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WAS MOKRANJAC THE FIRST SERBIAN ETHNOMUSICOLOGIST?¹

Abstract: The question posed in the title of this article stems from the widespread belief that on account of his work in collecting folk melodies for his *Rukoveti* (*Руковети*; Garlands), Stevan St. Mokranjac (Стеван Ст. Мокрањац) gained a place among Serbian ethnomusicologists; since ethnomusicology is still a young field in Serbia, the author puts even more emphasis on that belief by asking whether Mokranjac was Serbia's first "real" ethnomusicologist. After establishing clear criteria that define an ethnomusicologist as a scholar, including, above all, fieldwork, transcription, analysis, etc., and studying Mokranjac as well as other cultural workers (Vuk St. Karadžić and Vladimir Karić), as well as Mokranjac's successors (Vladimir Đorđević, Miloje Milojević, Miodrag A. Vasiljević, and D. Dević), the article concludes that the first Serbian ethnomusicologist was in fact Dr. Dragoslav Dević (Драгослав Девин). This ethnomusicologist and long-time professor at the Music Academy (today the Faculty of Music) in Belgrade is a true example of a scholar-ethnomusicologist who engaged in multiple activities that, in addition to those mentioned above, also included the tonometry of the folk-music material he collected, as well as something that his predecessors lacked – paying due attention to the living context of that music, especially the rituals and customs. Furthermore, Dević paid ample attention to traditional music instruments, shedding light on many of them from the aspect of their main features and thus leaving valuable recordings of their existence and function in Serbian traditional music practice (works on the bagpipes, ocarina, *cevara* (*цевара*), *rikalo* (*рикало*, shepherds' trumpet), as well as on various instrumental ensembles).

Key words: Mokranjac – ethnomusicologist, fieldwork, transcribing, analysis, Dragoslav Dević

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¹ This article is based on a talk delivered in September 2014 at the Kolarac People's University to mark the centenary of Mokranjac's death.

By choosing a topic that has already been discussed many times in our academia, directly and indirectly,² I set myself a task that was in no way easy, for a number of reasons, the main one being that the majority opinion is that the question itself is redundant, because the answer is already well known. But is that really so? Fortunately, since there is always a ‘doubting Thomas’ among us, that is, a person who harbours misgivings not only regarding this problem, but also many other problems like it,³ this text will perhaps justify its existence. I do not know if I will satisfy their curiosity or eliminate their doubts, but that is not my purpose anyway; instead, I seek to address something that has not been discussed very much so far – Mokranjac’s work in the domain of collecting and studying folk music. Regarding my approach to the topic, it will essentially rest on two – although differently formulated, yet similar – “principles”. First, in a lucid formulation by the German philosopher Schopenhauer, that the task of science is “not so much to see what no one has seen yet; but to think what nobody has thought yet, about that which everybody sees” [*Parerga et paralipomena*]; and second, that the “how”, not only in scholarship, but also in life in general, is often more important than the “what”. For, that “how”, since it constitutes the way one thinks about a problem as well as how that problem is solved, points to the very essence of man as a human being.

² Драгослав Девић, „Предговор“, in: Стеван Стојановић Мокрањац, *Етномузиколошки записи*. Vol. 9. Knjaževac, Nota – Belgrade, Завод за уџбенике и наставна средства, 1996, VI–XVII / Dević, Dragoslav, “Predgovor”, in: Stevan Stojanović Mokranjac, *Etnomuzikološki zapisi*. Vol. 9. Knjaževac, Nota – Belgrade, Завод за уџбенике и наставна средства, 1996, vi–xvii; Марковић, Младен, „Етномузикологија у Србији“, *Нови Звук*, 3, 1994, 19–30 / Mladen Marković, “Etnomuzikologija u Srbiji” (Ethnomusicology in Serbia), *Novi zvuk*, 3, 1994, 20; Сања Радиновић, „Приступи Кубе, Мокрањаца и Кухача у анализи мелодијских облика – њихова актуелност у нашој аналитичко-формалној проблематици“, *Развитак*, 3, 1991, 71–75 / Sanja Radinović, “Pristupi Kube, Mokranjaca i Kuhača u analizi melodijskih oblika – njihova aktuelnost u našoj analitičko-formalnoj problematici”, *Razvitak*, 3, 1991, 71–75; Сања Радиновић, *Облик и реч (Закономерности мелодистског обликовања српских народних песама као основа за методологију формалне анализе)*. Етномузиколошке студије – дисертације. Св. 3. Београд, ФМУ, 2011 / Sanja Radinović, *Oblik i reč (Zakonomernosti melopoetskog oblikovanja srpskih narodnih pesama kao osnova za metodologiju formalne analize)* (Form and Word (The Regularities of Melopoetic Form in Serbian Folk Songs as the Basis for a Methodology of Formal Analysis), Etnomuzikološke studije – disertacije (Studies in Ethnomusicology – Dissertations), Vol. 3, Belgrade, FMU, 2011, 31–33.

³ Having heard what the topic was going to be, some of them, whether out of curiosity or because they sought to avoid coming to the talk, asked me, “in passing”, to tell them “the secret”; my laconic answer to such enquiries was that they should wait and see... I hope that my answer and tone of voice did not reveal that at that moment. I did not have an answer myself.

* * *

Nonetheless, the problem of assessing Mokranjac as an ethnomusicologist, moreover, our first ethnomusicologist, is not so easy. There are multiple reasons for that. The main reason certainly has to do with the relationship between Mokranjac's work in the domain of ethnomusicology and what was accomplished in the field of studying folk music by others, whether his predecessors, contemporaries, or those who followed in his wake (I deliberately choose not to say 'successors', because that would have a different connotation), as a precondition for an accurate answer. And to arrive at such an answer, one must begin by identifying the traits that define one as a scholar, especially in ethnomusicology. However, this should likewise be treated with much care, primarily in terms of choosing what criteria to use – whether those of contemporary ethnomusicology, that is, those that apply to ethnomusicology today, in its present, developed state,⁴ or those that were more suited to the time when the discipline was still 'in its infancy', or was not even properly 'born' yet. A scholar should no doubt consider both sets of criteria: the more contemporary criteria, because they are more developed, as well as the older criteria, so as not to forfeit an objective view, which might even cause one to underestimate the achievements of our predecessors. In line with that and following the practice that stems from viewing the science of ethnomusicology from its many aspects, however, we may conclude that some methods do not grow obsolete, but always remain current and scientifically important. When it comes to ethnomusicology, those methods include the following: fieldwork, transcribing the collected material, and analysing it.⁵ These methods, even though there are some in the discipline of ethnomusicology who consider them anachronous and 'primitive', will always remain fundamental, and ignoring them may serve as an unfailing criterion when assessing a researcher as a "real" scholar or someone who is not one.⁶

⁴ An even bigger problem stems from the fact that contemporary ethnomusicology has branched out in a number of directions and enriched itself with various methodologies, often changing so much that one may rightfully wonder whether it is still the same discipline at all. At this time I will only highlight this issue and otherwise leave it for another occasion, because in my opinion, adopting methods from other disciplines may greatly affect the profile of any given scholarly field and even cause it to lose its identity.

⁵ In this regard, ethnomusicology is not alone, since some of those methods, and often all three of them, are characteristic of other disciplines in the humanities, for example, anthropology.

⁶ Ed. Драгана Радојичић. I first discussed the problems of scientific assessment and recognition of basic ethnomusicological methods in: Димитрије О. Големовић, „Истраживач на 'терену' – 'терен' у истраживачу“, in: *Теренска истраживања – поетика сусрета*. Зборник 27. Београд, Етнографски институт САНУ, 2012, 199–203 / Ed. Dragana Radojičić, Dimitrije O. Golemović, "Istraživač na 'terenu' – 'teren' u istraživaču" (The Researcher

Today we may witness the fact that what is called scholarly practice precedes theory and thereby also the constitution of a scholarly field itself, which is often motivated by the need to legalize, so to speak, existing results. That is why many researchers became scholars, without being aware of it, even before their field was fully formed as a scholarly discipline. That is also why their works, when we compare them to one another, are not uniform in quality or clearly defined in terms of methodology. In the domain of social studies and the humanities, a whole ‘army of people’ spent centuries collecting and often also studying various forms of human culture, material and spiritual alike; therefore, information about various forms of cultural phenomena, which they collected, may be found in a wide range of publications, whose character more often approximates travelogues rather than scholarly works focused on a single subject or area of study. Thus, when it comes to Serbia, one finds information about its folk music and dancing in the writings of many travellers, mostly foreign, which one may use to reconstruct a lot of information related to our musical past (Boué, Kanitz, Pirh, Kuba, etc.). Of course, one may also acquire invaluable information from the people of these parts, which is duly discussed further on.

Although there were some fine researchers who preceded him, I decided to begin with Vuk St. Karadžić (Вук Ст. Караџић, 1787–1864), the renowned collector of folk songs and reformer of the Serbian language. It is little known that, alongside everything else he did, Vuk also devoted much attention to the qualities of folk music, identifying and describing them in his *Rječnik* (*Рјечник*; The Serbian Dictionary).⁷ Conscious of the fact that the poetry he collected was sung and

in “the Field” – “The Field” in the Researcher), in: *Terenska istraživanja – poetika susreta* (Fieldwork Research – The Poetics of Encounters), Institute of Ethnography of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Collection No. 27, Belgrade, 2012, 199–203. Incidentally, the methods described above and their application in ethnomusicology, with special focus on fieldwork, are discussed in detail in: Димитрије О. Големовић, „Теренски рад некад и сад: Да ли ће теренски рад као научни метод икада застарити, а можда чак нестати из етномузиколошке праксе?“, in: *Савремена српска фолклористика II*. Београд, Институт за књижевност и уметност, Удружење фолклориста Србије, Универзитетска библиотека „Светозар Марковић“, Београд 2015, 357–366 / Dimitrije O. Golemović, “Terenski rad nekad i sad: da li će terenski rad kao naučni metod ikada zastariti, a možda čak neстати iz etnomuzikološke prakse?” (Fieldwork Then and Now: Will Fieldwork Ever Grow Obsolete as a Scholarly Method, and Perhaps Even Disappear from Ethnomusicological Practice?), *Savremena srpska folkloristika II* (Contemporary Serbian Folklore Studies II), Institute of Literature and Art, Serbian Folklorists’ Association, Svetozar Marković University Library, Belgrade, 2015, 357–366.

⁷ Ed. Dragoslav Dević. There is a detailed discussion of this in: Dragoslav Dević, “O pevanju narodnih lirskih pesama i napevima u Vukovim delima” (On the Singing of Folk Lyric Songs and on Melodies in Vuk’s Works), in: *Folklor i njegova umetnička transpozicija* (Folklore and Its Artistic Transposition), conference proceedings, 29–31 October 1987, Bel-

therefore incomplete if published without music, Vuk made an effort that must be judged invaluable from an ethnomusicological point of view – presenting several of them in musical notation as well (six “ritual *kajde*”, notated by the Polish musician Franciszek Mirecki; examples 1–3).⁸ Vuk did this in one of his pioneering books, titled *Narodna srbska pjesnarica* (*Народна србска пјеснарица*; Serbian Folk Songbook),⁹ whereas his later major collections, unfortunately, omit musical notation altogether.¹⁰ His commentaries accompanying some of the songs, as well as analyses of sorts, wherein, for example, he discusses various poetic elements, especially the refrains, form unequivocal proof of the “beginnings of scientific thought”, not only in the domain of linguistics, but also ethnomusicology.¹¹

Запис Мирецког

Под ноћ по...ћо низ по...ће,
О. јагње, ој мо...је низ по...ће.

Example 1: Pod noć podo

grade, Faculty of Music, 1987, 105–126; Dragoslav Dević, “Музички инструменти у Вуковом Српском рјечнику” (Musical Instruments in Vuk’s Serbian Dictionary), in: *Folklor i njegova umetnička transpozicija* (Folklore and Its Artistic Transposition), conference proceedings, 24–26 October 1989, ed. Vlastimir Peričić, Belgrade, Faculty of Music, 1989, 7–28.

⁸ It is interesting that other collectors of folk songs did not follow this practice, until those who were primarily interested in their musical traits. Unfortunately, the practice of dealing with folk songs only in terms of their lyrics, without discussing their musical traits, continues even today, when it comes to folk literary studies.

⁹ Вук Стефановић Караџић, *Народна србска пјеснарица*, Vienna, 1815 / Vuk Stefanović Karadžić (Вук Стефановић Караџић), *Narodna srbska pjesnarica* (*Народна србска пјеснарица*), Vienna, 1815.

¹⁰ The reason for this is probably the fact that it would significantly complicate the preparation as well as printing of Vuk’s books.

¹¹ Vuk’s conclusions regarding refrains, for instance, that there are various forms of refrains, that some only amount to a single syllable, and that the refrain is not always positioned at the end of the line, are lucid and almost visionary when it comes to this phenomenon in Serbian vocal folk music. For more on that, see: Димитрије О. Големовић, „Вуков допринос проучавању рефрена у српском народном певању”, *Задужбина*, 56, октобар 2001, 6–9 / Dimitrije O. Golemović, “Vukov doprinos proučavanju refrena u srpskom narodnom pevanju” (Vuk’s Contribution to the Study of Refrains in Serbian Folk Singing), *Zaduzbina*, 56, October 2001, 6–9.

Запис Мирецкоз

Заспа... ла де...вој...ка, заспа...ла де...вој...ка,
дренку на-ко...рен...ку мо-ре дренку на ко-рен...ку

Example 2: Zaspala devojka

Запис Мирецкоз

Краљу, светли краљу: краљу, светли краљу љело! Краљице ба-ни--це!

Example 3: Kralju, svetli kralju

In terms of assessing other figures who might be considered ethnomusicologists, an especially interesting example is that of Vladimir Karić (Владимир Карић, 1848–1894). In his book,¹² in the chapter titled “Melodije narodnih pesama, igara, svirke i igre” (*Мелодије народних песама, игара, свирке и игре*; The Melodies of Folk Songs, Dances, Instrumental Performance and Dance), Karić provided a range of interesting details about the folk music of Serbia (that music was a living tradition in the towns and villages alike, that songs were composed orally and then orally transmitted, and much more), as well as other traits, for example, that melodies played on the *gusle* (*гусле*) cannot be notated, because they include intervals smaller than the semitone (“even smaller than a half-tone”). Regarding love song melodies, Karić describes them as broad and characterized by a melodic range spanning a fifth, but notes that there are also those whose melodic range exceeds an octave; these melodies typically end with a “dominant triad”,¹³ which, in his opinion, probably attests to their polyphonic “character” (example 4).¹⁴ In line with classical music theory, which was cer-

¹² Владимир Карић, *Србија – Опис земље, народа и државе*. Београд, 1887 / Vladimir Karić, *Srbija – opis zemlje, naroda i države* (Serbia – A Description of the Country, People, and the State), Belgrade, 1887.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 189.

¹⁴ Especially interesting is the occurrence of a tempo change in this song, in the segment that probably constitutes the refrain: *Piu mosso* as opposed to the initial *Andante*, and then

tainly his point of departure, Karić asserts that many of these songs are in minor keys, but also that some of them are in the major mode, while in some songs both modes are present, usually in the same key (example 5).¹⁵ Karić refers to the opening and ending notes of these songs,¹⁶ noting that their cadences are “half-finished” because they end on the second degree (another sign of the influence of classical music training). Karić also notes the appearance of fixed time: in love songs, duple, triple, as well as “combined”,¹⁷ whereas songs that are sung “with wine, at celebrations, at weddings”, according to Karić, are dominated by a faster tempo, the major as well as minor mode, and various metres, most often duple.¹⁸ Karić also highlights the existence of dance songs – sung in *kolos* or round dances and performed by men and women alike, while songs that he called *poskočiće* (*поскочице*, “raunchy songs”), probably on account of their somewhat “freer” content (Karić’s words), were only sung by men. Like a proper ethnomusicologist, Karić discusses the existence of monophonic and two-part singing and emphasizes the existence of an appropriate terminology, such as *pevanje sa odpevanjem* (*певање са одпевањем*; “singing with singing back” – antiphonic singing), as well as terms such as *ovraćati* (*овраћаџу*), which denotes, in various parts of western Serbia, the second – accompanying or secondary – voice in two-part songs.¹⁹



Example 4: Ko pije vino

Ritardando, à tempo, followed by a return to *Ritardando*, while the final note is extended with a fermata. Such interventions suggest possible influences of art music on the song itself and, possibly, the transcriber as well, who performed his task in line with his classical music training.

¹⁵ Ibid., 191.

¹⁶ Ibid., 191.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid., 19–192.

¹⁹ Ibid., 192. By the way, this term has unfortunately disappeared from folk practice, typically supplanted by *us(ij)ecanje* (*ус(иј)ецање*) and *predvajanje* (*предвајање*; western Serbia and Šumadija).



Example 5: I tičica sanko ima

Vladimir Karić also discussed *gusle* performance, noting their widespread use throughout Serbia as well as their “primitive and monotonous” melodies, viewed in general, but also acknowledged that they display a rich variety of melodic types. According to Karić, songs accompanied on the *gusle* include an instrumental introduction, followed by singing with instrumental accompaniment,²⁰ which is one of the main features of this traditional music practice.

Dance tunes, according to Karić, are lively, varying in tempo from *Andante* to *Vivace*, although in some dances the tempo is subject to change. The time is usually duple (example 6), but in some dances, such as, for instance, *Đurđevka* (*Ђурђевка*), it is triple (example 7). There are even examples that use both.²¹ The constituent parts of these dance melodies, which Karić calls “periods”, typically comprise four bars, although there are also examples with three and five bars.²² Regarding some of the dances, Karić lucidly remarks that they constitute the embryo of European dances, on account of their tripartite form: ABA (with trio).²³

²⁰ Ibid., 193.

²¹ Ibid., 196.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid., 197.

Србијанка

Giusto



Example 6: Srbijanka

Ђурђевка

Allegro vivace



13*

Example 7: Đurđevka

In addition to the *gusle*, in this chapter Karić also lists other folk instruments: the *svirala* (свирала; flute), *dvojnice* (двојнице; “a flute with two pipes and two reeds”),²⁴ bagpipes, and even *šarkija* (шаркија; today *šargija*/шаргија), their functions, types of performers, and parts of Serbia where they are common. Karić also mentions the *ćemane* (ћемане; violin), *zurla* (зурла; zurna) as well *daire* (дауре; tambourine) and drums as Gypsy instruments, emphasizing the commonly accepted opinion that playing those instruments is a “Gypsy profession”.²⁵

Karić’s text is especially interesting in terms of ethnochoreology as well, since he provides detailed discussions of dancing as well as the musical accompaniment to dancing, vocal (*kolske pesme* / колске песме, *kolo* songs) and instrumental alike.²⁶

A special curiosity of this chapter in Karić’s book concerns his notated examples, around 20 of them, both of songs (it is a pity that they are provided without text underlay, which prevents one from developing a comprehensive impression of them) and performance on various instruments. Also, Karić failed to list the geographic provenance of these pieces, that is, his sources, if he borrowed them from somewhere else, as well as their transcribers, which deprives us of some important facts from an ethnomusicological point of view.

Stevan St. Mokranjac (1856–1914), a contemporary of Vladimir Karić, was a composer and, like his colleagues, both Serbian (Kornelije Stanković and many others) and foreign (let us mention here only those famous “national schools” of composers), took up the task of collecting folk melodies in search of material for his own compositions. Mokranjac probably began work in this area upon moving to Belgrade in 1870 or, more precisely, between 1872 and 1876, when he collected and harmonized a certain number of melodies.²⁷ However, until 1896, when he travelled to Kosovo, his fieldwork was neither intensive nor “scientifically conceived”. In his own testimony, during this period, as well as later, he made his transcriptions whenever he had the opportunity, “following his own skill” or the singing of singers whom he met on various occasions.²⁸ Since those singers came from various parts of the region, Mokranjac had an opportunity to gain an insight into the richness of Serbian musical folklore, as well as that of other ethnic communities living in Serbia and the region (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Montenegro).

²⁴ Regarding the *dvojnice*, Karić says they are characterized by an elegiac type of sound and are not used for dance music (*ibid.*, 197), which is their essential characteristic.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 199.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 199–202.

²⁷ Драгослав Девић, „Предговор“..., *op. cit.*, XII / Dragoslav Dević, “Predgovor” (Foreword)..., *op. cit.*, xii.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, xiii.

Trained in Germany, Mokranjac acquired a solid theoretical grounding in the basic music disciplines of harmony and counterpoint, as well as something even more important: an analytical approach to music. For that reason, seeking to deepen his knowledge of Serbian folk songs as much as possible and then to “build on them musically” in the best possible way, Mokranjac subjected the melodies he collected to a certain kind of analysis. This process, typical of other composers as well but most often hidden from public view, is transparent in Mokranjac, owing to a collection of songs from Levač (Левач), a small district in the region of Šumadija (Шумадија), the foreword of which was written by Mokranjac.²⁹ Accustomed to the usual superficiality of forewords in general, even in scholarly publications, one is, to say the least, surprised by certain features of this foreword, since its scope and especially content qualify it as a sort of scholarly study. This, however, was not the only task that Mokranjac had to complete regarding this collection of melodies from Levač. Before writing the foreword, he had to transcribe all the music examples in the book, as sung by Mr. Todor Bušetić (Тодор Бушетић),³⁰ which enabled him to gain an inside view of the songs, the way every “classical” ethnomusicologist seeks to do. For those who do not know what that means, I will only say that for every scholar and ethnomusicologist, transcribing musical examples has a number of benefits. First, one must listen and then “convert” sonic, that is, musical symbols into visual ones, only to return then once more to the “musical” symbols, to “verify” them and develop a complete view. This “circular process” yields much more information to the transcriber than just listening does and allows one to become familiar with the laws that govern the music that one is transcribing. Just how successful Mokranjac was in this may be seen in this musical study of his, but one should also bear in mind that his classical music education, however useful, often acted as an obstacle in reaching certain conclusions or formulating them in a certain way, from the viewpoint of contemporary ethnomusicological research.

²⁹ *Srpske narodne pesme i igre s melodijama iz Levča*, прикупио Тодор М. Бушетић, музички приредио Стеван Ст. Мокрањац, Београд: 1902 / *Srpske narodne pesme i igre s melodijama iz Levča* (Serbian Folk Songs and Dances with Melodies from Levač), collected by Todor M. Bušetić, edited by Stevan St. Mokranjac, Belgrade, 1902.

³⁰ Bušetić first appeared at the Serbian Royal Academy with this collection of melodies, which he had written down himself, with a request to have it published. However, upon an examination of his transcriptions, performed by Davorin Jenko and Stevan Mokranjac, who identified certain flaws and errors stemming from T. Bušetić’s inadequate training in music, following a suggestion of St. Mokranjac, it was decided to have the melodies transcribed anew, by someone more expert in that skill, and this was done by Stevan Mokranjac (*ibid.*, vii). One should also note that the book does not state who performed the melodies on the *svirala* and violin, so one might plausibly assume that that was also Mr Bušetić.

Mokranjac's study begins in a truly unexpected fashion, which at first glance makes it seem as though Mokranjac the theorist had given way to Mokranjac the ethnomusicologist. Namely, the foreword states that the examples have no key signatures (following the clef), in order to avoid connotations of a specific key, or "tonal mode" [*tonski rod/pol / тонски род/пол*], as Mokranjac called it, and thereby also any suggestion of a particular "harmonization" (example 8, Bušetić 59). In his words, the tunes are "put together in such a way that they may be interpreted and used correctly in a composition in many different ways".³¹ So, although at first it did not seem so, the *composer* nonetheless prevailed in this view and understanding of the essence of folk music, at the expense of the *ethnomusicologist*, because Mokranjac omits the fact that folk music (except when it comes to more recent forms) typically belongs to a different musical world than art music, which means that it should also be viewed in a different way, more suitable to it. Otherwise, the omission of key signatures, especially those that one might almost automatically place after the clef, even for notes that may be absent from a given melody, is quite natural in contemporary ethnomusicological practice. The rest of Mokranjac's discussion of this problem is more ethnomusicological, since he argues that the melodies must be transcribed "faithfully", the way they are performed in practice. That means monophonically, or *u glas* (*у глас*), in Mokranjac's terminology, which in many parts of Serbia and even beyond denotes older forms of (typically two-part) singing, but Mokranjac uses and explains the term as though it meant singing in unison, i.e. "without harmony".

Бр. 59. 

Ја на бр - до, а сун - це за бр - до, а сун - це за бр - до.
(Текст бр. 145.)

Example 8: Bušetić 59

Likewise in the remainder of his study, Mokranjac remains consistent to his musical training. Thus he stresses that, unlike the songs, the instrumental melodies are provided with key signatures, because their composition, that is, developed melodies, clearly points to their "tonal affiliation" (example 9, Bušetić 77). This does not apply to one of the melodies, which I hoped that Mokranjac would say did not belong to any "key"; but according to Mokranjac, this melody is the most interesting one, because "its tonality [*glasored/znacoped*] may be understood

³¹ Српске народне песме и игре..., op. cit., VII and VIII / Srpske narodne pesme i igre..., op. cit., vii and viii.

and used in a composition in various ways” (example 10, Bušetić 84).³² This is followed by a classification of the melodies by *glasored*, that is, tonal affiliation. Thus Mokranjac divides them in two groups: those belonging to the *hard* and *soft tonal mode*, that is, to major and minor keys, as well as the so-called major-minor mode, as a sort of hermaphrodite tonal mode. Likewise interesting and worthy is Mokranjac’s observation that there are melodies that do not belong to any “major or minor key”, which are not “interpreted” as series comprising a small number of notes, but point to the “primordial patterns” from which those melodies developed, which are “surely”, as he puts it, “much older than the theory of the major and minor mode”. There, the ethnomusicologist ‘spoke’ at last. However, the very next moment, the composer/theorist reappears, stating that those melodies “might perhaps be reducible to the patterns of the old tonal modes”, the Dorian, Phrygian, Ionian, etc. Still, Mokranjac decided not to classify these melodies “by the old tonal modes”, because that would produce, as he explains, “multiple groupings with multiple explanations”, whereas his aim was to have as few groups as possible and to explain everything through “modern music theory”. But here comes the ethnomusicologist again: he also identifies certain “divergences from music theory, which are plentiful in our melodies, but they are all consequential and may be reduced to common rules”.³³ Mokranjac here highlights the property whereby some songs begin and end on a note that is neither the tonic nor the dominant nor the mediant, but instead often the second degree, which is typical of folk music, as is widely known today; and although this was probably at odds with classical music theory, Mokranjac was not perplexed by it either, so he classified such songs along with others as belonging to the “diatonic major”.³⁴

Бр. 2. (77.)

РЕСАВКА
— на свирали —

Allegro

Example 9: Bušetić 77

³² Ibid., viii.

³³ Ibid., ix and x.

³⁴ Ibid., viii and x.

Discussing the soft tonal mode, Mokranjac, not at all surprised, highlights the occurrence of a sharp fourth degree, but only when the melody is descending. He does not highlight the inconsistency of this phenomenon, in songs where the fourth degree is not sharpened, nor does he note that the sharpening of the fourth degree produces an augmented third in the melody (example 11, Bušetić 1). This “musical signal”, which unequivocally points to oriental influences, remained unnoticed by Stevan Mokranjac.

Бр. 9. (84.)

— на свиралици —

Example 10: Bušetić 84

Бр. 1. *Moderato*

Ко за сла - - - ве ви - - - но ши - је,
 По - - - мо - зи му Бог! По - - - мо - гле му
 сла - - - ве бо - жје и сам Го - спод Бог!

Example 11: Bušetić 1

Discussing the major-minor scale, Mokranjac notes that it does not always have to be interpreted in the same way, in other words, that if the order of the scale is reversed, whereby the tonic also moves, the major-minor scale may also be interpreted as a classic minor scale (the melodic minor): thus c–d–e–f–g–a–flat–b–flat–c becomes f–g–a–flat–b–flat–c–d–e–f.³⁵ However, in both instances, probably in order to “complete” the scale, even though the note does not appear in the melody of the song, Mokranjac adds the note c, without offering any ‘justification’ whatsoever (example 12, 52 in the collection).

Бр. 52. *Adagio*

Што је ле - - - по, што је

ле - - - по с'ве - чер по - где - - - да - - - ти!

(Текст бр. 128.)

Example 12: Bušetić 52

Apart from classifying the songs by *glasored* or tonal mode, Mokranjac also classifies them by *takt* (*такт*; time) or *metrička razgrana* (*метричка разграна*; “metric branching” or simply metre). He thus divides them in three groups: melodies in duple, triple, and mixed time,³⁶ while also subdividing time signatures into “simple” and “composite”, without explaining.

Assuming “periodicity” as a feature of the songs, Mokranjac uses the term *metrička razgrana*, dividing the songs into five groups: 1) bipartite songs comprising two symmetric parts, which he calls the “front” and “back movement” (example 11, Bušetić 1); 2) bipartite songs with a *predmetak* (*предметак*), i.e. a section preceding the first of the two symmetric parts; 3) bipartite songs comprising two symmetric parts and an additional section at the end – after the “back movement”; 4) tripartite songs comprising three segments, *front*, *middle*, and *back* (example 12, Bušetić 52); and, finally, 5) songs comprising only a single “movement” (example 13, Bušetić 5).³⁷

³⁵ Ibid., xi.

³⁶ Ibid., xii and xiii.

³⁷ Ibid., xiv and xv.

Бр. 5. 

 О - бу - кџј се, па - шо, о - де - вај се!
 (Текст бр. 7.)

Example 13: Bušetić 5

Бр. 11. 

 Јед-ну пе-сму пе-смо и-спе-ва-смо, пе-смо и-спе-ва-смо.
 (Текст бр. 28.)

Example 14: Bušetić 11

The classification of songs, that is, their melodies, by “motivic composition” (*motivski sklop / мотивски склоп*) is another criterion of music analysis that Mokranjac introduces here,³⁸ which comes close to micro-formal analysis. He analyzes each melody in relation to its opening motive, seeking to establish whether the rest of the melody is based on the opening motive or not. His first group of melodies thus comprises those that are constructed on a single motive (example 13, Bušetić 5), the second group contains melodies with several motives (which, as he puts it, help the melody to “branch out”, example 14, Bušetić 11), while the third group comprises melodies that develop “independently”, that is, “without the aid of any motives”.³⁹

Although at the end of his foreword Mokranjac notes that it does not contain all that one could say about the songs, he “justifies” himself by stating that that was not his intention anyway, but, rather, to make his foreword act as a “stimulus and instruction for those who can and want to think about melodies”. He stresses that our melodies do contain “well-crafted musical thoughts”, which are, however, “expressed according to certain rules”. For, Mokranjac argues, “to search for such rules means to search (if such a comparison is allowed) for the musical grammar and logic whereby our people sing and play”.⁴⁰ Thus formu-

³⁸ Ibid., xx and xxi.

³⁹ Ibid., xx and xxi.

⁴⁰ Ibid., xxi.

lated, this thought may be grasped in different ways, as something that is regular in terms of classical music theory, or as something related to musical laws that apply only in folk music. That is the point of Mokranjac's "advice" that Serbian art music could only rest on the foundations of Serbian folk music (!).⁴¹ Finally, Mokranjac calls his study merely an attempt, hoping that it might "attract" "better and more comprehensive works".⁴²

And what more could one say about the work of Mokranjac as an ethnomusicologist of sorts? Given that he treated Serbian folk songs as building material for creating his *Rukoveti* (Garlands), it is surprising that there is no mention in his study of working with text, which is a basic feature of Serbian folk singing and was unfailingly 'recognized' as such by the Czech folklorist Ludvik Kuba,⁴³ otherwise a contemporary of Mokranjac. Nonetheless, one should note that many of the conclusions made in this text, admittedly sketched rather than fully fleshed out, to a certain degree still depart from what Mokranjac the composer imposed on Mokranjac the ethnomusicologist, as if "directing" him to take the path of Béla Bartók, who simultaneously shaped himself both as a composer who wrote music inspired by folklore and an ethnomusicologist in the "real sense of the word". In Mokranjac's case, unfortunately, there were no conditions for something like that in Serbia at the time, but he still, fortunately, used the opportunity to manifest the "other half" of his talent, which propelled him as a composer to heights that still remain, even a hundred years after his passing, unattainable to Serbian composers.

* * *

Well then, who *was* the first Serbian ethnomusicologist, one might ask as we approach the end of this text. Was it Vuk Karadžić or Vladimir Karić or Stevan Mokranjac, all mentioned above, or one of their 'successors', for instance, Vladimir Đorđević (Владимир Ђорђевић) or Miloje Milojević (Милоје Милојевић)?⁴⁴ The same question also vexed the ethnomusicologist Mladen

⁴¹ Ibid., xxi.

⁴² Ibid., xxi.

⁴³ In his book titled *In Montenegro*, published in Prague as early as 1892, Kuba established the existence of two basic creative principles in folk singing: 1) "interpolating additional words and texts" and 2) "repetition" (Ludvik Kuba, *U Crnoj Gori*, Podgorica, CID, 1996, 120).

⁴⁴ For more on the ethnomusicological exploits of these two important figures, see: Димитрије О. Големовић, „Владимир Р. Ђорђевић“, in: *Мелодије и фотографија*, тематски зборник радова посвећен Владимиру Ђорђевићу. Бор, Народни музеј Бор, 2011, 5–16 / Dimitrije O. Golemović, "Vladimir R. Đorđević", in: *Melodije i fotografija*, a

Marković, who “opted” for Prof. Miodrag Vasiljević (Миодраг Васиљевић)⁴⁵ and even called him the “high priest of Serbian ethnomusicology”.⁴⁶ For my part, taking into account the criteria identified at the beginning of this text, I have established that each of those figures lacked one or more of those criteria. Furthermore, fully aware of the situation in our ethnomusicological “skies”, I am more and more convinced that it was none of them, but actually a contemporary of ours, a man who engaged in fieldwork, transcription, and analysis, without, at the same time, losing sight of another important aspect – the living context of folk music – Prof. Dragoslav Dević. An offspring of the “school of Mokranjac”, which lived on through his successors, Kosta Manojlović (Коста Манојловић), Petar Konjović (Петар Коњовић), Miloje Milojević, and eventually Miodrag Vasiljević as well, Prof. Dević was an example of a complete ethnomusicologist. Evidence for this statement, to “placate” those “doubting Thomases” mentioned above, is plentiful. First, his fieldwork, undertaken in hundreds of villages he visited, and thousands of interviews and musical tracks he recorded with audio and often also video technology. His meticulous way of transcribing even the most complicated musical examples, based on the experiences of Béla Bartók, is what marks Prof. Dević’s “office” work, in addition to tonometry, with which the Professor sought to uncover the defining traits of tonal series, which in our tradition often comprise micro-intervals. Then there was analysis, which Prof. Dević also adopted from Bartók, who had, in turn, adopted it from Finnish musicologists and then modified it to suit the music of our part of the world. The significance of the ethnomusicologist Dragoslav Dević, who was educated not only in music but also in anthropology, is highlighted especially by his treatment of the context, that is conditions in which folk music lived, as the most important

collection of essays on Vladimir Đorđević, Bor, Narodni muzej Bor, 2011, 5–16; Димитрије О. Големовић, „Милоје Милојевић као етномузиколог – аналитичар (на примеру истраживања македонске народне музике)“, in: *Композиторско стваралаштво Милоја Милојевића, Зборник радова Музиколошког института САНУ*, Београд, Музиколошки институт САНУ, 1998, 216–223 / Dimitrije O. Golemović, “Miloje Milojević kao etnomuzikolog-analitičar (na primeru istraživanja makedonske narodne muzike)” (Miloje Milojević as an Ethnomusicologist-Analyst in the Context of His Research of Macedonian Folk Music), in: *Композиторско стваралаштво Милоја Милојевића, Зборник радова Музиколошког института САНУ* (The Compositional Oeuvre of Miloje Milojević: A Collection of Essays by the Institute of Musicology of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts), Belgrade, Institute of Musicology of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, 1998, 216–223.

⁴⁵ Младен Марковић, „Етномузикологија у Србији“, op. cit., 21–23 / Mladen Marković, “Etnomuzikologija u Srbiji”, op. cit., 21–23.

⁴⁶ Младен Марковић, „Миодраг А. Васиљевић: Првих сто година“, *Нови Звук*, 22, 2003, 21–26 / Mladen Marković, “Miodrag A. Vasiljević: Prvih sto godina” (Miodrag A. Vasiljević: The First 100 Years), *Novi zvuk*, 22, 2003, 22.

factor in its formation. In addition, one should especially emphasize that Prof. Dević made one of his most significant contributions in raising the awareness of Serbian music and folklore tradition in terms of studying traditional instrumental music, which was a pioneering undertaking in Serbian ethnomusicology. Over the course of his career, Prof. Dević produced a large number of works, veritable little monographs on individual instruments, such as bagpipes, ocarina, *cevara*, the shepherds' trumpet called *rikalo*, as well as various instrumental ensembles, whereby he paved the way for more serious explorations in organology. The foregoing is also borne out by an essay collection dedicated to Prof. Dević, which accompanied the symposium organized to mark his 75th birthday, which allows one to view not only those facts, but also the sheer complexity and multilayered quality of Dević's work in research.⁴⁷

None of the conclusions made above, and especially in the concluding section, should be taken as belittling the significance of our predecessors, especially Mokranjac. For, without them, we would not be here either. How would we harvest if no one had sown anything? And how would the discipline develop without the pioneering attempts of our predecessors to solve the problems they faced, at a time when there was neither the knowledge nor suitable scientific tools to accomplish that?

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⁴⁷ Ed. D. Golemović. That is why this symposium was organized around several thematic circles, so to speak. The title of the symposium and the essay collection that followed was *Čovek i muzika* (Man and Music), international symposium, Belgrade, 20–23 June 2001, Belgrade, Vedes, 2003.

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Summary

Assessing someone as a scholar is not a simple task even today, when many disciplines have reached their highest summits, let alone in the past, when they were still in their infancy. Viewed from that aspect, searching for *the first Serbian ethnomusicologist* must rest on scholarly criteria that are basic for ethnomusicology: fieldwork, research, transcription of collected melodies, and their analysis. Bearing those in mind, one may conclude that none of those who collected traditional Serbian oral music before the latter half of the 20th century, including Stevan St. Mokranjac, can be considered a “real” ethnomusicologist, let alone the *first* one in Serbia. That “title” undoubtedly belongs to Dr. Dragoslav Dević (1925–2017), a longtime professor at the Faculty of Music in Belgrade, who, in addition to his work in pedagogy, built a clear and mature approach to the science of ethnomusicology. In addition to his consistent application of basic methods that “define” ethnomusicology as a science, Prof. Dević also paid ample attention to the living context of music, which is the most significant factor in its shaping. Dević’s dealings with traditional Serbian instrumental practice shed light on many important traditional instruments as its “representatives”: bagpipes, ocarina, *cevara*, the shepherds’ trumpet called *rikalo*, and various instrumental ensembles.