

The Distribution of Data in the *Firfov Transcription Collection*

The *Firfov Transcription Collection* was created in the 1970s. The Firfov family, which gave us this collection, assumes that most of these transcriptions have not been published. Thus, its archiving in IRAM had a primary purpose of forming a database concerning the content of this collection, and later publishing the unpublished materials. Having in mind that part of the transcribed songs exist as audio recordings in the *Firfov Collection* digitized in 2000 at IRAM, we now see the opportunity of further research and ethnomusicological analysis. The transcriptions in the collection had primarily been organized in four folders. The first two folders contained transcriptions numbered by Firfov himself. The same two folders included songs lists that only partly corresponded with the numbering. At the end of this paper there is an appendix from the content of each separate folder (appendix no.1).

After evaluating the situation, we began to construct the secondary database. Firfov had left a large amount of information for some of the transcriptions, but there were such that lacked data such as: title, text, tempo, informer, etc. Another source of secondary data apart from the information written on the transcriptions does not exist. The fields of the database were formed according to the categories of data Firfov left behind. The database consists of 14 fields:

- ordinal number
- title
- beginning words
- meter
- tempo
- function of the song
- region
- informant
- transcriber
- date of transcription
- date of first transcription
- date of recording
- comments

The field “informer” could be further expanded into other categories. However, we decided to enter the additional data, such as the age and provenance of the informer, in the field “comments”, as a comment by Firfov. We received this collection in May, 2004, and we finished the secondary data input in June, 2004.

In this paper we will present the distribution of data in the above-mentioned fields of the database.

Ordinal number

Here we established the total number of transcriptions in this collection, which is 383.

Titles

This field contains data concerning 366 transcriptions.

Entered titles	Missing
366	16

Out of this data, 16 titles reoccur twice, and one title reoccurs three times. In 22 cases similar titles appear, 7 of which we are certain signify the same song.

Beginning words

This field helps to enable an easy search of the database, as well as identification of the examples with a similar title. Out of 383 transcriptions, 11 lack text.

With text	Without text
372	11

Meter

This field contains 383 transcriptions. For 12 there is no information about the meter. Those are songs interpreted freely (“ad libitum”, “rubato”, etc.)

Some of the transcriptions which lacked data about the meter even though the meter was clear. We believe that this data should not be omitted in the cases where the meter is clearly defined by the following bars.

Tempo

Firfov wrote down the tempo descriptively at some transcriptions (moderate, fast, allegro, moderato, etc), and at some he used a metronomic scale ($\underline{\quad}$ = 120, etc.). This field contained information for 158 examples. Out of those 158, 115 had a metronomic definition, and 43 a descriptive one.

Noted tempo	No data
158	225

Descriptive tempo	Metronomic scale
43	115

Function of the song

In 50 instances Firfov noted the function of the song, i.e. in which occasions and rituals that song was performed, such as for instance weddings, harvests, battles, Easter, etc. This field presents the following distribution of data:

Function of the song	
battle	8
St. George's Day	1
migrant	1
about Goce Delchev	1
humorous	1
heroic	1
lyrical	2
love	6
dance	1
ring-lead dance	17
partisan	3
spring	1
wedding	3
Easter	1
harvest	3
total	50

Ring-lead songs	
Ring-leads	10
migrant	1
for engagements	1
humorous	2
love	1
Wedding -humorous	1
Easter	1
total	17

Harvest songs	
Harvest	2
harvest labor	1
total	3

Structure

In 64 transcriptions, Firfov left data about the structure of the performing group.

Structure	
female vocal	2
female vocal and folk instruments	1
female vocal and male vocal	1
female singing group	20
female singing group with <i>chalgii</i>	7
female singing group with folk instruments	7
mixed singing group with folk instruments	1
male vocal with <i>chalgii</i>	1
male vocal with folk instruments	1
mixed singing group	7
male singing group	7
male singing group with <i>chalgii</i>	3
male singing group with folk instruments	1
traditional group	3
old-town orchestra	1
total	64

Region

Firfov wrote down the region or provenance of the song for 198 songs. The end of the text features an appendix concerning this field (appendix no.2).

Informant

Firfov left behind information for part of the informants. There are 114 transcriptions with notes on who sung the songs. Some of the transcriptions, apart from the names of the informants, feature more detailed information, such as age and provenance.

Transcriber

Having in mind that this collection was created by the ethnomusicologist Zhivko Firfov, it was evident that all the transcriptions were his. However, 7 transcriptions feature other names:

_toski _.	Kuchulev Ivan	Grujovski Mate	Grujovski Mate/Zhivko Firfov
3	1	2	1

Date of transcription

Firfov's notes prove that some of the transcriptions in this collection were copied later. Therefore, in this field we included information about the last copy. There is information about a total of 72 transcriptions, most of which originate from 1974.

Date of transcription	
1973	1
1974	63
1975	5
1980	3
Total	72

Date of first transcription

Here we include the data about the first copy of the transcriptions which contained two dates of transcription. There were 29 such examples.

Date of first transcription	
1925	2
1928	1
1930	4
1931	1
1935	1
1936	3
1937	1
1938	1
1940	1
1945	1
1950	1
1952	3
1953	1
1954	1
1955	1
1965	1
1974	1
1975	3
1979	1
Total	29

Date of recording

Having in mind that Zhivko Firfov worked in the Macedonian Radio Television, part of the songs he transcribed were recorded for the needs of the MR Television. Thus, some transcriptions include the data of recording, whereas with others which were not recorded at the time of transcription he noted the date of anticipated recording. Therefore, we can conclude that some of the transcriptions were made because of the recordings. Thus, we have information about the recording of 6 transcriptions, and information about the anticipated recording of 3 transcriptions.

Comments

The last field of the database consists of the comments concerning the transcriptions. Firfov included data which can aid in the further analysis of the database. This field also includes some of our comments, which mostly refer to “technical” problems, such as: text missing, incomplete transcription, missing title, unclear meter, and so on. In order to achieve better organization and categorization of the data in this field, we first grouped the comments in two groups:

- **TC** - transcriber comment
- **OC** – our comment

Where possible, we employed further categorization as shown:

Legend:

2vs – two voice song
3vs – three voice song
4vs – four voice song
tm – text missing
is – incomplete song
it – incomplete text
its – incomplete text and song
uh – unintelligible handwriting
nt – no title

Conclusion

As we already stated at the beginning, the basic purpose of this database relates to the preparations for printing this collection. On the other hand, through the presentation of the distribution of data, we already formed a series of conclusions relevant for other analyses and purposes.

The next phase of the analysis of the *Firfov Collection* involves inputting the unpublished transcriptions in a digital format through the *Sibelius* program. Having in mind that some of the songs already exist in audio format, a comparison of the transcribed material will be enabled.

Appendix no.1

Folder 1

- list of songs up to no.90
- a list in alphabetical order, not corresponding to the numerated transcriptions
- 15 unnumbered transcriptions, 12 separated from the rest and separately numerated

Comments:

- numbering ends at no.56 and continues at no.62. There are exactly 6 transcriptions in between (from 56 to 62)
- some numbers reoccur, and some are missing (for example, no.18 is missing, no.72 reoccurs)
- 90 songs are registered in the list, whereas the folder lacks another 10 numerated as a continuation of the previous 90

Folder 2

- a list of songs by alphabetical order, not corresponding to the songs
- 6 texts
- numerated transcriptions to no.144
- 5 transcriptions and 2 texts have not been numerated
- 8 transcriptions in typed form

Comments:

- the transcriptions begin with the no.8 according to Firfov's numeration
- some numbers reoccur, some are missing according to Firfov's numeration (for example, no.124-129 are missing)
- one transcription has not been numerated
- there is a total of 154 transcriptions

Folder 3

- 4 texts
- a folder with 9 transcriptions

Comment:

- the transcriptions are not numerated

Folder 4

- a list of songs
- 22 texts
- 5 transcriptions on a separate sheet

Appendix no.2

Region	
Berovo	1
Berovo rg	4
Bitola	2
Blagoevgrad	2
Blagoevgrad rg	1
Debar	2
Debar rg	2
Dojran	1
Egejska Makedonia	1
Galichko	1
Gjevgjelija	7
Gjevgjelija rg	2
Gostivar rg	1
Jorica	1
Kavadarci	3
Kichevo	9
Kichevo rg	2
Kochani rg	2
Kratovo rg, Berovo rg	1
Kriva Palanka	2
Kriva Palanka rg	4
Kumanovo	4
Kumanovo rg	5
Kumanovo, Kratovo	1
Lazaropole	5
Lazaropole rg	1
Lazaropole, Galichnik rg	1
Lazaropole, Tetovo rg	1
Mariovo	4
Meglen rg	1
Negotino	2
Ohrid	3
Ohrid rg	1
Ovche Pole rg	5
Papradishte, Veles rg	1
Petrich	1
Pirinska Makedonija	7
Prilep	8
Prilep rg	2
Radovish	2
Resen	1
Sandanski	1
Shtip	4
Shtip rg	1
Skopje	3
Skopje - Veles	1
Skopje rg	5
Strumica	1
Sv. Nikole	4
Tetovo	9
Tetovo rg	1
Tikvesh rg	2
Tikveshko	1
v. Agino - Kumanovo	1
v. Baba, Demir Hisar rg	1
v. Bapchor, Voden rg	2
v. Bilbegovo	1
v. Dolneni - Prilep rg	1
v. Dolno Gjuganci, Ovche Pole rg	2
v. Gacevo	1
v. Gjonosca, Gostivar	1
v. Guganci, Ovche Pole	1
v. Istibanja, Vinica rg	1
v. Kadino, Skopje rg	1

v. Klechovce, Kumanovo rg	2
v. Konche, Radovish rg	1
v. Konie, Radovish rg	1
v. Kostur	2
v. Ljupanci, Skopje rg	1
v. Orman. Skopje rg	1
v. Rokotinci, Skopje rg	1
v. Rusinovo, Berovo rg	1
v. Seovo, Gjumerdzhe rg, Agean Macedonia	1
v. Shopeko - Rudari, Kumanovo rg	1
v. Shopska Rudica, Kumanovo	1
v. Studena Bara - Kumanovo	1
v. Vatasha	1
v. Vetren, Delchevo rg	1
v. Vince, Kumanovo rg	1
v.Gjonojca, Gostivar rg	1
Varosh, Prilep rg	1
Veles	17
Veles - Skopje	1
Veles rg	5
Veles rg - Tikvesh rg	1
Voden rg	1
Total	198