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With Norwegian sense of beauty. Synthesis of classical form and Norwegian *slåtт* in Eivind Groven's *Symphony No. 2**

Over the past two centuries Norwegians have turned towards the arts of their roots three times and for various reasons: for the first time in 1814, when the country was ceded to Sweden after four centuries of being a protectorate of Denmark; then after the First World War as a result of a difficult geo-political situation of the country; and later in the late 1970s, the time of rebellion of the young generation against capitalism and industrialisation and their increased interest, reflecting the trend among Western European youth, in the music of the Third World Countries and suppressed nations. It was also the time when Norwegian citizens could first declare themselves in a referendum on the issue of joining the European Union. This recurring interest in tradition was long-lasting and bore fruit in the form of conservationist action and promotion of musical tradition (transcribed melodies, competitions of traditional music, machine recordings of folk tunes, radio programmes on the rustic art of music, creating archives and educational centres for teaching singing, playing

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traditional instruments and passing down the repertoire). The second effect of such focus on this part of the national heritage was the remarkable number of Norwegian composers inspired by the musical tradition of their forefathers (beginning in the 1830s and 40s). To this day these artists have been using that source in diverse ways, although rarely in order to make music with patriotic overtones. Especially in its older layer, Norwegian folk music forms their artistic background, and, next to the professional European tradition, it provides a framework for developing their skills and original tonal language.

This paper has been aimed at discussing the influence of folk music on professional compositions in the work of Eivind Groven, a Norwegian artist who started his career in the 1920s. It was his outstanding artistic profile, shaped by the environment and customs of his upbringing that made him a perfect choice to illustrate my thesis. I will present one of his distinctive methods of reference to traditional folk music, far from the typical adaptations of folk tunes in his day or what is in general described as the idiom of folk music. This method consisted in transferring characteristic features and structures of traditional tunes onto the background of professional music.

Grounds for inspiration with folklore in Norwegian compositions by the first half of the 20th century

Norwegians were one of the peoples for whom the 19th century was the time of searching for their national identity so far disturbed through long-term dependence on other states. As opposed to Denmark and Sweden, Norway had been deprived of their own statehood since the 14th century through the ties with Danes: first in the form of union on nearly equal terms, later by absolute protectorate until the 19th century. In 1814 Norway came under the rule of the king of Sweden. That opened a much more favourable period conductive to regaining the lost identity and building an autonomous, however, not yet fully independent state. For instance, the still binding constitution (as amended later) was adopted.[1] A university and a library were opened in Christiania (1811). The first Norwegian bank was also founded at that time. Other institutions of national culture sprang up soon: the National Archives (1817); Christiania Theater on stage of the new building of the national theatre since 1827, was

[1] The name of the city was changed in 1877 into Kristiania, and in 1925 into Oslo.

renamed as the National Theatre; Ole Bull Theatre in Bergen (1850), the Philharmonic Society (1846), the music society Musikforeningen in Christiania (1871), the Ethnographic Museum (1957) and the National Gallery (1883). The works of art made at that time—plays (by Henrik Ibsen, or Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson), paintings (mainly landscapes) and musical compositions—were mainly imbued with native motifs, and, according to Herder's idea, evoked the character of the nation. When it comes to music, the contemporary composers included Waldemar Thrane, Halfdan Kjerulf, Ole Bull, Johan Svendsen, Rikard Naardrak, Edward Grieg and Johann Halvorsen.

The new wave of rise in and strengthening of national awareness came next in 1905, when Norway fully regained independence. The calendar was soon filled with anniversaries marking historical events such as adopting the constitution (since 1914) or the millennium of the death of the king Olav II (1930) who instilled Christianity in Norway. Those celebrations served as presentations of the most illustrious of historical events of Norway and its art; they also contributed to development of national pride and awareness.

Geo-political stimuli to concentrate more on the folk tradition became evident again after the First World War, which brought about deep economic crisis that politically destabilised the country. Consequently, since the end of WWI the left-wing parties had been receiving more and more electoral support. During a yearly conference (1918), Labour Party, representing the left wing and inspired by the Bolsheviks, approved a project of a motion that claimed their right to start a revolution. In order to prevent this course of action civic parties united in combat against the mutual enemy. The right wing supported values involving home, family, Christianity, and the national virtues. The expressions of the extreme approach to battling the leftist movement was founding in 1933 Nasjonal Samling, a Nazi-style party headed by Vidkun Quisling, the prime minister of Norway at the time of Hitlerian occupation of the country. Their primary goal was to form a strong national bloc.

Such competition between political factions affected music. Eivind Groven's words witness that despite few publicly shared opinions, the political contest was transferred onto the field of arts.[2] Nevertheless, those in favour of maintaining tradition in new music were driven by diverse motives. Some quoted

[2] Eivind Groven, 'Vår folkemusikk. Og dens forhold til den inter-europeiske' (Notes on the Radio Lecture Given on the 21st of November 1931), [in:] *Tonekunst*, 1932 No. 3–4: 29.

the 19th century arguments; others were concerned about the uniqueness of Norwegian arts. To name but a few, in a series of papers on national music the Norwegian composer David Monrad Johansen (1888–1974) pleaded: "so we would not be devoured by communism in the sphere of culture."[3] He deplored those who saw the native arts only in negative light, which he ascribed to centuries-long Danish influence. He believed that this foreign impact resulted in 'the most precious, lasting and multifarious expressions of Norwegian spirit' (i.e. folk art, poetry, music, painting and architecture) becoming alien to most of his compatriots.[4] Eivind Groven's opinion was very similar. He stressed the point that 'as long as Norwegians do not incentivise themselves to make use of their ethnic resources they will remain under the absolute influence of the mid-European musical centres.' Numerous composers did not exclude the possibility of merging ethnic inspirations with European compositional trends (among others that group included Geirr Tveitt, David Monrad Johansen and Klaus Egge). However, there were also those who called for limiting the continental impact, and Groven was among them.

A Boy from Telemark

Eivind Groven (1901–1977) was born and brought up in Lårdal in Telemark, a region in central Norway famous for its vivid folk tradition. There were no opera houses or concert halls in that area. The music that he was familiar with as a child mainly belonged to the folk tradition. His mother grew up in a family preserving the nascent customs. His uncle, Rikard Berge, was at that time a well-known folklorist. In his boyhood Groven learnt to play the harmonica, and occasionally performed on Harding fiddle, guitar, *seljefløyte* (the willow flute) as well as *lengeleik*, which is a kind of folk droned zither. He remembered tunes by heart (he only learnt notes at the age of 15). When he was twelve he started his violin lessons. His plans to begin education in a conservatoire of music (where he was admitted) after leaving school were distorted by his father's advice to first go into education that he could make a living on. Having studied to be a teacher, he returned to his initial plans of musical development in 1924. Even though his stay at the conservatoire was limited to six

[3] D. Monrad Johansen, 'Nationale værdier i vor musik', [in:] *Aftenposten*, 11th July 1924: 7; in Norway the term 'communism in music' often referred to modernism too.

[4] D. Monrad Johansen, 'Nationale værdier i vor musik', [in:] *Aftenposten*, 11th of July 1924: 7.

months, two years later he made his debut at a concert of his own music. The reviews of the event, as well as some other performances of his music, which he frequently sponsored himself, expressed the critics' dissatisfaction with his insufficient skills, which in several cases became a reason why publishers abandoned printing his previously commissioned compositions. With time, however, Groven's work won the reviewers' favour (after *Mot ballade* was performed in 1933). What is more, before World War Two Groven won a symphony competition organised by a radio station (*Symphony No.1*). The radio jingles proposed by him also gained the highest recognition. Boosey&Hawkes, a publishing house that he came in touch with during his stay in London, expressed their interest in issuing his oeuvre. Apart from that, they also ordered a suite based on motifs of Norwegian folk music. In the end, this cooperation failed due to the outbreak of World War II.

Parallel to his compositional work, Groven was active in the field of ethnomusicology. He collected records of folk tunes (radio archive of the Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation, NRK) that he later turned into sheet music. He was one of the first copyists to mark intonational details in the score. One of the first editors of a 7-volume collection of tunes for Harding fiddle 'Hardingfeleslåttar', Groven also ran a radio programme on ethnic music (since 1931). A folk violinist—he played the Harding fiddle himself.

He linked nearly all of his compositional output with folk music. Like other nationally-minded composers, he used stories from folk songs, such as ballads (*Draukvćdet*, *Margit Hjukse*, *Olav Liljekrans*), melodies from the 19th-century collections of tunes by Ludvig Mathias Lindeman (suites *Fjelltonar*, *Bryllup i skogen*) and original folk melodies. What he did reluctantly was to make musical arrangements of folk melodies, which he believed consisted in depriving the material of its authentic features. Apart from that he composed pieces with themes alluding to folk music (e.g. *Symfoniske slåttar*, *Piano Concerto*, a symphonic poem *Renessanse*, or the overture *Hjalarljod*). He occasionally employed Norwegian folk fiddle (*Solstemning* from *Bryllupet* and *Genua*, *Mot vår*), transcribing also for Harding fiddle and piano, as well as for two Harding fiddles (e.g. *Springar* from *Symphony No.1*, *Balladetone*—version for two Harding fiddles). Above that, being an expert and representative of tradition, taking full advantage of his knowledge of Norwegian folk music, Groven applied genuine ethnic modes of composition in his professional work (e.g. *Symphony No.1* and *No. 2*)

Slåtts

For Groven the traditional folk culture of Telemark became the first point of reference, embedded within his childhood, and referring to traditional dances called *bygdedanser* representing the older layer of folk culture (opposite to the group of dances known as *gammeldans*, disseminated in Norway in the 19th century). In addition, these dances can be found in other regions of the South-Central and South-Western parts of the country: from Agder in the South, Sunnmøre in the North, to Valdres in the East and Vestlandet in the West. The group comprises *gangar*, *rull*, *halling* and *springar*. *Bygdedansene* are not characterised by one rhythmical form consistently used in all the area of its occurrence—their rhythmicity varies according to a region and local tradition. They can be recognised by the way in which they are performed (*springar*, *rull* and *gangar* are danced in pairs which move counter-clockwise along a ring; *halling* is a showpiece performed individually by a male dancer as a form of competition), by their steps and by metre: duple in *gangar*, *rull* and *halling*, and triple in *springar*. Another feature specific to *springar* is their usually asymmetric beat (it tends to display a more symmetric shape the closer it gets to the west coast in the south of the country).

Bygdedansene are accompanied by tunes called *bygdedansslåtter* (*slåtter*, sing. *slått*; the definition applied here refers us to the oldest layer of instrumental music played with dances), usually performed on Harding fiddle, *langeleik*, sometimes on the violin, and sung at times (*tralling*). Just like traditional dances, *bygdedansslåtts* lack individual architectural qualities that would allow for distinguishing specific genres. Therefore, it was possible to form a common model to all *slåtts*. It was based on the terminology and perception of tunes for *bygdedanser* by folk musicians. The author of this analytical approach is Tellef Kvifte, a Norwegian ethnomusicologist.

For him a motive (*motiv*) makes the lowest level of melody within which it is still possible to distinguish even smaller features, i.e. fragmentary motives (*delmotiv*). Motives are usually short, most typically two bars long. They are characteristically asymmetric. Next to two-bar musical ideas there can also be found one- and three-bar features. Furthermore, more recent melodies, mainly played on classical violin, emerge from symmetric motives—four- and eight-bar long.

Their motives mostly progress in seconds, thirds and fourths. Neighbouring notes frequently belong to the same triad, if one wants to apply the perspective and terminology derived from functional harmony.

The ambitus of musical ideas in traditional tunes ranges from a fourth or fifth to a tenth or an eleventh. Static motives are rare; those that prevail are pendular.

The main musical ideas of *slåtts* contain mostly short note values. These are notated as quavers, triplet quavers as well as dotted rhythm.

One *slått* comprises two to five motives. They usually do not display contrastive properties, and, most importantly, they often seem motivically related.

Referred to as *vek*, a higher level of construction is defined by Kvifte as a unit consisting of several, at least double, repetitions of a motive. It can be repeated identically or, more frequently, diverge from the original shape melodically, rhythmically, or in articulation or structure. Interestingly, the changes are small, but constant, which causes gradual abandoning of the initial form of the motive and reshaping it, often beyond recognition.

Typically, a motive is repeated more than two times. Researchers delving into the tradition of *slåtts* point to transforming and reshaping of motives as their most distinctive features. 'Motives are structured one upon another, and actually arise from one another,' in the words of Groven.[5] He remarked that their developmental form stems from the principle of 'blossoming'. This quality of old tunes is described by Tellef Kvifte as a rule of continuous variation.[6] The musicologist highlights the fact that this feature frequently makes it difficult to clearly classify one form as one *vek* or another. Consequently, Kvifte defines this ambiguity as yet another characteristic feature of *slåtts*. He emphasises that it contributes to their internal continuity.[7]

The next level in the construction of melodies for *bygdedanser* is referred to as *omgang,* containing at least two *vek.* It serves as a presentation of all the main melodic ideas in the order typical of the regional or local variant of a given *slått*. Each melody contains at least two such presentations. Nonethe-

[5] As in: A. J. Kydland, *Eivind Grovens 1. Symfoni—en studie i hans metamorfoseteknikk* [master's thesis], Oslo 1983: 16.

[6] Tellef Kvifte, *On variability in the performance on a Hardanger fiddle tunes and paradigms in ethnomusicological research* [Master's thesis; published with author's notes in Norwegian and English], Oslo 1978; 1994 [publ.]: 71 [English manuscript] .

[7] Kvifte, *On variability* ... (1978): 78.

less, they do not need to be identical (Groven refers to them as 'variations of variations'[8]). Variational changes are acceptable at each level.

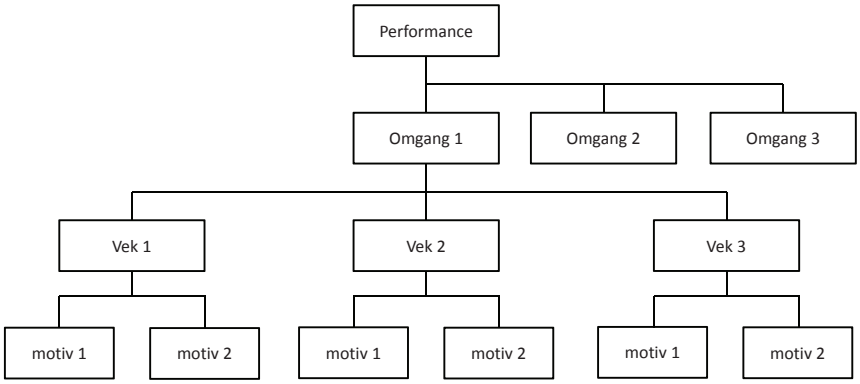


Illustration 1. General formal pattern of *slåtts*. As in: T. Kvifte, *Musikkteori for folkemusikk—en innføring*, Oslo 2000: 12

Eivind Groven's *Symphony No. 2*, *Midnattstimen*

Groven had been thinking about composing a piece that would be a merger of a symphony and *slått* since 1924, that is the first time when he heard the sound of an orchestra. The composition performed then was *Symphony No. 9 in D minor* op.125 by Ludwig van Beethoven. In one of his texts written in retrospect he revealed that he was tempted by the idea of a synthesis of a sonata form ('comprising exposition as a closed entity, an independent section called development and a slavishly following them recapitulation' [9]) and a dynamic *slått* comprised of ever new presentations. At the same time the composer found many common features between these forms of musical formation. Another source gives account of his statement that '*slått* makes a type of sonata with the main and secondary motives as well as sumptuous rich variations.'[10]

[8] As in: Kydland, *Eivind Grovens 1. Symfoni* ... (1983): 16.

[9] E. Groven, *Eivind Groven fortel*, [in:] O. Fjalestad, *Eivind Groven. Heiderskrift til 70-årsdagen 8. oktober 1971*, 1971: 54.

[10] E. Groven, 'Fra folkemusikk til kunstmusikk. Utvikling av vår folkemusikk spenner over uhyre tidsrom', [in:] *Aftenposten (kronikk),* 19th October 1945: 2.

Groven undertook the task twice: for the first time in 1937 (*Symphony No.1*), and for the second time between 1939 and 1943 (*Symphony No. 2*).

Symphony No. 2 Midnattstimen[11] contains three movements. The composer omits the last but one part of the sonata cycle and keeps the original character of the remaining movements (fast-slow-fast). He applies his idea of a synthesis of a classical form and *slått* in the first and second movement. The first movement takes the shape of a sonata form. Groven maintains the division into three sections. What is more, the movement is based on four subjects introduced in the exposition. According to the principle of the sonata form, two initial subjects oppose one another in their character. If one considers their introductory fragments, the conclusion may be drawn that Groven also keeps the standard tonal relation between subjects (this remark only refers to the beginning of both of them, as neither fully follows one key).

The subjects of the first movement are asymmetrical and quite long. Asymmetry can be associated with the tradition of *slåtter* too. It is usually achieved through repetition, often with transformations of the last motives in further stages of a subject.

Example 1. Eivind Groven: *Symphony No. 2*, subject of the 1st movement, manuscript, pp. 2–3



Furthermore, Groven links subjects motivically, structurally and through their mood: the third subject nearly faithfully recreates the internal structure of the first subject. Its second stage alludes to the mood of the first subject, whereas the first one, to the second subject. The head-motif of the fourth subject may evoke the first motive of the first subject. The similarity applied by

[11] *Midnattstimen*—Norw. midnight; acc. to critics the title refers to the ordeal of wartime. The composer himself had never confirmed these assumptions; he avoided associating his music with a programme. Nevertheless, the critics' assumptions seem to be supported by the composer's daughter, Dagne Groven Myhren, in her description of the circumstances of composing the piece and the atmosphere at home at that time.

the composer must have been inspired by the solutions present in old folk melodies in which the subjects of one *slått* are most likely to be motivically related. Even though the motivic correspondence within the first movement of *Symphony No. 2* may suggest lack of independence of the third and the fourth subject, further stages of this part prove their individual roles.

Still, the chief potential of *slått* that Groven wanted to transplant onto the ground of symphony lay in the ongoing transformations of their thematic ideas. He launches them from beginning of exposition—in the following stages of the subject which he expanded by forming chains of repetitions of motives. Just like in traditional ethnic melodies he transforms them by small alterations coming in the consecutive presentations. The changes are noticeable in melody (intervals, and registers, although it is mostly developed along the same lines), structure (expanding or contracting), rhythm, articulation or timbre (changing the instruments).

Example 2. Eivind Groven: *Symphony No. 2*, transformations of the subject of the 1st movement, manuscript, p. 19



The modifications are continual, just like in *slåtts*. Apart from that Groven made further use of the thematic material by not only transforming the subjects as entities but also by compiling individual motives of the main constituents of the first movement, especially in its development. The way they are joined and modified allows for creating a homogenous whole. Then they are again repeated through alterations. Moreover, each consecutive form of a chosen motive is not related to the initial shape of the idea, but to its last appearance, i.e. the preceding one. Consequently, he arrives at versions that often are difficult to recognise and far from the first occurrence. That is how the resulting musical image appears as more varied, and complex than traditional tunes, even though the composer only works on the thematic material, complying to the original manner. It is also the structure within given sections of the sonata form that in *Symphony No. 2* seems more intricate than in *slåtts*—the *vek*-like division

disappears. Likewise, the modes of presenting the material differ, especially in the development, which has parallel or overlapping chain combinations of motives from selected subjects rendered by various instrumental sections and contributing to the dense, truly mosaic texture. Development 'takes place' both horizontally (diverse musical ideas) and vertically (series of musical ideas).

In addition, the first movement of *Symphony No. 2* displays other features that not only prove a thorough knowledge of *slåtts*, but also reveal compositorial approach shaped by this folk tradition. While working on a piece Groven focused mainly on melodies, believing that 'a bad tune cannot be turned into a good composition.'[12] As a result, his priority was not harmony, and gripping modulations, which could have been ascribed to the limited harmonic system that *slåtts* are based on. He changed keys by opening a transformed motive with a different note or by inflating one of the pitches (chromatic modulations). The tonal arrangement of Groven's compositions shows traces of modal thinking: his favourite set was the discovered for his own use application of a minor key with the subdominant in a major key (he called it 'a Doric combination'[13]). Other patterns that would come back include parallel fifths and octaves.

Example 3. Eivind Groven: *Symphony No. 2*, 4th subject of the 1st movement, manuscript, p. 15



Analysis of the second movement of *Midnattstimen*, *Andante* poses more challenges, especially when it comes to defining the form Groven intended for this part of the symphony. He based it only on one subject (in the Phrygian mode), which subsequently, just like in the first movement, was constantly transformed and repeated.

[12] F. Benestad, 'Tanker om musikk. Komponisten, folketoneeksperten, vitenskapsmannen Eivind Groven i samtale med Finn Benestad', [in:] *Norsk musiktidskrift*, 1971 No. 4: 140.

[13] L. Y. Daliot, *Samtaler med Eivind Groven 1969–1970–1971*, [notes by Anne Jorunn Kydland Lysdahl on the recorded interviews with the composer; pages unnumbered].

Example 4. Eivind Groven: *Symphony No. 2*, subject of the 2nd movement, manuscript, pp. 43–44



The subject occurred throughout the movement in more than ten versions, not far from one another in their form. All of them have the same rhythmic structure, and most of them share the shape of the melodic line as well as the sequence of intervals, however, to a lesser extent. Not infrequently does Groven forsake to return to the subject in its full form, and chooses to keep only its fragments. Similarly to the first movement, he builds new transformations on the preceding repetitions, not merely on the first presentation of the main musical idea.

Founding the whole second movement on a sole subject makes is expedient to look into the structure through the prism of variations, fugue, and *slått*. The composer admitted that he was not satisfied by merely implanting *slått* into an orchestral piece, he wanted to combine its elements with larger forms of professional music.

Given that the second movement of Groven's *Symphony* is encapsulated in the form of variations that develop in a free way, as early as in the segment where the subject is introduced there can be noticed first modifications of the main musical idea. Variations are not numbered, still, most of them would be easily recognisable, as Groven distinctly signals their arrival by opening them with the subject or its fragment played by a selected solo instrument. Variations should, however, vary structurally. The composer does not even remotely repeat the first section of *Andante.* In each segment he returns to the main musical idea or its motive (as modified), but he renders them and organises anew. At the same time the returns lack their original traits, apart from one segment in which the subject is presented in imitations by the violins (no. 31–33).

Therefore, if the variations were to be agreed as the formal rule behind the piece, one would need to apply the broad definitions by Kurt Von Fischer and Henry Cope Colles.[14]

Groven's attention was driven in this movement mainly in respect of transformation of the material, which, just like in the first movement, happen on a continual basis with small alterations (mainly in the melody through interval shifts, although its direction remains unchanged). Such solutions may suggest an attempt at using the folk form of *slått*. The *slått* would be based entirely on only one subject, whereas the traditional Norwegian folk melodies arise from at least two main musical ideas.

Were one to analyse the second movement from the perspective of a fugue, it would be worth pointing to the converging tendencies in continuous reappearances, and thematic exchange among instrumental parts. Nonetheless, thematic presentations should be followed by its transformations. Admittedly, the subject itself reappears as an ever new version, but not through its alterations in inversion, retrograde, augumentation or diminution, typical of a fugue. Furthermore, in its recurrences this musical idea is only stated fragmentarily. Were this movement to represent a fugue, the composer would have abandoned the principle of tonal relations between subject statements and answers in its opening and ending.

Despite that likelihood that one may actually identify the beginning of the development section, the second movement does not seem to represent a sonata-allegro. What needs to be considered here is the influence of early symphonies on Groven's composition. For instance, the second movement of *Symphony No. 2* in C major by Joseph Haydn was based on one motive that was later organically modified (motivic development and transformation). Even so, it may prove futile to find any mention of his interest in the work of the classicist in Groven's writing and interviews with him. Notwithstanding, the conceivable influence may be the music of baroque, especially by J. S. Bach, to be traced in Haydn's *symphony* too. Groven's remark that the music by the Leipzig cantor resembles *slått*, in fact, 'it makes an extensive *slått* of many shades'[15] refers one again to his ethnic inspirations.

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[14] Compare: Z. Chechlińska, *Wariacje i technika wariacyjna w twórczości Chopina* [Variations and Variational Technique in Chopin's Oeuvre], Kraków 1995: 17, 22.

[15] G. Strømholm, '"Bach var som ein slått med svære fargar i!." Notater fra et samarbeid med og om Eivind Groven', [in:] *Programbladet*, 1972 No. 52: 18.

Finally, the analysis of *Andante* allows for applying the scheme characteristic of rondo. Were that to be the case, both the refrain and the couplets would stem from the same thematic material, with the refrains presenting the full subject, including its modified versions (especially melodically) and some couplets based only on motives derived from the subject of the refrain and melodically modified. The refrains would also be varied in their shape and size, thus, they would be variationally transformed. In such cases Groven talked about the so-called 'double form' or 'the potential joint form' (*dobbel* or *potensert rekkeform*).[16] If one assumed that *Andante* follows the framework of a rondo, its scheme would have the structure represented below:

A	B	A1	C	A2	D	A3	E	A41* + a cadence
(27–29)	(30–31)	(31–33)	(33–36)	(37–38)	(38–41)	(44)	(45)	(46)

* The principle of interlacing the segments with full subject supremacy and those of fragmentary subject presentation would require splitting the last section into two.

It seems likely that it was the composer's intention. It is known that he sought common elements between *slått* and rondo.[17]

For Eiving Groven the hope of Norwegian arts was bonding it with folk music 'which developed in isolation from professional music.'[18] 'The distinctive sound of Norwegian music and the Norwegian style result from long-term evolution conditioned upon the Norwegian sense of beauty. That is how other European nations' music developed too. We use the native features only in a small degree,' remarked the composer in 1931.[19] At the same time he was not satisfied with the work of Edward Grieg, Johan Svendsen or Johan Halvorsen, as they linked genuine folk melodies with other elements of music of European features. He advocated distinctiveness of national music with highlighted nascent elements and waning continental influence.

[16] As in: A. J. Kydland, *Eivind Grovens 20. Symfoni* ... (1983): 20.

[17] which he mentioned in an NRK radio programme on *slåtts* in 1938; as in A. J. Kydland, *Eivind Grovens 1. Symfoni* ... (1983): 20–21.

[18] Eivind Groven, 'Vår folkemusikk. Og dens forhold til den inter-europeiske' (Notes on the Radio Lecture Given on the 21st of November 1931), [in:] *Tonekunst*, 1932 No. 3–4: 29.

[19] Eivind Groven, 'Vår folkemusikk. ...' (1932): 30.

This focus on native ethnic arts can surely be regarded as Groven's contribution in the battle to save Norwegian arts against foreign influence. He surely supported that view while working on both of his symphonies. On the other hand, his preference stemmed from the fact that he was born and brought up in a place where the folk tradition was very vivid. It was where he came to know the world of music, which at that time seemed to only have ethnic expression. Therefore, his oeuvre was primarily a carrier of folk tradition. In this light one can surely resolve that even if he had not lived and worked at the time when national tendencies in Norway were fairly dominant, he would have chosen the same path. This assumption can be borne out by the fact that even when the national tendencies in Norway started weakening (only to return in the 1970s) Groven continued with his approach. In this way his proved his honesty as an artist. He used to say that it is difficult to originate valuable work not acting in accordance with one's principles: 'I cannot fathom,' he wrote, 'how a man can lose oneself to such a degree. All in all, it is not about reflecting national features. What is critical is that I was born and brought up here. A Norwegian poet cannot start writing in Polish. That would be a folly. Neither can a composer.[20]

Translated by Agnieszka Gaj

[20] F. Benestad, *Tanker om musikk. ...* (1971): 142.

Abstract

Norway is a country where invariably, starting from the nineteenth century up to now professional music composers have been eager to look for inspiration in the folk music. The reasons behind it varied throughout the time: first, it was due to the fact that Norway was relieved from the protectorate of Denmark, under which it had existed for over 400 years, and then of Sweden, in 1905. After the First World War, the geopolitical situation of the country that brought about the rise in power of left-wing parties against which the united right wing, focused on the national values, tried to oppose, gained in significance. By the end of the 1970s, the turn to the roots stemmed from the protest against capitalism and consumerism.
Eivind Groven (born in 1901) was an attentive witness of the two moments when the native music gained in popularity. His works are thoroughly steeped in concepts drawn from folk traditions. However, as opposed to the majority of Norwegian composers of his time, Groven knew the Norwegian traditional music perfectly well since he grew up with it. Therefore, reaching for the musical ideas present there seemed absolutely natural for him. This was the only conceivable way of composing for him. Since he was so perfectly acquainted with the tradition, the artist often combined instruments, sounds and forms of the professional music with the elements of the traditional music in a fresh and innovative way. This article discusses one instance of such mixture which is present in his *Symphony No. 2*.

Key words: Eivind Groven, history of the Norwegian music in the twentieth century, inspirations with traditional music.