

인도네시아에서의 서양 음악교육에 대한 바르폴로메예프의 역할

The Role of N. Varfolomeyeff in Western Music Education in Indonesia

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Abstract This study examines the contribution of N. Varfolomeyeff, a Russian diaspora musician, in shaping the development of music education and orchestration of national songs in Indonesia during the mid-20th century. As a graduate of the Moscow Conservatory who settled in Indonesia in the 1920s, Varfolomeyeff played a significant role in formal music education through his work at the Indonesian School of Music (SMIND) in Yogyakarta, as well as in orchestrating patriotic and national songs. The research employs a historical-descriptive approach, with data collected through literature review, archival documentation, and in-depth interviews with eight informants—musicians and educators who had direct interactions with Varfolomeyeff. The findings reveal that Varfolomeyeff successfully integrated Western musical idioms with Indonesian nationalism, producing orchestral arrangements that were both majestic and grounded in local musical expression. Beyond his technical contributions, Varfolomeyeff's pedagogical legacy emphasized discipline, perseverance, and a deep appreciation for music as a medium for character development. This study underscores the importance of preserving music history archives and highlights the critical role of diaspora musicians in the formation of national musical identity.

Key words: Varfolomeyeff, Indonesian national music, Russian diaspora, music education, patriotic song arrangement, Western classical music, history of Indonesian music

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초록 본 연구는 러시아 디아스포라 음악가 바르폴로메예프(N. Varfolomeyeff)가 20세기 중반 인도네시아의 음악교육과 국가 노래의 오케스트레이션 발전에 기여한 바를 고찰하는 것을 목적으로 하였다. 이를 위해 역사-기술적 방법을 적용하여 문헌과 아카이브 자료, 음악가 · 교육자 8인을 대상으로 한 심층 인터뷰를 통해 자료를 수집하였다. 연구 결과 모스크바 음악원 출신인 그는 1920년대 인도네시아에 정착한 후 욕야카르타 인도네시아 음악학교(Indonesian School of Music in Yogyakarta)에서 교육 활동을 전개하며 정규 음악 교육의 기반을 강화하였다. 아울러 국가를 대표하는 노래를 관현악곡으로 편곡하며 서구 음악 어법을 인도네시아 민족주의 정서와 조화롭게 결합하였다. 또한 그는 웅장하면서도 지역적 표현에 뿌리를 둔 편곡 양식을 정립하였고, 규율 · 인내 · 음악을 통한 인격 형성을 중시하는 교육철학을 남긴 것으로 나타났다.

주제어: 바르폴로메예프, 인도네시아 국가 음악, 러시아 디아스포라, 음악 교육, 애국가 편곡, 서양 고전 음악, 인도네시아 음악사

I . Introduction

The development of music in Indonesia cannot be separated from the role of foreign musicians who came and settled in the archipelago during the colonial period up to post-independence. Their presence, whether as educators, orchestra players, or arrangers, has shaped the musical foundation that also influenced the idioms and aesthetics of national music. In this historical trajectory, Western musical techniques—especially those from the European classical tradition—successfully entered and merged into local musical practices (Wallach & Clinton, 2019). A significant factor in this process is the presence of diaspora musicians, including those from Russia, Italy, Hungary, the Netherlands, and other countries, as documented by A. Pasaribu in *Analisis Musik Indonesia* (1986). However, their contributions have not fully found a place in Indonesian academic music studies, particularly in the official narrative of national music development. In contemporary higher music education, this Western legacy remains evident through the curriculum structure of music programs, which emphasizes instrumental specialization across seven major categories—vocal, piano, guitar, woodwind, brass, string, and percussion instruments—reflecting the influence of European classical ensemble traditions (Utomo et al., 2025).

After the 1917 Revolution, Russia, which was previously under Tsarist rule, transformed into a communist state, and since then, all aspects of life, including performing arts, came under state control. Musicians who rejected communist ideology chose to leave their homeland. Some of them, such as Varfolomeyeff (cellist), Shvecuk and Neudachin (clarinetists), as well as Vondracek (cellist), were noted to be actively involved in music in Indonesia, especially on the island of Java (Uswatun, 2019). In addition to those from Russia, several other international musicians also contributed to the Indonesian music landscape, such as C. McPhee, L. Ornstein, and M.

Tenzer from the United States who delved into Balinese gamelan, as well as D. Mack and K. E. Prier from Germany, and Jaap Kunst from the Netherlands, who wrote music education books still used today. Among these figures, Varfolomeyeff stands out for his orchestral arrangements of Indonesian national songs, such as 'Indonesia Raya', 'Maju Tak Gentar', 'Bagimu Negeri', 'Nyiur Hijau', 'Dari Sabang Sampai Merauke', dan 'Bengawan Solo' (Aryandari, 2022; Uswatun, 2019).

Although the influence of Western music on Indonesian national songs has been widely acknowledged (Irving, 2024), figures like Varfolomeyeff often remain on the fringes of mainstream discourse. Available studies mostly focus on local composers such as W. R. Supratman, I. Marzuki, or C. Simanjuntak. Yet, without the contributions of foreign musicians who arranged and modified these songs to be suitable for orchestras or formal choirs, the distribution and popularity of patriotic songs might not be as strong as we know today (Al-Amin & Khodra, 2019; Juwita & Endah, 2019; Kurniawati et al., 2020; Thooyibah et al., 2022). In this context, Varfolomeyeff occupies a unique position as a 'musical bridge' between European classical composition techniques and Indonesian nationalism.

Existing literature on the Russian diaspora in Southeast Asia generally highlights socio-political aspects, such as post-Bolshevik revolution exiles, but rarely explores cultural contributions, especially in the arts and music fields (Hood, 2016). Varfolomeyeff and his colleagues like Neudachin and Vondracek (fellow Russian musicians) were even mentioned to be active in forming music communities in major cities like Jakarta, Bandung, and Yogyakarta. From various interviews conducted in this study, both with former students and Varfolomeyeff's colleagues, a picture emerges of a disciplined educator, aesthetically sensitive, and possessing a strong vision to build formal music education in Indonesia (Utz, 2021).

In the context of music education, Varfolomeyeff was not only a cello instructor but also a skilled orchestra conductor and song arranger. Since the establishment of the Indonesian Music School Yogyakarta (SMIND) in 1952, he played a central role in curriculum development, student training, and organizing major concerts. The concerts he held with the SMIND orchestra, such as the Cornel Simanjuntak song concert at Alun-Alun Utara Yogyakarta in 1954, or the 'Ati Raja' concert in Makassar, are concrete evidence of how Varfolomeyeff used orchestration as a medium for forming a new national identity (Uswatun, 2019). His techniques in melody processing, instrument distribution, and harmony selection in Varfolomeyeff's arrangements demonstrate musical depth rarely found at that time. Several sources even state that until now, no Indonesian arranger has been able to match Varfolomeyeff's quality, especially in balancing

Western idioms and local nuances.

Unfortunately, many of Varfolomeyeff's works are not systematically documented. This indicates a lack of historical awareness and archiving in the field of music education in Indonesia (Uswatun, 2019). Some scores are only found through the personal collections of former students, such as R. Abdurrahman, or collective memories preserved through re-performances. The absence of documentation is one of the main backgrounds of this study. Considering the above conditions, this research becomes important to re-highlight Varfolomeyeff's role in the history of Indonesian national music. This study uses a historical-descriptive approach, with data collection through in-depth interviews, literature studies, and analysis of documents and scores. Through this approach, the author attempts to reconstruct Varfolomeyeff's life journey, his teaching methods, and his contributions in strengthening national idioms through Western music approaches.

Considering the historical background and the lack of academic studies on Varfolomeyeff, this paper is directed to deeply examine Varfolomeyeff's contributions in the world of music education and the development of orchestration of national songs in Indonesia. This research seeks to answer how Varfolomeyeff's involvement in music education activities, especially at the Indonesian Music School (SMIND) Yogyakarta, and how the arrangement techniques he used represent a blend between Western musical idioms and local nationalism spirit. On the other hand, this study also highlights how Varfolomeyeff's absence from the main discourse of Indonesian musicology affects the historical narrative of music that has so far inadequately accommodated the role of foreign musicians.

Through a historical-descriptive approach, this article aims not only to reconstruct Varfolomeyeff's contribution tracks but also to emphasize the urgency of archiving and recognition of diaspora figures in the development of national music (Setiawan, 2023). Thus, this study is expected to enrich the Indonesian musicology treasury, strengthen awareness of the importance of music archives, and elevate 'forgotten' figures who have indeed been part of the construction of Indonesia's musical identity.

II. Literature Review

1. The arrival of Western musicians before Indonesia's independence (1900-1937)

In the period before Indonesia's independence, groups of Western musicians—both large and small—frequently arrived in succession. Some of these arrivals were recorded, while others were not. In music history, the arrival of Western musicians has not been thoroughly explored, especially regarding who they were and why they came to Indonesia (Hijleh, 2018). As an illustration, these musicians brought instruments with them and played music in hotels or restaurants. According to Pasaribu (1986), their musical performances served as a source of livelihood. These musical migrations are categorized into five waves of arrival.

1) First wave (1900-1914)

The first wave consisted mostly of itinerant musicians. Occurring in the early 20th century, it was marked by the arrival of Italian street performers. In Batavia, they played flutes, violins, barrel organs, and sang on major streets. In places like Pasar Baru, Glodok, and Senen, some groups performed operas or circuses with live music, often at restaurants such as Oost Java. *Analisis Musik Indonesia* does not specify the names of the musicians who performed at those venues, as reviews were published by outlets like Java Bode and Dutch newspapers (Pasaribu, 1986). The lack of documentation may be due to the short duration of their visits and their itinerant nature. Since these Italian musicians traveled for livelihood, it was difficult to track them. Although notable names from this wave were not recorded, their presence was widely recognized and they often secured respectable performance spaces in restaurants and entertainment venues in Batavia.

2) Second wave (1915-1930)

In 1915, the second wave began with the arrival of Russians, which occurred in four groups. The first group comprised professors from conservatories fleeing the Bolsheviks. At that time, the renowned Ensemble Trio Moscow and musicians like Michailofski and A. Hmelnitsky established themselves as piano teachers in the Indonesian cities of Solo, Yogyakarta, and

Bandung. The second group came in 1920 with the touring 'Russian Opera' led by Feodorof. Then in 1930, the Balalaika Orchestra arrived, including members such as Doblowsky and Jablotskof (Pasaribu, 1986).

One final group of Russians, known as the 'White Russians' (anti-communists), came via Shanghai in 1925. Many remained active in the musical community of Java until the end of their lives, including Shevchuck, Neudachin (clarinetist), Varfolomeyeff, and Vondracek (cellist), along with other Russian refugees. Among this last group, Varfolomeyeff gained particular recognition for his substantial contributions to Indonesian national and regional music.

3) Third wave (1932-1933)

Before the third wave, in 1929, there was another Italian wave with the touring Opera Italia, which included Boskin, Melloni (clarinetist), and Pelegati (cellist). In 1930, a smaller wave from the Netherlands included N. Heim (violinist) (Pasaribu, 1986). The years 1932-1933 marked a significant wave with the arrival of Hungarian musicians, who were given prestigious performance opportunities at Hotel Des Indes (now Duta Merlin). These musicians included Setet (who later taught at SMIND Yogyakarta) and Vidor von Jechim, both accomplished violinists. Setet's arrival at SMIND Yogyakarta marked a phase where he taught violin. Although A. Pasaribu did not specify which students studied under Setet, it is believed that senior violinists at SMIND had once learned from him.

4) Fourth Wave (1935-1937)

Musicians from Czechoslovakia and Austria included Rosenberg (pianist) and Renner (violinist), both of whom became well-known during their time in Indonesia. A Dutch musician, A. Noteboom, performed at Hotel Homan in Bandung in 1937, while the Steiner brothers and the W. Schrammelorkest from Austria also performed (Pasaribu, 1986). The rise of Hitler and the anti-Jewish sentiment in Germany led many Jewish musicians to seek refuge abroad, including in Indonesia. Major cities became destinations, as these were the only places where their music could be accepted. The influx of foreign musicians to Indonesia indicates that they had access to geographic and cultural data about the country, and the diversity of international residents made Indonesia a strategic site for cross-cultural exchange.

5) Fifth Wave (1937-1947)

The largest and most influential wave was the fifth, often referred to as the Manila wave. While Pasaribu did not mention the exact years, it likely took place between 1937 and 1947. Filipino dance bands arrived during this period, including Garcia, Pablo, Badai, and Sambayon. Influenced by this wave, the Sambayon family became active in Indonesia and joined Radio Orchestras. After the fifth wave, more musicians came individually or in smaller groups, especially educators based in Bandung like W. van Swers, van de Wissel, and F. Wiemans, and composition instructors in Jakarta such as James Zwart. Some came completely independently, like the French violinist G. Reverger, who served as conductor and instructor at the Sunan Solo palace. Others included Italian pianist D. Lucia (based in Surabaya), Polish pianist Jarofski, violin maker Belle, and several others who settled near the royal courts of Langkat, Kutai, and Yogyakarta, all located in Indonesia.

Following the arrival of Western musicians in five waves—whether in large or small numbers—two types of ensemble configurations began to emerge: (1) Orchestra, which consisted of several string and wind instruments such as violin, viola, cello, double bass, piano, flute, clarinet, trumpet, and a single timpani percussion, usually performing classical pieces or repertoire; (2) American Dance Band, which consisted of instruments such as saxophone, clarinet, trumpet, trombone, off-beat rhythm string bass, and drums, with the piano played in a percussive manner.

Among the dance music introduced by the Manila musicians, Afro-American jazz proved to be particularly appealing to younger audiences, especially with the rise of gramophones, radio, film, and Hawaiian music by artists such as David Kaili and Andy Iona. Prominent figures in the dance music scene at that time included Ted Lewis and Louis Armstrong. As for what could be regarded as the sixth or final wave—even though Pasaribu did not categorize it as such—it was in reality the largest and most financially significant. In 1948, I. Baarspul brought 65 musicians to Tanjung Priok—the main port of Jakarta, Indonesia—to establish the Radio Philharmonic Orchestra, which would later become the foundation of the Orkes Radio Djakarta. The legacy of the Baarspul Orchestra includes prominent figures such as Hinze, J. Cleber, and Strake (Pasaribu, 1986).

From the table above, it is evident that the wave most relevant to the focus of this research is Second Wave, which saw the arrival of White Russian musicians around 1925. Varfolomeyeff was part of this group and remained in Indonesia until the end of his life. Unlike many other foreign musicians who were more involved in hotel entertainment or radio performances,

<Table 1> Summary of foreign musicians' migration to Indonesia (1900-1948)

Wave	Years	Country of origin	Characteristics and purpose	Key figures
I	1900-1914	Italy	Itinerant musicians, performed in hotels/restaurants in Batavia and other cities	Not specifically recorded
II	1915-1930	Russia (White Russian émigrés)	Political refugees (anti-communists), settled in Solo, Yogyakarta, Bandung; piano and cello teachers	Michailofski, Hmelnitsky, Varfolomeyeff
III	1932-1933	Hungary, Italy, Netherlands	Violinists, opera singers, clarinetists; some became instructors at SMIND	Setet, V. von Jechim
IV	1935-1937	Czechoslovakia, Austria, Netherlands	Jewish musicians fleeing Nazi Europe; performed in hotels and royal courts	Rosenberg, Renner, A. Noteboom
V	1937-1947	Philippines	Dance bands, jazz; many joined Indonesian radio orchestras	Sambayon family, Garcia, Pablo
VI	1948	Netherlands (post-war)	Philharmonic Radio Orchestra project; precursor to Jakarta Radio Orchestra	J. Cleber, Hinze, I. Baarspul

Varfolomeyeff positioned himself firmly within the fields of music education and national orchestration, making him a key figure in the development of modern Indonesian music history.

2. Western music in the period of Indonesia's independence

Although Indonesian life was greatly influenced by colonial powers, the aspiration to establish the Republic of Indonesia remained strong. This is evident in the unifying efforts through songs created during the independence struggle—songs that brought together people from diverse ethnicities, languages, and religions across the archipelago from Sabang to Merauke. Many of these songs were influenced by Western, especially European music, most notably through the use of diatonic scales. The works of famous composers such as Beethoven, Mozart, and Haydn became familiar to Indonesian songwriters. This was understandable, as many of the foreign musicians who came to Indonesia performed the works of these composers, contributing to the rapid dissemination of Western music across the archipelago. Regarding these three major composers, music history often associates them with the city of Vienna, which became the world

center of classical music. As noted by S. Weismann and reviewed by Martopo, in the 18th century Mozart, Haydn, and Beethoven pioneered what came to be known as the Vienna Classical Style, which would later become the hallmark of global classical music (Martopo, 2001).

Due to the strong Western influence, Indonesia had in fact been exposed to foreign musicians since the 1600s. However, it has been a long and complex journey to fully trace the origins of Western music in the Indonesian context. In a comparative historical study on the introduction of Western music to the East—specifically Indonesia and Japan—Bramantyo revealed that both nations were first exposed to Western music around the same time, during the first half of the 16th century. However, their trajectories diverged: Japan successfully established a formal music education system, whereas Indonesia did not show comparable development (Bramantyo, 2004).

The influx of foreign musicians, both in large and small groups, brought with them the European musical tradition in continuous waves, leading to the rapid growth of Western music in Indonesia. To trace this development, historians often begin from the 19th century, focusing on the arrival of Western musicians during that era (Wallach & Clinton, 2019). According to Pasaribu, there were at least five or six major groups of musicians who came from countries such as Italy, Russia, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, the Philippines, and the Netherlands, between 1900 and the outbreak of World War II in 1939 (Pasaribu, 1986).

3. Western music in Indonesia

A song created by an Indonesian composer and later arranged by someone like Varfolomeyeff cannot be separated from the cultural environment in which it emerged. The inspiration behind such creative works often reflects the social context and lived experiences of the composer. Songwriters and arrangers have the freedom to draw from various sources, often responding to real events or conditions around them. In the case of national songs, many reflect the personal experiences and emotional landscape of their creators. As the saying goes: “An artist’s creation cannot be separated from the artist’s own life story, environment, background, and aspirations” (Kamajaya, 1979). Since Varfolomeyeff lived during the colonial period, his orchestral arrangements were influenced by the socio-political environment and the range of choices available during his creative process. These choices often emerge from the artist’s inner self, including personal background, professional training, daily life, individual interests, and accumulated artistic influences (Bramantyo, 2004; Kamien, 1988).

Composers and arrangers, as part of their society, learn from their environment, are shaped

by its values, and respond to its cultural conditions. Local cultural influences—including public attitudes toward art, as well as political and social events—play a significant role in the creation of music (Nikolsky et al., 2020). Any musical work produced is undoubtedly influenced by the cultural setting, whether formally or informally. Through patriotic songs—honoring the homeland, heroes, or iconic places tied to the fight for independence—Indonesian national composers such as W. R. Soepratman, Maladi, Kusbini, N. Simanungkalit, L. Manik, Gesang, and Mutahar, among others, contributed to a growing repertoire of nationalist music. These songs attracted the attention of Varfolomeyeff, a Russian émigré musician who eventually settled in Yogyakarta, Indonesia and took the initiative to arrange these compositions for orchestra and choir formats.

4. The role of western music in patriotic and national songs

In the context of Indonesian history, patriotic and national songs have played a crucial role in reflecting the country's social and political landscape, particularly in promoting national identity and unity (Notosudirdjo, 2003, 2011). These songs often serve as reminders of the hardships and sacrifices endured by the Indonesian people in their struggle for independence. Western music had a significant influence on these compositions, especially through the use of diatonic scales. Nonetheless, what truly matters in these songs is the meaning and content of the lyrics—they had to be easily understood, accessible to sing, simple in form, and capable of being performed by people from all walks of life. It is not surprising, then, that many educational figures also contributed to songwriting, with most of the compositions reflecting various Western musical idioms. However, while many Indonesian composers incorporated Western idioms, this does not imply that their ideals were necessarily Western in nature (Faizah & Mohammed, 2021; Santaella, 2021; Sutton, 2010). This tension became a point of contention among some Indonesian cultural figures.

Addressing this issue, D. Mack highlighted a group of Indonesian composers who successfully developed a form of Western-influenced music. The first generation, which emerged during the independence era, included L. Manik and A. Pasaribu. After examining the biographies of composers who contributed to what is often called 'serious' or 'Western art music'—including patriotic and national songs—it becomes clear that the topic stirred significant debate within Indonesia's education system. This debate was notably joined by K. H. Dewantara, who at the time served as the Minister of Education under the first Indonesian cabinet.

His ideas often clashed with songwriters, particularly regarding his resistance to Western

cultural dominance. In one of his speeches, Dewantara outlined five key principles of his educational philosophy: (1) The ideals of national education must be based on local customs and traditions; (2) Western education functioned mainly as a colonial tool to prepare workers for Dutch companies; (3) The Western system contributed little to building national solidarity; (4) National education should prioritize boarding schools and pesantren (Islamic dormitories); and (5) An ideal national education must emphasize the importance of freedom for students (Sachari, 2002).

Despite strong resistance to Western education, the presence and influence of Western music on Indonesian composers was inevitable. Historically, even renowned Western composers borrowed from foreign musical idioms. Some prominent examples of nationalist influence in music include: *Carmen* (Spain) by G. Bizet (France); *The New World Symphony* (America) by A. Dvořák (Bohemia); *Madame Butterfly* (Japan) by G. Puccini (Italy); *Scheherazade* (Orientalist fantasy) by N. Rimsky-Korsakov (Russia) (Miller, 2017).

These cross-cultural influences among Western composers encouraged Indonesian musicians to explore hybrid musical approaches. Indonesian composers thus also developed distinct musical styles shaped by their contexts and aspirations. This was not merely imitation—it reflected a natural process of cultural exchange. In addition to Liberty Manik and Amir Pasaribu, figures like C. Simanjuntak, Kusbini, I. Marzuki, Maladi, and T. Kamal also composed music with Western influences. As Western idioms became increasingly prevalent in patriotic compositions, debate arose regarding their use in national symbols—particularly the anthem *Indonesia Raya*.

Amir Pasaribu once remarked that while Indonesians should take pride in *Indonesia Raya* as the national anthem, its limitations should also be acknowledged (Mack, 1995). He referred specifically to the fact that the anthem was composed using Western musical grammar. After extensively working with Western idioms, Pasaribu shifted his focus in 1952 to arranging folk and regional songs for the piano. His legacy was continued by a new generation of composers such as T. Kamal, J. Djamin, J. Suprana, and M. N. Abdullah (Mack, 1995). These composers maintained Western idioms while incorporating deeper connections to Indonesian cultural identity. Their contributions will be elaborated in the following section.

5. The role of Russia and diaspora musicians in the history of Indonesian music

Music has long served as a universal medium capable of bridging diverse cultures and

traditions. In Indonesia, the development of music during the struggle for independence and the post-independence era cannot be separated from the contributions of both local and foreign musicians, particularly in composing and arranging national songs. One of the most prominent figures in Indonesian music history is Varfolomeyeff, a White Russian émigré who settled in Indonesia in the early 20th century. As a graduate of the Moscow Conservatory, Varfolomeyeff brought Western classical techniques into the composition and orchestration of Indonesian patriotic and national songs, positioning him as a pioneer in adapting Western classical music within the Indonesian context.

In reviewing Varfolomeyeff's work, it is impossible to ignore the influence of Western culture. Indeed, the history of music in Indonesia has been deeply shaped by Western music—from keroncong to classical and jazz—all of which have their roots in the West. According to Ganap (1993) the history of Western music dates back to the Medieval period (5th century), a time when Roman civilization was under threat following the fall of the Roman Empire. Music history reveals that each era was born out of specific socio-political contexts: the Renaissance emerged from religious thinking, later giving rise to the secular rebellion expressed in the Baroque period. The Classical period reflected a longing for nature as seen in pastoral art, while the Romantic period conveyed themes of humanism and social realities. These thematic shifts also influenced Indonesian songwriters during the independence era, many of whom were inspired by Western musicians who had arrived in the archipelago.

Over time, the musical works produced during this formative period have remained relevant. However, some segments of Indonesian society still perceive music as a purely emotional form of entertainment, akin to reading the newspaper. This limited understanding often reduces music to sentimentality and hinders appreciation of its structural dimensions—such as harmony, melody, and rhythm—as an integrated whole. As Jamalus (1988) once expressed: “Music is a work of sound art in the form of a song that expresses the composer’s thoughts and feelings through rhythm, melody, harmony, and expression, as a unified whole.” Therefore, musical understanding must be holistic. If even one element is misaligned, the work can no longer be regarded as a structurally complete musical composition.

A lack of comprehensive understanding of musical structure can negatively impact the evolution of music within society (Astuti et al., 2024). For example, current musical expressions often reflect varying attitudes and behaviors articulated through musical tones. While certain communities may share similar goals in their musical expression, what differentiates them lies in the content of their works (Goldsworthy, 2005). Some groups, while sensitive to social realities,

remain attentive to musical form and structure, thus preserving quality and exploring alternative creative possibilities. Other groups, by contrast, pay little attention to musical structure or its significance. They focus instead on lyrics—describing everyday social experiences and sometimes dramatizing them to enhance emotional appeal. This results in an audience more captivated by the narrative content than by the artistic merit of the music itself.

III. Method

This study employed a qualitative approach with a historical-descriptive design aimed at reconstructing the life journey, musical contributions, and pedagogical practices of Varfolomeyeff in the context of music education and the development of national music in Indonesia. This approach was deemed appropriate, as the subject of the research is a historical figure who has passed away, while the informants interviewed are living witnesses with firsthand or professional experiences related to Varfolomeyeff. Therefore, a combination of archival data, in-depth interviews, and literature review was utilized to construct a comprehensive and accountable historical narrative.

Data collection was conducted through three main methods: literature study, in-depth interviews, and document analysis. The literature study encompassed sources on the history of Indonesian music, postcolonial music education, and documentation regarding foreign diaspora musicians. The in-depth interviews formed the core of this research. All interviews were conducted in 2006 with individuals who had direct professional or personal connections to Varfolomeyeff. These face-to-face interviews were recorded and transcribed.

A total of eight informants were interviewed: J. Purwanto (age 75, pianist), January 16, 2006, Kadipaten Kulon, Yogyakarta; A. L. Hwa (age 76, pianist), January 17, 2006, Mrican, Yogyakarta; Y. H. Purwadi (age 57, conductor), January 20, 2006, Jakarta; Luna L. Purwanto (age 45, violinist), February 2, 2006, Yogyakarta; Moordiana (age 65, conductor), February 6, 2006, PPPG Kesenian, Yogyakarta; Teddy Suthady (age 62, vocalist), April 6, 2006, ISI Yogyakarta; S. Suwandi (age 68, cellist), May 6, 2006, Jakarta; L. Aman (age 58, cellist), April 3, 2006, SMM Yogyakarta.

Additional data were obtained from musical scores, concert notes, and documentation preserved by families, educational institutions, and music archivists in Yogyakarta and Jakarta. The collected data were analyzed using a thematic and historical-interpretative approach. Each interview transcript was coded and categorized into key themes, including orchestration techniques, Varfolomeyeff's

role in music education, and the interplay between Western musical style and nationalist sentiment in his works. Analysis was conducted contextually by comparing Varfolomeyeff's contributions with those of his contemporaries, such as J. Cleber.

To ensure data validity, the study applied triangulation techniques of both source and time, cross-checking interview findings with written documents, concert archives, and relevant literature. Although the interviews were conducted nearly two decades ago, the availability of complete documentation and the enduring relevance of the information support its continued academic use in this study. Through this methodology, the research not only contributes to strengthening the historiography of Indonesian music but also raises awareness about the critical role of archives and collective memory in the context of national music education.

IV. Results

1. Varfolomeyeff's biography

Varfolomeyeff was born on May 16, 1900. During his tenure as a teacher at SMIND and while residing at the Garuda Hotel in Yogyakarta, little was known about his family background. Discussions about his origins were something Varfolomeyeff was reluctant to engage in. According to several informant—such as Purwanto, S. Suwandi, Moordiana, and A. L. Hwa—his



[Figure 1] Potrait of Varfolomeyeff
(SKMN 2 Kasihan, n.d.)

main aspiration at the time was to transfer the musical knowledge he had mastered to his students, so that graduates of the Indonesian Music School (SMIND) would be able to compete internationally and perform music at a high level, comparable to that of graduates from foreign conservatories. He often repeated this vision, hoping that his students would not only understand but also internalize the ideals he tried to convey.

Outside of teaching, Varfolomeyeff enjoyed riding a becak (pedicab) around town to relieve stress. He frequently visited the homes of colleagues and students such as Suthasoma, D. Hasan, Sumaryo, I. Sutopo, and other close associates. Aside from conducting the school orchestra, he also taught cello performance, harmony, and arrangement classes at SMIND.



[Figure 2] Cellist Varfolomeyeff, clarinetist Baumgartner
(Abdurrahman, n.d.)

As previously mentioned, Varfolomeyeff was initially introduced to the Indonesian music scene through his work at the radio station, where he met H. Mutahar, who later introduced him to Sampurna, the then-Director of Arts in Jakarta. Their discussion about the development of music in Indonesia eventually led to Varfolomeyeff being assigned to collaborate with musicians in Yogyakarta. This coincided with the founding of SMIND in 1952. While the exact reason why Yogyakarta was chosen remains uncertain, it is strongly believed that the city offered a rich pool of human resources, particularly musicians from the Kraton (palace) of Yogyakarta, many of whom had ceased performing since the revolutionary period. A report by the AMI Research Team (1982) revealed that the Yogyakarta palace had previously formed an ensemble called Kraton Orkest Djogja, which had once been trained by Walter Spies before he relocated to Bali.

Additionally, Ganap (1993) noted that the founding of HIK Kanisius in Muntilan, led by R. A. J. Soejasmin, contributed to the education of Indonesian freedom-fighter composers like C. Simanjuntak, L. Manik, and B. Sitompul.

Following the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, which established a communist regime in Russia, all sectors—including the arts—became state-controlled. Many musicians who opposed communism fled the country. As described by Pasaribu (1986), several former professors of Russian conservatories sought asylum from Bolshevik persecution. Members of the Moscow Trio Ensemble, including Michailofski and A. Hmelnitsky, eventually settled in Bandung, Yogyakarta, and Solo as piano instructors. More groups followed. In 1920, an Opera Russia troupe led by Feodorof arrived. Later, the Balalaika Orchestra toured with members like Doblowsky and Jablotskof. The final group of Russian musicians arrived via Shanghai in 1925, known as the White Russians (anti-communist exiles), which included Neudachin, Varfolomeyeff, and Vondracek. Before reaching Indonesia, they had made stops in Shanghai, Hawaii, and Manila, eventually settling in cities like Jakarta, Bandung, Solo, and Yogyakarta (Pasaribu, 1986).

Unable to return to their homeland due to political persecution, these Russian émigrés chose to remain in Indonesia. The White Russians were part of the aristocratic faction of Russian society, historically distinguished as the ‘Great Russians’, separate from the ‘Little Russians’ (Ukrainians) and ‘White Russians’ (Belarusians) (Cayne, 1976). After successfully teaching at SMIND until around 1976, Varfolomeyeff’s health began to decline. He often sought treatment at Dr. Yap’s Clinic and Panti Rapih Hospital. Eventually, he moved out of the Garuda Hotel and took residence at A. Gani’s home. Despite opportunities to leave, Varfolomeyeff refused to return to Russia. Even when his Dutch wife invited him to move to her homeland, he declined. Later, when four of his fellow Russian émigrés decided to migrate to Australia, Varfolomeyeff again refused, choosing instead to remain in Indonesia. In the end, he lived out the rest of his life in Yogyakarta, passing away on April 6, 1970 (interview with J. Purwanto, May 9, 2006).

Since the early 19th century, concert life in Russia flourished in cities like St. Petersburg and Moscow. Moscow, where Varfolomeyeff received his music education, equipped him with the training necessary to teach in Indonesia. Unfortunately, most of Varfolomeyeff’s orchestral arrangements—despite their number and significance—were never formally archived, including his arrangement of *Indonesia Raya*. According to interviews with J. Purwanto, supported by L. Purwanto’s statement (February 2, 2006), Varfolomeyeff had once been commissioned by H. Mutahar to arrange *Indonesia Raya*. However, the version officially recognized by the Indonesian government under current law is the orchestration by J. Cleber.

1) The context of Varfolomeyeff's arrival in Indonesia

During the years of World War I (1914-1919), Varfolomeyeff's home country of Russia was actively involved. While other nations were embroiled in the global conflict, Russia experienced a domestic revolution aimed at toppling the Tsarist regime. As stated by R.M. Soedarsono, a significant event took place in November 1917 when Nikolai Lenin, leader of the Socialist Party, successfully introduced Marxist ideology to Russia. Lenin, who believed that capitalism only brought human suffering, was determined to replace it in Russia (Soedarsono, 2001). The new government, a communist regime known as the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), eventually consolidated power and increasingly sought to regulate artistic and cultural developments, including performing arts.

Varfolomeyeff, known for arranging Indonesian patriotic songs during the independence era and beyond, ultimately chose to settle in Indonesia and became one of the instructors at SMIND. He arrived in Indonesia in 1925, as part of the final wave of Russian émigrés fleeing political persecution. Among the three waves of Russian arrivals, Varfolomeyeff belonged to the White Russian (anti-communist) group. Several Russian musicians were active in Java, including Shevchuk, Neudachin (clarinetist), Vondracek (cellist), and others. Of these figures, Varfolomeyeff became widely recognized for his arrangements of Indonesian songs (Pasaribu, 1986). A graduate of a Moscow conservatory, Varfolomeyeff later forged strong friendships with prominent musicians in Yogyakarta, such as Suthasoma, Sumaryo, and D. Hasan, eventually contributing to the founding of SMIND in 1952. In 1964, Varfolomeyeff also taught at various institutions, including AMI, ASTI, ASRI, and ASDRAFI. His orchestral arrangements are regarded as impressive and impactful within Indonesian music history, to the extent that his works have been compared with those of major composers such as Mozart, Beethoven, and Tchaikovsky (interview with J. Purwanto, January 16, 2006).

2) The significance of Varfolomeyeff in Indonesian music education

Throughout the independence era, national songs—including those with themes of struggle, patriotism, praise, and love for the homeland—have been widely sung across Indonesia, via RRI, TVRI, schools, and community choirs. These songs gained popularity for their simple lyrics, easy memorability, and official recognition as national anthems by the Indonesian government. Broadcast stations like RRI and TVRI regularly featured these songs at the close of their daily

programming. From elementary students to university-level learners, generations of Indonesians have become familiar with and memorized the lyrics to songs such as *Indonesia Raya*, *Bagimu Negeri*, *Nyiur Hijau*, and *Dari Sabang sampai Merauke*, among others.

These songs, which articulate messages of struggle, unity, and national aspiration, became even more renowned after being orchestrated by Varfolomeyeff, a foreign musician who introduced them in symphonic form. As a member of the White Russian diaspora, Varfolomeyeff arrived in Jakarta, where he worked in radio broadcasting and met key cultural figures such as Maladi, A. Pasaribu, and H. Mutahar. He was then introduced to Sampurna, Director of Arts in Jakarta, who, upon recognizing Varfolomeyeff's musical talents, recommended him for a teaching position at a music school soon to be established in Yogyakarta. Varfolomeyeff settled in Yogyakarta around 1952. From that point forward, he would often recount how he fled Russia, where refusal to conform to communist ideology could have resulted in his execution. According to sources Purwanto and A. Gani, Varfolomeyeff found great contentment living in Yogyakarta and teaching at the Indonesian Music School (SMIND).

3) Reward and impact

Songs such as *Maju Tak Gentar*, *Hari Merdeka*, and *Tanah Tumpah Darahku*—along with many others that celebrate Indonesia's natural beauty and patriotism—are testaments to Varfolomeyeff's deep emotional connection with his adopted homeland. These compositions suggest that Varfolomeyeff sought to belong to and be accepted by a new country, having fled Russia as an exile. According to A. Gani, J. Purwanto, a close friend, Varfolomeyeff preferred to remain in Indonesia rather than emigrate to Australia, despite multiple invitations from fellow émigrés. Each of Varfolomeyeff's arrangements carried a distinct personal identity, one that could not be easily imitated—even by his own students. As the first arranger of *Indonesia Raya* in orchestral format, Varfolomeyeff was not only a skilled conductor but also an accomplished cellist who passed on unique technical methods to his students. In recognition of his lifelong dedication to advancing musical arts in Indonesia, particularly in Yogyakarta, Varfolomeyeff was awarded the “Anugrah Seni” (Art Award) by the Yogyakarta Provincial Government in 1993 (interview with J. Purwanto, January 16, 2006).

2. Varfolomeyeff's contributions to music

According to Varfolomeyeff, anyone who aspires to become a musician must be willing to work hard to achieve that goal, as music, he believed, would provide them with the foundation for a sustainable future. Although he consistently emphasized discipline in practice and maintained close relationships with his students, Varfolomeyeff never spoke about his personal life in Indonesia, let alone his origins or family background. According to J. Purwanto (interview, February 6, 2006), Varfolomeyeff appeared to have deliberately buried all traces of his past—from his childhood to his exile in Indonesia. To this day, it remains difficult to trace the full identity of Varfolomeyeff. Nevertheless, his brilliance endures through his numerous orchestral and choral arrangements. To understand who Varfolomeyeff was, and why he remained in Yogyakarta until his death on April 6, 1970 (where he was buried at Sasana Laya), this study compiles a range of information from various sources covering his origin, activities, and final years.

After being appointed to SMIND, Varfolomeyeff served as a cello instructor, orchestra conductor, and arranger for orchestra and choir. At SMIND, he developed close friendships with fellow faculty members such as Sumaryo, Suthasoma, and D. Hasan. Beyond SMIND, Varfolomeyeff also taught at AMI, ASTI, ASRI, and ASDRAFI beginning in 1964. However, he reportedly found teaching at these institutions less fulfilling, as the students were perceived to be less motivated or responsive to his expectations. Consequently, Varfolomeyeff chose to focus his efforts primarily on SMIND and AMI, where he felt better able to share his thoughts and feelings.

According to several sources, Varfolomeyeff became disheartened by the lack of attentiveness among students outside of SMIND and AMI. This led to some friction with the management at those academies. Eventually, after discussions with faculty leadership, Varfolomeyeff understood that music was considered a supplementary subject at institutions like ASTI, ASRI, and ASDRAFI—not a core discipline. The misunderstanding was resolved, and Varfolomeyeff continued teaching at those academies. In the realm of orchestra instruction, Varfolomeyeff was known for being strict and highly disciplined. As recounted by T. Sutadhy, if Varfolomeyeff became silent, withdrawn, or refused to speak during rehearsals, it was a clear sign of disapproval. Students who recognized this behavior would independently gather in small groups to rehearse, determined to improve their performance. Varfolomeyeff spent much of his daily routine not only teaching but also arranging music, often handwriting his arrangements himself (interview, April 6, 2006).

Since the establishment of SMIND in 1952, the school has produced numerous skilled

musicians, including S. Suwandi, I. Sardi, I. Sutopo, Sudarmaji, Fauzan, R. Abdurrahman, Suhastjarja, F.X. Sutopo, Rusman, A. Gani, and others. Students could specialize in one of 14 instruments, including vocal, piano, clarinet, trumpet, violin, and cello, and would receive private instruction from experts in their chosen field. As a foreign artist residing in Indonesia, Varfolomeyeff's musical contributions had a significant impact on the development of Western music in Indonesia, which at the time remained unfamiliar to most of the population. Following the founding of SMIND, Western music gradually began to flourish. Though some considered it difficult to appreciate, a 1986 issue of *Buletin Laras* remarked that enjoying Western music was not inherently difficult—"it only requires an open heart to receive it. Once that openness exists, listening to Western music becomes as easy as enjoying pop, jazz, rock, and other genres" (*Buletin Laras*, 1986; *Perjalanan Musik di Indonesia*, 1983).

Varfolomeyeff's arrangements of Indonesian songs can be viewed as a musical record of Indonesia's sociopolitical journey toward independence. To fully appreciate a musical work, one must consider not only the performance itself but also the creator's background, education, experiences, and creative environment. Varfolomeyeff composed many of his arrangements at a time when Indonesia was experiencing the euphoria of independence. As such, his musical expressions are imbued with a strong sense of patriotism and reverence for the homeland. This stands in stark contrast to Varfolomeyeff's own status as a stateless person, a Russian national who fled persecution by the Bolsheviks. As noted by A. L. Hwa (interview, January 17, 2006), Varfolomeyeff's work conveys deep national sentiment despite his lack of formal citizenship—an irony that only deepens the emotional resonance of his compositions.

1) As an educator

As a skilled conductor, Varfolomeyeff dedicated himself to teaching orchestral classes both day and night. This relentless commitment amazed his students—there seemed to be no day without musical activities, whether it was teaching orchestras, individual practice, or arranging songs. He poured all of his time and energy into educating and training his students. According to multiple interviewees cited previously, nearly all of Varfolomeyeff's students under his guidance became skilled and dependable musicians.

When Varfolomeyeff was appointed to teach at the Yogyakarta School of Music, he was tasked with helping to develop the institution. Any student who chose the cello as their specialization would receive direct instruction from Varfolomeyeff. The following insights on his teaching



[Figure 3] Varfolomeyeff at SMIND Yogyakarta
(Abdurrahman, n.d.)



[Figure 4] Varfolomeyeff at PPBI Yogyakarta
(Abdurrahman, n.d.)

methods were obtained from S. Suwandi, one of his former students. Other students directly taught by Varfolomeyeff—I. Sutopo, Rusman, Sudarto, and Sudomo—are no longer contactable due to their passing.

In training his students, Varfolomeyeff was uncompromising. He demanded strict discipline and hard work in practice, resulting in remarkable performance skills. Regarding discipline, Varfolomeyeff would not hesitate to scold students who were unprepared for cello practice—even telling them to go home. According to Suwanto, this strictness served as a driving force for students to practice harder. Varfolomeyeff's motto was simple: "If you want to become a great musician, the only requirement is to practice 4 to 8 hours a day." From posture to how the instrument was held, and the movements involved in bowing the strings—Varfolomeyeff paid attention to every detail. This was especially evident when he demonstrated cello techniques to students; his teaching was characterized by meticulous care, particularly in ensuring correct bowing technique. Based on the outcomes of his students' training, Varfolomeyeff was acknowledged to possess a high level of technical mastery in cello performance (interview with S. Suwandi, May 6, 2006).

As a cello teacher both within and outside of SMIND Yogyakarta, Varfolomeyeff successfully trained a generation of professional cellists, many of whom passed on what they learned to the next generation. Consequently, Varfolomeyeff's teaching played a significant and dominant role in the development of Western classical music education in Indonesia, particularly in the field of cello performance.



[Figure 5] Varfolomeyeff teaching a student to play the cello
(SKMN 2 Kasihan, n.d.)

2) As an arranger

Varfolomeyeff's ability to teach orchestra was beyond question. As the conductor of the SMIND orchestra, he was highly respected by his students. A graduate of the Moscow Conservatory, Varfolomeyeff was exceptionally skilled in leading an orchestra. The concerts he led received much praise from audiences and the media. One notable example was a concert held in Yogyakarta in 1954 at the northern town square (alun-alun utara). This concert, arranged in memory of C. Simanjuntak and featuring Varfolomeyeff's orchestral arrangements of his songs, was a grand event attended by local officials. The songs performed included *Maju Tak Gentar*, *Tanah Tumpah Darahku*, *Hari Merdeka*, and other patriotic songs composed by Simanjuntak (interview with Moordiana, 6 February 2006).

Another concert took place in South Sulawesi, specifically in Makassar, from June 28 to July 1, 1954. Varfolomeyeff, as conductor, aimed to raise awareness among the Makassarese people about preserving their traditional music for future generations (as reported by Suthasoma, 1993). One of the pieces performed was *Ati Raja*, arranged by Varfolomeyeff, whose version remains in use today. On their return to Yogyakarta, the SMIND orchestra also performed in Surabaya (Uswatun, 2019). The local press covered the concert extensively, and reports from 1954 are included in the appendix. At the time, the head of SMIND was Sumaryo LE.

According to several SMIND teachers and students, Varfolomeyeff demonstrated exceptional creativity in arranging music, especially in instrument placement. Suhastjarja, former Dean of the Faculty of Performing Arts at the Indonesian Institute of the Arts Yogyakarta, stated in a

televised interview with TVRI (aired on June 29, 2006) that Varfolomeyeff was a true professional both as a teacher and an arranger. This was evident during a performance at Istora Senayan, where his arrangement received enthusiastic acclaim, including from state officials. In the same interview, Suhastjarja praised Varfolomeyeff's orchestration of *Bengawan Solo* by Gesang.

Moordiana, a former principal of SMM and an active arranger herself, stated that to this day, no arranger in Indonesia has matched Varfolomeyeff's skill. His division of instruments and melodic arrangements were extraordinary. His arrangements combined simplicity with rich variation in melody, harmony, and *cantus firmus*. His choral and orchestral works were majestic, due to their harmonic synergy. These assessments confirm Varfolomeyeff's expertise in orchestral concert preparation. Given his education at the Moscow Conservatory—a center of concert life in the 19th century—his excellence was no surprise. Seaman (1968) wrote:

From the beginning of the nineteenth century, concert life began to develop more widely, though it was still centred on St Petersburg and Moscow. Concerts were usually given at Lent, a tradition that persisted for many decades.

Being born in Russia, Western musical traditions were deeply embedded in Varfolomeyeff's musical identity. What set his arrangements apart was the fact that although he used Western techniques to orchestrate Indonesian national and regional songs, the Indonesian spirit and atmosphere still pervaded each piece. This quality became his unique strength. According to Moordiana, no Indonesian arranger has yet equaled Varfolomeyeff's accomplishments. When he led the SMIND orchestra in 1956 at the southern town square (alun-alun selatan) performing Simanjuntak's works, the concert was considered one of the most powerful of its time (interview with Moordiana, 2 February 2006).

Varfolomeyeff's compositional techniques included inventive melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic variations. His arrangements displayed his optimism about Indonesia's musical potential and his intent to elevate traditional songs into the realm of formal musical composition. This was demonstrated during the 1954 concert in Makassar, where he conducted the SMIND orchestra and arranged the traditional Makassarese song *Ati Raja*. Through community leaders, Varfolomeyeff reportedly said: "I aim to awaken public awareness in South Sulawesi to preserve their traditional musical wealth and pass it down to the next generation, so it may also be known by other ethnic groups." (interview with J. Purwanto, 16 January 2006). Thanks to his skills in harmony and orchestration, Varfolomeyeff's works have become models of excellence and are recognized



[Figure 6] Varfolomeyeff with his students
(Abdurrahman, n.d.)

by Indonesian musicians as on par with those of the great classical composers.

Varfolomeyeff's contribution to the history of Indonesian music must be understood within the broader socio-political and cultural contexts that surrounded his life and work. As an émigré musician from White Russia who chose to settle in Indonesia, Varfolomeyeff brought with him not only the rich traditions of European music but also demonstrated a remarkable ability to adapt to the local musical landscape. Unlike most foreign musicians who were more involved in entertainment or radio work, Varfolomeyeff played a more substantial role through his dedication to teaching and arranging national music.

His arrangements reflect a harmonious synthesis between Western musical structures—such as functional harmony, orchestral instrumentation, and balanced textural layering—and Indonesian musical idioms, which are often simple yet deeply expressive. When compared to other arrangers like J. Cleber—who also arranged *Indonesia Raya*—Varfolomeyeff's strength lies in the depth of his interpretative approach, capturing both the lyrical content and the patriotic spirit. His arrangements are not merely technical in nature, but emotional as well, rendering nationalistic songs both grand and grounded.

Varfolomeyeff's uniqueness extended far beyond technique. As a teacher at SMIND Yogyakarta and other arts academies, he was known for his discipline, inspirational leadership, and long-term vision for music education in Indonesia. His pedagogical style emphasized rigorous technical training, musical integrity, and social responsibility—qualities that made him a role model within Indonesia's formal music education system. The impact he had on his students continues to this day, sustained through direct transmission and the enduring use of his arrangements in orchestral performances. Thus, Varfolomeyeff's legacy should not be viewed merely as that of

a foreign figure filling a historical gap. Rather, he stands as a source of innovation in shaping the aesthetic of Indonesian national music—one that embraces cultural pluralism and musical openness.

V. Discussion & Conclusion

The national songs arranged by Varfolomeyeff demonstrate that, historically, Indonesian music has been elevated by a Western musician who recognized the country's vast musical potential and saw the importance of translating it into conventional orchestral forms. This is evidenced by the orchestral arrangements of various Indonesian songs. Once arranged and performed in orchestral and choral formats, these songs gained greater musical depth and expressive significance. For instance, songs such as *Indonesia Raya* and *Nyiur Hijau* became more widely known through radio and television after being arranged by Varfolomeyeff. In this context, arranging refers to the act of transforming a piece to make it more refined and musically enriched than its original version.

As an arranger, Varfolomeyeff was a true master of his field. A graduate of the Moscow Conservatory, he is still widely regarded as unparalleled in Indonesia. In addition to his work as an arranger, he was also a skilled orchestra conductor and a dedicated cello instructor. Since the establishment of the Indonesian School of Music (Sekolah Musik Indonesia/SMIND) in 1952, Varfolomeyeff had committed himself to all three roles. His profound attachment to the music school in Yogyakarta led him to refuse any opportunity to return to his homeland. In his arrangements, Varfolomeyeff emphasized strength and beauty through unique simplicity. His harmonizations were modest yet achieved perfect musical impact. One of his most notable qualities was how his instrumental melodies often resembled the human voice, as if the instruments themselves were singing. He often told his students that music should not hurt the ears—it should delight the listener. To this day, no arranger has been able to fully match his skill and artistry, and his works remain on par with world-renowned composers such as Tchaikovsky, Mozart, and others.

This study concludes that Varfolomeyeff was not merely an arranger or an ordinary music teacher, but a transformative figure in the history of Indonesian national music. His arrangements of patriotic and national songs such as *Indonesia Raya*, *Maju Tak Gentar*, and *Ati Raja* not only enhanced their musical beauty but also deepened their nationalistic spirit through orchestration that was both universally resonant and rooted in local tradition. The novelty of this study lies

in its attempt to recognize Varfolomeyeff as a pivotal figure who has long been overlooked in Indonesian musicological discourse. By tracing his historical path, analyzing his works, and assessing his influence in music education, this paper contributes to a more inclusive and multicultural narrative of Indonesian music history. The implications of these findings highlight the urgency of preserving musical archives and documenting the works of diasporic musicians to foster a more complete understanding of musical heritage. Furthermore, Varfolomeyeff's pedagogical approach can serve as a source of inspiration for contemporary music education—particularly in terms of technical discipline, cross-cultural appreciation, and the humanistic values conveyed through music.

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