

<p>EARLY POSTMODERNIST AND SOCIALIST REALISM TENDENCIES IN THE CREATIVE WORK OF RAMADAN SOKOLI</p>		<p>Music (performance)</p> <p>Keywords: Rhapsody, concerto, exposition, development, coda, introduction theme, thematic material.</p>
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Abstract

Over 60% of Ramadan Sokoli's music is composed of flute. These operas include miniatures, duets, and trios and extend to rhapsodies, suites, and concertos. In Prof. Sokoli's "Rhapsody No.1" for flute and piano, the choice of the Sonata Form (with an introductory theme and episode, without development) and reliance on the intonations of the Shkodër urban folk music (themes and modal-tonal harmony) result in a piece that is both accessible to audiences and exemplary in its refinement of folk music traditions. "Concerto No.1" for flute and piano, composed by Prof. Sokoli in 1956, shares the same year of composition as "Rhapsody No.1." While the structural elements of both works are nearly identical—featuring an introductory Sostenuto with rich harmonic textures, themes inspired by the intonations of northern urban music, and a Sonata Form, "Concerto No.1" marks a significant advancement in harmonic and thematic development. In "Burlesque," Prof. Sokoli chose a small ternary composition structure. This miniature for flute incorporates thematic material with a distinct national character. Despite being miniature, the flute technique is well showcased, establishing it as a convincing addition to the flute repertoire. The researcher worked on these operas with the students in class and played them in the concert, and reached the following conclusions.¹

INTRODUCTION

Ramadan Sokoli (1920–2008) was born in Shkodër. He studied flute and composition between 1940 and 1943 at the "Luigi Cherubini" Conservatory in Florence. When the Artistic Lyceum of Tirana was established, he became one of the first flute teachers in Albania, making his contributions to the flute repertoire both important and distinctive. As a foundational figure in Albanian ethnomusicology, his studies, beginning with the Illyrians, shed light on the origins of our people's priorities and historical genesis. He is the founder of Albanian musicology, as evidenced by his numerous publications. His legacy includes works such as "Albanian Musical Folklore – Morphology," "Albanian Musical Folklore – Organography," "Musical Instruments of the Albanian People", "Illustrious Figures of Our People", "The Figure of Skanderbeg in Music", "Folkloric Explorations", "Dances and Music of Our Ancestors", "Beyond 16 Centuries" and "Patriotic Songs". His works are essential to understanding the folk tradition value of Albania.

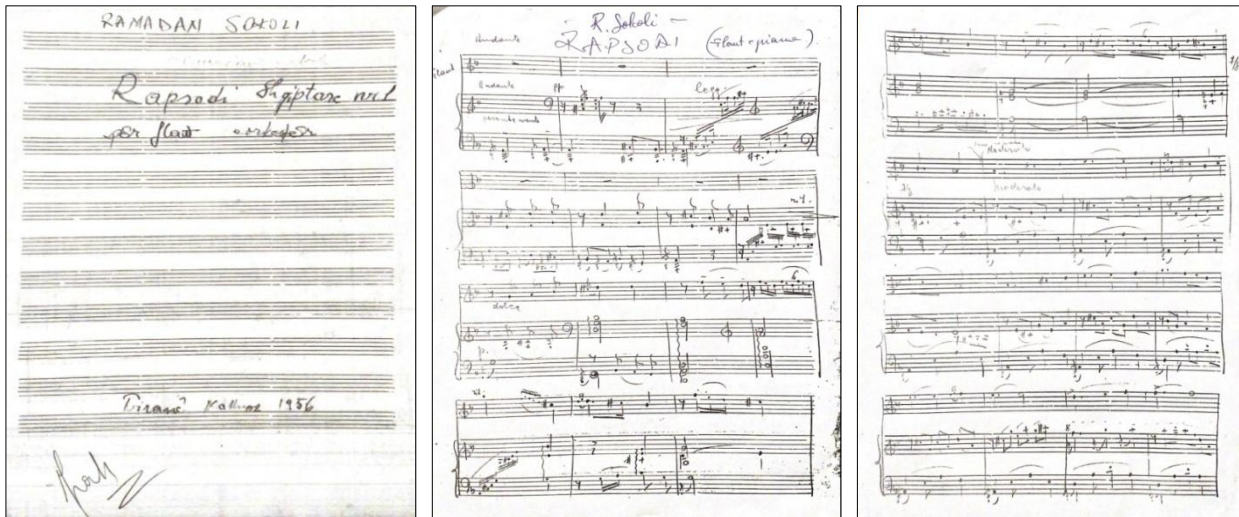
In the field of creativity, he followed the path of great Romantic composers. Like Brahms and Liszt, who drew upon Hungarian folklore, Bellini and Rossini, who incorporated Italian folk melodies into their operas, and Weber and Schubert, who adapted and developed German and

¹ Class work and stage preparation are theoretically based on theoretical publications:

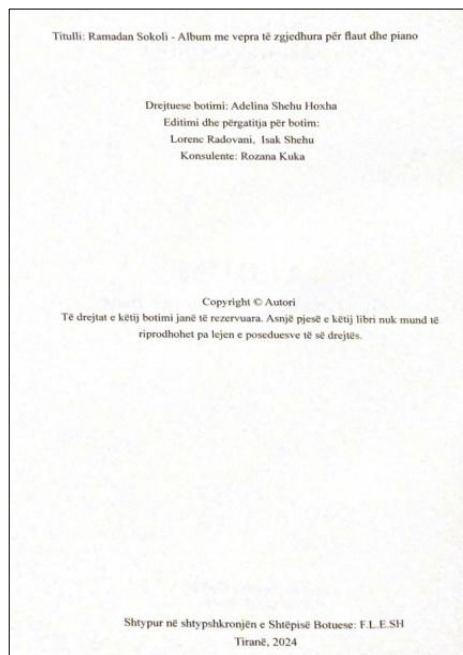
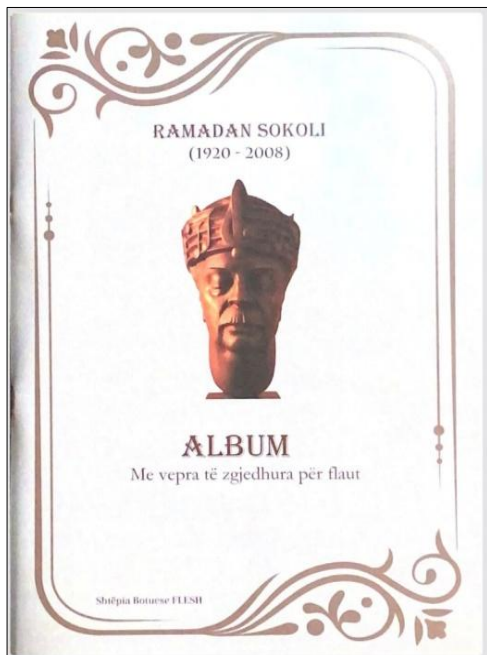
1. Lara, K., Harapi, T., &Paparisto, A. (n.d.). *Analysis of musical works*. Textbook Publishing House.
2. Çefa, S. (1972). *Harmony* (Adapted). Higher Institute of Arts, Music Department.
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4. Drabkin, W., Pasticcini, S., & Pozzi, E. (2017). *Schenkerian analysis: For an organic interpretation of musical structure* (A. Durrës, Trans.). ACUSTICA. (Original work published 2017).

Austrian folk legends, Prof. Ramadan Sokoli utilized Albanian folk motifs collected through research and studies in his compositions.

Three of the most indicative flute works in his compositions—"Rhapsody No. 1" for flute and piano, "Concerto No. 1" for flute and piano, and "Burlesque" for flute and piano—all feature a distinctly national language, offering a vivid and colorful panorama of our national heritage. "Rhapsody No. 1", "Concerto No. 1" and "Burlesque," have existed until today as a manuscript and were reproduced and digitized thanks to a working group of the Faculty of Music of UART for the evaluation and support of cultural heritage, which includes the creativity of R. Sokol.



Part from the Author's Original Manuscript



EDITION

Since it was taboo to talk about contemporary music in Albania until the 1990s, no real study has been done on the trends of Albanian musical creativity. Therefore, we do not find any point where the music of Socialist Realism converges with post-modernist tendencies. All these deductions that we reach in this article are derived from the study of scores.

These scores have been studied in the Schenkerian method², which is based on tonal music where the direction of the music is always from stable to unstable to resolve to stable, translated into harmonic functions is (T-S-D-T)³.

Methodology: The methodology used in this study is closely related to its nature. The methods include the following: analysis of theoretical sources from various authors; in-depth study of the relevant literature, where previous works and articles by different authors have been reviewed; and research, observational and scientific inquiry methods.

- Historical-comparative analysis of referenced materials.
- Schenkerian analysis of the musical material.
- Processing and analysis of data obtained from the gathered information.
- Personal observation and field research in the area.

Rhapsody No. 1 for Flute and Piano

Completed in 1956, this Rhapsody is distinguished by its finalized manuscript.

"The Rhapsody, as a musical genre, took shape in the mid-1800s, primarily as a form for orchestral works and solo pieces. A perfect example of this genre is Liszt's Hungarian Rhapsody, which is composed entirely of Hungarian folk themes.

Sokoli's selection of the Rhapsody genre for "Rhapsody No. 1" for flute proves to be a thoughtful choice, as the composition is entirely composed of the intonations of Shkodër's urban folk songs. Furthermore, the use of the Sonata Form, with an introductory theme and episode, without development, serves the realization of the creative concept.⁴

Given the stage of musical development at the time this operation was composed, the populist inclination to embrace nationalistic and folk-based elements fully justifies the author's aforementioned decisions. Thus, the choice of the Rhapsody genre, the Sonata Form, and the reliance on urban folk music (themes and modal-tonal harmony) allow Maestro Sokoli to strike a balance between accessibility to the public and professional rigor. This approach serves as an excellent example of the refinement of folk songs in all their dimensions. Let us now examine the Rhapsody in detail.

² Drabkin, W., Pasticcini, S., & Pozzi, E. (2017). *Schenkerian analysis: For an organic interpretation of musical structure* (A. Durrës, Trans.). ACUSTICA. (Original work published 2017).

³ Diether de la Motte, D. (2000). *Harmony* (S. Shupo, Trans.). ASMUS. (Original work published 1995).

⁴ Caplin, E. W. (1998). *Classical form: A theory of formal functions for the instrumental music of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven*. Oxford University Press.

As previously noted, the Rhapsody is composed of the Sonata Form, featuring an introduction, an exposition, no development, an episode, a recapitulation, and a coda.

Score

RAPSODI Nr. 1

Per Flaut e piano

Ramadan Sokoli

Andante $\text{♩} = 60$

Flute

Piano

Fl.

Pno.

mf

mp

f

rit.

A tempo

The Introduction Theme (measures 1--20) and the Main Theme (measures 21--70) are derived from the urban folk song “*Turtullesha*”, which is composed of the author himself. Harmonically, as analyzed in R. Sokoli's book “*Musical Folklore, Morphology*”, the Introduction Theme and the Main Theme are constructed on the third scale (mekame) of the Shkodër urban folk mode “*GJYSA*”⁵ (G, A, Bb, C#, D, E, F). However, the overall harmonic structure suggests a minor tonality, highlighting the use of modal-tonal harmony.

Moderato

Fl.

Pno.

mp

p

⁵ Sokoli, R. (1965). *Albanian musical folklore: Morphology*. Institute of Folklore.

From the very first chords, the tension between G minor and A7 becomes evident, representing the subdominant and dominant of G minor, respectively. At the same time, G serves as the seventh degree of the “GJYSA” scale, which is based on A major. Similarly, in the soloist's part, the same transition occurs from G minor to A major, creating the impression of a dual introduction that effectively prepares the main theme.

The main theme is constructed, as mentioned earlier, on the "GJYSA" scale based on A, in the form of a Strophe-Refrain song, followed by a variation that leads to the cadence in the minor of the main theme, which prepares the way for the transition. The main theme, in itself, does not feature significant development in terms of rhythmic texture, melody, or harmony. The variation that follows seems to provide an impulse to the theme, expanding it like a range and enriching it with a new harmonic element (the clash between the minor and major in the cadence). The accompanying section remains a simple rhythmic-harmonic texture with the pattern D-t-D-t-s-D. Harmonically, the main theme remains in transition from A major to G minor, A major, until the appearance of the variation at measurement 69 in G minor.⁶



The transition, starting at measurement 70, is based on the thematic material from the variation and harmonically facilitates the modulation to A minor for the subordinate theme (the Vth degree of the principal section). In this way, the tonal structure of the sonata form is fully respected: the principal key in D minor and the secondary key in the dominant area of A minor.

The Subordinate Theme is also based on the intonations of the Shkodër urban folk song, which uses a harmonic minor with some alterations in A minor, such as the raised fourth and sixth degrees and the third degree raised as an auxiliary note⁷. Notably, there is little contrast between the main theme and the subordinate theme, except for the more vertical accompanying texture, which adds vitality.

⁶ De la Motte, D. (2000). *Harmony* (S. Shupo, Trans.). ASMUS. (Original work published 1995).

⁷ Tole, S. V. (2000). *Albanian musical folklore: Structure and analysis - II*. Shblu. Tirana.

While the subordinate theme does not occupy much space in the musical development of the exposition, it serves as a continuation of the musical ideas introduced in the main theme, setting up the transition with the episode. This transition takes the form of a cadence for the solo part, a technique commonly used by composers in solo works. The solo transition is built on the arpeggios of B7, which almost immediately leads us to the D major with a corona, preparing the key of the G major, where the episode begins.



The theme of the Episode is notably built on folk intonations in D major, although it begins in G major, the subdominant, and cadences on the tonic in D major. The predominance of the major key creates a lively and joyful atmosphere for the Episode⁸, which starts pianissimo before being introduced by the solo instrument. The accompanying rhythmic texture, with movements in 1/16 notes, further enhances the vibrant feeling. The Episode is structured in a simple binary form and has a significant role in the overall work, contributing to its cheerful character. It features a harmonic progression from tonic to dominant (T-D) and frequently employs a passing double dominant (Bb, D, F, G#).



⁸ Sokoli, R. (1965). *Albanian musical folklore: Morphology*. Institute of Folklore.

Immediately following the Episode, the solo cadential development prepares the Recapitulation (measure 154), which brings back the theme from the Introduction⁹. This theme is slightly altered from its original presentation, although the change is greater in texture than in harmony. The coda appears in the third mekame of the Shkodran folk scale “GJYSA”, similar to the main theme, but with a livelier rhythmic texture, now fully supported by the second part (B) of the Episode. This is a purposeful choice, not a random one, designed to bring musical thought to a conclusion while creating a joyful atmosphere at the piece’s close. The confrontation between Sol and Sol+ in the coda creates a freshness and lightness, both in the solo and the accompanying parts, to close in Re- in measures 181--189. The musical thought is left open, ending on the Dominant, a characteristic often found in folk music¹⁰.



The work is believed to belong to Neo-Romanticism, with early influences of Socialist Realism, which are fully justified when considering the time in which it was written and the hardships experienced by the author.¹¹

Concerto No. 1 for Flute and Piano

"Concerto No. 1" for flute and piano was composed in 1956, coinciding with the completion of "Rhapsody No. 1." The same year of composition reveals several similarities between the two works. The structures are nearly identical, featuring an introduction *Sostenuto* with dense harmonic texture, themes inspired by the intonations of northern urban music, specifically from Shkodër, and the use of the Sonata Form. However, "Concerto No. 1" marks a step forward in both harmonic and thematic development. Let us now examine 'Concerto No. 1' for flute and piano by Ramadan Sokoli:

⁹ Hysi, F. (2006). *10 lectures on musical forms*. Textbook Publishing House.
¹⁰ Sokoli, R. (1965). *Albanian musical folklore: Morphology*. Institute of Folklore.
¹¹ Brahimi, R. (1981). *Arts and their development in RPSSH*, Publishing House “8 Nëntori”.

The Concerto opens with a grand unison sostenuto in D minor, which serves as the Dominant of g minor, the main key of the Concerto and the tonal basis for the Main theme. This choice is consistent with "Rhapsody No. 1."

The Introduction Theme is a musical material where the first four measures form the beginning of the main theme, followed by a three-measure passage with a harmonic shift in d minor: T-D7 moving to DD-VII7-T, which reinforces the tonality of d minor before transitioning to g minor.



In this section, the same musical material is transposed over seven measures, from d minor to g minor¹².

This material is repeated for the third time in the same seven-measure structure, but with two modifications: the soloist plays the theme a third highest in the first four measures, whereas the last three measures take a cadential form in D major, preparing the entrance of the Principal Section (measure 25).

Harmonically, it is important to clarify that the Principal Section is constructed on the 11th degree of the folk scale, which resembles the harmonic minor. This scale is known as NIHAVEND (Turkish BUSELIK) and consists of the following notes: G, A, Bb, C, D, Eb, F#, and G. This scale (mekam) typically centers on note D (dominant), and only in cadences does it resolve on g minor¹³.

As mentioned earlier, the main theme begins in G minor and follows a two-phrase period structure, with the first phrase spanning five measures and the second four measures ending in D major. This structure is characteristic of all musical materials built on the NIHAVEND scale, where responses are always found in the Dominant.

¹² De la Motte, D. (2000). *Harmony* (S. Shupo, Trans.). ASMUS. (Original work published 1995).

¹³ Tole, S. V. (2000). *Albanian musical folklore: Structure and analysis - II*. Shblu. Tirana.

Musical score for Flute (Fl.) and Piano (Pno.) from measures 22 to 26. The Flute part features a melodic line with slurs and accents. The Piano part provides a rhythmic accompaniment with slurs and accents. Dynamics include 'p' (piano).

This is what causes the theme to continuously seek development, transitioning through modulations, sequences, and ongoing variations. Specifically, in measure 45, a variation of the main theme begins, which takes the main motif of the theme and moves it through different harmonic planes, such as from g minor to d minor, b minor, etc., until we reach the transition in measure 92, which spans four measures and prepares the subsorting theme, starting at measure 96¹⁴.

Musical score for Flute (Fl.) and Piano (Pno.) from measures 105 to 109. The Flute part features a melodic line with trills (tr) and accents. The Piano part provides a rhythmic accompaniment with slurs and accents. Dynamics include 'a tempo' and 'Poco meno'.

This Theme is based on the song “*O ku po shkon moj goc e vogël* (Oh, where are you going, my little girl)” beginning with orchestral accompaniment before transitioning into the song itself. This sortinate Theme appears only once in the Exposition before moving into the Transition, which prepares for the development-in-D major¹⁵.

¹⁴ Caplin, E. W. (1998). *Classical form: A theory of formal functions for the instrumental music of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven*. Oxford University Press.

¹⁵ They are elements of minimalism, which join Socialist Realism in terms of the simplicity and enthusiastic nature of the subject. measures 123-140). The thematic material is also effectively developed without accompaniment, adding contrasting colors to the Concerto 1.

118 *calando molto*
Fl. *tranquillo*
Pno. *mp*

122 *Quasi Lento con grazia*
Fl. *mp leggiere*
Pno. *mp legato*

Development is one of the most critical moments in the thematic evolution of Concerto, where both Themes are contrasted, often played simultaneously in the solo and accompanying piano parts. In development, the main theme is prominent, fragmented across different harmonic planes, and expanded into hymn-like sections (as seen at the beginning of development in the accompaniment).

At the close of the development stage, a surprising two-measure connecting section appears which leads to the recapitulation, which has a reflective character, beginning with the subordinate in the main key (G major).

255 *Vivace*
Fl. *f*
Pno. *f energico*

259 *Vivace*
Fl. *f*
Pno. *f*

262 *Vivace*
Fl. *f*
Pno. *f*

A fitting guess, it is believed, would be the use of only the second phrase of the Subordinate Theme as thematic material. Here, in the Recapitulation, the Subordinate Theme is more developed, possibly because it appears only once throughout the Concerto and takes on a complete three-part form, maintaining the same thematic material (measures 289--298), transposed to the dominant (D major).

The entire transition, in D major, seems to be the dominant preparation, setting up the entrance of the main theme in the recapitulation. After the cadential variations in the solo part, this leads into the Coda.

The Coda, which uses material from the main theme, is in a 7/8 rhythm with *Allegro con fuoco* dynamics, similar to the entrance, and is in D minor. These elements are all designed to create a festive atmosphere at the conclusion.

The sudden appearance of the main theme in G minor at measurement 383 feels slightly unprepared, but this may serve to unify the work tonally.

The last eight measures could be called a small Coda, which resolves the entire musical narrative in a major key, a typical feature of works from Socialist Realism¹⁶.

¹⁶ Çefa, S. (1977). *Harmony* (Textbook Publishing House, Reprint). Lara, K., Harapi, T., & Paparisto, A. (n.d.). *Analysis of musical works*. Textbook Publishing House.

Burlesque for Flute and Piano

"Burlesque" as a musical genre originated during the preclassical period and was often used as a movement in older suites. It is also found under names such as "Scherzo" (Italian for "joke") or "Shutka" in Slavic and its form varies between simple binary or ternary structures. In some cases, larger scherzi are written as independent works or as movements within symphonies, sonatas, variations, rondos, or even rondo-sonatas.

In the case of R. Sokoli's "Burlesque," the work adopts a composition Ternary form¹⁷. It opens with a small four-measure introduction that prepares both harmonically and rhythmically for Part A, which itself is structured as a binary form with a recapitulation.

The image shows a musical score for "Burlesque" for Flute and Piano. The title is "Burlesque" and the subtitle is "Për flaut dhe piano" by Ramadan Sokoli. The tempo is "Allegro spiritoso". The score is in 3/4 time and D minor. It starts with a four-measure introduction. The piano part has dynamics like *mf* and *mp*. The score is divided into measures 1-4, 5-8, 9-12, and 13-16.

The theme is constructed as a two-phase period, with each phrase spanning four measures, which then transition into a canon from the solo part to the accompanying part, thus creating a playful atmosphere, the atmosphere of a "Game." Harmonically, the piece is based on a harmonic d minor with a base on A¹⁸. The cadences of the thematic material leave the musical thought open, creating a sense of continuity (*motto-perpetuo*). In fact, the chosen theme is derived from a very popular folk dance from Central Albania, constructed in the mekam or mode of the "GJYSA" scale: G, A, Bb, C#, D, E, F, with a base on A¹⁹.

¹⁷ Elements of Socialist Realism, which we find in almost all Albanian musical creativity, in the enthusiastic and joyful endings, which served the ideology of the time.

¹⁸ Rossen, C. (1972). *The classical style: Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven*. Norton.

¹⁹ Tole, S. V. (2000). *Albanian musical folklore: Structure and analysis - II*. Shblu. Tirana.

The harmony is modo-tonal, where d minor is predominant, yet the harmonic transitions are as follows: t-D7-t-s-D-t. In the second phrase of (A), the thematic material is condensed into two measures and is repeated twice from the soloist to the accompanying part²⁰.

Musical score for Flute (Fl.) and Piano (Pno.) from measures 19 to 22. The flute part begins with a melodic line marked 'dolce'. The piano accompaniment consists of eighth-note patterns in the right hand and chordal accompaniment in the left hand.

The first part of (B) begins with a thematic motif derived from the initial part, lasting only four measures, which leads to the Recapitulation (A1) of the first section. This Reprise, eight measures long, accompanies thematic material from the second motif of section (A) and the first four measures of section (A), thereby completing the cycle of this section both harmonically and thematically²¹.

Musical score for Flute (Fl.) and Piano (Pno.) from measures 28 to 31. The piano part includes a section marked 'Sforz' (Sforzando) starting at measure 31, indicating a dynamic increase.

Immediately after, the connecting section begins in A major, using thematic material from the first part (A). It then transitions into a dominant preparation in the E major, moving toward a

²⁰ Çefa, S. (1973). *Harmony* (Adapted). Higher Institute of Arts, Music Department.

²¹ Diether de la Motte, D. (2000). *Harmony* (S. Shupo, Trans.). ASMUS. (Original work published 1995).

minor, where the middle part (B) unfolds. Part (B) contrasts both harmonically and dynamically, presenting itself in an *Andante cantabile*.

In the second part (B), we encounter various alterations, such as a lowered second degree and an increased fourth degree, which deepen the harmonic texture and introduce a more dramatic color, thereby enhancing the contrast between the sections²².

43 *rall.* *sempre rall.* *rit.*
Fl.
43
Pno.
47 *Andante cantabile*
Fl. *p dolce*
Pno. *pp*

In the final measures of the second part (B), a connecting part prepares the recapitulation, which is notable for being harmonically identical to the first part (A). However, rhythmically, it changes to 7/8, from the original 9/8, while maintaining the *Allegro* tempo, which further lightens the musical texture.

77 *Allegretto*
Fl.
77
Pno. *mf*
80
Fl. *f*
80
Pno. *mf*

The Recapitulation, in contrast to what we have seen in the previous Parts (A,B), offers a broader development of the thematic material and places the thematic motifs from both the solo

²² Caplin, E. W. (1998). *Classical form: A theory of formal functions for the instrumental music of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven*. Oxford University Press.

and accompanying parts in contrast to one another. The Coda is constructed with thematic material from the First Part (A), bringing the musical thought to a close both harmonically and thematically, thus concluding the entire Burlesque.²³



This miniature for Flute serves as an excellent example of how to use folk thematic materials effectively, capturing national character without falling into folklorism, while also demonstrating the precise application of the flutist technique.

Conclusions

Postmodernism had its beginnings in Albanian musical creativity, as reflected in the tendencies of the works discussed above. An analysis of these three compositions by R. Sokoli revealed that the composer was highly knowledgeable in terms of folklore, harmony, musical form, and music theory. As a result, his works are built on a national foundation, lyrical realism, and a sound often marked by joyful popular influences, creating festive atmospheres. In general, his judicious and measured use of musical material construction elements ensures that his music remains both coherent and inspiring.

On the other hand, it is important to note that the composer could not entirely avoid the influences of the time, including the postmodernist tendencies in the European music of that era.

The fact that R. Sokoli studied in Florence, Italy, and had a strong understanding of these tendencies coupled with the privileged status of music during the dictatorship (when the administration was unaware of the latest developments in music) led to his work being influenced by postmodernism, minimalism, and other contemporary tendencies. His compositions show a simplification of forms, straightforward harmonizations, and the use of extended pedal points.

²³ Caplin, E. W. (1998). *Classical form: A theory of formal functions for the instrumental music of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven*. Oxford University Press.

These elements, however, do not compromise musical thought but rather minimize the richness of musical figures. Additionally, there is a noticeable inclination toward Socialist Realism, which begins to manifest in instrumental music through his work.

It could be said that all the composition of his work is a precursor to Albanian instrumental music, serving as an excellent example in every aspect.

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