

# Between the Self and Other: Vasily Kalafati's *Gypsy Song* and Russian Musical Orientalism<sup>1</sup>

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Although virtually unknown today, the composer Vasily Kalafati (1869–1942) was among Russia's most prominent musical figures during his lifetime. Of Greek ethnic origins, he studied under Rimsky-Korsakov at the Saint Petersburg Conservatory from 1892 to 1900. Then from 1901 to 1929 he was himself a professor there, where his students included Igor Stravinsky and Nicolas Slonimsky.<sup>2</sup> Despite his important position in the genealogy of Russian music, Kalafati's works have received very little scholarly attention.<sup>3</sup> Existing scholarship has mainly pursued a traditional life-and-works approach to Kalafati's career as a teacher and composer. While this research has been vitally important for plucking Kalafati from obscurity, his historical role in the cultural and political interactions that converge and are recast in his music merit closer scrutiny. Reintegrating Kalafati's works into the historical context of their creation provides crucial insights into his contribution to the establishment, expression, and development of Russian national musical identity, especially through the use of Oriental(-ist) musical idioms.

As a starting point in this direction, I examine how Kalafati's *Gypsy Song* (*Tsyganskaya Pesnya*) responds to Soviet nationality politics and inclusive cultural policies, with reference to its engagement with Russian musical Orientalism.<sup>4</sup> Kalafati's *Gypsy Song* first appeared in

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- 1 The author wishes to thank Stanimira S. Dermendzhieva for generously offering her expertise and advice during the preparation of this paper, Panos Vlagopoulos for his invaluable assistance in enabling me to access material from the Kalafati archive in Corfu, and Robin Porter for his meticulous transcription of *Gypsy Song* and his insightful observations on the score.
  - 2 Nicolas Slonimsky, *Perfect Pitch: A Life Story* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 39 and Igor Stravinsky and Robert Craft, *Expositions and Developments* (London: Faber and Faber, 1962), 42–45.
  - 3 In terms of the existing scholarship on the composer, I refer in particular to Stanimira S. Dermendzhieva's pioneering research in: "Vasily Pavlovich Kalafati (1869–1942): Η ζωή και το έργο ενός λησμονημένου συνθέτη και μουσικοπαιδαγωγού της Ρωσίας" [Vasily Pavlovich Kalafati (1869–1942): The Life and Works of a Forgotten Composer and Teacher of Russia] (PhD diss., Ionian University, 2011); and Stanimira S. Dermendzhieva, "Vasily Kalafati's Opera *Tsygany* (The Gypsies) after Alexander Pushkin (1899, Revised 1937)," *Sovremennie problemi muzikoznaniya* [Contemporary Musicology] 4 (2018): 61–87.
  - 4 Throughout this article, I refer to Kalafati's *Gypsy Song* by its English title. Transliterations of both Russian and Greek throughout this article are based on the system outlined in Stanley

his 1899 opera *Tsygane* (The Gypsies). Based on Pushkin's narrative poem of 1827, *Tsygane* tells the story of a Russian man in a complicated romantic relationship with a Gypsy woman. Here I focus on the revised version of *Gypsy Song* for soprano voice and orchestra, made sometime around 1927.<sup>5</sup> Kalafati designated this revised version as opus 19 (Example 1) and would later include this work in his final revision of the opera *Tsygane* in 1937, making it one of only three surviving orchestrated sections from the second edition.

Building upon the fundamental research of the scholars associated with the composer's archive in Corfu,<sup>6</sup> the relationship between Russianness and Orientalism had been a prevalent aspect of Russia's cultural engagement with a real or imagined East since Kalafati's early life. For example, when the influential art and music critic Vladimir Stasov reflected on Russian music in his 1882 essay "Twenty-Five Years of Russian Art," he named "the Oriental element" one of the four distinguishing features of what he termed "the New Russian School."<sup>7</sup> According to Stasov, "nowhere else in Europe does the [Oriental element] play so conspicuous a role as it does among [Russian] musicians," adding that the Eastern element has "joined the mainstream of Russian life and lent it such a special, characteristic coloring."<sup>8</sup>

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Sadie and John Tyrrell, eds, *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd ed. (London: MacMillan, 2001). Exceptions are made for names that have standard and familiar English forms such as Rimsky-Korsakov and Stravinsky. When quoting Russian sources cited by others in footnotes, I retain the author's original transliteration. Translations from Greek and Russian are my own unless otherwise stated.

5 Dermendzhieva dates the revision to the period between 1917 and 1927, a period of relative inactivity for Kalafati, concluding that 1927 is the mostly likely date. Kalafati himself includes opus 19 in a list of works composed between 1920 and 1936, and his designation of the work as opus 19 situates it between his opus 18 of 1913 and his opus 20 of 1928. The paper used for the autograph score is inscribed with the mark of the music publishing company "P. Jurgenson in Moscow," the pre-revolutionary name of the State Music Publishing House in Moscow. However, the Russian text of opus 19 reflects the orthographic reforms made shortly after the October Revolution, indicating that the score was prepared after 1918. See Dermendzhieva, "Vasily Pavlovich Kalafati," 78, 226, 253–55.

6 I rely in particular on Dermendzhieva's research on Kalafati and her fundamental efforts to organize and catalogue the composer's archive at the Hellenic Music Research Lab at the Ionian University in Corfu.

7 Vladimir Vasilievich Stasov, "Dvadtsat' pyat' let russkogo iskusstva" [Twenty-Five years of Russian art], in V. V. Stasov, *Izbrannīye sochineniya v trekh tomakh* [Selected Works in Three Volumes] (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1952), 2:523–29, 525 (first publ. in *Vestnik Yevropi* [European Bulletin] Nov–Dec 1882: Feb, Jun, Oct 1883). For an English translation, see Piero Weiss and Richard Taruskin, *Music in the Western World: A History in Documents* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1984), 390–94.

8 Stasov, *Izbrannīye sochineniya*, 525.

Example 1: Vasily Kalafati, *Tsyganskaya Pesnya* [Gypsy Song], Op. 19, autograph score of the 1st page, Hellenic Music Research Lab, Ionian University.



Taking a more critical view, I would like to invite *Gypsy Song*, in which characteristic features of the Oriental style and conventional Western tonality commune, to participate in our understanding of the complex and ambiguous function of Russian musical Orientalism that could be both Self- and Other-constructing.<sup>9</sup> The philosophical concept of the Other and ideas relating to its relationship with the Self, was developed in the writings of G.W.F. Hegel and Edmund Husserl and later, in the context of psychoanalysis and ethics, in the work of

9 Richard Taruskin, *Defining Russia Musically: Historical and Hermeneutical Essays* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000), 148.

Jacques Lacan and Emmanuel Levinas.<sup>10</sup> The use of the concept of the Other as a critical construct was subsequently appropriated in the context of discussions regarding gender relations and imperialism and colonialism, for example regarding Western representations of and attitudes towards the East.<sup>11</sup> The literature emergent in these fields has worked to highlight how power and oppression are often profoundly implicated in the representation and evocation of an Other and the definition of the Self in relation with this Other. These discussions have encouraged us to problematize the act of speaking about, or on behalf of, people with experiences and backgrounds different to our own.

Particularly influential was Edward Said's *Orientalism*, which, drawing on the earlier work of scholars including Anwar Abdel Malek, invites us to interrogate how attempts to understand, engage with, and depict the East from a Western perspective can generate reductive and stereotyped representations that function to (re)produce power and political inequalities and social divisions.<sup>12</sup> Along these lines, we are prompted to trouble Kalafati's representations of Eastern and minority people as well as the imperialistic undertones of the musical nation-building projects which encouraged such engagements and became central in the Soviet Union in the 1930s.

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- 10 See, for example, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, ed. Terry Pinkard and Michael Baur, trans. Terry Pinkard (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018) (first publ. in German in 1807); Edmund Husserl, *Cartesian Meditations: An Introduction to Phenomenology*, trans. Dorion Cairns (Dordrecht: Springer, 1960) (first pub. in French in 1931); Jacques Lacan, *Ecrits: The First Complete Edition in English*, trans. Bruce Fink (New York: WW Norton & Co, 2007) (first publ. in French in 1966); and Emmanuel Lévinas, *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority*, trans. Alphonso Lingis (Dordrecht: Springer, 1991) (first pub. in 1961).
- 11 Regarding gender relations, see, for example, Simone De Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, trans. Constance Borde and Sheila Malovany-Chevallier (New York: Vintage, 2011). For an analysis of the concept of othering in the context of colonialist relations, see Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "The Rani of Sirmur: An Essay in Reading the Archives," *History and Theory* 24 (1985): 247–72. More recently this concept has been developed in relation to disability and ableism, sexual identity, ageism, and social and economic status. On disability, see the analysis of Deborah Marks in *Disability* (London: Routledge, 1999) and Jacob Johanssen and Diana Garrisi, eds, *Disability, Media, and Representations: Other Bodies* (London: Routledge, 2020). On sexual identity see, for example, the analysis of Jacques Rothmann and Shan Simmonds in "'Othering' Non-Normative Sexualities through Objectification of 'the Homosexual': Discursive Discrimination by Pre-Service Teachers," *Agenda* 29 (2015): 116–26. On ageism, see Paul Higgs and Chris Gilleard, "The Ideology of Ageism versus the Social Imaginary of the Fourth Age: Two Differing Approaches to the Negative Contexts of Old Age," *Ageing & Society* 4 (2020): 1617–30 and Silke van Dyk "The Othering of Old Age: Insights from Postcolonial Studies," *Journal of Aging Studies* 39 (2016): 109–20. For social and economic status and othering, see, for example, Michal Krumer-Nevo and Orly Benjamin, "Critical Poverty Knowledge: Contesting Othering and Social Distancing," *Current Sociology* 58 (2010): 693–714.
- 12 Edward W. Said, *Orientalism: Western Conceptions of the Orient* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd, 1978; London: Penguin, 1995). Citations refer to the Penguin edition. See also Anouar Abdel-Malek, "Orientalism in Crisis," *Diogenes* 11, no. 44 (1963): 103–40.

Specifically, I seek to nuance an understanding of Kalafati's involvement in these musical processes by questioning his own subjective position within the opposition between the Self and Other—posed in Said's *Orientalism* as the opposition between the Occident and the Orient, West and East—by foregrounding the composer's Greek descent. I also acknowledge Greece's own complex situation between East and West, Balkan and European. Descriptions of Kalafati by Stravinsky as a "small, black-faced Greek with huge black moustaches," and by Jāzeps Vītols as a "pint-size Greek," for example, highlight the relevance of Kalafati's Greek heritage and his Greekness that was both identified by his students and contemporaries and self-conceived.<sup>13</sup> Indeed in a questionnaire given to members of the Central Committee of the Trade Union of Art Workers (RABIS) in 1936, Kalafati states that his nationality is Greek, rather than Russian.<sup>14</sup> Borrowing theoretical perspectives from the field of feminist studies, I thus consider Kalafati, as an ethnic Greek in Russia, as occupying the hyphen of Self-Other relations, in which the hyphen, as Michelle Fine writes, "both separates and merges personal identities with our inventions of Others."<sup>15</sup>

Shifting attention away from *Orientalism's* ontological and epistemological dichotomy between the Occidental Self and the Oriental Other as discrete opposites, I question how Kalafati's position at the hyphen *between* the "knottily entangled" Self and Other (in this case Russia and Greece) informed his use of the Oriental style in his musical engagement with minority peoples.<sup>16</sup> I suggest that Kalafati's use of Oriental musical signifiers in *Gypsy Song* simultaneously points to Gypsies' alterity in Russia and the other Soviet republics, and signals their constitution in Russianness, representing their sonic route into Soviet selfhood. In this way, *Gypsy Song* refracts the important function of the Oriental style as Self- and Other-constructing referred to earlier, fulfilling the requirements of parallel Soviet policies of national identity and cultural inclusiveness in the 1920s and 1930s. Ultimately, such a reading allows Kalafati's obscure but significant work to offer a deeper understanding of how the Gypsy people figured within the Russian conception of an Oriental Other in the context of the national plurality of the USSR.

The Oriental style in Russia was established through a lineage of composers and can be traced back to 1899, the year Kalafati first sketched *The Gypsies*. Since the turn of the century,

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13 Igor Stravinsky, quoted in Stephen Walsh, *Stravinsky: A Creative Spring: Russia and France, 1882–1934* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2003), 57; J. Vitol [Vītols], *Vospominaniya, stat'i, pis'ma* [Reminiscences, Articles, Letters] (Leningrad: Muzika, 1969), 63.

14 In a 1928 questionnaire supplied by RABIS Kalafati stated that his nationality was Russian. However, the 1936 questionnaire is far more extensive. This discrepancy suggests an unstable and developing sense of national identity. His self-identification as Greek rather than Russian in 1936 could also be considered in light of his departure from the Leningrad Conservatory in 1929 and the political repression of the 1930s. For a transcription of the 1928 questionnaire see Dermendzhieva, "Vasily Pavlovich Kalafati," 210. For a transcription of the 1936 questionnaire supplied by the Central Committee of the Trade Union of Art Workers (RABIS), of which Kalafati was a member, see p. 249.

15 Michelle Fine, "Working the Hyphens: Reinventing Self and Other in Qualitative Research," in *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, ed. Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1994), 70.

16 "Knottily entangled" is Michelle Fine's term; see "Working the Hyphens," 72.

the borders between the Russian Self and its Eastern Others, both literal and conceptual, were not always clearly defined or immutable. The forces fuelling this ambiguity shifted in the period between 1899 and 1927, from imperial foreign policy to the politics of Soviet internationalism and subsequently those of socialism in one country. However, the consequences of the use and function of the Oriental style were often analogous. Thus it becomes possible to consider that Oriental markers and their adjacency to Western musical idioms may have existed in Kalafati's 1899 sketch of *Gypsy Song*, despite the absence of archival sources preventing certainty.<sup>17</sup> However, while I address the continuity in the use and function of the Oriental style as realized on the one hand in the nineteenth century and, on the other, in the first post-revolutionary decades, I emphasize that the mission of representing rapprochement between the Russian Self and its Others became particularly acute in the 1920s when Kalafati revised and finalized *Gypsy Song* and, subsequently, in the 1930s in the context of the musical nation-building projects when Kalafati returned to revise other sections of his opera *The Gypsies*. Indeed, I refer to Kalafati's engagement with folk song from the national republics after 1929 as testifying to the influence and prevalence of this mission during this period, which I consider through the lens of the composer's own existence at the Self-Other hyphen, as embodying the contradiction of being both Self and Other. Therefore, while the features of the Oriental style that I identify in *Gypsy Song*, and the specific ways in which they are combined with Western devices, may have existed in the 1899 version of the opera, I suggest that the evolution of Soviet nationality politics at the very least provided a considerable impetus for Kalafati to return to and complete the work in 1927.

Kalafati's opera *The Gypsies*, following Alexander Pushkin's narrative poem, recounts the story of Aleko, a Russian man in voluntary exile from city life. Having fallen in love with a young Gypsy girl called Zemfira, Aleko decides to live among the Gypsies in a Bessarabian camp. Sometime later Zemfira takes a new lover, prompting Aleko to murder them both. Aleko is then cast out of the camp, with Zemfira's father declaring that he has no place amongst the free-spirited Gypsies. Sergei Yurievich Levik's libretto for the 1937 version closely follows the Pushkin plot line. Kalafati's notes for the libretto, which survive in the composer's archive, outline the three scenes. In the first, "the young gypsy Zemfira brings Aleko, who has problems with the law, to live in the camp and presents him to her father."<sup>18</sup>

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17 Indeed, during Kalafati's studies at the Saint Petersburg Conservatory from 1892 to 1900 he composed two other works that suggest the influence of musical Orientalism: *Podrazhanie arabskomu* [An Imitation on Arabic] for voice and piano (1894) and the incomplete opera *Sardanapalus* (1897–8). Kalafati's *Sardanapalus* invites particular interest. While it is based on Lord Byron's play of the same title, Kalafati overturns the traditional ending of the story to depict the victory of the Assyrian potentate over the Arabs. This could be considered in the context of the 1828 Treaty of Turkmenchay, after which several important former Assyrian territories were absorbed into the Russian Empire, precipitating an influx of Assyrians. While the musical material has not been examined (the score cannot currently be found in the composer's archive), from what is already known about the opera it appears that Kalafati presents a multivalent East which serves as both ally (the Assyrians) and enemy (the Arabs), thus communicating the complex relationship between Russia and her Eastern Others.

18 Quoted and translated by Dermendzhieva in "The Contribution of the Hellenic Diaspora to the Formation of the Russian Opera in the 19th and the Early 20th Century," in *Opera and the Greek World during the Nineteenth Century (Conference Proceedings)*, ed. Stella Kourmpa,

The second scene takes place two years later, when Aleko hears more about the Gypsies' capricious passions and "does not agree with the free choosing of their partners," having developed "vengeful" feelings. In the final scene of the opera, Zemfira appears with her young lover. Aleko discovers them and, in a fit of vengeance, kills the lover and Zemfira. *Gypsy Song* appears in the second scene of the 1937 version and features many of the devices that had, by the end of the nineteenth century, become established Oriental markers.<sup>19</sup> These include the double harmonic scale, which appears first in the clarinets in measure 14 (Example 2), within Zemfira's vocal cadenzas in measure 63 (Example 3) and measure 78 (Example 4), and finally in the clarinets in measure 116 (Example 5); melismatic singing (Examples 3, 4, and 6); unpredictable meter (Example 7); and the characteristic  $\tilde{5}-\sharp\tilde{5}-\hat{6}-b\hat{6}-\tilde{5}$  chromatic motive (Example 8).<sup>20</sup> In this way the work diverges from popular and frequently performed settings of the song, such as Alexey Verstovsky's 1832 setting, Tchaikovsky's *Zemfira's Song* (ca. 1860), and *Song of a Gypsy Girl* (1886).

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Konstantinos Kardamis, and Eleni Kokkinomilioti (Corfu: Hellenic Music Research Lab of the Music Department of the Ionian University and the Corfu Philharmonic Society, 2019), 38.

19 In this way, *Gypsy Song* differs from the musical material in the rest of the opera *The Gypsies*, in which there are no obvious Oriental musical markers.

20 Marina Frolova-Walker has described this chromatic motive as the *kuchka* (knot, or bunch) pattern. *Kuchka* refers to a group of five prominent Russian composers: Mily Balakirev, César Cui, Modest Mussorgsky, Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov, and Alexander Borodin. For the genealogy of this motive and its accrual of Oriental associations, see her *Russian Music and Nationalism: from Glinka to Stalin* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007), 141-60.

Example 2: Kalafati, *Gypsy Song*, extract, bb. 7-15.

The musical score is presented in two systems. The first system covers measures 7 to 15. It includes parts for Flute (Fl.), Oboe (Ob.), Clarinet (Cl.), Bassoon (Bsn.), Horns (Hn.), Harp (Hp.), Violins (Vln. 1, Vln. 2), Viola (Via.), Violoncello (Vc.), and Contrabass (Cb.). The score features various dynamics such as *f*, *p*, *mf*, and *sfz*. There are also articulations like *poco rit.* and *a tempo*. A first ending bracket is marked with a '1' above the staff. The second system covers measures 16 to 24. It includes parts for Flute (Fl.), Oboe (Ob.), Clarinet (Cl.), Bassoon (Bsn.), Horns (Hn.), Harp (Hp.), Violins (Vln. 1, Vln. 2), Viola (Via.), Violoncello (Vc.), and Contrabass (Cb.). The score features various dynamics such as *f*, *p*, *mf*, and *sfz*. There are also articulations like *cresc.*, *non legato*, and *rit.*. A first ending bracket is marked with a '1' above the staff.



Example 3: Kalafati, *Gypsy Song*, vocal extract from bb. 62-64.

62 *a piacere* **A tempo**  
rit. . . Как он лю- бит ме- ня

Example 4: Kalafati, *Gypsy Song*, vocal extract, bb.71-80.

71  $\text{♩.} = 69$  *p*  
Как лас - ка - ла е - го Я вноч -  
74 **10**  
ной ти - ши - не Как сме я лись тогда Мы тво-  
78 *a piacere*  
ей се - ди не

Example 5: Kalafati, *Gypsy Song*, extract, bb. 115-21.

115 **16** **A tempo**  
Fl.  
Ob.  
Cl.  
Bsn. *p*

Example 6: Kalafati, *Gypsy Song*, vocal extract, bb. 101-15.

101  
го - люб - лю У - ми - ра - ю лю - бя

104 **14**  
Я а а а а а а а а а

107  
а а а

110 **15**  
а а а а

113 **16**  
а

Example 7: Kalafati, *Gypsy Song*, extract, bb. 1-6.

Allegretto  
♩ = 72

Fl. *mf*

Ob. *mf*

Cl. *mf*

Bsn. *p* *mf*

Example 8: Kalafati, *Gypsy Song*, extract, bb.32-35.

32 **4**

Violin 1

Violin 2

Viola *p*

Violoncello *p*

Contrabass *p*

Adalyat Issiyeva traces many of the rhythmic, melodic, and ornamental devices which came to represent the Orient to early nineteenth-century Russian art song, in particular to the work of Alexander Aliab'ev, Alexander Dargomyzhsky, and Mikhail Glinka. She subsequently examines the development of this tradition of Oriental signification in the work of the Mighty Handful. In the works of these composers, Issiyeva identifies both the ethnographic approach to Oriental signification in composition, based on transcription of melodies encountered first-hand, and the Westernized, relying on Oriental material, images, and gestures rendered in Western collections of Oriental songs. Both approaches contributed to the formation of the Oriental style that had become established, but not unequivocal, by the end of the nineteenth century.<sup>21</sup> Largely by virtue of these diverse approaches, which could not always be clearly distinguished, the Oriental style could serve an ambiguous function for Russian composers. On the one hand, it could represent or evoke a mysterious and exotic Other. In narrative contexts, this Other was often uncivilized, barbarous, irrational, and erotic, all characteristics that stood starkly in opposition to those of their Russian counterparts. Typical examples from the Mighty Handful include Balakirev's symphonic poem *Tamara* (1882) and Rimsky-Korsakov's symphonic suite *Scheherazade* (1888), inspired by the compilation of Middle Eastern folk stories widely known as *Arabian Nights*. In the context of Russian eastward expansion under Alexander II, the Oriental style could be used to evoke an essentialized and exoticized antagonist, and in so doing assert Russian superiority. Examples include Borodin's *In the Steppes of Central Asia* (1880), written as a celebration of Alexander II and his expansionist policies and military conquests. Another example from Borodin's oeuvre is his *Prince Igor* (1887), which recounts Igor's eastward campaign of 1185. In sharp contrast to the "rationality and vigor" of the Western male prince, the khan of the Polovtsi (Igor's prisoner) employs "despotism, erotic fantasies, [and] sensual temptation" to lure him into an alliance.<sup>22</sup> In this way, Borodin's opera serves as a "classic example of an ideology legitimizing the [Russian] military drive to the East: the theory of Western superiority, on racial grounds, over the Eastern nations, giving Russia the right (or the duty) to subdue them."<sup>23</sup>

At the same time, however, the Oriental style expressed and reflected the growing empire's assimilation of its Oriental Others and acknowledgement of their position in an expanded notion of the Russian Self. In such a way, the Oriental style could refract Russia's own racial and cultural hybridity, situated at a nexus between East and West, Oriental and Occidental. Beyond this, our understanding of Russian musical Orientalism requires us to remember that both Stasov and Balakirev "believed that the Russians shared a common ancestor with the people of the East" and that Balakirev, for example, did not see the Oriental style as a means of "representing a separate, alien people [...] but as an essential component of musical Russianness."<sup>24</sup> The Oriental style thus signified on multiple levels. Even at the height of its

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21 Adalyat Issiyeva, "Russian Orientalism: From Ethnography to Art Song in Nineteenth-Century Music" (PhD diss., McGill University, 2013).

22 Francis Maes, *A History of Russian Music: From Kamarinskaya to Babi Yar* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002), 81.

23 Ibid., 81.

24 Frolova-Walker, *Russian Music and Nationalism*, 153.

popularity in the context of imperial geographical expansion, its function was not limited to serving imperial authority and perpetuating binary oppositions between "us" and "them."

Shifting to meet the political and cultural demands of the post-revolutionary period, musical Orientalism fused the inherited aesthetic of the Oriental style with the tenets of the Soviet nationalities policy and later of Socialist Realism, to express the complex, developing relationship with Russian Others, some of which were increasingly heralded as constituents of the Russian Self, even if only in a tokenistic manner. Problematizing nationalism, Lenin, writing in *Pravda* in 1914, proclaimed that:

[Nationalism] advocates the division and splitting up of the proletariat [...] The class-conscious workers fight hard against every kind of nationalism [...] [they] stand, not only for the most complete, consistent and fully applied equality of nations and languages, but also for the amalgamation of the workers of the different nationalities in united proletarian organisations of every kind.<sup>25</sup>

The Soviet nationalities policy, which figured significantly in the development of Russian musical Orientalism, was formulated along these lines and was underscored by an internationalist paradigm predicated on a cornerstone of Marxist socio-political theory. Considering that the capitalist system operated on an international scale, it was vital that the struggle of the working class to overcome capitalism be planned and projected to succeed without regard to ethnic and national divisions. This could only be achieved with a unified and equal proletariat, undivided by nationalist tensions. The Soviet nationalities policy, which Stalin summarized in his 1913 pamphlet "Marxism and The Nationalist Question," delineated a process of assimilation through indigenization referred to as *korenizatsiya*.<sup>26</sup> While it diverged from Lenin's unequivocal denunciation of nationalism of every kind, *korenizatsiya* was nevertheless promoted as an effective antidote to Russia's political and cultural supremacy across the union of Soviet republics.

The following decades saw a relative national plurality, as more national republics entered the newly established USSR. As Perry Anderson highlights, the Soviet Union thus became "the first and only state in history to include no national or territorial reference in its name," the first state "without designated place or people," thus exemplifying the "unconditionally internationalist" intentions of its founders.<sup>27</sup> During this time, the federal nationality strategy emerged in practice. This strategy, as Astrid Tuminez writes, "emphasiz[ed] equal rights for Russians and non-Russians, including the right of self-determination. Bolshevik leaders gave non-Russian groups opportunities to promote their indigenous cultures and language, and create political administrative units rooted in ethnic particularism."<sup>28</sup> In the context of the

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25 V. I. Lenin, "Corrupting Workers with Refined Nationalism," in *V. I. Lenin, Collected Works* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1972), 20:289–91 (first publ. in *Put Pravdy*, no. 82, May 1914).

26 Joseph Stalin, "Marxism and the National Question," in *J. V. Stalin Works* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1952–55), 2:300–382 (first publ. in *Prosvenshcheniye* [Enlightenment], no. 3–5, 1913).

27 Perry Anderson, "Internationalism: A Breviary," *New Left Review* 14 (2002): 5–25.

28 Astrid S. Tuminez, *Russian Nationalism Since 1856: Ideology and the Making of Foreign Policy* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000), 176.

Soviet nationalities policy, composers were expected to participate in the creation of music that was both socialist and national. Writing about Reinhold Glière in 1938, the composer Nicolas Slonimsky, a former student of Kalafati, described that when considering "national music," the "word *national* must be understood in an enlarged sense and should include all the minorities of the component republics of the Soviet Union."<sup>29</sup> Indeed, as reported at a meeting of the first All-Union Congress of Soviet Composers, the goal eventually became to "create Mighty Handfuls across the whole of our multinational Motherland, so that we could have not just one Mighty Handful in Moscow, but sixteen in our national republics."<sup>30</sup> These national projects existed in the shadow of the lurking resurgence of Russian nationalism, a shift spearheaded by Stalin towards a more overt enhancement of Russia's role within the union as "first among equals" that was to accelerate in the late 1930s.<sup>31</sup> However, the earlier Soviet nationality policy was nonetheless envisioned by the state to integrate and acculturate minority people into Soviet society as conscious citizens of their diverse socialist community.

Owing to the legacy of "authentic" Orientalist works, in the late nineteenth century Russian audiences increasingly demanded that composers were somehow qualified to appropriately and accurately represent or evoke the East. As Issiyeva writes:

After Félicien David's *Le Désert*, which was inspired by his travel to the French Orient; Mily Balakirev's *Tamara*, inspired by music of peoples living in the Caucasus; and Camille Saint-Saëns's oriental works, the opera *Samson et Dalila* and the "Egyptian" Piano Concerto, motivated by the composer's travels to Algiers and Egypt, it seemed almost indispensable for a respected composer to be immersed in Oriental culture before creating a proper (read "authentic") Oriental piece of music. Other conditions could also include cultural or genetic inheritance, which, in the case of Russia, was not unusual because of Russia's unique geographical advantage of sharing land with the East and steady assimilation over a few centuries of eastern and southern peoples living on the outskirts of the empire. In the Russian imagination, being born in a city or a village with a high Asian population or having an Eastern lineage (no matter how many centuries it dated back), enhanced a composer's credentials to write in an Oriental idiom, never

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29 Nicolas Slonimsky, "Reinhold Glière," in *Nicolas Slonimsky: Writings on Music: Russian and Soviet Music and Composers*, ed. Electra Slonimsky Yourke (London: Psychology Press, 2004), 2:35 (first publ. in *The American Quarterly on the Soviet Union* 1, no. 2, July 1938).

30 Manas Leviyev, "Perviy vsesoyuzniy syezd sovestkikh kompozitorov," [The First All-Union Congress of Soviet Composers] *Sovetskaya muzika* [Soviet Music] 2 (March 1948): 73, quoted in Frolova-Walker, *Russian Music and Nationalism*, 301.

31 For the phrase "first among equals," see Peredovaia, "RSFSR," *Pravda* 31 (1 January 1936): 1, quoted in Terry Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire: Nations and Nationalism in the Soviet Union, 1923-1939* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001), 452. Martin writes that following the publication of this editorial, the phrase "first among equals" became a "standard Soviet epithet for the Russian people." See also "Privet Izbrannikam" [Hello to the Chosen Ones], in I. G. M. Malenkov, "Torzhestvo Leninsko-Stalinskoi Natsional'noi Politiki" [The Triumph of Leninist-Stalinist National Policy], *Pravda* 157 (9 June 1938): 3, quoted in Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire: Nations*, 452.

mind being raised in what was thought as a perfectly Western society (like Borodin, Rubinstein, or Spendiarov).<sup>32</sup>

In the context of Soviet nationality politics and of the subsequent musical nation-building projects, these credentials became especially important. Kalafati did not undertake the ethnographic approach to Oriental signification (transcribing melodies encountered first-hand during travels to the national republics).<sup>33</sup> However, owing to his own "genetic inheritance," the composer was apparently "suitably qualified" to participate in the sonic representation of Russian Others and, as I suggest, to represent their inclusion in the multinational Soviet Union.

Using Kalafati's heritage and identification as Greek as a lens through which to consider the foundations of his musical interaction and engagement with minority people, I suggest that his use of the Oriental style in his representation of Gypsy people in *Gypsy Song* does not serve as an "accomplice to empire,"<sup>34</sup> to produce and sustain imperial hegemony. Instead, I point to the fusion of established Orientalist musical topoi with Western harmony and conventional tonality in *Gypsy Song* as functioning to inscribe Oriental elements into the Self. The most prominent example of a coalescence between Western harmonic conventions and features of the Oriental style occurs with Zemfira's words "starīy muzh, groznīy muzh" (old husband, cruel husband), in measures 18 to 20 (Example 9), when Zemfira describes her love for another to the surprised and dismayed Aleko. The last three notes of the melody, forming an augmented second and semitone (A#-G-F#) evoke the double harmonic scale heard earlier in the clarinet (Example 2). While this well-worn Oriental gesture points to Zemfira's Gypsy Otherness, its effect is alleviated by the strings' conventional ii-V-i authentic cadence in E (bars 20–21). Had the A# appeared as part of an E-minor harmony (held over from bar 19), rather than F#7, it would have been heard as a #4, thereby emphasizing Zemfira's Oriental character. Instead, as part of an F#7, the A# functions as a part of a secondary dominant to the B7 in measure 20.

It is worth noting that the A# in the voice does not function as a leading note to resolve up to the tonic B. The voice instead resolves to F#, going against the chord's secondary dominant function and thus momentarily highlighting Zemfira's Otherness. However, the A# does subsequently resolve to B in the violas and this resolution is mirrored in the clarinets, trombones and bassoon. Thus, whilst Zemfira's melody remains inflected with Oriental modality, its surrounding accompaniment pulls the music into a conventional Western harmonic progression by asserting the chord's secondary dominant function.<sup>35</sup>

A similar effect occurs earlier, in the A-minor theme that is presented for the first time by the clarinets (a typical Gypsy folk instrument) in measures 7–12 and which immediately

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32 Adalyat Issiyeva, "Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov and His Orient," in *Rimsky-Korsakov and His World*, ed. Marina Frolova-Walker (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2018), 145–46.

33 Kalafati only refers to travel to Switzerland, France, Germany, Austria, and Italy. See Question 21 in the 1936 RABIS questionnaire in Dermendzhieva, "Vasily Pavlovich Kalafati," 249.

34 Said, *Orientalism*, 334.

35 I would like to thank the anonymous reviewer for this observation of the score.

precedes the initial appearance of the double-harmonic scale in measure 14 (Example 2). In this A-minor theme, the absence of the sixth and seventh scale degrees avoids establishing the harmonic scale, or indeed any of its modes, as heard earlier. Furthermore, this melodic theme is accompanied by the relative major, which resolves to A minor through an authentic cadence (bars 10–11). The relative major harmony works here to destabilize any Oriental coloration in the clarinet melody, which itself is made more ambiguous by the absence of the sixth and seventh scale degrees. The adjacency of this theme, underscored by functional harmony that asserts the authority of Western tonality, and the double harmonic scale in measure 14, sonically works to bridge the gap between Self and Other, pointing towards the inscription of Oriental – in this case Gypsy – elements into the Russian Self.

Later, in measures 31–51 (Example 10), as Zemfira describes how she has grown to hate Aleko ("I hate you, I despise you"), and before declaring her love of another man ("I love another, I will die loving him"), we observe the chromatic motive  $\bar{5}-\#5-\hat{6}-\flat\hat{6}-\bar{5}$  in the string accompaniment. Taruskin has identified this device, which he calls an "essential *nega* [denoting sexual pleasure] undulation" as a primary feature of Russian Orientalism.<sup>36</sup> Taruskin suggests that this chromatic idiom becomes most potent in communicating *nega* by appearing alongside "melodic undulations tied over the beat," "English horn timbre," and other Oriental markers.<sup>37</sup> In the context of *Gypsy Song*, it would be perfectly appropriate to exploit such an association, which, according to Taruskin can be traced back to Glinka, to emphasize Zemfira's Eastern alterity as fuelled by her feminine seductiveness; to indicate a gendered "binary opposition between a morally superior 'us' (or 'collective Self') and an appealing but dangerous 'them' (collective 'Other')." <sup>38</sup> This is an eroticized encounter described by Ralph Locke in his discussion of Saint-Saëns' *Samson et Dalila* in which "'they' come close to causing 'our' downfall'." <sup>39</sup> However, in *Gypsy Song*, in the representation of the Gypsy girl Zemfira and her declaration of adulterous love, the absence of any other Oriental features suggests that this chromatic idiom does not function as an Orientalist device serving to exoticize or romanticize Zemfira, highlighting her dangerous and seductive powers. Indeed, the chromaticism  $\bar{5}-\#5-\hat{6}-\flat\hat{6}-\bar{5}$  appears to be part of a larger chromatic passage that serves to strengthen the modulation via the subdominant C back to G (bars 34–35), subsequently through A<sup>7</sup>, D<sup>9</sup>, and B<sup>o7</sup>, through a deceptive resolution to C (bar 39), before resolving to the current tonal centre of E minor (bar 51). Thus, in a vein similar to Russian romances of the 1820s and 1830s, which existed outside the realm of the Orientalist tradition,<sup>40</sup> this chromatic pass appears to serve a harmonic modulatory purpose rather than

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36 Richard Taruskin, "'Entoiling the Falconet': Russian Musical Orientalism in Context," *Cambridge Opera Journal* 4 (1992): 266.

37 Ibid., 266.

38 Ralph P. Locke, "Constructing the Oriental 'Other': Saint-Saëns's *Samson et Dalila*," *Cambridge Opera Journal* 3 (1991): 263.

39 Ibid., 263.

40 Frolova-Walker, *Russian Music and Nationalism*, 144. This example supports Frolova-Walker's general opposition to Taruskin's assertion that  $\bar{5}-\#5-\hat{6}-\flat\hat{6}-\bar{5}$  chromaticism was, for Russian composers in the nineteenth century, an oriental marker invariably denoting sexual pleasure. See Frolova-Walker, *Russian Music and Nationalism*, 141–60.

to communicate the "languid limbs, writhing torsos, arching necks" of the "seductive East."<sup>41</sup>

Example 9: Kalafati, *Gypsy Song*, extract, bb. 18-25.

The musical score is presented in two systems. The first system (measures 18-20) includes a vocal line with lyrics: "Ста рын муж грозный муж". The piano accompaniment and string section (Vln. 1, Vln. 2, Vla., Vc., Cb.) provide harmonic support. Dynamics range from *pp* to *mf*. The second system (measures 21-25) continues the vocal line with lyrics: "Режь. мен - я жи. меня: Я тверда не бо - юсь." The piano accompaniment and string section continue with similar dynamics and textures.

41 Taruskin, "Entoiling the Falconet," 259.



Example 10: Kalafati, *Gypsy Song*, extract, bb. 31-51.

The musical score is divided into two systems. The first system covers measures 31 to 35, and the second system covers measures 36 to 40. A box with the number '4' is placed above the first system, and a box with the number '5' is placed above the second system. The score includes parts for Flute (Fl.), Oboe (Ob.), Clarinet (Cl.), Bassoon (Bsn.), Voice, Harp (Hp.), Violin 1 (Vln. 1), Violin 2 (Vln. 2), Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vc.), and Contrabass (Cb.).

**System 1 (Measures 31-35):**

- Measures 31-35: Flute and Oboe are silent. Clarinet and Bassoon play a melodic line starting with a *mf* dynamic. Voice enters with the lyrics: "ни ог-ня. Не-на-ви-жу те-бя, Пре-зи-ра-ю те-бя". Harp provides a rhythmic accompaniment. Violin 2, Viola, Violoncello, and Contrabass play a bass line starting with a *p* dynamic.

**System 2 (Measures 36-40):**

- Measures 36-40: Flute and Oboe are silent. Clarinet and Bassoon continue their melodic line. Voice continues with the lyrics: "Я дру-го-го-люб-лю У-ми-ра-ю лю-бя а-а". Harp continues its accompaniment. Violoncello and Contrabass continue their bass line. A *Solo dolce* marking appears above the Oboe part in measure 40.

Example 10 continued.

41

6

Fl.  
Ob.  
Cl.  
Bsn.  
Voice  
Hr.  
Vln. 1  
Vln. 2  
Vla.  
Vc.  
Cb.

а а а а ф Режъ ме - ня . жи ме - ня ,

6

46

Fl.  
Ob.  
Cl.  
Bsn.  
Voice  
Hr.  
Vln. 1  
Vln. 2  
Vla.  
Vc.  
Cb.

Не ка - жу - - - ни - - че - го

Example 10 continued.

48

Fl. Solo

Ob. *p* *f*

Cl. *p*

Bsn. *p*

Voice  
Старый муж грозный муж Не узнаешь его.

Hp.

Vln. 1 *f*

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

In its fleeting appearance, the  $\bar{5}-\sharp 5-\bar{6}-\flat 6-\bar{5}$  chromatic motive and any potential erotic suggestiveness is shrouded, and, once again, *Gypsy Song* stops short of drawing hard and fast oppositions between an Eastern Other and a Western Self in terms of conventional Orientalist paradigms. While Kalafati's use of Oriental devices works to invoke the Otherness of the Gypsy people to achieve connotative representation, we can consider the fusion of, and the closeness between, Oriental markers and Western diatonicism as together signifying the Gypsy peoples' "permanent" status within Russia. Here I draw from Taruskin's taxonomy of the "Eastern theme" in Russian music, which distinguishes between an intra- and an extra-imperial East.<sup>42</sup> Issiyeva has further refined this taxonomy dividing the intra-imperial East into two subcategories: "newly-acquired" Orientals (including Caucasians, people of Siberia, the Russian Far East, and Russian Turkestan) and "permanent" Orientals (comprising Gypsies and Jews).<sup>43</sup> The Gypsies' status as "permanent" Orientals within the empire was crucial to their efforts at integration, as it facilitated a somewhat privileged minority position within Russian society, whereby, for example, by the end of the nineteenth century Gypsy performance culture had become a quintessential (if contested) feature of the Russian cultural landscape. Indeed, from the outset of the

42 Ibid., 253.

43 Issiyeva, "Russian Orientalism," 28.

nineteenth century, Russian writers including Pushkin and Tolstoy became fascinated with the Gypsy theme, and their literary portrayals of Gypsies inspired numerous musical engagements and fuelled a Gypsy genre craze (*tsyganshchina*) with a rich performance culture that gripped Moscow and Saint Petersburg well into the twentieth century.

I locate Kalafati's *Gypsy Song* within this context during which, as Issiyeva points out, "some of Russia's ethnic minorities were included into the picture of the Russian Self, suggesting an important shift in the state's cultural policy: from denial of Oriental Others to their inclusion."<sup>44</sup> Later, in the 1920s and 1930s, that context extended to the Roma people's efforts to "self-Sovietize" in response to the politics of Soviet nationality, which were represented, for example, by the All-Russian Gypsy Union and its activists, along with various pedagogical initiatives, including the establishment of Gypsy schools, the creation of a Romani alphabet, and the production of Romani-language textbooks, dictionaries, and periodicals.<sup>45</sup> As Alaina Lemon writes,

In the early Soviet decades, Gypsy assimilation policy was quite aggressive. Roma were to assimilate "at the same pace" as other minorities. In the mid-1920s, the state classified Roma as a "national minority," devoting special departments to Romani affairs within the National Minorities Sector of the Ministry of Culture. For a few years, the state offered Roma free land without a wait. There were even tentative proposals to establish a Romani Autonomous Region, to be called Romanestan, though these proposals came to nothing. Some Roma enrolled in schools that taught subjects in Romani, while some had steady employment in urban collectives and cooperatives.<sup>46</sup>

Despite Bolshevik opposition fuelled by persistent negative stereotypes of Gypsies and the sometimes ephemeral and under-funded endeavours to tackle what was perceived to be Gypsy backwardness, these efforts reveal a sustained and successful navigation and deployment of the Soviet nationalities policy.<sup>47</sup> Whether "grudgingly, forcibly, or enthusiastically" this engagement facilitated, as Brigid O'Keeffe writes, "Roma's self-fashioning as conscious, integrated Soviet citizens."<sup>48</sup>

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44 Ibid., 74.

45 For a detailed discussion of these endeavours, see Brigid O'Keeffe, *New Soviet Gypsies: Nationality, Performance, and Selfhood in the Early Soviet Union* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013), particularly Chapters 1 and 2.

46 Alaina Lemon, *Between Two Fires: Gypsy Performance and Romani Memory from Pushkin to Postsocialism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000), 132–33.

47 Here I refer to the perceived threat posed by the supposedly "backward" and "nomadic" Gypsies to the ideal proletarian citizen demanded by the Revolution for socialist construction. The qualities of this ideal citizen, apparently at odds with the backward Gypsies, are encompassed in the concept of the New Soviet man. As theorized by Trotsky, the New Soviet man would overcome their biological imperatives to achieve hyper-functionality that would be put to the service of the new order. See Leon Trotsky, *Art and Revolution: Writings on Literature, Politics and Culture* (New York: Pathfinder, 1972), 20–21. Regarding the perception of Gypsy backwardness, see O'Keeffe, *New Soviet Gypsies*, 27–66.

48 O'Keeffe, *New Soviet Gypsies*, 253.

Kalafati's use of features of the Oriental style and the ways in which they relate with Western musical devices in *Gypsy Song* embodies and enacts the ambiguity and complexity of musical Orientalism as first realized in the nineteenth century. Furthermore, seen in the context of the Soviet inclusive cultural policies in the 1920s and 1930s, it also becomes possible to consider this musical treatment as symbolizing the integration of Gypsy people into the polity, destabilizing the binary opposition between East and West, Self and Other. As further evidence in this direction, I refer to Kalafati's subsequent engagement with folk music and themes after his departure from the Leningrad Conservatory (formerly the Saint Petersburg Conservatory) until the end of his life. I consider this engagement as indicating Kalafati's participation in the tradition of the musical nation-building projects of the 1930s, which were promoted by the state as a means of carving out common ground between Russian and minority people.

In 1929, against the backdrop of the ascendancy of the Russian Association for Proletarian Music (RAPM), which advocated for the composition and promotion of "ideologically edifying" proletarian music, the Leningrad Conservatory underwent a radical restructuring.<sup>49</sup> During these years, criticism of the pedagogical techniques and curricula developed by Rimsky-Korsakov "came out into the open."<sup>50</sup> At this time, according to the composer's daughter, Lydia, Kalafati was fired from the conservatory, owing to his reputation as a preserver of old-fashioned traditions.<sup>51</sup> It is possible to consider that Kalafati's departure from the Leningrad Conservatory at the age of sixty under these circumstances contributed to a further sense of alienation, beyond that which I identify as emerging from an existence at the hyphen of Self-Other relations. Kalafati continued teaching but devoted himself more fully to composition. During this time, he worked with a variety of different musical groups and ensembles including Russian folk instrument orchestras, wind orchestras, and children's symphony orchestras. He also arranged his own and other classical works for performance at the cinema. These activities, and the establishment of such groups and ensembles, should be regarded as a top-down drive to disseminate culture and promote creativity during, and in the aftermath of, the Cultural Revolution of 1928–32.<sup>52</sup> Even so, Kalafati's compositional output in the period from 1929 until his death during the siege of Leningrad in 1942, enacting his apparent "cultural or genetic inheritance," is strongly characterized by nationalist and politically-themed music.<sup>53</sup>

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49 Marina Frolova-Walker and Jonathan Walker, *Music and Soviet Power: 1917–1932* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2012), xv.

50 Lidia Ader, "Stylistic Turbulence: The Experience of the Rimsky-Korsakov School," trans. Jonathan Walker, in *Rimsky-Korsakov and His World*, ed. Marina Frolova-Walker (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2018), 284.

51 Dermendzhieva, "Vasily Pavlovich Kalafati," 41.

52 On Soviet music policy referred to here, see Amy Nelson, "The Struggle for Proletarian Music: RAPM and the Cultural Revolution," *Slavic Review* 59, no. 1 (2000): 101–32 and Caroline Mary Brooke, "Development of Soviet Music Policy, 1932–41" (PhD diss., University of Cambridge, 1999).

53 The following list is extracted from the catalogue of Kalafati's works compiled by Dermendzhieva in "Vasily Pavlovich Kalafati," 326–84.

While Kalafati's personal political leanings are unknown, the sustained engagement with political themes and folk music, illustrated by Table 1, indicate his efforts to remain involved in cultural life, responding to political expectations and participating in cultural-political trends after leaving the Leningrad Conservatory.<sup>54</sup> Moreover, his specialization in national music, demonstrated in this burgeoning commitment to the study, transcription, harmonization, and utilization of folk songs and themes from Kazakhstan, Armenia, Ukraine, Crimea, Russia, Belarus, Greece, and Spain, as well as of Gypsies, some of which I refer to above, also indicates what Dermendzhieva describes as Kalafati's "love and respect for musical folk heritage."<sup>55</sup> This was something which, "in Rimsky-Korsakov's example," he transmitted to his students.<sup>56</sup> Fundamental to Kalafati's efforts to develop his appreciation and to supplement his knowledge of folk music was "the communication and exchange of ideas with his students," many of whom originated from the national republics and would go on to become distinguished composers in the national tradition.<sup>57</sup> These included Uzeir Hajibeyov (Azerbaijani), Cyrillus Kreek (Estonian), Romanos Melikian (Armenian), Sarkis Barkhudarian (Armenian and Georgian), Adrian Shaposhnikov (Turkmenistani), and Heino Eller (Estonian).<sup>58</sup>

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54 In the 1936 RABIS questionnaire, Kalafati indicated that he did not subscribe to any political party. Furthermore, Kalafati did not respond to the question regarding political engagement and involvement in the revolutionary movement. See questions six and twenty-two in the transcription of the questionnaire by Dermendzhieva in "Vasily Pavlovich Kalafati," 249.

55 Ibid., 265.

56 Ibid.

57 Ibid.

58 Kalafati also had many Jewish students, reflecting the Saint Petersburg Conservatory's open-door policy for Jews, who had otherwise limited access to university-level education. On Jewish musicians at the Saint Petersburg Conservatory and the Society for Jewish Folk Music from 1908–19 (including Rimsky-Korsakov's encouragement of it), see James Loeffler, *The Most Musical Nation: Jews and Culture in the Late Russian Empire* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010) and "'A Special Kind of Antisemitism': On Russian Nationalism and Jewish Music," *Yuval Online: Journal of the Jewish Music Research Centre* 9 (2015): 1–16.

Table 1. Nationalist and politically themed music composed by Kalafati between 1929 and 1941.

<i>Vosem' kazakhsikh pesen</i> (Eight Kazakh Folk Songs) Harmonizations for voice and piano	1929
<i>Dve pesni Krasnoy Armii</i> (Two Songs for the Red Army) For choir	1931
<i>Krasnoflotskaya boevaya</i> (Song of the Red Navy) For two-part choir, poem by E. Paviltsenko	1931
<i>Torzhestvenniy Marsh udarnikov</i> (Triumphant March of the Shock workers) <sup>59</sup> Arranged for large symphony orchestra, chamber orchestra (commission by SOYUZ-KINO) and piano trio	1931–33
<i>Pyat' kazakhsikh pesen</i> (Five Kazakh Folk Songs) Arranged for small symphony orchestra, piano trio and as a suite for Russian folk instrument orchestra	1931–36
<i>Pionerskiy marsh</i> (March of the Pioneers) For piano For wind orchestra For orchestra of Russian folk instruments	15/10/1933 6/11/1933 14/2/1934
J. Vitols, <i>Latishskaya pesnya</i> (Latvian Song) Transcription by Kalafati for small symphony orchestra	04/1936
<i>Chatir Dag</i> (Chatyr Dag) a) Fantasia for symphony orchestra b) Crimean Tatar folk song, for chamber orchestra	13/7/1937 1940
<i>Armyanskiy narodniy tanets</i> (Armenian Folk Dance) For chamber symphony orchestra (for children) and piano (four hands)	30/9–14/10/1937 23/10/1937
<i>Ne odna vo pole dorozhen'ka</i> (There Is not only One Path in the Field) Transcription of Russian folk song for symphony orchestra and choir (for children)	8/3/1938
<i>Vniz po matushke po Volge</i> (Down on the Mother Volga) Russian folk song, transcribed for symphony orchestra and choir	1938
<i>Devushka s ostrova Samosa</i> (The Girl from the Island of Samos ( <i>Samiotissa</i> )) <sup>60</sup> Folk song from Samos, Greece, arranged for tenor and baritone with piano accompaniment	1938
<i>Ispanskaya pesnya</i> (Spanish Song) Arranged for two violins, two guitars, trumpet and percussion (for children)	1938
<i>Uvertjura na ispanskiye pesni</i> (Overture on Spanish Themes) For symphony orchestra [lost]	1938–39
Song for Stalin (for the Spanish Pioneers in Leningrad) For voice and piano	1938–40
<i>Asturiyskiy tanets</i> (Dance of Asturias) For symphony orchestra (transcription by A. Gladkovsky and Kalafati) [lost]	1939
<i>Armyanskaya syuita</i> (Armenian suite) For symphony orchestra (for children)	1939
<i>Osetinskaya syuita 'Simd'</i> (Ossetian suite 'Simd') For symphony orchestra (for children)	1/7/1940
<i>Revet I stonet Dnepr shirokiy</i> (The Wide River Dnieper Roars and Moans) <sup>61</sup> Ukrainian folk song. Arranged for mixed choir and large symphony orchestra For mixed choir and piano	8/10/1939 1940
<i>Vtoraya uvertjura na russkie pesni</i> (Second Overture on Russian Songs) For children's chamber orchestra	17/1/1941
<i>Zvezdi Kremlya</i> (The Stars of the Kremlin) March for symphonic orchestra	1941

59 This work is an earlier version of *The Stars of the Kremlin* (1941).

60 Kalafati's *Samiotissa* is written in triple meter rather than the more conventional septuple for this type of song.

61 Set to Taras Shevchenko's poem of the same name.

Indeed, based on her exhaustive research of archival material in Greece and Russia, Dermendzhieva concludes that Kalafati had a "sincere appreciation for and also an inexhaustible interest" in the "national heritage and popular music traditions of every people within the Russian Empire and, subsequently, within the multinational USSR."<sup>62</sup> In terms of his relationship with his students, Dermendzhieva also points to Kalafati's deliberate efforts to pave the way for them "to love and utilise folk melodies in their works" and "to adapt them according to the conventions of western harmony."<sup>63</sup> In this vein, I agree with Dermendzhieva that Kalafati's role as a "composer, teacher and a *social-minded individual*" (*dimokratis*; my emphasis) should "not be underestimated" with regard to the music history of the multinational USSR.<sup>64</sup>

We may therefore note the congress between Eastern and Western elements in *Gypsy song* within the oeuvre of Kalafati's "national" music. This can subsequently be considered in terms of the tradition of musical nation building of the early 1930s, which is most closely associated with this period of musical Orientalism. These activities, in response to the Soviet nationalities policy, were essentially focused on assimilating the Eastern musical idioms of the constituent republics of the USSR into a Western musical framework for the creation of works that represented the multinational union (with Russia at its centre). Paradoxically, setting aside questions of authenticity, composers from the republics often drew from the Oriental style, established in the works of Russian composers, to represent their non-Russian nationality.<sup>65</sup> Furthermore, despite the defining mission of Russian music nationalists of the nineteenth century to create a national style distinct from Western conventions, it was Western harmony that was often considered most suitable to denote the Russian motherland. Indeed, for the musicians of the national republics in the 1930s who were engaged in the musical nation-building projects, "Russia was a Western power, with a Western culture."<sup>66</sup> Thus, drawing from both the Oriental style and Western harmonic resources offered a reliable, albeit theoretical, route towards the creation of music that sonically represented the rapprochement between Russia and her eastern republics, as required by the state.<sup>67</sup>

Kalafati's role in working to establish this musical common ground, manifested in his specialization in national music, was not, I argue, solely motivated by political requirement. I suggest that Kalafati's heritage from Greece not only qualified his engagements with folk

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62 Dermendzhieva, "Vasily Pavlovich Kalafati," 265.

63 Ibid.

64 Ibid.

65 For "auto-orientalism" in the context of the musical nation-building projects, see Frolova-Walker, *Russian Music and Nationalism*, 327-38.

66 Marina Frolova-Walker, "'National in Form, Socialist in Content': Musical Nation-Building in the Soviet Republics," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 51 (1998): 352.

67 This method was not adopted unquestionably, and there was indeed significant opposition from composers of the national republics to the use of both the Oriental style and Western harmonic devices. In practice, however, the fusion of Oriental and Western devices emerged as the most popular method to satisfy the requirements of Soviet nationality politics of the 1930s. See Frolova-Walker, *Russian Music and Nationalism*, 327-38.



songs and themes from the national republics to his audience, but perhaps also motivated his sincere and passionate commitment to learning about and incorporating Eastern musical idioms into his music. This also considers Greece's own geographical ambiguity, which situates it at a political and cultural crossroads between East and West, Balkan and European. Indeed, while its classical past could represent the birthplace of Western civilization, Greece often became subsumed in the broad and fluid category of the "Near East," which, as Lucien Frary writes, "Nineteenth-century Russian and European observers [employed] to describe the western lands of the Ottoman Empire, or the area formed by the converging extremities of Europe, Asia, and Africa."<sup>68</sup> Perceptions of Greece's Self or Other status in relation with Russia was thus evidently mediated through its Ottoman and perhaps also its Byzantine past.<sup>69</sup> Discussing his opera *Sevilia*, Rimsky-Korsakov clearly articulates this perception:

Thus, for *Sevilia* I needed to choose some kind of suitable national colour. Partly Italian and partly Greek seemed most suitable to me. For more casual moments, such as dances with music and the like, in my opinion, Byzantine and Oriental colour was fitting. For the Romans lacked any art of their own—they borrowed it from Greece. On the one hand, I am sure of the closeness of ancient Greek music to Oriental music, and on the other, I think that the remnants of ancient Greek music are to be found in Byzantine art, the echoes of which are heard in old Orthodox singing.

I therefore posit that Kalafati's Greekness, situating him between the Self and the Other—an ambiguous position perhaps emphasized by a sense of alienation following his removal from the Leningrad Conservatory in 1929—is reflected in the composer's sonic engagement with Eastern and minority peoples and their lands.

While little is known about Kalafati's motivation for revising *The Gypsies* in 1937, it is impossible to ignore that it coincided with the state-organized jubilee of Pushkin's death.<sup>70</sup> The jubilee was of unprecedented scope and significance,<sup>71</sup> involving the resurrection and

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68 Lucien J. Frary, *Russia and the Making of Modern Greek Identity, 1821–1844* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 1.

69 Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov, *Sevilia* in *Leptopis' moey muzikal'noy zhizni* [Chronicle of My Musical Life] (Moscow: Muzgiz, 1955), 217–18. The extract is quoted in translation by Frolova-Walker in "Inventing Ancestry, Imagining Antiquity: Classical Greece in Russian Music," in *Musical Reception of Greek Antiquity, From the Romantic Era to Modernism*, ed. Katerina Levidou, Katy Romanou, and George Vlastos (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars, 2016), 26. Refer also to Alexander Glazunov's use of Greek folk melodies in Louis-Albert Bourgault-Ducoudray, *30 Melodies Populaires de Grèce et d'Orient* (1887).

70 Kalafati also revised many of his other works in the 1930s.

71 Kevin Bartig explains that "there had already been at least four Pushkin jubilees between 1880 and 1924, though the 1937 jubilee was the most ambitious in scope." See Kevin Bartig, *Composing for the Red Screen: Prokofiev and Soviet Film* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 36. Alyssa W. Dinega summarizes a scholarly consensus regarding the jubilee: "Critics usually portray the 1937 celebration of the centenary of Pushkin's death as a literary festival of unprecedented scale that was meant to display national, social, and cultural unity. It is difficult not to agree with Boris Gasparov, who describes the national celebration of the 1937 jubilee as a 'definitive cultural watershed' that 'marks the culmination of the evolution of

the memorialization of the national bard who was heralded as both the "great Russian poet" and the poet for the "toilers of all nationalities."<sup>72</sup> This served to legitimize Stalin's cultural Russification on the eve of the Second World War, paradoxically intended to strengthen the entire "fraternal family of the peoples of the USSR."<sup>73</sup> In the years leading up to the jubilee, Pushkin's works had been translated into fifty-eight languages spoken within the Soviet Union, including Romani in 1937 by the poet Nikolai Pankov.<sup>74</sup> Pushkin was thus held up as the figure who could foster social cohesion, horizontally, across all citizens of the polity. In this way, the Soviet canonization of Pushkin as the "national poet of all the Soviet Union's people,"<sup>75</sup> presented the diverse republics of the Soviet Union with a unifying cultural heritage in the prelude to the "Great Patriotic War," during which the mission to consolidate public opinion and unite the proletariat behind Stalinism became paramount.

Contributing to the jubilee celebrations was the Moscow Romani Theater (also known as "the Romen"), established following approval from Narkompros in 1931 to "preserve a national culture" and "aid the assimilation, sedentarization, and education of nomadic peoples."<sup>76</sup> The Romen performed a play by Romani playwright Aleksandr Germano, in which "a former wanderer, illiterate and superstitious, is completely reborn through work."<sup>77</sup> Representing the assimilation of Gypsy people into Soviet society through normative labour was emblematic of the Romen's mission of facilitating integration, carving "the path toward finding positive Gypsy images" during Stalinism.<sup>78</sup> Indeed, in 1938 the Romani theatre, under the direction of M.M. Ianshin, staged a musical version of Pushkin's *The Gypsies*, which the activist Edvard Sholokh, writing in the journal *Narodnoe tvorchestvo* (Folk Art), described as a "turning point in the life of the theater."<sup>79</sup> The performance was

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Pushkin myth in the age of Modernism.' See Alyssa W. Dinega, *Taboo Pushkin: Topics, Texts, Interpretations* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2012), 369; and Boris Gasparov, "The 'Golden Age' and Its Role in the Cultural Mythology of Russian Modernism," in *Cultural Mythologies of Russian Modernism*, ed. Boris Gasparov, Robert P. Hughes, and Irina Paperno (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1992), 1–19, 15–16.

- 72 I. Trainin, "Suverenitet soiuznykh respublik" [Sovereignty of the Soviet Republic], *Pravda* 348 (19 December 1936), quoted in Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire*, 450.
- 73 "Dat'v srok uchebniki russkogo iazyka dlia nerusskikh shkol" [Give Russian Language Textbooks to Non-Russian Schools], *Uchitel'skaia gazeta* [The Teacher's Gazette], no. 106 (7 August 1938): 1, quoted in Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire*, 429.
- 74 E. Sikar, "Pushkin na iazykah narodov SSSR" [Pushkin in the Languages of the People of the USSR] *Revoliutsiia i natsional'nosti* [Revolution and nationality], 2 (1937): 71, quoted in Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire*, 456.
- 75 Sikar, "Pushkin na iazykah narodov SSSR," quoted in Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire*, 456.
- 76 Lemon, *Between Two Fires*, 131–32.
- 77 P.I. Novitsky, quoted in *Ibid.*, 147.
- 78 P.I. Novitsky, quoted in *Ibid.*
- 79 Edvard Sholokh, "Tsyganskii teatr 'Romen'" [Gypsy theatre 'Romen'], *Narodnoe tvorchestvo* [Folk art] 5 (1938): 51, quoted in O'Keeffe, *New Soviet Gypsies*, 235.

ultimately hailed as "authentic, real art,"<sup>80</sup> or as the newspaper *Sovetskoe iskusstvo* (Soviet Art) declared, "not merely a Gypsy, but a simultaneously Gypsy and Pushkinesque performance."<sup>81</sup> No longer subject to "anti-authentic" critiques from Bolsheviks, typical of the NEP-era, which castigated Gypsy performance of this kind as debauched and immoral, the Theater Romen's staging of *Gypsies* and its success signaled the Gypsies' assimilation.<sup>82</sup> Indeed, as Lemon writes, for Rom-Lebedev, a founding member of the Gypsy Theater, their work offered an "antidote" to *tsyganshchina* by "supporting the folk art of Gypsies born in the camps, villages, and *Kolkhozy* (collective farms)."<sup>83</sup> The description of the performance as "Pushkinesque" indicated the ostensibly successful transition from Gypsies into Soviet Gypsies by the end of the 1930s.

Considering that Kalafati's opera *The Gypsies* (and its *Gypsy Song*) was revised at this time, we may consider it as being intended to contribute to this rehabilitation of Gypsy images within Soviet society and to strengthen their alignment with Pushkin, the "national poet," on which the cultural front of Stalin's "socialism in one country" hinged. Indeed, it is worth considering in greater detail the relationship presented between Russians and Gypsies in Pushkin's seminal text, an engagement with Gypsy people which constituted a pervasive and lasting influence on Russian music.<sup>84</sup>

In its representation of the incompatibility between Aleko and Zemfira, driven largely by Aleko's inability to comprehend and reconcile with Zemfira's unrestrained and seemingly innate *volya* (freedom), Pushkin's *The Gypsies* indexes the cultural distance between the Gypsy people and Russians. However, their encounter simultaneously reveals some common ground, as identified by Dostoyevsky, for example, who described Aleko as expressing a "powerful, profound, and completely Russian idea" in his being an "unhappy wanderer in his native land" (and thus resembling the nomadic Gypsies).<sup>85</sup> Indeed, as Eric

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80 Sholokh, "Tsyganskii teatr 'Romen'," quoted in O'Keeffe, *New Soviet Gypsies*, 235.

81 *Rossiyskiy Gosudarstvenniy Arkhiv Literaturi i Iskusstva* [Russian State Archive of Literature and Art], f. 2668 o. 1 d. 7 l. 4., qtd. in O'Keeffe, *New Soviet Gypsies*, 235.

82 On the ideologically driven attacks against Gypsy performance during the NEP period, see O'Keeffe, "Pornography or Authenticity? Performing Gypsiness on the Soviet Stage," in *New Soviet Gypsies*, 191–239.

83 Quoted in Alaina Lemon, "Roma (Gypsies) in the Soviet Union and the Moscow Theatre 'Romen' (1991)," in *Gypsies: An Interdisciplinary Reader*, ed. Diane Tong (London: Taylor & Francis, 2016), 147–67, 150.

84 Musical adaptations of Pushkin's *The Gypsies* include Rachmaninoff's *Aleko* (1883). In 1926 Shostakovich partially destroyed sketches of an opera based on Pushkin's *The Gypsies*, which he later regretted. See Dmitri Shostakovich, "Dumī o proydyonnom puti" [Thoughts on the Path Taken] *Sovetskaya muzika* [Soviet Music] 9 (1956): 9–15, 11. For a more general discussion of music based on Pushkin's writings, see Boris Gasparov, "Pushkin in Music," in *The Cambridge Companion to Pushkin*, ed. Andrew Kahn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 159–73. Note that Gasparov incorrectly states that Kalafati's opera was composed in 1941.

85 Fyodor M. Dostoyevsky, *A Writer's Diary*, ed. Gary Saul Morson, trans. Kenneth Lantz (Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1997), 2:492.

Scott writes, the Russian character "might be said to approximate that of the Gypsies; at the very least, the Gypsy character was held to be comprehensible to the Russian in a way it was not to other Europeans."<sup>86</sup> Furthermore, Pushkin's representation of Gypsy morality challenges hollow, stereotyped representations of Gypsies typical of colonial-style discourses and is thus crucial to the establishment of common ground. Indeed, acknowledging Gypsies' ethical and moral agency, demonstrated in their ousting of Aleko for example, recalls a vital ingredient of nineteenth century Russian literature: the Russian interrogation into the moral, ethical, and spiritual values underscoring civic life. Thus, in *The Gypsies*, Pushkin, canonized as a universally representative and unifying figure with the "brilliant capacity to assume the form of the genius of other nations," tapped into the distinct Gypsy identity.<sup>87</sup> This was an identity that was apparently uniquely appealing to Russians.

In this way, Pushkin's poem crystallizes a relationship between Russians and Gypsies around an understanding of an essentialized Gypsy soul, which could apparently be accessed and imitated only by a similarly essentialized Russian poetic genius.<sup>88</sup> This point of convergence between the Gypsies' *volya* and Russian "settled society, with its tame and structured liberty (*svoboda*)," as represented in such a reading of Pushkin's *The Gypsies*, became crucial in the 1930s in terms of political efforts to subsume diverse national republics into one "fraternal family" towards the goal of socialism in one country.<sup>89</sup>

Situating Kalafati's *Gypsy Song* in relation to Russian musical Orientalism, particularly the development of Orientalism in response to the politics of Soviet nationality, I have argued that the closeness and combination of musical features of the Oriental style and Western musical devices in *Gypsy Song* destabilizes a binary opposition between East and West, Self and Other. This process, which we can trace back to Kalafati's teacher Rimsky-Korsakov and his 1907 opera *The Golden Cockerel*, in which he subverts the conventional orientalist narrative, is succinctly described by Aram Khachaturian, who emerged as a preeminent composer of national music from the republics:<sup>90</sup>

[Russian Oriental music] showed me not only the possibility, but also the necessity of a rapprochement between, and mutual enrichment of Eastern and Western cultures, of Transcaucasian music and Russian music [...] the Oriental elements in Glinka's *Ruslan* and in Balakirev's *Tamara* and *Islamey*, were striking models for me, and provided a strong impulse for a new creative quest in this direction.<sup>91</sup>

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86 Erik R. Scott, "The Nineteenth-Century Russian Gypsy Choir and the Performance of Otherness," *UC Berkeley: Berkeley Program in Soviet and Post-Soviet Studies*, 2008. Retrieved from <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/87w1v9rd>, 14.

87 Dostoyevsky, *A Writer's Diary*, 2:1273.

88 Scott, "The Nineteenth-Century Russian Gypsy Choir," 14.

89 Ibid.

90 *The Golden Cockerel* presents the victory of its two Orientals, the Astrologer and the Queen of Shemakha (represented with Oriental musical markers) over the Russian forces.

91 Quoted in Frolova-Walker, *Russian Music and Nationalism*, 338.

In particular, the relatively unknown *Gypsy Song* casts light on how, after the revolution, the Oriental style offered composers a means of articulating the complex encounters between minority people and Soviet nationality politics, whereby it was often some minorities' Otherness that opened a route into Sovietization. This is perhaps most appropriate for the Gypsies, whose "free" and "wild" nature made them alluring for Russian audiences, and thereby entitled them to a relatively privileged position in Russian culture. Paradoxically, their Otherness and what was perceived to be their extreme backwardness could be fruitfully invoked in their claims on nationality policy and their diverse efforts to reinvent themselves as Soviet citizens.<sup>92</sup> In the context of a political and cultural evolution towards socialism in one country, it was the ambiguous Oriental style that offered a language through which to express inclusion and integration of some Others into a complex and itself ambiguous and developing notion of the "Eastern-Western" Self.

Exemplifying the complexities of sonic national self-identification in a multi-ethnic empire, and subsequently union, the Oriental style was forged in a complicated relationship with a polysemic and amorphous Other, rather than emerging from what has come to be identified in the West as an innate and ineffable *Russianness*. Critical analysis of works such as *Gypsy Song* can thus offer a counterpoint to the Western reception of Russian music, which has, largely owing to Diaghilev's extravagant representations of Russian music for Western consumption, identified the Orientalist style as quintessentially Russian. Indeed, Frolova-Walker, in her seminal monograph *Russian Music and Nationalism*, writes that "from Diaghilev onwards [the Western reception of Russian music] failed to see the distinction between the 'Russian' and the 'Oriental' styles."<sup>93</sup> This is partly, as Frolova-Walker writes, "because Western audiences were [...] unable to trace Russian elements back to Glinka" and, never having built up "a repertoire of associations through operas that unmistakably presented the opposition between the Russian and the Oriental on stage," created a "misleading perception" in the West that has subsequently informed pervasive notions of indefinable musical *Russianness*.<sup>94</sup> This is a unique identity often encompassed in the idea of the elusive "Russian Soul," a concept deeply connected to Russian folklore Orthodox Christianity, and which is still exploited by concert promoters across the globe to attract audiences to Russian Music.

Furthermore, postcolonial theory invites us to recognize and question Kalafati's position as both an Imperial subject and an ethnic Greek. In these terms I have considered the extent to which Kalafati's Greekness, his "genetic inheritance" (to borrow Issiyeva's phrase), may have informed his use of the ambiguous Oriental style and his musical engagement with Russian Others, thinking of both as a means through which the composer explored his own identity and integration in Russian society and culture.<sup>95</sup>

In the hope of the discovery and analysis of further archival sources, this study paves the way for future interrogations of Kalafati's use of the Oriental style, representations of

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92 O'Keeffe, *New Soviet Gypsies*, 8.

93 Frolova-Walker, *Russian Music and Nationalism*, 329.

94 Ibid.

95 Issiyeva, "Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov and His Orient," 145.

minority people, and engagements with folk songs and themes from the national republics as being mediated through his own experience of Otherness. Separating the Western gaze from the sumptuous, seductive extravagance of Diaghilev's Orientalized *Ballets Russes*, future research could also involve a more specialized survey of Russian musical engagements with Gypsy themes in the context of Gypsies' determined efforts to self-Sovietize and challenge perceptions of Gypsy backwardness. The present article marks, however, a significant starting point to bringing Kalafati to the attention of a non-Greek and non-Russian speaking readership, giving due consideration to the historical situatedness and embeddedness of his works within prevalent musical traditions shaped at the intersection of politics and "cultural entanglements."<sup>96</sup>

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96 I borrow this phrase from Shane Graham's monograph *Cultural Entanglements: Langston Hughes and the Rise of African and Caribbean Literature* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2020).

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## **Abstract**

This article centres on the work of Vasily Kalafati (1869–1942), a prominent musical figure of the Greek diaspora in Russia. I examine how Kalafati's *Gypsy Song* (Tsyganskaya Pesnya), opus 19 (1927) responds to Soviet nationality politics and inclusive cultural policies, with reference to its engagement with Russian musical Orientalism. Through the lens of the composer's own lived experience of Otherness as a "small black-faced Greek" in Russia, I identify a fusion of Oriental musical signifiers and Western harmony and conventional tonality in *Gypsy Song*, suggesting that this functions to destabilize the binary opposition between Self and Other. In these terms, I consider *Gypsy Song* alongside the composer's subsequent study, transcription, harmonization, and utilization of folk songs and themes, in the context of Roma people's efforts to self-Sovietize in the 1920s and 1930s and the musical nation-building projects which were to become central in the Soviet Union in this period.

## **About the Author**

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