival of ethnic, national or local traditions in contemporary artistic practice or on the propaganda of current national genres and forms in the given cultural region, the driving forces of the movement were the same. He criticized the pursuit of accuracy of the representation of folklore literature, its quasi-scientific perfection, which is given the name 'authentic folklore' or 'authentic form of performance' (*autentiskais priekšnesuma veids*, Kļaviņš 1979). He also pointed out that the range of problems concerning the activities of folklore ensembles left to their own devices inevitably creates and will continue to create both theoretical and practical uncertainties:

In fact, the status of "folklore ensembles" is equated to "self-activity" in the most literal and unacceptable sense of the word. No one considers this activity undesirable—they are even enthused by it—but at the same time, they don't want to equate it with self-activity in other genres.

Faktiski "folkloras ansambļu" statuss ir pielīdzināts "pašdarbībai" šā vārda vistiešākajā un nepieņemamākajā izpratnē. Par nevēlamu šo darbību neviens neuzskata, pat apjūsmo, bet pielīdzināt to citu žanru pašdarbībai arī negrib. (Kļaviņš 1979)

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Klotiņš explained in an interview with Inta Čaklā in 1981 that it is important to perceive the moment when the tradition must be consciously maintained and restored according to folklore records. He pointed out that the conscious care of folklore was needed for the future and expressed the hope that the FAC would begin seriously dealing with folklore ensembles as well:

A sound library is needed, where the members of ensembles can listen to authentic folklore recordings or at least ones rooted in tradition. Knowledgeable methodologists are needed, of which there are unfortunately few in our republic. Courses for leaders of ensembles are needed, where folklore specialists from elsewhere are also invited. An individual approach must be found for each ensemble.

Vajadzīga fonotēka, kur ansambļu dalībnieki varētu klausīties autentiskus vai vismaz tradīcijā sakņotus folkloras ierakstus. Vajadzīgi zinoši metodiķi, kādu mūsu republikā diemžēl ir maz. Vajadzīgi kursi ansambļu vadītājiem, kur tiktu pieaicināti arī folkloras speciālisti no citurienes. Katram ansamblim jāatrod individuāla pieeja. (Čaklā 1981)

In his article "Folkloriskais. Mākslinieciskais" (The folkloric, the artistic), Klotiņš expresses concern about the "loss of the sense of folklore" (*folkloras izjūtas zudumu*) in rural ensembles: "In many cases, they have lost what they naturally inherited from their mothers, but nor do they have the breadth of vision available to urban ensembles that would make them consciously cultivate folklore" (*No māmuļām dabiski mantoto tie daudzos gadījumos pagaisinājuši, bet nav tiem arī pilsētu ansambļiem pieejamā redzesloka plašuma, kas liktu folklorisko izkopt apzināti*, Klotiņš 1981). Here, he again makes a comparison with the other Soviet republics, where the new methodological centers of folk art attract folklore propaganda methodologists from academic institutions for contract work, and he sarcastically continues, saying "until we receive the training for such methodologists (which has been neglected so far), all we can do is recommend to the leaders of rural ensembles that they rely on their innate sense of simplicity and naturalness" (*kamēr mēs sagaidīsim šādu metodiķu izskološanu (kas līdz šim bijusi novārtā), atliek ieteikt lauku ansambļu vadītājiem vienīgi paļauties uz savu iedzimto vienkāršības un dabiskuma izjūtu*, ibid.). In another article, dedicated to a concert by folklore and ethnographic ensembles, in which about ten specialists from Leningrad, Moscow, Tallinn, Tartu and Vilnius took part in order to evaluate the performances, Klotiņš writes that the judgment of these specialists has been unanimous: "the path set out on by our ensembles is the right one; from now on it must confirm itself in an even deeper study, reconstruction and folkloristically creative representation of folk customs and singing style" (*mūsu ansambļu uzsāktais ceļš ir pareizs, turpmāk tam jāapstiprina sevi vēl dziļākā tautas ieražu un dziedāšanas veida izpētē, rekonstrukcijā un folkloristiski radošā atveidē*, Klotiņš 1982).

In 1984, as already mentioned in section II, along with Ose becoming the deputy director of the Center, ethnographic and folklore ensembles finally became part of the Soviet artistic self-activity system. In an interview, Ose remembers that Klotiņš defended these things very well from a scholarly and theoretical point of view:

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Yes, he was there. We met quite often in relation to this work, (…) it's possible that he also served on some commission during a review. (…) He was an adviser. Then I also understood what should and what should not be done.

Jā, viņš bija klāt. Mēs diezgan bieži satikāmies tādā darba situācijā, (…) varbūt, ka viņš bija arī kādā komisijā skates reizē. (…) Viņš bija padomdevējs. Tad es arī sapratu, kas ir un kas nav jādara. (Ose 2024)

In the second half of the 1980s, having been inspired by the singers from whom he recorded folk songs, the choir conductor and folklore collector Andrejs Krūmiņš focused on the authentic manner of singing. He was invited to the "Ethnographic Singing" conference organized by the Folk Art Center in 1995. His paper "*Dažu tautasdziesmu autentiskā vokālā izpildījuma jautājumi (pamatojies uz Ziemeļlatvijas folkloru, kas savākta pēdējo trīs gadu laikā)*" (Issues of the authentic vocal performance of some folk songs (based on the folklore of northern Latvia, collected in the past three years)", raised "several issues specific to the style of folk or ethnographic singing that are unique to this authentic manner of singing" (*vairākas tautiskā jeb etnogrāfiskā dziedājuma stilam raksturīgas pazīmes, kas piemīt tikai šai autentiskā dziedājuma manierei*, Rozenbergs 1998). According to Krūmiņš, these questions about the ethnographic manner of singing and its place in modern-day life had hardly been addressed and were only touched upon in passing in the periodicals. He advocated different evaluation criteria for ethnographic and classical singers, noting that ethnographic singing is not something specific to a single nationality but is instead an international phenomenon because the basis of vocal production is the same. At the same time, he noted that the principles of operating the voice apparatus are significantly different for ethnographic singers, as they are based on natural voice registers:

Usually, the singer uses only one register when performing a song. The ancient layer of folklore sounds best in the chest register (…). The sound is far-reaching, free, leisurely flowing. (…) The use of the middle register is characteristic of the performance of songs of the younger layer.

Parasti teicējs, izpildot dziesmu, izmanto tikai vienu reģistru. Folkloras senais slānis vislabāk skan krūšu reģistrā (…). Skaņa ir tālu nesoša, brīvi, nesteidzīgi plūstoša. (…) Jaunākā slāņa dziesmu izpildījumam raksturīga vidējā reģistra pielietošana. (Rozenbergs 1998)

Krūmiņš believed that the question of the continued existence of "authentic folklore ensembles" was largely related to the preservation and transmission of the ethnographic singing manner to future generations. He described the situation at that moment as unsatisfactory, because "among the younger generation, there are almost no singers who know the correct ethnographic manner. Children and young people brought up in general education or music schools are, so to speak, ethnographically incapable" (*jaunākās paaudzes vidū pareizas etnogrāfiskās manieres pratēju tikpat kā nav. Vispārizglītojošās vai mūzikas skolās audzinātie bērni un jaunieši ir, ja tā var teikt, etnogrāfiski nespējīgi*, ibid.). Krūmiņš recommended carrying out "the real work of ethnographic education", involving leading members of ethnographic collectives as teachers.

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Andris Kapusts held the position of folklore expert at the LNCC for twenty years (1988–2008), and during this entire time he took care regarding the correctness of the manner of singing among folklore and ethnographic ensembles. Kapusts was the originator and main organizer of the 1995 conference. In a workshop in 2013, he explained why the term "ethnographic singing" was used in the 1980s and 1990s:

The folklore caretakers had to fight for their place under the sun and demonstrate to the others that the way in which folklore ensembles sing, in which ethnographic ensembles sing, is not insignificant but that it is also a kind of art, very serious art, and that it is definable, it has its own genres, styles, methods and everything else that belongs to a serious, professional field.

Tiem folkloras kopējiem bija jāizcīna vieta zem saules un jāpierāda pārējiem, ka tas, kā dzied folkloras ansambļi, kā dzied etnogrāfiskie ansambļi, ka tas nav vienkārši kaut kas tāds, nu tāds nekas, bet ka tā ir arī sava veida māksla ļoti nopietna, un viņa ir definējama, viņai ir savi žanri, stili, metodes un viss pārējais, kas pieder kādai nopietnai, profesionālai jomai. (Kapusts 2013)

Kapusts mentioned sound production through posture and breathing as the most important components of learning this kind of singing. Thus, the circle was closed. Singers who during the Soviet era had been able to escape the artistic self-activity system because they were not professional enough were now encouraged to become professionals with all the consequences that entailed.

5. From "finer" to "deeper": The case of the Zhdanov kolkhoz women's ethnographic ensemble

Andrei Zhdanov (1896–1948) was one of Stalin's emissaries and had, among other things, helped to prepare and implement the occupation of Estonia (Letonika 2024). The kolkhoz in the village of Sauna, where the first ethnographic ensemble in Latvia was established in 1953, as well as at least two more kolkhozes in the Latvian SSR were named after him. I reviewed two interviews with singers from the Zhdanov kolkhoz women's ethnographic ensemble: the first is from the Archives of Latvian Folklore, recorded by Benedikta Mežale in 1987 with Anna Kaža, and the second is from 1995, recorded by myself with Jadviga Anspoka. According to Kaža, the ensemble began after she had sung together with the teacher and choir conductor Vasiļevskis, who played the accordion at a local celebration and was surprised by her singing:

Then he asks me if there are more such singers here. I say: "There are." "Then call them" [he says].

Tod jis prosa nu maņe, voi te vairuok ir taidu, kas šitā pēc muzikas dzīd. Es soku: "Jir". "Nu tad pasaucit". (Kaža 1987)

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Anspoka remembered that there had been a group of women working in the field and

we were singing these songs in our simple way. And, well, Vasiļevskis happened to be there. And he began to take a liking to it [the singing], he began to ask: "Dear mothers, please sing such and such songs." And we sang, and he liked it a lot. And so he began to organize a kind of little ensemble. For the first two years, we were eight singers. We went to Riga and also right here in Preiļi [the largest nearby town and the regional center], we participated in the Song Celebration.

Nu i dziedājām tādā savā sprostonī tās dziesmiņas. Nu i Vasiļevskis gadījās. I sāka jim iepatikties, sāka prasīt: "Māmiņas, padziediet tādas un tādas dziesmas." Un mēs padziedājām, jim ļoti iepatikās. Tā jis sāka organizēt nu tādu ansamblīti. Sākumā astoņas mēs divus gadus dziedājām. Uz Rīgu braucām i šiten pat Preiļos, uz dziesmu svētkiem braucām dziedāt. (Anspoka 1995)

According to an article in the local newspaper *Ļeņina Karogs* (Lenin's Flag) written by T. Dzalbe[12], the inspector of the department of culture of the Preiļi district, the ensemble was established on the initiative of the "kolkhoz woman" Kaža, to which the singing teacher Vasiļevskis and several other "kolkhoz women" responded. In the beginning, only five or six singers regularly participated in the ensemble's rehearsals, but in the summer of 1954, fifteen members of the ensemble already stood on the stage of the Preiļi song celebration:

The ensemble passed its first major test well. Everyone liked the old Latgalian folk songs. The time spent in rehearsals had not been wasted.

Pirmo lielāko pārbaudi ansamblis izturēja labi. Senās latgaliešu tautas dziesmas visiem patika. Mēģinājumos pavadītais laiks nebija izlietots veltīgi.

And it so happened that the kolkhoz performers of old songs became known in Riga. It was a big surprise when the news arrived that the ensemble had been selected as a candidate for the decade[13] of Latvian art and literature. (…)

Un notika tā, ka par kolchoza seno dziesmu atskaņotājiem uzzināja Rīgā. Liels bija pārsteigums, kad pienāca ziņa par ansambļa iedalīšanu latviešu mākslas un literatūras dekādes kandidātos. (…)

Rehearsals often lasted late into the night—songs were not allowed to interfere with everyday work. And at the same time, it was necessary to prepare ethnographically correct folk costumes from the Preiļi region.

Mēģinājumi bieži ievilkās līdz vēlai naktij – dziesmas nedrīkstēja traucēt ikdienas darbam. Un līdztekus bija jāsagatavo etnografiski pareizi Preiļu novada tautas tērpi. (Dzalbe 1955)

12 The first name is not included in the source.

13 Decade stems from the Russian term 'dekada' (*декада*), which was the annual ten-day festival of folklore in the various republics in the Soviet Union in the 1930s (Brooks 2000, 96).

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Two years later, in 1955, the Decade of the Literature and Art of the Latvian SSR was organized in Moscow, and the ensemble from the Zhdanov kolkhoz was selected as one of the participants. There were two ethnographic ensembles in addition to a symphonic orchestra, choirs and theater troupes. The following excerpt from an article in the *Communist* newspaper from 1954 comments on the selection process (concerning the other ethnographic ensemble, from Nīca). The end of this excerpt also touches on the manner of singing, although in a slightly negative sense characterized as a little rough, a little too forced and loud:

There is unusual excitement here tonight: guests have arrived not only from Riga but also from Moscow to witness the Nīca singers' achievements in ethnographic art. In 1955, the decade of Latvian art and literature will take place in Moscow. Self-activity collectives will take part as well. (…) Nīca is one of the corners of our republic where Latvian folk art has evolved in a distinctive way. This is why the arts research commission has come here.

[This kind of singing] has survived from generation to generation, and the Nīca singers sang this very same way many decades ago. Now it is sung on stage by the Bolshevik kolkhoz women—yes, a little roughly, a little too forced and loud, but it nevertheless leaves a good impression.

Šovakar šeit neparasts satraukums: atbraukuši viesi ne tikai no Rīgas, bet arī no Maskavas skatīt nīcenieku sasniegumus etnogrāfiskajā mākslā. 1955. gadā Maskavā notiks latviešu mākslas un literatūras dekāde. Tajā piedalīsies arī pašdarbības kolektīvi. (…) Nīca – viens no mūsu republikas stūrīšiem, kur latviešu tautas māksla savdabīgi attīstījusies. Tādēļ arī uz šejieni atbraukusi mākslas pētniecības komisija.

Tāds tas saglabājies no paaudzes uz paaudzi, tieši tāpat to dziedājušas nīcenieces pirms daudziem gadu desmitiem. Tagad uz skatuves to dzied "Boļševika" kolchoznieces, tiesa, drusciņ neizkopti, mazliet pārlieku forsēti un skaļi, bet ar visu to atstāj labu iespaidu. (Bārene 1954)

Kaža said in the interview that, one year before they went to Moscow, a consultant from Riga was sent to them to advise them on how to sing, and also the number of singers increased from eight to fifteen. This consultant, Pauls Kvelde, later became a well-known conductor. At the time, however, he was still studying choir conducting at the Latvian State Conservatoire (today the Academy of Music). He wrote his final thesis in 1955 about the folk songs of this region. Kaža remembers that he was surprised and asked where they had learned to sing in so many parts. He also said that he did not see a need to do anything with their parts and melodies, only to bring some order to the music. "But he polished us up a bit, he polished a few things" (*Nu i drusku jau nūslīpieja, kur kas jau nūslīpieja jis myus*, Kaža 1987), she added. Kvelde, in turn, wrote in his thesis that the musical parts in the ensemble had always been made according to certain unwritten rules, which the ensemble members had inherited from previous generations and which they also further developed (Kvelde 1955, 66). Anspoka said that they did not change anything in their music or performance, but only learned some new songs and changed the names of the musical parts. Before, they had had only the "fine parts" (*smalkās balsis*, meaning the higher parts) and the "deeper parts" (*rupākās balsis*,

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meaning the lower parts), but now they were referred to as sopranos and altos. She also said that she had sung in the church choir for fifteen years before the ensemble, and this corresponds with what the church organist told me in an interview from the same fieldwork in 1995:

It's only from the church. Because when there was the first folklore ensemble here, at the Zhdanov kolkhoz, it was the church singers in it (…), the main singers. At that time, everyone was a church singer. Now it probably has no one left who has sung in the church choir. (…) The multipart singing is only sung by those who sing in the choir.

Tikai no baznīcas tas ir. Jo tur, kad bija tas folkloras ansamblis pirmais, Ždanova kolhoza, tur dziedāja baznīcas dziedātāji (…), galvenie dziedātāji. Tolaik visi bija baznīcas dziedātāji. Tagad laikam jau nav vairs neviens, kas baznīcas korī dziedājis. (…) Tikai to daudzbalsību dzied tie, kuri korī dzied. (Novicāns 1995)

Kvelde described this kind of multipart singing as follows:

The first part sings the melody in the upper register … The melodic line of the second part is parallel with the first part, mostly in thirds … The third part usually tries to draw out the "straight part". It has a smoother melody… The fourth part sounds an octave below the first part… The fifth part is sung in parallel tenths with the first part.

Pirmā balss dzied nelodiju augšējā reģistrī … Otrās balss melodiskā līnija virzīta paralēli pirmajai balsij, lielākoties tercas attālumā … Trešā balss parasti mēģina izvilkt taisno balsi. Tai ir līdzenāka melodija… Ceturtā balss skan oktāvās paralēli pirmajai balsij… Piektā balss – paralēlās decimās ar pirmo balsi. (Kvelde 1955, 66)

This kind of multipart singing is documented in recordings made in preparation for the Decade program in Moscow in 1955, the audio versions of which are stored in the Latvian Radio sound library. "Soviet Latvia" (*Padomju Latvija*) newsreel No. 33 (503) from 1955 includes excerpts of three songs sung during a theatrical filming in a kolkhoz field and is accessible at the Latvian State Archive of Audiovisual Documents (KFFDA 2024).

One of the songs from this program was recorded by Martin Boiko and Gita Lancere in 1990 at Kaža's home and was published in the *Anthology of Latvian Traditional Music* in 2008 (Boiko et al. 2008, 31, No. 38). As Boiko writes in the introduction to the anthology:

> This is a two-part song. Both parts are performed by one singer: they were recorded one after the other by using the technique of *re-recording*, because the singer Anna Kaža (1902–1992) was the last person able to perform this old ritual song. (Boiko 2008, 27)

In fact, five years later I did an interview with Jadviga Anspoka, a member of the same ensemble, who could sing these songs. The singing on the 1990 recording sounds about an octave lower than that of the 1955 and there are only two parts. Here is what Kaža said in an interview with Benedikta Mežale, three years before the 1990 recording:

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Now, you see, I don't have any soprano at all. I was once such a soprano; I sang like a nightingale. But my husband was a singer as well; he sang in the choir. When my soprano began to sink, I lost it, but this [lower part] was still very good and strong. And he says to me, "You learn mine [the lower part]. You have it, so just learn." And so I learned from him, and now, you see, I sing with this [part].

Es, vot, tagad, redz, man nav soprana nepavisam. Es biju tāds soprans, ka es situ kā lakstīgala. Bet man bija vīrs dziedātājs arī. Korī dziedāja. Tad, kad grima mans tas jau soprans, nabeja man vaira, a itys man bija ļoti jau labs un stiprs vēl tomā laikā. I jis soka: "Tu mācies munu. Tev jis ir un mācies." Un es nu juo mācījos. I tod tagad, vot, es ar tū i dzīžu. (Kaža 1987)

Thus Kaža, who sang the upper "fine part" on the 1955 recording, moved to the lower "deeper part" when she became older and could no longer sing so high. When the interviewer asked her to sing the second part together with the playback of the first part she had just recorded, she did so, and that is how the recording included in the mentioned anthology emerged. According to Boiko's description, this song "combine[s] elements of drone singing and harmonic polyphony" (Boiko, 2008, 27).

Anthologies usually claim to represent typical examples. Thus, this song, together with its description of multipart singing and low singing manner, was taken as an authentic example of ethnographic sound to be safeguarded and transmitted.

6. Improving the sound: The case of the Upīte folklore group

The ethnographic ensemble of the village of Upīte was established in 1980 on the initiative of local female singers. They approached Ontons Slišāns, who at that time held a leading position in the local sovkhoz, but who was also a great promoter of local music practices and had just established an ethnographic ensemble in the neighboring village. The singers in Upīte stated that they also wanted to have such an ensemble (more in Beitāne 2009; Beitāne 2018). In 1982, Irēna Slišāne, the wife of Ontons, established a children's folklore group (*Balvurcb* 2024a). From this children's group grew a youth folklore group, initially also led by Slišāne. In 2007, her son Andris Slišāns and his wife, Ligita Spridzāne took over the management of this group (*Balvurcb* 2024b).

In 2017, when the List of Latvian National ICH was established, Slišāns and Spridzāne petitioned to be added to this list (an initiative that was very much supported by the regional cultural policy), which they achieved in 2018. According to its website, this list "includes elements of intangible cultural heritage or values which are recognized as nationally protected cultural heritage and the inclusion of which has the support and participation of the relevant Community" (ICH 2024). The entities responsible for this framework are the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Latvia and the LNCC (ibid.). Although in the case of Upīte it was decided to name this a "cultural space" (an ICH element), singing played an important role within the framework. According to Spridzāne, who works with the singers of the folklore group "Upīte", the motivation to be included

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on the ICH list was determined by the desire for others to see and understand that what they have is a value that needs protection, support and continuation. The fact that traditions from other regions had already been included on this list also played a role. Ruta Cibule, who helped with the application, added that being on the list meant getting one extra tool for protection (Spridzāne and Cibule 2023).

While taking part in evaluation reviews organized by the LNCC, the folklore group from Upīte, like others, regularly received recommendations from the jury. However, for the singers themselves, the breaking point concerning the 'improvement' of their singing manner happened in 2005 during the "Traditional Singing Workshops" project organized by Cibule, who was at that time the head of the Balvi County Department of Culture, in cooperation with the singers from the traditional singing group "Saucējas" from the Latvian Academy of Culture in Riga (ibid.).

> The year 2005 brought forth new directions in the teaching of intangible cultural heritage with the presentation of a Traditional Singing Workshop in northern Latgale. The goal was to make use of hitherto underutilized teaching techniques and develop new approaches because teaching methodologies for local traditional singing had been neglected for some time. Individuals of the younger and middle generations interested in learning their own regional singing styles (…) were the target audience. (Cibule and Beitāne 2015, 97)

In an interview from 2023, Cibule expressed her opinion that at that time it was perhaps a matter of self-respect for the local singers in front of the singers from Riga, who sang their local repertoires louder and more convincingly (Spridzāne and Cibule 2023).

In order to improve their singing manner, they decided to invite a teacher and just as an adviser had been sent to the Zhdanov kolkhoz before the Decade in Moscow, the Upīte group got a vocal teacher. The difference was that such help was not sent from institutions but was instead invited by the singers themselves. Zane Šmite, a singing teacher at the Latvian Academy of Music, has been in demand as a singing teacher by folk music groups not only in Latvia but also in neighboring countries for more than twenty years. As she told me in an interview in 2021, she worked with the Upīte singers four times, both as individuals and as a group. The main reason why she was invited was that the singers wanted to improve their sound. As she explains:

They wanted this powerful sound, they wanted it higher, because Ligita [the leader of the group] herself sings very low, and there was a lack of this brilliance, the overtones we hear if it's raised up a bit.	*Viņas gribēja to jaudīgo skaņu, viņas gribēja viņu augstāk, jo Ligita dzied pati ļoti zemu, un tur pietrūka tā spožuma, tās virsskaņas, kas nāk, un tas viss ir dzirdams, ja to bišku paceļ uz augšu.* (Šmite 2021)

Spridzāne, in turn, remembers that they needed help with multipart singing, mainly adding other parts to the main part, as well as overcoming insecurity when starting a song and not being

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afraid of the sound of their own voices (Spridzāne and Cibule 2023). Šmite explained about the learning process:

We were looking for how they could sound powerful. No matter whether we call it the chest register or the "loud voice". Then there was another interesting thing, in that one of the singers said it sounded to her like yelling, that it's a type of yelling. And here I always have to smile, because it is in fact a kind of yelling. Yes, there were breathing exercises, and we played around with sounds, but in fact the main work I did was in the individual lessons, because there's no one single way to open up this voice; it's very individual and based on how the person speaks. In other words, I build it up from the way the person speaks, and then I guide her to this singing.

Mēs meklējām, kā viņas varētu skanēt jaudīgi. Vienalga vai mēs to saucam par krūšu reģistru vai skaļo balsi. Tad vēl tāda interesanta lieta bija, ka viena no dziedātājām, viņa teica, ka viņai izklausās, ka cilvēki kliedz, ka tā ir tāda kliegšana. Un tad man vienmēr ir jāsmaida, jo principā tā ir kliegšana. Jā, tur bija gan elpošanas vingrinājumi kaut kādi, un tad mēs dauzījāmies ar skaņām, spēlējām, bet es to lielo darbu faktiski izdarīju individuālajās nodarbībās, jo nav tādas vienas lietas, kā tu vari pavērt šo te balsi; katram tas ir ļoti individuāli un balstās tajā, kā cilvēks runā. Respektīvi, es viņu būvēju no tā, kā viņš runā, un tad es viņu vedu uz to dziedāšanu. (Šmite 2021)

In Šmite's opinion, the singers were primarily interested in sound and not in style, which she explains by the fact that they were not able to hear all the nuances of the singing in the historical recordings, which she used during her lessons in order to present an idea of what the singing might have sounded like in the past.

Everyone thinks that if they get the right sound, everything will be OK. At present, I'd say that the sound is somewhere in second or third place. In the case of Upīte, we didn't get to style.

Visiem liekas, ka ja viņi dabūs to skaņu, tad būs viss kārtībā. Es šobrīd teiktu, ka skaņa ir kaut kur otrajā un trešajā plāksnē. Līdz stilam Upītes gadījumā mēs nenonācām. (Šmite 2021)

However, Spridzāne was satisfied with the results of these singing lessons. According to her, the girls, who had until then sung "finely" or "peeped" and could not free their voices ("let them go"), were suddenly no longer afraid of their "loud voices" (Spridzāne and Cibule 2023). They also received praise from the jury at the folklore group review, which commented that they now had a completely different sound. "You sing like grandmothers," which Spridzāne took as a compliment (ibid.).

7. Conclusion

In the discussion about the preparation of two ethnographic ensembles for the Decade of the Literature and Art of the Latvian SSR in Moscow in 1955 in section V of this article, it was high-

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lighted that, according to a contemporary critique published in a newspaper, the sound of the Nīca ensemble was considered at the time a little rough, a little too forced and too loud. At the same time, Kvelde was sent to the Zhdanov kolkhoz to prepare the singers of the recently established local ethnographic ensemble for its participation in the same event.

But when Kvelde got to the singers, he was surprised by their multipart singing, which he subsequently described in his final thesis. Three years later, one of the songs of which he had written down the lyrics and music was included in the academic edition of folk songs edited by Vītoliņš and published by the Folklore Sector at the Institute of Language and Literature (Vītoliņš 1958, 60, No 92). This sector was formed in 1956, dividing the Institute of Ethnography and Folklore of the Latvian Academy of Sciences (LFMI 2024). In Vītoliņš' publication, the number of musical parts in the song was reduced from four to three. In the same manner, the consultant had "polished" the performance of the singers. On the other hand, the number of singers in the group increased from five or six to fifteen, they were taught new songs, and the "fine parts" and "deeper parts" were transformed into sopranos and altos. Kaža, a singer of the "fine part" in her youth, became a "deeper part" singer because she could no longer sing so high. The recording in which she sings both musical parts was included in the anthology of Latvian traditional music and became a model of an authentic sound and the two-part singing of the song.

The singers of the Upīte folklore group themselves decided to invite a teacher to help them learn to sing louder, higher and more powerfully, as well as to add other musical parts to their songs. The reason for this was the "Traditional Singing Workshops" project, which reawakened the self-confidence of local singers. A group of singers from Riga performed the songs they had learned from the historical recordings of this local practice, louder and more convincingly. The teacher mainly worked individually with each singer, based on the way they speak, and from there on building the manner of singing. According to her, the singers mostly focused on the sound, without tackling the style, because they did not hear all the nuances that are sung in the historical recordings. Nevertheless, the jury praised the group's performance, rating it as "singing like grandmothers". Since 2018, the Upīte cultural space and, therefore also the local multipart singing practice, has been a state-recognized and protected element of ICH, which, according to the ICH Law, can be excluded from the national list by the LNCC if it no longer meets the requirements defined in this law (ICH Law 2024). In turn, the LNCC takes care of compliance with the requirements by continuing to provide methodological support and evaluation.

Thus, political agency, in interaction with different personal and cultural agencies, has affected local music practices in both cases. The comparison shows that the scheme has actually been quite similar, and tracing the history of the Latvian amateur art system helps to better understand the reasons for that. Especially helpful are the articles published in the periodicals of the 1940s–1980s, the tone of which, although ideologically oppressive, nevertheless clearly reveals the context of the era in which this system was created. Its main and still functioning administrative institution was founded under the conditions of a totalitarian regime with the aim of ideologically controlling and methodically "helping" all kinds of folk art activities to fit in and exist in a unified centralized system.

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Within this system, traditional music was and still is designated as a field of folklore. Its entrance into the system can be dated back to 1982, when the first review of folklore and ethnographic ensembles took place. Thus, although attempts to include local music practices in the system have been undertaken since the 1940s, they succeeded only in the 1980s within the framework of the national awakening and the folklore movement. Paradoxically, while guided by the best of intentions, the movement's protagonists, who apparently believed that being in the system was the only option for their continued existence, not only gradually led to the creation and stratification of ethnographic and folklore ensembles but also helped the folklore field enter a system that did not previously (during the occupation regime) consider it necessary to include it. Among them, Klotiņš' name should be emphasized. As discussed in section IV, his articles in periodicals from the 1980s can be considered a kind of program according to which the designations, functions, and institutionalization of ethnographic and folklore ensembles have been gradually formulated and implemented within the Latvian amateur art system. His intention was that folklore and ethnographic ensembles could also enjoy "the benefits of centralized organization management", which until then was available only to stage dance groups and ensembles performing arranged folk music. He advocated the promotion of "authentic ensembles", raising their prestige, protecting them from "incompetent interference", and placing them under "centralized organizational care", believing that they needed a "scientific supervisors". He also stated that it is important to "seize the moment when the tradition must be consciously maintained and restored according to folklore records". Thus, already before the institutionalization of folklore as a field for amateur art, there has been an assumption that folklore groups and ethnographic ensembles need expert advice and care. This can also be seen with regard to the singing manner, campaigning for "the correct ethnographic manner" or trying to learn a singing style by copying historical recordings.

Jeff Todd Titon speaks about cultural heritage management, which has been developed by government agencies and NGOs in a single generation and in which "culture workers or brokers (Kurin 1997) implement policies meant to protect and preserve outstanding musical (and other cultural) traditions considered to be threatened" (Titon 2009, 120). From Titon's three kinds of public policy practices concerning cultural heritage management, the proclamation that a particular musical tradition is a monument requiring special treatment can be emphasized in the framework of the Latvian amateur art system as well. As Titon writes, such proclamations usually come from institutions carrying high cultural authority, thus offering a top-down validation of the tradition and tradition-bearer. As examples, he mentions UNESCO designations of cultural heritage masterpieces and arts council heritage awards to individual artists (ibid.).

In the Latvian case, ethnographic and folklore ensembles have been considered the bearers of living traditions; in other words, they provide almost the only way for multipart singing to continue to exist as it was in the past. As such, they are also represented on the national ICH list, which is compiled via a strong evaluation system that is regulated by the ICH Law and realized by the ICH Committee. It is obvious that the new ICH system in Latvia perpetuates the old system of

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artistic self-activity, with the difference that local multipart music practices, which in the past were outside the system, are now fully inside it. Thus, the system continues to exist. The replacement of the term "ethnographic singing" with "traditional singing" in recent public discussions in Latvia has had no effect on the set practice. More and more, this kind of singing is becoming a historically informed performance, like that practiced in art music by educated musicians. Singers in local practices now need and ask experts to help them sing "correctly", otherwise they risk slipping down in the system ranking, which affects them negatively, particularly in terms of their public presence. From this perspective, the politics of sound in the Latvian case firmly affect the everyday musical practices in all their components, from the production and perception of sound to questions of values and cultural self-determination.

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Kim Burton

Living Apart, Sounding Together

Bosnian multi-voice singing as a politics of cohesion

Abstract

Ethnomusicologists have often considered ways in which human understandings of landscape and their place within them can be engendered and defined by interactive modes of musical performance, or lost along with the loss of access to such landscapes. Drawing on Svetlana Boym's theories of nostalgia and Michael Herzfeld's concept of social intimacy, I examine whether such understandings can withstand a coercive separation from homeland environments, and consequent economic and social changes.

Southeastern Europe is home to a number of multi-voice practices that have attracted interest due to their pervasive use of close and unresolved vertical intervals as a fundamental means of construction. In the Bosnian Posavina and its diaspora, one has developed to underpin an extensive web of interdependent and mutually supportive relations circulated through various media, social networks, and live performance. The sonorous characteristics of this local style lie at the heart of this network, and are jealously maintained, determining the construction and performance techniques of accompanying instruments and the content of instrumental melodies. Performances in locations hosting social and spatially demarcated gatherings focus on shared remembrance of place and landscape. Neither entirely recreative nor reflective in terms of Boym's modes of nostalgia, the recreated sound is underlined by lyrical content which contrasts the audience's daily life with a half-imagined, half-recalled past located before the Yugoslav wars of the 1990s. Given the framing of the style by outsiders as "crude" or "primitive", it functions to affirm and strengthen community solidarity by embracing socially intimate "shame" as a marker of belonging.

This autonomous cultural network combines traditional and contemporary technologies to support the practical and spiritual reconstruction and healing of an ethnically fragmented society. I argue that the retention of deeply felt methods of multi-voice performance functions to evoke lost places and times as a vital component of that reconstruction.

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1. *Discourse*

The relationship between sound and landscape as a dynamically rendered 'field of experience' rather than a fixed phenomenon, one which engenders a 'way of seeing, or better still, a way of hearing' (Hicks et al. 2016) has been an abiding interest of ethnomusicology. However, the focus of the majority of these studies has been on direct communion and dialogue with the landscape from the point of view of environmental sounds and the subjectivities that move through them. Steven Feld observes that certain Kaluli singers in Papua New Guinea both listen to and enter a dialogue with the natural sounds of water and wildlife surrounding them in order to evoke and situate 'biography, memory, and feeling' (Feld 1996, 132). In a different context, Angela Impey has described how in the Maputaland area of South Africa the loss of access to lands through the creation of 'fortress' wildlife reserves has led to the partial loss of the practice of women singing and playing mouth-bows and jews harps in the area. Their practice of performance while walking or recalling traditional pathways within spiritually significant landscapes so as to confirm relationships and transmit knowledge became unsustainable when its 'acoustemology' was disrupted by physical expulsion (Impey 2006). Both the Kaluli in their her landscape and the South African exiled from hers understand the sounds themselves and their meaning to be culturally embedded in senses of place, although the acoustic environments in which they take, or took, place differ greatly: running and falling waters in the deep forest and its myriad of close sonic reflections, and the wide and arid spaces of the savannah where even an attenuated sound travels long distances. In both places the use of sound allows its makers and hearers to create and negotiate understandings of both macro and micro 'homelands', whether still present, within reach, or utterly lost.

The landscape of north-eastern Bosnia, the area known as the Posavina, or the valley of the River Sava, which flows between Bosnia and Croatia, are neither forest nor savannah, but a series of hills and wooded lowlands dotted with market towns, industrial sites, and small hamlets of isolated houses and farmsteads, where sound carries to the heights but is muted in the valleys. Over the last century there have been drastic changes to its natural, human, and political geography, but the most radical has been its depopulation. This is the consequence of war and migration, voluntary and involuntary, both preceding and succeeding the 1992–1995 conflict which led to the break-up of Yugoslavia and the formation of an independent but fractious Bosnian state consisting of two entities conceived on largely ethno-religious lines (Gordy 2015). The prosecution of this war by the method of 'ethnic cleansing', the forcible or induced expulsion of one or more ethnic groups by a militarily or politically superior group, has rendered previously mixed areas largely mono-ethnic. For example, the town of Derventa and its surrounding villages in the Posavina, previously mixed Serb and Croat, is now predominantly Serb, whereas the Croat population has moved elsewhere in Bosnia or abroad. Nonetheless, a specific form of music with clear stylistic and acoustic qualities, developed from rural origins but circulating through modest but extensive commercial and media networks, is shared by both Serb and Croat ethnic groups, both as pro-

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ducers and consumers.[1] The communities, especially in rural surroundings, tend to share identical cultural habits and folk beliefs, many of which have been interpreted as survivals of pagan beliefs predating conversion to new faiths, so whether these stylistic distinctions can actually be traced to ethnicity requires more detailed investigation. It is nonetheless the case that even now the live music is consumed by mixed audiences—often including members of the diaspora returning home for holidays, and groups of one ethnicity are still known to perform for festivals marking festivities or religious feasts celebrated by another (Panić-Kašanski 2006). Furthermore, the vastly increased diasporic audience created by the mass displacement of the wartime years and their immediate aftermath has created a commensurately increased demand for recordings and videos, as well as live performances, in countries as far removed from Bosnia as the United States and Australia. It is important to underline that the popularity of the music reflects trans-local rather than trans-national identities. Consequently it has long been condemned and traduced as primitive or provincial (*primitivna* or *seljačka*) by those from other areas of Bosnia and the former Yugoslavia, and it remains so, despite the hopes expressed by an anonymous writer for the weekly *Derventski List* newspaper in 1969: "Village folk song from the Derventa area is no longer something that 'refined' and 'cultured' people hide away and are ashamed of" (*Seoski narodni melos iz okoline Dervente nije više nešto od čega se "fini" i malo "kulturniji" svijet kloni i stidi*, N.J. ?1970, 6). It thus represents a form of 'cultural intimacy' (Herzfeld 2016) in which loyalties cling to the local homeland or *zavičaj* rather than the nation or the state (Halilovich 2013, 537), and I shall discuss how this intensely local music, known to its practitioners and public as *izvorna* music, engages landscape and place on macro and micro levels.

First, however, it will be necessary to attempt to define the slippery term *izvorna* itself. It carries a complex of meanings, including 'from the source', 'authentic', 'original', or even 'real', and is often employed to distinguish 'traditional' or rural music from commercial music with traditional characteristics—*narodna muzika*, '[newly-composed] folk music'. The founding metaphor is that of the spring or source, the *izvor*, related etymologically to the verb *izviriti*, with a sense of forceful emergence—something that springs forth. This lends it a kind of instability; it connotes both an unending flow of primal energy, and yet implies stasis in the form of eternal renewal. Crucially, it has moral connotations, the idea of purity linked with a single place of origin becoming muddied, muddled and corrupted as it flows on to other places (Ceribašić 2003, 263). None of the possible English translations—authentic, natural, original—can cover all this ground. The people of the Bosnian Posavina, however, generally understand it to mean a specific genre which despite its rural and amateur origins is now performed by semi-professionals at private and public gatherings, and circulated by record companies, radio and television stations,

1 A related musical genre is performed in the eastern Spreča Valley and the Bosnian Podrinje, further south and east than the Posavina, and now with a largely Bosniac (Muslim) population. Although melodically and rhythmically distinct, it shares a two-voice vocal style in which the interval of a second is emphasised, and certain aspects of instrumentation and performance situations (Burton 2014).

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Fig. 1 Building near Donja Bišnja, Derventa, Bosnia and Hercegovina. 19 May 2016. Photograph by Kim Burton.

and current digital and social media as part of an intricate self-sustaining musical ecology (Panić-Kašanski 2008). It is performed almost exclusively by a pair of singers, often brothers or even twins, either unaccompanied or more frequently backed by a long-necked lute, the *šargija* (Talam 2008, 126–137), and a violin. The use of accordion or electronic keyboards is very rare, and rather frowned upon by aficionados of the music, partly because of their inability to reproduce the untempered sounds typical of the music. Its sound, then, marks a certain congress of pride and shame, intimacy and distrust, carried by a trans-local network that springs from overlapping migrations over the past sixty years, one which is largely closed to outsiders, even those from elsewhere in Bosnia and Herzegovina. How does the sound of this music relate to its listeners' micro and macro landscapes of experience and memory; how does it serve to support the sense of a cohesive cultural in-group comprehending different ethnic identities, and foster a sense of uniqueness and solidarity in a sometimes hostile world? I would like to begin considering this question by focusing on a specific geographical location, and a structure built there.

Figure 1 shows a building in a place and as a place, a place that is itself situated within a landscape. Like all places its meaning is unfixed, porous, liable to drift, and subject to recreation and

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reinterpretation over time. It stands within multiple borderlands, at the centre of a memorial soundscape which is transmitted across multiple concentric boundaries. Furthermore, it is a place that literally owes its existence to motion, to travel and return. But before discussing that soundscape, and the networks of circulation and recirculation that determine its meaning, I would like to consider the house itself as a way to focus on the complex relationships that have been generated in north-eastern Bosnia over the last century and a half.

Standing alone on a remarkably straight, unpaved track leading from a minor road, the building is a sturdy structure of two wings and a foursquare central block, surrounded by the ancillary structures of rural life—a frame for drying maize, a well, a smokehouse. However, it differs from the typical farmstead of the area by virtue of its isolation, architecture, and condition. It is neither a ruined shell showing war damage, a modest, uninhabited structure next to such a shell, built by migrants next to their destroyed former home, nor is it a grandly imposing built by the 'foreign' money of more successful migrants, with sculptured balustrades and gateposts. Although uninhabited and stripped bare, it shows signs of being cared for; its spacious rooms have been swept clean, its broken windows boarded up and the grass mown, and though the walls are damaged, with plaster and brickwork pitted and cracked by shelling and pocked by small arms fire, it remains standing.

The life of this building and the lives of those who lived in it, abandoned it, yet still regularly travel across borders to visit it, encapsulate the history of this part of north-eastern Bosnia and its peoples, present and absent. It is both a physical and an imaginary object. Situated at a precise geographical location, it is one of the spaces which exist as touchstones of memory for a particular portion of the Bosnian diaspora. It also embodies in very literally concrete fashion the impact of technological progress on a rural population and its engagement with modernity, inviting us to examine how an intensely localised form of musical culture has grown to become a vital locus of stability and reconciliation for a mobile trans-local post-conflict population invoking a past moral order through the use of sonic, verbal and material resources. Crucially, it is one of many *lieux de mémoire* in the Bosnian Posavina which are not merely recalled from distant lands, but from a near exile, a short car journey or bus ride away.

From the solidity of its structure, the linearity of the track running past it, the blue numberplate affixed to one of the corner pillars, the traces of faded *Kaisergelb* under the whitewash, to the ravages of war and the attempts to maintain and preserve it, the building displays signs, some more legible than others, which point to the history of the area. Even the grass, mown by a neighbour who cultivates a nearby landholding, bears witness to the survival of a network of mutual sociality and obligation which binds and comforts its adherents. There are also invisible and intangible signs, retained in the experiences and memories of those who have left, tales told of courtship and marriage across ethnic lines, recollections of music, dance and song at gatherings by lamplight, and a scene recalled from childhood of a small boy running past the house, chasing after the trains.

This building was once a station and stationmaster's house serving the railway built immediately after this former Ottoman *vilayet* (province) was occupied and administered by Austria-Hungary following the Treaty of Berlin in 1878. The straight track is the bed of the former narrow-gauge

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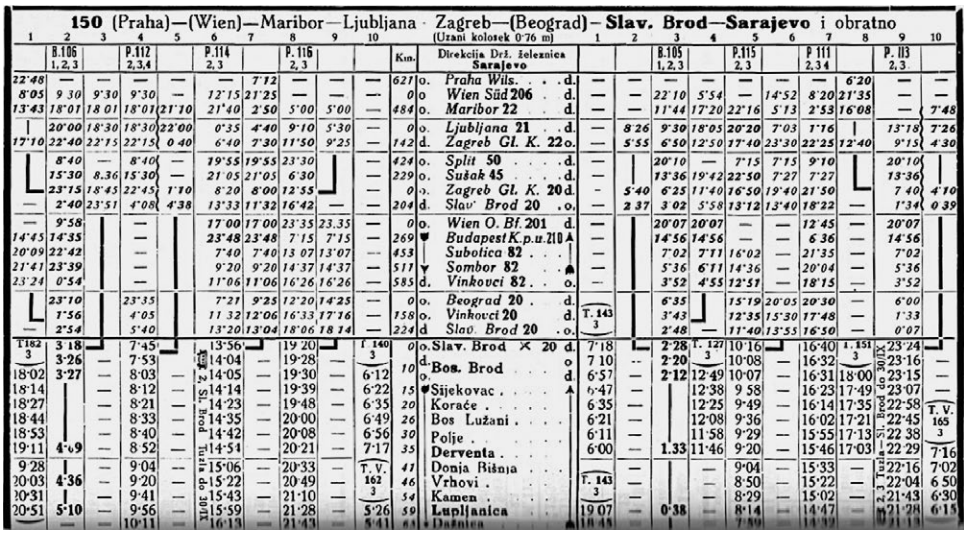

150 (Praha)—(Wien)—Maribor—Ljubljana · Zagreb—(Beograd)—**Slav. Brod—Sarajevo** i obratno

(Uzani kolosek 0·76 m)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Km.	Direkcija Drž. Železnica Sarajevo	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	B.106 1,2,3		P.112 2,3,4		P.114 2,3		P.116 2,3							B.105 1,2,3		P.115 2,3		P.111 2,3,4		P.113 2,3	
22·48	—	—	—	—	—	7·12	—	—	—	621	o. Praha Wils. . . . d.	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	6·20	—	—
8·05	9·30	9·30	9·30	—	12·15	21·25	—	—	—	0	o Wien Süd 206 . d.	—	—	22·10	5·54	—	14·52	8·20	21·35	—	—
13·43	18·01	18·01	18·01	21·10	21·40	2·50	5·00	5·00	—	484	o. Maribor 22 . . d.	—	—	11·44	17·20	22·16	5·13	2·53	16·08	—	7·48
	20·00	18·30	18·30	22·00	0·35	4·40	9·10	5·30	—	0	o. Ljubljana 21 . . d.	—	8·26	9·30	18·05	20·20	7·03	1·16		13·18	7·26
17·10	22·40	22·15	22·15	0·40	6·40	7·30	11·50	9·25	—	142	d. Zagreb Gl. K. 22 o.	—	5·55	6·50	12·50	17·40	23·30	22·25	12·40	9·15	4·30
	8·40	—	8·40	—	19·55	19·55	23·30		—	424	o. Split 50 . . . . d.	—		20·10	—	7·15	7·15	9·10		20·10	
	15·30	8.36	15·30	—	21·05	21·05	6·30		—	229	o. Sušak 45 . . . . d.	—		13·36	19·42	22·50	7·27	7·27		13·36	
	23·15	18·45	22·45	1·10	8·20	8·00	12·55		—	0	o. Zagreb Gl. K. 20 d.	—	5·40	6·25	11·40	16·50	19·40	21·50		7·40	4·10
—	2·40	23·51	4·08	4·38	13·33	11·32	16·42	—	—	204	d. Slav. Brod 20 . o.	—	2·37	3·02	5·58	13·12	13·40	18·22	—	1·34	0·39
—	9·58		—		17·00	17·00	23·35	23.35	—	0	o. Wien O. Bf. 201 d.	—		20·07	20·07	—	—	12·45	—	20·07	
14·45	14·35		—		23·48	23·48	7·15	7·15	—	269	♥ Budapest K.p.u. 210 A	—		14·56	14·56	—	—	6·36	—	14·56	
20·09	22·42		—		7·40	7·40	13·07	13·07	—	453	Subotica 82 . . .	—		7·02	7·11	16·02	—	21·35	—	7·02	
21·41	23·39		—		9·20	9·20	14·37	14·37	—	511	▼ Sombor 82 . . ♠	—		5·36	6·11	14·36	—	20·04	—	5·36	
23·24	0·54		—		11·06	11·06	16·26	16·26	—	585	d. Vinkovci 82 . . o.	—		3·52	4·55	12·51	—	18·15	—	3·52	
	23·10		23·35		7·21	9·25	12·20	14·25	—	0	o. Beograd 20 . d.			6·35		15·19	20·05	20·30	—	6·00	
	1·56		4·05		11·32	12·06	16·33	17·16	—	158	o. Vinkovci 20 d.	T. 143 3		3·43		12·35	15·30	17·48	—	1·33	
—	2·54		5·40		13·20	13·04	18·06	18·14	—	224	d Slav. Brod 20 . o.			2·48	—	11·40	13·55	16·50	—	0·07	
T.182 3	3·18		7·45		13·56		19·20		T. 140 3	0	o. Slav. Brod ✕ 20 d.	7·18		2·28	T. 127 3	10·16		16·40	T. 151 3	23·24	
	3·26	—	7·53		14·04	—	19·28	—		10	d. Bos. Brod . . . o	7·10	--	2·20		10·08	—	16·32		23·16	—
18·02	3·27	—	8·03	—	14·05	—	19·30	—	6·12		o. Bos. Brod . . . . d.	6·57	—	2·12	12·49	10·07	—	16·31	18·00	23·15	—
18·14		—	8·12	—	14·14	—	19·39	—	6·22	15	♥ Šišjekovac . . . . ▲	6·47	—		12·38	9·58	—	16·23	17·49	23·07	—
18·27		—	8·21	—	14·23	—	19·48	—	6·35	20	Koraće	6·35	—		12·25	9·49	—	16·14	17·35	22·58	T. V. 165 3
18·44		—	8·33	—	14·35	—	20·00	—	6·49	26	Bos. Lužani	6·21	—		12·08	9·36	—	16·02	17·21	22·45	
18·53		—	8·40	—	14·42	—	20·08	—	6·56	30	Polje	6·11	—		11·58	9·29	—	15·55	17·13	22·38	
19·11	4·09	—	8·52	—	14·54	—	20·21	—	7·17	35	Derventa	6·00	—	1.33	11·46	9·20	—	15·46	17·03	22·29	7·16
9·28		—	9·04	—	15·06	—	20·33	—	T. V. 162 3	41	Donja Bišnja . . .		—		—	9·04	—	15·33	—	22·16	7·02
20·03	4·36	—	9·20	—	15·22	—	20·49	—		46	Vrhovi	T. 143 3	—		—	8·50	—	15·22	—	22·04	6·50
20·31		—	9·41	—	15·43	—	21·10	—		54	Kamen		—		—	8·29	—	15·02	—	21·43	6·30
20·51	5·10	—	9·56	—	15·59	—	21·28	—	5·26	59	Lupljanica	19·07	—	0·38	—	8·14	—	14·47	—	21·28	6·15
	—	—	10·11	—	16·13	—	21·43	—	5·41	63	Dašnica	18·45				7·59		14·32		21·13	

Fig. 2 Railway timetable Vienna—Donja Bišnja, 1939. Courtesy www.zeleznice.in.rs

railway line running northward from Sarajevo to the former Turkish border garrisons of Derventa and Bosanski Brod, then across the river Sava, where it linked up with the network stretching from Zagreb to Vienna, Budapest and Prague, transporting troops south to the new colony, and goods and labour north to the factories of the Habsburg empire. (Beaver 1941, 281; Mitrović 2016, 64). It was this railway line, which survived until the 1970s, that carried Sophie Chotek to meet her husband, the Archduke Franz Ferdinand, in Ilidža in June 1914, en route to their fatal visit to Sarajevo (Miller-Melamed 2022, 131).

The families who lived in it passed through a series of administrative identities, nationalities and citizenships, whatever their ethnic identification and whatever their cultural subjectivities might be, as borders official and unofficial were drawn and redrawn around them throughout the twentieth century.[2] The most recent of these are the international border between the republics of Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the inter-entity border between Republika Srpska and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. These borders were established by the Dayton Accords of 1995, which followed the Bosnian War, although the main fighting in the Posavina

2 From 1878 Bosnia was a protectorate and effectively a colony of Austria-Hungary which formally and unilaterally annexed it in 1908 (Dedijer 1966, 78). Following the First World War it became part of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, then the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, the Independent State of Croatia, the Federal Peoples Republic of Yugoslavia, subsequently the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia and, following the 1992–1995 war, an independent republic consisting of two entities under the oversight of a High Representative appointed by the international community.

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occurred towards the beginning of the war, when it was first captured by Croatian Army and Croatian Defence Council forces, which were subsequently driven out by the Army of Republika Srpska (United States Central Intelligence Agency 2002, 145–146). A mass exodus of the Croat population subsequently took place northwards to take refuge in Croatia and beyond; few have returned permanently. The result has been that a new international border separates Croatia, the 'new homeland' (Čapo 2005) of those people of Croat ethnicity and Catholic faith who moved there before the war for work, and during and after the war for refuge, from their 'old homeland' once shared with their Serb Orthodox neighbours and now very largely occupied by the latter alone. Crucially, however, the border is, for them, almost entirely porous. In Croatia itself a large part of the diaspora from the Bosnian Posavina lives in a small number of urban centres: the Zagreb suburb of Sesvete, the towns of Dugo Selo and Vinkovci, and in Slavonski Brod, linked by bridge with Bosanski Brod on the opposite bank of the Sava. For them, the 'old homeland' and their old homes are a short walk and a brief passport inspection away. Meetings during my fieldwork in Slavonski Brod were sometimes postponed because my contacts there would turn out to be on the other side the river on the appointed day, 'mowing the grass', 'feeding the goats', shopping at the market in Derventa, or just visiting friends. Sometimes they would travel to play or sing with their former neighbours, or buy instruments. The memory and physicality of their abandoned homes collide and combine; nonetheless, these are no longer places to which they belong, but rather places where they once belonged.

To return to the specific site we were considering earlier, the station, and its 'place', then, constitute a micro-geography in which the oral, the familial, the intimate and the cooperative interpenetrate the bureaucratic, the impersonal and the coercive, and even overcome them through movement and sound. It is not simply a point on a line of constrained movement but a node on a network of mobility. Ante Galić, a musician and folklorist from the nearby village of Foča now resident in Zagreb, explicitly links railway travel in the 1960s with song.

Our ticket-collectors were good people! […] They were also ambassadors for our songs: they would travel along with the little train, to the end of the line. There was no television, no records or cassettes, but everything was carried along and sung in the little train from Brod to Teslić and Sarajevo. Many tunes were composed there. […] That's how our ticket-collectors spread many lyrics and melodies, long and short, to Doboj, Tuzla, Brčko, Modriča, Šamac…

Dobri su bili naši kondukteri! […] Oni su ujedno bili ambasadori naše pjesme: dokle je ćiro vozio, dotle ga i naša pjesma pratila. Nije bilo televizije, ploča i kaseta, nego se sve pronosilo i pjevalo u ćiri od Broda do Teslića i Sarajeva. Tu se ispekle mnoge kajde. […] Tako su naši kondukteri pronosili mnoge kajde i pjesme, dugačke i kratke, prema Doboju. Tuzli, Brčkom, Modriči, Šamcu… (Galić [No year], 156)

Although the line itself has long gone—and in the last decade international train travel to any part of Bosnia has been indefinitely suspended—the survival of this form of music has become

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increasingly dependent on circulation and movement, both physically and virtually, via broadcast, internet commerce and social media.

During my fieldwork in Bosnia and Croatia I was fortunate enough to be welcomed by a large number of people in the area of Derventa and permitted to video many performances in a wide number of locations and situations, which occupy a hybrid space between the formal and the informal, the intimate and the institutional. I want to make it plain here that we shall see both Serbs and Croats playing and singing the same music, in both Bosnia and in Croatia, often together, and very many, if not all of these required travel by at least some of the participants. A selection of these videos may be found (AV 01 to AV 10), which comprises an edit of ten different recordings made at various occasions in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia during 2015 and 2016 at various private and public occasions.

1. Members of a hunting association singing and playing informally at a post-hunt party held in a lodge owned by one of the members near Velika Sočanica, Derventa, Bosnia. The instrumentalist is a well-known semi-professional performer.
2. Semi-professional group filming to playback in a television studio for the privately owned K3 station in Prnjavor, Bosnia.
3. The control room of the studio.
4. The group Štrbački Zvuci at New Years concert in a sports centre featuring a line-up of eight or nine groups, Derventa, Bosnia.
5. Members of the group Glas Srca listening back to a recording in the control room of Studio Katedrala in Zagreb, Croatia.
6. Women singing informally at a weekly meeting of a social club consisting of people from the town of Žepče in Bosnia, held in a church hall in Sesvete, Zagreb, Croatia. A very large number of migrants from the Bosnian Posavina have settled in this suburb.
7. The same women on stage during a Folklore Review at the Feast of St Marko, Plehan monastery, Kovačevci, Bosnia. Since the war this has become an important pilgrimage site for migrants from the wider area.
8. The group Crnčanski Izvornjaci rehearsing in a village hall in Crnča village, Bosnia, for a planned recording session.
9. Engineering, mixing and EQ-ing this recording at Studio Škorpion in Kakmuž, Bosnia.
10. Audience members celebrating the dedication of a new church in Krtova village, Bosnia. The performers here are Raspjevani Sočkovljani, one of number of groups performing simultaneously at this event.

Not evidenced here are two important occasions on which music is performed: large-scale social gatherings called *prela*,[3] at which bands are employed as an attraction, and charity concerts to

3 Singular *prelo*. Originally informally organised house parties centring around communal labour such as processing maize, weaving or sewing, contemporary *prela* are commercially organised ventures held

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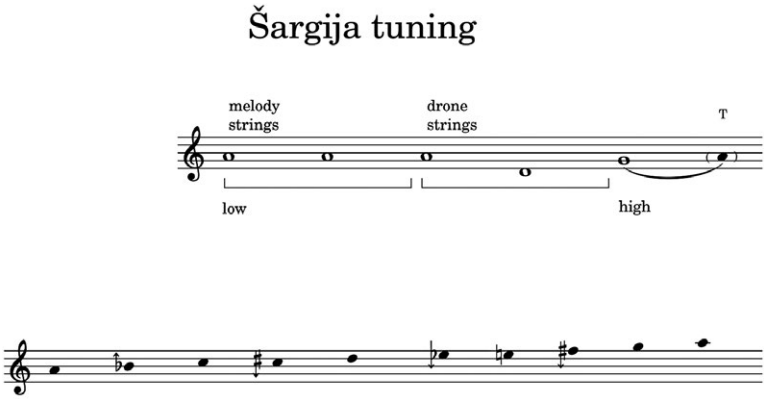

Fig. 3 Standard tuning of šargija (at normal pitch), notated by Kim Burton.

raise money for medical or other expenses for persons in financial distress. Bars may also hire in a band for an evening, especially to mark special occasions of the ritual or religious calendar. On most of these occasions the musicians will take requests from the audience, who sometimes offer considerable amounts of money for the privilege.

It is clear that all of these occasions are social gatherings, that the scale and formality of events varies considerably, and that the musical style is distinctive. I shall briefly describe the sonorous characteristics of the style, and then consider how they are linked with nostalgic understandings of place and a persistent association with movement.

The most fundamental, and least dispensable characteristic lies in the manner in which the style is pervaded, and indeed defined, by the use of two voices whose vertical arrangement emphasises the interval of the second, a frequent characteristic of rural music from southeastern Europe. These intervals are generated not by parallel movement, or movement over and below a drone, but by an interweaving of lines. However, it may not be immediately obvious from these short clips that considerable effort is made by the instrumentalists to reproduce the sonic quiddity of the vocal lines.

The strummed instrument seen in these videos is the *šargija*, which bears a metonymic relationship to the Posavina, being not only a practical instrument, but also a plaything, a lucky charm for the car, an icon in the logo of diaspora clubs and associations, a household ornament, and so on. It is clearly a member of the *saz* family, and was almost certainly introduced during the period of Turkish rule,[4] but folk narrative claims that it was developed especially for local use 'by our people who stole a *saz* and then adapted it to our music, hidden in the woods'—a kind of guerilla musicking (Milorad Savić—Skiba, private communication). The fretting is diatonic, and the placing of the frets is decided by a physical template, so that the actual pitch relationships

in hotel function rooms or banqueting suites, with charges for admission and food and drink.

4 From Turkish *şarkı* "particular genre of cheerful eastern songs", lit.: "eastern" (Škaljić 1989, 581).

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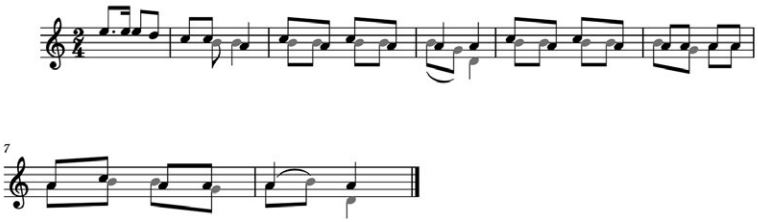

Fig. 4 Violin part for the song 'S'one strane Barice' as taught by Mile Popović, Derventa. 20 November 2015. Transcribed by Kim Burton.

vary slightly from maker to maker. The 'highest' string (the reference is spatial, not pitch related) is stopped by the thumb in various positions or left open to ring, and the two 'lowest' ones are played by the index and ring fingers, normally in unison but as we have seen, sometimes a second apart, particularly in cadential figures. The result, which is partly a function of the instrument's construction and tuning, can be highly complex chordal voicings.

A *šargijaš* can and does produce short chains of fingered parallel seconds, as well as generating them through the interplay of the open strings and use of the thumb. The construction and tuning of the violin, on the other hand—these days a standard tuning in fifths is overwhelmingly used—renders this a challenging option. Instead, the basic approach is to play in second position, that is, with the index finger stopping a note a third above the open strings, and using the fourth and third fingers to play pitches on either side of the first finger on the upper string or the open string (Fig. 4).

According to my interlocutors, the introduction of the violin to this music post-dated that of the *šargija* as an accompaniment to singers, which they suggest was the 1930s or 1940s at the earliest; and although the first commercial recording, by the Begić Brothers in 1969 (*Kad zapjeva Ilija i Marko*: Glas Komuna GK 1001) does not feature violin at all, it is present in many early recordings. It is thus likely to be a relatively modern technique, developed during after the Second World War. Violins were certainly rare, or expensive enough for some of the earliest, often self-taught, players to have made their own instruments (Đukić 2008, 75).

These efforts to reproduce the sonic effect of two singers, who aspire to sound 'as though with a single voice', a major aesthetic quality much appreciated by fans and aficionados alike, suggests that this sound, the *izvoran*, 'true' sound, is at the heart of the significance that the music bears for its listeners (Fig. 5). It is this homeland sound that is recreated in physical and temporal exile—for the sense of loss that it assuages is also one of the lost sociability that preceded the war and, for many, a nostalgia for youth itself.

Other factors such as lyrical content, the employment of images of *šargija* and violin as representational symbols in badges or on posters, and sometimes the wearing of traditional clothing all invoke the Posavina as a lost homeland. Song lyrics often state this explicitly, as in the following performance of the song Sokolova Želja by Braća Jelavić:

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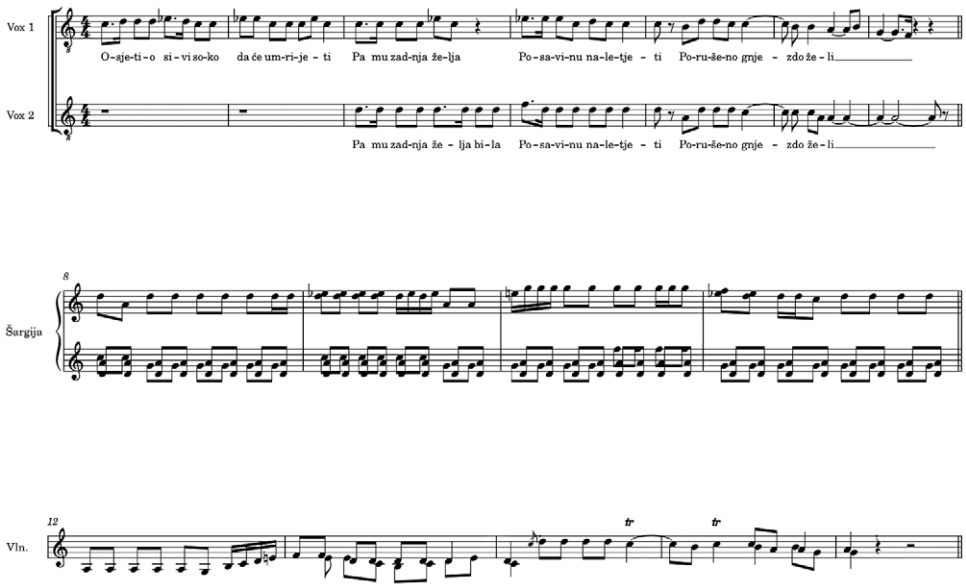

Fig. 5 Typical duophonic vocal line and instrumental adaptations. From Braća Jelavić: 'Sokolova Želja'. Transcribed by Kim Burton from multi-track recording kindly made available by Ivan Pavuša, Studio Katedrala.

The grey falcon sensed his death was coming,	*Osjetio sivi soko da će umrijeti,*
And his last wish was to fly to Posavina,	*Pa mu zadnja želja bila Posavinu naletjeti,*
Once more to visit his ruined nest.	*Porušeno gnjezdo želi još jednom vidjeti.*
[...]	*[...]*
He had but one desire, to build a nest,	*Imao je jednu želju gnjezdo da savije,*
At the old place, where his nest had once been.	*Na starome mjesto gdje je gnjezdo bilo prije.*
Yet his wish remained unfulfilled.[5]	*Ali mu se želja ostvario nije.*

In fact, the falcons frequently do return to their nests to rebuild them, if not to live in them once built. We may regard these visits as pilgrimages, whether they are to visit former homes and fields whose owners may raise crops and livestock, even now, or to celebrate Catholic religious festivals such as saints' days, the ritual blessing of fields to ensure a good crop, and other occasions in the church calendar. In some cases, as I have mentioned, the distance is so short as to be easily walkable. The annual feast of St Anthony in the village of Gornja Močila takes place some 10

5 Transcription of a part of the song lyrics and their translation by Kim Burton.

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kilometres away from the town of Slavonski Brod in Croatia, just the other side of the river, and worshippers process on foot from their new homes to their old ones in order to celebrate it. These 'pilgrimage' sites of collective knowledge, nostalgia, and familiarity are also places for the migrants to eat, drink, listen to music and meet old friends after the church service, very much as they would have done in the past. However, given the destruction of so many religious buildings in the war, and the priority given to rebuilding them as markers of ethnic identity, the current physical landscape and the memory landscape do not map onto one another—both the monastery and the church at Plehan, the location of one of the most important religious and social gatherings, were razed to the ground by Serb forces using explosives and have been entirely rebuilt (Walasek 2016, 35). It is thus specifically sound, predominantly musical, within the landscape that is instrumental in actualising nostalgic feelings to work towards recovering social intimacy rather than physical features of the landscape itself. It is worth noting that one of the most prominent features of the religious foundation at Plehan are the church bells, recast 'so that all who worship may again hear the bells of Plehan', and rung during the feast of St Mark, held in April each year.

The video clip includes a fragment of those festivities, showing two women from the Sesvete social group on stage, plus one of the buses that bring people from Brod, Zagreb, Vienna and further afield; many migrants live in Scandinavia. It did not show the marquee where a band played to visitors all afternoon and where food and drink were served, or the informal and spontaneous dancing to *šargija* and violin that took place outside the church separately from the official programme. Nor did it show the stands of the instrument makers selling *šargije* and *dvojnice* double flutes, children's models and souvenirs, nor the scenes when families repaired to the sites of their former homes, where they themselves sang or played, not always with great skill, but with deep enjoyment and satisfaction. The amount of work involved in the organisation of this important part of people's religious and social calendar, including police presence and traffic control, provision of PA, publicity, and transport, and the erection of stages should not be under-estimated.

In collective memory, the movement of these sounds within landscape is linked with large scale gatherings in the 50s, 60s and 70s of last century. These gatherings, which reportedly involved hundreds of people drawn from surrounding villages, regularly took place early in the afternoon outside the church after Sunday service, at major religious festivals and, of course, dates of importance to the history of the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY), such as the First of May, or Republic Day on 29 November, say, which were granted more enthusiastic official support. Many of the older generation allude to standing on a hilltop or in a valley and hearing the sound of music and song alerting them to such gatherings (e.g., interviews with Milorad Nović, Derventa, 22 December 2015 and Pavo Ćorluka, Zagreb, 14 March 2016). The dancers would typically gather in a closed ring, surrounding a *šargijaš* playing a dance melody, while pairs of singers would occasionally break into song in the form of couplets, with different pairs succeeding one another. Crucially, in many cases the gatherings were so large that multiple rings, as many as six, each with

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its own musician, were simultaneously active. Dancers in each ring would hear only the sound of their own instrumentalist, as the throng of participants blocked and muted the sound from rival groups. However, the hubbub could be heard from far away as a confused mass of sound which attracted those who heard it from afar, while at the event itself those walking around would travel from the ambit of one group to that of another, hearing multiple shifting sound sources overlaid one upon another. The contemporary large-scale social events described above tend to recreate such a dynamic soundscape, although the use of amplification works to create larger blocks of coherent sound, with the acoustic phenomenon of multiple sound sources bleeding into one another becoming less pronounced. However, this confusion of sound persists as a social phenomenon in more intimate gatherings. At one *zavičajni* (homeland) club in Sesvete, Croatia, I not infrequently encountered as many as three groups singing different songs at one time in the body of the hall, at different pitches and different tempi, with another in the lobby. At one point I asked one of the members whether this disturbed her, and she replied 'no, but it's better when they keep quiet' (*bolje kada oni šute*). Nonetheless, it remains a constant feature of the soundscape of gatherings of all scales, and such is the fondness for this sonorous phenomenon, however, that it has spawned a particular sub-genre of music, first identified as such by Dragica Panić, known as *Ozrenska Svatovska* (Ozren wedding style), in which singers perform a slow, ornate melody above a fast and furious instrumental backing to which it bears no obvious metrical relation[6]. She ascribes the first recording of this to the group Raspjevani Sočkovljani (Panić, personal communication). The final clip in the video (2'34") is an example of this occurring 'live', with two celebrants lost in their own song while the band plays merrily in the background; the band being, by a pleasant coincidence, Raspjevani Sočkovljani themselves.

Yet this is a sound that implies intimacy; only those close to the singers will hear it, and it reaches for a social, sensual and emotional warmth that is described by Sofija Prgomet, who married the boy who ran after the train and lived in the stationmaster's house. Her description includes not merely the social occasion, but its entanglement with physical labour, the role of music, and the embodiment of both sociality and local identities in the shape of the *šargija*.

It was a *prelo*, *prelo* was what it was called, so there were—people met like at a disco as we say these days. It was a club—'let's go to the station down there, bring a *šargija*!'—people would gather maize and [...] they were all in those rooms and then, in a circle indoors, and playing the *šargija*, singing, and then husking the maize, that's what they did. It was having fun and then through that, through

To je prelo, znaš. To se zvalo baš prelo. Znači – to je bilo sastanak kao neko, kad neka diskoteka danas možeš reći, disko, klub je bilo. 'Idemo sad kao na stanicu dole, šargiju ponesi' – i zašto bilo i kukuruz su ljudi brali [...] sad stoje u tim sobama i sad u krug ovako stanu onda šargija, pjevat' i rade tamo ono perušat'. To se tu oni rade. Onda preko toga, preko te muzike i svega,

6 An example may be heard in the video, as performed by Strbački Zvuci (0'46").

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the music and and everything we would fall in love with one another, you know, there were women and men, of course, that's how you got married back then, that's what they told me, there was love through that *šargija*, and it brought all this together. And people of all three peoples (*nacije*; i. e., Croats, Muslims and Serbs) met there.

jedan u drug' se ljubljivan' kao žene i muški i tako su se ženili prije. Tako su on meni prič'u to je bilo. Ljubavi kroz tu muziku i kroz tu šargiju i sve to, sve to povezilala. I tu su se ljudi sastale sa tri nacije. (Prgomet 2017)

Her description of the past flows into a reverie; listening to the music associated with place and sociability reconstructs both place and community.

[The *šargija*] kind of takes you back to the place you were born (*rodni kraj*)—when you hear it you just remember your parents, you remember your friends, how people got together there and what life was like. It all makes you … it was companionable, like you have to listen to it, listen until the end, and the *šargija*, really the music, it really lifts you up, you know. How nice it used to be, how nice and companionable.

Pa znaš šta tu ti malo – vuči te na rodni kraj, znaš. Znači ta, kad ti čuješ onda se sjetiš se svojih roditelja, sjetiš se svojih prijatelja, kako se družio tu, kako se živio tu, sve te nekako potiče to je složeno, tako da ti moraš slušat', odslušat' i tako. I ta šargija baš muzika te baš onako digne, znaš, i od kad je to bilo, kak' je lijepo složeno i lijepo se slažete. (Prgomet 2017)

2. *Conclusion*

Michael Herzfeld defines social intimacy as "the recognition of those aspects of an officially shared identity that are considered a source of external embarrassment but that nevertheless provide insiders with their assurance of common sociality," and suggests that it "ultimately dissolves the possibility of clearly defined, immutable levels of power" (Herzfeld 2016, 7). The application to the peoples of the Bosnian Posavina, both those remaining at home and those forced into diaspora as the result of ethnic cleansing and powerful economic factors seems clear. This social intimacy, which is founded on a cultural intimacy of shared memory and loss, which comprehends costume, games and sports, foodways, and remembrance of place, sometimes even down to a single tree commemorated in dispersed discussion over Facebook or YouTube, penetrates and is penetrated by the musical practices which draw people together over long distances to reawaken and rework memories of time and places past.

In *The Future of Nostalgia*, Svetlana Boym (2001) distinguishes two forms of nostalgia as emotion, or sickness. The first, 'restorative nostalgia', seeks to turn back time, assumes that a return to the yearned for past is a possible, even a rational response to loss and displacement. The second, reflective nostalgia, mobilises individual and cultural memory, refusing to allow

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'affective memories [to] absolve one from compassion, judgment or critical reflection' (Boym 2001, 50). Yet she alludes to the experiences of Bosnia as one of the cases in which 'the mirror of reflective nostalgia is shattered'. However, despite appearances, the nostalgia of the people of the Posavina is neither restorative nor properly reflective, but transformative. Although it superficially harks back to older ways of doing things, seeking comfort in recreating the forms and sounds of the past, it energises and drives reconciliation, solidarity, and resistance to the forces that threaten them. The sounds that they cling to embrace innovations in technology, from Digital Audio Workstations to the mobile phone, as indeed they always have, bringing the past into the modern world; they continue to be sounds in motion, with pre-war stars now in Croatia performing to appreciative Serb audiences in the towns from which they fled, and Serb musicians travelling regularly to Croatia to accompany those stars in the studio or at crowded celebrations. As Mark Slobin points out, 'Music is central to the diasporic experience, linking homeland and here-land with an intricate network of sound' (Slobin 1994, 243). The exiles in Slavonski Brod and Zagreb, Vienna or Stockholm are not so naïve as to believe that a pre-war Bosnia will ever be restored, nor do they yearn to exchange their burgundy passports, symbolising their rights and privileges as citizens of a European Union state, for a blue Bosnian one, subject to distrustful scrutiny at border crossings. Yet the comforting sound of major and minor seconds enchained, the haze of the *šargija*'s clusters and of innumerable pairs of voices overlapping in a crowd reminds them that they have a place of belonging of which outsiders can never deprive them.

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Jasmina Talam

Redrawing boundaries of patriarchal culture

Female multipart singing in central Bosnia

Abstract

Talking about female folk singers in Bosnia and Herzegovina is not simple. Life for women here has always been restricted by the unwritten traditional rules of a patriarchal society. Their activities were very limited and took place within the house. Certain freedom, in the context of public musical expression, was given to girls through singing or dancing during village festivities and wedding ceremonies. After marriage, a woman's status would change completely and many social activities would become forbidden. Most women's musical practice took place far from the public eye, their repertoire limited and based on the musical forms which were considered "moderate". Only a small number of women sang and played publicly and were supported by their husbands, and by close and extended family. I have recorded several female singers and players, and this paper highlights the phenomenon of multipart singing through the examples of Fata Mujanović (1904–1992) and Marica Filipović (b. 1965). Both were very talented, excelling with their beautiful voices and good knowledge of local musical tradition. Mujanović often sang with her older sister, Hasna Telalović, while Filipović sang with her female friends. The research material consists of both archival sound recordings and audio and video recordings that I made. I will attempt to provide insights into the musical creativity of these women who have "crossed the boundaries" of the patriarchal way of life and sung publicly. Their performances represent a unique sound experience, which will be explored through detailed discussion of musical styles regarded by performers and local communities as the most appropriate acoustic and aesthetic experiences in the rural part of central Bosnia.

1. Introduction

The traditional culture in Bosnia and Herzegovina is highly patriarchal. The role of women in creating and interpreting traditional musical expression is closely related to the position of women in the social community. According to the strict, unwritten norms of behavior of patriarchal society, women occupied a subordinate position in the family. The organization of family life was based "on the institution of a large, extended family" (Hofman 2010, 7) comprising several generations (parents and male children with families) cohabiting in a single household in which the oldest

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man was in charge. In such an environment, women lived under the command of their husbands or older men––father-in-law or older brother-in-law (Beissinger 2001, 412) ––and played the role of mother and housewife. The value of women was valorized through their appearance and behavior, and through the maternal transmission of value to daughters and sons. Thanks to their cultural, social and military engagement in the People's Liberation Army of Yugoslavia (1941–1945), women acquired certain rights that enabled their inclusion in certain spheres of social and public life. The achievements of the national liberation struggle led the socialist authorities (1945–1990) to implement a policy of gender equality. Nonetheless, despite the formal rights they acquired in socialist society, women remained subordinate.

Moreover, the school books seemed to promote rather different values for men and women. Males were encouraged to be strong, courageous, warriorlike, and creative, with little encouragement to males to be good (future) fathers or to care about their looks. Females, on the other hand, were portrayed as maternal, beautiful, and indecisive, thereby giving encouragement to women to be weak objects of male conquest (Ramet 1999, 104).

This "so-called 'socialist patriarchy' was seen as an unsuccessful attempt to improve the position of women" (Hofman 2010, 2), and this lack of success was especially evident in rural areas. Ankica Petrović states that restrictive norms of living and acting of women were often supported by older women.

Interestingly, older women supported the subordinate status of young women and often warned sons to treat their wives more harshly if they had objections to their 'inappropriate' gender behavior, including those related to performing inappropriate forms of singing from women's repertoire.

Zanimljivo je da su starije žene podržavale podređen status mladih žena i često opominjale sinove da trebaju strožije odnositi prema svojim ženama ukoliko su imale primjedbe o njihovu 'neprimjerenom' rodnom ponašanju, uključujući i one koje su se odnosile na izvođenje neodgovarajućih oblika pjevanja iz ženskog repertoara. (Petrović 2018, 99–100)

Another perspective in this discussion is the challenges faced by female researchers. In this context, Petrović states that:

as a female researcher, she herself encountered obstacles in communicating with male members of rural communities. Moreover, their wives also showed distrust, or gender underestimation of me 'because I am a woman,' and it often took a long time to breaking down gender prejudices and establishing communication with interlocutors. Sometimes I was in a situation to act like

Kao žena istraživač i sama nailazila na prepreke u komunikacijama sa muškim članovima seoskih zajednica. Štoviše, i njihove žene, pokazivale su nepovjerenje, ili rodno podcjenjivanje prema meni 'jer sam žena', te je često trebalo proći duže vrijeme za razbijanje uvriježenih rodnih predrasuda i uspostavljanje komunikacije sa sugovornicima. Ponekad sam zbog toga bila u situaciji

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a male or 'genderless' person. Only later, after gradually getting to know and getting closer to singers and narrators, I was able to start recording songs and relevant information and to conduct delicate conversations about gender differences in society and about the ways in which gender identity is manifested in musical performances.

da se ponašam kao muška ili 'bezrodna' osoba. Tek naknadno, nakon postepenog upoznavanja i zbližavanjima sa pjevačima i kazivačima, mogla sam da započmem snimanje pjesama i relevantnih informacija te voditi delikatne razgovore o rodnim razlikama u društvu i o vidovima manifestiranja rodnog identiteta u muzičkim izvedbama. (Petrović 2018, 100)

The influence of a conservative patriarchal ideology which tries to determine a woman's place in the entire social community is still present today in the rural areas of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Because of this gender hierarchy, women could find space for the meaning of life, and thus musical creativity, only in their close family circle. Most women's musical practice took place far from the public eye, their repertoire was limited and based on the musical forms which were considered "suitable". Only a small number of women sang and played publicly and were supported by their husbands, and close and extended family. Thus, the folk musical expression of women is confirmed as an artistic reflection of specific social circumstances.

During the course of my research, I recorded several female singers and players, and this paper highlights the phenomenon of multipart singing through the examples of Fata Mujanović (1904–1992) and Marica Filipović. Both were outstanding, highly talented singers, with beautiful voices and good knowledge of local musical tradition. Mujanović often sang with her older sister, Hasna Telalović, while Filipović sang with her female friends. In the following pages, the musical creativity of these women who have "crossed the boundaries" of the patriarchal way of life and sung in public will be presented in order to explain the female repertoire and musical styles regarded by performers and local communities as the most appropriate acoustic and aesthetic experiences in the rural central Bosnia.

A large number of talented folk singers have been recorded in the course of ethnomusicological research from 1937 onwards, but only a small number of them have had the opportunity to sing in public[1]. From Rittman's research grew a comprehensive study: "Čičak Janja, folk singer from

1 Thanks to local collaborators, Milman Parry and Albert Lord recorded numerous folk songs performed by folk female singers from Gacko and its surroundings. In the book *Serbo-Croatian Folk Songs* (1951) by Béla Bartók and Albert Lord one can find texts and transcriptions of 75 songs from the collection of Milman Parry, among which are 60 ballads performed by folk female singers, as well as basic biographical data on singers, interlocutors and characteristics of their singing. In the book *Embroidered with gold, strung with pearls. The Traditional Ballads of Bosnian Women* (2003) Aida Vidan presented research on Milman Parry's and Albert Lord's methodology, biographical data on female singers, as well as lyrics of 40 recorded ballads. (Talam 2015, 36) With the help of local party commissioners and educators, Cvjetko Rihtman collected information on narrators throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina

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Kupres" (1951), which contains transcriptions and analysis, without any discussion of her role as a singer and bearer of the local folk music tradition. The research of Ankica Petrović, central to the documentary *The Key from Spain* in which female singer Flory Jagoda is presented, as the bearer of the Bosnian Sephardic tradition is also extremely significant. In recent years, research in the field of gender ethnomusicology has intensified, and opened some new issues related to the creation, nurturing and transmission of specific female musical forms, and the understanding of gender in the folk music tradition (Karača Beljak and Talam 2015; Martić 2020). As a result of these initiatives, several works have been created by younger ethnomusicologists.

Nevertheless, the story of Mujanović and Filipović, women who crossed borders, is one of the rarely told stories about the importance and role of female folk singers in Bosnian ethnomusicological literature.

2. *Portraits of female singers*

The journey from an anonymous to a respected folk singer is very demanding, even more so in the case of female folk singers. Consequently, in local communities, one or two talented female singers usually stood out, characterized by a good knowledge of folk tradition, exceptional vocal abilities, singing skills and pronounced creative abilities for improvisation as well as the creation of new lyrics and melodies. Their repertoire had to be varied and extensive, adapted to almost any occasion in which the song was necessary.

Cvjetko Rihtman's sound recordings were often a guidepost for new field research by students of the Academy of Music. In December 1954, Rihtman conducted field research in Zenica and surrounding villages[2]. On the recommendation of the locals, he recorded the singing of Fata Mujanović (1904–1992) and her sister Hasna Telalović (1902–1977), born in the village of Bistrica. In December 1983, Professor Dunja Rihtman-Šotrić organized a field trip to the same site, attended by several students of ethnomusicology, including myself. During the trip, we also made recordings of the singing of Rihtman's narrator Fata Mujanović. Mujanović delighted us with her cheerful nature, interesting stories and desire to provide us with as much information as possible about the musical tradition of her region. Although she was already advanced in years and suffering quite pronounced dementia, Mujanović managed to remember the songs she sang in her youth. Over the following years, I visited Mujanović several times and recorded additional material.

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and planned research accordingly. The research, in a way, was conducted through local party presidents, which significantly facilitated access to folk singers.

2 Field research took place in the villages: Nemila, Vranduk, Kolići, Smajići, Šerići, Bistrica, Bistričak and Orahovica as well as the hamlets Rajčići, Gornja Mahala and Spahići.

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Rihtman recorded the largest number of polyphonic forms in this area performed by Mujanović and Telalović, which was done for the first time in the field, and then at the Institute for the Folklore Research in Sarajevo in 1956. Mujanović fondly remembered Professor Rihtman because he gave her the opportunity to come to Sarajevo for the only time in her life (Mujanović 1983).

Fata Mujanović and Hasna Telalović always sang together. They learned the songs from their mother, who was born in the village of Kolići, not far from Bistrica. At the age of 15, Fata married Meho Mujanović. Her sister Hasna was already married to Ramo Telalović. In the patriarchal environment in which they lived, it was not acceptable for married women to sing. Still, Fata Mujanović and Hasna Telalović often sang even after marriage. Their husbands greatly appreciated their singing, approved of it and encouraged it in the family circle, as well as at gatherings, weddings and other occasions. Therefore, their singing in public was approved by the extended family, as well as by other members of the local community. They were often invited to weddings and other celebrations. Both were distinguished by beautiful voices and rich knowledge of the folk music tradition of this area.

During several hours of conversation with Fata Mujanović, I collected very valuable information about the time, place and manner of performing certain songs, as well as the function of the songs within certain customs. Mujanović's narration sheds light on the way people think about local music practice, the principles of folk creation and various aspects of musical expression. From conversation with Mujanović, it was clear that the songs were functionally related to all segments of rural life. This leads to the conclusion that traditional folk music should be viewed and studied as an integral part of folk life, and folk knowledge considered to be a source for study.

One of the few women who actively participate in the cultural life of her local community is Marica Filipović (Lug-Brankovići, 1965), a folk singer and musical instrument player. Her parents had eleven children (seven brothers and four sisters) of whom Marica is the youngest. She graduated from the Secondary Textile School in Žepče and got a job as a textile worker in Mahnjača. Due to the war (1992–1995), she lost her job. After almost ten years, she started working as a cleaner at the Catholic School Center in Žepče. Marica Filipović did not marry and today lives with her brother and his family in her home village.

From an early age, Filipović did not understand the imposed rules of patriarchal society according to which many forms of behavior were unacceptable and immoral for women, yet acceptable for men. She always wanted to do what she loved no matter how much she was criticized, and often punished. Her first musical activities are related to her early childhood, that is, to the time when she kept sheep as a girl. She first learned to play the *dvojnice*[3], playing alone, while tending sheep,

3 The *dvojnice* (double flute) is one of the most widespread aerophones in Bosnia and Herzegovina. According to the HS classification, it belongs to the flutes with inner channel and holes for playing. It is considered a pastoral instrument. Two types of *dvojnice* exist, based on the arrangement and the number of holes: the Bosnian type has four holes on the right side and three holes on the left, while the Herzegovinian type has three holes on the right and four holes on the left side. Dvojnice are, almost by

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and claimed that the best way to learn how to play was "while alone with the flock. Shepherd's instrumentals on *dvojnice* instrument are slower, and you can make as many mistakes as you want until you practice." The first negative reaction to her playing came from her father, who considered it "a shame for a woman to play" (Filipović 2008).

Her older brother noticed Marica Filipović's talent and gave her his *dvojnice* on the condition that her father would not see her play. With great enthusiasm she observed, listened to and imitated interpretations of folk songs performed by older women. Unfortunately, her friends were not interested in folk music, so she often sang alone and sometimes included older people in the singing. During high school, she learned how to play the instruments *šargija* and *bugarija*[4], and a little later, how to turn the *tepsija*[5]. And that's where the problems began. She secretly took her father's *šargija* and played. She was constantly criticized, and sometimes physically punished. Marica Filipović states that the quarrel with her father lasted for a full three years and states with satisfaction that "in the end he relented. I won!" (Filipović 2008).

She expresses her love for folk tradition and creativity through performances of various vocal and instrumental forms during all rural social events. She is the president of the local cultural and artistic society and often performs at folklore festivals and other events in Bosnia and Herzegovina and abroad. Unlike the past, Filipović says, "Now I sing and play everywhere, but today everyone is proud of my singing and playing." Although a number of women continue to support established models of patriarchal society and the division of roles into male and female, Filipović has persisted in successfully "crossing the boundaries of the patriarchal way of life" and encouraged several older women to sing with her in public.

3. Female repertoire

Emphasizing gender and generational divisions influenced the characteristics of the musical repertoire and style of women's musical practice in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which should be viewed

rule, played by men. In the village of Drežnica, however, girls sometimes also played the *dvojnice* while watching the sheep in the mountains (Rihtman-Šotrić 1982, 148). The skill of playing the dvojnice was transmitted from one generation to the next, and with that also the repertoire. This repertoire consisted of pastoral and travel tune as well as various traditional dances characteristic of certain regions (see Talam 2013, 198).

4 The *bugarija* and *šargija* are chordophones of the long-necked lute type. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, long-necked lutes are generally called tamburas. The basic parts of the *bugarija* and *šargija* are the resonator, which consists of the *kutla* (resonant body) and the *daska* (soundboard), and the *drška* (neck). The soundboard over the *kutla* has *glasnice* (sonorous holes) that improve the instrument's sonority. Both instruments can be used as an accompaniment to singing, or one can play the *kola* on them (more in Talam 2013, 121–147).

5 In traditional musical praxis, the *tepsija* (pan) is used as an idiophone to accompany singing by women.

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as a reflection of life. Certain freedoms, in the context of public musical expression, were given to girls through their singing or dancing during village festivities and wedding ceremonies. Singing was learned by listening and practicing away from the public eye. Since sexual maturity occurred early,[6] singing in public began immediately after puberty. Petrović states that the children also adopted "knowledge about the gender suitability of the repertoire, i. e. about the forms suitable for their gender-generational identity and status, which shifts with age" (Petrović 2018, 98–99). After marriage, a woman's status would completely change and many social activities would become forbidden. By entering into a marital union, and especially motherhood, a woman's life was focused on meeting the demands of family life to the fullest. Thus, the repertoire of women was directed towards her new family and social function.

Given all the limitations they suffered, women were highly creative in the segments of creating, transmitting and preserving folk music tradition. Through the repertoire considered exclusively female,[7] women expressed their thoughts, feelings and emotions. It is important to mention that the folk terminology clearly indicates the gender division of vocal forms such as the *djevojački glas* (girl's voice), *muški* and *ženski glas* (male and female voice), *muška* and *ženska kajda* (male and female melody)[8].

From conversations with Fata Mujanović and Marica Filipović, it can be concluded that the male and female repertoires are characterized by different textual and melodic structures, as well as stylistic and performance elements. Women's songs were more expressive and emotional and contained certain features such as a specific pattern of melodic movement, particularly melismatic tones, stylistic sighs and exhalations (Petrović 1990; Hoffman 2010). Female repertoire can be divided:

- according to the place and occasion in which the songs were performed: *svatovske* (wedding) songs, *vodonoške* (songs sung while carrying water), *žetelačke* (harvest song), *pjevanje uz tepsiju* (singing along the pan) and *kolske* (circle dance) songs.
- according to the content: lullabies, ballads, humorous, love, folk spiritual songs, etc.;
- according to melopoetic forms: short and long melody;
- according to the method of performance: whether one or more singers perform in one voice (in unison) or in two voices (polyphonic).

6 The imposition of work obligations in early childhood significantly affected the early maturation of children.

7 Ankica Petrović was the first to classify two separate genres of male and female Bosnian and Herzegovinian folk music (Petrović 1990, 71).

8 Since most of the songs were recorded outside their original context, i. e. without their practical and aesthetic functions, I draw on folk knowledge as the most important source for understanding the way people think about their musical art, aesthetic evaluation, principles of shaping melopoetic structures, and reconstructing the circumstances in which songs were performed.

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Among the songs that are functionally related to certain customs, the most numerous are wedding songs. Wedding songs that belong exclusively to the female repertoire are customarily performed in different sections of the wedding, such as preparing clothes, waiting for the bride and groom, collecting the bride, her departure from the parental home, the wedding of the bride,[9] and singing to the bride and groom for the purpose of giving presents to the newlyweds. These were performed exclusively by girls, in addition to their dancing the *kolo* (circle dance).

Songs that are sung while performing certain activities such as fetching water, digging and harvesting were performed exclusively by girls who were involved in those activities. Unlike work songs that could be heard in both women's and men's repertoire, singing by a spinning *tepsija* (a baking dish) could be heard exclusively in the performances of girls and older women. Given that the textual content of the songs was directly related to the age and marital status of the singers, it was appropriate for the girls to perform humorous and love songs in which they emphasized "lust, the call of love and female identity." (Petrović 2018, 86) The change of status also meant the adoption of a new repertoire that included lullabies, ballads, spiritual songs and lamentations.

According to Rihtman's classification, tunes are divided into two categories that clearly define the relationship between the text and the melody, and are marked by folk names––short and long melody[10]. (Rihtman 1951) A long tune implies a more complex melostanza formation which is achieved by the following procedures:

- by repeating verses or parts of verses
- by connecting verses
- by adding exclamations, simple or complex choruses, and
- by combining the above procedures.

A short tune implies a simpler way of creating a melody, in which each melody is presented with new textual content. The text has a dominant role over the melody, which enables the performance of songs with a larger number of verses, i. e., narrative forms.

9 One of the wedding customs that is exclusively tied to the Muslim tradition is *knivanje mlade* (tattooing the bride with henna). Before the first wedding night, that takes place one night before going to *đerdek* (the room furnished for newlyweds), the brother-in-law would bring the bride to a room that was specially prepared for henna tattooing. In that room were *jengije* or *jenđije*, girls and younger married women who were the groom's relatives. The bride was standing or sitting, and on her four sides stood four girls and held a *duvak* ––a large scarf often red in color which covered the girl on the way from her house to the groom's. The custom of henna tattooing means that the girl's nails on her hands and feet are coated with henna. Throughout the ceremony, all the girls and women present sang functionally related songs for the ceremony. Some of the songs were related to the symbolic function of the ritual, and through some songs, good wishes for her married life were expressed.

10 The division of songs according to melopoetic forms and manner of performance refers to both male and female songs.

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In contrast to the urban vocal tradition in which a monodically conceived vocal style predominates, singing in multiple voices, terminologically defined as polyphonic singing, is heard more frequently in the countryside. In such circumstances, polyphonic forms have developed in which the major second is perceived as a consonant interval.

In this polyphonic practice there can be no question of some accidental, unconscious separation of one section from another, but of completely willing, traditionally established forms of joint singing. These are established forms of traditional music making which, despite the low level of musical culture, they are practiced among the rural population in a certain area. […] The low degree of musical culture (i. e., the great antiquity of these forms) reveals a very narrow ambit of their melodic movement (and therefore their scale), […] Voices must match in color. Melodic lines of voices are inextricably linked.
One of the most important characteristics of these forms is that the melodic line of the main partner occasionally falls below the melodic lines of the others––for a minor or major second––according to the pattern established by tradition. Therefore, what we hear as a melody will be the result of both vocal parts.

U ovoj polifonoj praksi ne može biti govora o nekom slučajnom, nesvjesnom odvajanju jedne dionice od druge, već o sasvim voljnim, tradicijom utvrđenim oblicima zajedničkog pjevanja. Radi se o ustaljenim oblicima tradicionalnog muziciranja koji, i pored niskog stepena muzičke kulture, postoje i prakticiraju se među seoskim stanovništvom na određenom području […] Nizak stepen muzičke kulture (odnosno veliku starinu ovih oblika) odaje vrlo uzak ambitus njihovog melodijskog kretanja (pa prema tome i njihova skala), kao i čenjenica da je ritam ovih primjera redovito tačnije fiksiran negoli visina tona […] Glasovi se moraju slagati u boji. Dionice su nerazdvojno povezane.
Jedna od najvažnijih karakteristika ovih oblika sastoji se u tome što se dionica glavnog partnera povremeno spušta ispod dionice ostalih – za veliku ili za malu sekundu – prema obrascu koji je utvrđen lokalnom tradicijom. Stoga će ono što čujemo kao melodiju biti rezultat obiju dionica. (Rihtman 1998, 7–8)

Observing that there are significant differences between older and more recent singing, Rihtman divided polyphonic forms into two categories. The first category implies a more recent style, in which one voice has the leading role and the other a supporting role. The leading voice is more expressive and has more possibilities for "free improvisation of words, melody and rhythm", but the role of the accompanying voices is also very important because "1. each of them must know and feel what the leading voice will sing and, based on experience, harmonize (the voice) into appropriate relations with it; 2. all accompanying voices must react uniquely to the leading of the song, to its movement and variation, i. e. to sound like one (Petrović 2016, 42). The tunes are "wider in range with larger intervals in the leading voice structure as well as in the polyphonic structure", and the tonal relationships are less labile and closer to tempered. (Karača Beljak 2014, 76–77) The second category, dubbed old Bosnian (*starobosansko*) singing, implies older forms of singing in which the voices are equal, and the shares of the voices are intertwined. A special

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feature of the second category is the prominence of major seconds in the harmony, which the people perceive as consonant.

The group of singers was expected to achieve "sound unity," which meant equalizing the volume of performance and the vocal timbre. Such a sonic unity could be achieved by people who grew up together and had close relationships in everyday life. This is why there are often examples of sisters, relatives or close friends singing together. The repertoire of Fata Mujanović and her sister Hasna Telalović was dominated by old polyphonic singing. Telalović always sang the lead voice and Mujanović the second. After the death of her sister, Fata Mujanović rarely sang. In order to fulfill my wish to record examples of older polyphonic singing, Mujanović tried to sing with her daughter-in-law with whom she lived in the household, and then with a group of girls from the neighboring village Smajići contributing the lead voice with the others backing her. The leading voice can be interpreted as a kind of creator of a certain musical form, because it begins the performance of the melody, which gives it the opportunity to introduce certain melodic and rhythmic variations within the melody.

Singers are not performers of a strictly defined musical form, but during each performance they are to some extent creators of new musical patterns, which are formed within traditionally established concepts of structure. The degree of variation within traditional musical norms depends on the creative abilities of the leading voice. This singer forms a specific melodic pattern that is taken over in the group part of the singing, but in a remodeled form.

Pjevači nisu izvođači strogo utvrđenog muzičkog oblika, nego su za vrijeme svake izvedbe donekle tvorci novih muzičkih obrazaca, koji se tvore unutar tradicijom utvrđenih koncepata strukture. Stupanj variranja u okviru tradicionalnih muzičkih normi ovisi o kreativnim sposobnostima… osobito vodećeg glasa koji izlaže tekst. Ovaj pjevač oblikuje specifičan melodijski obrazac koji se preuzima u grupnom dijelu pjevanja, ali u premodeliranom obliku. (Petrović 2018, 189)

However, it should be born in mind that in the performance of polyphonic tunes "all the singers were of equal importance for good song delivery, whether they were leading the song, undertaking the lead part from the first leader, supporting, that is singing the second line in parallel, or embellishing the song with ornamental tones" (Petrović 2008, 118). Due to the large age difference between Fata Mujanović and other singers, as well as the younger singers' insufficient knowledge of the older tradition, it was not possible to equalize the strength of the singing or the color of the voice. Visibly dissatisfied with the impossibility of harmonizing all the elements of the musical style of old singing, Mujanović gave up on further attempts.

Unlike Fata Mujanović, who grew up in an environment where the older village tradition was performed, Marica Filipović listened to the singing of several women––bearers of older musical practice, including Kaja Pavlović (Lug 1955) and Jela Travančić (Komšići 1952). For years she watched, listened and tried to imitate them, and today she sings with them. Filipović usually starts the performance, and the other singer joins in, takes over or follows. Despite the fact that

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they started singing together a little later, uniform performances and vocal timbre are noticeable in their performances.

These examples clearly point to the fact that the performances of polyphonic tunes require long-term rehearsal by the singers, as well as their clear division into leading and supporting voices. Only in this way is it possible to achieve sound unity, i.e., a uniform volume, vocal timbre, and other stylistic elements that satisfy the sonorous aesthetics of the local tradition.

4. Redrawing the boundaries of patriarchal culture on the examples of Fata Mujanović and Marica Filipović

Despite the many social, political and cultural changes that marked the 20th century in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the world of men and women remained different, as the role of women continued to be viewed from a traditional angle. This meant that a woman should primarily be an exemplary housewife and take care of the house and family, and use the rest of her "free" time for other activities. Thanks to their creativity as well as awareness of their position in society, women expressed their emotions, joys and sorrows in the sphere of "her kingdom. In this physically limited, but at the same time space of an infinite freedom, a woman's words could be spoken, or sung. The woman was the guardian of house, the intimate world of family, which could equally be the entire universe. In it she sang, for her child, other women, always to herself, healing her own soul" (Toska 2015, 92). Thus, certain musical and traditional patterns originated and survived in special cultural and social contexts, and their creators, bearers, and transmitters were women.

The girls never sang in public until they were sure that their singing met the aesthetic criteria of the local community. By the 1950s, girlhood came to an end at 15 or 16 years of age. The girls who sang together were happy if they married in the same village, as it allowed them to "continue to socialize, trust, help each other in the new environment and possibly continue to sing together, if new families allow it" (Petrović 2018, 103). Fata Mujanović and Hasna Telalović got married and were lucky enough to stay in the same village, so they could see each other more often. Since they were both cheerful in nature, open and sociable, they were welcome in their new families. At first, they sang only in the circle of their new families, and then they were invited to sing at weddings, parties, during the harvest, and other village gatherings. Fata Mujanović's and Hasna Telalović's singing quickly became known in neighboring villages, so they were often invited to social events, especially weddings. Their husbands greatly appreciated their singing qualities. Moreover, they were proud of their wives, which was very unusual at the time. Fata Mujanović and Hasna Telalović never wanted to take money for their singing, but the hosts always rewarded them with appropriate gifts.

Unlike other married women who sang exclusively in female company and mostly indoors, Mujanović and Telalović often sang on occasions where it was not considered appropriate to hear

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female singing. Their repertoire was very rich and varied, and even contained songs belonging to the male repertoire, mostly wedding songs that were sung in front of the house of the bride or groom, along the way when the bride and groom lead the girl, and in the wedding circle dance. In this, the girls sang to important wedding participants (*kum*: godfather, *bajraktar*: flag bearer), and the groom's closest relatives (father-in-law, mother-in-law, brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law) to give the newlyweds a gift, and then to gift a "circle dance," i. e., girls in the circle who assisted in various wedding household chores. Fata Mujanović and Hasna Telalović were always invited to lead the song in a *kolo* (circle dance) with the girls.

In those years (1950s) the girls didn't know how to sing the old *kajda* (melody)… they all sang all together, all the same, the same *kajda*, and the older ones wanted to hear our old singing. Some girls tried, but they didn't succeed. My Hasna knew how to do that the best. She took the lead, and I followed her. When my Hasna died, I stopped singing. And no one sang the old-fashioned *kajda* anymore. The young people didn't like it, it wasn't modern. These people only know *bećarci* songs and what they hear on the radio.

Tih godina (1950tih) nisu djevojke znale pjevat starinsku kajdu… one sve pjevale sve zajedno, sve isto, istu kajdu, a stariji su htjeli čuti naše starinsko pjevanje. Neke djevojke su pokušavale, ali im nije išlo. Moja Hasna je to najbolje znala. Ona povede, a ja za njom. Kad je moja Hasna umrla, ja sam prestala pjevati. I niko više nije pjevao starinsku kajdu. Mladima se to nije sviđalo, nije bilo moderno. Ovi danas znaju samo bećarce i ono što pjeva na radiju. (Mujanović 1983)

Fata Mujanović and Hasna Telalović gladly went to the *moba*[11] (harvest), as well as to the *sijelo*[12] (village parties) and cheered the audience with their clean and sweet voices. It is interesting to note that they never sang throatily or in a full voice, but gave their songs a lyrical character in terms of clarity of sound and fluent presentation of the text. They often came up with new lyrics to already known tunes and new songs, but they never declared themselves as their authors. As

11 *Moba* is a folk term that means mutual help of the workforce––family, neighbors and other members of the local community in performing larger jobs, and most often the harvest. Harvesting is one of the most important jobs in harvesting of crops. It used to be an extremely long and difficult job, because everything that was sown had to be reaped in a short period of time. Both younger and older members of the community were present at the *moba*. Girls, boys, and older men worked in the fields, and older women prepared food for *moba* participants. At the end of the harvest, the girls tripped the grain around the sickle and thus marked the end of the harvest work. After the successful completion of the work, the host organized a party with song and dance.

12 *Sijela* or *prela* were organized in late autumn and winter (when the work in the field was completed) to do the work together, but also for fun. Older and younger people attended the *sijelo*. The villagers gathered in the house of one host and together they performed various tasks such as combing wool, spinning, knitting, chopping corn. Each subsequent meeting was organized by a different host so that joint work was done in almost all households.

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Ankica Petrović states, "Modesty and the suppression of ego was a common feature here, especially in the female side of society." (Petrović 2008, 118)

Although many years have passed since their death, the people of Smajići and surrounding villages fondly remember Fata Mujanović and Hasna Telalović. They were the first women of their region to cross the boundaries of "permissible" and "appropriate" behavior determined by the strict norms of patriarchal society. Thanks to them both, female singing has moved from private to public, space and their informal musical activities have become formal and meaningful to the entire community. However, Fata Mujanović and Hasna Telalović are not mentioned today as women who broke the taboos of patriarchal society, but rather as extremely good people and talented folk singers who delighted with their beautiful voices. They are also mentioned as some of the last bearers of the old style of singing which, with Hasna Telalović's death, has almost fallen into oblivion. Fata Mujanović and Hasna Telalović belonged to the last generation of women who actively participated in the old customs, but also the first women who "violated" the norms of rural society.

Although Marica Filipović began her musical activities almost half a century after Fata Mujanović and Hasna Telalović, in rural areas women remained subordinate to men. At first Filipović did not understand, and later she did not want to accept the gender restrictions that were imposed on her.

It was not common for a woman to play or sing in public. Women were supposed to draw back. I always protested against that division [...] It's a rural area and it always has been––you're a woman you draw back, you're not for it, you're not for this, you're not for that [...] I always resisted, I fought, I didn't give in. I learned to play to show what you can do and I can't.

Nije bilo uobičajeno da žena svira, ni da pjeva javno. Gledalo se uvijek da se žene sklanjaju. Ja sam se uvijek bunila protiv te podjele [...] To je seoska sredina i uvijek je bilo – ti si žensko ti se skloni, nisi za to, nisi za ovo, nisi za ono[...] Ja sam se uvijek opirala, borila sam se, nisam dala na sebe. Naučila sam svirati svirati da pokažem šta vi to možete a ja ne mogu. (Filipović, 2021)

Her love for the folk music tradition of her region, as well as the desire to carry out her musical activities outside the "four walls" of the home were enough motivation for her to successfully overcome all the problems she encountered. During her early youth, the old folk customs disappeared and with them the songs related to those customs. At the initiative of Sister Marija Filipović, the Croatian Catholic Cultural and Artistic Association *Ognjište* was founded, whose task was to nurture and promote local tradition. Marica Filipović immediately became actively involved in the work of the society. The biggest help was provided by Jela Travančić, and later by Kaja Pavlović. Marica Filipović has been the president of the society since 1995, as well as leader of the folklore section, singer and musician. Although the institutionalization of cultural life in the village and the formation of a cultural and artistic association brought certain changes, most older women, accustomed to the "rules of conduct" of the patriarchal community, did not want to

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get involved in the work of the society. Through her perseverance and personal example, Marica Filipović encouraged women to become actively involved in the cultural life of the village and to begin performing in public. For more than twenty years, the society has successfully organized a folklore festival called Days of St Michael's Summer, and it participates in folklore festivals in Bosnia and Herzegovina and other countries, as well as in events and concerts where folklore is presented. Marica Filipović sings with her friends at all of these. The older polyphonic forms are most often performed by two or three singers, and newer polyphonic forms such as *bećarci* or singing "na bas"[13] by four to five singers. Especially interesting is the form of vocal-instrumental practice—older polyphonic singing along the *tepsija*[14] (copper pan). In the past, the singing to the accompaniment of *tepsija* was polyphonic in most villages,[15] and today it is mostly sung by one or more singers in one voice.

For the last ten years, Marica Filipović has been playing together with male musicians. Traditionally, folk dances in her village were performed with the musical accompaniment of *šargija* and violin. Filipović always plays *šargija*. She also performs certain traditional musical forms in a duo with a male singer.

Filipović is one of the few middle-aged women who has replaced informal music in a closed women's circle with formally presented music in stage performances on her own, with her friends and members of a folklore group. As president, singer and musician, and as the organizer of the folklore festival, she made a great contribution to the institutionalization of cultural life in her village and in the entire municipality of Žepče.

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13 Previous research has shown that *bećarci* and singing "na bas" have been present in central Bosnia since the Second World War, and that they came through Posavina and Slavonija through cattle breeders (Rihtman 1998; Petrović 2008).

14 The technique of panning (*tepsijanje*) is achieved by continuous turning of *tepsija* on a short, round, wooden area which was used as a table (*sofra*). The pan is raised and turned around with the outstretched right hand. Singing starts at the moment when the woman feels that sound of pan is stabilized. Panning involves two women. On one side of the table stands the woman who turns the pan and sings and abeam stands the woman who sings straight to the pan. By turning the face to the copper area, the voice is directly reflected by the area of the pan. That way, a specific quality of singing is achieved, where important characteristic is echo effect.

15 The example of polyphonic singing along with the pan was recorded by Gerhard Gesemann, Walther Wünsch and Kurt Huber in the Blažuj near Sarajevo (see Huber and Wünsch 1938/39, 25). Three songs, which were sung along the copper pan (tepsija), were recorded on 4 October 1937; the first one: a lyrical song *Zmaj preleće*, performed by Cvijeta Stolica (50 y. o.) and Milica Rogan (45 y. o.); the second one: a lyrical song *Dobro moje*, performed by Cvijeta Stolica (50 y. o.), Jevrosima Bujak (17 y. o.), and Pava Rogan (18 y. o.); third one: a lyrical song *Sinoć prođoh ja*, performed by Cvijeta Stolica (50 y. o.) while Milica Rogan (45 y. o.) turned the pan (Talam 2011, 253).

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5. *Conclusion*

Older polyphonic forms occupied a significant place in the folk music tradition of Bosnia and Herzegovina. They were created, performed and transmitted in women's society and were mostly functionally related to certain customs and rituals. Female and male polyphonic forms have certain common characteristics, but there are also peculiarities related to the way of melody shaping and polyphonic harmony, use of melismatic tones, type and manner of text presentation, performance intensity, and the control of inhalation and exhalation. With regard to performance in specific ambient and performance contexts, the women tried to express the musical emotion through a controlled volume and a specific "bright and pleasant timbre." The folk singers Fata Mujanović and her sister Hasna Telalović were one of the last "guardians" of the tradition of singing older polyphonic forms in the wider local community and the first women to step into a "strictly forbidden" public space with their performances. Although the role of women in society has changed, Marica Filipović and her friends had to fight for their social and cultural engagement. The new and more complex role of women, which implied many more obligations, often including the struggle for a basic existence, as well as a more modern way of life, has contributed to the disappearance of certain folk customs and rituals. At the same time, older polyphonic forms that were functionally related to certain customs and rituals have vanished. Thanks to their perseverance, love for the old tradition of their region and amateur work in the cultural and artistic society, Marica Filipović and her friends have succeeded in "reviving" the old tradition by interpreting and transmitting forms of female vocal practice.

In some rural areas in Bosnia and Herzegovina, women still live under the "command" of their husbands, physically and emotionally disadvantaged. Đokanović, Dračo and Delić claim that "the economic crisis and decades-long failed socialist modernisation processes were the main causes of growing ethno-nationalism and nationalism." (2014:83) In the end of 1980, these processes led to re-patriarchalisation, which returned the role of women to the "four walls" of the home. It can be concluded that the death of old customs and the songs that accompanied them, as well as the exclusion of women from participating in cultural events and expressing their musical creativity in public, has led to the extinction of certain forms of female musical expression in those environments, including older polyphonic forms.

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II. The individual and the group

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Erna Ströbitzer

Finding answers in folk songs

A portrait of the *Landl Quartett* between *Volksmusikpflege* and folk revival

Abstract

Four prominent figures in the field of singing—Gerlinde Haid (a folk music researcher and scholar from Styria), Maria Walcher (a cultural manager from Lower Austria), Norbert Hauer (a cultural and music mediator from Lower Austria) and Markus Stieldorf (a veterinarian from Tyrol)—came together in Vienna around 1980 to form the *Landl Quartett*. Each of them came from a different background and region and was differently musically socialized and trained.

This quartet, which also performed as a duo or trio depending on availability, attempted to revive a folk music practice that they and their environment perceived as authentic, joyful and democratic. Like songwriters and musicians coming from the folk revival movement in the 1970s and 1980s, the *Landl Quartett* tried to break with conventions of how folk music should sound and how it should be performed (i.e. *Volksmusikpflege*). The sociopolitical or historical context, lyrics corresponding with social reality, spontaneity, improvisation, communication, discussion, and audience participation were more highly valued than a perfect sound or a unique arrangement.

The *Landl Quartett* took part in various (singing) initiatives and engagement programs organized by the Austrian, Lower Austrian, and Viennese Folk Song Societies and performed relatively few stage concerts. In addition to Haid's research on a modern folk music practice, which the *Landl Quartett* certainly inspired, the *Landl Quartett*'s mediating-methods and a great part of its repertoire remain alive today, carried on by the remaining singers themselves and enthusiastic students and friends.

1. *Introduction*

The discovery of the *Landl-Mappe* (Haid [No year]), a folder with concert programs, letters, photographs, and sheet music in the *Archiv des Österreichischen Volksliedwerkes* (Archives of the Austrian Folk Song Institute[1]), strengthened my interest in researching the detailed history of

1 The English translations of the term *Volksliedwerk* differ depending on the institution: While the *Österreichisches Volksliedwerk* uses "Folk Song Society", the *Österreichische Nationalbibliothek* uses "Folk Song Institute".

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the *Landl*[2] *Quartett*. The collection was most likely created by the folk music scholar Gerlinde Haid, who was the driving force of the group. Her publications offer thoughts that contribute to a better understanding of her motivation, the repertoire, and the singing process. Styrian singer and musicologist Eva Maria Hois and I conducted interviews with the former group members Maria Walcher and Norbert Hauer (2021a and 2021b) and had an extensive telephone conversation with Markus Stieldorf (2021). These interviews serve as additional sources for this paper and provide a subjective and emotionally colored perspective on the *Landl Quartett*. According to ethnomusicologist Giorgio Adamo, "[…] a performance of multipart vocal music […] is a special case of interpersonal relationships. If we consider a performance as a socially-organized musical production, a relation between different parts is, in fact, a relation between *persons*[3]" (Adamo 2008, 87). Here, I will show how the performance and repertoire of the *Landl Quartett* are not only to be seen in the group's historical and socio-political context but are simultaneously to be traced back to the people involved and their individual relationships.

2. *Introduction of the four protagonists*

2.1 Gerlinde Haid (1943–2012), soprano— the knowledgeable, critical, playful, and circumspect one

Though Gerlinde Haid grew up in Bad Aussee (Styria), a region renowned for its lively folk music tradition, the influence of her humanistically educated parents was quite strong. Haid played the piano, the violin, and later on the *Schwegelflöte*, a type of Austrian duct flute. At the University of Vienna, she enrolled in music education and German, later on also studying *Volkskunde* (folklore studies)[4] and musicology. After her years as assistant to Walter Deutsch (1923–2025) at the *Institut für Volksmusikforschung* (Department of Folk Music Research)[5] at the *Hochschule für Musik und darstellende Kunst* (University of Music and Performing Arts) in Vienna, Haid became the first full-time and female General Secretary of the *Österreichisches Volksliedwerk*[6]

2 The term *Landl* is explained in section 5.

3 Italics in original.

4 The translation "folklore studies" is used in the university department's self-description: "In 2000, the former *Institut für Volkskunde* (Department of Folklore Studies) was renamed the *Institut für Europäische Ethnologie* (Department of European Ethnology)". Other names for the discipline include Empirical Cultural studies and Cultural Anthropology (see Department of European Ethnology).

5 In 2002 the Department's name was appended with the term *Ethnomusikologie* (Ethnomusicology, see Department of Folk Music Research and Ethnomusicology).

6 The *Österreichisches Volksliedwerk* is the umbrella association of the Folk Song Societies of the nine Austrian Federal States.

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(Austrian Folk Song Society), serving in that position from 1976 (see Würzel 1976) to 1989. From the same desk, she also managed the *Volksliedwerke für Wien und Niederösterreich* (Folk Song Societies for Vienna and Lower Austria).[7] With extensive field research, a focus on historical sources, and a special interest in the methods and processes of transmission and folk music practice, she led these tasks into a new direction. Her move to the *Fachbereich für Musikalische Volkskunde* (Department for Musical Folklore) at the *Hochschule für Musik und darstellende Kunst Mozarteum* (University of Music and Performing Arts Mozarteum)[8] in Innsbruck in 1989 brought an end to the *Landl Quartett*. In 1994, Haid returned to Vienna as a full professor at the Institute for Folk Music Research and Ethnomusicology, which she headed until her retirement in 2010 (Walcher 2013, 20).

*2.2 Maria Walcher (*1960), alto—the self-confident, word-perfect, and extroverted one*

Maria Walcher grew up in Gedersdorf near Krems in a middle-class entrepreneurial family. She often sang for her own amusement in inns and taverns together with her father, her sister, and friends. The family's musical tradition was shaped by her father's Styrian and her mother's Bohemian-Viennese origins. From 1980 onwards, Walcher was part of a private singing circle in Hietzing, a bourgeois district of Vienna. Because they usually met on Mondays, the singing circle was called *Montagsrunde* (Monday's Round). There, several generations sang together informally. The diverse repertoire was contributed by the participants. In addition to studying *Volkskunde*, Walcher worked in the folk song archives at Fuhrmannsgasse 18a in Vienna. In 1989, she succeeded Gerlinde Haid as head of the Austrian Folk Song Society. Under the leadership of Walcher, who is an excellent networker, the society flourished.[9] From 2004 onwards, she worked for the National Agency for Intangible Cultural Heritage of the Austrian UNESCO Commission. One of her passions is singing *Wienerlieder* (Viennese songs).

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7 The Lower Austrian Folk Song Society and the Viennese Folk Song Society were founded as separate associations in 1973, but continued to operate in the form of a joint working committee (*Arbeitsausschuss*). Until 1999, they shared one office with the Austrian Folk Song Society: from 1948/1954 to 1993 at Fuhrmannsgasse 18a, 1080 Wien, and from 1993 to 1999 Gallitzinstraße 1, 1160 Wien (Gamsjäger 2019).

8 In 1998 the university was renamed *Universität Mozarteum Salzburg* (University Mozarteum Salzburg). Since 2000 the also renamed *Fachbereich Musikalische Ethnologie* (Department of Musical Ethnology) has been part of the Department of Musicology (see Mozarteum University, Ethnomusicology).

9 See annual reports in the *Jahrbuch des Österreichischen Volksliedwerkes* or Yearbook of the Austrian Folk Song Society (e.g. Brodl 2000, 166; Gmasz 2005, 250).

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*2.3 Norbert Hauer (*1953), tenor—the spontaneous, humorous, mediative, and audacious one*

Norbert Hauer grew up in a family with many children in St. Oswald in the Lower Austrian Waldviertel ("Wood Quarter"). Under the strict guidance of his mother, who conducted a choir and played the organ at church, he as well as his siblings were educated in multipart singing and playing instruments. The family regularly performed at Catholic church services and at festive occasions and attended music summer camps. Since his youth, Hauer has been part of the Austrian Kolping association (*Kolping Österreich*)[10] and is involved in social work in many ways. For a while, he played in boogie, rock, and beat-mass bands. He attended the Pedagogical Academy in Vienna from 1974 to 1977. In the context of a lecture-course on musical folklore by Karl Schnürl (1924–2011, chairman of the *Niederösterreichisches Volksliedwerk* or Lower Austrian Folk Song Society) in 1976, he came into contact with people involved in folk music research, especially Rudolf Pietsch (1951–2020) and Gerlinde Haid. Hauer works as a mediator, presenter, teacher, and social worker in a number of different projects.

*2.4 Markus Stieldorf (*1954), bass / harmonic fundament—the balancing, philosophical, and humorous one*

Markus Stieldorf grew up in Hall in Tyrol. He sang in the school choir and took piano-lessons until the age of 14. Then he played drums in the school band, taught himself to play the guitar and later tried his hand at the diatonic button accordeon (*Steirische Harmonika*) and the *Schwegelflöte*. While a student of veterinary medicine in Vienna, he joined the Hietzinger *Montagsrunde* through neighbors and acquaintances, and there he met Maria Walcher and her sister Christine Walcher. In 1988, Stieldorf finished his studies in Vienna and went back to Tyrol. This also meant his departure from the *Landl Quartett*. Stieldorf currently works as a veterinarian in Tyrol. In retrospect, he states that he owes his understanding of harmonic listening and *qualitätsvoller Volksmusik* to the *Landl Quartett*. With the latter expression, which translates to "high-quality folk music", he distinguishes between music described as authentic and positive and *volkstümliche Musik* (commerzialized folk music) with a negative connotation.[11]

In the early 1980s, the lives of all four group members were centered in Vienna. Two of them were studying at university and were independent with no family obligations. This promoted the

10 The Kolping society is a Catholic social association acting at the national and international level. It is inspired by the teachings of the German priest and social reformer Adolph Kolping (1813–1865) (see Kolping International).

11 For an overview about this term see the paragraph "*Volkstümliche Musik* as a popular genre" in Morgenstern 2015.

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quartet's activity, its powerful spirit as well as its effectiveness. However, when two of the members (Haid und Stieldorf) left Vienna at the end of the 1980s, the *Landl Quartett* ceased to exist.

3. *Musical functions or roles*

The core of the quartet consisted of Haid and Walcher, who started out, and often performed, as the *Landl Duo*.[12] They met in early 1980 while measuring musical instruments at the *Volkskundemuseum Wien* (Austrian Museum of Folk Life and Folk Art). According to Haid, they began singing together from manuscripts in the archives due to the lack of suitable audio examples for one of her lectures (Haid, G. 2000, 10). Haid was the intellectual and scholarly centre of the group; her strength lay in bundling and uniting forces. Her voice was softer and more timid than Walcher's. The latter, with her strong voice and confident stage presence, was the most word-perfect of the singers. She usually began songs or verses. In the Austrian Alpine multipart singing tradition, this role or function is called *Ansingen*. Usually this is the principal part, which is also recognizable in ending on the key note. Deviating from this "rule", however, Walcher starts with the *Überstimme* (over-part) or *Überschlag* (turning over) in AV 12, which, because of her assertive voice, leads the listener to the impression of hearing the principal part.

Haid's function was to accompany the main part. She sang the second part above (*drüberschlagen* or *drübersingen*) or below (*zuwisingen*, *druntersingen* or *sekundieren*) the principal part, depending on the type of the melody.[13] While there are no published recordings of the *Landl Quartett*, there are at least four recordings of the *Landl Duo*[14]. As an example, listen to the following soldier's song about the hope for peace. Walcher starts singing the verse. In the second bar, Haid falls in with the *Überstimme*, while Walcher changes into the principal part below.

The song lyrics of AV 11 and an English translation of them read:

I can hear big bullets whizzing by,	*Große Kügerl hör ich sausen,*
but small ones even more.	*aber kleine noch viel mehr!*
God in heaven, he shall have mercy.	*Gott im Himmel, der soll sich erbarmen,*
Oh, if only there were peace at last.	*so dass nur einmal Frieden wär!*
God in heaven, he shall have mercy.	*Gott im Himmel, der soll sich erbarmen,*
Oh, if only there were peace at last.	*so dass nur einmal Frieden wär!*

12 The *Landl Quartett* also performed as a trio or duo, and sometimes substitutes helped out.

13 For a general introduction of Alpine multipart singing see e.g. Haid 2011, Deutsch 2017, Derschmidt 2000, and Fritz 1988.

14 Even the *Landl Duo* performed with different line-ups. There are two recordings with Walcher and Haid and two with Walcher and Hauer.

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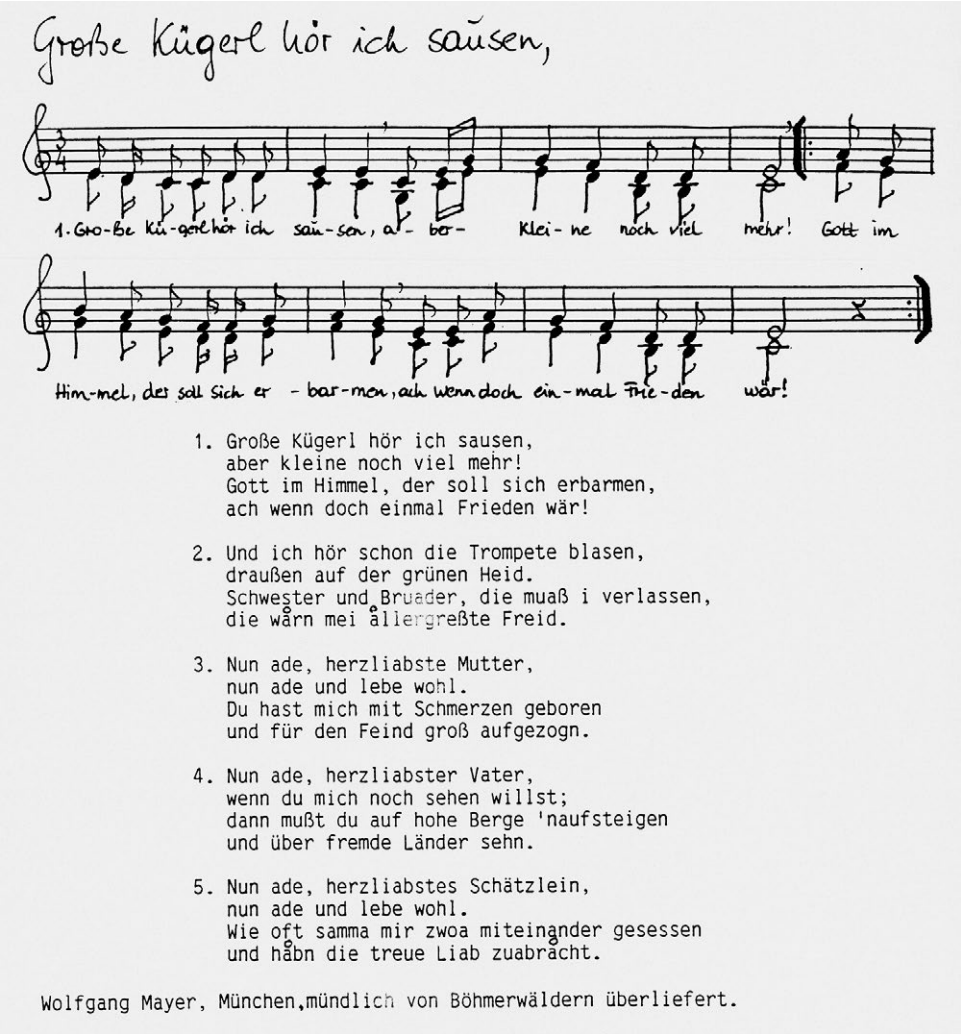

Fig. 1 Notation of the music and lyrics of the song "Große Kügerl hör ich sausen" (I can hear big bullets whizzing by) by Wolfgang Mayer (Munich) from the oral tradition in Bohemian Forests (Draxler and Monitzer-Pimeshofer 1991, 24; AV 11).

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Fig. 2 The *Landl Quartett* singing at the 9th Hauser Sängertreffen (Hauser Singers Meeting) in Haus im Ennstal (1985). From left: Norbert Hauer, Maria Walcher, Gerlinde Haid, Markus Stieldorf (Haid [No year], Sign. ÖN 21-(1)-3,1 AÖV/ÖNB).

And I can already hear the trumpet blowing,
out on the green heath.
Sister and brother, I must leave them.
They were my greatest joy.
Sister and brother, I must leave them.
They were my greatest joy.

Und ich hör schon die Trompete blasen,
Draußen auf der grünen Heid.
Schwester und Bruader, die muaß i verlassn,
Die wårn mei ållergreßte Freid.
Schwester und Bruader, die muaß i verlassn,
Die wårn mei ållergreßte Freid.

Now goodbye, dearest mother,
now goodbye and farewell.
You gave birth to me with pain,
and brought me up for the enemy.
You gave birth to me with pain,
and brought me up for the enemy.

Nun ade, herzliabste Mutter,
Nun ade und lebe wohl.
Du håst mich mit Schmerzen geboren
Und für den Feind groß aufgezogn.
Du håst mich mit Schmerzen geboren
Und für den Feind groß aufgezogn.

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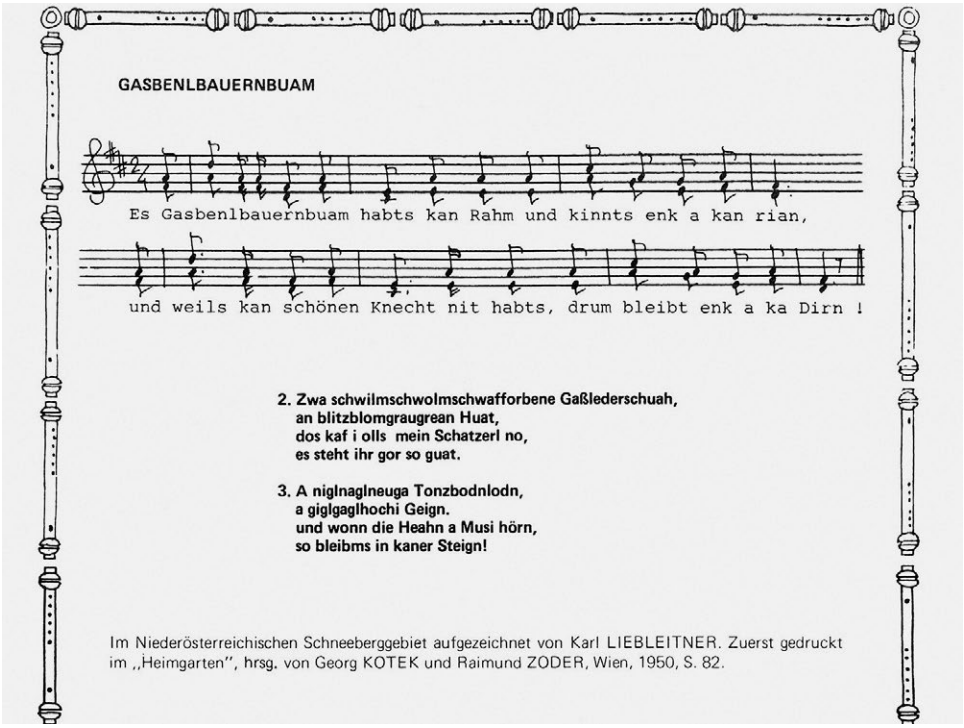

Fig. 3 Notation of the music and lyrics for the song "Gasbenlbauernbuam" (You goatdung-farmer boys, Haid and Haid 1981, 32; AV 12).

When visiting the folk song archives at Fuhrmannsgasse 18a in Vienna sometime in 1980, Hauer found Haid and Walcher singing, and he spontaneously joined them. He often acts on impulse, be it in teaching or performing. He also enjoys weaving in improvisational elements and perfected the art of reading the words to songs from Walcher's and Haid's lips. Hauer sang the third part. Singing this harmony part requires a sensitive as well as a highly practiced ear. Haid described singing traditional folk songs "as a form of musical communication which consists of listening and reacting" rather than "as learning voice leading by heart" (Haid, G. 2011, 153).

The four-part choral singing of the *Landl Quartett* was considered the most "representative" formation. In this context, they did not want to commit themselves to fixed arrangements; according to Haid, they sang *spontane Mehrstimmigkeit* (spontaneous multipart [music]) (Haid, G. 1985, 460). Stieldorf usually sang the fourth part, a bass-part called the *Funktionsbass* or *Schusterbass* ("functional bass" or "cobbler's" bass). This lowest fundamental part accompanies the upper voices and focuses on the main tone of the underlying harmonies, mainly tonic and dominant. Stieldorf often entered at the end of the verse or in the repetition of a phrase. Hauer and Walcher call him a calm anchor who offered energetic balance, including in terms of gender.

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I take as an example a rare recording of the *Landl Quartett* during field research (see Figure 3, AV 12, and the transcription of the lyrics and their translation into English below). Walcher begins singing the upper part, and Haid joins in in the second bar with a lower second part, which is actually the principal part. In the third bar, Hauer begins harmonizing loudly. He spontaneously adds an improvised "doodle-doo" in the fourth bar of the second verse, which causes laughter among the audience. Stieldorf begins singing the bass in the chorus of the second verse.

You goatdung-farmer boys have no cream and cannot stir any, and because you don't have a handsome farmhand, no maid stays. Hodari hodara hodareiduljo …	*Es Goaßbedlbauernbuam håbts kan Rahm* *und kinnts enk a koan riahn,* *und weils koan schenen Knecht net håbts,* *drum bleibt enk a koa Dirn!* *Hodari hodara hodareiduljo …*
A new dancefloor plank, and a high fiddle, and when the chickens hear some music, they stay in no crate. Hodari hodara hodareiduljo …	*A niglnoglneicha Tånzbodnlådn,* *und a giglgaglhochi Geign* *und wånn die Hean a Musi hörn,* *då bleibns in koana Steign.* *Hodari hodara hodareiduljo …*
Two swallowtail-coloured goatskin shoes, and a lightning blue-green hat. I'll buy it all for my darling, it suits her so well. Hodari hodara hodareiduljo …	*Zwoa schwilmschwoafschwoaffårbene Goaß-lederschuach* *und an blitzblaun blaugrean Huat.* *Dås kaf I ois mein Schatzele* *dås steht ihr går so guad.* *Hodari hodara hodareiduljo …*

According to the interviewees, vocal balance or a perfect sound was not the goal. Besides conveying content, the intention was to have fun. Compared to later years, a lot of rehearsal work was invested in studying the songs of the song booklet titled *Weil ma arm san* (Haid and Haid 1981), a basic repertoire, though rehearsals were in general rare and tended to resemble social gatherings among friends with lots of laughing and drinking. The *Landl Quartett* also preferred a sociable sing-along to a concert with its associated conventions. This preference of socializing and the group's loose approach to formalized rehearsals and stage performances can be seen as characteristic of the folk music revival movement of the 1970s and 1980s, as Owe Ronström writes: "The focus was upon the process and not the product… The key words were active, living, participation" (Ronström 1998, 40).

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4. Repertoire and singing in a folk revival context

As in many other European countries in the 1970s, several musicians in Austria were influenced by the Anglo-American folk and German singer-songwriter movements and began drawing on their own traditional music culture and dialect as well as referring to older sources, often with a social-critical focus. For example, there were groups such as *Dreschflegel* with its "defiant" Austrian folk songs.[15] The Tyrolian folklorist and writer Hans Haid (1938–2019), the husband of Gerlinde Haid, was among other things, the initiator of the International Folk Festival in Eggenburg in 1978, where singer-songwriters such as Martin Auer (*1951) and Sigi Maron (1944–2016), folk-music "natives" such as Alois Blamberger (1912–1982) and young tradition-oriented folk musicians such as Hermann Härtel (*1949), Rudolf Pietsch, and Sepp Gmasz (*1949) met one another (Haid, H. 1978).

While some groups from 1980 onwards turned their interest to experimenting with and fusing folk music with rock, jazz, and world music under the term *Neue Volksmusik* (new folk music) from a distancing point of view (Weber 2014, 63), others based their repertoire and practice on "living" tradition, fieldwork, and historical resources (Morgenstern 2017b, 271). The protagonists of this paper, who also often did their own research, intended to break with negative connotated forms such as *Volksmusikpflege*, folklorism, and *Volkstümliche Musik* (commercialized folk music) (Morgenstern 2017a, 37).

Volksmusikpflege, an Austrian-Bavarian movement of the 20th century that literally "cared" for folk music, led to musical standardization, reglementation, and clichés (for an overview, see Morgenstern 2017b). Haid, for example, criticized the extremely popular use of *enge Dreistimmigkeit* (tight and parallel three-part harmony) (for an overview, see e. g. Deutsch 2017, 300), stage performances without statements, and songs proclaiming an intact world. However, having taken over the leadership of the newly reorganized major folk music documentation and *Pflege* institution during the revival movement in 1976, Haid did not break with convention; instead, she slightly directed the tasks of *Volksmusikpflege* towards, as she called it, a radical and progressive innovatory *Volksmusikpflege*: "But then there is the innovative cultivation of folk music, which from the outset strives for renewal. I have described it as radical and progressive. Radical, meaning oriented towards the roots, i. e. tradition; and progressive, meaning aimed at survival in the future" (*Dann gibt es aber die innovatorische Volksmusikpflege, die von vornherein und unbedingt die Erneuerung anstrebt. Ich habe sie als radikal und progressiv bezeichnet. Radikal, das heißt, an den Wurzeln orientiert, also an der Tradition; progressiv, das heißt, auf ein Fortleben in der Zukunft gerichtet*, Haid,

15 LP, *Der Dreschflegel: Aufsässige Volkslieder aus Österreich* (The Flail: Rebellious Folk Songs from Austria) Auer, Honold, Tinsobin 1978). Their group's program "Aufsässige Volkslieder aus Österreich" (Rebellious Folk Songs from Austria) was performed for two weeks in Vienna in 1977. Christiane Fennesz-Juhasz wrote about the relationship of critical Austrian songwriters to traditional folk music in the 1970s and 1980s (Juhasz 1994, 100–109).

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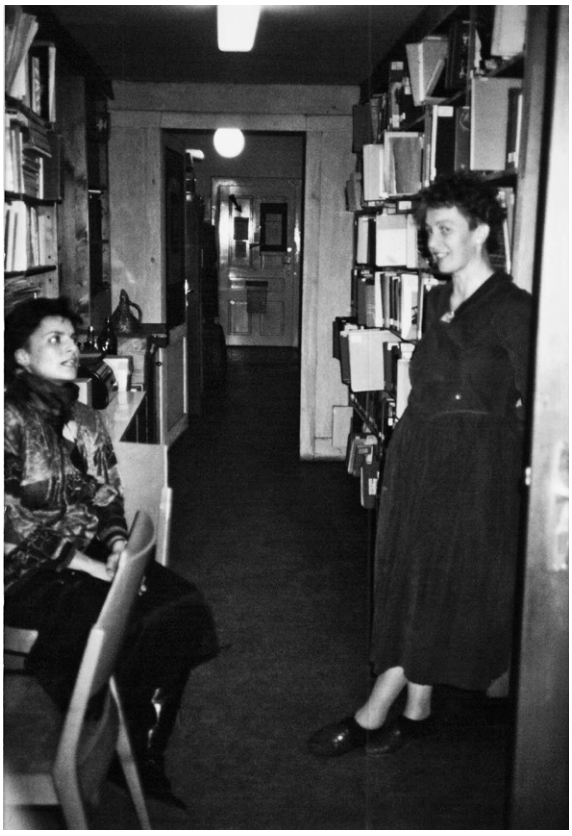

Fig. 4 Maria Walcher and Gerlinde Haid at the Folk Song Society in Fuhrmannsgasse 18A, Vienna (Haid [No Year], Sign. ÖN 21-(1)-3,23).

G. 2014, 15). The innovative aspect of it "tried to understand the musicians and singers coming from the tradition as personalities in their whole life contexts and to set the whole 'musicianship' as a model" (*Versuch, die aus der Tradition kommenden Musikanten und Sänger als Persönlichkeiten in all ihren Lebenszusammenhängen zu verstehen und das gesamte ‚Musikantenwesen' zum Vorbild zu setzen*, Haid, G. 1985, 460) for modern folk music practice. The official framework for this process built the Austrian Folk Song Association, "burning souls" as Haid and her enthusiastic singing friends in the *Landl Quartett* mediated knowledge as well as practice (Ronström 1996, 10; Morgenstern 2017b, 278).

Like many figures and groups in folk revivals, the *Landl Quartett* found its repertoire in historical sources located in archives and via fieldwork. Very important were the manuscripts of the Lower Austrian folk-song collector Karl Liebleitner (1858–1942), which were a treasure trove of knowledge. Haid describes them as "short songs with pretty melodies, pointed lyrics, some full of humor, others full of sadness. Their polyphony and phrasing arose so naturally from our listening experiences that we hardly ever thought about right or wrong" (*kurze[r] Liedchen mit hübschen*

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Melodien, pointierten Texten, voll Humor die einen, voll Traurigkeit die anderen. Ihre Mehrstimmigkeit und ihre Phrasierung ergaben sich so selbstverständlich aus unseren Hörerfahrungen, dass wir kaum einmal über richtig oder falsch nachdachten, Haid, G. 2000, 10). At that time Liebleitner's manuscripts were held at the archives of the Austrian Folk Song Society,[16] thus easily accessible to Haid and Walcher, because they both worked there. Walcher, in particular, was deeply involved with the Lower Austrian songs, as she transcribed them from Kurrent script into a typewritten version. Those that appealed to them both — songs that offered a story and were suitable for music mediation — became part of their repertoire.

The second important way to generate repertoire was field research centered on folk music, which was increasingly carried out by Haid at the Austrian Folk Song Society. The aim of this qualitative research was to record the "authentic" traditional music in the repertoire and practice of a predefined cultural area with still "living traditions" (Ronström 1998, 40). Significant for the *Landl Quartett* was, for example, field research in the Tyrolian valley of Pitztal in 1981 (e. g. Haid and Walcher 1982a and 1982b, standing for all documents that can be found in the AÖV/ÖNB, see *Feldforschung Pitztal* 1981) and field research in Haus im Ennstal in 1983 (see *Feldforschung Ennstal 1983*). All four members of the group took part in these. Interestingly, one of the two existing records of the *Landl Quartett* was recorded during field work in an obviously convivial setting (see AV 12). According to Walcher, knowing songs was important in order to be able to sing with the informants. Ulrich Morgenstern notices the practice of acquiring the documented singing and playing practice for oneself among many European folk music researchers. He mentions Cecil Sharp (1859–1924) and Joseph Pommer (1845–1918), who sang together with their informants in order to elicit undocumented songs from them (Morgenstern 2017a, 36).

Creating new rhymes to existing melodies, contrafacts, and *Gstanzln* (quatrains) also played a dominant role for the *Landl Quartett*. Hauer recalls it being particularly pleasurable when one scored a hit with a spontaneous creation and elicited an emotional reaction. Thus, new verses were created for festive occasions such as birthdays, name-days or weddings. Haid in particular, often came up with suitable personal words and humorous rhymes. Conversely, the group sometimes provided melodies for special tuneless lyrics. For example, the *Landl Quartett* put a melody to Veronika Pasteiner's lyrics (see Figure 5). She was imprisoned in the women's prison in Schwarzau am Steinfeld, where Hauer later directed a choir. Singing with imprisoned people had a most lasting influence on him.

16 Today the Lower Austrian manuscripts are kept at the *Niederösterreichisches Volksliedarchiv der Volkskultur Niederösterreich*, the archives of the successor institution of the former Lower Austrian Folk Song Society, located at the *Niederösterreichische Landesbibliothek* (Lower Austrian State-Library) in St. Pölten (for an overview see Gamsjäger 2019). The other part of the Liebleitner's manuscripts is at the Archives of the Austrian Folk Song Institute of the Austrian National Library in Vienna (see *Volksmusikdatenbank* …).

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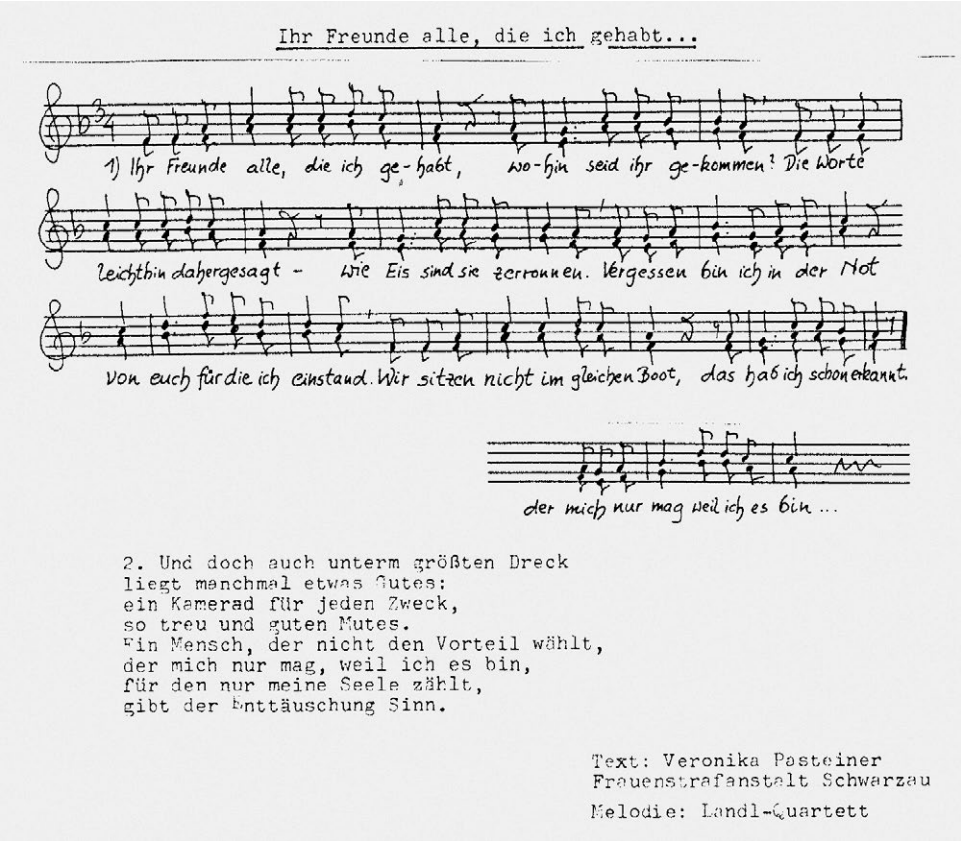

Fig. 5 Notation of the music and lyrics of the song "Ihr Freunde alle, die ich gehabt" (All you friends whom I have had, Haid [No Year], Sign. ÖN 21-(3)-1,16).

An English translation of the first stanza of the song reads:

All you friends whom I have had, where have you gone?
Words spoken lightly –
like ice they have melted away.
In the misery I am forgotten by you,
for whom I stood up.
We are not in the same boat,
I have already realized that.

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The *Landl Quartett* did not release any recordings but collaborated in the publication of the song booklet *Weil ma arm san* (Because we are poor, Haid and Haid 1981). It was presented in October 1981 in Neumarkt in Styria as part of the seminar "Regionale Wirtschaftsentwicklung durch Kooperation" (Regional Economic Development through Cooperation) sponsored by the Federal Chancellery. It was published by the *Initiative Mein Dorf* (Initiative My Village) in collaboration with the Austrian Folk Song Society, the *Internationales Dialekt Institut* (International Dialect Institute, or IDI), and the *Landl Quartett*. The head of the IDI and the My Village Initiative was Hans Haid. He positioned himself against centralism, multinational corporations, and mass tourism and started numerous initiatives dedicated to rural regional development and cultural and democratic grassroots activities. The My Village Initiative was dedicated to helping promote a village population's "own" culture in structurally weak areas in Austria. Field research, discussions, community evenings, and sociable singing-gatherings with a low-access threshold (called *Offene Singen*, or Open Singalongs), were all organized within this initiative.

In his song booklet-article, Hans Haid ascribes a socio-political significance to folk song, in which a "hidden-behavioural oppositional attitude" was to be read behind and between the lines of the lyrics (Haid, H. 1981, 8). He felt that people should recognize their own cultural roots, identify with them, and draw strength from them in order to raise their voices for their own rights and ultimately be able to develop autonomously, both economically and culturally. In contrast to this "manifesto", Gerlinde Haid introduced songs with more homey subtlety, each of them framed by illustrations of *Schwegelflöten* (see Figure 6). A *Schwegelflöte* is quite easy to play and can be found in rural, military, and also conservational contexts. The illustrated frame of *Schwegelflöten* became a symbol of Gerlinde Haid.

In keeping with the socio-political claim of the editors, the song booklet contained mainly "democratic folk songs" as Wolfgang Steinitz called them (Steinitz 1954). Steinitz himself collected songs of an oppositional character, songs that criticize rule or church, and songs from the perspective of (hard-) working but poor people with little social respect or protection, i. e. peasants, servants, soldiers, craftsmen, miners, emigrants, poachers — " 'Folk songs from the bottom': These were so to speak the 'authentic' songs, the songs of the ordinary people and their lives, with all their hardships and passions, their longing and defiance" (*‚Volkslieder von unten': Das waren sozusagen die ‚authentischen' Lieder, die Lieder der kleinen Leute und ihrer Lebenswelt, mit all ihren Nöten und Leidenschaften, ihrer Sehnsucht und Renitenz*, John 2006, 23). The *Landl Quartett* thus enhanced its focus on songs about women, the unemployed, drunkards, crooks, and robbers. The latter became especially interesting, with performances in prisons, which is addressed later in this paper.

According to Eckhard John, Steinitz's concept of folk song had a deep impact on the German folk movement of the 1970's (both in West and East Germany), corresponding with a general non-conformist attitude and protest songs. I believe Hauer is referring to this oppositional character when he speaks about "don't-shit-your-pants-stories" (*scheiß di ned an-Geschichten*, Walcher and Hauer 2021a). Consequently, the *Landl Quartett* even tried singing songs that were banned

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Fig. 6 The members of the *Landl Quartett* playing *Schwegelflöte*. From left: Norbert Hauer, Maria Walcher, Gerlinde Haid, Markus Stieldorf (Haid [No year], Sign. ÖN 21-(3)-3,10 AÖV/ÖNB).

on grounds of immorality, such as ambiguous erotic songs. However, probably because the songs in *Weil ma arm san* booklet were intended to be suitable for social singing and sing-alongs, the song selection and repertoire was generally not too provocative and often combined bitter social reality with (gallows) humor.

5. Let's call it Landl—music mediation and looking between the lines

The quartet was named after the *Landl*, a colloquial expression for the *Landesgericht für Strafsachen Wien* (Vienna Regional Court for Criminal Cases), where the singers had one of their first performances. Richard Wasicky (*1936), a Protestant prison chaplain, invited them to sing at a Christmas party at the *Landl* in 1980. Haid wrote about the name "as a flirtatious wordplay between a rural-moral idyll [*Landl* is also a belittled version of the 'countryside'], and the urban-immoral fall of man (*als kokettes Spiel zwischen ländlich-sittlicher Idylle und städtisch-unsittlichem Sündenfall*, Haid, G. 2000, 9). This quotation not only refers to the quartet's humor; it also tells something about the uninhibited, unusually political approach to the repertoire

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and its playful and unserious demeanor in contrast to other folk music singing groups at the time, which were often conserving and/or conservative and could be assigned with the concept of *Volksmusikpflege*.

With songs about robbers, crooks, and poachers and songs indicating "compensatory justice", the *Landl Quartett* wished to address the audience in prisons at eye level, rather than moralize or lecture to it. The imprisoned people themselves preferred sentimental and melancholic songs (Haid, G. 2000), which were also included. From 1990 to 1995, these initially rather informal visits became an official project, titled *Musik und Poesie in Justizanstalten* (Music and Poetry in Prisons), of the Austrian Folk Song Society and the *Verein Österreichische DialektautorInnen und Archive* (Association of Austrian Dialect Authors and Archives), subsidized by the Federal Ministry for Education and Arts. Letters to Haid testify that the quartet did indeed touch imprisoned people, i. e. by meeting them without prejudice or through songs that awakened faith and memories (Correspondence in Haid [No year], ÖN 21-(2)-2,2–4, AÖV/ÖNB): "I just wanted to say thank you to you and your friends because, by remembering this hour, you helped me to get through Christmas" (*ich wollte mich nur recht herzlich bei Ihnen und Ihren Freunden bedanken, denn Sie haben mir geholfen, in Erinnerung an diese Stunde Weihnachten zu überstehen*, G. K. to Gerlinde Haid on 3 March 1985, Haid [No year], ÖN 21-(2)-2,4, AÖV/ÖNB).

But overall, these performances seem to have had a more lasting effect on the singers, musicians, and authors who performed under hitherto unknown conditions (Walcher 2000). Hauer, for example, profited from the sincere reactions he received there.

The founding of the *Landl Quartett* also coincides with the Austrian socialist period of government of Bruno Kreisky and Fred Sinowatz. Sinowatz served as Federal Minister for Education and Arts from 1971 to 1983 and later also as Chancellor of Austria. Among the achievements of his term in office were the cultural policy measures from 1975 onwards that aimed to increase the population's participation in cultural events (BKU 1975, 34–38). Art and cultural education projects were particularly promoted. A special cultural service office (*Österreichisches Kulturservice*) was set up in 1977 to facilitate encounters between artists and the public (Rausch 2003, BKU 1975, 35). Engagement agreements and letters of response from schools indicate that the *Landl Quartett*, in cooperation with Hans Haid, was involved in these subsidized programs. The *Landl Quartett* also sang at senior living facilities, performed at singers' meetings and communal sing-alongs, enhanced official occasions and celebrations, and had countless spontaneous engagements. The group mainly wanted to involve audiences, no matter whether they sang on a stage or not. It fostered a convivial setting in order to reduce inhibitions about joining in. A similar open form is the *Musikantenstammtisch* (musicians' regular table), which is a regular musical meeting place in a pub for free singing and music making—a tradition that became established in Austria in the early 1980s and which at the time served to promote a common repertoire (e. g. Haid, G. 2014; Morgenstern 2017a, 37).

The artistic, educational, and communicative practise of *Musikvermittlung* is the most important feature characterizing the *Landl Quartett*, yet finding the "right" English term for it is a difficult task. Depending on the context, it could be called music mediation (a literal translation), music

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education, transmission (Hemetek et al. 2015), or community music (i.e. Bánffy-Hall and Hill 2017). Sarah Chaker and Axel Petri-Preis describe current attempts at a definition of *Musikvermittlung* and make the case in their publication *Turning up!* for maintaining the German term (Chaker and Petri-Preis 2022, 15–17). Because Walcher and Hauer categorize the *Landl Quartett* as a group that mediates and paraphrase it with the function of a pivot or a hinge, I shall use the literal translation "music mediation". As I understand their paraphrase, it is not only about mediating between an audience and folk songs; it is also about connecting people with their tradition, with their individual inner strength, and among themselves as a community and group. By its own account, the *Landl Quartett*, had no pedagogical idea, meaning the members did not wish to teach in a teacher-student sort of way (and this is one reason why I have not used the term "music education"). Instead, they shared their songs and knowledge about songs and encouraged audiences in an entertaining way to participate in the singing and reflect. Walcher und Hauer regard singing as an immediate, elementary means of expression, for example, to express joy or to cope with problems more easily. Ernst Klusen speaks of "self-affirmation through self-activation" (*Selbstbestätigung durch Selbstbetätigung*, Klusen 1985, 49). For him, singing in a community has a strong functional character and enables emotional identification—the individual identifies with the song, its content, and also with the other singers and the community. Haid was of same opinion when she described self-activity as a distinguishing quality of "authentic" folk music practice (Haid, G. 1978, 126 and 1983, 37).

For this purpose, the *Landl Quartett* chose song forms that especially encouraged the audience involvement, even if audience members were unfamiliar with the lyrics. Examples include songs with chorus, the repetition of phrases, and yodeling.

For their participative events, communal evenings, and singalongs, the quartet asked people to conntribute their own songs. The journalist Robert Holzhammer wrote in a newspaper about a communal evening in 1982 in Eggenstall, Tyrol:

The evenings of the My Village Initiative have a fascination of their own: Here, it is not musicians offering folk music presented in perfection to a devoutly listening audience, but here the listeners themselves sing along and also contribute their own songs. This creates a new form of homeland-consciousness, a pride in one's own tradition that mainly serves the local people and does not simply remain as a tourist attraction.

Die Abende der ‚Initiative Mein Dorf' haben eine eigene Faszination: Hier bieten nicht Musiker Volksmusik, die perfektioniert einem andächtig lauschenden Publikum dargeboten wird, sondern hier singen die Zuhörer selbst mit und bringen auch ihr eigenes Liedgut ein. Dadurch bildet sich eine neue Form von Heimatbewußtsein, ein Stolz auf die eigene Tradition, die hauptsächlich dem Einheimischen dient und nicht nur als Fremdenverkehrsattraktion übrigbleibt. (Holzhammer 1982)

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In addition, the *Landl Quartett* searched the archives for regional songs, which they then "brought back" to the people. This is reminiscent of statements by the Styrian poet Peter Rosegger (1843–1918) and the English folk song collector Cecil Sharp (Morgenstern 2017a, 29). However, Gerlinde Haid and her colleagues were not concerned with the purification of a regional repertoire but rather with a way of identifying with one's own homeland through songs. This reflection on one's own culture was meant to strengthen self-confidence and empower communities (Haid, G. 1985, 463). In any case, it was the experts from the city who "dug up" valuable objects, singled them out according to aesthetic or political preferences, and mediated the appropriate knowledge (Ronström 1996, 7).

According to Walcher and Hauer, Haid had the strongest idea of how and what she wanted to sing. She was well prepared for each performance. She created song sheets for the audience that were objective as well as place- and person-oriented, which the participants could take home. Both the song sheets and short song explanations were exemplary and formative for Hauer's music-mediation methods. Each song was accompanied by a comment, which could include explanations about the collectors, the sources, and the places where the song was found. However, what was new was not only the additional historical interpretation of the lyrics but also the content's transferability to the present and its relation to a social reality. This opened the lyrics to a different perspective and identification and created space for political messages. Hauer mentioned that they wanted to find answers to current issues in traditional songs.

These comments were a fundamental part of the *Landl Quartett*'s performances. Looking back, Hauer and Walcher jokingly said that the songs themselves were not that important. The following conversation can be heard during the presentation of the song "Und I trau mi net eini" (And I don't dare to enter) in 1982 (see AV 13):

GH: Hans Haid has already said that we do research not only in the Pitztal [valley], but also in the Waldviertel [region]. And one of the people who often helps us is Norbert. We also met him here today, quite surprisingly.
MW: By chance! [laughs]
GH: Now, because there are three of us today, we would like to sing you a song from the Waldviertel, a song about the famous robber and gang leader Grasl. It is said that he stole from the rich to give to the poor, which is probably not true, but it would be so nice.
NH: Like the landlord [he and the audience laugh].

GH: *Der Hans Haid hat zuerst schon gesagt, dass wir nicht nur im Pitztal forschen, sondern auch im Waldviertel. Und einer, der uns dabei sehr oft hilft, das ist der Norbert. Den haben wir heute da auch getroffen. Ganz überraschenderweise.*
MW: *Zufällig! [Lacht]*
GH: *Jetzt möchten wir euch, weil wir heute zu dritt sind, ein Lied vorsingen, aus dem Waldviertel. Und zwar ist das ein Lied von dem berühmten Räuberhauptmann Grasl. Von dem erzählt man, dass er die Reichen bestohlen hat, um die Armen zu beschenken. Was vermutlich nicht stimmt, aber es wär' halt so schön.*
NH: *Wie der Wirt [er und das Publikum lacht].*

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In reading between the lines and in interpreting lyrics, the *Landl Quartett* was influenced by contemporaries such as the historian Michael Mitterauer (1937–2022) and his book series *Damit es nicht verlorengeht …* (*Lest We Forget*, Müller 2007) and the sociologist Roland Girtler (*1941). While Mitterauer researched economic and social history based on the everyday knowledge of older people in the form of personal life stories, Girtler examined social fringe groups such as prostitutes and robbers and the connotations of expressions in their languages.

Grete Meixner-Puchegger, a participant in a singing workshop, reported positively about the experience in the journal of the organizing association (see Figure 7). Her report presumably concerns the two-day singing workshop for the Austrian Association for Mountain Farmers and Small Farmers (now the *Österreichische Berg- und Kleinbäuer_innen Vereinigung, ÖBV-Via Campesina Austria*) organized by Toni Rohrmoser, which took place in November 1981 in Marbach am Walde, a village in Lower Austria. Among other things, she pointed out the mediation method and the "rural" way of singing:

At this weekend we learned many new folk songs and discussed their lyrics. Thus we learned how to "read between the lines" or Gerlinde Haid explained the connections and how they arose. What I also liked about singing was that we did not learn to sing professionally, instead, we learned to sing the way people in the countryside do when they get together.

Und wir lernten an diesem Wochenende viele neue Volkslieder und diskutierten zwischendurch über die Texte. Dadurch lernten wir ‚zwischen den Zeilen zu lesen' oder Frau Haid erklärte uns die Zusammenhänge und wie sie entstanden. Was mir am Singen auch gefiel war, daß wir nicht lernten professionell zu singen, sondern so wie die Leute am Land singen, wenn sie zusammenkommen. (Meixner-Puchegger 1981 and Figure 7)

What is interesting in this context is the mediated "imperfect" singing aesthetic, which fits the *Landl Quartett*'s own sound. Joy and "usability take(s) precedence over beauty" (Klusen 1985,45).[17] Furthermore, it harmonizes with the folk music revivalist aim that folk traditions should leave the stage to become a part of everyday life again (Ronström 1996, 11).

In my opinion, the goal of the *Landl Quartett* in their whole appearance, including songs and commentaries, was not only to entertain, but to be primarily enlightening and communicative. Thus their appearance definitely had a functional character quite similar to that of the critical songwriters' generation of the 1980s, but less provocative (Juhasz 1994, 124–148).

17 According to Ulrich Morgenstern, this is one popular prejudice about folk music (see the paragraph "Volksmusik ist primär funktional, nicht ästhetisch intendiert" in Morgenstern 2014, 183–186). Morgenstern rejects Klusen's idea of the *Irrelevanz des Ästhetischen* (irrelevance of the aesthetic).

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Bericht 8

SINGWOCHENENDE

GRETE MEIXNER-PUCHEGGER

Ich war Anfang November dieses Jahres beim Singwochenende der ÖBV in Marbach/Walde.

Is Grundanliegen von Frau Haid, die dieses Wochenende leitete, ist es, Lieder, die mit dem Leben zu tun haben, zu entdecken, zu fördern und mit den Leuten zu singen.

Schade fand ich, daß von den ca. 2o Teilnehmern nur eine geringe Zahl Bauern waren.

Nach einer guten Jause am Anfang tauschten wir unsere Erwartungen an das Wochenende aus. Mir fiel auf, daß die Erwartungen sehr unterschiedlich waren; sie gingen von: ich bin einfach mitgefahren, weil ich angesprochen wurde, über: ich singe gern, bis: ich möchte ern kritische Lieder lernen, ihre Hintergründe und Entstehungsgeschichte.

Und wir lernten an diesem Wochenende viele neue Volkslieder und diskutierten zwischendurch über die Texte. Dadurch lernten wir "zwischen den Zeilen zu lesen" oder Frau Haid erklärte uns die Zusammenhänge und wie sie entstanden.

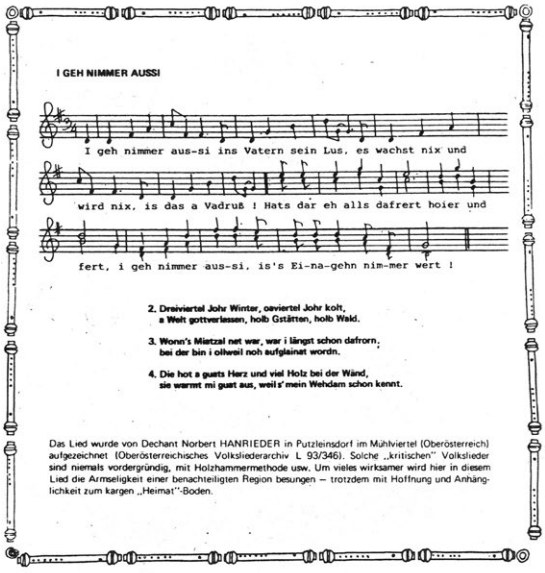
Was mir am Singen auch gefiel war, daß wir nicht lernten professionell zu singen, sondern so wie die Leute am Land singen, wenn sie zusammenkommen.

Für den Samstag abend hatte Rohrmoser Toni die Bevölkerung von Marbach und Umgebung zu einem gemeinsamen Singabend eingeladen. Es kamen im Endeffekt leider weniger als wir erwartet hatten (Wie wir im Nachhinein erfuhren, war ein Hauptgrund neben dem schlechten Wetter die"Löwinger-Bühne" im Fernsehen) Trotzdem wurde es ein schöner Abend, an dem wir auch wieder von den ortsansässigen Leuten neue Volkslieder lernten.

Auch ein Dichter von Marbach war unter uns, der köstliche Gedichte vortrug.

Auf Grund dieses Wochenendes kann ich sagen, daß ich es gut finde, daß die ÖBV neben dem Diskutieren der Situation und Agrarpolitik die Basiskultur, die Alltagskultur, die Kultur der Vielen unter der ländlichen Bevölkerung fördert und weckt, denn meiner Meinung nach trägt eine solche Kultur wesentlich zum Selbstbewußtsein der Leute bei.

Als kleine Köstprobe hier ein Lied aus dem Liederheft "Weil ma oam san" (kann bei der ÖBV bestellt werden)



I GEH NIMMER AUSSI

I geh nimmer aus-si ins Vatern sein Lus, es wachst nix und wird nix, is das a Vadruß ! Hats dar eh alls dafrert hoier und fert, i geh nimmer aus-si, is's Ei-na-gehn nim-mer wert !

2. Dreiviertel Johr Winter, oaviertel Johr kolt,
a Welt gottverlassen, holb Gstärten, holb Wald.

3. Wonn's Mietzal net war, war i längst schon dafrorn;
bei der bin i ollweil noh aufglainat wordn.

4. Die hot a guets Herz und viel Holz bei der Wänd,
sie warmt mi gust aus, weil s' mein Wehdam schon kennt.

Das Lied wurde von Dechant Norbert HANRIEDER in Putzleinsdorf im Mühlviertel (Oberösterreich) aufgezeichnet (Oberösterreichisches Volksliederarchiv L 93/346). Solche „kritischen" Volkslieder sind niemals vordergründig, mit Holzhammermethode usw. Um vieles wirksamer wird hier in diesem Lied die Armseligkeit einer benachteiligten Region besungen – trotzdem mit Hoffnung und Anhänglichkeit zum kargen „Heimat"-Boden.

10

Fig. 7 Report on a weekend singing workshop in 1981 (Meixner-Puchegger 1982).

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6. What remains?

From the early 1980s onward, the *Landl Quartett* presented and shared its repertoire not only at its performances but also as music mediators at singers' and musicians' camps. Thus the quartet's members had a lasting influence on the repertoire of singers and groups such as the *Sommereiner Viergesang*[18] and the *Stifta Geigenmusi*[19], who still sing the *Landl Quartett* songs today. Rosi Froschauer (*1956), the flutist of *Stifta Geigenmusi*, compares her group's first contact with the *Landl Quartett* to the liberating pop of a champagne cork. She was inspired and impressed by the often-ambiguous lyrics, the refreshingly audacious performance, and the unconventional joyful way of singing. Some of the *Landl Quartett*'s songs are still published in songbooks today and thus disseminated (e.g. Draxler and Niemeczek 2019). Likewise, its music-mediation ideas are carried on by its former members, the institutions in which they have worked, and inspired colleagues, friends, and students (e.g. Evelyn Fink-Mennel, *1972).

Inspired by socio-political and folk revival movements, the *Landl Quartett* tried to break with the convention of how folk music should sound and how it should be performed in the context of the then-common "domesticating" and (seemingly) apolitical practice of *Volksmusikpflege* (Haid, G. 1983, 37). There existed precise ideas about what could be sung and how (Haid, G. 1988, 2). On the contrary, the *Landl Quartett* valued context, discussion, lyrics corresponding to a social reality, spontaneity, and just-letting-it-loose more highly than a perfect sound or a unique arrangement. And above all, the members of the *Landl Quartett* were close friends in the middle of a lively Viennese and Lower Austrian alternative folk music scene, of which many humorous anecdotes are still told today.

Nowadays, it is more the individual members of the *Landl Quartett* that are remembered than the group itself: Gerlinde Haid as the scholar, Norbert Hauer as the mediator, Maria Walcher as the head of folk tradition-saving institutions. Manfred Stieldorf probably participated in the revival mostly to meet friends, with less of an interest in the revival itself (Ronström 1996, 16). One explanation for the relative oblivion of the *Landl Quartett* could be that there are no published sound documents of the quartet. This could have to do with the (cultivated) lack of sound perfection (Haid, G. 1988, 2). More likely, however, the group had no inclination towards marketing or professionalization. Media-friendly and commercial folk music was precisely what they did not want to do.

Heaving read the end of the *Einführung in die Volksmusik Österreichs* (Introduction to Austrian Folk Music) lecture transcript by Gerlinde Haid at the Institute for Folklore Studies at the Univer-

18 The Lower Austrian quartet *Sommereiner Viergesang* consisted of Anni Hartl (soprano), Gabi Rupp (alto), Anton Holzmann (tenor), and Alfred Tatzber (bass). They came together in the early 1990s at a *Großrussbacher Jugendsingwoche*, a summer singing camp for young people, where they later also worked as teachers.

19 *Stifta Geigenmusi* is a Lower Austrian (Stift Ardagger) folk music ensemble founded in 1973. The ensemble came into contact with the *Landl Quartett* and its repertoire at the *Großrussbacher Musikantenwoche* summer music camp in the early 1980s through its member Toni Distelberger (*1963), who occasionally accompanied Gerlinde Haid and Maria Walcher on the zither.

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sity of Vienna from 1983/1984, it seems as if the *Landl Quartett* served above all a kind of model or experimental framework for her attempts to establish a folk music practice that she and her environment perceived as modern and authentic, somewhere between *Volksmusikpflege* and folk revival:

1) The general unease with the current cultural scene gives rise to a call for "alternative forms". People are trying to get away from elaborate, prestige-laden event culture; they want to close the gap between artist and audience (see the catalog of cultural policy measures).[20] Favorable conditions for this could be found in traditional folk music, where this gap never existed.

1) Aus dem allgemeinen Unbehagen am gegenwärtigen Kulturbetrieb entsteht der Ruf nach „alternativen Formen". Man bemüht sich, wegzukommen von der aufwendigen, prestigebeladenen Veranstaltungskultur, man möchte die Kluft zwischen Künstler und Publikum wieder schließen (vgl. den kulturpolitischen Maßnahmenkatalog). Günstige Voraussetzungen dafür wären in der traditionellen Volksmusik zu finden, wo diese Kluft nie bestanden hat.

2) The critical youth discover their own language. The dialect wave, songwriters, the folk movement. Turning away from foreign-language folklore and turning towards German-language folk songs. And particularly of interest is the text and its relation to social reality (cf. Wolfgang Steinitz, *German Folk Songs of Democratic Character*. Berlin, 1954).

2) Die kritische Jugend entdeckt ihre eigene Sprache. Dialektwelle, Liedermacher, Folk-Bewegung. Abkehr von der fremdsprachigen Folklore, Hinwendung zum deutschsprachigen Volkslied. Dabei interessiert vor allem auch der Text und sein Bezug zur sozialen Wirklichkeit (vgl. Wolfgang Steinitz: Deutsche Volkslieder demokratischen Charakters. Berlin, 1954)

3) The uneasiness with centralism, the rebellion against multinational corporations, against nuclear power plants, neutron bombs, etc. strengthen movements towards grassroots democracy, which are then necessarily linked to a new sense of the tasks of popular culture, e.g. the My Village Initiative.

3) Das Unbehagen am Zentralismus, die Auflehnung gegen Multinationale Konzerne, gegen Atomkraftwerke, Neutronenbombe usw. stärkt Bewegungen in Richtung Basisdemokratie, die dann notwendigerweise mit einem neuen Empfinden für die Aufgaben der Volkskultur verbunden sind, z. B. „Initiative Mein Dorf".

4) Some forms of folk music cultivation [*Volksmusikpflege*] are found to be ineffective. People are trying to orient themselves more closely to manifestations of "authentic" folk music. Away from complicated choral arrangements towards small groups. Away from concert

4) Gewisse Formen der Volksmusikpflege werden als unwirksam empfunden. Man versucht, sich enger an den Erscheinungsformen der authentischen Volksmusik zu orientieren. Weg von komplizierten Chorsätzen, hin zur kleinen Gruppe. Weg vom Konzertbetreib, hin zu geselligen Formen

20 BKU 1975.

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performances towards sociable, open performance forms (such as *Musikantenstammtisch* and sing-alongs). A trend towards spontaneous music-making and improvisation based on the example of practicing musicians. The creation of an atmosphere that is as open as possible (open singing, open dancing). They are trying to build a scene in which the musician is neither an idealist nor a commercial factor, but a skilled craftsman who plays because he is needed, and is paid for it.

(Hoangascht, Musikantenstammtisch). Trend zum spontanen Musizieren und Improvisieren nach dem Vorbild praktizierender Musikanten. Schaffen einer möglichst offenen Atmosphäre (offenes Singen, offenes Tanzen). Man versucht, eine Szene aufzubauen, in der der Musikant weder ein Idealist, noch ein kommerzieller Faktor ist, sondern ein gelernter Handwerker, der spielt, weil er gebraucht wird, und dafür auch bezahlt wird. (Haid 1983, 37–38)

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Antonis Ververis

"We don't want to sound like a classical choir"

Issues of vocal timbre and agency in traditional vocal ensembles of Greece

Abstract

"Traditional choirs," choral ensembles specializing in traditional music, emerged in Greece in the late 1930s with the establishment of the Greek Radio Ensemble of Traditional Music, the aim of which was to perform traditional songs in a more 'authentic' way than a western-style choir of that time would have. Under the great influence of state radio (and later television) in the decades that followed, traditional choirs were established throughout Greece, reproducing the practices this ensemble introduced. During the past decade, a new trend has emerged with the formation of 'traditional vocal ensembles'. These ensembles aim at a wider and less specialized audience and function more as community music ensembles concentrating on the joys of collective musicking and singing rather than pursuing authenticity. The present study investigates the case of three traditional vocal ensembles that follow this trend, focusing their repertoire on traditional music. The aim of this study was to examine aesthetic and ideological issues related to the performance and re-creation of oral traditions outside their physical context, issues of vocal technique and timbre, as well as issues of music education (use of score, teaching methods) and performance (staging and the conductor's role). With regards to vocal technique, the directors of the ensembles under study seemed to focus their teaching on how these would not sound like a classical or western choir, with a preference for slightly nasal singing, almost exclusively in the lower register of the voice. Several other points that emerged from the present research concerned: (a) the preference for performing a cappella, (b) the preference for multi-part singing, even in cases of songs whose original forms are monophonic, and (c) the predominance of the drone (isokràtima) as the most popular arrangement technique, even in the cases of songs which are not normally performed with a drone.

1. Introduction

Traditional choirs emerged in Greece in the late 1930s with the establishment of the Greek Radio Ensemble of Traditional Music, the aim of which was to perform traditional songs in a more

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'authentic' way than a western-style choir of that time. As de Quadros (2019, 42) pointed out, "the fostering of identity is a central concern of choirs, particularly those that stand outside the traditional performance of classical music in conventional settings". Soon, under the great influence of state radio, ensembles of this type—usually identified by the term *paradosiaki chorodia* (traditional choir)—were established throughout the country.

In the mid-1990s, a new type of ensemble also appeared, aiming at a more specialized 'research-informed' performance of traditional music. Due to their more 'academic' orientation, these ensembles did not gain the same popularity as traditional choirs. This is not surprising since the issue of authenticity regarding the performance of traditional music does not seem to concern the average amateur singer who wants to join a vocal ensemble (Gkantzou 2022). Various researchers have also commented on young people's—especially of those who have grown up in urban regions—limited contact with traditional music (see, for example, Mavroidis 1995).

As ethnochoreologist Irene Loutzaki reflected, how can a young person who grew up listening and dancing to hip hop music relate to a Thracian *baidouska*? (Rovatsou 2013). In his classic work, *An Essay on the Greek Folk Song*, Swiss musicologist Samuel Baud-Bovy (2007) posed the question of whether the musical practices he documented in the first edition of his book were still being practised in the mid-1980s, in a very different society than that of the people he had encountered in the Greek countryside half a century earlier.

Returning to the discussion about traditional vocal groups in Greece, a third trend emerged during the past decade, with the formation of 'traditional vocal ensembles'. Interestingly, the preference for the term 'vocal ensemble' instead of 'choir' seemed to be consistent and intentional as if members and directors wanted to distance themselves from a 'typical' choir, whether Western or traditional. Aiming at a wider and less specialized audience, compared to the more 'academic' groups mentioned above, these function more as community music ensembles concentrating on the joys of collective musicking and singing, rather than pursuing authenticity.

The present study investigates the case of three traditional vocal ensembles that follow this trend, focusing their repertoires on traditional music. The aim of this study was to examine issues related to the performance and re-creation of oral traditions outside their 'original' context. Are the members and directors of these groups aware of the limitations and difficulties of this undertaking? Does the approach they follow aim for a 'valid' reproduction of the sound one hears today in archival recordings? Or do they see traditional music as the basis of a new hybrid genre? To answer these questions, I focus on issues of vocal technique and timbre, arrangement techniques, as well as issues of music education (use of score, teaching methods) and performance (staging and the conductor's role). Finally, I examine the preference that all three directors show for the use of the term 'vocal ensemble' instead of 'choir'.

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2. *Background*

2.1 *Traditional choirs and vocal ensembles in Greece: "Is this a choir?"*

Traditional choirs, choral ensembles specializing in traditional music, emerged in Greece in the late 1930s, with the founding of the Greek Radio Ensemble of Traditional Music under the direction of musicologist Simon Karas (1903–1999). The aim of Karas' ensemble was to perform traditional songs from all over Greece more authentically than its western-style choir contemporaries. The ensemble consisted of chanters reading Byzantine notation to perform the songs in unison, accompanied by a five-member orchestra of traditional instruments: the qanun, oud, violin, clarinet, and lute. Interestingly, despite Karas' intention to avoid elements such as western harmonization and vocal timbre, which were alien to this traditional music, he, in fact, adopted specific practices that derived from western choral music (Angousis 2009). For example, the ensemble appeared on stage with the singers lined up in rows and the instrumentalists seated in front of them, while Karas conducted them with his back turned to the audience. Some criticism, expressed mainly after Karas' death, concerned the identical way in which songs from different regions were performed, as it ignored their unique local features (Angousis 2009; Kallimopoulou 2009), resulting in "a syncretic—and to an extent, homogenized—idiom" (Kallimopoulou 2009, 43). The case of Kara's ensemble does not seem to differ much from similar efforts made in other countries. One such case was that of the "Kartuli Khoro" (Georgian Choir), the first professional 'ethnographic' choir in Georgia, which was founded by Lado (Vladimer) Aghniashvili in 1885. "While the Khoro's appearance", according to Bithell (2014, 577), "was hailed by some as a triumphant celebration of the nation's heritage, for others it was the beginning of an inevitable process of homogenization as regional nuances were lost".

Under the great influence of state radio (and later television) in the decades that followed, traditional choirs were established throughout Greece, reproducing the practices that Karas applied in his ensemble. It should be mentioned that a number of researchers have highlighted the exceptionally influential role that the twentieth-century state radio broadcasts played in the standardization of repertoire and practices regarding the performance of traditional and folk music in countries such as Turkey (Degirmenci 2006), Serbia (Vesić 2013), Mexico (Hayes 2000) and India (Fiol 2012), while Greece does not seem to be an exception. Apparently, the existence of a state music ensemble alone seems to be capable of influencing the practices that musicians adopt in that country. In neighboring Bulgaria, the case of the *Obrabotki* choral genre, which became popular from the 1950s onwards, mostly due to Filip Kutev's Bulgarian State Ensemble for Folk Song and Dance (Kirilov 2015), is indicative.

In the mid-1990s, a new type of ensemble also appeared in Greece, specializing in certain vocal traditions such as the multi-part singing traditions of Epirus. Despite their contribution, these ensembles, which approached traditional music in a more 'academic' way, never gained significant popularity, unlike 'traditional choirs' which, in the meantime, had started functioning more as

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'community ensembles'. During the past decade, the current trend emerged with the formation of 'traditional vocal ensembles', which aim at a wider and less specialized audience and function more as community music ensembles. A noteworthy fact is that these groups prefer the term 'vocal ensemble instead of 'choir'. Garnett (2017) pointed out the robust and coherent content of "choral singing", which as a social construction is accompanied by a set of well-established perceptions which define it. In most of the Western world, these perceptions have become unquestionable, transcending the local, defining 'what counts as choral and what does not'. For instance, Ashley (2015) suggested a distinction between the 'choral work' and the 'vocal work', which take place in a choir and a school class, respectively, to indicate the differences between the two activities. With regards to the Greek context, Meligopoulou (2009) made a similar distinction between 'choral singing' and 'group singing', depending on whether the reference is to part-singing or not. Besides part-singing, Vourdoulas (2016) indicated that singing in the upper register ('head voice') is also an element of choral singing in contrast to group singing. Considering these factors, we can understand Durrant and Himonides' (1998) reluctance to see the Greek Orthodox Church chant as a form of choral singing.

2.2 *Teaching traditional singing: Issues of vocal technique*

The systematic study and understanding of the way in which the vocal mechanism functions during phonation and singing has always been problematic, making the work of singing teachers challenging, regardless of music genre. As Welch and Sundberg (2002) maintained, in teaching singing, coding and evaluation of processes are a difficult job compared to the case of teaching instruments, which students hold and see; unlike other musical instruments, the voice is invisible.

In addition to describing the processes involved in the production of a vocal sound, it is also difficult to describe the sound itself in words. In most languages, as in English, when we describe timbres or sound qualities, we usually use words that normally describe other phenomena, such as color (bright, dark), density (thin, thick), weight (heavy, light), temperature (warm) etc. As Thurman et al. (2000, 517) suggested, the development of voice science may lead to a solution for this problem someday, "matching voice quality labels to science-based terminologies for the voice functions that produce the qualities". They also highlighted the two most crucial factors influencing the creation of voice qualities, that is, the breathflow-to-larynx functions and the vocal tract acoustic influences.

Indeed, researchers in the field of voice science have already contributed to the better understanding of the ways singers from different cultures and genres use their vocal mechanism. Indicative is Biglari's study (2012), which utilized digital technology in order to record and analyze the voice of a professional male singer performing the Persian style of *avaz*. Similarly, Latartara (2012) used spectrographic images to explore the timbre of Thai classical singers, while Henrich et al. (2009) studied the case of a female singer and teacher of Bulgarian singing in Australia.

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These studies have provided useful information regarding elements such as tract resonance tuning, formants, spectrum harmonics, etc. At this point, the question arises as to whether these achievements, despite their undeniable importance, can help the average music educator who, lacking special training in voice science, may not be able to completely understand and incorporate them in the teaching process.

More practical and useful for the average reader, despite its obvious Western-centric orientation, is the proposal by Sperry and Goetze (2019, 424), who use terms from the Western *bel canto* singing tradition as a means of understanding 'other' singing cultures. As they suggested, Western classical singing is primarily based on four techniques: (1) onset of tone from the breath, (2) lowered laryngeal position, (3) 'forward' placement of tone, and (4) blending of vocal registers to maximize range with a preference for head voice. According to Sperry and Goetze, a singing teacher may approach a non-western vocal tradition by examining how it differs from bel canto regarding these variables. For example, some traditions may demand a higher position of the larynx, a more nasal sound, or even the exclusive use of chest voice (lower register). Adopting the bel canto technique as a point of reference may assist singers or choral directors in making decisions about how much more nasal the tone placement must be, or how much higher the laryngeal position must be.

Regarding the existing literature on various vocal traditions of Greece, one notices Greek researchers' preference for terms that derive from the field of voice science combined with the 'vocabulary' bel canto teachers normally use. Sarris and Tzevelekos (2008), through spectrograms, explored vocal techniques used by older singers from Thrace, comparing them to technical and stylistic features found in the playing of local *gaida* (bagpipe) players. These authors identified many resemblances between specific singing techniques and gaida music. More specifically, they observed a general preference for loud singing in the upper register of the voice, which resembled the sound of the gaida and resulted in a timbre rich in high-frequency formants in which higher harmonics were often more prominent than the fundamental. Regarding melodic embellishments, singers used various techniques, such as jitter, shimmer, and vibrato, in addition to rapid tone skips and glottal stops, trying to imitate the fast trills, tone skips and melodic transitions of the gaida. These findings support Katsanevaki and Petrinioti's view (2021) that traditional singers emphasize less on specific vocal techniques and more on the aesthetic characteristics from which these techniques arose and, to some extent, have been standardized.

Tsachouridis (2008, 2013) conducted research on two unrelated vocal traditions: that of the Greeks of the Black Sea (Pontos), and that of Epirus, a region located in the Northwest Mainland of Greece. Concerning Pontic singing, he highlighted its highly ornamented nature and the frequent alternations between falsetto and modal voice ('voice breakings'), which singers perform rapidly and with great precision. This technique, which resembles the playing of the *lyra* (the leading instrument in the music of Pontos), requires a 'movable' larynx to form a variety of distinct configurations of the soft palate and uvula. The imitation of the lyra sound by singers also leads to a preference for singing in the upper vocal register, similar to the aforementioned

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case of the Thracian singers, who imitated the sound of the bagpipe. Moreover, Tsachouridis considered the 'twitch' of thorax and the creation of thoracic 'space' in breathing that he observed to be a technique which assists singers in the execution of ornaments. Comparing traditional singing of Epirus to Pontic, Tsachouridis claimed that vocal production in the former is less tense in the throat, singers usually sing in lower pitch, and that falsetto voice is rarely used. He also suggested that the focal point of the singers' voice in Epirus is set back into the soft palate as well as the nasal cavity.

Katsanevaki (2012) conducted extensive ethnographic research in the mountainous regions of Pindus in Northwestern Greece. With regards to vocal technique, she observed local singers' tendency to (a) form open vowels similarly to their pronunciation of the spoken Greek language, (b) sing with an open relaxed larynx, a technique which provides vocal flexibility, (c) sing in the upper register ('head voice') imitating the sound of a nightingale. The extensive use of head voice, especially in the case of female singers, was a radical 'discovery' considering the then prevailing perception about women's singing of traditional music which was supposedly limited to the low vocal register known as 'chest voice' (Katsanevaki and Petrinioti 2021).

3. The study

The present study explores the cases of three traditional vocal ensembles of Greece: The Tsougranes Vocal Ensemble and the Thirathen Vocal Ensemble, both from the island of Crete, along with the Thessaloniki-based Nefes Vocal Ensemble. In addition to conducting semi-structured interviews with the ensemble directors, the researcher analyzed audiovisual material from their public appearances.

3.1 Tsougranes Vocal Ensemble

The Tsougranes Vocal Ensemble was founded in 2017 by drama teacher, singer and percussionist Eleanna Papanikolopoulou and is based in the city of Heraklion. According to Papanikolopoulou's words, "as several girls were asking me to give them private lessons of traditional singing, I decided to start the choir to save time" (*Επειδή αρκετές κοπελίτσες μου έλεγαν να κάνουμε ιδιαίτερα μαθήματα παραδοσιακού τραγουδιού, σκέφτηκα να κάνω μία χορωδία για να γλιτώνουμε χρόνο*, Papanikolopoulou 2021) Although her ensemble had more than forty members, she preferred the term 'vocal ensemble' instead of 'choir', as she wanted to avoid the conservative or religious connotations that traditional choirs are usually associated with. As she said:

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I believe that the term "traditional choir" often implies something different from what I wanted to do. Something more Byzantine. I have been a member of such choirs… I was in one conservatory choir, where some of its members were priests. It was as if the singing was connected to the Church, which is not my purpose.

Θεωρώ ότι το «παραδοσιακή χορωδία» πολλές φορές παραπέμπει σε κάτι άλλο από αυτό που εγώ ήθελα να κάνω. Κάτι πιο βυζαντινό. Επειδή έχω υπάρξει μέλος τέτοιου είδους χορωδιών… έχω υπάρξει μέλος σε χορωδία ωδείου, η οποία είχε μέσα παπάδες. Ήταν σαν να συνδέεται η Εκκλησία με το τραγούδι, που δεν είναι αυτός ο σκοπός μου. (Papanikolopoulou 2021)

Before the COVID-19 crisis, Tsougranes had about 40 members of which six or seven were men. We could say that Tsougranes is truly intergenerational since there were members of very different age groups. According to Papanikolopoulou, 40 % of the members had some music training before joining the ensemble. The ensemble is open to everyone without any requirement for an audition.

As Papanikolopoulou maintained, the repertoire they performed was 90 % traditional Greek. From the videos of the ensemble on the internet, one sees that they do not focus only on the music of one area, preferring to perform songs from all over Greece. They also sing traditional music from other parts of the world, mostly from the Balkans and the Mediterranean. As she said:

I am also very interested in the music of the Balkans and the Mediterranean. How do they connect? What connections does music have? Their topics… what do people living in the Balkans talk about? Do they speak about the same things as we do in our traditional songs?

Με ενδιαφέρει πολύ και η μουσική των Βαλκανίων και της Μεσογείου. Το πώς συνδέονται, τι συνδέσεις έχουν μουσικές. Οι θεματικές τους… για τί πράγμα μιλάνε αυτοί ας πούμε που ζούνε στα Βαλκάνια; Μιλάνε για τα ίδια πράγματα όπως και εμείς στα παραδοσιακά μας τραγούδια; (Papanikolopoulou 2021)

Her main source of repertoire was the internet. On the issue of authenticity, Papanikolopoulou argued that, on the one hand, she approaches traditional music with respect, but, on the other hand, she believes that it is impossible for traditional music to remain unaltered, especially when performed outside its natural context. For this reason, she suggested the term *contemporary re-creation*. As we will also see later, the phrase "we approach tradition with respect" seemed to be a repeated motif in all participants' interviews. Since this phrase is open to many interpretations, I wanted to explore which innovations were considered 'acceptable' in a contemporary re-creation with respect for tradition:

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Doing it exactly as it is, is not possible. How can a Cretan approach a song from Epirus without having the experiences? Although I see it as a contemporary re-creation, I try to keep the elements of its character. It's what I said before. It mustn't go somewhere else. It mustn't resemble European [choral] repertoire. As we experiment, [the sound] must keep reminding us of the [music] we have been inspired by.

Να το κάνεις όπως ακριβώς είναι δεν γίνεται. Πώς μπορεί να προσεγγίσει ένας Κρητικός ένα Ηπειρώτικο χωρίς να έχει τα βιώματα; Εγώ το βλέπω σαν σύγχρονη αναδημιουργία προσπαθώντας όμως να κρατήσω τα στοιχεία του χαρακτήρα του. Αυτό που είπα και προηγουμένως. Να μην πάει άλλου. Να μην πάει προς το ευρωπαϊκό ρεπερτόριο. Όσο πειραματιστώ εγώ μαζί του, να θυμίζει αυτό από το οποίο έχουμε εμπνευστεί. (Papanikolopoulou 2021)

An engaging point that frequently arose during this study concerned the participants' willingness to avoid elements and techniques that could make their performances of traditional songs have a 'Western culture' sound. This point is of particular interest since it was not always clear what exactly the participants meant by the term 'Western'. Regarding the use of vocal mechanism, all of them, including Papanikolopoulou, seemed to identify 'Western' vocal technique with the use of the upper vocal register ('head voice'), an element that Vourdoulas (2016) has also pointed out as already mentioned above. Furthermore, for all participants the term 'Western culture sound' referred, in addition to the use of the vocal mechanism, to part-singing techniques which, according to their words, should not resemble the way a melody is harmonized in western choral music. Most of the traditional songs that Tsougranes performed were monophonic by their nature. As they had never performed these songs in unison, we were curious to learn what 'non-Western culture' arrangement techniques Papanikolopoulou employed. According to her words, the technique that she used in almost all pieces was that of drone (*isokràtima* in Greek), a practice which can be found in the traditional songs of some specific areas of Greece, but not everywhere. The drone sometimes can be doubled by adding a second part, one perfect fifth higher than the bass.

Indicative is Tsougranes' performance of "Savvato Vradi" (Saturday night), a song from the island of Karpathos, in which the ensemble has added a second lower part that plays the role of a drone. As the reader will see in the following transcription, the drone is not fixed but shifts between the tonic and the subtonic, a practice which resembles the playing of the local *tsabouna* (type of bagpipe found mainly in the islands).

This resemblance is perhaps the reason why the drone, although originally performed by instruments rather than voices, does not sound like an alien element. However, Tsougranes' arrangement was not only limited to the introduction of a drone. In the last two stanzas of the song, a third part has been added, this time higher than the main melody.

Apart from including the *drone*, Papanikolopoulou also mentioned arranging techniques such as the *call and response*, as well as the *round* (canon), while she tried to use, wherever they exist, traditional techniques of multi-part singing. However, she admitted that she did not have the deep knowledge that the performance of such songs demands.

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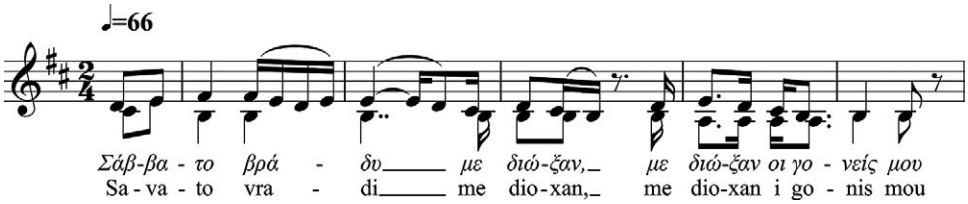

Fig. 1 Transcription by Antonis Ververis of the beginning of the song "Savvato Vradi" (Saturday night) performed by the vocal ensemble Tsougranes (Papanikolopoulou 2018).

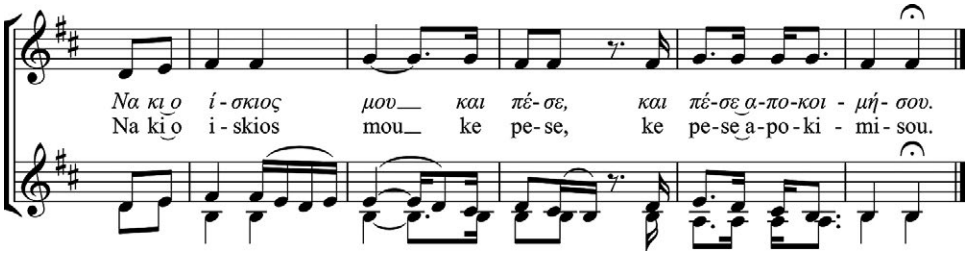

Fig. 2 Transcription by Antonis Ververis of the eight verse of the song "Savvato Vradi" (Saturday night) performed by the vocal ensemble Tsougranes (Papanikolopoulou 2018).

In her teaching, Papanikolopoulou rarely used music scores, preferring participants to learn the aural way, either by singing or by using recordings. During rehearsals, she did not play any musical instrument as she chose to run the rehearsal *a capella*. Sometimes she accompanied the ensemble by playing traditional percussion instruments. Each rehearsal began with a short warm-up session, which as she told us is uncommon in other traditional choirs. However, she did not see the warm-up as a means of teaching vocal technique, but only as a means of readying the singers' voices. When asked if she took into consideration the different vocal timbres required to perform songs from different areas, she answered, "Yes", although from the discussion with her, we understood that her focus was more on issues of diction and not on differences regarding the use of the vocal mechanism.

In its concerts, the ensemble lined up on stage in a semicircular form with Papanikolopoulou standing on the left, from where she led by singing and playing percussion. Neither did she conduct nor like to be on stage with her back turned to the audience as is the case of a 'typical' choir. In every public appearance, the Tsougranes Vocal Ensemble primarily performed a capella and, for certain songs, they were accompanied by a percussion ensemble, consisting of Papanikolopoulou's students. Depending on the requirements of the repertoire, Tsougranes would sometimes invite instrumentalists who played traditional instruments such as the violin, clarinet, lyra, gaida, lute, oud, and percussions.

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3.2 Thirathen Vocal Ensemble

The Thirathen Vocal Ensemble was established in 2017 in the framework of Thirathen Museum of Folk Instruments, located in the historical village of Krousonas, 15km from Heraklion. Although the ensemble focused on the study of Greek traditional music, the founders' background predisposed them to something more international, since the director, Eva Koutsogiannaki, had pursued studies in Plovdiv, Bulgaria, and the co-founder of the ensemble was a teacher of classical singing with studies in Albania. The ensemble consisted of twelve women, aged 25 to 55, nine of whom were professional musicians. Its repertoire was predominantly traditional Greek music and sometimes traditional music from other countries. As in the previous case, the choice of the term 'vocal ensemble' instead of 'choir' was deliberately made in order to avoid identifying the group with other traditional choirs. Yet, this group's chief reason was the connection of the term to how traditional choirs typically present traditional songs. As Eva Koutsogiannaki said:

Inside our minds, we have an image of traditional choirs in collaboration with instrumental ensembles. In our case, we decided that our ensemble would be exclusively vocal, performing only a cappella, without the accompaniment of any instrument, even though there was the possibility of doing so.

Γιατί τις παραδοσιακές χορωδίες τις έχουμε στο μυαλό μας σε συνεργασία με οργανικά σχήματα και όχι a capella. Και για αυτό εμείς είπαμε να είναι φωνητικό και να μην υπάρχουν όργανα, αν και υπάρχει αυτή η δυνατότητα. (Koutsogiannaki 2021)

As we have already seen, the repertoire of the Thirathen Vocal Ensemble included traditional music from Greece primarily and also from other countries. According to Koutsogiannaki:

We want to experiment, to change things but with respect to tradition. We always respect the style of each area, approaching it with great sensitivity. We don't want it to become something foreign.

Θέλαμε να πειραματιστούμε, να πειράξουμε πράγματα πάντα με σεβασμό στην παράδοση. Πάντα σεβόμενοι στο ύφος και το στυλ κάθε περιοχής, με πολλή ευαισθησία η προσέγγισή μας. Δεν θέλουμε να γίνει κάτι ξένο. (Koutsogiannaki 2021)

In addition, Koutsogiannaki liked to mix songs from different regions, or even countries, which either share the same music scale or have a similar melody. For example, they once presented a Greek song along with a song from Turkey and one from Albania as a medley, emphasizing that "in music there are no borders".

The Thirathen Vocal Ensemble, as in the case presented before, performed monophonic traditional songs with the addition of extra vocal parts. Here, too, the drone proved to be the most

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popular arranging technique, as it was even added to pieces which were not originally sung with a drone. As for songs which originally shared elements of folk polyphony, they tried to perform them by imitating recordings of local vocal groups. However, as Koutsogiannaki admitted, they did not have the special knowledge required for something like that.

In a song from Epirus, we will follow the idiomatic forms of the area with great respect and caution, as we are not specialized in this genre. If we choose a piece from Crete, where there isn't any tradition of multi-part singing, we will arrange it by adding drones… our goal is not to present a Cretan piece in a superficial way.

Σε ένα ηπειρώτικο, με πολύ σεβασμό και προσοχή γιατί δεν έχουμε εντρυφήσει σε αυτό το κομμάτι, θα ακολουθήσουμε τις φόρμες της ηπειρώτικης μουσικής. Αν πιάσουμε τώρα ένα κρητικό κομμάτι, που δεν υπάρχει πολυφωνία στην Κρήτη, θα το πειράξουμε μεν αλλά με ισοκρατήματα... ο στόχος μας δεν είναι να παρουσιαστεί ένα κομμάτι κρητικό με πλαστό ύψος. (Koutsogiannaki 2021)

It is noteworthy that Koutsogiannaki did not perceive the drone as a foreign element, although as a practice it is unknown in the vocal traditions of Crete.

The Figure 3 is a transcription of a Thirathen Vocal Ensemble performance of *Kàlanta* (Christmas carols) from Epirus. The main melody is found in the second (middle) part, while the two outer parts are almost identical with a difference of one octave. The arranger's attempt to highlight the pentatonic character of the song indicates the ensemble's will to approach this music with respect, although it is certainly very divergent from the multi-part vocal tradition of Epirus as performed by the local ensembles of the region.

The rehearsal of the ensemble always began with a short warm-up session. In her teaching, Koutsogiannaki preferred to use music scores, which she believed could assist even novice members who do not yet feel confident when sight-reading. As we see in the following excerpt, her preference for music scores seemed to influence the way she taught a new piece, which could easily be deconstructed into smaller layers, a practice used by classical choral conductors,

To start with, we approach the [new] piece. We explain what it is, where it comes from, and what it says. We read it twice normally. Afterwards, we recite the words rhythmically and then we start to study the melodies of each part.

Μετά προσεγγίζουμε το κομμάτι. Εξηγούμε τι είναι αυτό, από που είναι αυτό, τι λέει. Το διαβάζουμε δύο φορές κανονικά. Μετά διαβάζουμε ρυθμικά τα λόγια και μετά παίρνει καθεμιά μας μια φωνή και τη δουλεύει. (Koutsogiannaki 2021)

Another interesting point concerned the use of musical instruments in relation to the non-tempered intervals of traditional music. Koutsogiannaki seemed to be aware that adding extra parts to traditional songs results in a more "tempered" performance. For this reason, she did not find the use of tempered instruments such as the keyboards or piano during rehearsals problematic. However, in the case of songs in which there was only one melody and drone, they preferred to

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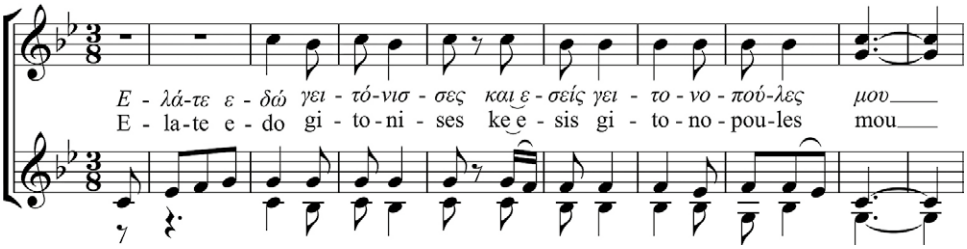

Fig. 3 Transcription by Antonis Ververis of the beginning of the song "Kàlanta" (Christmas carols) performed by Thirathen Vocal Ensemble (Museum Thirathen 2018).

learn them a capella, trying to perform the intervals of the traditional scale in their non-tempered form. As regards the teaching of vocal technique, Koutsogiannaki's approach was similar to Papanikolopoulou's as mentioned above. While there seemed to be a relative sensitivity to the different timbre that characterizes the vocal tradition of each region, the whole effort focused on how the ensemble 'would not sound classical'.

We try to identify the style of each area. As much as we can, of course. […] Even in songs that have solos, my colleague does not sing the solo although she is our best voice… Since she is a classical singer, [singing the solo would greatly alter the sound].

Θα προσπαθήσουμε να εντοπίσουμε το ύφος κάθε περιοχής. Όσο μπορούμε βέβαια. [..] Ακόμα και σε κάποια κομμάτια που έχουν σόλο, η συνάδελφός μου που είναι κλασική, παρ' ότι είναι η καλύτερη μας φωνή, δεν θα το πει. (Koutsogiannaki 2021)

In its concerts, the ensemble is lined up on stage in a semicircular form. As Koutsogiannaki said:

There is no conductor for any reason. The role of the conductor is limited to leading the rehearsals. In the concerts, we are all equal. No one directs. We have agreed on our breaths, how to enter, [and] where to enter. We have developed our own code of communication to help each other.

Δεν υπάρχει διεύθυνση για κανένα λόγο. Ο ρόλος του μαέστρου είναι στις πρόβες μόνο. Στις παραστάσεις είμαστε ισότιμοι. Δεν διευθύνει κανείς. Έχουμε συνεννοηθεί για τις ανάσες μας, το πώς θα μπούμε, πού μπαίνουμε. Έχουμε έναν κώδικα επικοινωνίας για να βοηθάει η μία την άλλη. (Koutsogiannaki 2021)

In the appearances of the ensemble, many of the songs were performed with physical movement or dance, while sometimes there was also the element of dramatization. As for the concert attire of the ensemble, a modern uniform had been designed, which, however, had references to elements of folk art.

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3.3 Nefes Vocal Ensemble

Nefes Vocal Ensemble was established in 2019 by Elena Moudiri-Chasiotou. Moudiri-Chasiotou pursued music studies in Turkey, where she took singing and percussion lessons and participated in choirs of classical Turkish music. Nefes Vocal Ensemble is based in Thessaloniki and consists of 12 members, aged between 20 and 45 years. Moudiri-Chasiotou prefers the term "vocal ensemble" instead of "choir", claiming that her main concern was to avoid being considered a "choir with singers holding folders". As she said,

"Nefes" in Turkish means "breath", a word which best describes the purpose of the ensemble. I was interested to see how breath becomes mutual, and how this breath becomes sound… which is actually how singing occurs. It is breath, air that becomes sound.

Nefes θα πει «αναπνοή, ανάσα» στου τουρκικά, μία λέξη που ορίζει τον στόχο της ομάδας. Με ενδιέφερε πώς γίνεται η αναπνοή κοινή, και πώς η αναπνοή αυτή γίνεται ήχος… που ουσιαστικά αυτό είναι το τραγούδι. Είναι ανάσα, αέρας που γίνεται ήχος. (Moudiri-Chasiotou 2021)

Regarding the purposes of the ensemble, Moudiri-Chasiotou maintained that her concentration is more on the pedagogical dimensions of the project rather than the final music product, namely the concerts. Therefore, she considers Nefes, whose main purpose is to train its members, more as "a workshop" and less as an artistic group. As regards the public appearances of the ensemble, these are seen more as an opportunity for the members to demonstrate their progress and less as concerts. Moreover, Moudiri-Chasiotou actively avoids the term 'concert' since the performances of the ensemble are not 'solely music events' but aim at the unification of music, movement, and speech.

The repertoire of the ensemble consists of traditional songs of Greece, but also the wider region of the Mediterranean and the Balkans. On the issue of 'authenticity', Moudiri-Chasiotou seemed to have a very clear concept of her goals, as she explained:

Traditional songs have a narrative character. When you sing them, it is like telling a story. We are the medium, the channel through which this story reaches the audience. However, it's not me who experienced these events and feelings. I believe that this gives a timelessness to both folk poetry and music. And this is my approach to traditional music in general.

Τα παραδοσιακή τραγούδια έχουν έναν χαρακτήρα αφηγηματικό. Είναι η αφήγηση μίας ιστορίας. Εμείς είμαστε το μέσο, το κανάλι που η ιστορία φτάνει στο κοινό. Δεν είμαι εγώ η ίδια που έζησα αυτό το πράγμα και αυτό νομίζω ότι δίνει και μία διαχρονικότητα και στη δημοτική ποίηση και στη μουσική τελικά. Και αυτή είναι η προσέγγισή μου στην παραδοσιακή μουσική γενικώς. (Moudiri-Chasiotou 2021)

Thus, when she introduces new songs to the ensemble, she always tries to use the oldest possible recordings, but without trying to imitate them.

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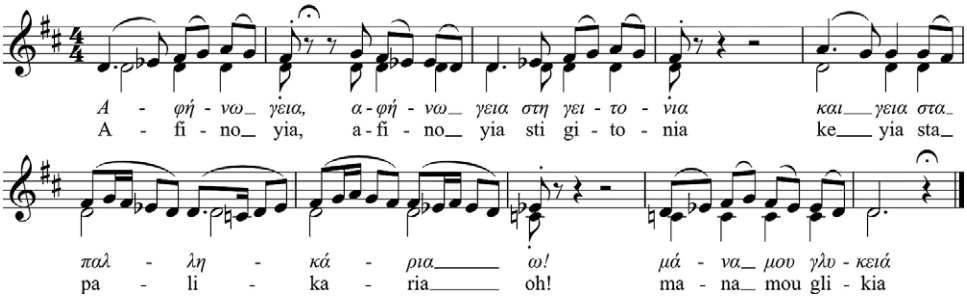

Fig. 4 Transcription by Antonis Ververis of the beginning of the song "Mana Mou, ta Louloudia Mou …" (Mother, My Flowers…) performed by Nefes Vocal Ensemble (Moudiri-Chasiotou 2020).

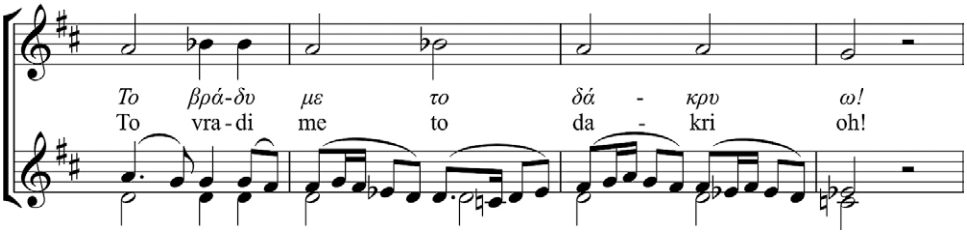

Fig.5 Transcription by Antonis Ververis of the vocal part in the fourth stanza of the song "Mana Mou, ta Louloudia Mou …" (Mother, My Flowers…) performed by Nefes Vocal Ensemble (Moudiri-Chasiotou 2020).

We will not try to reproduce the original. To what extent should it concern me or a vocal ensemble of twelve people to sing in this way? Someone who does transcribe songs should do it.

Δεν θα προσπαθήσουμε να αναπαράγουμε το πρωτότυπο. Μέχρι που δηλαδή αφορά εμένα ή ένα φωνητικό σύνολο δώδεκα ατόμων, να τραγουδήσουν με αυτόν τον τρόπο; Ας το κάνει κάποιος που κάνει καταγραφή. (Moudiri-Chasiotou 2021)

This last phrase possibly expresses a desire to distance themselves from other ensembles that approach traditional music in a more academic way. This also justifies Moudiri-Chasiotou's ease in experimenting with this music using various forms of polyphony, with an extensive use of second and third parts, in addition to the drone analyzed earlier in the two previous cases, as well as other techniques such as body percussions and rhythmic recitation.

A good example of applying all these techniques is the following arrangement of "Mana Mou, ta Louloudia Mou…" [Mother, My Flowers…] from Halkidiki, a region located in Northern Greece.

Here, we notice a drone that has been added below the basic melody, while in the fourth stanza a third part is also added. This extra part functions as a second drone which creates intervals of a fifth and a sixth in relation to the tonic, as we see in Figures 4 and 5.

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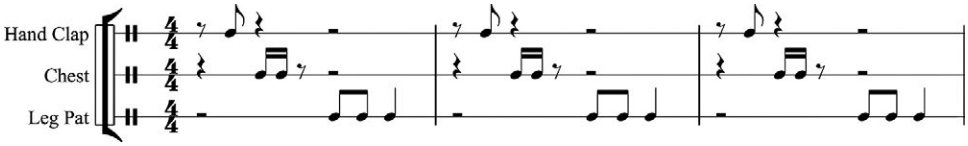

Fig. 6 Transcription by Antonis Ververis of the body percussions in the fourth stanza of the song "Mana Mou, ta Louloudia Mou …" (Mother, My Flowers…) performed by Nefes Vocal Ensemble (Moudiri-Chasiotou 2020).

Another interesting feature of this arrangement is the use of body percussions. The obvious preference for rhythmic syncopations must be intentional since they—especially the chest beats—strongly resemble the highly-syncopated playing of the *dauli*, the bass drum which usually accompanies singing in Northern Greece.

Rehearsals at Nefes Ensemble begin with breathing exercises, theatrical play and vocal exercises. In her teaching, Moudiri-Chasiotou does not use any musical instrument or score. As she claims, she wants each member to experiment ornamentation in their own singing, before 'agreeing' on a mutual way of performance. The warm-up exercises focus more on ear training and familiarization of members with the musical intervals, scales and motifs used in the songs to be learned later.

In its performances, the Nefes Vocal Ensemble constantly changes layout on stage, while Moudiri-Chasiotou leads them with her back turned to the audience. As she pointed out, in their performance each song is linked to the other, and for this reason, the audience is usually instructed not to applaud in between. Most of the songs are performed a cappella, although in some, there is an instrumental accompaniment.

4. Discussion

One of the aims of the study was to explore issues related to the 'authenticity' of these three ensembles' attempt to perform traditional songs in a 'new' context. As Sarah Bartolome (2019) suggested, when traditional music is performed outside its natural context, searching for 'true authenticity' is unrealistic by definition. All three ensemble directors seemed to be aware of this, having realized that it is acceptable to experiment with traditional music, while also respecting its character. Many times, in fact, experimentation with traditional music was not only permissible but desirable and necessary. In his article on teaching traditional Greek music, Ververis (2021) maintained that this assumption can be liberating for the teachers who, out of respect for the subject they teach, are trapped in a futile hunt for authenticity or, even worse, have the dangerous delusion that they have achieved it. For this reason, Goetze (2017) proposed the use of the terms *re-creation* and *recontextualizing* for cases of performance of traditional music outside its natural context; for example, in schools, universities, concert halls, etc.

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Concerning the directors' choice to define their groups as 'vocal ensembles' instead of 'choirs', it became apparent, especially in the case of the 40-member Tsougranes Vocal Ensemble, that this was not related to the size of the group and the number of members. Furthermore, both directors' concern was more focused on how to avoid the identification of their ensembles with what is considered a typical 'traditional choir' and not ensembles which perform western choral music. Papanikolopoulou and Moudiri-Chasiotou pointed out the conservative or religious connotations with which traditional choirs are usually associated, while Koutsogiannaki maintained that traditional choirs usually perform accompanied by musical instruments and not a cappella, as occurs in her ensemble. Moreover, all three seemed to give great importance to the communal nature of collective singing, prioritizing the learning and rehearsal processes rather than final musical products. According to Barz (2006, 25), community is not a static object, but a process by which "a group of people gathers for a common reason: to remember and recall, to share or to create new experiences".

With regards to vocal technique, the directors did not seem to have a clear aural image in their mind, that is, 'how they wanted their ensemble to sound'. On the contrary, the aim of their teaching focused on 'how the ensemble should not sound', and more specifically, how not to sound like a classical or western choir. In all three cases, this approach led to a preference for slightly nasal singing, almost exclusively in the lower register of the voice ('chest voice') as the use of the upper register ('head voice') was limited or non-existent. This became apparent in the recordings of all three ensembles and was easily identified since all three consisted mainly of female singers. It should be noted that the avoidance of the high register is a stereotypical idea about traditional singing especially by women, which does not apply to all Greek vocal traditions as we have seen before in this paper (see, for example, Sarris and Tzevelekos 2008; Tsachouridis 2008, 2013; Katsanevaki 2012; Katsanevaki and Petrinioti 2021). Furthermore, despite the directors' intentions to approach each song differently depending on its origin, one can easily see that each ensemble has developed a specific timbre — or 'a sound' — with which they perform all the pieces of their repertoire. Moreover, from the interviews with the three directors it became clear that they did not intend to imitate the local singers' way of vocal production heard in field recordings. Instead, they felt that this was in the field of research (for ethnomusicologists, folklorists, etc.).

Several other points that emerged from the present research concerned: (a) the preference for performing a cappella, (b) the preference for multi-part singing, even in cases of songs whose original forms are monophonic, (c) the predominance of the drone (isokràtima) as the most popular arrangement technique, even in the cases of songs which are not normally performed with a drone. Regarding the use of music notation, the directors did not share the same view since in two ensembles the teaching was done mainly in an aural way, while in the third, it was exclusively executed with the use of music scores.

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5. Conclusion

A central position in Christopher Small's work is occupied by the term *musicking*, with which he wanted to emphasize that music is something we do (a process), and not an object. According to Small, concerts do not exist to present musical works, while musical works exist to give musicians something to perform (Small 1977, 1998). The participants in the present study appeared to embrace this stance, which may have helped them to avoid prevailing perceptions in the field, according to which traditional music is a 'museum piece' that we do not touch. The directors of the three ensembles perceived traditional music as material so that singers have something to sing' but also to experiment with, as long as they respect its character. This position quite possibly led them to extend their quest to other musical cultures of the Balkans and the Mediterranean, an element which differentiates their ensembles from 'traditional choirs'. In this case, noteworthy is the consistent preference for traditional—or at least, music that sounds traditional—music of these cultures. This persistence could be argued to be no different from what de Quadros (2019) calls "new choral syncretism". This term refers to the trend observed in recent years in the globalized choral world, characterized by the integration and assimilation of elements of various world musics in standard choral repertoires.

In closing, I would like to express my belief that the three cases presented are indicative of a general trend that is continuing to develop in Greece at this time. With a quick glance at the internet, it becomes obvious that there is a constantly increasing number of similar ensembles. Although their members represent different age groups, they share common goals and views on the reconstruction of traditional music and present various similarities in terms of repertoire and sound, as presented in this study of the three cases. Another important feature is the dedication their directors and members show to what is called 'amateur creation', while they do not seem to seek a place in the country's music industry, at least so far. As these ensembles are a new and dynamically developing phenomenon, the need for further research in the future with the participation of more traditional ensembles from all over Greece becomes imperative.

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Guido Raschieri

The symphony of the world

From personal and cultural to universal musical discourse

Abstract

This paper deals with musical experiences centred on the creation of *Museo del Paesaggio sonoro* (Soundscape Museum) in Riva presso Chieri, in Piedmont, Italy. This expressive centre enables and combines a complex network of relationships between individual and cultural agency, which can be grouped into a series of basic performance models:

- a moment of reaffirmation and shared celebration of common cultural roots;
- a space of testimony, reflection and narration of collective history through sound and its repositories;
- the embodiment and actualisation of a common cultural background;
- a place of transcendence, from the individual and community dimension to universal matter, of translation from an idiomatic into a cross-cultural language, of reduction of music to sounds and, finally, to the symbolical essentiality of the sound.

The final and most meaningful stage of this undertaking focuses on the natural, ripe fruits of a long experimental application process, and of constant conceptual development. This process has culminated with the theatrical and musical performance Paesaggi sonori (Soundscapes), especially in its opening piece, La sinfonia del mondo (The symphony of the world). Although it is the creative product of one musician and researcher, Domenico Torta, what emerges is the act of gathering and condensing a collective, layered vision of the soundsphere, as well as the extended compositional effort of a dynamic multipart music lab.

1. Discussion

My essay is concerned with musical experiences centred on the creation and activities of *Museo del Paesaggio sonoro* (Soundscape Museum) of Riva presso Chieri, in Piedmont, Italy. This museographic process should, in and of itself, be read as a performative act, in the Latin sense of the term *performare*—to shape, to depict and interpret all the elements of a local sound and musical culture. On the other hand, the entire set of music practices, which are rooted in the local envi-

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ronment and are still alive, as well as new forms of revival and contemporary relaunch, have been fueled by crossing lines of thought and interpretation.

Before I get to the core of this experimental journey, I would like to introduce a basic framework for the history of the Museum experience, which was originally based, for the most part, on a remarkable figure: Domenico Torta, born in 1957 in the same village of Riva presso Chieri, not far away from Turin.

As can be inferred from this brief introduction, our discussion progresses by focusing on the role played by an individual within a musical community. On the one hand, this type of strategy fits well with modern ethnomusicological lines of thought, which have made new forms of representing the expressive settings under scrutiny possible and legitimate on a methodological level (Stock 2010). On the other hand, the path we have chosen was not entirely intentional; instead, it was influenced by a performative ethnographic experience.

The basis for this research project and its different applications was in fact an early, albeit erratic, closeness between our study group and members of a specific musical tradition, which has led to a growing dialogic process and mutual engagement, and to the proactive and unlabelled role of Domenico Torta, who in turn has undoubtedly been involved in a separate sense-making process.

Indeed, Torta deserves praise for having experimentally and conceptually developed some of the core ideas of a cultural project that later became collective, and that may appear even personal at first glance, but has actually demonstrated a capacity for dialogue on universal subjects with a variety of interlocutors.

The first thing to bear in mind is the multifaceted and unusually diverse nature of Torta's life, his early travels and his professional experience. He combines the roles of a formally trained musician and folk performer, a researcher of traditional music and classical composer, a teacher by trade and an all-around experimenter by nature.

His unique, although not isolated, work in the field of traditional music has been first and foremost driven by the joy of discovering, rescuing and directly and naturally cultivating a neglected culture, all of which he did in support of, and for the benefit of, his own community.

Standing out with his innate musical talent, Torta adopted the instrumental abilities available to him as a member of the community. On keyboard instruments, he began by playing the organ and progressed to piano and the cognate practice of accordion, making all of them quickly available to the real needs of the rural centre's ritual calendar. In addition, he underwent parallel training in the town's brass band, where he went on to become the conductor. In this context, Torta also learned the languages of wind instruments, specifically those peculiar to regional dance music. These were traditionally associated with a performance mode that was not dependent on writing but tended towards the improvised development of a melodic repertoire while at the same time adhering to embodied harmonisation rules (Raschieri 2020, 110–123).

This experience has led Torta to acquire and recompose a set of performative abilities after years of nearly complete abandonment following the rise of new hybrid languages and the emergence of a more commercial attitude.

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From a very young age, Torta developed a strong musical sensitivity as a result of having been exposed to music at home and at informal social gatherings, where singing had been a deeply ingrained practice. Alongside this, and as a natural continuation of this early training, he began and completed his studies at the Conservatory.

As well as learning theory and developing his technical and expressive abilities, Torta also had to face the art music community's attitude of superiority and disdain for traditional musical practices. This was the beginning of an inner struggle that, coupled with a victorious desire to assert the legitimacy and ownership of his intrinsic cultural otherness, made him realise that he had the potential to rescue those practices, although he has always steered clear of any kind of fanaticism. He then began a project to compile traces, artefacts and testimonies about the musical languages of his own tradition. He also chose to pursue didactic activity characterised by an open, anti-elitist, anti-dogmatic and anti-academic perspective.

This stance, which emphasises the concreteness of acting from the inside out and in favour of folk culture, seems to echo some of Johann Gottfried Herder's ideas, which ushered in a new vision of human expression.

> There is more poesy, and there are more poetic sources in *folk belief*, in *fantasy*, *myth*, *tradition*, *language*, *customs*, in the culture of all Indigenous peoples living close to nature, than in the poetics and oration of all time. (Herder and Bohlman 2017, 43)

On the other hand, Herder's historical space of aesthetic discovery of the 'primordial' and the 'primitive' has undergone a profound transformation in the specific experience at issue and is relived as a contemporary experiment in cultural reappropriation rather than as an idealised object of romantic attachment. Moreover, the solid and persistent discourse proposed by the museum was indeed rooted in the local dimension, but it had to interact and identify with the equally established and complementary field of ethnomusicology, which in Torta's case was embodied by Febo Guizzi (Spoleto 1947—Milano 2015) and his students collectively. In the late 1990s, the University of Torino gave Prof. Guizzi the first chair in ethnomusicology, capping off a multi-year research programme and study that he primarily directed with Roberto Leydi, the founder of the current Italian field (Guizzi 2008, 7–33). Among his many abilities and accomplishments, Guizzi had established himself nationally for his specific work in the area of ethno-organology and for his categorisation system for musical instruments, notably those of Italian folk culture (Guizzi 2002 and 2020).

Guizzi's chance encounter with Torta, unforeseen on both sides, was brought about mostly by this particular interest. The meeting with his new interlocutor, who later became a colleague and friend, was described by Guizzi as a "recognition", because there was an instant sense of shared purpose and thought (Guizzi 2007).

As a result, a communal discourse has developed, which has led to the creation of a new multiple object—the museum—which finds a common thread in the reference to the soundscape and the sharing and ongoing development of a specifically anthropological understanding of this idea.

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Fig. 1 *Museo del paesaggio sonoro* (Soundscape Museum) (in Riva presso Chieri, Piedmont, Italy), second room *Il suono e l'ambiente* (Sound and environment). Photograph by Guido Raschieri. 2018.

The compound term 'soundscape' now had a substantially different meaning than when it was first coined, due to its partial detachment from the subject of acoustic ecology, sound design programs, and the creative or re-creative deployment of the many methods of so-called soundscape composition. Through the in-depth laboratory work of modern applied ethnomusicology, the concept of soundscape has come to be associated with surveys on the diverse sound world of an anthropic context, its representation and portrayal through the museum medium, and its rescue through performance experiments such as the one that forms the object of this analysis (Ghirardini 2021, 255–276).

The process of project development and museographic setup began in 2004, reaching its current layout in 2011. In the meantime, the activity of "ethnomusicological excavation", which was initially individual in nature, became more of a collective endeavour as the tools for analysis and interpretation were improved (Raschieri 2019,155–169).

The same cultural collectivisation trend has happened at the community level. It is actually a feedback system, in which this background serves as inspiration for the individual vision, and the continuity of a collective sensibility is, in turn, condensed in the extraordinary personality of a single performer.

Thus, the strong intentionality of an individual and his forethought emerge as those core characteristics of human agency identified by social cognitive theory, although in this case there was never any detailed planning or predetermined outcomes. However, Torta's tenacity and ability to function in his social milieu serve as evidence of his persistent tendency toward *self-reactiveness*,

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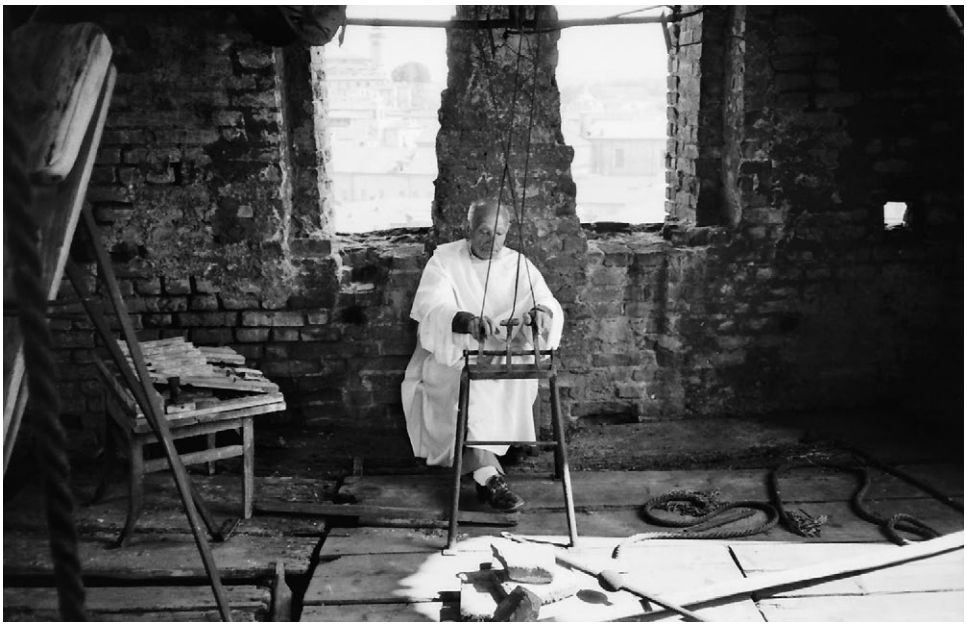

Fig. 2 Ethnomusicological documentation: *Fra Stéu* (Attilio Portesine, 1922 – 2000) playing a ritual piece for Easter day at the top of the bell tower of the church of San Domenico in Chieri. Photograph by Domenico Pellegrino, between the 1980s and 1990s. Used with permission.

or "the ability to construct appropriate courses of action and to motivate and regulate their execution". Finally, accurate and clear *self-reflectiveness* serves as both the point of arrival and the motif that best sums up the entire process (Bandura 2006, 164–165). The key factor is that the latter quality—which was transferred from an individual to a particular group of actors—has sparked a new, collective capacity for reflection because it was able to detect, and promote, an unexpressed common sense, which has in turn led to a backwards process of active investment in real practices among a significant portion of the involved population.

The museum provides a representation of this chorality, from witnesses to individual issues that are addressed during a visit to the overall picture of a small universe of culture and sound. Guizzi clearly understood and outlined this dual polarity, in particular the concurrence of individual act and community response within a constrained socio-cultural context, in a preliminary writing for the creation of the museum itself. In this text, he highlighted the idea of soundscape as a "construction" and as collective "adherence".

> The soundscape, then, is the unitary vision of space as the place of sound experience; the experience of the subject who identifies, chooses and recombines sounds as an expression of the world. Each subject builds his point of "view" (or better point of "listening") on the sound world, so he builds an

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Fig. 3 The study and recovery of musical traditions: Domenico Torta explains and shows the practice and functions of the bell tradition, with the help of an experimental reproduction of the bell tower of the Riva presso Chieri parish church (including a keyboard and six tubular bells). Photograph by Guido Raschieri. 2017.

> idea of his own soundscape. Someone—whether it is an individual or a group—may do this in an extraordinary way, because they can assert their hegemony over the collective sounds, or because they broaden their sensitivity to the maximum. In this way, they are able to infuse their idea with a sense that "resonates" with others as well, who accept it with admiration, almost with gratitude, since it provides them with an overall perspective that they feel they cannot attain, and as such they "adhere" to that proposal (hence the "adherence" soundscapes). (Guizzi 2021, 237)

The responsibility and task of cultivating the traditional sound knowledge and practices preserved at the museum—also in terms of musical performance—was then transferred to a large number of young actors simply by sharing everyday life activities and a set of competences as well as through teaching, thus creating a virtuous cycle of "new tradition" and regeneration (Raschieri 2017, 94–97).

This experience is an interesting example of the educational application of ethnographic research methods and is broadly consistent with the principles and methods of a "praxis-based pedagogy" (Cammarota 2008). This project did not consist in the mere transfer of technical and musical tools; it began with the direct involvement of the young participants in the research work, which was

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Fig. 4 Active learning: a student of the "Oscar Levi" junior high school in Chieri playing a piece for bells on the reproduction owned by *Museo del paesaggio sonoro* (designed and built by Domenico Torta, Roberto Favretto, Cesare Gastaldi and Adriano Pertusio). Photograph by Guido Raschieri. 2017.

followed by a guided interpretive process. This led to the development of a new consciousness of cultural identity and its transformations, which was sometimes lacking in previous generations, as well as of current issues, thus laying the groundwork for critical thinking and active citizenship.

On the basis of the above framework, we can identify an expressive foundation that enables a complex web of relations between individuals and cultural agency in the construction of a common discourse, which distinguishes the level of museography from the dynamic one of musical practice. In regard to the latter operating level, we can glimpse this global organism in some fundamental models of performance.

The first model is that of sound expression as the reaffirmation of identity and the shared celebration of common cultural roots. In other words, it is a process of self-representation that starts from the collective witnessing of past cultural traits that are still vital, which find an updated transposition in the work of the individual and to which the collectivity adheres, making it its own. To represent this sphere of musical expression, I chose a vocal and instrumental piece titled "Ij massé". Locals use this term to identify the "chiefs" of the community's most important feast, in keeping with the traditional organisation of civic and religious rituality that characterised the society of the *ancien régime*.

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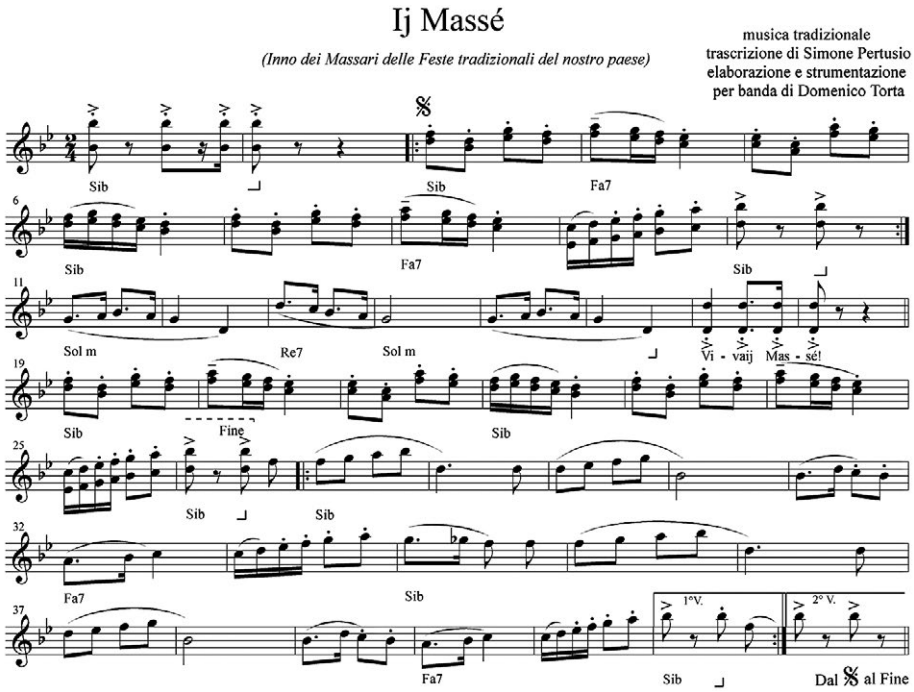

Fig. 5 Domenico Torta's musical reworking and band arrangement of the traditional Hymn of the *Massari* (*Ij Massé*) for the feast of Saint Alban. The piece, transmitted orally, was transcribed for the first time in the 1980s by Simone Pertusio, then conductor of the local band. The documentary record is preserved in the archives of the Filarmonica Rivese.

The musical composition is dedicated to the legend of the martyr Saint Alban, a mythical soldier of the Theban Legion and the patron saint of Riva presso Chieri. This hagiographical narrative shrouded in myth tells the story of a peasant who, struggling with his cart, appeals to the saint and gets the help of a couple of dogs, who are still today among the protagonists of the processional route, along with the *massé cit* ('little chiefs').

The performers of the music piece are first and foremost members of the village brass band, currently conducted by Domenico Torta himself, and are accompanied by the whole community, as well as by the symbolical, unifying presence of the bell tower. This song, collected from oral and traditional witnesses, has seen a revival in collective practice, becoming once more a spontaneous expression of communal feeling and devotion (Raschieri and Torta 2016, 138).

A second model is that of performance as a space of testimony, reflection and the narration of collective history through sound and its repositories. The example chosen here is an ancient ballad known in the regional tradition as "L'infanticida alla forca" (The infanticide on the gallows) (Nigra 1888 [2009], 83–87). In addition to representing an investigation into the deepest core of a

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Fig. 6 Group photo of the Saint Alban feast in 1927, with the *massé* (the chiefs of the feast), the *massé cit* (the little chiefs) and the dogs, around the processional cart. Archives of Museo del paesaggio sonoro. Used with permission.

cultural system, this performance is a symbolic witness of the transmission of traditional messages, that set of implicit rules of sexual morality that might almost be regarded as the continuation of the Medieval *exempla*. The final performer of this ballad was Torta's mother, Giuseppina Tamagnone (Riva presso Chieri, 1925–2015), who was the main inspiration for all his symphony. She is captured in the photograph below during a simple revival of two traditional practices: working and singing, namely, hand spinning and the age-old vocal repertoire.

The intensity of the act of singing and the cultural significance of this song combine into an inseparable whole. Without falling into romantic mythopoiesis, we are certainly facing a particular situation, in which the "ancient folk song" reveals its essential nature as "true music", "that which stirs the ear with simple tones" (Herder and Bohlman: 26 and 33). This poignancy manifests itself through a deft ability to use very few ingredients, with techniques and styles of expression that are more akin to an instinct built on experience than to the conscious activation of interpretive strategies—not unlike the deft mechanics of simultaneous manual actions when spinning wool. We are confronted with the past, or a representation of it, but one that looks very different from an antiquarian artefact or a stereotyped picture.

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Fig. 7 Giuseppina Tamagnone (1925–2015) photographed during manual spinning while singing the old ballad *L'infanticida alla forca* (The infanticide on the gallows). Photograph by Paolo Torta, Riva presso Chieri, Italy. 18 March 2011. Used with permission.

A third fundamental model pertains to performative practice as the embodiment and actualisation of a cultural background. Here the work becomes programmatic, artistically organised and aimed at well-defined creative and conceptual goals.

The main performance experience that has accompanied the museum's long process of ideation and creation is associated with I Musicanti di Riva presso Chieri, a musical ensemble formed by Torta in the mid-1990s. If the museum's function is to provide a sanctuary, a safe haven, a place for reflection and study, then the Musicanti's theatrical and musical works have taken on the task of addressing, in their performances, the same topics and carrying the same messages of a shared renewal of sound and musical practices—in short, the same mission statement.

The initial target audience was the local and, to a lesser extent, the regional area, which was more familiar with and recognised the languages and messages they proposed. Accordingly, the spaces and occasions for expression were mostly performances in squares and small theatres, stages on local TV networks, and music tapes distributed by local publishers. Early on, there were also occasional events outside the ensemble's context of origin, which revealed a broad consensus on their initiative and allowed them to identify common traits shared by close territorial and cultural areas in northern Italy.

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10.

L'INFANTICIDA ALLA FORCA

A

Sun tre fenóire ch'i van fenè,
Van fenè giù d'cule praderie.
3 Chi l'à n'anfan l'è Lüssia Maria.
Lüssia Maria l'avia n'anfan;
A l'à pià-lo, l'à campà-lo ant l'eva;
6 L'éigua dël mar a si stërboréiva.
La sua mare ai va press an gridand:
— Coz'as-tü fáit, o Lüssia Maria?
9 Tüta la gent van criand për via.
— Mama, mia mama, parlè pi pian;
Che se la giüstíssia a ven d'antende,
12 Ohimè, ohimè, ch'a mi faran pende! —
Ma la giüstíssia s'n'è già 'ntendü,
L'à pià Lüssia Maria përzunera,
15 E l'àn bütà-la ant la tur suttera.
Di supra a i passa gentil galant:
— Lassè-me vëde la përzunera,
18 Che tüti a m'dizo ch'a l'è tan bela.
— Gentil galant, o turnè duman,
Turnè duman e vedrei la bela,
21 Êl boja 'l prim e chila darera. —

(*La Morra, Alba*. Trasmessa da Tommaso Borgogno).

Fig. 8 Lyrics of the song *L'infanticida alla forca*, collected and published by folklorist Costantino Nigra, in his work *Canti popolari del Piemonte* (Piedmontese Folk Songs), 1888. This is the first of three versions of piece no. 10 reported by the scholar in his anthology.

Regarding the performances by the Musicanti group, I would like to recall my contribution to a previous meeting on multipart music in which I discussed an example of a rediscovered musical tradition consisting of an improvisation practice of dance repertoires for wind ensembles of brass-band derivation. On that occasion, I emphasised the traits of the expressive model and the peculiarities of a language that can be adequately reproduced given the necessary competence, respect and, most importantly, the ability to instantly apply the basic rules of dialogue, intertwining and counterpoint among instrumental voices (Raschieri 2015, 374–395).

The performance I am focusing on here is equally significant in terms of the renewed adoption and reworking of traditional expression models as well as the reaffirmation of a value system. Despite appearances, the song "Larin Lareta" is actually a newly composed piece, not so much for mannerism's sake but as a faithful continuation of an untapped source. This work was created in the early 2000s for the theatrical performance "Se ij bogianen a bogio… pòrca miseria!". The title is difficult to translate because it presupposes a shared cultural background that is complex and strongly identity-bound. The Piedmontese sarcastically refer to themselves as *bogianen*, 'those who do not move', for their proverbial indolence; but that description is called into question here, because the Piedmont region had a significant role in national history, at least until relatively recently. The

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final expletive, generic and widely used, is combined here with a subtle reminder of the *miseria*, or extreme poverty, as the defining, "cursed" predicament of the popular classes.

The dialectal words of the song, loosely modelled after a serenade, are based on a light-hearted comparison between town girls and rural girls, in which the latter are preferred for their simplicity. Beyond the core message, the performance focuses on a number of key expressive elements. On one side, the strictly musical element is limited to the part of the diatonic accordion, combined with Torta's initial lead vocals; then the vocal ensemble joins the sung text and the leading melody, in accordance with the rules and the polyvocal style of a tradition that is still practised in some regions of northern Italy.

The rhythm sections, at times autonomous, occasionally make use of sound devices, which are musical adaptations of tools that have other primary functions. This undoubtedly creative technique is also inspired by an ingrained, spontaneous custom and may have been simply transferred, with the necessary adjustments and reshaping, to stage performance. We will see more examples of this adaptation, with meaningful enhancements, in the compositional development addressed in the following sections of this article.

These sound objects are additionally joined by peculiar instruments with a parodistic-imitative quality, such as the *cuse* (gourds), a particular type of idiophonic mirliton that is essentially unique in organology and is typical of this region (Guizzi 2020 [2002], 78–80; Ghirardini [Ed.], 14; 31; 245; 251). Finally, in an interlude, Torta changes his role from singer to actor, although he follows a delivery pattern that is closer to street storytelling than theatre acting.

Below is given a translation of the song lyrics:

1) The city girls wear makeup for good / but the country ones have beautiful cheeks / Lovely cheeks larin larà […] Beautiful cheeks Pretty girl.
2) The city girls wear nice earrings / but the country ones have pretty little eyes / Lovely eyes *larin larà* […] Lovely eyes Pretty girl.
3) The city girls comb their hair well / but the country ones have beautiful curls / Lovely curls *larin larà* […] Lovely curls Pretty girl.
4) The city girls would be nice enough to kiss / but the country ones are to marry / I sing for you *larin larà* […] I sing for you Pretty girl.

The fourth model brings us to the last part of our journey, and to the conclusion of my discussion. This model is designed as a place where individual and communal dimensions are transcended, attaining a universal domain. Here, a particular idiom is translated into a language that can be used across cultures, and in the process, music is reduced to sounds, and sound becomes essentially symbolic.

What I will concentrate on is a remarkable compositional work that is the natural, fully developed result of a long-term experimental application process as well as of constant conceptual development. This work has found its completion in the theatrical and musical production *Paesaggi*

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Larin Lareta

(stile popolare arcaico)

testo e musica di
Domenico Torta

Sol Lam Re7 Sol
Le fi - je'd la si - tà as em-ba - ga - gio bin ma co-leìd la cam-
Lam Re7 Sol Do Lam Re7
pa - gnaa l'han doi bei po - min po min d'a - mor la-rin la - rà po-min d'a-
13 Sol Mim7 Lam Re7 Sol Do Lam
mor la-rin la - rà po-min d'a - mor la - rin la - re - ta Po-min d'a - mor la-rin-la-
20 Re7 Sol Mim7 Lam Re7 Sol
rà po-min d'a - mor la-rin la - rà po-min d'a - mor be - la fi - je - ta

1) Le fije dla sità as embagagio bin
ma cole ed la campagna a a l'han doi bei pomin
Pomin d'amor larin larà
Pomin d'amor larin larà
Pomin d'amor larin lareta
Pomin d'amor larin larà
Pomin d'amor larin larà
Pomin d'amor Bela fijeta

2) Le fije dla sità a l'han ed bei orcin
ma cole ed la campagna a l'ha doi bei ujin
Ujin d'amor larin larà
Ujin d'amor larin larà
Ujin d'amor larin lareta
Ujin d'amor larin larà
Ujin d'amor larin larà
Ujin d'amor Bela fijeta

3) Le fije dla sità lor as penteno bin
ma cole ed la campagna a l'han 'd bei risolin
Bei riss d'amor larin larà
Bei riss d'amor larin larà
Bei riss d'amor larin lareta
Bei riss d'amor larin larà
Bei riss d'amor larin larà
Bei riss d'amor Bela fijeta

4) Le fije dla sità sario da basé
ma cole ed la campagna a son da maridé
Mi cant per voi larin larà
Mi cant per voi larin larà
Mi cant per voi larin lareta
Mi cant per voi larin larà
Mi cant per voi larin larà
Mi cant per voi Bela fijeta

Fig. 9 Music and lyrics of the song *Larin Lareta* by Domenico Torta (2005).

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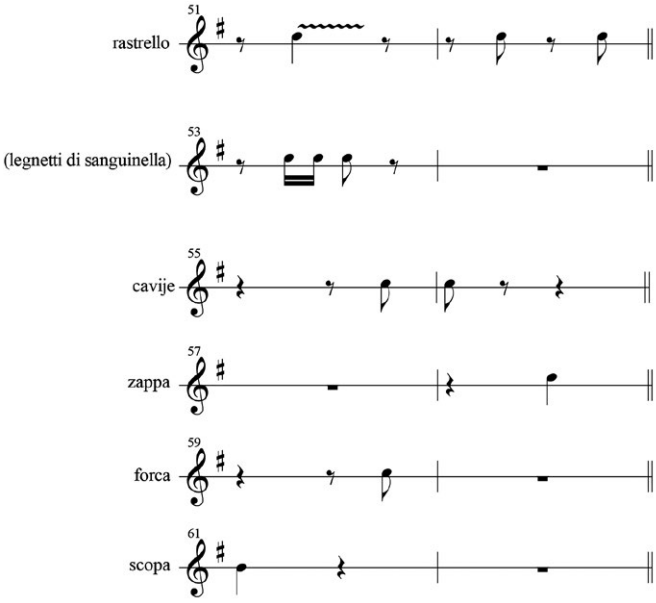

Fig. 10 Rhythmic patterns for the refrain of the song *Larin Lareta* by Domenico Torta. The score also specifies the sound objects to be played: rake; dogwood sticks; sticks to bind sheaves; hoe; pitchfork; broomstick.

sonori (Soundscapes), and especially in its opening piece, "La sinfonia del mondo" (The symphony of the world) (Torta 2017). We owe this creative process to Domenico Torta as a musician and researcher, but what comes to fruition is the act of compiling and distilling a collective, layered vision of a sound-sphere and the extended participation in terms of composing of a dynamic multipart music lab (Torta 2020).

The original title of the work was "*p*iccolo *p*opolo—*f*ievoli *f*iabole *f*rivole" (The little people—faint frivolous fables). The first word combination was an implicit reference to a term used to describe many Aboriginal peoples, but it also makes a more subtle allusion to the original cultural stratum of the community to which Torta himself belongs. The humorous subtitle attempted to capture the work's apparent simplicity, but in reality it was essentially a collection of instructive fairy tales: I "L'omino e la vecchia torre" (The little man and the old tower) is a play that addresses the transmission of musical knowledge and skills between generations through the tale of a bell ringer; II "Le sei principesse" (The six princesses), in which the humanised bells reveal their identities and the tasks they have to carry out in communal life; III "I tre rastrelli musicanti" (The three musical rakes), whose protagonists consider their status as tools of the trade as well as their capacity and right to be used as musical instruments; and finally, IV "E un patà!" is an Italian rhythmic phrase that magically condenses the common right to music that was announced by the rakes in the preceding story and is quickly shared by the other everyday objects gathered for the musical performance that closes the parade of the objects ("La parata degli oggetti").

That same playful tone characterises the description of the instrumental ensemble: "narrator, tubular bells, rakes, spoons, beaten bottles, breathed bottles… with the complicity of a string

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orchestra with a woodwind quartet and a funny percussionist. We do not exclude special appearances by the famous masters Georges Bizet, Ludwig van Beethoven, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and finally Amilcare Ponchielli, as well as the fabulous audience in the hall" (Torta 2017).

In the first section of *Paesaggi sonori/Soundscapes*, the protagonist is accompanied by a wide range of folkloric sound objects in addition to the orchestra's sophisticated instruments. First and foremost, the juxtaposition of these two expressive registers has to do with Torta's dual identity as a musician and, in particular, with his efforts to reconcile these two diametrically opposed musical traditions. This theme, as seen above, also forms the narrative core of the fable "I tre rastrelli musicanti" and is further clarified by the motto added to the new title of *Soundscapes*: "Music belongs to everyone, and you can do it with anything" (Torta 2017).

Instead of the original title, the expression *Paesaggi sonori/Soundscapes* was chosen because it was simpler, more direct and suggested a strong, universal connection to the museum's history, commitment and mission. The title was changed in view of the first staging, which took place in 2015 at Teatro Regio, or Turin's Royal Theatre. "La sinfonia del mondo" (The symphony of the world), introduced above, was also composed after the fairy tales; as the first movement of a work-in-progress, it aims to set the stage for the subject matter and metaphorically introduce a series of essential ideas.

A narrator speaks a short poetic text in a "biblical tone", describing the scenes that follow. The first section aims to create an impression of the imagined landscape of Creation using the sounds of natural forces and primordial elements. The text is the following: "In the darkness of the mists of time, sound was free: free to fly in the wind, to merge in the sea, to burn in fire, to extinguish and regenerate in the rain…" (Torta 2017, 7).

This section is labelled "Soundscape: Keynotes A" in the score, and it relies on—but is clearly independent of—Raymond Murray Schafer's theory and development of the notion of 'soundscape' (Torta 2017, 10–13). We have in fact observed how this term takes on a specific "ethnographic" meaning throughout the museum's history and thus also in the related cultural restitution to the community. Similarly, the concept of 'keynote' maintains the figurative meaning attributed by Schafer and thus the reference to original sounds proper to the natural world as well as to anthropised environments. However, their performance—through the use of sound objects—here becomes a further metaphorical construction, in a tale that starts from the representation of original sounds. The composition, played here by the Musicanti in a new, partly modified version, features sound devices that are more or less popular and that mimic the noises of natural forces: wind, sea, fire, rain, thunder. Anemophone, talassophone, pirophone, brocheophone and bronteophone are all neologisms that have been coined to identify these phenomena. These names also aim to establish a relationship to the sound machines built by Luigi Russolo for the musical Futurist movement in Italy of the early 1900s (Russolo 1916).

Returning to Herder's ideas, we might frame what seems to be the composer's role within a process that involves the direct hearing, embodiment and development of the auditory parts of creation as well as a universalistic vision, expressed in a nutshell, of the sound sources and instruments.

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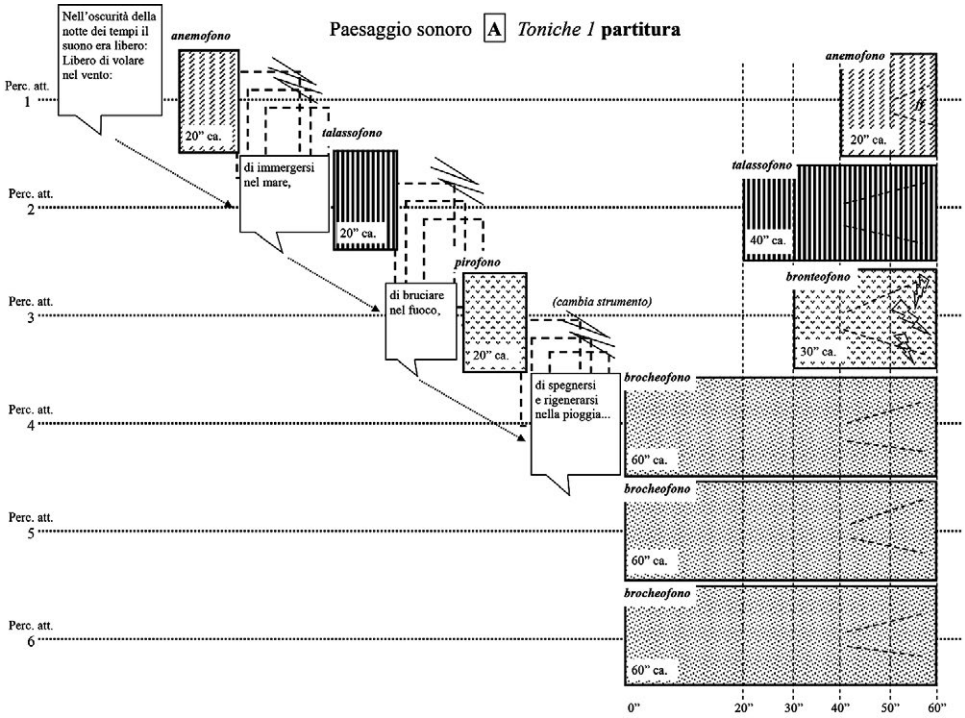

Fig. 11 Score of the section *Keynotes A*, from *Paesaggi sonori* by Domenico Torta, for the following "newly invented" musical instruments: *Anemophone, talassophone, pirofone, brocheophone, bronteophone*.

> Everything that resounds in nature is music. Nature contains all of music's elements within it and only requires a hand to draw them out, an ear that hears, and a common feeling that is sensitive to it. No artist ever created a tone, or charged it with power, that was not first contained in nature and in his instrument. The composer discerns the ways of tones, and forces them upon us with gentle strength. (Herder 2017b [1800], 250)

As can be seen in the score below, the musical sequence is timed throughout and uses expressive devices to simulate realism that are reminiscent of historical methods of producing stage sound effects as well as foleys utilised in film.

The second section, entitled "Keynotes B", is introduced by a single poetic line: "The dawn of life rose up little by little" (Torta 2017, 7; 14–32). By simulating shared experiences and auditory sensations, the piece actually depicts the genesis, or origin of life, in a symbolic manner. Beginning with insect sounds and bird calls, it progresses to the sounds of domestic animals and various forms of human labour before ending with a newborn's cry and the return of nighttime sounds. The instruments, all documented in the museum, include sound toys, tools and bird calls.

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A first group imitates the croaking of frogs, and later on the clucking of chickens, and comprises various friction drums with one added string that are used in a variety of techniques, although were all originally intended to have a ludic function. Then the actual ornithological calls start to emerge: a friction idiophone made from a small wooden block and a screw to imitate cricket chirping or lark singing; various globular flute types to imitate owl, nightingale and turtledove songs; ribbon reeds to imitate the little owl and lapwing; and flutes with a flexible air reservoir that were once used to entice thrushes. These are then combined with different *soundmarks* aimed at evoking the peasant world and its work practices: harness bells for donkeys, bells for goats and cows, coachmen's whips, clappers reproducing the sound of hooves and so on. The last soundmark is the newborn's cry, which is produced by using a plastic straw as a double reed and modulating the sound with the hands acting as a mobile resonator.

The performers are again the Musicanti, who interpret the work with remarkable subtlety, but the importance and independence of sound take centre stage as dusk approaches, and the action recedes into the background.

The third and final section focuses on mankind and on the duality of the natural and spiritual dimensions. The title is "Soundscape: Signals C", again a reference to Schafer's taxonomy and nomenclature (Torta 2017, 31–42). The accompanying text reads: "Hunger and thirst appeared and the lack of the sacred was felt: it was then that sound became rite and magic…" (Torta 2017, 7).

In order to depict this new scene, the composer turns in particular to another auditory tradition, also recorded by the museum, namely, the noises of Holy Week. In accordance with a complex and enigmatic religious symbology that is rooted in the ancient liturgical treatises, special instruments are used to convey the thundering and awesome outburst of divine power, including various types of horns, shells and idiophones such as the *tabelle* (percussion plaques) and *raganelle* (ratchets) (Raschieri 2020, 74–85).

Torta has considerably changed the aerophones by including a large African horn and a goat's horn, the latter of which openly imitates the Jewish shofar. This foreign participation in the Christian Easter rituals is a deliberate continuation, and more overt expression, of his universal message. In the definition given by Guizzi, the chaos of anti-music that characterises ceremonial noises contains a first seed of musicality that, by the piece's conclusion, results in a regular rhythm provided by the above-mentioned African horn (Guizzi 2004, 201–243).

The horn signals the transition into the closing section, which is devoted to "Soundmarks D and D'" (Torta 2017, 43–60). The text provides an introduction to the issue of how musical language has evolved in humans: "Mankind learned to observe and see, listen to and hear, imagine and narrate… the immediate reaction to that immense landscape was music. Over time, man developed the tools needed to tell it" (Torta, 7).

According to Schafer, the term 'soundmark' describes the peculiar features of each unique cultural area. This is why Torta chose to include one of the most significant and primitive instruments from his own local tradition, and from the museum collection: the *torototèla*, a musical bow consisting

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Fig. 12 A frame of the section, *Keynotes B*, from Paesaggi sonori by Domenico Torta, with the Musicanti playing small friction drums to imitate the clucking of chickens. Snapshot taken from video footage by Mattia Bena on 26 and 27 February 2015, in Teatro Regio, Torino, Italy.

Fig. 13 A frame of the section, *Signals C*, from *Paesaggi sonori* by Domenico Torta, with the Musicanti playing the Holy Week instruments and a big African horn (at the center of the scene). Snapshot taken from video footage by Mattia Bena on 26 and 27 February 2015, in Teatro Regio, Torino, Italy.

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of a basic wooden structure, a resonator made from an inflated pig's bladder, and a very simple bow to vibrate the monochord instrument.

The rediscovery of this instrument—which shares similarities with other ancient European artefacts—was based first and foremost on written historical and literary accounts, in particular the morphological and functional description found in the autobiographical writings of Angelo Brofferio, a senior political figure of the Italian Risorgimento period as well as a poet and amateur musician (Brofferio 1861, 67–72). However, precisely in the area bordering the provinces of Turin and Asti, and even in his own family tradition, Torta had also come across rare documents and material remains of the 20th-century version of the instrument, undoubtedly residual compared to its former widespread use yet intact and authentic.

Beyond the allure of this discovery, and the passionate journey of restoring a unique and significant forgotten instrument, the torototèla (or more accurately *criŋa*, from *criŋ*, the local dialectal word for 'pig') became the highest symbol of the already recognised folk practice of building and playing imitative instruments using humble materials.

The first piece in this section is the same song that we heard previously, performed by Torta's mother, Giuseppina Tamagnone. However, here the piece is enhanced in terms of its semantic content, along with some aspects of expression and style. As can be read in some passages of the score, Torta's song is referred to as *melos*, or free, ancestral singing.

The term used for the Musicanti's vocal accompaniment is *organum vocale*, a form of early polyphonic music. What stands out in particular is the use and expressive highlighting of vocalisms and nasal consonants. Finally, the continuous sound of the animal horn, or *bordone*, serves as a reminder of pre-tonal musical systems and various folk traditions.

The second section, the "Soundmark D'", is organised around the words from another traditional song, "Lu gril e la furmìa" (The cricket and the ant), in which the model of the ballad—with its narrative structure and literary topoi—meets the moral fable (Nigra 2009 [1888], 587–589). Two levels converge in this new compositional work. On the one hand, we have the apparently playful nature of the piece, which comes in the form of a children's rhyme. This structure sets off a regular and lively rhythmic gait, sustained by some of the sound objects we have already met, which are now given a new function of accompaniment. The second, derivative level represents a more recent phase of musical and choreutic expression, or at least a dimension other than the isolated poignancy and pure sacredness of sound.

> In the second part of the story the African horn is joined by new instruments, such as: walnut shells that are rubbed to imitate the croaking of frogs, or beaten to mimic the tapping of the woodpecker on tree trunks; *cavigliatori* or *cavicchi* [sticks to bind sheaves], taking a break from harvest to remind us of the rhythms of field workers; and three *torototèla* that highlight the fascinating evolution of the chordophones. The melody transitions to mensural. One of the actor-percussionists touches his shoulder, rubs his chest with his palms, and slaps his legs… There is a change in the air, and perhaps we can even sense the arrival of dance. (Raschieri and Torta 2021, 297)

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Thus, the final section represents the process of acclimating to the Modernist musical language of Europe and Romantic symphonism, to the development of construction techniques, and the zenith of orchestration models. Thus the orchestra appears on the scene, with its unique soundmark, which comes closest to the essence of sound at the moment of tuning, regarded as a highly representative music piece in its own right. In this way, the seemingly positivistic idea of evolution is dismantled by a vision that provocatively looks back to a primordial magma.

> All in all, this would simply be an orchestral tuning, which usually precedes any musical performance, but this disorganised magma of the orchestral tuning also corresponds to what Guizzi described as "anti-music". Surely a soundmark for Schafer, and a great scream for me. The primordial scream, which the human community has always known since the dawn of time, because that tension is the sum of numerous other ancestral and primordial tensions: chaos, dismay, fear, hunger, thirst, which subside through rituals and magic. (Raschieri and Torta 2021, 297)

At the beginning of this discussion, I suggested that sound expression and music performance combine the agency of individuals and communities (Herder and Bohlman 2017). I believe that these assumptions are clearly reflected in the work that we have just finished analysing, in that it really encompasses individual action, recurring references to a collective heritage and a choral approach to explore the meaning of sound-making itself.

But there is a further horizon that is both syncretic and more expansive. Just like the *Museo del Paesaggio Sonoro*, this musical work leans towards an imagined and experienced transculturality and universality without generalising or simplifying.

Thus, to restate this multiperspectival conception and discourse on music, I would like to close with a fitting quote by Torta that epitomises the whole work and its concept: "In our research, we have drawn with a pair of compasses in a small place to embrace and grasp something much bigger and deeper."

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III. Production and perception of sound

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Ulrich Morgenstern

Playing without instruments in a patriarchal society

Russian mouth music as a practical substitution, an artistic niche, and an autodidactic method

The balalaika is the Russian mandolin with two to three strings.
Nearly every village has its virtuoso on the patriarchal instrument.
Die Balalaika ist die russische Mandoline mit zwei bis drei Saiten bespannt.
Fast jedes Dorf hat seinen Virtuosen auf dem patriarchalischen Instrumente.
Robert Lippert (1847, 127)

Abstract

Vocal imitation of instrumental music was a widespread and culturally meaningful performance practice in Russian music until recently. Strangely enough, the phenomenon, with its diverse musical and social functions, has not yet been the subject of in-depth inquiry. In this article, I will outline some characteristics and typical performance situations of Russian mouth music, taking it as a predominantly female practice in a patriarchal society. From an interdisciplinary perspective, I will draw from sociology, Russian folkloristics, structural linguistics, and both Anglophone and Russian ethnomusicology, including comparative aspects of Russian and "Celtic" (Irish and Scottish) mouth music.

"Playing the tongue / the lips" (*igrat' na iazyke / na gubakh*)" is traditionally not conceptualized as singing, but rather described as a substitution for "real" instrumental music. But this is only one aspect of the phenomenon. In particular, female performers were able to create an aesthetically satisfactory and socially meaningful music-filled situation in settings traditionally dominated by women. These include gatherings and more intimate private situations, while at weddings and larger dance events "real" musicians (exclusively male) were indispensable. Skilful female mouth musicians are often remembered as extremely creative and extrovert personalities by the younger generation, even after most traditional performance contexts have vanished.

Male musicians used vocal imitations nearly exclusively as a mnemotechnical method, particularly in autodidactic learning. Vocal modelling is an effective tool to keep new melodic motifs and phrases—be they heard from others or invented by oneself—in the auditory memory until they are transferred to the more secure motor memory. The absence of male performance of Russian mouth music in social events can be explained by the gender roles found in a patriarchal society and also by specifics of instrumental music-making in traditional Russian settings.

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1. *Introduction*

Any student of Russian folk music with a focus on traditional styles and repertoires is familiar with vocal imitation of instrumental music. Strangely enough, unlike Irish lilting and Scottish diddling, the widespread and culturally meaningful performance of Russian mouth music has not yet been the subject of in-depth inquiry. To my knowledge there are no articles on Russian mouth music examining its distinct musical characteristics and social functions, except with regard to a specific wedding genre from the Poozer'e, in the Russian-Belarusian borderland (Razumovskaia 1996).

In the following I will give a brief summary of the characteristics of the voice being used "in instrumental function", as ethno-organologist Iurii Boiko (1946–2015) put it (1982, 71). I will draw from the existing literature and from fieldwork in Central, North and Northwest Russia between 1990 and 2012. The idea of a special article on mouth music arose many years after my field work in Russia came to an end. For this reason, unfortunately, I can only summarize general observations without having conducted targeted interviews.

This is not an in-depth study on the musical and phonological features of Russian mouth music and its intrinsic syntaxis and compositional strategies, comparable with Christine Knox Chambers' profound analysis of Scottish (1980) or Catherine E. Mullins' study Irish mouth music (2014) even if the practices presented would deserve such systematic approaches. For now, I will outline the general societal framework of the expressive behaviour in question, its typical performance situations and genres, its main functions, and, briefly, the characteristics of its musical style.

In the vast majority of cases, performers of, and audiences for, Russian mouth music are women or girls. Thus, this aspect of traditional expressive culture cannot be discussed without looking at the social norms of patriarchalism. Though frequently contested since the late 19th century, these norms were largely valid in Russian rural life until at least the recent past. Of course, this does not mean that Russia was that backward a country, as the apologists of the Bolsheviks prefer to depict it. In fact, Russia was one of the first European countries to introduce female voting rights, in May 1917, after the liberal February revolution[1]. Civil marriage was introduced after February 1917 and obligatory since 1918. Regardless of state interventions since the reforms of Peter the Great, forced marriages were not uncommon in Russian villages even in the first decades of the 20th century.

In the following sections, I will offer a necessarily selective and sketchy discussion of multidisciplinary perspectives relevant for Russian mouth music. I will start with sociology, followed by Russian folkloristics, structural linguistics and both Anglophone and Russian ethnomusicology. The title of this article is not to be understood in the sense that all aspects of the musical practices discussed are related to or even determined by the patriarchal order. However, for a discussion of the cultural significance of the phenomenon a consideration of these social conditions is helpful and necessary.

1 Unfortunately, this right did not last long, since, after their disastrous electoral defeat, the ruling Bolsheviks abandoned female voting rights, together with the voting rights of males, for the next seven decades.

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2. *Perspectives from sociology: patriarchalism*

In the Greek Septuagin Bible, the term patriarchēs (πατριάρχης) "is used in a broad sense, including religious and civil officials" (Herbermann 1913, 1227), but first of all to the progenitors of Israel: Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. In the Christian tradition, *Patriarchate* designates a high or the highest religious authority in the Eastern Orthodox and Catholic Churches, that of the *Patriarch*. English political theorist, Robert Filmer (c. 1588–1653), in *Patriarcha, or the Natural Power of Kings* (posthumously, 1680), used the concept of the *pater familias* to naturalize secular power. In the Early French Enlightenment there were serious challenges of the "the rule of the father". In Diderot's *Encyclopédie*, Louis, Chevalier de Jaucourt argued that "reason shows us that mothers have rights and authority equal to those of fathers [...] as both are equally responsible for bringing them into the world" (2003 [1765]. However, earlier and more radically, Marie de Gournay claimed *Egalité des hommes et des femmes* (1622), not only in the family but in society as a whole.

In the last third of the 19th century, liberal feminist philosopher Harriet Taylor in co-authorship with John Stuart Mill prominently continued the struggle for gender equality, arguing that in human history

> every step in improvement has been so invariably accompanied by a step made in raising the social position of women, that historians and philosophers have been led to adopt their elevation or debasement as on the whole the surest test and most correct measure of the civilization of a people or an age. (Mill 1869, 37)

Far from any such sociopolitical claims, but with a certain admiration, Johann Bachofen speculated (1861) on matriarchial periods in history, while anthropologists like Henry Lewis Morgan (1851) studied matriarchial order from a recent and George Alexander Wilken (1884) from an historical perspective. The latter was one of the first to use matriarchy/patriarchy (*Matriarchat/Patriarchat*) as nouns.

In Marxist social theory, patriarchal order is under continuous attack. For Friedrich Engels "the first class oppression [coincides] with that of the female by the male sex [die erste Klassenunterdrückung mit der des weiblichen Geschlechts durch das männliche]" (1902, 79 [1884, 68]). Monogamy, regardless of its oppressive aspects, offered "great historical progress [*Die Einzelehe war ein großer geschichtlicher Fortschritt*]" (ibid.), as did the dissolution of patriarchal order in the 19th century (s.b.).

Max Weber, from a politically unbiased point of view, proposed an explanation of patriarchalism and its social and mental preconditions:

> Among the prebureaucratic types of domination the most important one by far is patriarchal domination. Essentially it is based not on the official's commitment to an impersonal purpose and not on obedience to abstract norms, but on a strict personal loyalty. (Weber 1968 [1922], 1006)

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'Bureaucracy' Weber equates with the modern state based on codified law while "under patriarchal domination the norms derive from tradition; the belief in the inviolability of that which has existed from time out of mind" (ibid.). It follows that patriarchalism is closer to what sociologist Reinhard Bendix calls "traditional societies" (Bendix 1967, see also Morgenstern 2021). Patriarchal domination is therefore not only clearly opposed to modern capitalist societies, but capitalism also appears to be a decisive factor in overcoming it:

> As the household with its patriarchal domestic communism evolves, in the age of the capitalist bourgeoisie, into the associated enterprise based on contract and specified individual rights. (Weber 1968 [1922], 1070)

This fundamental societal transformation has not escaped the attention of the authors of the Communist Manifesto

> The bourgeoisie, wherever it has got the upper hand, has put an end to all feudal, patriarchal, idyllic relations. It has pitilessly torn asunder the motley feudal ties that bound man to his "natural superiors," and has left remaining no other nexus between man and man than naked self-interest, than callous "cash payment". (Marx and Engels 1888 [1848], 15)

According to Lenin, Lev Tolstoi's

> unremitting accusations against capitalism [...] convey all the horror felt by the patriarchal peasant at the advent of the new, invisible, incomprehensible enemy coming from somewhere in the cities, or from somewhere abroad, destroying all the "pillars" of rural life. (Lenin[4] 1977 [1910], 324, 325)

Today, the classics of Marxism-Leninism have hopelessly fallen in oblivion, while slogans like "Against patriarchy and capitalism" became fashionable. This shift of meaning can be explained with a transformation of 'patriarchalism' as an analytical concept to 'patriarchy' as a political buzzword with low explanatory value in 21st-century Europe. In this sense 'patriarchy' is beyond the focus of this article.

A second driving force against patriarchal rule is political liberalism, notably liberal feminism's claim against "inequality of rights between men and women" (Mill 1869, 10). More than 150 years after the Mills' seminal book, we can fairly state that: "[s]eeking to improve the lives of just over half the population on earth, feminism has been, for well over a century, one of the most significant social movements in human history" (Pluckrose and Lindsay 2020, 135) and when defining feminism as "belief in gender equality", the "majority of the population [in the US] is now feminist" (Pluckrose and Lindsay 2020, 136).

How did late 19th-century Russian folklore scholars face the patriarchal reality of the social settings under study? The last third of the century was a period of increased fieldwork in which

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philology and ethnography went hand in hand. Cultural criticism was not a taboo for early Russian music anthropologists. It is likely that many of them would have agreed with the Mills' liberal positions more than with the traditionalism of a Lev Tolstoi. As folklorists Laura J. Olson and Svetlana Adonyeva put it: "Certainly many nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Russian ethnographers saw Russian peasant gender relations as oppressive" (2013, 134). However, contrary to Russian and Western scholars who "have viewed Russian society through the lens of liberal feminism, and reached the conclusion that the patriarchal structure of the Russian family was detrimental to women's freedom" (ibid., 44), Olson and Adonyeva highlight women more as "actors negotiating within a system that imposes constraints on all members" (ibid.). It is precisely expressive culture where they identify meaningful, yet limited spaces for female agency. This might be not entirely new for ethnomusicologists, considering observations by Tullia Magrini:

> In the large households once typical of northern Italian peasant societies, ballads were performed by women in small groups [...]. Within this this context, ballad singing was the most important instrument that women had to reflect upon themselves and their relationship with society [...]. (Magrini 2003, 4)

It would be easy to find other instances for female gatherings, typically marked by collective work, but also by music of different genres, mainly vocal, as a means of self-reflection and social commentary. This context is vital for the understanding of niches of female music making, including Russian mouth music.

3. Perspectives from anthropology and folkloristics: patriarchalism and traditional expressive culture in Russia

Traditional societies are shaped by numerous largely accepted restrictions of everyday behaviour which members of liberal Western societies would hardly find acceptable (cf. Bendix 1967, 320). Many of those restrictions are based on patriarchal values. And these values and restrictions have a huge impact on traditional expressive culture, particularly on the practices of instrumental music. Timothy Rice, in "Social constraints on music learning" draws a clear picture of the situation in Bulgaria: "Men were almost exclusively the instrumentalists, while women seemed to have known most of the songs" (1994, 43). Women "never had free hands to practice an instrument and were discouraged from taking up what was viewed as a male activity" (ibid.). Even in rural regions of post-war-Austria, when the prospects for women to engage in leisure activities such as reading, painting or sports gradually increased, it was not widely appreciated that they played folk musical instruments in public settings. Typically, brass/woodwind bands began to accept female members only in the 1960s or later, though private musical activities were not entirely uncommon in earlier times. Bert Breit's retrospective documentary "Zillertaler Geiger" (1976) presents prominent male dance fiddlers and elderly women, playing the harmonica and the triangle for their own entertainment.

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According to Olson and Adonyeva the situation in 20th-century Russia was not too different from Bulgaria. Instrumental music "had always been associated more with men than with women (with some local exceptions) remained largely the provenance of men" (2013, 134). Indeed, field data reveal that at parish fairs, dancing parties, weddings nearly always male musicians were in the centre of the communal event. But this is only one part of the story. Taking seriously patriarchal rules of male domination, we should not forget about existing niches for female expressive behaviour and of the role of musical instruments in scenarios of social change.

First, at least since the pre-war period, playing musical instruments was considered to be a normal social activity for women, though generally restricted to private gatherings. Again Olson and Adonyeva: "Exceptions include women who play balalaika or small button accordions. Female accordionists and *rozhok* (horn) players were and are rare" (2013, 320). Studying folk music practice in the Kostroma oblast, anthropologist Kaori Yunoki-Oie (2004) interviewed 11 female and 13 male balalaika players who began playing in the pre-war years. This high number of female balalaika players has to be understood in the context of the dramatic loss of the male population during and after the war. I myself met 28 male and 8 female balalaika players in the Central Pskov oblast (province) between 1995 and 1996 (Morgenstern 2007a), but, to be honest, I easily could overlook female performers as, in this project, my main focus was on the sophisticated old-time repertoire which was mainly the domain of (button) accordion players in which women were very rare.

Second, even in late 19th century, instrumental music marked situations in which socially meaningful changes in village life became visible. As Stephen Frank (1992) puts it:

> As new forms of entertainment were introduced at evening gatherings, however, the opportunity for greater and more frequent contact increased. By the 1880s, for example, folk dances such as the *khorovod* (round dance) were being supplanted by the quadrille, the waltz, and the controversial polka. As village youth quickly learned and adopted these dances into the repertoire of their evening gatherings, moral reformers warned that they were yet another sign of the growing depravity of rural life. (Frank 1992, 717)

Ethnographic sources from European Russia and Northern Belarus also reveal that before and after this period newly adopted choreomusical genres, such as early-20th-century ballroom dances, and musical instruments, such as the violin in mid-19th century Smolensk oblast or the ubiquitous button accordion, could trigger serious generational conflicts (Morgenstern 2010, 50, 51). However, after a short period of "peaceful coexistence", the controversial couple dances Frank mentions, early-20th century couple dances with Russian melodies (*korobochka*, *mesiats*, *na rechen'ku*) and also more recent ballroom dances such as the *tustep* (two-step), *padespan* (*pas d'Espagne*) were shared by all generations and at least until recently were considered by older dancers to be an integral part of local heritage, as opposed to the more than controversial pop music.

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Third, the increasing role of the *chastushka* as a medium of social commentary[2] was a particular challenge for patriarchal norms and parental power. It is likely that similar epigrammatic short songs existed in Russia centuries earlier—all the more as the *chastushka* reveals structural and functional parallels to distinct folk genres of Roman antiquity (Morgenstern 2011, 2015). However, there is a societal reality behind the incorrect notion of the *chastushka* as a new genre of the reform period after 1861. Its role for individual expression and its capacity to immediately comment both on personal experience and on social life was of heightened importance in an atmosphere of dramatic upheavals in traditional order and everyday culture. Parental power, forced marriages, and irresponsible and cruel husbands are a continuous issue in *chastushka* texts as well as in other genres such as lyrical songs and ballads.

In the new life of the old *chastushka* genre, the accordion played a vital role. As a symbol for modernity, urbanity, and cosmopolitanism, the *talianka* (from *italianka*: the Italian [woman]) the *venka* (the Viennese), and the *petrogradskaia garmon'* [Petrograd accordion] was held in the highest favour by the village youth—and despised both by traditionalist Russian upper-class folklore enthusiasts and by the musical elite. But this does not mean that the accordion was always a ubiquitous symbol of social change. As early as 1840, on his way between the North Russian Vologda and Ustiug, German zoologist Johann Heinrich Blasius reported that "every peasant owns an accordion [...]. When he is outdoors and is not singing he pulls and pushes his accordion on which his eyes rest with tenderness"[3] Hardly any of these comparatively wealthy farmers from the notoriously conservative Russian North were adversaries of patriarchalism. But were they altogether oppressive? Certainly the patriarchal system provided them with opportunities for oppressive behaviour. However, it is hard to generalize about the private life and the views and decisions of people who lived nearly 200 years ago.

4. Perspectives from structural linguistics: expressive iconicity

As a special type of voice-based, but wordless, expression, mouth music is related in many ways to speech and language. Structural linguistics is forever dealing with phonological phenomena crucial to mouth music, both with regard to function and to morphology. Mouth music syllables are located between what Robert L. Oswalt called *inanimate imitatives*, when the depicted sound "is emitted by an inanimate object" (1994), 293) and *animate imitatives*, when "the modelled sound is one produced vocally by an animate creature" (ibid.). From a rational, non-mythological perspective, musical instruments indeed are inanimate objects, but they are operated by animate

2 The term 'social commentary' is widely used, among other contexts, in research on the *Plena* from Puerto Rico (Silvestrini 2023). It aptly refers to one of the main functions of the *chastushka*.

3 „Ein jeder Bauer besitzt eine Handharmonika [...]. Ist er im Freien und singt nicht, so zieht und drückt er an seiner Harmonika, auf der sein Blick mit Zärtlichkeit ruht" (Blasius 1844, 182).

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humans with expressive intention, which necessarily informs the sound image of the music both performed and imitated.

Mouth music has much in common with onomatopoeic ideophones, i. e. "marked words that depict sensory imagery" (Dingemanse 2015, 946), which is true also for mouth music syllables. However, ideophones related to instrumental music are typically not used in mouth music: lexical units depicting specific musical instruments such as eng. *fiddle fiddle dee* (for the fiddle), *strum, strum* (for the guitar), or rus. *tsyntsy-brynsy* (for the balalaika) may share with mouth music certain techniques like repetition, reduplication and phonological unconventionality, but these syllables and bisyllabic units can hardly ever be found in the repertoire of an experienced performer of mouth music.

Like onomatopoetic ideophones, mouth music syllables are never "perfect copies of the sounds as they exist in the world" (Reay 2006 [1994], 531). This is not just because "human speech mechanisms have their limitations" (ibid.). "The spectrogram of a domestic cat miaowing and that of an English-speaker saying /mijiaʊ/ [...] show completely different patterns" (ibid.) and the difference between a real rooster's cry and the related ideophone in English (cock-a-doo-dle-**doo**), Russian (*kukareku*) and German (*Kikeriki*) is even more dramatic. But unlike the notoriously bivocalic donkey's cry, a rooster typically produces monovocalic sound impulses more accurately depicted as /yˑ y ˈyˑ yː/. A similar transformation of the sound being imitated occurs in mouth music. Even a short glance at Russian, Irish and Scottish vocal imitation shows that the necessarily mono-timbral acoustic impulses of a musical instrument are modelled more often in disyllabic units than monosyllabic ones. For instance, *di-di* is less typical than *di-da* or *di-li*. To a certain degree, the tendency toward consonant alternation and rhyme can be explained by the higher convenience of pronunciation. More important, however, is the guiding principle of *Interest*, a term which American-Bulgarian linguist Donka Minkova borrowed from Kristin Hanson and Paul Kiparsky (1969). In her study on "Ablaut reduplication in English" she suggests that in verbal art,

> subsequent formations, both Ablaut and Rhyme words, are more aggressively creative; like doggerel verse, *boo-boo* reduplication is avoided for esthetic reasons. Variation is a great desideratum in verse. HK [Hanson and Kiparsky] refer to the enforcement of monotonous rhythm as 'formally possible but functionally pointless', and propose a principle they call Interest to cover the subtlety and variety of the setting of linguistic to metrical forms [...]. It is possible to imagine that a template which started out as a recurrence of completely identical structures was changed in a particular way in response to the general principle of Interest, changing either the vowel or the consonant in the iteration of the first foot. *Shall I shall I* is perfect reduplication, but *shilly-shally* is more esthetically gratifying. (Minkova 2002, 148, 149)

Further, Minkova links Hanson's and Kiparsky's definition of *Interest* to the concept of *tension*:

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> "Interest: The parameters are set so as to maximize the esthetic interest of the verse" (HK: 295). This parameter within the HK theory corresponds to the more familiar notion of tension,'the conflict created by interplay of the constituent elements of a work of art' (*OED* [*Oxford English Dictionary*]). (ibid.)

It follows that the higher iconicity[4] of the monosyllabic repetition as the more faithful modelling of an instrument's sound comes into conflict with aesthetically more productive, alternating types of reduplication.[5] From the perspective of musical semiotics, Vladimir Karbusicky points to high-low vowel alternation as a cross-cultural phenomenon: "Spontaneously and cross-culturally 'intervallic' polarities unfolded, particularly that of *i* and *a*"[6] (Karbusicky 1986, 143, see also 152). However, in a comparative study of "disyllabic sound symbolic reduplicatives" (2011, 185), Shinji Ido (2011) has shown a preference for the high-low vowel alternation in English, German and Hungarian language, but less in most Asian languages. In German high-low vowel alternation is a ubiquitous source of expressiveness of spoken language (Roman Jakobson's 'poetic function')[7]. While in Ido's study, Slavic languages are not considered, it is likely that high-low reduplication is less pronounced in Russian ideophones. However, they frequently appear in disyllabic units of Russian mouth music.

From a semiotic perspective, poetic techniques of reduplication are close to the affective domains of mouth music. Gerrit Kentner and his co-authors suggest that "word-internal

4 In a Peirceian sense, icon is opposed to symbol. "Although 'symbolism' points towards a conventional relation between sign and referred meaning, iconicity implies an inherent relation" (Auracher et al. 2011, 5). For Peirce an icon "is a sign which refers to the Object that it denotes merely by virtue of characters of its own, and which it possesses, just the same, whether any such Object actually exists or not" (Pierce 19 [18], 247). This is important to note for ethnomusicologists, as Thomas Turino in his insightful but largely intuition-based *Music as Social Life*, inaccurately drawing on Charles Sander Peirce, expands the concept of iconicity to "some type of resemblance between sign an object" (2008, 236). He goes so far to include cognitive strategies of "grouping of phenomena because of some type of resemblance" (ibid., 6) or "recognition of patterns and *form* in music" (ibid, 9) and repetition of musical units "at different points in a piece" (ibid.) as iconic. Surely, these cognitive and compositional strategies are fundamental to traditional music, and to ethnomusicology and folkloristic theory. However, in Turino's understanding of iconicity the sign-object relation gets lost: "we recognize dogs as a type of animal because of some type of resemblance" (ibid, 8.). This is true, but dogs are dogs and not signs. So this and many other of Turino's examples for "iconic processes" have no base in the semiotics of Peirce, whom he quotes only very rarely.

5 There is no consensus in linguistics whether or not repetition can be subsumed to reduplication. Gerrit Kentner (2017, 237) distinguishes "phonological doubling" from reduplication.

6 "Spontan und überkulturell entfalteten sich 'intervallische' Polaritäten, insbesondere die von *i* und *a*".

7 Not only ideophones (zick-zack, tick-tack) but also popular rally cries follow this pattern. Examples are *Vivat* /ˈviːvat/ (German Empire), the notorious /*ziːk* haɪ̯l/ (Nazi Germany), and quite recently *Widerstand* /ˈviːdɐʃtant/ (resistance), a somewhat unspecific slogan, frequently heard at far-right or united far-right and far-left demonstrations in Germany and Austria.

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reduplication may support emotive meanings related to ideas of familiarity, diminution, naiveté, and playfulness or fun" (Kentner et al. 2022, 324). Réka Benczes puts English rhyming compounds in the context of the previously underemphasized "'ludic' function of language" (2012, 301): "According to [David] Crystal (1998), language play is an integral part of our linguistic (and cognitive abilities), which we engage in from a very early age" (ibid.). According to Mark Dingemase and Bill Thompson "[p]layfulness and iconicity are pervasive features of language" (2020, 204), and in an empirical study on "the relation between funniness and iconicity" they could show how in the English language these principles are interrelated. Summarising recent insights from neurocognition and music education, Benczes points to the "significance of rhythm in the process of language acquisition" (2012, 300) directly referring to folklore. Alongside lullabies and children's songs, "nursery rhymes can assist a child's linguistic, cognitive, physical, social and emotional, and musical development" (ibid.). It follows that the artistic niches to be discussed in this article are not only a domain of entertainment, but also a factor in personal development.

In this article I will use a classification of reduplicative compounds, established in linguistics since Otto Jesperesen (1909), which Benczes presents in the following way:

1. full reduplication of the base word, as in *bye-bye* and *goody-goody*;
2. partial reduplication of the base word, with a change in the initial consonant, as in *namby-pamby* or *nitty-gritty* (i. e., rhyming compounds); and
3. partial reduplication of the base word, with a change in the root vowel, as in *tick-tock* and *wishy-washy*, also referred to as "ablaut-motivated compound" (Benczes 2012, 301, paragraphing is mine).

5. Perspectives from ethnomusicology: sounds, uses and functions

Mouth music research is not yet an established field in our discipline. To my knowledge, the body of ethnomusicological literature on mouth music is rather limited (in quantity), even in its more prominent habitats[8] of Ireland, Scotland, Scandinavia and Russia. Sometimes in basic texts, references to previous studies are missing. A milestone is the unpublished dissertation *Non-Lexical Vocables in Scottish Traditional Music* by Christine Knox Chambers (Edinburgh 1980, accessible online). Drawing from philology and ethnomusicology (Alan P. Merriam, Christopher Small), Chambers presents a huge number of primary sources—texts (vocables), musical transcriptions, and field interviews. As many researchers after her she rejects the superficial notion of 'nonsense syllables', defining "non-lexical vocables" (Chambers 1980, i.) as "syllables without semantic content" (ibid., i.) which "often convey as specific a musical meaning as words do semantic meaning" (ibid.).

8 Foregrounding these regional practices may be somewhat selective. It is to a certain degree informed by contemporary revival practices. Needless to say that vocal performance in instrumental function reaches far beyond domains of traditional music, as scat singing in Jazz or beatbox show.

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She divides the Scottish music style of diddling into *instrumental* and *plain* diddling, the first with an iconic reference to a specific musical instrument the second without. Instrumental diddling has to be distinguished from the bagpipers' solmisation system *canntaireachd*:

> In the case of pibroch *canntaireachd*, the process of attaching vocables to musical phrases serves to remind the piper of the melody itself and of the placement of various ornaments within it. In the case of performance diddling, however, it seems that the same process takes place partly to facilitate a brisk tempo of performance, and partly for the sake of euphony.
> It isn't particularly easy to diddle dance tunes. Anyone who has tried it will have found that it demands good breath-control and a high degree of vocal agility, especially when attempting jigs and reels. (Chambers 1980, 64)

The orientation on euphony in Scottish mouth music corresponds to the quality of *Interest* (Minkova) in verbal art. This is of particular importance in a social environment which values individual expression and in which the "function of aesthetic enjoyment" (Merriam 1964, 223) holds a prominent place:

> In our culture it seems that as soon as any kind of music becomes a performance genre people begin to evaluate it and make value judgements about it, and—as was mentioned before—this is true of diddling. The existence of past and present diddling competitions implies a set of criteria for judging [...]. Other informants have made it clear that some diddlers are thought to be better than others, and in some cases they referred specifically to the choice and arrangement of vocables used, i. e. what I've referred to as euphony. (Chambers 1980, 65)

Chambers throughout examined the pitch-vowel relation, the strategies of sound combination in vocables, the syntagmatic and paradigmatic relationship of sounds in vocables and of the vocables themselves (1980, 113–149). In diddling, the "principle of contrast" is vital: "as a general although not invariable rule no vocable will be exactly the same as its immediate neighbours" (Chambers 1980, 149). This, again, corresponds to Minkova's parameter of *Interest* in verbal art, where reduplicative techniques require "maintain maximal perceptual distance" (2002, 151) between base and reduplicant. In diddling as a performing art, however, the expectations of the audience are balanced by the "principle of minimum effort" (Chambers 1980, 149) which "states that the linear arrangement of vocables is designed to be as easy as possible for the performer to articulate" (ibid.).

A main function of diddling in Scotland until recently was to replace the musician for a dance event: "One of the most common, and practical, reasons was simply if people wanted to dance and there was no instrumentalist present (or present but incapable)" (ibid., 71). Music for listening has also a longer tradition (ibid., 212). Instrumental diddling could and can be used for teaching (ibid., 20) but even more frequently, alongside plain diddling, for "tune swapping" (ibid., 38), i. e.,

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the circulation of melodies through "[D]irect musical communication among or between musicians of equal status" (Chambers 1980, 209).

David W. Hughes, in his comparative study of "acoustic-iconic mnemonic systems" (2000), maintains that so-called nonsense syllables "although lexically meaningless [...] make eminent sense once their logic is understood" (ibid., 94). He introduces the concept of Intrinsic Pitch, as the base of "the highly regular relation between vowels and melodic direction" (ibid., 105) and the principles of Intrinsic Intensity and Intrinsic Duration.

Phoneticians have found that in the vast majority of languages the vowels closest to [i] and [u], those spoken with the mouth relatively closed, will take less time to articulate and will also register a lower volume on a vU meter than will more open vowels; by contrast, the "longest" and "loudest" vowel is [a], followed by [o] and [e]. [...] This is why [i] and [u] are often favoured for short notes or those in weak metric positions in oral mnemonic systems, while [a] tends toward the opposite. (Hughes 2000, 105 and 106)

Discussing "intrinsicality in non-solmization contexts" (ibid., 111), Hughes suggests that in Irish lilting and Scottish diddling "Intrinsic Intensity and Duration play an important role", as

> the relatively strong backbeat tends to be represented by syllables with "heavier" vowels, such as "ah", "um" or "i" (here pronounced [ay]), whereas the weaker or shorter notes tend to use the sounds [ɪ] or [i]. My impression is that Intrinsic Pitch plays little or no role in lilting. (Hughes 2000, 112)

In a case study on "the relationship of vocables to melodic contour and musical accents" in lilting, Catherine Mullins (2014, 87) confirms Hughes's assumption, demonstrating "a direct relationship between vocables and music [...] apparent in the often consistent relationship to metrical and agogic accents (ibid., 103). In accord with Hughes, she is also sceptical about the "attempt to relate vowels to relative pitch" (ibid.) thus doubting "a possible connection with Intrinsic Pitch" (ibid.). It would be illuminating to bring together Hughes's and Mullins' observations with Chambers' analytical charts, though of course this should be done by a specialist in Celtic mouth music.

Chambers' in-depth ethnographies were continued by Heather Sparling's monograph on "Celtic mouth music" from Cape Breton (2014). She examines both *puirt-a-beul* (songs which combine verbal texts and non-lexical syllables) and *jigging*, the local equivalent to lilting and diddling consisting exclusively of vocables. As is known from Scotland, jigging plays a crucial role in teaching and in informal transmission of tunes between musicians (ibid., 54–55), but also by non-instrumentalists: "Many older Cape Breton fiddlers have talked about how they learned their repertoire from the jigging of non-fiddling family members" (ibid., 56).

In addition, jigging "is also used as a means of practising tunes, perhaps in contexts where playing a tune is not possible" (ibid., 58). Sparling briefly also refers to the substitutional function of mouth music with non-lexical syllables: "Jigging could be used to accompany a dancer in the absence of any available instrumental accompaniment" (ibid., 59).

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Russian ethnomusicologists have studied mouth music more from an anthropological perspective with regard to uses and function than in terms of musicological or philological analyses of style. As the following section will show, their observations reveal similarities of primary function but also different scenarios and practices of performance.

6. Repertoires of Russian mouth music

Before discussing the repertoires and key functions of mouth music, we have to consider that it is always conceptualized not as singing but as a specific form of instrumental performance. This is evident from local terms as *igrat' na gubakh* ("playing the lips", Razumovskaia 1996, 9, with reference to Kotikova 1962), *igrat' na iazyke* ("playing the tongue" coexisting with onomatopoetic verbs, compound by vocables and the onomatopoetic suffix *-kat'* such as *dililin'kat'* (wide spread), *tryndikat'*, *tiririkat'* (see Pashina 2012, 81), *kynakyrkat'* (Riazan oblast, cf. Morgenstern 1995, 275), *tyrlykat'* (verbal form from *tyrlykanie*, cf. Shchepanskaia 2022, 258). The expression *pod iazyk* ("to the tongue") is often used in ethnomusicology but, contrary to a wide-spread notion (including Morgenstern 1995, 2007a), does not indicate vocal imitation itself but rather expressive processes coordinated with mouth music. In phrases like *pliasat'/pet' pod iazyk* (dancing[9]/singing [songs] to the tongue), the latter is referred to as a musical instrument, like *pod garmon'/balalaiku* (to the accordion / the balalaika). Razumovskaia (2013, 10) similarly explains expressions like *plach* (lament) *pod iazyk* as analogous to *plach pod skripku* (lament to the fiddle). It is only logical that Boiko listed the *iazyk* as a distinct musical instrument among others (the balalaika and the accordion). For the same reason, he recommended that mouth music be transcribed with beamed notes like actual instrumental tunes, not with single notes as in syllabic songs (personal communication). Drawing from an emic perspective, I will also refer to mouth music performance as 'playing', not as 'singing'.

Like most Russian ethnomusicologists, Boiko describes the main repertoire of "the pan-Russian tradition of singing and dancing [*pliasat'*] *pod iazyk*" (1982, 17) with *chastushka* and *pliaska* tunes. While in some regions of North Russia, music for *pliaska* dancing (and nearly everywhere that for the *khorovod*) can be served by purely vocal dance songs, the dependence on instrumental music is more fundamental with regard to the so-called *chastushka*. This is particularly the case for the instrumental-vocal[10] genres of European Russia, related to *chastushka*-text but conceptually and structurally distinct from the *chastushka* as a musical genre. The main distinction is the leading function of the instrumental part over the vocal, which excludes notions such as instrumental

9 The Russian verb *pliasat'* refers mostly to improvised solo or agonal step dances. The *pliaska* is distinguished from couple dance (*tanets*) and also from the circle and chain dances (*khorovod*), however the latter distinction is less sharp.

10 This term belongs to Iurii Boiko who introduced it to mark the hierarchy between the parts, discussed here.

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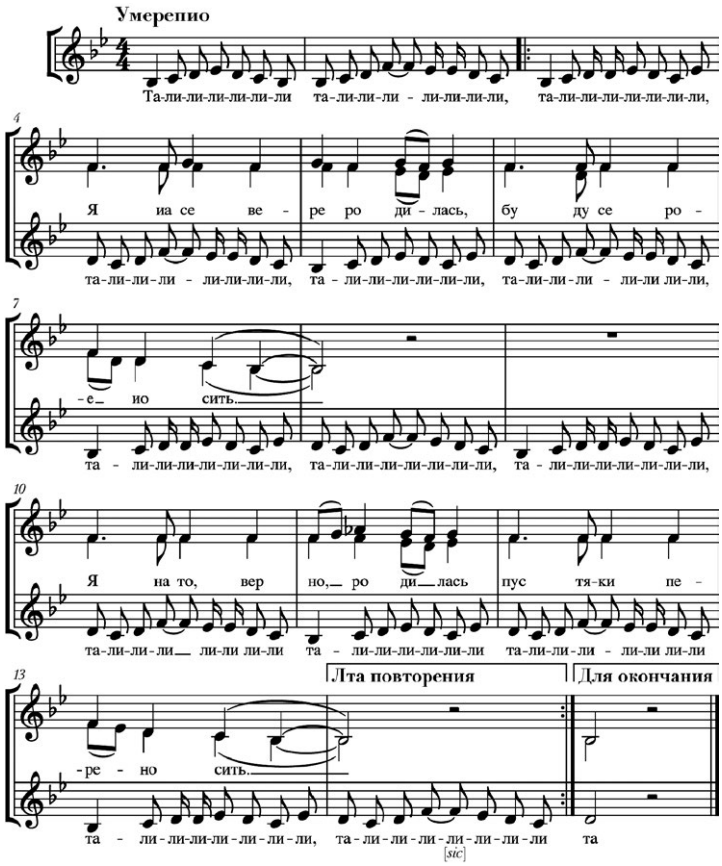

Fig. 1 Chastushki "pod iazyk" from Vilegonsk, Arkhangel'sk oblast. Fieldwork: Aleksandr Medvedev (Kotikova 1962, 78).

"accompaniment" or "interludes" (Morgenstern 2007, 2011, 2018). Traditionally, this non-dance genre is called *pod pesni* (for songs) or *po derevne* (along the village). In some regions until the 1930s, the genres *pod pliasku* and *pod pesni* (po derevne) covered nearly all socially meaningful and public instrumental music. *Pod pesni* was performed at parish fairs and, in the context of mouth music more importantly, at female autumn/winter gatherings (spinning rooms). Most local varieties of this genre are shaped by an asynchronous or partly synchronous relationship between instrumental and vocal phrases (Fig. 1, Video 1*). Pauses can occur only between the vocal phrases against the background of a continuous instrumental part. Thus, a performance of the lyrics only, without an instrumental part, or its imitation, would be incomplete. A similarly polyphonic arrangement of instrumental and vocal part is typical for wedding laments in the Poozer'e (Razumovskaia 1996, s. below).

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7. Performers of Russian mouth music

During my fieldwork in traditional settings in Russia and Belarus between 1989 and 2012, I never noticed any common *nomen agentis* for performers of mouth music. This is in striking contrast to the Celtic traditions. Irish musicians and audiences may often refer to *lilters*, and "The Jiggers" is even a name of Scottish ceilidh band. The reason might be that mouth music, with its limited acoustic range, is typically not performed for a larger audience, be it for dancing or for listening.

Nearly all performers of Russian mouth music are women. Focusing on the role of female gatherings in the Poozer'e, Irina Romodina emphasizes that "performance of that type also knows its leaders" (1990, 51). It seems that these leaders belong to that special category of village woman who are famous as pranksters but also feared for their sharp tongue. Very often experienced mouth musicians are *chastushka* singers at the same time. This genre of verbal art is the ideal medium not only for social but also for personal commentary.

Male performers very rarely show themselves as mouth musicians. In a rare instance, I can refer to a very eccentric old man from the the Dedovichi raion of the Pskov oblast, after a video by Aleksander Romodin (2011). Anthropologist Tatiana Shchepanskaia has observed that "many male informants refused (as if they were shy) to reproduce *tyrlykanie* on record" (2022, 258). The (male) instrumentalists' reluctance to perform mouth music is clearly reflected in nearly all published transcriptions which originate from female performance. An exception of this rule are the demonstrations of autodidactic learning processes, carefully documented by Aleksei Mekhnetsov, the author of the first book on traditional Russian instrumental music entirely based on fieldwork (2004, 181–186, six transcriptions). I can also mention the famous balalaika player Aleksei Leonov, also from the central Pskov oblast, who demonstrated the mouth music version of the *Sumetskaia* (Audio 1) as sung by his mother on which he based his balalaika version (Video 11).

But in general, Bogina's laconic description of the gender setting in South Russian mouth music can be generalized for all Russian regions under study: "This practice is purely female—by a fully understandable reason: a man has to *play* an instrument, and a group of women can, in case of necessity, be satisfied with a substitution" (2004, 204). I will later try to explain this strict division of gender roles.

8. Structural parameters of Russian mouth music

In most known transcriptions of Russian mouth music, the instrumental part is performed solo. In some South Russian traditions homophonic ensemble playing is common and, only in the Central Pskov Region (Morgenstern 2007, Audio 2, 3), up to four performers can create a highly improvised polyphonic texture. This unusual and rarely documented style is historically related to a deeply-rooted polyphonic thinking in local instrumental music. It would deserve a separate study.

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As in dance music played on instruments, the focus of mouth musicians is on "accentuation of the strong beats in the tunes, the precise observation of the tempo, a succinct, pronounced motoric, rhythmic movement" (Romodina 1990, 51), however "with a most schematic outlining of the melody" (ibid.). But even such a schematic vocal version can imitate the melody of concrete musician (ibid.). Naturally, the melodic agility of the accordion or other aerophones exceeds the possibility of the human voice. A comparison between mouth music and actual instrumental renditions of traditional tunes will surely reveal a higher melodic tempo of the latter. That does not mean that there is no virtuosity in mouth music. But its virtuosity lies primarily in the aesthetically productive choice and combination of syllables, less in the melody itself.

For the following analytical sketch, renditions of 16 performers have been considered. This is not intended to be a proper statistical analysis, as that would require a higher number of examples, and longer sections, chosen and weighted in systematic way. The selections were recorded during fieldwork in the oblasts of Arkhangel'sk (1993, under the guidance of Vladimir Mymrin), Pskov (1995, 1996, 2006), and Riazan' (1990, 1990, under the guidance of Larisa Ivleva, 1944–1995). The second of two pieces by Aleksandra Parshina (here: Nr. 2) is not considered, as individual performers should be represented equally. The rhythmic values of the syllables (or vocables[11]) are represented in the following way[12]: σ [syllable]… = crotchet, σ.. = dotted quaver, σ. = quaver, σ = semiquaver.

1. *Pod pliasku* [For dancing]
Aleksandra Parshina (*1927). Arkhangel'sk oblast, Ust'ia raion (Morgenstern 2011, 89, Video 6)

3/4 y | yn. ny-tl dy. dy-dl dyn. di-dl | 2/4 da. ta. dy da-dl | dy. na-dl dy. di-dl |
| di. ta… di-dl | dy. dy-dl dy. ny-dl | dy. ta. dy. ta. | di. ta. da.

2. *Po derevne* [Along the village]
Aleksandra Parshina (*1927). Arkhangel'sk oblast, Ust'ia raion (Morgenstern 2011,89, Video 1)

2/4 | dy.. dl da-dl da-dl | dy-ly ky-dl da-dl da-dl | dy-ly ta-dl dy.. ta-na |
| da.. ty dai. na. | da.

11 Ethnomusicologists seem to prefer the term *vocables* instead of *syllables*, however the syntactic qualities of the linguistic term (s. terms such as *syllabic*, *disyllabic*) are not easy to transfer. Thus, in the given context, I will speak of syllables.

12 In most cases, standard transcriptions of the examples can be found in the literature cited.

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3. *Pod dolguiu* [For the long tune]
Anna Ivanova (*1923). Pskov oblast, Porkhov raion (Morgenstern 2007b, Nr. 40, Audio 1)

2/4 ty | y.. dl' dy... | di-dl' di-dl di. ti-dl' | di-dl' di-dl' dy.. di-dl' |
| li. na. na... |

4. *Milashka* [Darling] (*Porkhovskaia*) [The tune from Porkhov]
Pskov oblast, Porkhov raion (Morgenstern 2007b, Nr. 42, first singer, Audio 2, 3)

2/4 di. ti. | ri. ti. ni. ti. 3/4 | di-di l'. na... ta... 2/4 | ny. na-dl' ny. na-di' |
| ny. na-dl' ny.

5. *Milashka* (*Porkhovskaia*)
Pskov oblast, Porkhov raion (Morgenstern 2007b, Nr. 42, second singer, Audio 2, 3)

2/4 di-di di. ti. | di. dl'-di di. ti-di | di. ty-di li. da. | ta.

6. *Milashka* (*Porkhovskaia*)
Pskov oblast, Porkhov raion (Morgenstern 2007b, Nr. 42, third singer, Audio 2, 3)

2/4 | ta. na. | ri. da. na. ta. | di. na. na. ta. | a. na. ta... |
| ri.na. na. ta. | ri. na. na. ta. | di. na. na. ta. | a.

7. *Pod dolguiu (Dlinnaia)* [The long tune]
Antonina Vasil'eva (*1917). Pskov oblast, Porkhov raion (Morgenstern 2007b, Nr. 44, Audio 4)

2/4 ti-dl | di. di-dl dy. di-dl | ly. di-dl li. da. | da. di-dl li. di-dl |
| di-dl di-dl di. ti-dl | di. di-dl di. di-di | li. di-di li. da. | ra...

8. *Sumetskaia* [The tune from the Sumetskii district]
Anna Ivanova (*1923). Pskov oblast, Porkhov raion (Morgenstern 2007b, Nr. 143, Video 4)

2/4 | tin. di-dl' dyn. di-dl' | di-dl' da. ty. di-dl' | di. di-dl' di. ti-dl' | di. ta. na. ta |

9. *Sumetskaia*
Aleksei Leonov (1927–2008). Pskov oblast, Porkhov raion (Morgenstern 2007b, Nr. 144, Audio 5)

2/4 ty | y. dy. dy-nl' ny-nl' | ny... ty-ny na-ni | ly. ti-di ly. ty-ly | ny. na...

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10. *Sumetskaia*
Evdokiia Mironova (*1923) Pskov oblast, Porkhov raion (Video 5)

2/4 | ta. da. di-dl' di-dl' | di. ta. di-dl' di-dl' | di. ta. di-dl' di-dl' | di. ta..

11. *Pod pliasku*
Evgeniia Ivanova (*1928). Pskov oblast, Dedovichi raion (Morgenstern 2007b, Nr. 101, Audio 6)

2/4 ty. | ny. di-dl' di. ty-dl' | di-dl' di-dl' di. ti-dl' |
| di-dl' di-dl' di. ta. | ri. na-dl' di.

12. *Pod pliasku*
Antonina Petrova (*1927). Pskov oblast, Dedovichi raion (Morgenstern 2007b, Nr. 102, Audio 7)

2/4 | ti-dl' di-ni li. ta. | di. na. li... |
| ti-dl' di-di li. da. | ti. na. ni... |

13. *Pod pliasku*
Anastasiia Panteleeva (*1908). Pskov oblast, Dedovichi raion (Morgenstern 2007b, Nr. 106)

2/4 | ty... ty... | ty-dl' di-dl' di... |
| ty. di. di. da. | di-dl' dy-dn li... |

14. *Dlinnaia*
Tatiana Goriunova (*1923). Pskov oblast, Kun'ia raion (Video 2).

2/4 | ta.. na-ri | ri. na. ty. na-ri | ri. na. ty-ri nai. | ti. na. ri. na. | dy..

15. *Pod pliasku* [= *Kamarinskaia*]
Valentina Maksimovna (*1927). Pskov oblast, Kun'ia raion (Video 7)

2/4 na. | ty-dl' di-dl' ly. na. | ty-dl' di-dl' ly. na. | ty. na...

16. *Pod pliasku*
Evdokiia Sharonova (*1917). Riazan' oblast, Kotelino raion (Video 8)

2/4 ta. | ri. da. ri. na. | ri. na. ri. na. | ri. na. ri. na. | ra. na. na... |
| na. na. ri. na. | ri. na. da. da. | na. na. ri. na. | ri. na. da... |

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17. *Pod pliasku*
Unknown singer. Riazan' oblast, Kotelino raion (Video 9)

2/4 | a.- i. ri. na. | ri. na. ra. ta. | ra. ta. ri. na. | ri. na. ra... |

Fig. 2 Selected sequences of mouth music from 16 performers (my fieldwork).

Choice of syllables. The chosen examples consist of 354 syllables[13]. The most frequent syllables are *di* (80), *dl/dl'* (62), *na* (54), *ri* (27), *ta* (26), *da* (20), and *dy* (17). The vowels *e* and *u* are completely absent, while the consonant *l/l'* often carries a syllabic function.

Choice and combination of vowels. For longer notes a slight preference for the low vowel *a* can be observed: 14 out of 23 crotchets, with 9 on high vowels *y* (5) and *i* (4). However on dotted quavers *y* (4) is prevailing over *a* (2). In quavers, 86 high vowels (63 *i*, 23 *y*) are slightly prevailing over 76 low vowels (*a*). Analysing vowel combinations in trochaic units, I have first chosen all pairs of quavers starting with a metric accent on the first. I also included the very few units where the second note is longer than a quaver. Further, I took in account all pairs of semiquavers starting with a beat or a half beat.

In trochaic units based on quavers, a clear preference towards a vowel alternation high–low can be observed (45 units, for example: di–da), while in 15 units, two identical or similar vowels are combined (for example ty–ri). Alternation low–high is absent. Semiquaver pairs show a strong tendency to combine identical or similar vowels (for example di–di) while 3 pairs show a low–high alternation. Very often, the second semiquaver is filled with the syllabic consonant l.

Choice and combination of syllables The syllable repertoire of the individual performers ranges from 4 (example 10) to 10 (example 1) syllables. In trochaic units, as defined above, a tendency for reduplication is prevalent. In 82 out of 140 units techniques as the following are used:

1. Partial reduplication with a change in the root vowel (as in *na-ni*): 48
2. Partial reduplication with a change in the initial consonant (as in *ta-na*): 23
3. Full reduplication (as in *di-di*): 8

No reduplication occurs in 61 trochaic units (such as as *ri–na*). It seems that contrasting units are a general rule for Russian mouth music—alongside with the phonological inventiveness that is manifest in the sometimes highly developed syllable repertoire of individual performers. However, a quite narrow syllabic repertoire can be observed in mouth music pieces from Medvedev's fieldwork the southern Arkhangel'sk oblast with its extended monosyllabic sections: "Ta-li-li-li-li-li-li" (Kotikova 1962, 78, here: Fig. 1) and "Tė-nė-nė-nė-nė-nė-nė-nė-nė, nė-nė-nė-nė-nė-nė" (Kotikova

13 Syllables are represented in accordance to the Library of Congress system of transliteration for the Russian language, not to the standards of the International Phonetic Association. Contrary to spoken standard Russian, the vocal *i* does not necessarily imply a palatalization of the foregoing consonant.

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1962, 80). Some of Razumovskaia's recordings of wedding music expose a similar disinterest in sonic contrast: "Ti_ri_ri_ri, ri_ri_ rili_ri" (1995, 25) and "Ra_ra ri_ra ra_ra ra_rari" (ibid. 33).

9. Key functions of Russian mouth music

Practical substitution. Most Russian folklorists point to the substitution of an absent musician as the main function of mouth music. "When groups of village women found themselves without an accordionist, they sang a particular form of mouth music (called *pod iazyk*) as accompaniment for *chastushki*" (Olson and Adonyeva 2013, 320, fn. 2 to chapter 4). Numerous sources show that vocal imitation was practiced only until a musician came along, or after he went away and singing *chastushki* or dancing had to be continued. According to Natal'ia Kotikova's field observations: "singing '*pod iazyk*' is caused by the absence of an accordion [*garmon'*]. As soon as there is no accordion they start singing '*pod iazyk*'" (Kotikova in Medvedev 1961, 22). Kaori Yunoki-Oie's retrospective fieldwork in the Kostroma oblast indicates that in the after-work period of girls' gatherings (*besedy*) "when the balalaika player left, we danced [*pliasali*] *pod iazyk*" (Iunoki-Oiė 2004, 25).

Sometimes performers refer to the substitution of a particular instrument, an analogy to the instrumental diddling noted by Chambers. Aleksandr Medvedev (1927–2010) who did fieldwork in the southern parts of the Arkhangel'sk oblast in autumn 1960 describes "singing 'pod iazyk'" (Medvedev 1961, 8)[14] as imitating the sound of the balalaika or the accordion. Igor' Matsievskii (Pashina 2005, 343), obviously based on Boiko's observations in the Leningrad oblast, mentions the same source instruments. However, Elena Bogina, studying the *chastushka* culture of the South Russian Lipetsk oblast, points to the accordion as the exclusive source for mouth music: "It's always the sound of the accordion (not of the balalaika) which is reproduced" (Bogina 2004, 204). This preference is only natural in a region where the prestigious accordion is particularly widespread since the mid-19th century. However, in those North Russian Regions where the accordion arrived only in the late 19th century (Medvedev 1961, see also below), the older balalaika is represented in mouth music alongside the newer accordion. In the Kadom raion of the Riazan' oblast, the singer Anna Varlamova (b. 1919) from the village of Darino explained the term *kynakyrkat'* (see above) as the specific imitation of the balalaika. In the neighbouring village of Kotelino, mouth musician Evdokiia Sharonova (*1917) imitated the strumming technique of the balalaika with her right hand (in Video 8). Such imitative gestures are an important indicator for the source instrument. Most typical is the imitation the left and right hand movements in accordion playing: Video 9

14 Medvedev was accompanied by the student Viacheslav Shchurov. His report can be found in a typescript of the "Theoretical Conference on Folk Music", launched by the Composers' Union of the USSR. It includes a vivid discussion in which outstanding musicologists and folklorists took part, among them Evgenii Gippius, Lidia Kershner and Natal'ia Kotikova. Copies of these unpublished materials are preserved in the Svenskt visarkiv.

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(Riazan' oblast), Video 4 (Pskov oblast), Video 3 (Novgorod oblast, see also Bogina 2004, 204, for the Lipetsk oblast).

Razumovskaia (2013, 9) explains the imitation of instrumental dance music through the urgent necessity of substituting (male) musicians during and after WW2. In the Poozer'e, the extremely important task of the wedding musician could sometimes be fulfilled only through vocal imitation (ibid.). These are the most dramatic instances of practical substitution of instrumental music with a vocal alternative. However, substitution is not found exclusively in performance situations where the presence of a male musician would be the first option and mouth music the second. In certain contexts, both ritualized and informal, the physical presence of a male musician is not desirable but instrumental music is. In such situations, the function of mouth music can be called symbolical substitution.

Symbolical substitution. As noted earlier, patriarchal order reinforces the necessity for women to meet in separate spaces, often for collective work: "In household social gatherings organized by and dominated by women, men will often sit at the periphery or may come and go" (Olson and Adonyeva 2013, 17). In such spaces singing is one of the most meaningful social activities for women of different age groups.

Ritualized scenarios where males were not always expected to join in include working hours of the spinning rooms (*posidelki*, from *posidet'*: "sitting together"). Romodina has shown that "boys [*parni*] were given the role of guests" (1990, 47), and "the initiative to invite the boys belonged to the girls" (ibid.). Boys were generally absent at such *posidelki* in which "girls rehearsed the *nadel* (the presentation of gifts for the newlyweds), enacting episodes with the 'mother', the 'bridesmaids' and even the 'groom' (ibid., 50)". While in Russian tradition, solo wedding laments were traditionally performed against the background of melismatic lyrical songs, in the Poozer'e, the polyphonic counterpart was played by the wedding musician, most often a fiddler or an accordion player (for a video example s. Romodin 2011). In the necessary absence of a (male) musician, at pre-wedding *posidelki* the instrumental part could be only performed with mouth music. Of course, "under conditions of a real wedding [...], the full-fleshed instrumental sound was needed"[15] (Romodin and Romodina 1989). However, Razumovskaia (1996, 10, 11) also provides evidence of parodic wedding episodes, incorporated in the real wedding ritual and also in mummery games during Christmastide (*sviatki*). In this framework of a grotesquely estranged wedding, mouth music was the only acceptable way of playing instrumental wedding music. Razumovskaia assumes that this parodic imitation of the solemn vocal-instrumental wedding genre "only out of necessity was performed seriously during some after-war years" (ibid., 11). Thus "in the extreme situation" (ibid.) the common practice of symbolic substitution of instrumental wedding music was turned into a practical substitution.

15 "В условиях же подлинной [...] свадьбы требовалось полнокровное инструментальное тембровое звучание."

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Artistic niche. Informal female gatherings, as cultural niches, are the small-scale scenario for dancing or singing *pod iazyk*. The preferred genres are the same as in public events: the pan-Russian *pod pliasku* and *pod pesni*. The former enables individuals to show off at regular dance events before the opposite sex and possible rivals while the latter is the space for local groups of young men to show themselves either in their local village or in the neighbourhood. In these scenarios instrumental music is indispensable and so, in small-scale gatherings, it can be replaced by mouth music when necessary.

The substitutive function of mouth music is only one aspect of the phenomenon. Romodina's emphasis on the role of the "leaders" with their high expressive abilities may indicate that mouth music is not only a surrogate, but a full-fleshed style of performance in which female performers are able to create an aesthetically satisfactory and socially meaningful music-filled situation. According to reports of local performers[16], as well as observations from reconstructive fieldwork, skilful female mouth musicians are often remembered as extremely creative and extrovert, even after most traditional performance situations have been abandoned.

While the social aspect of women's singing in a patriarchal society can hardly be overemphasized, small-scale gatherings cannot be fully understood without the aesthetic dimension of performance. The enthusiasm of our interlocutors and their willingness and ability to engage with rather complex musical textures (audio 2, 3) allow us to describe the typical female scenarios for mouth music as artistic niches.

Autodidactic method. Mouth music played a crucial role in the typical practice of learning by listening, co-existing with direct teaching (Morgenstern 1999).

> One of the folk techniques of acquiring instrumental music is the voice imitation of a tune, as they said, "*na gubakh*" or "*pod iazyk*". Our interlocutors and musicians told that they used to sing, not only reproducing the melody but also imitating the timbre of a tune, heard at youth gatherings (*vechorki*, *besedy*), at village feasts, in the cinema and from the gramophone. (Shchepanskaia 2020, 63, see also Mekhnetsov 2005, 68)

Vocal imitation stabilizes new musical impressions and inventions until they can be transferred to the more secure motor memory. As one accordion player from the Vologda oblast puts it: "I translated it from the tongue to the accordion" (Shchepanskaia 2020, 63). Ample evidence shows that young musicians were interested in starting this transfer process as soon as possible, in one case even sacrificing their participation in a dance event, running home, humming or singing the newly acquired tune, or rather an actual rendition of a known tune, as soon as possible (Morgenstern 1999, 114, 115).

As Mekhnetsov (2005, 68, 69) has shown, autodidactic accordion training with mouth music could begin long before a future musician had a real instrument at his disposal. Thus, he was able

16 See the memory of a performance of the *Kamarinskaia* referred to in the following section.

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to memorize different tunes and versions before playing them. Another autodidactic mnemotechnical method is silent retracing new melodies before playing them on the instrument (ibid.). Mouth music "was also used by adult accordion players, when they wanted to memorize and to acquire tunes new for them" (Shchepanskaia 2020, 63).

I have no evidence for the use of mouth music for "tune swapping", so common in Irish and Scottish folk music scenes. During my fieldwork, I heard few detailed discussions between two musicians on melodic content. There is reason to assume that both the structure of the traditional repertoire and the strategies of individual musicians exclude an active circulation of the repertoire beyond teaching situations. Due to the extremely limited number of local tunes, what could be shared is not a new tune, but a new motif or a new rendition of the whole pattern. But melodic turns (*perebory*, s. briefly Morgenstern 2018, 48) are the personal pride and private property of each accordion player.[17] They don't like to share them with others and the audience expects individual melodic creation from an accordion player. I have also never heard about the use of mouth music in direct teaching. The acoustic and visual demonstration of motifs and tunes played on a real instrument might be more effective than mouth music could be. Hoverer, this hardly can be regarded a universal rule.[18]

10. Historical interpretations

Our knowledge of the historical roots of Russian mouth music is very limited. Apparently, 20th century scholars were the first to draw attention to the phenomenon, with early evidence appearing in Medvedev's field interviews. He was fascinated with the polyphonic tension between the instrumental ostinato and the drawn-out melody (see Fig. 1), and the supposed origin of what he called "one of the varieties of the oldest polyphonic style of Russian singing" (Medvedev 1961, 8) in the art of the medieval minstrels (*skomorokhi*). When musicologist Lidia Kershner asked what emerged earlier, the performance *pod iazyk* or the accordion, Medvedev, among whose interlocutors was a 90 years old women, replied "Performance *pod iazyk* emerged earlier; they themselves told me". As the accordion in the region under study evolved in the late 19th century, it is safe to assume that mouth music existed before this time.

Medvedev related mouth music to polyphonic *singing*, while Kotikova convincingly insisted on its genuine instrumental nature. On the other hand, he also associated it with the art of the *skomorokhi*. Interestingly, the satirical parts of their supposed repertoire, which might have survived

17 A sense of individual melodic property is very common in European folk music traditions, to mention only the Sardinian *launeddas* players (*Bentzon 1969*) and Calabrian bagpipers among which the theft of a motif can entail very serious consequences (personal communication by Christian Ferlaino).

18 One of the anonymous reviewers of this article pointed my attention to mouth music as a systematic method in launeddas teatching in Sardegna. I hope to learn more about this practice in the future.

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until the 20th century in unaccompanied solo performance, contain direct references to instrumental music. Folklorist Zoia Vlasova draws on Alexander Gil'ferding's collection of North Russian epics (fieldwork: 1871) and the repertoire of epic singer Mariia Krivopolenova (1843–1924):

In the songs, reminiscences of musical accompaniment for the performance of songs are reflected. The beginning of some works [songs] presents somehow the imitation of a tune played on folk musical instruments: "Ai, didi, didi, didi, didi, didi" ("The epic [*starina*] of the big bull"); "Akh, tara-tara, tara-tara-tara" ("The song of Kostriuk" in M. D. Krivopolenova's rendition).

В песнях отразились воспоминания о музыкальном аккомпанементе, сопровождавшем исполнение песен. Начало некоторых произведений представляет как бы имитацию наигрыша на народных инструментах: «Ай, диди, диди, диди, диди, диди!» («Старина о большом быке»); «Ах, тара́-тара́, тара́-тара́-тара́» (Песня о Кострюке в исполнении М. Д. Кривополеновой) Vlasova (2001, 327)

The parallels to real mouth music are obvious: the trochaic *didi* is present in the syllable repertoire of four singers quoted above, *tara* only in one rendition. The combination of an initial syllable with a following syllable frequently repeated is striking. Such monosyllabic sections (full reduplication) are found in Medvedev's example (Fig. 1) as well as in Razumovskaia's study (see above). As for the function, it is hard to say if they are onomatopoeic ideophones, i. e. linguistic units, or actual mouth music syllables.

According to all sources from the 19th century, epics in the Russian North were performed by one or sometimes several singers without any instrumental accompaniment. Vlasova explains mouth music elements in satirical epics of that time as relicts of actual instrumental music: "'Ai, didi' among the more recent performers of the song replaced the accompaniment on the *gudok* [a bowed lute] and the *gusli* [psaltery of various types] which accompanied the performance [of the song] among the *skomorokhi* [«Ай, диди» заменило у поздних исполнителей песни аккомпанемент гудка или гуслей, которые сопровождали исполнение у скоморохов] (Vlasova 2001, 325). This might be a convincing explanation in some cases, however at the heart of the big-bull story is a minstrel who makes a bagpipe from the bladder of the stolen gigantic bull, amusing the market audience. As *didi* is widely known as a sound characteristic of aerophones, it has to be understood as a textual reference to the bagpipe, but not an instrument accompanying epics, which the *Russian bagpipe* probably never was. The vocables are clearly ideophonic in another Northern epic, "The widow and her three daughters", recorded on phonograph by Aleksandr Grigor'ev who related it to the *skomorokhi* tradition (1904, xix). According to music historian Nikolai Findeizen the initial syllables of the refrain "*Tprundy-tprundai* can be identified/explained as sound imitation of the balalaika, the domra or another string instrument" (1928, 164). "Tprundy, trundy, balalaika" is a well-known nursery rhyme, with the initial consonant cluster an iconic representation of the instrument's strumming technique, but it is not suitable for, and was never used in, actual mouth music.

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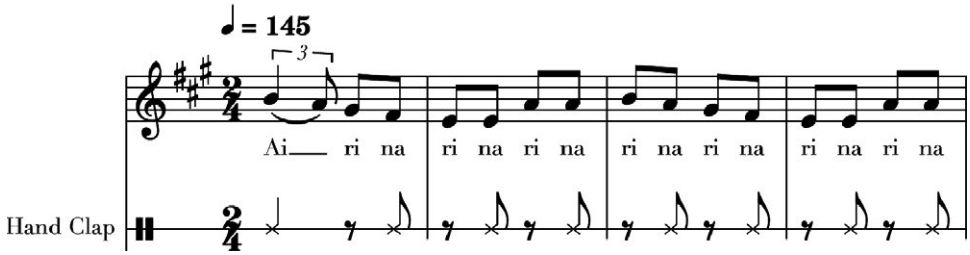

Fig 3 Two from three renditions of *Pod pliasku* (with hand-clapping) from the Kadom raion of the Riazan' oblast. Fieldwork: Larisa Ivleva, Ulrich Morgenstern, Mariia Gorn (Morgenstern 1995, 281).

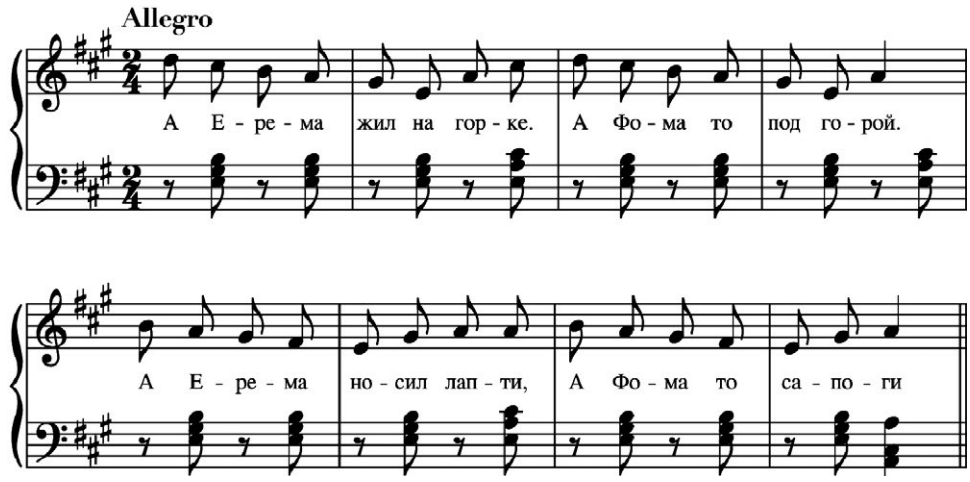

Fig. 4 A song of Foma i Erema (Findeizen 1928, 167).

As we have seen, mouth music can be directly oriented not only to specific instruments (as instrumental diddling) but also on concrete musicians, known to the performer. Sometimes, however, Russian (and Poozer'e) mouth music may indicate a connection with historically distant styles and repertoires of instrumental music.

Studying instrumental music in the Kadom raion of the Riazan' oblast in 1990 and 1991, I noticed that balalaika players for the local old-time repertoire exclusively used the more recent "guitar tuning" based on the major chord in root position, while the older "balalaika tuning" (unison-fourth) has completely vanished. However, the above-mentioned singer Anna Varlamova performed a melodically elaborated vocal imitation of the basic tune *pod pesni* which is impossible to play in the chord-oriented guitar tuning, while very similar tunes are known from early transcriptions of tunes played in the balalaika tuning, designed for the melody-drone style (Morgenstern 1995, 142). Thus, the mouth musician maintained a melodic concept of the tune which has disappeared

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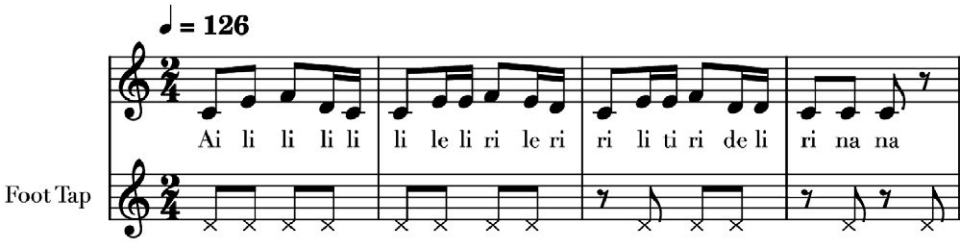

Fig. 5 "Russkogo [The Russian one]". Aliaksandra Lukashonok, from the Verkhniadzvinsk raion of the Vitsebsk voblasts', Belarus. (Video 10).

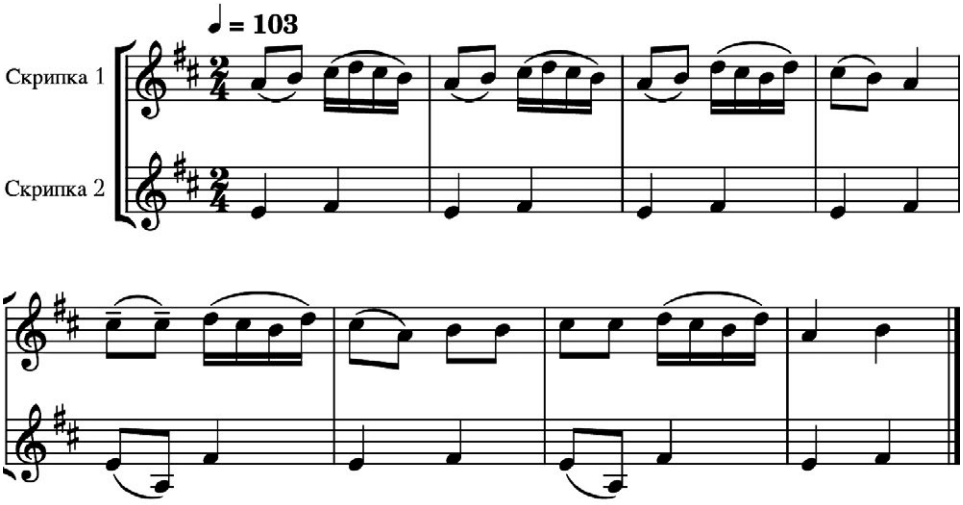

Fig. 6 "Khorovodnaia [Circle dance melody]". Fiddle duo from the Smolensk oblast (Smirnov 1961, 63).

from the actual practice of the balalaika players. But mouth music can preserve not just style but repertoires. I could never find the famous *Kamarinskaia* in the active repertoire of eight accordion and six balalaika players, or even memories of the tune played on these instruments. Only one interlocuter vividly remembered a female mouth music performer from the interwar-period who imitated the melody of this tune while "strumming" a log with her hand. Very few others remembered evidence from their parents' generation of the *Kamarisnkaia*, played by ensembles of twin-hornpipes (*trostianki*) in the first decades of the 20th century. Another mouth music player from the Kadom raion performed (three times) an unusual rendition of the tune *pod pliasku* (Fig. 3, Video 9). A phrase based on a descending movement from h^1 to e^1 and eventually to a^1 is very widespread, as a contrasting second phrase or refrain in dance songs. However, as a self-sufficient pattern I never could find it, neither in folk song collections nor in the repertoire of hundreds of balalaika and accordion players. The only parallel I know is a mid-19th century

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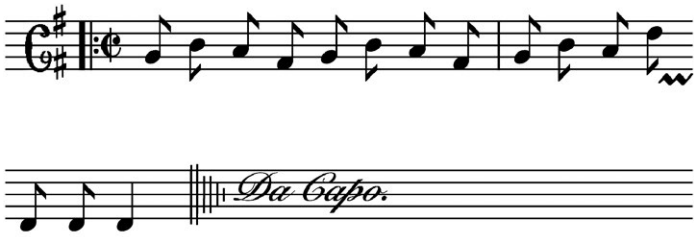

Fig. 7 First version of "the common Russian country melody [die gemeine russische Lands-Melodie]" (Stählin 1770, 64).

notation of a *nebylitsa* (nonsense song)[19] based on the 17th century Tale of Foma and Erema which Nikolai Findeizen (1928, 166, 167) discusses in the context of relicts of the *skomorokhi* repertoire. Fig. 4 shows a melody based on a repeated two-bar pattern, realized in two compatible melodic variants with the same harmonic progression.

An unusual version of the dance "Russkogo [The Russian one]", the later also called "Pod pliasku", was recorded during Irina Romodina's fieldwork in the Vitsebsk voblast. A middle-aged woman, continuously dancing, sung the melody as mouth music and later also with a *chastushka* text (Video 10). The melodic pattern consists of four nearly identical one-bar arching motifs and a sharply accentuated closing figure. This is an extremely rare compositional model, as much more often the "Russkogo" ("Pod pliasku") is based not on a single motif, but a constantly repeated motif pair. After Felix Hoerburger, motif-pairing is a general principle in European traditional instrumental music (Morgenstern 2022, 363). I could never find this single-motif model in any field recording or published transcription of traditional instrumental music in Belarus or Russia, except the initial phrase of a circle dance melody from a fiddle duo of the Smolensk oblast (near to contemporary Belarus) with a more melodic closing figure (Fig. 6) and one of three versions of "the common Russian country melody [die gemeine russische Lands-Melodie]" (Stählin 1770, 64, Fig. 7) which Jacob Stählin in his Russian music ethnography (1770, 61–65) describes as the most common vocal or instrumental tune in the whole country.

It seems that mouth music in Russia and Belarus can be based on compositional principles which have largely vanished from practices of actual instrumental music. If further research confirms this tendency, it would open a series of questions on transmission of style and repertoire.

11. A preliminary conclusion

Russian mouth music shares many key characteristics with that of the Irish and the Scottish tradition. These parallels cover function, genres, and strategies of vocalizing. The range of aesthetic and communicative functions of Russian mouth music is narrow, compared with lilting and diddling.

19 Findeizen took the notation from Nikolai Abramychev's *Collection of Russian folk songs* (Н. Абрамычев: *Сборник русских народных песен*, Санкт-Петербург, 1879), № 36.

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However, in all regional traditions discussed in this article, substitution of instrumental musical in the absence of a musician is one of its main functions. The same is true for the important mnemotechnical function, which is present in the Russian practice nearly exclusively in contexts of autodidact learning processes. One important function of lilting and diddling, absent in Russian folk music is "tune swapping", as well as presentative music for listening. Mouth music is always included in choreomusical and/or in instrumental-vocal (more rarely vocal-instrumental) multipart practices, which would be at best incomplete without an instrumental part. To be sure, the genre *pod pesni* can include extended purely instrumental performances without quatrain singing, mostly as "solitary music making" (Killick 2006, Morgenstern 2018), also more rarely as music for listening. However, this practice is known exclusively from real instrumental music, never from mouth music.

Structural parameters of both Russian and Irish/Scottish mouth music reveal a strong tendency toward euphony (Chambers) and *Interest* (Minkova), manifest in the wide-spread vowel alternation high–low. Principles of Intrinsic Intensity and Intrinsic Duration (Hughes) seem to play an important role alike.

One of the most striking characteristics of Russian mouth music is its distinct female nature. Recalling Bogina's general statement on the gender expectations towards a man who "has to *play* an instrument" (s. a.), I'll try to explain why these expectations nearly excluded male performance of mouth music at large-scale social events in Russian villages. At least two factors have to be considered.

First, the high number of musicians and the availability of musical instruments, from the every-household balalaika in the 18th century (Morgenstern 1995, 39) to the accordion, ubiquitous since the late 19th century (Morgenstern 2007a, 165). Under such conditions, a musician would be available at any larger or smaller social event and only the best would be chosen by those who arranged a wedding or dance, or would be accepted to play at a parish fair.

Second, the prestigious position of a good accordion player (Morgenstern 2007a, 163, 164). Playing a good accordion was indicative of material wealth, while playing it well spoke of other human, particularly "male" qualities (Morgenstern 2018, 47). The social position of a Russian accordion player, who traditionally played for free, was much higher than that of the semi-professional dance fiddlers and wedding musicians in Poland or Hungary (Morgenstern 2017, following Ludwik Bielawski and Bálint Sárosi).

Imagine, a young man at a dance event in a Russian village starting to perform *na iazyke*. He would present himself as someone who is interested in instrumental music, but who either does not have an instrument or is not able to play it, or both. He could hardly distance himself further from the prestigious role model of the *garmonist*. Who would need such self-embarrassment? Conversely, a girl or woman was never expected to play an instrument at large-scale scenarios or dance events. It does not matter so much for her general social prestige whether she would entertain her female peers or support them in singing and dancing by playing the balalaika, or the accordion, or simply with mouth music.

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It would be intriguing to learn why, unlike a Russian male villager from the past, an Irish lilter or Scottish jigger would never diminish his reputation by performing in public. I can only guess whether the two factors indicated above—the availability of instruments and the social prestige of the musician—are historically less developed in Ireland and Scotland, or whether the relaxed and inclusive atmosphere of a traditional Irish céilí (Cowdery 1990, 11–13) gives space for more different musical role models than traditional Russian society offered. This would be only one of several attractive perspectives for a comparative study of Russian, Celtic and other mouth music in Europe and beyond. Another research subject could be the position of the "acoustic attributes" (Ozaki 2024, 1) of mouth music between instrumental music, singing and speech, to be investigated from a perspective of contemporary cross-cultural musical analysis, employing linguistic perspectives on playing with sounds.

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*Field recordings marked with Audio/Video can be found here:
https://www.youtube.com/@institutfurvolksmusikforsc8772

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Rytis Ambrazevičius

Performance rules in traditional singing: local vs universal

Abstract

So-called "performance rules" in music are systematic deviations (with a statistical scatter) of an actual live performance from a mechanically precise one. For example, pairs of eighth notes are performed by lengthening the first eighth and shortening the second, or vice versa, or the intonation of a certain scale degree depends on its musical context, deviating from the theoretical or averaged scale. The rules, in effect idiosyncrasies applied subconsciously, are expected markers of music performance style. If ignored, the performance is perceived as inappropriate, or not exemplifying a certain style.

Which of these performance rules are local, and which can be considered universal? Clearly, it would be difficult to judge their universality, as this would require many different examples of musical cultures. Nevertheless, it is possible to assess certain claims to (quasi-) universality by ascertaining analogous manifestations of such rules in several musical dialects or, more broadly, within several musical cultures.

I chose five performance rules in the time domain for the current study, drawing on Lithuanian, Belarusian and Ukrainian singing traditions: *Inégales* (nominal ratio of rhythmic values 1:1), *Double duration* (2:1), *Duration contrast* (the case of 3:1), *Phrase arch*, *Final ritardando*, and two versions of the *Melodic intonation* rule (*Leading tone* and *Ascending/descending sequences*). The durations of 828 recorded tone pairs and the pitches of 274 tone pairs in audio recordings were measured, while additional measurements were made to construct tempo curves and pitch tracks. Based on these acoustic measurements, timing and pitch performance rules were ascertained. Finally, I compared their manifestation in these musical dialects with Western academic music.

It is found that the expression of *Inégales* is very diverse, in this respect the Dzūkai musical dialect (SE Lithuania) merges with the Belarusian and Ukrainian tradition. The performance trends of *Double duration* are close, and *Duration contrast* is the opposite of those observed in Western academic music. Rules *Phrase arch* and *Final ritardando* are not observed in the considered dialects. *Melodic intonation* rules show similar trends to those found in Western academic music, although not equally strongly for the different dialects.

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1. *Introduction: The basics of performance rules*

Live music performance differs from its written incarnation through various "inaccuracies". It is these inaccuracies, irregularities, that make music alive and real. Even if you try to perform a written rhythm precisely and mechanically, the result will still contain 'errors', primarily due to the JND (just noticeable difference) of duration (smaller differences in duration are not perceived). Also, when trying to precisely intone all pitches or sing all syllables equally loudly, the result can differ significantly from the prescribed version.

These are chaotic irregularities, so-called performance noise. But of more significance are the systematic irregularities caused by musical contexts and emotions. These are desirable, without them the music would sound unnatural. There are domains of time, pitch, loudness, and timbre, all more or less characterized by those systematic irregularities. Such irregularities are expressed in so-called performance rules, which exemplify specific tendencies, formulas, and algorithms that create regular deviations from the exact (mechanical, monotonous, ideally intoned) prototype.

The rules can be revealed in two ways. First, an "exact" version of the musical material can be provided and listeners asked to adjust it to sound 'natural' (this is possible with modern computer tools), or many versions of the material are provided and listeners are asked to choose the one that sounds most natural. Second, existing performance recordings are analyzed, measured, and characteristic systematic deviations determined from them. Computational models of music performance and performance rule sets have been designed by various authors (cf. Todd 1992; Widmer 1995; Arcos, de Mantaras, Serra 1998; Mazzola 2002; Widmer, Goebl 2004), but probably the most comprehensive set was devised by a group of Swedish scientists (Friberg, Bresin, Sundberg 2006, 148). They group the 21 rules into eight groups: phrasing, micro-level timing, metrical patterns and grooves, articulation, tonal tension, intonation, ensemble timing, and performance noise.

Perhaps the most suitable object for study of the rules[1] (largely because it is the most common) is piano music, especially of the Romantic period, particularly in terms of rhythm. This is due to the sound of this instrument, measurement techniques, and style features. Piano sound attacks are short, so it is not difficult to measure sound durations from sound recordings accurately enough. In addition, such measurements can be automated by connecting a sensor system to the keyboard or (even simpler) by using a synthesizer keyboard. The expressiveness inherent in the Romanticism piano performance presupposes sufficiently large deviation values (not only for timing, but also for dynamics), and the performance rules are clearly articulated.

The study of performance rules in written and oral cultures differs fundamentally in one aspect. In written culture, the nominal values of sound durations and pitches are known; they are fixed in the score because the notation is prescriptive. However, when transcribing examples of oral culture, those nominal values are, strictly speaking, only guessed. The notation is descriptive and

1 This refers, in particular, to the second method mentioned above, i. e. analysis of performance recordings.

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thus emic/etic issues can appear. Therefore, we should rely on those examples for which we do not doubt the "guesses" presented in the scores.

In the context of the phenomena we are considering, it is important to remember that performance rules act as markers of style. If their style-specific expression changes, the music may sound unnatural, strange, or even unacceptable. A good example is the metrorhythm of the Viennese waltz. 3/4-meter quarters are systematically of unequal duration, the first is systematically shortened, the second is lengthened, and the third is average, i. e. the schematic expression of the performance rule is SLI (Short-Long-Intermediate; Bengtsson, Gabrielsson, Thorsen 1969). This is due to the dance's motorics — interpreting the three-part meter differently would simply make it uncomfortable to dance. However, 3/4 meter in the case of another style might be interpreted differently, to match the feel of that style.

In the remainder of this study, we will examine the set of the rules provided by Swedish scholars Friberg, Bresin and Sundberg (2006): *Inégales*, *Double duration*, *Duration contrast*, *Phrase arch*, *Final ritardando*, and *Melodic intonation*.

2. *Performance rules studied in this paper*

2.1. *Description of the performance rules*

Inégales. A "common pattern is the alternating long-short pattern commonly found in a variety of musical styles including Baroque (Hefling 1993), folk, as well as jazz music. The *Inégales* rule was our first implementation of this pattern (Friberg 1991)" (Friberg, Bresin, Sundberg 2006, 150). The brief description of the rule is as follows: "Introduce long-short patterns for equal note values (swing)" (ibid, 148). Briefly, it is a tendency to perform 1:1 as >1:1 (LS, Figure 1).

Fig. 1 Schematic representation of *Inégales* rule.

Double duration. "…the rule *Double duration*, which performs any 2 to 1 duration ratio with reduced duration contrast, keeping the total duration of the two tones the same (Friberg 1991)." (Friberg, Bresin, Sundberg 2006, 150). Briefly, "Decrease duration ratio for two notes with a nominal value of 2:1" (ibid, 148). Briefly: tendency to perform 2:1 as <2:1 (Figure 2).

Fig. 2 Schematic representation of *double duration* rule.

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Duration contrast. "The *Duration contrast* rule increases the difference in IOI between different note values such that long notes are lengthened and short notes are shortened (Sundberg et al. 1982; Friberg, 1991)" (Friberg, Bresin, Sundberg 2006, 149). The brief description of the rule follows: "Shorten relatively short notes and lengthen relatively long notes" (ibid, 148). Briefly: a tendency to perform, for instance, 3:1 as >3:1 (Figure 3).

Fig. 3 Schematic representation of *duration contrast* rule.

Phrase arch and final ritardando. "A musical phrase is often performed with an arch-like shape applied to tempo and dynamics (Gabrielsson 1987; Repp 1992). The phrase is typically slow/soft in the beginning, fast/loud in the middle and ends slow/soft, modeling a *crescendo/accelerando decrescendo/rallentando* pattern" (Friberg, Bresin, Sundberg 2006, 149). The brief description of the rule follows: "Create arch-like tempo and sound level changes over phrases" (ibid, 148). In this case, we are interested in the tempo changes. They can be represented by the following diagram (Figure 4).

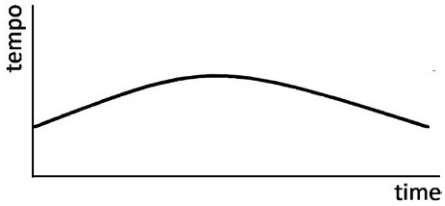

Fig. 4 Schematic representation of *phrase arch* rule.

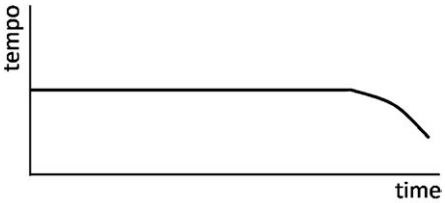

Fig. 5 Schematic representation of *final ritardando* rule.

"The *Final ritardando* rule provides an alternative phrasing for the end of the piece (Friberg and Sundberg, 1999)" (Friberg, Bresin, Sundberg 2006, 149). A brief description of the rule is, "Apply a ritardando in the end of the piece" (ibid, 148). This is analogous to physical deceleration, such as the frictional deceleration of a spinning wheel when it comes to rest. This is shown schematically in Figure 5.

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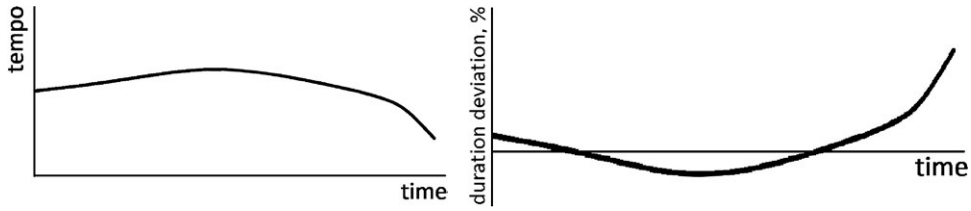

Fig. 6 Schematic representations of *phrase arch* plus *final ritardando* rules.

Figure 6 (top) shows the cumulative result of the rules *phrase arch* and *final ritardando*. So-called "tempo curves" are more often used in this type of research. They show how much specific durations differ from those performed at a steady tempo. Such a graph is thus like the inverse of the tempo variation graph (Figure 6, bottom).

Melodic intonation."The *Melodic intonation* rule determines the intonation of each note depending on the melodic context and its relation to the root of the current chord (Frydén et al. 1988; Friberg 1991)… For example, in a leading tone to tonic progression, the leading tone is often played sharper in pitch than is indicated in equal temperament tuning, resulting in a melodic interval that is smaller than a semitone (i. e., less than 100 cents)" (Friberg, Bresin, Sundberg 2006, 151).

2.2. *Examples of performance rule manifestations*

The rules in question have been formulated through the analysis of samples of mostly common practice period and jazz music. We may assume that they are more or less valid in the sphere of traditional music as well and I will provide a more detailed test of this later in the paper. In the meantime, here are some examples.

Figures 8 and 10 show typical tempo curves composed from the IOI measurements[2] of two Lithuanian traditional vocal *tempo giusto* performances[3] (Figures 7 and 9). The structural notes

2 It should be noted that it is not the real durations (time intervals from the beginning to the end of the sounds) that are measured, but the rhythmic durations that determine the perception of the rhythm — the time intervals between the perceived attacks of sounds (IOIs — Inter-Onset-Intervals). See, for instance, Clarke and /Cook 2004, 80–82.

3 Only (at least approximate) *tempo giusto* performances (i. e., which are characterized by identified rhythm values) can be employed for the composition of tempo curves. If listening to a performance results in ambiguous, or alternative, different interpretations of rhythm and meter, the composition of tempo curves might seem useless. Nevertheless, collation of the alternative tempo curves may facilitate recognition of more adequate interpretations.

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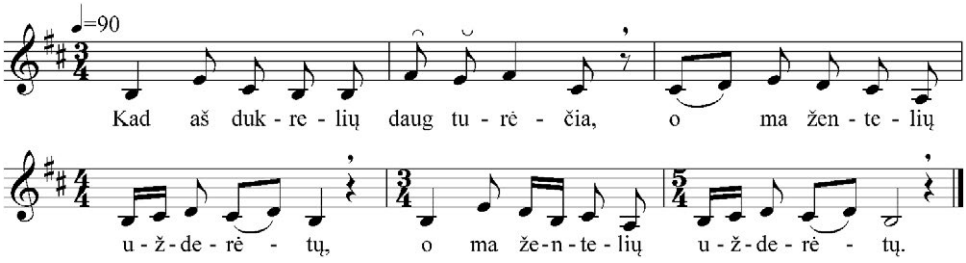

Fig. 7 Transcription of the first verse of the song "Kad aš dukrelių daug turėčia".[4]

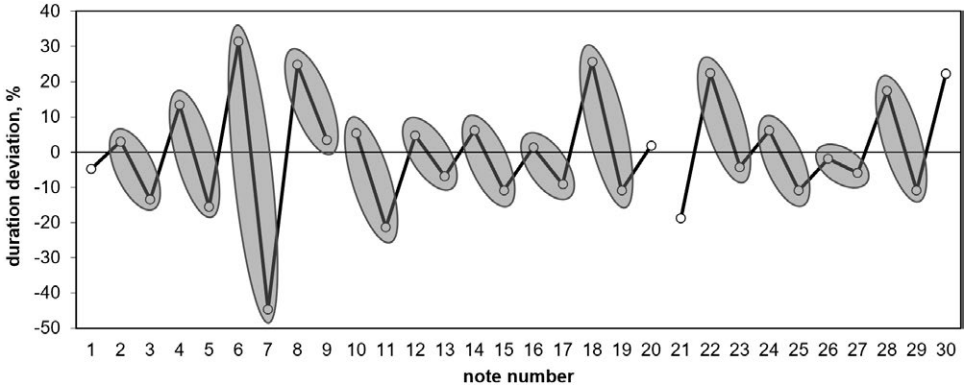

Fig. 8 Tempo curve of "Kad aš dukrelių daug turėčia" (see the transcription in Figure 7). Phrases separated by gaps. Pairs of quavers and one pair of crotchets (notes 8–9) are circled.

were considered; durations of embellishments (appoggiaturas, etc.) were incorporated into the corresponding structural notes. Only three notes in the transcriptions are supplemented with microfermata marks (see the syllables "daug" and "tu-" in Figure 7, and the first "-no" in Figure 9). Consequently, the prolonging or shortening of the rhythm values is clearly perceived only for three notes. Yet a significant fluctuation of the durations is observed in the tempo curves and the performances present two opposite cases of *Inégales*. Figure 8 shows a clear LS tendency (long-short division of crotchet into two quavers) whereas Figure 10 shows a reverse SL tendency. The performance is characterized by a somewhat "limping" rhythm (thus, this case is the reverse of the one defined in the "classical" nomenclature of performance rules). The median of $T1/T2$ ratios (ratios of quaver durations forming one crotchet) for the song "Kad aš dukrelių daug turėčia" equals 1.23 and the interquartile encompass the range 1.17–1.34. For the song "Jojau pro dvarą", the median is 0.72 and the interquartile is 0.62–0.78.

4 The metrics of sound recordings are presented in the Appendix.

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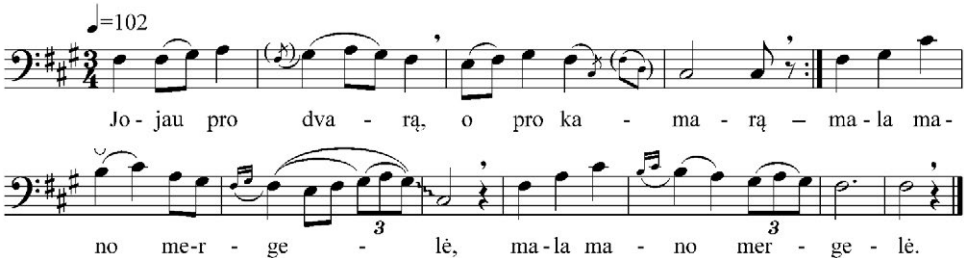

Fig. 9 Transcription of the first verse of the song "Jojau pro dvarą".

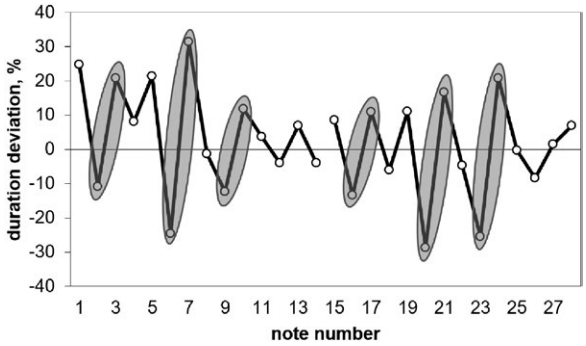

Fig. 10 Tempo curve of "Jojau pro dvarą" (see the transcription in Figure 9; first four measures with repetition). Phrases separated by gap. Pairs of quavers are circled.

Alf Gabrielsson (1987) presents nice examples of the *phrase arch* and *final ritardando* rules manifesting in performances of the theme from Mozart's Piano Sonata A Major (K. 331). These rules are not observed in the performances of the two Lithuanian traditional songs discussed here.

Now consider the example of "Oi giria giria, girele žalioji" (Figures 11 and 12). From the pitch tracks, it can be seen that scale degrees are intoned differently, depending on their position in the melodic contour. This, certainly, can result from the zonal origin of intonation, errors of measurement, and from an insufficient number of statistical samples. However, if the changes are large enough and systematic, then they most probably reflect certain features of the horizontal (temporal) component in the modal thinking or in the physiology of vocal technique.

As an example, consider the patterns consisting of the anchor tone and its closest lower neighbor in the musical scale, i.e., a kind of leading tone. In cases when no strong interaction between the third and the fourth degrees is observed (i.e., when the intermediate tones appear between the two tones in the melodic contour or, e.g., when the two tones are separated by a division in the time structure), the second interval occurring between the third and the fourth degrees tends to be relatively wide. Thus, the third is relatively low in this case. In contrast, when strong interaction between the two scale degrees is characteristic (e.g., when the third appears as an intermediate tone between two anchor fourths in the melodic contour), the second interval tends to be narrowed,

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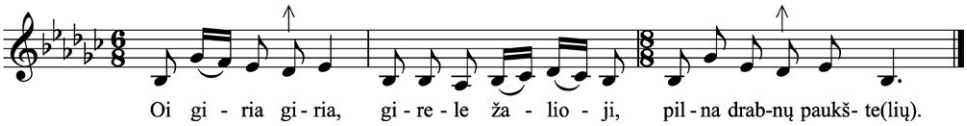

Fig. 11 Generalized transcription of the song "Oi giria giria, girele žalioji".

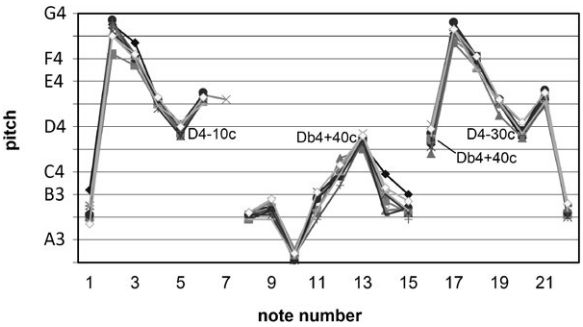

Fig. 12 Measured pitch tracks of all melostrophes of the song "Oi giria giria, girele žalioji" (see the transcription in Figure 11); data from Ambrazevičius and Wiśniewska 2008, 25 is used. Phrases separated by gaps. The pitch medians of the third scale degree are indicated.

i. e., the third is raised. The discussed difference between the thirds equals 36–50 cents, on average. Here the high third works as something similar (or the prototype) to the leading tone in diatonic thinking, thus strengthening the anchor quality of the fourth. In other words, we are dealing here with *rule of leading tone* (case of *melodic intonation*).

In the example of "Vai jokit, jokit, jauni broleliai" (Figures 13 and 14), we can again see from the pitch tracks that scale degrees are intoned differently, depending on their position in the melodic contour.

The thirds in the ascending sequences are systematically intoned approximately 28 cents higher than in the descending sequences, on average. Thus, sort of *rule of ascending/descending sequences* (case of *melodic intonation*) can be derived. This issue is conditioned by this tendency to widen intervals.

3. *Rationale*

The samples for the study were drawn from various audio publications (see "Audio publications" section). The recordings cover various musical dialects of Lithuania, Belarus and Ukraine. The four main Lithuanian musical dialects (Aukštaitija, northeastern Lithuania; Žemaitija, western Lithuania; Dzūkija, southeastern Lithuania and Suvalkija, southwestern Lithuania) were analyzed separately. Contextual Belarusian and Ukrainian musical material was pooled into samples from those cultures.

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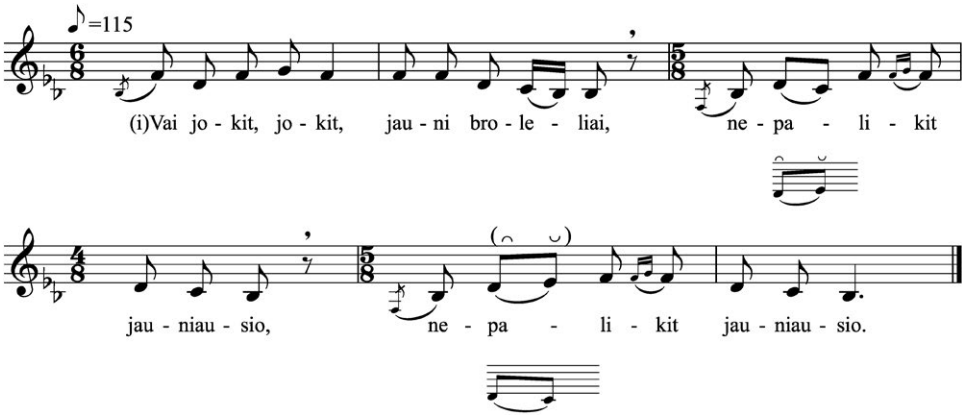

Fig. 13 Generalized transcription of the song "Vai jokit, jokit, jauni broleliai".

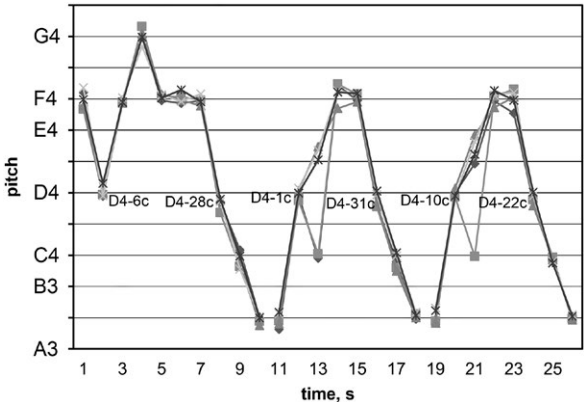

Fig. 14 Measured pitch tracks of all melostrophes of the song "Vai jokit, jokit, jauni broleliai" (see the transcription in Figure 13). Phrases separated by gaps. The pitch medians of the third scale degree are indicated.

Acoustic measurements were done with Praat software.[5] When studying time-domain rules, the IOIs were measured: pairs of 511 durations studying the *Inégales* rule, pairs of 176 durations studying the *Double duration* rule, and pairs of 141 durations studying the *Duration contrast* rule (its 3:1 variant of nominal durations). Measurement quantities naturally vary due to different sampling frequencies. When studying pitch-domain rules, the pitches were measured thus: pairs of 165 pitches studying the *rule of ascending/descending sequences*, and pairs of 109 pitches studying the *rule of leading tone* (both are cases of *melodic intonation*).

5 Virtually any commercial audio editing software works for duration measurements. However, pitch measurements require specialized software such as Praat.

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4. Results

4.1. *Inégales (nominal 1:1)*

Medians and interquartiles (in parentheses) of T1/T2 (ratio of the first and second durations in the pair) for the examined samples of the Lithuanian dialects (A, S, Z, D) and pooled Belarusian and Ukrainian samples (BY, UA) are, respectively, 1.09 (0.94–1.24), 1.09 (0.99–1.22), 1.01 (0.90–1.13), 0.91 (0.78–1.08), 0.92 (0.70–1.01), and 0.85 (0.75–0.95) (Figure 15).

Interestingly, in the case of Dzūkai, we are faced with the phenomenon of 'inverted swing' (SL) or, in terms of Friberg and colleagues, with negative k (coefficient for the intensity of rule) values. This trend is also typical of Belarusians and Ukrainians. Thus, from the point of view of the present, the Dzūkai and the Eastern Slavs fall into one musical region. The feature of musical performance in question is, at first sight, seemingly insignificant, but it fits perfectly into the overall set of musical features. The links between Dzūkai and East Slavic musical folklore are often noted (see, for instance, Nakienė 2000).

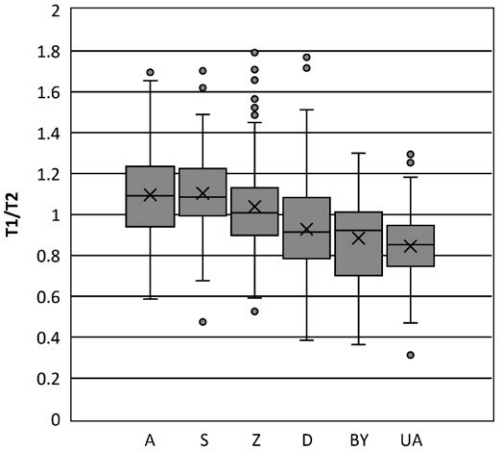

Fig. 15 Box charts for duration ratios of paired sounds nominally presented in equal rhythmic values (the 1-line marks the exact proportion 1:1). A, S, Z, D, BY, UA, respectively: Aukštaičiai, Suvalkiečiai, Žemaičiai, Dzūkai, Belarusians (generalized), Ukrainians (generalized). The same notations in other figures.

The dominance of the SL formula is illustrated by several Ukrainian examples (Figures 16–19). Ellipses mark the pairs of sounds for which the *Inégales* strategy is applied. Gray ellipses denote the SL formula, and empty ellipses denote the LS formula. See also the Lithuanian example in Figure 10.

As for the rules *phrase arch* and *final ritardando*, the matter is very simple. As can be seen from Figures 8, 10, 17, and 19, these rules are not detected in the studied samples. From my experience, I can presume that the *final ritardando* rule is typical of newer, "romance-type" songs, but there were no such examples among the examples examined.

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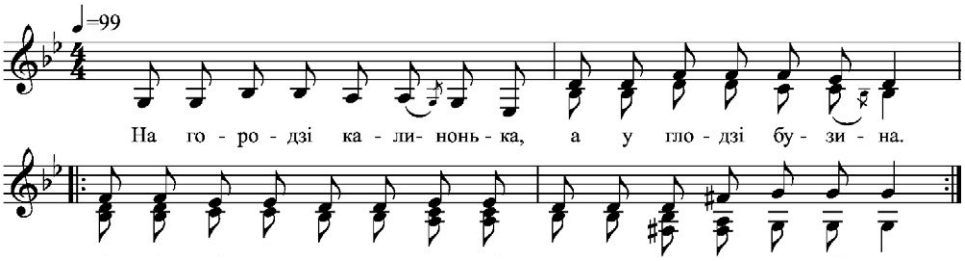

Fig. 16 Transcription of the first melostrophe of the song "На городі калинонька".

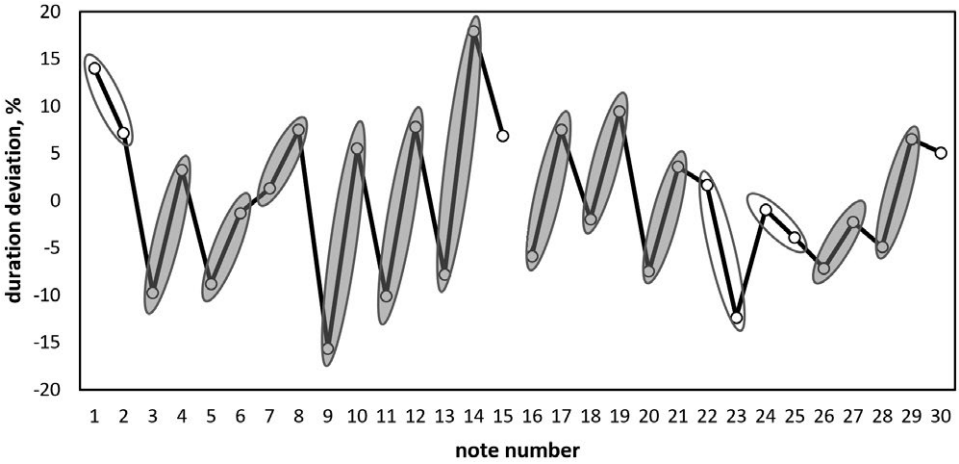

Fig. 17 Tempo curve of "На городі калинонька" (see the transcription in Figure 16). Phrases separated by gaps. For ellipses, see the body text.

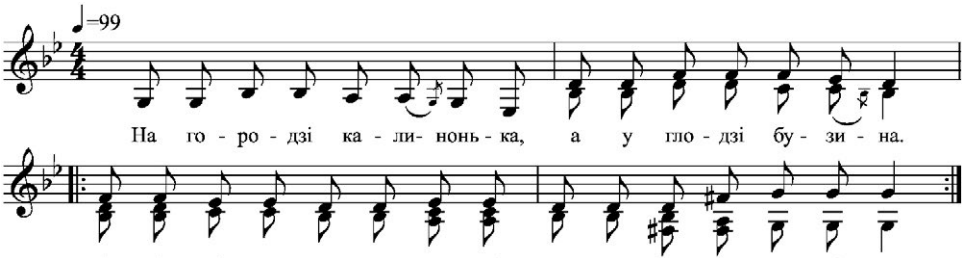

Fig. 18 Transcription of the first melostrophe of the song "Ой той край милий".

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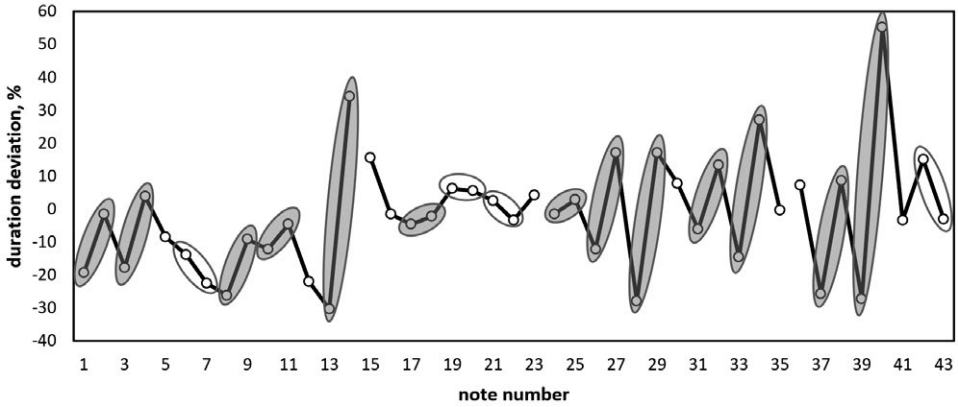

Fig. 19 Tempo curve of "Ой той край милий" (see the transcription in Figure 18). Phrases separated by gaps.

4.2. Double duration (nominal 2:1)

Figure 20 shows the results for Dzūkai and (pooled) Belarusian and Ukrainian samples. The samples of other Lithuanian dialects were statistically insufficient, so they are not shown here. However, the few examples found show similar trends. Figure 21 shows the results of four songs of A and S (Aukštaičiai and Suvalkiečiai).

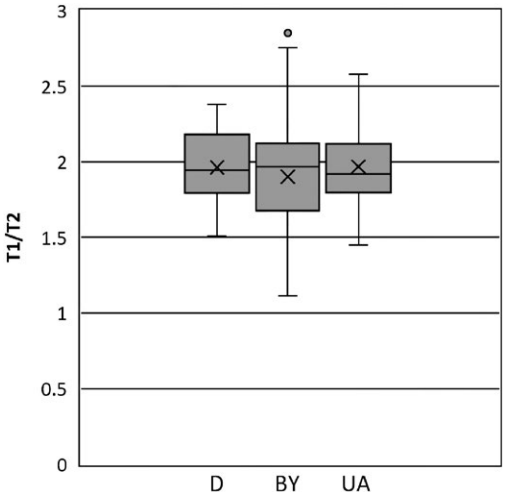

Fig. 20 Box charts for duration ratios of paired sounds nominally presented in ratios of rhythmic values 2:1 (the 2-line marks the exact proportion 2:1).

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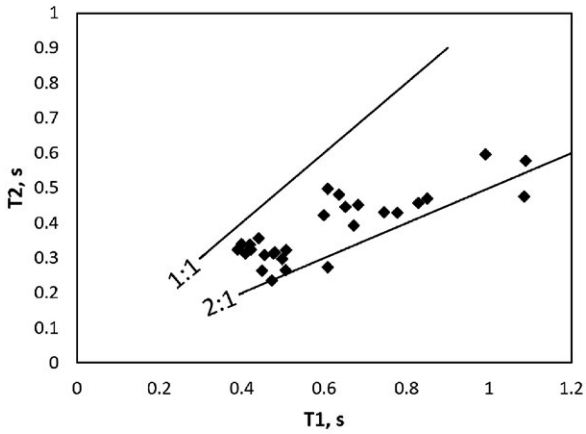

Fig. 21 Actual durations of paired sounds nominally presented in ratios of rhythmic values 2:1; four songs of A and S. The oblique lines mark the exact proportions.

As in the case of Dzūkai, Belarusians, and Ukrainians, here we can note a tendency to soften the contrast of durations. Most occurrences range from 2:1 to 1.5:1 or even 2:1 to 1:1. Thus, this is broadly in line with the trend observed in the case of Western academic music.

4.3. Duration contrast (nominal 3:1)

In the examples considered, patterns 3:1 were rare, but there was a sufficient statistical number of them in the samples of Dzūkai, Belarusians and Ukrainians. Therefore, I will only briefly discuss these samples below. Figure 22 shows the results.

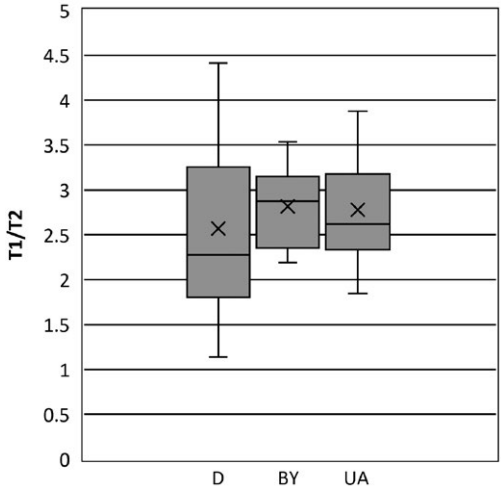

Fig. 22 Box charts for duration ratios of paired sounds nominally presented in ratios of rhythmic values 3:1 (the 3-line marks the exact proportion 3:1).

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The tendency of duration contrast to be attenuated becomes apparent. Thus, this is broadly out of line with the trend observed in the case of Western academic music, that is, unlike in the case of "double duration". In summary, there is a tendency in the traditional music in question (at least based on the examples examined) to soften any contrast of durations. We must note that the manifestation of the rule is quite broad, especially for Dzūkai.

It should be noted that only a statistical generalization of the time domain rule expression is presented here. As observed during the research, performances of individual songs (primarily genres, not singers) can vary considerably. This requires more detailed study.

4.4. Melodic intonation: Leading tone

The manifestations of this rule are generalized in Figure 23. The results of the Žemaičiai musical dialect are not discussed here, as there are few such examples and statistical generalizations would be unreliable. The results of all the other musical dialects are given (Aukštaičiai, Dzūkai, Suvalkiečiai, Belarusians, Ukrainians). Obviously, an examination of the individual Belarusian and Ukrainian dialects may reveal that some of those dialects have an even stronger manifestation of that rule. The Dzūkai dialect is particularly prominent. However, the *leading tone* rule holds true in all cases, albeit at different levels. There is a clear tendency to sharpen the "leading tone" in the context of tonal anchor (here: the third scale degree in the context of the fourth scale degree as the anchor).

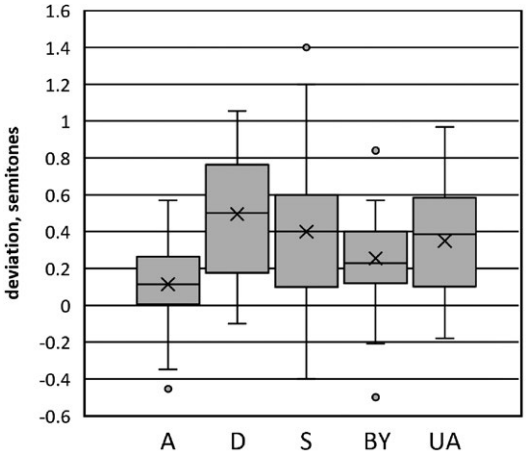

Fig. 23 Box charts for deviations between the pitches of the third scale degree in "leading tone" and "non-leading tone" occurrences. D, S, Z, BY, UA, respectively: Dzūkai, Suvalkiečiai, Žemaičiai, Belarusians (generalized), Ukrainians (generalized).

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In short, we can deduce the following rule, which, to a greater or lesser degree, works for all the musical dialects in question: a scale degree next to an anchor tone tends to "gravitate" to the anchor tone if the two tones are found in a pattern of strong interaction. In this particular case, this rule applies to the third degree of the musical scale (which ascends—i. e., gravitates toward the fourth degree—if present in the context of the fourth-degree tonal anchor).

4.5. Melodic intonation: Ascending/descending sequences

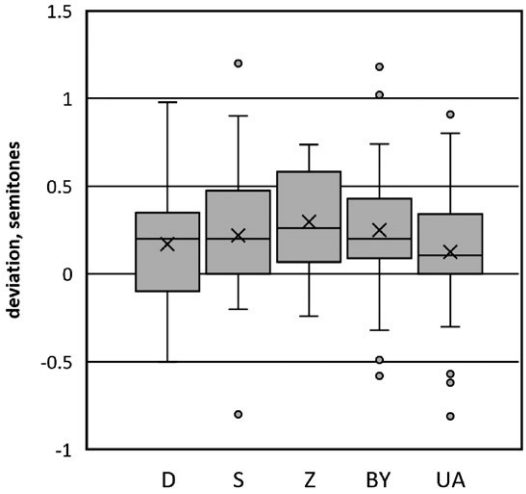

Fig. 24 Box charts for deviations between the pitches of the third scale degree in "ascending" and "descending" occurrences. A, D, S, BY, UA, respectively: Aukštaičiai, Dzūkai, Suvalkiečiai, Belarusians (generalized), Ukrainians (generalized).

The manifestations of this rule are generalized in Figure 24. The results of the Aukštaičiai musical dialect are not discussed here, as there are few such examples and their statistical generalization would be unreliable. But, as before, the results of all the other musical dialects are given (Dzūkai, Suvalkiečiai, Žemaičiai, Belarusians, Ukrainians). We can state that the rule in question is most pronounced in Žemaičiai singing.

Thus, in summary, the tendencies of melodic intonation are the same as in the more widely studied Western academic music. I mean tendencies rather than the precise intervals. For example, as mentioned, a semitone acting as a "leading tone" in academic performance is narrowed (if the properties of the instrument allow). In the examples of traditional singing discussed here, the wider interval (neutral second or major second, i. e. two semitones) is narrowed rather than the corresponding (in academic performance) semitone. So, the key here is that the psychological trend is universal: the narrowing intervals between the "leading tone" and the tonal anchors emphasize the significance of the tonal anchors.

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5. *Discussion*

The rules found for Western academic (common practice period) music are valid to varying degrees in the case of the examined examples of traditional singing. Naturally, some rules perhaps could be considered (quasi-)universal (at least by comparing the examined traditional singing and Western academic music). However, the expression of other rules found in the case of Western academic music does not hold true for other musics. Some differences in the studied musical traditions (in the examined aspect) were observed. Of course, for reliable conclusions on these differences, even larger samples would be desirable.

As for the timing rules, it should be noted that the examined examples are mainly of the "lyrical" style of performance. Examples of ceremonial style seem to be discursively distinctive (i.e., interpretation of rhythmic patterns may be different). The expression of the performance rules in them will be determined through further research.

The assessed rules could be placed into four groups. The first includes rules that manifest themselves analogously in both academic and traditional music (researched in the current study), so they can be considered at least quasi-universal. The second group's rules show similar trends to those found in the performance of academic music, but the range of their manifestation in traditional singing is very wide. The third group contains rules found in academic music but not found in traditional singing. And the fourth group includes those rules whose expression in traditional singing depends on the musical dialect. Thus, they can be considered as markers of local musical style.

Appendix. Metrics for song recordings cited

Jojau pro dvarą [I Was Riding Across the Farm]. Vincas Jurčikonis, 75, Babrai, Lazdijai Dst. Record of 1964 (Četkauskaitė 1995, N18).

Kad aš dukrelių daug turėčia [If I Had a Lot of Daughters]. Adelė Kazlauskienė (née Ambrasaitė), 81, Gustaičiai, Prienai Dst. Record of 1983 (Četkauskaitė 2002, N76).

Oi giria giria, girele žalioji [Oh, Grove, Green Grove]. Magdalena Radzevičienė, 65, Santaka, Marijampolė Dst. Record of 1937 (Nakienė and Žarskienė 2003, N31).

Vai jokit jokit, jauni broleliai [Hey, Ride, My Young Brothers]. Agota Mikulevičienė, 62, Orija, Marijampolė Dst. Record of 1937 (Nakienė and Žarskienė 2003, N28).

На городі калинонька [Viburnum in the Garden]. Group from Vepryk, Gadyatsky Dst., Poltava Oblast. Record of 2005 (Sopilka 2005a, N5).

Ой той край милий [Oh, That Dear Land]. Group from Kryachkivka, Pyryatynsky Dst., Poltava Oblast. Record of 2005 (Sopilka 2005a, N1).

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Paolo Bravi

I did it my way

Interaction and temporal dimension in the extemporary poetry of North-Central Sardinia

Abstract

Within the scope of linguistic conversational studies, the tendency towards convergence between speakers (starting at the phonetic level) has been widely observed and discussed. The phenomenon, as a whole, is bound to the dynamics of communication and the relations between speakers.

The study proposed here concerns the field of improvised and sung poetry, in particular the genre of *galas in otadas* (poetry contests in octaves) in the Sardinian-Logudorese language. This genre has both a centuries-old history and a lively contemporary tradition. The improvisers sing (i) in a free rhythm and almost *a cappella*, despite the presence of short interludes by the so-called "a tenore" accompaniment choir, and (ii) following melodic profiles that, in spite of having a number of features in common, may basically be regarded as part of the individual style of each poet.

Starting from the assumption that the interaction between improvising poets represents in all respects a form of dialogue in verse, an analysis has been carried out in order to verify empirically if the duration of the *otadas* sung by each poet changes in relation to the duration of those sung by his "opponent", the poet with whom he sings/competes, and to answer the following question: Do poets in the course of a duel, consciously or not, tend towards a convergence in the temporal dimension or independence?

At the first stage of this analysis, what emerges is the predominance of consistency and non-permeability across different performance styles.

1. Introduction

1.1 Input

This study is devoted to the interaction between improvising poets in a sung poetic duel. However, my interest was awakened by a concept that I found in fields other than (ethno)poetic or (ethno)musicological studies, where we might expect to find research on the phenomenon of sung and improvised poetry. My starting point comes instead from conversational analysis.

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Besides the differences that emerge in very different "discussion" contexts, one might suppose that some aspects observed in dialogues (that we may categorize under the overarching scaffold of "ordinary conversation") may also remain true, or find a logical counterpart, in the extremely formalized dialogue that the improvising poets put forward in their poetic competition.

During a conversation,

> "[p]articipants are *sensitive to their interlocutor's rhythm* [my emphasis] and indeed are able to 'tune in' to it with enough precision for an isochronous pattern to arise across turns. [...] Having a common rhythm counts as a display of mutual endeavour; it turns the sequence of turns into a conversational 'duet' (Falk 1980) with speech rhythm serving as a unifying frame." (Auer, Couper-Kuhlen, Müller 1999, 59)

From that starting point, I tried to determine whether a similar tendency is present in Northern Sardinian improvised poetry contests as well, i.e. if a Sardinian poet who improvise his *otadas* (8-line stanzas) is "sensitive to their interlocutor's rhythm". In this case, the "interlocutor" is of course the improviser with whom he is confronted.

1.2 The Logudorese improvised poetry: a short survey

Before trying to answer the question, a very short survey on the genre of the North Sardinian poetic duel is necessary.[1] In a North Sardinian poetic duel in *otadas*, normally two or three improvising poets confront each other in the Logudorese variety of Sardinian.[2] Their improvisation is, in part, *a cappella*; while they sing their verses, there is no accompaniment. When the sung line (or couplet or, rarely, longer series of lines) is completed, and the singing poet reaches the tonic centre with a recognizable downwards melodic movement, a three-part accompaniment choir intervenes on the last syllable of his line. This accompaniment choir is called "tenore" in Sardinia and is comprised of three voices–*bassu* (low voice), *contra* (middle voice) and *mesu boghe* (high voice)–whose "breaks" (called *corfos*–sing. *corfu*–literally, 'hit, shot') are short when they are internal to the *otada* and long at the end of it (see Figures 1a–b and *infra*).[3]

1 Here are presented only the main characteristics of the poetic genre of the improvised poetry in *otadas*. For more detail, see, for example, Pillonca 2002; Manca, M. 2009; Pilosu 2012c.

2 The Logudorese variety enjoys particular prestige and is used in poetry in a much wider context than in the geographic area of the Sardinian sub-region of Logudoro. For a historical view on the subject, cf. Angius 1838–1839; Spano 1840; Despine 1881; Manca, S. 1909.

3 The *tenore* choir is also an essential part of the polyvocal groups and of the genre from which it takes its name: "a tenore singing", which are spread in many areas of Northern Sardinia and particularly in the central mountains, in the Barbagia region. Though a clear social, poetic, and musical bond is present

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Fig. 1a–b Two views of the stage of a poetic contest in *otadas*.
Figure 1a: in the foreground, the improvising poet, Bernardo Zizi, during his turn of speech; behind him, two poets awaiting their turn (Salvatore Ladu can be recognized in the image on the left side); on the right side of the photo, the three-part choir (*tenore*) accompanying the improvising poets. Sorgono, feast of Assunta, 13 August 2017. Photo by Paolo Bravi.
Figure 1b: a poetic contest with three poets seen from upstage: in the center, during his performance, Mario Masala; at his left and right sides, seated and waiting their turn, the poets Bruno Agus and Giuseppe Porcu. Behind the poet Masala, also seated, are the three tenor singers accompanying the poetic competition. 23 September 2014. Photo by Fabrizio Giuffrida. Used with permission.

The development of the melody of the improvising poets has a minimum ambitus of a major third in the case of melodies built on a "tritonic" basis (T / 2M / 3M), but can extend up to the octave, according to the interval pattern of a major scale.[4] The polyphonic interventions of the *tenore* have as a constant reference point the major chord in the form T / 5G / 10M (see Figure 2).

As regards the overall structure of a *gara poetica a otadas* performance, the main parts are the two *temas* ("themes"). To sing a *tema* means each poet performs his own "role", defending the *tema* that the organizing committee of the duel assigned him. The *temas* are always built in a contrastive form in order to allow the development of a poetic controversy between the poets. They may be "traditional", in the sense that they have been proposed several times in the history of the poetic contests in *otadas*, or "new", particularly if they refer to current topics. A couple of examples of these *temas* (the first a typical "traditional" theme, the second clearly a "new" theme related to the explosion of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020) are Beauty vs. Wisdom vs. Richness (in this case a three-poet contest) or Pro-vaccination vs. No-vax (a theme adapted for a two-poet duel).

between the *a tenore* song and the *a otadas* improvised poetry, the two genres should not be confused. A detailed description of the *a tenore* song and its relation with the improvised poetry can be found in Deplano 1994; Pilosu 2012a and 2012b.

4 The tritonic scale is identified by Pietro Sassu–2010 [1973]–as the fundamental basic structure in traditional Sardinian music.

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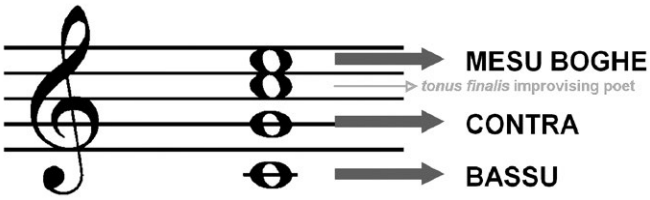

Fig. 2 Basic interval relations in the performance of a *corfu* by the *tenore*, built on the basis of the *tonus finalis* of the melody sung by the improvising poet.

2. *Analysis*

2.1 *Corpus*

This analysis has been carried out on a corpus of 190 *otadas*, which come from 4 *temas* taken from 4 different performances with two improvisers. In all four cases, one of the improvisers is the poet Mario Masala, while his competing poets are, in each respective contest, Giuseppe Sotgiu, Francesco Mura, Bernardo Zizi, and Celestino Mureddu.[5] The corpus has been selected from the rich digital archive held by the *Regione Autonoma della Sardegna* (Autonomous Region of Sardinia). The selected events are as follows (see also the map in Figure 3):

[1] date: 25.07.1992, village: Selegas, occasion: Sant'Anna Fest, poets: Giuseppe Sotgiu/Mario Masala (see Sozu and Masala 1992);

[2] date: 06.09.1997, village: Abbasanta, occasion: Sant'Agostino Fest, poets: Francesco Mura/Mario Masala (see Mura and Masala 1997);

[3] date: 19.05.2006, village: Ruinas, occasion: San Teodoro Fest, poets: Bernardo Zizi/Mario Masala (see Zizi and Masala 2006);

[4] date: 11.11.2006, village: Riola, occasion: San Martino Fest, poets: Mario Masala/Celestino Mureddu (see Masala and Mureddu 2006).

The central idea here is to verify if Masala's style is in some way sensitive to the rhythm of his "interlocutor" (the competing poet). Three aspects have been taken into consideration here: the way in which the *otada* is subdivided (section 2.1), the performing speed (section 2.2), and the inner modulations (section 2.3).

5 For brevity, I include only date of birth and village of origin (or residence) for each of these poets: Mario Masala (1935–2015, from Silanus), Giuseppe Sotgiu (1914–2008, from Bonorva), Bernardo Zizi (1928, from Onifai), Francesco Mura (1933–1999, from Silanus), Celestino Mureddu (1950, from Aidomaggiore). Portraits of the poets are seen in figure 4. Short biographies of each poet can be found in volume 13 of the *Enciclopedia della musica sarda* (Pilosu 2012c: 105 [GS], 108 [FM], 115 [CM], 117 [MM], 119 [BZ]).

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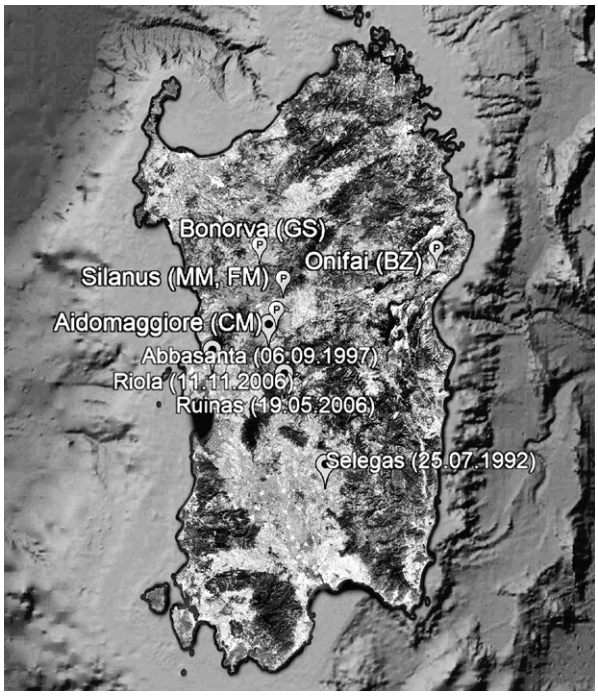

Fig. 3 Villages where the four poetic contests of the corpus were held and villages of origin of the five poets (GS: Giuseppe Sotgiu; BZ: Bernardo Zizi; FM: Francesco Mura; MM: Mario Masala; CM: Celestino Mureddu). Image from Google Maps.

Fig. 4 The poets present in the poetic contests of the corpus. From left to right: Giuseppe Sotgiu, Bernardo Zizi, Mario Masala, Francesco Mura and Celestino Mureddu.[6]

6 Credits for the photos: Giuseppe Sotgiu courtesy of the Sotgiu family archive; Bernardo Zizi and Mario Masala courtesy of Fabrizio Giuffrida; Francesco Mura courtesy of the "Sa domo de sa poesia cantada" archive (Mura 1985); Celestino Mureddu courtesy of Antonio Caria. The photos have been cropped for homogeneity and balance by the author. Thanks to the individuals who authorized the use of the images, who are listed in the "Acknowledgments" section.

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2.2 Otada *subdivision: corfu-separated line grouping*

Performing the sung *otada*, poets are allowed to divide the *otada* in various ways. The subdivision of the *otada* is expressed by means of quick interventions of the *tenore* choir. The improvising poet tells (or, better, calls for) the accompaniment *tenore* to enter for a short 'break' by way of his melodic movement. From a harmonic point of view, *corfos* are based on a major chord, with some possibility of small melodic variations (cf. Figure 2). From a rhythmic point of view, the intermediate *corfos*, sung by the *tenore* as an interlude within each *otada*, are short, whereas the final *corfos*, sung by the *tenore* to mark the end of the *otada* and the passage from one poet to another, are long. By way of example, two different ways of dividing the 'flow' of the *otada* lines are graphically shown in Figure 5. The intermediate breaks of the *tenore* (short *corfos*) are represented in dark grey in the waveform, together with an icon representing the *tenore* choir placed above it; the final intervention of the *tenore* (long *corfu*), that underlines the end of the *otada* is represented by the same icon of the *tenore*, but this time it appears larger, straight, and is placed just over the waveform. It is apparent from the different number of intermediate *tenore* breaks (four in the first example, three in the second) that a different subdivision of the *otada* has been performed in the two cases (more details can be found in the caption to Figure 5).

A trait that could clearly indicate the fact that a poet is sensitive to the rhythm of his interlocutor is the fact that the modality of subdivision, which is never uniform in absolute terms, tends to approach the scheme that is prevailing in the *otadas* sung by the partner. A sensitivity in this direction could manifest itself in the poets, even unconsciously, a trend towards some sort of accommodation with the competing improviser.

From the analysis of the *otada* subdivision, as manifested by the *corfu*-separated line grouping, we may observe what follows:

- As regards the rhythm in the performance of the *otada* given by the calls of the *tenore* break, Masala generally divides it differently from the other poets in the first distich. While Masala normally performs the first distich in the same way as the following distichs, i.e. without interruption, Mura, Sotgiu, and Zizi normally perform the first with a division between the first and second lines (see Figure 6).[7]
- Masala's style does not appear "sensitive to the interlocutor's rhythm" in relation to this aspect of the rhythm of the performance. The only trace of a possible 'interference' occurs in the poetic contest with Francesco Mura. Here it is possible (though with no clear statistical evidence[8]) that the variability of Mura induces a relative increase in cases of division of the first distich in Masala (structure 1–1–2–2–2).

7 What can be observed in the corpus analyzed here reflects one of Masala's characteristic behaviors. Poetry expert Cosimo Capra notes that it is typical of him "[chiamare] il tenore ogni due versi, raramente scandendo i versi singoli; quando lo fa, si limita ai primi due" [tr.: [to call] the tenor every two lines, rarely spelling out single lines; when he does, he limits himself to the first two] (Capra 2022).

8 Statistics: p-value = 0.0104, Fisher's Exact Test.

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Fig. 5 Examples of two different *otada* subdivisions (in red and with an icon representing the *tenore* choir short/intermediate and the long/final breaks with the polyphonic intervention of the accompanying choir). In example 1, based on an *otada* improvised by the poet Bernardo Zizi, the performed form has the following structure: line 1 [*corfu*] / line 2 [*corfu*] / line 3–4 [*corfu*] / line 5–6 [*corfu*] / line 7–8 ([long *corfu*]); in example 2, based on an *otada* improvised by the poet Mario Masala, the performed structure is: line 1–2 [*corfu*] / line 3–4 [*corfu*] / line 5–6 [*corfu*] / line 7–8 ([long *corfu*]). The audio examples cited, extracted from the poetic contests of the corpus (cf. note 6), can be accessed at P/B 2021.

2.3 Otada *duration: performing speed*

The sung performance of the *otadas* can last a variable stretch of time. This variability is mainly linked to the singing style (*traju* or *tràgiu*; plural: *trajos / tràgius*) of the poets.[9] However, the overall duration of the *otada* is also linked to other factors, such as the number of interventions of the *tenore* choir and the speed of singing of every single lines. The measure of the *otada* duration made here also excludes the duration of the breaks of the *tenore* in order to isolate the timeframe of the parts actually sung by the poets[10].

9 *Traju* (or *tràgiu, trazu* or equivalent terms) is an important concept within the traditional music of Sardinia. Connected with improvised poetry, it indicates the singing style adopted by each improviser, which may be characterized both in terms of its melodic features (for instance, range, rapidity, variability, etc.) and in terms of its social correlates (for example, its representativeness as a singing style of a specific village or area, or its resemblance to the style of other singers, etc.). For further information on this topic, cf. Bravi 2010, 27–259; Bravi 2012a; Bravi 2012b; Bravi/Proto 2019; Murru 2010, as regards each genre of poetic improvation. On a larger scale, general observations on the relevance of the concept of *traju / tràgiu* in the oral Sardinian music are in Macchiarella 2012; Bravi 2015.

10 In Figure 7, the left panel is based on the time of the *otadas* measured with exclusion of the time occupied by the *tenore* interventions, while the right panel considers them, with the exclusion of the last *tenore* intervention which takes place after the completion of each *poet's otada* (see caption).

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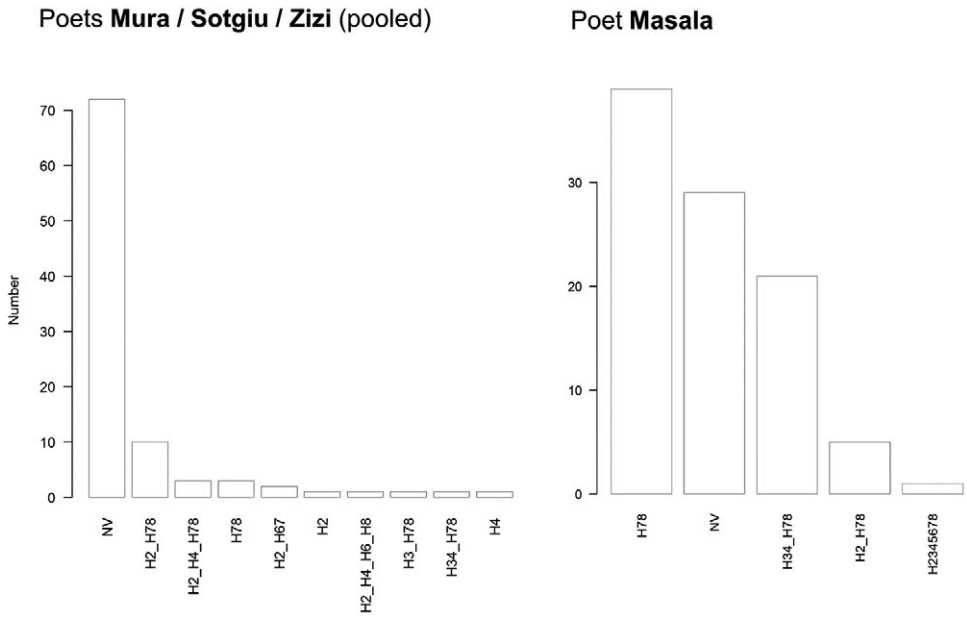

Fig. 6 Occurrence of the combination type S / C (soloist–*a capella*–part / *corfu* of the *tenore*). On the left, the pooled results of the three poets who are confronted with Masala (Sotgiu, Zizi, and Mureddu): here there is a clear prevalence of the 1–1–2–2–2 structure; on the right, the combinations used by Masala, with a clear prevalence of the 2–2–2–2 structure.

The overall distribution of *otada* lengths in the corpus examined shows different behaviors of the poets (see Figure 7). As a whole, we may observe differences among the poets from the speed of execution and from the variability of the duration. As for the first point, one notes a clear difference among Zizi's very quick *traju*, Masala's quick *traju* and Mura's, Sotgiu's and above all Mureddu's slow traju. As for the second point, Sotgiu's *traju* allows a wide variability in the performance of the *otada*, while the other poets' *traju* makes the rendition of their *otadas* fairly regular as far as duration is concerned.

Coming back to the main issue here, is the Masala's performance speed affected by those of his "interlocutors"? As a matter of fact, only in the case of the coupling with Mureddu does the duration Masala's *otadas* appear significantly changed, i. e. slower than his standard.

A further investigation concerns the possibility that some form of influence is active on a short timescale level. In this case, I have not looked at the groups of *otada* durations as a whole, but one-by-one, measuring the variation of duration occurring during the poetic duel. The question may be refined and can be expressed in these terms: is there a correlation between the duration of an *otada* and that of the preceeding one? The plots in Figure 8, showing the durations of the series of *otadas* in each performance (carried out respectively by the couples of poets Masala/

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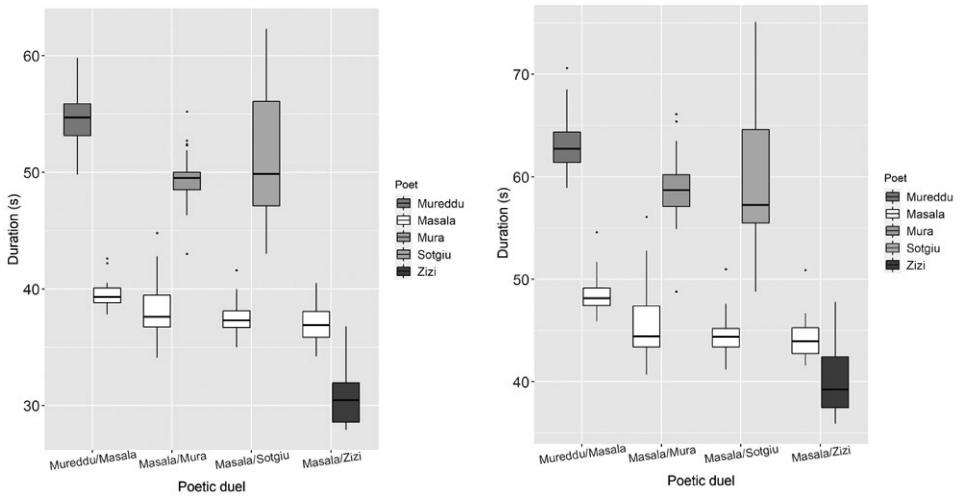

Fig. 7a–b Boxplot of the duration of the *otadas*, divided per poet and per poetic duel. Stretches of time filled by *tenore* inner interventions–between (groups of) lines–are excluded (left panel, Fig. 7a) and included (right panel, Fig. 7b). The intervention of the *tenore* at the end of the *otadas* is excluded in both cases.

Mureddu, Masala/Mura, Masala/Sotgiu, Masala/Zizi), does not evidence any clear and significant correlation in this regard.

To synthesize what emerges from this analysis of *otada* duration, which is partly related to the poet's performing speed, we may observe as follows:

- As regards performance speed, Masala's *otadas* are on the fast side, a little slower than Zizi's, but normally faster than Mura's, Sotgiu's, and Mureddu's;[11]
- Masala's style does not appear "sensitive to the interlocutor's rhythm" in terms of one-to-one *otada* interaction;

11 It must be emphasized that Masala's subdivision of the *otada* is fixed in the vast majority of cases and provides for only three interventions of the *tenore* choir within the stanza, after the second, fourth and sixth lines (form 2–2–2–2, cf. par. 2.2), whereas other poets call normally for more frequent *tenore* interventions (see the time differences between the two panels in Figure 7). The speed with which Masala used to perform his *otadas* is also noted in the biographical note presented on the page dedicated to the poet on the website, "Sa domo de sa poesia cantada", which describes him "[p]oeta di vena naturale, componeva le ottave velocemente senza mai cadere in errore nel rispetto dell'endecasillabo" [tr. [p]oet of natural vein, he composed the *otadas* quickly without committing any errors in respecting the hendecasyllable] (Pillonca, F. 2019).

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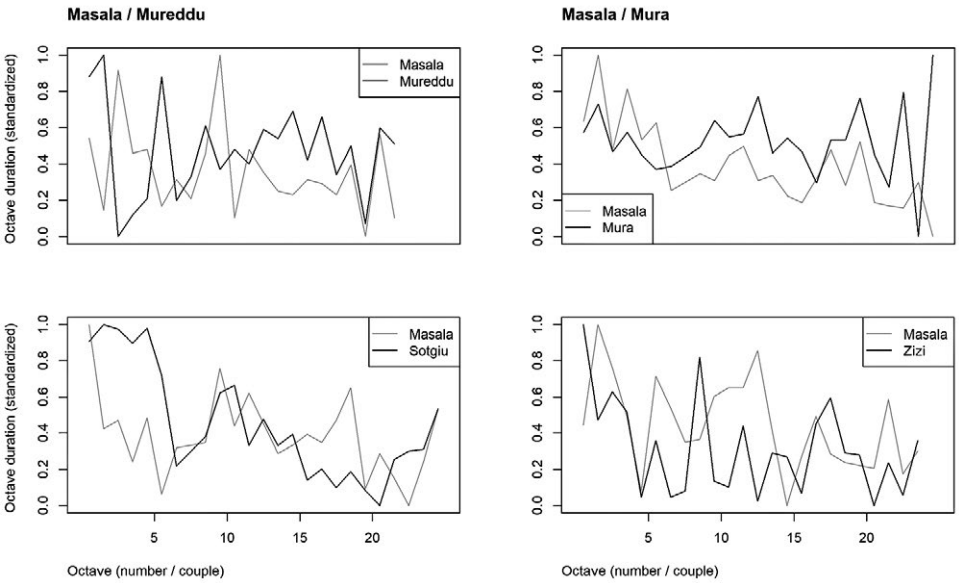

Fig. 8 One-by-one interaction in the duration of the *otadas* in the four poetic duels. For ease of comparison between the couple of poets the durations are standardized here.

– As an exception in the overall appearance of "insensitivity to the interlocutor's rhythm" observed so far, an "interference" occurs in the poetic contest with Celestino Mureddu. Here the duration of Masala's *otadas* is significantly longer than usual, a "slowing down" that might be driven by Mureddu's extremely slow style.[12]

2.4 Otada *inner modulations: one-tone movements*

In Logudorese improvised poetry, only one type of harmonic movement is present: the shifting of the tonal center of one tone, up and down.[13] The *tenore* choir that accompanies the improvisers follows the melodic movement performed by the poet and tunes his major chord accordingly to

12 Statistics: chi-squared = 26.763, df = 3, p-value = <.01, Kruskal-Wallis test. Note: no age factor is here relevant. The improvising poet Giuseppe Porcu and the expert Salvatore Tedde, while noting the substantial stability of the Masala style (see par. 3.1 "Discussion" below), interpret the deviation from the standard in this particular occasion as "an exception that confirms the rule" (see Porcu 2022; Tedde 2022).

13 This kind of harmonic movement has a large presence in Sardinian music. It may be observed in many of the traditional musical genres present nowadays and has a long history, having been observed and documented since Madau 1997 [1787]; Spano 1840; Oneto 1841. For an overall survey, cf. Lortat-Jacob 2000.

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the new tonal center, passing for instance from the chord form C-G-E to D-A-F#. In Figure 9, this one-tone oscillation is graphically represented in a way that aims at showing how the melodic profile established by the poet is followed by the *tenore* choir, whose breaks are one tone apart from one another according to the poet's demand.

From a strictly formal point of view, the one-tone modulation is a feature that concerns the dimension of the pitches of the sounds and that of harmony. However, it is also evident–starting from the perceptual data–that it is an element that has a rhythmic value as well. Harmonic stability and, on the opposite side, its interruption realized through the tone modulation is a trait that contributes significantly to the perception of the "rhythm" of an improviser poet.

The distribution reveals quite different behaviors among the four poets. For a clearer understanding of what happens, it is helpful to count all the types actually present distinguishing Masala and the four poets he is confronted with in the four performances examined (Figure 10).

To synthesize what emerges from this analysis of *otada* inner modulations, i. e. the one-tone movements that may be performed within each *otada*, we may observe thus:

- Two thirds of the most frequent forms used by Masala–LL | LL | LL | HH (44 %); LL | HH | LL | HH (22 %)–have no presence in Mureddu and Zizi and only a limited presence in Sotgiu.
- Masala's style does not show clear evidence of being "sensitive to the interlocutor's rhythm" in terms of one-tone movements within the *otada*. The "flat" (= no-modulation) form is the only one used by Mureddu and Zizi and is strongly prevalent in Mura. In the case of the Masala/Zizi performance, Masala uses almost exclusively this form. This might suggest that Zizi influences Masala. However, the same prevalence of the "flat" form in Mureddu and Mura do not show significant correspondence with Masala's *otadas*. As a whole, the distribution in the case of the poetic duel between Masala and Zizi does not offer a clear connection to the idea of "sensitiveness to the interlocutor's rhythm". This suggests further investigation.

3. *Discussion*

Improvised poetry is a form of dialogue in verses. In this sense, the comparison with what conversation studies bring to light can be stimulating. It can offer research ideas, suggest areas of study, provide methodological and conceptual tools that can be "exported" or adapted to the context of the sung poem. In the case examined here, the idea taken from conversation studies is that there may be some sort of inter-speaker influence among those who converse, in particular with regard to the rhythm of the elocution. Given that the 'debate in verse' realized by improvising poets is, at least from a thematic point of view, a form of dialogue, we asked ourselves whether the rhythm of a poet–in this case, bound by the metric form and expressed in the form of a sung performance–could be influenced by that of the poet with whom he is confronted.

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Fig. 9 An example of an *otada* sung by Giuseppe Sotgiu with three one-tone modulations. The overall structure observed in this regard is as follows: line 1 [low] / line 2 [high] / line 3 [low] / line 4 [high] / line 5–6 [low] / line 7–8 [high]. The audio example cited, extracted from the poetic contests of the corpus (see note 5), can be accessed at P/B 2021

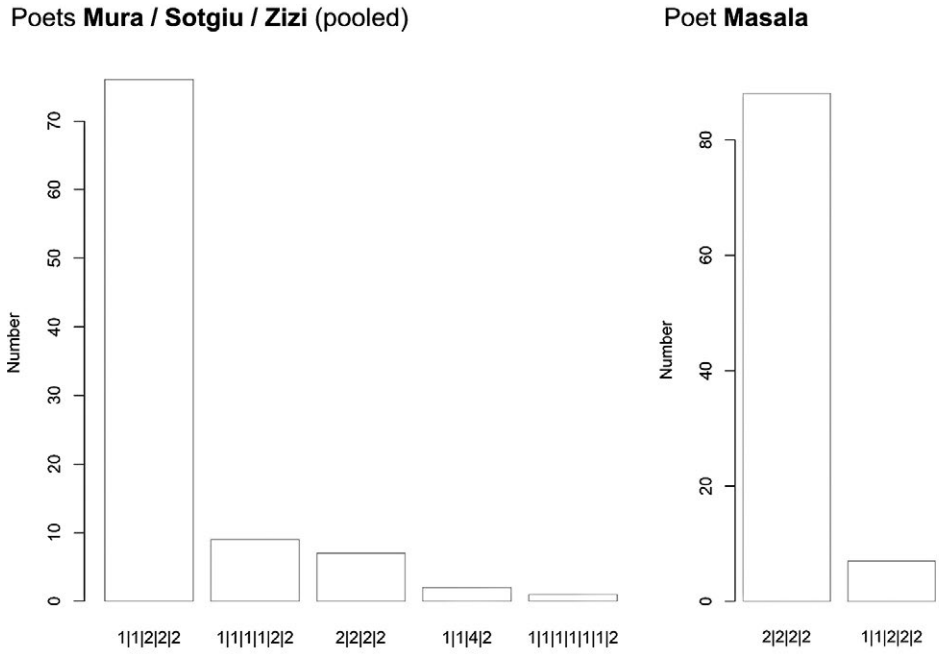

Fig. 10 Tonal oscillations in the performance of improvised *otadas*. The tone modulation upwards is indicated by the acronym H [high]; the following figures (1–8) indicate the lines in which the poet remains steadily on the tone established by means of the one-tone movement; the sigle "NV" stands for "no variation" (i. e., no inner modulation is present on the whole *otada*).

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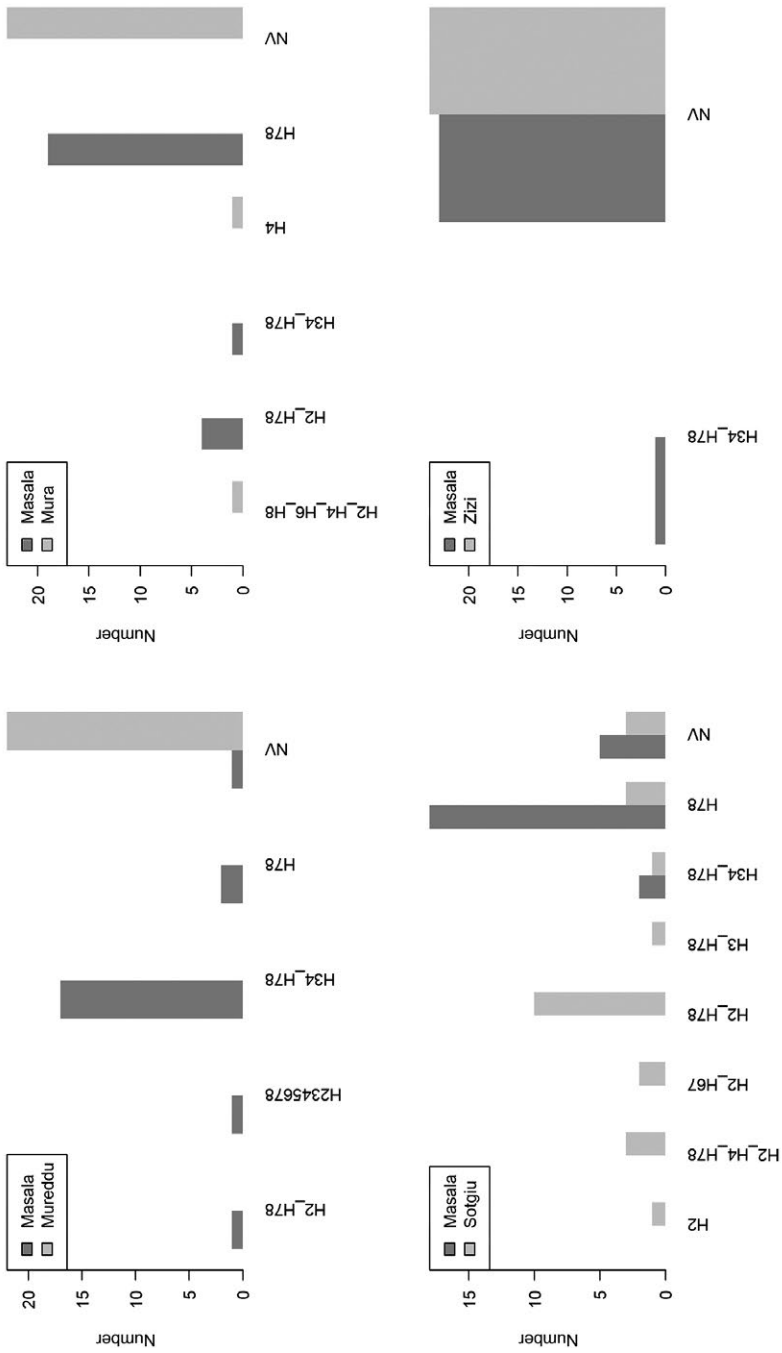

Fig. 11 Distribution of the forms of modulation in each of the four performances of the corpus (for interpretation of the acronyms in the *x*-axis, see Figure 10, caption).

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In this exploration, only one poet, Mario Masala, was considered, and four of his 'dialogues in verse' (*temas*) sustained with four different poets during Masala's long and renowned career were examined. The need to define a corpus of manageable size has as its limit the fact that the poet's behavior might be different in other poetic competitions, or when confronting other poets. Furthermore, nothing excludes the notion that a different behavior might be observed in other improvising poets. Therefore the "conclusions" I reach through the investigation conducted here represent a piece of a picture that clearly requires further work. As such, they should be seen as provisional, an attempt at generalization which does not claim to define universal and unshakable axioms.

From the methodological point of view, it should be added that instrumental analyses have the advantage and "strength" of returning objective data. But these, in turn, must be "framed" in order to be correctly interpreted, i. e. they must be placed, so to say, in a wider context and observed in the light of a perspective that takes into consideration the whole complex of phenomena that come into play in a performance of improvised poetry. To this end, the instrumental analysis of the documents of the corpus has been accompanied by an ethnographic investigation that has involved some improvising poets in activity and some experts who have a deep knowledge of the poet Mario Masala and of the improvised poetry in *otadas* as a whole.[14] The following paragraph offers a summary of the main points that have emerged in the communications I had with them.

3.1 The voices of poets and experts

The theme of stability and, so to speak, "indifference" of the *traju* of Masala with respect to the speed of execution of the poet with whom he competes has been discussed with some currently active poets and with some experts in Logudorese *otadas* in general, and Mario Masala's style in particular.[15]

A first observation that emerges unambiguously is that the *traju* of the poets is distinctive to each poet. It represents his way of presenting himself to the public, his acoustic "signature".[16] In some cases, the poet's *traju* changes over the course of his career, in particular in relation to the

14 The dialogic approach has been extensively used in the past decades in Sardinia. Among the most relevant contributes, cf. Macchiarella 2009; with reference to the Sardinian improvising poetry, cf. Bravi 2012c.

15 The "discussion" took place virtually, in most cases through an exchange of emails and, in the case of Giuseppe Porcu, by telephone. I thank Sebastiano Pilosu who, in addition to having personally discussed the topic of the research with me at length, has provided me with information (and in some cases the email contacts) of these poets and experts.

16 The term and concept of "signature" is taken from Macchiarella 2015. In that case, however, the reference is that of individual characterization in the context of multipart singing in Sardinia.

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physiological phenomenon of aging. A case in which this phenomenon is very marked is that of the renowned poet Giuseppe Sotgiu, also present in the corpus analyzed here:

If we want to cite another great poet, in Sotgiu this thing is very evident: there is a very rhythmic and fast Sotgiu immediately after the war, and there is a very melodious, slow, but in a pleasant way, not hard to listen to for sure, very pleasant indeed, of recent years, after '85 and until his retirement in '93, you find him very slow, very rested, very reflective.

Se vogliamo citare un altro grande della poesia, in Sotgiu questa cosa è molto evidente: c'è un Sotgiu molto ritmico e veloce subito dopo il dopoguerra, e c'è un Sotgiu molto melodioso, lento, piacevolemente però, non pesante da ascoltare di sicuro, anzi, gradevolissimo, degli ultimi anni, quindi dopo l'85 e fino al ritiro nel '93, lo trovi molto cadenzato, molto riposato, molto riflessivo. (Porcu 2022)

In another passage of his interview, Giuseppe Porcu underlines how the characteristic of slowness does not represent at all a negative element in the case of Sotgiu:

"Slow": take it in the sense of speed of execution and rhythmic way, not in a negative sense, as a flaw in the poet who needs a long time to compose and sing [the improvised *otada*]. In Sotgiu this did not matter; if he took a little more time in composing, in singing, it was all in harmony with the creation of the line. It almost seemed to you that the melody gave that fraction of a second more necessary to fit the perfect word, which then came out as a liberation, as if a sudden flash came that would settle down at the last moment […] almost a vocalization and then … pam! The right word came, but very pleasantly. It gives me this impression when listening to it.

«Lento»: prendilo nel senso di velocità di esecuzione e di maniera ritmica, non in senso negativo, che sia una pecca del poeta che ci mettesse tanto a comporre. In Sotgiu non pesava questo: se prendeva un po' di tempo in più nel comporre, nel cantare, era tutto una cosa armonica nella creazione del verso. Quasi ti sembrava che la melodia desse quella frazione di secondo in più necessaria ad incastrare la parola perfetta, che poi usciva come una liberazione, come se arrivasse un lampo improvviso che si accomodasse all'ultimo momento […] quasi un vocalizzo e poi … pam! Arrivava la parola giusta, ma molto in senso piacevole. Dà quest'impressione a me nell'ascoltarlo. (Porcu 2022)

In the early years in which a young person begins to practise poetry and forges his own singing style, in some cases one can observe the influence or even the imitation of a particular poet. However, with time there is always some kind of personalization of the style:

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As regards the influence in the *traju*, it may be that a young fan takes more from one poet than from another the way of singing	*Pro cantu riguardat s'influentzia in su traju, cussu potet esser chi unu dae minore apassionadu pius a unu poeta che aun'ateru nde li leet unu pagu de modu de cantare puru.* (Agus 2022, in Sardinian Logudorese)
Everyone has their own *traju*, way of singing. It must be said that, especially at the beginning, there is a tendency to take inspiration from some other greater poet, but gradually each one goes on to create one of his own.	*Ognuno ha un proprio traju, modo di cantare. C'è da dire che, soprattutto agli inizi, c'è la tendenza a prendere spunto da qualche altro poeta più grande, via via però ognuno va a crearne uno suo.* (Bitti 2022)

In the case of Masala, the *traju* is identified by colleagues and Sardinian poetry experts as stable, characterized in the sense of speed and clearly identifiable as a personal "brand":

Mario Masala always had his original *traju*.	*Mario Masala ha avuto sempre il suo traju originale.* (Casu 2022)
The way of singing of Masala was always the same [...] the style of Masala has always been unmistakable	*Su modu de cantare de Masala sa manera fit semper cudda [...] s'istile de Masala est istadu sempre incunfundibile.* (Agus 2022, in Sardinian Logudorese)
[Masala] shows a style (*su traju*) all of his own, unmistakable, with the perfect rhythm of a true genius of improvised poetry, building the octave in less than a minute and sometimes within 50 seconds.	*[Masala] mostra uno stile (su traju) tutto suo, inconfondibile con un ritmo perfetto da vero genio della poesia improvvisata, costruendo l'ottava in meno di un minuto e talvolta entro i 50 secondi.* (Capra 2022)

Unlike what can be observed for other poets, in Masala's case the *traju* has remained almost unchanged over the years. In his case, small changes in his *traju* are present only in some minimal melodic-rhythmic variations, in a slight slowdown and in the natural evolution of the vocal timbre due to aging:

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Masala can maybe be distinguished by the vivacity of his voice and by speed. There are some nuances, maybe some micropauses, somewhat more pronounced "cadence" towards the end, in his last years [of life], [...] he was always very fast, as a young man he was even faster, unlike some poets who have relaxed a lot over the years, he has always remained very fast, only some of these melodic nuances, a few more breaths, some more accentuated cadences towards the end, in the last years [of his life], which by the way was also very nice to hear [...] The little that you can distinguish is at the level of vocal timbre, evidently changes in all people with the years, with the change of age, so maybe you can distinguish a bit the moment of singing, of the performance, of the recordings, but the speed... more or less we are there, a little slower at the end, but not so much, with this kind of little rest at the end.

Masala forse tu lo distingui dalla vivacità della voce e dalla velocità. Ci sono alcune sfumature, magari alcune micropause nella chiusa che faceva più nell'anzianità [...] è stato sempre velocissimo, da giovane era più veloce ancora, a differenza di alcuni poeti che negli anni si sono molto rilassati, lui no, è rimasto sempre molto veloce, solo alcune di queste sfumature melodiche, qualche respiro in più, qualche cadenza più accentuata verso la fine, negli ultimi anni [di vita], che tra l'altro era anche molto bella da sentire [...] Il poco che riesci a distinguere è a livello di timbro vocale, evidentemente con gli anni cambia in tutte le persone, col cambiare dell'età, quindi magari riesci a distinguere un po' l'epoca del canto, dell'esecuzione, delle registrazioni, ma la velocità ... più o meno siamo lì, dai, un po' più lento alla fine, ma non tanto, con questo specie di riposetto alla fine. (Porcu 2022)

The voice, especially of those who sing on the stage almost every night for at least 4 or 5 months a year for 60 years in a row, undergoes a minimum of change, in the timbre, in the clarity or sharpness, perhaps also in the pitch, but in Masala, if it did occur, it was indeed in an imperceptible and irrelevant way. Masala has always maintained his brilliance, his rapidity and clarity in singing, and skilfully practises the way of *pesare* [starting the song], the *otada* almost muted, with a low but clear tone, to rise in tone in the second line and quickly finish the *otada* [...], and this lasted over time until the sudden end of his career, which sees [...] a slight change in the rhythm.

La voce, specie di chi canta nel palco quasi ogni notte per almeno 4/5 mesi all'anno per 60 anni di fila, un minimo di cambiamento lo subisce, nel timbro, nella chiarezza o limpidità, forse anche nella nota, ma in Masala, se si è verificato, è stato davvero in modo impercettibile e irrilevante. Masala ha sempre mantenuto la sua brillantezza, la sua rapidità e chiarezza nel cantare, esercita abilmente il modo di pesare s'otava quasi in sordina, con tono basso ma chiaro, per salire di tono già al secondo verso e portare rapidamente a termine l'ottava [...], e questo si è protratto nel tempo fino alla fine improvvisa della sua carriera, che vede [...] un leggero cambiamento nel ritmo. (Capra 2022)

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Between Masala who sang until the 1980s and Masala in the 2000s, we see a certain change, an elderly poet tends to be quieter in singing [...] In recent years he was a little slower, but this is normal, that with age one loses a bit of daring, but not the substance, rather to the latter one tends with age to pay more attention.

Tra su Masala chi cantaiat finas a s'otanta e su Masala de sos annos duamitza s'idet unu certu cambiamentu, unu poeta anzianu tendet a esser pius pasidu in su cantare [...] In sos ultimos annos fit pius pagu lestu, ma cussu est normale ca cun s'edade si perdet unu pagu de ardimentu, ma non sa sustantzia, antzis cussa cun s'edade tendet a ponner pius bundu. (Agus 2022, in Sardinian Logudorese)

Masala's *traju* has not undergone major changes over the course of his very long career. In the singing speed, we can see a slowdown of a few seconds in the competitions from the 1990s onwards. It is an aspect common to many poets.

Su traju *di Masala non ha avuto grandi cambiamenti nel corso della sua lunghissima carriera. Sulla velocità nel cantare possiamo notare un rallentamento di qualche secondo nelle gare dagli anni '90 in poi. È un aspetto comune a molti poeti.* (Bitti 2022)

In general terms, however, the *traju* of Masala has remained the same throughout his entire poetic career. His performative quality, his speed of execution, his "restrained" voice—a characteristic element of his singing voice—and his "statuesque" way of expressing in front of the public his sung poetry are traits that Masala maintained along the entire arc of his career:

Apart from the voice timbre (which in the recordings up to the 1970s is certainly more youthful and fresh in the timbre), his *traju* has remained substantially unchanged; Mario already as a young man sang "a boghe retèsa", which in our language [Sardinian Logudorese] means with the voice "restrained", modulated on a reduced volume and tone (this perhaps due to the fact that Mario was a youngster when he debuted on the stages and also very shy, which he masked with a playful and jovial attitude); even in his mature years, he kept the same approach; even the accentuated speed of execution has not undergone any changes; just as the tendency to tone variation over the course of the *otada* (alternating high and low tone), used especially in the performance of the two final hendecasyllables (7th and 8th), [which is] neces- sary to underline [...] the moral of the concept expressed in the six previous hendecasyllables]

Al netto del timbro di voce (che nelle registrazioni fino agli anni '70 è certamente più giovanile e fresca nel timbro), su traju *è rimasto sostanzialmente invariato; Mario già da giovane cantava "a boghe retèsa" che nel nostro linguaggio vuol significare con la voce "trattenuta", modulata su un volume e tonalità ridotti (ciò forse a causa del fatto che Mario era un ragazzino al'esordio sui palchi e peraltro anche molto timido, cosa che mascherava con un atteggiamento scherzoso e gioviale); anche nell'età matura ha conservato la stessa impostazione; anche la accentuata velocità di esecuzione non ha subito modifiche; come non ha subito modifiche la tendenza alla variazione di tono nel corso dell'ottava* (sa bassa e s'arta alternate), *usata specialmente nell'esecuzione dei due endecasillabi di chiusura (7° e 8°), necessaria a sottolineare [...] la morale del concetto espresso nei sei endecasillabi precedent.* (Tedde 2022)

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In my personal opinion, Masala is the prototype of the "imperturbable" poet, in the way of singing. Very few "jumps" of the voice or drops in tone [...]. Even in the demeanor on stage it is almost statuesque: body slightly askew, one hand on the table or on the railing and the other in his pocket. Tiu Marieddu practically never gesticulated, unlike Piras, Seu, or Zizi.

Secondo il mio personale parere, Masala è il prototipo del poeta "imperturbabile", nel modo di cantare. Pochissime "impennate" di voce o cali di tono [...]. Anche nel contegno sul palco è quasi statuario: corpo leggermente di sbieco, una mano sul tavolo o sulla ringhiera e l'altra in tasca. Tiu Marieddu praticamente non gesticolava mai, a differenza di Piras, Seu o Zizi. (Bitti 2022)

[measured] in seconds [Masala is] the fastest, in fact if you examine some video recordings, you will see that the other poet is finishing his singing [his *otada*] and he [Masala] is already standing

In termine di secondi [Masala è] il più veloce, infatti se [Ed.: Lei (rivolto a chi scrive)] esamina dei filmati vedrà che l'altro poeta sta finendo di cantare e lui è già in piedi. (Casu 2022)

Masala has always had his standard singing style, he was always fast in singing the *otada*.

Masala at tentu semper un andamentu regulare in cussu sensu ca est bistadu sempre lestu cantende s'otada. (Agus 2022, in Sardinian Logudorese)

Once we see that Masala is a poet characterized by a fundamentally stable and fast style of singing, we can ask which factors are associated with the small variations in the singing style observed in the performances that even in such an "imperturbable" poet can be observed. One factor that can influence the speed of execution is *sa muta*, the poetic inspiration. Generally speaking, an improvising poet can be quicker in moments or in poetic contests where he feels more inspired than when he is less so:

The poet has what we call 'sa muta', which translated into Italian [...] is 'inspiration' (it is not exactly the same thing, but they are similar) [...] That phenomenon there [slowing down of singing] we can also interpret it in terms of a difference of inspiration, of *muta*, because it is evident that the poet, even a professional, who realizes that he is in an evening [a poetic contest] when he is not at 100 %, tends to slow down to have a few more time [to think – ...] There are poetic contests in which maybe there is a moment when [*sa muta*] drops, you realize that you are not at that moment up to the level you could have been, but step by step, continuing, slowing down, and trying to change it

Il poeta ha quel che noi chiamiamo sa muta, *che tradotto in italiano [...] è "ispirazione" (non è proprio la stessa cosa, comunque sono simili) [...] Quel fenomeno lì [Ed.: il rallentamento del canto] lo possiamo inquadrare anche in una differenza di ispirazione, di* muta, *perché è evidente che il poeta, anche professionista, che si accorge di essere in una serata in cui non è al 100 %, tende a rallentare per prendersi qualche attimo in più [...] Ci sono delle gare in cui magari c'è un momento in cui* [sa muta] *cala, tuti accorgi che non sei in quel momento all'altezza di quello che potresti fare, però piano piano, continuando, rallentando, e provando a cambiare-*

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is not uncommon for [*sa muta*, the inspiration] to come back [...] The ability to bring it back, even that is something that is acquired over the years, with experience.

filone non è raro che [sa muta, *l'ispirazione] torni [...] L'abilità di farla ritornare, anche quella è una cosa che si acquista negli anni, con l'esperienza*. (Porcu 2022)

Of course, it happens to vary the speed [of singing] according to the inspiration of the day.

Certu capitat de variare sos tempos a sigundu de sa muta de sa die. (Agus 2022, in Sardinian Logudorese)

Dionigi Bitti, also a professional poet, expressed himself in similar terms, underlining how variation in the speed of execution is also linked to the "enthusiasm" of responding to the argument of the competing poet:

The execution speed of an octave does not substantially change, there may be small changes which, in my opinion, depend more on a greater or lesser enthusiasm in responding, rather than on the colleague you are singing with.

La velocità di esecuzione di un'ottava sostanzialmente non cambia, ci possono essere dei piccoli cambiamenti che, secondo me, dipendono più da una maggiore o minore foga nel rispondere, piuttosto che dal collega con il quale si canta. (Bitti 2022)

A widely shared opinion is that the type the *tema* discussed by the improvisers may lead to some variations in the way the *otadas* are presented. A "light" and playful *tema* can be sung in more dynamic and lively *otadas* than a serious and profound one:

find the only form of "adaptation" in the use of voice and tones in [improvising on] particular "contents"; I will give the most frequent example: generally the second *tema* of each contest is dedicated to a "light" theme that lends itself to an interpretation, including mimicry, which also needs to act on the modulation of the voice (tone and rhythm).

L'unica forma di "adattamento" nell'uso della voce e dei toni la ritrovo su "contenuti" particolari; faccio l'esempio più frequente: in genere il secondo tema di ciascuna Gara è dedicato ad un argomento "leggero" che si presta ad una interpretazione anche mimica che necessita di agire anche sulla modulazione della voce (tono e ritmo). (Tedde 2022)

Sometimes there are also influences, this applies to all poets, based on the theme that is sung: many times cheerful themes tend to be sung in a more rhythmic way, serious reflective themes tend to be sung with a different [slower] rhythm.

A volte ci sono anche delle influenze, questo vale per tutti [Ed.: i poeti], in base al tema che si canta: tante volte a temi più allegri si tende a dare più ritmo, a temi più seri, più riflessivi si tende a darne un altro. (Porcu 2022)

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A further factor that can be relevant in determining a variation in the rhythm of the song is linked to the context in which the competition takes place. The response of the public is among them:[17]

Certainly everything depends on the state of mind that reigns inside the poet, that is *sa muta* [poetic inspiration] and, in the same way from the audience… the poet captures every minute mood of the public, sees the number of those present, winks […] and sees appreciation as well as applause, sometimes at the open stage. This greatly influences the evening of the single poet and of the duo or trio on stage.

Certamente tutto dipende dallo stato d'animo che regna dentro il poeta, cioè sa muta *[…] e, nello stesso modo, dal pubblico presente… il poeta coglie ogni minimo umore del pubblico, vede il numero dei presenti, ammiccamenti […] e apprezzamenti nonché applausi, a volte a scena aperta. Questo influenza molto la serata del singolo poeta e della coppia o del trio sul palco.* (Capra 2022)

The idea that there may be a conditioning effect of one poet on another, although not excluded in general terms among the possible factors of influence in the playing style of improvising poets, is substantially rejected by experts and Masala's colleagues:

The theme of the colleague with whom Masala sang is [… that he was] prototypical of Masala himself […] because we can divide poets into different categories. There are poets who adapt themselves a lot to the colleague they sing with. There are also today [poets] who sing in one way while singing with me, sing in another [way] while singing with another poet, similar, yes, but with a different cadence, with a different rhythm, which is influenced by the presence of a colleague who perhaps sings quicker or slower or has a more or less shrill voice that maybe puts a little adrenaline in the singing, I don't know what you want to call it, however something that pushes him to do more in terms of rhythm and things like that. Masala not so much [as regards this point], indeed, many times it seems that when the colleague was slow, he took pleasure in showing this speed difference.

Il discorso del collega con cui cantava Masala è […] prototipico di Masala stesso […] perché noi possiamo dividere i poeti in diverse categorie: ci sono quei poeti che si adattano tanto al collega con cui cantano. Ce ne sono anche oggi che se cantano con me cantano in un modo, se cantano con un altro in un altro: simili, sì, però con una cadenza diversa, con un ritmo diverso, che viene dato dalla presenza di un collega che magari canta più o meno veloce o ha una voce più o meno squillante che magari mette un po' di adrenalina nel canto, non so come la vuoi chiamare, comunque che lo spinge a fare di più a livello di ritmo e di cose del genere. Masala non più di tanto questo, anzi, sembra che tante volte quando il collega fosse lento, lui ci prendesse gusto a fare vedere questa differenza di velocità. (Porcu 2022)

17 The importance of the role of the public in the Sardinian traditional music and its performances has been outlined in Macchiarella 2011 and Lutzu and Manconi 2004.

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Personally I consider the poet Mario Masala a fundamentally stable poet over the course of his long and honored career. There is no evidence […] of any "adaptation" either to the way of singing or to the tone of the voice, or rather in *su traju*, in the modulation of the voice, of high or low tones, at the start and the end of the octave. All this remains stable in Masala since the first poetic contests […] Masala really demonstrates that it does not suffer from any subjection nor to undergo any influence, not only from the great Sotgiu, but even from other colleagues.

Personalmente ritengo il poeta Mario Masala un poeta fondamentalmente stabile nel corso della sua lunga e onorata carriera. Non si rileva […] alcun "adattamento" sia al modo di cantare sia al tono della voce, o meglio in su traju, *nella modulazione della voce, dei toni alti o bassi, in attacco o in chiusura dell'ottava. Tutto questo rimane stabile in Masala fin dalle prime gare […] Masala dimostra davvero di non soffrire di alcuna sudditanza né tantomeno di subire alcuna influenza, non solo del grande Sotgiu, ma nemmeno di altri colleghi.* (Capra 2022)

3.2 Exegesis (an attempt)

With regard to the rhythmic aspects examined in the limited corpus of this study, we can observe an independence in Mario Masala's singing style in relation to the way of singing the *otada* during the "interaction" with the four poets (Mura, Mureddu, Sotgiu, and Zizi) with whom he performs. The poet "dialogues" on a conceptual level, but does not implement strategies or show an unconscious sensitivity to the context, which is sometimes observed in verbal conversations.

Masala's "independence" can be interpreted based on factors of different types and nature. It can be related to the typical agonistic character of improvised poetry and oral cultures in general: in improvised poetry, the dialogue does not have as its purpose (at least on the surface) the consolidation of the relationships between the poets who speak, but the affirmation (normally, but not always, discreet) of a superiority over the competing poet.

A different interpretation of the poet's independence from context may involve the complexity of the cognitive operations underlying the improvised creation and performance of the *otada*, which require a highly structured process and the use of standard procedures at the performance level, the relative stability of the musical form which obeys an internal logic and is only marginally sensitive to external conditioning, or even the rigidity of the poetic performance seen as a form of "rite" with slight margins of change of the standard forms.

These factors can explain an inhomogeneity between speech and poetic dialogues. At the same time, however, other factors of a different nature (ranging from idiosyncrasy to physiology) may also be invoked and investigated in order to interpret the results of the present analysis and, in a wider perspective, to clarify what differentiates the two forms of dialogue (speech conversation and poetic contest) from one another.

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Lauge Dideriksen

Non-Geometrical rhythm in European traditional music

Conceptualisation, Transcription, and Notation

Abstract

In singing traditions, it is common for the text to take priority over strict musical time, warping the subdivision-grid that lies at the foundation of our Western understanding of rhythm. As most, if not all, playing traditions exist alongside a singing tradition, this 'bending the grid' is assimilated into instrumental styles through shared repertoire, osmosis, or both—becoming an integral stylistic feature. Thus, one of the major remaining problems in notating music from field recordings is finding a medium that not only represents the spectral content, but also contains essential musical information like meter, without over-saturating the transcription.

With the rise of digital accessibility, it can be argued that the function of transcription has changed. It no longer has to describe a music that the reader cannot hear, but can instead illustrate elements not readily audible in a recording.

Taking a cue from Richard Barrett's description of notation as the "spatialisation of time", and drawing on the work of composer Aaron Cassidy, this article presents a method that combines conventional transcription, spatial notation, and the possibilities offered by spectral analysis. Representing the duration of a note spatially, it allows the notated rhythms to describe the material's placement within the strong and weak beats of the meter. This hybrid phonetic/phonemic transcription facilitates a precise but easily comprehensible notation and visualization of the non-geometrical rhythms in European traditional music.

1. *Introduction*

Transcribe: from Latin transcribere *"to copy, write again in another place, write over, transfer. To do poorly—to* transcribble."
Etymonline.com

"Transcription" means different things to different people in different contexts. Etymologically, "to transcribe" means to *write-across*. In other words, to transfer material from one medium to another. In Western classical music, it generally refers to arranging a work for a different instrumentation

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than that for which it was originally written (Stockmann 1979). These transcriptions range from distributing notes across an aggregate of instruments to realising the concept of the work—whatever the transcriber perceives that to be—to the fullest extent possible in a new instrumentation. Jazz musicians, on the other hand, transcribe solos as a way to expand their playing vocabulary. In this case, transcribing refers to committing music to paper, but an accurate description of the original is rarely the final goal. Instead, the notation helps the musician accurately imitate the original, before finally integrating parts into their own vocabulary.

In ethnomusicology, perhaps more so than any other discipline, transcription has been debated for a long time (see, e.g., Marian-Bălașa 2005; Nettl 2015). An ethnomusicological transcription represents the transcriber's understanding of a culture, at least in part. This brings with it a series of potential ethical issues, especially the colonial implications that some see in representing an indigenous music in the Western notational system (e.g., Killick 2013, 75–83). As important as these questions are, they are a topic for another time.

This article is about rhythm. It is about rhythm in traditional music, specifically, non-geometrical rhythm in European traditional dance music. These rhythms pose a number of challenges, both for transcription and notation, and also for conceptualisation and understanding. Although the examples herein are from Austria and central Poland, the methodologies described are applicable to any music with a concept of *meter*.

While working on this research, the question I have been asked the most—by a long shot—has been about the term "non-geometrical". Why it is not, for instance, "non-arithmetic", "imaginary", or, as one person suggested, "unreal" rhythm? As much as I would enjoy writing about "unreal rhythm", and while a term like "non-rational" or "irrational" might be mathematically more exact, the term "non-geometrical rhythm" is a reference to the work of American composer and conductor Aaron Cassidy. Since 2015, much of Cassidy's work revolves around the notation of music that is metrical, but where a subdivision does not imply a fractional division of the beat; it refers to a time-domain that is divided not by straight lines, but by curves (Cassidy 2015).

In *A Thousand Plateaus*, Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari extrapolate Boulez's notion that "smooth space-time one occupies without counting, whereas in a striated space-time one counts in order to occupy" (1989, 477). They further divide striated spaces into two subcategories. If the striation is constant and unchanging (even, periodic divisions of a bar, such as even $^3/_4$, $^4/_4$, $^7/_8$, etc.), it is a "straight striated space". In "curved striated spaces" the underlying principle behind the division—the "module"—may be either regularly variable (a focalised curved striated space) or irregular (an unfocalised curved striated space). In these terms, this paper are concerned with the transcription and notation of curved striations of time, as they appear in metrically conceived traditional musics.

After reviewing the relevant literature and theory, I will present a method for spatialising otherwise conventional notation to simultaneously display the phonetic and phonemic aspects of rhythm. This basic idea will then be applied to the transcription of various archival recordings.

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2. *The metric dichotomy*

As a sweeping generalisation, any ethnomusicological transcription will fall into one of two categories: *phonetic* or *phonemic*. If it represents the spectral content of a source—a *phonetic* transcription, we would talk about measurable parameters like pitch, duration, and amplitude. Conversely, a transcription can be a notated interpretation of a source, attempting to reveal the structure that may have been behind the sounding result. This is a *phonemic* transcription, and it would make more sense to talk about melody instead of pitch, rhythm instead of durations, and dynamics instead of amplitude (Nettl 2015, Ch. 6). As with any categorical definitions it is debatable whether truly phonetic or phonemic transcriptions exist. Nonetheless, they are useful concepts for describing the intended subject of a transcription: the music, the performance, or even the *musicking* (Small 1998).

While a phonetic transcription may give an exact account of the spectral content of a source, it can be difficult to read. Conversely, a phonemic transcription may be easier to read, but unless the reader is already familiar with the stylistic idiosyncrasies, they might not understand it.

Until very recently, phonetic transcriptions played an essential role in ethnomusicology. Before recordings could be made readily available, digitally or on CD, any example included in an article had to be written out in a way that would give the reader an adequate idea of the sonic material being discussed, without requiring them to be intimately familiar with the style (Marian-Bălașa 2005). Nowadays, "sending a recording" no longer involves shipping a roll of magnetic tape with the post, yet the discipline of transcription does not seem to have noticed. This realisation offers and requires a rethinking of both the role and the function of transcriptions. If the notation no longer has to communicate a complete sonogram, it could instead be used to illuminate aspects of the music that are not readily audible to a cultural outsider. Any attempt to do so will likely require a reevaluation of the way each relevant musical parameter is represented visually.

With very few exceptions, detailed rhythmic notation sacrifices one half of the metric dichotomy—duration/weight—for the exactitude of the other. Most "contemporary" music written after 1950 illustrates this trend. Here, time signatures have been reduced to signifying a number of subdivisions, grouped in a certain way—two beats of three subdivisions followed by three beats of four subdivisions, etc. (Gould 2011, 149). What is missing, is the elusive quality of musical "weight", which is so integral to the concept of meter. A Viennese waltz is not a Viennese waltz because it is notated in three. And not because the third beat is shorter than the first, and the second much longer than either. Leaving out the durations would be no better, but without the heavy one, lighter two, and a third beat that is only slightly heavier than the second, it might as well be in five, in seven, or in eleven.[1]

1 Both in Austria and in Sweden, ethnomusicologists have resorted to compound time signatures like $\frac{3+5+4}{16}$ in an attempt to solve this issue (Derschmidt 2022; Misgeld et al. 2019). In many cases this is a workable solution, but just as often it exchanges one issue for another: what if the second "beat" is divided into four equal notes? Is the polyrhythm 4:5 a better representation of the music?

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The dichotomy of duration and weight is likely as old as notation itself, but especially the past 60 or 70 years have seen several attempts at resolving the metric dichotomy in the context of ethnomusicological transcription. One such solution is found in *About Asymmetrical Beat in the Polska*, where Sven Ahlbäk approximates beat durations in 16th notes (2003, e.g. 176). He then notates the measured duration of each beat as a percentage of the bar-duration below the stave. While these percentage-values are clear for the purposes of comparative analysis, it is not immediately obvious to a reader what they "sound" like.

Dealing with similar issues of readability, Béla Bartók used a two-stave system in his transcriptions of Serbo-Croatian folk songs (Bartók and Lord 1951, e.g. 184). It consists of a simplified phonemic transcription on the bottom stave, and a more detailed phonetic transcription on the top stave. In addition to being easily understood, these transcriptions clearly illustrate how complex-sounding rhythms can result from the stylistic realisation of very simple material. What the system lacks, is a way of notating beats and measures of different length without resorting to a myriad of tempo changes.

Polish ethnomusicologists have long used a simple graphic representation of unevenness within a bar (Sobiesca and Sobiesca 1973). While this notation is both simple and highly effective, it is neither exact nor very flexible. Specifically, it assumes that there is only one "longest" best—as is the case in *oberek*.

Barbara Konrad uses time-space notation in an attempt to untangle the rubato part of Waldschnepfentertzett's recording *Alt-Wiener-Tänze II* (Konrad 2005/2, 122–123). This is related to the methodology described below, but regrettably the time-space notation is not part of her final transcription.

It is not only ethnomusicologists who struggle to represent metrical rhythm. Along with microtonality (e.g., Sabat and von Schweinitz 2004) and phonemically conceptualised material (e.g., Orning 2015[2]), composers since the 1960s have developed a multitude of pragmatic notational strategies for various rhythmical complexities (see, for instance, the work of Andrew Greenwald, Timothy McCormac, and Aaron Cassidy, but also Karlheinz Stockhausen's 1965 *Klavierstuck VI*). Until quite recently, and in spite of Doris Stockmann's warning against continuously reinventing the notational wheel (1979, 205), most if not all of these developments seem to have gone unnoticed by the ethnomusicological community. Furthermore, many of the notational devices introduced by European ethnomusicologists unnecessarily contradict the norms of western staff notation as it is accepted in the world of engraving and publishing (compare e.g. Lubej, Fritz, and Deutsch 1992 or Sobieska 1964 to Gould 2011 or Stone 1980). Nevertheless, there is a growing number of publications applying tools and methods from contemporary music to issues in ethnomusicology (e.g., Ferlaino 2020; Scaldaferri 2017). Little of this effort, however, has been put towards accurate notations of metrical rhythm.

2 Although "prescriptive notation" in the context of contemporary music refers to a notation that dictates a musicians movements rather than the resulting sound, Orning does not make a distinction in whether the material is phonetically or phonemically conceived.

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3. "*Luft von anderen Planeten*"[3]

My own attempts to create a hybrid between phonetic and phonemic notation began as I tried to play Viennese music. While I was working on the rubato part of *Maß-Wein-Tanz* (Original Wiener Schrammel-Quartett "Lenz" 1910), I also experimented with different notation. I found that, even though I could play along to the recording, I could not make sense of the rubato. Perhaps because of my background as a composer, my first instinct was to start coming up with different ways of notating the passage. My first attempt was to make a phonetically exact notation of the rhythms (Fig. 2, line 1). While that proved a useful starting point for further exploration, the transcription itself was almost Ferneyhoughian[4] and any notion of metrical weight was gone. The second attempt, which eventually resulted in this paper, was based on Richard Barrett's description of notation as the "spatialisation of time"[5] and the connection to my transcriptive work came from Aaron Cassidy's inaugural lecture as a professor at the University of Huddersfield (Cassidy 2015).

In his lecture, Cassidy presents a conceptualisation of rhythm based on curves, instead of straight lines—what he calls *Non-Geometrical Rhythm*. He expresses these ideas in parametrically notated scores where rhythm is interdependent with several idiomatic parameters. Although the resulting notation is very far from an ethnomusicological transcription, it enables the autonomous description of weight and duration. Each bar consists of a number of beats as denoted by the numeral below each "tempo" stave, and any number of musical events can subdivide a beat. Even so, neither the duration of a bar, nor the duration of a beat is decided by the number of beats or subdivisions they contain. Instead, the horizontal lines on the "tempo" stave prescribe the tempo of the bar and the length it occupies on the page likewise reflects its duration.

Perhaps more relevant to the present subject, Cassidy shows his transcription of the improviser Peter Evans (Cassidy 2015, 14). This is a music which is conceived with little regard for the traditional understanding of rhythm but is nonetheless unquestionably rhythmical. Although contemporary improvised music may seem far from a fiddle tradition from central Poland, not only are they both largely aural traditions, but to transcribe either requires ways to notate their rhythm—and preferably do so on the music's own premises. Very often, this means a rhythmical notation in which "[w]hile meter is present—and indeed is pivotal—it has been untethered from steady stable notions of pulse or beat [...]. Each 'beat' has a speed and duration unique to its contents" (Cassidy 2016, 4).

3 "Air from other planets".

4 Brian Ferneyhough (b. 1943) is a British composer and a central figure in the so-called "New Complexity" paradigm in contemporary classical music.

5 I had the good fortune to study with Richard Barrett at the *Koninklijk Conservatorium Den Haag* in The Hague, NL, which is where he introduced me to this idea. Since then, Barrett has published a book on his compositional approach, *Music of Possibility* (2019).

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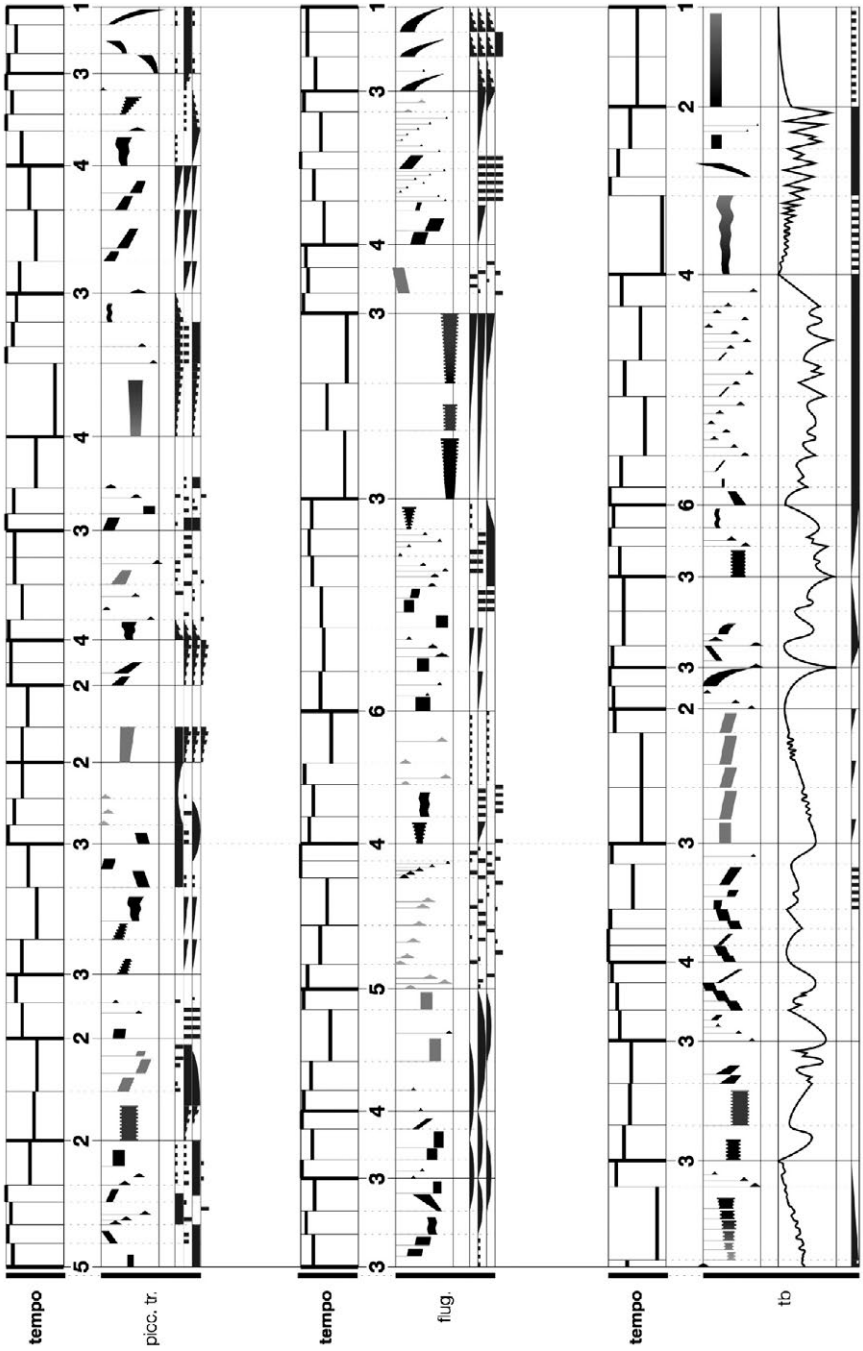

Fig. 1 A page from the score to Aaron Cassidy's piece *The Wreck of Former Boundaries* (2016). Although reproduced in greyscale, colour is an integral element in Cassidy's notation. Used with permission from the composer.

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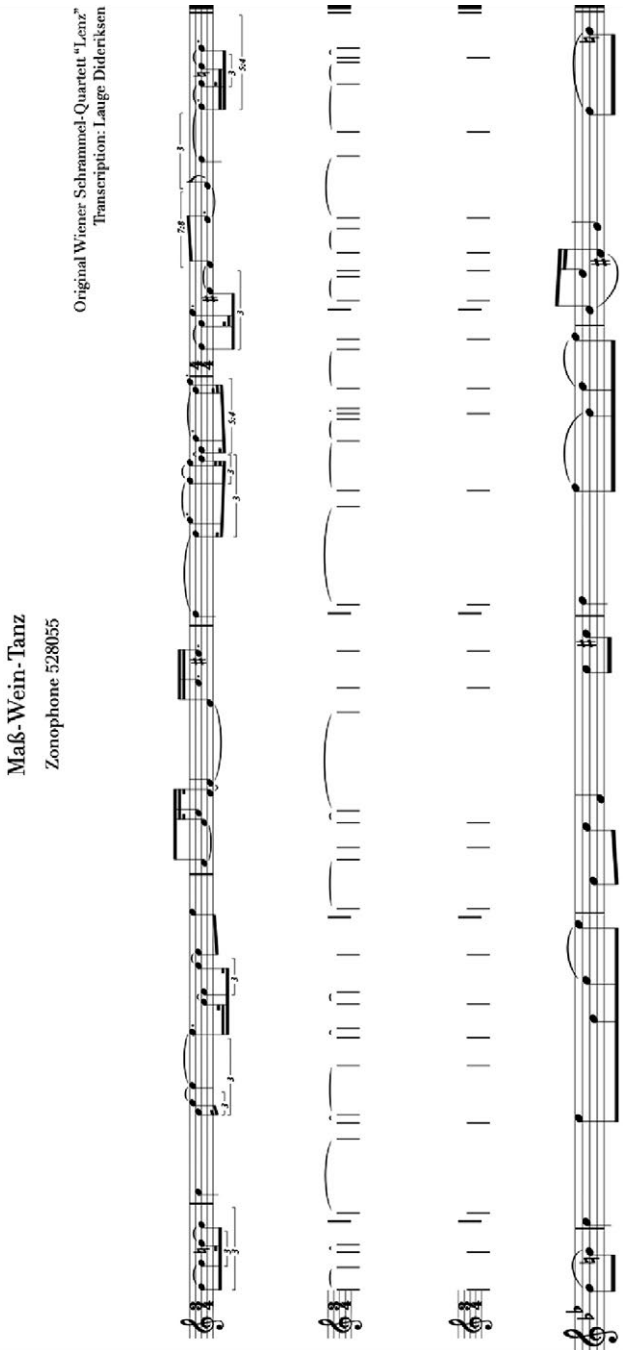

Fig. 2 Original Wiener Schrammel-Quartett "Lenz" (1910), *Maß-Wein-Tanz*, 38–248. Transformation of a phonetic transcription to a hybrid phonetic-phonemic transcription through spatialisation.

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The score to *The Wreck of Former Boundaries* is a beautiful and efficient solution to the metric dichotomy in Cassidy's work. While it does not provide a good solution to the issue raised in the present article, Cassidy's notation made me reconsider how I had approached the problem up to that point.

Removing all beams, noteheads, and metre-indications from my phonetic transcription of *Maß-Wein-Tanz* mentioned above (Fig. 2, line 1), leaves a graphic representation of the temporal distribution of events within each measure (line 2). In this example, the tied notes are superfluous and can be removed, which leaves only the attacks[6] (line 3). Reintroducing the phonemic metre and beaming (in this case adopted from Konrad's transcription), produces a transcription in which the duration of a note is represented spatially, while keeping the metrical structure intact (line 4).

When I came up with this notation method in January of 2020, I was not aware of anything similar. I have since found two examples. Michalis Cholevas uses a similar form of beamed, spatial notation in his transcriptions of "free-rhythm taksim improvisations" (e.g. Cholevas and Abramovay 2018). However, due to the nature of the music he transcribes, Cholevas' transcriptions do not include a notion of global metre. Instead, he uses beaming to represent localised metrical cells. The second example is from the work of Austrian ethnomusicologist Franz Födermayer. He arrives at a similar form of spatialised metrical notation as above by aligning notes with a sonogram, but does not develop it any further (Födermayer 1990, 229–233).

4. Methodology: four approaches to spatialised notation in ethnomusicological transcription

In the above example, notation is spatialised in a process that goes from phonetic to phonemic. In practice, approaching spatialisation as a process of synthesising a phonemic transcription with empirical measurements provides a much more flexible framework. In the following section I will first describe four ways of dealing with the empirical measurements. I will then discuss how various idiomatic factors might influence the phonemic aspects of transcription as discussed in the present article. In the remaining sections, I will apply the methods discussed to musical examples from Upper Austria, Vienna, and central Poland.

The four approaches can be divided into two categories: fully spatialised transcriptions (1) and "vignettes" (2). There are two forms of fully spatialised transcriptions, distinguished by how they treat time on a macro-scale. In the first type (1a) the conversion from time to length remains the

6 In conventional engraving, it is good practice to not space notes corresponding to their duration. Instead, the proportions are relative to each other, and each duration takes up only marginally more space than the next-shortest (Gould 2011, 39). In this case I, deviated from this rule and spaced the phonetic transcription mathematically.

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same throughout, e.g. 2cm per second. The second type (1b) maps the same structural section to the same space on the page, e.g., an A-part a single stave.

Likewise, there are two types of vignettes. In its most basic form (2a) a vignette shows the average placement of each subdivision within the relevant structural unit. In many cases, however, it is relevant to show the offset between different voices (2b)—e.g. a jazz saxophonist that is consistently "late" compared to the drummer. It is also worth noting that although the "relevant structural unit" is often a single measure, it does not have to be (see, e.g., Fig. 14, below).

4.1 Fully spatialised transcriptions

Despite their differences, both forms of fully spatialised transcription are realised in the same four steps:

1. Generating material: phonetically transcribing the source, and measuring the onset-time for each relevant "event"[7]
2. Map the onset values from time-measurements to points on the page
3. Move the notational representation of each event to the point that corresponds with the onset-measurement.
4. Manually adjust barlines, dynamics, etc., to reflect standard notational conventions as well as possible.

The difference between 1a and 1b is in how the onset values are converted from duration to length.

4.1.1 Absolute duration

Method 1a spatialises notation relative to the absolute duration of the source. In its simplest form, the full duration of the transcription is divided by the full stave-length, and the resulting number is used as the conversion factor for each onset value. In reality, most transcriptions span multiple lines of music, making the arithmetic a little more involved (see below).

The resulting transcription provides a very clear illustration of the musical pace. Fast passages appear dense on the page, while slower iterations of the same material are more spaced out. Although I have found little use for this form of spatialisation in my personal work, I could imagine how it would prove useful for the notation of musics that rely heavily on gradual tempo-changes.

Although this form of spatialisation is conceptually straight-forward, it presents a number of downsides. By prioritising differences in pace, this method is less suited to comparative analysis

7 I choose to use the word "event" to encompass any point relevant to the spatialisation. This can include the onset of notes, rests, dynamic gestures, ornaments, and so on.

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of multiple iterations of the same material. This is where method 1b shines. The biggest challenge is the layout, and method 1a often results in notation that is not primarily laid out to reflect the musical structure, but instead to cause the least spill-over from one stave to the next.

In practice, the spatial placement of notes is calculated separately for each line of written music. The spatial position of a given note, n, is given by

$$n = \left((t_n - t_0) \frac{l_{system}}{d_{max}} \right) + pos_{n[0]}$$

where $l_{system} = pos_{final.barline} - pos_{n[0]}$ and d_{max} is the duration of the longest (in time) stave of music and $t_{n[fin+1]}$ is the cutoff of the final note on the stave. $t_{n[fin+1]}$ is represented in the notation by the placement of the final barline of the stave.

4.1.2 Relative durations

In contrast to method 1a, method 1b prioritises internal rhythm and tempo to more global changes in tempo. It does so by mapping each iteration of the same musical material to the same length. Not only does this make the work of engraving the transcription much simpler, it also provides a very clear tool for comparing several performances of the same musical material. For method 1b, the spatial placement of notes is calculated separately for each line of written music. The spatial position of a given note, n, is given by

$$n = ((t_n - t_0) \frac{l_{system}}{d}) + pos_{n[0]}$$

where $l_{system} = pos_{final.barline} - pos_{n[0]}$ and the duration, $d = t_{n[fin+1]} - t_0$. $t_{n[fin+1]}$ can be either the end of the final note of the system, or the onset of the first note of the next system, depending on context.

4.2. Vignettes

As will be clear from the descriptions above, creating fully spatialised transcriptions can be very labour-intensive. Nonetheless, it provides a method for notating and visualising certain kinds of music—especially slower rubato styles—that might otherwise not be notated so accurately and simply. In many other cases, especially in music that is regularly uneven, the vignette notation described below is just as good, if not better.

In an article on microtonal intonation in fiddle music from Central France published by the Centre Régional des Musiques Traditionnelles en Limousin (CRMTL), Jean-Marc Delaunay

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provides a kind of prescriptive key to transcriptions based more on the positions of the fingers on the fingerboard than on absolute pitch (Delaunay 2022). More precisely, the deviation of those positions from the conventional sharp-natural-flat. In this system, each finger can occupy one of five positions within its "territory" on the fingerboard, from "b–" to "#+". In the same way, the average deviation of each beat and/or subdivision from an even distribution within a given metre can be notated graphically and function as a reader's key.

While the spatialisation of the vignette itself is a lot less time-consuming than spatialising a whole transcription, the process of calculating the average position of each subdivision becomes a process of analysis in itself.

4.2.1 Simple vignette

The simplest form of a vignette depicts the average distribution of subdivisions within a bar. The position of each subdivision in the vignette is given by

$$n = ((t_{sd} - t_0)\frac{l_{system}}{d_{sd}}) + pos_{n[0]}$$

where t_{sd} is the average position of a subdivision *sd* in the sample, and $l_{system}=_{posfinal.barline}\text{-}pos_{n[o]}$, and where the duration, $d=t_{n[fin+1]}\text{-}t_o$. $t_{n[fin+1]}$ can be either the end of the final note of the system, or the onset of the first note of the next system, depending on context.

4.2.2 Vignette with offset

In multipart music, it can be relevant for the vignette to also reflect the offset between parts. This can be done by altering the formula for method 2a

$$n = ((t_{sd} - (t_0 + o))\frac{l_{system}}{d_{sd} - o}) + pos_{n[0]} + o$$

to where *o* is the offset-constant, calculated as the average difference between of the part in question, and t_o of the reference part. The choice of reference part can be a practical consideration, and the reference is the part that on average begins before the rest. In other cases, for instance if the difference is not extreme, it can also be a part which has a rhythmically decisive role.

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4.3. Idiomatic considerations for phonemic transcription

The four methods described above all have the same goal: to manipulate an existing phonemic structure to better reflect the phonetic reality of its source. The goal at the outset of this paper was to devise strategies for rhythmical notation that reflect a phonetic result, but also the phonemic intention behind that result. In order to do that, especially in metrically ambiguous cases, it is essential to answer the question of why a music treats rhythm the way it does—or perhaps even the ontological question of what rhythm *is* within that idiom.[8] Although that question sounds dangerously close to "what is music", it proves a starting point to better understand how a specific tradition understands musical time.

That text and music are interdependent in vocal music is nothing new. Depending on tradition, rhythm may take precedence over pronunciation, or vice versa. In traditions of mixed vocal and instrumental music, the influence of text often extends beyond singing to the instrumental styles and, indeed, often to instrumental styles surrounding a singing tradition (see Fig. 5 and the related discussion below). Likewise, instruments and instrumental technique affect rhythmical performance through physical and/or technical idioms. Similar to text in singing traditions, *instrument-idiomatic rhythm* often influences the surrounding performance practices.

The Danish musicologist Henning Refsgaard postulates that, while the technical aspects of bowing lend themselves to a short-long quaver pattern, brass instruments lend themselves better to a long-short pattern (Refsgaard 1962, 59–60, as referenced in Bæk 1995). In his subsequent analysis of three Danish fiddlers' playing styles, Refsgaard cites this as a possible explanation for Evald Thomsen's tendency to play quavers differently than fiddlers like Anders Peter Andersen or Kristian Trads, who played both cornet and fiddle their entire lives. While it is difficult to prove or disprove Refsgaard's claim in regards to the playing of Thomsen, Andersen, and Trads, it is indisputable that instrumental mechanics have an influence on stylistic idioms and their development (e.g., Baily 2008; Patteson 2016, 8).

To better understand a style, I find it helpful to divide idiomatic traits into two categories: internally motivated and externally motivated. As the name suggests, internally motivated idiomatic traits are motivated by things "internal" to the performer/instrument/material aggregate, regardless of the performance situation. Examples include instrument-idiomatic rhythm, textual stress, or even a musician's physical impairments. A concrete example could be how Django Reinhardt's harmonic style was shaped by the burn-injuries on his left hand.

8 The terms "rhythm" and "meter" are both incredibly blurry, and necessarily so. Any attempt at specifying such general terms would lead to the inevitable exclusion of some musics in favour of others. As such, there have been several working definitions employed by (ethno)musicologists in different fields. An overview of the major schools on the subject within Western ethnomusicology until the 1990's, the majority of which are still influential today, can be found in Elschek (1990, 21–30).

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Externally motivated idiomatic traits on the other hand, are caused by the social or cultural function of a music, its current context, and its history. That includes the internal idiom of other participants in the socio-musical situation, past or present. Here, the example could be how Django's injuries have shaped the harmonic language of Gypsy jazz as a whole. That being said—and like phonetic and phonemic transcriptions—these concepts do not exist as absolutes in reality. There are parts of both in any musical situation.

As an illustration of how these concepts can be applied to phonemic transcription, the following section will look at two examples from central Poland. Both recordings feature the same fiddler, Józef Zaraś, playing the same *oberek*, in two very different contexts, with very different results.

5. *Oberek, Pt. 1 and Grajże mi Józiniu*

In 2020, the Polish National Radio published a collection of archival recordings featuring the fiddler Józef Zaraś. In addition to being a valuable document of one of the fiddlers who have had great influence on the 1990s revival movement in Poland (Dahlig 2020), the publication includes multiple performances of the same tunes, making it a rich source for stylistic analysis. The following analysis focuses on the first and second tracks. On the first, *Grajże mi Józiniu*, Zaraś plays an oberek with singer Franciszka Zaraś, and drummer Stanisław Budzisz, while on the second, *Oberek, Pt. 1*, Zaraś plays the same *oberek* alone.

Transcribing Polish dance music, especially from the Radom region, requires a somewhat unusual way of listening. On their own, the melodies may seem like they are in 2/4, possibly with a number of triplets. Emically, however, *oberek* is always counted in three, though the beats are not necessarily the same duration (e.g. Sobiescy and Sobiescy 1973).[9] Exactly how the beats are unequal varies from village to village and from fiddler to fiddler. On these two recordings, the first and third beats are shorter, while the second beat is longer.

On *Grajże mi Józiniu*, Budzisz plays a very clear "2–3" on the cymbal of his baraban. On the skin, he plays different patterns, but almost always marks the first beat. From here, it is possible to extrapolate the fiddle part (Fig. 3). Even considering the timing (see Fig. 4[10]), Zaraś' phrasing strongly suggests a 3/4 metre.

9 One reviewer suggested transcribing both *Grajże mi Józiniu* and *Oberek, Pt. 1* in 4/4. I have decided to stick with 3/4, as it better reflects the emic understanding of the music.

10 All transcriptions included in the present article were originally made to act as "interpreters" between the source recording and a cultural outsider. In that context, parameters such as tempo are obvious from the recording and were therefore omitted from the notation.

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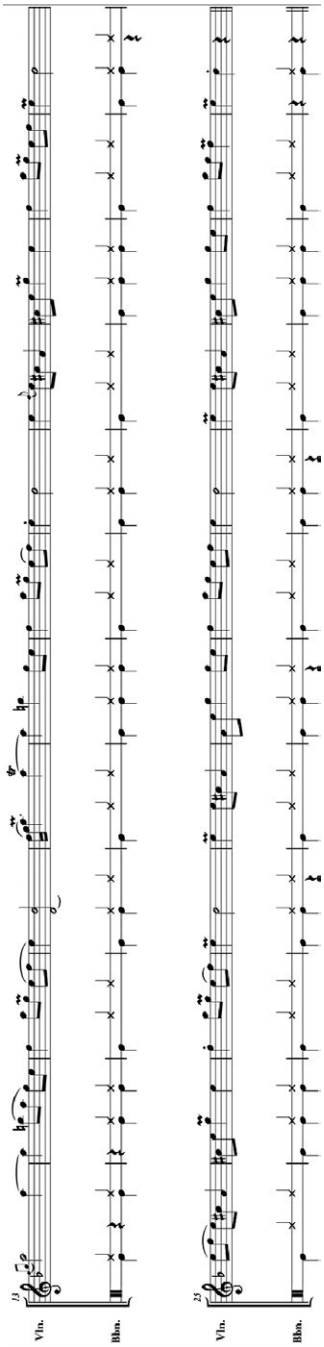

Fig. 3 phonemic transcription of *Grajże mi Józiniu* (Zaraś, Zaraś, and Budzisz 1968), 00:10–00:19.

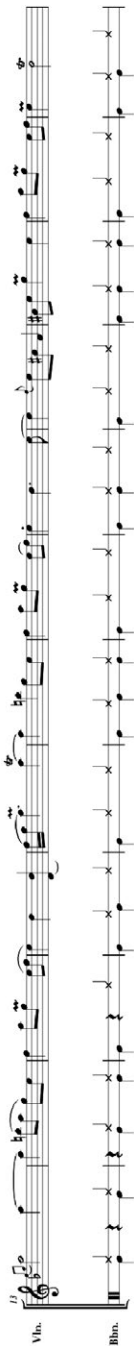

Fig. 4 Spatialised transcription (method 1b) of *Grajże mi Józiniu* (Zaraś, Zaraś, and Budzisz 1968), 00:10–00:15.

Fig. 5 Spatialised transcription (method 1b) of *Grajże mi Józiniu* (Zaraś, Zaraś, and Budzisz 1968), 00:00–00:10.

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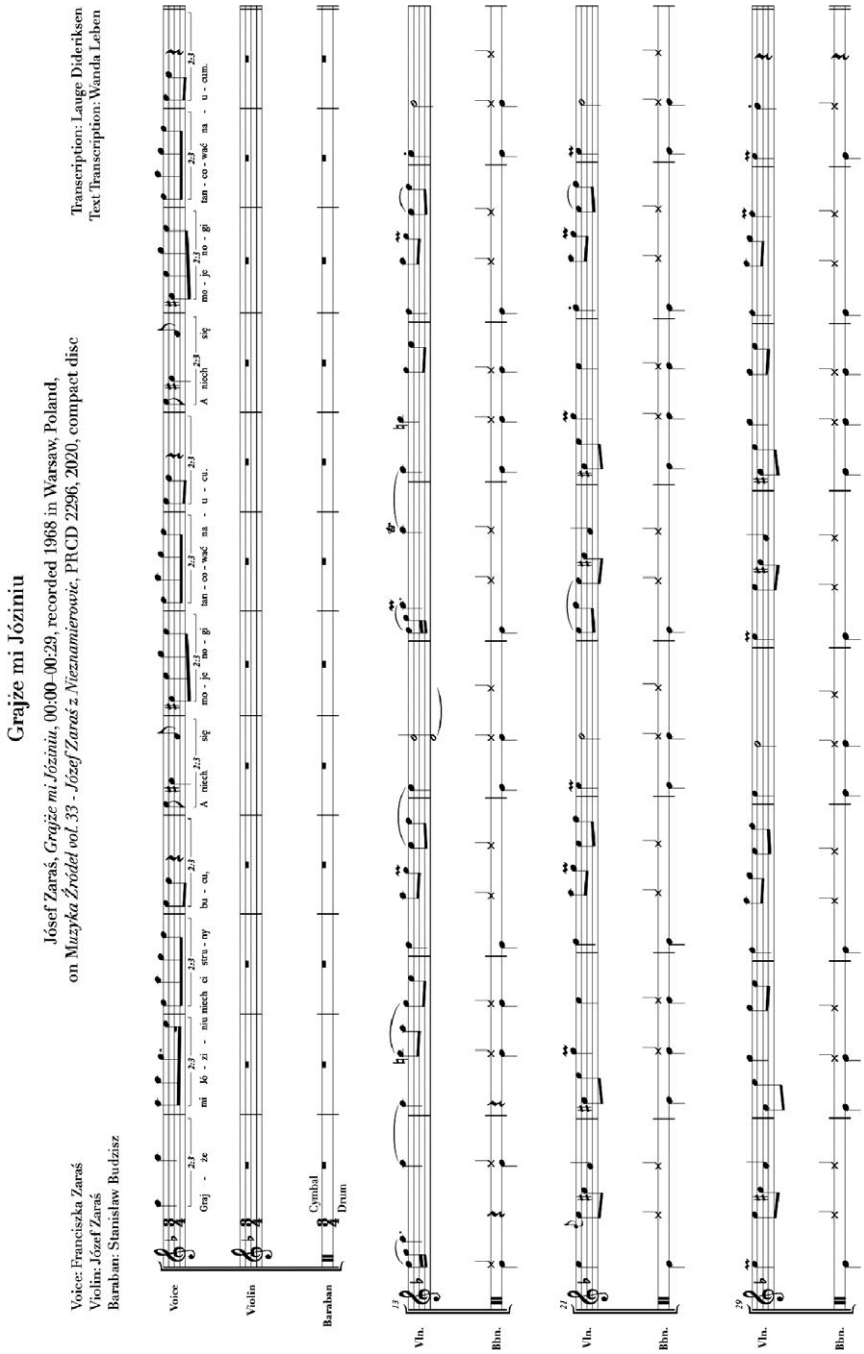

Fig. 6 *Grajże mi Józiniu*. 00:00–00:29. Transcription: Lauge Dideriksen. Text transcription: Wanda Leben.

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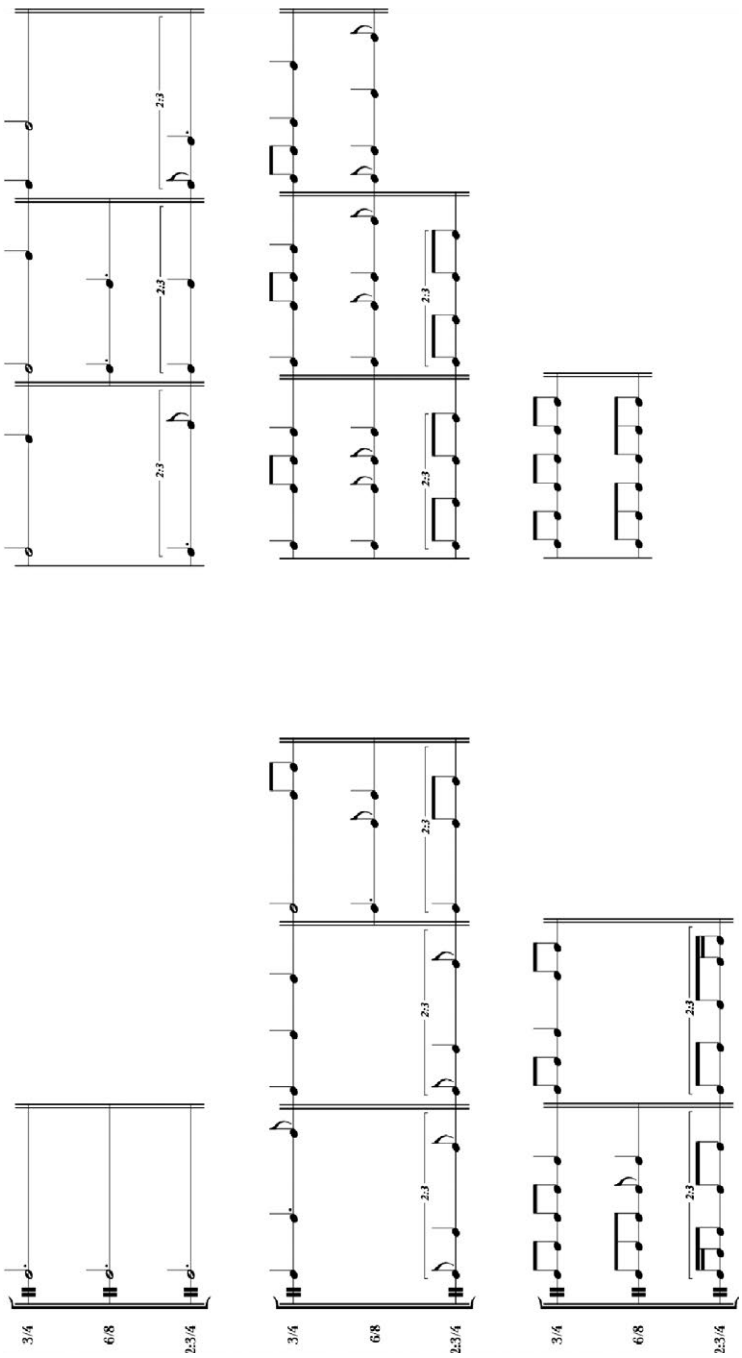

Fig. 7 Rhythmic patterns in *Oberek, Pt. 1*, quantised to three possible "grids"—3/4, 6/8, and 2/3.

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Nevertheless, there is a good argument to be made for notating at least part of *Oberek, Pt. 1* in 2/4 or, better yet, as two in the time of three.[11] In addition to being notationally convenient and easy for a cultural outsider to understand, it reflects the connection to how the Polish traditionally sing *przyśpiewki*. These stanzas usually have four syllables per measure, and are by many singers performed as four notes of more-or-less equal duration (Fig. 5).

This presents a dilemma for a phonemic transcription. Is the melody conceptualised in three, much like the oberek-steps and the drum pattern, or rather in two, like the text? At this point, it is hopefully obvious that questions of this nature cannot be avoided by simply coming up with a new notational technique. Indeed, no amount of fancy notation will ever remove the element of interpretation, nor the transcriber themselves from the practice of transcription. With that in mind, why not turn the issue on its head and find a way to clearly and transparently communicate the phonemic interpretation in the notation?

On *Grajże mi Józiniu*, the most logical option is to notate the voice in terms of the text, and the fiddle with the drum. In addition to making phonemic "sense", the parts are significantly different in their rhythmical treatment of the melody, and they are strictly separated in the arrangement (Fig. 6). Depending on the goal of the transcription, however, one might choose to notate sung melody and violin in the same metrical plane.

Oberek, Pt. 1 is more ambiguous. Compared to to *Grajże mi Józiniu*, Zaraś plays a much "cleaner" version of the melody. He plays fewer ornaments and the beat is more clearly marked in the rhythm. This "cleaner" version of the melody turns out to be a blessing as well as a curse. While nothing obscures what Zaraś is playing, there is no other instrument to compare his playing to when it is unclear. And exactly that, becomes the challenge when transcribing this particular recording. Where on the first recording Zaraś can rely on a melody that has already been presented by the singer, and on a baraban keeping time for the dancers, he has to do all of that by himself in the second.

The rhythmical patterns that appear on *Oberek, Pt. 1* can be notated in two, sometimes three, metres (Fig. 7). In its written form, it is obvious what sets each of these patterns apart from the others. In many performances of Western music—traditional or not—it would not be hard to decipher either. But in a case like this, where the beats and subdivisions are uneven, and where the metrical weight often changes between repetitions, those distinctions start to blur. In some cases, one could look at the relative amplitude of notes to determine what is "accented" and what is not, but Zaraś's use of expressive dynamics renders what is already an unreliable approach useless at best. To compound the issue, the transcriber almost certainly has some sort of conscious or unconscious confirmation bias. Absolute subjectivism on the other hand, is not a viable alternative.

11 The convention in Polish ethnomusicology is to notate these rhythms as 4:3. I use 2:3 instead, as it better reflects the trochaic metre prevalent in both *przyśpiewki* and violin phrasing.

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Zaraś, Jósef: Oberek, Pt. 1, bar 21–40

		Notes			Bars		
		uneven 8ths	2:3	even 8ths	uneven 8ths	2:3	even 8ths
b.21	1-2	28,73 %	3,26 %	-	21,69 %	6,52 %	-
	3.	14,65 %	9,78 %	-			
b. 22	1	8,06 %	10,20 %	32,65 %	19,54 %	15,99 %	25,26 %
	1&	11,00 %	11,56 %	32,65 %			
	2.	52,86 %	31,97 %	1,02 %			
	3.	6,22 %	10,20 %	34,69 %			
b. 23	1	7,56 %	10,62 %	32,97 %	8,34 %	28,39 %	20,33 %
	1&	4,37 %	23,81 %	14,29 %			
	2-3	21,39 %	56,78 %	17,58 %			
	3&	0,06 %	22,34 %	16,48 %			
b. 24	1.	11,64 %	9,63 %	-	26,54 %	6,42 %	-
	2-3	41,43 %	3,21 %	-			
b. 25	1-3	1,26 %	33,33 %	-	2,52 %	20,70 %	-
	gn	3,79 %	8,06 %	-			
b. 26	1.	5,31 %	7,71 %	19,22 %	18,04 %	12,43 %	19,72 %
	2	16,58 %	0,65 %	50,97 %			
	2&	31,89 %	14,52 %	3,83 %			
	3.	18,38 %	26,84 %	4,87 %			
b. 27	1.	6,56 %	4,44 %	28,33 %	4,87 %	12,12 %	26,37 %
	2	0,38 %	13,99 %	29,01 %			
	2&	10,93 %	24,23 %	6,83 %			
	3.	1,62 %	5,80 %	41,30 %			
b. 28	1.	9,04 %	11,52 %	-	13,30 %	6,07 %	-
	2-3	4,56 %	4,83 %	-			
	3&	26,31 %	1,86 %	-			
b. 29	1	10,56 %	48,65 %	11,49 %	21,26 %	32,43 %	38,63 %
	1&	27,07 %	16,22 %	12,84 %			
	2	9,22 %	21,62 %	17,57 %			
	2&	16,74 %	6,76 %	30,07 %			
	3.	0,20 %	4,05 %	43,92 %			
b. 30	1	3,05 %	19,43 %	39,58 %	9,73 %	20,71 %	55,36 %
	1&	1,12 %	19,43 %	20,85 %			
	2.	8,20 %	13,07 %	69,61 %			
	3	1,77 %	49,82 %	12,37 %			
	3&	34,51 %	1,77 %	23,67 %			
b. 31	1	12,31 %	27,13 %	9,31 %	28,72 %	13,56 %	22,87 %
	1&	36,42 %	5,54 %	20,84 %			
	2.	36,01 %	20,46 %	9,65 %			
	3.	30,15 %	1,13 %	51,69 %			
b. 32	1.	7,30 %	9,75 %	-	8,18 %	16,79 %	-
	2-3	4,99 %	4,69 %	-			
	3&	4,07 %	19,13 %	-			
b. 33	1	6,27 %	55,78 %	16,83 %	26,21 %	37,29 %	18,81 %
	1&	25,44 %	18,81 %	10,89 %			
	2	8,56 %	6,27 %	40,59 %			
	2&	36,35 %	28,71 %	6,93 %			
	3.	2,02 %	2,31 %	26,73 %			
b. 34	1.	2,23 %	0,00 %	25,00 %	6,80 %	10,42 %	13,28 %
	2	18,56 %	29,69 %	5,47 %			
	2&	17,19 %	31,25 %	1,56 %			
	3.	2,80 %	1,56 %	47,66 %			
b. 35	1.	2,19 %	15,09 %	36,31 %	11,25 %	25,77 %	23,82 %
	2	5,84 %	24,98 %	12,53 %			
	2-3	23,03 %	51,54 %	13,66 %			
	3&	13,93 %	11,48 %	32,79 %			
b. 36	1.	5,24 %	3,08 %	-	21,84 %	2,05 %	-
	2-3	38,44 %	1,03 %	-			
b. 37	1-2	3,88 %	9,35 %	9,35 %	6,81 %	9,35 %	30,46 %
	2&	2,36 %	9,35 %	64,03 %			
	3.	14,20 %	9,35 %	17,99 %			
b. 38	1	1,76 %	18,37 %	38,78 %	5,31 %	10,12 %	28,16 %
	1&	16,80 %	6,94 %	39,59 %			
	2.	0,59 %	22,45 %	8,16 %			
	3.	7,42 %	2,86 %	54,29 %			
b. 39	1	2,97 %	0,76 %	25,57 %	8,98 %	22,52 %	16,98 %
	1&	6,28 %	19,08 %	21,37 %			
	2.	22,96 %	45,04 %	8,78 %			
	3.	3,72 %	25,19 %	12,21 %			
b. 40	1.	28,94 %	31,87 %	-	25,71 %	21,25 %	-
	2-3	22,47 %	10,62 %	-			
				Average:	7,39 %	16,54 %	30,91 %

Fig. 8 deviation of actual duration from theoretical values. The smallest deviation is marked in grey.

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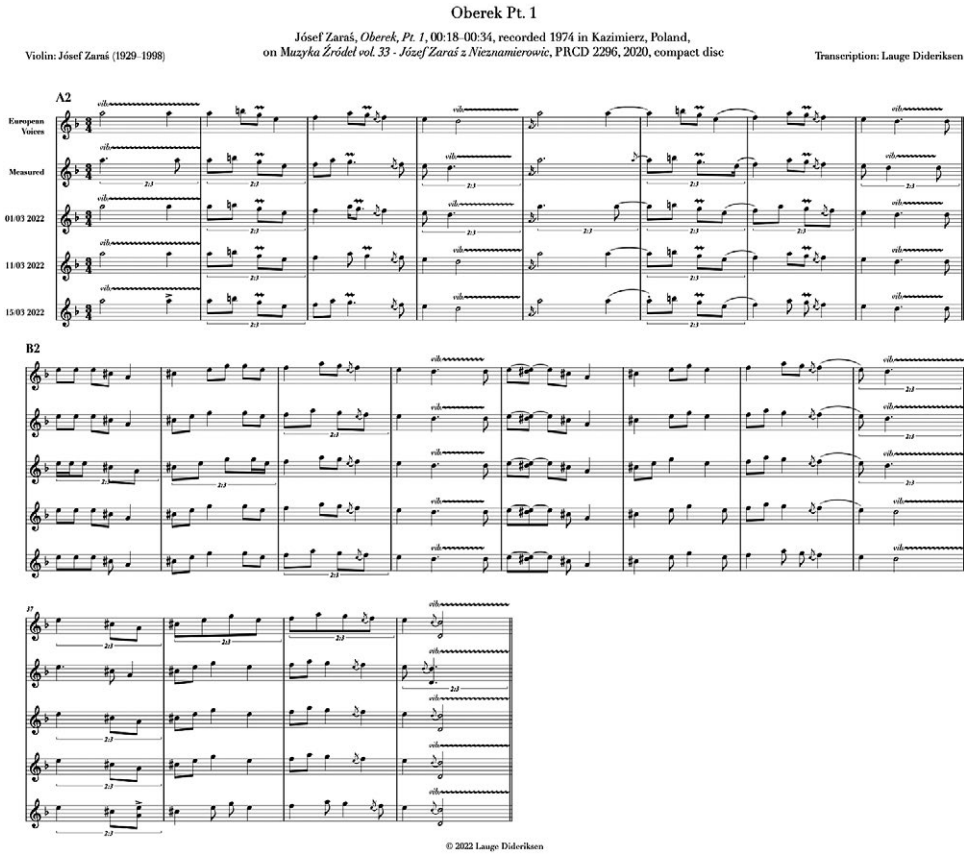

Fig. 9 transcriptions of the same passage across multiple days. The top stave was the version presented at European Voices VI in Vienna on 30 September 2021. The second stave is an approximation of the measured durations, using the three grids shown in Fig. 7.

I decided to approach the transcription from diametrically opposed directions.[12] Ignoring everything apart from the measured durations, I first compared the duration of each note to its theoretical equivalent at a resolution of either un-even quavers, even quavers, or even quavers in 2:3 (Fig. 8).

12 The following analysis is focused on the second time Zaraś plays the tune for two reasons: 1) from the recordings I have had access to, it seems like Zaraś—like many musicians—takes some time to get "in the zone". The first time through a tune usually includes a few slips and mistakes—at least judging from the dissatisfied grunts and groans that follow; 2) towards the end of a tune, there is usually greater variation in tempo, but less in rhythm and ornamentation, likely as a result of the musicians' attempt to coordinate an ending.

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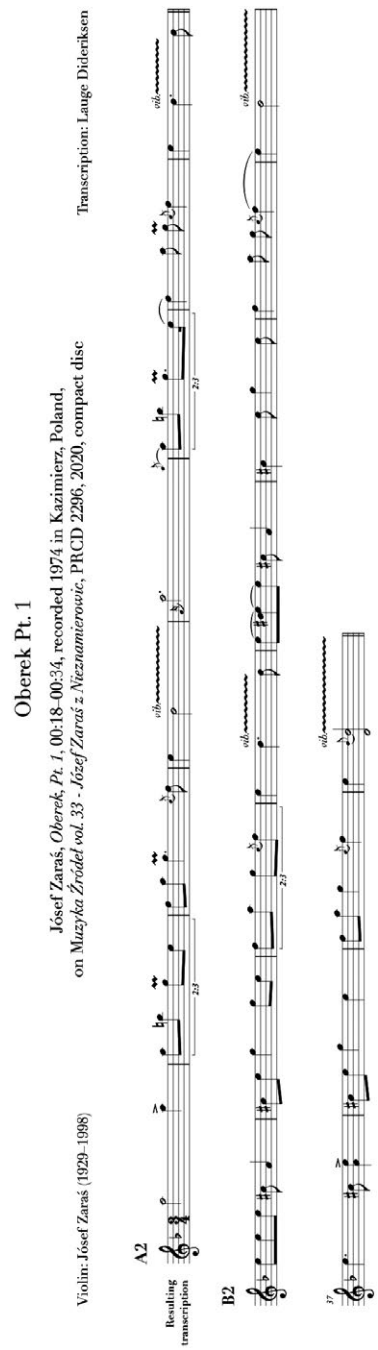

Fig. 10 Non-spatialised transcription of *Oberek, Pt. 1*, 00:18–00:34.

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While the majority of isolated notes and entire measures alike falls undeniably into one metre or another, that is not always the case.

In an attempt to focus on the weight-part of the metre, I ran a completely unscientific experiment: every couple of days for a week, I made several "metrical transcriptions", writing down what I heard as strong and weak beats. The results were all similar, but never the same. By overlaying the measured durations with my interpretations of metrical weight, resulted in the transcription seen in Figure 10.

Looking at the result inevitably raises the question: does this transcription reflect what Zaraś intended when he recorded it? Probably not. I am not sure if he was thinking in these terms at all. But maybe he was imagining *przyśpiewki* or fragments of *przyśpiewki*. Or maybe he imagined one or more dance couples and played for these imaginary dancers—I know I often do. In the end we will never know. Still, I think there is value in this kind of interpretative transcription work. It creates a language for talking about a music, and for communicating how we understand it. And if that is not the point, then what is?

6. Alt-Wiener-Tänze II

A similar approach can allow us to better understand the extremely slow rubato style of Viennese *Schrammelmusik*. In terms of notational complexity, the transcription of *Maß-Wein-Tanz* above (Fig. 1), is relatively simple: a single part, no bowing, and very little articulation. The performance itself is also relatively "straight" rhythmically, compared to other examples of *Schrammelmusik*. This raises the question of how this form of spatialised notation would deal with greater levels of complexity, including multiple parts, written-out ornamentation, and more extreme rubato.[13] With that in mind, it is hard to find a better "worst-case-scenario" than Waldschnepfentertzett's *Alt-Wiener-Tänze II* (ca. 1912). Of all the recordings included in Barbara Konrad's thesis on *Weana Tanz* (Konrad 2005a) this is easily the most rhythmically complex. Indeed, Konrad dedicates several

13 Although a meter is per definition a striation, rubato styles—especially the likes of which are found in Schrammel music, some types of Jodel, etc.—clearly illustrate Boulez's notion that a striated space tends to meld with a strongly directed smooth space, one in which the distribution, although without a module, is not an equal statistical distribution (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 478). As such, it would be logical to argue that these types of metrical rubato are striated spaces, although perhaps in disguise: "In striated space, lines or trajectories tend to be subordinated to points: one goes from one point to another. In the smooth, it is the opposite: the points are subordinated to the trajectory. […] There are stops and trajectories in both the smooth and the striated. But in smooth space, the stop follows from the trajectory" (*ibid.*). However, as seems to almost always be the case when dealing with the chaos of human experience, the only possible answer is: it depends, "[…] the two spaces in fact exist only in mixture: smooth space is constantly being translated, transversed into a striated space; striated space is constantly being reversed, returned to a smooth space" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 474).

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pages to describing her transcriptive process (Konrad 2005b, 121–124). Uncharacteristically for her thesis, however, Konrad's final transcription of the slow section is very unidiomatic—seven bars long and changing meter twice (Konrad 2005b, 26[14]).

The phonemic part of the following transcription was made in collaboration with the Austrian fiddler and researcher Hermann Fritz. In the process, we spent the better part of two days in Waldviertel untangling the rubato to extract what could be the source melody. To verify our result, we ran the melody through the enormous ABC database kept by musician and researcher Simon Wascher. Here, we found several examples of essentially the same melody (see comparison, Fig. 11). Apart from two examples in Konrad's collection (Waldschnepfentertzett 1912; Zither-Quartett Rupp-Krause N. N.), the melody appears in three nineteenth-century manuscripts under different names: *Schwarmer Tanz* (Hs.42481, 3), *Solo Tanz* (Schrammel 1888), and *Steirische und Landler* (StVLA Mappe 183.7, I/74). According to a footnote in the *Corpus Musicae Austriacae* (Deutsch and Weber 2010b), the name *Schwomma* seems to have come from Josef Weidinger who published an arrangement for two clarinets and kontragitarre (Deutsch and Weber 2010b, 364–366), based on Schrammel's version of the melody.

Comparing these historical examples to Fritz's and my transcription,[15] the accordion seems to play the melody. Walther Deutsch and Ernst Weber, however, hypothesise that Johann Schrammel's version of the melody is a diminution of the Austrian Almlied *Geh is her über d' schneid* (2010/1, 366). If that is the case, then the violin part would be based on what used to be the melody, which starts on the third. There are several ways in which that seems unlikely. First, Schrammel's version, as well as Weidinger's arrangement of it, both start the melody on the root note, and only introduce the upper voice in the B-part. Second, there are significant harmonic and melodic differences between the slow part of *Alt-Wiener-Tänze II* and *Geh is her über d' schneid*, especially in bars four and seven. Third, the highest note in *Alt-Wiener-Tänze II* occurs at the beginning of bar three, while in *Geh is her über d' schneid*, it is at the beginning of bar two. As Deutsch and Weber do not give any further explanation for their hypothesis, nor any intermediate steps, it is difficult to say how they arrived at their conclusion.

Furthermore, there is a good argument to be made that it is not the accordionist, but instead the violinist—or perhaps even the violin—that shapes the ensemble-rubato in this section. On the recording, the violin is louder than both the accordion and the kontragitarre. Although it is difficult to say if that is intentional or not, the accordion becomes the most prominent voice in

14 There are no page numbers in Konrad's collection of transcriptions, instead she numbers the transcriptions. *Alt-Wiener-Tänze II* is transcription number 26. Counting from page 1 of transcription 1, *Alt-Wiener-Tänze II* is on page 50.

15 One reviewer suggested rebarring the transcription to better "make sense of the harmony and harmonic rhythm". Although I agree that the present metre seems unusual at first, it corresponds to the majority of variants found in manuscripts, as illustrated in Figure 11. Additionally, Hermann Fritz was able to show me several examples of similar meter from various Alpine repertoires.

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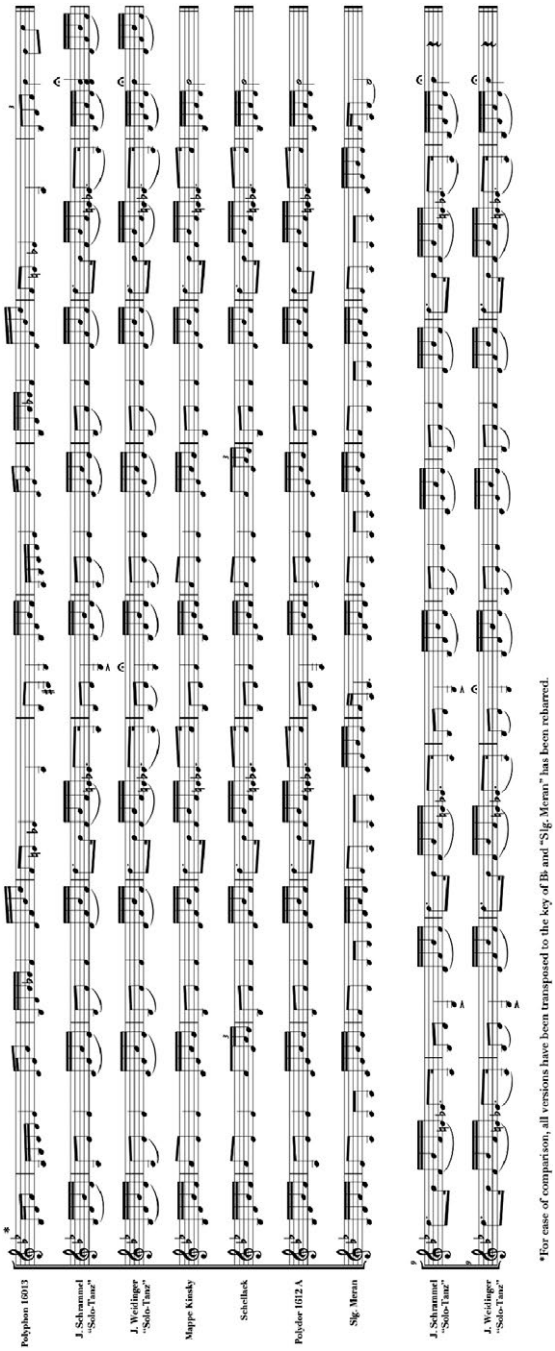

Fig. 11 Comparison of written and recorded sources of the melody played on Polyphon 16013.

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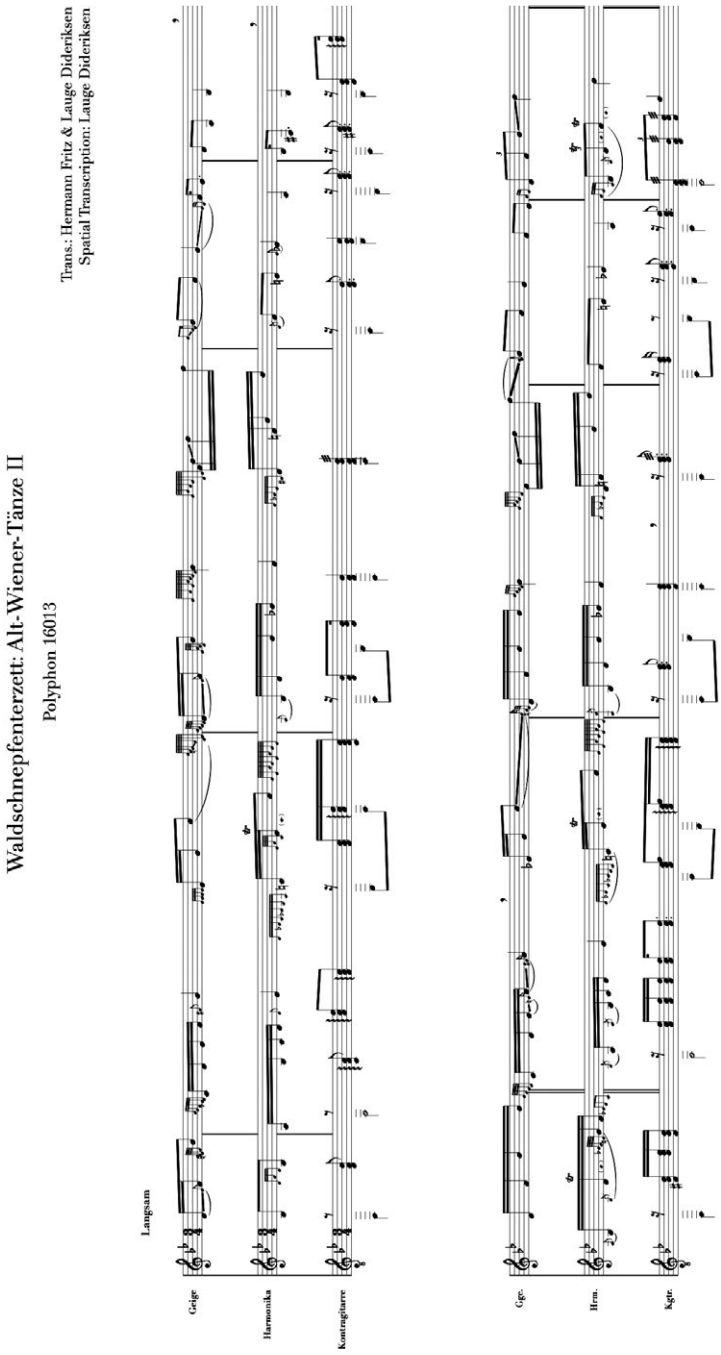

Fig. 12 Spatialised transcription (method 1b) of Waldschnepfenterzett 1912. Phonemic transcription: Hermann Fritz and Lauge Dideriksen, spatialisation: Lauge Dideriksen.

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the subsequent sections. Further evidence can be found in the timing between the instruments. On the majority of not-grace notes, the violinist is slightly earlier than the other two. In places where the violinist is not earlier, it often sounds as if whoever enters first is anticipating the beat.

If it is the violinist who leads the rubato, it makes sense to look at what might influence their phrasing. It is clear that while the grace note-flurries fit into the harmony, they are first and foremost shaped by what is comfortable on the violin in terms of fingering, bowing, and position changes. Similarly, the glissandi rarely span more than a third—first to third position and back. Where that is not far enough to reach the desired destination note, one or two grace notes are added to bridge the remaining gap. Interestingly, most glissandi either begin on a weak beat, or happen completely within a weak beat. This has the effect of giving notes that would otherwise be passing notes or placed on weak beats a lot of length and weight. The result is a playing style that elaborates and celebrates the position changes, instead of hiding them like a dirty secret.

7. *Vignette notation in* Steirer *and* Innviertler Landler

As discussed above, the process of creating spatialised vignettes (method 2a and 2b) often overlaps with the process of analysis itself. Indeed, as one begins to analyse metre statistically, it is almost inevitable that underlying patterns emerge. A vignette is one way to represent and compare those patterns.

7.1 *Sepp Stadlmann:* Steirer

In the case of a *Steirer* played by Josef 'Sepp' Stadlmann and recorded by Ludwig Wiener and Hermann Fritz in 1986, the metrical patterns appear closely connected to the form of the tune (Fig. 13; Stadlmann 1984, 11:40–13:12). This points to a conscious formal awareness on the part of the musician, it also suggests that the different metrical distributions might have, in fact, been intentional.

On the recording, Stadlmann plays with his daughter Sieglinde Stadlmann on double bass. Josef Stadlmann's foot is very audible on the recording—always marking "one" and "three"—and provides a natural reference point for everything else.[16] Even on the first hearing, it is obvious

16 In speaking to other dance fiddlers, there seems to be a consensus that how and when a fiddler taps their foot while playing, has a profound impact of the interaction between musicians and dancers. In some styles, the foot functions similarly to the drum in the central Polish tradition: tapping the foot helps the fiddler keep time, thus allowing them greater rhythmical freedom. At the same time, the sound of the sole hitting the stage becomes a reference point, in relation to which the fiddler can create rhythmical tension by "leaning" back or forward. It can, however, be a two-edged sword; especially in music with subtle phrasing, the dancers quickly start "dancing to the foot", instead of the fiddle.

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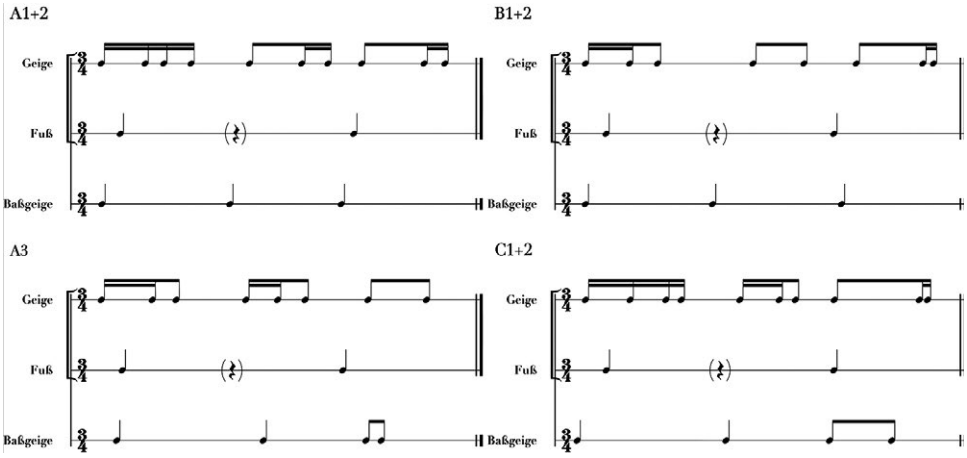

Fig. 13 Vignette notation with offset (method 2b) for each structural section of Stadlmann 1986, 11:40–13:12.

that any attempt to generalise the metrical properties of the recording as a whole, would entirely misrepresent the music. Not only is the metrical distribution completely different from section to section, so is the relative timing between fiddle, foot, and bass.

Treating the foot as the reference point, a clear tendency is for the fiddle to be very early, and to play the first beat, specifically the second quaver of the first beat, very long. It is harder to say anything general about the bass. With Josef Stadlmann's foot keeping time, it seems as if Sieglinde Stadlmann's role is to place the metrical weight. Although she tends towards a certain timing within each section, the margin within which she plays is much greater than that of the fiddle or the foot and she rarely places the weight in the same place twice. An additional factor is her articulation. Instead of a clear attack, most notes begin with a mini-crescendo, at the apex of which Sieglinde Stadlmann removes the bow from the string and lets it ring. In this case, the placement of the double bass notes have as far as possible been measured at that apex, and not at the first sound.[17]

17 The phenomenological question "where is the beat", however integral to any discussion of metre, timing, and musical weight, is outside the scope of this article. Like any question of its kind, it must necessarily be dependent on the material at hand, as well as on the working definition of metre within which it is being discussed. It is not merely a question of what notes in a measure fall on strong or weak "time", but more so of whether that note begins as soon as a sound is produced—at whatever threshold—or when the note receives its ictus. That ictus, although often created through amplitude or articulation, is just as often a result of the (expected) metrical weight. I intuit that rather than this being a case of the chicken and the egg, it is a case where the use of one or more parameters to establish a metrical

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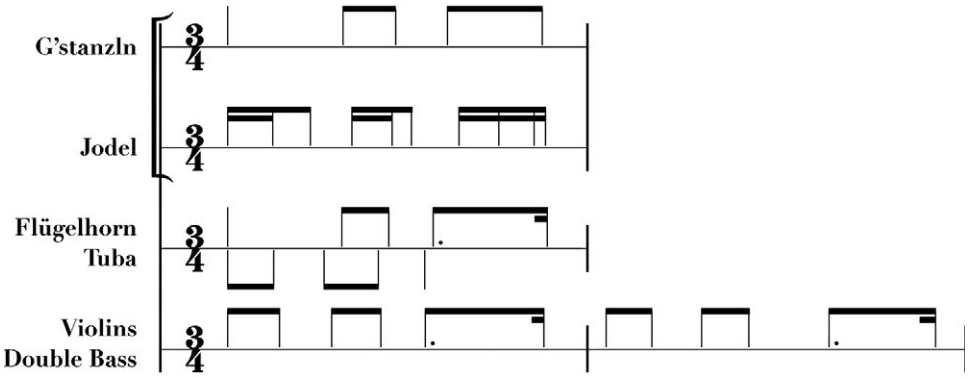

Fig. 14 Vignette notation with offset (method 2b) for Solinger Bauernkapelle (1949), 00:57–01:40.

This example reveals one possible issue with vignette notation: how they treat subdivisions. On this recording, there is no instance of Josef Stadlmann playing every subdivision in a single measure. That leads to the two last semiquavers of A1 and A2, not representing the distance between those two semiquavers, but instead signify the time between the first semiquaver of the third beat and whichever one of the two is performed. While that proves to be inconsequential in this transcription, it foreshadows the next issue.

7.2 Solinger Bauernkapelle: Innviertler Landler 2. Teil

The Austrian *Innviertler Landler* is often characterised by way of the "Innviertler rhythm"—a 3/4 meter where each beat is progressively longer than the previous. This in itself would make Innviertler Landler a good candidate for the use of vignette notation to illustrate the uneven metre. However, while that metrical distribution is present in the Innviertler style, it is only part of it. In a 1949 recording of the *Solinger Bauernkapelle*, for instance, the "Innviertler rhythm" only makes up half of a two-measure violin pattern (Solinger Bauernkapelle, "Innviertler Lander 2. Teil", 1949). That being said, it is the flugelhorns that present the greater challenge for the use of vignette notation.

At a first glance, there seems to be little logic to whether the flugelhorns play the first or the second beat shorter. According to Volker Derschmidt, the preference of one metrical pattern over another is dependent on whether or not the second beat is subdivided (Derschmidt in conversation with the author, 2022). Given his larger sample size (Derschmidt 2022), it is very likely

pattern, either in the particular musical situation or in the musical practice as a whole, allows for the expected metrical pattern to then give individual notes their ictus.

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that Derschmidt's findings are generally correct. On this particular recording, however, there is a much closer correlation between the preference of one or the other metrical pattern and whether the first beat is subdivided or not. If the first beat is subdivided, the third beat is still long, but the second is marginally longer than the first. If not, the first beat is short, the second very short and the third very long.

The sung parts pose a similar problem. The vignette (Fig. 14) depicts the average distribution across the sample and, although it reflects rhythmical tendencies that are somewhat audible in the recording, it would be difficult to draw any conclusions regarding a style. Instead, I expect that the vocal phrasing is largely shaped by *G'stanzl*-texts.

More than anything else perhaps, this transcription illustrates the limitations of vignette notation on its own. For it to be an accurate representation of the music as the performers understand it, would require a deeper analysis of the emic terminology of the performers. As it currently stands, this transcription of *Solinger Bauernkapelle* is little more than an enhanced phonetic transcription.

8. Conclusion

In this paper, I have presented four approaches to transcribing metrically conceptualised music using spatialised notation. All four methods represent empirical, phonetic qualities of a recording within a phonemic and/or emic framework. The advantages and limitations of each method were illustrated in transcriptions of music from Austria and Poland.

Fully spatialised notation can be realised in two ways. Method 1a converts duration to length by a set factor, thereby creating a clear visualisation of musical pace and density. It can, however, cause a number of issues for layout and engraving.

Method 1b, solves these issues by spatialising each structural unit over the same length. In the example of Waldschnepfenterzett's *Alt-Wiener-Tänze II* (Fig. 12), the structural unit is one repetition of the A-part, four bars with an upbeat. By mapping each iteration of the same musical material to the same length on the page, this method prioritises micro-timing over global changes in pace, and the resulting layout makes it excellent for comparative analysis.

The main drawback of fully spatialised notation is the amount of time required to spatialise even short transcriptions. As a result, method 1a and 1b are likely best suited to in-depth analysis of shorter excerpts or recordings.

Methods 2a and 2b, present an alternative to fully spatialised notation in the form of vignettes; both work best for music that is regularly uneven. Vignettes can additionally serve as short-hand for the rhythmical tendencies of a source, or even a style, thereby aiding comparative analysis.

The methodology described above relies on an emic understanding of *meter*. Without this *a priori* understanding of strong and weak beats, there is no framework within which to place the

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empirical observations. Indeed, as illustrated by my vignette for Solinger Bauernkapelle's *Innviertler Landler 2. Teil* (Fig. 14), the correct spatialisation of a questionable phonemic framework merely leads to a more believable misrepresentation of the source.

One of the fundamental challenges of transcription and notation is that an excellent transcription in one context might be useless in another. This form of spatialised notation is good for understanding and communicating how metrical structures are expressed in practice, not for unearthing what those structures are in the first place. Ethnomusicologists are not the first, nor will they be the last, to encounter shortcomings of the western notation system, nonetheless, few solutions from other fields have been adopted or adapted.

One of the first things a blacksmith's apprentice learns is how to forge their own tools—hammers, pliers, drifts, and punches. Is it not time to take the same approach to notation? Is it not time to build the tools we need to inscribe the message into the medium itself, instead of allowing the medium and whatever tools we have inherited to dictate what can be said?

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Susanne Schedtler/Herbert Zotti

On the relationship and mutual impact between the Alpine song and the *Wienerlied*[1]

Abstract

The Alpine song was enormously popular in 19th-century Vienna. On the other hand, there is a considerable number of *Wienerlieder* that display similar stylistic features in their composition. One of these is the phenomenon of yodelling from the Alpine song, which can be found in many *Wienerlieder* collections as so-called *Salonjodler* or *Dudler*. In the praxis of Alpine singing, there is normally one leading musical part and one or more accompanying parts, frequently sung in parallel thirds. The harmonic structure in the Alpine song is very simple, while a particular hallmark of the *Wienerlied* is the great variety of chromatic and harmonic phrases and turns. When *Wienerlieder* are sung, frequent changes of tempo also become apparent; they follow the line of the song's narrative and are intended to keep the audience in suspense. Also noteworthy is the theatrical fermata before the singer fervently bursts into the chorus, which most of the audience generally joins in on. A typical *Wienerlied* is composed in 2/4 or 3/4 metre and is performed, as already mentioned, with inimitable rubato.

The *Wienerlieder* emerged in the first three decades of the 19th century under the influence of different musical forms of expression. The rural impact on the genre was quite strong in terms of both topical and musical parameters. Other sources of *Wienerlieder* were theatre songs from the popular comedian stages, so-called *Küchenlieder* (kitchen songs), ancestors of current hit songs, street ballads and the songs of wandering musicians as well as harpists and hurdy-gurdy players. Finally, the impact of Viennese Classicism and Lied-composers such as Franz Schubert was also obvious.

1 This is the written version of the presentation of this paper at the symposium. The term *Wienerlied* (singular) and *Wienerlieder* (plural) can be translated as "Viennese Song" and "Viennese Songs", respectively. This contribution uses the original form of the term since it is widely used in the English literature as well.

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1. *Wienerlied*

Since 1890 and especially after 1918, Alpine songs became increasingly important within Austrian folk music practices. The Alps occupy about two thirds of the present-day area of Austria and cover the entire western part of the country. The highest mountain in Austria is the Großglockner, which stands at an altitude of 3798 metres on the border between the states of Carinthia, Salzburg and Tyrol. Before 1918, however, the landscape of the greater Austro-Hungarian Empire was much less alpine. A historical map clearly shows that large regions of the empire were relatively flat or had no high mountains. In the 19th century, a large number of folk songs from German-speaking areas such as the Bohemian Forest, Silesia and Transylvania were also popular. However, Austrian folk song collectors such as Franz Friedrich Kohl,[2] Josef Pommer[3] and Konrad Mautner[4] were mainly interested in folk songs from the Alpine landscapes.

Therefore, what we find in song books and what we nowadays call (Austrian) folk songs are mainly Alpine folk songs. The *Wienerlied*, as a sort of urban folk music, is related to Alpine folk music, but the two genres are definitely not identical. Generally speaking, the urban folk song was a low-cost form of entertainment for the lower middle class and workers in the 19th century, when the urban centres were growing very quickly. The population of Vienna, for example, grew from about 250,000 residents in approximately 1800 to more than two million around 1900. The *Wienerlied* is similar to other urban folk songs/singing genres, but only in terms of its functional and social aspects, not its musical characteristics. Elsewhere in Europe, singing traditions such as the *canzone napoletana* in Naples and *fado* in Lisbon emerged at about the same time, as did the "city song" in Tbilisi and, later, *rebetiko* in Greece. These genres served the same purpose as the *Wienerlied*, namely, to entertain the working urban population.

We start referring to *Wienerlied* as a genre from around 1820 onwards. It arose from various sources, as was the case with many other urban song traditions in Europe, and every source and tradition left its own marks in it. Among these influences was the tradition of ballad singers,

2 Franz Friedrich Kohl (1851–1924) was an entomologist and a collector of Austrian folk songs. Among other works, he also published the *Echte Tirolerlieder* collection (Wien 1899).

3 Josef Pommer (1845–1918) was a politician, teacher, folk music collector and editor. In 1904, he was involved in the founding of the Austrian Folk Song Society (*Österreichisches Volksliedunternehmen*), which was renamed the Austrian Folk Song and Music Society (*Österreichisches Volksliedwerk*) in 1946 and still exists today as an umbrella organisation. Pommer also used the term "genuine" folk music ("genuine" according to his definition) to underpin his German-national and antisemitic politics (more in Mochar-Kircher 2004).

4 Konrad Mautner (1880–1924) was the son of a Jewish industrial family and an enthusiastic collector of folk songs. In 1910, he published the *Steyrisches Raspelwerk*, a collection of songs, quatrains and rhymes from the small village of Gößl am Grundlsee in the Styrian part of Salzkammergut, which is still today one of the most popular regions of Austria among visitors to the country, thanks to its traditional architecture, music, costumes and customs.

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wandering musicians and harpists with their so-called *Zeitungslieder*, or "newspaper songs". These musicians sang mainly in a free-rhythm performance style, their language was easy to understand, and the stories in their songs were usually quite long. This is also a feature of the *Wienerlied*, which can have up to 24 lines in one verse. From the classical and Romantic period of art music, the *Wienerlied* got its chromatic structure, which is also well-documented in the development of the typical Viennese instruments: *chromatische Knopfharmonika* (chromatic button accordion) and *Kontragitarre* (two-neck guitar with five or seven fretless bass strings). *Theaterlieder*, or "theatre songs", which were stage songs in old Viennese comedies, gave the *Wienerlied* its sense of humour. From 1900 onwards, modern dance music began to influence the *Wienerlieder* in the form of the foxtrot, shimmy, tango, jazz, one-step and blues—even if the conservative side of the *Wienerlieder*, including composers and some audiences, rejected this music. Many *Wienerlieder* were originally from operettas, became famous as separate songs and were published on song leaflets. As part of this genre's heritage from folk music, we find the 3/4 or 6/8 rhythmic patterns typical of the genres known as the Landler, Deutscher and Allemande.

2. *Nationalsänger, Jodler, Dudler*

Before the Alpine song began to influence the *Wienerlied* around 1850, we have to consider the "Alpinisation" of Austrian folk song, which began much earlier, with the so-called *Tiroler Nationalsänger* (Tyrolean national singer). These singers adopted the custom of many Tyrolean itinerant traders of singing their traditional songs to attract customers at markets, especially abroad. With a certain sense for salesmanship, from 1820 onwards several families from Zillertal—such as the Rainer, Strasser and Leo families—increasingly began mixing their trading business with singing performances, for which they were also paid. For example, the Familie Strasser sold gloves but eventually gave up this trade in favour of musical performances. Thus they became *Nationalsänger* (national singers) performing in Vienna, Prague, Frankfurt, Hamburg, Dresden, Weimar and so on, as well as in Russia, England and even the United States (more in Schneider 1997; Hupfauf 2016). The *Nationalsänger* created a type of Tyrolean song that was no longer genuine, and thus the "à la Tyrolienne" fashion was born. We find early evidence of the importance of Tyrolean singing societies in 1796 in the Viennese comedy *Tyroler Wastl* by Emanuel Schikaneder (cf. Zotti 2007), who was also Mozart's librettist for *The Magic Flute*:

The Tyroleans are funny, the Tyroleans are happy, They drink their little wine and dance in the same manner …	*Die Tiroler san lustig, die Tiroler san froh,* *sie trinken ihr Weinderl und tanzen a so …*
…They yodel and sing and do good, and hop and jump around like chamois…	*…Sie jodeln und singen und tun sich brav um,* *und hüpfen und springen wie die Gemsen herum…*

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Schikaneder's Wastl was, by the way, a rich carpet and glove merchant from Tyrol. In this comedy, he seems to depict the rise of the singing Tyrolean itinerant merchants.

The success of the Tyrolean national singers found imitators. For example, the so-called *Alpensänger* from Styria, Carinthia and Vienna followed in their footsteps and achieved more or less the same success with their own performances. They often dressed in funny "traditional" or even in fantasy costumes (see Zotti 2007, 6).

There were several reasons for the "Alpinisation" of Austria. These included homesickness and a bucolic desire in the wake of urbanisation and industrialisation on the part of Austrian migrants, and tourism, especially summer resorts, from 1840 onwards. With the opening of the first railway routes around 1850,[5] urban residents could more easily reach the so-called *Sommerfrische* (a summer retreat) in rural regions. The exploitation of the Alps became popular, and the establishment of tourism clubs and alpine huts followed (see Köstlin 2022). The *Nationalsänger* fit perfectly in all these settings.

With the *Nationalsänger*, the significance of yodelling became much more important than before. It was inserted between quatrains, which were strung together to form complete songs. These *Jodler* songs were now performed artistically and in multipart form. *Salonjodler* were suitable for the indoor stage and, especially in Vienna, they grew ever longer and more complicated, also in terms of chromatic phrases. Instead of strict metre, they were sung partly in a rubato manner (see Zotti 2007, 6). At some point, *Jodler* in Vienna were also called *Dudler*, with the names *Jodler* and *Dudler* used in the same connotation.

Today, we use the term *Jodler* to refer to the Alpine yodel, while *Dudler* refers to the salon yodel, which often appears in the *Wienerlied*. Special musical features of the Alpine yodel include a diatonic system, major keys, chords on the first, fourth and fifth harmonic degrees of the scale, a cappella performance with one to four (or five) parts without vibrato, in clear defined intervals and with almost no rubato. In contrast, the Viennese *Dudler* needs chromaticism and instrumental accompaniment, uses both major and minor keys, and includes the second and fourth harmonic degrees in addition to the usual chords based on the first, fourth and fifth harmonic degrees. The *Dudler* is sung with a maximum of two parts with much rubato and often a looping of the notes.

3. *Alpine song and Wienerlied*

To understand the relationship between Alpine song and *Wienerlied*, we must pay attention to some Viennese composers who created songs in the rural style, or *Volkston*. This term translates to 'folk tone' but is used in this case to mean 'in the tone of folk music'. The *Volkslieder*, or "folk songs", of Alexander Baumann (1814–1857), a Viennese civil servant, songwriter and zither player, mark

5 The first railway route was the Semmering Railway (*Semmeringeisenbahn*), which has been in use since 1854 and became a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1998 (Häfliger und Dinhobl 2021).

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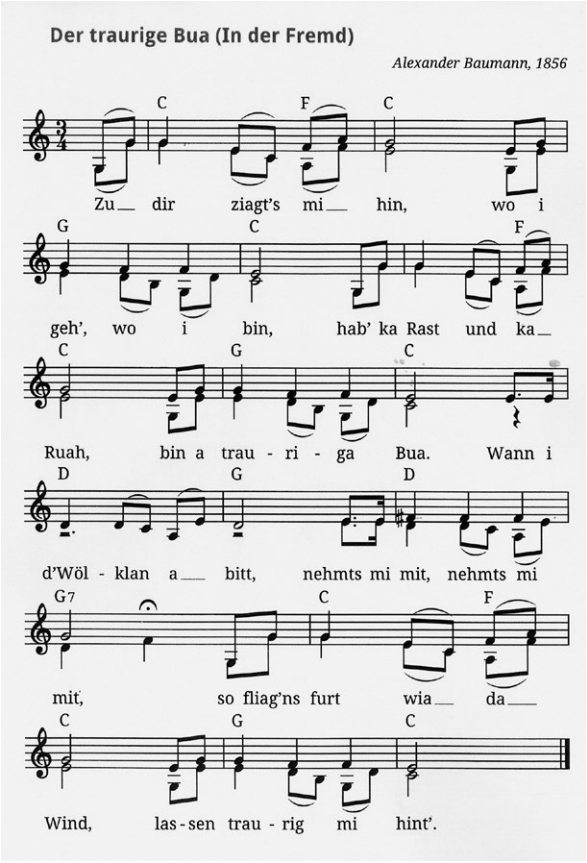

Fig. 1 The music of the song "Der traurige Bua (In der Fremd)" for "The Sad Boy (In the Foreign Land)", (see Zotti 2013, 87).

the beginning of the Alpine *Wienerlied*. Baumann also wrote several *Singspiele* (song-plays), such as the popular play *Das Versprechen hinterm Herd, eine Scene aus den österreichischen Alpen mit Nationalgesängen* (The Promise Behind the Stove, a Scene from the Austrian Alps with National Singers). His songs and verses were passed down as genuine folk poetry, and some of them are still published today as folk songs (Zotti 2009, 8).

For example, there is Baumann's song "Der traurige Bua" (The Sad Boy, 1856; see Zotti 2013, 87), which is often declared a *Kärntnerlied* (Carinthian song) with no known author. Like the *Wienerlied*, the *Kärntnerlied* is a fixed term in Austria. A *Kärtnerlied* means mainly an Austrian folk song, most often with melancholic lyrics, written for four to five musical parts, of which the main part is the tenor.

In the case of "The Sad Boy" (Figure 1), we notice some specifics that would not appear in a typical 8-bar (or 2 × 4 bars) Alpine song. Also, the little bridge in bars 9 to 14 leads to a key change from C major to G major, before returning to the home key.

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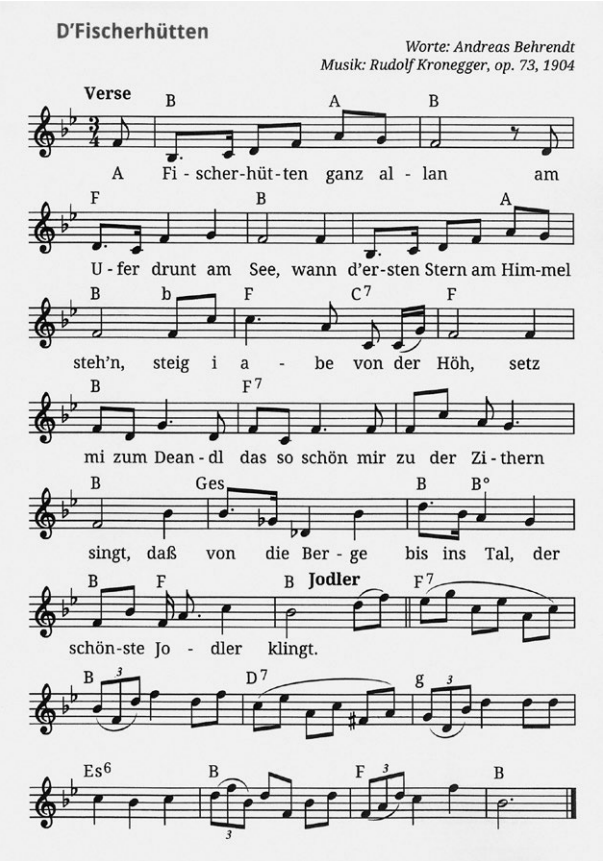

Fig. 2 The music of the song "D'Fischerhütten" (The Fisher Hut, see Zotti 2013, 92).

The next song is "D'Fischerhütten" (The Fisher Hut, see Figure 2) composed by Rudolf Kronegger (1875–1929), one of the most important composers of *Wienerlied* in the period from 1900 to 1925. This song is another example of harmonic richness within the framework of an Alpine *Wienerlied* with the character of a song in a minor key.

Rural *Wienerlieder* are a refuge of love and Alpine eroticism. The dairymaid and the dairyman, the poacher and the hunter play the main roles here—by no means an urban theme. Well-known Viennese *Volkssänger* (folk singers) had these rural songs in their repertoires. On the covers of song leaflets, the singers also liked to present themselves in Alpine costume or—as in the case of the singing wife of *Wienerlied* composer Ludwig Gruber (1874–1964)—even as a *Holzhackerbua*, or "lumberjack boy" (see Figure 3):

Conversely, Alpine songs were often sung more *wienerisch* ("in the Viennese manner") by Viennese interpreters than they were originally notated or handed down. One example is the third verse "Herzig's, schön's Deandl" (Sweet, beautiful girl) of the Alpine song "Übern Tauern tuats

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Fig. 3 The cover for the song "Alpenlieder-Marsch. Heut geh' i nimmer hoam" (Alpine Song-March. I Won't Go Home Today) from 1906.

schauern" (It shivers over the Tauern) from the 19th century, which was conceived as a separate song in Vienna. A recording by the Viennese singers and *Dudler* specialists Heini Griuc (1932–2004) and Trude Mally (1928–2009) shows very nicely how a metrically conceived song is interpreted in Viennese rubato style (see Mally 2008, Track 17).

Rural or Alpine *Wienerlieder* were composed until the 1930s. The shellac record market was huge, and male and female yodellers and *Dudler(innen)* such as Adi Rothmayer, the brothers Fritz and Hans Matauschek, Maly Nagl, Rudi Hermann and Mizzi Stareck sang until old age and had success with their repertoires (Schedtler 2021, 275–276). After the Second World War, the era of the rather stirring Viennese songs began, while rural Viennese songs were hardly composed anymore. The lyrics of these stirring songs focus on the city of Vienna and its attributes, of course including the concept of *das Goldene Wiener Herz*, or the famed "golden Viennese heart" of the city's residents. Songs about the "golden Viennese heart" conjured an ideal world in which the Viennese were unreservedly kind and just. The songs also celebrated heaven as an eternal extension of the

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Heuriger (Viennese wine tavern) lifestyle. But there was certainly also opposition to this trend. For example, the social reporter Max Winter (1870–1937) took a counter position in his social reportages "Das schwarze Wienerherz" (The black Viennese heart, Winter 1982).

Dudling (from *Dudler*), i.e. Viennese yodelling, however, has remained present in *Wienerlied* throughout the 20th century and to this day. From the mid-1980s onwards, *Wienerlied* experienced a renaissance, with especially older singers such as Pepi Matauschek, Leopoldine Debljak, Luise Wagner and Trude Mally enjoying newfound success not only on tavern stages but also on concert stages (more in Schedtler 2021, 282).

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List of audiovisual examples

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Kim Burton

Living Apart, Sounding Together

Bosnian multi-voice singing as a politics of cohesion

AV 01 *Informal singing*
Performers: Duško Petrić and members of hunters' association
Place of the recording: Velika Sočanica, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Date of the recording: 6 December 2015
Recorded by: Kim Burton
Source: Kim Burton private collection
Duration: 25"

AV 02 *Miming to playback*
Performers: Performers and staff
Place of the recording: Studio floor, K3 Television building, Prnjavor, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Date of the recording: 12 December 2015
Recorded by: Kim Burton
Source: Kim Burton private collection
Duration: 15"

AV 03 *Live video and audio mixing*
Performers: Staff of K3 television
Place of the recording: Control room, K3 Television building, Prnjavor, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Date of the recording: 12 December 2015
Recorded by: Kim Burton
Source: Kim Burton private collection
Duration: 5"

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AV 04 *Live performance to paying audience*
Performers: Strbački Zvuci
Place of the recording: Športsko-kulturna dvorana, Derventa, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Date of the recording: 28 December 2015
Recorded by: Kim Burton
Source: Kim Burton private collection
Duration: 39"

AV 05 *Listening to playback*
Performers: Glas Srca
Place of the recording: Studio Katedrala, Zagreb, Croatia
Date of the recording: 5 March 2016
Recorded by: Kim Burton
Source: Kim Burton private collection
Duration: 14"

AV 06 *Sociable singing*
Performers: Members of Žepče homeland club
Place of the recording: Sesvete, Zagreb, Croatia
Date of the recording: 1 April 2016
Recorded by: Kim Burton
Source: Kim Burton private collection
Duration: 14"

AV 07 *Part of programme of Folklore Review*
Performers: Members of Žepče homeland club
Place of the recording: Plehan, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Date of the recording: 30 April 2016
Recorded by: Kim Burton
Source: Kim Burton private collection
Duration: 12"

AV 08 *Rehearsal*
Performer(s): Crnčanski Izvornjaci
Place of the recording: Community Centre, Crnča village, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Date of the recording: 24 June 2016
Recorded by: Kim Burton
Source: Kim Burton private collection
Duration: 17"

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AV 09 *Mixing and production*
Performer: Drago Petrušić, engineer
Place of the recording: Studio Škorpion, Kakmuž, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Date of the recording: 8 July 2016
Recorded by: Kim Burton
Source: Kim Burton private collection
Duration: 16"

AV 10 *Informal singing during band performance*
Performers: Audience members, Raspjevani Sočkovljani
Place of the recording: Krtova, Ozren, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Date of the recording: 21 July 2016
Recorded by: Kim Burton
Source: Kim Burton private collection
Duration: 30"

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Erna Ströbitzer

Finding answers in folk songs

A portrait of the *Landl Quartett* between *Volksmusikpflege* and folk revival

AV 11 *Große Kügerl hör ich sausen* (I can hear big bullets whizzing by)
(p.) Performers: *Landl Duo* – Maria Walcher (first part) and Gerlinde Haid (second part)
Date of the recording: May 1986
Recorded by: *ORF Niederösterreich*
Source: *Krieg und Frieden im Volkslied. Blaugelbes Notenbüchel* (War and peace in folk songs. Blue-yellow songbook). AÖV/ÖNB, Sign. T 368
Duration: 1'59"

AV 12 *Ös Goasbeidlbauernbuam* (You Goatdung farmer boys)
(p.) Performers: *Landl Quartett* – Maria Walcher (first part), Gerlinde Haid (second part), Norbert Hauer (third part), Markus Stieldorf (bass)
Place of the recording: Niederöblarn, Ennstal, Styria, Austria
Date of the recording: 1983
Recorded by: Austrian Folk Song Society
Source: AÖV/ÖNB, Sign. T 143.1
Duration: 1'15"

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AV 13 (p.) Gerlinde Haid's presentation of the song *Und I trau mi net eini* (And I don't dare to enter)
Performers: Gerlinde Haid, Maria Walcher, Norbert Hauer
Place of the recording: Zaunhof, Pitztal, Tyrol, Austria
Date of the recording: 25 October 1982
Recorded by: Austrian Folk Song Society
Source: Community evening – presentation of the booklet of the field research in Pitztal, organized by Initiative My Village. AÖV/ÖNB, Sign. T 132.1
Duration: 0'42"

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