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Sonatas for Violin and Piano by the Bulgarian Composers Pancho Vladigerov, Lubomir Pipkov, Dimitar Nenov, Veselin Stoyanov, and Marin Goleminov

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SONATAS FOR VIOLIN AND PIANO
BY THE BULGARIAN COMPOSERS PANCHO VLADIGEROV,
LUBOMIR PIPKOV, DIMITAR NENOV, VESELIN STOYANOVA,
AND MARIN GOLEMINOV

By

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Dedicated to Nikola Lipov
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ABSTRACT

In spite of the vast popularity of music written for the violin in the past century, most contemporary violinists are still unaware of the significant number of Bulgarian instrumental works. The general lack of knowledge regarding Bulgarian music deprives violinists of the opportunity to perform challenging and dynamic music written for the violin.

This treatise will discuss six sonatas for violin and piano written by the Bulgarian composers Pancho Vladigerov, Dimitar Nenov, Lubomir Pipkov, Veselin Stoyanov, and Marin Goleminov, who comprised the Second Generation composers, pioneers who aimed to create a new Bulgarian national musical style. The sonatas, written during the first half of the twentieth century are examples of a perfect union between Neo-Romantic and folk elements. Information on these composers and their music is highly underrepresented in such sources as the New Grove Dictionary for Music and Musicians, Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart (MGG), Oxford Dictionary of Music. This treatise will serve to broaden awareness for this relatively unknown body of violin repertoire.

The first chapter will introduce classical music in Bulgaria in the early Twentieth century and specifically the music of the Second Generation composers. It will include a historical background and explanation of the political environment. Chapter two will offer short biographies of each composer. Chapter three, the last chapter, will discuss each sonata separately. The historical background for each sonata will present information germane to the genesis of each piece, such as dates of composition, details about the premiere and the purpose for its creation. The general form of each sonata will be introduced briefly, followed by analyses of the technical challenges the piece presents for the violinist and the pianist. Folk elements in each sonata will then be isolated and explained in the context of Bulgarian folk traditions. Simple guidelines will be presented to aid the performer in a stylistically accurate performance, including bowing techniques, articulation and the treatment of ornaments.
The history of Bulgarian music can be divided into five major periods: 1) the early period with Thracian and Slavic origins from 861 to about 1511; 2) post-liberation from Ottoman rule in 1878; 3) the period between 1920 to 1945; 4) after the establishment of communism in 1944; and 5) the era following the liberation from communism in 1989.

Bulgarian music is not as well known abroad as is the music of other Eastern European countries. From 1396 to 1878 the Ottoman Empire reigned over Bulgaria, and this resulted in the massive demolition of cultural centers. Only the Christian Orthodox religion and oral folklore preserved Bulgarian culture during the five centuries of slavery. However, folk music developed separately from church music. Before 1860, the populace preferred vocal genres. The first artists—a cappella choirs—performed arrangements of folk melodies. The singing school in the Rila Monastery was the premier music institution, created to educate singers for the Orthodox Christian Mass. The earliest choral society, formed in Rousse in 1870 as a result of a protest against the Greek Orthodox Church tradition, reformed the liturgy and performed it in Bulgarian as opposed to Greek.

After the liberation from Turkish slavery in 1878, professional music started to develop. Characteristic of this period are small classical music compositions, the development of opera, solo and instrumental works, worker’s songs, music theory and criticism. Popular European melodies with Bulgarian texts served as the basis for school songs. In 1892, a Czech Kappellmeister formed a small symphony orchestra for the Royal Guards in Sofia, the capital. The monarchist institution and King Boris III helped create army brass bands, led by pedagogues who came from Western Europe and other Slavic countries. Under their influence, professional classical music gradually developed in other major cities in Bulgaria except the capital. By the

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middle of the nineteenth century, amateur musicians created music clubs. Among them were private concert management boards who organized concerts by Bulgarian and foreign performers. World famous musicians and solo performers, such as Alfred Korto, Claudio Aray, Nikolay Orlov, Marcel Chiampi, Paul Griumeur, Artur Rubinstein, Sergei Prokofiev and Karol Szymanovski traveled to Bulgaria to give recitals in the major cities. 4

Despite these developments, many Bulgarians decided to study music abroad. These Bulgarians returned to the country to become the First Generation Bulgarian composers. Their works consisted mostly of arrangements of well-known folk and popular songs. They brought to the country music genres and forms completely unknown before that, such as the symphony and opera. These pioneer musicians worked in difficult conditions because of the lack of sheet music and too few musicians to perform their pieces. Their works are characterized by a simple structure. Some of the most important composers from this period are Dobri Hristov (1875-1941), Emanuil Manolov (1860-1902), Georgi Atanasov “the Maestro” (1882-1931) and Nikola Atanasov (1886-1969). 5 Dobri Hristov is considered the first Bulgarian composer. He was a student of Paul Ducas at Ecole Normale de Musique in France. He wrote mainly vocal music, arranging folk tunes for choirs. He was also a theorist and a teacher. Emanuil Manolov composed the First Bulgarian Opera, Siromakhinya (The Poor Woman) in 1900. Manolov studied flute, piano and harmony at the Moscow Conservatory from 1883-1885. His works were intended for both professional and amateur ensembles. Manolov was significantly the first Bulgarian bandmaster in the Bulgarian army. Maestro Georgi Atanasov was the first prominent opera composer and conductor. He was a student of Pietro Mascani at the Rossini College in Italy. During his early career he was also a military bandmaster. From 1922-23 he conducted the Sofia National Opera. Nikola Atanasov wrote the first symphony. A graduate of the Conservatory in Zagreb, Poland, he taught music in various cities in Bulgaria before joining the faculty of the State Music Academy as a lecturer in music theory. 6

4 Lilia Kratcheva, Short History of the Bulgarian musical culture, (Sofia: Avagar, 2001), 179.
After World War I, a new phase in the evolution of Bulgarian music began, ushering in an increased sophistication in musical life. While the main music center remained Sofia, the capital, new state music institutions were created throughout the country such as music schools, orchestras, opera theaters, and choral unions. In Sofia, The National Opera was founded in 1890, as well as the State Music Academy in 1921 and the National Philharmonic Orchestra in 1929. The Union of the Bulgarian Musicians was founded in 1920. The creation of the Academy Symphony Orchestra of the State Music Academy in 1928 resulted in collaboration between outside musicians and students. Not only orchestras gave symphonic concerts, but also the opera houses. The development of professional music life caused the creation of music schools in Plovdiv, Ruse, Varna and Burgas in 1921 and 1922. The music clubs from the previous years continued to promote and organize classical music concerts. However, they did not premiere any new music at these concerts and performed only Viennese classics, pieces from the Romantic period, and songs written by the First Generation Bulgarian composers.

During the first half of the 1930s, a group of new composers appeared on the musical scene in Sofia. After studying with the composers of the First Generation, these young musicians continued their education in Germany, France, Austria and Italy. After they completed their training, they all returned to Bulgaria, with a place to instigate a new art based on the foundation that was laid by the First Generation composers. The main goal of this group, known as the Second Generation Bulgarian composers, was to achieve a new Bulgarian national style. These composers sought a higher artistic, ideological and technical level in their works. These three aspects proved to be major challenges for them. The discussion began with Lubomir Pipkov’s article “On Bulgarian Musical Style”. After Pipkov, the composers Petko Staynov, Marin Goleminov, Veselin Stoyanov, the musicologist, Stoyan Djoudjev, and the art critic Alexander Obretenov wrote articles on the subject. Newspapers and magazines published articles on the national style in Bulgarian music from 1934 to 1944, making the public aware of the problems that the composers were facing. In his book *The Symphonism of the Bulgarian Composers from the Second Generation*, Ivan Hlebarov clarifies the situation:

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8 Mario Dimitrov, “The Violin concerto and its development in Bulgaria.”(DMA Diss., Louisiana State University, 2006), 34.
In the beginning there was the problem of original musical language- a problem that was the main theme of all articles written until the middle of the 1930s. The first ten years, from the middle of the 1920s, is a period for creative formation of the composers of the Second generation. At the end of the 20s it becomes clear that the art principals of the western modernists are inapplicable in Bulgaria until the composers find their own language and create their own artistic style. The authors of the articles from these years see a road towards renovation of the musical language in adopting the use of elements from the village folklore. In the middle of the 30s all composers from the Second Generation finally turn towards the “national” style. Because of that an entire musical conception starts to develop and the creation of the Contemporary music society in 1933 becomes an outside expression of the inside process.  

Because of a negative reaction from the music critics, the young composers had to endure serious criticism. No one could defend them; therefore they had to defend themselves. The leading officials assumed a neutral position. The critics said that the works of the Second Generation composers were used as a tool for popularization of Western European musical art. They even said that this was a betrayal of Bulgarian society, and that audiences did not accept this new Bulgarian music. The journalist Yordan Badev, the linguists Konstantin Galabov and Zhana Nikolova, the literary critic Vladimir Vassilev, and the musicologist Peter Panov wrote strong articles against the operas “Yanas’ Nine Brothers,” by Lubomir Pipkov and “Salambo,” by Veselin Stoyanov. On the other side, the composers defended themselves by stressing the need for a new form of expression in Bulgarian music. The discussion naturally resolved when the social conditions with the start of the Communist regime changed in 1945.

In 1933, the composers Pancho Vladigerov, Asen Dimitrov, Dimitar Nenov, Lubomir Pipkov, Petko Staynov, Andrey Stoyanov, and Tsanko Tsankov created the Contemporary Music Society with other composers from the Second Generation. The Society’s book protocol stated that the organization aimed to create better work conditions for composers and assisting

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11 Translation by author.
financially challenged composers. They also helped boost the interest in Bulgarian music of high artistic quality in the country and abroad and encouraged composers to use traditional music and recreate it in artistic forms.  

The Society organized many concerts in Bulgaria. The concerts, known as “One Hour of Bulgarian Music”, premiered many new pieces written by Bulgarian composers. Lilia Kratcheva states in Short History of the Bulgarian Musical Culture: “This society’s main goal was to work for the best interest of Bulgarian music in the country and abroad and to watch for the right course of Bulgarian musical life.”

During the 30’s and 40’s, chamber music flourished. The composer Marin Goleminov stated in his report from the 1953 bulletin of the Contemporary music society: “The overall condition of Bulgarian Chamber music is good, even great in comparison with other genres.”

Socially, chamber music ensembles started to form as a result of the creation of the state music institutions: the Lechev quartet, formed in 1931; the Avramov quartet, formed in 1934; and the Royal Military quartet, formed in 1901 are among the ones that gained popularity both in the country and abroad. Other quartets that were found during the period 1932-1937 included the Sofia quartet and the Academy quartet of the State Music Academy. During the 1930s, there were also string trios that were created in Sofia, as well as a wind quintet. With the creation of the chamber groups, the composers of the Second Generation began to write music for them. For example, Pancho Vladigerov wrote a piano trio in 1916 and a string quartet in 1940; Lubomir Pipkov wrote the first Bulgarian string quartet in 1928, which featured folk motives in the thematic material, a piano trio, piano quartet, and piano quintet; Marin Goleminov wrote three string quartets and one wind quintet, and Veselin Stoyanov composed three string quartets.

Bulgaria entered the Communist regime in 1945, the rules for composing music completely changed. The new government denied past achievements in this area and established new policies. New music was supposed to be uncomplicated and easier to get to the people. Many of the composers remained silent and the ones that dared to write dedicated their works to the Communist party. Folklore remained popular because it was believed that it was closer to the

16 Kratcheva, 153-179.
Communist ideal.\textsuperscript{17} When the liberation from Communism came in 1989, positive changes took place in the musical horizon. In 1990 the \textit{Association for New Music} was founded and they established the International Festival of New Music \textit{Muzika Nova}. By the end of the 1950s, Bulgarian composers were using modern compositional techniques such as twelve-tone music, serialism and aleatorics, as seen in the practice of Arnold Schoenberg, Alban Berg and Anton Webern.

The history of violin training started in the 1850s with violin pedagogues who came to work in Bulgaria from other countries. The most prominent of them came from the Czech republic to teach the first generation violin pedagogues. Violin students from the newly created State Music Academy received the opportunity to be trained in Italy, England, The United States, Belgium, Czech Republic and France. Because of this training they became world class concert violinists. After the completion of their studies, they also returned to Bulgaria. Petko Naumov was the first violinist that returned to the country and gave his first solo recital on November 1\textsuperscript{st}, 1903. After him in 1908 the violinist Nedialka Simeonova started to tour Bulgaria. During the second half of the 1920s more violinists performed throughout the country such as Vladimir Avramov, Hristo Obreshkov, Boyan Konstantinov, Vassil Chernaev and Petar Hristoskov. As a result of the new presence of good performers, composers started to write music for them. Pancho Vladigerov wrote the first sonata for violin and piano (1914), Rhapsody \textit{Vardar} (1922), Two Bulgarian Paraphrases (1925), Petar Hristoskov wrote Suites and Rhapsodies for solo violin- Suite No.1 (1954), Suite No.2 (1964), Rhapsodies \textit{Shopska, Selska, and Pastoralna} (1964), Veselin Stoyanov wrote two concertos for violin (1956, 1963) and a sonata for violin and piano (1934), and Lubomir Pipkov wrote two sonatas for violin and piano (1929, 1969) and a violin concerto (1968). Works by other composers who wrote in this genre during this period are by Stefan Remenker, Pencho Stoyanov, Benzion Eliezer, Dimitar Sagaev, Lazar Nikolov, Tsvetan Tsvetanov, Parashkev Hadjie, Marin Goleminov, and Dimitar Nenov, to name a few.

\textsuperscript{17} Marta Simidchieva, ““An Annotated Bibliography of works for cello and orchestra by Bulgarian Composers written between 1925 and 2000” (DMA Diss., Florida State University, 2006), 7.
CHAPTER 2
SHORT BIOGRAPHY OF THE COMPOSERS

The composers presented in this chapter are all representatives of the Second Generation and play an important role in the development of Bulgarian music. The reader will find that they possess common features such as studying abroad and then returning back to Bulgaria. They wrote music in all genres that was distinguished by incorporating western musical traditions with traditional folk elements.

Pancho Vladigerov (1899-1978)

Pancho Vladigerov was born in Zurich, Switzerland on March 25, 1899. He was one of the most important of the Second Generation Bulgarian composers because he pushed the development of Bulgarian music towards the Western European musical traditions. A spontaneous, expansive musician, he composed in a wide variety of genres with virtuostic compositional technique. Vladigerov’s perfectly well-balanced orchestral style puts him among the founders of Bulgarian symphonic music.

He lived in Schumen, Bulgaria, until 1910, then moved with his family to Sofia, where he studied piano and composition briefly at the National Music School with Dobri Hristov and Henrich Visner. After his father died, his mother took him and his twin brother, Luben
Vladigerov, to Berlin, Germany. There, he took private lessons from Paul Juon and Henri Barth before enrolling in 1914 at the *Staatliche Akademische Hochschule für Musik*, where he studied composition with Friedrich Gernsheim and Georg Schumann and piano with Leonid Kreutzer. His twin brother Luben also studied violin at the same school with Henri Marteau. By 1914 Pancho Vladigerov was already popular abroad and until 1944 he gave recitals with his violinist brother in Bulgaria, Europe and America. From 1933 he resided in Bulgaria and taught piano, chamber music and composition at the State Music Academy. He was awarded the Mendelsohn prize in 1918. He was also one of the founders of the Contemporary Music Society and was an executive of the Union of Bulgarian Composers. He wrote works mainly in vocal, dramatic and instrumental genres. He was awarded the Gottfried von Herder prize for overall achievement in twentieth century music. The composer died on September 8, 1978 in Sofia, Bulgaria.\(^{18}\)

**Marin Goleminov (1908-2000)**

Marin Goleminov was born on September 8, 1908 in Kystendil, Bulgaria. He started taking violin lessons from his father at an early age. Later he took private lessons in Sofia with professor Nikola Atanasov.

After completing high school, Goleminov entered the State Music Academy in 1927 with a double major—violin performance and theory and composition. Professors Todor Torchakov,

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Dobri Hristov and Nikola Atanasov taught him violin, theory and composition respectively. While studying in Sofia he played viola in the National Opera Orchestra from 1929 –1930, and wrote his first work-- the symphonic poem “Bells of Rila” (1931), based on the sound of the bells in Rila Monastery. After the completion of his studies at the State Music Academy in 1931 he left Bulgaria to go to Paris, France in order to obtain an Artist Diploma. He studied composition and conducting at the Schola Cantorum under Vincent d’Endy, Alexander Bertlen and Marten Labe from 1931-1934. This opportunity helped the composer to master the contemporary compositional techniques. While in Paris, he also attended theory and music history lectures at the Sorbonne and Ecole Normale de Musique.

Goleminov returned to Bulgaria in 1934. After his return he taught at the Second Male School in Sofia and became a frequent lecturer at the State Music Academy. He was the second violinist of the Avramov quartet from 1935-1938. For a short period of time he conducted the Radio Sofia Chamber Orchestra. In 1938 he went to Germany for one year to specialize in composition and conducting at the Music Academy of Munich. His teachers there were professors Yosef Haas, Hans Knape and Karl Erenberg. After his return to Bulgaria in 1939 Goleminov was officially appointed Professor of Composition and Orchestration at the State Music Academy. In 1954 he became President of the Academy and held the position for two years, until 1956. A decade later, from 1965-1967 the composer served as the General Director of the National Opera.

Marin Goleminov wrote a significant number of academic publications. Among them are four theory books and over two hundred articles and reviews published in Bulgaria and abroad. Most of his scholarly works pointed out the characteristics of the Bulgarian musical style and its historic significance. One example is the article “On the foundations of the Bulgarian music” (1937) with which he took part in the ongoing debate for a national style. Two of his books are still required material at the State Music Academy- *Instrumental Knowledge* and *Orchestration Problems*. He became a member of the Bulgarian Academy of Science in 1989. He holds national awards for significant achievement in music and the Gottfried von Herder award from the Vienna University, which he received in 1976. Some of his most famous works are the ballet

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“Nestinarka” (1940), Symphonic Variations on a theme of Dobri Hristov (1942), Third String Quartet, “Ancient Bulgarian”, Five Sketches for String Quartet (1948), Sonata for violin and piano (1930) and a work for a capella choir titled “Lud Gidiya” (1934). Marin Goleminov died on February 19th, 2000 in Espinjo, Portugal.\textsuperscript{21}

\textbf{Veselin Stoyanov (1902-1969)}

![Veselin Stoyanov](image)

Figure 2.3 Veselin Stoyanov

Born on April 20, 1902 in Schumen, Bulgaria, Veselin Stoyanov started taking piano lessons from his father, Anastas Stoyanov at the age of six. He entered the State Music Academy in 1922 as a piano performance major and studied with his older brother, Andrey Stoyanov. He specialized in composition and piano in Vienna, Austria from 1926-1930 with Franz Schmidt and Joseph Marx. At the same time, he took private piano lessons with Paul de Kon and orchestration lessons with Vunderer.

After Stoyanov’s return to Bulgaria in 1931, he worked as a private piano and theory teacher and performed as a soloist and conductor. His solo career as a concert pianist allowed him to perform his own pieces in Berlin, Bucharest, Budapest and Moscow. In 1945 he became a professor of composition and music analyses at the State Music Academy. Among his students are such prominent Bulgarian composers as Dimitar Petkov, Stefan Remenkov, Ivan Marinov

and Alexander Tanev. Veselin Stoyanov held the position of President of the State Music Academy after Marin Goleminov from 1956-1962, and served as a General Director of the National Opera from 1953-1954.

The works of this composer have a moderately modern trend. Rich use of harmony and leitmotiv technique characterizes his compositional style. In his search for a national musical language he successfully blended regular and irregular rhythms characteristic of Bulgarian folk music with his original melody of the piece. Some of his most famous works include the Symphonic Grotesque Suite “Bay Ganyu” after the novel by Aleko Konstantinov (1941), Festival Overture for Orchestra (1956), Concertos for piano and violin, Piano Sonata and Piano suite (1930), Sonata for violin and piano (1934) and three string quartets.

A recipient of numerous national awards, Stoyanov served as a frequent judge of international music competitions, festivals, and conferences, and his compositions were performed abroad. Among his scholarly works are articles on music theory and contemporary Bulgarian music. The composer died on June 20, 1969.

Dimitar Nenov (1902-1953)

Bulgarian composer and pianist Dimitar Nenov was born on January 1, 1902 in Razgrad, Bulgaria. Unlike his colleagues, he never attended the State Music Academy in Sofia, Bulgaria.

22 Marta Simidtchieva, “An Annotated Bibliography of works for cello and orchestra by Bulgarian Composers written between 1925 and 2000”( DMA Diss., Florida State University, 2006), 37.
He started playing piano at the age of six with his mother and later was a private student of Andrey Stoyanov (brother of Veselin Stoyanov) from 1919-1920.\textsuperscript{24}

In 1920 he left Bulgaria to pursue a double education in both music and architecture in Dresden, Germany. He attended the Technische Hochschule in Dresden and the Dresden Conservatory from 1920-1927.

After a successful graduation with a doctorate in art history and a bachelor of music, he returned to Bulgaria. Nenov worked as an architect for a short period of time, and then decided that music was more important for him, so he embarked on a career in music. He went to specialize in piano with Egon Petri in Zakolane, Poland. A gifted pianist and interpreter of Beethoven, Liszt and Skryabin, Nenov was also a very prominent representative of the Second Generation. The composer was officially appointed as a piano professor at the State Music Academy (Sofia, Bulgaria) in 1937. Among his achievements are: founder and director of the Music section at Radio Sofia from 1935-1937 and a co-founder of the Contemporary Music Society. He took part in the debate on national musical style and published several articles on the subject. Nenov’s compositions are characterized with Romantic expression found in the music of Skryabin and elements of Bulgarian folk music found in his use of modes and octatonic scale.\textsuperscript{25} His most famous works are the Piano Concerto (1932) and the \textit{Rhapsodic Fantasy} for Orchestra (1942). Among his other compositions are the Sonata for violin and piano (1921), Sonata for piano (1922) and the \textit{Ballad} for Orchestra (1926).\textsuperscript{26}

\textsuperscript{26} Dr. Elisaveta Valchinova-Chendova, \textit{Bulgarian Composers and Musicologists, Encyclopedia} (Sofia: UBC, 2003), 45.
A writer, critic, conductor and composer, Lubomir Pipkov is one of the most important representatives of the Second Generation because he is considered to be the founder of the Bulgarian national style. He was born in Lovech, Bulgaria, on September 19, 1904 and his father, Panayot Pipkov, was a prominent First Generation Bulgarian composer. A piano student of his father, the young Pipkov started taking private lessons with the famous pianist Ivan Torchanyov after the family moved to Sofia, the capital of Bulgaria. He enrolled at the Sofia Music School in 1919 as a piano student of Henrich Visner. In 1926 he obtained a scholarship to study at Ecole Normale de Musique in Paris, France. The professors Paul Dukas, Yvonne Lefebure and Nadya Boulanger taught Pipkov composition, piano and music history.27 Paul Ducas described his student as “one of the most interesting artists of our age.”28

Upon his return to Bulgaria in 1932, Pipkov worked as an accompanist at the National Opera and later, in 1948, he was employed as professor of vocal ensembles and opera at the State Academy of Music. He co-founded the Contemporary Music Society in 1933, served as a secretary of the Bulgarian Choral Union (1945-1952) and was a director of the National Opera (1944-1947). The characteristics of his music combine the principles and forms of the Western European tradition with elements from traditional Bulgarian folk music. Pipkov’s operas and

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28 Marta Simidchieva, “An Annotated Bibliography of works for cello and orchestra by Bulgarian Composers written between 1925 and 2000”(DMA Diss., Florida State University, 2006), 37.
orchestral works are compared in style with Shostakovich, Bartok and Britten.\textsuperscript{29} His String Quartet No.1 (1929) was notably the first Bulgarian string quartet. Some of his other compositions include the operas “Yana’s Nine Brothers” (1929-32), “Momchil” (1939-43) and “Antigona’43” (1962), vocal-orchestral opuses such as “Oratorio for Our Time” (1959), four symphonies, choral and solo songs, children’s songs, folksong arrangements, movie music, and instrumental works such as Sonata for Violin and Piano (1929), Piano Trio (1930) and Concerto for Percussion, Winds and Piano (1931). Lubomir Pipkov was also a prominent scholar and a recipient of many national awards. In 1974 he became an honorary member of the Union of Bulgarian Filmmakers.\textsuperscript{30}

\textbf{Summary}

All of the composers presented above were extremely important because they were the pioneers of the Bulgarian national style. At a time of changing social conditions in the country between the two World Wars, these young composers determined the new direction of Bulgarian music. Opening up a debate on the importance of having their own national musical language, they were the first ones to write compositions in all genres, thus establishing the new style. Despite the negative reaction of the music critics, they continued to fight for a national style because they realized the importance of preserving the national identity. They achieved the new style by incorporating complex compound rhythms and ornamentations of Bulgarian folk music with traditional Western-European compositional techniques. Founding members of the Contemporary Music Society, these composers took over musical life in Bulgaria between 1930-1945 and transformed it completely by creating works that will stay in the history of Bulgarian music as the first strong examples of the national style. The sonatas for violin and piano, written by each of these composers as discussed in the next chapter, are a perfect illustration of their art.

\textsuperscript{29}Petko Staynov, Venelin Krastev, Raina Kazarova, ed., \textit{Encyclopedia of Bulgarian Music Culture} (Sofia: BAS, 1967), 353.
CHAPTER 3
THE SIX SONATAS.

This chapter will discuss each of the six sonatas for violin written by the composers introduced in the previous chapter. The sonatas were written during a period when chamber music flourished in Bulgaria. Their creation coincides with the formation of state music institutions which, in turn, lead to the formation of various professional chamber groups. This was also the time when violinists, professionally trained abroad, returned to Bulgaria. The sonatas are sorted in chronological order as follows: Pancho Vladigerov (1914), Dimitar Nenov (1921), Lubomir Pipkov (1929, 1969), Vesselin Stoyanov (1934) and Marin Goleminov (1952). Two of the sonatas are for solo violin without piano accompaniment. Elements such as the history of the piece, general form, style, and technical challenges for the violinist and pianist will be isolated and explained in the context of each composition.

Sonata for Violin and Piano Op. 1 by Pancho Vladigerov

The Sonata for Violin and Piano in D major, Op.1 is Pancho Vladigerov’s first chamber music piece. The composer was very young when he wrote it and still a student at the Staatliche Akademische Hochschule für Musik in Berlin, Germany. His studies there from 1912-1918 mark the beginning of his career as a composer. Other works written during these years are Four Pieces for Piano (1915), Variations on a Bulgarian Folk Song (1916), Six Lyric Songs for Voice and Piano (1917), and Ballade for Voice and Piano (1917).

The sonata was a composition assignment written under the supervision of Vladigerov’s teacher at the Hochschule, Paul Juon (1872-1940). The young composer started working on it in the spring of 1914 and finished it in December of the same year. Luben Vladigerov, the twin brother of the composer who was studying violin at the same school, edited the violin part. The sonata is dedicated to Henri Marteau (1874-1934), French violinist and professor at the Staatliche Akademische Hochschule für Musik. Marteau was Luben’s violin teacher and he frequently coached the duo.31 The dedication on the first page of the score reads: “To our dear

31 Boriana Kojouharova Buckles, “The Significance of selected piano compositions by Pancho Vladigerov”, (DMA Diss., The Louisiana State University, 2004), 8-9.
teacher professor Henri Marteau with deep gratitude”.

A couple of months after the sonata was finished, in February 1915, the two brothers performed it for the first time at a private concert in the home of Marteau. This was the first important presentation for the young composer and his brother in front of music critics and musicians who were friends of the host. According to Evgeni Pavlov, author of biographical books about Vladigerov, the performance was successful and everybody enjoyed the piece. Marteau liked the sonata so much that he performed it later in Germany, Switzerland, Sweden, Norway, and in Bulgaria accompanied by the composer.

The style of the sonata is romantic; there is presence of a motif. There is no influence of Bulgarian folklore in it, but there are still uses of some Eastern European harmonies. The piano and the violin part are equally challenging, while the texture of the piano is massive at times.

The first movement, Agitato, is in D major. Both instruments state the main theme in the first measure. This three-note statement—d, c#, a, serves as a motif and appears in the other two movements (see Example 3.1).

Example 3.1 Vladigerov, Sonata for Violin and Piano, Movement I, mm.1-4.

In the exposition, the arpeggios in the piano part (mm. 3-40) are set against an intense melody in the violin that breaks the dramatic mood of the movement. The ritardando in m. 43 prepares the Poco mosso that comes in the next measure and marks the beginning of the development.

In m. 55 the tempo moves to piu stringendo with the violin part in one of the highest registers, marked appassionato. The recapitulation (beginning in m.71) is extremely long—111 measures.

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32 Evgeni Pavlov, Pancho Vladigerov, (Sofia: Muzika, 2000), 35.
33 Evgeni Pavlov, Pancho Vladigerov, (Sofia: Muzika, 2000), 36.
Its beginning is marked *tempo I* and clearly states the same three-note *motif* from the beginning of the movement, but this time in a higher octave in the violin part. The movement finishes with a short coda that starts in m. 182, marked *Vivace*.

The second movement, *Andante*, starts with the *motif* from the first movement in the piano part. However, this time it is in a minor key—G minor (see Example 3.2).

![Example 3.2 Vladigerov, Sonata for Violin and Piano Op. 1, Movement II, mm. 1-3.](image)

The violin comes in m. 11 with the same melody. It is important to note that throughout the whole movement, Vladigerov gives the performers clear directions by writing various markings. He used them to indicate not only the dynamics and the change of tempo throughout the movement, but also to suggest the mood of a particular episode. For example, in m. 11 he writes *molto espressivo con sentimento* in the violin part, in m. 22 *con grande espressione* and in m. 31 *molto appassionato* with tempo marking *impetuoso*. The second part of the second movement is contrasting, marked *quasi marchia* [sic.]. In the violin part the suggested bow stroke is *marcato* with left hand pizzicati in mm. 50-51. The recapitulation starts in m. 110 with the *motif* stated in the violin. The movement finishes with solo piano marked *cantando* and *morendo*.

The last movement, *Allegro con brio*, is short and dance-like. It starts with a piano introduction that lasts 14 measures (see Example 3.3). The violin joins in m. 15 playing the *motif* with a different articulation. In the score the part is marked *Am frosch*, (at the frog). The whole movement is highly virtuostic: the violin has harmonics in mm. 24 and 26 and some off beat pizzicato chords (mm. 39-44). In the recapitulation (beginning in m.50), the main theme of the movement collides with the *motif* of the sonata. The *stringendo* at m. 256 leads to a short coda, marked *vivacissimo* in m. 260.

In the violin part of the score, edited by Luben Vladigerov, the \textit{Poco mosso} in the first movement (mm. 45 and 145) is marked all up bows. In the interest of saving time and all of the dynamic markings, one suggestion will be to play it as it comes. The first part of the second movement requires careful observance of the dynamics, especially the \textit{sub. piano}. The author suggests use of slow vibrato. Again in the second movement, in the part marked \textit{quasi marchia}, the pizz. chords are to be played simultaneously, not arpeggiated because they are marked \textit{forte} and later \textit{fortissimo}. Third movement requires very short and crisp stroke. The author suggests limited use of the bow. In the edition, m. 131 is marked flying \textit{staccato}. The author suggests playing it as it comes in order to achieve the desired stroke. The octaves at the end of the movement (m.250) require special attention; the tempo marking there is \textit{vivace}. It is recommended that the violin and the piano work slowly the passage from m.250-end for ensemble. The tempo goes from \textit{vivace} to \textit{vivacissimo} to a brilliant and short finale.

\textbf{Sonata for Violin and Piano by Dimitar Nenov}

The Sonata for Violin and Piano is one of Nenov’s early compositions. It was written in Dresden, Germany, in 1921. This is the third piece in the list of his works. The two previous ones are \textit{Fantasy for Piano and Orchestra} and \textit{Six Preludes for Piano}, both written in 1920-1921. At first, the sonata was to have five movements, but it turned out to be two movements- one slow and one fast. The first two performances of the sonata were in 1936 and 1937 by Vladimir
Avramov and Nikola Obreshkov on violin, and Dimitar Nenov on piano. The first edition of the score was published in 1967 and edited by Lazar Nikolov, a prominent composer of the Third Generation.  

As a whole the sonata is lyrical. It possesses typical features of Nenov’s sensitive approach to writing, and is also influenced by a mixture of late French romanticism and early impressionism (for example the sonata for Violin and Piano by Cezar Frank)—a phenomenon that was often found in European music written in the first two decades of the twentieth century. The composition diverges from typical sonata compositions by composers such as Beethoven; it consists of two movements, connected by united thematic material. The technique used is alternating of smaller and bigger motives rather than development of themes. The first movement is moderately slow and free in form, much like a fantasy, which introduces the second movement, written in sonata-allegro form. The composer writes about his approach to instrumentation in the following:

Инструментирам извънредно бавно и внимателно. Може би си въобразявам много неща, може би защото съм учил много малко, но инструментирането на всяко ново произведение за мене е проблем. Тъй като не обичам нито шаблоните, нито формулите, мъча се да колорирам всеки такт според идеята на музиката.

[I work on instrumentation very slowly and carefully. Maybe I am imagining a lot of things, maybe because I studied so little, but the instrumentation of a new composition for me is a problem. Because I don’t like patterns or formulas, I try to color every measure according to the idea of the music.]  

The first movement, Langsam, is built on four episodes that float smoothly into one another. Nenov constructed everything based on a simple motive, and the development of the whole movement is based on the constant changing of the main theme. Throughout the movement, the composer uses dissonant chords. For example, in the beginning of the sonata, the main theme is in the violin with a G natural, while the piano part has a trill on G sharp, creating tonal tension (see Example 3.4). The second episode starts in m. 41 and it has richer harmony. Arpeggios of six and seven against nine in the piano part lead to a small climax in m. 44. The climax of the movement is in the third episode in m. 74, labeled animato. In the fourth episode

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36 Boris Stephanov, Vesselin Stoyanov Sonata for Violin and Piano, Dimitar Nenov Sonata for Violin and Piano, Dina Schneiderman, violin, Ivan Zhekov, piano (Sofia: BKALP 439), 19
there is a preview of the theme from the beginning of the second movement in the violin part (mm.90-97). The key shifts to C sharp minor and the first movement finishes with the main theme from the first episode, this time played by the piano (mm. 92-end).

![Example 3.4 Dimitar Nenov, Sonata for Violin and Piano, Movement I, mm. 1-9.](image)

The second movement, *Allegro con fuoco*, has three sections. The first one serves as an exposition and is comprised of contrasting episodes. The second one is very short and acts as a development section while the third one is a recapitulation of the first section, but paraphrased and shorter, followed by a short coda. The first section is 66 measures long. It starts with the piano playing arpeggios and the violin playing the theme (see Example 3.5). Later the violin plays the same theme in the high register, on the same string (m. 31). From mm. 33-44 the piano plays the phrase from the beginning, but in chords and twice as fast. The climax is in m. 45 with sextuplets in the piano. The second section starts in m. 67 and is marked *Mit ausdruck(breit)*, (with feeling). The violin has double stops and the piano part plays an ostinato bass in eight notes. The character of this section is different, more lyrical, marked *espressivo* for both parts. The third section (m.84) is written *piano* and has motives taken from the first and second movement. The recapitulation is very short and altered, starting in m. 116. The conclusion of the sonata (m. 147) is built on the two main themes of the both movements.

In the author’s opinion, in order to achieve a stylistic performance, both violinist and the pianist have to recreate a rich and colorful sound. The tools that are necessary for achieving it include using different degrees of density in the sound, carefully observing dynamic nuances and balancing the sound production of both instruments. The violinist needs to find the right intensity in the vibrato, and the pianist needs a well-balanced pedal.
Legato stroke is preferred in phrases labeled *risoluto* (for example, the beginning of the second movement). The places marked *tranquilo, animato, risoluto, appassionato, languido*, are clear indications of the author’s wishes—he wants maximum attention for coloring the tone. The violin has several passages that require comfortable fingerings: the first movement beginning in m. 73 and in the second movement beginning in m. 137. The second movement requires a good choice of tempo, not too fast. This will allow for a complete and authentic interpretation, regarding to Bulgarian musical language.

**Sonata for Violin and Piano No.1 by Lubomir Pipkov**

Lubomir Pipkov’s Sonata for Violin and Piano No. 1 was written in 1929 while he was a student at *Ecole Normale de Musique* in Paris, France. The composer was very young when he created the sonata, only 25 years old. Written during his first compositional style period, the work contains various compound rhythm combinations. All of Pipkov’s first period compositions were created before World War II and possess tonal, melodic, and metric features characteristic of Bulgarian folk music. Some of them include a Piano Trio (1930), his First String Quartet (1928), the Bulgarian Suite (1928), and the Concerto for Winds, Percussion and Piano (1929).  

The Sonata for Violin and Piano No. 1 premiered successfully in Sofia in 1930. In 1935 the composer performed it live on the National Radio with Prof. Vladimir Avramov on the

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violin. During this time the director of the classical music section of the radio was another composer from the Second Generation—Dimitar Nenov—whose main purpose was to promote Bulgarian music written by his contemporaries. In the fall of 1949, when a group of Bulgarian musicians went to visit the Moscow Conservatory in Russia, the sonata was included in Pipkov’s compositional recital program, along with his Piano Trio and his Second String Quartet. The Russian violinist Galina Barinova decided not to play it at the very last minute under the pretext that the sonata content had formalist qualities, in other words it was too complicated for the audience. Later in 1953, in Bulgaria, violinist Boyan Lechev and pianist Snezhana Gulubova secretly learned the sonata and recorded it. The recording was aired on the National Radio on October 19, 1956. The personal records of the composer show a poem written on this day in his diary after he heard the performance on the radio. It reads:

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Разтревожи ме тази соната!
Този огнен набег в тишината
Колко обич и яростен яд
Колко много надежди отбълснати!
Моите песни наново пишат
Като птици от бурята пръснати!
19 Октомври, 1956
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[This sonata made me anxious!
The fiery escape in the silence,
How much love and madness,
How many broken hopes, taken away!
My songs are screaming loud again
Just like birds, spread out by the storm!]
October 19th, 1956

The overall structure of the sonata is homogeneous. Pipkov said that he was strongly influenced by Stravinsky when he wrote it, in particular the motoric movement, repetitive melodic and rhythmic patterns that shift abruptly, and the fast meter changes in his works. The violin part and the piano part have equal roles. Each of the three movements is in sonata form.

The first movement, *Moderato*, is built on a great diversity of complex rhythms. It is in A minor and has two main themes, both in 4/4 meter. The first theme first appears in the piano part in mm. 1, then in the violin in mm. 12 (see Example 3.6). The second theme starts in mm. 41 and is labeled *molto cantabile* (see Example 3.7).

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The development starts in mm. 62 with a metric structure typical of Bulgarian folk music. The changing meter starts with 5/8 and then goes to 7/8, 9/8, 10/8 and 11/8. The recapitulation starts
in mm. 165 and is labeled *a tempo*. The first theme returns in the piano part in mm. 166, then the violin part picks it up in mm. 176.

The second movement has an improvisational character. The *Lento* starts in C minor with the melody in the piano part (see Example 3.8). A recitative-like melody is present in the violin from mm. 5-24. The development starts in mm. 25 with dramatic accents in the piano that are repeated in the violin in mm. 31 and mm. 46-50. The harmonic language becomes modal in mm. 51, labeled *moderato*, where the key goes to G minor. The recapitulation of the movement comes in mm. 73 with the original tempo marking *Lento*.

The last movement is labeled *Presto* in 10/8. It starts with brilliant harmonics and trills in the violin part and a staccato eighth-note passage in the piano (see Example 3.9). In m. 20 material taken from the second movement (mm. 40-44) appears in the violin part. The sonata finishes with the main theme from the first movement and a short *stretto* with harmonics in the violin and *pp* in the piano part.

![Example 3.8 Pipkov, Sonata for Violin and Piano, Movement II, mm. 1-9.](image-url)
Example 3.9 Pipkov, Sonata for Violin and Piano, Movement III, mm. 1-6.

As a whole there is a richness of timbral nuances in the sonata. The thematic material has a more declamatory style typical of vocal writing as opposed to purely instrumental. There is an intensity of metrical and rhythmic structures, the harmonic language is original, and there is a strict dramatic sequence of the parts. 40

The difficulties of the first movement are mainly ensemble issues between the two instruments due to complexity of rhythms and fast metric changes. Second movement requires a very precise phrasing of the musical line in both instruments. The author suggests re-editing fingerings and thinking enharmonically in the third movement because of accidentals, especially in passages like the one marked *Meno* in m.62.

**Sonata for Solo Violin No.2 by Lubomir Pipkov**

Lubomir Pipkov’s second violin sonata was completed in August of 1969. The earliest sketch is dated February 2, 1969. Pipkov wrote the sonata during his third period (1967-1974), which is characterized by mostly chamber music works and concertos. The beginning of his third

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period was marked by his work *Oratorio for Our Time* (1959). Other works written during this period are the opera *Antigona 43* (1962), *Third String Quartet* (1965), and the *Concerto for Clarinet and Chamber Orchestra* (1966). As a result of being influenced by the Russian composers, Pipkov became interested in the dark side of human nature and the music he wrote during these years had a more sarcastic and ugly character. However, the presence of lyrical and folk elements, typical of his earlier style, still remains. All of Pipkov’s chamber works written after 1967 share characteristics with his symphonic works. For example his *Third String Quartet* sounds much like his *Third Symphony* (written during the same year, 1965), and his *Sonata for Solo Violin* is reminiscent of the *Concerto for Clarinet*. These last two works share two main themes in their first movements, moving in between dark and lyrical, although not presented as strongly as in the concerto for clarinet.

The *Sonata for Solo Violin* was commissioned by the prominent Bulgarian violinist and a current professor at the State Music Academy, Stoika Milanova. She had approached the composer about writing a sonata, and after its completion Pipkov dedicated the work to her. Milanova worked closely with the composer and edited the sonata. When asked in an interview from 1971 what is it like to write for violin, the composer replied:

> [...Since I was a child the violin was deeply engraved in my mind. My father played it. He actually used the violin in order to discover himself as a musician. During this period the timbres of the instrument stayed deep in my subconscious and I developed the skill to hear it in a different way than the rest of the instruments. The case with the sonata was like that: I heard Stoika Milanova and was deeply moved by her connection with the violin. It was like the violin was reborn for me. Stoika asked me to write a sonata. At first I was a little bit taken aback because the thought was unexpected. But the instrument had already come back to life in my mind, arising with its full colors, in which of them I began to express the musical thoughts that came as a result of that to completely take over me...]  

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The first movement, in A minor, serves as a thematic center for all of the three movements. As previously mentioned, it has two contrasting themes similar to his *Concerto for Clarinet*. In the beginning, two things get the attention of the listener: the time signature of 5/4 and the clear statement of the first main theme *Allegro energico* (see Example 3.10). The first two measures consist of the main three motives of the theme; the remaining five measures are variations of it.

![Example 3.10: Pipkov, Sonata for Solo Violin, movement I, mm. 1-6.](image)

The calmer second theme *Piu Lento* (shown in Example 3.11) is an eight measure closed period. It is tonally stable (in D minor) and embellished with chromaticism. The lyrical second theme is reminiscent of a *sarabande*, because the emphasis is on the second beat. It consists of broken chords with various accidentals and left hand pizzicati. In the exposition (mm. 40-53) there is a reappearance of the second motive of the first theme at Tempo I. The development (mm. 54-98) expands the first and second motives of the first theme and leads to the recapitulation of the movement. The recapitulation (mm. 99-end) is in Tempo I and has material from the first theme, which later joins material from the second theme leading to the end of the movement.\(^{42}\)

\(^{42}\) Ibid., 27,28.
The second movement is a slow and lyrical Largo, con moto. The form is a theme with three variations. The first measure of the movement presents the theme. The first variation has double stops and in the second variation Pipkov wrote three and four-voice broken chords. The third variation is the culmination of the movement with recapitulation of the main theme.

The movement’s rhythmic elements (as shown in Example 3.12) from the beginning of the movement) are characteristic of Bulgarian folk music. The uneven vocal singing found in Bulgarian folk songs influenced the composer. Passed orally from generation to generation, the vocal singing in Bulgaria is done by female choirs. The songs are categorized by improvisations on the main melody and a lot of embellishments. In this movement Pipkov uses elements taken from the slow harvest songs typical of the Sofia region. These songs are unpulsed, performed rubato and densely ornamented. Therefore the ornamentation and triplets in the movement must be performed in the following way: every triplet needs to be drawn out and the grace notes that are a part of the ornamentation need to be emphasized with the bow and with vibrato, thus imitating vocal singing, reminiscent of the singing of the female choirs.

The third movement is Allegro and is built on material of the “Theme of the Darkness” taken from Pipkov’s opera Antigona 43 (See Example 3.13). The sonata theme is the violin version of the first orchestral interlude; the composer simply added an introduction and a conclusion, both labeled sostenuto, to the previously existing material from the opera.  

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44 ibid., 72.
It serves as an antithesis to the second movement. The lyrical character of the second movement is in contrast to the grotesque and dark mood of the last movement. The overall form is A, A1, Coda, and written in changing meters with very fast sixteen-note passages throughout. The movement starts in 7/4, and then switches constantly between 7/8 and 8/8. The 7/8 is always grouped 2+2+3, and the 8/8 is 3+2+3. The last imitation is interrupted in mm. 77 by a meter change to 3/8, followed by 7/8 meter and the conclusion of the movement in the original sostenuto in 7/4 meter with the same material as the beginning. In mm. 77 the diamond- shaped sign is intended to get the attention of the performer. It indicates that the D sharp in the beginning of the measure switches to D natural.

**Sonata for Violin and Piano by Veselin Stoyanov**

The Sonata for Violin and Piano in F sharp minor by Veselin Stoyanov was written in 1934, during the composer’s first compositional period. Stoyanov had already established his writing style, but needed to work on clarifying his individual language. At this time he had just returned to Bulgaria from his studies abroad. During this period the composer dedicated himself
to writing chamber music. Three string quartets and the sonata for violin and piano are the only music he wrote during this time. Coincidentally, these were all of the chamber pieces that Stoyanov wrote in his lifetime.

The first performance of the sonata was in 1934, live on the radio, with Sasha Popov, violin, and the composer on piano.\textsuperscript{45} The composition clearly shows Stoyanov’s mastery of the sonata form, as well as his skill in developing a successful dialogue between the two instruments. The sonata follows the pattern of a four-part cycle with a scherzo third movement. Logical development of the form and successful blending of the two instruments according to their idiosyncrasies results in a very well written work that has the potential to be a valuable piece in the repertoire. Built on rich and varied thematic material, the sonata is a mixture of late romanticism, diatonic harmonies that are reminiscent of Bulgarian folk music and chromatic passages.

The first movement, \textit{Agitato}, is in sonata form. The first theme is in the violin (see Example 3.14).

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.8\textwidth]{example3.14.png}
\caption{Example 3.14 Vesselin Stoyanov, Sonata for Violin and Piano, Movement I, mm. 1-4.}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{45} Dimitar Zenginov, “Chamber and Solo Piano pieces by Vesselin Stoyanov”, \textit{Bulgarian Musicology} (Sofia: BAS, 2002), 100-101.
The key is F sharp minor, but m. 10 modulates to A minor with a clear statement of the second theme and the beginning of the development. The large number of accidentals makes the violin part extremely challenging for controlling intonation. From m. 90 until m. 121 tension builds up, achieved by fast triplets in the violin and alternating legato and spiccato strokes. The culmination of the movement arrives in m. 122 with syncopated high octaves in the violin part and triplets in the piano. The recapitulation is in m. 127 with the first theme stated exactly as in the beginning and played by the violin. In m. 192 a short coda labeled animato and in the original key of F sharp minor finishes the movement.

The second movement, Andante Cantabile, is in compound three-part form. The main theme is a sad mourning song in aeolian mode, stated by the violin (see Example 3.15).

The piano repeats the theme in m. 9. The change of tempo in m. 31 (poco piu mosso) and the different material suggest this to be the beginning of the development. Very high, syncopated notes in the violin, labeled molto appassionato (m. 51) indicate the culmination of the movement. The recapitulation starts in m. 56 with the main theme played by the piano, and then the violin.

The third movement, Allegretto, written alla breve, is a scherzo written in the model of Beethoven’s Sonata for Violin and Piano No.5 (see Example 3.16).
Example 3.16 Stoyanov, Sonata for Violin and Piano, Movement III, mm. 1-4.

The very short movement has a middle section (mm. 17-42) that is repeated. The character is very playful. It is written in a way that the two instruments joke with each other throughout the movement.

The finale, Allegro, is similar in character to the first movement and its main theme is not unlike the main theme of the first movement (see Example 3.17).

Example 3.17 Stoyanov, Sonata for Violin and Piano, Movement IV, mm. 1-4.

The movement is in classical sonata rondo form; the A and B sections serve as the first and second themes in the exposition and recapitulation. The A section, or the first theme, appears in mm. 3-39 in the exposition and mm. 74-110 in the recapitulation. The B section, or the second theme, appears in mm. 40-60 in the exposition and mm. 111-140. There is a short C
section, or development, that lasts only from mm. 61-72. The movement finishes with a short coda, labeled animato (mm. 141-end).

**Little Suite for Solo Violin by Marin Goleminov**

Marin Goleminov’s works can be categorized roughly into three style periods. Among his early compositions are the ballet *Nestinarka* (“The Fire Dancer”) (1938-40), *Variations on a theme by Dobri Hristov* (1942) and String Quartet No.3 *Starobulgarski* (“Old Bulgarian”, 1946). Strong influence of Bulgarian folk music and its elements including music, dance, etc. characterize his second compositional period, which dates from 1945-1963. Along with the *Suite for Solo Violin*, the *Prelude for Cello and Piano* (1948), *Violin Duets* (1955), *Cello Concerto* (1950), and *5 Sketches for String Quartet* (1948) are other compositions created during this period. Works of the third style period include *Concerto for Violin* (1968), *Concerto for Cello No. 2* (1984), *Concerto for Piano* (1975), *Lament in memory of Dobrin Petkov* (1989), among others.

Marin Goleminov’s Little Suite was written originally for viola in 1951 and transcribed for violin in 1952. The violin score was published in 1974 and edited by Boyan Lechev, violin professor at the State Music Academy. This work is for advanced violinists because it has technical difficulties that require a high level of training and control of the instrument. It has four movements, slow-fast-slow-fast, and each movement has a title.

The first movement, *Ballade*, is in 4/4 and in A minor. Labeled *Moderato mosso*, the tempo and mood do not change throughout the movement. The writing is very violinistic and reminiscent of Œsaye’s *Six Sonatas for Solo Violin* in texture (Sonata No.4 and Sonata No.6). In this movement it is obvious that Goleminov had a deep knowledge of the instrument and that he was a good violinist. Set to express complex emotions, the rhythmic features are reminiscent of slow folk songs. The exposition (mm.1) starts with the main theme on the G string, ornamented with trills (see Example 3.18).

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The broken chords in mm. 2 and 3 need to be emphasized for stylistic effect. The beginning of the development is clearly labeled by the composer with a double bar in mm. 10-11. The quintuplets and dectuplets, as well as the dotted eighth note with two sixteenth notes in mm. 18 are typical figures used in vocal and instrumental folk music (see Example 3.19).

In the recapitulation of the first movement the composer uses almost the exact same material as the beginning, except for the last four measures, which is a coda. The movement finishes with a crescendo.

Second movement, *Skoropogovorka (Tongue Twister)*, is in a fast 2/4. It is marked *Allegretto*, with a quarter note that equals 104. Technically challenging, this movement has sixteenth—note passages throughout. The exposition starts with a four-voice chord on the first beat and double stops (see Example 3.20).
Example 3.20 Goleminov, Suite for Solo Violin, Movement II, mm. 1-5.

The material of the development (starting at m. 19) is different than the beginning. Two pizzicato chords follow grouped thirty-second notes, and in m. 29 there is a passage with difficult intervals for the violinist that lasts for four measures. This passage needs to be practiced slowly for precise intonation before attempting it at tempo. There are also some challenging string crossings in m. 46. The recapitulation (starting at m. 50) brings together material from the beginning and material from the development. The movement finishes with a short glissando to a sixteenth note, which is just like the end of many Bulgarian folk songs performed by a group of women (see Example 3.21). At the end of these folk songs, the women performers finish with a short scream-like sound, called izvikvane or provikvane:

Izvikvane or Provikvane is a loud, ornamental, scream-like portamento in unison on the perfect fourth, minor seventh, or eight interval of a drone voice. Often, izvikvane is a cadential formula at the end of a phrase, or in the middle of a word.

Third movement, Momina Jalba (Maiden’s Lament) is slow, in G major, and has changing meter and tempo. It starts Lento in a 2/4 meter. The beginning has a two-voice texture, characteristic of slow vocal Bulgarian folk songs. In the folk songs, one voice sings the embellished melody, while the other sings long, sustained notes. Goleminov uses the same kind of texture throughout the movement (see Example 3.22).

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47 Blagomira Lipari, “The Influence of Bulgarian folk music on Petar Christoskov’s Suites and Rhapsodies for Solo Violin”, (DMA Diss., The Louisiana State University, 2004), 11.
The meter starts changing in mm. 9 and goes to 4/4, 3/4, 4/4, 2/4, 3/4, and 2/4. In mm. 21 the change of tempo to *Piu mosso* presents asymmetrical meters. The melody switches between 9/8, 5/8, 8/8, 6/8, 7/8, 3/8, and 4/8. While 9/8, 8/8, 6/8, and 4/8 can be considered symmetrical meters, the division of the beats in this music is typically asymmetrical, such as 8/8 grouped as 3+2+3 and 9/8 grouped as 2+2+2+3 (see Example 3.23).

The *Molto sostenuto e a piacere* in mm. 26 indicates the beginning of the development with new material. The unison intervals, as well as the major and minor seconds, are also features taken from slow vocal folk songs. Bulgarian folk melodies usually move by step and have narrow intervals within an octave that are characteristic of this melody. The recapitulation (beginning in m. 60) is short. Some interesting details are the short metric interruptions and rests in mm. 68 and 69. For an accurate performance of the movement, it is important that all of the intervals are played very close to each other, sometimes clashing, and that all quintuplets are grouped 2+3.

The fourth movement, *Gadularska (Tune for Bagpipe)*, is a fast *Rondo* in 2/4 in A major. It starts with an introduction of 17 measures. The main theme appears in m. 18 with three- and four-voice chords in double stops (see Example 3.24).
The articulation is heavy *marcatto* in the lower part of the bow, almost *detaché*. The development in m. 36 offers a drastic change of mood with a *piano* dynamic and legato sixteenth notes. From m. 45 until almost the end of the movement the composer uses an artistic device characteristic of the Bulgarian folk instrument *gaida* (bagpipe)—a drone. The *Gaida* is a favorite instrument for weddings in Bulgaria. It is made of a goat skin bag with wooden stocks that receive three pipes—a melody pipe, a drone pipe and a blow pipe. Because the instrument has both a melody and a drone pipe, it is able to perform double stops with one moving and one drone voice. The violin plays passages with one moving and one non-moving voice, like an ostinato bass. (see Example 3.25). The goal of the composer was to imitate the sound of the *Gaida* on the violin.

The recapitulation of the movement begins in m. 79 with the main theme repeated exactly as in the beginning. In mm. 92 and 98 there are two very high jumps of two octaves. From mm. 116 until the end is a short coda with material taken from the theme, which finishes the suite.
Conclusion

In spite of the vast popularization of music written for the violin in the past century, there is still very little known about the significant number of works for the violin composed in Bulgaria. This obscurity has deprived violinists of the opportunity to perform these little known, but wonderful pieces. Until today they remain important in Bulgarian music as standard material in the repertoire of Bulgarian violinists. The six sonatas discussed in this treatise, composed by the Second Generation Bulgarian composers between the years of 1914-1969 are the first chamber music pieces written for violin and piano in Bulgaria. Pancho Vladigerov’s Sonata (1914) is the first sonata for violin and piano written by a Bulgarian composer. The sonatas possess certain similarities: three of them have folk elements and all of them are technically difficult, including use of compound rhythm. Three of the six have three movements, two of them have four movements, and one has two movements. The performance suggestions written in this document are according to the author’s personal experience in performing the pieces and knowledge of Bulgarian music. It is the author’s hope that this project will be useful to teachers who are interested in providing new repertoire for their students. Five of the sonatas are recommended for students in the college level or extremely accomplished upper level high school students. Marin Goleminov’s Little Suite is appropriate for both lower and higher level violinists.

The goal of this treatise is to gain broader awareness for these sonatas. The author is confident that they have the potential to become regular pieces in the repertoire of modern day violinists.
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Lora Lipova is native of Plovdiv, Bulgaria. She received the Doctor of Music degree in String Performance from The Florida State University College of Music in 2007. Ms. Lipova has been a member of the Eppes String Quartet, Principal Second Violin and member of the viola section at the University Symphony. She holds a Bachelor of Music degree from the State Music Academy in Sofia, Bulgaria, and a Master of Music degree from the Louisiana State University. Her primary teachers included Alexander Spirov, Iosif Radionov, Kevork Mardirossian, Karen Clarke, Beth Newdome, and Pamela Ryan. Ms. Lipova participated in master classes with Yfrah Neaman, Charles Castelman, Vania Milanova, Ellen Taaffe- Zwillich, Bruce Owen, Kevork Mardirossian, and Michael Frischenchlagier. She has been a member of the Tallahassee Symphony Orchestra, the Pensacola Symphony Orchestra, the Northwest Florida Symphony Orchestra, the Baton Rouge Symphony, the Acadiana Symphony and the New Symphony Orchestra in Sofia, Bulgaria. She served as a concertmaster of the Summer Music Festival “Euroculture en pays gentiane” in France in 2005 and is on the faculty of the Summer Music Camps at the Florida State University.