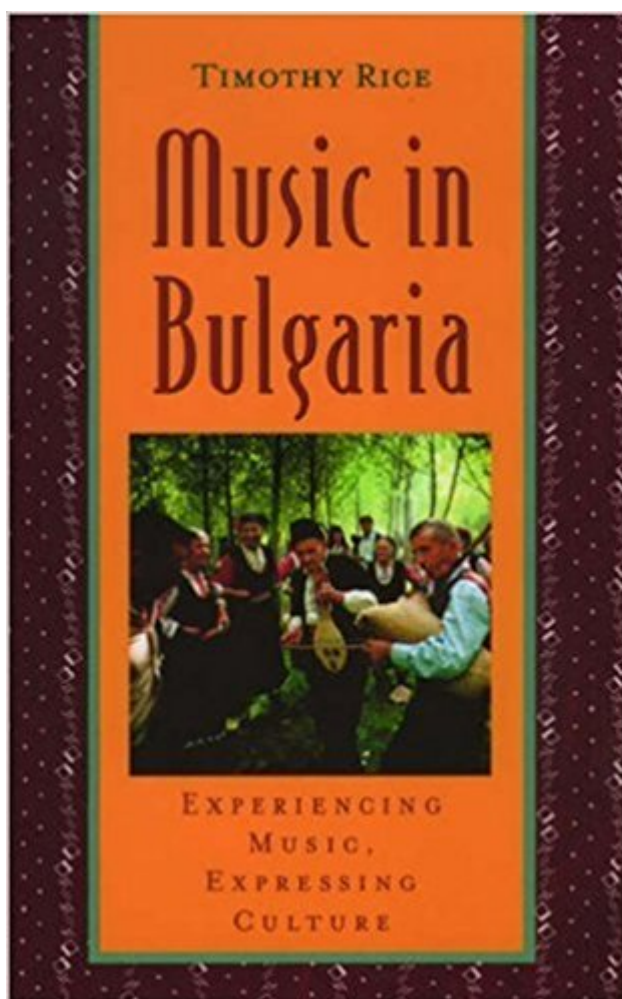


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# Music In Bulgaria: Experiencing Music, Expressing Culture (Global Music Series)



## Synopsis

Music in Bulgaria is one of several case-study volumes that can be used along with *Thinking Musically*, the core book in the Global Music Series. *Thinking Musically* incorporates music from many diverse cultures and establishes the framework for exploring the practice of music around the world. It sets the stage for an array of case-study volumes, each of which focuses on a single area of the world. Each case study uses the contemporary musical situation as a point of departure, covering historical information and traditions as they relate to the present. Visit [www.oup.com/us/globalmusic](http://www.oup.com/us/globalmusic) for a list of case studies in the Global Music Series. The website also includes instructional materials to accompany each study. *Music in Bulgaria* presents a focused introduction to the rich and varied tradition of Bulgarian music. Taking readers on a tour of the country's musical landscape, it explores ways in which Bulgaria's rural traditions affect the expression and interpretation of its music and examines how Bulgaria's history has influenced its music over many decades. The book also shows how musical traditions have been preserved and have flourished despite the social changes brought about by the post-WWII era of industrialization, modernization, and urbanization. Timothy Rice demonstrates how Bulgarian music--in addition to being an art and an entertainment--is deeply embedded in the cultural, social, economic, and political life of the country. He analyzes how this music has spread to other cultures and how it has made its mark on new forms of popular music. Brief lessons on how ethnomusicologists conduct their research are also included. Written in a lively style accessible to both students and general readers, *Music in Bulgaria* features vivid eyewitness accounts of performances, interviews with performers, and glossaries of Bulgarian and musical terms. Incorporating numerous listening examples and other activities that help readers learn to listen, sing, and dance to Bulgarian music, this volume is packaged with a 70-minute CD containing examples of the music discussed.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Music in Bulgaria is a valuable addition to ethnomusicology's instructional literature. It should facilitate the addition of a European tradition to university survey courses that are generally dominated by African, Asian, and American musics, while at the same time giving students an opportunity to benefit from the experience and insight of one of the important theorists of our field. Rice is an engaging writer who should be able to connect with and make a lasting impression upon students."--*Ethnomusicology*

Timothy Rice is at UCLA. Bonnie C. Wade is at University of Washington.

This book helped me understand Balkan culture as a whole by sharing the importance (historically) of music and dance in Bulgaria. The CD is fun too listened to it while I read!

Timothy Rice's *MUSIC IN BULGARIA*, part of Oxford University Press' "Global Music" series, is a concise introduction to the world of Bulgarian musical life from peasant traditions of centuries past to the pop-folk ("chalga") combination enjoyed by modern urban listeners. Unlike Rice's earlier work on the subject, *MAY IT FILL YOUR SOUL: Experiencing Bulgarian Music*, this volume assumes no prior study of ethnomusicology, but a knowledge of basic music theory is vital to making the most out of it. Rice begins with the wedding music scene, the only survival of village communal music that exists in the lives of average urban Bulgarians. Describing a wedding in Sofia, he gives a portrait of Maria Stoyanova, a player of the gaida (bagpipe) brought with a well-known band for this lavish event. He next describes a Roma wedding in a village, the next place Stoyanova was invited to perform. After this fairly substantial dive into Bulgarian music, Rice gives a more systematic tour, such as the distinctive characteristics of each region's music. The reader will learn how to tell a Shop song from Pirin singing, recognise the several most common traditional instruments, and understand the origin of various kinds of music in the agricultural calendar. The next portion of the book deals with the impact of politics on music, explaining how folk music was sanitized by the Communist government

and then exported abroad as world music. "Les Mystere des Voix Bulgares" is the most well-known example. Many American musicians and listeners have been fascinated with the sound of this state-crafted music, whether because of its interesting rhythms, its otherworldly harmonies, or (for a subset of choral fans) because its female voices can be taken as a feminist statement. However, Rice is critical of those who take some aspects of Bulgaria's music without wanting to truly understand the social and cultural background of this rich heritage. Finally, Rice describes the most recent redaction of folk music in Bulgaria, the combination of folk inspiration with modern instruments that creates the genre known as popfolk or chalga. Throughout the book Rice gives us some neat details about the music described, including instructions for the pravo horo danced at weddings, the lyrics of famous songs, and the scores of some tunes. I must say I was frustrated by the simple level of the writing. The "Global Music" series is meant for college readers but here it seems like a high-school audience is held in mind here. Nonetheless, this is a fun and informative book, sure to entertain and enlighten English-speaking fans of Bulgarian music.

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