AN INTRODUCTION TO SERBIAN PIANO MUSIC: MUSICAL AND CULTURAL INFLUENCES ON THREE SELECTED COMPOSERS

Jelena Djukic

*University of Nebraska - Lincoln, lenayu87@gmail.com*

Follow this and additional works at: [http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/musicstudent](http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/musicstudent)

Part of the [Composition Commons](http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/musicstudent/102), [European Languages and Societies Commons](http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/musicstudent/102), and the [Musicology Commons](http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/musicstudent/102)

Djukic, Jelena, "AN INTRODUCTION TO SERBIAN PIANO MUSIC: MUSICAL AND CULTURAL INFLUENCES ON THREE SELECTED COMPOSERS" (2016). Student Research, Creative Activity, and Performance - School of Music. 102.

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Music, School of at DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln. It has been accepted for inclusion in Student Research, Creative Activity, and Performance - School of Music by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln.
AN INTRODUCTION TO SERBIAN PIANO MUSIC:
MUSICAL AND CULTURAL INFLUENCES ON THREE SELECTED COMPOSERS

by

Jelena Dukic

A Doctoral Document

Presented to the Faculty of
The Graduate College at the University of Nebraska
In Partial Fulfillment of Requirements
For the Degree of Doctor of Musical Arts

Major: Music

Under the Supervision of Professor Paul Barnes

Lincoln, Nebraska
December, 2016
AN INTRODUCTION TO SERBIAN PIANO MUSIC:

MUSICAL AND CULTURAL INFLUENCES ON THREE SELECTED COMPOSERS

Jelena Dukic, D.M.A.

University of Nebraska, 2016

Adviser: Paul Barnes

Serbia is a country that has survived many political and religious conflicts. Perhaps the best way to describe Serbian culture and tradition would be a country whose inhabitants struggled for many years, yet managed to incorporate the best elements of its conquerors’ cultures. Serbian musical identity is an amalgam of local and international influences and styles.

Different foreign authorities occupied this country for centuries. The Danube River was the main border of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, located in the north, and the Turkish Ottoman Empire, situated south of the Danube. The Austro-Hungarian influences on Serbian music are most evident in piano music played at numerous salons, while the Ottoman Empire’s impact derives from its folk melodies and rhythms that were absorbed into Serbian culture.

This document focuses on three Serbian composers from three different eras, educated in three distinct cultures. The first composer, Kornelije Stankovic was the first Serbian composer to be educated in Vienna; his studies were shaped by the salon music of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and by traditional Serbian folk music. The second composer, Isidor Bajic was educated in Budapest; his piano works, popular among young musicians are included here due to their impact on the development of classical music in
Serbia. Svetozar Sasa Kovacevic, the third Serbian composer, was trained entirely in Serbia and wrote music inspired by Bach and Liszt.

This presentation and description of selected Serbian music will benefit pianists of any nationality. Those of Serbian heritage will recognize the development of their nation’s musical style throughout history, as exemplified by the chosen composers’ musical input; and non Serbian performers will have the opportunity to develop an appreciation for the great piano works composed in Serbia. The multinational threads of Serbian music history present a beautiful image: a country, resolutely persisting despite oppression, gathering worthy musical elements to create a unique tapestry.
This document is dedicated to my parents, Petar and Nada Dukic
# Table of Contents

**INTRODUCTION** ...............................................................................................................................................1

**CHAPTER I:** An overview of the history of Serbia from the 18th century to the beginning of the 20\(^{\text{th}}\) century..............................................................................................................................2

**CHAPTER II:** Salon music and classical music in Serbia in the 19\(^{\text{th}}\) century........................................8

**CHAPTER III:** Kornelije Stankovic (1831-1865)..........................................................................................15

  Biography.......................................................................................................................................................15

  Works and stylistic characteristics ..................................................................................................................17

**CHAPTER IV:** Isidor Bajic (1878-1915).................................................................................................30

  Biography.......................................................................................................................................................30

  Works and stylistic characteristics ..................................................................................................................34

**CHAPTER V:** Svetozar Sasa Kovacevic (1950-present)............................................................................49

  Biography.......................................................................................................................................................49

  Works and stylistic characteristics ..................................................................................................................51

**CHAPTER VI:** Conclusion ........................................................................................................................61

**BIBLIOGRAPHY** ...........................................................................................................................................63
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>Map of Europe in the 19th century</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>Mahmud II (1789-1839)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>Franz Joseph I of Austria (1848-1916)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>Milos Obrenovic (1780-1860)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>Mihailo Obrenovic (1823-1868)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>Milan Obrenovic (1854-1901)</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>Salon music in royal court in Vienna</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>Jovanka Stojkovic (1855-1892)</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>Kornelije Stankovic (1831-1865)</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>Kornelije Stankovic: Book I, Lyric song No. 7, mm. 1-5</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>Kornelije Stankovic: Book I, Melancholic song No. 2, mm. 1-4</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>Kornelije Stankovic: Book I, Folk song No. 5, mm. 1-4</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>Kornelije Stankovic: Book II, Song No. 1, mm. 1-4</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>Kornelije Stankovic: Book II, Song No. 1, Var. No. 1, mm. 1-4</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>Kornelije Stankovic: Book II, Song No. 2, mm. 1-4</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>Kornelije Stankovic: Book II, Song No. 2, Var. No. 1, mm. 1-4</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>Kornelije Stankovic: Serbian Dances, <em>Smederevka</em>, mm. 1-8</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>Kornelije Stankovic: Serbian Dances, <em>Paracinka</em>, mm. 1-5</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>Kornelije Stankovic: <em>Slavonic quadrille, Pantalon</em>, mm. 1-6</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.12</td>
<td>Kornelije Stankovic: <em>Slavonic quadrille, L’été</em>, mm. 1-4</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.13</td>
<td>Kornelije Stankovic: <em>Slavonic quadrille, Poule</em>, mm. 1-6</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 3.14: Kornelije Stankovic: *Slavonic quadrille, Trenis*, mm. 1-4…………………………26

Figure 3.15: Kornelije Stankovic: *Slavonic quadrille, Pastourelle*, mm. 21-33 ..............27

Figure 3.16: Kornelije Stankovic: *Slavonic quadrille, Finale*, mm. 21-37 .........................27

Figure 4.1: Isidor Bajic (1878-1915) ................................................................................30

Figure 4.2: Music School “Isidor Bajic” (in the past) ......................................................... 33

Figure 4.3: Music School “Isidor Bajic” (present time)........................................................ 33

Figure 4.4: Isidor Bajic: *An Album of Compositions*, Piece I, mm. 1-6.............................38

Figure 4.5: Isidor Bajic: *An Album of Compositions*, Piece II, mm. 1-3 .........................39

Figure 4.6: Isidor Bajic: *An Album of Compositions*, Piece II, mm. 10-12. ....................40

Figure 4.7: Isidor Bajic: *An Album of Compositions*, Piece III, mm. 1-6.....................40

Figure 4.8: Isidor Bajic: *An Album of Compositions*, Piece V, mm. 1-6.........................41

Figure 4.9: Isidor Bajic: *An Album of Compositions*, Piece VI, mm. 21-34..................41

Figure 4.10: Isidor Bajic: *An Album of Compositions*, Piece VII, mm. 1-8 ..............42

Figure 4.11: Isidor Bajic: *An Album of Compositions*, Piece VII, mm. 129-139 ..........42

Figure 4.12: Isidor Bajic: *An Album of Composition*, Piece VII, mm. 9-24 ..................43

Figure 4.13: Isidor Bajic: *An Album of Composition*, Piece VIII, mm. 53-58............43

Figure 4.14: Isidor Bajic: *An Album of Composition*, Piece VIII, mm. 85-89.............44

Figure 4.15: Isidor Bajic: *Serbian Rhapsody*, mm. 1-8..................................................45

Figure 4.16: Isidor Bajic: *Serbian Rhapsody*, mm. 35 .....................................................45

Figure 4.17: Isidor Bajic: *Serbian Rhapsody*, mm. 39 .....................................................46

Figure 4.18: Stanislav Binicki: *March on Drina*, mm. 1-16 .........................................47

Figure 4.19: Isidor Bajic: *Serbian Rhapsody* mm. 54-55 .............................................47

Figure 5.1: Svetozar Kovacevic: Svetozar Kovacevic (1950-present) .........................50
Figure 5.2: Svetozar Kovacevic (His and J. S. Bach’s portrait on the wall) ..................52
Figure 5.3: Svetozar Kovacevic: Prelude and Fugue in D minor mm. 1-4 ....................54
Figure 5.4: Svetozar Kovacevic: Prelude and Fugue in D minor, mm. 5-6 ...................55
Figure 5.5: Svetozar Kovacevic: Prelude and Fugue in D minor, mm. 14-15 ............55
Figure 5.6: Svetozar Kovacevic: Prelude and Fugue in D minor, mm. 18-19 .............55
Figure 5.7: Svetozar Kovacevic: Prelude and Fugue in D minor, mm. 41-47 ............56
Figure 5.8: Svetozar Kovacevic: Prelude and Fugue in D minor, mm. 73-75 .............57
Figure 5.9: Svetozar Kovacevic: Prelude and Fugue in D minor, mm. 100-103 ..........57
Figure 5.10: Svetozar Kovacevic: Prelude and Fugue in D minor, mm. 95-97 ...........58
Figure 5.11: Svetozar Kovacevic: Prelude and Fugue in D minor, mm. 103-106 .........58
Figure 5.12: Svetozar Kovacevic: Hungarian Fantasy in G minor, mm. 1-2 .............59
Figure 5.13: Svetozar Kovacevic: Hungarian Fantasy in G minor, mm. 16-19 ...........59
Figure 5.14: Svetozar Kovacevic: Hungarian Fantasy in G minor, m. 5 ....................60
Figure 5.15: Svetozar Kovacevic: Hungarian Fantasy in G minor, m. 10 .................60
Introduction

My interest in Serbian music was awakened during my high school music studies in my home city of Novi Sad. My piano professor, Ivana Branovacki, shared with me her knowledge and love of Serbian music and our musical heritage. Serbian composers such as Stankovic and Bajic, whose music will be discussed in the following chapters of this document, were admired as great philosophers and teachers by the Serbian royal family, as well as by ordinary people.

This document advocates for the worthy but under-appreciated works of significant Serbian composers by examining the impact upon composition of the nation’s political and religious infrastructure, foreign versus domestic education, and traditional Serbian music. The first chapter of this document introduces the reader to the historical and religious concepts that influenced the creation of music in Serbia over several centuries. Specifically, Chapter II traces the introduction of Western classical music to Serbia and the subsequent development of Serbian salon music. Chapters III through V present three Serbian composers from different eras educated in Vienna, Budapest, and Serbia, revealing an interesting cross-section of music inspired by both Serbian folk music and Western European composers. The goal of this document and my future recitals is to promote the music of three distinguished Serbian composers of the 19th and 20th centuries and explore their influence on contemporary composers.
CHAPTER I

An overview of the history of Serbia
from the 18th century to the beginning of the 20th century

Serbia is a country whose inhabitants are accustomed to great struggle. They were under foreign occupation for several centuries, during which time they strove to maintain their identity while fighting for survival. The desire to attain freedom led to numerous wars for independence. While the perseverance of Serbian citizens eventually achieved freedom in 1867, modern generations continue to feel the consequences and bear the scars of those difficult years. Wars combined different cultures and religions in Serbian territory and by that, influenced the creation of a unique musical palette.

One contemporary popular song provides an apt description of Balkan, the land where Serbia is located.

“…This here is Balkan,
The country of dreams,
Between powerful forces of good and evil...
Here, anyone can be an enemy and the brother
Where every fifty years the war starts…”

Of the many countries that have attempted to conquer Serbia, two empires had a significant effect on the nation’s musical development. The first was the Austro-

---

1 The Balkan Peninsula easternmost of Europe’s three great southern peninsulas usually characterized as comprising Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, and Slovenia (http://www.britannica.com/place/Balkans)
2 Lyrics taken from the song “Ovo je Balkan” (This is the Balkan) by well-known Serbian musician Momcilo Bajagić-Bajaga
Hungarian Empire, located in the central part of Europe, north of the Danube River. The second, located south of the Danube, was the powerful Ottoman Empire. Serbian composers were introduced to the musical styles of these empires, which later on influenced musical development in Serbia.

Figure 1.1: Map of Europe in the 19th Century

The first empire, which occupied Serbia for five centuries, was the Ottoman Empire, established in 1299 by Osman I. The Ottoman Empire existed until 1923. Mahmud II was the primary ruler in the 19th century. This culture influenced Serbian music with its unique melodic and rhythmic patterns, which will be explored later in the document.

3 http://www.stylepinner.com/19th-century-europe-politics/MTI0aC1jZW50dXJ5LWV1cm9wZS1wb2xpdGljcw/
Serbia’s contribution during empirical rule changed with the transfer of power from the Ottoman Empire to the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and again upon winning independence from foreign invaders in 1878.

During the 17th century, Serbia was under Ottoman occupation. In 1718, Austria occupied the northern part of Serbia. The rivers Danube and Sava were the main borders between the two empires. People who lived in the northern part of Serbia were able to retain their culture and traditions. On the other hand, those who dwelt south of the river had a difficult time adjusting to Turkish rule. Average citizens were forced to change...

---

4 http://www.britannica.com/biography/Mahmud-II-Ottoman-sultan
their religion from Orthodox Christianity to Islam, resulting in a fading sense of identity in future generations.

The Habsburg family ruled major portions of Europe from their capital in Vienna for the better part of six hundred years. In 1867, Hungary, one of the countries under the administration of the Habsburgs, requested autonomy. Austria and Hungary, as a joint formation, created the new name for the Empire: the Austro-Hungarian Empire, which ruled from 1867 to 1918. Franz Joseph I, a member of the royal family, was on the throne from the end of the 19th to the beginning of the 20th century. The specific musical genre, salon music, developed in the Austro-Hungarian Empire and this genre affected the establishment of music composed by Serbian composers in the 19th century.

Figure 1.3: Franz Joseph I of Austria (1848-1916)5

5 http://www.britannica.com/biography/Franz-Joseph
In the 19th century, the Serbs began seeing freedom, engaging in several battles under the guidance of the royal family Karadjordjevic. However, it was the royal family Obrenovic and its successors who took part in the initial steps toward establishing independence for Serbia. In 1817, Milos Obrenovic, a member of the royal family, founded the Principality of Serbia under Ottoman rule. During that time, Serbia gradually started developing an economy, industries, and a judicial system. Mihailo Obrenovic achieved full independence for Serbia in 1867, and the free nation became a kingdom in 1882 as a result of Milan Obrenovic’s efforts.

Figure 1.4: Milos Obrenovic (1780-1860)

Figure 1.5: Mihailo Obrenovic (1823-1868)

---

6 Milos Obrenovic was Prince of Serbia from 1815-1839, and again from 1858-1860. He participated in the First Serbian Uprising, led Serbs in the Second Serbian Uprising, and founded the House of Obrenović. Under his rule, Serbia became an autonomous principality within the Ottoman Empire. (http://www.britannica.com/biography/Milos)

7 Mihailo Obrenovic was a member of the royal family.

8 Milan Obrenovic was the ruler of Serbia from 1868 to 1889, first as prince (1868-1882), then as king (1882-1889). (http://www.britannica.com/biography/Milan-IV)

9 http://www.britannica.com/biography/Milos

10 http://www.britannica.com/biography/Michael-III-prince-of-Serbia
The three composers honored in this document were profoundly affected by the culture and religion of these two empires, and by the Serbian royal families from the end of the 19th to the beginning of the 20th century. The inspirations are notable in the melodies, harmonies, forms, and dedications of the compositions created. The composers often revised favorite folk melodies of the royal family to create new compositions dedicated to the Serbian rulers.

---

11 http://www.britannica.com/biography/Milan-IV
CHAPTER II

Salon music and classical music in Serbia in the 19th century

Salon music was a common name for the music performed in middle-class homes and royal courts. Salon music was first established in the Habsburg Monarchy around 1830, and was later transferred to the territory of the Principality of Serbia. The composers of two territories, the Habsburg monarchy (Vienna and Central Europe) north of Danube and the Balkan countries (Serbia, Romania, and Greece) in the south, followed the established patterns in composing salon music. These specific patterns will be explored later in the document.

Types of music common in the salon genre include fantasies, mazurkas, boleros, songs without words, bagatelles, etudes, impromptus, and polonaises. The most popular types for audiences were themes with variations and operatic or symphonic transcriptions for piano, the most widely played instrument among musicians at that time. During the 18th century, one could hear these types of composition performed in big salons in France, which were rooms located within palaces where the wealthiest people spent their free time. The possession of salons and the ownership of pianos were symbols of wealth and affluence among the royalty and middle class.

Salon patrons included Sébastien Erard, Henri Herz and Ignaz Pleyel. Clara Wieck, a well-known pianist, was among the musicians who performed in some of those

---

venues, notably in Erard’s salon in 1839. Some of the first salon music composers, who came from Western Europe, were Joseph Czerny, Ferdinand Gruber, Johann Nepomuk Kafke, and Ferdinand Wald Muller. These composers wanted to display not only their virtuosity, but also the physical and musical possibilities of the piano. Several of the technical challenges included crossing hands on the keyboard, “bravura” octaves, and virtuoso passage work.

Among the first salon piano pieces to be performed were Collections of Serbian Songs and Dances by Kornelije Stankovic, published in 1862-1863. He was the first major Serbian composer to be educated in Vienna, where he premiered these pieces, as will be discussed in the following chapters. A number of the pieces from this period were commissioned by various singing societies in Serbia, or by the current lord, duke, or prince.

Over time, many Serbian composers traveled abroad to learn more about music and culture in general, and to share that knowledge at home for the benefit of future Serbian musicians. Most of these composers went to Vienna or Budapest to study with renowned European professors and musicians. Middle class people in Serbia were passionate about upper-class status and upward social mobility, as evidenced by peoples’ desire to own a piano, and to accrue enough money to buy music scores and pay music

teachers. In the royal Serbian family, the daughters had the privilege of learning to play the piano, as well as the opportunity to study other aspects of music, foreign languages, and history of the arts. The sons, on the other hand, had to serve in the army. Members of the middle class enjoyed going to the theater, concerts, and various other cultural events.

Some of the characteristics of salon music include, predominantly homophonic texture, virtuosic melodic material, repetition of certain melodic or rhythmic patterns, brevity, and the expression of a single emotion or character. These characteristics of salon music will be explored in detail in subsequent chapters.

Most of the time, composers chose to harmonize a preexisting folk melody rather than compose an original tune. The supporting harmonization was executed with simple broken or blocked chords. The repetitions of particular melodic figures or harmonic structures were one of the favorite compositional devices used in creating salon music. Some of the types of music used were fantasies quadrilles, waltz, and polkas. “Quadrilles” were European dances from the 18th and 19th century, performed by four couples in rectangular formation. The five movements of the quadrille are Le Pantalon (Trousers), L’été (Summer), La Poule (The Hen), La Pastourelle (The Shepherd Girl), and Finale.18

---

Piano music in Serbia started to flourish in the 19th century. The earlier lack of musical instruments, professional teachers, and educated musicians led to this late development of classical music compared with the other parts of Europe. In addition, Serbia was under foreign occupation for many years. After several wars, battles, Ottoman attacks, and eventual industrial development, the economically stronger country was able to concentrate more on its arts and culture.  

According to one study, the first piano was brought to Prince Milos Obrenovic’s court in 1824, whereupon his daughter, Princess Jelisaveta, expressed her desire to learn to play. A second study stated that the first piano in Serbia arrived at the home of Prince Milos’s brother, Jevrem Obrenovic, and that his daughter Anka was the first princess to play the instrument. Both sources show that the Serbian royal family was closely related

---

to professional musicians and piano teachers. They wanted future generations, especially their daughters, to be well educated and respected in the realm of music and culture in Serbia.\footnote{Dragana Jeremic Molnar. \textit{Serbian Piano Music in the Romantic Period 1841-1914} (Novi Sad: Matica Srpska, 2006), 35.}

Aleksandar Morfidis-Nisis made significant contributions to the development of classical piano music. One of his major contributions was the creation of the first original piano composition in Vojvodina, in the northern part of Serbia, the waltz \textit{Pozdrav Srpskim Devama} (“Greetings to Serbian Maidens”) (1841).\footnote{Dragana Jeremic Molnar. \textit{Serbian Piano Music in the Romantic Period 1841-1914} (Novi Sad: Matica Srpska, 2006), 37.}

Jovanka Stojkovic, one of Liszt’s students, was a successful performer in Europe and in her home country Serbia. She was an active pianist during the late 1880s and 1890s. Jovanka performed in major cultural centers such as London, Paris, Budapest, and Graz. Her repertoire included works by Beethoven, Chopin, Mendelsohn, Rubinstein, Tchaikovsky, and others.\footnote{http://www.riznicasrpska.net/muzika/index.php?topic=29.0}
The circle of musicians important in the next period in Serbia includes Kornelije Stankovic, Jovan Pacu, and Robert Tolinger. Stankovic studied in Vienna from 1861 to 1863, during which time he embarked on a successful concert tour, playing pieces by upcoming composers, transcriptions of operas and symphonies, and his own works. His life and music will be explored in more detail in the next chapter.

Jovan Pacu (1847-1902) wrote themes and variations for piano, and had an affinity for integrating folk melodies into his instrumental works. Some of his most successful pieces include Rhapsody, Three Kola (three dances), and several song cycles based on the texts of contemporary Serbian poets.

The third musician from this group was a Czech composer, Robert Tolinger (1859-1911). His compositions comprised dances, including Backa poskokica,
Beogradjanka, Biserka, Svatovac, Pictures From Children Lives (Op.8), Youth and Happiness (Op.9), and 2 Serbian Dances for 4 hands (Op.11).

At the beginning of the 20th century, piano music in Serbia underwent some structural and stylistic changes:

- Composers wrote less piano music
- The popularity of the theme and variations form was diminished
- Fugues, fantasies, and rhapsodies were favored
- Composers began to utilize more progressive and structurally complex writing strategies

Some of the composers of the early 20th century included Vladimir Djordjevic, Stanislav Binicki, Isidor Bajic, Petar Konjovic, Stevan Hristic, and Miloje Milojevic.

Stylistically, the piano music in particular of Isidor Bajic and Kornelije Stankovic is the most representative of piano music in Vojvodina, as will be discussed in the next chapter.

Several developments, including the introduction of the gramophone and American 20th century music, contributed to the disappearance of salon music. At the beginning of World War I, changing musical trends and the international political climate took center stage, and salon music slowly became a thing of the past for many people.
Kornelije Stankovic (1831-1865), born in the Serbian part of Budim, is considered to be the first educated Serbian musician in the 19th century. Stankovic was a pianist, violinist, composer, and choral conductor. He studied first in Budim, and then in 1850 moved to Vienna, where he learned harmony, counterpoint, composition, and piano performance under the tutelage of Simon Sechter and H. P. Willmers.\(^{25}\) One of the people who influenced his musical and social development in Vienna was Vuk Karadzic.\(^ {26}\) His first pieces were settings of the Orthodox liturgy. After their premieres in 1851 and 1852, Stankovic realized that he lacked real experience and knowledge of the Serbian religious tradition: therefore, he spent 1855-1857 in Sremski Karlovci, where he collected and harmonized Serbian liturgical chant.\(^ {27}\) This resulted in a specific chant called “Karlovačko pojanje” (Karlovci’ chant).

\(^{25}\) Anton Bruckner’s professor.

\(^{26}\) Vuk Stefanovic Karadzic (7 November 1787 – 7 February 1864) was a Serbian philologist and linguist who was the major reformer of the Serbian language. For his collections of songs, fairy tales, and riddles, he merits the title of father of Serbian folklore. He authored the first Serbian dictionary in his new reformed language. In addition, he translated the New Testament to the reformed Serbian language. (http://www.britannica.com/biography/Vuk-Stefanovic-Karadzic)

Serbian liturgical chant has a fascinating history. Stankovic wanted to develop a new approach to chanting. Up to beginning of the 19th century, the chant melody was presented in one voice. He harmonized existing chants and composed liturgies that were written for several voices. Most of his harmonic structures remained diatonic, with few chromatic influences, reflecting the simplicity of traditional chant melodies.

After the time he spent in Karlovci, Stankovic moved to Belgrade where, in 1863, he became the main conductor of the Belgrade Singing Society. Shortly thereafter, he contracted tuberculosis which stopped him from pursuing his career further. Unfortunately, the short life of this composer ended in Budim in 1865.

---

28 http://www.medias.rs/kornelije-stankovic-kompozitor-pijanista-i-horovodja
Works and stylistic characteristics

Stankovic is considered to be one of the creators of the national style of piano music in Serbia. He struggled to define the unique forms used to compose his works, while incorporating folk traditions into his writing. As Prof. Danica Petrovic mentioned:

The lack of musically literate and educated Serbs who could collect and support traditional music culture was a problem, which attracted attention of many, [sic] educated Serbs, both laymen and church hierarchy, in the first half of the 19th century.

Young Serbian musicians from Vienna started coming to the newly formed Princedom of Serbia after 1830, to establish the first musical institutions and to promote and spread Serbian musical literacy. Stankovic was among them. A population that had been under the Ottoman Empire for decades began to develop traditional and national characteristics after gaining full independence.

Stankovic’s compositional style is an amalgamation of Serbian cultural music and Western classical tradition. He absorbed the works of Mozart, Beethoven, and Schubert in Vienna, which provided insight into the style and structure he wished to use in his own music. On the other hand, he integrated Serbian folk melodies, Turkish scales, Hungarian rhythms, and Bulgarian melodies to lend a sense of cultural identity to his writing.

Although Stankovic composed some sacred works, including two liturgies (Vienna, 1851 and 1852) and a book of liturgical chant (1862), the main purpose

30 http://www.riznicasrpska.net/muzika/index.php?topic=58.0
of this chapter is to examine Stankovic’s secular works. They are based on traditional folk melodies composed for voice and piano, solo choir, and solo piano. All of these pieces were written in Vienna.\footnote{Dragana Jeremic Molnar. *Serbian Piano Music in the Romantic Period 1841-1914* (Novi Sad: Matica Srpska, 2006),65.}

Stankovic’s piano works may be divided into five different groups:

**Serbian Folk Songs I** (1862)
- *Prolecela saren-tica perja sarena*
- *Kalopero pero*
- *Oj devojko duso moja*
- *Sunce jarko ne sijas jednako*
- *Aj sjela moma na pendzeru*
- *Car Vezia na divan poziva*
- *Devojka sokolu zulum ucinila*
- *Momce mi prom’ce kroz selo*
- *Dje si bila Jano?*
- *Starac sedi na orahu*
- *Cujes li Kato?*
- *Svatovac – Serbian Dance*

**Serbian Folk Songs II** (1863)
- *Prag je ovo milog Srba*
- *Devojka se u Drenovcu kupa*
- *Oj talasi mili hajte*
- *Rado ide Srbin u vojnike*
- *Ti sozdavi oko*
- *Evo desnice verne*

**Serbian Folk Dances**
- *Sremsko kolo Op. 7* (1857)
- *Oro* (1862)
- *Smederevka* (1863)
- *Paracinka* (1863)

**Quadrilles and Polkas**
- *Slavonic Quadrille* (1855)
- *Serbian Quadrille* (1859)
- *Bulgarian Quadrille* (1862)
- *Bratimstvo Polka* (1862)
Variations on Serbian Folk Songs

- Variations on the song *Ustaj, ustaj, Srbine* Op.3 (1853)
- Variations on the song *Secas li se onog sata?* Op.4 (1854)
- Variations on the song *Sto se bore misli moje* Op.6 (1857)

**Serbian Folk Songs Book I and II**

Stankovic published two collections of Serbian folk songs, harmonized for piano in Vienna in 1862 and 1863. The original title was “Srpske narodne pesme” (“Serbian Folk Songs”). The first book contains twelve folk songs and was dedicated to a Serbian royal family member, His Excellency Mihailo Obrenovic, Prince of Serbia. Stankovic chose the songs very carefully, combining them based on different characters or accompaniment patterns. There are lyric, melancholic, and humorous songs in the first book. The composer dictates specific tempo markings and instructions for each group of songs. The lyric songs are marked with *Andante*, the melancholic with *Adagio con espressione, Adagio espressivo, or Adagio maestoso*. The tempi for the humorous songs are *Allegretto scherzando, Andante con anima, Allegretto, and Andante giocoso*. Six of the songs are extended by one or two variations.
Figure 3.2: Kornelije Stankovic: Book I, Lyric song No.7, *Devojka sokolu zulum ucinila*, mm.1-5.

Figure 3.3: Kornelije Stankovic: Book I, Melancholic song No.2, *Kalopero pero!* mm.1-4.

Figure 3.4: Kornelije Stankovic: Book I, Folk song No.5, *Aj sjela moma na pendzeru*, mm.1-4.
The second book (1863) was dedicated to His Excellency Mr. V. P. Balabin, the Russian imperial emissary in Vienna. In this book, only the second song uses folk material. Songs Nos.1, 4, and 6 are titled national and patriotic songs, from nineteenth-century Serbia and Croatia. The second book contains fewer songs than the first, but they have more complex piano accompaniment, including virtuoso passage work, broken chords, parallel octaves, and almost all boast one or two variations in tempo of the marches or lyrical *Andante.* The songs may be played separately or as an entire collection.

Some of the technical challenges of this book are presented in the following examples and include quick chord repetition (Fig. 4.5), fast octave passages (Fig. 4.6), embedded melodies (Fig. 4.7), and repeated notes (Fig. 4.8):

![Figure 3.5: Kornelije Stankovic: Book II, Song No.1, Prag je ovo milog Srba, theme mm.1-4.](image_url)

---

Figure 3.6: Kornelije Stankovic: Book II, Song No.1, Variation No.1 mm.1-4.

Figure 3.7: Kornelije Stankovic: Book II, Song No.2, Devojka se u Drenovcu kupa, Theme, mm.1-4.

Figure 3.8: Kornelije Stankovic: Book II, Song No.2, Variation No.1 mm.1-4.
**Serbian Dances**

*Serbian Dances* were original folk melodies transcribed for voice and piano, or solo piano. They were published either as solo pieces or in a collection of Serbian folk songs. In this particular set, there are eight dances. A brief description of two dances, *Smederevka* and *Paracinka*, will be presented in the following examples.

*Smederevka* is in binary form with contrasting tempi to mark each section *(Andante grazioso- Piú Vivo).*

![Image of Smederevka sheet music]

Figure 3.9: Kornelije Stankovic: Serbian Dances, *Smederevka*, mm.1-8.

*Paracinka* is written in the form of AA. The second part of the piece contains the same material an octave higher. Both dances are written in D major, in 2/4 meter.
Quadrilles and Polkas

Quadrilles were a popular type of rectangular dance performed in different countries. These quadrilles contain Serbian, Romanian, Ukrainian, Czech, and Moravian melodic material. Stankovic employed the traditional structure of six movements for each of his three quadrilles. The movements are “Le Pantalon” (Trousers), “L’été” (Summer), “La Poule” (The Hen), “Trenis”, “La Pastourelle” (The Shepherd Girl) and “Finale”, each of which is written in 2/4 meter and is approximately 32-48 measures long. To elucidate the quadrille form, an overview of the Slavonic quadrille follows.

The first movement of the Slavonic quadrille, “Le Pantalon,” is written in C major in the rondo form of ABACA. The quadrille contains three Serbian songs that describe parents’ babbling to young family members. Each section contains
eight measures. In this movement, the composer emphasizes the melody in parallel thirds with a broken-chord accompaniment.

![Figure 3.11: Kornelije Stankovic: Slavonic quadrille, “Le Pantalon, “ mm.1-6.](image)

The second movement, “L’été,” is in A minor in ternary form (ABA) and contains Russian gypsy folk songs. The first A section is eight measures long, while the B section is sixteen measures long. This movement highlights staccato articulation with broken chords and some parallel octaves.

![Figure 3.12: Kornelije Stankovic: Slavonic quadrille, “L’été,” mm.1-4.](image)

“Poule” is the third movement of the Slavonic quadrille. The form of this movement is an Introduction followed by a rondo ABACA. It is written in 6/8
meter in the key of A major. The main melody is displayed in octaves and chordal harmonies. For programmatic content, Stankovic draws upon two folk songs that describe the peacefulness of a rural morning.

![Figure 3.13: Kornelije Stankovic: Slavonic quadrille, “Poule,” mm.1-6.](image)

The fourth movement is entitled “Trenis,” written in D major in ABA form. The prime characteristic is again the melody, arrayed in thirds accompanied by broken chords. Stankovic employs a love folk song for this movement.

![Figure 3.14: Kornelije Stankovic: Slavonic quadrille, “Trenis,” mm.1-4.](image)

“Pastourelle,” the fifth movement, is written in G minor and contains Russian melodies. The form of the piece is ABCDA. The composer expended the
use of the keyboard in this movement by composing melodies in octaves and chords in both hands and by favoring forte and fortissimo dynamics.

Figure 3.15: Kornelije Stankovic: Slavonic quadrille, “Pastourelle,” mm.21-33.

“Finale” is the last movement of the quadrille. After a brief introduction of four measures, the form of the piece is ABA. Stankovic fashioned the accompaniment from large leaps that resonate as a strong and majestic ending to the set.

Figure 3.16: Kornelije Stankovic: Slavonic quadrille, “Finale,” mm. 21-37.
Variations on Serbian Folk Songs

All three sets of variations have specific dedications. The first set was dedicated to Mihailo Obrenovic, the Serbian Prince. The second set was also dedicated to a member of the royal family, princess Julia Obrenovic. The third set, Variations on the song *Sto se bore misli moje*, Op.6 (1857) honored the Municipality of Pancevo, a city in Serbia.

Stankovic expressed the best elements of his compositional style in these three sets of variations, which were written in virtuoso style, with elegant ornamented melodies. The sets begin with basic harmonic structure and technical expectations. Later on, the increasingly technical challenges required extensive preparation for performance. According to several sources, Liszt and Talberg influenced Stankovic the most during the drafting of these variation sets.33 Although no record indicates that Stankovic ever played any of Chopin’s pieces, all three sets of variations resemble Chopin’s and Field’s nocturnes.

Stankovic was among the first composers to explore a combination of Viennese salon music and Serbian folk tradition. Although Stankovic’s use of harmony and texture clearly speaks the Viennese classical language the Serbian quality of his music is evidenced by his consistent employment of Serbian folk songs, as well as his works’ dedication to Serbian royalty. Stankovic’s works were supported and recognized by both the Habsburg Monarchy and the Princedom of Serbia. Several of his contemporary colleagues, including Nikolai

---

Rimsky-Korsakov and Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky, also recognized his works through music critics. However, despite Korenelije Stankovic’s local renown, many of his pieces have yet to be included in the standard recital repertoire.

CHAPTER IV

Isidor Bajic (1878-1915)

Biography

The second composer that we will examine is Isidor Bajic, born in Kula, Vojvodina on August 16th, 1878, thirteen years after the death of Stankovic. Bajic died in Novi Sad on September 15th, 1915. He was a composer, pedagogue, publisher, and ethnomusicologist who transcribed folk melodies from different regions of Serbia. During elementary music school, Prof. Jovan Grcic instructed Bajic in piano and violin. After graduating in 1897, Bajic heeding his father’s wishes, traveled to Budapest to attend law school. After some time, he realized his love for music was much stronger than his love for law, just as Robert Schumann had before him. Hans von Koessler, Professor of Composition at Music Academy in Budapest, invited Bajic to study composition in his studio, which Bajic did from 1897 to 1901.35

Figure 4.1: Isidor Bajic (1878-1915)36

35 Hans von Koessler (1853-1926) was a German composer of symphonies, choir and chamber music. Some of his students garnered international acclaim, such as Béla Bartók, Zoltan Kodaly, Erno Dohnanyi, and Lep Weiner.
36 http://www.riznicasrpska.net/muzika/index.php?topic=34.0
Comparing music institutions in Budapest and Serbia in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Budapest enjoyed an undeniably more developed music education scene, with such resources as the National Theater, Hungarian Music Singing Societies, National Opera House, Budapest Philharmonic Orchestra Music Conservatory, and Hungarian Music School, to name a few. This highly charged musical environment in which Bajic found himself certainly influenced his decision to study music. Like Stankovic before him, Bajic returned to Serbia after attaining a first-class education so that he could bestow his knowledge and experience to future generations.

Bajic returned to his home province of Vojvodina to teach at the gymnasium (high school)\(^\text{37}\) as the choral and orchestral director.\(^\text{38}\) Bajic’s dedicated approach significantly improved the quality of music education at his school and increased the public’s consciousness of music appreciation. While teaching, Bajic composed and premiered several works in Vojvodina. One piece that received great reviews by Serbian audiences was *Putnik na Uranku (Traveler on Reveille)*\(^\text{39}\) for male choir, tenor solo, and string orchestra, with lyrics by renowned Serbian poet, Branko Radicevic.\(^\text{40}\)

With the guidance of Bajic, the school choir enjoyed tremendous progress. In addition, the instructor devoted considerable attention to instilling professionalism within his student musicians. Students were provided a multifaceted music education, including such subjects as music theory, vocal

\(^{37}\) "Gymnasium" refers to a traditional or general high school


\(^{39}\) This is not the official translation of the title.

During his high school tenure, Bajic brought about great progress in the quality of classical performances. In selecting repertoire for concerts, he would not only choose works by distinguished musicians, but also by contemporary composers. As a result, Bajic promoted the creation and dissemination of new music in Serbia.

In addition to his excellent instructional endeavors, Bajic founded the *Serbian Musical Magazine*, the first music magazine to be published in Serbia, in 1903. In it, Bajic compiled reviews of new and known musical works, and created the Serbian Music Library, a periodical list of Serbian compositions. Bajic was a member of the organization that established the Association of Serbian Singing Societies and was actively involved in their development and promotion. He also wrote several books dedicated to students who wanted to learn the basics of music theory and the art of piano performance. These included *Piano – How To Learn To Play The Piano* (1901), *The Theory Of Singing* (1904), and *The Science Of Musical Form*.  

In September 1909, Bajic founded a school specializing in music education. Initially, the school housed 120 students and several professors, and its numbers increased over the next few years. After several years, the school was renamed “Isidor Bajic –the Music School.” The institution flourished during its first years, until it was forced to close a result of World War I. After World War II, the school’s doors opened once again.

---


Figure 4.2: Music School “Isidor Bajic” (in the past-1929.)\textsuperscript{43}

Figure 4.3: Music School “Isidor Bajic” (present time)\textsuperscript{44}

\textsuperscript{43}http://www.isidorbajic.edu.rs/o-nama/o-skoli/

\textsuperscript{44}http://www.nadji.info/rs/isidor-bajic-muzicka-skola-njegoseva-novi-sad/ve32692/photos/ph5024/
What sets Bajic apart from other Serbian composers is his work as a successful ethnomusicologist, preceding the studies of Bartók and Kodaly. He gathered national musical treasures, principally from Vojvodina in northern Serbia and Vranje in the south.\(^{45}\)

Isidor Bajic possessed incredible energy and drive, and pioneered many novel musical endeavors and concepts for his country. He strove to introduce the people of Serbia, where music education was nascent, to the musical achievements of European composers. Bajic’s compositions benefited musicians at all stages, from his challenging works for educated professionals to his adaptations for amateurs. His tireless music advocacy incited pervasive positive changes in Serbian music education and compositional output.

**Works and stylistic characteristics**

Bajic composed in a variety of genres and for several different ensemble types. In addition to his piano music, a few of his other works are listed below to offer an example of his diverse output. Some of them received immediate praise from music critics and audience members alike, while others were only acclaimed after many years.

Works:
- **Opera:** *Knez Ivo od Semberije*, 1911 (*The Prince Ivo of Semberia*)
  This opera was based on text by renowned Serbian writer Branislav Nusin. The piece describes famous characters from Serbian and Turkish history. The melodies adhere to the specific music style of both Turkish and Serbian culture including dotted rhythms and stepwise melodic patterns.
- **Operetta:** *Zrtva Ljubavi* and *7 Gladnih Godina*  

\(^{45}\) Music Encyclopedia, (Zagreb: Miroslav Krleža Institute of Lexicography, 1971),114.
• Theater acts with singing: *Seoska Lola, Cucuk Stana, Divljusa,* and *Rakija*
• Orchestral works: the symphony *Milos Oblic* (the musical scores were lost), *The Serbian Prayer,* and the overture *Mena*
• Piano music: *Serbian Rhapsody* and *An Album of Compositions*
• Chamber music pieces for tamburica\(^{46}\) orchestra
• Solo – lied: *Love Songs*
• Choral: *Iz Srpskih Gradina* (with folk motives and melodies), *Guslareva Smrt* (*The Guslar’s*\(^{47}\) Death), and *Mornareva Pesma* (*The Sailor’s Song*) (original melodies)
• Some additional pieces: the polka *May Flower,* marches, individual miniatures, fantasies, and Serbian dances
• Church/religious pieces: Choral piece *Divine Liturgy*

Bajic’s compositional approach will be now discussed using examples of melody, harmony, rhythm, form, texture, keyboard range, and by comparison with other composers.

**MELODY:** Bajic approached melodic material in one of two ways: by composing original melodies, or by basing his melodies on folk and traditional Serbian music, as Stankovic did. His melodic lines are flowing and predominantly diatonic.

**HARMONY:** In his works for piano, Bajic employed both simple and complex harmonic progressions. His piano pieces based on original melodies, such as those found in *An Album of Compositions* contain a variety of

---

\(^{46}\) Tamburica (Тамбурица), meaning "little Tamboura," refers to any member of a family of long-necked lutes popular in Southern Europe and Central Europe, particularly Hungary, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia (especially Vojvodina), Slovenia, and Croatia (especially Slavonia). All possess characteristics of the Persian tanbur, but also resemble the mandolin, in that the strings are plucked and often paired. The frets may be moveable to allow the playing of various modes (http://www.britannica.com/art/tambura).

\(^{47}\) A gusle is a single-stringed musical instrument traditionally found in the Dinarides region of the Southeastern Europe. The instrument is always accompanied by singing. The gusle player (*guslar*) holds the instrument vertically between his knees, with the left hand fingers on the strings. The strings are never pressed to the neck, giving a harmonic and unique sound (http://www.britannica.com/art/gusla).
harmonic entities including diatonic, chromatic, and enharmonic modulations, decorative seventh chords, and mediant key relationships.

RHYTHM: Dotted rhythmic patterns are characteristic of folk music in the southeastern part of Europe. Drawing on this folk tradition, Bajic adopted these rhythmic patterns, as well as folk-inspired triplets and syncopations.

FORM: Bajic frequently wrote in binary and ternary forms. Sequences, repetition, and 4+4 or 8+8 musical phrases are the most common structures in his piano works. Some examples of binary form from his output are L’Attente, La Resignation, A La Fontaine, Le Reve, and Valse Mignone. Bajic composed the following in ternary form: Capricio in D minor, Capricio in E minor, La Danse, Serbian Rhapsody, and Serbian Flower.

TEXTURE: There are no apparent instances of complex polyphonic textures in Bajic’s piano pieces. Some music critics have complained that his compositions for piano are not challenging enough for professional pianists due to their textural simplicity.

RANGE: Bajic’s compositions cover the entire spectrum of the keyboard, but with an emphasis on the central section of the instrument.

COMPARISON: Similarities can be found between the techniques of Bajic and Tchaikovsky, as well as between Bajic and Liszt. In the opinion of this author, Bajic and Tchaikovsky both assumed a sentimental style when writing miniatures. Gorgeous and expressive melodies in the upper voice accompanied by gentle and sophisticated bass lines are considered to be mutual characteristics of these two composers. In contrast, Bajic also
conceived pieces with challenging passagework and extended octaves. This
virtuosity is among the stylistic similarities between Bajic and Liszt, possibly
resulting from Bajic’s years in Budapest.

However, some of Bajic’s Serbian forbears also favored a technically
demanding compositional style, as Dragan Kojic writes

Before Isidor Bajic, there were many composers, such as Kornelije
Stankovic, Jovanka Stojkovic, Dr.]ovan Pacu, as well as some Czech
composers whose artistic activities were associated with our territory.
At that time, the piano literature was characterized by works that have
been created in rhapsodic forms in which technical virtuosity had a
primary and prominent role. 48

Piano works

An Album of Compositions and Serbian Rhapsody

Bajic’s An Album of Compositions was written in the style of
Tchaikovsky, Schumann, and Liszt. 49 Some pieces of this set are dedicated to
people from Bajic’s life, including mentors, colleagues, and friends.

The album contains eight pieces:
  • Rezignacija (La Resignation)
  • Na Izvoru (A La Fontaine)
  • Cekanje (L’Attente)
  • Sanje (Le Reve)
  • Valse Mignone

48 Dragan Kojic, Review on Piano Compositions by Isidor Bajic. (Novi Sad: City Library,
2002), 34.

• *Igra (La Danse)*
• *Capriccio in D minor*
• *Capriccio in E minor*

The following brief description of these pieces offers a general overview of the characteristics of Bajic’s compositional style as applied to solo piano. Additionally, *An Album of Compositions* constitutes an introduction to some musical elements (style, melody, harmony, and rhythm) that are particular to Austrian, Hungarian, and Turkish culture and are recurring features of Serbian piano music.

The first piece in this set is called *La Resignation* and is dedicated to Zora Vouchetitch. It is written in ternary form, and relies upon syncopated rhythms. This piece is set apart by its texture, which increases in thickness throughout, the gradual addition of voices shaping the structure.

The piece commences with a short lyrical introduction of three measures. At first, the melody is presented in a single line. Throughout *La Resignation*, the melody occurs almost exclusively in the left hand; however, from mm.16-20, it switches to the right hand and is enriched with additional notes in octaves.

![Figure 4.4: Isidor Bajic: An Album of Compositions, Piece I, mm.1-6.](image-url)
The harmonic structure of the piece is very straightforward. The composer does not deviate from the chords within the home key of E minor. The principal challenge of this piece is to maintain the stability and accuracy of the syncopated rhythms while the other voices flaunt beautiful cantilena melodies.

The second piece of the set is named *A la Fontaine*. This piece is also known as *Etude Mignone*, and is dedicated to Mrs. Vida Vulko. Bajic deems the piece an etude because of its specific technical challenges; for example, *Etude Mignone* contains rapid sixteenth-note passages and sudden changes of hand position.

![Figure 4.5: Isidor Bajic: An Album of Compositions, Piece II, mm.1-3.](image)

This piece has several repeated sections characteristic of salon music. The right hand performs the main melody, which is obscured by broken interval patterns, while the left hand accompanies with repeated octaves and broken chords.
The subsequent pair of short pieces are *L’Attente* and *Le Reve*, which are notably similar in several aspects. Both are written in ternary form, and contain syncopated left-hand accompaniment patterns throughout. Melodies present in both pieces are in stepwise motion in blocked intervals, with just a few intervallic leaps by way of broken triads and chordal patterns. *L’Attente* in particular involves a simple harmonic structure, with only a few measures posing modulations to distant tonalities.

The fifth and the sixth pieces are *Valse Mignone* and *La Dance*. Once again, Bajic uses a ternary form for the foundation of these works. They are composed in three repeating sections. Common characteristics are accents on
weak beats and emphasis placed on the second beat of the measure via accent or longer note value.

Figure 4.8: Isidor Bajic: *An Album of Compositions*, Piece V, mm.1-6.

Intriguingly, Bajic favors the Neapolitan chord more in these two pieces than in previous ones. Since pieces V and VI are dances in the key of A minor, they can be played as a pair or separately.

Figure 4.9: Isidor Bajic: *An Album of Compositions*, Piece VI, mm.21-34.

The last two pieces of the collection are the capriccios in D and E minor. These works are the most technically and musically challenging in the set.

The introduction of *Capriccio in D minor* is eight measures long, and encompasses motivic material that is reiterated three times in this piece, with slight variations.
Figure 4.10: Isidor Bajic: *An Album of Compositions*, Piece VII, Original motivic material (mm.1-8).

Figure 4.11: Isidor Bajic: *An Album of Compositions*, Piece VII, First repetition, with variation (mm.129-139).

The leading melody of the first section presents a characteristic example of Serbian folk tradition: a stepwise melody articulated by two-note slurs. The melody repeatedly incorporates the augmented second interval, a standard interval in Serbian folk music.
Figure 4.12: Isidor Bajic: *An Album of Compositions*, Piece VII, Two-note slur patterns (mm.9-24).

*Capriccio in E minor* is written in the form of ABA with a five-measure introduction. Traditional southeastern folk compositional elements are evident in the B section of this piece. The stepwise four-note motive is presented twice, appearing first in A minor, and later in A major. The restatement of a motive in parallel keys (A minor and A major) is another typical compositional feature of traditional folk music.

Figure 4.13: Isidor Bajic: *An Album of Compositions*, Piece VIII, B section: Four-note motive in A minor (mm.53-58).
The Serbian Rhapsody

The *Serbian Rhapsody* (1914) is the most musically and technically imposing of all of Bajic’s piano works. This composition delivers a blend of traditional folk elements as well as compositional features present in the piano works of Liszt. The beginning of *Serbian Rhapsody* incorporates bravura octaves and passagework similar to that found in many of Liszt’s works, particularly the *Hungarian Rhapsodies*. The broken chords, energetic chromatic passages, and octave doubling are a few of the similarities shared with Liszt’s piano pieces. These features will be seen in the following examples.
At measures 35 and 39, a two-note slur melodic pattern is prevalent; this traditional southeastern Serbian folk element is illustrated in the following examples.
While constructing his *Serbian Rhapsody*, Isidor Bajic found a muse in Stanislaw Binicki, a Serbian musician and contemporary of Bajic. Binicki composed a Serbian patriotic song, *March on Drina*, in 1914, shortly before the publication of *Serbian Rhapsody*. Bajic conceived the piece in honor of Serbian victories over the Austro-Hungarian army during the Battle at Cer.\(^\text{50}\) This march garnered widespread popularity, and was hailed as a symbol of Serbian resistance to foreign empires. *March on Drina* illustrates the presence of an intimidating power, the perseverance of the Serbian army, a long fight for freedom, and, perhaps the most important aspect, a traditional symbol of heroic spirit. The significance of this piece was confirmed by the fact that the work was performed at the presentation ceremony for the Nobel Prize in Literature when Serbian writer Ivo Andric was named as a Nobel Laureate in 1961. Measures 54 and 55 of Bajic’s *Serbian Rhapsody* were directly influenced by *March on Drina*, exemplified in the rhythmic pattern found in each piece. The pattern appears in the right hand in one piece and in the left hand in the other, containing alternation.

---

\(^{50}\) Cer-A mountain on the border between Serbia and Bosnia.
between duple and triple that sounds like a trumpet sounding forth a marching army.

![Figure 4.18: Stanislav Binicki: March on Drina, the original rhythmic motive (mm.1-16).](image)

![Figure 4.19: Isidor Bajic: The Serbian Rhapsody Bajic’s motive (mm. 54-55).](image)

Isidor Bajic clearly made a substantial positive impact on the development of music education and the dissemination of Western European classical music into Serbia. Bajic penned textbook resources that improved and modernized music-teaching methods. He was a well-known Serbian ethnomusicologist deeply interested in discovering traditional Serbian folk music. Bajic supervised the development of several musical societies and supported the printing of choral
pieces and other music through the publication of the *Serbian Musical Magazine*.

The pinnacle of his many accomplishments was the successful founding of the music school bearing his name.
CHAPTER V

Svetozar Sasa Kovacevic (1950-present)

**Biography**

The third composer, Svetozar Sasa Kovacevic, born in 1950 in Serbia, is considered to be one of the most successful and world-renowned contemporary Serbian composers. Kovacevic graduated from the “Isidor Bajic” Elementary and High School of Music in Novi Sad, specializing in accordion under the direction of Prof. Milana Malenica-Barackov. Kovacevic proceeded to earn degrees from the Faculty of Music in Belgrade (Department of Music Theory), and the Academy of Arts, in Novi Sad (Department of Composition, in the studio of Prof. Dusan Radic). Due to the legacy of Stankovic and Bajic, Kovacevic was able to attain a quality music education entirely in Serbia. Kovacevic can be seen as a musical grandchild of these pioneering Serbian composers, continuing their work of advancing musical culture and education in Serbia.

During his studies, Kovacevic attended several master classes and seminars, including a class about the construction and tuning of the organ (Croatia, 1973) with Prof. Patrick Collon (Belgium), and a seminar for chamber music in Amsterdam and Utrecht by invitation of the Dutch Government (1974).
Kovacevic was the Professor of Accordion at the Davorin Jenko Music School in Belgrade, taught sight-reading and accompaniment at the Isidor Bajic Music School, and served as the main accompanist for opera and ballet at the Serbian National Theater in Novi Sad. Since 2000, Svetozar Kovacevic has been a full time professor at the Department of Composition and Musicology at the Academy of Arts in Novi Sad. In 2007, he opened a music school in Sombor (Serbia).

Kovacevic’s reputation as a composer extends beyond Serbia. In 2005, he represented Serbia as a visiting professor at Maribor University in Slovenia. He presented his document on ecumenism in music, which focused on his work Missa Oecumenica at the international symposium "Religion As a Factor of Stability in South East Europe" sponsored by the European Union, the European Academy of Sciences and Arts in Salzburg, and the Danube Rectors Commission.

51 Photo from the composer’s personal archive.
Kovacevic sings in the Orthodox Church choir, and has played organ in Catholic and Protestant churches. Throughout his life, he has been interested in ecumenism, the religious movement seeking cooperation and understanding among the Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and Protestant churches. He is devoted to synthesizing the musical traditions of these separate branches of the Christian church.

Kovacevic’s crowning achievement took place in 2005, when the International Biographical Centre in Cambridge, England included him in their list of the most successful international composers. In 2010, the same institution awarded Kovacevic a diploma and a silver medal for composition in the field of ecumenical music \textit{(Missa Oecumenica)}, and counted him among the two thousand most outstanding intellectuals of the 21st century.

\textbf{Works and stylistic characteristics}

German composers such as Bach, Handel, Mozart, and Liszt, were the strongest influences on Kovacevic’s compositional style. His sacred pieces are filled with religious elements including a deep sense of tranquility and spirituality.
Kovacevic’s works include over 300 compositions of sacred music, solo songs, stage music, instrumental pieces, chamber works, and symphonic music.

Some of his vocal and instrumental works are:

- Missa Oecumenica in Nomine Jesu for SATB voice, choir, and organ
- Stabat Mater for soprano, flute, oboe, choir, and chamber orchestra.
- Ave Maria for soprano, flute and organ
- Halleluia for flute, choir, and baroque chamber orchestra
- Missa Theatrica for a capella women’s choir
- Molitva Ocu Vasiliju Ostroškom (Prayer to Father Vasilije Ostroski) for choir

Kovacevic often selects unique combinations of instruments for his works, such as chamber orchestra and harpsichord, flute and organ chamber orchestra with solo violin, flute, harpsichord, bass, piano and accordion chamber orchestra.

---

52 Photo from the composer’s personal archive.
Kovacevic’s piano works include:

Madjarska fantazija g-mol (Hungarian Fantasy in G minor)  
Igra Senki na Vodi, (Shadows Dance on the Water)  
Tokata in C (Toccata in C)  
Preludijum i fuga c-moll (Prelude and Fugue in C minor)  
Preludijum i fuga cis-moll, (Prelude and Fugue in C-sharp minor)  
Preludijum i fuga d-moll, (Prelude and Fugue in D minor)  
Jesenji List, (Autumn Leaf)  
Jazz igra, (Jazz Dance)  
Dobra Vila (The Good Fairy)  
Lu Vals  
Jazz Etida (Jazz Etude)  
Koncert za klavir i simfonijski orkestar Es dur (Piano Concerto in E-flat major)

For a cross-section reflecting the variety of musical styles in Kovacevic’s compositions, two pieces will be discussed: the Prelude and Fugue in D minor, and the Hungarian Fantasy in G minor.53

53 While not directly related to his piano music, the Missa is included here to express Kovacevic’s profound commitment to spiritual and ethical elements in music. The Missa is written for solo voices (soprano, mezzosoprano, alto, tenor, baritone, and bass), mixed choir, and orchestra with continuo (organ). During the 30th anniversary of the University of Maribor in Slovenia, regarding the beauty and significance of music, Kovacevic wrote: Music is certainly the most universal of all arts and, as I have already said, it addresses each person individually. There is no one who hears it and pays even the least of attention to the beauty of the melody and harmony of intertwining of rhythms and harmonies that can remain indifferent and everyone can understand its language and its message. And the key message and the basic meaning of music, as far as I am concerned, is exactly the feeling of unity, wholesomeness and harmony. Harmony and unity with oneself, with one’s own soul, harmony in relations with other people, harmony with the whole world. This feeling has always been important to people and it is, probably, the most indispensable to people today, who live in these uncertain, dangerous and too often tragically turbulent times. Kovacevic’s belief that the harmony and unity inherent in music can inspire harmony and unity among humanity bespeaks his confidence in the spiritual properties of the musical arts. Kovacevic further expresses the importance of spirituality to European music tradition: The fact is that we who live in Vojvodina have the opportunity to encounter closely the most significant branches of Christian spiritual music. Christianity is the basic, most important and fundamental spiritual heritage of Europe. Thinking about that [sic] I have also been inspired to attempt to harmonize somehow in my music all the different forms and different languages of expression of one, basically similar and homogenous spiritual music tradition. Kovacevic also asserted the purpose of ecumenism and its musical manifestation: Regardless the [sic] known differences – exclusively the a cappella music practice in Orthodox tradition, the use of instruments in Catholic and protestant temples and exceptional wealth and diversity of church melodies, the basis of that music is the same. The spiritual foundation of music is the same and texts sung for different music are also the same or similar... The most important is the fact that the basic objective and sense of church music is completely identical, namely it is the expressing of sincere and complete prayer of
The first selected piece by Kovacevic is the Prelude and Fugue in D minor for solo piano. The contrapuntal structure of this work epitomizes J. S. Bach’s influence on Kovacevic’s compositional style. The form of the prelude is ABA. The first (A) and last (A’) sections are each five measures long, marking the introduction and conclusion of the prelude. Both sections are marked *Adagio*.

![Präludium und Fuge in d-moll](image)

Figure 5.3: Svetozar Sasa Kovacevic: Prelude and Fugue in D minor, Introduction (A) mm.1-4.

Kovacevic draws upon several tonal centers including E minor and an unconventional shift to distantly related F-sharp minor for the middle section of the prelude.
The only part of this section that deviates from the established sixteenth-note rhythmic pattern is a syncopated fragment in E minor. The change in tonal center and rhythm distinguish this passage, setting it apart from the continuous sixteenth-note runs pervading the prelude.
The fugue changes meters, from common time to 6/8 time, and is written in four voices. The subject is six measures long, and is presented in the alto voice first. Kovacevic does not use a specific folk melody for the subject of the fugue, but constructs a melody in the style of traditional folk songs from Vojvodina. Echoing the creative process of Stankovic and Bajic, Kovacevic incorporates traditional Serbian folk melodies into standard Western European forms.

Figure 5.7: Svetozar Sasa Kovacevic: Prelude and Fugue in D minor, Fugue, Theme, mm.41-47.

A noteworthy aspect of this fugue is that it modulates to a distantly related key, just as the prelude did. In the fugue, Kovacevic highlights the key of B minor, with full entries of the theme before returning to the home key of D minor by way of an extended dominant prolongation before the improvisatory section.
As Figure 5.10 below demonstrates, a portion of the theme can sometimes be heard in the external voices, while the alto and tenor fill out the chordal texture.
Figure 5.10: Svetozar Sasa Kovacevic: Prelude and Fugue in D minor, mm.95-97.

The concluding section of this fugue begins in m.103, wherein the texture changes to two voices in streams of running, stepwise thirty-second notes in thirds. This segment is meant to sound improvisatory. Presumably the prolonged dominant finally resolves to tonic at the end.

Figure 5.11: Svetozar Sasa Kovacevic: Prelude and Fugue in D minor, Fugue, mm.103-106.

Hungarian Fantasy in G minor, the second selection from Kovacevic’s output, exists in multiple versions, including violin and piano, chamber orchestra, and solo piano. This piece was heavily influenced by Hungarian folklore, lending itself to comparison with the work of Liszt.
Full, majestic chords create a strong introduction that captures the
attention. Indicative of the range that will be required throughout the fantasy,
early the entire keyboard is covered in the first two measures:

Figure 5.12: Svetozar Sasa Kovacevic: Hungarian Fantasy in G minor, mm.1-2.

Concerning the melodic content, the second section of the piece exhibits a
famous czardas melody, with octaves and parallel thirds clearly evoking the style
of Liszt.

Figure 5.13: Svetozar Sasa Kovacevic: Hungarian Fantasy in G minor, mm.16-19.
Syncopated rhythms pervade the fantasy, a typical Hungarian rhythmic pattern that draws another parallel with the work of Liszt.

The texture of this piece requires a concentrated effort to perform, as the prevalent chordal jumps, octaves, and fast chord changes are physically strenuous. In yet another nod to Liszt, Kovacevic employs several virtuoso techniques, including parallel octaves, parallel thirds and sixths, trills and arpeggios.

Figure 5.14: Svetozar Sasa Kovacevic: *Hungarian Fantasy in G minor*, m.5

Figure 5.15: Svetozar Sasa Kovacevic: *Hungarian Fantasy in G minor*, m.10.
CHAPTER VI

Conclusion

The purpose of this document is to introduce the reader to the history and development of Serbian piano music, and its fruition in noteworthy composers who use folk melodies to speak of that history. These pages are not enough to exhaustively communicate the political and social climate at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century in central and southeastern Europe. However, the evolution of music in Serbia was affected in that turbulent time by factors such as war, shifting authority, religion, and eventually the pride that accompanies independence.

The works of the three composers on which this document focuses offer a mere snapshot of musical composition in Serbia. Kornelije Stankovic is notable for the Austro-Hungarian influence on his salon works, as well as the musical knowledge that he gained during his studies in Vienna and transmitted to the next generation of Serbian composers. Isidor Bajic, studying in another important cultural center of Budapest, was selected because of his tremendous impact on Serbian classical music and music education, in addition to his extensive compositional output for piano. Bajic was a respected ethnomusicologist who spent his life collecting and promoting traditional folk music. His tremendous dedication to young musicians led to his successful founding of the music school that bears his name. Finally, although his works contain Hungarian influence, Svetozar Sasa Kovacevic is an example of a living composer whose entire musical education occurred in Serbia. His commitment to musical ecumenism is an important reflection of the musical and religious history of Serbia.
Serbian music is a treasure, with a rich history and promising future, as modern Serbian composers continue to add works to the global repertoire. This document aims to incite curiosity among young musicians about the music of Serbia, because it offers technical challenges, a variety of styles, and culturally significant folk elements. The author’s goal is to provide the reader with an interest in performing or becoming familiar with Serbian music, in order to expound musical knowledge and performance repertoire. For the musician who is willing to explore new or unknown pieces with cultural significance and a marriage of European folk melodies with Western forms, a unique musical journey lies ahead, guided by respected Serbian composers.
Bibliography


