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## MARKING A HUNDRED YEARS SINCE THE BIRTH OF PROF. DR. DRAGOSLAV DEVIĆ (1925–2017)

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*This year marks a century since the birth of a doyen of Serbian ethnomusicology, Prof. Dragoslav Dević, Ph.D. (1925–2017). Dr. Dević dedicated more than 50 years of tireless scientific research to the study of Serbian musical folklore, elevating his calling to the level of a mission. His ethnomusicological heritage is woven into the work of the Department of Ethnomusicology at the Faculty of Music, which he helped establish and develop throughout his prolific university career (1962–1990).*



Dragoslav Dević

*Ever since the founding of the New Sound journal, Dragoslav Dević was one of its regular contributors and a well-respected member of the Editorial Board. Among other contributions on the pages of our Journal he left several valuable studies dedicated to Béla Bartók and Yugoslav folk music (No. 6), the analysis of Dinaric and Shopic singing (No. 19), shedding light on Mokranjac's work as a melographer and ethnomusicologist (No. 28), while in No. 50 we posthumously published Dević's last conference paper, discussing Partisan songs in Serbia.*

*To mark this significant jubilee, in this issue we bring a redacted version of an interview with Dr. Dragoslav Dević conducted by his colleague and close associate Dr. Dimitrije O. Golemović. Their conversation was recorded*

*in 2011, to mark the 60th anniversary of the founding of the Department of Ethnomusicology at the Faculty of Music. We offer the living words of Prof. Dević to the scholarly community as a precious account of his professional journey and the historical development of ethnomusicology as an academic discipline in Serbia and Yugoslavia, as well as a reminder concerning a figure whose pioneering explorations indebted Serbian ethnomusicology and culture for good.*

*The Editorial Board offers its heartfelt thanks to Dr. Dimitrije O. Golemović for permitting us to publish this interview.*

*I.M.P.*

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Faculty of Music

Department of Ethnomusicology and Ethnochoreology

## **AN INTERVIEW WITH DRAGOSLAV DEVIĆ**

*Our esteemed and beloved Professor Dragoslav Dević occupies a key place in the history and development of our ethnomusicology, as well as the present Department of Ethnomusicology and Ethnochoreology at the Faculty of Music in Belgrade. Please share with us, Professor, some more details from your biography. You were originally a student at the Department of Music Theory, right?*

Yes, right... So, I was born in Požarevac on 15 August 1925. Already as a young boy I had a good singing voice. At school and on other occasions, they would always call on me to sing a song. My father loved music and somehow acquired a violin. In fact, he used that violin as a gusle and sang epic songs with it, accompanying himself by playing on a single string. I turned that violin into a violin. When I was in my second year of elementary school, I took private lessons with a Russian who taught singing. That was how it all started. I slowly learned the violin until I came to Stanković School of Music. This was around 1946, when I came to Belgrade. The violin helped me a lot

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in the army as well. It somehow happened that I had to report for duty here in Belgrade, although Požarevac was my hometown, and I was immediately mobilized and assigned to the 23rd Division.

*How did you develop your love of folk music?*

As a boy, I went to every folk celebration in our area. Around Požarevac there are many villages where my father had relatives. Gypsy music was the main kind of music in Požarevac. At every festivity, let's say a *Slava*, they would come and play the [Toreador] March from *Carmen* and, of course, folk songs as well. And that's how this love appeared already in my childhood. There are many folk songs I could sing.

*When you moved to Belgrade, you enrolled at Stanković High School of Music. In the violin or the music theory department?*

In Požarevac, I had studied the violin privately with the famous Vlasta, I've forgotten his last name. He had graduated with Otakar Ševčík. He got a King Alexander Scholarship and went to study in Prague. He was a good violinist. For instance, he quite quickly enabled me to play one of Louis Spohr's concertos. There weren't many etudes, although I did, under his influence, obtain some etudes by Ševčík as well. I also benefited from playing folk music and that drew me even closer to music. I wanted to enroll at the Music Academy.

*When you came to Belgrade, what did you study? How old were you when you came to Belgrade?*

I came to Belgrade to study architecture. However, I couldn't do that because my father was a merchant. You see, at that time, around 1945, 1946, you couldn't study whatever you wanted.

*You didn't have a proper, working-class background?*

No, actually my grandfather was a worker. In fact, he was a craftsman, a shoemaker in Belgrade.

*So why couldn't you study architecture? Because your father was a merchant?*

Because my father was a merchant. All merchants were denounced after 1944/45.

*Blacklisted.*

I was the son of a kulak. I couldn't enroll.

*And where did you enroll then?*

I was admitted to the music theory department at the Academy of Music. The important thing was that you could sing well. Vasiljević<sup>1</sup> was on the entrance exam committee and he said to me: "You're in".

*At the Academy? That's interesting.*

At the music theory department. At the same time I also joined Grbić's violin class at the Academy. But there I had to re-learn how to position my hand, going back to basics. I tried that and realized it was no good, that I was going to have to practice from scratch, including hand positioning, whereas I could already play. And then I thought about studying music history, because I was interested in it. No folklore there. However, I couldn't join the music history program, I didn't have a piano, so I started learning that, too. When I showed up for the entrance exam, Hájek,<sup>2</sup> who was part of the examining committee, told me: "No, my child, you don't have a piano, you can't, but play the violin instead". However, then it occurred to me that it might be a good idea, since I loved folk customs, to study ethnology. And I enrolled in the ethnology program<sup>3</sup> and graduated from there. And then I had this source of capital, which was very important: the ability to engage with folk music and music history in a different way. And that's how it all began. I came to Stanković School of Music and in 1951 they introduced Music Folklore as a subject in the curriculum. And I immediately said: I'll teach that. At first I had to teach both Music History and Musical Folklore. That's how it all began for me. I started following a lot of things related to ethnology.

*Educating yourself along the way?*

Indeed. And then, when I came to the Academy, I was appointed a teaching assistant on the Musical Folklore course. And that's sort of how I ended up at the Academy.

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<sup>1</sup> Miodrag Vasiljević.

<sup>2</sup> Emil Hájek.

<sup>3</sup> At the Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade.

*On Vasiljević's course on Musical Folklore?*

No, that was my preference, but Konjović<sup>4</sup> was my professor of folklore. I took his folklore class and learned the Finnish method from him.

*It's interesting that Konjović taught folklore and not Vasiljević. How did that happen?*

They didn't elect him, because there was a lot of animosity. Vasiljević had not formally graduated from the academy, didn't have a degree. He taught solfège. And it was via solfège that he made all of us aware of a lot of things. We learned those models of his, those little tunes.

*Because he based his teaching of solfège on folk music. That was his background. But I'd like to know more about your experience with Konjović. Was he more of an office-based kind of professor?*

He was a refined office-based kind of gentleman. Everybody had to take his folklore class, the whole music theory department. And in his classes he always cited examples from Mokranjac's *Garlands*. Because he did not write down songs himself.

*Konjović didn't do fieldwork. Manojlović<sup>5</sup> wrote down songs from Eastern Serbia... Did you know Manojlović?*

Practically I did. I know that he published a lot of folk songs. He published songs from Krajina at the Institute of Musicology and wrote the preface.

*Vasiljević published songs from Montenegro, two Yugoslav collections, songs from Kosovo, Macedonia, Sandžak, Leskovac. Whereas Manojlović published songs from Eastern Serbia.*

Yes, songs from Krajina. And Živojin Stanković wanted to publish all of that stuff in some form. He gave his transcriptions to the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, in a type of notation that was unknown. Some kind of neumes. Kosta Manojlović later took that stuff and transcribed it.

*So, Konjović was your professor of musical folklore. He also wrote quite a bit, essays on musical folklore.*

---

<sup>4</sup> Petar Konjović.

<sup>5</sup> Kosta Manojlović.

I still have his notes, exactly the way he lectured. I think it would be a good idea to have them published.

*It was instructive.*

He had these little cards. He would dictate and we would have to learn that stuff for the exam.

*Did he talk to you about his pieces and folklore as a source of inspiration?*

No, he didn't.

*At one point, when Konjović retired, Vasiljević got a chance to establish his own department. He was elected as an associate professor of musical folklore.*

I was assigned to him.

*Was a teaching assistant appointed immediately, or had you already been working for some time?*

Stana Đurić Klajn gave me Milojević's writings, to write my so-called inaugural address. That was how they appointed me as a teaching assistant. As soon as Vasiljević died, I started teaching as an assistant. I was assigned to him in 1961. In 1962 he went to Opatija and passed away in 1963. And so I took over the department. The first Macedonians took their classes with me. Mikan<sup>6</sup> was in that group as well. I inherited them from Vasiljević. Gradually, I started developing an interest in studying ethnology as well.

*Did you enroll in the ethnology program only once you started working at the Academy?*

Yes, yes, only then; I graduated from the Music Academy in 1951.

*And when did you join the ethnology program?*

Around 1958. It says in my biography.

*I'm interested in your beginnings. When you joined the faculty, as far as I know, there was not a single tape here, nothing related to the department, no literature. Where did you begin? Did you have a model?*

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<sup>6</sup> Dimitrije Mikan Obradović.

At Stanković I taught the Musical Folklore class. When I graduated, I was elected as a professor, in 1951. Rajičić<sup>7</sup> was on the hiring committee. I was in that position for some four or five years. I graduated and then enrolled in the ethnology program.

*When you joined the faculty, where did you begin? There was not a single book, nothing. You had your notes and had done some reading before that. Did you go to conferences in folklore studies?*

Yes, yes, the first one was in Pula in 1951 and the second one took place in 1952. And then I followed every congress.

*You were friends with Rihtman.<sup>8</sup>*

I was. Žganec<sup>9</sup> had published a lot of his writings. I was especially interested in Rihtman because he followed his old diaphonics and that inspired me to begin exploring and recording that type of music.

*How did Rihtman treat you? Was he benevolent?*

He criticized me when I spoke at the first congress about folk singing and the experience of collecting songs. My presentation was flawed. But I accepted it. It went slowly. I'm self-taught.

*The beginnings.*

Well, I did have a degree from the Music Academy, the music theory department. I had a degree in ethnology. And slowly all of that stuff matured in me, I kept reading, there were congresses all the time. There was a wealth of topics.

*Folk creativity.*

Folk creativity as well. Nedeljković<sup>10</sup> was like a father to us. He kept asking me to write something for him. He invited me to be an associate fellow at the Institute of Ethnography, so I did fieldwork with them, traveled to Prizren,

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<sup>7</sup> Stanojlo Rajičić.

<sup>8</sup> Cvjetko Rihtman, an ethnomusicologist from Bosnia and Herzegovina.

<sup>9</sup> Vinko Žganec, a Croatian ethnomusicologist.

<sup>10</sup> Dušan Nedeljković, a Serbian folklorist.

Kosovo, etc., and collected material. I came to know and work with Milojević's<sup>11</sup> and Vasiljević's singers: they sang for me as they had done for them. Milojević's book was likewise a product of fieldwork.

*Those are nice experiences. The same singers.*

Well, yes. The same singers. Because they were still alive at the time.

*A curious fact is that you recorded Stana Karaminga's song "Dimitrije, sine Mitre".*

Yes, this was in Vranje. It was 1960, I was a permanent employee at the radio, for fifty years, and I was collecting melodies for Karaklajić.<sup>12</sup> I would write them down and they would be included in the programming.

*In the repertory.*

Right, for instance, Karaminga's *Dimitrije, sine Mitre* – that song became a hit in a way, because it was played on the radio. It was sung by Danica Obrenić. Later it was sung by Anđelija Milić.

*The radio had an interest in collecting songs, because they have to keep refreshing their broadcasting repertory.*

A singer from Niš had some beautiful songs. And I recorded those songs for Karaklajić. Whatever was on the radio was required for programming purposes. He then produced radio broadcasts about them; I made broadcasts on various topics. For instance, the area around Leskovac and its customs.

*And when you began doing fieldwork, how did you choose where to go? What were your criteria?*

We went to places that had festivals. The festivals informed my selections. For instance, the first festival in Dragačevo in 1961, where I recorded some beautiful songs, polyphonic song, wedding songs, a lot of stuff.

*Was that the beginning of your exploration of Dragačevo, which you continued exploring for 25 years? You led student teams there...*

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<sup>11</sup> Miloje Milojević.

<sup>12</sup> Nikola Karaklajić, journalist and editor at Radio Belgrade.

Indeed. I explored Dragačevo with my students for more than 25 years. Did you go as well?

*I did. Then I went to Crnorečje, to Kosovo, Gnjlane, Stanišor, various villages, I remember well. You went to all of those places. You also spent some time around Svrlijig. That was a rich area.*

You went to Grljan.

*I did. With instrumentalists.*

I collected almost all of that stuff.

*Now I'd like to know more about your method. Did you mostly rely on the German school of ethnomusicology and Béla Bartók, with the Finnish method?*

I did indeed. I had already learned the Finnish method with Žganec and then I switched to Bartók's.

*Bartók's variant, which works better for our music.*

And then I taught analysis according to Bartók's system. We had an ordered structure: what constitutes a melographic list, first the lyrics, then how it's sung, analysis.

*The meter, form, cadences... We had drawers full of written analyses. That was our assignment, what constitutes classic ethnomusicology: fieldwork, transcribing, analysis. The holy trinity.*

Making young professionals. You also did fieldwork, like everyone else.

*When you became the first professor here, how many students did you have?*

I inherited five from Vasiljević. When I came here, you were my first student. There was nobody here, nobody wanted to study ethnomusicology. Everybody wanted to do musicology. But then the musicologists slowly started to gravitate toward us, you can see them in the photographs, they did fieldwork with me. Some of them liked it and studied both things, but officially you were not allowed to do that. And slowly we started getting more students. Then we introduced entrance exams as well.

*And it used to be the Division of Ethnomusicology, but within a shared department, for musicology and ethnomusicology, which was called the Department of Music History and Musical Folklore. The name of the course was not Ethnomusicology but Musical Folklore.*

Musical folklore is the raw material, so I reworked that when I wrote my book.

*It's the field of research, not the discipline.*

*Very interestingly, you sat on a committee for a number of years. In every exam, it was you, Professor Hercigonja, and Professor Peričić, before Professor Pejović came. This was the exam committee, for final theses.*

And then we introduced the master's program.

*And the doctoral program.*

When I was working on Boljevac, Srđan<sup>13</sup> and Mira<sup>14</sup> kept pressuring me – you must get a PhD. So I said, let me get the stuff I was still missing. And so I went to do fieldwork around Boljevac and made some supplementary recordings around 1987. There's a lot of fine stuff there. And then the book slowly came.

*By the way, you didn't really need to do that at all.*

You were the first one. You said you wanted it...

*Đorđe Đorđijev was the first one.*

And then we expanded it, so others could get doctoral degrees as well.

*That option is completely open now.*

Then the Macedonians came as well. Someone called Bora...

*Bora Džimrevski from Macedonia. But they were all your students.*

So I sat on that committee, because they had the option of doing doctoral degrees there.

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<sup>13</sup> Srđan Hofman.

<sup>14</sup> Mirjana Veselinović-Hofman.

*How much influence did our department have with you as chair? Together with Rada Petrović from the Institute of Musicology, you were the alpha and omega of our ethnomusicology. For years, there was no one else. For years, you were at the helm: the festival Crnorečje u pesmi i igri (“Crnorečje in Song and Dance”), the Dragačevo Assembly (Guča Trumpet Festival), Homoljski motivi (“Motives from Homolje”). You went to Bratovoje,<sup>15</sup> Prođoh Levač, prođoh Šumadiju (“Been to Levač, Been to Šumadija”). Then also Mokranjčevi dani (The Mokranjac Days Festival)...*

Yes, the Mokranjac Days. At first, we practically had folk music there. Now they want to reinstate it.

*So, concert performances of folk music on the one hand and symposia on the other. And those early booklets, which came out in the 1960s, with proceedings from the Mokranjac Days. On the other side, Razvitak (“Development”), that was important, too. In Razvitak, Toma Mijović always published papers presented at the Mokranjac Days. So it was a network of activities that was highly developed and practical. Also, you had Sabor narodnog stvaralaštva (Folk Creativity Assembly), which was likewise your work.*

I took you with me. We did fieldwork there.

*That’s right, in Leskovac, in 1978, I remember that.*

There were some great recordings.

*But what did you work with at first? Those weren’t some great tape recorders, some Telefunken ones, what we had at the time.*

At first we used big tape recorders, we have some of them here, we’ve kept them.

*I’ve seen the one Hercigonja used.*

Hercigonja used a big American one, but it had to be connected to the main supply.

*And Vasiljević had a Nagra with a wind-up mechanism.*

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<sup>15</sup> Bratovoje Marković, the organizer of the festival *Prođoh Levač, prođoh Šumadiju* (“Been to Levač, Been to Šumadija”).

He did everything by ear at first.

*There is a photo of him...*

Right, that's the wind-up Nagra.

*Doesn't need a battery. That's great. Then for years you...*

Then the Radio<sup>16</sup> made it possible for me to record everything with a Nagra, to obtain good recordings. I made radio broadcasts out of that stuff and it was great for transcribing.

*Another one of your activities was the Bemus festival. Concert performances at Bemus.*

Dušan Skovran came up with that idea. It was his idea. The first one was an event at the Gallery of Frescoes. My first concert happened there, before our first performance at Bemus. And then the whole thing moved to Bemus. I was constantly doing fieldwork and bringing performers from the countryside, you know that. For instance, the famous piper Krstivoje Subotić. Then you made a book about him. It all unfolded from a single coil...

*It all unfolded like a ball of thread. For years I was a participant in all of it, from 1973, and in 2013 it will be 40 years since we began working together. We've been through a lot together. There is an anecdote. They say that one night you had to stay at a villager's house and that all of you slept on a single bed, staring at the ceiling, through the roof.*

The stars were coming out... We couldn't get back. We were in the field, in Dragačevo. We would come by bus, carrying big tape recorders and going from one village to the next. There were buses you could take, so we waited for them, so we wouldn't have to carry...

*What did you bring with you, what kind of equipment?*

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<sup>16</sup> According to the secretary of Belgrade Radio 3 at the time, Dušan Ćasić, Radio 3 provided Prof. Dević with a Nagra recorder for the purposes of making fieldwork recordings. On the waves of Radio Belgrade 3, Dević played his fieldwork recordings as part of the "Music Tradition" (*Muzička tradicija / Музичка традиција*) broadcast, along with his commentaries.

You can see that in some of the photos. I had a camera, two Nagra tape recorders, two microphones, and I made some high-quality recordings. There was a Telefunken one, and later an Uher tape recorder. I made a lot of recordings with the Uher. Vlada Dimkov also went with me. He was the Radio's main fieldwork sound recording operator. Radoje Dimić went with us as well. He would give me a Nagra to make recordings with it and that was my training. Everything clicked together, in succession, helping me produce good recordings and do good work.

*(The interview was transcribed by the section editor Ivana Miladinović Prica)*

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## STUDIES

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### FROM HABSBURG CLASSROOMS TO SOCIALIST YUGOSLAVIA: A TRAJECTORY OF SLOVENIAN CHILDREN'S AND YOUTH SONGBOOKS

**Abstract:** This article examines the development of Slovenian children's and youth songbooks from the nineteenth century to the early 1970s, culminating in the influential school songbook *Prek sveta odmeva pesem* (1972). By analysing curricula, pedagogical reforms, and editorial practices across the Habsburg, interwar Yugoslav, and socialist periods, the study demonstrates how songbooks functioned as cultural artefacts shaping musical, educational, and national identities. Despite political shifts, strong continuities persisted, particularly the central role of folk song. *Prek sveta odmeva pesem* is shown to synthesise these traditions within the modernised framework of the unified eight-year school system.

**Keywords:** songbooks, music education in Slovenia, children's and youth musical culture, school curricula and reforms, *Prek sveta odmeva pesem*.

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## **Introduction**

Children's and youth songbooks constitute a fundamental yet surprisingly under-researched source for understanding twentieth-century Slovenian cultural and musical history. Although they were used continuously in school settings from the nineteenth century onward, scholarly literature has tended to treat them merely as peripheral didactic tools rather than as complex cultural documents. Only a systematic historical–analytical approach reveals that songbooks – through their selection of repertoire, editorial interventions, visual design, and institutional oversight – reflect key aspects of the development of schooling, cultural policy, ideological orientations, and artistic standards of their time.

In the post-Second World War period (the era on which this study focuses) songbooks occupy a position at the intersection of several dynamic processes: school reform, the professionalisation of music education, the emergence of new youth cultures, and the shaping of socialist cultural identity. At the same time, this period displays a clear continuity with pre-war editorial traditions. Songbooks embody the tension between rupture and continuity, between ideological instrumentalisation and pedagogical expertise, between folk tradition and new creative output.

Within the Slovenian context, the songbook is a distinctly hybrid genre. Publications intended for school singing or choral training often incorporate a wide array of elements: conducting instructions, rhythmic exercises, improvisational prompts, choral arrangements, didactic guidelines, and illustrated content. The boundaries between songbook, choral anthology, pedagogical handbook, music textbook, and printed collection of songs are frequently fluid. This genre openness allows songbooks to be understood as part of the material culture of education (Burke) – as objects that transmit cultural norms, aesthetic preferences, and institutional practices.

This study focuses primarily on the period after 1945, when modern Slovenian music pedagogy emerged within socialist Yugoslavia. The years from 1945 to roughly a decade after the introduction of the eight-year primary school (1958/60) were crucial for the development of songbooks: the system became centralised; schools received clearer pedagogical guidelines; editorial processes were professionalised; and institutional support for youth singing became a significant pillar of cultural policy. Songbooks thus found themselves situated between the demands of curricula and professional ambitions, between publishing constraints, teachers' expectations, and the broader cultural objectives of the state.

Yet the repertoire of postwar songbooks often continued to draw on pre-war traditions. Editorial teams retained many of the same figures, pedagogical approaches remained similar, and the understanding of the folk song as the “natural” foundation of musical education persisted. Consequently, postwar songbooks were not simply products of the new state, but rather outcomes of long-term processes in which older models and new ideological emphases intertwine.

### **Curricular Continuities and the Making of a Canon: Towards *Prek Sveta Odmeva Pesem***

*Prek sveta odmeva pesem* is one of the most recognisable Slovenian songbooks and, despite more than 50 years of history, it remains a staple of music education in primary schools. In 1971, it was officially approved as a textbook by the Republican Secretariat for Education and Culture, a decision that significantly shaped its subsequent status. Although such approval may seem unsurprising in a period when textbooks were the primary teaching resource, elevating the songbook to textbook level effectively overshadowed numerous other collections and even curtailed the publication of new songbooks. The reasons for its exceptional prominence become clear only through an understanding of the historical development of children’s and youth musical literature up to that time.

An examination of curricula after 1945 reveals a compelling picture. Until 1958 the subject was still called *petje* (singing), a legacy of the school systems of the former Yugoslavia and the Austro-Hungarian Empire, in which singing was closely tied to basic musical-theoretical instruction.<sup>1</sup> This is confirmed by the 1879 curriculum, which even lists specific collections of songs, including Anton Nedved’s *Šolske pesmi*.<sup>2</sup>

In socialist Yugoslavia, frequent educational reforms significantly influenced curricular structures. Although the content of music education did not undergo radical changes, pedagogical methods and systematic didactic approaches developed substantially.

It is noteworthy that postwar curricula generally did not specify textbooks or songbooks, with the exception of the Rationale for the Eight-Year

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<sup>1</sup> The curricula for primary and secondary schools are held by the Slovenian School Museum in Ljubljana.

<sup>2</sup> The title does not correspond to the titles of Nedved’s songbooks. It was most likely a reprint of the 1865 edition *Pesmi za mladost* (*Songs for Youth*).

School Curriculum (1959),<sup>3</sup> which recommended several collections: from new postwar songbooks (Kalan, Kramolc, Mihelčič-Potočnik) to older pre-war editions, especially Pregelj's *Nageljčki*. The list in footnote 3 is instructive for several reasons: it includes most – but not all – new postwar collections; it also cites a songbook from an earlier period; it names the key figures shaping postwar primary-school vocal literature; the listed songbooks contain monophonic and polyphonic songs as well as choral works; the document explicitly notes that none of the existing collections was fully adequate.

Despite the intense postwar musical production and the steady flow of new repertoires published in the music periodical *Grlica*,<sup>4</sup> earlier songbooks continued to appear in the curriculum. This points to a clear continuity: postwar youth musical literature was built upon traditions long established in schools since the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes/Yugoslavia.

The central role of Pregelj's songbooks in the subject *Petje (Singing)* in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes is further confirmed by the 1926 curriculum for the first four years of primary school, which lists as “convenient songbooks for the teacher” the collections by: Drago Ilić, Anton Dobronić, Ciril Pregelj, France Marolt, Janez Žirovnik, and Hinko Druzovič.

In accordance with the ideals of the new state and its emphasis on education in the spirit of national and civic unity, the selection also includes Croatian and Serbian songbooks. Alongside the newer Slovenian collections, the curriculum likewise envisages older ones dating back to the Austro-Hungarian period (Druzovič, Žirovnik). This again illustrates the continuity and persistent presence of songbooks from earlier eras.

The curriculum defines its primary aim as the “awakening and developing of aesthetic and patriotic sentiment”, with an emphasis on singing “lighter

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<sup>3</sup> In the 1959 curriculum, the following songbooks are listed under “Sources”:

Kalan Pavle: *Drobne pesmi*, vol. II, Ljubljana, 1954.

Kramolc Luka – Matija Tomc: *Pesmarica za srednje šole*, several postwar editions.

Mihelčič Slavko – Potočnik Peter: *Zapojmo*, vol. I and II, Ljubljana, 1949.

Pregelj Ciril: *Nageljčki*, in particular vol. I and II, Celje, 1928–29.

Some suitable material can also be found in the music journal *Grlica*, as well as in several collections by individual composers (Bitenc, Kuhar, Pahor, Pirnik).

In: Učni načrt (nastavni program) za I., II., III. in IV. razred vseh osnovnih šol v Kraljevini Srbom, Hrvatov in Slovencev, Beograd 1926, p. 20 (Curriculum [Instructional Program] for the First, Second, Third, and Fourth Grades of All Elementary Schools in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, Belgrade).

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.dlib.si/details/URN:NBN:SI:spr-MALM3JLG>

patriotic songs”, both folk and art songs. Art songs were to be chosen from the domestic compositional output, while folk songs continued to serve as the fundamental instructional material.

A retroactive examination of curricula from three different historical periods reveals that efforts to cultivate children’s and youth musical literature in Slovenia have been present since at least the second half of the nineteenth century, and that traditions were carried forward from one period to the next. By 1959, when the number of available songbooks reached its historical peak, the *Rationale* to the curriculum explicitly stressed the need for “a suitable, systematically organized songbook”. This aspiration cannot be attributed solely to socialist ideology; rather, it stemmed from professional and didactic efforts to provide music education with high-quality material aligned with contemporary pedagogical principles. Such a conclusion is possible only through a comparative historical perspective, which shows that early vocal literature for young people developed in close connection with the evolution of the school system, itself shaped by broader socio-political circumstances.

### **Austro-Hungarian Foundations: Between Institutional Constraints and the Emergence of the First Systematic Songbooks**

Music education in the Habsburg Monarchy was marked by pronounced stratification: it differed significantly between urban and rural schools, and among regular primary (Volks-) schools, Bürgerschulen, and gymnasiums. Singing was formally a compulsory subject, yet its quality depended heavily on the individual teacher’s musical competence and on the availability of appropriate instructional materials.

It is within this context that the first Slovenian songbooks emerged – initially with a strong moral and educational emphasis (Anton Martin Slomšek’s *Drobtinice* and *Šola veselega lepega petja za pridno šolsko mladino*), and later with more methodologically-structured collections by Jurij Flajšman and Anton Nedvėd, both of whom aligned their approaches with broader Habsburg pedagogical principles. Given that Nedvėd’s contribution represented pioneering work in the field of children’s and youth songs for school use,<sup>5</sup> it is unsurprising that his songbooks were prescribed in contemporary curricula. Nevertheless, due to the structure and stratification of the school system, one should not assume that this repertoire was consistently – or even widely – used across all institutions.

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<sup>5</sup> *Kratek nauk o glasbi* (1863, 1893), *Pesmi za mladost* (1867), *Slavček* (1879–1896), *Početni pouk v petji za ljudske šole* (1894).

The 1869 school reform established minimal guidelines for the teaching of singing but did not introduce systematic songbooks. Early collections thus arose from the individual initiatives of teachers, resulting in substantial variation in repertoire from one school to another.

Although Anton Foerster made a significant contribution to youth choral literature, Hinko Druzovič emerged as Nedvéd's true successor at the beginning of the twentieth century. The author of the first Slovenian music pedagogy handbook and a staunch advocate of teaching singing through notation, Druzovič was critical of singing instruction in primary (folk) schools, arguing that pupils generally lacked adequate musical grounding. In his songbooks he therefore systematically integrated teaching methods, theoretical foundations, vocal exercises, and curated song selections, which made his collections a hybrid form between a songbook and a textbook.

Although it remains uncertain whether teachers of the time were sufficiently trained to use such demanding material, Druzovič's songbooks – with their progressive pedagogical approach – became fundamental instructional resources after the First World War, as confirmed by the 1926 curriculum. His *Lira*, intended for secondary school students, sought to elevate school singing to a higher, more artistically ambitious level. The fact that multi-voice youth singing was still in its developmental stages before the war – and strongly shaped by the social conditions and school structures of the period – was also emphasised by Vasilij Mirk in the postwar *Grlica*.<sup>6</sup>

### **The Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes/Yugoslavia: Consolidation of Tradition and the Development of Youth Song Literature**

With the dissolution of the Habsburg Monarchy and the establishment of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, the cultural conditions for Slovenians changed significantly. Owing to substantial disparities in cultural and educational development among the various regions, the pre-1918 school legislation largely remained in force; it was only with the 1929 School Act that elementary education was unified and compulsory eight-year schooling introduced.<sup>7</sup> The elementary school was defined as a “national school”, divided into lower and upper stages, after which pupils could continue their

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<sup>6</sup> Vasilij Mirk, “Poziv višjim gimnazijam”, *Grlica*, 20, 1956–57, 20.

<sup>7</sup> Ervin Dolenc, “Kultura 1918–1941”, in: Jasna Fischer et. al. (Ed.), *Slovenska novejša zgodovina: Od programa Zedinjena Slovenija do mednarodnega priznanja Republike Slovenije*, Ljubljana, Mladinska knjiga, Inštitut za novejšo zgodovino, 2005, 415–440.

education in different types of institutions – though graduates of *meščanske šole* (civic schools) were barred from progressing to the higher gymnasias. Attempts to standardise schooling across the kingdom faced considerable difficulties, influenced by ideas of the “triune nation” and by the introduction of a non-existent Serbo-Croatian-Slovenian language as the official state language.<sup>8</sup> This was reflected also in the curricula – for instance, the 1926 primary school curriculum, which lists among recommended songbooks several Serbian collections by Drago Ilić. Because singing instruction was now included in all four grades of primary school, the lower stage of compulsory education became more uniform, which in turn contributed to greater consistency in the teaching of singing.

Although Druzovič's songbooks constituted fundamental pedagogical material, the journal *Grlica* documents a growing need for new and more suitable songs.<sup>9</sup> Existing collections were regarded as insufficiently “domestic” and overly “school-like”, prompting Ciril Pregelj to begin collecting folk songs appropriate for young singers and to arrange many of them himself – particularly to address the lack of three-part repertoires for youth choirs. The formation of a new repertoire was also shaped by Hubad's pedagogical courses at the newly established State Conservatory, which trained teachers in more modern methods of choral instruction. These courses reportedly produced numerous influential music educators and authors of school songbooks, among them Pregelj and Pavel Kozina, who expanded the repertoire in accordance with Druzovič's didactic principles. During this period, the emphasis on folk material became the dominant criterion of school song literature – a noteworthy contrast to Druzovič's own collections, which consist predominantly of original compositions.

In the nineteenth century, the principal criterion for identifying folk songs was their circulation and popularity among the people. A more precise understanding of folk material began to develop only with the large-scale collection of Slovenian folk songs undertaken by the so-called Committee for the Collection of Folk Songs as part of the wider Austrian project *Das Volkslied in Österreich* (1905–1918). In the interwar period, this initiative primarily strengthened public awareness of the significance of the folk musical heritage, even though teachers themselves did not yet possess a thorough

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<sup>8</sup> Aleš Gabrič, *Sledi šolskega razvoja na Slovenskem*, Ljubljana, Pedagoški inštitut, 2009, 22.

<sup>9</sup> In: [the editors of *Grlica*], “Ciril Pregelj – 70-letnik”, *Grlica*, 1, 1956/57, 12.

knowledge of it. This context helps explain why Žirovnik's *Narodne pesmi* remained part of the primary school curriculum: they provided an accessible and practical source of folk repertoires for school use.

*From Education to Art: The Development of Slovenian Youth Music Literature Between the Two World Wars*

The interwar period opened new horizons for Slovenian children's and youth music literature, particularly with Emil Adamič's *Mladinske pesmi* (1922) and Srečko Kumar's *Otroške pesmi* (1924). Their significance was quickly recognised both in Kumar's *Grlica* and later in the cultural discourse of the Second Yugoslavia, where authors spoke of the "birth of our youth song", the "ascent of youth choral music", and even a "rebirth" of youth creativity. In assessing the situation before the First World War as modest and largely confined to the school environment, Borut Loparnik adopted a broad cultural perspective, though in doing so he overlooked the school-oriented works of Nedvčed and Foerster.<sup>10</sup> Nevertheless, he acknowledges that without these early efforts, the later artistic flourishing of the interwar years would not have been possible.

In the preface to *Mladinske pesmi*, Adamič noted that young people had grown weary of the monotonous school repertoire and that teachers lacked suitable compositions for school ceremonies and events.<sup>11</sup> The increased demand for high-quality literature resulted from both the new school system and changing cultural circumstances: the establishment of the Conservatory and the activity of two major choral organisations significantly strengthened choral life across Slovenia. Alongside the *Glasbena matica*, Kumar's Teachers' Choir and Marolt's Academic Choir played an important role, frequently performing more contemporary works by Slovenian and Yugoslav composers.

With the reform of the school system – particularly the introduction of co-education as a new educational reality – the need for song and choral repertoires simultaneously changed and expanded. Kumar's *Otroške pesmi* (1924) appeared to have anticipated a shift towards more artistically oriented youth music literature by inviting composers such as Adamič, Dobronič, Grbec, Kogoj, Lajovic, Vodopivec, and others to write new works for children and young people. He continued in this spirit with *Grlica* (1933–1935), a

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<sup>10</sup> Borut Loparnik, "Po stopinjah časa", *Grlica*, 16, 1973/74, 14.

<sup>11</sup> Emil Adamič, *Mladinske pesmi*, Učiteljska tiskarna, Ljubljana, 1922. <<http://www.dlib.si/?URN=URN:NBN:SI:DOC-ZJWP9AEL>>

Yugoslav-oriented serial publication devoted to youth music. Kumar initially intended to adapt the contributions for use in a school songbook,<sup>12</sup> but it became evident that the pieces were too demanding and extensive for school needs and for the standards set by the curriculum.

The interwar development of songbooks thus produced two new types: the songbook as artistic choral literature and the songbook as a school-oriented didactic tool. It was within this environment that Kumar's student Avgust Šuligoj – “the founding father” of the Trboveljski slavček choir (Trbovlje Nightingale) – emerged. Working with children from the mining community, he created a choir of remarkable quality, a cultural symbol of the state, and a source of inspiration for numerous composers. The successes of the Trboveljski slavček choir significantly accelerated the development of youth musical creativity and raised the standard of vocal instruction in schools.

In 1934, Šuligoj organised the Days of Youth Music, bringing together twenty choirs; at the main concert, 1,200 children performed works by Grbec and Adamič. With the Trboveljski slavček choir he presented contemporary works at home and abroad by composers such as: Osterc, Pahor, Kogoj, Mirk, Bravničar, Premrl, Adamič, Papandopulo, Matetič Ronjgov, Krstić, and others.

### **After 1945: Leading up to *Prek sveta odmeva pesem***

The new state and its new social order after 1945 profoundly influenced the development of schooling in Slovenia and throughout Yugoslavia. In the altered sociopolitical circumstances, the ruling ideology of the Communist Party sought new principles for the education system;<sup>13</sup> however, the envisioned structural reforms could not be fully implemented until the 1950s, owing to the country's poor economic conditions. Immediately after the war, a commission was appointed to review curricula and textbooks and to assess their suitability. Some textbooks were rejected, others revised, while in the

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<sup>12</sup> *Grlica: revijalna zbirka omladinske muzike*, Zagreb, self-published by Srečko Kumar, 1933–1935, II.

<sup>13</sup> According to the Minister of Education, Lidija Šentjurg, the task of the school system was as follows: “Our education and our schools must, in addition to providing basic knowledge, instil in our people and youth the lofty ideas and achievements of the National Liberation Struggle, show them the perspectives of future development, and educate strong, fearless, and courageous builders of the new Yugoslavia, who will believe in the success of their work and their efforts.” This is how Minister Šentjurg articulated the mission of education in her speech in 1947. In: Aleš Gabrič, *Slovenska agitpropovska kulturna politika 1945–1952*, Ljubljana, Mladika, 1991, 508.

case of textbooks for Latin, Greek, physical education, music, and chemistry only minor corrections were required, such as the removal of authors' and translators' names. Several textbooks were approved simply because no alternatives existed, which meant they were free of any ideological tendencies.<sup>14</sup>

Organisational and curricular reform (aside from the most ideologically-sensitive subjects – history, geography, religious instruction, and, to a degree, the Slovene language) followed the Third Plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia (29–30 December 1949, Belgrade), when the authorities acknowledged the serious missteps caused by unsuccessful organisational experiments and excessive ideological interference in education. In addition to the poor equipment of schools, dilapidated buildings, and the challenges of teaching combined classes, the new government faced significant difficulties due to the heterogeneity of the four-year upper stage of compulsory schooling. The division into lower gymnasiums, eight-year schools, and higher elementary schools did not provide equal educational opportunities for all children between roughly eleven and fifteen years of age,<sup>15</sup> even though the curricula of these institutions became increasingly similar during the first five years of the new state.<sup>16</sup>

With the establishment of the Commission for School Reform at the Federal Assembly in 1954, numerous public debates emerged concerning the future organisation of the school system, the introduction of a unified elementary school, possibilities for further education, and the standardisation of the system and curricula throughout the country. All these initiatives were grounded in the idea of shaping the “new socialist human being” in the spirit of a socialist, working-class society. According to Gabrič, the commission completed its final proposal by mid-1957, and this document became the basis for the legislation adopted in the subsequent years.<sup>17</sup> Since education fell under the jurisdiction of the republics, the Federal Assembly enacted only a general education law in 1958, which abolished the system inherited from the Austro-Hungarian monarchy and introduced an eight-year unified elementary school compulsory for all children. The gymnasium became a four-year secondary school, equal in status to other secondary-school pro-

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 514.

<sup>15</sup> Aleš Gabrič, “Šolska reforma”, in: Jasna Fischer et. al. (Ed.): *Slovenska novejša zgodovina: Od programa Zedinjena Slovenija do mednarodnega priznanja Republike Slovenije*, Ljubljana, Mladinska knjiga, Inštitut za novejšo zgodovino, 2005, 1035–1038.

<sup>16</sup> Aleš Gabrič, *Slovenska agitpropovska kulturna politika 1945–1952*, 559.

<sup>17</sup> Aleš Gabrič, “Šolska reforma”, 1036.

grams.<sup>18</sup> The reform process concluded in April 1960 with the adoption of a new curriculum, described as a “compromise between the previously less demanding upper grades of the elementary school and the more demanding lower gymnasium”, which ensured equal access to secondary education for all children.

The reform also significantly affected music education. In the justification of the 1959 curriculum, the former subject “singing” appears under the new name “music education”, accompanied by a detailed articulation of its aims, the grade-by-grade content structure, and the sources on which teachers were expected to rely. The final printed version of the curriculum from 1962 no longer includes these sources; instead, it merely recommends that teachers select up to ten songs as a mandatory repertoire for all schools. The curriculum also emphasises the development of choral singing – each school was encouraged to establish, where possible, three choirs: a children’s choir, a youth choir, and a youth choir for the upper grades.

In the 1950s, issues concerning music education were a regular topic of professional consultations among music educators throughout the country, including within the Slovenian Association of Music Educators (Društvo glasbenih pedagogov Slovenije). Significant systematic contributions to the reform of music instruction were published in *Grlica* by Peter Potočnik,<sup>19</sup> author of the *Methodology of Vocal Instruction* for the first four grades (1950, 1952, 1957), which Slavko Mihelčič complemented with the song collection *Zapojmo* for the first and second grades of primary school.

In *Grlica*, two distinct tendencies became clearly established during the 1950s: the need for systematic didactic methods for teaching music and for appropriate instructional materials; and a commitment to publishing original artistic choral literature for young singers, which was also the journal’s founding mission. Both orientations had their roots in the interwar period – in the work of Druzovič and Pregelj on one side, and Kumar on the other. This duality was likewise reflected in postwar youth music creativity, while *Grlica* itself gradually transformed during the 1960s from a journal of youth choral music into a journal of music education.

Because the Trboveljski slavček choir had profoundly shaped youth choral culture and stimulated the growth of school choirs, the postwar period

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Peter Potočnik, “Razmišljanje o reformi glasbenega pouka na osnovnih šolah v Sloveniji”, *Grlica*, 1, 2, 4, 1958/59.

frequently invoked its legacy. Although the rise of youth singing was not as rapid as during Šuligoj's tenure, the number of school choirs far exceeded that of the prewar period, even if their early activities were largely limited to performances at the many school ceremonies of the time. One new development in schools was the introduction of unison children's singing, initially met with hesitation but accepted as an equal part of school practice after Janez Kuhar's successful 1956 concert of 34 unison songs with piano accompaniment.

The Youth Choral Festival in Celje, founded in 1946, began full operations in 1958, expanded beyond the local framework in 1961, and by 1963 became an international biennial festival. The Slovene Philharmonic Youth Choir, founded under Šuligoj in 1949, existed for only three years; a far more lasting influence was exerted by the Children's and Youth Choir of Radio Ljubljana, established in 1957 by Janez Bitenc and Janez Kuhar, through which youth choral singing became an integral part of the radio programme.

The growing choral activity was also described in 1966 by Ignacij Ota, who emphasised that children's choir singing had become a regular component of school and extracurricular events, while teachers increasingly sought out new songs and repertoires with notation.<sup>20</sup>

In the 1960s, municipal festivals of youth choirs expanded significantly, and from 1968 onward the central event became the republican festival in Zagorje ob Savi. This development grew directly out of the tradition of the Trboveljski slavček choir, as postwar youth choirs in the Zasavje region increasingly sought stronger interconnection and the elevation of their activities to the republican level.<sup>21</sup>

*Grlica* (together with the musical journal *Naši zbori*) and the published works of Slovenian composers could not meet the increasing demand for youth choral literature. As school choirs became a permanent feature of cultural life, various institutions began independently issuing songbooks and choral collections. In the 1960s, Celje Youth Choral Festival, Radio Ljubljana, and Pionirski dom Ljubljana published several collections of children's and youth choirs. These volumes expanded the available repertoires – particu-

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<sup>20</sup> Ignacij Ota, "Predgovor", in: Ignacij Ota (Ed.), *Otroške in mladinske pesmi*, Trst, Slovenska prosvetna zveza, 1966, 3.

<sup>21</sup> Janja Dragan Gombač, Lenka Gašpirc, Dragica Žvar, *Najlepši čas, mladosti čas!: dvajset revij slovenskega mladinskega petja v Zagorju ob Savi: 1968–2006*, Ljubljana, JSKD, Glasbena matica, 2006, 17.

larly important at a time when access to foreign music literature was limited – while simultaneously articulating positions on programme policy, which was expected to be broad, stylistically diverse, and musically and rhythmically fresh. Such guidelines gradually shaped the criteria for assembling school choir programmes. While the Celje festival published new works by Slovenian composers, RTV and the Pionirski dom primarily selected historical works by foreign authors.

### **Songbooks after 1945: Typologies, Pedagogical Functions, and the Path toward *Prek sveta odmeva pesem***

If we set aside literature intended for school-based choral singing, more demanding works for youth choirs, and original compositions for children and young people,<sup>22</sup> and instead turn to music-didactic collections, the following set of songbooks emerges:<sup>23</sup>

1945

- *Mladinske pesmi iz naše osvobodilne borbe*, Selection of Songs by Partisan Composers
- *Otroške narodne pesmi*, ed. Makso Pirnik

1948

- *Igraj, kolce!* Collection of Regional Songbooks, ed. Matija Tomc
- *Mladinske pesmi za predšolsko dobo* for voice and piano, ed. Vida Jeraj
- *N'mav čez izaro*, Collection of Regional Songbooks, ed. France Marolt

1949

- *Pesem najmlajšim "Biba leze"*, Collection of Songs for Preschool Children, ed. Vida Jeraj
- *Pevska vadnica*, ed. Adolf Groebming, Luka Kramolc in Matija Tomc
- *Zapojmo! 1*, Songbook for the 1st and 2nd Grades of Primary School, ed. S. Mihelčič in P. Potočnik
- *Zapojmo! 2*, Songbook for the 3rd and 4th Grades of Primary School, ed. S. Mihelčič in P. Potočnik

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<sup>22</sup> Composers who published original, artistically-autonomous works for children and youth up to 1973 include: Rado Simoniti, Slavko Mihelčič, Karol Pahor, Danilo Švara, Marjan Kozina, Janez Kuhar, Makso Pirnik, Ivan Šček, Matija Bravničar, Pavel Šivic, Jakob Jež, Srečko Koporc, Viktor Šonc, Viktor Mihelčič, Franjo Luževič, and Janez Bitenc.

<sup>23</sup> The bibliographic information for all songbooks mentioned in this article is available on the COBISS portal: <https://plus.cobiss.net/cobiss/si/sl>

1952

- *Drobne pesmi tolminskim učiteljiščnikom na pot*, vol. I, ed. Makso Prinik
- *Pridi Gorenč – vabi Dolenč*. Collection of Regional Songbooks, ed. Matija Tomc

1954

- *Drobne pesmi učiteljiščnikom na pot*, vol. II, ed. Pavle Kalan
- Ivan Grbec, *Pesmarica za osnovne, nižje srednje in strokovne šole*, vol. I

1955

- *Drobne pesmi učiteljiščnikom na pot*, vol. III, ed. Pavle Kalan

1959

- *Mladina poje: pesmarica za koroško mladino*, vol. I, ed. F. Aichholzer in R. Vouk

1960

- Janez Bitenc, *Naša četica koraka*, Collection of Children's Songs and a Handbook for Early Childhood Music
- *Mladina poje: zbirka pesmi, iger in plesov s petjem, urejena po tonskem obsegu*, vol. I

1961

- *Otroci domovini*, collected and edited by Albin Weingerl

1962

- Janez Bitenc in Janez Kuhar, *Otroške pesmi*
- *Otroške pesmi raznih narodov*

1964

- *Mladina poje*, Song Collection for the Upper Grades of Primary School, vol. II, ed. Luka Kramolc
- *Partizanske pesmi za otroke*
- *Pesmi za osnovno šolo*, ed. Franc Gruden

1965

- *Partizanske pesmice*, ed. Janez Bitenc in Mirko Kokol

1966

- Janez Kuhar, *Cicibanom na pot*
- *Otroške in mladinske pesmi*, ed. Ignacij Ota
- *Uspavanke in nagajivke*
- Mira Voglar in Marta Paulin, *Čirule, čarule, pojte pesmice in rajajte*

- *Zapojmo s kitaro*, Songbook for the First Four Grades of Primary School and for Music Schools, ed. Stanko Prek

1967

- *Pesmarica za višje razrede osnovnih šol* (5th to 8th grades), ed. Stanko Prek

1969

- *Slovenska pesmarica*, vol. III, folk songs, ed. L. Kramolc, Z. Kumer in M. Tomc

1971

- *Pesmi z gora*, a selection of songs by Danilo Škerbinek

1972

- *Prek sveta odmeva pesem*, Songbook for the 4th to 8th Grades of Primary School, ed. Miro Kokol

What picture does this survey of songbooks reveal? The songbooks can be divided into four categories:

- a) Songs for the youngest children, intended for preschoolers and possibly first grade pupils, characterised by clearly-emphasised didactic strategies. Within this tradition of simple, careful, pedagogically-conceived monophonic songs, we find works by Vida Jeraj, Janez Bitenc, Janez Kuhar, and Mira Voglar.
- b) Songs for primary school children arranged by levels of difficulty and by grade, such as the songbooks *Zapojmo* by Slavko Mihelčič, Grbec's *Pesmarica*, and the Carinthian (Celovec/Klagenfurt) collection *Mladina poje*.
- c) Collections of regional songbooks, presenting multi-part choral settings from different Slovenian regions.
- d) Youth songs from the Liberation Front (OF) and partisan songs.
- e) Folk songs, as represented in the *Slovenska pesmarica*.

An analysis of the songbooks reveals an increased interest in materials for preschool children and a marked lack of songbooks for the upper grades of primary school. The works that most closely meet the needs of these higher grades are Grbec's *Pesmarica za osnovne, nižje srednje in strokovne šole* (1954) and *Mladina poje* (1959). In addition to songs arranged by grade and level of difficulty, Grbec's songbook includes an overview of the fundamentals of music theory, musical texture, and conducting, and it demonstrates a clear awareness of Kumar's legacy. *Mladina poje* was originally intended for bilingual schools in Austria and contains primarily folk songs, organised accord-

ing to their tonal range. A year later, a revised Slovene edition was published, while the second volume (1964) added canons as well as patriotic and partisan songs.

Grbec's songbook emerged from an environment with a strong choir tradition, whereas the Klagenfurt collection was developed with the aim of preserving Slovene song in postwar schools. Patriotic and battle songs had been firmly embedded in earlier songbooks, so their presence after the war is not surprising. The collections published immediately after 1945 reflect the legacy of the Partisan school system, while those from the 1960s primarily address the need for music suitable for school celebrations on state holidays. The shortage of appropriate material was also emphasised by Pavle Kalan in *Grlica* in 1960.<sup>24</sup> Nevertheless, patriotic and partisan content in most songbooks is not prominent enough to suggest a deliberate politicisation of youth music.

The *Drobne pesmi* volumes, intended for teacher training colleges (Pirnik in Gorica, Kalan in Ljubljana), contain folk and original songs in one, two, or three parts, and depart from older models of multipart writing. *Pevska vadinica*, compiled by Kramolc and Tomc (1949), was based on a pre-war textbook but introduced a new organisation and selection of songs, thereby constituting a new publication; its structural design significantly influenced the later songbook *Prek sveta odmeva pesem*.

A less successful attempt is Prek's *Zapojmo s kitaro*, which offered practical support for teaching through its instrumental accompaniment, but was criticised by Kramolc for its abundance of foreign songs and imprecise attributions of folk material.<sup>25</sup> Prek would likely have avoided these shortcomings had the third volume of the *Slovenska pesmarica* (1969) already been available – this was the first scientifically-grounded edition of Slovenian folk repertory. Although not explicitly intended for schools, it enabled a more informed performance of folk music in educational settings, while Zmaga Kumer's introduction contributed to a more rigorous scholarly understanding of folk song, which had previously often been oversimplified.

The long-anticipated songbook for primary schools was published in 1972, although it had already been approved as a textbook for the 4th–8th grades by the Republican Secretariat for Education and Culture on 10 March 1971.

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<sup>24</sup> Pavle Kalan, "Kakšnih pesmi nam manjka", *Grlica*, 1, 1960, 7–9.

<sup>25</sup> Luka Kramolc, "Stanko Prek, Pesmarica za višje razrede osnovnih šol osnovnih šol. S sodelovanjem Janje Korošec uredil in priredil – Ljubljana 1968", *Traditiones*, 1, 1973, 272.

*Prek sveta odmeva pesem* (*A Song Resounds Across the World*), comprising 536 pages, became by far the most extensive Slovenian songbook to date and was therefore printed in two volumes for technical reasons. The first volume contains folk songs – organised into songs from Slovenian regions, from other Yugoslav nations and nationalities, and from foreign traditions. The second volume consists of art songs (by Slovenian and other Yugoslav and foreign composers) as well as battle and revolutionary songs from Slovenia, other Yugoslav nations, and international composers.

Although the songbook is the work of Miro Kokol, Jakob Jež emphasised that “the compiled material underwent expert review and assessment to an extent unprecedented in the past, as distinguished composers and pedagogues were consulted.” The reviewers included Makso Pirnik and Pavel Šivic, while the expert committee consisted of Pavle Kalan, Uroš Krek, and Alojz Srebotnjak; Zmaga Kumer contributed specialised advice on Slovenian folk songs.

The songbook contains both monophonic and two-part songs, the latter taking the form either of canons or of settings for two independent voices. Kokol deliberately avoided parallel-third or parallel-sixth textures, arguing that such two-part writing represents “the simplest form of folk polyphony, which is improvised spontaneously and therefore should not be prescribed”. At the same time, he added notes wherever a folk third or sixth could be introduced, thereby encouraging improvised folk-style two-part singing in the school environment, as he believed that polyphonic singing brings children genuine enjoyment. Although officially classified as a textbook, Kokol departed from the established practice of earlier songbooks by refraining from assigning songs to specific grade levels.

Viewed from a broader historical perspective, and taking into account the long trajectory that preceded it, the songbook reflects contemporary scholarly insights into the transcription and interpretation of Slovenian folk music; it provided schools with a carefully-selected repertoire for state holiday celebrations, while simultaneously resonating with the increasingly cosmopolitan spirit of the period. It undoubtedly fulfilled its mission: through its substantial and thoughtfully curated corpus of Slovenian folk songs, it succeeded in preserving the foundational aim of earlier songbooks – capturing the spirit of the nation in song.

## By Way of Conclusion

The historical trajectory of Slovenian songbooks for children and young people demonstrates that these publications consistently functioned as much more than pedagogical tools – they were key cultural artefacts through which aesthetic values, educational norms, and collective identities were shaped. Although political frameworks shifted – from the Habsburg Monarchy to the interwar Yugoslav state, and finally to socialist Slovenia – the role of the songbook as a mediator between schooling, musical culture, and notions of belonging remained remarkably stable. The emergence of *Prek sveta odmeva pesem* in 1972 can thus be understood not as an isolated achievement but as the culmination of long-standing editorial, pedagogical, and musical traditions.

The songbook's enduring relevance is tied to its breadth, internal coherence, and its grounding in contemporary scholarly approaches to folk music transcription and music education. Its approval as a textbook undoubtedly strengthened its institutional authority, yet its real significance lies in the way it synthesised diverse musical repertoires and provided a usable, culturally-resonant framework for primary school singing. Precisely because songbooks stand at the intersection of music, pedagogy, and cultural policy, they open important avenues for further inquiry.

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## Summary

This article approaches Slovenian children's and youth songbooks as culturally-embedded artefacts that operate at the intersection of music pedagogy, cultural policy, and the material culture of schooling. Rather than treating songbooks as neutral didactic tools, the study situates them within broader processes through which educational systems articulate ideological aims, aesthetic values, and models of collective identity. In this sense, songbooks function as mediating objects: they transmit curricular priorities, reflect pedagogical norms, and embody tensions between continuity and reform.

The analysis begins with the post-1945 curricular landscape, which – despite profound political and ideological changes – reveals marked continuities with earlier

educational traditions. Until 1958, the subject of music remained officially designated as *petje* (“singing”), echoing Austro-Hungarian and interwar practices that linked vocal instruction with foundational music theory. Although socialist Yugoslavia introduced numerous school reforms, curricula rarely prescribed specific songbooks. The notable exception is the Rationale for the Eight-Year School Curriculum (1959), which recommended a mixed repertoire: newly created postwar collections (Kalan, Kramolc, Mihelčič–Potočnik) alongside older, prewar songbooks, in particular Pregelj’s *Nageljčki*. This co-existence indicates both the persistence of established pedagogical models and the recognition that no existing songbook fully met the demands of the reformed school system.

A parallel survey of published songbooks reveals similar patterns. The most intense period of production – late 1940s to 1960s – coincides with structural changes in primary education and the increasing professionalisation of music pedagogy. Yet many collections continue to rely on long-standing principles, especially the centrality of folk song as foundational musical and cultural material. Songbooks for upper primary grades remained scarce, and the repertory gap was filled only partially by regional anthologies, partisan-themed collections, and a limited number of more advanced pedagogical volumes.

Within this trajectory, *Prek sveta odmeva pesem* (1972) represents a pivotal culmination. Combining ethnomusicological rigor, expert review, and pedagogical functionality, it synthesises decades of songbook production and reflects the shifting expectations placed on music education. As such, the article argues that the study of songbooks offers a productive lens for examining how music, ideology, and schooling co-produce youth musical culture across changing historical contexts.

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**PHONOGRAPHIC RESEARCH (NON-COMMERCIAL)  
RECORDINGS OF SERBIAN MUSICAL-FOLKLORIC MATERIAL:  
FOREIGN CONTRIBUTIONS AND THE CONTEXT  
OF THEIR CREATION**

**Abstract:** The importance of using the phonograph was recognized by musical folklorists from across the region that, after the First World War, became part of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (renamed the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in 1929). However, the introduction of this device into their research practices was not implemented everywhere in accordance with that awareness. The varying pace of improvements in fieldwork through the use of the phonograph was only one indicator of the uneven development of musical folkloristics throughout the Western Balkans. Conditioned by numerous unfavorable circumstances, its advancement in Serbia progressed at a visibly slower pace than in the former parts of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, a fact reflected as well in the belated acquisition of the first phonograph in 1930. Under such circumstances, a kind of compensation for the historically very important yet modest domestic results in this field was provided by foreign researchers, through their own phonographic recordings of Serbian musical heritage in Serbia, in the broader region, or among Serbian populations in both near and distant diasporas. This paper offers a comprehensive chronological overview of these known research contributions, made between 1907 and 1940.

**Keywords:** phonographic recordings, phonographic collections, phonogram archives, Serbian musical folklore, *guslar* epics, Western Balkans.

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The invention of the phonograph by Thomas Alva Edison (1847–1931) in 1877 marked a significant turning point in the study of traditional world music. The use of the first device for recording and reproducing sound<sup>1</sup> greatly facilitated and accelerated fieldwork (as the need for on-site transcription was eliminated), advanced melography and analysis (due to the possibility of playback, enabling repeated listening to the same musical performance), and above all, decisively contributed to the establishment of comparative musicology, providing it with the essential prerequisite for any scientific discipline – documentation and verifiability of facts, permanently stored on a physical sound medium.<sup>2</sup>

After the earliest ethnomusicological application in America in 1890,<sup>3</sup> the phonograph quickly attracted the attention of music folklorists on the other side of the Atlantic as well. Thus, by the end of the nineteenth century, the first recordings were made in Russia in 1894 by Julius Block (Юлий Иванович Блок, 1858–1934), a German-born entrepreneur and philoso-

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<sup>1</sup> A somewhat earlier invention, the phonautograph, was patented in 1857 by Édouard-Léon Scott de Martinville (1817–1879), but this device only had the ability to graphically record sound on paper, not to reproduce it. On April 9, 1860, it was used to create the first graphical recording of the human voice, probably Martinville's own, who sang a short excerpt of the French folk song *Au clair de la lune*. Using computer technology, this visual recording was translated into sound in 2008 in Berkeley (California).

<sup>2</sup> The remaining two key constitutive events are linked to 1885, the official year of birth of comparative musicology. These are: the cent-system of Alexander John Ellis (1814–1890), introduced in his equally foundational study “On the Musical Scales of Various Nations” (1885); and “Umfang, Methode und Ziel der Musikwissenschaft” (1885), the treatise by Guido Adler (1855–1941) which established musicology, and within its systematic branch the field of comparative musicology (Vergleichende Musikwissenschaft), the precursor to ethnomusicology. It is worth noting that Adler divided musicology into historical and systematic branches, with the latter further divided into four subfields: music theory, music aesthetics, music pedagogy, and comparative musicology. See: Erica Mugglestone, “Guido Adler’s ‘The Scope, Method, and Aim of Musicology’ (1885): An English Translation with an Historico-Analytical Commentary”, *Yearbook for Traditional Music*, 13, 1981, 13.

<sup>3</sup> The credit for this goes to the ethnologist and archaeologist Jesse Walter Fewkes (1850–1930), who recorded the songs and stories of the Passamaquoddy North American Indians in the reservation at Calais (Maine) in the northeastern United States using a phonograph. He made these recordings with an early version of the phonograph, as part of the initial testing of the device in practice, conducted by the Edison company. See: Jesse Walter Fewkes, “A Contribution to Passamaquoddy Folk-Lore”, *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, 3/11, 1890, 257–280.

pher, who recorded several Russian epic songs (*bylinas*). Shortly thereafter, the famous Russian singer and folklorist Evgenia Lineva (Евгения Эдуардовна Линёва, 1853–1919) also conducted recordings, collecting examples of folk polyphony in the Upper Volga region and central Russia in 1897.<sup>4</sup> This period also includes the earliest sound recordings from Hungary, made in 1896 by the ethnographer Béla Vikár (Béla Vikár, 1859–1945) in Borsod county.<sup>5</sup>

In Europe, at the turn of the century, there was already such an abundance of recorded material that the first phonogram archives were established, both as repositories for research materials and as symbols of cultural prestige for developed countries. The oldest in the world was founded in 1899 in Vienna at the Austrian Academy of Sciences (Phonogrammarchiv der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften),<sup>6</sup> followed by the influential one in Berlin in 1900 (Berliner Phonogramm-Archiv),<sup>7</sup> and soon other European centers joined this trend.<sup>8</sup>

The phonograph was gradually improved over time and was given various names, which usually referred to the type of technological innovation or the producer's brand. The most significant change within the broad framework of this technology was made in 1887 by Emile Berliner (1851–1929) with his invention of the gramophone, replacing cylindrical media with more practical and economical flat discs. Although both systems – his and Edison's

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<sup>4</sup> Е. Канн-Новикова (Ed. Е. В. Гиппиус), *Собираиельница русских народных йесен Евѣния Линѣва*, Москва, Государственное музыкальное издательство, 1952, 44, 48, 62–101, 125–140.

<sup>5</sup> See: <https://nepi.kultura.hu/cikk/fonograffal-uttalan-utakon>. According to some authors, Vikár conducted the recordings as early as 1892. See: Walter Graf, "The Phonogrammarchiv der Österreichischen Akademie der Wisschenschaften in Vienna", *The Folklore and Folk Music Archivist*, IV/4, 1962, 4.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Gerda Lechleitner, "The Phonogrammarchiv of the Austrian Academy of Science", *Etnografie Sonore / Sound Ethnographies*, I/1, 2018, 225–239. However, there is data suggesting that the oldest phonogram archive was actually founded in Helsinki as early as 1893, at the Finnish Literature Society (Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura, SRS). See: Изалиј Земцовски, "Етномузикологија – стогодишњи пут", *Народно стваралаштво – folklor*, XXVI/1–4, 1987, 17.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Walter Graf, op. cit.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Jaap Kunst, *Ethnomusicology (A study of its nature, its problems, methods and representative personalities to which is added a bibliography)*, Hague, Martinus Nijhoff, 1959, 16–37; Mervyn McLean, *Pioneers of Ethnomusicology*, Coral Springs (CA), Plumina Press, 2006, 39–51.

– co-existed for decades, the term “phonograph” remained as a designation for all devices that convert sound impulses into a spiral groove on a medium (therefore, both cylindrical and disc-shaped),<sup>9</sup> and the technology itself remained in wide use as the sole standard until the mid-twentieth century, when it was replaced by the tape recorder.<sup>10</sup> This new invention brought numerous improvements, first and foremost the ability to record long musical pieces in their entirety, as phonograph records could hold only a few minutes of sound.<sup>11</sup>

The importance of using the phonograph was quickly recognized by music folklorists from across the region, but its introduction into research practice was not uniformly carried out in line with this recognition. The varying pace at which fieldwork with this device was advanced was just one indicator of the already-present uneven development in music folklore studies in areas that would later, after the First World War, become part of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, i.e. Yugoslav Kingdom (after its renaming in 1929).<sup>12</sup> This disparity in developmental conditions was influenced by several interrelated factors, primarily the following:

- different cultural and economic foundations, inherited from previous historical periods;
- the varying number, professional profiles, status, level of dedication, and methods of work of people engaged in the collection, research, and publication of music folklore material;
- disproportionate financial and other support from relevant national institutions, which unevenly assessed their priorities in different regions;
- the influence of certain neighboring countries, which, whether open or hidden, benevolent or not, was felt in various ways.

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<sup>9</sup> In the broadest sense, it is still today a general term for any device that is used to record (“write”) sound.

<sup>10</sup> The tape recorder existed earlier, as far back as the 1930s. It was first used for research recording of folk music by Fritz Bose (1906–1975) in Karelia (Finland) in 1936. See: Susanne Ziegler, “Historijski snimci bosanske muzike u njemačkim arhivima”, in: Jasmina Talam; Fatima Hadžić; Refik Hodžić (Eds), *Zbornik radova – VII. Međunarodni smipozij “Muzika u društvu” (Sarajevo, 28–30. oktobar)*, Sarajevo, Muzikološko društvo FBiH; Muzička akademija u Sarajevu, 2010, 143. However, the commercialization of the tape recorder did not occur until the 1950s.

<sup>11</sup> This problem was sometimes overcome by the successive use of two or more phonographs.

<sup>12</sup> Due to this change, the more general term “Yugoslav Kingdom” will also be used in this study, alongside other terms.

Determined by these factors, the development of Serbian musical folkloristics was in a worse position than in the western parts of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, as will be demonstrated in the following brief overview of the regional history of the discipline at the turn of the twentieth century and in the first half of the twentieth century.

The most significant results in almost all areas of music folkloristics activity were achieved by Slovenia. Karel Štrekelj (1859–1912), a linguist, ethnologist, and university professor of Slavic studies, led a major endeavor to publish Slovenian folk songs, collected earlier and during his time. In the publication *Slovenske narodne pesmi*, one of the finest in Europe of that era, around 8,700 texts and 300 melodies were successively published from 1895 to 1923 (in four volumes and 16 “bundles”), mostly under Štrekelj’s editorial work.<sup>13</sup> The publisher of this endeavor was Slovenska Matica. The next major step was taken between 1906 and 1914, when Austria-Hungary implemented a project to collect traditional songs of the peoples under its rule, called *Das Volkslied in Österreich (The Folk Song in Austria)*. This project resulted in the collection of around 13,000 Slovenian examples with melodies. The project was also led by Štrekelj, who was succeeded after his death by another great figure, Matija Murko (1861–1952).<sup>14</sup> The research also included phonograph recordings, carried out in 1914 by the lawyer and politician Juro Adlešič (1884–1968) in his native Bela Krajina.<sup>15</sup> They were not the first in Slovenia, as previously, in 1912 and 1913, the aforementioned Evgenija Lineva, one of the pioneers of phonograph recording in Europe, had been active in the vi-

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<sup>13</sup> After Štrekelj’s death, this work was completed by Joža Glonar (1885–1946), a linguist, literary historian, and translator, who edited the 15th and 16th volumes (in 1913 and 1923). Cf. Karel Štrekelj, *Slovenske narodne pesmi*, snopič 16, Ljubljana, Slovenska matica, 1923; Milko Matičetov, “Joža Glonar (1885–1946)”, *Slovenski etnograf*, III–IV, 1951, 399–401.

<sup>14</sup> Vladimir Murko, “Sudbina literarne ostavštine i fonografskih snimaka srpskohrvatskih epskih pjesama Matije Murka”, *Narodna umjetnost*, 2/1, 1963, 108.

<sup>15</sup> Adlešič recorded the material on 38 wax cylinders, of which only 10 have survived, now preserved in the archive of the Institute of Ethnomusicology of the Scientific Research Center of the Slovene Academy of Sciences and Arts (Glasbenonarodnopisni inštitut Znanstvenoraziskovalnega centra Slovenske akademije znanosti in umetnosti, GIN ZRC SAZU), along with the accompanying manuscripts. See: Drago Kunej, “Peseško izročilo Bele krajine na zgodnjih terenskih posnetkih”, *Traditiones*, 46/3, 2017, 144–147. The testimony of Adlešič’s recordings is represented by transcriptions published in the collection *Das Volkslied in Österreich*. According to: Krešimir Kovačević (Ed.), “Adlešič, Juro”, in: *Leksikon jugoslavenske muzike 1 (A–Ma)*, Zagreb, Jugoslavenski leksikografski zavod “Miroslav Krleža”, 1984, 5.

cinity of Bled and in Bela Krajina.<sup>16</sup> An important interwar continuation of Slovenian activities is then associated with the name France Marolt (1891–1951) and the founding of the Music Ethnography Institute (Glasbenonarodopisni inštitut) in Ljubljana in 1934 – although the recordings actually resumed only in 1955, when the tape recorder was introduced.<sup>17</sup>

A similar situation was evident with Croatia. To recognize that its starting position was considerably more advanced than in Serbia in the period after the Great War, it is enough to recall the collection of 1,600 recordings and numerous scholarly contributions published in Croatia in the second half of the nineteenth century by Franjo Ksaver Kuhač (1834–1911),<sup>18</sup> as well as the existence of the esteemed Zagreb music journal *Sv. Cecilija* since 1877. The subsequent interwar period saw Croatia receive the highest possible level of institutional support for the publication of folk songs when, in 1924 and 1925, the Yugoslav Academy of Sciences and Arts (Jugoslavenska akademija znanosti i umjetnosti, JAZU) published two volumes of 902 folk melodies from Međimurje – a melographic achievement by Vinko Žganec (1890–1976),<sup>19</sup> an exceptionally productive researcher and future academician, formally educated as a Catholic theologian and lawyer. Just before the Second World War the comprehensive book *Hrvatska narodna glazba (pregled hrvatske muzikologije)* by the composer, musical folklorist, and the first formally trained Croatian musicologist Božidar Širola (1889–1956) appeared, which was published in Zagreb in 1940 by Matica hrvatska.<sup>20</sup> Regarding pho-

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<sup>16</sup> Some of her recordings have been preserved and are kept in the sound archive of the Institute of Russian Literature (Pushkin House) of the Russian Academy of Sciences (Институт русской литературы (Пушкинский Дом) Российской академии наук, ИРЛИ РАН) in St. Petersburg. See: Drago Kunej, “Pesemsko izročilo Bele krajine na zgodnjih terenskih posnetkih”, op. cit., 144–146. There is also a larger study on the first phonographic recordings in Slovenia. Cf. Drago Kunej, *Fonograf je došel!: prvi zvočni zapisi slovenske ljudske glasbe*, Ljubljana, Založba ZRC, ZRC SAZU, 2008.

<sup>17</sup> Drago Kunej, “Pesemsko izročilo Bele krajine na zgodnjih terenskih posnetkih”, op. cit., 147.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Fr.[anjo] Š. Kuhač, *Južno-slovenske narodne popevke*, knj. 1–4, Zagreb, Tiskara i litografija C. Albrechta, 1978–1881.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Vinko Žganec, *Hrvatske pučke popijevke iz Međimurja*, sv. I (svjetovne), Zbornik jugoslovenskih pučkih popijevaka, knj. I, Zagreb, JAZU, 1924; idem, *Hrvatske pučke popijevke iz Međimurja*, sv. II (crkvene), Zbornik jugoslovenskih pučkih popijevaka, knj. I, Zagreb, JAZU, 1925.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Božidar Širola, *Hrvatska narodna glazba (pregled hrvatske muzikologije)*, Mala knjižnica Matice hrvatske, kolo V, sv. 30, Zagreb, Matica hrvatska, 1940.

nographic recording of folk melodies in Croatia from 1901 to 1936, a whole series of highly-educated individuals were engaged in this field, mostly from various parts of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, the majority of them directly involved in the joint project of the Vienna Phonogram Archive and the Austro-Hungarian Balkan Commission of the Imperial Academy of Sciences.<sup>21</sup> They not only recorded Croatian traditional music and the folk speech of Croats in Croatia itself, but also in certain areas of the diaspora.<sup>22</sup> After the establishment of the Department of Folk Music (*Odsjek za pučku muziku*) at the Ethnographic Museum (*Etnografski muzej*) in Zagreb (1921), this activity continued in parallel within Croatia through domestic research expeditions. Initially, due to financial difficulties, it depended heavily on support from Vienna;<sup>23</sup> nevertheless, it operated continuously under the auspices of a specialized national institution and produced important results. Recordings were made in various parts of Croatia from 1923 to 1931, carried out by two close colleagues – Božidar Širola, and the distinguished ethnographer and

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<sup>21</sup> These included: Matija Murko, a Slovenian literary historian and ethnologist who worked as a university professor of Slavic studies in various cities of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy; the Serbian Slavist, dialectologist, and also university professor Milan Rešetar (1860–1942); the Croatian linguist and musician Josip Floršić (*Josip Florschütz*) (1864–1916); the Italian linguist Giuseppe Vidossi (1878–1969); Josip Široki Baček (1882–1963), a folklorist, musicologist, Doctor of Philosophy, physicist, and a man of many other interests and professions; the Czech and Moravian ethnographer and curator František Pospíšil (1885–1958); and Leo Hajek (1887–1975), a physicist of Jewish origin employed at the Phonogram Archive until the Anschluss (first as an assistant, later as the director of the institution). Cf. Сања Радиновић, Милан Миловановић, “*Croatian Recordings 1901–1936*”, *Музиколоџија*, 14, 2013, 235–249. (review)

<sup>22</sup> Cf. *ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> The available funds were very modest at first, so the phonographic workshop of the Department of Folk Music could not begin operating independently. Širola therefore turned to the Vienna Phonogram Archive with a request that the newly-founded Department become its branch, which was immediately accepted. Soon after, a phonograph from the archive and the necessary recording discs were sent from Vienna as a gift. The cooperation agreement required the Department to send the recorded originals to Vienna for processing, from where their copies were then returned to Croatia. This, however, demanded considerable material resources and time, which caused the collection of the phonographic workshop to grow rather slowly. Relief came in 1929, when the Department, thanks to a large donation, succeeded in purchasing a more modern recording device. See: Božidar Širola, Milovan Gavazzi, “*Muzikološki rad Etnografskog muzeja u Zagrebu*”, *Narodna starina*, 10/25, 1931, 3–20.

musical folklorist Milovan Gavazzi (1895–1992) – who were also the founders of the Department of Folk Music.<sup>24</sup>

The collecting and research results in Bosnia and Herzegovina around the turn of the century were also far more extensive than those in Serbia, primarily thanks to the attention given to the region by the renowned Czech folklorist Ludvík Kuba (1863–1956). His four-month field expedition in 1893 was conducted under the patronage of the National Museum (*Zemaljski muzej*) in Sarajevo, an institution established in 1888 by Austria-Hungary in the occupied territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Between 1906 and 1910, the Museum consecutively published as many as 965 out of a total of 1,127 musical transcriptions in its *Glasnik Zemaljskog muzeja Bosne i Hercegovine*.<sup>25</sup> In Bosnia and Herzegovina, there were also significant research recordings made by foreign collectors. The first was undertaken as early as 1908 by the linguist, ethnographer, folklorist, and archaeologist Eduard Carl Gottfried Wolter (1856–1941), a citizen of the Russian Empire and later the USSR.<sup>26</sup> He carried out these recordings in Sarajevo and its surroundings, resulting in a small collection of cylinders of poor quality, but significant as evidence of one of the earliest undertakings of this kind<sup>27</sup> (see below). In various parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Matija Murko conducted record-

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<sup>24</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 3–20, 30–40. During this period, Croatia also became involved in international scholarly activity in the field of musical folklore – through Širola's participation at an international congress organized in Vienna on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of Beethoven's death in 1927. There, he presented a paper on the relationship of Haydn and Beethoven to Croatian folk music, which was published in Vienna later that same year. See: *ibid.*, 18, 75.

<sup>25</sup> Ludvík Kuba, (Ed. Cvjetko Rihtman), *Pjesme i napjevi iz Bosne i Hercegovine*, Sarajevo, Svjetlost, 1984, 11.

<sup>26</sup> In Russia, he is known as Eduard Alexandrovich Wolter (Вольтер Эдуард Александрович). He held high positions in various Russian cultural institutions – among other roles, he worked as a university professor and is considered the founder of the Russian Phonotheque in Saint Petersburg, where he lived from 1883 to 1918. After that, he was active in Lithuania. Wolter was an outstanding expert on the culture of the Baltic peoples, particularly Lithuanians, but he also had interests in other regions. Among his important pioneering achievements were the first recordings of Lithuanian traditional music, made on wax cylinders in 1908 and 1909. In 1908, he also conducted recordings in Bulgaria and Ukraine. See: Susanne Ziegler, "Historijski snimci bosanske muzike...", *op. cit.*, 143–144; <https://ethnomuseum.ru/collections/collectors/volter-eduard-aleksandrovich/>

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 143–146.

ings several times thereafter, primarily focusing on epic poetry, culminating in 1937 with the peak of phonographic activity achieved by a team of renowned foreign and domestic experts led by Gerhard Gesemann (1888–1948) (which will be discussed in more detail).

We now return to Serbia, whose status throughout the period under consideration was fairly unfavorable. Its martial destiny, conditioned by a particular geopolitical position in the Balkans, did not allow the same pace of cultural development, even though enormous efforts had previously been made in this direction, throughout the entire nineteenth century. As a result, the most significant achievement from the beginning of the twentieth century was a small collection of fewer than 100 examples, titled *Српске народне њесме и иїре с мелодијама из Левча*, which was a joint effort by the village teacher Todor M. Bušetić Toša (1864–1919) and the renowned composer Stevan St. Mokranjac (1856–1914).<sup>28</sup> It was published in 1902 in the journal *Српски еїноїграфски зборник*, based on Bušetić's amateur collecting work, which Mokranjac, dissatisfied with the appearance of the notation, had to correct melodically, relying solely on Bušetić's interpretations of the recorded examples.<sup>29</sup> During this period, there were also numerous other collections in Serbia, but they were still mostly compiled in the nineteenth century manner – for concert, school, or private music-making in bourgeois settings, often with harmonized and stylized melodies that were usually already widely known, or became so through these very collections. The scholarly approach to musical folklore, especially rural, developed slowly in interwar Serbia and engaged a small number of specialists, primarily devoted to other musical professions.<sup>30</sup> The most extensive publications supported by the state were the collection *Српске народне мелодије (Јужна Срдија)*<sup>31</sup> by Vladimir R.

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<sup>28</sup> Cf. Тодор М. Бушетић, Стеван Ст. Мокрањац, *Српске народне њесме и иїре с мелодијама из Левча*, *Српски еїноїграфски зборник*, 3, 1902.

<sup>29</sup> According to: Оливера Младеновић, “Учешће Стевана Мокрањаца у раду Српске краљевске академије наука”, in: Михаило Вукдраговић (Ed.), *Зборник радова о Стевану Мокрањацу*, Београд, Одељење ликовне и музичке уметности САНУ, 1971, 185–204.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Владимир Р. Ђорђевић, “Оглед библиографије српске народне музике”, *Гласник Еїноїграфскої музеја у Београду*, 6, 1931, 120–125.

<sup>31</sup> According to the administrative division in force from 1919 to 1922, Southern Serbia was one of the eight provinces of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. It consisted of Old Serbia – made up of the Novi Pazar Sandžak, the Kosovo-Metohija region, and the areas around Tetovo, Skopje, Kratovo, and Kočani – along with the remaining parts of Northern Macedonia. See: Jovan Erdeljanović, “Etnički položaj Srba Stare Srbije i

Đorđević (1869–1938), published by the Скопско учено друштво (Skopje Learned Society),<sup>32</sup> and the extensive paper “Музичко дело нашега села” by Kosta P. Manojlović (1890–1949) in 1929, published in the collection of papers of the same name.<sup>33</sup> For his second “true Serbian” study, and up to that point the most extensive collection in Serbia – *Српске народне мелодије (Њредрајна Срдија)*, containing 597 vocal and instrumental examples – Đorđević did not receive adequate state support. The Ministry of Education granted him barely one-third of the necessary funds, so this publication was realized as a private edition.<sup>34</sup> In short, the collecting and research results in Serbia during that period were significantly more modest than those from

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Makedonije među Južnim Slovenima”, *Нова Европа*, X/11, 1924, 331. After that, a new division was introduced, creating 33 districts, which remained in effect until 1929. Under the final division, valid from 1929 to 1939, the country consisted of nine *Banovinas*; the former territory of Southern Serbia largely coincided with the Vardar and Zeta Banovinas. Nevertheless, the term “Southern Serbia” continued to be frequently used during the interwar period. A closer look at Đorđević’s aforementioned collection reveals that it contains only a few dozen examples from areas belonging to present-day Serbia.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Владимир Р. Ђорђевић (Introduction: Ernest Closson), *Српске народне мелодије (Јужна Срдија)*, Књиге Скопског научног друштва, 1, Скопље, Скопско научно друштво, 1928.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. Коста П. Манојловић, “Музичко дело нашега села”, in: Милосав Стојадиновић (Ed.), *Наше село*, Београд, Савремена општина, 1929, 3–64. (offprint)

<sup>34</sup> Cf. Владимир Р. Ђорђевић, *Српске народне мелодије (Њредрајна Срдија)*. Београд: б. и., 1931. At the end of his preface, Đorđević writes the following: “Finally, let me also mention that I recorded all the melodies in this collection while traveling through Serbia at my own expense. I was never able to obtain assistance from any source. I am likewise compelled to publish them with my own money. It could not have been otherwise. My only, and indeed great, gratitude goes to Mr. Božidar Maksimović, Minister of Education, who graciously granted me from the funds of the Ministry of Education the sum of ten thousand dinars for printing this book, thereby easing nearly one-third of the cost. My heartfelt thanks to him!”. See: *ibid.*, XIV. Even before that, Đorđević had publicly pointed out the state’s indifference toward the financial and other difficulties faced by collectors of folk melodies in Serbia. He believed that the solution lay in systematically organized fieldwork under state patronage, in a more thorough professional approach to this endeavor, in primary dedication to rural environments, and, finally, in the serial publication of results financed by the state. See: Влад.[имир] Р. Ђорђевић, “Невоље наше народне музике”, *Нова Европа*, VI/3–4, 1922, 80–81; Сања Радиновић, “Написи о традиционалном музичком наслеђу југословенских народа у часопису *Нова Европа*”, in: Марко Недић, Весна Матовић (Eds), *Нова Европа 1920–1941 (зборник радова)*, Историја српске књижевне периодике, 21. Београд, Институт за књижевност и уметност, 2010, 622.

the western regions of the Yugoslav Kingdom, while a more appropriate level of state institutional support was received only after the Second World War, within the framework of the new social order.

In the field of phonographic recording, Serbia also lagged behind those parts of the Yugoslav community that had for years enjoyed the strong support of German-speaking countries (which, it should be noted, clearly saw their own political interest in this). The key reason for this was the lack of awareness among representatives of Serbia's most relevant institutions about the importance of supporting the acquisition of phonographs, organizing recordings under state patronage, and ensuring institutional care for the sound collections that would be created in this way. Several representative examples demonstrate that, over a long period, folklorists repeatedly but unsuccessfully emphasized the need to use the phonograph for documenting Serbian cultural heritage. The survey may begin with Ludvík Kuba, who, considering that in certain cases the phonograph was not only indispensable but also the only possible choice, stated the following as early as 1890:

In Montenegro itself, that is, in the Katunska Nahija and its immediate surroundings, there prevails a type of singing which, unfortunately, cannot be written down. It is a fluid, long-lasting, pure trill performed at various intervals. Figuratively speaking, it is a musicalized cry; a phenomenon encountered throughout inner Dalmatia, as well as among the Uskoks in Croatia. Such things – very interesting and unusually important – can be recorded only with the phonograph, and only as phonograms will they be possible to comprehend and analyze.<sup>35</sup>

Shortly thereafter, he expressed a similar view regarding interpretations by Montenegrin *gusle* (a monochordal, bowed Serbian instrument) players, in which improvisation is strongly present: “It is impossible to record this production in musical notation. Only part of the interlude can be captured. For all of this, the phonograph already exists. And I believe that it would indeed deserve the phonograph.”<sup>36</sup>

The next example can be found in a report by Stevan St. Mokranjac, which he presented to the Ethnographic Committee (Etnografski odbor) of the Serbian Royal Academy (Srpska kraljevska akademija, SKA) in 1906. He was dissatisfied with the results of fieldwork by amateur collectors, and wrote the following:

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<sup>35</sup> Ludvík Kuba, *Album černoohorské 70 národních písní*, V Praze, nákladem vlastním, 1890, 119.

<sup>36</sup> Ludvík Kuba, *Na Černé Hoře. Cesty podniknuté za účelem sbírání národních písní, roku 1890 a 1891*, V Praze, Tiskem i nákladem Edvarda Beauforta, 1892, 255.

These collections, as they are, cannot be printed. They must be verified and reliably recorded. For this purpose, I propose that an expert go to the places where the collectors gathered these songs, listen to the same songs directly from the mouths of the local singers, and record them. And in order for this recording to be even more reliable, it is necessary to acquire a phonograph, on which the singers would perform, and the expert would then faithfully transcribe everything sung into notation. Therefore, the *phonograph* should be acquired immediately, both to verify these collections and to obtain reliable collections from all regions of Serbia.<sup>37</sup>

A quarter of a century later, Kosta P. Manojlović also advocated for collecting work using the phonograph:

What is immediately evident is that work on recording folk melodies and tunes must be organized at once, without delay, and for this purpose the country should be divided into musical regions, and a musical expert should be sent to each to carry out this task. All of this material should be sent to the Ethnographic Museum, where it can be catalogued and published. For this purpose, the department of musical folklore was created in the Museums of Belgrade, Zagreb, and Ljubljana, and it is only necessary for all the Museums to acquire phonograph devices as soon as possible, in order to facilitate the work of recording folk melodies.<sup>38</sup>

Nevertheless, the most persistent advocate was Gerhard Gesemann, a German Slavist, folklorist, literary critic, and university professor from Prague, who was primarily interested in the Serbian epic tradition. Knowledge of this comes from a reliable witness to the interwar events: the Montenegrin Germanist, literary historian, and folklorist Radosav Medenica (1897–1987). Hoping for a final understanding on the part of the authorities after the great international success of the *gusle* player Tanasije Vučić (1883–1937) and the recording of his interpretations in Berlin in 1928 (see below),

Gesemann repeatedly tried to convince the representatives of our scholarly institutions in Belgrade of the necessity of creating an archive of recordings of our folk songs. (...) It goes without saying that he did not succeed in this endeavor. A primitive, egocentric, and indifferent attitude toward this field of our scholarship prevented any work of this kind. We do not hesitate in the least to point out that the then representatives of the Academy of Sciences and the University of Belgrade bear the gravest and greatest responsibility for this. We know this from the many futile attempts at persuasion and reasoning that we, a few of us ‘romantics,’

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<sup>37</sup> According to: Оливера Младеновић, *op. cit.*, 196, 200.

<sup>38</sup> Коста П. Манојловић, “Музичко дело...”, *op. cit.*, 63–64.

as we were called, made precisely to the leading figures of those institutions. (...) All of this has been recounted in order to emphasize once more: that future generations will never forgive us for having failed to preserve, through recording, the singing of our epic songs – thus safeguarding the greatest treasure of our ancient culture – at a time when it was still possible to find enough performers of the original, traditional, and convincingly representative style, before modern life silenced it completely. The yellowed texts of our folk songs on the shelves of future generations will be nothing but dead, dry mummies – without a trace of the people's soul, yet serving as an eternal memento of our negligence and our lack of respect for ourselves and for our past.<sup>39</sup>

Nevertheless, the overall situation regarding the phonograph recording of Serbian musical heritage was somewhat better than in the previously outlined aspects of music-folkloristic activity. This more favorable picture was largely due to the results of sound recordings carried out by foreign researchers – in Serbia, in the wider region, or among Serbian communities in both nearby and distant diaspora. As for the results originating from Serbia itself, they appeared in the early 1930s, thanks to the efforts of two distinguished scholars – the only ones within the domestic milieu who managed to achieve anything in this regard. These were the eminent ethnologist, anthropogeographer, and museologist Borivoje M. Drobnjaković (1890–1961), and, to a far greater extent, the composer, choral conductor, folklorist, and tireless promoter of musical culture in Serbia and Yugoslavia, Kosta P. Manojlović. Both remained solitary figures in this field until the introduction of magnetic tape technology after the end of the Second World War. Their phonographic achievements are connected to the period of existence of the first common state of the South Slavic peoples – a turbulent era marked by numerous challenges, which both of them enriched with their many professional accomplishments. The valuable phonographic contribution of these individuals can be fully understood only within the broader context of the phonographic efforts of foreign collectors who included Serbian heritage in their recordings. The importance of such a comprehensive overview lies not only in the fact that only by acknowledging this wider framework can an objective understanding of the scope and significance of the sound legacy created by domestic efforts be achieved, but also in the realization that all phonographic contributions – both domestic and foreign – together form an essential, and until now missing, part of the historical picture of the overall achievements

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<sup>39</sup> Радосав Меденица, *Наша народна еџика и њени ѿворци*, Цетиње, Обод, 1975, 373–375.

of musical folkloristics in the first half of the twentieth century in the field of recording, researching, and preserving Serbian musical heritage.

It should be pointed out that, alongside research-oriented recordings, commercial field recordings were also conducted until the mid-twentieth century. These were carried out by various gramophone companies, which used them as material for their phonograph record releases.<sup>40</sup> There were significant and multiple differences between profitable and research-oriented recordings – manifested in the different purposes of the recordings, the different approaches to fieldwork by those conducting them, the superior technology used by gramophone companies, and in the fact that commercial recordings, unlike research recordings, were long considered disposable goods of limited duration, deemed unworthy of institutional archival preservation (which is why, in our time, it is often impossible to obtain information about them). Nonetheless, it is also true that today the clear boundary between the results of commercial and phonographic research recordings is disappearing. Many research recordings later appeared on commercial audio releases; while, on the other hand, commercial recordings possess undeniable value as sources for ethnomusicological research – especially considering that since the end of the twentieth century, the scope of ethnomusicological study has expanded to encompass virtually all music worldwide, regardless of genre, period, location, or social and cultural context.

### **The contributions of foreign collectors to the phonographic documentation of Serbian material**

Information on Serbian material collected during phonographic expeditions by foreign researchers (and, in rare cases, by Serbs living outside Serbia) remains rather fragmentary and incomplete. Until the Second World War, re-

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<sup>40</sup> “In the early 1900s, the major record companies were feverishly building up separate repertoires for major nationalities and ethnic groups of the world in order to conquer new marketing areas. They manufactured sound carriers (cylinders or discs) as well as record-playing equipment (phonographs or gramophones). They had realised that without an impressive recorded repertoire of local music it was impossible to sell equipment in each area. Various recording systems were used, which meant that the cylinders or discs of one company were not necessarily playable on machines of another company”. See: Risto Pekka Pennanen, “Immortalised on Wax: Professional Folk Musicians and Their Gramophone Recordings Made in Sarajevo, 1907 and 1908”, in: Božidar Jezernik et al. (Eds), *Europe and Its Other: Notes on the Balkans*, Ljubljana, Filozofska fakulteta, 2007, 112.

search recordings of Serbian heritage were largely carried out under the auspices of foreign institutions. Apart from the portion that was published, the collected material was stored in specialized archives abroad and is often not readily accessible. In addition, there still exists unsorted material known to very few individuals today, typically archival staff and private collectors.<sup>41</sup> Consequently, the review that follows<sup>42</sup> can only outline the main contours of these activities, which are likely to be further enriched by new findings in the future.

- Walter's small collection from July 1908 (previously mentioned in connection with Bosnia and Herzegovina) is among the earliest contributions of foreign researchers to the non-commercial phonographic recording of Serbian heritage. It is preserved in the so-called Walter Collection of the Berlin Phonothek, together with accompanying correspondence, where it is catalogued as Serbian ("Wolter Serben"), in accordance with Walter's own designation. It was sent from Saint Petersburg to Berlin because, at that time, the galvanization and duplication of cylinders<sup>43</sup> could only be carried out there.<sup>44</sup> More complete documentation on this material is kept in the archive of the Russian Academy of Sciences in Saint Petersburg.<sup>45</sup>

The Berlin Wolter collection consists of four cylinders of lower quality and contains examples of Serbian epic songs performed for this researcher in July 1908 in Sarajevo and Ilidža by two *gusle* players, Rizvan Kadrović<sup>46</sup> and

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<sup>41</sup> Susanne Ziegler, "Historijski snimci bosanske muzike...", op. cit., 142, 150.

<sup>42</sup> The presentation will mainly follow the chronology of the phonographic recordings, but there will be minor departures from this criterion when necessary.

<sup>43</sup> Due to their physical fragility, wax cylinders and 20 cm wax discs (a later medium) had to undergo galvanization and the creation of electrotype (galvanoplastic) copies to ensure the durability of the sound recordings and the possibility of their duplication.

<sup>44</sup> Susanne Ziegler, "Historijski snimci bosanske muzike...", op. cit., 143.

<sup>45</sup> The original archival data for this item is as follows: Санкт-Петербургский филиал Архива РАН, Фонд 178, Вольтер Эдуард Александрович, опис 1, ед. хр. 45. See. *ibid.*, 144–145.

<sup>46</sup> In a letter addressed to the Berlin Phonothek, Wolter wrote (translated): "Rizvan Kadrović in Sarajevo, a Muslim *gusle* player, sang Serbian melodies to me in the City Museum and played the *gusle*, recorded in July 1908". The epic song was recorded on two cylinders, while the third captured Kadrović's account of his military life. See: Susanne Ziegler, "Historijski snimci bosanske muzike...", op. cit., 144. According to Finnish ethnomusicologist Risto Pekka Pennanen, the Sarajevo Muslim Roma Kadrović (whom he likely mistakenly refers to as "Kardović") was originally from Trebinje. He earned a living both as a porter and as a singer with a great reputation. During that period, he was also

Pero Dragoje (from Mostar).<sup>47</sup> Walter himself classified all the recorded pieces as Serbian, even though one of the performers was of the Islamic faith.<sup>48</sup> It is not known how these individuals identified themselves in terms of ethnicity at the time, but, evidently due to the content mentioned, this collection is catalogued in Berlin as Serbian. However, the records from St. Petersburg differ slightly, as the recordings of Rizvan Kadrović are labeled “Bosnian,” while those of Pero Dragoje are labeled “Serbian.”<sup>49</sup> In any case, this small phonographic contribution from 1908 is highly significant, both

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recorded by others, both commercially and for research purposes – Matija Murko in 1913, and earlier in 1907 by Georg Franz Hampe (1879–1947), a traveling sound engineer for the Deutsche Grammophon-Aktiengesellschaft. Hampe’s recordings, which were the first ever made of the *gusle* tradition, are of high quality and are preserved in England at the EMI Music Archive. The surviving recordings made by Murko are of much lower quality and are part of the Phonogram Archive of the Austrian Academy of Sciences in Vienna (see below). Similar recording activities were carried out in Bosnia and Herzegovina by representatives of other record companies, although detailed reliable data on these efforts are lacking. See: Pekka Pennanen, *op. cit.*, 113.

Moreover, Franz Hampe was engaged in this activity from 1902 to 1918, primarily in Europe. On several occasions, he also made recordings in other cities that would later become part of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes – in Zagreb (1902, 1907, 1910, 1912), Belgrade (1907, 1910), Subotica (1910), Sombor (1911), and Pančevo (1912). Cf. [https://www.recordingpioneers.com/RP\\_HAMPE1.html](https://www.recordingpioneers.com/RP_HAMPE1.html). His elder brother Theodor Heinrich Max Hampe (1877–1957) was also a recording engineer for the Deutsche Grammophon company, but among the future Yugoslav cities he visited only Sarajevo and Cetinje in 1908. It seems likely that, thanks to the Hampe brothers, other Serbian musical-folklore material was documented for commercial purposes in all these cities, in addition to the recordings already mentioned. The same applies to recordings made in these areas by the British Gramophone Company (and likely by others as well, which warrants further detailed investigation). However, this task is challenging, since, as previously noted, commercial recordings were long considered unworthy of institutional archiving, leaving many today difficult to access or even permanently lost. Cf. Pekka Pennanen, *op. cit.*, 135–143.

<sup>47</sup> Wolter labeled the recorded piece as follows (translation): “Heroic song about Kraljević Marko, accompanied by the *gusle*, sung by Pero Dragoje in Ilidža, near Sarajevo, recorded by me in July 1908”. See: Susanne Ziegler, “Historijski snimci bosanske muzike...”, *op. cit.*, 144.

<sup>48</sup> Preserved data indicate that there were two more cylinders in this collection, but for unknown reasons Wolter sent only four to Berlin. The remaining two, recorded in Ilidža, contain a song about Musa Kesedžija performed by Pero Dragoje and an unspecified piece performed by Spaniola Simona, i.e., Jewish Simon. See: *ibid.*, 145.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 144–145, 150.

chronologically and in terms of identity. The material was digitized in Berlin and officially transferred in 2010 to the Institute of Musicology (Institut za muzikologiju) at the Music Academy (Muzička akademija) in the Federal part of Sarajevo. Some of it had previously been published in Germany in 2007 on the valuable CD-ROM edition *Musik WeltKarte*<sup>50</sup> (*World Map of Music*).

- In 1912, Béla Viktor János Bartók (1881–1945) carried out some of the earliest ethnomusicological recordings of Serbian musical heritage from the Banat diaspora, working in his native region – in the Banat villages of Temesmonostor in the Temes district (in March) and Saravola in the Torontal district (in November). This area, which belonged to Austria-Hungary until 1918 and later became part of Romania, includes Bartók's birthplace, the small town of Nagyszentmiklós.<sup>51</sup> The region is known for its striking ethnic diversity, shaped by Serbian, Hungarian, German, Romanian, Roma, and other communities. Equipped with a phonograph and wax cylinders from the Ethnographic Museum (Néprajzi Múzeum) in Budapest, Bartók recorded 21 examples of instrumental, vocal-instrumental, and vocal music – mostly dance tunes. His recordings featured two singers<sup>52</sup> and two instrumentalists (violin and tambura)<sup>53</sup> from Temesmonostor, and one instrumentalist from

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<sup>50</sup> Ulrich Wegnet, *Der Edison Phonograph und die musikalische Kartographie der Erde. The World Map of Music. The Edison Phonograph and the Musical Cartography of the Earth*, CD-ROM, Museum Collection Berlin Audiovisuell Vol. 1, Lars-Christian Koch (ed), Ethnologisches Museum, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin – Preussischer Kulturbesitz, 2007. According to: Susanne Ziegler, “Historijski snimci bosanske muzike...”, op. cit., 145, 151.

<sup>51</sup> The town is called Veliki Semikluš in Serbian, Sânnicolau Mare in Romanian, and Großsanktnikolaus in German.

<sup>52</sup> Their names were Ima Jović and Dimja Urmaz. However, according to some researchers, Bartók likely recorded their names incorrectly – they were probably Sima Jović and Dina Burmaz. See: Стеван Бугарски, “Сава Илин трагом Беле Бартока”, in: Јовановић, Јелена; Катарина Томашевић; Пера Ластић (Eds), *Бела Бартоок и српска музика – Зборник радова са скупа “Сво јодина од Бартокових фонозаписа српске народне музике” (Будимпешта, децембар 2012)*, Будимпешта, Српски институт; Београд, Музиколошки институт САНУ; Будимпешта, Музиколошки институт Мађарске академије наука (МТА ВТК Zenetudományi Intézet); Сентандреја, Удружење “Вујичић”, 2016, 56.

<sup>53</sup> The violinist was Mihaj Skitović, of Romani origin. The young tamburitza player, who was 22-years-old at the time of the recording, was named Milan Marković.

Saravola (Banat bagpipes).<sup>54</sup> Eleven recordings came from Temesmonostor,<sup>55</sup> and ten from Saravola.<sup>56</sup>

Bartók completed precise transcriptions of all the recorded melodies in 1935, once again demonstrating his extraordinary musical perception and his rich, unique talent as a melographer. He compiled the notated scores (to which he added seven Bulgarian melodies) into a manuscript titled *Musique paysanne serbe (No. 1–21) et bulgare (No. 22–28) du Banat*, and sent copies from Budapest to several recipients, including his Croatian colleague Vinko Žganec in Sombor, along with a letter containing the following message:

I have recently noted down some of my own Serbian and Bulgarian phonogr. recordings dated 1912, or rather I have revised my earlier, not altogether accurate, notations made from these recordings. I think the Serbian material will interest you, so I am sending you a copy of these notations. It's true that some of the Serbian pieces are well-known melodies, but nowhere have such accurate recordings and notations been published. In fact, I think this is the only Serbian material so far to have been taken down (with the greatest possible accuracy) from phonograph recordings; for, as far as I know, no phonograph has been used hitherto in your country for folk-song collecting; or at any rate, no material collected in this way has been published.<sup>57</sup>

All of these transcriptions have been published in facsimile several times between 1970 and 2017.<sup>58</sup> Since 2004, the original sound recordings are also

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<sup>54</sup> The name of the bagpipe player was not recorded by Bartók.

<sup>55</sup> Recordings from Temesmonostor: 1. *Malo kolo* (violin); 2. *Malo kolo* (tambura); 3. *Veliko kolo* (tambura); 4. *Veliko kolo* (violin); 5. *Srbkinja* (tambura) [a folklorized choral composition by Isidor Bajić (1878–1915)]; 6. *Seljančica* (tambura); 7. *Zaplet* (tambura); 8. *Oj, djevojko, rokoko* (tambura); 9. *Đurđevka* (tambura); 10. *Pevaj, petle, na dudu jalovcu* (tambura and singers); 11. *Idem kući, a već zora* (tambura and singer Ima Jović).

<sup>56</sup> Recordings from Saravola: 12. *Malo kolo* (bagpipes); 13. *Veliko kolo* (bagpipes); 14. *Banatsko kolo* (bagpipes); 15. *Seljančica* (bagpipes); 16. *Srpski mađarik* (bagpipes); 17. *Folk song* (bagpipes); 18. *Otvori mi vratnice* (bagpipes); 19. *Otvori mi vratnice* (bagpipes with singing); 20. *Odbi se biser grana od jorgovana* (singing) [wedding song]; 21. *Lepu Smilju dovedoše* (singing) [wedding song]. The vocal pieces and the vocal sections of the vocal-instrumental recordings were most likely performed by the bagpipe player himself.

<sup>57</sup> Béla Bartók, Albert B. Lord (Ed. Benjamin Suchoff), *Serbo-Croatian Folk Songs and Instrumental Pieces from the Milman Parry Collection*, Vol. 1, Yugoslav Folk Music, Vol. 1–IV, New York, State University of New York Press, 1978, 451.

<sup>58</sup> The first publication took place in Budapest in 1970, in the series *Dokumenta Bartókiana* collection. Cf. *Dokumenta Bartókiana* 4, Budapest, Akadémiai Kiadó, 1970, 221–240. [https://adt.arcanum.com/hu/view/MTA\\_DokumentaBartokiana\\_04/?pg=5&layout](https://adt.arcanum.com/hu/view/MTA_DokumentaBartokiana_04/?pg=5&layout)

available to the public in a digitized and restored form, thanks to a commercial CD-ROM issued by the “Vujičić” Association in Hungary (which since 1974 has been dedicated to preserving Serbian and Croatian musical traditions from the diaspora in that country).<sup>59</sup> The edition is accompanied by a short text about the collection, photo illustrations, and Bartók’s autograph transcriptions from 1935.<sup>60</sup> These forms of appreciation of Bartók’s 1912 research were complemented by a small international scholarly conference held in Budapest in 2012 to mark the centenary, followed by a collection of the presented papers published a few years later.<sup>61</sup>

In the Yugoslav region, Bartók’s overall contribution to the study of Serbian musical tradition was hardly written about before the end of the twentieth century,<sup>62</sup> when the need to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of

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t=s. The second was in New York in 1978 as “Appendix Two” at the end of the first book of the revised and greatly expanded edition of Bartók and Lord’s (Albert Bates Lord, 1912–1991) famous work on “Serbo-Croatian” folk songs (see below). Cf. Béla Bartók, Albert B. Lord, op. cit., 451–471. The third was on the CD-ROM issued by the “Vujičić” Association (Vujicsics Együttes). Cf. *Bartók Béla szerb népzenei gyűjtése – Fonogramok a Bánáttól 1912 (Serb Folk Music Collected by Béla Bartók – Early Wax Cylinder Recordings from the Bánát region 1912)*, 2004, Vujicsics Association, Eredics Gábor →-e-DISC 101, Извор, CD-ROM. The fourth was in Budapest in 2017, as a separate, representative co-edition by the “Vujičić” Association and the Serbian Institute (Srpski institut), supplemented by a study by the director of the Bartók Archive, László Vikárius, on the history of the recordings and the place of those Bartók’s transcriptions within his ethnomusicological work. Cf. <https://srpskiinstitut.hu/>.

<sup>59</sup> For more information about this ensemble, see: [https://hu.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vujicsics\\_egy%C3%BCttes](https://hu.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vujicsics_egy%C3%BCttes)

<sup>60</sup> See note 59.

<sup>61</sup> Cf. Јелена Јовановић, Катарина Томашевић, Пера Ластић (Eds), *Бела Барћок и српска музика – Зборник радова са скупа “Сто година од Барћокових фонозайиса српске народне музике” (Будимпешта, децембар 2012)*, Будимпешта, Српски институт; Београд, Музиколошки институт САНУ; Будимпешта, Музиколошки институт Мађарске академије наука (MTA ВТК Zenetudományi Intézete); Сентандреја, Удружење “Вујичић”, 2016.

<sup>62</sup> The reason for this decades-long neglect lies in the highly negative reception of Bartók’s work on “Serbo-Croatian” folk songs in Serbia by several Yugoslav intellectuals, which carried political connotations and escalated into an extremely unpleasant and unfounded polemic, published in the respected *Књижевне новине* in 1954 and 1955. The delicate postwar period in which this occurred was marked by harsh persecution of opponents of the newly established communist regime. Ignoring warnings about someone’s alleged political ill intent (even if unfounded), or especially defending such a person, usually meant bearing the same stigma. Consequently, the professional community of the

his death in 1995 prompted a change. In the small body of work produced from then until today,<sup>63</sup> Bartók's recordings from the Banat have not been the subject of particularly thorough consideration. From these studies it is evident that for a long time in Serbia the same assumption prevailed that Bartók himself had made – that his phonograms represented the first sound testimonies of Serbian musical heritage in general. Work by Walter, as well as an even earlier contribution (see below), demonstrates the unfoundedness of such beliefs. Nevertheless, it remains true that this small collection constitutes one of the oldest and most valuable sound documents of Serbian culture, a significance further emphasized by the fact that the material comes from the Serbian diaspora. Its value was not diminished even by the critical assessment of the well-known melographer Savo Ilin<sup>64</sup> (1935–1989), from Varjaš near Timișoara, who, intending to verify the validity of Bartók's findings, conducted repeated research in the same area from 1952 to 1960 and, as reported by Stevan Bulgarski, concluded that:

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time quietly chose to ignore Bartók's work, a situation that persisted until the democratic changes and the breakup of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in the 1990s. See: Сања Радиновић, “Станислав Винавер, Јожеф Дебрецени, Јосип Славенски и Бела Барток у етномузиколошком дискурсу (или: О могућим последицама једне старе политичке полемике)”, in: Мирјана Живковић (Ed.), *Јосип Славенски и његово доба – Зборник са научној скупи њоводом 50 година од композицијорове смрти (Београд, 8–11. новембар 2005 године)*, Београд, СОКОЈ-МИЦ, 2006, 239–255.

<sup>63</sup> Cf. Драгослав Девић, “Бела Барток и југословенска народна музика”, *Нови Звук*, 6, 1995, 17–36; Нице Фрациле, “Записи Беле Бартока са банатских простора”, *Зборник Мајнице српске за сценске уметности и музику*, 16–17, 1995, 53–76; Nice Fracile, “In the Wake of Bartók's Recordings. The Changes and Evolutionary Tendencies in the Serbian and Romanian Folklores in Vojvodina, Yugoslavia”, in: Marin Marian Blașa (Ed.), *East European Meetings in Ethnomusicology, Vol. 2*, Bucharest, Marin Marian Blașa, 1995, 15–23; idem, “Bartók Béla: Szerb népzenei gyűjtése Fonogramok a Bánáttól 1912. Szerb zenei hagyományok I (Collection of Phonographic Recordings of Serbian Folk Music from Banat, 1912. Legacy of Serbian Folk Music I)”, *New Sound*, 37/1, 2011, 107–109. (review); idem, “The Manners of Performance in Historical Recordings of the Serbian and Romanian Traditional Music”, in: *Proceedings of the Regional Conference Research, Preservation and Presentation of Banat Heritage: Current State and Long Term Strategy* (Vršac, Serbia, 17–19 November 2011), Vršac, City Museum of Vršac, 2012, 157–164; idem, “The Phonographic Recordings of Traditional Music Performed by Serbian Prisoners of War (1915–1918)”, *New Sound*, 51, 2018, 17–42; Сања Радиновић, “Станислав Винавер, Јожеф Дебрецени...”, op. cit.; Јовановић et al, op. cit.

<sup>64</sup> In ethnomusicological circles, he is better known by the later form of his surname – Илић. Cf. Стеван Бугарски, op. cit., 49.

the recordings in Monostor are not authentic local folklore as performed by the villagers, but rather notations based on performances by a tamburitza band composed of people from various places, which toured the area on Sundays, holidays, church feast days, weddings, and so on, with repertoires for different occasions and tastes, moving musical motifs from place to place, mixing and embellishing them, without strictly observing authenticity.<sup>65</sup>

• During the First World War (1914–1918), the renowned musicologist Georg Otto Alexander Schünemann (1884–1945) made recordings in the German prisoner-of-war camps Königsbrück (near Dresden) and Parchim (near Hamburg).<sup>66</sup> On 63 wax cylinders, he documented 85 examples of Serbian folk music (51 vocal or vocal-instrumental and 34 instrumental) performed by 18 Serbian prisoners (not before 1916, as they only began arriving at these camps at that time).<sup>67</sup> This previously unknown material, preserved in the Ethnological Museum (Ethnologisches Museum) in Berlin and now available in digitized form, was first reported to the Serbian scholarly community by Nice Fracile, who subjected it to a limited morphological analysis and comparative discussion.<sup>68</sup> His work was complicated by the relatively poor sound quality of the recordings, the incompleteness of the metadata in the accompanying card catalog, the varied places of origin of the performers (Podrinje, Veliko Gradište, the surroundings of Požarevac, Grocka, Niš...), and consequently the pronounced heterogeneity of the recorded material. The vocal corpus of this collection includes traditional village songs, urban songs (old town songs, a serenade, a wedding song, a *šalajka*...), patriotic songs, battle

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<sup>65</sup> Ibid., 53–54.

<sup>66</sup> Of more than 8 million prisoners during the Great War, approximately 220,000 were Serbian, the majority in Austria-Hungary (over 154,000) and in Bulgaria (around 40,000). The last in this unfortunate tally was Germany, with about 28,000 Serbian prisoners across 47 camps. Cf. Далибор Денда, “Српски ратни заробљеници у Великом рату”, in: Срђан Рудић; Миљан Милкић (Ed.), *Први светски рат, Србија, Балкан и велике силе – Зборник радова*, Београд, Историјски институт; Институт за стратегијска истраживања, 2015, 269–289.

<sup>67</sup> Official data on Serbs who perished in the camps at Königsbrück and Parchim can be found on the following web pages of the Ministry of Culture (Ministarstvo kulture) of the Republic of Serbia: <https://velikirat.rs/spomenici-page/spomen-obelezja-u-inostranstvu/nemacka-spomenici/logorsko-groblje-kenigsbrik/>; <https://velikirat.rs/spomenici-page/spomen-obelezja-u-inostranstvu/nemacka-spomenici/logorsko-groblje-parhim/>

<sup>68</sup> Cf. Nice Fracile, “The Phonographic Recordings...”, op. cit.

songs, and even the anthem *Bože pravde*. Instrumental interpretations feature *frula* (a type of flute), *dvojnice* (a type of double flute), bagpipes, *gusle*, and violin, on which folk songs and dances, signaling, shepherd, and improvised melodies were performed, as well as accompaniment for epic songs.<sup>69</sup> Among the performers were four individuals of non-Serbian origin with Serbian first and last names – a Romani and three Romanian violinists.<sup>70</sup> All participants identified themselves as Orthodox Christians.

Despite the circumstances mentioned, which make a full understanding of this mosaic collection difficult, its scientific and historical significance is exceptional. As Fracile rightly concludes:

In all likelihood, this is the largest collection of non-commercial recordings of traditional Serbian music from the early 20th century, established for scholarly purposes and unique for the fact that the recordings were made in a prison camp, during World War One, and not in times/conditions of peace. Its peculiarity also arises from the fact that some of the Serbian prisoners did not perform on their own instruments but on those which were available in the camp and had been brought from Serbia. (...) The corpus in question is an invaluable historical document, testifying to the national and cultural identity of the Serbs.<sup>71</sup>

- It has already been noted that several significant phonographic projects were carried out in Croatia and among Croats in the diaspora from 1901 to 1936, primarily thanks to research conducted by the Austro-Hungarian Balkan Commission of the Imperial Academy of Sciences, in collaboration with the Vienna Phonogram Archive (see above). A large portion of the recordings were published in 2009 on the five-disc set *Croatian Recordings 1901–1936* – publication no. 11 of the aforementioned institution in the series Complete Historical Collections 1899–1950 (Gesamtausgabe der Historischen Bestände 1899–1950).<sup>72</sup> Within this very diverse material, there are examples that are

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<sup>69</sup> The recorded material also includes several pieces of art music. See: *ibid.*, 34.

<sup>70</sup> Considering the regions from which the “three Romanians” originated (Požarevac and Podrinje) and the music they performed, they may in fact have been Vlachs and/or Romanian Roma. See: *ibid.*, 24, 37.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 38–39.

<sup>72</sup> Cf. *Croatian Recordings 1901–1936*, Tondokumente aus dem Phonogrammarchiv der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften – Gesamtausgabe der Historischen Bestände 1899–1950, Series 11/1, Wien, Phonogrammarchiv der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2009, OEAW PHA CD 27.

undoubtedly of Serbian origin, although this fact was generally omitted by the editors, except in a few extremely transparent cases.<sup>73</sup> Serbian material is found primarily within three “South Slavic” folk music collections by Josip Široki Baček, created in 1913, 1914, and 1917 at the Phonogram Archive itself, based on Široki’s own singing – meaning that he was simultaneously both performer and recorder of his repertoire. He seems to have learned part of the Serbian material from Serbs in Vojvodina, which is not unusual, as he had spent some time there for his education. This group also includes several pieces of instrumental and vocal heritage that Milan Rešetar recorded in 1907 among the descendants of old Serbian colonists in the Molise region of southern Italy. Unfortunately, the recordings are of very poor quality, making it difficult to discern the content precisely. The aforementioned population, most likely settled from Dalmatia in the area between the Neretva and Biokovo, left their homeland at a time that has not yet been precisely determined, but certainly sometime between the late thirteenth and sixteenth centuries. Over time they adopted the Catholic faith, which led Croatian and German researchers – unjustifiably – to classify them as Croats (as could have been expected), even though they were unquestionably Serbs who, by the late nineteenth century, were fully aware of their true ethnic identity.<sup>74</sup> Thus, the recordings made by Rešetar are the earliest known to date and, as such, establish 1907 as the chronological boundary for the emergence of Serbian phonographic material. Finally, the *Croatian Recordings* collection also includes around a dozen examples of *gusle* epic songs recorded in Sarajevo and Široki Brijeg in 1913 through the efforts of Matija Murko. The accompanying recording protocols do not always include information about the performers, so it remains uncertain how all of them identified themselves ethnically. Nevertheless, there can be no doubt as to how this material should be attributed, since the texts mention, for example, *trides't kaurina* (“thirty infidels”) and

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<sup>73</sup> A comprehensive critical review of that edition, with particular emphasis on such omissions, can be seen in: Сања Радиновић, Милан Миловановић, op. cit.

<sup>74</sup> In 1885, this colony was visited by Risto Kovačić (1845–1909), professor of Slavic studies at the Faculty of Philosophy in Rome and a corresponding member of the Serbian Learned Society (Srpsko učeno društvo) since 1883. He gave a detailed account of his findings in issue no. 62 of the *Гласник Српској ученој друштва*. Cf. Ристо Ковачић, “Српске насеобине у јужној Италији. Први извештај члана проф. Риста Ковачића”, *Гласник Српскоја ученој друштва*, 62, 1885, 273–340; Novak R. Miljanić, “Kovačić, Risto”, in: *Leksikon pisaca Jugoslavije*, III K–LJ, Novi Sad, Matica srpska, 1987, 357; <https://www.sanu.ac.rs/clan/kovacic-risto/>

the famous Serbian hero Kraljević Marko; moreover, it is well known that, in these and other regions, any possible Croatian or Bosniak identity of Murko's informants mostly arose from an earlier conversion from Orthodox Christianity to the Catholic or Islamic faith.

• Matija Murko's recordings, conducted under the auspices of the Vienna Phonogram Archive, were carried out on several occasions and represented a substantial continuation of the passionate interest in the nineteenth century in Slavic epic heritage of the Balkans, both domestic and foreign. This interest had been initiated by the work of Vuk Stefanović Karadžić (1787–1864) and received a new significant impetus in the era of phonographic recordings.<sup>75</sup> The project encompassed the traditions of Serbs, Croats, and Bosniaks and was carried out in the following regions:

- 1912: northwestern Bosnia
- 1913: central Bosnia including Sarajevo; parts of Herzegovina<sup>76</sup>
- 1930: part of northwestern Serbia; eastern Bosnia; Montenegro; Metohija; Old Serbia; eastern part of the Novi Pazar Sandžak
- 1931: central and southwestern Serbia; Resava; remaining parts of south-eastern Bosnia up to Sarajevo; the hilly regions of Dalmatia
- 1932: Dubrovnik and surroundings; the islands; Bay of Kotor; Montenegrin Littoral<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> The *guslar* tradition was especially prominent on commercial phonographic recordings issued between 1908 and 1931/32. During the interwar period, it enjoyed widespread popularity throughout the Yugoslav Kingdom and was actively promoted through the so-called *guslarske utakmice* (*guslar* competitions), held in 1924, 1927, 1929, and 1933, which received the personal support of King Alexander I Karađorđević. See: Данка Лајић-Михајловић, “Такмичења као облик јавне гусларске праксе”, *Музиколоџија*, 11, 2011, 183–202; idem, “Такмичења гуслара: поглед из перспективе етномузиколога”, in: Жељко Чуровић (Ed.), *Хоће ли Срби сачувати гусле као што су гусле сачувале њих – Зборник радова*. Обреновац, Друштво гуслара “Никола Тесла”, 2012, 55–67; Данка Р. Лајић-Михајловић, Смиљана Ж. Ђорђевић-Белић, “Певање уз гусле и музичка индустрија: гусларска извођења на првим грамофонским плочама (1908–1931/2)”, *Музиколоџија*, 20/1, 2016, 199–222.

<sup>76</sup> In Herzegovina, he visited Mostar, Široki Brijeg, and Nevesinje. See: Jasmina Talam, *Narodni muzički instrumenti u Bosni i Hercegovini*, Sarjevo, Muzička akademija; Institut za muzikologiju, 2014, 22. The previously-discussed CD publication *Croatian Recordings 1901–1936* contains a selection of material recorded in that same year.

<sup>77</sup> Murko's fieldwork took place in other years as well, but during those years he did not have access to a phonograph. For instance, this was the case in 1924, when he was col-

In his lifelong work, Murko mostly recorded epic songs, with a smaller number of other types. His first recordings (1912 and 1913) were made on wax discs under the patronage of the Vienna Academy, while the later ones (1930–1932) were made under the patronage of the Slavic Institute (Slovan-ský ústav) from Prague on wax cylinders (an older but higher-quality technology). According to available data, he recorded a total of 82 discs (46 + 36) and 349 cylinders (208 + 96 + 45), but many have since been lost, mostly during the Second World War. What has survived is of poor quality and is kept in two locations. The “Viennese” collection, technically poorly executed,<sup>78</sup> is preserved at the Vienna Phonogram Archive. The originals no longer exist, but most of their galvanoplastic copies have been preserved (13 were lost). Unfortunately, only 138 cylinders from the higher-quality “Prague” recordings remain. For the purpose of study and creating galvanoplastic copies, Gezemann sent that collection to Berlin. There, it was reportedly heavily damaged in 1945 during the street fighting at the end of the Second World War, and further deterioration occurred afterward (due to fires, improper storage, and natural oxidation). The remaining material is now kept in Zagreb (Croatia). At the request of the Yugoslav government, the cylinders were sent from Prague in 1965 and became part of the Archives of the Yugoslav Academy of Sciences and Arts (Jugoslavenska akademija znanosti i umjetnosti, JAZU; in 1991 renamed the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts, i.e., Hrvatska akademija znanosti i umjetnosti, HAZU).<sup>79</sup> In the entirety of the preserved Murko legacy there must certainly be a significant amount of Serbian material, although precise details about it are, for now, harder to access.

- From 1928 to 1937, a series of phonographic documentation projects on the musical heritage of the Yugoslav Kingdom was carried out, initiated and

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lecting songs in the western part of the Novi Pazar Sandžak. See: Vladimir Murko, op. cit., 113–114.

<sup>78</sup> Murko conducted the recordings from 1912 and 1913 with a “small imperfect device on wax discs of poor quality, so the entire effort was in vain”. See: Радосав Меденица, *Наша народна ејика...*, 373.

<sup>79</sup> Vladimir Murko, op. cit., 112–118; Maja Bošković-Stulli, “Tragom ostavštine Matije Murka”, *Narodna umjetnost*, 4/1, 1966, 285–287; Danka Lajić-Mihajlović, “Doprinos Matije Murka etnomuzikološkom proučavanju epike”, in: Petr Kaleta, Lubomir Tyllner (Eds), *Slovanský svět očima badatelů a publicistů 19. a 20. století – Sborník z mezinárodní vědecké konference k 50. výročí umrtí Ludvíka Kuby (Opole 16.–17. listopadu 2006)*, Praha, Etnologický ústav AV ČR, v. v. i., 2007, 81–82; Данка Лајић-Михајловић, *Српско традиционално певање уз гусле (гусларска пракса као комуникациони процес)*, Београд, Музиколошки институт САНУ, 2014, 16.

led by Gerhard Gezemann. The first such project took place in early 1928, when Gezemann and Serbian historian Andrija Luburić (1891–1944) were in Berlin with the famous Montenegrin *gusle* player Tanasije Vučić to record his repertoire. This visit was part of a major international tour that Vučić undertook in late 1927 and early 1928,<sup>80</sup> organized by Gezemann after he was impressed by Vučić's performances at the 'London' tavern in Belgrade. The tour itinerary included Zagreb – Prague – Berlin – Frankfurt am Main – Prague. It featured his performances for both general and academic publics, and in Prague it also included lectures and presentations by Gerhard Gezemann, Matija Murko, and Ludvík Kuba. In Berlin, twenty so-called shellac records of good quality were recorded in the Department of Phonetics of the Prussian State Library, at the beginning of 1928.<sup>81</sup> This material, labeled as Serbian from Montenegro, is now part of the Sound Archive (Lautarchiv) at Humboldt University in Berlin (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin), with brief information about it (though not the music itself) available on the official website.<sup>82</sup> Based on this information, as well as data published by Gezemann in 1928, it can be seen that Vučić, accompanied by the *gusle*, recorded 11 epic songs and one *Pripev* ("Appendix") on 18 records, while the remaining two include examples of folk speech and several lyrical songs – four wedding songs, one litany for the cross procession, and one Christmas song.<sup>83</sup> Unfortunately, the Berlin documentation shows that five records have been lost.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> Sometimes the literature incorrectly states that the tour took place at the end of 1928 and the beginning of 1929. It is beyond doubt that this is erroneous when the archival records from Berlin (see below) and the publication dates of other relevant sources reporting on this endeavor are taken into account. Cf. Миро Вуксановић, "Јакобсон, Геземан и Грета Сикора о Танасију Вућићу", *Зборник Мајнице српске за књижевности и језик*, 49/3, 2001, 367–375.

<sup>81</sup> Рад.[осав] Меденица, "Фонографско снимање наших народних песама у Сарајеву", *Прилози истраживању народне поезије*, IV/2, 1937, 273; idem, *Наша народна епика...*, 367–369.

<sup>82</sup> The records are numbered 1005–1024. See: <https://www.sammlungen.hu-berlin.de/objekte/lautarchiv/?page=2>

<sup>83</sup> The titles of the epic songs are: *Ženidba Banović Mijajla*; *Nevjerna sestra*; *Junaštvo Rada Čevljanina*; *Vila Zavađa Jakšiće*; *Pogibija Vuka Lopušine*; *Toplica Milan i careva šćer*; *Marko sveti sokola*; *Ženidba Komnen-barjaktara*; *Žena izbavlja muža*; *Majčina kletva*; *Ženidba Đurova Lazara*; *Pripev*. Only the first and third epic songs were recorded in their entirety, and even then in segments (records no. 1005–1010 and 1011–1016). The titles of the lyrical songs are not known. See: Миро Вуксановић, op. cit., 370; <https://www.sammlungen.hu-berlin.de/objekte/lautarchiv/?page=2>

<sup>84</sup> No. 1017–1021.

Interestingly, in 2012 an example of one of them (no. 1018) appeared on a YouTube channel, illustrated with a photograph of its label.<sup>85</sup> The anonymous person who uploaded it (likely a private collector, under the name “Gamelan 78s”) wrote in the comments that he/she owns 11 more such records(!) by the same performer – a detail that is particularly alarming when considering the aforementioned disappearance of the originals from this Berlin collection and their current fate.

- From May 21-31, 1931, the Ethnographic Museum in Belgrade (Etnografski muzej u Beogradu) took part in a series of recordings organized for the purpose of researching epic poetry in Southern Serbia – that is, in the then Vardar Banovina of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. It was an international expedition, approved by the Ministry of Education, proposed to the Museum by the German Society for Slavic Studies from Prague, with the Faculty of Philosophy in Skopje (Филозофски факултет – Скопје) also participating. The recordings were carried out by representatives of the German partner institution: two professors from the German Charles University in Prague (Deutsche Karlsuniversität in Prag), Gerhard Gesemann and the musicologist Gustav Wilhelm Becking (1894–1945),<sup>86</sup> accompanied by his assistant Grete Sykora (1906–1988).<sup>87</sup> The Ethnographic Museum in Belgrade was represented by its director Borivoje M. Drobnjaković and curator Mitar S. Vlahović

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<sup>85</sup> Cf. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A76GTuP0rUw>; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZDmSs3E9uPg>; [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZDmSs3E9uPg&list=RDZDmSs3E9uPg&start\\_radio=1](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZDmSs3E9uPg&list=RDZDmSs3E9uPg&start_radio=1)

<sup>86</sup> In addition to his work in musicology, Becking was also deeply interested in folkloristic subjects, particularly in the rudimentary forms of musical expression characteristic of the *gusle* epic tradition and other related traditions preserved in the Balkans. For this reason, he undertook field research in Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, and Greece together with his team of collaborators. In the field of Serbian ethnomusicology, he is best remembered for his renowned 1933 study, in which – based on excerpts from one of the previously-mentioned performances by Tanasije Vučić, recorded in Berlin (from record no. 1013) – he conducted a meticulous analysis of the musical and melopoetic structure of epic songs from Montenegro. Becking’s paper was the first of its kind on this subject and included his transcription of the example in question, where he applied an original system of notation devised specifically for that purpose. Cf. G.[ustav] Becking, “Der musikalische Bau des Montenegrinischen Volksepos”, *Archives Néerlandaises de Phonétique Expérimentale*, VIII-IX, 1933, 144–153.

<sup>87</sup> She also left a testimony about the *guslar* Tanasije Vučić through an unusual, literary-toned obituary on the occasion of his death in 1937. According to: Мирo Вуксановић, op. cit., 373–375.

(1897–1982),<sup>88</sup> while the Faculty of Philosophy in Skopje was represented by the ethnologist Milenko S. Filipović (1902–1969) (Геземан 1932: 194). This research project was a unique joint endeavor of two domestic institutions and one foreign institution, a collaboration reflected not only in the composition of the participating experts but also in the equipment used. The phonograph belonged to the Ethnographic Museum, while the wax cylinders were financed through a subsidy from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Prague. It was agreed that the original recordings would remain in Belgrade, with copies to be kept in Skopje and Prague.<sup>89</sup>

The expedition followed the route Skopje – Veles – Prilep – Bitola – Ohrid – Struga – Debar – Gostivar – Tetovo – Skopje, and resulted in material recorded on 36 wax cylinders.<sup>90</sup> The research focused on the distinctive epic tradition of the central Balkan region, which, on a poetic level, is related to the Dinaric tradition but differs considerably in its musical realization and certain other aspects.<sup>91</sup> From the perspective of official scientific and political positions, it does not, in fact, belong to the Serbian but rather to the Macedonian musical heritage of the former “Southern Serbia” and, according to that logic, it does not fall within the scope of these considerations. Of course, this touches on the long-standing and controversial question of the ethno-

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<sup>88</sup> Vlahović brought back several dozen items for the museum’s collection from these trips, including musical instruments. His well-known article on blind *guslars* from South Serbia is largely based on the data gathered on this occasion. See: Митар С. Влаховић, “О слепим гусларима у Јужној Србији”, *Гласник Етнографској музеја у Београду*, 6, 1931, 100–106; Боровоје Дробњаковић, “Етнографски музеј у Београду у 1931. години”, *Гласник Етнографској музеја у Београду*, 6, 1931, 148.

<sup>89</sup> Герхард Геземан, “Нова истраживања о народном епу у Вардарској бановини”, *Гласник Скойској научној друштва*, XI, Одељење друштвених наука, 5, 1932, 194.

<sup>90</sup> Боровоје Дробњаковић, *op. cit.*, 147.

<sup>91</sup> For Gesemann himself, as a Slavist, these musical aspects were not important. Moreover, given his broad interest in the history of European and world epic traditions, he approached the “local” characteristics of the Balkan epic as part of a larger framework: “First: the Serbo-Croatian epic question must be freed from the shackles of national isolation. It is not only a question of the history of the Serbo-Croatian epic but of the history of European and non-European epic in general. Within a purely national framework, we will never find a way forward. The first step toward this goal is the recognition that the entire South Slavic epic constitutes an indivisible whole. ‘South Slavic’ means, in national terms, Serbo-Croatian and Bulgarian; and in geographical terms, Dinaric and central Balkan epic”. See: Герхард Геземан, “Нова истраживања о народном епу...”, *op. cit.*, 192.

genesis of the Macedonian population, which continues to provoke debate today; however, we shall leave this issue aside and return to the results achieved during that phonographic research (in the second part of this paper).<sup>92</sup> It may be added here that Gesemann's report on the expedition was published the following year, in 1932, in the *Гласник Скојскої научної групиїва*,<sup>93</sup> and that, even before the Second World War, the poor technical quality of the recorded material had been noted due to the use of an inferior sound medium.<sup>94</sup>

- The third, final, and by far the most significant in the series of phonographic expeditions initiated by Gesemann took place in Sarajevo and its surroundings in 1937, from September 15 to October 15. The multidisciplinary research team (previously mentioned in connection with activities in Bosnia and Herzegovina) carried out extensive phonographic recordings aimed at documenting and studying folk music and language. The expedition was titled "Journey through Bosnia 1937" ("Bosnienfahrt 1937") and its sponsor was the German Academy in Munich, established to study the culture of peoples in Eastern and Southeastern Europe – specifically, its separate South-eastern Committee (Südost-Ausschuss der Deutschen Akademie München), for which this was the first task of this kind.<sup>95</sup> In addition to Gesemann, the team of distinguished scholars included: Kurt Huber (1893–1943), a professor at the University of Munich, musicologist, philosopher, and psychologist; his assistant Walter Wünsch (1908–1991), a specialist in the Slavic epic; the phonetician Friedrich Karl Roedemeyer (1895–1948) from Frankfurt; Wilhelm Stauder (1903–1981), a musicologist from Frankfurt responsible for technical matters; and on the Yugoslav side, two experts from Belgrade who

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<sup>92</sup> When examining the collection of interwar wax cylinders from the Ethnographic Museum in Belgrade.

<sup>93</sup> Герхард Геземан, "Нова истраживања о народном епу...", *op. cit.*

<sup>94</sup> Рад.[осав] Меденица, "Фонографско снимање...", 273; *idem*, *Наша народна епика...*, *op. cit.*, 372.

<sup>95</sup> The Southeastern Committee focused on the study and promotion of the culture of the German minority in Eastern and Southeastern Europe, and the "Bosnienfahrt 1937" project was the first to be devoted to the local population. This ambitious undertaking also involved the State Institute for German Music Research in Berlin, as well as the Department of Linguistics and the Musicological Institute of the University of Frankfurt am Main.

joined privately, Radosav Medenica and Alois Schmaus (1901–1970), a German Slavicist and Balkanologist.<sup>96</sup>

Although this information cannot be found in ethnomusicological literature from the former Yugoslav region, some foreign sources explicitly state that the purpose of the expedition was “to study and record all the distinctive varieties of Serbian [emphasis S. R.] musical folk-lore,” as well as the language of the local population.<sup>97</sup> Sarajevo was chosen as the center of the research due to its pronounced interweaving of different cultures and confessions. A total of 137 musical recordings and 35 spoken recordings were made, in the highest possible quality for the time. For the first time, a plastic medium – decelith discs<sup>98</sup> – was used, and the recording equipment, quite complex and specially developed for this occasion, was designed by Stauder. A highly heterogeneous body of material was recorded, consisting primarily of *sevdalinkas* (urban love songs of the Muslim tradition), documented in their most distinctive contexts and interpretations. These songs were performed not only by Muslims, but also by Catholics and Orthodox Christians.<sup>99</sup> In addition to the urban heritage, rural material from the surroundings of Sarajevo was also collected. Great attention was devoted to *guslars* (epic singers accompanying themselves on the *gusle*), of whom there were about ten.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> Рад.[осав] Меденица, “Фонографско снимање..., 273; idem, *Наша народна еџика...*, 374; Vlado S. Milošević, “Rad ekipe prof. dra Gerharda Gezemana na fonografisanju narodnih pjesama u Sarajevu 1937.,” *Radovi Akademije nauka i umjetnosti BiH*, XLVII, Odjeljenje za književnost i umjetnost, 1, 1973, 185.

<sup>97</sup> Walter H. Rubsamen, “Kurt Huber of Munich,” *The Musical Quarterly*, 30/2, 1944, 230.

<sup>98</sup> This type of disc was subsequently put into use by German radio and television. See: Susanne Ziegler, “Historijski snimci bosanske muzike...,” op. cit., 147.

<sup>99</sup> An interesting detail is that the most prominent interpreter of *sevdalinkas* was Nikola Stojković, a former singer for *begs* (*beg* was a noble or administrative title in the Ottoman Empire), “who sang and experienced *sevdalinka* within the circles that were largely its main bearers, and who possessed an extraordinary understanding of the true sensual mystique of the *sevdalinka*.” See: Радосав Меденица, *Наша народна еџика...*, op. cit., 374.

<sup>100</sup> Particularly notable were Vukan Štuka (according to some sources: Štaka), an accomplished *guslar*, multi-instrumentalist, singer, and storyteller, as well as a pair of blind *guslars*, Nikola Korica from Lika in Croatia, and Rom Jovan Antić from Serbia, recognized for their unusual joint performances on double *gusle*. These performances inspired the publication of two studies in the same year in *Прилози иџроучавању народне иџезије*. Cf. Рад.[осав] Меденица, “Два путујућа слепца-гуслара,” *Прилози иџроучавању народне иџезије*, IV/2, 1937, 287–300; Валтер Винш, “Гуслање и рецитација слепаца Николе Корице и Јована Антића,” *ibid.*, 300–302.

The recordings also include examples of secondal polyphony singing,<sup>101</sup> as well as, for the first time, single examples of *eganje* (vocalization intended to incite bullfighting) and singing accompanied by a *tepsija* (a metal tray used as an idiophone instrument). Various forms of religious music-making were also documented, along with performances on the *dvojnica* (a type of double flute), *ćurlika* (a type of flute), *tambura*, *saz* (a type of large *tambura* used to accompany the singing of *sevdalinkas*), and violin, as well as vocal-instrumental renditions (singing accompanied by *gusle*, *saz*, or violin). The material is divided into five categories: 1. songs from small towns; 2. rural songs; 3. *guslar* epics; 4. instrumental music; and 5. religious songs, recitations, and other forms. This collection is considered the most significant body of phonographic material from Bosnia and Herzegovina preserved in Germany.<sup>102</sup> Based on the personal names and recorded musical practices listed in Felix Hoerburger's (1916–1997) *Katalog der europäischen Volksmusik* from the Sound Archive of the Institute for Music Research in Regensburg (Schallarchiv des Institutes für Musikforschung Regensburg),<sup>103</sup> there is no doubt that this collection also contains Serbian material.

There was considerable discussion in scholarly publications about the representative undertaking “Bosnienfahrt 1937”, particularly before the Second World War, when the recordings were kept in Berlin at the State Institute for Research on German Music (Staatliche Institut für Deutsche Musikforschung). Three copies were made, two of which were destroyed during the war, while the third somehow ended up in Regensburg. For a long time it was believed that even this copy had been lost, but at the beginning of the twenty-first century it was eventually rediscovered and digitized,<sup>104</sup> and in the au-

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<sup>101</sup> Foreign researchers were particularly fascinated by this old rural secondal polyphony, which they regarded as typical of the Western Balkans, especially in performances featuring alternating groups of singers. According to: Susanne Ziegler, “Historijski snimci bosanske muzike...”, op. cit., 148.

<sup>102</sup> Герхард Геземан, “Пролегомена поводом грамофонског снимања босанске народне песме”, *Прилози проучавању народне поезије*, IV/2, 1937, 222–239; Рад. [осав] Меденица, “Фонографско снимање...; idem, *Наша народна ејика...*; Kurt Huber, Walther Wünsch, “Bosnienfahrt”, *Deutsche Musikkultur*, III/1, 1938/39, 19–26; Vlado S. Milošević, op. cit.; Susanne Ziegler, *ibid.*, 146–149.

<sup>103</sup> Cf. Felix Hoerburger, “Jugoslavien”, in: “Katalog der europäischen Volksmusik” *im Schallarchiv des Institutes für Musikforschung Regensburg*, Regensburg, Gustav Bosse Verlag, 1953, 33–46. Hoerburger's *Katalog* is partially available at the following web address: <http://www.sevdalinke.com/2012/08/spisak-sevdalinki-snimljenih-1937-god-u.html>.

<sup>104</sup> Susanne Ziegler, “Historijski snimci bosanske muzike...”, op. cit., 150.

tumn of 2017 it was delivered in this form to the Music Academy of the University of (Federal) Sarajevo.<sup>105</sup> Much earlier, in 1969, Vlado S. Milošević (1901–1990) managed to re-record almost the entire collection in Germany using a tape recorder. Shortly thereafter, he published a study on the material, which included transcriptions of twelve illustrative examples as well as a complete translation of Stauders' 1937 report.<sup>106</sup>

- In the same pre-war period, from 1935 to 1939, another German – economist, journalist, and agricultural expert Gustav Adolf Küppers-Sonnenberg (1894–1978) – traveled through the countries of Southeastern Europe to make phonographic recordings of folk music on wax cylinders, under the auspices of the Berlin Phonogram Archive. He visited Yugoslavia in 1935, 1938, and 1939. Given the fact that he was a supporter of Hitler's ideas – later becoming an advisor for the Balkans in the military-economic staff of the Wehrmacht High Command during the Second World War – it is unsurprising that Küppers-Sonnenberg primarily sought to document the music of the Volksdeutsche in Southeastern Europe. Nevertheless, of the total 188 recorded cylinders, he also documented many musical examples from other peoples: Czechs, Slovaks, Hungarians, Croats, Macedonians, Slovenes, Serbs, Albanians, Romanians, Vlachs, Jews. In 2011, part of this material was published for the first time in Berlin, in the series Berlin Phonogram Archive – Historical Sound Documents (Berliner Phonogramm-Archiv Historische Klangdokumente).<sup>107</sup> The accompanying study notes that Küppers-Sonnenberg recorded in Vojvodina as well as in the southern and eastern regions

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<sup>105</sup> This information was provided by Dr. Tamara Karača-Beljak, professor of ethnomusicology at the aforementioned Sarajevo institution, to whom I am grateful on this occasion as well.

<sup>106</sup> Cf. Wilhelm Stauder, "Die Volksliedaufnahmen der Deutschen Akademie in Südslawien", *Akademie zur wissenschaftlichen Erforschung und zur Pflege des Deutschtums – Deutsche Akademie, Mitteilungen*, 12/4, 1937, 583–584; Vlado S. Milošević, "Rad ekipe prof. dra Gerharda Gezemana...", op. cit., 185–186.

<sup>107</sup> *Walzenaufnahmen aus Südosteuropa (Wax Cylinder Recordings from Southeast Europe) – G. Küppers-Sonnenberg 1935–1939*, Berliner Phonogramm-Archiv Historische Klangdokumente 7, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, 2011, CD. The contents of this publication are also available at: <https://www.discogs.com/Various-Walzenaufnahmen-Aus-S%C3%BCdosteuropa-Wax-Cylinder-Recordings-From-Southeast-Europe-1935-1939/release/4603967>. A concise review by Dimitrije O. Golemović was published shortly thereafter by ICTM. Cf. Dimitrije O. Golemović, "Walzenaufnahmen aus Südosteuropa (Wax Cylinder Recordings from Southeast Europe): G. Küppers-Sonnenberg 1935–1939", *Yearbook for Traditional Music*, 45, 2013, 282.

of Yugoslavia, and that Serbian heritage in his legacy was represented by a smaller number of examples – mainly recordings of instrumental dance melodies and church chanting from the Dečani Monastery.<sup>108</sup> However, no Serbian example was included in the selection. The text of the study offers no explanation for this omission, nor does it provide a clear account of what Serbian material from his collection, if any, has survived to this day, since part of the legacy was damaged under various circumstances during the Second World War.

• The Balkan musical tradition also attracted American scholars of various backgrounds. Between 1933 and 1935, during study trips to Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, and Croatia, the renowned American Homeric scholars Milman Parry (1902–1935) and Albert Bates Lord (1912–1991) assembled an impressive collection of 3,584 double-sided 12-inch aluminum discs (approximately 415 hours of material). These recordings include not only recitations but also sung renditions of 367 epic and 260 lyric “Serbo-Croatian” songs – that is, songs of Bosniaks, Serbs, and Croats (along with several dozen Turkish, Albanian, and Macedonian songs, as well as instrumental pieces).<sup>109</sup> Overall, this represents the most significant result of phonographic expeditions across all territories that were once part of Yugoslavia. Transcriptions of 75 selected examples were incorporated by Bartók into his and Lord’s aforementioned 1951 study on the “Serbo-Croatian” songs.<sup>110</sup> According to international scholarly consensus, these particular transcriptions represent the pinnacle of Bartók’s melographic work and rank among the most complex ever produced in ethnomusicology.<sup>111</sup> This extraordinary collection, largely unexplored, is preserved at the Widener Library of Harvard University under the title *Milman Parry Collection of Oral Literature*. To the best of our

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<sup>108</sup> Cf. Susanne Ziegler, “The Wax Cylinder Recordings by Gustav Küppers-Sonnenberg”, in: *Walzenaufnahmen aus Südosteuropa (Wax Cylinder Recordings from Southeast Europe) – G. Küppers-Sonnenberg 1935–1939*, Berliner Phonogramm-Archiv Historische Klangdokumente 7, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, 2011, 63–73.

<sup>109</sup> David Elmer, “The Milman Parry Collection of Oral Literature”, *Oral Tradition*, 28/2, 2013, 341–346.

<sup>110</sup> Cf. Béla Bartók, Albert B. Lord, op. cit. The first publication of this major work appeared in 1951, and a revised and significantly expanded edition, which we refer to here, was published in 1978.

<sup>111</sup> Ter Ellingson, “Transcription”, in: Helen Myers (Ed.), *Ethnomusicology: An Introduction*. The Norton/Grove Handbooks in Music, New York – London, W. W. Norton & Company, 1992, 142–143.

knowledge, it has not yet been published in audio form. Digitization has been ongoing since 2002, and selected examples are available through the official website,<sup>112</sup> as well as on a YouTube channel.<sup>113</sup>

- The next in this series of known collections of Serbian material recorded on phonograph is also linked to the United States. In 1938, the famous American ethnomusicologist Alan Lomax (1915–2002) conducted field recordings of music from various peoples residing in the Great Lakes region (i.e., the states of Michigan and Wisconsin), including Serbs and, to a lesser extent, Croats. Examples of Serbian music were recorded on August 5th and 6th in Clairpointe and River Rouge, suburbs of Detroit (Michigan).<sup>114</sup> These recordings are part of Lomax's extensive collection from the area, which is kept at the Library of Congress in Washington D.C. The material consists of 10 double-sided 12-inch discs<sup>115</sup> of relatively good quality, each capable of holding up to 5 minutes of sound.<sup>116</sup> It has been digitized and is available through the official website,<sup>117</sup> though this does not apply to the accompanying written materials. The collection is quite diverse, but, due to the inaccessibility of

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<sup>112</sup> See: <https://mpc.chs.harvard.edu/>

<sup>113</sup> See for example: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LuemytQRmnE>

<sup>114</sup> The existence of this valuable sound collection was first pointed out by a graduate student in ethnomusicology, Nikola Zekić from Podgorica (Montenegro). Cf. Никола Зекић, *Гусле на 78 обрћаја (од њочейка снимања звука до 1939 године)*, 2018 (unpublished).

<sup>115</sup> They are listed under the signature AFC 1939/007, from numbers 2238 to 2248, with additional labels A and B. According to the library records, the collection contains 17 "items," although there are actually a few more: *Announcement*; *Pastirska pesma*; *Narodno kolo* (2238 A); *Pastirska pesma*; *Pesna o bojo srba* (2238 B); *Guslarski ep* (2239 A; 2239 B); *Salaška narodna pesma* (2240 A); *Kraljević marko* (2240 B); *Dolinom se šetala* (2241 A); *Drina*; *Oj savice* (2241 B); *Oj savice*; *Drinking song* (2242 A); *Zaplakala stara Majka*; *Tamburitza group* (2243 B); *Bosa Mara Bosun fregazila*; *Lipa jelo*; *Tamburitza group* (2244 A); *Maširala kralja petra garda*; *Tamburitza group* (2244 B); *Smrt čekaj paše* (2245 A; 2245 B; 2246 A); *Kolo* (2246 B); *Pastirska pesma*; *Kolo*; *Seljančica (kolo)* (2247 A); *Scale on diiple*; *U ivana gospodara*; *Melodija gusle na dipli* (2247 B); *Pastirska pesma* (2248 A); *Pastirska pesma*; *Seljančica*; *Melodija gusle na duduko*; *Šalaj* (2248 B). See: <https://www.loc.gov/collections/alan-lomax-in-michigan/about-this-collection/>;

<https://www.loc.gov/collections/alan-lomax-in-michigan/>

<sup>116</sup> Zekić concluded that Lomax's recording device (brand Presto) was placed in the trunk of his car and operated on electricity supplied by a battery. This was probably the main reason why the recordings took place outdoors. See: Никола Зекић, op. cit., 13.

<sup>117</sup> See note 116.

all metadata, it is not possible to precisely determine from which Serbian regions the performers originate. Based on the recorded pieces and limited information, it is reasonable to conclude that some performers come from Banat, Bosnia, the Banija region, and surrounding areas of Serbian Krajina, while for others, it can only be stated that they are also from the Dinaric area. In addition to epic *guslars* and vocal pieces (both monophonic and in old two-part polyphony), the collection features various instrumental examples, performed on the *duduk* (a type of flute), *dvojnice*, *diple* (a type of single-reed schalmay), and by a smaller tambura ensemble.

- Before the outbreak of the Second World War, there were other American research recordings of Serbian musical heritage, conducted both in Yugoslavia and in the United States. Pianist and folklorist Esther C. Jonsson<sup>118</sup> (1901–1982) documented traditional music in Serbia (at the Belgrade tavern “Triglav” at Zeleni Venac), Macedonia, and Bulgaria, “around 1940.”<sup>119</sup> About 20 recorded pieces (with a total duration of approximately 65 minutes) are preserved on seven “first-generation aluminum discs,” 12-inch, 78 rpm records, which are kept in the Indiana University Archives of Traditional Music.<sup>120</sup> The examples from Serbia document songs and dances performed by an unnamed Roma tavern orchestra from Niš, which included violin, probably various tamburas, cymbal, and accordion. The vocal parts were performed by a female singer and a male duet. Among the songs, the still popular *Evo srcu mom radosti* can be recognized, and among the dance melodies, *Seljačko kolo* stands out.<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>118</sup> In the sources, she is more commonly known by her surname Garlinghouse, which she adopted after marriage.

<sup>119</sup> Some sources state that Jonsson was recording “around 1940”, while others give 1938 as the year of her stay in the Balkans and note that she visited Yugoslavia again in 1946. Cf. <https://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/entries/garlinghouse-esther-c-jonsson>. The year of her recordings in Belgrade certainly cannot be 1940, given the fact that she collaborated with Kosta P. Manojlović there in 1939 (see the continuation of this article).

<sup>120</sup> The content of the recordings is as follows: *Mohammedan call to prayer*; *Zurla solos*; *Wedding procession*; *Račenića dance*; *Gypsy, Paiduška, Srpsko, Seljacko and Crnogorsko kolo dances*; *Gypsy orchestra music*; *Hungarian gypsy music*; *Bosnian singer with orchestra*; *Children’s songs*; *Game song*; *Marriage song*; *Bulgarian songs*; *Moma, momče*; *Untitled songs* [Macedonian?].

See: <https://beta.worldcat.org/archivegrid/collection/data/16879038>.

<sup>121</sup> Марија Думнић, “Музичирање и музичари у кафанама у Београду од почетка емитовања програма Радио Београда до Другог светског рата”, *Зборник Мајинце српске за сценске уметности и музику*, 49, 2013, 86.

- Esther Jonsson later recorded several songs of Serbian origin on three identical media (12-inch aluminum discs, 78 rpm) on December 10, 1940, in New York, in collaboration with George Herzog (1901–1983), which also marks – as far as we know – the later chronological boundary of the phonographic documentation of Serbian musical folklore. These songs were performed by a certain Chris Sekulić, apparently a descendant of Serbian émigrants, singing and accompanying himself on the *gusle*. All of these recordings are also part of the collection at the Indiana University Archives of Traditional Music, which was founded by Herzog in 1948.<sup>122</sup> Copies of these recordings were transferred to the Institute of Musicology, Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts (SASA) in 2012 for research purposes.<sup>123</sup>
- At the conclusion of this overview, we will revisit the previously discussed collections of Evgenia Lineva and Juro Adlešič from Bela Krajina, recorded in 1913 and 1914. It is a well-known fact that this part of Slovenia was settled several centuries ago by Serbian and Croatian populations arriving from various regions (fleeing from the Turkish expansion during the Ottoman Empire), which had a significant impact on the region's traditional culture, and thus on its musical folklore.<sup>124</sup> Since intermarriages between members of different faiths were very rare in the past, the Serbian population in Bela Krajina, isolated by its Orthodox faith, long resisted acculturation and assimilation – processes that only gained significant momentum after the Second World War.<sup>125</sup> Therefore, it is highly likely that Lineva's and Adlešič's recordings included what was then still well-preserved Serbian material, even though there are no explicit references to this. The only data we have is that Lineva recorded eight

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<sup>122</sup> The tracks are labeled with the following titles: *Boj na kosove*; *Starac Vujadin*; *Pjesnik i vila* / by King Nikola; *Poem* / by Branko Radičević; *Songs from the drama Balkanska Carica* / by King Nicola; *Zenska pjesma*; *O devojko duso moja*. See: <https://beta.worldcat.org/archivegrid/collection/data/16752543>.

<sup>123</sup> Данка Лајић-Михајловић, Јелена Јовановић, “Историјат сакупљања теренских звучних записа традиционалне музике у Музиколошком институту САНУ”, in: Растко Јаковљевић (Ed.), *Фоноархив Музиколошкој институције САНУ: историјски звучни записи у дигиталној ери*, Београд, Музиколошки институт САНУ, 2014, 4.

<sup>124</sup> Cf. Zmaga Kumer, *Pesem slovenske dežele*, Maribor, Založba Obzorja, 1975.

<sup>125</sup> Сања Ранковић, “Основне одлике српске вокалне праксе у Белој Крајини (Словенија) (На основу грађе Гласбенонародописног института у Љубљани)”, in: Ивана Перковић-Радак, Драгана Стојановић-Новичић, Данка Лајић (Eds), *Историја и мистерија музике – у часи Роксанде Пејовић*, Музиколошке студије – монографије, св. 2, Београд, ФМУ, 2006, 227.

or nine Croatian examples.<sup>126</sup> However, this certainly requires verification, due to the similarities and frequent intermingling of Serbian and Croatian musical folklore,<sup>127</sup> as well as the fact that the unwarranted attribution of numerous Serbian heritage examples to Croatian music has become a common practice in our time (one such case has already been mentioned in this report). In short, when a thorough examination of Lineva's and Adlešić's sound materials is conducted, it will likely turn out that parts of these collections should be included in our overview. The language and characteristic structure of the titles of certain recorded songs (with dependent refrains within the verse, for example), as well as the typical surnames of some of the singers, provide more than enough grounds for such an assumption.<sup>128</sup>

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According to the facts known so far, the overall picture of the phonographic recordings of Serbian musical folklore heritage carried out by foreign collectors could be summarized as follows:

- The recordings took place with varying intensity over a span of 33 years, from 1907 to 1940, with the highest number occurring just before the Second World War, i.e., at the end of the 1920s and during the 1930s.
- They mostly took place either in areas of older and newer Serbian diaspora (Italy, Slovenia, Hungary, Romania, United States), or in regions that were historically Serbian but over time became part of surrounding newly-established states and nations (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro). It was more rare for performers to travel abroad specifically for the purpose of recording (such as the journeys of Josip Široki Baček to Vienna and Tanasije Vučić to Berlin), or for them to be temporarily displaced for other reasons and by chance participate in the recordings (such as Serbian prisoners in two German camps during the First World War). On the other hand, sound recordings of Serbian material within Serbia itself were carried

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<sup>126</sup> Drago Kunej, "Pesemsko izročilo Bele krajine...", 145–146, 149–153.

<sup>127</sup> This is not surprising, given the well-known fact that a considerable part of the Croatian ethnic corpus derives from Serbian populations who, either voluntarily or – more often – under pressure, abandoned the Orthodox faith and converted to Catholicism.

<sup>128</sup> Here are a few indicative song titles from Lineva's and Adlešić's phonographic collection: *Išla Mara, zlato moje, kraj vode bunara*; *Široko je Drenopolje*; *Devojka je išla u goru zelenu*; *Oj, Korano, oj, janje, tiha voda 'ladna*; *Tri sem dana kukuruzu brala*. According to: Drago Kunej, "Pesemsko izročilo Bele krajine...", op. cit., 149–153.

out very rarely (Murko, Küppers-Sonnenberg, Jonsson), and the phonograms that were made have either been lost without a trace (Küppers-Sonnenberg), are in extremely poor condition (Murko), or are few in number and insufficiently characteristic (Jonsson).

– The recordings were conducted by 23 individuals of various professions, interests, and motivations, most of whom were experts of high renown, including respected university professors. The largest group consists of foreign Slavic scholars and linguists (Murko, Gezemann, Šmaus, Parry, Lord, Rodemeyer), with a few domestic experts from these fields joining them as exceptions (Rešetar, Medenica). Following them are musicologists (Schünnemann, Beking, Sykora, Huber, Wunsch, Stauder), comparative musicologists (Bartók, Lomax, Herzog), and folklorists (Wolter, Lineva, Široki, Jonsson), while contributions were also made by individuals from other professions (Adlešič, Küppers-Sonnenberg). Equally impressive is the heterogeneous ethnic background of all these individuals, among whom were as many as ten Germans, five Americans, two Slovenes, one Russian, one Lithuanian, one Hungarian, and one Croat (with, as an exception, two Serbs).

– Since musical folklore was not the primary area of interest for everyone (Slavists, linguists), musical performances were recorded as part of a broader syncretic whole and context. Those researchers who were primarily focused on traditional music very rarely concentrated specifically on Serbian heritage (Bartók, Herzog) – their encounter with it was usually part of a broader recording of the musical heritage of other nations, or even an unplanned incidental event. Ultimately, there were also cases of clear instrumentalization of phonographic activities for political purposes, at a time when fascist ideology was on the rise and the Third Reich had aspirations toward the Balkans (Küppers-Sonnenberg). It was only with the involvement of domestic researchers – primarily Kosta P. Manojlović, who was actively engaged both at the Ethnographic Museum and at the Music Academy – that a somewhat larger body of Serbian material from Serbian territory was intentionally recorded, primarily that from Kosovo and Metohija.

– When it comes to the technical aspect of the phonographic activities of foreign collectors, a variety of devices of different chronological origins were used during this relatively long period, and accordingly, almost all types of related media – ranging from wax cylinders and discs, to shellac and lacquer discs, and even high-quality carriers made of decelith.

– For both technical reasons and due to the historical circumstances of survival over a long period of time – which, in some cases, extends beyond a century and includes two world wars – the sound collections have not always been preserved in their entirety and vary in audio quality. The range of condition extends from examples that are completely inaudible, to those that are barely audible and filled with interference, to recordings whose digitization and restoration can, or already have, resulted in exceptionally good sound quality.

– As the most successful, due to the technical quality of the recordings, the quantity and comprehensiveness of the material recorded, and/or historical significance, the following four collections stand out: the collection of Parry and Lord (1933–1935), the collection of Gezemann’s team from Bosnia (1937), Schünemann’s collection from German prisoner-of-war camps (First World War), and Gezemann’s collection with performances by Tanasije Vučić (1928). The same status likely applies to Murko’s “Prague” collection (1930–1932), but this can only be confirmed if it one day becomes more accessible to researchers from Serbia.

– The recorded phonograms provide an unusually diverse spectrum of sound documentation of Serbian traditional music. In general, the greatest attention was given to epic songs accompanied by the *gusle*. They were collected in the wider “epic area” of the western and central Balkans (Murko’s collections), most extensively and systematically in the border region of Serbia, Montenegro, and Bosnia and Herzegovina (the collections of Parry and Lord), to a greater extent around Sarajevo (Gezemann’s team collection, Wolter’s collection), and occasionally even from across the Atlantic (Lomax, Jonsson, Herzog). In comparison to the recordings of *guslars*, all other material shows a pronounced mosaic-like quality and gives the impression of an unplanned collection of “trial samples” of music from the territories represented.

– Despite the mentioned shortcomings, the ethnomusicological value of all the phonographic recordings in these collections is undeniable, and due to their rarity, this value is all the more significant. Above all, their great historical importance must be emphasized – not only as sound testimonies of Serbian traditional music *per se*, but also as evidence of the Serbian presence and lived fate in the represented geographical areas.

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## Summary

The invention of the phonograph by Thomas Alva Edison (1847–1931) in 1877 marked a significant turning point in the study of traditional world music. The use of the first device for recording and reproducing sound greatly facilitated and accelerated fieldwork, advanced melography and analysis, and above all, decisively contributed to the establishment of comparative musicology (1885), providing it with the essential prerequisite for any scientific discipline – documentation and verifiability of facts, permanently stored on a physical sound medium.

After the earliest ethnomusicological use of the phonograph in the United States (1890), the first recordings on the eastern side of the Atlantic followed: in Imperial Russia (1894; 1897) and in Hungary (1896). The importance of using the phonograph was quickly recognized by music folklorists from across the region that would later, after the First World War, become part of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, i.e., Kingdom of Yugoslavia (after its renaming in 1929), but its introduction into research practice was not uniformly carried out in line with this recognition. The varying pace of improvements in fieldwork through the use of this device was only one indicator of the uneven development of musical folkloristics in the Western Balkan region. Conditioned by numerous unfavorable circumstances, the advancement of Serbian musical folkloristics progressed at a visibly slower pace than in the former parts of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, a fact reflected as well in the belated acquisition of the first phonograph in 1930. Moreover, the only Serbs who ever engaged in phonographic recording of Serbian musical heritage within the local environment were the distinguished ethnologist, anthropogeographer, and museologist Borivoje M. Drobnjaković (1890–1961), and (much more extensively) composer, choral conductor, folklorist, and multifaceted contributor to the development of musical culture in Serbia and Yugoslavia, Kosta P. Manojlović (1890–1949). Under such circumstances, a kind of compensation for the historically very important yet modest domestic results in this field was provided by foreign researchers, through their own phonographic recordings of Serbian musical heritage in Serbia, in the broader region, or among Serbian populations in both near and distant diasporas.

According to the facts known so far, the overall results of their work present a highly heterogeneous picture in every possible respect. Their recordings took place with varying intensity over a span of 33 years, from 1907 to 1940, with the highest number occurring just before the Second World War, i.e., at the end of the 1920s and during the 1930s. They mostly took place either in areas of older and newer Serbian

diasporas (Italy, Slovenia, Hungary, Romania, United States), or in regions that were historically Serbian but over time became part of surrounding newly-established states and nations (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro). It was more rare for performers to travel abroad specifically for the purpose of recording (such as the journeys of Josip Široki Baček to Vienna and Tanasije Vučić to Berlin), or for them to be temporarily displaced for other reasons and by chance participate in the recordings (such as Serbian prisoners in two German camps during the First World War). On the other hand, sound recordings of Serbian material within Serbia itself were carried out very rarely (Murko, Küppers-Sonnenberg, Jonsson), and the phonograms that were made have either been lost without a trace (Küppers-Sonnenberg), are in extremely poor condition (Murko), or are few in number and insufficiently characteristic (Jonsson).

The recordings were conducted by 23 individuals of various professions, interests, and motivations, most of whom were experts of high renown, including respected university professors. The largest group consists of foreign Slavic scholars and linguists (Murko, Gezemann, Šmaus, Parry, Lord, Roedemeyer), with a few domestic experts from these fields joining them as exceptions (Rešetar, Medenica). Following them are musicologists (Schünemann, Beking, Sykora, Huber, Wunsch, Stauder), comparative musicologists (Bartók, Lomax, Herzog), and folklorists (Wolter, Lineva, Široki, Jonsson), while contributions were also made by individuals from other professions (Adlešič, Küppers-Sonnenberg). Equally impressive is the heterogeneous ethnic background of all these individuals, among whom were as many as ten Germans, five Americans, two Slovenes, one Russian, one Lithuanian, one Hungarian, and one Croat (with, as an exception, two Serbs).

Since musical folklore was not the primary area of interest for everyone (Slavists, linguists), musical performances were recorded as part of a broader syncretic whole and context. Those researchers who were primarily focused on traditional music very rarely concentrated specifically on Serbian heritage (Bartók, Herzog) – their encounter with it was usually part of a broader recording of the musical heritage of other nations, or even an unplanned incidental event. Ultimately, there were also cases of clear instrumentalization of phonographic activities for political purposes, at a time when fascist ideology was on the rise and the Third Reich had aspirations toward the Balkans (Küppers-Sonnenberg). It was only with the involvement of domestic researchers – primarily Kosta P. Manojlović, who was actively engaged both at the Ethnographic Museum and at the Music Academy – that a somewhat larger body of Serbian material from Serbian territory was intentionally recorded, primarily that from Kosovo and Metohija.

When it comes to the technical aspect of the phonographic activities of foreign collectors, a variety of devices of different chronological origins were used during this relatively long period, and accordingly, almost all types of related media – ranging from wax cylinders and discs, to shellac and lacquer discs, and even high-quality car-

riers made of decelith. For both technical reasons and due to the historical circumstances of survival over a long period of time – which, in some cases, extends beyond a century and includes two world wars – the sound collections have not always been preserved in their entirety and vary in audio quality. The range of condition extends from examples that are completely inaudible, to those that are barely audible and filled with interference, to recordings whose digitization and restoration can, or already have, resulted in exceptionally good sound quality. As the most successful due to the technical quality of the recordings, the quantity and comprehensiveness of the material recorded, and/or historical significance, the following four collections stand out: the collection of Parry and Lord (1933–1935), the collection of Gezemann’s team from Bosnia (1937), Schünemann’s collection from German prisoner-of-war camps (First World War), and Gezemann’s collection with performances by Tanasije Vučić (1928). The same status likely applies to Murko’s “Prague” collection (1930–1932), but this can only be confirmed if it one day becomes more accessible to researchers from Serbia.

The recorded phonograms provide an unusually diverse spectrum of sound documentation of Serbian traditional music. In general, the greatest attention was given to epic songs accompanied by the *gusle*. They were collected in the wider “epic area” of the western and central Balkans (Murko’s collections), most extensively and systematically in the border region of Serbia, Montenegro, and Bosnia and Herzegovina (the collections of Parry and Lord), to a greater extent around Sarajevo (Gezemann’s team collection, Wolter’s collection), and occasionally even from across the Atlantic (Lomax, Jonsson, Herzog). In comparison to the recordings of *guslars*, all other material shows a pronounced mosaic-like quality and gives the impression of an unplanned collection of “trial samples” of music from the territories represented.

Despite the mentioned shortcomings, the ethnomusicological value of all the phonographic recordings in these collections is undeniable, and due to their rarity, this value is all the more significant. Above all, their great historical importance must be emphasized – not only as sound testimonies of Serbian traditional music *per se*, but also as evidence of the Serbian presence and lived fate in the represented geographical areas.



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## NEW WORKS

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### SYMPHONIC POEM *NIKOLA TESLA – PREDAWN* BY STEVAN DIVJAKOVIĆ

**Abstract:** The Serbian scientist and inventor Nikola Tesla (1856–1943) remains at the center of interest within the scientific community even today, as his inventions continue to be relevant – perhaps even more so than in the time they were created. Tesla’s personality also continues to intrigue the world of art. Numerous works bearing his name, including books dedicated to him, visual artworks, and multimedia projects testify to the continuous effort of artists to express their admiration for this genius in various ways. Among the Serbian composers inspired by Tesla is the Vojvodina-based Stevan Divjaković (1953). In his symphonic poem *Nikola Tesla – Predawn*, conceived in a developmental form, he employs a distinctive framing technique reminiscent of cinematographic art. This approach gives the work notable expressive flexibility typ-

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ical of applied music, thereby granting it, in addition to a concert life, further potential to become part of various multimedia projects.

**Keywords:** Nikola Tesla, Stevan Divjaković, symphonic poem.

The Serbian scientist and innovator Nikola Tesla (1856–1943) continues to be a subject of interest within scientific circles, as his inventions remain relevant even today – perhaps even more so than when they were first discovered. Tesla’s personality also continues to intrigue the world of art. Numerous projects bearing his name, including books dedicated to him, visual artworks, and multimedia events testify to the constant effort of artists to express, in various ways, their admiration for the achievements of this genius. If we set aside cinema – which in the past two decades has produced at least three notable works featuring Tesla<sup>1</sup> – as well as fictional and nonfiction publications, which offer even more examples throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries,<sup>2</sup> and instead direct our attention to the field of art music, we may observe that significant works have also emerged in this domain.

Since the beginning of the new millennium, several sources have mentioned the two-act opera *Tesla – Lightning in His Hand* (2003) by Constantine Koukias,<sup>3</sup> a dramatization of Tesla’s life with a libretto by Marianne Fisher, featuring soloists, choir, and orchestra, and incorporating one of the first electronic instruments – the Theremin – as well as sound effects of “electric discharges” produced by the so-called Tesla Coil.<sup>4</sup> Another work is the vocal

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<sup>1</sup> *The Prestige* (2006, directed by Christopher Nolan), *Tesla* (2015, directed by Michael Almereyda), *The Current War* (2017, directed by Alfonso Gomez-Rejon) – to mention just a few titles.

<sup>2</sup> Among the sources, it is worth mentioning *Prodigal Genius: The Extraordinary Life of Nikola Tesla* by Pulitzer Prize winner John Joseph O’Neill (Ivan Washburn, 1944), who was a friend of Tesla; and *Wizard: The Life and Times of Nikola Tesla* (Citadel Press, 1996) by Marc Seifer, who consulted archival documentation, including materials held by the FBI. In the realm of fiction, a prominent example is Vladimir Pištalo’s novel *Tesla: A Portrait Among Masks* (Agora, 2008), for which he received the NIN Award, and which Nebojša Bradić adapted and directed as the stage play *Tesla, Izumetnik* (Serbian National Theatre, Novi Sad, 2022). The music for this production was composed by Aleksandra Vrebalov.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Constantine Koukias, *Australian Music Centre* website, <https://www.australianmusiccentre.com.au/artist/koukias-constantine>, accessed June 8, 2025.

<sup>4</sup> This refers to an electronic discharge accompanied by a characteristic sound, which

cycle *In My Mind's Eye: Songs of Nikola Tesla* (2015) by Kenneth Froelich, written for tenor and electronics, with text by Allison Armerding. In this piece, the choice of sound source evokes the “energy” of the Serbian scientist, while the text draws on his autobiographical writings.<sup>5</sup>

Perhaps the most attention-grabbing work in this context is the multimedia opera *The Lives and Dreams of Nikola Tesla as Summoned by the Honorable Spirits of the Grand Gotham Hotel* (2024) by Phil Kline, created in collaboration with filmmaker Jim Jarmusch. The project stands out not only for the striking partnership between these two eccentric artists but also for its decision to cast a countertenor as Tesla – a vocal choice with castrato origins from the Baroque era, suggesting the “supranatural” nature of the Serbian scientist.<sup>6</sup>

In Serbia, the first musical work to portray the life of Nikola Tesla was the multimedia opera *Violet Fire* by John Gibson, with a libretto by Miriam Seidel, performed in 2006 at the National Theatre in Belgrade during the celebration of the 150th anniversary of Tesla’s birth. The production was realized by the Opera Ensemble of the National Theatre Belgrade in collaboration with American artists, creating a symbolic bridge between the two countries where Tesla had lived. Originally written and performed as a project of the Temple University Music Workshop in Philadelphia in 2004, the opera was later revised and staged in Belgrade, directed by Terry O’Riley, with costumes by Boris Čakširan.<sup>7</sup> *Violet Fire* represented a kind of “musical theatre derived from the oeuvre of Philip Glass and other proponents of the still-active minimalist movement in American music”.<sup>8</sup> Also in 2006, the multimedia musical stage work (described as a “music–theatre spectacle”)<sup>9</sup> *Tesla*

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can be sampled and used as any other “sound data” in electronic music. Cf. the video demonstrating this phenomenon at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TxXpI2UZmqc>, accessed June 9, 2025.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Kenneth Froelich, official website, <https://www.kennethfroelich.com/works>, accessed June 9, 2025.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Katelyn Simone, “Imagining Nikola Tesla: Phil Kline’s New Opera Searches for the Man Behind the Myth”, *San Francisco Classical Voice*, <https://www.sfcv.org/articles/feature/imagining-nikola-tesla-phil-klines-new-opera-searches-man-behind-myth>, accessed June 8, 2025.

<sup>7</sup> For more details, see Milena Pešić, “The Opera *Purple Fire* by John Gibson”, <https://muzickilimbo.rs/iz-pera-milene-pesic-opera-ljubicastavatra-dzona-gibonsa/>, accessed June 10, 2025.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. “*Tesla – Total Reflection* on Saturday at the Yugoslav Drama Theatre” <https://www.>

– *Total Reflection* was performed. The composers Anja Đorđević, Vladimir Pejkočić, Igor Gostuški, and Božidar Obradinović stated that, inspired by Tesla, they composed “anything but boring music”.<sup>10</sup>

Serbian composer Miroslav Miša Savić also created an *hommage* to Tesla with his album *Music Hologram Nikola Tesla* (Sokoj, 2016).<sup>11</sup> On that occasion, the composer emphasized that his work was not linked to any specific content directly referencing the great scientist. Rather, the musical ideas realized in the genre of electroacoustic music resonate with Tesla’s thought, though not necessarily with its materialization, “which is possible only through art”.<sup>12</sup>

Among the composers who have created works dedicated to Tesla is the Vojvodina-based Serbian composer Stevan Divjaković.<sup>13</sup> His symphonic

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beograd.rs/cir/beoinfo-vesti/a19032/Tesla-totalna-refleksija-u-subotu-u-Jugoslovenskom-dramskom-pozoristu.html accessed November 23, 2025.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> A recording of this cycle can be found at <https://chatgpt.com/c/6846c38b-15e4-8005-a731-24089698cc44>, accessed June 9, 2025.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. the commentary on *Music Hologram Nikola Tesla* by Miroslav Savić <https://miroslavsavic.bandcamp.com/album/music-hologram-nikola-tesla>, accessed April 28, 2025.

<sup>13</sup> Stevan Divjaković (Novi Sad, 1953), composer, graduated from the Academy of Arts in Novi Sad in 1979 and obtained his Master’s degree in 1995 under Professor Rudolf Bruči. From 1980 to 1995 he worked as a professor at the “Isidor Bajić” Music School, and from 1995 to 2000 he served as the manager of the Serbian National Theatre. Between 2003 and 2018, he was a professor and director of the College of Vocational Studies for the Education of Teachers in Novi Sad. Divjaković’s activities are multifaceted and define him not only as a composer but also as a cultural worker, who revived the NOMUS Festival (Novi Sad Music Festivities) and served as its artistic director (1987–1995). He acted as artistic director of the Vojvodina Philharmonic, introducing the requirement that each concert feature a work by a contemporary local composer. In his creative work, after early experiences rooted in the avant-garde movements of the second half of the twentieth century, Divjaković turned toward a postmodern musical language grounded in new tonality and elements of Balkan musical tradition. He has composed in all genres. Among his most important works are *Festive Overture* (1984) for orchestra, the vocal-instrumental work (later realized as a ballet) *Altum Silentium* (1988), and the opera *Vladimir and Kosara* (2017), among others. His compositions have been performed in many European countries in prestigious concert halls. He has received numerous awards and honors, including: the “Petar Konjović” Award of the Association of Composers of Vojvodina for Lifetime Achievement (2019); the Golden Badge of the University of Novi Sad for outstanding artistic contribution (2012); the October Award of the City of Novi Sad (1989); the Charter of the City of Novi Sad (1986); and First Prize of the European Broadcasting Union (EBU) competition for his *Festive Overture* for symphony orchestra

poem *Nikola Tesla – Predawn* (2024) “should not necessarily be associated with the literal following of an extramusical narrative, as was often the case in the symphonic poems of Romanticism based on sonata form, but rather as a musical structure in which the composer’s own reflections on the chosen theme are mirrored through varied textures”.<sup>14</sup> Accordingly, “the dedication to the great Serbian scientist is not connected to any extramusical ‘program’”,<sup>15</sup> but rather to “atmospheres” that are formed through specific thematic materials within a kind of developmental form built upon the alternation of sections derived from the key motivic nuclei of three main themes. Their musical content relies on specific harmonic “progressions” involving chromatic mediant relationships, while formally the piece achieves a clearly recognizable reprise-based closure. This “illumination”, achieved through orchestral color and the effort to convey a sonic impression of “expansion” into an ever-widening space,<sup>16</sup> reflects the composer’s understanding of Tesla’s wondrous scientific world.

Since the establishment of orchestral music in Serbia in the early twentieth century, the symphonic poem has been a far more attractive form than the symphony, and therefore more frequently composed. There was a practical reason for this: as a one-movement composition, the symphonic poem had a much greater chance of being performed as an opening piece in concerts featuring works by the great masters of Western European music, thus gaining easier opportunities for premieres or subsequent performances. Audiences, drawn by the classics of art music, more readily accepted new orchestral works by Serbian composers, who in turn sought to shape their musical language so that these works would indeed be well received. The position of domestic orchestral music has not changed much, and even today – more than a century after the creation of the first Serbian symphonic poem,

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(1984). In 2021 he received the February Award of the City of Novi Sad, and in 2024 he received the Award for Outstanding Contribution to National Culture of the Republic of Serbia. In 2025, the Serbian National Theatre presented him with the Golden Medal “Jovan Đorđević” for Lifetime Achievement.

<sup>14</sup> From an interview conducted with Stevan Divjaković on April 6, 2025.

<sup>15</sup> Divjaković emphasizes that he consulted literary sources and cinematic works while preparing to compose the score, highlighting Vladimir Pištalo’s novel *Tesla – A Portrait Among Masks* (2023) ([https://laguna.rs/n6083\\_knjiga\\_tesla\\_portret\\_medju\\_maskama\\_laguna.html](https://laguna.rs/n6083_knjiga_tesla_portret_medju_maskama_laguna.html)). From the interview conducted on April 6, 2025.

<sup>16</sup> Divjaković’s comment about “depicting the cosmos” at one point in the conversation reveals the “expanded programmatic” concept he had in mind while composing.

*Serbia liberata* (1904) by Petar Konjović – the single-movement orchestral composition, such as the symphonic poem, remains the most appealing form for large ensembles in Serbia.<sup>17</sup>

“*Predawn* – the time before sunrise, when the day breaks through the ‘shell’ of night and light returns after darkness – is such a solemn and wondrous moment that I felt the music dedicated to our scientist Nikola Tesla had to bear that word, that title”,<sup>18</sup> notes Divjaković about his new work for symphonic orchestra *a tre*, featuring an expanded percussion section that includes, besides timpani, bass drum, vibraphone, cymbals, snare drum, bells, and glockenspiel. The composition is based on the sonic potential of a Romantic orchestra enriched with harp and piano, thereby expanding the overall timbral range in line with the idea that the texture should be shaped primarily through color – both instrumental and tonal – while the thematic material is derived from decomposed chordal signals.

This compositional technique aligns with Divjaković’s typical creative strategies, in which the composer carefully departs from traditional means only to return to them again, striving to create music “that achieves the maximum of expressivity with the minimum of means”.<sup>19</sup> This characterization applies to his entire oeuvre, within which special places are held by *Festive*

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<sup>17</sup> In addition to Petar Konjović, symphonic poems were written by Miloje Milojević, Stevan Hristić, Petar Stojanović, Vojislav Vučković, Stanojlo Rajčić (who composed four), Dragutin Čolić, Mihajlo Vukdragović, Dragutin Gostuški, Petar Stajić, Petar Ozgijan, Slobodan Raicki, and Predrag Repanić, among the older or mid-twentieth century composers. However, in the last decades of the twentieth century, the symphonic poem ceased to be a relevant musical form to which composers explicitly turned, even though many single-movement symphonic works appeared whose formal affiliation with the genre is not emphasized, yet whose inspiration from literary or other extramusical sources somewhat ties them to it. Thus, symphonic “movements”, “frescoes”, and “overtures” with programmatic titles appeared. In the postmodern landscape of the 1990s, an increasing number of single-movement orchestral works emerged, inspired by fairy tales, mythological heroes, (contemporary) historical events, and various literary or non-literary contents. However, the writers often did not concern themselves with categorizing these works within the “classical” framework of the symphonic poem. The same seems to be the case with twenty-first century orchestral music, in which the titles of certain single-movement symphonic works do not indicate their generic or formal affiliation.

<sup>18</sup> From an interview conducted with Stevan Divjaković on April 6, 2025.

<sup>19</sup> Dušan Mihalek, *Program Booklet of the Serbian National Theatre* for the premiere of the ballet *Altum Silentium*, Serbian National Theatre, Novi Sad, November 20, 1998.

*Overture* (1984) for symphony orchestra, *Simfonieta* (1991) for accordion orchestra,<sup>20</sup> the vocal-instrumental work *Altum Silentium* (akin to *Songs of Space* by Ljubica Marić), as well as more recent compositions such as the opera *Vladimir and Kosara* (2017), the symphonic poem *Phoenix*, and *Orchestral Fantasy* with its allusions to folklore.<sup>21</sup>

“A musician in the best sense of the word, in the sense of absolute mastery,”<sup>22</sup> who “does not lose himself in experiments or in the pursuit of effects,”<sup>23</sup> Divjaković upholds the belief that “the imperative of creation” lies in communication with the audience, mutual understanding, and recognition, which he consistently implements in his mature creative period.<sup>24</sup>

In his symphonic poem *Nikola Tesla – Predawn*, Divjaković, as already noted, does not rely on a specific program, nor does he adhere to the “formal and textural discipline”<sup>25</sup> characteristic of this predominantly Romantic structural model. Instead, the work shapes three thematic units<sup>26</sup> that develop in such a way that – thanks to their constant progression through chromatic mediant tonalities – they evoke an impression of expanding sonic space.<sup>27</sup> In a certain sense, this creates an association with the spreading of light, which, on another level – one that could even be described as *pro-synesthetic* – alludes to the context with which the figure and work of Nikola Tesla are almost synonymous.

The first theme of this developmental form, however, bears an echo of the tradition to which Divjaković is fundamentally inclined. It is rooted in Russian symphonism, primarily in the *sound world* of Prokofiev (Сергей Сергеевич Прокофьев) and Shostakovich (Дмитрий Дмитриевич Шостакович). Thus, the introductory broken motif of the tonic triad in the cellos

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<sup>20</sup> In the printed edition of the German publisher “Jetelina”, this composition is titled *Simfonieta Dramatica*.

<sup>21</sup> This work was composed for the gala concert celebrating the presentation of Novi Sad as the European Capital of Culture in 2022.

<sup>22</sup> Dušan Mihalek, op. cit.

<sup>23</sup> Zoran Hristić, composer, *An Evening with Stevan Divjaković*, Cultural Centre of Novi Sad, June 6, 2005.

<sup>24</sup> A similar view was expressed by Rajko Maksimović in an interview conducted by Ivana Vuksanović: “Communication as an Imperative of Creation (Interview with Rajko Maksimović)”, *New Sound*, 6, 1995, 5–15.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Mirjana Veselinović Hofman, “Serbian Music and the ‘Frozen’ History”, *New Sound*, 9, 1997, 16.

<sup>26</sup> It is well known that Tesla was obsessed with the number three.

<sup>27</sup> The scheme of the work could be described as IT – IIT – IIIT – Reprise of IT – Coda.

in E minor, accompanied by the signal of the English horn and then taken up by the clarinet and bassoon, recalls the striking beginning of Prokofiev's movement *The Montagues and Capulets* from the ballet *Romeo and Juliet*. However, the reinterpretation of this familiar signal is achieved through a kind of softening of its aggressiveness, so that the resemblance is recognizable but perceived merely as a coincidental association, since the tempo is *adagio* and the dynamics *piano*.

A new "face" of this motif emerges with the *pizzicato* articulation in the cellos, combined with *tremolo* in the violins and violas, while the first thematic material is presented in unison by the cellos and double basses (Example 1). This material modulates from G minor to B-flat minor, G major, and E major, before "slipping" into D-flat major (enharmonically C-sharp major), setting off on a further chain of mediant tonalities beginning with A major, and continuing in a similar sequence up to B-flat major. Divjaković notes that he employed the cellos in what he considers their most noble register,<sup>28</sup> as throughout the entire musical flow he sought to highlight the instrument registers traditionally regarded as the most sonically refined. The "expansion" of the first theme through chromatic third relationships concludes with chromatic modulation in C major.

**Example 1:** Stevan Divjaković, Symphonic poem *Nikola Tesla – Predawn*, Adagio, mm. 1–5.<sup>29</sup>

The image shows a page of a musical score titled "Praskozorje" by Stevan Divjaković, 2024. The score is in C major and Adagio (♩ = 42). It features staves for Oboe 1, Clarinet 1 in Bb, Bassoons 1 & 2, Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello, and Contrabass. The music shows a melodic line in the woodwinds and a rhythmic, tremolo accompaniment in the strings.

<sup>28</sup> From an interview conducted with Stevan Divjaković on April 6, 2025.

<sup>29</sup> All musical examples in this paper are taken from the manuscript score of Divjaković's symphonic poem *Nikola Tesla – Predawn* and are used with the author's permission.

The second section – essentially the second theme of the work – begins with the horn in F major, played in the register where the instrument achieves its most expressive sonority (in the small and first line octaves). This later evolves into a chorale texture for the four instruments of the horn section. Accompanied by *pizzicato* in the violins and violas, this section serves as a striking contrast that clearly delineates the developmental passages of the first and third themes (Example 2).

**Example 2:** Stevan Divjaković, *Symphonic poem Nikola Tesla – Predawn*, Adagio, mm. 35–40.

The image displays a musical score for Example 2, spanning measures 35 to 40. The score is arranged in two systems. The first system includes staves for Horn 1 (H.1), Horn 2 (H.2), Clarinet 1 (Cl.1), Clarinet 2 (Cl.2), and English Horn (Hrn.). The second system includes staves for Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vcl.), and Contrabass (Cb.). The music is in F major and begins at measure 35. The horn section enters with a melodic line in the first line of the staff, marked *mp*. The strings play a rhythmic accompaniment, with violins and violas marked *pizz* and *mp*. A *cresc.* marking is present in the lower strings. The score concludes at measure 40.

The impulse for the beginning of the third theme is given by the English horn, accompanied by the dense texture of the harp. With a *crescendo*, this material is taken up by the full orchestra, leading into the climax of the entire poem. The dramatic intensity of the orchestral *tutti* is heightened by the loss of a tonal center, increased tempo, and the participation of bells. The brief effect of atonality, however, stabilizes through a return to G minor, followed by modulation to B-flat major, thereby preparing the reprise of the first theme (Example 3).

**Example 3:** Stevan Divjaković, Symphonic poem *Nikola Tesla – Predawn*, Adagio, mm. 51–58.

The repetition of the first theme section, however, does not signify a return to the opening tonality. Here, the reprise does not appear as an attempt to bring the material back to its point of origin, but rather to continue the development of the first theme through the full sonority of the orchestra, with a strong sweep of bells and a powerful chorale-like support of the brass instruments. The subsequent *decrescendo* has a clear purpose: the material of the first theme is presented by the solo violin, accompanied by an imitative interplay with the solo cello. The development proceeds in a manner similar to the beginning of the composition, with the movement in sextuplets in the lower strings being taken over by the piano. Finally, with a tonic G major chord in *forte fortissimo*, the coda begins – described by the composer as “a great sonic explosion”<sup>30</sup> – from which emerges a graceful oboe theme, a distant reminiscence of the slow movement of Antonín Dvořák’s *Symphony from the New World*.

The piece concludes in the tonic key of G major through the arpeggiation of the tonic triad across the entire orchestra, accompanied by a dramatic tremolo in the strings. Yet this effect gives the impression that the composer sought to “dissolve” the sound rather than to bring it to a halt. The entire coda thus functions as a kind of climax in which the composer strives to *liberate* sound rather than to end it.

The developmental form of the poem *Nikola Tesla – Predawn* resists being placed into a specific formal pattern, such as sonata form, the classical

<sup>30</sup> From an interview conducted with Stevan Divjaković on April 6, 2025.

three-part structure, or the like. Divjaković, in fact, applied something that directly evokes filmic recording techniques. He constructs the musical flow as a series of sections that alternate like shots, but in a “sonic” sense: each of them has a clearly defined timbral and harmonic atmosphere, which either “expands” (zoom out), as in the first theme, or abruptly cuts to a new “shot,” as in the entry of the second theme, or shifts to a “wide shot,” as in the appearance of the third theme. This kind of organization of musical content relies on linear thematic development, in which the expansion and contraction of texture act as a sonic equivalent of optical zoom. In this way, the composition aligns with the poetics of associative thinking, noticeable from the very beginning, where the birth of the day is simulated in piano dynamics. This approach is rooted in the broader tendency to create music based on creative methods from other arts, present since the early twentieth century, to which many composers “succumbed”. Divjaković’s approach to composition in *Predawn* is undoubtedly influenced by extra-musical sources, primarily literary and cinematic, which the composer consulted during the preparation of the score.<sup>31</sup>

This aligns with a broader phenomenon widely present in contemporary artistic creation – the increasingly intense interweaving of the poetics of different media. Camera techniques, once exclusively characteristic of film art, have over time become a structural principle in the creation of art music. In an era when short video formats, such as those on social media (especially TikTok), shape not only reception but also the very formation of sonic material, this is unsurprising. The influence of contemporary media on music is becoming ever more visible, not only at the level of production and presentation but also within the very process of composition. In this context, Divjaković’s approach in the poem *Nikola Tesla – Predawn* can be seen as a reflection of a broader trend in which the boundaries between artistic disciplines are increasingly blurred, and their methods interpenetrate in the search for new forms of sonic thought. This very aspect of the new work by Divjaković gives it additional potential as applied music, which could be utilized in certain documentary or narrative “moving-image” projects.

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<sup>31</sup> It should be noted that Divjaković also made sketches for a future opera about Tesla during the process of composing this score. *Ibid.*

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## Summary

Among the many artists inspired by the life and inventions of the Serbian scientist Nikola Tesla (1856–1943) is the composer Stevan Divjaković (1953), who dedicated his symphonic poem *Nikola Tesla – Predawn* to him. Motivated by the earliest hours of the day, when “its shell cracks” as a metaphor for Tesla’s extraordinary contribution to the “conquest of light”, Divjaković constructs a straightforward developmental form composed of three contrasting themes that follow one another. While the first, introduced in the broken chords of the cello and double bass in E minor, unfolds through mediant chordal connections, the second is realized as a choral section for brass instruments. The third theme is performed by the English horn together with the flute, supported by the dense texture of the harp. This material is taken up by the orchestra in a crescendo leading to a climax, where a clear slip into atonality occurs. The recapitulation unfolds in B-flat major (which is not the key of the opening), making it evident that Divjaković does not intend to achieve tonal closure, but rather to “liberate” the first theme. This is accomplished immediately after a delicate interplay

of solo violin and cello in a brief decrescendo section. The “Big Bang” of the coda begins in G major, whose material allows the sound of the first theme to “disperse” rather than come to a halt. In this work, Divjaković employs techniques reminiscent of various cinematic framing methods. This approach gives the piece a potential akin to that of applied music, enabling it, in addition to its concert performance life, to be integrated into diverse multimedia projects.



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## ANALYTICAL PERSPECTIVES

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### **DASTGAH: ALGORITHMIC EXPLORATIONS OF PERSIAN MICROTONALITY AND SERIALISM**

**Abstract:** This article presents *Dastgah*, an original composition that integrates the Iranian microtonal modal system with algorithmic and serialist methodologies. By extending traditional 12-tone serialism into a 17-tone pitch matrix derived from the Dastgah system, the work engages with microtonal nuances central to Persian classical music. Utilizing the SuperCollider programming environment, the composition applies serial operations—Prime, Retrograde, Inversion, and Retrograde-Inversion—to microtonally-defined pitch sets, while algorithmically managing rhythm, dynamics, and spatialization. This fusion of tradition and technology results in a generative, real-time musical system that challenges Western tuning paradigms and offers a new model for culturally-inclusive algorithmic composition. The project is both a theoretical and artistic exploration of how computational tools can mediate between his-

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torical depth and contemporary innovation, highlighting issues of identity, authorship, and cross-cultural aesthetics in 21st-century music.

**Keywords:** Iranian Dastgah System, Microtonality, Algorithmic Composition, Serialism, SuperCollider.

## 1. Introduction

The composition *Dastgah: Algorithmic Explorations of Persian Microtonality and Serialism*<sup>1</sup> emerges from an ongoing investigation into the integration of Iranian microtonal modal systems within contemporary algorithmic and serialist compositional frameworks. This work builds upon prior compositions such as *Walking in the Darkness for solo santur*,<sup>2</sup> in which algorithmic logic governs melodic development based on constrained pitch sets reflecting Iranian modal traits, and *Daramad for tar and fixed media*,<sup>3</sup> which merges live performance with electroacoustic tracks. These earlier explorations established foundational strategies for embedding Iranian modal structures into contemporary compositional practice.

*Dastgah* advances this trajectory by embedding the modal, microtonal language of Iranian classical music directly within an algorithmic system designed in SuperCollider. Central to this integration is the extension of the conventional 12-tone serial matrix into a 17-tone system that reflects the intervallic structure of the Dastgah system tradition. Rather than juxtaposing disparate musical systems, the work incorporates Iranian microtonal intervals into the structural logic of serialism, applying operations such as Prime, Retrograde, Inversion, and Retrograde-Inversion to a culturally-informed pitch set.

SuperCollider plays a critical role in realizing this synthesis, offering real-time control over pitch, rhythm, dynamics, and spatialization. Through custom algorithmic processes, the composition becomes a generative system capable of producing infinite non-repetitive variations. These procedures not

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<sup>1</sup> Ali Balighi, *Dastgah: Algorithmic Explorations of Persian Microtonality and Serialism*, Berlin, Post-Orientalism, 2025. <https://alibalighi.bandcamp.com/album/dastgah-algorithmic-explorations-of-persian-microtonality-and-serialism>

<sup>2</sup> Ali Balighi, *Walking in the Darkness for Solo Santur*, 2016. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PX1lZ56oyc0>

<sup>3</sup> Ali Balighi, *Daramad for Tar and Fixed Media*, 2020. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pnoZhKhfdnM>

only preserve the expressive subtleties of Iranian music, particularly its nuanced microtonal inflections, but also reflect serialism's emphasis on formal rigor and systematic development.

Algorithmic composition serves not merely as a tool of automation, but as a creative paradigm through which tradition and innovation can interact dynamically. It enables the exploration of a microtonal pitch space that lies outside the Western equal temperament system, while also facilitating real-time transformations that simulate aspects of improvisation—a central component of Iranian musical aesthetics.

This composition thus challenges the hegemony of Western tuning paradigms and expands the expressive and structural potential of serialism. It does so by treating Iranian musical heritage not as a static artifact but as a living framework adaptable to contemporary technological tools. *Dastgah* reflects a commitment to cross-cultural composition, highlighting the role of digital media in preserving, transforming, and reimagining cultural identity within the context of contemporary art music.



**Figure 1:** Screenshot of the SuperCollider IDE showing code for the algorithmic composition *Dastgah*, which implements a 17-tone Iranian microtonal matrix using serial operations. On the left, the code defines functions to generate the tone matrix and map pitch classes to a custom synthesizer. The right side displays the SuperCollider help browser and the real-time output window, illustrating the program's execution and matrix transformations. This visual represents the synthesis of Iranian musical modes with algorithmic composition in a live coding environment.

## 2. Background and Context

### 2.1. The Iranian Dastgah System and Modal Logic

The Dastgah system constitutes the core of Persian classical music. Each Dastgah comprises a collection of short melodic prototypes called *gūshe* that musicians shape into extended, semi-improvised performances.<sup>4</sup> Melodic development follows *seyir*—a concept of directional contour rather than goal-oriented functional harmony—while *shahed* (a pitch of gravitational focus) supplies local tonal centrality.<sup>5</sup> Because the tradition is transmitted orally, performers internalize these structural cues and flexibly reconfigure them in real time, privileging expression over fixed form.

### 2.2. Microtonality as Expressive Foundation

Persian modes rely on microtonal inflections that lie between the semitones of Western equal temperament, including neutral seconds ( $\approx 144 \text{ ¢}$ ) and three-quarter-tone intervals ( $\approx 44 \text{ ¢}$ ). These precise pitch shades are indispensable to conveying affect and poetic nuance.<sup>6</sup> Psychophysical studies confirm that musicians and listeners can reliably perceive—and, with exposure, prefer—such microtonal deviations.<sup>7</sup> In compositional terms, microtonality establishes a vocabulary that is simultaneously scalar and timbral, because slight detunings generate distinctive beating patterns and spectral color.<sup>8</sup>

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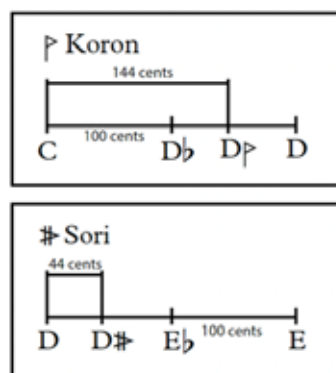
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<sup>5</sup> Sina Sanayei, “The Concept of Melodic Progression (Seyir) in Persian Classical Music”, *Rast Müzikoloji Dergisi*, 11, 2023, 213–30.

<sup>6</sup> Bamdad Khoshghadami Hosseini, and Soroosh Ghahramanloo, *Deciphering Persian Music: A Systematic Approach through Modal Classification and Synthesis*, Research Catalogue, 2024. <https://doi.org/10.22501/rc.2547124>

<sup>7</sup> Freya Bailes, Roger T. Dean, and Mary C. Broughton, “How Different Are Our Perceptions of Equal-Tempered and Microtonal Intervals? A Behavioural and Eeg Survey”, *PLoS ONE*, 10(8), 2015, e0135082. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0135082>

<sup>8</sup> Eline Adrienne Smit, Andrew J. Milne, Roger T. Dean, and Gabrielle Weidemann, “Perception of Affect in Unfamiliar Musical Chords”, *PLoS ONE*, 14(6), 2019, e0218570. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0218570>

**Microtonal:**

**Figure 2:** Diagram showing Persian microtonal symbols Koron and Sori and their pitch positions. In the image, D Koron lies between D $\flat$  and D, creating a neutral second interval of 144 cents from C to D Koron, compared to the 100 cents from C to D $\flat$ . Sori also raises a note by 44 cents. In the image, D Sori lies between D and E $\flat$ , forming a three-quarter-tone interval (44 cents) from D to D Sori, in contrast to the 100-cent semitone from D to E $\flat$ . These microtonal steps are used in Persian music to articulate nuanced scalar and emotional expression. The image is from *Daramad for tar and fixed media* by Ali Balighi.

### 2.3. Serialism and Western Formalism

In contrast, Western serialism—codified by Schoenberg and later expanded by composers such as Messiaen—organizes the twelve chromatic pitch classes into an ordered row subjected to transformations of Prime, Retrograde, Inversion, and Retrograde-Inversion.<sup>9</sup> By treating every pitch as structurally equal, serialism displaces tonal hierarchy and foregrounds combinatorial organization.<sup>10</sup> Although philosophically distant from modal improvisation, serialism offers a rigorously systematic approach to pitch that can be adapted algorithmically—particularly within software environments that handle non-standard tuning data.

### 2.4. Bridging Modal and Serial Systems

Uniting these traditions raises both aesthetic and technical challenges. Iranian practice prizes ornamented, cyclic time and spontaneous elaboration, whereas serialism privileges pre-composed order and linear traversal<sup>11</sup>. Moreover, the fixed 12-tone grid cannot directly encode Persian micro-inter-

<sup>9</sup> Allen Forte, “Olivier Messiaen as Serialist”, *Music Analysis*, 21, 2002, 3–34.

<sup>10</sup> Roger T. Dean, “The Serial Collaborator: A Meta-Pianist for Real-Time Tonal and Non-Tonal Music Generation”, *Leonardo*, 47, 2014, 260–61.

<sup>11</sup> Simon Gorin, Benjamin Kowialiewski, and Steve Majerus, “Domain-Generality of Timing-Based Serial Order Processes in Short-Term Memory: New Insights from Musical and Verbal Domains”, *PLoS ONE*, 11(12), 2016, e0168699. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0168699>

vals. Nevertheless, extending the serial matrix to seventeen tones—thereby embedding culturally-specific intervals—enables a reconciliation that respects modal nuance while preserving serialist transformational logic. Algorithmic environments such as SuperCollider facilitate this hybridization by permitting custom frequency ratios, stochastic selection, and real-time spatialization, effectively converting the score into a generative system that mirrors the improvisatory spirit of Dastgah system performance.

By framing Iranian microtonality and Western serialism as complementary rather than oppositional, the present project positions algorithmic composition as a mediator of cross-cultural exchange. It demonstrates how computational tools can sustain the expressive priorities of Iranian music while engaging the formal experimentation prized in post-tonal Western art music—a synthesis that underpins the creative aims of Dastgah.

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1. Algorithmic Framework and Conceptual Goals

The composition Dastgah is built on a custom-designed algorithmic system implemented in SuperCollider, aiming to reconcile the expressive microtonality of the Iranian Dastgah system with the structural rigor of Western serialism. Central to this methodology is the creation of a 17-tone serial matrix—a deliberate expansion of the traditional 12-tone row—designed to incorporate culturally-specific intervals that define Iranian modal.

This system does not merely automate compositional tasks; it functions as a creative framework that enables real-time musical evolution, shaped by both formal logic and algorithmic chance. As Fieldsteel notes, SuperCollider's hybrid architecture—combining a real-time synthesis server with an expressive coding language—makes it uniquely suited for exploratory, microtonal, and generative music systems<sup>12</sup>.

#### 3.2. Constructing the 17-Tone Serial Matrix

At the core of the composition lies a 17-tone prime row, derived from Iranian modal intervals, including neutral seconds ( $\approx 144 \text{ ¢}$ ), three-quarter tones ( $\approx 44 \text{ ¢}$ ), and other microtonal variants. These were encoded numerically in MIDI pitch values, such as:

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<sup>12</sup> Eli Fieldsteel, *Supercollider for the Creative Musician: A Practical Guide*, Oxford University Press, 2024.

```
row = [0, 1, 1.44, 2, 3, 3.44, 4, 5, 6, 6.44, 7, 8,  
8.44, 9, 10, 11, 11.44].scramble;
```

Using a custom `createMatrix` function, the matrix was constructed to support the four traditional serial transformations—Prime (P), Retrograde (R), Inversion (I), and Retrograde-Inversion (RI)—applied to the expanded pitch set. These transformations were recalculated to preserve microtonal spacing and interval directionality, allowing for systematic pitch manipulation while maintaining culturally-embedded tonal subtleties.

### 3.3. *Dynamic Selection and Real-Time Variability*

To reflect the improvisational ethos of Persian music, the algorithm incorporates stochastic and non-linear decision-making processes. A selection mechanism randomly chooses a transformation (P, R, I, RI) and its index in real time:

```
selectFormAndIndex = {  
  var forms = [\P, \R, \I, \RI];  
  [forms.choose, (0..(row.size-1)).choose];  
};
```

This dynamic structure enables the piece to generate endless variations without repeating, mirroring the organic unfolding of *seyir* (melodic progression) in traditional performance. Such use of randomness echoes aleatoric practices while staying embedded within a rigorously- defined system.

### 3.4. *Timbre, Rhythm, and Spatialization*

Each matrix-generated pitch is converted into frequency via `midicps`, and then mapped to a custom synthesizer. Registers are assigned through an algorithmic mapping to different pitch ranges (low, mid, high, post-high), and rhythm is governed by stochastic timing functions, e.g.:

```
(exprand(0.1, 4) / tempo).wait;
```

Amplitude and dynamic contours are shaped by randomized envelope generators (`EnvGen.kr`) and modulated by values drawn from a bounded random range. SuperCollider's `PanAz.ar` function facilitates spatial diffusion across four speakers, creating immersive, multichannel textures that recall the spatial complexity of Iranian architecture and musical design.

This real-time diffusion supports listener immersion while reinforcing the structural logic of the piece. The use of spatialization and stochastic

dynamics adds layers of perceptual variability that align with contemporary theories of embodied and affective listening.

### 3.5. *A Hybrid Model of Musical Intelligence*

Rather than forcing Iranian modal music into a fixed grid, this methodology embeds its essential features—modal gravities, microtonal inflection, improvisational form—into an algorithmic architecture that enables perpetual variation. This hybrid model treats the computer as a co-composer, one that performs transformations both deterministic and probabilistic, thus enabling a generative structure that remains culturally grounded and sonically unpredictable.

This model reflects a broader redefinition of compositional authorship. As discussed by Dean and Fieldsteel, algorithmic music requires the composer to become a system designer—curating possibilities rather than prescribing fixed outcomes. In this sense, *Dastgah* aligns with emerging views of composition as a dynamic, collaborative process between human intention and machine behavior.

## 4. Results and Analysis

### 4.1. *Structural Outcomes of the 17-Tone Matrix*

The application of serialist operations to a 17-tone pitch matrix informed by Iranian microtonal vocabularies results in a highly differentiated and evolving musical structure. Unlike traditional 12-tone serialism, which depends on symmetrical and equidistant pitch relationships, this expanded system incorporates culturally-specific specific microtones—such as neutral seconds ( $\approx 144 \text{ ¢}$ ) and three-quarter tones ( $\approx 44 \text{ ¢}$ )—that diverge from harmonic regularity and challenge the structural assumptions of Western pitch organization. Rather than forming a fixed scalar system, these intervals reflect the expressive flexibility and modal logic found in Iranian musical practice.<sup>13</sup>

Each transformation—Prime (P), Retrograde (R), Inversion (I), and Retrograde-Inversion (RI)—operates on a row that embeds these non-Western intervals, producing asymmetrical and non-repeating contours. This system ensures structural rigor while preserving pitch identities essential to Iranian

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<sup>13</sup> Idin Samimi Mofakham, *Holographic Composition Technique: Revisiting the Medieval Treatises on Iranian Music*, Norwegian Academy of Music, 2023; Dariush Talai, *A New Perspective on Iranian Music Theory*, Tehran, Mahoor Institute of Culture and Art, 1993.

Dastgah expression. As observed in matrix-based traversal, the formal architecture remains serially grounded but perceptually fluid, generating non-linear, mosaic-like musical narratives that eschew goal-directed harmonic progression.

Furthermore, the randomized traversal of the matrix—driven by stochastic selection functions—enables emergent forms. The composition does not follow a pre-determined linear arc but evolves dynamically, creating an open-ended structure that simulates improvisation, a hallmark of Iranian classical performance.<sup>14</sup>

#### 4.2. *Perceptual and Emotional Implications*

The incorporation of microtonality significantly expands the expressive range of the composition. While serialism has historically been critiqued for its emotional detachment and abstract formality, the infusion of Iranian modal material introduces pitch nuances that convey affective states such as longing, tension, or spiritual introspection—qualities deeply embedded in Dastgah aesthetics.<sup>15</sup>

Empirical studies confirm that listeners can distinguish microtonal intervals from equal-tempered ones, and with repeated exposure tend to develop preferences and deeper perceptual acuity for microtonalities<sup>16</sup>. This capacity is critical to the Dastgah system, which relies on subtle inflections and expressive deviations to signal emotional shifts. Thus, microtonality in this composition is not merely a stylistic addition but a cognitive and emotive dimension that redefines the listening experience.

#### 4.3. *Texture, Timbre, and Spatial Design*

Timbre and spatialization are integral to the composition's aesthetic identity. SuperCollider's synthesis engine facilitates the precise tuning of sine oscillations.

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<sup>14</sup> Sina Sanayei, op. cit.

<sup>15</sup> Shahram Amiri, Aliakbar Parvizi Fard, Behnam Khaledi-Paveh, Aliakbar Foroughi, Amir Bavafa, Meysam Bazani, Youkhabeh Mohammadian, and Kheirollah Sadeghi, "The Effectiveness of Music Therapy on Insomnia Using Persian Traditional Music", *Journal of Kermanshah University of Medical Sciences*, 23, 2019.

<sup>16</sup> Yvonne Leung, and Roger Thornton Dean, "Learning Unfamiliar Pitch Intervals: A Novel Paradigm for Demonstrating the Learning of Statistical Associations between Musical Pitches", *PLoS ONE*, 13(8), 2018, e0203026. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0203026>

tors to microtonal frequencies, resulting in glistening, glassy tones with non-harmonic overtones. These tones, slightly detuned and filtered, emulate the breathy texture of traditional Iranian instruments such as the *târ* and *ney*. The result is a sonic environment that blends acoustic memory with digital abstraction.

Envelope generators and amplitude modulators shape each sound's dynamic arc, while multichannel spatialization (via PanAz.ar) diffuses sound in four channels, producing a shifting and immersive auditory field.<sup>17</sup> This spatial fluidity mirrors the architectural aesthetics of Iranian domes and courtyards, where sonic reflections are integral to spiritual and perceptual experience.

Research in auditory perception confirms that textural complexity—especially when driven by microtonal variation—elicits heightened sensory engagement and emotional depth<sup>18</sup>. Thus, texture in *Dastgah* is not ornamental but essential to its expressive power.

#### 4.4. Algorithmic Improvisation and System Agency

The algorithmic design enables continuous transformation of pitch material in real time, granting the system a quasi-improvisational agency. By employing stochastic methods such as `r rand`, `expand`, and `.choose`, the system mimics the variability and spontaneity of human performance, reinforcing the improvisatory ethos of Iranian music.<sup>19</sup>

Each performance of *Dastgah* unfolds uniquely, determined by algorithmic decisions governed by the matrix. In this sense, the computer functions not merely as a tool but as a co-performer. These dynamics challenge traditional conceptions of compositional authorship, aligning with contemporary views that regard the composer as a system designer and curator of potentialities.

The generative structure also undermines the fixity associated with classical serialism. Instead of a closed-form, repeatable artifact, the piece becomes a living system—constantly reinterpreting its source material and offering new emotional and formal landscapes in each iteration.

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<sup>17</sup> Eli Fieldsteel, *Supercollider for the Creative Musician: A Practical Guide*, Oxford University Press, 2024.

<sup>18</sup> Eline Adrianne Smit et al., "Perception of Affect in Unfamiliar Musical Chords", op. cit.

<sup>19</sup> Roger T. Dean, op. cit., 260–61.

## 5. Aesthetic and Cultural Reflections

### 5.1. Reimagining Tradition Through Technology

*Dastgah* represents an aesthetic proposition in which tradition and technology converge to reconfigure cultural identity in sound. Rather than treating the Iranian *Dastgah* system as a static historical artifact, the composition frames it as a living, adaptable framework that is capable of transformation through contemporary algorithmic processes. This aligns with broader shifts in ethnomusicological discourse, which emphasize the dynamic, evolving nature of tradition in globalized contexts.<sup>20</sup>

Through its SuperCollider implementation, the composition enables precise articulation of Iranian microtonal intervals—an achievement often unattainable with conventional Western instruments. Technology here is not simply a Western tool applied to a non-Western tradition; it is reconfigured as an expressive medium for Iranian musical heritage. In doing so, the work reflects the notion that software environments can become culturally-situated spaces for artistic production<sup>21</sup>.

### 5.2. Hybridity as Structural, Not Stylistic

The hybridity in *Dastgah* is not superficial. It is structurally embedded at every level of the composition—from the algorithmic logic to the pitch architecture. The work does not juxtapose Iranian and Western elements; rather, it fuses them at the level of compositional grammar. This contrasts with earlier models of cross-cultural composition that often relied on quotation or fusion aesthetics. Instead, this piece presents a *hybridity*, where the *Dastgah*'s microtonality becomes foundational to the serialist structure itself.

Such an approach resonates with Bhabha and Rutherford's notion of the *third space*, wherein cultural identity is not simply inherited but produced through negotiation, translation, and transformation.<sup>22</sup> The algorithmic matrix becomes a site of intercultural encounter, where Iranian modal sensibilities are not subsumed by Western frameworks but co-construct the compositional language.

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<sup>20</sup> Sina Sanayei, op. cit.

<sup>21</sup> Ali Balighi, "The Art and Science of Multichannel Audio in Electroacoustic Music: A Review", *Emille*, 2024, 12.

<sup>22</sup> Homi K. Bhabha, and Jonathan Rutherford, "Third Space", *Multitudes*, 26, 2006, 95–107.

### 5.3. *Challenging Authorship and Algorithmic Creativity*

By embedding indeterminacy and randomness in the system, the work decentralizes the role of the composer. Rather than functioning as a sole author, the composer designs a system of possibilities—curating conditions under which music emerges. This reflects a broader trend in post-digital aesthetics, where creativity is distributed between human intention and machine agency.

Each performance of *Dastgah* differs based on real-time algorithmic decisions, blurring the line between composition and performance. This challenges the Romantic ideal of the composer as a masterful originator, instead positioning the composer as a collaborator with code—an architect of generative systems. The system itself becomes a co-performer, producing a dialogic relationship between structure and emergence.

### 5.4. *Expressive Ambiguity and Cultural Resonance*

Aesthetically, the piece resists categorization. Its microtonal palette, stochastic rhythm, and spatial diffusion create a sound world that is neither strictly Iranian nor strictly Western. Instead, it cultivates a space of expressive ambiguity—a sonic third space—that invites listeners to engage without relying on familiar tonal or formal cues.

This ambiguity is not a weakness but an aesthetic strategy. As listeners navigate non-tempered intervals and emergent textures, they experience unfamiliarity as a site of meaning. For audiences familiar with Persian music, the modal echoes of Shur, Mahur, or Segah may activate cultural memory. For others, the piece becomes a gateway into alternative tuning systems and compositional logics.

Moreover, the use of algorithmic form challenges expectations of teleological development. The piece unfolds cyclically and unpredictably, echoing the temporal aesthetics of Persian music, which privileges emotional immediacy and spiritual contemplation over narrative closure.

### 5.5. *Ethical Dimensions of Cross-Cultural Composition*

The integration of Iranian musical elements within a Western-derived computational framework raises ethical questions regarding representation, ownership, and power dynamics. While algorithmic systems are often assumed to be culturally neutral, they are in fact shaped by the epistemologies and aesthetic priorities of their creators.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Kamer Ali Yuksel, Batuhan Bozkurt, and Hamed Ketabdar, “A Software Platform for Genetic Algorithms Based Parameter Estimation on Digital Sound Synthesizers”. Paper

In this work, care is taken to embed Iranian musical logic authentically, drawing from lived experience and internal knowledge of the tradition. This approach avoids the risk of appropriation and instead engages in what Born terms *reflexive musical hybridity*, wherein cultural materials are treated with critical respect, not simply as aesthetic resources but as repositories of knowledge.<sup>24</sup>

By framing the *Dastgah* system as structurally-generative and algorithmically-viable, the composition advocates for a rethinking of whose musical systems are considered *composable* in algorithmic contexts. It positions non-Western systems not as exotic alternatives but as co-equal frameworks capable of reshaping the future of compositional practice.

## 6. Conclusion

The composition *Dastgah* exemplifies an advancement in algorithmic and microtonal music, offering a new model for structurally-embedded cross-cultural composition. By expanding the 12-tone serial system into a 17-tone matrix derived from Iranian *Dastgah* intervals, the work challenges the dominance of Western equal temperament and redefines serialism as a culturally-adaptive framework. Rather than imposing a rigid 12-tone structure, the composition incorporates culturally-specific microtonal intervals—such as neutral seconds and three-quarter tones—into the core generative logic of its pitch organization.

The use of SuperCollider as both compositional environment and performance engine enables a level of precision and real-time variability that mirrors the improvisational sensibilities central to Persian classical music. Through stochastic processes and matrix-based transformations, the composition becomes a generative system in which form, rhythm, and pitch continually evolve—producing an ever-shifting soundscape that resists formal closure.

At a broader level, *Dastgah* contributes to a rethinking of cultural hybridity in algorithmic music. Unlike superficial stylistic fusion, this work operates through what Georgina Born describes as reflexive musical hybridity—a deep, self-aware integration of musical systems that acknowledges

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presented at the Proceedings of the 2011 ACM Symposium on Applied Computing, 2011.

<sup>24</sup> Georgina Born, “Music and the Materialization of Identities”, *Journal of Material Culture*, 16, 2011, 376–88.

their historical, institutional, and affective dimensions. The composition does not merely combine Persian and Western elements; it re-engineers their compositional grammars at a structural level, allowing for mutual transformation and dialogic exchange.

This project also invites a critical reexamination of authorship and system design in contemporary composition. By treating the algorithm as a co-creative agent, the composer relinquishes control and repositions themselves as a curator of dynamic potential rather than a prescriptive author. This decentralization opens space for emergent musical behavior that honors the interpretive, flexible spirit of *Dastgah* while engaging with the formal rigor of serialism.

Ethically, the work foregrounds the importance of respectful cultural integration. By drawing upon insider knowledge of Iranian music and embedding it structurally within a new compositional model, the piece resists appropriation and instead demonstrates how algorithmic systems can serve as tools for cultural continuity, not erasure.

Ultimately, *Dastgah* offers a vision for the future of composition in which technology is not a neutral tool, but a culturally-situated medium. It affirms that non-Western systems—when engaged with critically and creatively—can reshape algorithmic music at its foundational levels. This composition is not only an artistic statement, but also a theoretical intervention – one that proposes hybridity as a structural practice, serialism as an open and culturally-inclusive form, and algorithmic design as a space for negotiating identity in sound.

## 7. Code

```
(
var createMatrix, row, matrix, n, tempo, adjustFloat;

adjustFloat = { |value|
  if (value.isKindOf(Float)) {
    value = value.trunc(1) + 0.44;
  };
  value;
};

// Function to create the 17-tone matrix
createMatrix = { |row|
  var i, n = row.size;
```

```
matrix = Array.fill(n, { Array.new(n) }); // Initialize a N * N matrix with empty sub-arrays

matrix[0] = row;
n.do { |i|
  if (i > 0) {
    matrix[i] = (matrix[i-1] + (row[i] - row[i-1])).mod(12);
  }
};
matrix;
};

// 17 Persian tones input row (Prime row)
row = [0, 1, 1.44, 2, 3, 3.44, 4, 5, 6, 6.44, 7, 8, 8.44, 9, 10, 11, 11.44].scramble;

// Generate the matrix
matrix = createMatrix.(row);

// Display the matrix
matrix.do { |row| row.postln };

// Set the tempo (beats per second)
tempo = 2; // 2 notes per second (120 BPM)

// Function to convert pitch classes to MIDI notes and send to synth
n = row.size; // The number of pitch classes
SynthDef(\atonalSynth, {

  |freq = 440, amp = 0.3, dur = 1|
  var sig, env, filter, osc, osc1, osc2, osc3, osc4,
  oscamp;

  // Envelope for the flute sound
  env = EnvGen.kr(Env.perc(0.01, Rand(0.01, 1).range(1, 4), amp, -4), doneAction: 2);

  // Create sine wave oscillators
  oscamp = Rand(0.1, 0.7);
  osc1 = SinOsc.ar(freq, 0, oscamp);
  osc2 = SinOsc.ar(freq * (5/4), 0, oscamp);
  osc3 = SinOsc.ar(freq * 2, oscamp);
```

```
    osc4 = SinOsc.ar(freq * (2 + (5/4)), 0, oscamp);

    osc = Mix.ar([osc1, osc2/2, osc3/3, osc4/4]);

    filter = LPF.ar(osc, 2000); // Low-pass filter with
cutoff frequency
    filter = HPF.ar(filter, 20); // High-pass filter
with cutoff frequency

    // Apply the envelope to the filtered signal
    sig = filter * env;

    //Panning the signals across 4 channels.
    sig = PanAz.ar(4, sig, Rand(0, 1.0), 0.8, 2, 0.5);

    // Output the signal
    Out.ar(0, sig);

}).add;

{
    var usedForms = List.new;
    var playNote, printForm, selectFormAndIndex, get-
PitchClassRange;

    // Function to randomly select a pitch class within
a specified wide range
    getPitchClassRange = { |pitchClass|
        var baseNote;

        if (pitchClass.isNil) { pitchClass = 0; }; //
Avoid nil values

        // Randomly choose a register: low, mid, or high
switch(4.rand,
            0, { baseNote = (24 + 12.rand).clip(24,
36); }, // Low register
            1, { baseNote = (48 + 12.rand).clip(48,
60); }, // Mid register
            2, { baseNote = (72 + 12.rand).clip(72,
84); }, // High register
            3, { baseNote = (84 + 12.rand).clip(84,
96); } // Post-High register
        );
```

```
        (baseNote + pitchClass).mod(127); // Ensure it
stays within MIDI range
    };

    // Function to play a note with a random register
    playNote = { |pitchClass|
        var midiNote = getPitchClassRange.(pitchClass);
        var freq = midiNote.midicps;
        Synth(\atonalSynth, [\freq, freq]);
        (exprand(0.1, 4)/ tempo).wait; // Adjust
wait time according to tempo
    };

    // Function to print the form used
    printForm = { |form, index, rowOrCol|
        ("Form: " ++ form ++ " " ++ index ++ ": " ++
rowOrCol).postln;
    };

    // Function to randomly select a form and index
    selectFormAndIndex = {
        var forms = [\P, \R, \I, \RI];
        var form, index;

        // Randomly select a form and index
        form = forms.choose;
        index = (0..(row.size-1)).choose; // Ensure the
index is within bounds

        [form, index];
    };

    // Continuous loop to play the matrix using random
forms and indices
    inf.do {
        var formAndIndex = selectFormAndIndex.();
        var form = formAndIndex[0];
        var index = formAndIndex[1];
        var rowOrCol;

        switch(form,
            \P, { rowOrCol = matrix[index]; },
            \R, { rowOrCol = matrix[index].reverse; },
```

```
        \I, { rowOrCol = matrix.collect { |row|
row[index] }; },
        \RI, { rowOrCol = matrix.collect { |row|
row[index] }.reverse; }
    );

    printForm.(form.asString, index, rowOrCol);
    rowOrCol.do { |pitchClass| playNote.(pitchClass);
};

};

}.fork;
)
```

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## Summary

This article presents *Dastgah*, an original composition that merges Iranian microtonal modal systems with Western serialist and algorithmic compositional methods. The piece is realized through SuperCollider and structured around a 17-tone pitch matrix, derived from Persian modal intervals such as neutral seconds and three-quarter tones. These microtonal elements are embedded into the formal logic of serial operations—Prime, Retrograde, Inversion, and Retrograde-Inversion—producing a hybrid structure that is both culturally grounded and formally rigorous.

By algorithmically transforming this microtonal pitch set, *Dastgah* becomes a generative musical system capable of infinite variation. Stochastic processes govern the real-time selection of matrix transformations, rhythmic values, amplitude envelopes, and spatial distribution. This dynamic and emergent behavior reflects the im-

provisational nature of Persian music, while simultaneously engaging the systemic discipline of Western serialism.

The integration of Iranian *Dastgah* elements into an algorithmic framework challenges the dominance of Western equal temperament and proposes a culturally-inclusive model for compositional design. Rather than relying on stylistic fusion, *Dastgah* re-engineers the grammar of serialism to accommodate culturally-specific tuning systems, enabling a deeper structural hybridity.

Beyond its technical innovations, the work raises aesthetic and ethical questions about authorship, representation, and cultural agency in algorithmic music. The composer's role shifts from that of a prescriptive creator to a system architect, curating conditions under which music unfolds in real time. Each performance is unique, embodying a collaborative dialogue between human intention and machine behavior.

Ultimately, *Dastgah* demonstrates how contemporary technologies can be harnessed to honor and transform traditional musical practices. It affirms the creative potential of cross-cultural composition by treating non-Western musical systems not as exotic adjuncts, but as foundational sources of compositional logic. Through this project, algorithmic music becomes a space for negotiating identity, structure, and expressive ambiguity in a globalized artistic landscape.

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## VIEWS

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### NO SUFFICIENT REACH – NO SUPPORT

#### Marking the 34<sup>th</sup> International Review of Composers in Belgrade (September 27–October 7, 2025)

**Abstract:** The survival of our only festival of contemporary music, the International Review of Composers, was jeopardized when Serbia's Ministry of Culture decided not to support the 34<sup>th</sup> edition of this event, whether in terms of funding or organization. This called into question the already defined structure of the festival, marking its founder's jubilee, the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the Composers' Association of Serbia. This paper is a presentation of the works performed at the festival, which were selected and included in its concert program by the festival's selector Tatjana Milošević Mijanović.

**Keywords:** International Review of Composers, most recent Serbian and international music, concert programs, authors and their works, non-compliance.

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An excerpt from an appeal signed by the participants of the First International Review of Composers held in May 1992:

*We do not accept isolation, which would mean the end of our culture in general! We do not allow the primitive and aggressive spirit of false myths to represent our tradition, culture, and creativity! [...] We want the review of composers to be an attempt to generate a basis for coming together, for creative interpenetration and collaboration between people dedicated to musical art, which knows no boundaries.*

An excerpt from the reply that the institution that organizes the International Review of Composers, the Composers' Association of Serbia, received from the Committee for Distributing Funding of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Serbia in September 2025:

*Although this festival, the Review of Composers, dedicated to contemporary music, has a long tradition, in our assessment its programming is aimed at a rather narrow segment of the public, without a broader reach in our society. The committee is of the view that this year's edition may be realized by relying on support from other permanent sources of funding. No support...*

And between that May 1992 and September this year, 2025, 33 Reviews took place, which every government – since the Review of Composers is our *only* review of contemporary Serbian art music! – invariably found to be indispensable as an important part of elite culture, whereby a country addresses not only its citizens, but also the world at large, taking pride in its composers and their most recent accomplishments.

Now, it is as if that same government from 1992, 33 years later, were punishing its “disobedient” composers and their association for issuing that old appeal against a tide of destructive primitivism, which has finally reached the Ministry of Culture as well.

It has arrived indeed, false myths have come to dominate, aggression has become part and parcel of everyday life, primitivism informs public space, but music is like water: the more they seek to block and suppress it – the more ways it finds to gush in. The packed halls of the Kolarac Foundation on the opening night and the Belgrade Philharmonic on the closing night of the 34<sup>th</sup> International Review of Composers demonstrated precisely that. Once again, just like in 1992, the audience, composers, and performing artists came together with the intent of leaving the Ministry that oversees them to its own phony culture.

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This year, when the Composers' Association of Serbia marked its 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the Review comprised as many as 13 concert evenings! Apart from the Kolarac Foundation (the opening night of September 27<sup>th</sup>), the auditorium of the Belgrade Philharmonic (October 3<sup>rd</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>, the closing), Artget Gallery (September 30<sup>th</sup>, two concerts), Radio Belgrade's Studio 6 (October 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>), the auditorium of the Composers' Association of Serbia (September 28<sup>th</sup>), the festival could also rely on the Cathedral of the Blessed Virgin Mary (October 4<sup>th</sup>), the Josip Slavenski Memorial Room (October 5<sup>th</sup>), as well as some newly discovered concert venues that turned out to be very well suited to their new purpose: the Museum of Science and Technology (September 29<sup>th</sup>) and Czech House (October 6<sup>th</sup>, two concerts). A total of 57 pieces were performed.

One should note that this year, the festival's repertoire also found room, with ample justification, for several concerts that were, strictly speaking, outside its programming menu, but provided welcome additions, marking the 80<sup>th</sup> birthday of Milan Mihajlović (October 1<sup>st</sup>, Radio Belgrade's Studio 6, an evening dedicated to his chamber music); focusing our attention on the development of Serbian electronic music from the mid-1980s to the present (October 2<sup>nd</sup>, Radio Belgrade's Studio 6, a selection of pieces by Vladan Radovanović, Srđan Hofman, Ana Gnjatović, Maja Bosnić, and Vladimir Korać); presenting less well known music for children by Ludmila Frajt (October 6<sup>th</sup>, the Czech Center, children's choirs); and a concert presentation of last year's winners of the Composers' Association's Aleksandar Pavlović Award (the auditorium of the Composers' Association, September 28<sup>th</sup>, featuring Marija Timotijević and Irena Pejoska).

The Review's program selector, composer Tatjana Milošević Mijanović, with much creativity and skill, put together one of the best Reviews in recent years, with as many as 13 concert events, nine of which featured her selections, organized in programs according to the performing forces required by the works submitted to the Composers' Association of Serbia. In that sense, the Review's opening sounded like a spectacle of Serbian music, with a selection of works for choir and orchestra, as well as works for organ by contemporary foreign authors that are seldom performed here, the invariably attractive pieces for chamber ensembles and electronics, as well as a concert dedicated to the double bass accompanied by a string ensemble, featured on the closing night.

This year, too, the Review was a fitting ground for the presentation of the Composers' Association's main awards (which were stripped, by the decision of the Ministry mentioned above, of their – otherwise symbolic anyway! – financial “equivalent”): the Stevan Mokranjac Award (to Milica Đorđević for her orchestral work *Little Firefly between Two Flickers* [Малу свиџацу између два њепреџаја]); Pavle Stefanović Award (to musicologist Ksenija Stefanović, for her essay “The Audio-visual Composition *Water* by Vladimir Korać – Nomen est omen”,<sup>1</sup> published in the Serbian-language version of the *New Sound International Journal of Music*), and the Aleksandar Pavlović Award (to the musicians Slobodan Gerić, Nikola Peković, Kata Stojanović, and Jasmina Janković). Also, the Review found room for a presentation of *The Engine of Serbia's Music Life* (Моџор музичкоџ живоџиа Срџије), a monograph about Sokoј's (the Organization of Music Authors of Serbia) Cultural Grants Fund authored by Stefan Cvetković.

Traditionally, like in previous years, special praise was reserved for the musical artists who carried all the concerts on their shoulders. In that sense, over the years, the Review has “raised” several excellent ensembles and multiple prominent instrumentalists who always return to “their” festival. In some cases, the hiatus was quite a long one, as in the case of Dušan Skovran Belgrade Strings; sometimes it was short, in the case of the RTS Symphony Orchestra, which is the Review's only reliable carrier of full orchestral sound; and sometimes there is no hiatus at all, as in the case of the Construction Site New Music Ensemble, a mainstay of the festival for two decades now, whose concert is invariably one of the Review's high points, in content and performance alike. This ensemble often spawns smaller chamber forces as well (this time the Four Strings quartet). In artistic terms, this year's Review benefited invaluablely from numerous individual musicians as well, including the conductors Olga Biserčić, Rade Pejčić, and Srđan Sretenović, organist Maja Smiljanić Radić, and especially four double bass players whose skill and expressivity were truly impressive: Zoran Marković, Slobodan Gerić, Fahrudin Strojil, and Ljubinko Lazić. Vladimir Korać, always reliable, controlled the computers in multiple acoustic-electronic performances; one must also mention the violinists Mirjana Nešković, Jelena Dimitrijević, and Dušica Mladenović, harpists Milena Stanišić and Ivana Pavlović, flutist Stana Krstajić, oboist Ivana Dakić, clarinetists Veljko Klenkovski and Ilona Janović, pianists Bojana Dimković and Neda Hofman Sretenović...

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<sup>1</sup> <https://ojs.newsound.org.rs/index.php/NS/article/view/171/281>

The 34<sup>th</sup> International Review of Composers opened with a full-evening concert at the Kolarac Foundation, which also served as a festive way to mark the 80<sup>th</sup> birthday of the Composers' Association of Serbia, featuring a selection of works for choir and orchestra by Serbian composers. The RTS Choir and Symphony Orchestra had been solidly prepared and firmly led by Olga Biserčić, who has served as a reliable interpreter of contemporary Serbian music on multiple occasions. They performed works by authors from several generations, diverse and for the most part likable in the postmodern-eclectic way. Their composers had mostly relied on the local tradition of oratorio music from the period of Yugoslav social modernism and/or academism, without venturing into deep explorations of sound, the relationship between music and text, and especially the links between the vocal and instrumental parts of the score, with a conspicuous lack of contrapuntal textures. Sensitized to tragic and heroic content (and its canonized stereotypes), for the most part they treated them with overheated emotions and explicit romanticization/naturalization of musical narration.

The young composer Igor Andrić had intended his oratorio *Sleeping Letters* (*Уснула џисма*) for a performance at the Great School Class in Kragujevac (this time we heard an abridged version), hence the tragic, solemn, and pathetic quality in his otherwise quite maturely shaped sound, based on oratorio works by Ljubica Marić and Igor Stravinsky. Exciting, sometimes imposing, traditional in concept and context alike, this work re-evoked the old days, when composers wrote solemn oratorios in memory of the victims of fascism. This was only fitting for a Great School Class, because something along those lines is what is expected there anyway.

In her piece titled *The Kiddo from the Carousel* (*Мала од вртишкe*), Dragana Jovanović likewise foregrounds antiwar content (setting verses by Aleksandar Milanković), but from the unusual perspective of mixing the views of an adult person with those of a child, that is, a form of musical speech that combines academic seriousness with childishness. Hence some commonplaces in this music (syllabic recitation in the choral part resembling a nursery rhyme, sublime moments with emphasized emotions and percussion, which signals gunshots...) as opposed to soft oases of lyricism and even a miniature quotation from a well-known evergreen song by Goran Bregović – a musical grimace introduced in order to capriciously blur the signifiers before the end of the piece.

*V.R. Ibi coram oculis nostris* by Zoran Komadina is likewise programmatically oriented against violence and crime in today's world, based on its

author's selection of some of the most familiar lines from Latin and Christian Orthodox liturgy. This work employs an academically understood breviary of technical procedures and typical gestures from "canonic" 20<sup>th</sup>-century oratorio music and starkly evokes the tragedy of today's world by means of this already depleted vocabulary, including even the "hackneyed" *Dies irae* sequence.

One of the two works whose fresh and unconventional approach marked the evening was *Milje* by Branka Popović. Entirely in line with her personal style, it showed how a fully developed poetics may be reflected in a large vocal-instrumental ensemble that is outside of its author's usual habitat. The work is based on several haiku lines by Bashō and demonstrates a reflexive approach to and lyrical refinement of Popović's compositional procedures, as simple as they are uncommon and authorially sovereign. The work's large performing forces are used economically, with color and clarity, along with well-placed and never exaggerated delicacies, and with controlled tutti. This music found its semantic range in natural sounds, in the humming of wind against rocks and the echo of a robust landscape, where choral voices in their reciting of the text blend with instruments and become a murmur. An intimate piece in a large format.

*The Flight of Doves from the Palace* (Бeй њолубова из њалање), a work by a member of the youngest generation of our composers, Damjan Jovičič, combines verses by Minja Jovičič with the approach of the famous American postmodern author of short prose Donald Barthelme, with the composer embracing his surrealistic and parodic expression, fragmentary speech and form, and play with signifiers approaching the absurd. This gives rise to light and cheerful music, which for the most part parodically evokes the style of Philip Glass and his compositional and technical procedures, but in an entirely unique atmosphere playing with "vocalisms" (њласизми; flickering figurations, repetitive phrases, prominent vibraphone, piano, and harp parts in the orchestra), and the heritage of French oratorio neoclassicism. This is wit, faced with an abyss of seriousness.

Unlike this authorially strong piece, Milorad Marinković treated us to a "reminiscence" devoted to his professor Rajko Maksimović and his academically lofty oratorio music. Still, his *Hymn* setting of verses by Miloš Crnjanski sounded too eclectic, aggressive, and even tasteless. Too much drama, wailing, and ecstasy per unit of musical time.

The second concert of this year's International Review of Composers (September 29<sup>th</sup>) took the festival's audience into the beautiful and acousti-

cally perfect setting of the Museum of Science and Technology, featuring works for small instrumental ensembles. The accordionist Marija Ratkov had little trouble with *Against the Shapes*, a repetitive and smooth etude by the Canadian Tom Lachance, while the violinists Katarina Kovačevski and Kornelija Stamenković had to invest more effort to perform *Relation*, a hermetic piece by the Israeli composer Ruth Alon. Miloš Raičković, with his uncomplicated ideas and technical solutions, this time chose to weave together musical emblems from Serbia and Japan, Serbian round dancing (*коло*) and the timbre of the Japanese instrument shamisen, giving rise to the tender, warm, and witty *Japanese Round Dance* (*коло јайанско*) for harp and guitar. The domain of the mellifluous provided a home for Svetlana Maksimović as well with one of her most accomplished pieces, *Enchanted* (*Зачарано*), where she subtly forged the simple lyrical flows of three distinct lines, along with an oft-present motive that “enchants” this dreamlike atmosphere, performed by the excellent Karolina Bäter on the recorder, Stana Krstajić on the flute, and Predrag Nedeljković on the clarinet.

The end of the evening was reserved for Nataša Bogojević who, aided by Adriana Spasojević and the Dandelion (*Маслачак*) string quartet, in her sovereign postmodernist way, commemorated the first known female composer in the history of music, in *Kassia* for soprano and string quartet. Every work by Bogojević occupies a noticeably personal perspective on an extra-musical subject, which it articulates as though it were poetry or a powerful metaphor. That is why for her “less is actually more”, in this case with subtle sonorities and tangles between the instruments and solo vocal part, which are led with delicacy, control, lyrical poetics, always with that precious “surplus” of poetical sense that links contemporary sound and the fate of Kassia (or Kassiani), a Byzantine abbess and composer from the 9<sup>th</sup> century. The impression is also enhanced by the fact that the vocal part is textless, reduced to vocalisms (Byzantine *jubili*?) as well as other, non-traditional modes of vocalization (hissing and growling as a perennial symptom of a frustrated female artist?), with the overall result – supported by an unimposing string quartet (the ison?) – of a peculiar and indeed rare phenomenon in our music: a spiritual yet not religiously prayerful (*доїомољачки*) sound.

Presenting music for small instrumental ensembles in concert was resumed at Artget Gallery of the Cultural Center of Belgrade (September 30<sup>th</sup>). On that occasion, we heard a tender, witty, and diatonic, repetitive creation by Andrija Andrić, *Cloudspotting* for violin (Dušan Panajotović) and piano (Bojana Dimković), as its author’s conceptual invocation of the Zen atmo-

spheres of Arvo Pärt and a counterpart to the serene infinity voiced with tintinnabuli. Ana Kazimić submitted *Contraforte*, a piece for double bass (Ljubinko Lazić) and piano (Bojana Dimković), highly “gregarious” and aggressively virtuosic, but without a deeper meaning save for gushing narration as such. In his *Inharmonic Refractions* for piano (Dimitrije Nikolić), Mateja Nikolić presented his fascination with a physical situation in the harmonic series – and made sure that this experiment of his be literally registered by the audience as well. However, that is possible only in *fortissimo* dynamics and with much use of the sustain pedal, resulting in a rather aggressive and disharmonic sound without aesthetic justification.

Veljko Nenadić retained a firm grasp over the performance of his *Two Movements* for two violins (Mirjana Nešković and Jelena Dimitrijević) and piano (Veljko Nenadić) in his own skillful hands and thus lent his personal pianist *brio* and charisma to this striking and inspired music. Even though the piece is “classical”, everything in it is contemporary, while its contrasting confrontation of lyricism and drama, encompassing the entire work, is enthusiastic and exciting enough to maintain a high level of tension throughout. That applies especially to the second movement, “Perpetuum mobile”, which flies by in a single breath, carried by the wings of invention, brilliance, wit, and the postmodernist paronomasia of signifiers.

It appears that Svetlana Savić is most at home with select Serbian poetry, entrusting it to a female voice in her subtle and unique way. This time, we heard *Nocturnal Songs* (Ноћне њесме) for voice (Mina Kovač Marković) and piano (Dušan Marković), a setting of verses by Jelena Marinkov. Topics related to solitude, incomprehension, anxiety, and melancholia had long occupied the very core of her style, where maximum effect is generated by minimal means: from a lapidary musical speech, from a translucent and simple texture, succinct expression, the power of a single well-placed sonic gesture. This is a melancholy, calm, and “highly polished” sophistication.

In his *Bagatelles* for violoncello and piano (Đorđe Milošević and Bojana Dimković) the Hungarian composer Balázs Kecskés provided an exciting and interesting conclusion to the concert precisely by means of postmodernist modelling and paraphrasing in relation to the imposing shadows of Béla Bartók and European neoclassicism, within the compact formation of a series of miniatures.

Radio Belgrade’s Studio 6 (October 2<sup>nd</sup>) hosted the retrospective evening of Serbian electronic music mentioned above, featuring a selection of works by its pioneers, Vladan Radovanović and Srđan Hofman, as well as by younger

composers: Ana Gnjatović, *A Space That Cannot Be Thought* (Простор коју се не може мислити) and Maja Bosnić, *there is not nothing.sgs*. The evening was concluded with ample effect with *Orontea MIX* by Vladimir Korać, one of the best composers of his generation, who took a creative approach to a recording of *Orontea*, an opera by Antonio Cesti, and produced a sound replete with effects from old vinyl recordings: cracking, ticking, various soft murmurs and distortions. The opera's musical content is reduced to bare materials and construction blocks, almost entirely “dismantled” and digitally processed, only in a few places shining through, as though from the deep waters of time covering the world, like a precious artifact. It is proof that electronic music can have a narrative poetic meaning and effect.

A concert of electro-acoustic music took place in the Auditorium of the Belgrade Philharmonic (October 3<sup>rd</sup>), featuring members of the Construction Site Ensemble led by Srđan Sretenović. The evening will be remembered by *Voices No. 1*, a work by Predrag Milojković for vibraphone, two small gongs, and chimes (Milorad Balić), which reflected in a ragged and cracked mirror an image of an imaginary Tibetan ritual. In his exciting work titled *Ocean Dandelion*, Kamil Grzegorz Polak from Poland both united and juxtaposed oboe and live electronics, with computer effects and sound (Vladimir Korać) distorting, multiplying, and extending the oboe's simple line (Sanja Romić), treating us to a strange oboe sound enhanced by digital steroids. Talia Amar (Israel) submitted *Labyrinth*, an ambient and not particularly striking work for a group of instruments and live electronics, while Ivan Božičević had composed *Rig Veda X.129:4* for bass clarinet (the exquisite Ilona Janovič) and electronics (Vladimir Korać), where the subject of artistic elaboration appeared to be juxtaposing diatonic (!) electronics and a surly bass clarinet, all of which was inspired by verses from the Rigveda's Hymn of Creation.

To this Review Miloš Zatkalik submitted a nonet titled *Evolution of a Monster* (Еволуција чуговишћиа). The subject of the author's thinking was the phenomenon of a “mechanical monster”, that is, the problem of the mechanical/mechanicist that in music morphs into the monstrous/monstrosity. For the author, it was also a question of stasis and dynamism in the musical flow, with alternation between those two states in the progression of momentum and stasis until, at the end of the work, a mechanically rough pulse, in an onslaught of theatricalization, permeates the work's texture up to the apex of this wave of expression, before all of this blithering mechanical loquacity dissipates and scatters into the ending or vanishing of the work.

Matteo Maria Salvo from Italy authored his witty and brilliantly devised *Promenade électronique* for five instruments and electronics (V. Korać), which celebrates the joy of playing with sound as a mosaic of all sorts of things, as a cheerful noise and entropy of music. Less noteworthy was *Nysa* by the Greek composer Kostas Zisimopoulos, a work for five instruments that, in a pretty banal way and with several explicit tone images, evokes the pre-Arcadian parts where Dionysus spent his childhood, a god known for dying and being resurrected twice. Gerson Batista from Portugal had written *Superimposable* for an unusual ensemble (flute, guitar, piano, percussion) and electronics (Vladimir Korać) as a combination of classically produced, digital, and computer-enhanced sound. It was yet another pretentious work dealing with the subjects of humanity, existence, the place of humans in the universe, and their fragile mortality.

New organ music (at the Cathedral of the Blessed Virgin Mary, October 4<sup>th</sup>) was presented by Maja Smiljanić Radić along with her class (Veljko Nenadić, Simonida Atanasković). They performed works by authors from countries where composing music for organ has a long tradition (Leonids Lobrevs, Friedrich Jaecker, Brian Andrew Inglis, João Pedro Oliveira, Carlotta Ferrari), diverse in expression, which, perhaps also as a result of that tradition, was postmodernist, mindful of that mighty instrument's overall sound, but also relatively innovative, and sometimes also witty in relation to the works' program titles: from a tonal image of polar lights (the Latvian Lobrevs), via a contemporary invocation of Christian motives (the German composer Jaecker) or their eclectic elaboration (the UK-based Inglis); via experimenting with form and its smallest elements (the Portuguese Oliveira), to an entire poem inspired by *Wuthering Heights* (the Italian Ferrari). Regrettably, none of our Serbian composers had submitted an organ piece to the call of the Composers' Association, so we cannot make a comparison. That said, one ought to commend Maja Smiljanić Radić for returning to the Review and hope that next time she and her students will also play music by Serbian authors on the beautiful and mighty organ of Belgrade's cathedral.

In the auditorium of the Josip Slavenski Memorial Room (October 5) the program included music for solo instruments and duos. The evening opened with the famous clarinet doyen Ante Grgin's unpretentious *Three Pieces* for solo clarinet (performed by Veljko Klenkovski) and then the excellent Miodrag Đorđević played *Horizontal* (Хоризонтала) for accordion, a work by the young composer Olga Janković focused on a pretty formalized and forced exploration of sound in the orbit of second (post)modernism. This was fol-

lowed by *qubits of blue*, a flute piece by Marko Vesić (performed by the excellent flutist Jelena Šarenac Španović) with unclear authorial ideas but with explicit procedures, and then by *Toque a Eshu Eleggua*, a work for solo oboe by the Cuban composer Louis Franz Aguirre (performed by the excellent Ivana Dakić), demonstrating the author's extensive familiarity with extended performance techniques on the oboe.

Peter Durkó from Hungary submitted an eclectic work for double bass (Filip Dokljanov), *Landscape and Reminiscence*, while Victor Arul from the United States composed *Nonmeagre* for solo bassoon (Goran Marinković) as a longwinded musical narration about a conflict between an abstract individual and their surroundings, deploying familiar academic tools. Geoffrey Gordon from the US answered the Composers' Association's call with *Jeux de Création* for harp (Ivana Pavlović) and used his musical language and means to make an homage to French music from a hundred years ago. This extensive and pretentious work appeared to be meant to exhaust all the ways that a contemporary harpist could use the instrument, and was successful in that pursuit.

The evening was concluded by a piece by Draško Adžić, *A Drind, Bucolics, and Trans* (Дринд, дуколика и ѿранс) for two violins (Mirjana Nešković and Jelena Dimitrijević), easily the high point of the entire concert. The author had turned to Vlach music for inspiration and modelling, but with good taste and control, more as an evocation of the old folklore contrast of singing/dancing, which in his interpretation gained an energy boost as a singing/dancing competition. Formally devised as a series of diverse miniatures, this inventive duo-drama demonstrated all the things that two inspired violins are capable of, at a Vlach party or a concert of art music.

On the penultimate day of the Review (October 6<sup>th</sup>), the auditorium of the Czech Center assembled an audience interested in string quartet sound, with the "4 Strings Quartet" (D. Panajotović, P. Živadinović, V. Popović, and S. Sretenović) carrying the entire program. The ensemble performed pieces by Faruk Mehić from Bosnia and Herzegovina (his somewhat self-absorbed and unremarkable *Mosaic III*, op. 20); Teodora Stepančić ("Kolman's Work" [Колманов раг] – inexpressive but subtle music in the postmodern condition); Petra Strahovnik from Slovenia (*Attack!* – music as a metaphor and metonymy of the work's title); Carl Schimmel from the United States (tone images and contemporary compositional procedures pursuing the content suggested by the work's title: *Two Poems by James Tate*); Dario Argentesi from Italy (his quartet *Hagaki*, a poetic and striking musical link between the

sound traditions of Europe and Japan), and Matthew Lam from Hong Kong, who in his *Peculiar Voices* approached the experimental idea of pursuing the limits of a string quartet's sound/sounding in a traditional, systematic, and transparent way, while the Canadian composer Willyn Whiting submitted *Two Pieces*, likewise an extensive work examining the accomplishments and possibilities of post-postmodernism.

For the conclusion of this concert, the Review's selector Tatjana Milošević Mijanović had wisely reserved Jug Marković's *Psalm* for voice (Milena Damjanović, soprano) and instrumental ensemble (M. Nenadović, flute; V. Klenkovski, clarinet; M. Balić, cymbal; and D. Krsmanović, violoncello; conductor: S. Sretenović). For several years now, Marković has affirmed time and again that he is at his creative zenith, having finely chiselled out unique style and poetics of his own that combine the postmodernist poetics of multiple signification with the most cutting-edge explorations in sound. The lyrics, selected from two poems by Ingeborg Bachmann, achieved a wonderful blend with the music, which embraced and supported them rather than delivering them, given that the vocal part was deliberately quite simple and sonically "marginalized". This diptych unfolded in the *sotto voce* (уопуїнасје) of a compositional and technical scheme whereby, by means of repeating a simple diatonic structure, it is slowly eaten away by dissonances, coupled with an "early Baroque" sounding ensemble, thanks to a peculiar tuning scheme. The second poem is set to "fantastic blabbering" in the flute, clarinet, and cymbal, which only toward the end provoke the singer to sing out, take over, and conclude the piece.

This year's International Review of Composers ended with a concert in the fully packed Auditorium of the Belgrade Philharmonic (October 7th), which smartly combined the presentations of the Composers' Association's awards mentioned above (the Pavle Stefanović and Aleksandar Pavlović Awards) with marking what would have been the 75th birthday of the composer Zoran Erić and a presentation of the most recent compositions for double bass and string ensemble.

This was one of the most successful concerts of this year's festival and, therefore, it should receive a separate review of its own, just like the opening evening. An innovative blend of excellent compositions and superb double-bass soloists (Zoran Marković, Slobodan Gerić, Ljubinko Lazić, Fahrudin Strojil) with Erić's old associates – Dušan Skovran Belgrade Strings (conducted by Rade Pejčić) – was a move that allowed, in Erić's own unimposing, light, and witty way, the poetic legacy of this great composer to echo through

this year's Review. Following his *Blues & Rhythm* (F. Strojil), a work for double bass and string quartet from 2009 that opened the concert, the audience heard works by Erić's colleagues and former students. In his canonized style – which had long ago switched from minimalism to a version of new simplicity – Vladimir Tošić presented his *Altos* for double bass and strings (F. Strojil).

Lazar Đorđević wrote a serious and lengthy *concertante* work, *(R)evolution*, which demands from the soloist a broad technical range of non-traditional playing and virtuosic techniques. We listened to active, energetic, and colorful music, ruffled by the double bass and string ensemble “fighting” each other, the constant dynamism of a now thickening, now diluting texture, brilliant, dramatic, chilling effects, a veritable fireworks of fervor with brief points of rest furnished by general pauses and islands of cadential solos.

In her *Eight Sensitive Fragments* (*Осам осећајних фрагмената*) Tatjana Milošević Mijanović offered an amalgam of a “concertino” and a suite-like mosaic, where each fragment had its thematic grounding in one of eight characteristic situations. Along with several (unintended?) reminiscences of Erić's music, we heard an impressive dramatic flow teeming with wit, caricature, energy, cheerfulness, grotesque, melancholy, the decadence of ambivalent feelings, from irony to nostalgia; a flow intersected with peculiar and effective solo cadenzas (the excellent Slobodan Gerić), which fit perfectly into this carousel of sonic images and flamboyant whirling signifiers serving as its source of energy. This game, in which Erić was an uncontested master, takes over musical time in this piece, with its luxuriant aesthetic effect.

Aleksandar Sedlar devised his *Gera Concerto* as a traditional three-movement form, but on this occasion we only heard its second movement (Slobodan Gerić), mellifluously lyrical music with standard orchestration and eclectic quoting of Wagner's chord progressions. All of that had already been done a long time ago, and much more effectively, by classical Hollywood. Inadequate for a Copernican twist of ridiculing clichés.

At the end of the concert and the 34th International Review of Composers as a whole we heard a 43-year-old piece, *Off* for double bass and 12 strings by Zoran Erić. The soloist Zoran Marković had a different idea from what double bassists usually do in this single-movement concerto, indulging in “gregarious” and lengthy cadenzas intended to accomplish an extreme degree of delicacy and interpretive virtuosity where other soloists do not pursue them, which added an inertia to the orchestral part and dulled the legendary dynamic and energetic, razor-sharp repetitive sections. However, we thereby

discovered a different *Off*, where the complementary relations between the fast and slow sections, tuttis and solos, energy and stasis yielded to the extravagance of an authentic authority.

\* \* \*

*The Board of the Composers' Association of Serbia decided in March 1991 that "in support of the students' demands and protesting against repression and every kind of suppression of freedom, members of the Association will not permit any public performances of their music, especially on the radio or television, until the students' demands have been met in full and until the public is allowed fully free and unbiased access to information".<sup>2</sup>*

*Princes and lords, our natty official culture commissars entrusted with performing exorcisms in art and culture, have relegated themselves among the marginalizers of our contemporary art music. But art music feels good even when surrounded by social injustices, even better inasmuch as it transcends their humiliating practices.*

## Summary

This year, the International Review of Composers did not receive its usual funding support from the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Serbia, which jeopardized its survival. These circumstances are reviewed in the text by focusing on the following questions: How did the Review fare faced with the possibility of discontinuation and how did its organizers respond to that plausible threat? How good were the concerts that featured the selections of Tatjana Milošević Mijanović and did we get to hear multiple outstanding works by Serbian composers this year as well? Did Serbian music prove once again that it is stronger than any kind of institutional repression and torture?

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<sup>2</sup> Minutes from a meeting of the Board of the Composers' Association of Serbia held on March 12<sup>th</sup>, 1991.

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## RESEARCH AND TRADITION

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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.<sup>1</sup>

**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.<sup>2</sup> 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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<sup>2</sup> 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).<sup>3</sup>



**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,

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<sup>3</sup> 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),<sup>4</sup> 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.

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<sup>4</sup> 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.<sup>5</sup>

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”.<sup>6</sup> 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:<sup>7</sup>

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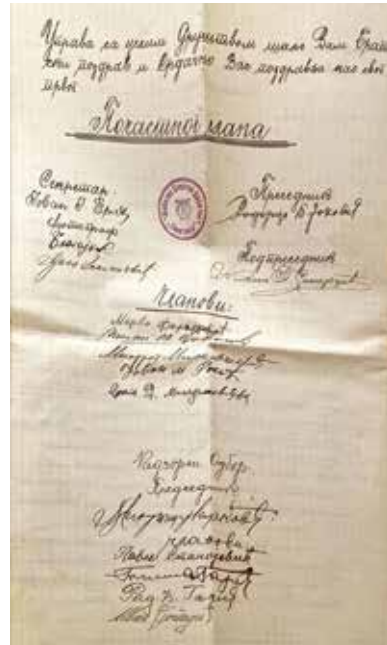
<sup>5</sup> Bojana Popović, *Moga u Beogradu 1918–1941*, Beograd, Muzej primenjene umetnosti, 2000, 114–115. [Bojana Popović, *Fashion in Belgrade 1918–1941*, Belgrade, Museum of Applied Arts, 2000, 114–115].

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

<sup>7</sup> 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,<sup>8</sup> 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.<sup>9</sup>

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,<sup>10</sup> in which love is expressed across a wide affective-emotional spectrum. In the first song, “Zelenoje lišće” (Leaves are Green),<sup>11</sup> 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

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<sup>8</sup> Cf. Милоје Николић, “Прилог истраживањима форме Мокрањчевих руковети”, у: Ивана Перковић Радак и Тијана Поповић Млађеновић (ур.), *Мокрањцу на дар 2006 (Прошећа – 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.]

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> 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.

<sup>11</sup> 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.<sup>12</sup> Therefore, based on this criterion, the cumulative textual-content framework of Sudarević's *Po-*

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<sup>12</sup> 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”.<sup>13</sup>

### 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).<sup>14</sup> 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 song<sup>15</sup> (constructed from only two stanzas), all other songs are relatively complete structural-formal entities built from four or

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> 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.]

<sup>15</sup> 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, b<sup>1</sup>, a<sup>1</sup>* (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 quote<sup>16</sup> *a, b, b<sup>1</sup>, b<sup>2</sup>* (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 a<sup>1</sup>*, 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-

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<sup>16</sup> 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', b<sup>2</sup></i>	Varied strophic (textural variation and choral-orchestral variation); Transformation of the folksong citation in the cadence; formal scheme: <i>a, b, b', b<sup>2</sup></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', b<sup>2</sup>, b<sup>3</sup></i>	Varied strophic 2+2 (textural variation and choral-orchestral variation); formal scheme: <i>a, a, a', a<sup>v</sup></i>	Varied strophic (textural variation and choral-orchestral variation); formal scheme: <i>a, a', b, b', b<sup>2</sup>, b<sup>3</sup></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 variation<sup>17</sup> 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.<sup>18</sup>

### 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

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<sup>17</sup> 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.

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

Mokranjac's work"<sup>19</sup> 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"<sup>20</sup>. 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

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<sup>19</sup> 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.]

<sup>20</sup> 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 за о - чи тво - је што су - зе ро - не,

9 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*

У - да - ра - ло\_ у там-бу-ре ђа - че,\_ у там-бу-ре ђа - че, у там-бу-ре ђа - че.

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 - B $\flat$  - C $\sharp$  - 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 E $\flat$  (double harmonic minor scale) or E (Balkan minor scale), or alternatively, whether F $\sharp$  (double harmonic minor scale) or F (Balkan minor). In that sense, the melodic movement D - E - F $\sharp$  - 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-



utilised in his other choral cycles as well.<sup>21</sup> 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).<sup>22</sup> 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

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<sup>21</sup> 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.

<sup>22</sup> 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 t<sub>6</sub> D<sup>2</sup>t<sub>6</sub> II<sup>3</sup><t -VII<sub>D</sub><sup>5+6</sup> <D>(unutrašnji)

D d: t \_\_\_\_\_ -s<t II<sup>3</sup><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  $\underline{V}/\underline{IV}$  (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<sup>6</sup> (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)

The musical score is for a choral piece in 3/4 time, marked (Andante). It features four vocal parts: Baritone solo, Soprano/Alto, Tenor, and Bass. The lyrics are in Serbian. The guitar accompaniment is shown at the bottom with chord symbols.

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

Guitar chords: g: t<sup>6</sup>—<sub>5</sub> DD D<sup>7</sup> VI Ds<sub>3</sub>s t<sup>6</sup> II<sup>7</sup> -DD<sup>7</sup> D

5 *f* *mf*

Бар. соло

за о-чи тво - је што су-зе ро - не

*mf*

С А

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 DD<sup>9</sup> D — 7 VI VII<sub>5</sub><sup>6</sup>s t<sup>6</sup> II<sup>7</sup> -DD<sup>7</sup> D

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

(Andante)

Баритон соло

ах! О-ди, о-ди сред за-гр - ља - ја!

*mf*

Сопран  
Алт

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

Тенор

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

Бас

*mf*

пре - пуне, пре - пуне ба -

*mf*

g: t — 6 III<sup>6</sup> DD<sub>3</sub><sup>4</sup> D<sub>3</sub><sup>6</sup> VI<sup>6</sup> D<sub>5</sub><sup>10</sup> F<sub>3</sub><sup>4</sup> t<sub>4</sub><sup>6</sup> — 6 — 5 II<sup>7</sup> — 6 — 5 -DD<sub>5</sub><sup>14</sup> 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, III<sup>6</sup> (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* *mf*

g: t DD<sub>3</sub>-DD<sub>3</sub><sup>+6</sup>/<sub>4</sub> III<sup>6</sup> t -II<sub>2</sub>< t<sup>6</sup>

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, Га - ур - ко

Тенор

за о - чи тво - о - ди, Га - ур - ко

Бас

о - ди, Га - ур - ко

g:  $-DD_3^4$   $D_{-5}^6$  t VII<sup>6</sup>  $D_{-2}VI_4^6$   $Ds_5^6$  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.



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## REVIEWS

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**JELENA JANKOVIĆ-BEGUŠ\***

Independent researcher

Belgrade

**Asja Radonjić and Danica Maksimović,**  
***Centenary of the Belgrade Philharmonic Orchestra (1923–2023), Belgrade,***  
**Belgrade Philharmonic Orchestra, 2024, 260 pp.**  
**ISBN 978-86-907703-9-7**

To mark 100 years since the founding of the Belgrade Philharmonic Orchestra, the most renowned Serbian symphony orchestra, the musicologists Asja Radonjić, M.Sc.<sup>1</sup> and Danica Maksimović,

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<sup>1</sup> Asja Radonjić (b. 1977) graduated from the Musicology Department of the Faculty of Music in Belgrade. She earned her M.Sc. degree in Cultural Management and Cultural Policy in the Balkans, at the University of Arts in Belgrade – UNESCO Chair. She is a Ph.D. Candidate at the Faculty of Media and Communications in Belgrade. She writes articles and reviews in the field of musicology, as well as professional reports from academic conventions, symposia, and festivals, which have

M.A.<sup>2</sup> – the program managers of the Belgrade Philharmonic Orchestra for nearly 20 years and mainly responsible for the preparation of the concert seasons, tours within Serbia and abroad, and other activities of this institution – au-

been published in music magazines and newspapers in Serbia and internationally.

<sup>2</sup> Danica Maksimović (b. 1976) graduated from the Musicology Department at the Faculty of Music in Belgrade. She was proof-reader, reviewer and editor of the Belgrade Philharmonic's publications: *Homage to Hans Swarowsky* (2005), Oskar Danon's autobiography *The Rhythms of Restlessness* (2006), Zubin Mehta's autobiography *The Score of My Life* (2010), and a children's book *The Boy with the Violin* (2015), among other responsibilities.

thored the jubilee publication titled *Centenary of the Belgrade Philharmonic Orchestra (1923–2023) / Сто година Београдске филхармоније (1923–2023)*. This luxurious and richly-illustrated book in hard cover, with parallel text in Serbian and in English,<sup>3</sup> was published by the Belgrade Philharmonic Orchestra in 2024. On these 260 pages in large, A4 format, the authors tell a vivid and exciting tale about the history of one of the most important Serbian institutions in the field of art music. The abundant archival material, which was collected and initially sorted with the assistance of the musicologist Marijana Dujović, M.A., is presented in a clear and methodologically-consistent manner: the authors opted for a chronological approach, which is fully aligned with the purpose of this publication. Besides the archival sources and existing literature about the Belgrade Philharmonic Orchestra (including the manuscript *75 Year of the Belgrade Philharmonic Orchestra [1923–1998]* by Dejan Despić), the authors have also collected personal impressions from the conductors and soloists who have collaborated with the orchestra, as well as from several former and current members of the orchestra, and other persons who have been connected to the work of this institution, which has largely contributed to the timeliness and interest of the text for the wider reading audience.

The main text, i.e. the historiographic study by Maksimović and Rado-

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<sup>3</sup> English translation: Ivana Medić, Ph.D. (main text and appendices) and Marija Drndić (*What Others Have Said About Us*).

vić, encompasses roughly one half of the book and is distributed in several chapters which follow the rises, stagnations, and new beginnings in the work of this institution, from its inception until today. After the authors' brief introduction (pp. 6–7) and a methodological chapter which presents the research approach and the relation to archival material and literature (pp. 8–11), the main text ensues, which analyses the evolution of the Belgrade Philharmonic Orchestra over a period of 100 years. First, the study overviews the beginnings of symphonic music in Serbia and the first steps towards the founding of the Belgrade Philharmonic Orchestra (pp. 13–16), followed by the presentation of the period from its foundation until the Second World War (pp. 19–29), then the years of the institution's rise in the postwar period (pp. 31–41), culminating with the so-called "Golden Age" of the orchestra under the artistic direction of its chief conductor Živojin Zdravković, from 1961–1978 (pp. 42–57). The authors analyse the period of challenges which occurred after Zdravković's retirement, and particularly during the last decade of the twentieth century, when the institution carried out its activities in the circumstances of the society's devastation and narrowed frames (pp. 58–73). With the onset of the new millennium and the democratic changes in society, the "Second Golden Age" of the orchestra began, marked by the creative personality of the pianist Ivan Tasovac as its director (pp. 74–131), as well as by the continuous support to this institution from the well-known conductor

Zubin Mehta (pp. 132–139). The authors conclude this historic overview with the presentation of the project introducing the new concert hall for the Belgrade Philharmonic Orchestra (pp. 140–143) and a swift “look into the future” (pp. 144–145), some sort of an “open conclusion”, sending a clear message that “the best time for the Belgrade Philharmonic Orchestra is yet to come” (p. 145).

Due to the limitations of this review, it is not possible to present in detail all of the fascinating insights offered by Maksimović and Radonjić in their analysis of the position and the achievements of the Belgrade Philharmonic Orchestra in the twentieth century, but also in their overview of the institution’s more recent history and its current state. However, I do agree with Srđan Teparić’s opinion that the authors have presented both stellar moments and years of stagnation and decline, “objectively, and thus scientifically pertinently”.<sup>4</sup>

As a particular quality of this book, I would like to emphasize once again its vivid and immediate style of narration, the proliferation of anecdotes which enliven the analyzed archival material and bring it closer to wider audiences, and which are presented graphically within each chapter in the form of small “internal units” under the title “Did you know?”. Also, the exquisite design and layout, with an abundance of visual materials (photos, concert posters, and other

documents), as well as the bilingual nature of the publication, all testify to the fact that the achievements of the Belgrade Philharmonic Orchestra over the past 100 years deserve to be presented in such an optimal way to the Serbian and international readership.

The book features several expertly-prepared appendices, which are also of enormous significance for any future study of the activities and achievements of the Belgrade Philharmonic Orchestra in both national and international frameworks. Among others, these appendices include the lists of foreign visits and tours of the orchestra, a discography, commissions, the names of orchestra members in specific years (including the jubilee year 2023), a selection from the bibliography of reviews and articles about the institution, etc.

The high quality of this publication, which documents the important accomplishments of the Belgrade Philharmonic Orchestra during the varying periods of its history, stands in stark contrast with the lack of care for this institution shown by the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Serbia over the past several years, including the absence of more significant financial support for the jubilee concert season of the orchestra, as well as the slow pace of the realisation of the new concert hall. Nevertheless, the monograph *Centenary of the Belgrade Philharmonic Orchestra (1923–2023)* is a praiseworthy publication in which the realities of the institution and the dynamics of its changes – caused primarily by external (and some internal) sociopolitical and

<sup>4</sup> Srđan Teparić, “Recenzija monografije Sto godina Beogradske filharmonije”, <https://muzickilimbo.rs/recenzija-monografije-sto-godina-beogradske-filharmonije/>

economic, organisational reasons – is blended seamlessly with the personal experiences of the protagonists of this story which carries on. As the authors Asja Radonjić and Danica Maksimović themselves conclude: *The Philharmonic is Forever*.

*Dedicated to the memory of the conductor  
Gabriel Feltz (1971–2025)*

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2000) and managing secretary of the Dušan Skovran Belgrade String Orchestra (2000–2002). She also edited the CD series *Late 20th-century Serbian Contemporary Music* (1995) and published a collection of essays, *Twelve Short Pieces* (1997). She was the organiser and moderator of the panel series *New Sound Spaces* (2014–2019) and edited a volume of proceedings from these conferences (2019). Texts by Premate have been published in the *New Sound*, *Muzički talas*, and *Treći program* music periodicals, and her reviews and criticism in the culture section of the *Politika* daily. In 2017 she won the Pavle Stefanović award for music criticism and essay writing and the *Musica Classica* prize for music criticism.

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She has published 11 books, both single-authored and co-written, and more than 50 scholarly articles. She introduced a new Master's program at the Academy of Arts titled Music and Media. She is the recipient of the 2024 Culture Medal for the Preservation of Cultural Heritage (2024).

**Sanja Radinović**, Ph.D., is an Associate Professor in the Department of Ethnomusicology at the Faculty of Music in Belgrade. At this same institution, where she has been employed since 1988, she earned her Magisterium (1993) and Ph.D. in ethnomusicology (2007). She has served as a visiting professor on several occasions at other universities in the Republic of Serbia (Priština/Varvarin; Kragujevac) and the Srpska Republic (East Sarajevo), where she has likewise been engaged in this capacity over the past several years (Banja Luka). She is the author of four books (including two single-authored volumes, one co-authored, and one co-edited) and several dozen scholarly articles published in reputable national and international journals, conference proceedings, and scholarly monographs. Her principal areas of interest include the morphological characteristics of Serbian vocal heritage, analytical methodology, old Serbian two-part singing. Her book *Oblik i reč (Form and Word)* received the prestigious "Mile Nedeljković" Award in 2012 as the best study in the field of contemporary Serbian folkloristics published in the previous year.

**Dina Vojvodić Nikolić**, Ph.D., a musicologist, is an Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Arts in Zvečan – Kosovska Mitrovica. She received her Ph.D. in 2021 from the Department of Musicology at the Faculty of Music in Belgrade. She has published one scholarly monograph – *Morton Feldman: Establishing a Creative Identity* (2016), and over 30 articles in journals of international and national significance and in proceedings from national and international scholarly conferences in which she has participated. Her field of scholarly interest relates to the reception of Serbian music in the daily and periodical press, as well as a critical-musicological review of writings on music by Serbian and foreign authors. She is the coordinator of the scientific project *Science and Art in Kosovo and Metohija: From Inspiration to Synthesis*. She is a member of the editorial board of the interdisciplinary scientific journal *Triptih* and the thematic proceedings *Traditional and Contemporary in Art and Education*, published by the Faculty of Arts in Zvečan – Kosovska Mitrovica.

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