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THE IDEOLOGY OF YUGOSLAV NATIONALISM AND PRIMORDIAL MODERNISM IN INTERWAR MUSIC*

Abstract: In this paper I strive to illuminate the connections between the ideology of Yugoslav nationalism and the discourse on music and music production in the interwar Kingdom of Yugoslavia. In order to comprehend the traits that are germane to the aforementioned practices, I propose the notion of *primordial modernism*. Primordialism was a crucial standpoint for vindicating the existence of a united Yugoslav nation, which was to enclose the 'tribes' of different histories, religions and even languages. A concern to be modern was also pertinent, as a part of the endeavour to produce a semblance of Yugoslavia as a modern, progressive European state. The paradigm of primordial modernism compromises these distinct tendencies, presupposing that a musical work should be ostensibly modern, but, at the same time, that it should use folk material in a manner that reveals the existence of its deeper, psychological, primitive, prehistoric layers.

Keywords: Primordial modernism, Kingdom of Yugoslavia, cultural politics, discourse on music, music production

The time between First and Second World Wars is often pointed to as one of the most thriving and most diverse periods in the narratives of national music historiographies formed on the territories of former Kingdom of Yugoslavia. Due to immense stylistic diversity, coexistence of composers of different generations, but also proliferation of important music institutions, this period has proven of great interests to a wide range of music scholars. Not by accident, the period is characteristically interpreted as one of a clash and dialogue between pre-war traditions and the processes of modernization which engulfed Yugoslavia after unification.¹ Respecting the noted stylistic diversity of music created in interwar Yugoslavia, in this paper I will try to show how a vast swathe of loosely interconnected tendencies in music production can be illuminated by explaining characteristic paradigms of official state cultural policy, driven primarily by the interests

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¹ Cf.: К. Томашевић, *На раскрсћу Истока и Запада: о дијалогу традиционалног и модерног у српској музици (1918–1941)*, Београд and Нови Сад 2009.

of the ruling Karađorđević dynasty. In this paper I try to follow the path laid down in groundbreaking study on Yugoslav ideology in architecture by Aleksandar Ignjatović who applies the paradigm of primordialism in the realm of art, and, more specifically, develops the notion of *primordial modernism*.² My aim is not to strictly apply this term as an alternative to existing stylistic classifications, but to propose it as a useful and versatile tool in analysing certain phenomena pertaining to the relations between music practices and Yugoslav nationalism. I am also well aware that some of the tendencies to which I will point in this context – such as the striving for modernity, tracing the ‘psychological roots’ of musical folklore, resorting to rural culture – were a mere commonplace in the European artistic landscape of the time, but my aim is to point to the complex social, political and ideological meaning that they acquired in interwar Yugoslavia, mainly due to the peculiarities of this interim polity.

Investigating the paradigms of nationalism and modernism in music has most often adhered to analyses aimed at discovering certain compositional and stylistic traits which are, or should be, linked to either modernism or nationalism. And while we have witnessed a burgeoning need to access musical modernism through a wider understanding of the social circumstances in which specific compositions were written, modernism in music is still primarily understood as a stylistic problem. In order to investigate the multifarious field of music production in the interwar Kingdom of Yugoslavia, in this paper I will try to approach both nationalism and modernism as primarily social discourses. In the subsequent discussion I will show how both nationalism and modernism stood as core stones of the dominant and state-supported cultural model in the interwar Yugoslavia. Enveloping musical practices, these discourses have heavily influenced not only compositional practice itself, but the institutional agency and the discourse of music criticism as well.

In the following pages I will firstly investigate the importance of a primordial comprehension of the Yugoslav nation for the kingdom’s state policy and also point out how this comprehension intertwined with the discourse of modernity. Beginning with the analysis of discourse on music I will show how the paradigm of primordial modernism regulated the sphere of art music production in interwar Yugoslavia. By pointing to several concrete examples, I will demonstrate how primordial modernism in music transcends questions of style and encompasses institutional background as well as issues of discourse on music and other arts.

In contemporary national music historiographies, the narratives of Serbian music history, as well as those of Croatian music history, usually

² A. Ignjatović, *Jugoslovenstvo u arhitekturi 1904–1941*, Beograd 2007.

unfold without special mention of the fact that in the period between 1918 and 1941 they occurred in a new state, which was based on a specific ideology. These circumstances had substantial discontinuity with the period before the First World War, and are not like the communist-party state formed after the Second World War. In order to comprehend how state ideology penetrated the mechanisms of musical practice, it is necessary to observe closely the basis of the new government, and, specifically, its attitude towards questions of nation and race.

The idea of South Slavic unification had been present throughout the greater part of the 19th century and had been rampant throughout the Balkans for decades before the outbreak of the First World War.³ Broadly defined, this idea attracted many supporters with frequently conflicting interests, and they saw it as a means to achieving utterly opposing goals. Unification of the lands attributed to Southern Slavs in the way that was achieved through Versailles Treaty was mostly the fulfilment of the interests of the Serbian Karađorđević royal dynasty. However, in a loosely organised parliamentary monarchy with at least the ostensible freedom of forming political associations, different interpretations of Yugoslavism often led to bitter disputes. It is important to differentiate between the two main approaches to the idea of Yugoslavism. The first approach, endorsed by the ruling dynasty, is the so-called ‘integral Yugoslavism’; its maxim is that Southern Slavs, or Yugoslav people, are essentially one nation, or one race – in the words of the day – with certain ancestral biogenetic features by which it can be defined and differentiated from other nations or races. The linguistic and cultural differences observed between Serbs, Croats and Slovenians were construed as a result of different historical circumstances, and they were seen as “the three tribes of one nation”. The endorsement of this ideology was directly linked to the desire to build a centralized unitary state with the dominance of the Serbian elite, and it was more or less present in the state bureaucracy during the whole period of the existence of the Kingdom. According to second approach, Slovenes, Croats and Serbs are seen as three essentially different nations, but with a strong affinity and mutual interest in sharing a single state. This “multinational Yugoslavism” was a powerful tool in the hands of Slovenian and Croatian politicians calling for a federal state, but was also endorsed by many Serbian nationalist intellectuals who saw Yugoslavia as a threat.⁴

With the constant wrestling between these two ideologies, the history of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia can be divided into three periods.

³ For a comprehensive account on formation of ideology of Yugoslavism prior to First World War cf.: М. Екмечић, *Стварање Југославије 1790–1918*, Београд 1989.

⁴ Cf.: J. Vakić, *Ideologije jugoslovenstva između srpskog i hrvatskog nacionalizma 1918–1941: sociološko-istorijska studija*, Zrenjanin 2004.

Following the First World War, a federal Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was formed, which for the most part preserved the historic borders between the 'tribes' predating the war. Lasting until 1929 and a bitter parliamentary crisis, the official policy of the Kingdom of SCS opted for gradual assimilation of the tribes into a unified nation. In 1929, King Aleksandar imposed a period of dictatorship, which continued until 1931 when a new constitution was introduced. During this entire period, concluding with the assassination of King Aleksandar in Marseilles in October 1934 and new multi-party elections in May 1935, integral Yugoslavism was imposed strongly and the 'Kingdom of Yugoslavia' was adopted as the official name of the state. Finally, in the following period leading to the outbreak of the Second World War, the bureaucracy and governing elite were gradually forced to cede to the numerous demands of the proponents of multinational Yugoslavism, ending with the Cvetković-Maček Agreement in August 1939, which opened the question of the internal divisions in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia by forming the Banovina of Croatia.

Throughout these periods, integral Yugoslavism was the dominant cultural model and the cornerstone of state cultural politics.⁵ Observing these politics from the perspective of contemporary nationality studies, we can recognise that the rhetoric of primordialism was essential in formulating integral Yugoslavism. As one of the platforms that provide the bases for the construction of nations, primordialism envisions it as a natural, organic and ancient entity, rather than as a socio-historical one.⁶ Primordialism was a crucial standpoint for vindicating the existence of a unitary Yugoslav nation, which was to enclose the 'tribes' of different histories, religions, and even languages. Advocating the primordial comprehension of the Yugoslav nation was thus the quintessence of the state cultural politics of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. It insisted on a common racial ancestry and prehistoric connection. Narratives of the Serbian mythological past, situated in pre-Ottoman history, were of crucial importance, and in this we can also read the quest for Serbian dominance. As King Aleksandar stated on the occasion of the New Year of 1930, the aim was to construct the Kingdom of Yugoslavia as a "higher synthesis of our national expressions and properties which will in inward harmony enable the development of all the fair features of our race, and outwardly display the strength of unity and the stoutness of this

⁵ For an in-depth discussion on cultural politics in Kingdom of Yugoslavia cf.: Љ. Димић, *Културна политика у Краљевини Југославији: 1918–1941*, Београд 1997.

⁶ Cf.: J. D. Eller and R. M. Coughlan, "The poverty of primordialism: the demystification of ethnic attachments", in: *Nationalism: Critical Concepts in Political Science*, London 2000, 161–179 and V. Bačová, "The Construction of National Identity – On Primordialism and Instrumentalism", *Human Affairs* 8 (1998), 29–43.

single-blooded people”.⁷ Even as late as 1937 it is easy to find textbook examples of this rhetoric, such as the opening of the speech of Senator Đorđević:

By that which is in us race and biology, which signifies a community of ancestry and blood, what is deep and deepest in our intimate psychological nature, we are undoubtedly one. By that which is in us the voice and living law of blood ancestry, which defines the primal character of a people’s soul, giving it the deepest features [...], by that which stays unchanged and unchangeable in spite of all the different historical circumstances under which one riven race and nation had lived – we are undoubtedly one people [...] Indeed, we did not deceive Europe when we at a certain time claimed that we are one nation!⁸

In the quest to find this primordial layer of a common South Slavic heritage, proponents of Yugoslavism generally pointed towards folk tradition, and even more specifically to the heritage of folk music. In his seminal study on the anthropogeography of South Slavs and the Balkans, the prominent geographer Jovan Cvijić repeatedly indicates folklore as a gateway to understanding deep, psychological traits of the Southern Slavs.⁹ In order to achieve this understanding, the beholder is invited to abandon the cloak of the new urban culture and to delve into the riches of the traditional art preserved in rural regions.

Concurrently with the quest of finding traits of common South Slavic ancestry, the governing elite endeavoured to produce a semblance of Yugoslavia as a modern, progressive European state. In reality, Yugoslavia was a deeply rural state, with the vast majority of population living in the country, dependent on agriculture, and its modernization and industrialization had proven to be a slow and painstaking process. However, the *raison d’être* of the new Versailles state was to grow into a modern European nation, and while the pace was unsteady on the social and economic levels, in the realm of culture and art it was possible to make a swift transition and more radical shifts.¹⁰ Moreover, it was expected that the process of modernization would contribute to the unification of the Yugoslav nation and to the disappearance of the cultural differences between the ‘tribes’. In this process it is important to emphasize the role of the Belgrade bourgeoisie, which was eager to

⁷ Cited in: Љ. Димић, *op. cit.*, I, 257.

⁸ Cited in: J. Vakić, *op. cit.*, 359–360.

⁹ J. Цвијић, *Балканско полуострво и јужнословенске земље. Основи антропогеографије. Књ. 2: Психичке особине Јужних Словена*, Београд 1931. Jovan Cvijić was one of key ideologists of integral Yugoslavism and a noted member of the Serbian delegation at the Versailles peace conference. His studies were fundamental in providing scientific scaffolds for this ideology. Cf.: К. Томашевић, *op. cit.*, 148–149.

¹⁰ Cf.: В. Прпа-Јовановић, *Југославија као модерна држава у виђенјима српских интелектуалаца 1918–1929*, unpublished PhD thesis, Univerzitet u Beogradu 1995, 316–317, 468.

embrace what was seen as ‘westernized’ taste, profusely illustrated by newly-built houses in a modern architectonic style.¹¹ The desire of the political elite to have their aspirations paralleled in music with modern, progressive currents, and not by still widely-popular style of 19th-century romanticism, can be illustrated by the written statement of the head of the General Department of the Ministry of Education, who recommended the refusal of the petition of the composer Matko Brajša-Rašan to dedicate his composition *Slaveni* [*Slavs*] to King Aleksandar:

The composition of Matko Brajša *Slaveni*, a song for male choir, is a pro-Slavic, patriotic song. In musical terms it is written correctly, in a style in which, by the end of the last century, patriotic and heroic songs were generally composed. This style is conventional, so the composition of Matko Brajša, beyond the correct musical style, does not carry any individual or national feature.¹²

Interestingly, it is claimed that the composition, because of its *conventional*, outmoded style cannot epitomize the *national*. Consequently, it can be deduced that the representation of the new Yugoslav nation could only be conveyed through a contemporary, cutting-edge compositional style. The imperative of being modern was also sufficient reason enough to prevent sympathetic review of a composition that, apparently, corresponded to the general “pro-Slavic” and “patriotic” orientation of the cultural policy of Kingdom of Yugoslavia.

Searching for common ancestry and racial features inevitably brought the discourse of integral Yugoslavism into connection with the pan-Slavic discourse; in the words of a writer Rastko Petrović, it was believed that there was a common “sensibility which has characterized all Slavic tribes since the beginning of time”.¹³ The dominant strain of interwar pan-Slavic discourse was connected with propagating modernism, and was turned towards a new state on the European map – Czechoslovakia, as a product of the Treaty of Versailles. It is important to bear in mind that throughout the interwar period, the Versailles Treaty was perceived as unstable and easily shakeable, with nations such as Germany, Austria and Hungary perpetually advocating for the revision of the new borders. Yugoslavia was thus strongly inclined to maintain close ties with the proponents of the Versailles borders, especially with France, named the keeper of the Versailles Treaty, but also with the newly formed Central European states.

¹¹ P. Marković, *Beograd i Evropa 1918–1941. Evropski uticaji na proces modernizacije Beograda*, Beograd 1992, 169.

¹² Letter of the chief of the General Department of the Ministry of Education to the Court, September 2nd 1932 (Arhiv Jugoslavije, fund 66 /Ministarstvo prosvete Kraljevine Jugoslavije/, folder 100-105).

¹³ Cf.: B. Prpa-Jovanović, *op. cit.*, 423.

In 1920, together with Czechoslovakia and Romania, Yugoslavia formed a military and political alliance named the Little Entente, which lasted until 1938. The apogee of mutual cooperation was achieved at meetings in Belgrade in 1932 and Geneva in 1933. Cooperation between Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia largely transcended diplomatic activity and saturated all fields of social life. In the Yugoslav discourse of modernisation an image of Czechoslovakia was created which spoke of a congenial, modern Slavic and European state which should be followed as a paragon on the road to industrialisation and modernization. In this light, influences that came from Czechoslovakia in particular were met with elaborate panegyrics, often through quite diverse social discourses.¹⁴ The main institutional backbone in Yugoslavia which organized the cooperation between the two countries was the Yugoslav-Czechoslovakian League, founded in 1922 and closely tied to the state bureaucracy, which was systematically engaged in forming cultural ties, especially after 1928.¹⁵ Ties with Czechoslovakia were very much present in the discourse on music: writers on music, such as Miloje Milojević (1884–1946), excelled in essays on modern Czech music, and concerts dedicated to contemporary Czech music were rampant.¹⁶ Perhaps even more importantly, educational ties with Czech institutions were ubiquitously emphasised, even in short biographies of Yugoslav composers and performers, while music periodicals regularly delivered reports of current news and musical activities in friendly Czechoslovakia.¹⁷

Based on the foregoing discussion, it is possible to formulate an ideal model which would fully correspond to the paradigm of primordial modernism, and thus to the dominant strain of cultural politics in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. In order for a work of art to be produced and received through this paradigm it is essential to be ostensibly modern, but at the same time to be based on the folk art of the Southern Slavs. This connection with folklore should not, however, be superficial, but should aspire to uncover its

¹⁴ Noah W. Sobe, for example, investigates this phenomenon in the discourse on beekeeping; cf.: “Cultivating a ‘Slavic Modern’: Yugoslav Beekeeping, Schooling and Travel in the 1920s and 1930s”, *Paedagogica Historica* 41 (2005), 143–158. I am thankful to Ivana Vesić for this reference. Cf.: I. Vesić, *Između poetike i politike: polje muzičke produkcije u Srbiji i njegov odnos prema društvenoj stvarnosti u periodu između dva svetska rata*, unpublished graduation thesis, Fakultet muzičke umetnosti u Beogradu, 2007.

¹⁵ Cf.: Љ. Димић, *op. cit.*, III: 229–244.

¹⁶ Cf.: М. Милојевић, *Музичке студије и чланци. Друга књига*, Београд 1933; Р. Пејовић, *Музичка критика и есејистика у Београду (1919–1941)*, Београд 1999.

¹⁷ For a case study with an in-depth analysis of one music periodical and its role in forming these ties, cf.: Б. Милановић, “Часопис *Музика* као заступник југословенско-чехословачких музичких веза на измаку друге деценије 20. века”, in: *Праг и студенти композиције из Краљевине Југославије. Поводом 100-годишњице рођења Станојла Рајичића и Војислава Вучковића*, Београд 2010, 141–160.

deeper, psychological, primitive, prehistoric layers, ideally through the sensibility of the soul of the artist himself. Finally, in appropriating modern artistic means, the creator is invited to look at the achievements of modern art in Czechoslovakia. In comparison with other artistic fields, one notes that the field of music production was particularly conducive to primordial modernism. The peculiarities of the music field were such that most of its members were part of the state bureaucracy and subsisted by means of the payrolls of the Ministry of Education.¹⁸

Moving to the discourse on music, through a close reading facets of primordial modernism are easily recognizable in the writings of most of the prominent authors. Miloje Milojević, the composer and music writer based in Belgrade, perhaps gave some of the most discerning and detailed accounts of questions regarding the orientation of contemporary Yugoslav music. Ruminating on the questions of national style and modernism in his sophisticated essay entitled “The Artistic Elaboration of our Folk Melodies through Modern Technical Means”, Milojević describes the contemporary musician as a modernist and individualist who studies the national folklore ‘psychologically’. “The first and foremost thing in elaboration of folk music”, claims Milojević, is to “try to enter through simple, poorly developed, primitive folk melody or dance into the soul of its anonymous creator”.¹⁹ In an earlier and related essay on musical folklore, Milojević advises fellow composers that “we have to be very careful in the discovering and choosing of what is ‘ours’”; contributing to the discussion of distinct historical ‘layers’ in musical folk material, and arguing for a search for those which are as ancient as possible and which would truly embody the spirit of the nation, Milojević reminds us that “it is important to illuminate that very deep source to its end, because deep down, at the bottom, lie the gemstones of our musical folklore”. Arguing for the fostering of studies of musical folklore, Milojević envisions the following as the result:

laying down the principle of our musical-national style. Because national style in art derives from an idiom of primitive, folk art, and is developed from these idioms. National musical style is: the raising of primitive artistic elements, which result from the intuition of “simple souls”, people, the folk, to the heights of an intricate and culturally elaborate art of a formed style, which has merit even when looked upon from the highest artistic point of view.²⁰

¹⁸ M. Janičević, *Stvaralačka inteligencija međuratne Jugoslavije*, Beograd 1984, 40.

¹⁹ M. Milojević, “Уметничка обрада наших народних мелодија помоћу модерних техничких средстава”, in: *Музичке студије и чланци. Друга књига*, 14–26.

²⁰ M. Milojević, “Музички фолклор. Његова културно-музичка важност”, in: *Музичке студије и чланци. Прва књига*, Beograd 1926, 137–147. Cf.: A. Васић, “Проблем националног стила у написима Милоја Милојевића”, *Музикологија* 7 (2007), 231–244.

The discourse of the composer Antun Dobronić (1878–1955), who was active in Zagreb, often resembles that of Milojević. A former student of the Prague Conservatory and Vítězslav Novák, Dobronić is the prime example of a Croatian composer who opted for integral Yugoslavism during the interwar period. He advocated forming of “a particular musical expression of our race”, and opines that the only element by which we can arrive at our race’s musical style is *the spirit* of our folk music: “the psychological content of our musical folklore is actually the only true source of our genuine national, not only primary, folk, but also higher, artistic musical culture”.²¹ The opinions brought forward by a minor author, Božidar Joksimović (1868–1955), testify to the tendency to appropriate the project of the Yugoslav nation by the Serbian-dominated elite. Joksimović states that “pertinently characteristic Slavic elements are, doubtlessly, mostly present in the music of Serbian people. It follows that the development of our future, common artistic music, should be based on the foundations of Serbian folk music, adding to it characteristics from the music of other Slavs of the Balkan Peninsula”.²²

One of the musicians who enjoyed the financial support of the state during the third decade of the century in order to study abroad was Josip Slavenski (1896–1955). Studying in Prague, his application for a scholarship was originally positively reviewed by Milojević.²³ Born as Josip Štolcer in the Croatian town of Čakovec, Slavenski changed his surname in a surge of pan-Slavic emotion and spent most of his career in the capital city of Belgrade. Establishing his name as the foremost modern Yugoslav composer, during the early 1920s Slavenski produced an array of compositions bearing as part of the title the word ‘Yugoslav’. The most widely acclaimed was *Yugoslav Song and Dance* for violin and piano, which was often performed in Belgrade and abroad. Slavenski succeeded in having his compositions published by Schott in Mainz, which is germane if we consider that the ideology of Yugoslavism was meant for the international stage from its onset. At this stage Slavenski mostly employed the musical folklore of his native rural province, Međimurje, responding both to the call to forge an intimate, personal relation with musical folklore, and to return to the sources of the folk material. We find similar strategies in the *oeuvre* of one of the most important contemporary architects, Branislav Kojić, who used the forms of rural dwellings as the basis of his modern architectural

²¹ A. Dobronić, “Križa i problem morala u našem muzičkom životu (II)”, *Zvuk*, god. 3, br. 3 (1935), 118. Cf.: “Anketa o nacionalnom muzičkom stilu”, *Музика*, год. I, св. 5–6 (мај–јуни 1928), 152–167; R. Pejović, “Antun Dobronić i njegovi napisi publikovani u Beogradu”, *Međimurje* 13/14 (1988), 165–171.

²² “Anketa o nacionalnom muzičkom stilu”, 153.

²³ Arhiv Jugoslavije, fund 66, folder 624.

achievements.²⁴ Writing on Slavenski's piano compositions in 1933, Rikard Švarc noted that in his music there is a “skilful perusal of raw, previously unknown folklore material”, and that “with the strict tonal foundations of folk melodies Slavenski never interferes”.²⁵ This aptly describes *Yugoslav Song and Dance*, which commences solemnly, with the citation of a simple folk song in the violin part, played *cantabile* and *sul G*, accompanied by rudimentary and often hollow harmonies in the piano part (cf.: example 1).²⁶

Example 1. Josip Slavenski, *Yugoslav Song and Dance*, I Song, m. 1–5.

More than a decade later, in 1936, Antun Dobronić submitted his *Yugoslav ballad* for violoncello and piano to an open competition for chamber work organized by Belgrade Society of Friends of Art *Cvijeta Zuzorić*, and succeeded in gaining second place. For the purposes of submission he used coded name ‘Guslar’ (*gusle* player), not accidentally, as the violoncello part openly emulates the manner of performance of this traditional instrument. The *gusle* was a pertinent instrument in evoking the ancient folk tradition of the Southern Slavs. In an article by Pero Slijepčević dedicated to this instrument and published in Belgrade in 1929, the *gusle* is celebrated as part of the prehistoric art of the Yugoslav people. Slijepčević notes that the “great primitivism of the *gusle* points to the distant past”, adding that “it is certain that the *gusle* was brought by our great-grandfathers when they arrived in the Balkans”.²⁷ Tracing the vestiges of archaic times, Slijepčević

²⁴ A. Ignjatović, *op. cit.*

²⁵ R. Švarc, “Josip Slavenski i njegova klavirska dela”, *Zvuk* 5 (mart 1933), 167–171.

²⁶ For Slavenski’s attitude towards ideology of Yugoslavism cf.: M. Живковић, “Југословенство Јосипа Славенског”, in: *Јосип Славенски и његово доба: зборник са научног скупа поводом 50 година од композиторове смрти, Београд, 8–11. новембар 2005*, Београд 2006, 13–26. For a more general survey cf. M. Milin, “Inventing Yugoslav Identity in Art Music”, in: *Musical Folklore as a Vehicle?* Belgrade 2008, 21–30.

²⁷ П. Слијепчевић, “Музика гусала”, *Музика* II/1 (јан. 1929), 3–9.

points out that the rhythm, “as the oldest element”, is most developed, while the melody is still incipient. In his *Yugoslav ballad*, Dobronić tries to construct this imaginary sound of ‘primitivism’ and prehistory: he uses elaborate rhythms and characteristic ornaments paired with copious changes in metre, tempo and character, and simplifies the melodic line at the opening of the composition restraining its ambitus. In addition, the impression of the ‘primitive’ sound is further enhanced by restricting the melodic line to pentatony (cf.: example 2).

Example 2. Antun Dobronić, *Yugoslav ballad*, violoncello part, m. 1–9.²⁸

Mihovil Logar (1902–1998), born in Rijeka and of Slovenian origin, was another composer from Yugoslavia who studied in Prague, as a pupil of Josef Suk, and afterwards settled in Belgrade. As in the case of the other composers with similar background, information on Logar’s Prague education was ubiquitously present in all press reports of performances of his works. Noted for his modern style, Logar closely collaborated with Society of Friends of Art *Cvijeta Zuzorić*. The society was officially a private initiative but was closely influenced by the Belgrade political elite, the Ministry of Education and the court. *Cvijeta Zuzorić* was particularly renowned for supporting modernism, in music as well as in the other arts.²⁹ In the same aforementioned open competition Logar submitted his newly composed song cycle *Legenda o Marku (Legend of Marko)*, winning the third prize. Written on texts by Petar Valić, the cycle centres on the character of Prince Marko, one of the most prominent figures in Serbian epic poetry, signifying Serbian appreciation of freedom and defiance towards

²⁸ The example is taken from the manuscript submitted to the Society of Friends of Art *Cvijeta Zuzorić*, now held at the Historical Archives of Belgrade.

²⁹ Cf.: С. Атанасовски, “Музичка делатност Удружења пријатеља уметности *Цвијета Зузорић* у контексту културне политике Краљевине Југославије”, in: *Ликови и лица музике*, Београд 2010, 207–224.

foreign oppressors. Logar does not introduce any folk quotations, but uses certain folk-like elements and relies heavily on variation form, which was considered characteristic for folk music (cf.: example 3).³⁰ Perhaps even more important is Logar's choice of subjects: opting for a character from Serbian mythologized history, Logar engages with the cultural discourse of integral Yugoslavism as centred on Serbian history. This discourse was famously inaugurated in artistic practice by arguably the most potent representative of Yugoslav primordialism, architect and sculptor Ivan Meštrović. In the years preceding the outbreak of the First World War, as well as during the war, Meštrović presented an array of sculptures pertaining to the myth and history of the Battle of Kosovo (his so-called *Kosovo cycle*), as well as the model of a monumental *Vidovdan temple*, to the public in Vienna, London, Rome and Venice, and amongst them Meštrović also displayed an equestrian bronze statue of Prince Marko (see illustration 1). Meštrović's sculptures aspired to convey a strong expression of the Yugoslav race and to create a prototype of a Yugoslav hero and they are recognized as the first major effort toward creating the art on the premises of integral Yugoslavism.³¹

Example 3. Mihovil Logar, *Legenda o Marku*, III, m. 1–11.

Con strepito ♩ = 88 di M. M.

Mar - ko bu - vatt du vin rou - ge du pa - ys Mar Sve -
Sje - di Mar - ko pl - je ruj - no vi no. Sve

³⁰ Cf.: Б. Милановић, “Вокална лирика Миховила Логара”, *Зборник Матице српске за сценске уметности и музику* 12/13 (1993), 137–148.

³¹ Cf.: А. Ignjatović, *op. cit.*, 43–60.

Illustration 1. Ivan Meštrović: *Kraljević Marko na konju* (Equestrian Statue of Prince Marko, 1910; National Museum in Belgrade)³²



The kaleidoscopic image created by these three examples does not aim at producing a comprehensive survey, or at identifying stylistic features of what can be called primordial modernism in music. By defining primordial modernism as a paradigm of cultural politics in the interwar Kingdom of Yugoslavia, my aim was quite different: to show how composers of different generations and works of different styles were concurrently influenced by this ideological practice, and to illustrate some of the possible discursive strategies through which they became involved with this practice. Although primordial modernism in music was formed neither as a specific style nor as

a tendency that can be analytically defined as a question of compositional technique, it put forward a set of values and expectations that regulated both the production and the reception of music. In this process, discourse on music and music institutions was germane in forming a network through which music acquired its ideological meaning and was positioned on the complex political map of interwar Yugoslavia.

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³² I hereby thank National Museum in Belgrade for permission to reproduce this photograph taken by Vladimir Popović.

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Срђан Атанасовски

ИДЕОЛОГИЈА ЈУГОСЛОВЕНСКОГ НАЦИОНАЛИЗМА И ПРИМОРДИЈАЛНИ МОДЕРНИЗАМ У МЕЋУРАТНОЈ МУЗИЦИ (Резиме)

У овом раду покушавам да расветлим везе између идеологије југословенског национализма и дискурса о музици и музичке продукције у међуратној Краљевини Југославији. Како бисмо боље разумели ове везе предлажем увођење термина *примордијални модернизам*, по угледу на историчара архитектуре Александра Игњатовића. Као вид теорије национализма, примордијализам је једини омогућавао дефинисање

јединствене југословенске нације, која је требало да обухвати ‘племена’ која су имала различиту историју, културу, религију, па чак и језик. Идеја да су југословенски народи у тренутку почетка историје били једно, и да их њихове расно-биолошке одлике и даље уједињују била је у сржи идеологије југословенства иза које је стајала династија Карађорђевића и државна бирократија, те је ова идеја уједно представљала и једну од основа културне политике Краљевине Југославије. Императив да се Југославија, у реалности заостала, неразвијена и аграрна земља, прикаже као модерна европска нација није био ништа мање изражен, јер је идеал модернизације новостворене државе био један од темељних разлога њеног постојања. Примордијални модернизам је формиран као резултат синтезе ових тенденција, као парадигма којом је усмеравана продукција уметности, а која је била посебно утицајна на пољу музичке продукције. Парадигмом примордијалног модернизма се од музичког дела очекује да отелотворије модеран и напредан стил, али и да користи фолклорни материјал (или тематски материјал сродан фолклору) на начин који би требало да у њему открије постојање дубљих, психолошких, примитивних, слојева, који трансцендирају тренутачне културе ‘племена’ и одражавају предисторијско јединство Југословена. Занимљиво је да се примордијални модернизам често појављује у вези са модерним стремљењима која су препознана као утицај чехословачке културе; Чехословачка не само што је била савезник Југославији у заштити граница Версајског споразума, већ је сматрана сродном словенском нацијом и прогресивном европском земљом на коју се треба угледати. Парадигма примордијалног модернизма може се пронаћи како у дискурсу о музици, тако и у музичкој продукцији. У циљу да покажем присутност и важност оваквог начина мишљења указују на ставове водећих музичких писаца у Југославији, као што су Милоје Милојевић и Антун Добронић. Истражујући музичку продукцију потребно је указати не само на конкретна дела (нпр. Добронића, Јосипа Славенског и Миховила Логара), већ и на институционално окружење у коме су она настајала, као и на реторику која је пратила њихову рецепцију. Значајно је нагласити да примордијални модернизам није стилска категорија, већ идеолошка пракса која је утицала на композиторе различитих генерација и стилских опредељења.

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