

Some tunes from the Ukrainian and Lemko song book

<http://icking-music-archive.org/ByComposer/Lemko.html>

Translations and notes by Orest T Lechnowsky

Transpositions from Lira keys to G/C Hurdy Gurdy by Graham Whyte

Banduryste orle syzyj



Slow, sad and Lyrical

Kied mi przyszla karta



Kied mi przyszla karta is maybe a dance number - I'm not familiar with it, and its quite idiomatic - though it seems also to be a love song. It refers to musicians playing a czardas while 3 girls cry....one because of a ring.

Oj chmelu



Slow, sad and Lyrical

Oj ty niczenko



Slow, sad and Lyrical

Pasla Hancya pawy



Pasla Hancia pawy is somewhat of a silly flirting song about "Hanna" supposedly tending a flock of peacocks (which are not native to Ukraine - thus silliness) whilst rebuffing the advances of Hussars - and using the (non-existent) flock of peacocks as her excuse. I'd play it in an upbeat way. Its all about her saying no but using transparently fictitious excuses to let them know that their advances are not unwelcome. Playing hard-to-get in other words.

Pid oblaczkom



Pid oblaczkom (Under the Leaves) is another (unfamiliar to me) sad love song....I've loved him not one year, not two, but oh so long. Is this love from God or is it from the Devil. Should I drink the potion of deadly herbs? I cannot live without him. See how the wind blows here under the leaves of the green Sycamore tree....Maybe I should entrust myself to his roots (die and be buried?)...My Darling, what ever will become of us.....

Rewe ta stohne



Reve ta Stohne is indeed extremely sad. It is usually played in a very grandiose way - broad and expansive and melancholy sometimes tending towards anger.

The title means "The broad Dnieper (river) roars and groans" - the words are from a poem by Taras Shevchenko:

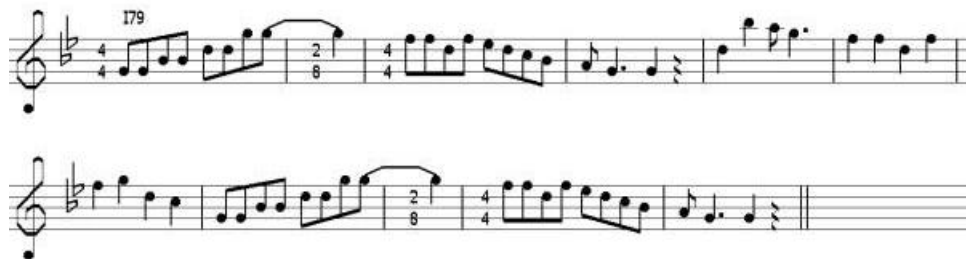
The mighty Dnieper roars and bellows,
The wind in anger howls and raves,
Down to the ground it bends the willows,
And mountain-high lifts up the waves.

The pale-faced moon picked out this moment
To peek out from behind a cloud,
Like a canoe upon the ocean
It first tips up, and then dips down.

The cocks don't crow to wake the morning,
There's not as yet a sound of man,
The owls in glades call out their warnings,
And ash trees creak and creak again.

Translated by John Weir
Toronto

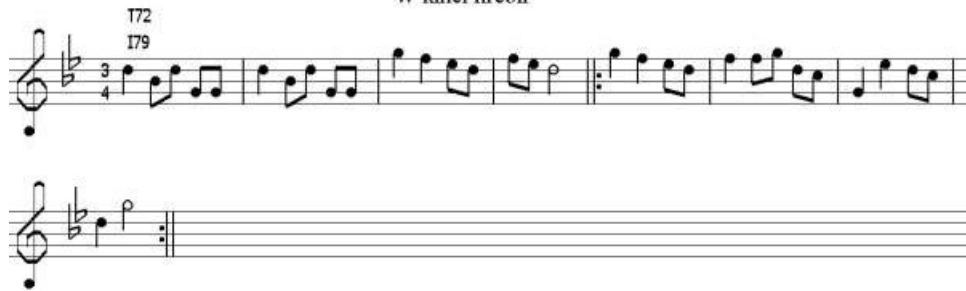
Tomu kosa dobre kosyt



Why is the Reaper reaping so well?
Because a sweetheart brings his meal, heya hoi!
And I would reap that way, heya hoyo,
And I would reap that way
If a sweetheart brought a meal to me!

Its probably a working song for reapers, and so should be played with a steady rhythm, not too fast, but upbeat and with energy.

W kinci hrebli



Slow, sad and Lyrical

Za Horu sonce zahoriaje



Za Horu sonce zahoriaje is a melancholy song I think. The title "The sun shines behind the mountains" is misleading, as many Ukrainian songs open with a poetic "scene" which conjures an image but has little to do with the song. At any rate, it is about a young man who is leaving his girl to join the army and he is sad because he will not be able to hold her. During the day he must march and at night he lies on a cold cot in a cold camp. His road is long, and he will never return (because the black raven is calling) and worst of all as he lays on his cold cot the last line is something like "My darling does not say to me: come let me hold you in my arms". So its all longing, loneliness and sadness.