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Bulgarian Revival Era Songs: Problems of Melody and Genre

Part II

Iskra Racheva

The end of Part I of the present study (Bulgarian Musicology, 2007, № 2) noted the classification of Revival Era songs into four basic groups, which have been generally accepted by scholars: school songs, revolutionary songs, romantic-lyrical songs and historical songs. Behind this classification system, which is connected to the songs’ verbal content, lie deeper reasons for this division: the grouping reflects the connections between various groups of songs and different types of subjects, which reveal various aspects of the transformation of the subject from the traditional type to the Revival Era type of individual. Thus, school and revolutionary songs are connected with that which I call a group subject – a successor to ritual youth initiation societies. In romantic-sentimental and elegiac songs, the individual’s intimate spaces formed in such a way that he or she recognizes him or herself of the self-contained bearer of subjectivity - that which I call the intimate subject. Finally, in late historical songs due to the personal level of the experience attained, the Revival Era concept of “the Bulgarian people” is formed - that which I called the historical subject.

At the same time, in various types of songs different psychological aspects are worked out and traditional psychological attitudes are transformed so as to harmonize with new Revival Era ideas and values. Hence school songs emphasize the category of the mind (reason) in combination with the will, directed inwards, which overcomes mental laziness and inspires one towards mental effort - the work of the mind in the field of abstractions, which breaks down the limitations of pure instrumental thought and rationalizes mythical time-space attitudes.

Rebel songs rework the category of the emotions, urging them to overcome the laziness and limitedness of the heart, which has to expand the boundaries of its emotional attachment to familial-local identities in order to encompass the pan-Bulgarian and from there to transform into the will, directed outwards, for quick revolutionary action. In romantic-sentimental songs the internal (intimate) space of the soul is the space of aesthetic contemplation, in which the individual contemplates his own experiences and thus becomes conscious of his own individual soul. Finally, in late historical songs the category of historical memory is construed as a super-individual, meta-personal category like the “national spirit” (according to one famous Revival Era song), which unites Bulgarians in time and space. Various melodic models are examined, which are connected to the delineated song groups; the concept of Revival Era song-melodic types is introduced. Thus begins the formation of a musical semantic layer of a modern European type, different than the folkloric-genre-semantic layer, as well as the medieval-Orthodox level of semantic meaning. At this level certain melodic models of the traditional-folkloric type also receive secondary figurative-thematic lives, a phenomenon particularly characteristic for late historical songs, which can be seen as attempts to restore the epic tradition through melodic “figures of memory”. 
Dimitar Nenov wrote Piano Etude № 1 in 1931. The composer’s selection of the total modal organization of the hemiditone symmetrical mode (octatonic scale, whole-tone half-tone scale, diminished scale, Example 1) is the reason that the thematization of the modal regularities was transformed into a basic form-creating factor. Three pages of rough sketches have been preserved in Nenov’s archive (Example 2). They represent three stages in Nenov’s work on the composition (April, May and July 1931) and allow the progress of the composer’s creative process to be traced and “reconstructed.” Changes in the work’s modal-harmonic organization bear witness to the purposeful, compositionally motivated restructuring of the entire modal picture (Examples 3, 4 and 5). One of the many signs of that is the change in the main theme’s cadential moments in the final version as compared to the original version (see measures 4 and 8 in Examples 3 and 5). A comparison shows that in Dimitar Nenov’s symmetrical-modal composition system, in contrast to “classical” tonal musical thinking, the cadences turn out to be fluid parts of the musical form, and the initium – a stable modal-thematic idea. The same artistic logic led him to end the piece with a transposition different from the opening one. The connection between them is the „tonally-centering” tritone (the augmented fourth c-fis) as an element of the central chord from the dissonant tonality c-fis-h. In this way, Nenov reached a new, contemporary understanding of the tonal unit adequate to the chosen symmetrical-modal system. As a result of structural-thematic changes in the final version of the etude, a new, wider interrelationship is apparent between the parts of the form, which make it a diminishing musical construction. The individual, specifically Nenov-style characteristics in the work are found in the “search for the new, as-of-yet unsaid” through the rethinking of a traditional musical form as a “structural matrix” for a new, contemporary way for the composer to express himself.

Nikolay Gradev

The Symmetrical-Modal Musical Thought of Dimitar Nenov in Piano Etude № 1
„…And searching for the new, as-of-yet unsaid“

New Music on the Horizon of Two Leading Thematic Projects of Modernity: Fragments

Tsenka Yordanova

The subject of this study is New Music from the 20th century (Musica Nova or Neue Musik) in the Austrian and German context around the First World War: before the war, in the context of Viennese modernism, and after the war, in the context of Berlin modernity.

The basis for my observations is work on the deconstruction of tonality and the appearance of the chromatic tone row - a type of Opus Magnum in the field of “the being of sense and meaning” of the New in music. This act, which forms the basis of uncompromising Neue Musik, is examined here within the horizon of the two major leading thematic projects of Modernity: the Cartesian and the interpretative.

The impact of the first thematic project - the Cartesian objectifying experimental-mathematic project of Modernity - has activated the processes. Within the framework of Neue Musik it was actualized after 1908 in a relatively pure form by Josef Matthias Hauer,
who called himself a “musical engineer.” His bipolar yin/yang system of 44 tropes (groups) of 12 tones, each of which was divided into two polar groups of six tones - as well as his new system of notation without alterations, suitable for free work across the whole tonal row – are examined in this study as a thoroughly rationalized analytical-theoretical mode of the Cartesian objectifying project of Modernity applied to the languages and codes of Neue Musik. The experiment and its place in the work of the musical avant-garde in the second half of the 20th century is also a fact in the horizon of experimental-mathematical thematization through the objectifying Cartesian project of physical/acoustic reality.

The impact of the second thematic project - the alternative critical interpretive humanistic project of Modernity - is realized by the Circle of Schoenberg, Webern and Berg. The new objectification and the new expressivity of Neue Musik has been radically rethought on the musical-artistic level; the atonal-systematization of musical codes and languages has evolved more slowly and gradually in comparison to Hauer’s “engineering” style of thinking, developing the twelve-tone music as if it were organic material. Existing in its own reality of an intentionally created hermeneutic universum, Musica Nova is the result of complex internal interferences and mutual interaction between these two mega-projects of Modernity and their impact on the “lived world” of modern musicality: from the most intimate mechanisms of Neue Musik’s acoustic parameters to the existence of its meaning and its substantiality. And its comprehensibility (Fasslichkeit) or coherence (Zusammenhang).


Diana Danova

The International Festival of Contemporary Piano Music ppIANISSIMO began in 1998, first as a project of the Association for New Music in Bulgaria (DNMB), and since 1999 as an eponymous foundation. Stylistically, it is connected to the concept of Musica Nova, which was actualized through the activities of the DNMB and the International Festival of Contemporary Music Musica Nova – Sofia. At the time this article was written, the festival has been produced nine times. The festivals are examined chronologically. They realize DNMB’s most important aims, which are tied to the creation of an educated youthful public and the participation of elite performers who present contemporary Bulgarian works as part of a global musical culture. In the conception of ppIANISSIMO several approaches developed consecutively: the interesting and even provocative thematic organization of concerts, notable anniversaries, the presentation of piano music from various national cultures, Bulgarian music, works by female composers, music for and by young people, etc. The performers’ participation reflects a high level of professionalism combined with the magnetism and naturalness of youth. The significance of ppIANISSIMO for Bulgarian musical culture is great, even more so given that since the last production of the Musica Nova – Sofia festival in 2002, ppIANISSIMO has been the only forum for contemporary musical works. On par with other European New Music festivals, ppIANISSIMO measures up to established European standards and successfully takes its place among prestigious international forums for contemporary music.
An Analytical Psychological Reading of Two Bulgarian Folk Songs

Anatol Anchev

This article presents analytical psychological readings of two Bulgarian folk songs: “Sin kara bashta si na sud” (A Son Brings His Father to Court) and “Vladika se poturchva zaradi hubava hanuma” (A Bishop Converts to Islam Because of a Beautiful Turkish Bride). The article establishes that in first song the archetype of the father and the symbolism of the family is an expression the wholeness of the individual, while the son’s actions are indicative of a concrete mental illness - an agonizing feeling of guilt that torments the sick man, which he then projects onto his father. The situation described in the second song can be seen as a classic case of a man possessed by an anima, the man being the bishop and the anima the fair woman. The same text examined from a different angle shows that it is not the bishop, but rather the blonde young man driving the train whose mental state is being presented - he is obsessed by the anima (the white woman), while the “black” bishop (who, in fact, drives the black train in the young man’s place) is actually his shadow.

ICTM – 39th World Conference in Vienna 2007

Rosemary Statelova

From June 4–11, 2007, the 39th World Conference of UNESCO’s International Council for Traditional Music (ICTM) was held in Vienna. The event took place at the University for Music and Performing Arts, Vienna, and its organizers - in addition to Austria’s national ICTM committee - included the Institute for Folk Music Research and Ethnomusicology (from the above-mentioned university), the Institute for Musicology at Vienna University, the Phonogrammarchiv of the Austrian Academy of Sciences, as well as the Austrian Commission for UNESCO.

Nearly 400 scholars from many countries around the world took part, and there were nearly 100 different events (dedicated to various themes, panels and plenary sessions). Bulgarian participants at the conference included representatives from the three BAS institutes working with ethnomusicology, ethnography and folklore. The Institute of Arts Studies was represented by Ivanka Vlaeva, Ventsislav Dimov (unfortunately he was unable to appear in Vienna personally) and myself. Lozanka Peycheva represented the Institute for Folklore, while Elena Marushiakova and Veselin Popov represented the Ethnographic Institute (the latter both participated in a panel presenting research on Roma culture).

The conference had five main themes: 1. Cosmology and its relationship to music and dance; 2. National and regional traditions in ethnomusicology and ethnochondoreology; 3. Popular music and dance in connection with new technologies; 4. The transmission of music and dance through informal and formal education/training; 5. New research. Besides these topics, however, the papers and discussions introduced many new themes presented in individual panels. In my article I report on the two panels I participated in by invitation of their organizers. Both had participated in the international conference “Music and Minorities” in Varna in 2006, which was organized by the Institute of Art Studies at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences.
The largest international ICTM conference in Vienna turned out to be a huge challenge for me, both emotionally and professionally. Austria’s multicultural heritage was the particular focus of the concerts organized especially for conference participants. Academic presentations and discussions were fleshed out with an abundant amount of music. This live musicmaking, together with the musical documentary films, created a colorful parallel line in a conference program already full of events. The organization of the Balkan panel “History and Perspectives on National Ethnomusicologies and Ethnochoreologies in the Balkans” in two sessions on June 6, 2007, which some of the Bulgarian representatives took part in, was also a provocation. The basic goal was to identify events, facts and individuals who were key to the development of each of the national schools presented. In this way each of the represented countries’ understanding of its own history was outlined in parallel. This joint Balkan project showed that dialogue and collaboration between scholars from Southeastern Europe is possible, even if different historical pasts and differing interpretations of that past sometimes lead to divergent viewpoints.

The Balkan panel appeared as one among many strongly represented national and regional cultures, which constituted one of the focuses of the conference program. During the course of the conference, the exceptionally active research on Chinese traditions presented in various sessions was striking.

In connection with the protection and preservation of nonmaterial culture, questions were raised regarding the reconstruction of instruments, manuscripts, genres, and performance practices, while established concepts such as “tradition” and “folklore” were rethought. Participants discussed manifestations of the national, the global, and the transnational and the mutual interactions between them, as well as the effects of immigration on music and the development of autochthonous minorities. It was primarily younger scholars who devoted particular attention to the media and new technologies in their research.

Изследването на ромска музика като парадигма в проучването на малцинства

Урсула Хеметек

В доклада, предназначен за изнасяне в 39-тата световна конференция на Международния съвет за традиционна музика във Виена, третирам проблема за изследването на ромска музика и съдържато се в него предизвикателство спрямо етномузикологията, особено в европейски контекст. Концепцията за европейската нация-държава е основна за историята на дисциплината. Ромите обаче никога не са „пасвали“ в тази концепция по причина, че им е липсвала „родина“, както и „национална“ култура, дори напротив: повече от всички други малцинства ромите и специално ромските мuzиканти представяваят предизвикателство спрямо „на-
This book addresses one of the most significant spiritual movements that spread during the 13th-15th centuries within the Orthodox world – hesychasm. The hesychasts believed that God could be reached through pure devotion. They paid special attention to the word in music. The “divine beauty” of the latter became a means of expression to reach God. The book aims to reveal the intrinsic meaning of this music. It is an attempt at cross-cultural study of many primary sources, musical and hymnographical, employing the achievements of the modern musicology and theology. The main principles used are those of musical exegetics and theological interpretation. The rich source material is interpreted in the context of Orthodox belief and the teaching of the Holy Fathers such as St. Makarios of Egypt, St. Basil the Great, St. John Chrysostomos, St. Gregory of Palama, St. Symeon the New Theologian, and others. The author searches for the truth of the Orthodox faith that is encoded in musical sources. The deepness of the meaning of musical phenomena has been revealed on the basis of the theological cognitive foundation, the foundation of belief.

Kristina Yapova’s book is dedicated to church music, examined through the prism of liturgicality. The author defines her research method as a “drawing into”. This is a research strategy that maintains the author’s (and the reader’s) point of view as the meaningful center of the research object. From this height, the contents of key concepts such as culture, aesthetics, truth and memory are realized and rethought. Liturgicality is examined as a place of connection between the religious person and music. From this methodological position, the author directs her attention towards the Orthodox Liturgy and Dobri Hristov’s liturgical music, which is the concrete focus of the research study. The book’s separate parts and chapters contain clear, continually developing and mutually enlightening ideas. In Part Two church music is presented in a system of coordinates along east-west and medieval-new era axes, while in Part Three these problems are examined in the framework of the Bulgarian spiritual space. Yapova succeeds in deciphering within the phenomena of composed church music its ongoing mission to be the music of the Church through its religious ethos, through its unity of music and text, and through the leitmotif of divine beauty. Thus the connection between liturgical-musical thought and
method in her theory opens new horizons for research on Bulgarian music. Kristina Yapo-
va’s book is an important achievement within contemporary Bulgarian musicology.

Goritsa Naydenova: *The Year–Life–History. The Life and Decline of a Traditional Culture as Seen Through the Eyes of an Ethnomusicologist*
Sofia, Institute of Art Studies – BAS, 2006, 315 p., chart and visual materials

*Svetlana Zaharieva*

This book is a musical-anthropological research study in which music is examined not only in the context of culture, but rather music itself is treated as culture. In addition to this the author puts culture and music in mutually dependent and mutually interpreting relationships in which: “not only the meaningful levels of music are explained through culture, but also a series of cultural characteristics are illuminated through music. Or – [it is] an attempt at reconstructing a cultural system through its music.”

The rich observational data, scientific conclusions and conceptions are structured into two parts. The first contains a reconstruction via a synchronic vestige of traditional culture in the village of Erkech (Kozichino), which is characterized by its conservatism and resilience, which aided in its preservation up until the 1950s. The second half diachronically traces the disintegration of traditional culture in the second half of the 20th century, and also discusses later and newer forms of preservation and revitalization of local folklore. Both approaches - the synchronic-reconstructing and the diachronic-historicizing - reveal two different, mutually complementary sides of the cultural tradition being studied, of its ritual system and its later preservationist-“museumifying” and reduced-for-the-stage transformations.

Goritsa Naydenova’s work is unique among academic musical-anthropological research studies of a single local traditional culture, characteristic of the holistic musical-ritual system of the past. As an academic accomplishment it can be described as a unique standard and as a necessary jumping-off point for further research in this field.

Marija Barbieri, *Bulgarian Singers on the Croatia Opera Stage*


*Rozalia Biks*

In this book, Marija Barbieri, in her capacity as a highly regarded opera professional and also on the basis of numerous analyses by other scholars, presents Bulgarian singers who performed on the Croatian stage between 1920 and 2006. The first of them included Petar Raychev, Mimi Balkanska, Marian Radeva, Todor Mazarov, Neli Karova, Maria Milkova-Zolotovic, Mihail Popov and so on. After the Second World War, 76 Bulgarian singers visited Croatia, 14 of whom were employed full-time or as permanent guest-performers. According to Barbieri: “the Bulgarian opera school is a sign of quality.” Among those who made a particularly lasting impression on Croatia’s operatic memory in the second half of the 20th
century are Mariana Radeva, Stoyan Stoyanov, Veneta Yaneva Ivelic, Zlatomira Nikolova, Ivan Stefanov and Valentin Enchev. Others made an impression with a single performance: Rayna Kabaivanska, Nikola Nikolov and Dimitar Uzunov, Lyubomir Bodurov and Yulia Wiener-Chenisheva, and Svetlana Kotlenko. In recent years, visitors have included Bozhidar Nikolov, Svetla Vasileva, Gabriela Georgieva, Kamen Chanev, Kaludi Kaludov and Kiril Manolov. The author emphasizes: “Bulgarian artists arrived [in Croatia] as finished works, well-trained, with wide general and musical knowledge, and made their valuable contribution to Croatian opera... without them Croatian opera would not be nearly as rich... especially Croatia’s musical stages after the Second World War”. 