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# A CLASSICAL APPROACH TO THE TRADITIONAL SOUND OF SERBIA AS CAPTURED DURING THE TIME OF FORMER YUGOSLAVIA

by

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> An Independent Study Submitted to the Graduate Faculty

> > of the

University of North Dakota

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

Master of Music

Grand Forks, ND July 2021 This independent study, submitted by Galina Dordevic in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Music from the University of North Dakota, has been read by the Faculty Advisory Committee under whom the work has been done and is hereby approved.

Dr. Alejandro Drago

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Title A Classical Approach to the Traditional Sound of Serbia

As Captured During The Time of Former Yugoslavia

Department Music

Degree Master of Music

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Galina Dordevic July 18, 2021

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#### **ABSTRACT**

This independent study serves as an introduction of the Serbian folk music from the time of former Yugoslavia to classical musicians unfamiliar with its style. It provides research about its characteristics, heritage, and development, as well as the introduction to a few of many folk songs popular to this day. Furthermore, it offers arrangements and an explanation of the arranging process from the perspective of a classical music performer, which can serve as an inspiration and guide to other musicians interested in arranging music, as well as different styles of music.

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## **Introduction**

#### **Background and Significance**

As a violinist who has been pursuing education in classical music for almost 20 years through various cultures and approaches, I came to the conclusion that classical education does not offer many opportunities, if any, for exploration of different styles of music, both in theory and performance. Music as a part of cultural heritage evokes a natural need in each individual, especially musicians, to express themselves through the tradition of music they grew up to. Therefore, I decided to showcase the features, traditions, and sounds of Serbian music, making it more familiar to people around the world, especially classically trained musicians interested in different styles of music and their traditions.

Over time and through my experiences, I realized that being a classical musician requires more than knowing music theory and the technique of playing an instrument. In order to be an excellent musician and performer, I believe that one has to be open-minded and therefore willing to explore various sides of such an infinite field as music is. Although extremely richly detailed and complex, classical music does not contain all the features that could be found in other genres and styles of music, which is a great reason for musicians to explore them and expand their knowledge of music, as well as improve their abilities when it comes to performing other music styles.

#### **Purpose**

The main purpose of this Independent Study is to introduce Serbian traditional music to musicians around the world, and specifically to classical musicians. Apart from introducing Serbian music, which is one of the best representatives of Serbian history and culture, this Independent Study can serve as an inspiration to other musicians for exploring music of various cultures and countries, which might differ from the classical music to a great extent. Learning about different styles of music could also affect one's abilities of performing, which is another purpose of this study. In search of a particular sound, character, or manner of playing, one could develop certain technical abilities which they would have never thought of when performing classical music. Furthermore, this study can serve as a great guide to all of those who would like to start learning the process of arranging music.

#### Method

In this Independent Study, I will be using several different methods. The first method I will use is the collection of different information and research done about Serbian traditional music, its characteristics, and features, as well as the analysis of specifically chosen songs. I believe that this kind of information is extremely important in understanding the style of music and its main features that make it unique.

Another method I will use is a thorough explanation of my own arranging process of the specific Serbian traditional songs. This will be done through journaling, consisted of detailed description of the process.

Lastly, I will convey a comparison between the classical music style and the style of Serbian traditional folk music, which can serve as a performance guide with the emphasis on solo violin.

# I. SERBIAN FOLK MUSIC, HISTORY, AND CHARACTERISTICS

According to Bruno Nettl, an ethnomusicologist and musicologist, folk music is a type of traditional and generally rural music that was typically transferred orally from generation to generation. Furthermore, he states that folk music refers to music that a broad part of the population understands and identifies with, particularly the lower socioeconomic classes.

Accordingly, it is the rural music parallel to the urban popular music, although that music depends mainly on the mass media – recordings, radio, television, and to some degree the Internet – for dissemination.<sup>2</sup>

In her scientific paper, Ivana Medić, a Serbian musicologist, defines Serbian ethnic music as "a comprehensive cultural and marketing construct that encompasses a variety of musical practices: from reconstructions and performances of the oldest layers of rural music, through 'modernized' arrangements of traditional songs for vocal and instrumental ensembles, to a variety of genres of popular music (pop, jazz, techno) loosely based on folk music models (with or without actual citations)." In Serbian language there is a distinction between the terms "etno-muzika" (ethnic music) and "narodna muzika" (folk music), in which folk music refers to a slightly more modern style inspired by foundations of the ethnic music, one which reflects a true tradition and customs of Serbian culture. In order to avoid confusion, this study will only be using the term "folk music."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Bruno Nettl, "Folk music," *Encyclopedia Britannica* (January 2, 2019): https://www.britannica.com/art/folk-music.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Ivana Medić, "Arhai's Balkan Folktronica: Serbian Ethno Music Reimagined for British Market," *Muzikologija/Musicology* 16 (2014): p. 110.

When it comes to the history of Serbian music and culture of Serbia in general, it is very important to mention what might have been the strongest influence throughout the history, that being Ottoman Empire, which was ruling the territory of Serbia from the 14<sup>th</sup> until the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The Turkish settlers and army were mainly based in town areas, and therefore without a very close contact with villages that were hard to access, which is one of the main explanations why rural areas of Serbia managed to preserve the oldest forms of folk singing, dancing, and playing. However, the changes that occurred in folk music of that era were not only musical, but also social. The changes of musical elements, such as more developed melodic lines, tonal ranges, melismatics, and rhythm, created an expressive new layer in both vocal and instrumental folk music. However, the changes outside the musical characteristics, and particularly those connected with social life, are more fundamental changes as Serbian musicologist Radmila Petrović points out, and she states the most essential changes in music tradition beginning from the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

Firstly, the development of towns, crafts, and trade created a new social bourgeois class in towns, which was following the pattern of the Turkish society. The first changes in music were rather cumulative – a new repertoire of songs and dances were being accepted, as well as new oriental musical instruments. In that process of acceptance, the music was going through several stages, such as selection, adaptation to Serbian musical system, reinterpretation, lexical adaptation etc., which all created new stylistic characteristics. This more developed musical style originated among the bourgeois, men and craftsmen class, whose music we called *town folk music*. <sup>5</sup>

Secondly, within the *town folk music*, a playing instrumental group called "čalgije" (pronounced tchalgeeah) according to Turkish terminology, began to be cherished. Originally,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Radmila Petrović, "Folk Music of Eastern Yugoslavia: A Process of Acculturation: Some Relevant Elements" in *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music* Vol. 5, No. 1 (Croatian Musicological Society, 1974): p. 218.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Idem, pp. 218-219.

three players, mainly Gypsies, had three different kinds of instruments used for: melody, accompaniment, and for a rhythmic base. These kinds of ensembles played mostly in cafes and homes of the rich people at wedding ceremonies, and although the number of members did gradually increase, their style remained the same – characterized as chamber music for an indoor setting. The older "čalgije" ensembles in Kosovo, South Serbia, and Macedonia were most frequently composed of: ćemane (fiddle), grneta (a primitive kind of the clarinet), a kind of tambura (for accompaniment), def (tambourine) or darabuka (kettle-drum), and sometimes a talambas (cymbals). The last of these ensembles still exist to this day in the Ohrid area in Macedonia.<sup>6</sup>

Together with the new repertoire and instrumental ensembles, a new kind of *professional players* was emerging, who were mostly Gypsies in Serbia and in Macedonia, and they played an important role in the development of musical life. Traveling from one place to another and going through different towns and villages, Gypsies enriched the local repertoire and created for themselves a social standing of a musician and innovator. Gypsies as players were mediators between the Oriental and Serbian music culture, favoring the Oriental to a certain degree, mostly by accepting novelties brought by the Oriental culture. What made Gypsies to be innovators in folk music in this region was the acceptance of the new instruments, such as ćemane (the fiddle), zurle (a wind instrument with a double reed, seen in example 1), various kinds of tambura, as well as percussion instruments such as daire or def (tambourine), talambasi (a Persian-Arabic type of naqqara), tupan (big drum) and others, and at the same time the rejection of the old traditional Serbian instruments played by domestic peasants, such as gajde (bagpipe), duduk (type of shepherd's flute), kaval or gusle (one string bowed instrument). At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Gypsies were also the ones

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Petrović, "Folk Music of Eastern Yugoslavia" in *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music*: p. 219.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Idem, pp. 219-220.

who adopted new instruments with ease, such as the accordion, the violin, the clarinet, and the double-bass.

#### Example 1 (zurle):



In the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Yugoslav music was still in its old and traditional forms; the ritual songs were very important, the epics still played a great role in aesthetic, cultural, and educational needs of Yugoslavs in a manner unknown in Western countries since the passing of the minstrels.<sup>8</sup> One of the general characteristics of the Yugoslav folk music at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was a non-tempered musical system

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Radmila Petrović, "The Concept of Yugoslav Folk Music in the Twentieth Century" in *Journal of the International Folk Music Council* Vol. 20 (Cambridge University Press, 1968): p. 22.

which used a small number of tones and melodic lines with rather narrow steps, without the use of wide intervals. Another particular characteristic would be the use of a very simple modulation, but it was done only in a few regions of the country. With some exceptions, most parts of Yugoslavia also practiced acapella singing – singing without an instrumental accompaniment. Furthermore, there were two types of rhythm: free rhythm, which was used over a sustained note and found in many mountain tunes, and regular rhythmic patterns, which were the most common in Yugoslav folk music. The musical form usually consisted of two phrases; however, it still offered a sense of completeness due to its semi-cadential and cadential tones. The form would be repeated until the whole text was sung. Some of the other characteristics of the folk style would also be its timbre, performing style, two-part singing using the interval of a second as a consonance, and the melodic final tone on a second degree of the European major or minor scale that had a role of psychological tonic.<sup>9</sup>

Between the two World Wars, popularity of cafes was increasing because men would gather here to chat, get the news, as well as listen to Gypsy musicians. After the Second World War, people who were not Gypsies started self-learning to play instruments, mostly the accordion, while Gypsies stayed as the unsurpassable self-taught violinists. Among the self-taught players of Serbian nationality emerged new composers who wrote songs created in a folk style. Although such composers appeared even earlier, <sup>10</sup> their activity erupted during the sixties in many of the Yugoslav towns, especially in Serbia and Bosnia, then Montenegro and Macedonia, while barely touching in Croatia and Slovenia. <sup>11</sup> The creation of such new folk songs relied on an author of the music, a lyrics writer (sometimes the same person), and the

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Petrović, "The Concept of Yugoslav Folk Music in the Twentieth Century" in *Journal of the International Folk Music Council*: p. 22.

It is known that in 1943, for instance, Miodrag Krnjevac-Todorović, a well-known accordion player, composed the song "Jesen stiže rana, vinogradi zreli" and in 1946 the song "Znaš li dragi onu šljivu ranku?"
 Svetislav Pavićević, "Nove potrebe – novi vidovi kulture" in *Kultura* No. 8 (Belgrade, Serbia, 1970): pp. 132-140; *The new folk music* (a discussion on the 3rd programme of Radio Belgrade with Sveta Lukić, Zagorka Pešić-Golubović, Dragutin Gostuški, Vojislav Đonović, Dragoslav Dević, Prvoslav Plavšić).

writer of the arrangement. <sup>12</sup> The most prevalent way of presenting these songs were at festivals, <sup>13</sup> which would not only showcase new songs and arrangements, but sometimes a new singer. An expert jury would give out high prizes, which were usually followed by the issuing of new recordings by those singers. According to Radmila Petrović, the analysis of these songs could establish that this music shows certain trends, one of which is a more developed melody line ornamented by melismatic formulas, which are usually not written down, but depend on the abilities of a singer. Another trend is a musical form broadened into four or more phrases, as well as the ABA form with a contrasting B section in tempo or style. Furthermore, the popular melodic stanza with minor tonalities and the augmented second occupying a dominant place is preserved, the form of the texts is of a strophic character with quite long refrains, and in content dominated by themes of abandoned and forsaken love. There is also a frequent combination of various regional and ethnic stylistic elements in the framework of a composed song, such as the elements of Bosnian love songs "sevdalinka," Macedonian asymmetrical rhythms, and Sumadian syllabic style in singing etc. <sup>14</sup>

The renowned Serbian ethnomusicologist Dimitrije O. Golemović mentions in one of his books the features of the older traditional folk music and its connection to rather modern folk sound of Serbian music. Established at the conference of IFMC (International Folk Music Council) in Sao Paolo, the resolution about the definition of the folk music says: "Folk music is a product of music tradition which developed through the process of oral tradition. Factors that shape the tradition are: 1. continuity which connects the present with the past; 2. variation which is a result of a creative impulse of an individual or a group; and 3. selection made by a

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Petrović, "Folk Music of Eastern Yugoslavia" in *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music*: p. 222.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> The biggest and most well-known ones are the "Beogradski sabor" in Belgrade and the "Ilidža" in Sarajevo. <sup>14</sup> Petrović, "Folk Music of Eastern Yugoslavia" in *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music*: p. 223.

community, which decides one or two forms in which music will survive." <sup>15</sup> According to Golemović, this also refers to the music impacted by popular, composed music, which was later absorbed by the community as the unwritten living tradition. <sup>16</sup> In a traditional vocal folk song, there is an invaluable connection between the melody and text. Interestingly, Golemović underscores how even the most skilled folk singers could not disconnect the text from the melody and perform it separately; those attempts would result in forgetfulness of the text, mistakes in the type of verse, as well as the change of the actual meaning of text and its message. 17

Apart from delivering a message, a text or better said type of verse is also very important in creating the rhythm of a folk song, mainly through caesuras (a pause in metrics), which could appear in the end or in the middle of a verse. When caesura appears, a more drastic change could be expected in rhythm, melody, or harmony, which is probably what eventually created some of the existing patterns in folk music. Furthermore, the metrics of the text seem to have had a bigger impact on rhythm than the accentuation of words, which would most often be adjusted to the already existing melody. 18

Having in mind the historical background and characteristics of Serbian folk music, it is not surprising that many musicologists decided to explore this subject. Although there are various approaches, the most interesting one is probably that which refers to a folk song as a "living organism," which naturally changes throughout the time and therefore stays open to a continuous research and exploration.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Dimitrije O. Golemović, Folk Music of Yugoslavia (Belgrade, Serbia: Muzička omladina Srbije, 1997): pp. 7-

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Idem, pp. 8-9.

#### II. INTRODUCTION TO SELECTED SERBIAN FOLK SONGS

This chapter will introduce a few of many Serbian folk songs which are extremely popular to this day and still are a part of everyday life in Serbia and Balkan region. They showcase some of the main characteristics of Serbian folk music mentioned in the previous chapter, as well as its authentic style and spirit.

#### 1. Aj, mene majka jednu ima / Oh, my mother has only me

Aj mene majka jednu ima is a folk song based on a folk poem by an unknown author, recorded for the first time by a Serbian singer Zorica Brunclik. The song was arranged by the Serbian composer, arranger, and accordion player Branimir Đokić, and released in 1977 in Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia by PGP RTB, <sup>19</sup> also called RTB Records.

Aj, mene majka jednu ima is written in 9/8, an immensely popular upbeat meter when it comes to Serbian folk songs. As it was common during this time, the song is written in ABA form, repeated three times, with lyrics where a female singer expresses dissatisfaction with a man that her mother chose for her (figure 1a, figure 1b).

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> Produkcija Gramofonskih Ploča Radio Televizije Beograd – Production of Vinyl Records Radio-Television Belgrade

#### Figure 1a (lyrics of Aj, mene majka jednu ima in Serbian and translation to English):

Aj, mene majka jednu ima, pa ima Aj, mene majka jednu ima, pa ima Bil, bil, bil, bil, bul, bul, bul Aj, mene majka jednu ima, pa ima

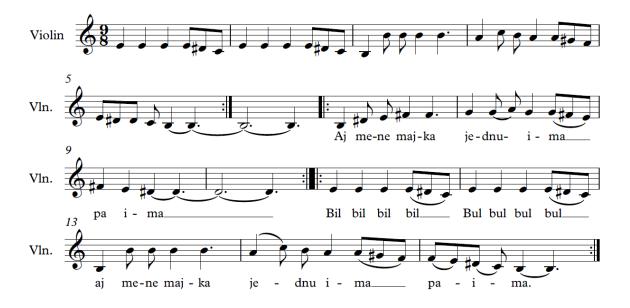
Aj, pa me daje za Aliju sevdiju Aj, pa me daje za Aliju sevdiju Bil, bil, bil, bil, bul, bul, bul Aj, pa me daje za Aliju sevdiju

Aj, a ja neću za Aliju sevdiju Aj, a ja hoću za Aliju bekriju Bil, bil, bil, bil, bul, bul, bul, bul Aj, a ja hoću za Aliju bekriju Oh, my mother has only me, so she has
Oh, my mother has only me, so she has
Bil, bil, bil, bil, bul, bul, bul
Oh, my mother has only me, so she has

Oh, so she gives me to Alija sevdija<sup>20</sup> Oh, so she gives me to Alija sevdija Bil, bil, bil, bil, bul, bul, bul Oh, so she gives me to Alija sevdija

Oh, I don't want to go for Alija sevdija Oh, but I want to go for Alija bekrija<sup>21</sup> Bil, bil, bil, bil, bul, bul, bul Oh, but I want to go for Alija bekrija

#### Figure 1b (transcription):



<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> sevdija = the loving one

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> bekrija = tippler, drunkard

# 2. <u>Lela Vranjanka / Lela from Vranje</u>

Lela Vranjanka is a song released in 1974 by PGP RTB and Staniša Stošić as the performer of the song, written by Dragan Toković. It is written in 6/8 and tells about love towards Jelena Lela, a former lover of the author of the song with whom he is still in love with (figure 2a, figure 2b).

Figure 2a (lyrics of *Lela Vranjanka* and translation to English):

X7.1.1 ' 1 X7 ' 1	
Volela me jedna Vranjanka	One woman from Vranje loved me
Mladost mi je kod nje ostala	My youth stayed with her
Nit je Sofka, nit je Koštana	She's neither Sofka nor Koštana
Već najlepša Lela, Jelena	But the most beautiful Lela, Jelena
Pusto, pusto mi je sve	Empty, empty, empty is everything
Nema, nema moje Jelene	My Jelena is no more, is no more
Dođi, dođi, Lelo, Jelena	Come, come, Lela, Jelena
Ti si moju mladost odnela	You took away my youth
Ko zna gde je moja Vranjanka	Who knows where my woman from Vranje is
Lepša od svih, lepa Jelena	More beautiful than all, beautiful Jelena
Sve bih dao kad bi saznao	I would give everything if I found out
Ko je moju Lelu ukrao	Who stole my Lela
Pusto, pusto mi je sve	Empty, empty, empty is everything
Nema, nema moje Jelene	My Jelena is no more, is no more
Dođi, dođi, Lelo, Jelena	Come, come, Lela, Jelena
Ti si moju mladost odnela	You took away my youth

Figure 2b (transcription):



There are a lot of different assumptions when it comes to the heritage of this song, especially the melody. Some believe that the melody is based on a Greek melody for song "Misirlou," which means "Egyptian Muslim woman." According to the book *Ethnic Music on Records*, *volume 3: Eastern Europe* by Richard Spotwood, the first known recording was by Tetos Demetriades in 1927 for the Victor Label. In 1962, American guitarist Dick Dale wrote his own interpretation of the Greek melody, which was used in 1994 in the movie "Pulp Fiction" by Quentin Tarantino. Laster in 1963, Beach Boys did their own version of this song.

However, the same melody is highly popular in Turkey, where they consider it an old Arabic song that tells a story about an Egyptian girl, usually interpreted by Turkish singer, composer, and actor Zeki Müren.<sup>22</sup> The same melody was also used in a Turkish song titled "Yarali Gonul" with lyrics by composer and singer Suat Sayin.<sup>23</sup>

Furthermore, the song also has its Ashkenazi Jewish history. Singer and actress Miriam Kressyn is credited for her 1943 Yiddish lyrics, although the tune had been popular in the European Jewish community since the 1920's, which could have been brought in by Sephardic musicians. There is a version of the "Miserlou" recorded in the 1950's by the musicologist Harry Smith and sung by a prominent orthodox Jewish Rabbi Abulafia from New York's Lower East Side.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> J. Kulaš, "A song *Lela Vranjanka* is a worldwide hit," *Telegram* (2017): accessed March 10, 2021, https://www.telegraf.rs/vesti/kultura/2917745-pesma-lela-vranjanka-je-svetski-hit-poslusajte-4-verzije-ove-pesme-na-srpskom-grckom-arapskom-i-rok-obradu-dika-dejlija-video.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Megan Finley, *Misirlou: The Song That Started Exotica*, accessed March 10, 2021: https://www.academia.edu/38088843/Misirlou\_The\_Song\_That\_Started\_Exotica. <sup>24</sup> Ibid.

## 3. Jutros mi je ruža procvetala / This morning my rose blossomed

Released in 1989 by a singer Merima Njegomir and PGP RTB, the song *Jutros mi je ruža procvetala* was written by Serbian folk singer and songwriter Petar Tanasijević. This song is telling the touching story about a woman's lost love and her rose, which reminds her of her beloved (figure 3a, figure 3b). The song is written in duple meter in a slow tempo, which allows the lyrics to come to the fore.

Figure 3a (lyrics of Jutros mi je ruža procvetala and translation to English):

Jutros mi je ruža procvetala	This morning my rose blossomed
Ružu gledam pa sam zaplakala	I look at the rose, so I started crying
Ružo moja mladost sam ti dala	My rose, I gave you my youth
Svojom sam te suzom zalivala	I watered you with my tears
Kol'ko sam te puta poljubila	How many times have I kissed you
Još pupoljak mladi dok si bila	Ever since you have been a young bud
Ispijala rosu s tvojih grana	Drank the dew from your branches
Mesto usne mojega dragana	Instead of my darling's lips
Moj je dragi otiš'o davno	My dear went away a long time ago
Ja ga čekam već godinu ravno	I have been waiting for him for a year straight
Ružu gledam na te mislim dragi	I look at the rose, I think of you my dear
Na te usne, na tvoj pogled blagi	Of those lips, of your gentle glance

## Figure 3b (transcription):



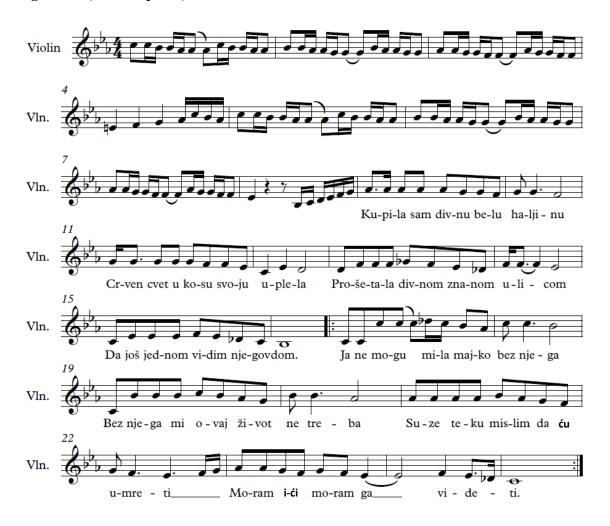
## 4. Ja ne mogu bez njega / I cannot (live) without him

Ja ne mogu bez njega is a song released in 1979 by Beograd Disk, sung by a Serbian singer Gordana Sotjićević. The music of the song was written by Novica Negovanović, the lyrics were written by Dara Ružić, while Dragan Knežević did the arrangement. Once again, the song is depicting a woman crying after a lost love and the unfulfilled dreams of marrying the man who now belongs to someone else (figure 4a, figure 4b).

Figure 4a (lyrics of *Ja ne mogu bez njega* and translation to English):

Kupila sam divnu belu haljinu	I bought a beautiful white dress
Crven cvet u kosu svoju uplela	And I wreathed a red flower in my hair
Prošetala tihom, znanom ulicom	I walked by a quiet, familiar street
Da još jednom vidim njegov dom	So I can see his home once again
Ja ne mogu, mila majko, bez njega	I can't live without him, oh my dear mother
Bez njega mi ovaj život ne treba	I don't need this life without him
Suze teku, mislim da ću umreti	My tears flow, I think I will die
Moram ići, moram ga videti	I have to go, I have to see him
Ubrala sam nežne ruže, crvene	I have picked delicate, red roses
Neka s njima kiti svoje svatove	So he can give them to his wedding nuptials
To cveće smo za nas dvoje gajili	Those were the flowers that the two of us cherished
Zbog drugih se nismo uzeli	We didn't marry because of others
Haljinu sam belu davno želela	I have always wanted a white dress
On je hteo takvu meni da kupi	He wanted to buy that dress for me
Sad druga je mesto mene kraj njega	The other woman is now next to him
Ja nikada neću drugoga	And I don't want anyone but him

#### Figure 4b (transcription):



The following chapters will focus on the process of arranging, as well as the final arrangements of the first two songs from this chapter – *Aj mene majka jednu ima* and *Lela Vranjanka*, written for a small ensemble – clarinet, solo violin, violin tutti (labelled violin 2 in the arrangements), viola, cello, and double bass. Being familiar with the songs helps with identifying the most important aspects which should remain the same in an arrangement in order to preserve the style, idea, and authenticity of each song.

#### III. **ARRANGING**

Before I will venture in the process of arranging the songs, I would like to briefly present some important facts about the act of arranging with the focus on various musical forms used.

Arranging is the adaptation of a vocal and/or instrumental piece of music for one or more performers. It is not rare that the arrangers add their own musical ideas to their arrangements, which means that arranging often includes a certain amount of composition. There are many music elements that need to be considered when starting the process of arranging, such as form, instrumentation, tonality, melody, harmony, rhythm, style, etc. 25

#### Form

form.

Musical form is the structure of a musical composition which either indicates a standard type or genre, or the procedures in a specific work. The nomenclature for different types of musical form can be determined by the medium of performance, the technique of composition, or function.<sup>26</sup>

When analyzing the form of a song, it is important to consider melodic and harmonic structure, but also the structure of the lyrics. According to Robert Doezema, there are several typical form models that are often used by songwriters. When it comes to the older song

<sup>26</sup> F. Kirby, "Musical form," Encyclopedia Britannica, January 7, 2015. https://www.britannica.com/art/musical-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> Robert Doezema, Arranging 1 (Berklee College of Music, 1986): p. 1.

forms, especially in folk music, each verse represents an equal subdivision of the lyrical structure of the song through the same melody (AA). In a two-part song form (simple binary form), a verse is followed by a chorus, which has a different melody, harmony, and lyrics compared to the verse (AB). When this musical form is repeated, each verse represents different lyrics, while lyrics of the chorus stay the same (example 2).<sup>27</sup>

## **Example 2 (simple binary form):**

A	В	A	В	
Verse 1	Chorus	Verse 2	Chorus	etc.

Another type of a song form is a complex binary form. In comparison to a simple binary form, a verse and chorus are longer and more elaborate, both lyrically and musically. The verse functions as the introduction to the chorus, and it is called an introductory verse, while the chorus is the main part of the song which may be repeated entirely or partly without the verse (example 3).<sup>28</sup>

#### **Example 3 (complex binary form):**

A	В	В	24.0
Introductory verse	Chorus	Chorus	etc.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> Doezema, *Arranging 1*, p. 2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> Ibid

When it comes to the form of an arrangement, one must present essential elements of a song in a way that is exciting to the listener and preserves the song's musical and lyrical integrity. In order to do so, arrangers often manipulate the song form in order to highlight the most interesting elements, repeat the song form in order to allow additional instrumental or vocal variations or solos, and add new sections composed by them such as introduction, interludes, endings, or tags (example 4 and example 5).<sup>29</sup>

#### **Example 4 (arrangement form, simple binary):**

	A	В		A	В
Instrumental	Verse	Chorus	Instrumental	Verse	Chorus
introduction	(vocal)	(vocal)	interlude	(vocal)	(vocal)

	В	В
Instrumental solo section	Chorus (vocal)	Chorus (vocal)

Repeat, Chorus and Fade

#### **Example 5 (arrangement form, complex binary):**

A	В	В
Introductory verse	Chorus	Solo chorus
(vocal)	a a b a	aaba
	(vocal)	(instrumental)

В	В
Arranger's chorus	Chorus
aaba	aaba
(instrumental)	(vocal)

Tag ending (vocal and instrumental)

21

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> Doezema, *Arranging 1*, p. 5.

#### **Definitions**

Introduction = an instrumental section in the beginning of an arrangement which introduces the mood, the character, and the tonality of music that follows.

Interlude = an instrumental section often similar to the introduction in melody and harmony, which serves as a contrasting section to the main song form; it may be found between two choruses or between a chorus and a new verse.

Tag = a repetitive music idea which is built into a conclusion of the arrangement; it serves to delay the ending.

Arranger's chorus = a chorus in which arranger composes over the form of the song.

Solo chorus/section = a section in which the performer improvises over the entire part of the song form.

#### The process of arranging the chosen songs

Being solely a performer of classical music with little experience in composition and no experience in arranging music, the process of arranging Serbian folk songs *Aj, mene majka jednu ima* and *Lela Vranjanka* was rather challenging. The purpose of this chapter is to serve as an inspiration and possibly a guide to all the musicians who are interested but do not have experience in arranging.

Even though I did not have the same arranging approach when working on these two songs, the first step was the same in both cases – listening and transcribing the main melody, which has been showcased in the previous chapter. For me as a classical musician, the

following step could not have been any other but the determination of the key for each of the songs, which was not an easy task. When looking at the transcription of the song I arranged first – *Aj, mene majka jednu ima* (figure 1b on page 17), one can notice a constant presence of a D-sharp and F-sharp in the melody, with an occasional appearance of a G-sharp. Even though it might not be entirely correct, I decided to think as a classical musician and therefore treat this song as if it was written in the key of E minor, with a G-sharp being a nonharmonic note with the purpose of creating an augmented second, a typical interval for Serbian folk songs. However, when arranging the song, I used its enharmonic equivalent instead (A-flat) in order to simplify the reading of the music for the performer.

When it comes to the form of my arrangement of the song *Aj, mene majka jednu ima*, I did not follow any of the previously mentioned forms, but rather created my own. I decided to start with an introduction which is consisted of three sections – first one played by a solo clarinet and double bass, later joined by violin 2, viola, and cello in the second section, and lastly with a violin solo section with the accompaniment by the other strings. All of these short parts of the introduction were freely composed. Furthermore, instead of introducing the verse after the introduction, I chose to introduce the chorus first. The form that follows after that is a simple repetition of the verse and chorus, which happen three times, and the arrangement is finishing with a closing section, which is actually the identical material introduced in the third section of the introduction (figure 5).

Figure 5 (form of the Aj, mene majka jednu ima arrangement):

Introduction	В	A	В	A	В	A	В	Closing section
a, b, c	chorus	verse	chorus	verse	chorus	verse	chorus	С

Being my first attempt, this arrangement was written with a rather classical mindset, which clearly shows in the harmonization I used throughout the arrangement. Written in the key of E minor, this arrangement is consisted of the actual 5/3 and 7 chords in different inversions, which sometimes creates an unusual harmony for a folk song, especially when there is a nonharmonic note included. For example, if we take a look at the measures 30-33 of this arrangement (example 6), we can recognize the dominant 5/3 chord in measure 30, an augmented 5/3 chord on G and an E minor chord in measure 31, and an augmented 6/3 chord on A followed by a dominant chord of E minor in measures 32 and 33. This kind of harmonization clearly shows the classical mindset and therefore creates an arrangement not so typical for folk music. On the other hand, the constant use of an augmented second, as well as the emphasis on the irregular rhythm 2+2+2+3, preserve the exotic oriental sound typical for Serbian folk music.

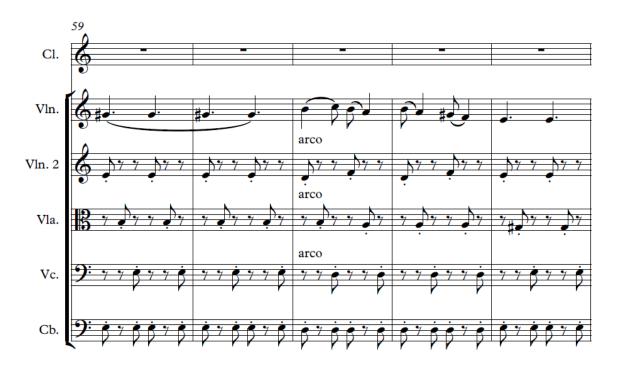
When performing both of these arrangements, it is very important to have in mind the possibility of improvisation, especially in the solo violin and solo clarinet parts. The performer should be familiar with the original version of the song first, in order to be able to create their own contribution to the performance. The addition of trills, glissando, accelerando or rallentando, as well as other characteristics typical for folk music, are always welcome and somewhat expected, since they differentiate a mechanical performance from an authentic and passionate one.

Example 6 (Aj, mene majka jednu ima, mm. 30-33):



When arranging *Lela Vranjanka*, I tried to dettach myself from the classical mindset and find solutions which would be closer to the style of folk music. Looking at the transcription of the song (figure 2b on page 19), the use of natural pitches with a constant presence of a G-sharp could indicate the key of A minor, however, when arranging this song I decided not to focus on the tonality itself, but rather the melody. Therefore, instead of building various chords, I would simply use the pitches used in the melody and adjust the accompaniment according to the melody, sometimes adding a third below or above the pitches of the main line (example 7). This approach resulted in a lot of parallel movement, which motivated me to experiment more with the rhythm, in comparison to my first arrangement. I also added more nonharmonic tones in order to create the sound of the orient, composed more technical passages in the accompaniment section, and added a broader variety when it comes to the use of different registers.

Example 7 (*Lela Vranjanka*, measures 59-63):



When it comes to the form of this arrangement, it could be said that it is somewhat similar to the simple binary form shown in example 4 (page 27), however, it is not quite the same. Here, I decided to follow the structure of the original version of the song with the additions of an arranged beginning and arranged end, which resulted in a double introduction in the beginning and double chorus at the end (figure 6).

Figure 6 (form of the *Lela Vranjanka* arrangement):

Introduction	Introduction	A	В	Instrumental interlude	A	В	В
clarinet and viola	strings	verse	chorus	(same as introduction)	verse	chorus	chorus

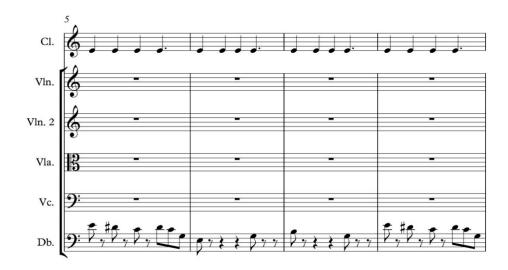
Although challenging, exploring the world of arranging is also very interesting and useful for learning certain aspects of music, which are not necessarily needed or used when performing. I came to a conclusion that it is important to follow certain rules, especially the basic ones. However, I believe that arranging relies more on the creativity of the author, as well as their proneness to experimenting with the freedom that arranging itself provides. Since the evaluation of any kind of art relies on a subjective opinion and individual preference, the same happens with different compositions, performances, and arrangements, which means that there is no ultimate truth whether a piece of music is of a high or low quality. However, just as in performing or any other profession, one thing remains – practice makes perfect or at least brings one closer to a refined result.

## IV. ARRANGEMENTS

This chapter is a representation of the final arrangements of the songs *Aj, mene majka jednu ima* and *Lela Vranjanka*.

## Aj, mene majka jednu ima

























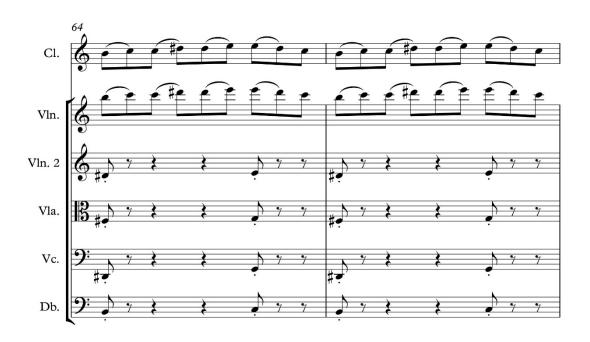








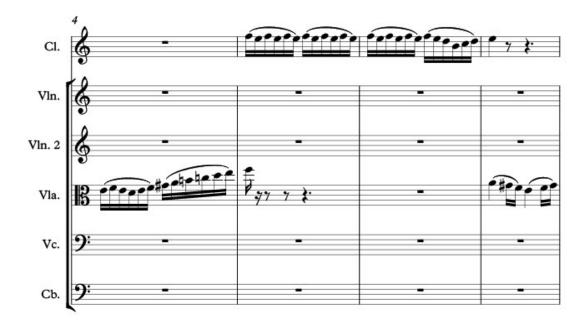


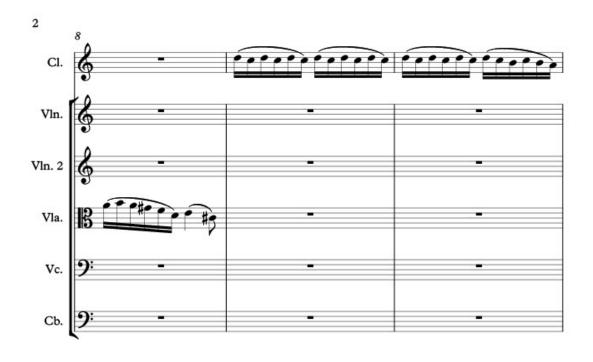


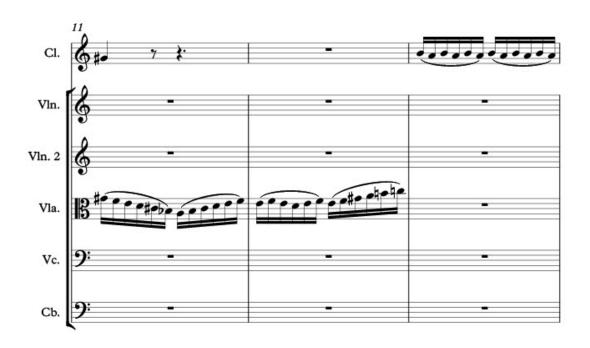


## Lela Vranjanka



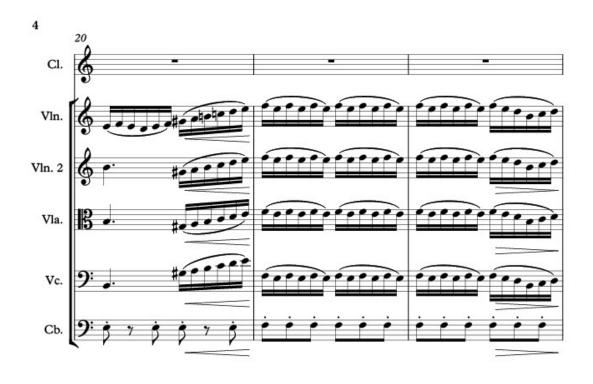


















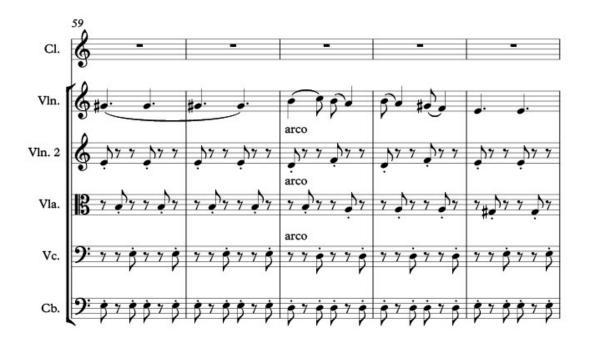


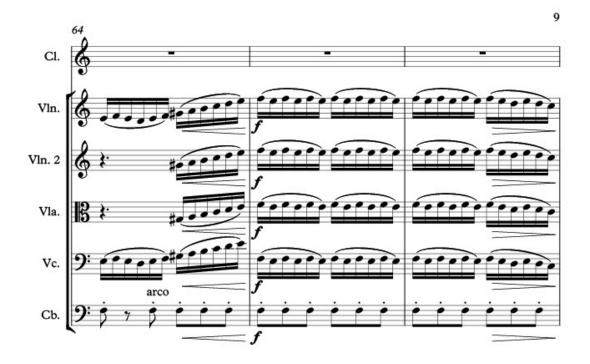
























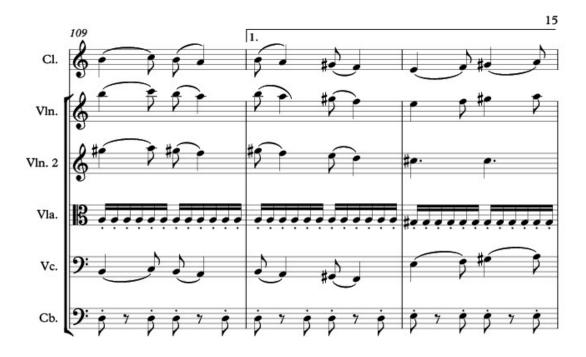


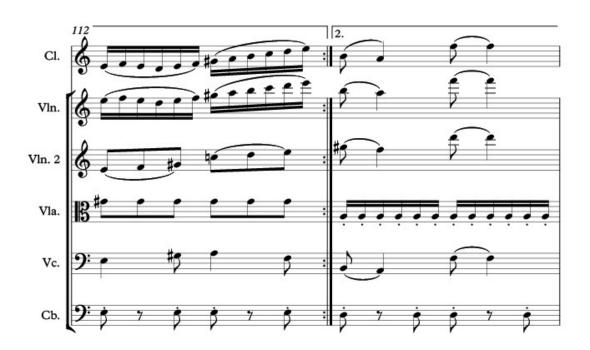














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