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DANCE IN THE SALONS:
WALTZES, POLKAS AND QUADRILLES
IN SERBIAN PIANO MUSIC OF THE 19TH CENTURY

As public events, balls had an important role in social life among the Serbs in the Habsburg monarchy in the 19th century. They were organised by the aristocracy and citizens, various associations and ethnic groups. The most prestigious were the so-called “nobles”, i.e. aristocratic balls, while the civil ones were less elegant. A repertoire of dances was to some extent conditioned by the type of the ball. Waltz, polka and gallop were very popular at civil balls, as well as stylised Serbian folk dances, such as kolo. At noble balls, on the other hand, besides waltzes, polkas and gallops, it was quadrilles and cotillions that enjoyed special popularity. On the other hand, in the young Principality of Serbia, the organisation of the balls began in the 1860’s, both at the prince’s court and in better hotels in Belgrade. In the 1860’s, the ball season in Belgrade was opened by Prince Mihailo Obrenović. The dancing repertoire included Serbian folk and civil dances, as well as modern European dances. Following the example of larger European cities, a trend of dancing in salons was as well widespread among the Serbs. Socialising could spontaneously grow into dancing, and sometimes dancing was the expected grand finale of the evening. In salons one could dance for family entertainment, without guests. In court and civil salons in Belgrade, the gatherings, almost as a rule, ended with dancing of popular international and Serbian folk dances. International salon dances make up about a third of the salon music repertoire for piano. The polka is one of the most frequent international dancing genres in the Serbian piano music of the 19th century. Besides the polka, there are other subtypes of this dance: the polka-mazurka, the polka française, the schnell polka, the polka tremblante, the galopp polka, the polka valse and the polka caprice. After the polka, the waltz is the most frequent international dance genre in the Serbian piano music. Besides the waltzes originally written for the orchestra, numerous waltzes were composed for the piano. The popularity of quadrilles in ballrooms is also reflected in the albums of salon music for the piano. This dance genre, which was composed in a potpourri manner, was especially suitable for having the melodies of popular folk and civil songs arranged in it. While in the first half of the 19th century melodies in the quadrilles were either transcribed from popular operettas or operas, or were originally written by composers, in the second half of the century composers mostly resorted to melodies of Serbian or Slavic folk and civil songs. In the second half of the 19th century, Serbian folk dances, such as kolos, took over the ballrooms and the albums of salon music alike. The approval of the Serbian identity was sought in the kolo, and the emphasis on national characteristics through music was politically dominant in the 19th century.

Keywords: Serbian salon music, piano, waltzes, polkas, quadrilles.
INTRODUCTION

In the 19th century, balls were a favorite form of social entertainment. Unlike the circumstances in the 18th century, the new era brings with it an increasing number of balls open to all social groups, which corresponded to a wider selection of concerts. In order to acquire a clearer insight into the significance that ballroom dance enjoyed in society, we will focus on certain segments that were part of this culture.

Throughout the century, and especially in its second half, more and more special buildings were opened for dance parties: ballrooms, as well as various places for entertainment and picnic areas, where music for dancing was played on Sundays. Casinos and various social clubs also contributed by maintaining luxurious redoubt halls, and many entrepreneurs, out of a desire for profit, invested capital in elegant entertainment venues, where music for dancing was performed. Dancing was also one of the usual forms of completing private gatherings in aristocratic and civil salons.

In almost all European countries, a dansomania among the rich and the poor led to the abandonment of strict dancing conventions of the 18th century. In new century waltz, polka, mazurka and quadrille left behind dances such as rigaudon, gigue, gavotte or allemande and minuet. Dance teacher Johann Heinrich Kattfuß wrote in 1800 that these dances were no longer in vogue. Waltz ruled dance floors, spreading across the globe at lightning speed. From court, through fast waltzes of inns and salons, to those played by barrel organists on the streets of big cities, this dance, with a pronounced and articulated first beat, crossed not only national but also society boundaries.

Among other dances in pairs, a special place belongs to the polka, which appeared at the beginning of the 19th century. This lively Czech folk dance quickly became an integral part of the ballroom dancing repertoire, and numerous polkas were published together with other dances or in special collections of polkas with descriptive or popular titles. Local dance teachers presented their variants of the polka: the polka-mazurka, where the steps of polka are combined with a ¾measure of mazurka, became the most popular in the 1840’s. In Germany, the most popular was the Kreuzpolka, and during the 1850’s in Vienna dance halls two new kinds appeared — a lovely Polka française and a lively Schnell Polka, similar to gallop.

After 1800, group dances as well underwent a number of “innovations”. The quadrille became very popular at the beginning of the 19th century. This French dance, performed by an equal number of couples in fours, was also popular at the beginning of the 20th century. This is evidenced by a description from 1901: “the quadrille, that is still danced today, contains six figures. In the beginning there were five of them (Le Pantalon, L’été, La Poule, La Pastourelle, Finale), and Trénitz introduced the sixth, which was named after him”. The figures alternate in duple (2/4) and triple (3/4 or 6/8) metre. This way of performing, according to Bernhard Klemm, was “a vivid image of a solid society and its conventional forms”. Music for quadrilles in the 19th century was most often a potpourri of popular melodies from operettas and operas. The production of quadrilles in that period is immeasurable and can compete only with waltzes and polkas.

3 Waldau A. Böhmische Nationaltänze, Prague : Vitalis, 2003. 188 S.
With the industrial expansion and the expansion of purchasing power, the market interested in “favourite” dances also grew. Scores of dance novelties were offered in the form of pocket or individual editions, properly arranged, and composers, such as Johann Strauss Jr., often gave their works well thought out and attractive titles. Popular dances, composed for the orchestra, were also arranged for the piano and published in albums of dances or individually. For example, the world-famous Strauss’ waltzes, polkas and marches could be heard not only in ballrooms, but also in piano arrangements in civil salons. The fact is that even in the salons, people liked to dance to the sounds of the piano, which contributed to the popularity of dances in the piano repertoire. Dances and marches, as genres characteristic for the public musical life, through the piano, as the most popular instrument in the civil society of the 19th century, became an unavoidable part of the salon music repertoire.

**FROM BALLROOMS TO THE PRIVACY OF SALONS**

Balls, public concerts and parties at home — as popular forms of social life during the Biedermeier period — also spread to smaller towns in the countries of the Habsburg monarchy. As public events, balls played an important role in social life among the Serbs in the Habsburg monarchy in the 19th century. They were organised by the aristocracy and citizens, various associations and ethnic groups. The most prestigious were the so-called “nobles”, i.e. aristocratic balls, while the civil ones were less elegant. A repertoire of dances was to some extent conditioned by the type of the ball. Waltz, polka and gallop were very popular at civil balls, as well as stylised Serbian folk dances, such as kolo. At noble balls, on the other hand, besides waltzes, polkas and gallops, it was quadrilles and cotillions that enjoyed special popularity. The kolo was rarely danced, because it was considered to be “rural, and even when it was danced, few people excelled, because not everyone knew how to dance to it”. However, as early as the 1840’s, academic youth organised Serbian balls, which also featured Serbian folk dances. Serbian balls regularly commenced and ended with a kolo, which often had the bagpipe accompaniment.

On the other hand, in the young Principality of Serbia, the organisation of the balls began in the 1860’s, both at the prince’s court and in better hotels in Belgrade. In the 1860’s, the ball season in Belgrade was opened by Prince Mihailo Obrenović (1823–1868), and only after the Turkish-Serbian war (1876–1879) did the balls spread throughout Serbia as a...

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1 When exploring the 19th Serbian culture it is necessary to bear in mind the existence of cultural pluralism, conditioned by complex and dynamic socio-historical movements, as well as by the fact that the private and public life of the Serbian people took place in different social and state systems: the Habsburg or Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, the Ottoman Empire and the Principality / Kingdom of Serbia.


4 In an effort to modernise social life in Serbia, Prince Mihailo Обреновић initiated the establishment of a number of institutions. He launched the construction of the National Theatre and organised the first horse races in Belgrade. He also arranged charity balls. Thus, in 1865, a ball was organised in the Srpska kruna hotel for the purpose of erecting the first hospital in Belgrade (Вулетић А., Мијаиловић Ј. Између посела и балова / Завод за уџбенике и наставна средства. Београд, 2005. Стр. 120).
form of entertainment. Back then, the “ballroom etiquette and organisation of luxurious and magnificent court balls began”\textsuperscript{1}. Balls were intended exclusively for the members of high society. The dancing repertoire included Serbian folk and civil dances, as well as modern European dances. A ball would open with a kolo, followed by the then popular international salon dances (waltz, polka, mazurka and quadrille), as well as the Serbian ones.

Following the example of larger European cities, a trend of dancing in salons was widespread among the Serbs. Socialising could spontaneously grow into dancing, and sometimes dancing was the expected grand finale of the evening. In salons one could dance for family entertainment, without guests. Princess Anka Obrenović (1821–1868) wrote in her diary that she spent one winter afternoon dancing while accompanied by her sister on the piano. There are several similar descriptions in her diary: “on Tuesday morning, he and I were dancing in the salon, while Tina was playing”\textsuperscript{2}. In court and civil salons in Belgrade, the gatherings, almost as a rule, ended with dancing of popular international and Serbian folk dances. Queen Natalija Obrenović (1859–1941) welcomed in her salons in Belgrade the most prominent people from the political, social and artistic world. Evening receptions, known as “вечеринке” [evening parties], began at eight o’clock and ended at midnight. They were held once a week, usually on Thursdays. Although guests would dance at these evening parties, they were more much more intimate than the balls. Their opening was reserved for new dances, which Queen Natalija Obrenović saw in Paris, but lively modern dances such as waltzes, quadrilles and polkas were also danced. The repertoire also included kolos, which the queen liked very much\textsuperscript{3}.

**POLKAS**

International salon dances make up about a third of the salon music repertoire for piano. The polka is one of the most frequent international dancing genres in the Serbian piano music of the 19\textsuperscript{th} century. Besides the polka, there are other subtypes of this dance: the polka-mazurka, the polka française, the schnell polka, the polka tremblante, the galopp polka, the polka valse and the polka caprice. The polkas are written in a ternary form with a contrasting Trio, which mainly modulates to the subdominant. Almost all of them have a short introduction at the beginning, and they are rounded off with a more or less developed coda. As a rule, the melody is in the right hand, while the left hand has the function of accompaniment. Great interval leaps and a characteristic rhythmic pulsation with an accent on the second beat give a special charm to the graceful and elegant melodies. The titles of the polkas reveal the names of women to whom they were dedicated (Milan Milovuk: *Natalija polka*), indicate certain occasions (Emil Zatlokal: *Na rođendanu* [At a Birthday Party]) or pan-Slavic aspirations of composers, as in Kornelije Stanković’s *Bratinstvo polka* [Fraternity Polka], dedicated to the Bulgarians or Josip Svoboda’s *Slavenska polka* [Slavic Polka].

The polka became a favorite of the ballroom dancing repertoire and the repertoire of military-court orchestras. Numerous examples of polkas originally composed for the piano or piano adaptations of the polkas originally written for the orchestra speak in favour that the polkas were gladly performed in salons too. Thus, the orchestral versions

\textsuperscript{2} Дневник Анке Обреновић (1836−1838) / уредник Р. Гикић-Петровић. Нови Сад, 2007. Стр. 103.
\textsuperscript{3} Кокановић-Марковић М. Друштвена улога салонске музике у животу и систему вредности српског грађанства у 19. веку / Музиколошки институт Српске академије наука и уметности, Београд, 2014. Стр. 163.
of polkas, which often had their piano adaptations as well, were primarily written by the bandmasters. Josif Šlezinger (1794–1870), who was a bandmaster of the Novi Sad Civil Guard (Habsburg Monarchy, present-day Serbia) in the 1820’s, and then moved to the Principality of Serbia, where he founded the Serbian Prince’s Band (1831), composed mostly for the military bands he conducted. For the Serbian Prince’s Band Šlezinger composed Polka and Wastl-Polka, while the Julijana polka, dedicated to Princess Julijana (1831–1919), the wife of Prince Mihailo Obrenović (1823–1868), was composed for the piano. Unlike Šlezinger, whose salon dances were primarily written for the orchestra and performed at balls, Aleksandar Morfidis Nisis (1803–1878), a piano teacher in Novi Sad and a composer of salon and choral music, wrote pieces for the piano. The stylisations of salon dances are at the same time his most successful works, which exude grace, “fresh” harmonies and the accuracy in figuring out characters of the dances. Morfids Nisis’ polka A’ quelles grâces! already in the title indicates the character of a salon dance, and was probably intended for one of the composer’s students (example 1).

Example 1

A. Morfidis Nisis, A’ quelles grâces! B. 5–8

The trio brings modulation to the subdominant A-major key, and the expected contrast is achieved by changing the rhythmic pulsation, which now alternates semiquavers and quavers and shifts the melody to a higher register (example 2).

In the second half of the century, the aspiration of composers to introduce melodies of Serbian and Slavic folk and civil songs into the international dance genres is evident. This process is most pronounced in quadrilles, but it is certainly resent in other dance genres too, but it dance. Representative examples can be found in the piano oeuvre of Kornelije Stanković (1831–1865), who is recognised in the history of Serbian music as the pioneer in establishing a national style in music. Thus, his piece with a very characteristic title Bratimstvo polka [Fraternity Polka] is based on Serbian folk melodies, as indicated by the author himself. Folk motifs are evoked by the characteristic acciaccaturas in the melody,

1 Franjo Kuhač wrote that Šlezinger visited composer Simon Sechter in Vienna, where pianist Josef Fischhof, famous at the time, and Johann Strauss senior “gave him their latest dances and marches so it often happened that Strauss’ band and the one in Novi Sad played new music at the same time” (Kuhač F. Josif Šlezinger. Prvi srpski kapelnik knjaževske garde. Vienac : Zabavi i pouci. Zagreb : Dionička tiskara, 1897. Broj 8. Str. 126).


3 The title page says: “from Serbian Folk Songs, arranged for the piano and dedicated to the Bulgarians by Kornelije Stanković, in Vienna in 1862” (Vienne chez Gustave Albrecht). In the same year, Stanković’s Bulgarian Quadrille was published. The polka was composed inspired by Serbian folk melodies from Srem, but the songs were not presented in the score (Kornelije Stanković — Collected Works, Piano Music, Book
as well as the movement in fourths in the bass, which brings to mind playing the double bass, while the cadences on the second degree are harmonised with a secondary dominant of the dominant (example 3).

Example 2

\[ \text{A. Morfidis Nisis, A’ quelles gr\'aces! B. 22–25} \]

Example 3

\[ \text{Kornelije Stanković, Bratimstvo polka [Fraternity Polka], b. 1–10} \]

In the *Srbski dnevnik [Serbian Daily News]* of the 23rd of July 1863, an anonymous author, reporting on the Serbian celebration held in honor of the “holy Slavic apostles Cyril and Methodius” in Novi Sad, praised that “when the quadrille was danced, the music was not taken from some foreign songs, but from Serbian, from our own songs. We thank them for that. So, we will aid and abet them by telling that we also have a ‘polka tremblant’ by Kornelije Stanković, also on the Serbian songs”\(^1\). This article appeared in the newspapers a year after the publication of Stanković’s polka in Vienna and points to the fact that even the works that were originally written for the piano, were performed not only in salons, but also at balls arranged for the orchestra.

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\(^1\) Србски дневник. 1863. Број 161. Стр. 1.
**WALTZES**

After the polka, the waltz is the most frequent international dance genre in the Serbian piano music. Besides the waltzes originally written for the orchestra, numerous waltzes were composed for the piano. They were composed in a complex ternary form, or as a cycle of several, thematically and tonally different waltz parts, with a slow introduction, which is not supposed to be accompanied by dancing, so it can be in binary or quadruple time, and an effective ending coda / finale built on new or already known material.

The cycles of waltzes, with characteristic salon titles, can be found in the oeuvre of Aleksandar Morfidis Nisis: *Pozdrav srpskim djevama* [Greetings to Serbian Maidens] (1841), *La plus belle journée de ma vie* [The Best Day of My Life], *Ti si dušo lepo cvće* [You, My Dear, are a Pretty Flower] and *Un oiseau chante pour celui qui lui a donné des ailes*, Op. 10. [The Bird Sings to the One Who Gave It Its Wings]. The waltz *Greetings to Serbian Maidens* is dedicated to Miss Sofija Sekulić, from whose name three tones are derived, which the composer used as the main theme of the piece: *Sofija* Sekulić (f – a – e). The latter was then used in all the waltz parts. This kind of device, so characteristic of Robert Schumann’s works for the piano, indicates Nisis’ fondness for this composer.¹ Schumann applied this kind of a procedure already in his Op. 1 *Abegg Variations* for the piano, while Nisis also marked his waltz as “the first piece”². The three tones served Nisis as the core from which he would develop a modulating period, which is an introduction to a series of five waltz parts (example 4).

The waltzes composed in a complex ternary form, were mostly lyrical miniatures, fragments from albums, which reflected temporary moods and impressions. Some examples are *Valse Mignonne* by Isidor Bajić, published in his *Album of Piano Compositions*, as composition No. 5. That Bajić’s waltz was not intended for the dance floor is already illustrated by the tempo indication Vivace (♩ = 126). The form is ternary with the Trio in the subdominant F-major, which also brings a character contrast (Meno mosso cantabile). Like in other miniatures from the Album of Compositions, the harmony language in *Valse Mignonne* is richer, so there are diatonically and chromatically altered chords, as well as frequent modulations (example 5).

**QUADRILLES**

The popularity of quadrilles in ballrooms is also reflected in the albums of salon music for the piano. This dance genre, which was composed in a potpourri manner, was especially suitable for having the melodies of popular folk and civil songs arranged in it. A paradigmatic example is the *Serbian Quadrille* Op. 14 of Johann Strauss Jr., which was premiered at the Saint Sava Ball in Vienna in 1846. The piece was dedicated to the young Serbian prince Mihailo Obrenović. Besides the Serbs, representatives of other Slavic nations also attended the ball, and the Austrian and Serbian press noted that the piece was a great success: “It was played three times, twice after a break, and the heart, ears and legs still wanted to hear some more of it. Our songs were praised and opened doors to higher circles”³.

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¹ The fact is that he compared his piano student Julija Velisavljević, in whom he was probably secretly in love, with Clara Wieck.

² Schumann’s piece was published in 1831, and Nisis’ in 1841.

³ *Serbske Narodne Novine*. St. 9. Pest, 1846. Str. 34–35.
Prince Miloš Obrenović (1780–1860) ordered 400 printed copies of this quadrille from the renowned Viennese score publisher Pietro Mechetti¹.

Example 4

A. Morfidis Nisis, Pozdrav srpskim djevama [Greetings to Serbian Maidens], b. 1–19

Example 5

Isidor Bajić, Valse Mignonune, b. 20–27

In the quadrilles, Serbian composers also respected the usual series of six figures (Le Pantalon, L’été, La Poule, Trénitz, La Pastourelle, Finale), composing them in a potpourri manner. While in the first half of the 19th century melodies in the quadrilles were either transcribed from popular operettas or operas, or were originally written by composers, in the second half of the century composers mostly resorted to melodies of Serbian or Slavic

¹ Кокановић-Марковић М. Српски и словенски балови у Бечу и Штраусова гостовања у Дунавским земљама // Зборник Матице српске за сценске уметности и музику, 2011. Број 44. Стр. 115–129.
folk and civil songs. For example, in the *Slavic Quadrille* (1855), Stanković brings a mosaic of songs of Slavic peoples brought together in the form of the quadrille. The *Quadrille* features Serbian, Russian, Ukrainian, Czech and Moravian songs\(^1\). It can be assumed that Stanković was inspired by the Slavic balls in Vienna, in which he himself took part. Four years later (1859), Stanković published the *Serbian Folk Quadrille*, in which he arranged the melodies of sixteen Serbian folk songs, and three years later the *Bulgarian Quadrille* on the “Bulgarian folk songs”. The piece was dedicated to “young Bulgarian ladies”\(^2\) (example 6).

K. Stanković, *Serbian Folk Quadrille*, La Pastourelle, b. 1–8

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In the second half of the 19\(^{th}\) century, Serbian folk dances, such as kolos, took over the ballrooms and the albums of salon music alike. The approval of the Serbian identity was sought in the kolo, and the emphasis on national characteristics through music was politically dominant in the 19\(^{th}\) century. The audience accepted the recognisable folk melodies with glee, as well as the melodies of patriotic songs, in both the ballrooms and the concert halls. It was local forms, such as the kolo, that reflected specific national characteristics in the salon repertoire, which in general was very similar, if not identical throughout Europe.

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\(^2\) In the same year of 1862, Stanković’s *Fraternity Polka* was published, dedicated to the Bulgarians.
16. Кокановић-Марковић М. Српски и словенски балови у Бечу и Штраусова гостовања у Дунавским земљама // Зборник Матице српске за сценичке уметности и музiku, 2011. Број 44. Стр. 115–129.

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ТАНЦІ У САЛОНАХ: ВАЛЬСИ, ПОЛЬКИ І КАДРИЛІ

в сербській фортепіанній музиці XIX століття

Актуальність дослідження. Салонна музика Сербії недостатньо досліджена сфера національної музичної культури. Водночас аналіз фортепіанних альбомів, контент яких відзеркалює реалії музичного життя Сербії та процеси становлення національної ідентичності в музиці, є важливим і актуальним завданням не лише сербського, а й європейського історичного музикознавства, оскільки типологічно подібні процеси могли відбуватись і в інших національних школах другої половини XIX століття.
Мета дослідження — проаналізувати побутові й бальні танці, що містяться в салонних альбомах фортепіанної музики, з’ясувати їх роль у становленні національної ідентичності.

Методологія дослідження. Для вирішення поставлених завдань застосовано історичний, контекстний, соціологічний методи, жанровий аналіз і системний підхід.

Головні результати та висновки дослідження. Важливу роль у соціальному житті сербської громади в Габсбурзькій монархії XIX століття відігрівали бали. Їх організовувала шляхта, міщани, різні товариства й представники етнічних груп. Репертуар танців відповідав умовам і типу балу. Вальс, полька, галоп, а також стилізовані сербські фольклорні танці (коло) переважали на балах міщан, у шляхтичів, окрім вальсів, польок і галопів, — кадрилі і котильйони. У Князівстві Сербія бали відбуваються, починаючи з 60-х років XIX століття як при князівському дворі, так і в найкращих готелях Белграда. У 1860 році бальний сезон у Белграді відкрив князь Михайло Обренович. У танцювальному репертуарі були як сербські народні, так і сучасні європейські танці. За прикладом великих європейських міст, мода на салонні танці поширилася серед сербської громади. Салонні танці становлять майже третину тогочасного побутового музикуального репертуару для фортепіано. Одним з найпоширеніших загальновідомих сербських танців в сербській фортепіанній музиці XIX століття була полька. Відомі кілька субжанрових різновидів польки: полька-мазурка, «французька» полька, швидка полька, полька-галоп, полька-валс і полька-каприс. Після польки найбільш поширеним жанром у сербській салонній фортепіанній музиці був вальс. Окрім вальсів, створених для оркестру і перекладених для фортепіано, відомі й оригінальні фортепіанні вальси. Про популярність кадрилей свідчать альбоми салонної фортепіанної музики. Цей танцювальний жанр, створений у манері попурі, був особливо відкритим для залучення фольклорних мелодій як тематичної основи композицій. Якщо в першій половині XIX століття композитори сперва переважно на тематизм популярних опер і опер або її створювали композитори, то в другій половині століття вони часто використовували теми сербських і слов’янських народних пісень. У другій половині XIX століття сербські народні танці, зокрема коло, також набули поширення в салонній музиці — і на балах, і в альбомах. Це було одним із виявів сербської ідентичності в музиці, що відповідало провідним тенден ціям доби.

Ключові слова: сербська салонна музика, фортепіано, вальс, полька, кадриль.