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REVIVING FORGOTTEN MUSIC OF THE PAST: THE CREATIVE WORK OF NIKOLA SUDAREVIĆ AND AN ANALYSIS OF HIS CHORAL SUITE *PODRINKE NO. 1*

Abstract: This article initiates a comprehensive investigation of the life and work of Nikola Sudarević (1878–1943), a prominent yet insufficiently known figure in Serbian cultural history, who left a significant mark on both the tailoring craft and musical art.

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As the center of the analysis of Sudarević's compositional methods, we chose his work *Podrinke No. 1* for mixed choir and baritone solo because the methods employed in it became a template for his later choral works. In this choral suite, Sudarević demonstrates exceptional inventiveness in reshaping the traditional strophic form. Instead of literal repetition, he consistently applies variation procedures, achieving a nuanced musical flow through changes in texture, choral "orchestration", and the structure of folklore citations. Each song is given a distinct dramaturgical arc, building a complete and expressively-diverse musical architecture. This article analyzes specific solutions in melodic and scale organization, the tonal plan, and the ways of achieving harmonic variation as the fundamental element of the varied-strophic form. Special attention is given to the specificities in the use of non-altered and altered chords that characterize the composition. The ultimate goal is to illuminate the importance of Sudarević's contribution to Serbian music and to highlight the need for further research into forgotten composers in Serbian musical history.¹

Keywords: Nikola Sudarević, tailor, composer, Serbian music, choral music, varied-strophic form, harmony, tonality.

Introduction – The Life and Creative Journey of Nikola Sudarević

To discover the undiscovered means, in fact, to discover oneself. Dusting off old documents presents a challenge for researchers. Thus, the "case" of the composer Nikola Sudarević was, until recently, completely unknown to the wider public, as well as to the professional community. He was born in Petrovčić (the municipality of Surčin) to father Dimitrije, a merchant, and mother Mileva.² Considering his father's occupation, it is presumed that, soon after birth, he moved with his family to Šabac, where he grew up and

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² A significant amount of biographical data and materials (photographs) were provided to the authors of this article by the composer's great-grandson, also called Nikola Sudarević.

later married Jelisaveta, with whom he had two daughters, Radmila and Nadežda (see Figures 1 and 2).³



Figure 1: A photo of Nikola Sudarević with his wife Jelisaveta and daughters Radmila and Nadežda. Used by permission.

In addition to his talent for tailoring, which would bring him great prestige upon moving to Belgrade around 1920, with the establishment of the then very famous tailoring shop “Sudarević and Savković”, his musical talent was also recognized. In Šabac, he attended composition lessons with the renowned Czech composer Robert Tolinger (1859–1911), with whom he collaborated until moving to Belgrade. During this period, at the end of the nineteenth century, he also became a member of the Šabac Singing Society,

³ Nadežda Đorđević (née Sudarević, 1911–1983) was active as a musician and an art music singer. She completed her studies at the Music School ‘Stanković’ in Belgrade, studying piano and singing. Very little information about her is available, and most is provided by her family to the Museum of Theatre Arts in Belgrade. See: <https://teatro-slov.mpus.rs/licnost.php?id=5185>, accessed October 16, 2025.

and subsequently the choirmaster of the “Abrašević” Cultural and Artistic Society in Šabac. It is presumed that his interest in composing originated from that period, and particularly his interest in choral music – a domain in which he would leave the largest number of his works.



Figure 2: Nadežda Đorđević (née Sudarević). Used by permission.

During the First World War, Sudarević and his family were likely interned in the Austro-Hungarian prison camp Nežider (Neusiedl),⁴ which was one of the largest camps for the intellectual elite of that time. According to his great-grandson Nikola (as this information is lacking in the book dealing with the operations of this prison camp), the composer’s wife died in the camp, and he remained alone with his daughters until the end of the internment, presumably until 1918. Upon his arrival in Belgrade in 1920 a new life and professional chapter for Nikola Sudarević began, with his marriage to his second wife Jelena (née Berekazi [Beregszászi]) from Budapest and the birth of their son Milovan in the same year.

⁴ More on this in: Исидор Ђуковић, Ненад Лукић, *Нежидер. Аустроујарски логор за Срђе 1914–1918*, Београд, Историјски архив Београда, 2017. [Isidor Đuković, Nenad Lukić, *Nežider. Austro-Hungarian Prison Camp for Serbs 1914–1918*, Belgrade, Historical Archive of Belgrade, 2017.]

The tailoring shop “Sudarević and Savković” made an exceptionally significant contribution to interwar fashion, and Nikola Sudarević and his colleague were often characterized as arbiters of men’s fashion in Belgrade at that time. Furthermore, all writings or talks about Sudarević highlighted his inclination toward art in general:

When speaking of the tailoring craft as an art and when mentioning famous French creators who, in addition to fashion, were also involved in other arts, Nikola Sudarević was highlighted in Belgrade as he was also a musician and composer. His high prestige is also evidenced by his election as a member of the commission for master tailor exams, within the Section of Master Tailors.⁵

Also, referring to Sudarević’s inclination towards music, a journalist for the newspaper *Nedeljne ilustracije* (*Weekly Illustrations*), in an article from 1929, pointed out that “[Sudarević] is an artist tailor and an amateur musician, which proves that tailoring is an art and that we are not lagging behind Paris at all, because we have great tailors who are artists at the same time”.⁶ In support of the fact that Sudarević was an exceptional tailor, we should mention that in 1933, as suggested by the Minister of Trade and Industry, he was awarded the Royal Order of Saint Sava, 5th degree (Figure 3). In the domain of music, in 1926, he received an honorary certificate from the Šabac Singing Society “Zanatlija” (Craftsman) (Figure 4).

The compositional oeuvre of Nikola Sudarević is almost completely unexplored and unknown to the professional public. The reasons for this are that he lacked institutional music education and that his primary profession was that of a fashion tailor. Despite this, the authors of this article have discovered a significant and extensive body of Sudarević’s works that includes choral compositions, art songs, and chamber pieces:⁷

⁵ Bojana Popović, *Moga u Beogradu 1918–1941*, Beograd, Muzej primenjene umetnosti, 2000, 114–115. [Bojana Popović, *Fashion in Belgrade 1918–1941*, Belgrade, Museum of Applied Arts, 2000, 114–115].

⁶ See: <https://globalfashion.rs/beogradski-krojaci-i-bezvremena-elegancija-muskog-odela/>, accessed October 10, 2025.

⁷ The authors would like to thank their colleagues, employees of Matica Srpska in Novi Sad, for their wholehearted assistance in locating the manuscripts. This institution preserves the majority of Sudarević’s original scores that the authors received in electronic form.



Figure 3: Decree for receiving the Royal Order of Saint Sava, 5th degree. Used by permission.



Figure 4: The Honorary Certificate of the Šabac Singing Society from 1926. Used by permission.

Choral Music – Folk Song Arrangements

- *Tri međimurske narodne pesme* (Three Folk Songs from Međimurje) for mixed choir
- *Zora zori* (The Dawn Arises) for male choir
- *Podrinke No. 1* (Songs from the Podrinje Region) for mixed choir and baritone
- *Podrinke No. 2* (Songs from the Podrinje Region) for male choir
- *Ja zaprosih milje moje* (I Proposed To My Darling) for male choir
- *Bekrijo, bekrijo* (Reveler, Reveler) for male choir

Choral Music – With Lyrics from Serbian Poetry

- *Rosa* (Dew) for mixed choir (lyrics by Pavle Sokoljanin)
- *Kroz noć* (Through the Night) for male choir (lyrics by Pavle Stanić)

- *Sećanje na mladost (Remembering Youth)* for male choir (lyrics by Pavle Stanić)
- *Hajd u polje (Let's Go to the Field)* for children's choir (lyrics by S. Stanković)

Sacred Music

- *Opelo (Requiem)*
- *Svjati Bože (Trisagion)*
- *Mi, tajno obrazujušće (The Cherubic Hymn)*

Art Songs for Piano and Voice, With Lyrics from Serbian Poetry

- *Gde si koso moja vrana (Where Are You, My Dark Haired)* (lyrics by Marko Šarčević)
- *Bol (Pain)* (lyrics by Pavle Stanić)
- *U divnome vrtu (In a Beautiful Garden)* (lyrics by Pavle Stanić)
- *Već sunce greje (The Sun is Already Shining)* (lyrics by Pavle Stanić)
- *Jesenje jutro (An Autumn Morning)* (lyrics by Desanka Maksimović)
- *Zastavi Zanatlija (To The Flag of the Craftsmen)* (lyrics by Sava Marinković)
- *Oči su mi pune lepote (My Eyes Are Filled With Beauty)* (lyrics by Dimitrije Bivolarević Hekoa, *Didini soneti* [Dida's Sonnets] XVII)
- *Kad smo se sreli (When We Met)* (lyrics by Dimitrije Bivolarević Hekoa, *Didini soneti* [Dida's Sonnets] XX)
- *U tebi je mesec (The Moon is Inside You)* (lyrics by Dimitrije Bivolarević Hekoa, *Didini soneti* [Dida's Sonnets] XIII)
- *Kazaću ti tajnu (I Will Tell You a Secret)* (lyrics by Dimitrije Bivolarević Hekoa, *Didini soneti* [Dida's Sonnets] I)
- *Volim te (I Love You)* (lyrics by Dimitrije Bivolarević Hekoa, *Didini soneti* [Dida's Sonnets] V)
- *Sagradiću crkvu (I Will Build a Church)* (lyrics by Dimitrije Bivolarević Hekoa, *Didini soneti* [Dida's Sonnets] XXV)

Chamber Music

Trio No. 1 in G Major, for violin, cello and piano



Figure 6: The Obituary for Nikola Sudarević. Used by permission.

Nikola Sudarević's Choral Works – A Short Overview

According to the available data that the authors of this paper obtained from the private estate of Nikola Sudarević's great-grandson (Nikola Sudarević Jr.), Sudarević displayed an early interest and affinity for choral music already as a tailor's apprentice in Šabac. A decisive influence on his musical development and later decision to engage in composition was the composer and conductor Robert Tolinger, the choirmaster of the Šabac Singing Society at the time. It was from him that the young Sudarević first learned music. At that time, choral ensembles were the most widespread and popular artistic associations in Serbia, so it is not surprising that Sudarević directed a significant portion of his creative energy towards writing choral works.

Based on our research, Sudarević's choral works can be classified into three categories: choral pieces inspired by folklore, choral pieces set to verses of Serbian art poetry, and compositions for children's choir. We chose to analyze the composition *Podrinke No. 1* for mixed choir and baritone solo

because it became the nucleus of all compositional procedures that Sudarević consistently applied not only in compositions of folkloric provenance but also in his other choral works, with minor deviations (especially on the macro-formal level).

Selection of Folk Melodies and Textual-Poetic Organization

When selecting musical material for artistic arrangement, Sudarević employed the already tried and tested principle, exhibited in choral practice by earlier Serbian composers such as Kornelije Stanković (1831–1865), Josif Marinković (1851–1931), and Stevan Stojanović Mokranjac (1856–1914) – that the folk melodies belong to the same folkloric area,⁸ in this particular case the Podrinje (the area surrounding the Drina River and its valley). In this way, Sudarević ensured the initial cohesion of the folkloric citations, which were generationally and geographically filtered and refined, thereby securing stylistic unity (not only external-formal, but also internal-profound) even in the initial phase of compositional arrangement.⁹

The stylistic unity of *Podrinke No. 1* is also achieved through the masterful selection of texts, in which Sudarević, in this aspect of processing folkloric material, greatly resembles Stevan Stojanović Mokranjac. Sudarević, like Mokranjac, chooses lyrical texts predominantly of a romantic content,¹⁰ in which love is expressed across a wide affective-emotional spectrum. In the first song, “Zelenoje lišće” (Leaves are Green),¹¹ love shows its two faces: it is Jovo’s painful longing (‘Leaves of the pine tree are green / Under it Jovo lay sick’), but also his mother’s caring love towards her son (‘His mother visits

⁸ Cf. Милоје Николић, “Прилог истраживањима форме Мокрањчевих руковети”, у: Ивана Перковић Радак и Тијана Поповић Млађеновић (ур.), *Мокрањцу на дар 2006 (Прошета – чудних чуда кажу – 150 година) 1856*, Београд – Неготин, Факултет музичке уметности – Дом културе „Стеван Мокрањац”, 2006, 117. [Miloje Nikolić, “A Contribution to the Research on the Form of Mokranjac’s *Garlands*”, in: Ivana Perković Radak and Tijana Popović Mladenović (Eds), *A Gift to Mokranjac 2006 (Prošeta – čudnih čuda kažu – 150 Years) 1856*, Belgrade – Negotin, Faculty of Music – Cultural Centre “Stevan Mokranjac”, 2006, 117.]

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Out of a total of six songs in this choral suite, only the final one, “Krcа, krcа nova kola”, is humorous in character; but even that song contains implicit romantic/love associations.

¹¹ In Sudarević’s score, the adjective (archaism) “zelenoje”, taken from the Old Slavonic language, is written as one word.

him often, Bringing grapes in her apron'). In the second song "Ide lola" (The Lad is Coming), love is strong, honest, unperturbed ('I love you and nobody else'). The next song, "Đaurko lepa" (Beautiful Infidel), is gentle but not melancholic; the longing in this song is painful, but not paralyzing ('Beautiful infidel, I am longing for your eyes that cry tears'). The song is filled with romantic passion and latent erotic tension ('Your beautiful, colorful eyes, oh! go, go, in the middle of a hug'). In the fourth song, "Udaralo u tamburu đaće" (A Schoolboy was Playing the Tambura), the love is youthful, one-sided, and unfulfilled, metaphorically expressed through a painful sigh of the tamburitza, which serves as an extender of the soul ('A schoolboy was playing the tambura, he played it so forcefully, he started to cry from sorrow'). In the song "Sve pjeva" (Everything is Singing), love is expressed as an emotional isolation of a girl, Janja ('The girl Janja does not sing, does not sing'); her silence can be interpreted as an expression of sadness or hidden sorrow. The final song "Krca, krca nova kola" (A New Wagon is Creaking, Creaking), although outwardly cheerful, comic and playful, actually depicts loving feelings expressed by metaphors of an *old* and *new wagon*, signifying old and new love ('I will not ride an old wagon, the old wagon is rattling loudly / I want the new wagon, the new wagon is clattering').

From everything stated above, we can conclude that Sudarević selected texts while proactively considering their macro-formal effectiveness. *Po-drinke No. 1* can be read as a poetic emotional drama in six acts. Although the songs are formally independent, together they build a thematic-poetic structure of a higher level of complexity in which love is multidimensional and layered: from maternal, through romantic and erotic, to unfulfilled, while sadness is a universal element of the human experience. Through skillful and thoughtful text selection, Sudarević strives to achieve the textual unity of the cycle. Although the individual songs do not possess pronounced dramatic potential, they are connected by the same motif/state within the cyclical form, thus indirectly and latently producing a dramatic situation. An identical relationship among songs can be found in the *Eighth, Eleventh, Twelfth* and *Thirteenth Garlands* by Stevan Mokranjac.¹² Therefore, based on this criterion, the cumulative textual-content framework of Sudarević's *Po-*

¹² Ксенија Стевановић, "Текстуално-музичка драматургија руковети", у: Ивана Перковић Радак и Тијана Поповић Млађеновић (ур.), *Мокрањцу на дар 2006...*, оп. cit., 111–112. [Ksenija Stevanović, "Textual-Musical Dramaturgy of the Rukoveti", in: Ivana Perković Radak and Tijana Popović Mladenović (Eds), *A Gift to Mokranjac 2006...*, op. cit., 111–112.]

drinke No. 1 could be characterized as a passive or latent drama. The songs are “above all associative; they gather around one problem, motif, or state illuminated from different angles”.¹³

Macro-Formal Aspects

The macro-formal model that Sudarević establishes in *Podrinke No. 1* encompasses six different songs, with each of them representing a single ‘movement’. The songs (movements) build a balanced macro-formal construction with an equal relationship between slow and fast tempos (*Andante, Allegro moderato, Andante, Allegro, Andante, Allegro ma non troppo*). By applying this model, Sudarević aims to emphasize the contrast in character, or at least a distinction between successive songs (see Table 1: Tempo and character).¹⁴ The uniformity of the six-movement form is also reflected in the even distribution of the architectural weight of the individual formal constituents within the overall macro-formal scheme. It is immediately noticeable that, except for the central, third song¹⁵ (constructed from only two stanzas), all other songs are relatively complete structural-formal entities built from four or

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ The balanced relationship between slow and fast movements is also present in *Rukoveti* [Garlands] by Stevan Mokranjac, with the difference that it contains four songs (the *Ninth* and *Thirteenth Garlands*, as well as the *Hungarian Folk Songs* and *Russian Folk Songs*). More on this in: Милоје Николић, op. cit., 119–120. [Miloje Nikolić, op. cit., 119–120] Such a formal-character disposition is also present in certain *Garlands* created in the period after the Second World War; an example of this is the second cycle of *Songs from Prizren* by the composer Petar Đorđević. Cf. Саша Божићаревић, Драгана Милић, “Руководање у Песмама из Призрена Петра Ђорђевића – аналитички преглед”, *Музикологија*, 37, II/2024, 162–163. [Saša Božidarević, Dragana Milić, “The *Rukovet* Principle in Petar Đorđević’s *Songs from Prizren* – An Analytical Overview”, *Musicology*, 37, II/2024, 162–163.]

¹⁵ In the context of the composition’s overall macro-formal architectonics, this song can be considered the center of dynamic symmetry, possessing a concave, descending gradient. For more details on the dynamic forms of individual songs incorporated into cyclical forms (using Mokranjac’s *Garlands* as examples), see: Милоје Николић, *Примена гешталт аналитичког метода у проучавању форме Мокрањчевих руковети*, *Основни облици динамичких форми Мокрањчевих руковети* (докторска дисертација) Београд, Универзитет уметности у Београду, 2016, 311. [Miloje Nikolić, *Application of the Gestalt Analytical Method in the Study of the Form of Mokranjac’s Rukoveti*, *Basic Forms of Dynamic Forms of Mokranjac’s Rukoveti* (doctoral dissertation), Belgrade, University of Arts in Belgrade, 2016, 311.]

more stanzas (see Table 1: Number of stanzas). This ensures adequate space for the horizontal and vertical shaping of the musical content, which is particularly significant from the perspective of developing dynamic gradations.

Medio-Formal Aspects

The internal structure and form of the songs in the choral suite *Podrinke No. 1* indicate the composer's need and inclination to dynamize and reshape the basic strophic form. In all the songs of this choral suite, the strophic form is 'translated' into a more complex formal pattern: the varied-strophic form. In the first song, "Zelenoje lišće", the varied strophic structure is achieved through the combined effect of textural and choral-orchestrational means, forming an *arc-shaped gradational scheme with ascending dynamism* in the second and third stanzas and a *descending, reminiscent effect* in the fourth: *a, b, b¹, a¹* (see Table 1, column 1: medio-form). In the second song, "Ide lola", the choral movement's texture achieves the effect of a *unidirectional ascending gradation of the variational process*, which reaches its peak in the cadence of the final stanza. In it, a brief effect of a through-composed form is realized through a change in the melodic structure of the folkloric quote¹⁶ *a, b, b¹, b²* (see Table 1, column 2: medio-form). The level of variation is lowest in the central (third) song, "Đaurko lepa", which is constructed from only two stanzas. This static type of variational form *a a¹*, realized solely through changes in the texture of the choral movement, can be justified by the role this song plays in the overall macro-formal construction of this composition. This 'shortcoming' is compensated by the baritone solo part, so the adaptation of the entire choral expression and its physiognomy to the soloist, in this case, can be considered a quality rather than an anomaly (see Table 1, column 3: medio-form). In terms of textural variation, the fourth song, "Udaralo u tamburu dače", represents a completely contrasting movement compared to the previous song. The degree of variation in it reaches a dynamic climax, not only compared to the previous song but also to the other songs of this choral suite. Textural variation in the second stanza, and both textural and choral-

¹⁶ For more details on the procedure of transforming the folk quote in *Podrinke No. 1* and its formal implications on the strophe model, see: Saša Božidarević, *Mokranjčevi kodovi u horskim rukovetima druge polovine XX veka [Mokranjac's Codes in Choral Rukoveti of the Second Half of the 20th Century]*, Kosovska Mitrovica, Fakultet umetnosti u Zvečanu – Kosovskoj Mitrovici, 2018, 93–96.

Number of the movement	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
Title of the song	<i>Zelenoje lišće</i> (<i>Leaves are Green</i>)	<i>Ide lola</i> (<i>The Lad is Coming</i>)	<i>Đaurko lepa</i> (<i>Beautiful Infidel</i>)	<i>Udaralo u tamburu</i> (<i>A Schoolboy was Playing the Tambura</i>)	<i>Sve pjeva</i> (<i>Everything is Singing</i>)	<i>Krca, krca nova kola</i> (<i>A New Wagon is Creaking, Creaking</i>)
Synopsis of form	A	B	C	D	E	F
Tempo and character	Andante	Allegro moderato	Andante	Allegro	Andante	Allegro ma non troppo
Number of stanzas	4	4	2	6	4	6
Medio-form (form of the song)	Varied strophic (textural variation and choral-orchestral variation); formal scheme: <i>a, b, b', b²</i>	Varied strophic (textural variation and choral-orchestral variation); Transformation of the folksong citation in the cadence; formal scheme: <i>a, b, b', b²</i>	Varied strophic (textural variation); formal scheme: <i>a, a'</i>	Varied strophic citation with varied strophic accompaniment; formal scheme: <i>a, a', b, b', b², b³</i>	Varied strophic 2+2 (textural variation and choral-orchestral variation); formal scheme: <i>a, a, a', a^v</i>	Varied strophic (textural variation and choral-orchestral variation); formal scheme: <i>a, a', b, b', b², b³</i>

Table 1: Structure of the suite, formal, tempo, textural, and choral-orchestral characteristics of the songs in *Podrinke No. 1* by Nikola Sudarević

orchestrational variation¹⁷ in the third, fourth, fifth, and sixth stanzas, are supplemented by structural variation of parts of the folksong citation in the fourth and sixth stanzas. In this way, the variational processes from the choral texture spill over into the leading voice in parts of the overall form. This type of variation with the scheme: a, a^1, b, b^1, b^2, b^3 , could be designated as *developmental-oscillatory*, primarily due to the drop in variational tension in the fifth stanza (see Table 1, column 4: Medio-form). In the fifth song, “Sve pjeva”, the level of variation drastically drops compared to the previous song, so in the context of the overall macro-formal relations this song is experienced as the second variational-dynamic anti-climax (with the first anti-climax happening in the second song). In this case, the varied-strophic form is formed on the two-stanza principle 2+2 with a pattern: $a, a + a^v, a^v$. This type of variation can be defined as *static-repetitive with a minimal one-directional ascending gradation* (see Table 1, column 5, Medio-form). In the final song of the choral suite *Podrinke No. 1*, “Krca, krca nova kola”, the textural variation proceeds according to the principle of multi-stanza formal constituents (similar to the previous song), in this case, asymmetrically positioned 2+3 with the scheme: $a, a^1 + b, b^1, b^2, b^3$. This type of variation represents an *ascending-unidirectional process with a slightly rising gradient*. The maximum of the variational process in this given case is realized in the final stanza, where a fragmented (short-lived) effect of a through-composed form is achieved through minimal changes in the structure of the folk citation.¹⁸

Harmonic-Tonal Characteristics of the Choral Suite *Podrinke No. 1*

The following section of this article will examine various elements of the harmonic language of the composition *Podrinke No. 1*. The attitude towards tradition, primarily towards the related choral cycles of Josif Marinković and Stevan Mokranjac, in the domain of tonal and harmonic relations in Sudarević's choral works composed as folk tunes, shows continuity in his approach to arranging folk melodies. This line of development in Serbian music, which Vesna Mikić designated as the “strategy of ‘externalization’ of

¹⁷ The types of choral orchestration and their influence on the sound color and variational processes are described in detail by Miloje Nikolić. Cf. Miloje Nikolić, *A Contribution to the Research of the Form of Mokranjac's Garlands*, op. cit, 125–127.

¹⁸ Saša Božidarević, *Mokranjčevi kodovi u horskim rukovetima druge polovine XX veka*, op. cit, Example 14, 93–94.

Mokranjac's work"¹⁹ in the post-Second World War period, was already manifested in the period between the two world wars. Such "externalization" is vital for the development of Serbian choral music and is confirmed in Sudarević's *Podrinke No. 1*. Nevertheless, their expression is also shaped by relatively pronounced authentic solutions in harmonization. First, we will examine the specific solutions in the melodic, i.e., scalar, organization of individual songs in this choral suite, and then the characteristics of the tonal plan. Also, we will consider how the composer achieved harmonic variation as one of the basic compositional procedures in constructing the varied-strophic form. Finally, we will briefly review the specific use of diatonic and altered chords that characterize this composition. An overview of the tonal, harmonic, and metric characteristics of all six songs of the choral suite *Podrinke No. 1* is provided in the following table (Table 2).

As Dejan Despić points out, "the national musical characteristic, understandably, has always been expressed primarily through melodies (...), and that further means – through the specific features of the scales themselves, since folk melody is, as a rule, diatonic, but often based on scales different from the classical major and minor"²⁰. In that regard, Sudarević's suite *Podrinke No. 1* also represents a prototype of the compositional approach to folk sources characteristic of the first decades of Serbian national Romanticism, where the folk origin of the melody is critically impelled by major-minor contrasts. Namely, the equal representation of major and minor in the suite, resulting from the fact that it is composed of three major and three minor songs, reveals a small but significant asymmetry in this regard. Specifically, while the songs in a major key most often have the regular, natural variant of the major scale as their basis, with only the occasional presence of

¹⁹ Весна Микић, "Традиција/Мокрањац као инспирација: креативна рецепција Мокрањчевог дела у српској музици после 1945. године", у: Соња Маринковић и Санда Додик (ур.), *Владо Милошевић: етномузиколог, композитор, педагог. Традиција као инспирација – тематски зборник*, Бања Лука, Академија умјетности Универзитета у Бањој Луци – Академија наука и умјетности Републике Српске – Музиколошко друштво Републике Српске, 2015, 13. [Vesna Mikić, "Tradition/Mokranjac as Inspiration: Creative Reception of Mokranjac's Work in Serbian Music after 1945", in: Sonja Marinković and Sanda Dodik (Eds), *Vlado Milošević: Ethnomusicologist, Composer, Pedagogue. Tradition as Inspiration – Thematic Collection*, Banja Luka, Academy of Arts of the University of Banja Luka – Academy of Sciences and Arts of Republic of Srpska – Musicological Society of Republic of Srpska, 2015, 13.]

²⁰ Dejan Despić, *Harmonija sa harmonskom analizom [Harmony with Harmonic Analysis]*, Beograd, Zavod za udžbenike i nastavna sredstva, 2002, 265.

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
Number of the movement						
Title of the song	<i>Zelenoje lišće</i> (Leaves are Green)	<i>Ide lola</i> (The Lad is Coming)	<i>Đaurko lepa</i> (Beautiful Infidel)	<i>Uđaralo u tamburu</i> <i>đaće</i> (A Schoolboy was Playing the Tambura)	<i>Sve pjeva</i> (Everything is Singing)	<i>Krca, krca nova kola</i> (A New Wagon is Creaking, Creaking)
Meter	2/4	3/4 and 2/4 (consistent horizontal polymetry)	3/4	2/4	4/4 (brief interpolation of 2/4)	2/4
Tonal plan	G major (parallel G minor in half-cadence at the end of each stanza)	The oscillation between 'Hungarian' ('Gipsy') and 'Balkan' G minor; melodic G minor (occasional appearances)	Four types of G minor: harmonic, natural, melodic, and 'Hungarian' ('Gipsy')	G minor – D minor – G minor (predominantly 'Hungarian' / 'Gipsy', less frequently harmonic and melodic)	D major	A major – E major – A major
Harmonic characteristics	Diatonic chords predominate; VII/V7 (half-diminished), VII/V (6), "German sixth" in the function of VII/V, VIII/III7, #II7 (diminished), VIII/II7, V/V9	Diatonic chords, but with significant appearance of secondary dominant chords: V/V, V/V7, V/V9 and their inversions; dominant seventh chord with a flattened fifth in the function of V/V (with regular and plagal resolutions), VII/V7 (with regular and plagal resolutions); specific dominant chord V (7/4/2); I9 and its inversions; upper or inner pedal points	Diatonic chords, but with an even more significant appearance of secondary dominant chords: V/V, dominant seventh chord with a flattened fifth in the function of V/V; ninth chords in the function of V/V and V/IV and their inversions; Phrygian third-fourth chord	Diatonic chords (IV7), but with significant appearance of dominant seventh chord with a flattened fifth in the function of V/V (with regular and plagal resolutions), "German sixth" in the function of VIII/V	Diatonic chords predominate; VII/V1 (6/5); V/V7, V/V9 and its inversion	Diatonic chords (emphasis on the III triad); V/V7 and its inversions, V/IV9 and its inversion, VIII/V7, V/IV7, V/II7

Table 2: Structure of the suite; metric, tonal, and harmonic characteristics of the songs in *Podrinke No. 1* by Nikola Sudarević

the harmonic major mode, all three songs in minor, on the other hand, are based on melodies that contain the augmented (Lydian) fourth degree. This results in the transformation of the harmonic minor basis toward the double harmonic minor mode (also called the ‘Hungarian’ or ‘Gypsy’ minor mode) and the ‘Balkan minor mode’; however, the tunes themselves in all three minor songs very rarely contain melodic sequences that encompass the entire scalar range and remain predominantly within the range of the tonic pentachord of the given scale (Examples 1, 2, and 3). The distinction between the harmonic, ‘Hungarian’, and Balkan minor modes is usually ensured by another voice, one in which the theme itself will not appear, and/or by a specific harmonic turn that occurs during the song and belongs to one of these three types of minor modes. Simply put, unlike the folk tunes used as the basis for the minor songs, where the augmented Lydian fourth does appear, it is not found in the tunes on which the songs in major keys are based (although Sudarević does use it in the chords with which he harmonizes those themes).

Example 1: Nikola Sudarević, *Podrinke No. 1*, song “Ide lola”, bb. 1–7, the main theme of the song, sung by first tenors

Allegro moderato

И-де ло-ла, и-де ло-ла, ... и-де ло-ла, из пре-ко-га мо-ра, из пре-ко-га мо-ра.

Example 2: Nikola Sudarević, *Podrinke No. 1*, song “Đaurko lepa”, bb. 3–14, the main theme of the song, sung by solo baritone

Andante
mf

Ђа - ур - ко ле - па, ту - ге ме мо - ре,

5

f за о - чи тво - је што су - зе ро - не,

9

mf за о - чи тво - је што су - зе ро - не.

Example 3: Nikola Sudarević, *Podrinke No. 1*, song “Udaralo u tamburu đaće”, bb. 1–8, the main theme of the song, sung by first tenors

Allegro
mf

U - da - ra - lo_ u tam-bu-re đja - če,_ u tam-bu-re đja - če, u tam-bu-re đja - če.

The image shows a musical score for a first tenor part. It is in 2/4 time and G minor. The melody starts on G4, moves to A4, then Bb4, C5, and D5. It then descends to C5, Bb4, A4, and G4. The lyrics are: U - da - ra - lo_ u tam-bu-re đja - če,_ u tam-bu-re đja - če, u tam-bu-re đja - če.

The song “Ide lola” represents a paradigmatic example of the aforementioned scales. The main theme of this song, assigned entirely to the first tenor at the beginning of the song, has a five-note ambitus that corresponds to both the double harmonic minor scale and the Balkan minor mode in G: G - A - Bb - C# - D. For the most part, it is a combination, or rather an oscillation, between these two scales, depending on what pitch is reached in the other layers of the musical flow – whether Eb (double harmonic minor scale) or E (Balkan minor scale), or alternatively, whether F# (double harmonic minor scale) or F (Balkan minor). In that sense, the melodic movement D - E - F# - G, occasionally found in the song, should be understood as the result of a specific combination of the upper tetrachords of these two scales (double harmonic minor scale and Balkan minor scale), or, less frequently, as a melodic consequence of using the chord of the secondary dominant, and much less often as a true melodic minor. Nevertheless, as the song progresses towards the end, the Balkan minor gradually prevails in certain choral parts. It seems that Sudarević intentionally wanted to highlight this scale, entrusting it to the soprano in the second half of the song, whose melody in the third and fourth stanzas is entirely situated in the Balkan minor (Example 4).

The G minor scale, including its sub-variants, also forms the melodic basis of the next two songs, “Đaurko lepa” and “Udaralo u tamburu đaće”. The pentachordal ambitus of the themes of these songs, with the frequent occurrence of the augmented Lydian fourth, also provides these songs with the basis of the double harmonic minor mode. Thus, in the song “Đaurko lepa”, various types of the G minor scale can be observed; besides the double harmonic minor mode, we encounter the harmonic, natural, and melodic minor scales, while in the song “Udaralo u tambure đaće”, G minor is predominantly given in the double harmonic minor variant.

Even in the songs that are not in a minor key, the influence of the minor tonal color is so pronounced that it specifically reshapes the prevailing sound of the major key. In this regard, the first song of the suite, “Zelenoje lišće”, stands out. This song is in G Major, contains no modulations, but in the ca-

dence of each of the four stanzas it transitions to the parallel G minor (Example 5). This is observed not only in the appearance of the pitch Bb in the melody but also in the appearance of the minor tonic triad in the given segment at the end of each period (stanza). Such a melodic-harmonic procedure in the cadence is frequently found in Mokranjac's compositions as well, which confirms the deep stylistic and expressive connection of this choral suite with Mokranjac's works that clearly served as models for Sudarević.

Example 4: Nikola Sudarević, *Podrinke No. 1*, song "Ide lola", bb. 15–17.

(Allegro moderato)

g: $t_4^6 6 -s<7 t_4^6 6 ||_5^6 t^6 t_6 D DD_5^{14} <D>(gornji)$

Example 5: Nikola Sudarević, *Podrinke No. 1*, song "Zelenoje lišće", bb. 1–8, the main theme of the song, sung by sopranos

Andante ♩ = ♩

Зе-ле-но-је__ лиш-ће бо - ро-во, бо - ро-во. Зе-ле-но-је__ лиш-ће хаж! бо-ро - во

The composition *Podrinke No. 1* for mixed choir represents a paradigmatic example of the logic of cadential connection between songs, which Sudarević

utilised in his other choral cycles as well.²¹ In the case of *Podrinke No. 1*, that logic rests on the harmonious linking of the songs by means of the final chord in the song and is achieved in two ways: (1) the song ends with the tonic or dominant chord if the next song remains in the same tonal center (G major / G minor), as is the case in the first three songs; or (2) the song ends with the dominant chord, which simultaneously sounds like the tonic triad in the key of the next song, as the composition moves through the ascending circle of fifths towards the end (D major and A major).²² However, despite this harmonic strategy, the organic unity of the suite is weakened to a certain degree, and the absence of tonal closure certainly contributes to this. Thus, the first song is in G major, while the last is in A major, which still seems unexpected from the viewpoint of the general stylistic framework, corresponding to the average early Romantic harmonic language. The balanced ratio of major and minor scales in the choral suite *Podrinke No. 1*, i.e., the fact that three songs in the suite are in a major key and the same number are in a minor key, has somewhat mitigated the lack of tonal closure, instead of which there is a kind of ‘modal’ closure: although it does not end in the same key it began in, the suite still ends in a major key, just like it began.

Regarding the tonal and formal organization of the suite *Podrinke No. 1*, the songs “Udaralo u tambure đaće” and “Krca, krca nova kola” stand out. These songs share several common features, thanks to which they function as a dual climax of the composition: both are built on six melopoetic stanzas each, which is the largest number of stanzas in any song in the suite; they have similar choral orchestration, an identical syntactic structure of the sentence that forms the stanza, and, finally, identical tonal relations. Simultaneously, these are the only songs in the suite that contain modulations, organized according to the plan of tonic – dominant – tonic key (G minor – D minor – G minor in the song “Udaralo u tambure đaće”, and A major – E major – A major in the song “Krca, krca nova kola”, respectively), with two

²¹ It should be mentioned that this composition is characterized by a degree of formal separation among the songs, leading to a somewhat weaker coherence of the cycle compared to Mokranjac’s *Garlands*. This conclusion stems from the fact that Sudarević gave separate titles to songs, writing them at the top of the page (in the original score), at the beginning of each song.

²² In the second of the two cases mentioned, these chords – due to the aforementioned separation of the songs – cannot function as pivot chords, or as chords that change their function in the process of diatonic modulation. Instead, a tonal jump is used to change the key between the songs.

stanzas belonging to each key. In the song “Udaralo u tambure đaće”, Sudarević successfully executed the modulation of the theme into the dominant key by using a melodic link, the pitch A with which the theme ends in G minor and begins in D minor. Namely, in melodies that begin on the fifth degree and end on the second degree (which, incidentally, is how the majority of Serbian folk tunes end), transposition into the dominant key automatically ensures this melodic link, and Sudarević was certainly aware of this (Example 6).

Example 6: Nikola Sudarević, *Podrinke No. 1*, song “Udaralo u tamburu đaće”, bb. 13–20.

(Allegro)

Сопран
Хој! Од ту - ге се

Алт
Хој! Од ту - ге се

Тенор
mf мла-до у-да - ра-ло, мла-до у - да - ра-ло, хој! Од ту - ге се рас-пла-ка-ло
mf Од ту - ге се рас-пла-ка-ло јад - но...

Бас
p Од ту - ге се
mf

g: VI t₄ D²t₆ II³<t -VII_D⁵₆
<D>(unutrašnji)

D: t
d: t _____ -s<t II³<t
<D>

As already mentioned, the form of the songs in the choral suite *Podrinke No. 1* is entirely based on the pattern of the varied-strophic form. Although the differentiation of musical expression between stanzas within a song is achieved through various textural solutions, as well as specific nuances in terms of choral orchestration, harmony still plays a key role in underscoring this differentiation. In other words, the harmonic component is primarily responsible for creating the different sound of each individual stanza within a song, which suggests that the composer was fully aware of harmony’s significance in achieving the desired goal. Sudarević carried out the harmonic variation of the same melody on two primary levels: (1) the diatonic palette – the carefully devised, but occasionally very imaginative, use of scale chords of the given key (including chords that belong to the harmonic major mode);

and (2) chromatic nuances – the very subtle and diverse use of non-diatonic chords, primarily secondary dominants and their substitutes, as well as ninth chords of chromatic structure functioning as secondary dominants.

Pronounced harmonic variation appears in the song “Đaurko lepa” from the first *Podrinke* suite and is carried out on two levels: in the repetition of the two-bar and four-bar units within a stanza, and between the stanzas themselves. The first type of harmonic variation is exemplified in a very simple way in the repetition of the four-bar unit written to the text *za oči tvoje / što suze rone* (for your eyes / that shed tears) within the first stanza (Example 7a).

The harmonic content in the repetition of the four-bar unit is the same, except for the type of non-diatonic chord, a secondary dominant for the subdominant: in the first appearance, the second inversion of a seventh chord $\underline{\text{V}}/\underline{\text{IV}}$ (4/3) is applied, and in the repetition, it is replaced by the first inversion of the substitute for the secondary dominant for the subdominant, VII/IV (6/5), as a simplified form of harmonic variation. The second type of this variation is significantly more noticeable than the first, since it involves a very intensive harmonic variation carried out in a through-composed manner, spanning almost every bar. If, therefore, Examples 7a and 7b are compared, a clear picture of the intensification of harmonic expression emerges, which is manifested in the repetition of the four-bar phrase between the two stanzas. As such, the first appearance of the four-bar phrase *za oči tvoje / što suze rone* (for your eyes / that shed tears) in the first stanza corresponds to the first appearance of the four-bar phrase *Ah! Odi, odi / sred zagrljaja!* (Ah! Come, come / into the embrace!) in the second stanza.

It is easily observed that harmonic variation between the first and second stanzas is applied continuously, from the beginning to the end of the basic four-bar phrase. Thus, in the first bar of the excerpt from the second stanza, a new chord appears, the III^6 (first inversion of the mediant triad), as well as a richer movement in the bass within the tonic harmony; and at the end of the bar, an inversion of the dominant of the dominant (V/V) appears, instead of the root position of this triad from the first stanza. The second and fourth bars of this phrase are particularly significant in this regard. In the second bar, the deceptive cadence is varied through the use of inversions (the first inversion appears both for the dominant chord and the VI degree chord); the V/IV chord (dominant of the subdominant) is now a 10th chord, and not a third-fourth chord (4/3) as in the first appearance, and thus receives a deceptive resolution into a Phrygian third-fourth chord (4/3), which is the only

Phrygian chord in the composition. Finally, the standard half-cadence in the phrase (in the fourth bar of the phrase) is achieved in the first stanza through a relatively simple progression: the -V/V seventh chord resolving to the dominant chord, while in the second stanza it receives a progression that starts from the first inversion of the seventh chord on the II degree (II6/5), then moves chromatically to the fourteenth chord -V/V (14) and ends on the dominant.

The harmonic variation illustrated in these segments represents only a part of the entire system of harmonic variation that Sudarević applied in *Podrinke No. 1*, and he proved his excellent command of this technique in his other choral works as well. It is understandable that the slow tempo (*Andante*) also contributes significantly to the described harmonic variation being more easily perceived and experienced. It is precisely thanks to the harmonic variation, and only then due to certain interventions that the composer implemented in the structure of the stanza, that one can speak of the varied-strophic form in this song.

Example 7a: Nikola Sudarević, *Podrinke No. 1*, song “Đaurko lepa”, first stanza, bb. 7–14.

(Andante)

Баритон соло

за о - чи тво - је што су - зе ро - не,

Сопран
Алт

је, за о - чи тво - је што су - зе ро -

Тенор

је, за о - чи тво - је што су - зе ро -

Бас

g: $t^6_{\frac{5}{3}}$ DD D7 VI $Ds^{\frac{4}{3}}s$ t^6 II7 -DD7 D

5 *f* *mf*

Бар. соло

за о - чи тво - је што су - зе ро - не

С А *mf*

не, за о - чи тво - је што су - зе ро - не

Т

-не, за о - чи тво - је што су - зе ро - не

Б *mf*

t — 6 DD⁹ D — 7 VI VII_s⁶s t⁶ II⁷ -DD⁷ D

Example 7b: Nikola Sudarević, *Podrinke No. 1*, song “Đaurko lepa”, second stanza, bb. 21–24.

(Andante)

Баритон соло *f* *mf*

ах! О - ди, о - ди сред за - гр - ља - ја!

Сопран *mf*

Алт ба - ја

Тенор *mf*

пе, те о - чи ле - пе пре - пу - не ба -

Бас *mf*

пре - пуне, пре - пу - не ба -

g: t — 6 III⁶ DD₄⁶ VI⁶ D_s¹⁰ F₃⁴ t₄⁶ — 6 — 5 II⁷ — 6 — DD₅⁶ D — 2

In Sudarević's *Podrinke No. 1*, the harmonic language rests on an almost precise balance between diatonic and non-diatonic chords. Although true altered chords can occasionally be found, non-diatonic chords represent the dominant group of non-scale chord structures. It can be said that Sudarević had excellent knowledge of the numerous nuances in the application of non-diatonic harmonies. The usual fund of secondary dominant chords, which consist of diatonic-type chords – the dominant seventh chord in the function of V/V and the diminished and half-diminished seventh chords in the function of VII/V – is frequently expanded with chromatic-type chords: the dominant seventh chord with a flattened fifth as V/V, and the diminished seventh chord with a flattened third as VII/V.

In the second song of *Podrinke No. 1*, “Ide lola”, we find a very prominent use of these altered chords serving as V/V and VII/V, which are successfully intertwined with regular diatonic chords. The reason for their prevalence is an extensive use of the augmented, Lydian fourth, which occurs no less than five times in the main melody (within only seven bars); also, the fact that Sudarević harmonizes each appearance of the Lydian fourth using one of the altered chords. In other words, he never treats the augmented fourth as a passing tone. However, in order to avoid the monotony he could easily fall into regarding the (expected) harmonization of this augmented fourth, the composer strives not to repeat an identical chord in successive harmonizations, which only reinforces the harmonic diversity of this song.

The basic characteristic of this principle is that the dominant seventh chord with a flattened fifth on the II degree, with which Sudarević harmonizes the given alteration, is resolved in both possible ways in this song, inherited from centuries-old practice of tonal music. Thus, the composer uses the dominant seventh chord with a flattened fifth in its expected function of -V/V with a resolution into the diatonic dominant chord (bb. 17–18 in the song) or into a substitute chord of the same function, III⁶ (Example 8); however, he also uses the dominant seventh chord with a flattened fifth in a non-standard, yet customary function in the epoch of Romanticism, namely as the altered II degree with a plagal resolution into the tonic chord (also in Example 8). Such a refined and, above all, knowledgeable use of these resolutions suggests that Sudarević was not only a good connoisseur of ‘academic’ harmony, but also, in all probability, had very thoroughly studied the harmonic language of his predecessors, as well as his contemporaries.

Example 8: Nikola Sudarević, *Podrinke No. 1*, song “Ide lola”, bb. 3–4.

(Allegro moderato)

Сопран

Алт

Тенор

Бас

и - де ло - ла,
и - де ло - ла, из пре - ко - га
и - де ло - ла,

mf *p*

g: t DD₃-DD₄⁺⁶ III⁶ t -II₂⁴< t⁶

One of the main characteristics of the harmonic language in Sudarević’s suite *Podrinke No. 1* is the use of the five-note chord (ninth chord) and its inversions. These chords appear not only on the dominant, but also in the function of the secondary dominant (V/V), and even as the tonic chord. In the song “Ide lola”, the V/V ninth chord and its inversions become more frequent as the song gradually approaches its end (see Example 4 above). This harmonic crescendo with ninth chords is joined by the appearance of the tonic ninth chord in root position (song “Ide lola”, b. 24) and in an inversion (b. 26), as well as the very specific appearance of the final, theoretically non-applicable, fifth inversion of the ninth chord, as is the case with the dominant ninth chord just before the end of the song (also in b. 26).

For the most part, the appearance of these ninth-chord configurations, which are relatively atypical for this style – such as the tonic ninth chord and, especially, the fifth inversion of the dominant ninth chord – is the result of sustained tones in the parts of upper voices, functioning as upper or inner pedal points. It is precisely these held, pedal tones in some of the upper voices that constitute an important harmonic characteristic of this song, sometimes resulting in a ninth chord that, at first glance, appears as a merely figurative chord, but which essentially represents an independent chord structure. This

understanding is most often supported by a leap into or out of the bass tone, which lends significance to the given structure. In the song “Đaurko lepa”, an even more pronounced use of the ninth chord and its inversions is observed in the function of the dominant and secondary dominants (V/V in bb. 6 and 24, and V/IV in bb. 22 and 26; Example 9). This is entirely consistent with the harmonic development that could be observed in the previous song (“Ide lola”). Such established continuity with the song “Ide lola” results in a specific complexity of expression, so the ninth chords now even appear as chromatic-type chords, such as the twelfth chord based on the “French sixth” (or augmented 4/3 chord) as -V/V (b. 6).

Example 9: Nikola Sudarević, *Podrinke No. 1*, song “Đaurko lepa”, bb. 6 and 26.

(Andante)

Баритон соло

мо - ре, тво - је

Сопран
Алт

за о - чи тво - о - ди, Ђа - ур - ко

Тенор

за о - чи тво - о - ди, Ђа - ур - ко

Бас

о - ди, Ђа - ур - ко

g: $-DD_3^4 +6$ $D-5$ t VII⁶ $D-2VI_4^6$ Ds_5^6 s

Conclusion

The research presented in this article shows that Nikola Sudarević left a significant mark as a composer in Serbia, particularly in the interwar period, with an oeuvre predominantly consisting of vocal works, namely composi-

tions for various choral ensembles, art songs, and one chamber work. In the choral suite *Podrinke No. 1*, Sudarević displays a certain degree of inventiveness in shaping and forming the internal space of each individual song, consistently applying diverse variation procedures in reshaping the traditional strophic form. Instead of literal repetition, he creates a dynamic and nuanced musical flow in which variation is achieved through changes in texture and choral orchestration, as well as in the structure of the folksong citations themselves. The internal organization of the songs is carefully shaped so that each of them acquires a special dramatic arc and a function within the whole, thereby building a complete and expressively diverse musical edifice. Sudarević nurtured a free and creative relationship with the source material, creating a composition in which tradition became the foundation for personal artistic expression. His harmonic language fully corresponded with the spirit of the time, largely relying on the tradition of Stevan Mokranjac's *Garlands*. However, Sudarević also introduced innovative approaches, such as specific cadences that aimed for modal rather than tonal closure, the use of ninth chords and their inversions (which is not very common for the style of Serbian choral music), and intensive and rich harmonic variation. Regarding the application of non-diatonic chords, Sudarević's approach is equal to the most developed treatment of these chords in the harmonic language of European Romanticism.

Finally, it can be said that the choral suite *Podrinke No. 1* by Nikola Sudarević is inscribed in golden letters in the long line of harmonizations of melodies in the double harmonic minor and Balkan minor in Serbian art choral music. The authors of this article believe that the musical creativity of Nikola Sudarević, a great name in Belgrade fashion in the interwar period, deserves a kind of revival that would encompass both the performance of his works and the scientific – musicological and music-theoretical – engagement with his oeuvre, with a most sincere hope that this paper will be only the first in a series of scholarly investigations dedicated to the works of this unjustly forgotten composer.

Translated by Ivana Medić

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Summary

This article offers a comprehensive study of the oeuvre of Nikola Sudarević (1878–1943), a composer who has remained obscure, despite also being the leading Belgrade tailor of his time. The focus of the analysis is on the suite of songs for mixed choir and baritone solo, *Podrinke No. 1*, which serves as an illustration of his compositional activity. This work acts as a basis for Sudarević’s later compositional procedures. He would consistently apply the compositional procedures used in this work, with only minor deviations (especially regarding macroform), not only in works inspired by folklore but also in all his other choral creations. Sudarević demonstrated a conscious

and thoughtful approach to text selection, anticipating the macro-formal effectiveness of the chosen lyrics. As a result, the choral suite *Podrinke No. 1* functions as a complete poetic emotional drama in six acts. Although the songs are formally independent, their skillful combination builds a complex, thematic-poetic construction of a higher level, where love is depicted multi-dimensionally (from maternal to erotic and unfulfilled), and sorrow becomes a universal element of the human experience. Through this careful selection of lyrics, the composer ensured the textual unity of the entire suite. Our analysis has established that Sudarević, in *Podrinke No. 1*, demonstrated exceptional inventiveness in shaping the varied-strophic form. Instead of literal repetition, he applied diverse variation procedures – especially changes in texture and choral orchestration, as well as in the reshaping of folksong citations – thereby building a dynamic and expressively diverse musical flow. Sudarević's harmonic language is rooted in the tradition of Stevan Stojanović Mokranjac's *Rukoveti (Garlands)*, but with innovative approaches that elevate it to the level of mature European Romanticism. This is due to specific cadences that aim for modal rather than classical tonal closure, the use of ninth chords and their inversions, as well as intensive harmonic variation. The prevalence of the augmented fourth is manifested in the intense use of the double harmonic minor mode and Balkan minor mode, creating the recognizable colour of Serbian choral music inspired by folk tunes. The harmonic language in Sudarević's *Podrinke No. 1* establishes an almost perfect balance between diatonic and non-diatonic chords. Although true altered chords occasionally appear in his work, non-diatonic chords – especially secondary dominants and their substitutes – constitute the fundamental and most substantial group of non-scale chords. This indicates that Sudarević mastered numerous nuances in the application of non-diatonic harmonies.