

MOKRANJAC ON REPEAT: REAFFIRMING MUSICAL CANON THROUGH SOUND RECORDINGS (PGP-RTB/RTS DISCOGRAPHY)*

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Received: 15 September 2019

Accepted: 1 November 2019

Original scientific paper

ABSTRACT

Starting with the hypothesis that sound recordings published by the Serbian/Yugoslav record label PGP-RTB/RTS dominated programmes of the Radio Television Belgrade/Radio Television Serbia during most of the twentieth century (while declining in this century), and that decisions made within the label on which composers' works were going to be (repeatedly) present in its catalogue consequently had significant impact on overall music and media culture in Serbia/Yugoslavia, our goal was to examine how the central composer figure of Serbian music, Stevan Stojanović Mokranjac, was represented in this catalogue. Research methods were based primarily on analysis of archive material gathered in documentation of the label itself, data on recordings available via online music databases, and recordings themselves, while relying on theoretical notions of canon in music, with the accent on the performing canon.

KEYWORDS: musical canon, performing canon, Stevan Stojanović Mokranjac, PGP-RTB/RTS, discography, RTB/RTS Choir

* This study was written as a part of the project *Serbian Musical Identities within Local and Global Frameworks: Traditions, Changes, Challenges* (No. 177004) funded by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development of Republic of Serbia.

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This study deals with the recordings of Stevan Stojanović Mokranjac's music (1856–1914) released by the PGP-RTB/RTS label.³ Our interest in the topic is directly connected to the results of previous research deriving from two different areas. One of them is related to various aspects of the canonisation of Mokranjac and his opus in the construction of Serbian art music at the beginning of the twentieth century (Milanović 2014a, 2014b, 2017, 2018), while the other refers to overall art music discography of the PGP-RTB/RTS from the label's foundation in 1951 up to its contemporary editions (Maglov 2014, 2015, 2016a, 2016b). In addition, one kind of mutual connectedness of these areas found its place in edition of the archive sound recordings of Mokranjac's works by the RTB/RTS Choir and its conductors, presenting the tradition of composer's secular oeuvre interpretation (Milanović 2014c). This edition, whose title *The Imaginary Museum of Mokranjac's Works* evokes Lydia Goehr's study of the musical work (Goehr 1992), was also among the incentives for our involvement in this topic. Bearing in mind that Mokranjac's oeuvre has confirmed its central place through resonance in many practices of local music culture until present day, our main idea was to examine how the production of sound recordings – which began to be a part of that context during the second half of the twentieth century – was included in these strategies and proved to be a constitutive factor of canonisation.

In our survey we made an effort to take into account all PGP-RTB/RTS editions that include Mokranjac's music. However, considering that not every recording bore an indication of the year of publishing, we were able to make mention of the dates of some editions only approximately. This is a common problem in discography (Cf. Weber 2001). For the purpose of this study we used the archive documentation of the PGP-RTB/RTS that was collected and analysed in previous research by Maglov.⁴ As

3 The abbreviation PGP-RTB/RTS stands for *Produkcija gramofonskih ploča Radio televizije Beograd / Radio televizije Srbije* [Production of gramophone recordings of the Radio Television Belgrade / Radio Television Serbia]. The name was officially changed in 1992. Up to that year, official abbreviation used was PGP-RTB, and after it was PGP-RTS. Since our paper covers the period both before and after the change of the name, we decided to refer to the institution with the combination of these abbreviations. For a survey of the development of this label see Maglov 2016a.

4 The archive research of Maglov was undertaken during the academic year 2012/13, for the purposes of a Master's thesis *Ozbiljna muzika na pločama u izdanju PGP-RTB/PGP-RTS-a (1968–1994)* [Recordings of classical music published by PGP-RTB/PGP-RTS (1968–1994)], supervised by Vesna Mikić, PhD, defended at the Department of Musicology of the Faculty of Music in Belgrade in 2013, and published as a revised and expanded monograph (Maglov 2016b). Research was based on documentation kept at the working facility and offices of the PGP-RTB/RTS in Belgrade, where all of the documents dating from the time of their original publication are kept, though not necessarily in an organised, systematised and approachable manner. On the state of the archive and available documentation see Maglov 2016a: 10–12. Survey of classical music by national composers published on vinyl (and in some cases reissued as audio cassette or compact disc) is given in Ibid: 109–126. Other editions (i.e. licensed editions by international labels such as Deutsche Grammophon, Philips, and others) were also presented in the same

the absence of archival sources on some editions was noted, we also included information from other sources, such as the independent online database *Discogs*.⁵ In addition, since previous research was done five years ago, our research into new recordings issued in the meantime was undertaken.⁶

The text is segmented into three parts. The first of them is an introductory discussion on theoretical and methodological aspects of the canon and their use in our research. The second part is devised in order to present the Mokranjac music editions of the PGP-RTB/RTS in a systematised way that concurrently points to dominant musical interpretations of the composer's opus, while the final section includes some important problems and questions in the contexts of both different artistic strategies of canonisation and programme policies of the PGP-RTB/RTS, while focusing on canonical performances of Mokranjac's works.

Before discussing the PGP-RTB/RTS editions, it is worth mentioning that some examples of Serbian music, including Mokranjac's works, can be found in old catalogues under the labels of various gramophone recording companies (Cf. e.g. Catalogue 1909: 42; 1927: 24–25). However, the conditions for gramophone record productions in local circumstances appeared only after the foundation of the first local label, the PGP-RTB/RTS, which remained the main recording label in Serbia, and one of the biggest labels in the former Yugoslavia. It was institutionally part of the Radio Television Belgrade, later Radio Television Serbia, whose ensembles made many recordings for this label (Cf. Maglov 2016b).⁷ As will be stressed further in the text, some of the most important recordings of Mokranjac's music were made precisely by the RTB/RTS Choir. In addition, one should not neglect the fact that works by Stevan Mokranjac were also published by other labels and in other Yugoslav republics. According to our present knowledge, the first LP with Mokranjac's works was published by the Croatian, Zagreb-based label Jugoton in 1958, some thirteen years before the first edition dedicated to the same composer released by the PGP-RTB/RTS.⁸ According to available data, it is interesting that the first edition of Mokranjac's *Liturgija Sv. Jovana Zlatoustog* [*Divine Liturgy of St John Chrysostom*] was published with tourism promotion goals in mind in 1967. Performers were the Beogradski madrigalisti

monograph. For more detailed insight into this production see Maglov 2014: 311–319. From the total of 31 books of original documentation, kept at the PGP-RTB/RTS facilities that were consulted for the research in the aforementioned period, 15 contain documents related to various editions with Mokranjac's music. The books are listed in the bibliography section.

5 *Discogs – Music Database and Marketplace*, <https://www.discogs.com>.

6 The latest catalogues up to the year 2015 are available on the PGP-RTS website (<http://www.rts.rs/page/rts/sr/pgp/news/1686/katalog-pgp.html>). For information on further editions, *Discogs* was used as a source.

7 For detailed insight into the programmes of the ensembles of the Radio Television Belgrade see Simić 1988.

8 This is a recording of Rukoveti [Garlands] Nos. 5 and 10, as well as *Kozar* [Goatherd], performed by Borivoje Simić (1920–2001) and the RTB/RTS Choir.

[Belgrade Madrigalists], conducted by Dušan Miladinović, with bass Žarko Cvejić as soloist, and the LP was issued by the Yugoslav state travel agency Putnik whose aim was “to promote 1967 as ‘International Tourist Year’”⁹ In the following decades, there were editions by Jugoton (four editions in total), Združeno Podjetje Iskra and Gallus Mladinska knjiga (Ljubljana), Zadruga Pravoslavnog sveštenstva (Belgrade), Jugokonzert (Belgrade), KUD *Svetozar Marković* (Novi Sad), a joint edition by Diskos (Aleksandrovac Župa) and Kalenić (Kragujevac), etc.¹⁰ Finally, numerous recordings of Mokranjac’s music were also released by labels from other European countries as well as the US.¹¹ A detailed insight into these regional and international editions calls for further research. There is no doubt that an overview of the PGP-RTB/RTS discography of Mokranjac’s compositions could be the starting point for such research, since this label released the largest number of issues related to this composer, spanning more than forty LPs, audio cassettes and/or CDs.

1. NOTES ON THE CANON(S)

Canon is among the most dynamic and complex concepts in the humanities, whose relevance began to be discussed especially in a debate that began several decades ago. While the debate was opened by sharp opposition between defenders of a traditional canon and those that perceived it radically as an obsolete phenomenon, today one can find a whole set of various paths of research that were taken in meantime. After different turns in cultural studies, there seems to be a certain consensus about the Western canon as a web of ideologies, activities, values and authorities, as well as a process of selection, hierarchisation, marginalisation and exclusion that works according to the interests of those who make these choices.¹² Apart from a wide range of approaches, which vary from proposals to open up the canon in order to include minorities, and those who wish to revise national, regional, racial or ethnic canons, to those that argue the existence of multiple canons, there is an evident dispersion of the notion, so that one can speak of canons in “high” artistic practices, but also in

9 Cf. *Discogs – Music Database and Marketplace*.

10 Details on all these items may be found at: <https://www.discogs.com/artist/995806-Stevan-Stojanovi%C4%87-Mokranjac?limit=50&page=1>.

11 E.g. Tabor (Germany), Attempo Verlag (Germany), Christophorus-Verlag (Germany), Grammo-phonclub Ex Libris (Switzerland), to name just a few. A more complete notion of foreign editions may be grasped by searching through databases such as WorldCat database or OCLC (Online Computer Library Center, Inc.).

12 For a comprehensive history of the canon, related mainly to the literary field, see Gorak 1991. In musicology, after Joseph Kerman’s pioneering text (Kerman 1983), now “classical” but still topical publications are *Disciplining Music: Musicology and Its Canons* (Bergeron and Bohlman 1992), and studies by William Weber (e.g. Weber 1999). See also Samson 2001, Goehr 2002, Danielsen 2006, Kurkela and Väkevä 2009, Shreffler 2013.

jazz (e.g. Gabbard 1995) and popular music (e.g. Kärjä 2006; Jones 2008), or of canon in the context of digital media (Backe 2015). Hence there are many arguments for a claim that global age is “hypercanonical” or “postcanonical in much the same way that it is postindustrial” (Damrosch 2006: 44).

In our discussion we consider discography as a practice of reaffirmation of the canon of musical works. Mokranjac’s oeuvre as a key constituent of the national canon is one important topic in this context. However, according to our research, discography is able to act as a mechanism through which the canon of the performance of music can emerge. This means a shifting perspective in the ontological status of the canon, which is a move from its centre, from an author-and-work concept, to performance agencies.

First of all, it is important to mention that musical canon, represented as text, stands as a main feature of much research into canonization. Thus, when talking about “musicology’s canons”, Bohlman emphasises that musicologists “think of pieces of music as discrete texts, rendered so by the notation with which we study and represent music.” According to various kinds of texts, from musical score to anthologies, music histories, journals and other texts disciplined by musicologists, Bohlman stresses:

Texts are essential to the canonising process because they replace the timeliness of music as an oral phenomenon with the timelessness of music as a textual ontology. To enter the canon of great works, a piece of music must ‘last,’ and how better to make it last than to transform it into text? (Bohlman 1992: 202)

Concerning canonisation in the context of performance and further in discography, it is useful to start with William Weber’s methodological tools (1999), which are very applicable in various kinds of research into canons and their histories. Specifically, among the three major types of canon that he outlines – the scholarly, the pedagogical and the performing (Weber 1999: 339–340) – his focus is especially directed to the performing canon and its emergence from the eighteenth century onwards, which “involves the presentation of old works organised as repertoires and defined as sources of authority with regard to musical taste” (340). Stressing “four main intellectual bases of canon: *craft*, *repertory*, *criticism*, and *ideology*”, Weber states that “a performing canon (...) is more than just a repertory: it is also a critical and ideological force”. Hence he takes into account “musicians as shapers of the canon”, bearing in mind that “a complex variety of social forces, ideologies, and rituals that can often be quite difficult to sort out” have an effect in the process of canonisation, which is determined not only by intellectual agencies, but also by performing agencies (340–349).

A performing canon is closely associated with the emergence of the musical work-concept described by Lydia Goehr (1992), which has begun to regulate musical practice from the Romantic era, and “in its more reified senses relates to the covering conditions of *modernity*” (Butt 2015: 7). According to Goehr, the work-concept is connected with a full set of features of the time, such as post-Kantian philosophy, the

rise of Romantic aesthetics, relative musical autonomy, an investment in subjectivity, the belief in an author's greatness and the timelessness of his work, a distinction between art and craft, strengthening copyright laws, and so on. Although Goehr's provocative concept has been criticised, especially by some scholars dedicated to early music,¹³ it could be adopted and thus useful in different ways. Concerning musical performance, for example, Goehr stresses its transience and subordination to the work-concept. Performance, as well as notation and reception, were pervaded by the ideal of *Werktreue*. "Without their development," however, "the abstract work-concept (...) would never have found its regulative force in practice" (Goehr 1992: 242). Her museum-metaphor is precisely the embodiment of such normative codes of musical works:

Since music was a temporal and performance art, its works could not be preserved in physical form or placed in a museum like other works of fine art. Music had (...) to replicate the conditions of the plastic arts and, at the same time, render them appropriate to its temporal and ephemeral character. Music resolved the problem by creating for itself a 'metaphorical' museum, an equivalent of the museum for plastic arts – what has come to be known as an imaginary museum of musical works (Goehr 1992: 174).

The adoption of Goehr's approach in relation to performance practice includes some new possibilities in recent times. This is also emphasised by John Butt, who claims that "the weakening of the classical work-concept has, at the very least, allowed us to consider other factors implicit in the music, particularly to do with performance" (Butt 2015: 20). In addition to specific directions in performance studies, such as "the trend towards trying to move away from works as fixed in scores towards works as events in real time and in which the performer is fully complicit", Butt mentions "the issues that are not specified in the score (such as absolute tempo and rubato)" as well as "creative deviations. Although this might seem to be a return to the time before the score became dominant, when music could be spontaneously embellished or even composed, it is clear that improvisation has never really disappeared. Rather, it was usually merely devalued and ignored by historians of 'serious' musical works" (Butt 2015: 20).

This also refers to various media technologies, including permanent sound recordings that undermine the normative codes of the classical work-concept. There are not only various ways of performing and listening to music, which go beyond the concert as an institution, but also the possibilities of collecting, storing, publishing and consuming sound recordings that have been made at different moments of the present and past. As such, sound recordings and their editions bring a dimension of materiality and enable the "imaginary museum" to acquire a new, palpable agent in disciplining the temporal and ephemeral character of music. In this context, the aforementioned edition the *Imaginary Museum of Mokranjac's Works* can be under-

13 See, for example, White (1997) and the debate of Strohm (2000) and Goehr (2000).

BILJANA MILANOVIĆ & MARIJA MAGLOV

MOKRANJAC ON REPEAT: REAFFIRMING MUSICAL CANON THROUGH SOUND RECORDINGS
(PGP-RTB/RTS DISCOGRAPHY)

stood as broadening Goehr's museum metaphor, symbolically used in access to sound recordings that had "played a pivotal role in nurturing the performing tradition of Mokranjac's opuses during the second half of the twentieth century" (Milanović 2014c: 28). This time, however, available documentation of the output of PGP-RTB/RTS allows us to research editions by various choral ensembles and hence ask questions about programme strategies, thanks to which some performers and their sound recordings achieved a canonical status in the performance of Mokranjac's works.

Placing the sound recordings at the centre of our narrative might also recall the fact that performance practice was precisely the first and foremost channel of the formation of the canon of Serbian art music that started at the end of the nineteenth century. Mokranjac's oeuvre emerged from his own practical work with the Belgrade Choral Society, which he had conducted for about two and half decades and which premiered most of his compositions. That mutual work essentially marked his compositional and performance activities, the spread of their influence on other choral societies, and also resulted in building this institution, its composer-conductor, and its repertoire into a unique image of Serbian national music that was constantly being renewed. The Belgrade Choral Society and then the Serbian Musical School that functioned under the auspices of this choral institution were at the core of the emerging musical elite as well as dominant factors in the construction of musical ideologies, activities, standards and values. In addition to other secular and sacral choral music by Mokranjac, his fifteen cycles of *rukoveti* [garlands] – choral compositions written between 1883 and 1909 – which had been constructed as the core of the national music canon already during and immediately after Mokranjac's lifetime, secured their reputation by way of performances and public acknowledgment and reconfirming their significance through the work of younger composers, institutional and pedagogical practices, musicological narratives and the audience's reception in succeeding generations (Milanović 2014a; 2014b; 2018).

Mokranjac's oeuvre, which originated mostly from the time of the Kingdom of Serbia (1882–1918), had been accepted regionally, co-opted both by and beyond national and Yugoslav ideologies, and had an important place in the culture of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes/Kingdom of Yugoslavia (1918–1945). During the communist period of the second Yugoslavia (1945–1991), Mokranjac's opus was one of the paradigms of local musical culture of the time, being included in a multiple and changeable web of cultural policies. Although a typical product of bourgeois culture, his compositional leaning on "folk song" was easily connected to ideas about the new socialist man and the people's democracy, so that his secular music became the main part of the repertoire of various choirs. On the other hand, since open hostility of the authorities to the presence of Church tradition, especially Orthodox, was a part of the cultural policy during the early decades of the communist regime, sacred choral music was excluded from concert repertoires. This involved a number of factors, including the decline and disappearance of civil and church choral societies as products of the former bourgeois and capitalist context, as well as the revival and/or foundation of other kinds of choirs, such as various worker and

youth societies, and especially different choral ensembles that functioned as parts of the “kulturno-umetnička društva” (abbreviated KUD, meaning “cultural-artistic societies”), the typical amateur associations of the socialist period. As far as sacred music was concerned, although some steps in its return from church to concert hall were taken in a controlled way, this musical genre was re-established starting from the 1980s, and to an increasing extent in the 1990s. This included especially the reintegration of Mokranjac’s sacred choral works into the national canon of art music.¹⁴ Performance practices, together with aspects of other spheres such as the scholarly, the compositional and the educational, which contributed to the processes of the canonisation of Mokranjac’s output during the socialist period, found their place in changed contexts during the so-called post-socialist transitional times, being adapted and reaffirmed in different ways after the break-up of federal Yugoslav state during the 1990s, and in the recent transitional period in the twenty-first century, “revealing the multidirectional and various interactions by which the contemporary experience of Stevan Mokranjac’s work has been constituted” (Mikić 2012: 12).¹⁵

Although studies on Stevan Mokranjac are diverse and numerous, it is important to emphasise that issues of the canon(s) of artistic music in Serbia after World War II have not been investigated, and neither have the processes and strategies of reinterpreting Mokranjac’s oeuvre as canonical in different historical contexts since the mid twentieth century onwards.¹⁶ Our text is a contribution to only one segment of various practices that create a dynamic and changeable web of canonization.

As different kinds of sound recordings show, the majority of editions originate from the socialist period as well as the 1990s. This is not surprising since the PGP-RTB/RTS, as a state label, occupied a dominant, “monopolistic” (Cf. Arnautović 2012) position in the Serbian/Yugoslav media space, shaping much of the music

14 On the treatment of the Orthodox sacred music in socialist Yugoslavia, with emphasis on the importance of concert presentations of Mokranjac’s works, see Milin 2015.

15 Post-socialist transition is the process of political, economical, social and cultural transformation into a plural political society, market-oriented system with economic liberalization, macroeconomic stabilization and privatization, integration into international processes of trade, exchange and communication on a global level etc. Although Serbia began its transition in the late 1980s, while still part of former Yugoslavia, the process was soon interrupted during the 1990s. This decade was marked by the break-up of Yugoslav federation, increasing nationalism of the regimes the newly-formed states and war conflicts, as well as strong nationalistic and anti-reform forces within the government in Serbia proper, together with numerous problems such as the economic embargo imposed by the UN sanctions, growing inflation, ethnic conflicts, NATO military intervention etc. While some scholars perceive two different periods of transition in Serbia, the others consider that the post-socialist transition has begun after the fall of Slobodan Milošević’s regime in 2000, when reforms on different levels started. On various standpoints on culture in Serbia in transitional times see texts that refer to the topic, published in issue 140 of the journal *Kultura* in 2013.

16 The text of Vesna Mikić (2012), which has been already quoted, represents one of the rare examples of research into the canonization of Mokranjac in “transitional” times.

culture as well as media culture. This is also the case for classical music. Recordings made by the PGP-RTB/RTS dominated programmes of Radio Television Belgrade/Radio Television Serbia during the second half of the twentieth century (Ibid: 60). Thus, it is evident that decisions made within the institution on what was going to be published and when, and which composers and compositions were going to be repeatedly present in the catalogue consequently had significant impact, by the mere presence of those editions, on musical culture. It is also important to note that the role of the PGP-RTB/RTS significantly declined in the twenty-first century, mainly because of the emergence of other, private labels and the fact that the possibility to record music was no longer so exclusive, and thus available to different institutions. These changes are evident in our investigation, since available data show that production was reduced in comparison with production back in the days of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) and that there were no new recordings of works by Stevan Stojanović Mokranjac released by the label in recent times.

2. SURVEY OF RECORDINGS WITH MOKRANJAC'S MUSIC RELEASED IN PGP-RTB/RTS

Mokranjac is one of the most represented domestic authors in the PGP-RTB/RTS catalogue, given the number of individual recordings, re-recordings, albums, different performers engaged in recording his music and the overall inclusion of his works in the repertoires of various ensembles.¹⁷ When there are recordings devoted exclusively to music of individual composers, he is present with individual LPs, as well as albums consisting of several recordings, since they were conceived as collected works, or “overviews” of his most significant works. Some of the material presented through these recordings was reissued on audio cassettes and compact discs in following years (complete as an “original” edition or with repertoire consisting of selected compositions).

Recordings of domestic classical music of the PGP-RTB/RTS may be roughly divided into three groups of editions devoted to: (1) a particular composer and his or her opus, (2) a performer or performing ensemble, and (3) a repertoire that is selected according to a specific concept or topic. The total number of editions and their reissues relating to Mokranjac mentioned in this paper is forty-three. First group contains eighteen editions, the second one eleven, and the third one (miscellaneous issues as well as those of the Serbian string quartet *Mokranjac*, and LP with compositions from the *Mokranjčevi dani* [*Mokranjac's Days*] festival) fourteen issues. The oldest edition (as far as available data at this moment show) from the total group dates from 1968.

When Mokranjac's music recordings are discussed on the basis of this classification, the construction of a powerful image of the RTB/RTS Choir and its leading conduc-

17 For the recordings dedicated solely to individual domestic composers' works in the PGP-RTB/RTS catalogue see appendix in Maglov 2016b: 115-126.

tors becomes very visible. Specifically, almost all integral sound editions that comprise of all of Mokranjac's main works of secular and sacred music were made by the RTB/RTS Choir. Thus, the first two mentioned categories of editions actually overlap in some way, since there is a significant number of recordings released to represent both the composer's oeuvre and a specific interpretative identity of the RTB/RTS Choir. After an overview of this kind of edition we will present examples in which Mokranjac's compositions were included in repertoires recorded by distinguished choirs other than the RTB/RTS Choir. The third, most varied group of editions will be examined in a similar way, by observing which works by the composer were included in the conception of thematically varied editions and how that decision was justified.

2.1. SOUND RECORDINGS DEDICATED TO MOKRANJAC'S OEUVRE

Among early RTB/RTS Choir editions that represent complete performances of Mokranjac's works of secular and sacred music are three LPs (LP2401, 2402 and 2403) with all fifteen rukoveti, *Primorski napjevi* [*Coastal Tunes*], *Kozar* [*Goatherd*], *Dve pesme iz 16.veka* [*Two Folk Songs from the 16th Century*], as well as the *Akatist* [*Atakhistos Hymn*], *Vozbranoj* [*O Champion Leader*], *Heruvika* [*Cherubic Hymn*], *Statija treća* [*Third Stasis*] and *Njest svjat* [*There is none so holy*]. Almost the entire repertoire was conducted by Borislav Simić, with the exception of two works conducted by Mihailo Vukdragović (Rukovet No. 2) on the second LP and Milan Bajšanski (Rukovet No. 15) on the third.¹⁸ Although these LPs were released only between 1976 and 1982, it is important to mention that Simić was the first conductor to compile permanent recordings of the greater part of Mokranjac's major works, beginning this task already in the late 1950s.¹⁹ At the time of Simić's engagement with the Choir, the ensemble developed into a highly professional performing body in both technical and interpretative terms, which also meant collaborative work of the ensemble and its leader with various distinguished musicians. Some of them, such as Žarko Cvejić, Nikola Mitić or Olivera Đurđević, were also included in Simić's recordings of Mokranjac's works.²⁰

18 For basic information about Mihailo Vukdragović (1900–1986), Milan Bajšanski (1903–1980) and Borivoje Simić, including their conducting activities and work with RTB/RTS ensembles, see Milanović 2014c.

19 For example, most of his recordings of the composer's secular works, which are kept in the Radio Belgrade Phonoarchive, were made between 1958 and 1969 (Milanović 2014c: 20). However, as far as these three LPs in question, archive documentation of the PGP-RTB/RTS does not contain information on either the time of the recording of the material or the years of their publishing. We can thus only suppose that the editions include some of the recordings made in earlier years. On the other hand, the years of the publishing of the LPs can be found at *Discogs* as follows: LP2401 1977, LP2402 1982 and LP2403 1976.

20 Soloists on the recordings were: Dušan Cvejić, Žarko Cvejić, Branko Ristić, Nikola Mitić, Vera Popov, Olivera Đurđević (LP2401), Branko Ristić (LP2402), Zora Mojsilović, Vera Popov, Radovan

BILJANA MILANOVIĆ & MARIJA MAGLOV

MOKRANJAC ON REPEAT: REAFFIRMING MUSICAL CANON THROUGH SOUND RECORDINGS
(PGP-RTB/RTS DISCOGRAPHY)

The next complete edition by the same Choir was made under the direction of Mladen Jagušt, the next important conductor who led the RTB/RTS ensembles after Simić (Cf. Milanović 2014c). The repertoire was recorded in 1981, between May and July in the *Braća Stamenković* Studio, and then issued in 1981 or 1982 (LP3330036).²¹ This edition is a four - LP set, containing all of Mokranjac's rukoveti as well as the *Primorski napjevi*, *Kozar*, *Opelo* [Requiem] and the Liturgy.²² In addition to distinguished soloists included in recordings, high professional standards are reflected in the booklet which comes with the edition. Written bilingually, in Serbian and English, it is also marked by scholarly authority, embodied in an extended commentary by the musicologist and music writer Petar Bingulac.²³ This edition was reissued as a triple CD album in 1996 (CD430206, 430213, 430220) and 2015 (CD432248). In addition, the *Liturgy* and *Opelo* with solo bass singer, protodeacon Vlado Mikić (1940–2017), were reissued as a separate CD (613011) in 1987.²⁴

While the aforementioned editions can be understood as efforts to shape the sound image of Mokranjac's oeuvre through the collection of all his works that have been proved to have canonical status since the time of the composer, an interesting example of both the widening and the additional construction of the canon is conspicuous in the case of the *Strasna sedmica* [*Passion Week*], recorded as a live performance of the RTB/RTS Choir and conductor Vladimir Kranjčević (1936–) at the Mausoleum of Oplenac in May 1990, and published as both LP (230545) and cassette (530344) in 1991, as well as a compact disc (431203) in 2003.²⁵ A unique dramatic

Popović (LP2403). Data on sound engineer, producer, editors and in general recording place and dates are not mentioned in the archive documentation or the LP editions themselves. On the LP sleeve of all three recordings there is the same informative, short text on Mokranjac written by Mihailo Vukdragović.

21 According to data available at: <https://www.discogs.com/artist/995806-Stevan-Stojanovi%C4%87-Mokranjac?limit=50&page=1> the year is 1982. The official document stored in PGP-RTB/RTS is dated in 14 September 1981.

22 LP 1 includes Rukoveti Nos. 1–6 (soloists: Karolj Kolar, Jovan Reljin, Radovan Popović, Zoran Popović, Nikola Mitić, Zorica Dimitrijević Stošić, Stevan Strunjašević, Irina Arsikin); LP 2 includes Rukoveti Nos. 7–13 (soloist: Karolj Kolar); LP 3 includes Rukoveti Nos. 14–15, *Primorski napjevi*, *Kozar*, *Opelo* (soloists: Karolj Kolar, Vlado Mikić). LP 4 includes the Liturgy, soloist Vlado Mikić. Editor in chief of PGP-RTB/RTS was Stanko Terzić, the edition reviewer was the musicologist Neda Bebler, the sound engineer was Slobodan Mladenović, the producer and recording supervisor Milorad Kuzmanović.

23 Petar Bingulac (1897–1990) was a lawyer, philosopher, theologian and musicologist, and a prominent Yugoslav diplomat in Milan, Prague and Sofia. He was a professor at the Academy of Music in Belgrade and a research associate at the Institute of Musicology SASA. He is the author of several important studies on Mokranjac, and the text included in the booklet is based on excerpts from his text "Stevan Mokranjac and his garlands" (Bingulac 1956).

24 According to <https://www.discogs.com/Stevan-St-Mokranjac-Hor-RTV-Beograd-Mladen-Jagu%C5%AD-Liturgija-Opelo/release/2615308>

25 The first edition was issued when the editor-in-chief was Stanko Terzić. Neda Bebler is listed as this edition's editor, with Svetozar Karakušević as reviewer. Sound engineers were Kurt Kindle and Zoran

whole of eleven numbers of the *Strasna sedmica*, which does not exist in Mokranjac's opus as a complete liturgical form, was invented by the composer, conductor and expert on sacred music Vojislav Ilić,²⁶ who connected various numbers of Mokranjac's music into one new, integral musical work.²⁷ The cycle *Strasna sedmica* was released at the time when Vladimir Kranjčević, a famous conductor from Croatia, was hired as chef conductor of the RTB/RTS musical ensembles (1988–1991). His interpretative project with the RTB/RTS Choir was presented as a cultural and musical event of the first importance, which was “crowned” by the mentioned edition.²⁸

Since sacred Orthodox music did not fit into the new model of culture after World War II, being viewed as unacceptable and even potentially dangerous, it was precisely Mokranjac's opus that formed an important axis in reducing this kind of political control (Milin 2015). However, the relatively late dates of the said releases of his sacred music confirm the conclusion on gradual changes. The weakening of control was a process that started especially thanks to the activities of the Belgrade Madrigalists and their conductors (Vesić and Peno 2018). One of them was Vojislav Ilić, who conducted the choir in performance of Mokranjac's Liturgy at the *Sagra musicale* international festival in Perugia in 1966, one year before the work was recorded on the aforementioned edition of the *Putnik* travel agency.²⁹ This programme direction was still unique and an alternative example in choir performance at that time, which the state record label was not immediately ready to adopt. One could say that it started cautiously, three years later, with the joint edition with the Patriarchate of Serbian Orthodox Church, presenting a performance of the Liturgy by the Collegium Musicum choir and Vojislav Ilić. Soloists were Živadin Đorđević and Miloš Erdeljan. The recording includes the sound of the bells of the Orthodox Cathedral in Belgrade. This LP (2406) is dated in 1971, and was reissued again in 1973, 1976, 1984, 1987, in

Marinković, while Jugoslav Bošnjak served as producer. The CD booklet was equipped with the text by musicologist Ivana Trišić, written for the concert performance at BEMUS in 1990.

26 On Vojislav Ilić (1911–1999) see Đaković 2015: 73, 79, 88–94, 160, 212, 218, 235–237; for his biography see Kirčanski 1982 and Ribić 2012.

27 Next to Mokranjac's settings of texts sung on Holy Friday (*Tebe odjejučagosja* [1892] and *O kako bezakonje* [1893]) and Easter Saturday morning (*Tri Statije* [1906–1909]), Ilić included *Da ispravitsja* (1906) and the *Akathistos* (1892) as well as some unison voice pieces from *Strano pjenije*.

28 The premiere performance of the cycle *Strasna sedmica* was held in Negotin, at the *Mokranjčevi dani* festival on 14 September 1990, and then repeated one month later, on 15 October, at the BEMUS Festival in Belgrade. See Trišić 2003; Marinković 2015.

29 The discourse on the choir's goals and profile is oriented towards sacred music, as may be seen from the comments by Milan Bajšanski (the choir's founder) on Mokranjac, his work, and on the activities of the choir, printed in the booklet. This is evident from the mention of the repertoire of the first concert (dedicated to music by Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina and Mokranjac), as well as the choir's participation in the international congress of Byzantine studies, with the repertoire dedicated to Serbian and Russian sacred music.

BILJANA MILANOVIĆ & MARIJA MAGLOV

MOKRANJAC ON REPEAT: REAFFIRMING MUSICAL CANON THROUGH SOUND RECORDINGS
(PGP-RTB/RTS DISCOGRAPHY)

cassette form in 1984 and three further times, years of publications unknown.³⁰

At a time of the intensive revival of sacred music performances in concert practice during 1990s, when the genre became a desirable tool of national identification and thus adopted by various choirs, the state label's fitting-in of the new official policy resulted in one peculiar, and until then unusual edition of Mokranjac's *Liturgy*. It was Vojislav Ilić's arrangement of the work, performed by the children's ensemble of the RTB/RTS Musical Production, the *Kolibri* choir, conducted by Milica Manojlović (1933–2008) and with participation of the tenor Dragoslav Pavle Aksentijević.³¹ As a long-time expert on church music, Ilić was also honoured with the posthumous recognition of this choir and its conductor by the edition *Kolibri u spomen Vojislavu Iliću* [*Kolibri in memory of Vojislav Ilić*] (CD 450327). As well as the *Liturgy*, this time recorded with the soloist Nenad Ristović, in March 2003 at the Cathedral Church in Belgrade, the issue included Ilić's own singing of nineteen hymns from the *Osmoglasnik* [Octoechos], notated by Mokranjac according to traditional church chant.³² As was stressed in the CD booklet, Ilić's singing was recorded in the studio of Radio Belgrade at the time when this tradition "was neglected and, though used in the church services, almost completely unknown to the wider audience of Belgrade Radio. The record is interesting at the first place because of the manner of singing of the religiously educated musician, who wanted to present Stevan Mokranjac's melographic records and exemplary way of singing church chant" (Petrović [2003]: 20).

2.2. MOKRANJAC'S MUSIC ON SOUND EDITIONS OF VARIOUS CHORAL ENSEMBLES

While recordings by Simić, Vukdragović, Bajšanski, Ilić, Kranjčević and especially Jagušć maintain a noteworthy place in discography of Mokranjac's works, because of the fact that those recordings are specifically conceived as being solely devoted to Mokranjac's oeuvre, these performers are not the only ones who recorded the works in question, nor did their recordings cover all the composer's works. As was noted, those particular performances are far from the only ones issued by the PGP-RTB/RTS label. However, the other recordings were published by particular performers/ensembles, which included different compositions on their recorded repertoire. By analysing these kinds of recordings, we may gain insight into the presence of Mokranjac's works

30 This data is found on *Discogs – Music Database and Marketplace*. In official documentation of PGP RTB/RTS only the documentation concerning the audio cassette was found, dated 29 August 1984.

31 The sound material was recorded at the Vavedanje monastery and published as a compact disc (450051) in 1998 according to *Discogs – Music Database and Marketplace*.

32 Editor-in-chief was Vladimir Marković, sound engineers were Goran Letunica and Zoran Marin-ković, producer was Mario Kremzir, while musicologist Danica Petrović wrote the text that was published in Serbian and English in the CD booklet. The exact dates of Ilić's recordings as well as issue's releasing are not noted on the CD. However, Romana Ribić mentioned 2003 as the year of publishing (2012: 163).

not only in terms of recordings devoted to his oeuvre, but when decisions to include his works came (by assumption) on the initiative of ensembles themselves.

There are in total nine different choral ensembles, in addition to the RTB/RTS Choir, which included Mokranjac in their repertoire and recorded it for the PGP-RTB/RTS from 1975 to 2004. Beside those from Belgrade, almost half of them are based in other Serbian cities, such as Niš, Šabac, Zrenjanin and Subotica, indicating the strong choir culture that was maintained in Serbian/Yugoslav musical life. Also, while there is no direct indication that inclusion of these ensembles in the PGP-RTB/RTS catalogue was motivated by the strong turn towards decentralisation in 1974, it is still worth noting that since the mid-1970s there was consistent representation of choirs from various parts of the republic.³³ It should be noted too that these recordings were mostly made at the time when choirs of cultural-artistic societies were still prominently active as well as youth ensembles of various types. In particular, these editions were put out by: two female academic choirs – *Collegium Musicum* from Belgrade and the *66 devojaka* [*66 Girls*] choir from Šabac;³⁴ two mixed choir ensembles of academic cultural-artistic societies (AKUDs), both based in Belgrade – the choirs of AKUD *Ivo Lola Ribar* and AKUD *Žikica Jovanović Španac*;³⁵ two youth choirs – one of which, *Koča Kolarov* from Zrenjanin, functions as a city ensemble, while the other, *Dr Vojislav Vučković*, works as the choir of the music school from Niš;³⁶ two civil choirs – the First Belgrade Choral Society as well as the Chamber Male Choir *Stanislav Binički* from Kruševac; and, finally, only two professional ensembles – the

33 In 1974, a new Constitution was established after much unrest, giving more autonomy to the republics forming the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

34 The *Collegium Musicum* Academic Choir, one of the most eminent domestic ensembles, was founded in 1971, at the initiative of Professor Vojislav Ilić. It is formed by female students of Faculty of Music. Since its foundation, the choir has been conducted by Darinka Matić Marović and performed over 200 premieres. The choir *66 devojaka* [*66 Girls*] was formed as youth choir in 1963, within the Teacher's School in Šabac, which became the Pedagogical Academy in Šabac. This female choir was led by professor Branko Đurković, and, under the present name, had significant success both domestically and abroad.

35 AKUD *Ivo Lola Ribar* was formed in 1944, just after the liberation of Belgrade. It was named after the youth and academic partisan leader. Formed as a youth choir, it became academic since many of its members were/are students. Many famous Yugoslav and Serbian singers and musicians were former members (such as Radmila Bakočević and Miroslav Čangalović, among others). AKUD *Žikica Jovanović Španac* is an association of students of Belgrade University, dedicated to theatre, instrumental and choir music, as well as folk music. The choir was founded in 1954 and since its beginning has been stationed within Studentski grad [Student city].

36 The *Koča Kolarov* Youth Choir was founded in Zrenjanin in 1966. Professor Mirko Bulovan became the conductor of the choir in 1970 and from this time it began to participate in festivals and competitions. Singers of the choir are all between 15 to 19 years old. The *Dr Vojislav Vučković* Youth Choir was founded in 1969 in Niš. It was led by Radojica Milosavljević, whose name it bears today. The choir members are students of the local Music school.

BILJANA MILANOVIĆ & MARIJA MAGLOV

MOKRANJAC ON REPEAT: REAFFIRMING MUSICAL CANON THROUGH SOUND RECORDINGS
(PGP-RTB/RTS DISCOGRAPHY)

Belgrade Chamber Choir and the RTB/RTS Choir.³⁷ In general, although all aforementioned choral bodies belong to different social and artistic contexts, we can see that their common feature was their publicly recognised quality, which had already been ascertained through the various public appearances, accolades and awards of each individual choir within its social and performing category.

Considering the concept of each particular issue in the second group of editions, two types of ensemble presentation may be seen. One of them relies on a selection of representative examples from the choir's repertoire, which are presumed to show considerable interpretative abilities in the performance of traditional and/or contemporary choral literature as "high" art music. In addition, these kinds of editions usually indicate a specific whole in terms of repertoire. On the other hand, the second type of edition pretends to be a part of "popularised" art music, which implies various kinds of repertoire.

Among the former type of recordings, two compact discs are focused on Orthodox sacred music. The Belgrade Chamber Choir and its conductor Vladimir Marković included Mokranjac's Opelo in their edition dedicated to Russian and Serbian sacred music, performed in the Belgrade Gallery of Frescoes and issued in 2001 (CD431142).³⁸ The other edition, released under the name *Srpska duhovna muzika. Dela najvećih srpskih kompozitora – horovođa Društva* [*Serbian Sacred Music. Works of greatest Serbian composers – choir directors of the Society*] (CD 430602 in 1998), was also prepared as a live recording, presenting a concert of the First Belgrade Choral Society under the leadership of Vladimir Milosavljević.³⁹ The concept of the CD – including its title itself – is a reminiscent of a long-established strategy of presentations of the same choir from the time of its prominent conductor Stevan Mokranjac, when concert programmes, along with other – spoken, written and visual – narratives, had been devised to map as well as memorialise the historical sequence of prominent conductors of the Society, and thus to build an elite and leading position of the Society in the construction of the canon of Serbian national music (Milanović 2014d: 22–24). The recording was released after several decades of a changed, marginalised position of the Society in the public cultural space, when the activities of the Society had been reduced to its status as the Belgrade Cathedral Choir Society

37 The Male Chamber Choir *Stanislav Binički* was founded in Kruševac, in 1973. The choir is particularly dedicated to the repertoire of sacred music, presenting it in concerts both in Serbia and abroad. The Belgrade Chamber Choir was founded in 1996, and comprises 20 professional artists. Vladimir Marković has been the conductor of the choir since its founding. The choir performs a wide-ranging repertoire of spiritual music.

38 There are five numbers on the compact disc: *Liturgija Sv. Jovana Zlatoustog* comprising music by various Russian composers; *Svjati Bože* [*Holy God*] by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840–1893); *Heruvimska pesma* [*Cherubic Hymn*] by Josif Marinković (1851–1931); *Molitva Davidova* [*The Prayer of David*] by Vladimir Milosavljević; Mokranjac's Opelo is the closing composition.

39 The concert was held on the occasion of the 145th anniversary of the Society (Cf. Petrović, Đaković and Marković 2004: 141).

(Cf. Petrović, Đaković and Marković 2004: 105–143). The time of “transition”, which implied a revival of bourgeois societies that had not been welcomed in the political and social context of the communist state after the World War II, is very noticeable here. The edition is marked by a nostalgia for the former “glory” and elite position of the Society. The aim for the renewal of image and reaffirmation of the Choir is presented here through the sacred music of Serbian composers who were professionally connected to the Society as their conductors, starting from Kornelije Stanković (1831–1865). In this sound construction of an historical narrative, Mokranjac’s place is the most prominent. Among 14 numbers, there are three of his compositions: *Njest svjat, Heruvimska pesma, Kanon Evharistije* [*The Canon of Eucharist*].⁴⁰

Other representative repertoires in editions by different ensembles were selected to present Serbian or both Serbian and foreign choral literature. In the case of the *Ivo Lola Ribar Academic Choir*, two of its LPs for PGP-RTB/RTS are dedicated to Serbian composers. The first of them, with conductor Ivan Dražinić, released in 1975 (LP2433), contains 10 numbers among which two compositions of Mokranjac are present (*Akatist* and *Rukovet No. 11*).⁴¹ The double album (3130088) from 1984, with conductor Milovan Pančić, is dominated by the recording of the *Opelo* by Stevan Hristić on one disc, while the other contains repertoire by other composers, including three works by Mokranjac (*Rukovet No. 9, Rukovet No. 11* and *Primorski napjevi*).⁴² Serbian music is also presented on the edition of the *Žikica Jovanović Španac Academic Choir* from 1988 (LP 230120). This time, contemporary choral compositions dominate in the performance of the ensemble under conductor Miloje Nikolić and his assistant Vesna Souc, but with addition of *Rukovet No. 15* by Stevan Mokranjac.⁴³

In the case of the edition of the *Dr Vojislav Vučković Youth Choir*, released in 1988 (LP 230022), one half of the repertoire is dedicated to Mokranjac, while Josip Slavenski, Kosta Babić and the late-Renaissance Venetian composer Baldassare Donati (1525/1530–1603) were represented by one composition each.⁴⁴ A large chronological

40 The rest of the edition includes two compositions by the conductor Vladimir Milosavljević, and one composition each by other composers: Kornelije Stanković, Davorin Jenko (1835–1914), Josif Marin-ković, Stanislav Binički (1872–1942), Stevan Hristić (1985–1958), Miloje Milojević (1884–1946), Kosta Manojlović (1890–1949), Svetolik Paščan-Kojanov (1892–1971), Aleksandar Gavanski (1901–?) and Georgije Maksimović (1929–2014).

41 The other composers included are Krešimir Baranović (1894–1975), Josip Slavenski (1896–1955), Vladimir Berdović (1906–1980) and Vojislav Kostić (1931–2010), each of them represented by one composition, as well as Milorad Kuzmanović (1932–1996) and Konstantin Babić (1927–2009), with two pieces each.

42 There are also compositions by Dmitri Bortnjanski (1751–1825), Milorad Kuzmanović, Konstantin Babić and Todor Skalovski (1909–2004). The last number is *Poema* about Lola Ribar by Radomir Petrović (1923–1991).

43 The LP, under the name *Kazivaljke* [*Clue Rhymes*] contains works by Radomir Petrović, Josip Slavenski, Konstantin Babić, Dušan Radić (1929–2010), Dimitrije Golemović (1954–) and Minta Aleksinački (1947–).

44 Two recordings of the choir’s performances with conductor Radojica Milosavljević in 1975/6 and 1981 were published on this LP. The first of them was held at the radio choral contest “Let the Peoples

BILJANA MILANOVIĆ & MARIJA MAGLOV

MOKRANJAC ON REPEAT: REAFFIRMING MUSICAL CANON THROUGH SOUND RECORDINGS
(PGP-RTB/RTS DISCOGRAPHY)

span and historical frame in the choice of repertoire is also present on the release of the *66 devojaka* Choir under conductor Branko Đurković, from 1976 (LP2549). Fourteen numbers in total comprise the music of local authors, from Davorin Jenko to Dejan Despić, as well as Felice Giardini (1716–1796), an Italian eighteenth century composer, and Victor (Vic) Nees (1936–2013), the contemporary Belgian (Flemish) composer. Mokranjac's *Primorski napjevi* is the closing number of the record. The composition of the Croatian author Ivo Tijardović (1895–1976), which is also present on the edition, suggests the inclusion of other composers from the then-Yugoslav state.⁴⁵ Repertoire strategies of some choral ensembles from Serbia often included such practices, which had their origins in Mokranjac's time (Milanović 2018). In the later socialist context, they sometimes took on new forms of presentation, incorporating music from different Yugoslav republics. This is the case with the edition of the *Collegium Musicum* Academic Chamber Choir under the direction of respected conductor Darinka Matić Marović, released in 1984 to celebrate an important jubilee, the 1000th concert of the ensemble (LP2330113). The repertoire also included the *Kondak* by the Russian composer Pavel Chesnokov (1877–1944) and *Tebe pojem* by Mokranjac, while other works presented various authors from Serbia, Croatia and Macedonia.⁴⁶ This inconspicuous association with official Yugoslav policy is situated in the context of musical popularisation through specific media strategies of the RTB/RTS, embodied in various activities of radio and television presenter Dejan Đurović. It is interesting that along with music parts of the mentioned repertoire, a commentary by Đurović was also recorded. Dedicated to the popularisation of classical music, Đurović's radio show *Dragstor ozbiljne muzike* BG 202 [*Classical Music Store* BG 202] featured choirs in several editions, in addition to recordings of the show or its famous top-list names themselves, indicating a form of cooperation. This is the case with editions of the *Ivo Lola Ribar* Academic Choir, The *Collegium Musicum*, as well as the *Koča Kolarov* Youth Choir.

The LP of the *Koča Kolarov* Youth Choir and its conductor Mirko Bulovan, released in 1985 (LP 2330148), brings a slightly more dispersed repertoire, presenting a mixture of choral music by various composers from Jacob Arcadelt (1507–1568) to contemporary authors, as well as some popular numbers such as the spiritual *Soon No Well Be Down* or a choral version of song *Oh Susanna!* by the American songwriter Stephen Foster (1826–1864). There is, however, a specific sense of the whole, since all

Sing", and run and broadcasted by BBC, when the choir included Mokranjac's *Heruvimska pesma* along with compositions by Slavenski, Babić and Donati. Side B contains recordings from the 16th edition of the *Mokranjčevi dani* festival in Negotin, where choir performed *Tebe pojem* and Rukoveti Nos. 2 and 5.

45 As well as already mentioned authors, the edition includes Mihailo Vukdragović, Marko Tajčević (1900–1984), Vladimir Đorđević (1869–1938), Vojislav Ilić (with two compositions), Berislav Popović (1931–2002), Milivoje Dragutinović, and Kosta Manojlović.

46 Among those composers are Dejan Despić, Aleksandar S. Vujić (1945–2017), Ivan Matetić-Ronjgov (1880–1960), Toma Prošev (1931–1996), Vlastimir Nikolovski (1925–2000), Radomir Petrović, Vladimir Berdović, Dušan Kostić (1925–2005) and Dragutin Gostuški (1923–1998).

numbers are short, virtuosic or of comic character, and musically appealing to a wider audience. One can thus understand why the two compositions by Mokranjac's that introduce the listener into the repertoire are presented in abridged versions (Rukovet No. 5, songs 6–9; Rukovet No. 10, songs 3 and 4).⁴⁷ Another edition of miscellaneous repertoire that perhaps could also be considered under the rubric of popularization was made by the *Stanislav Binički* Chamber Male Choir and conductor Milorad Gale Radovanović in 2001, under the title *U slavu Kruševca [In the glory of Kruševac]* (CD431135). It features a very strong mixture of genres and a total of twenty-five numbers, where one can find sacred music by Serbian and Russian authors as well as patriotic songs and examples of *starogradska muzika* [old urban music], a great part of the recording is dedicated to Mokranjac. There are several parts of his Liturgy (*Prva slava* and *Svjati Bože, Milost mira, Dostojno jest, Svjat, svjat, Tebe pojem, Tebe Boga hvalim*), *Njest Svjat, Himna Sv. Savi* and *Za inat*.⁴⁸

Finally, two ensembles of the Radio Television Serbia (Choir and Symphonic Orchestra) had their own recording published in 2004 (CD 431629), on which 10 numbers by Serbian and international composers were performed.⁴⁹ Given the extensive work on Mokranjac's oeuvre that choir ensemble had done over the previous decades, it is no wonder that one composition by this author (Rukovet No. 1) was included again.

2.3. MOKRANJAC'S MUSIC ON MISCELLANEOUS EDITIONS

The third group of editions does not refer to a particular composer, particular works or a particular choral ensemble. These editions are dedicated to a specific "topic" or "occasion" around which some compositions, authors and/or performers are gathered. The group is heterogeneous, and recordings vary from a multi-part edition of the *Antologija srpske muzike [Anthology of Serbian Music]* to those such as *Božićne pesme [Christmas songs]* or "top lists" of classical music. However, as opposed to these diverse conceptions, what binds these editions together is the RTB/RTS Choir as the main performer.

47 The edition was presented as the "Selection of the Most Successful Recordings in the Period 1979–1984" of the Choir. Composers included, apart from Mokranjac, are: Milorad Kuzmanović, Konstantin Babić, Vladimir Berdović, Giovanni Giacomo Gastoldi (1550–1622), Jacob Arcadelt, Richard Genée (1823–1895), R. Herzl, Emanuel Fabrez, Manuel Oltra (1922–2015), Zoltán Kodály (1882–1967), Georgu Gheorghe Danga and Stephen Foster (in arrangement by Berdović and Bulovan).

48 Other composers included are: Dušan Kotur (1870–1936), Mita Topalović (1849–1912), P. Dvorecki, Dragan Jovašević (1958–), Georgije Maksimović, Pavel Chesnokov, Stanislav Binički, F. Šistek, K. Berić, Davorin Jenko, V. Joksimović and Isidor Bajić (1878–1915).

49 Those are: Petar Konjović (1883–1970), Svetislav Božić (1954–), Vasilije Mokranjac (1923–1984), Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791) and Georg Friedrich Händel (1685–1759). Information on the conductor was not included in the data on the disc.

BILJANA MILANOVIĆ & MARIJA MAGLOV

MOKRANJAC ON REPEAT: REAFFIRMING MUSICAL CANON THROUGH SOUND RECORDINGS
(PGP-RTB/RTS DISCOGRAPHY)

The edition *Antologija srpske muzike*, released as five LPs in 1977 (LP 2601–2605), was created as a selection of representative examples of Serbian music from the nineteenth to the middle of the twentieth century. A historical construction of a series of anthologies is divided according to different genres that found their place on separate LPs of symphonic, chamber, piano, lied and choral music. It is worth mentioning that Mokranjac is represented by two works on the LPs Nos. 4 (Lied) and 5 (Choral music). His solo song *Lem Edim* is performed by bass Branko Pivnički and pianist Konstantin Bogino, while his composition *Ogrejala mesečina* [*The Moonlight Began Shining*] is performed by the RTB Choir under Borivoje Simić. Having in mind that Simić recorded the bulk of Mokranjac's choral music, the inclusion of a lesser-known work instead of the widely-performed rukoveti was perhaps motivated by the idea that the core part of Mokranjac's opus has already (or was planned to be) published. This example of widening the canonical platform of Mokranjac's oeuvre is combined with a selection of other composers and works. The prevalence of Josif Marinković is obvious on both LPs, while usually marginalised composers, such as Isidor Bajić, Stanislav Binički and Petar Krstić (1877–1957), are also included.⁵⁰ This edition "is very significant precisely because of its 'anthological' character, since an 'added value' is given to presented works that forms the desired historicist line of the Serbian music tradition" (Maglov 2016b: 99). Although we could talk about revision of the canon here, one should bear in mind at least two additional aspects. Concerning the said anthology, a very few compositions in total, selected to cover an entire edition, do not permit precise comparison with other practices of canonization that were implemented through elaborate and hierarchised historical narratives (e.g. musicological discourses, concert programme policies etc.).⁵¹ On the other hand, it is important to

50 LP no. 4, dedicated to lied, contains the following compositions: *Potok žubori* [*The Brook is Murmuring*] and *Čežnja* [*Yearning*] by Josif Marinković (orch. by Milan Ristić), *Lem Edim* by Stevan Mokranjac, *Uspavanka mome sinu Vladimiru* [*The Lullaby to my son Vladimir*] by Isidor Bajić (orch. by Milan Ristić), *Sabah* [*The Dawn*], *Chansone* and *Pesma o dvoje* [*Song about Two People*] by Petar Konjović, *Nimfa* [*The Nymph*], *Japan* and *Molitva majke Jugovića zvezdi Danici* [*The Prayer of the Jugović Mother to the Evening Star*] by Miloje Milojević, *Lastavica* [*The Swallow*] and *Veče na Školju* [*Evening on the Beach*] by Stevan Hristić. LP no. 5, dedicated to choral music, contains following compositions: *Srpske narodne pesme* [*Serbian Folk Songs*]: *Devojka sokolu* [*The Girl Doing Wrong to the Falcon*], *Siva maglo* [*Oh Gray Fog*], *Pade listak drenjine* [*Down Fell a Leaf of Cornel-berry*] by Kornelije Stanković, *Deseto kolo* [*The Tenth Ring Dance*] and *Potočara* [*The Brook Mill*] by Josif Marinković (later orch. by Borivoje Simić), *Ogrejala mesečina* by Stevan Mokranjac, *Divna noći* [*On Beautiful Night*] by Stanislav Binički, *Devojka i vetar* [*The Girl and the Wind*] by Petar Krstić, *Tri ženska hora* [*Three Female Choirs*] *Oj, za gorom* [*Behind the Mountain*], *Orošen đerdan* [*The Necklace Covered with Dew*] and *Vragolan* [*The Devil Boy*] by Petar Konjović. In addition to the composers mentioned, the Anthology also includes works by Predrag Milošević (1904–1988), Ljubica Marić (1909–2003), Stanojlo Rajičić (1910–2000), Josip Slavenski and Marko Tajčević. The reviewer of the edition was Davorin Županić and editor-in-chief Dragiša Petković. For the contents of all five LPs see Maglov 2016b: 109–110.

51 For example, there is only one symphony (by Petar Konjović) on LP No. 1, or, to take an example of chamber works on LP No. 2, only three compositions are presented, by Predrag Milošević, Ljubica

consider the broader context of the state label's editions, and note that the presence of other Serbian composers on sound recordings was less than Mokranjac's, which is the fact that will be stressed in the final chapter of this study.

There are several celebratory editions in this group, which were released on certain special occasions. Among them, one of the oldest recordings from the PGP-RTB/RTS catalogue on which data could be found was certainly a recording comprising four compositions that had previously been recorded for other editions and promoted as a celebratory issue under the title *Novogodišnja ploča 1969* [*New Year Record 1969*], released at the end of 1968 (EP-NG5 33 o/m). Mokranjac's composition *Kozar*, performed by the RTB Choir and Borivoje Simić, was included, and together with popular pieces by Wienawski, Prokofiev and Gounod was presented as a "hit" of artistic music, suitable for listening to during the New Year holidays.⁵² This kind of edition is a predecessor of a later, organised popularisation of classical music whose main energiser was the above-mentioned radio and television presenter Dejan Đurović. His strategies for bringing classical music to a wider audience were borrowed from the context of popular music promotion in media culture. The PGP-RTB/RTS catalogue saw many renditions of his popular top lists of classical music "hits". One such recording, named *Top lista Dragstora ozbiljne muzike* [*Classical Music Store Top List*] was published in 1982 as both LP (2139327) and audio cassette (530298).⁵³ This edition saw Mokranjac's sacred piece *Njest svjat*, performed by the RTB Choir and Borivoje Simić, recognised as being such a "hit" – the only one by a Serbian composer among predominantly orchestral works from the Western classical music canon. This placement adds another layer to the perception of Mokranjac as the central composer figure in Serbian music.⁵⁴

The edition of the RTB Choir and conductor Vojislav Ilić, published on both LP and audio cassette in 1990 under the name *Božićne pesme* (LP 230 537, KA 530 336), was also intended for a broader circle of listeners, other than those who had been believers and/or interested in Orthodox church music. Since the early years of "transition" favoured increasing the number of such listeners, demand for these recordings also grew. Mokranjac's music fitted into these "functional" frames, and more than

Marić and Stanojlo Rajičić, while older composers are completely excluded. On the other side, there are no composers of the younger generation among lied and chamber music (LPs Nos. 4 and 5).

52 There are four compositions on this EP: *Kozar* by Mokranjac, *Mazurka* by Henryk Wieniawski (1835–1880), *Gavotte* by Sergei Prokofiev (1891–1953) and the aria of Marguerite from the opera *Faust* by Charles Gounod (1818–1893).

53 For more on the concept of *Classical Music Store* and accompanying media contents, see Maglov 2015.

54 Judging by the programme, a video cassette *Subotom uveče Top lista klasične muzike* [*Saturday Evening Classical Music Top List*, VHS 890162], dated 1990/91, is essentially the same as the earlier audio edition. Mokranjac is again included in the top list with the same composition and its performers. The author of the accompanying music video is director Arsenije Jovanović. The editor of the video programme was Nikola Nešković, editor-in-chief Stanko Terzić, and the authors of the show were Snežana Nikolajević, Dejan Đurović (also serving as its lead) and Aleksandar Mandić.

BILJANA MILANOVIĆ & MARIJA MAGLOV

MOKRANJAC ON REPEAT: REAFFIRMING MUSICAL CANON THROUGH SOUND RECORDINGS
(PGP-RTB/RTS DISCOGRAPHY)

half of the edition comprises his carols, antiphons and other songs, while a considerable number of pieces were written by Ilić himself, with an additional example from Marinković's music.⁵⁵

Another kind of edition that adjusted to official policy of the same time is the CD *Sila krsta* [*The power of the Cross*], dedicated to the 800th anniversary of Hilandar Monastery (CD430572, 1998). This edition comprises Mokranjac's Liturgy sung by the *Kolibri* and Pavle Aksentijević under conductor Milica Manojlović, while the majority of the other works were written or arranged by Zoran Hristić. This is one of rare examples of an edition that presents both the RTB/RTS and other ensembles (*Kolibri*; the RTS Choir and Orchestra; the *Obilić* Choir and the First Belgrade Choral Society).

In the year of Radio Belgrade's 75th anniversary (2004), a celebratory edition under the name *Radio Beograd 75 godina* [*Radio Belgrade 75 years*] was released (CD430923). The compact disc contains 21 numbers in different musical genres, performed by various ensembles associated with the RTB (children's choir, national orchestra, vocal quartet, etc.), in order to present all performing bodies of the state media enterprise. Mokranjac's specific status in Serbian music is confirmed not only by the quantity of compositions included in the selection, but also by the variety of performers. Specifically, as well as Jagušt's recordings of the *Heruvimska pesma*, Rukovet No. 10 and *Kozar*, there is also *Tebe pojem* from the Liturgy performed by the *Kolibri* children's choir, as well as a jazz arrangement of the Rukovet No. 8 by Zvonimir Skerl, performed by the RTB Jazz Orchestra and soloists Milivoje Marković, Stjepko Gut and Mihajlo Blam.⁵⁶

One edition in this miscellaneous group is a rare example of a recording of the spoken word and music published in 1976 under the name *Vuk Karadžić govori* [*Vuk Karadžić Speaks*] (S 26500). Side A of this edition contains a commentary spoken by Predrag Knežević (in synthesised voice), while the other side brings Mokranjac's composer *Himna Vuku Karadžiću* [*Hymn to Vuk Karadžić*]. Although the name of the

55 There are seven compositions by Vojislav Ilić, six by Stevan Mokranjac and one by Josif Marinković (*Prevećni rođisja po ljeti* / *The Pre-eternal was born*). The compositions by Mokranjac are: *Uranila, koledo stara majka* [*The Koledo Singers, Carol*]; *Molitvami Bogorodici, Spasi ni, Sine Božji* (Antifoni) [*Antiphons By the Prayers of the Theotokos and Save us, O Son of God*]; *Roždestvo Tvoje* [*Troparion Thy Nativity, O Christ our God*]; *Ko pije vino za slave Božje* (Slavska) [*He who drinks wine to God's glory at a family Slava, Carol*]; *Tebe Boga hvalim* [*Te Deum*]; *Uskliknimo s ljubavlju svetitelju Savi* [*Hymn to St Sava, Serbian Church Anthem*]. The soloists were Živojin Ćirić, Ana Jovanović and Branimir Jovanović. The sound engineer was Danica Velešević, the producer Jugoslav Bošnjak, the reviewer Svetozar Karakušević, the editor Neda Bebler, and the editor-in-chief Stanko Terzić.

56 On this edition, a very varied spectrum of genres and performers was included (ranging from symphonic and choir music, to jazz, popular music and old urban songs). Mokranjac is the only composer of choir music on this edition, while other representatives from the canon of Serbian art music are Petar Konjović (*Kestenova gora* [*The Chestnut Forest*] from the symphonic tryptich *Koštana*) and Stevan Hristić (*Grlica* [*The Turtle-dove*] from the ballet *Ohridska legenda* [*The Legend of Ohrid*]).

conductor is not mentioned in the documentation, the composition was performed by the RTB Choir, confirming that the range of various editions with Mokranjac's music in the performances of this ensemble includes many different kinds of "functional" issues that tended to be accessible to both specific and general publics.

3. THE PERFORMANCE CANON OF MOKRANJAC'S OEUVRE

During several decades of its activities, the PGP-RTB/RTS acted as one of the canonisers of local musical art. This became more obvious when we take into account an extensive series of twenty-five LP editions under the title *Savremeni domaći kompozitori* [*Contemporary Serbian composers*], which ran from the 1970s and covered many distinguished composer figures with at least one record.⁵⁷ This edition also included several composers active in the interwar period (e.g. Stevan Hristić, Josip Slavenski, Predrag Milošević). Nevertheless, the lesser representation of older composers in the PGP-RTB/RTS recordings of the time was criticised (Jakšić 1979). Although this deficit was soon after partly compensated for, the overall representation in such editions remained more than modest. With the exception of the series of contemporary composers as well as the above-mentioned series of the *Antologija srpske muzike*, there are only four LPs with Konjović's opera *Koštana* (1983) and only one album with music by Josif Marinković (LP 2130653, 1985),⁵⁸ while many composers of the older generations such as Kornelije Stanković, Stanislav Binički, Isidor Bajić and Miloje Milojević are not represented by an individual recording on the state label. The policy of the PGP-RTB/RTS to focus its own publishing activities, mainly for the promotion of composers of younger generations, thereby to induce the construction of the canon of then-contemporary music seems obvious from today's perspective. This context particularly sharpens the fact that Mokranjac was an exception in the broader frame of the label's editions. Not only was the history of local music canonised through his oeuvre, but his music was also very much dominant in comparison with contemporary authors.

Seen from another angle, the same fact is confirmed by several specific editions of the state label. One of them is a film about Stevan Stojanović Mokranjac, a VHS edition from 1997.⁵⁹ This film points to the strategies related to the culture of remembrance, which are inseparable from the formation and reaffirmation of the canon, the various ways in which Mokranjac's image and work were reproduced in Serbian culture of the past (Milanović 2017, 2018) and recent times (Mikić 2012). The subtle maintenance of composer's name and, thus, a symbolical value-inscription is found

57 For the contents of the series see the appendix in Maglov 2016b: 111-114.

58 See <https://www.discogs.com/Josif-Marinkovi%C4%87-%C4%8C%C5%BEnja/release/10183703>.

59 The production was made in cooperation with the Radio Television of Serbia, Centar film, Jugoslovenska kinoteka, Prizma Kragujevac and Niš film. Scenario and text were written by dramatist Petar Volk.

BILJANA MILANOVIĆ & MARIJA MAGLOV

MOKRANJAC ON REPEAT: REAFFIRMING MUSICAL CANON THROUGH SOUND RECORDINGS
(PGP-RTB/RTS DISCOGRAPHY)

in the editions of the Serbian String Quartet *Mokranjac*.⁶⁰ Among its three editions with standard international repertoire (LP 22-2533, 1979; LP 2330067, 1983; LP 430350, 1997), the second was accompanied by a booklet with a commentary by the composer Konstantin Babić on the history of the first Serbian String Quartet and the role of Stevan Mokranjac in this ensemble. The symbolic reaffirmation of the composer's role in Serbian/Yugoslav musical life is carried out through the existence of various institutions in the spheres of education, culture, performance and musical creations that bear his name. Among them are, for example, music schools in Belgrade, Požarevac, Kraljevo, Negotin, Vranje, Senta, Zaječar and Novi Pazar, and choral societies in Belgrade, Negotin and Zaječar, including a cultural-artistic society in his native Mokranje near Negotin. There are also the Belgrade-based *Mokranjac* Association for the promotion of culture, as well as the prestigious annual prize of the Composers' Association of Serbia, the *Stevan Mokranjac* Award. The most prominent place in this diverse network of cultural memory belongs to the *Mokranjčevi dani* festival, founded in 1966 in Negotin, which during its decades of existence has acquired the role of one of the greatest canonisers of Stevan Mokranjac. The PGP-RTB/RTS connection to the festival is shown by the edition of the RTB Choir and Borivoje Simić from 1975, who recorded several compositions that received awards at this festival (LP 2432).⁶¹

Together with mutual interconnections between the PGP-RTB/RTS and the institutions and sites of memories and promotion of Stevan Mokranjac, the state label role as policy maker in the canonising of performances of Mokranjac's works seems to have had a special, far-reaching effect. Some recordings are amongst those which achieved canonical status because, thanks to the development of technology, they stayed "'forever' 'fixed' in famous performances" which "opens a whole new set of questions on how we listen to Mokranjac, and how we hear him, and which could be further applied to the practices of listening (to domestic choir music) in general" (Mikić 2012: 4). Our understanding of the topic is related to the performances which are repeatedly present over several PGP-RTB/RTS editions, as well as the specific performance styles of particular ensembles and conductors. The repetitiveness of these editions and the "frozen" state of the performances meant that these particular ways in which Mokranjac's works were performed were "engraved" in collective reception of how Mokranjac's music should sound. It has even more impact if there are repeated reissues of recordings, in different media formats, and in different repertoire constellations, emphasising certain performances as even more significant and adding to their recognisability in the cultural life and minds of listeners. In that sense, coming full circle as regards PGP-RTB/RTS recordings of Mokranjac's, the fact that

60 It has to do with the Serbian String Quartet (1971–1992) that worked under the name of Mokranjac from 1882. In recent times, another ensemble with the name of the composer, *Mokranjac* String Quartet (2011), has been active.

61 Among them are *Pesme rastanka* by Ljudmila Frajt (1919–1999), *Madrigal* by Vlado Špoljarić, *Razbrajalice* by Konstantin Babić, *Šaljivka* and *Čobanske* by Vladimir Berdović, *Pesme Janje Čičak* by Vojin Komadina, and *Zakukuljeno* by Vojislav Ilić.

in addition to the most repeated albums of performances conducted by Simić, Ilić and especially Jaguš, some other editions contain excerpts of these same recordings further adds to their status of “the” ultimate Mokranjac performances.

In addition to these “peaks”, all other performances with the RTB/RTS Choir, the first professional and one of the most distinguished choral ensembles in the country are dominant in comparison to other choirs. One can understand that the state label invested its power position in the promotion of the ensemble with whom it shared the same institutional house. Also, there is a broader dominance of the Choir in public presentations, which is very conspicuous when looking at statistics on the number of their concerts under various conductors held at *Mokranjčevi dani* festival.⁶² The public prominence of the ensemble was also confirmed and recognised when the performance of Mokranjac’s compositions by the Choir and Mladen Jaguš was awarded in 1982 with the October Award of Belgrade, one of the highest recognitions for achievements in arts and culture (Milanović 2014c: 116).

Thanks to individual conductors the RTB/RTS Choir became the main body that set performance standards in interpretation of Mokranjac’s music. In this context, it is worth bearing in mind that all of its leaders had a very deep respect for Mokranjac. In addition, the broader activities of some of them, such as composing, editing, organizing or scholarly work in music, their other institutional positions and, finally, their public narratives as well as the mutual collaboration of some of them, were among various factors that influenced the empowering of their images as unique performing experts in the performance of Mokranjac’s music.

Thus, Simić and Ilić found their creative models of composing precisely in Mokranjac’s oeuvre. That had its parallel in their orientations towards the composer as conductors, Simić’s in performing secular music, and Ilić’s in the sacred genres. Vukdragović stressed in public interviews his attachment to his initial creative impulses found in Mokranjac’s works: “I was drawn to Mokranjac’s shaping of folk melodies into original works of art and by his ability to translate the values of authentic folklore into his creative language. I, myself, have also remained loyal to those ideas during my five decades of composing” (see Milanović 2014c: 24).

Vukdragović was among the key figures in the foundation of the *Mokranjčevi dani* in Negotin and the Yugoslav Choral Festival in Niš. As a corresponding member of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts (SASA) since 1950, and then a full member since 1961, he was also credited with the restoration of Mokranjac’s birth-house that has been transformed and institutionalised as the museum. Vukdragović’s editorial work was an important contribution to the shaping of the long-awaited first publication of texts by (ethno)musicologists and musical experts on Mokranjac, published by SANU (cf. Vukdragović 1971). As versatile energiser of musical life and especially

62 During half of the century, the Choir was led by Borivoje Simić (1971, 1972, 1974, 1975, 1976, 1978, 1979, 1980), Mladen Jaguš (1981, 1982, 1983, 1985, 1997, 2006, 2011), Vladimir Kranjčević (1988, 1990), Bojan Sudić (1992, 1993 – twice, 1995 – twice, 2010, 2014 – twice), Đorđe Stanković (2002) and Darinka Matić Marović (2003). The statistical data does not include their performances of vocal-instrumental works (Marinković 2015).

BILJANA MILANOVIĆ & MARIJA MAGLOV

MOKRANJAC ON REPEAT: REAFFIRMING MUSICAL CANON THROUGH SOUND RECORDINGS
(PGP-RTB/RTS DISCOGRAPHY)

amateur music-making, as well as a highly ranked individual in the musical, educational and cultural milieu of the socialist period,⁶³ Vukdragović used his positions to engage in the propagation of Mokranjac's work. His activities as a conductor were an integral part of this context.

Mladen Jagušt maintained his stance that Mokranjac was an unsurpassed choral composer, claiming "that we have somehow not managed to place Mokranjac's music in the world" (Milanović 2014c: 26–27). The occasion of the celebration of the 125th anniversary of the composer's birth was marked by the release of the above-mentioned quadruple LP of the Choir and Jagušt and by a number of festival performances, as well as a guest appearance in the Soviet Union (Milanović 2014c: 27). These came at the time when a more systematic approach to publishing music by Serbian composers was taken at the PGP-RTB/RTS, as opposed to earlier years, when editions came without a particular plan or order (Jakšić 1979). Certainly, this new turn in the label's publishing policies helped with the realisation of the plan to give Mokranjac the place that was, according to shapers of musical and cultural life at the time, his due. Thus, this complex undertaking by maestro Jagušt and choir ensemble that has already taken a specific place in Serbian musical culture was further affirmed first with the LP album and then many reissues in new media formats that followed every few years.

Vojislav Ilić, an expert on the human voice and choral singing, professor at the Academy of Music in Belgrade (1951–1980) who was educated both in theology and conducting, acted as one of the most important editors of the Complete Works of Stevan Mokranjac (1992–1999). Along with his other activities as conductor and promoter of church music at the beginning of the transition of the 1990s, it was one of the opportunities for him to show that he had never given up interest in Mokranjac's church music. His influence on some conductors was very visible and peculiar. For example, Vladimir Kranjčević was thankful to Ilić who directed him, as he stressed, "into all secret connections between Mokranjac's music and the liturgical text". Kranjčević believed that Mokranjac's music "was written from the soul, so this vibrancy was especially felt and transmitted to the ensemble and the auditorium" during performance. He claimed that Mokranjac's sacred music was "unrivalled" and that some of it "represented the greatest pinnacles of world choral literature" (Marinković 2015: 165–167).

In conclusion, we can stress that the PGP-RTB/RTS activities in the publishing of Mokranjac's music included a set of factors that affected the nurturing the image of Mokranjac through releasing of his music, which was presented by recordings of various kinds of ensembles as well as by different publishing concepts, from albums and integral editions to "functional" and "popular" issues. These aspects of publishing policy covered both the musically informed and a broader public. At the same time, the professional choral ensemble of the state media house was at the centre of these publishing activities, which involved strategies of presentations of the Choir as

63 To mention only a few of his various functions: Professor at the Academy of Music (today Faculty of Music), and its Rector, 1947–1952; first Rector of the Academy of Arts (today University of Arts), 1957–1959; General Secretary of the Composers' Union of Yugoslavia, 1953–1962 etc.

the most distinguished performer of Mokranjac's work. On the one hand, it is evident that unquestionable domination of the state label during the socialist period produced some of the most valuable editions. The period of the 1990s was characterised by efforts to intensify the publishing of the sacred works. Right from the beginning of the twenty-first century, PGP-RTS's engagement on new publishing projects steadily declined. Since 2003 the state label has not published a single sound edition presenting a new performance of Mokranjac's work. On the other hand, however, relying on the cultural capital acquired during its dominance as well as the sound resources of older projects, the PGP-RTS did not completely give up its practice of repeating its editions. Recordings that were periodically reissued over time have imposed on collective reception an idea of how Mokranjac's music should sound. It is this strategy of repetition that has further strengthened the actuality of older interpretations, contributing to their canonical status even in the present time.

Finally, it should be emphasised that the next step of this examination should focus especially on the period after the 1990s, in order to analyse the production of other publishers and acquire a picture of Mokranjac's music in the contemporary context of the discography. Furthermore, given the need to explore the complex processes of canonization in post-World War II local music practices, it would be of interest to conduct a comprehensive comparative study, and to see the mutual synergy and/or conflict in the positioning of various agents of canonization in the field of discography and of other relevant areas such as music performance, creation, education and musicology.

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BILJANA MILANOVIĆ & MARIJA MAGLOV

MOKRANJAC ON REPEAT: REAFFIRMING MUSICAL CANON THROUGH SOUND RECORDINGS
(PGP-RTB/RTS DISCOGRAPHY)

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BILJANA MILANOVIĆ & MARIJA MAGLOV

MOKRANJAC ON REPEAT: REAFFIRMING MUSICAL CANON THROUGH SOUND RECORDINGS
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