

## MACEDONIAN COMPOSERS DURING WORLD WAR TWO, REVISITED

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**Abstract.** *Despite the numerous writings about the first generation of Macedonian composers, we have decided to design a pilot project based on a meticulous review for missing or contradictory data. We revisited the data about four Macedonian composers who played a crucial role in the establishment of the contemporary Macedonian music culture: Stefan Gajdov, Zhivko Firfov, Trajko Prokopiev and Todor Skalovski.*

**Key words:** *Macedonian Music, Composers, World War Two*

The historical analysis of contemporary Macedonian music is usually focused on the works and the activities of Macedonian composers. If we compare the quantity of the written materials regarding all aspects of contemporary Macedonian music culture, the majority of papers will be primarily devoted to the life and the works of Macedonian composers. Likewise, five composers who were among the first to initiate the modern history of Macedonian music take highly distinguished positions: Stefan Gajdov (1905, Veles – 1992, Ohrid), Zhivko Firfov (1906, Veles – 1984, Skopje), Trajko Prokopiev (1909, Kumanovo – 1979, Belgrade), Todor Skalovski (1909, Tetovo – 2004, Skopje), and Petre Bogdanov-Kochko (1913, Skopje – 1988, Skopje). Not only are there numerous articles, essays, and TV documentaries, but three of them (Prokopiev, Skalovski and Kochko) are highly recognized in monographs (Kostadinovski 1983; Kitan Ivanovska, Skalovski and Manchev 2003; Nikolovski, ed. 2002) describing in detail their activities and the events in their lives.

One can expect such an outcome, bearing in mind that they were crucial actors during a period that, particularly after the end of World War Two and the establishment of the Republic of Macedonia, marked the transition of Macedonian musical culture from an oriental to an occidental type. All modern “westernized” music institutions are connected

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to their names and their activities, and sometimes they were compared to the Russian “petorka”, alluding to their role in developing a unique Macedonian music idiom.

The existing papers give the impression that there is sufficient written musicological material about this subject. Nevertheless, we decided to revisit and check the influence of ideological, political and other factors which could have contributed to misinterpreting events from the past. This was the main incentive to launching a pilot research regarding Macedonian music culture during the World War Two period, presented in this paper as viewed by the author of this edition.

We also expected that the time distance, despite the fact that participants are deceased and the artifacts no longer exist, particularly those of the pre-digital era, has a very important and serious impact that would lead towards an increased level of objectivity in the understanding and explanation of the events.

Once again, we would like to emphasize that there are no doubts that these five composers, who were also choral and orchestral conductors (Stefan Gajdov, Todor Skalovski and Trajko Prokopiev), singers (Petre Bogdanov-Kochko) and ethnomusicologists (Zhivko Firfov) played a crucial role in the establishment of the Macedonian contemporary music culture idiom. This paper does not intend to either reverse or re-evaluate the explanation and understanding of the contemporary history of Macedonian music. The history of Macedonian music in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century is an exceptional example not only for the oriental-occidental transformation, but also for a skyrocketing development which brought fully home-educated musicians such as Simon Trpcheski, who at the moment holds performances on world-renowned stages.

In fact, our main goal is to raise the level of criticism, and determine, i.e. locate any missing or contradictory data. We can only share the common scientific opinion that any written conclusion should be carefully and meticulously checked to avoid copying of statements not based on solid facts. This also assumes that we have evidence for such inconsistencies, particularly in the pioneering years of Macedonian musicology (ibid). For example, the concert of Yury Arbatsky held in the German Evangelist Church in Prague on October 18, 1942, which included two compositions for organ, *Fantasia* by Zhivko Firfov, and *Sonata nr. 6* by Panche Peshev (Karakash 1970, 54–55), is confusing due to several reasons:

- both, Zhivko Firfov, and Panche Peshev wrote compositions for an instrument which was totally unknown in Macedonia at that time;
- the scores from the quoted compositions or other similar compositions for the organ are missing;
- the title suggests large music forms not present in their compositional opus;
- last but not least, “the sixth” sonata by Panche Peshev, implies that the other five are missing (see ibid, 56).

What can be confirmed is that:

- the copy of the concert program, published in Branko Karakash’s book on Macedonian composers, is obviously not a fake;
- Yury Arbatsky, who was a pianist, an organist and a composer, was also very interested in ethnomusicology and Macedonian and Central Balkans folklore, resulting from his book *Beating the Tupan in the Central Balkans* (1953);
- both Firfov and Peshev were taking private lessons from Yury Arbatsky (Karakash 1970, 28, 55; Ortakov 1982, 77; Burnazovski & Trajkovski 1984, 10–14, 97), yet when, how often, how long and what the content of the lessons was, remains unclear.

The theoretical responsibility was the main criterion behind the revisited subject of the activities of the Macedonian composers during World War Two. We would also like to emphasize that this paper is complementary to the paper of Buzarovski & Jordanoska (this edition) that determines the methodological assumptions and wholly reviews the culture through the results of the pilot research. Moreover, we had in mind that the data presented in the previous papers, are often based on interviews with the composers or the members of their families, and the copies of the original documents that would confirm their authenticity are rare.

While focusing on the activity of composers, we decided to organize the accessible artifacts in accordance with the three different periods characteristic to World War Two: 1939–41, 1941–44, and 1944–45. This entirely corresponds to the changes of the suffixes or even the entire family names from “ić”, to “ov” and (for Skalovski to) “ski”. For instance, until 1941 we find the following names: Stevan M. Gajdović (Zorikj 2007, 40), Todor Nastić for Todor Skalovski (Kitan Ivanovska 2003, 32), Trajko Prokopijević (Kostadinovski 1983, 25, 28) and Zhivko Firfović (according to the change of the surname of his wife, see Pavlovska-Shulajkovska 2009, 12).

We also decided that our paper will review the activities of only four composers of the group, as Petre Bogdanov-Kochko, started his compositional activities later, i.e. at the end and after World War Two (see Nikolovski, ed. 2002).

The first period was consistent with the previous period, when the group acquired their music education in the Belgrade Music School (Muzichka škola u Beogradu), which after World War Two took the name of its founder Stevan Mokranjac (Marinković 2007, 631). Still, despite the numerous papers about the education of the group, the data should be thoroughly checked as the only copy of the diploma is the one printed in Kostadinovski’s monograph about Trajko Prokopiev (1983, 22). There is no doubt that they completed the school – the missing or contradictory data is related to their enrollment, graduation and the classes they attended (or what they majored in).

There is evidence, and consequently, a common agreement that the emphasis of the compositional activities of the whole group is in the choral area. There are two major reasons for this outcome: the compositional skills of the group and the overwhelming presence of the vocal i.e. the choral practice in the whole region during the pre World War Two period (Buzarovski & Jordanoska this edition). This does not undermine the achievements of the group, as their compositions have been present in the international repertoire until present times (for example, see the data about the most frequently performed works at the International Choir Festival in Nis, where one can find the works of Skalovski and Prokopiev. Kostić 2010, 60, 62–63, 94). It is obvious that at that stage of development of the Macedonian music culture, one cannot expect complex compositional works in a formal, orchestral and stylistic sense. This will be achieved when the first generation of Macedonian composers who had undertaken the full higher education training in Belgrade, Zagreb and Ljubljana in the late 1950s and the 1960s, such as Kiril Makedonski, Vlastimir Nikolovski, Toma Proshev and Tomislav Zografski, graduated.

Usually, the most documented part of the activities of these composers, are the catalogs with the titles of their compositions. Among the latest research in the area, the dissertation “Digital Catalog of Macedonian Choral Works” by Ivica Zorikj (2007), is based on the largest collection of such compositions at the moment. The catalog fully confirms our previous thesis that the accent of their opus was on choral practice. Bearing in mind that

we were interested only in the specified period of 1939–1945, we were immediately confronted with the problem of the exact year of creation, particularly pointing out that some of the compositions might have been published, performed or rewritten later.

During 1939–1941, most of the existing data refers to the choral works of Stefan Gajdov – ten compositions for mixed choir, two for male choir and five for female choir (Kolovski 1993, 88–89). The other composers are much less present, or hypothetically, less creative during the period. This is particularly evident in Zhivko Firfov’s works where there is hardly any data. The opus of Trajko Prokopiev includes two mixed choir compositions, one for male choir and, a piece, *Pastorala*, for flute, harp and violin with inconsistent data about the ensemble(s) and year of creation (see Kostadinovski 1983, 204–208, 315). The list of Todor Skalovski’s works from the same period includes two lost compositions, *Uchi Karaj* and *Rudari* (Skalovski 2003, 198), four compositions for mixed choir, and one for female choir.

During the same period, 1939–1941, and particularly in 1941, all of these composers were living and working abroad: Stefan Gajdov was a music teacher at the Vukovar High School (Todorchevska 2004b, 34); Zhivko Firfov was a teacher and leader of the orchestra at the Zemun Center for the blind and visually-impaired, and a conductor of the Zemun Choral Society (Karakash 1970, 27–28); Todor Skalovski was a high school teacher in Sremska Mitrovica and a conductor of the Citizens’ Choir (Kitan Ivanovska 2003, 37–38; Skalovski 2003, 190); while Trajko Prokopiev was the conductor of the choral society “Sloga” in Sarajevo and a part-time teacher at the Serbian Orthodox Church School (Kostadinovski 1983, 38). When the war started they all returned to Macedonia. Although we cannot say that the exact data of return are of a special musicological importance, we found some discrepancies such as in Kitan Ivanovska’s quote that “... as a supporter of the Yugoslav Communist Party, with a decision of the Croatian Ustasha on the April 6, he [Todor Skalovski] was exiled with his family to Macedonia...” (2003, 38). Such data should be corrected bearing in mind that April 6, 1941 was the first day of the German attack on Yugoslavia.

During the next period, 1941–1943, there is partial data that the four composers in our survey stayed mainly in Skopje, except for Todor Skalovski in whose case there is inconsistent data about his stay in Bitola and Skopje (compare *ibid*, 38–39; v. Skalovski 2010, 69, 71). As the majority of them were working as music teachers, it is unclear whether or not they were sent to Bulgaria for additional training as part of the restructuring of the educational system in Macedonia during the Bulgarian occupation (see Buzarovski & Jordanoska this edition). In 1941, Stefan Gajdov was employed in the “Tsaritsa Ioanna” All-Girls High School in Skopje, and, “in September 1943 he was appointed “principal” of the Bulgarian established authority of the Music School in Skopje, “who, a month later, discontinued classes” (see Todorchevska 2004b, 34). The quoted data contradicts the research by the historian Rastislav Terzioski, who writes that the Music School in Skopje was opened in the school year 1941/1942:

The classes were held by high school music and singing teachers. This music school in the school year 1943/1944, with order from the Ministry of education, became the Music High School... (Terzioski 1974, 31).

Again there is no data about Zhivko Firfov during the period when Todor Skalovski was a teacher at the Bitola High School. Trajko Prokopiev was also a teacher in the Second All-Boys High School where we used to work with a choir and an orchestra which performed some of his compositions (Kostadinovski 1983, 40).

We were particularly careful when reviewing the data of this period, bearing in mind the ideological and political pressure during the following socialist period. All of the extant biographies emphasize that Skalovski, Prokopiev and Gajdov (as well as Bogdanov-Kochko) were included in the resistance against the German and Bulgarian occupation, and that choral practice was the undercover means for these activities. Consequently, Skalovski formed the “Macedonia” male choir in 1942 in Skopje (Skalovski 2003, 156), “as a cover for the activities of the partisans“. Its members later on became members of the Second Skopje Partisan Detachment (Kitan Ivanovska 2003, 39). Later, “under the directions of the Party” he moves to Bitola where his house is “the headquarters for the resistance of the entire Bitola region” (ibid). “In Bitola, also the choir is the ideal form for action and propaganda and sending the ‘singers’ to the partisan detachments” (Skalovski 2010, 71).

Similar activities were noted by Prokopiev, who states that he, as a sympathizer of the resistance, supported the activities of the “progressive youths” through the organization of music events, which were used for undercover meetings (Kostadinovski 1983, 40). He also helped keep their meetings undercover through additional music lessons and organization of weekend choir concerts in the Sv. Gjorgji Church in the Chayr neighborhood where one of the communist party cells was working (ibid).

We find similar information based on the interview with Prokopiev that:

... in the “Boris Drangov” choral society, a Music School was formed... [by Skalovski, Asparuh Hadzinikolov, Prokopiev and Bogdanov-Kochko] where unofficially they appointed Stefan Gajdov as its principal, and Petre Bogdanov-Kochko as its secretary. But the school did not start to work, and there were no students enrolled. Under the instructions of our [sic] Communist party the school should have been a place for gathering of the progressive youth. These intentions were discovered by the Bulgarian occupants who immediately brought Bulgarian music teachers and opened the Music High School (ibid).

This obviously contradicts the previously quoted data about the opening of the Music School with Stefan Gajdov for “principal” in 1943. Moreover, Todorchevska writes that “...the Bulgarian fascists appointed Petre Bogdanov-Kochko as principal of the ‘Boris Drangov’ Music High School from November 4, 1941 to April 1, 1942” (2004a, 42).

At the same time Gajdov was a conductor of the “Brakja Miladinovi” male church choir in the Sv. Dimitrija Church in Skopje until 1945. According to the article by Todorchevska, it was “used as a link between the soldiers sent to partisan detachments” (2004b, 34). Parallel with this information, in the newspaper *Celokupna B’lgarija* we found an article reporting that “yesterday (August 5) in the hall of the First All-Boys High School the new choir “Brakja Miladinovi” was established” with members mainly coming from the former Sv. Dimitrija church choir (*Celokupna B’lgarija* 1942, no. 352, 2).

As we have already emphasized, this is only a pilot research into the area regarding a larger project for clearing up the inconsistencies in the existing data, inconsistencies arising particularly from political and ideological reasons. We assumed that the political pressure might have resulted in an exaggeration related to the progressive roles of the individuals. This also refers to the use of the choirs as a center for the resistance movement, as there is parallel data, which show that the choirs were equally used for propaganda activities from the Bulgarian side, as well (see Buzarovski & Jordanoska this edition). For example, immediately after the Bulgarian occupation of Macedonia in 1941, the “Boris Drangov” choir was formed of the former members of the choirs “Vardar” and “Mokranjac”, and at first, the conductors were Todor Skalovski and Asparuh Hadzinikolov.

Later on, Trajko Prokopiev was appointed as conductor of the same choir, while Petre Bogdanov-Kochko was a piano accompanist (Kostadinovski 1983, 40). The next choir which was frequently mentioned in the articles of *Celokupna B'lgarija* and reviewed in our pilot research is “Georgi Sugarev” with the conductor Todor Skalovski. The pilot research points out that there is written and photographic material about both choirs, particularly obvious in the concert of “Georgi Sugarev” in “Zala B'lgarija” in Sofia with the conductor Todor Skalovski on July 16, 1942 (*Celokupna B'lgarija* 1942, no. 325, 4; no. 339, 2).

As we have mentioned earlier, there is little evidence about their activities as composers in this period. There are only two choral pieces by Gajdov, written in 1942, *Gora i junak* for female choir with several confusing years of creation – 1941, or 1942 (Kolovski 1993: 89), or even 1932, (Todorchevska 2004b, 34) and *Rumba, rumba se sobrale*, also for female choir (1942) (Kolovski 1993, 89).

Again there is no data about Zhivko Firfov. This only confirms the need for a larger study of Zhivko Firfov’s life and particularly his ethnomusicological work, as there are no doubts about his contribution to the establishment of Macedonian ethnomusicology, and particularly the preservation of Macedonian music folklore. Yet, we should not undermine his compositional activities which are also confirmed by the article “Makedonskata pesen” (“The Macedonian song”) where one can find a list of the Macedonian composers: Firfov, Gajdov and Prokopiev (*Celokupna B'lgarija* 1942, no. 355, 4).

According to the list of works by Trajko Prokopiev (Kostadinovski 1983, 314), he finished the choral work *Kumanovka IV* (ibid, 99) and wrote only the music for the play *Pechalbari* by Anton Panov (1942) which was performed the same year (*Celokupna B'lgarija* 1942, no. 393, 2). We found very often the name of Trajko Prokopiev in the Radio Skopje program for children *Chas za Deteto*, where he conducts the group *Detska pesen* (for example, ibid. no. 353, 2).

We have more data about Skalovski’s choral compositions, mostly for mixed choir: *Goce* (as first part of the Ilinden trilogy) (1941–44), *Rhapsody 1* (1941–44), *Ilinden Ballad*, *The Song of Gjorgji Sugare* [sic] (as second part of the Ilinden trilogy) (1942), *Prijdite poklonimsja* (1942) and *Makedonsko oro* (1943–44) (also with a version for a female choir) (Skalovski 2003, 199). Another list of works by Todor Skalovski from 1942 includes an additional three choral compositions: *Dobro utro lichno mome*, *Tuljo* and *Tumbe kafe* (Kolovski 1993, 198). In the monograph about Skalovski, Kitan Ivanovska quotes Ivan Kamburov who pronounced Skalovski’s composition *Macedonian Humoresque* (written in 1938–1939) performed during the concert of “Georgi Sugarev” in Sofia in 1942, as “the most humorous song in Bulgarian literature” (2003, 39). As we have already said, there is other data that need further clarification, such as the performance of *Makedonsko oro* for female choir in 1943 at “the National theater in Skopje, where all the communist youth [SKOJ] was present and rewarded the composition with a long applause” (ibid, 43).

There is much more data covering the period from 1944 on, all of it mainly regarding the activities related to the organization of culture by the partisans in the liberated territories. They generally refer to the music activities in the AGITPROP (agitation and propaganda) unit of the Communist party in the Headquarters of the newly formed resistance in the village Gorno Vranovci, a place where musicians, poets, and other artists were gathered. In the existing printed documents we find the names of Skalovski, Prokopiev and Zhivko Firfov (Vlastimir Nikolovski and Petre Bogdanov-Kochko are also

mentioned) working with the newly formed partisan choirs (ibid, 42). According to Todor Skalovski:

every event began with an opening speech and the song *Izgrej zoro na slobodata* [sic]. The artistic part consisted of *Vrapche*, followed by music solos, recitations and choral songs; the crown of every event was the performance of the drama group *Pettoimeniot Gjore*. The dance *Teshkoto* was performed together with the peasants... (ibid).

It is difficult to reconstruct the exact time and way in which the compositions are linked to the activities of the composers of the period. In the existing writings, Todor Skalovski stated that:

Firfov wrote his *First partisan's march for male choir*, Trajko Prokopiev [wrote] his first composition... inspired by the National Liberation War and the Revolution... Here, I wrote my first works, several marches, the cantata *11 Oktomvri* and the song *Goce* (ibid).

Probably Skalovski refers to his choral composition *11 Oktomvri* which is registered in the Zorikj's catalog (2007, 75), while in accordance to the list of works in the same monograph, the cantata *11 Oktomvri* is written in 1946 (Skalovski 2003, 202).

In Gorno Vranovci, *Mlad borec* published a small collection with arrangements of the popular resistance songs under the title *Mladinski poj*, with lyrics by Venko Markovski, Kole Chashule and Aco Shopov, edited by Todor Skalovski (Nikolovski 1986, 96; Kitan Ivanovska 2003, 41; Skalovski 2003, 201).

In the data given by Todor Skalovski, he states that he made the arrangements of *A bre, Makedonche, Aj shto mi e milo, em drago mlada partizanka da stanam, Vo borba, Od Makedonija glas se slusha, Ne odred, a vojska sme nie, Zora zori* and *So chest i gordost* (Kitan Ivanovska 2003, 44) and the compositions *Titovi sme pioneri, March of the Macedonian youth, March of the Yugoslavian youth, Ognot* (ibid, 43). One can also find a list of twelve other choral compositions written by Skalovski in this period (Kolovski 1993, 198; Skalovski 2003, 199, 201; Zorikj 2007, 75).

There are other controversial data about the transcription and the arrangement of the Macedonian national anthem *Denes nad Makedonija* given by Skalovski himself (Kitan Ivanovska 2003, 43–44). The question of the Macedonian anthem needs further meticulous research, particularly regarding the origin of the melody and the date of its introduction.

As far as Trajko Prokopiev is concerned, after the liberation of Skopje (November 13, 1944) he formed the Military Choir of the National Liberation War Headquarters in Macedonia with soldiers of the battalions in Skopje. The first performance was at the reception of the ASNOM delegates where together with the choir from the All-Girls High School they performed partisan and patriotic songs (Kostadinovski 1983, 42). The choir grew up to 80 members and had its rehearsals "in the former French school and later in the Music High School" (ibid). Prokopiev performed with this choir throughout Macedonia and Serbia and later on at the Srem front. This choir premiered his compositions *Karposh* (written in 1944, performed 1945) and *Dena* (written 1940–1941, performed 1945) (ibid, 42–43). Kostadinovski (ibid, 313–314) also lists the compositions *Vardare* for voice and piano (1944–45), *Rosa* for female choir (1945), *Pesna za sturceto* for children choir (1945) and again the music for the play *Pechalbari* (1945).

There are very rare data about Gajdov's activity. His name is mentioned in the newspaper *Nova Makedonija* (November 30, 1944) as a choral conductor performing the anthems

*Hej Sloveni* and *Izgrej zora* (cited in *Izgrej zora...* 2012). His name is also quoted regarding the concert on December 9, 1944 at the celebration of Sv. Kliment day by the new Ministry of Education formed by ASNOM: “during the music part, Stefan Gajdov and the choir from the All-Girls High School performed his choral compositions *Lele Jano*, *Shto mi e milo em drago* and *Se zapali odajcheto Treno, odajcheto*” (*Nova Makedonija*, December 12, 1944 cited in Todorchevska 2004b, 35). This is the best proof that this choir, which we have already met in the previous period, continued its activities.

During the period of our research (World War Two) there were several other Macedonian musicians who were active composers. Among them, the most quoted name is Panche Peshev (1915, Veles – 1944, KUSHKULI, PLACHKOVICA), an active member of the Yugoslav Communist Party before the war. He participated directly in the resistance against the German and Bulgarian occupation, was imprisoned in 1942, narrowly escaped execution and tragically died in combat in 1944. He was one of the first students at the Music School in Skopje in 1934, but he left the school (Burnazovski & Trajkovski 1984, 14–15). He was on numerous occasions mentioned as taking private lessons in composition with Josip Slavenski and Arbatsky and was the author of one of the first revolutionary songs *Klasje zeleno* in 1936 (*ibid*, 13–14, 29). Unfortunately the only accessible composition by Panche Peshev is the *March of the III Macedonian liberation brigade* (1944), with lyrics by Aco Shopov (*ibid*, 115–118).

Among other activities, he was one of the founders of the illegal newspaper *Dedo Ivan* in 1941, written in Kumanovo dialect (*ibid*, 70). In the second issue he published the article “Pejachki hor” (“Singing choir”) as a reaction to Bulgarian propaganda in Kumanovo:

The Bulgarians “through their AGENT Bojan... try to make us traitors of our class and our people. To increase his influence he promises that he will organize a trip for the singers to Sofia... Do not go to Sofia! This is not a time for that. Forward in the struggle against fascism! (*ibid*, 71–72)

Taki Hrisik (1920, Krushevo – 1983, Skopje) is undoubtedly the composer that deserves to be included in the review of the period. Among the very rare data about his works and his life, we find that he was taking music lessons with the Austrian composer and conductor Albert Hrasche (Kolovski 1993, 229) who used to work in Krushevo and Prilep in the 1930s (Dzimrevski 2005, 238). Karakash (1970, 61); that he was a participant in the resistance against the occupation of Macedonia; that in 1941 he translated the words from *L'Internationale* into the Vlach language, and he wrote the songs *Na noze*, *Krevajte se rabotnici* and *Partizani*. Kolovski's list (1983, 230) of Hrisik compositions includes: *Rabotnichki marsh* (1940), *Partizanski marsh* (1942), *Partizanska himna* (1944) and *Svechena pesna za brakata Kiril i Metodij* (1945). Among his works, surprisingly, there are two orchestral pieces: *Vo mrakot* – a phantasy for orchestra, written in 1943, and *Razdelba* – suite for orchestra, written in 1944 (Karakash 1970, 62; Kolovski 1983, 229). One can be sure that Taki Hrisik focused on writing the so-called *mass songs*, evident through the award received at the anonymous competition of the Association of Composers in Yugoslavia for a Yugoslav anthem in 1969, for his composition *Svechena pesna* (Karakash 1970, 61; Kolovski 1993, 229).

We would also like to mention Asparuh Hadzinikolov (1909, Skopje – 1980, Skopje) whose music education is unclear. The existing data point out that he was enrolled in a high school in Leipzig (Karakash 1970, 36; Kolovski 1993, 226) and returned to Belgrade “when Hitler took the power in Germany in 1933” and, in the same year he finished the



Music School in 1934 (Kolovski 1993, 226). From 1934 he became a music teacher in different cities in Serbia and in Skopje where he also worked as choral conductor. An additional study of his compositional activities should be undertaken as thirteen choral compositions are listed in Zorikj's catalog (2007, 23).

The complete survey of the compositional activities of the period cannot avoid the discussion about the group of amateur composers who created the repertoire of the partisan songs (see for example Ortakov 1977, 13–14; Nikolovski 1986, 96). Among them we should mention Kiro Gligorov (the first president of the independent Republic of Macedonia) with his composition *Lenka*, and Vlado Maleski, the author of the Macedonian anthem *Denes nad Makedonija*. Despite the numerous references in different papers, we assume that this data would be revisited and reviewed, as well.

In conclusion, we accept the opinion that revisiting events from the music history can always contribute to a better understanding of the music of the past, as well as bring light to it from a more objective and realistic perspective.

#### SUMMARY

The pilot research about the activities of the Macedonian composers during World War Two confirmed the need for careful and meticulous review of all existing written data and artifacts in order to avoid copying of statements not based on solid facts. A high level of criticism will help clearing missing or contradictory data, and particularly, misinterpretations which could be a result of the biased political, ideological, cultural or ethnic attitudes.

The review of the activities of the four composers who are considered as founders of contemporary Macedonian music culture, Stefan Gajdov, Zhivko Firfov, Trajko Prokopiev and Todor Skalovski, confirmed the continuity of their pre and post World War Two activities and their crucial role in Macedonian music life and culture. Also the pilot research proved the need for an extensive project that includes other composers such as Panche Peshev, Taki Hrisik and Asparuh Hadzinikolov.

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## MAKEDONSKI KOMPOZITORI TOKOM DRUGOG SVETSKOG RATA, PONOVRNO RAZMATRANJE

*I pored brojnih napisa o prvoj generaciji makedonskih kompozitora, autori ovog rada su sproveli pilot istraživački projekat, koji podrazumeva otkrivanje i detaljnije proučavanje nepoznatih ili protivrečnih podataka. Ponovo su razmatrane činjenice u vezi sa životom i radom Stefana Gajdova, Živka Firfova, Trajka Prokopijeva i Tadora Skalovskog, kompozitora koji su odigrali presudnu ulogu u formiranju savremene makedonske muzičke kulture.*

Ključne reči: *makedonska muzika, kompozitori, Drugi svetski rat*