



RECORDINGS OF TWENTIETH CENTURY SERBIAN CHURCH CHANT

MATERIAL EVIDENCE OF INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

NATAŠA MARJANOVIĆ

Institute for Musicology of Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts
natasamarjanovic4@gmail.com

INTRODUCTION

Traditional Orthodox Serbian church chant, based on the older Greek, Byzantine and Serbian church chant tradition, was set on its course at the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century. In the history of Serbian church music this was a turning point to the new period. After the Great Migrations of the Serbs to the Habsburg monarchy (at the end of the seventeenth century), the musical tradition with Byzantine basis and with the roots in the work of the brothers Cyril and Methodius continued its living and gradually modified in the new cultural space. Serbian, that is, Byzantine musical practice was 'confronted' with the music of Western Europe and Europeanized Russian church music. Among the other influences, the diverse musical life in the new environment encouraged 'adaptation' to the European musical style. Nevertheless, the need for preservation of the national identity and religious affiliation was dominant among Serbs in the Austro-Hungarian Empire.¹

During the nineteenth century traditional Serbian church chant was cultivated among Serbs living in different geographical and cultural spaces which used to belong to the two empires: Austro-Hungary and the Ottoman

1 Danica Petrović, "Church Elements in Serbian Ritual Songs," *V Grazer Balkanologen Tagung 1973* (Graz: Grazer musikwissenschaftliche Arbeiten 1, 1975), 109–125; Danica Petrović, „Српско литургијско појање и јерархија Карловачке митрополије.” In *Три века Карловачке митрополије 1713–2013* (Сремски Карловци 2013), 567–585; Predrag Đoković, „Путеви традиције: од старог ка новијем српском црквеном појању.” *Савремено и традиционално у музичком стваралаштву* (Источно Сарајево: Универзитет у Источном Сарајеву, Музичка академија 2020), 63–86.

Empire (today constituting different national countries). It flourished primarily in the monasteries in Fruška Gora and in the seminaries and secular schools in the territory of the Metropolitanate of Karlovci (Austro-Hungary), but also among the Serbs who lived in the Ottoman Empire. Serbian church chant was part of both the liturgical and the private life of the Serbian people across different cultural and geopolitical frameworks. This is documented in archival documents, as well as in newspapers, correspondences and autobiographical works.²

For decades this chant was transmitted exclusively as an oral tradition. It was written down for the first time in the mid-nineteenth century with the encouragement of the Serbian Orthodox Church hierarchy, who recognised the need to have the traditional melodies written down in musical notation in order to ensure their preservation and to facilitate learning for the younger generations. With the significant help of the Metropolitan of Karlovci, later Serbian Patriarch Josif (Rajačić), as well as the Metropolitan of Serbia Mihailo (Jovanović), this work was undertaken by Kornelije Stanković (1831–1865), one of the first educated Serbian musicians. He wrote down, at first place in unison form, the vast repertoire of the annual cycle of liturgical hymns according to the singing of the nest church musicians, singers from the monasteries of Karlovci and Fruška Gora.³ During the second half of the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries important music collections were compiled by Stanković's younger followers, educated composers, theologians, priests and laymen.⁴ These collections ensured that the melodies of the Serbian church chant from the two previous centuries were standardized and preserved until the present day.

Audio recordings of traditional (unison) Serbian chant have an especial value as authentic and unique testimony of this segment of the Serbian musical heritage. This paper focuses on representative twentieth century recordings of the Serbian church chant, many of which have been

2 Danica Petrović, „Будим и Пешта у историји српске музике.“ In *Друштвене науке о Србима у Мађарској* (Будимпешта: САНУ, Српска самоуправа у Мађарској 2003), 55–66; Nataša Marjanović, *Музика у животу Срба у 19. веку – из мемоарске ризнице* (Нови Сад – Београд: Матица српска – Музиколошки институт 2019).

3 In further stages of his work, Stanković harmonized greater part of the written melodies for mixed choir. See: Danica Petrović, „Станковић – мелограф српског појања“, „Извори и начела издања,“ In: Корнелије Станковић, *Сабрана дела, Осмогласник* (књ. За, Зб) (Београд, Нови Сад: Музиколошки институт Српске академије наука и уметности, Завод за културу Војводине 2014), 15–18, 19–25; Danica Petrović, „Црквена музика у Сабраним делима Корнелија Станковића: поводом обележавања 150-годишњице смрти,“ *Зборник Матице српске за сценске уметности и музику* 53 (2015): 159–172 ; Nataša Marjanović, „Erhaltene einstimmige Aufzeichnungen des serbischen kirchlichen Volksgesangs aus der Feder des Kornelije Stanković,“ In *Theorie und Geschichte der Monodie*, Band 7/2 (2014): 515–540; Nataša Marjanović, „Gesangweisen des serbischen Kirchengesangs in melographischen Aufzeichnungen und Harmonisierungen von Kornelije Stanković,“ In *Theorie und Geschichte der Monodie*, Band 9/1 (2018): 149–187. A large multi-annual project on the preparation of the complete written music legacy in the *Complete Works of Kornelije Stanković* (project lead and chief editor Prof. Dr. Danica Petrović).

4 Petrović, „Church Elements“; Danica Petrović, „Српска црквена музика као предмет музиколошких истраживања,“ *Зборник Матице српске за сценске уметности и музику* 15 (1995): 31–46. Many of those collections testify to the version of Serbian chant specific to the tradition cherished among the Serbian communities in the area north of the Danube, Sava and Drina rivers. As the term 'Prečani Serbs' (*Prečani*) was used to distinguish Serbs from 'Serbia' and Serbs in the Habsburg/Austro-Hungary monarchy, the term 'prečanski' chant (*prečansko pojanje*) is used to refer to the variant of traditional Serbian chant from that area. Among its main characteristics are richly ornamented melodies and slower singing.

published but that also include one large archival audio collection that has not been known to the public until now. The chosen archival material allows for numerous interpretations (given its varied origin and the circumstances in which it was recorded). It is my choice to present the selected audio recordings as examples of the style of church chant in Serbian churches and monasteries at two points in time – first in the 1930s, and then in the second half of the twentieth century. These material testimonies concerning the living chant tradition allow us today to learn about Serbian church chant and thus to bear witness to its survival as an intangible cultural heritage of our times.

LAZAR LERA AND HIS CONSERVATORY OF SERBIAN CHURCH CHANT (1933)

The oldest known audio recordings of Serbian church chant were published in 1933, under the title of “Conservatory of Serbian Church Chant” (Расаџник српског православног црквеног појања). The key participant in this project was Lazar Lera (1885–1966), teacher and exceptional church chanter, who had studied and practiced church chant at the very source of this tradition, among the well-versed and respected chanters in Sremski Karlovci, in Sombor with Dušan Kotur, and as a student of Radivoje Bikar, who himself has studied with the Karlovci chanter Gerasim Petrović.⁵ In the interwar period Lera was an active chanter in several Belgrade churches, and especially noteworthy is his work as a chanter and teacher in Zemun where in addition to his regular duties as the chanter at the Church of the Holy Virgin (from 1933), he taught the basics of church chant to school children. With the agreement of the Synod of the Serbian Orthodox church and under the auspices of the Ministry of Education, she organised and led a private school of Serbian church chant in Zemun.⁶

Together with Čeda Dimitrijević, a well-known merchant from Pest, and with two other chanters from Zemun, Lera worked on a pioneering project to record the large corpus of the most important hymns from the annual cycle of the liturgical repertoire of Serbian chant.⁷ The main goal of the project, called “Conservatory of Serbian Church Chant” (Расаџник српског православног црквеног појања) was to enable those interested in church chant to learn the basic chanting repertoire, and fundamental chanting skills. Sponsored by Čeda Dimitrijević, this edition was published in Zagreb in 1933 at the *Edison Bell Penkala* publishing house, on 78rpm records.⁸ The collection contains 160 set hymns of the General chant, Festal

5 Konstantin Kostić, *Из прошлости Учитељске школе у Сомбору* (Нови Сад, 1938), 134; Dimitrije Stefanović, „Лазар Лера (1885–1966). Прилог историји музичке културе код Срба,“ *Зборник Матице српске за друштвене науке* 50 (1968): 163–165; Predrag Miodrag, „Знаменити професори црквеног појања и литургије у Карловачкој митрополији и Богословији.“ In *Три века Карловачке митрополије 1713–2013* (Сремски Карловци 2013), 587–600.

6 Nataša Marjanović, „Заоставштина Лазара Лере у Музиколошком институту САНУ – грађа за историју српског црквеног појања, музичке културе и просвете,“ *Темишварски зборник* 13 (2021): 30–31.

7 The chanters Dušan Lambrin and Đorđe Parabučki sang several hymns for the edition.

8 The whole Yugoslav record industry in the period, up to the late 1950s, was located in Zagreb. See: Naila Ceribašić, “Music as Recording, Music in Culture, and the Study of Early Recording Industry in Ethnomusicology: A Take on Edison Bell Penkala“, *IRASM* 52 (2021): 323–354.

chant, from the Octoechos and the memorial service.⁹ The conception of the collection was based on the basic liturgical units and adapted to the educational purposes of the collection. The first group of hymns, from the Liturgy, selections of hymns from the Vespers and festal troparia, was intended for school children, while the more complex hymns from the second part of the collection – hymns of the so called ‘great chant’ for the Liturgy, matins and vespers, Psalms and Resurrection troparia, festal troparia, megalinaria and festal heirmoi were intended for adults, i.e. for those who were more advanced in chanting skills.¹⁰ Through these recordings, as well as through writing down chant melodies in musical notation, the so called ‘tailoring’ (*krojenje*), setting of the melodies, Lera wanted to contribute to the formation of a correct and “uniform” chant.¹¹ Alongside numerous examples of the ‘small’ church chant characterized by syllabic melodies, the collection is especially interesting for its examples of the elaborate so-called ‘great’ (richly melismatic) chant, whose preservation was especially close to Lera’s heart.¹²

These recordings, as well as numerous examples of church chant that Lera had written down, are valuable testimonies to the Serbian church chant tradition as it was cultivated in the territory of the former Austro-Hungary (some melodies bear traces of local chant practices: ‘from Novi Sad’, ‘from Sombor’, ‘from Karlovci’). The audio recordings of Lera’s chanting are authentic examples of the so-called ‘prečanska’ tradition of Serbian church chant – the tradition present among the Serbs north (on the other side from Serbia proper) of the Sava and the Danube. Future studies of his interpretations could shed additional light on various aspects of Lera’s personal style of chanting which was marked by notably slow singing, very precise enunciation of text and recognisable metrical-rhythmic frameworks specific to certain hymns, i.e. melodies.

In the interwar period, when the *Conservatory* was published, Serbian church chant had ceased to be an obligatory subject in teacher training colleges and state schools,¹³ which led to a significant drop in

9 Future answers to the questions about the flow and the method of work on the recording of the *Conservatory* can certainly be found in Lera’s numerous handwritten music records and the works of his predecessors and contemporaries.

10 Milica Andrejević, “Звучни снимци српског православног црквеног појања,” *Свеске Матице српске* 45 (2006): 78.

11 The term ‘tailoring’ (in Serbian *krojenje*) means setting the melodies of the Modes of the Octoechos, their specific melodic formulas in particular order, to the hymnographical texts. Concerning Lera’s view of the importance of this chanting skill see: Lazar Lera, Писмо митрополиту Митрофану, Земун, 14. децембар 1940, Архив Музиколошког института САНУ (Letter to metropolitan Mitrofan, Zemun, 14 December 1940, Archives of the Institute of Musicology, Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts).

12 In the Serbian traditional liturgical music, ‘great chant’ is the term which appeared in the 19th century, implying very melismatic melodies of certain liturgical hymns. Cf. Vesna Peno, “Great Chant in Serbian Tradition – on the Examples of the Melody It is Truly Meet”, *Зборник Матице српске за сценске уметности и музику* 40 (2009): 19–38; Nataša Marjanović, “Great chant in the liturgical practice of the Serbian Orthodox Church”, *Crossroads – Greece as an intercultural pole of musical thought and creativity*, (Thessaloniki: Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, School of Music Studies, International Musicological Society (I.M.S.), Regional Association for the Study of Music of the Balkans, 2013), 569–579; Nataša Dimić, *Аспекти великог појања у контексту српске православне црквене музике*, докторска дисертација, Факултет музичке уметности, Београд 2015; Марјановић, “Заоставштина Лазара Лере”.

13 Cf. Petrović 1995; Danica Petrović, “Традиционално српско народно црквено појање у XX веку. Пут неговања, замирања, страдања и обнављања,” *Црква 2000* (Београд: Календар Српске

numbers of skilled teachers and church chanters and made the *Conservatory* an even more valuable instrument for individual study of church chant. The new edition was also widely used for studying church chant in Serbian monasteries, making its way first of all to many monasteries in Fruška Gora and elsewhere in Serbia (at that time part of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia). Particular documents testify that the publisher, Čeda Dimitrijević, negotiated distribution of the edition also in Split, Plaško, Sarajevo and Cetinje. The importance of the recorded material was quickly recognised by the teachers of church chant. Bishops Mitrofan Abramov, who himself was an excellent and well-versed church chanter who took great care of the music education of the monks and nuns,¹⁴ bought the *Conservatory* for to the students in the monastic school in Visoki Dečani monastery. At the beginning of the 1940s the monks even acquired a specially selected gramophone to facilitate easier study of the recorded hymns.

Lera's edition attracted attention of the Serbian diaspora in the United States, among whom there was also a significant interest in Serbian church chant. Lera's and Dimitrijević's correspondence with the general secretary of the Serbian Singing Association in Detroit in the 1934 shows that the importance of the new audio edition was fully recognised, especially in the light of the Association's main goals to facilitate preservation of the Serbian language, music and tradition.¹⁵ Dimitrijević emphasised the fact that Serbian choral church music had its roots precisely in the unison tradition of church chant.¹⁶

INDIVIDUAL PUBLISHED SERBIAN CHANTERS' RECORDINGS (1974-2013)

The next audio editions of the Serbian chant were published only in the last decades of the twentieth century. Recordings of chanting by Marko Ilić, deacon at the Orthodox Cathedral of the Archangel Michael in Belgrade were published in the late 1970s in Germany.¹⁷ He recorded the Beatitudes and Troparia and Kontakia in all eight Modes. On the occasion of the 770th anniversary of the autocephaly of the Serbian Orthodox Church protodeacons Radomir Perčević and Vlado Mikić recorded most of the hymns from the Octoechos¹⁸ followed by a selection of festal chants, as written down by

православне патријаршије, 1999), 104–111.

14 Aleksej Arsenjev, „Руска емиграција и црквено појање у Србији: 1920–1970. године.“ *Зборник Матице српске за сценске уметности и музику* 55 (2016): 132.

15 See: Krinka Vidaković Petrov, „Улога Српске православне цркве у очувању културног наслеђа иселјеника у САД,“ In: *Очување и заштита културно-историјског наслеђа Србије у иностранству (IV)*, ур. Видоје Годубовић, Петар Петковић (Београд: Институт за међународну политику и привреду, 2012), 213–231.

16 Čeda Dimitrijević, Letter to V. M. Lugonja, secretary of the Serbian Singing Association, Detroit (Michigan, USA), 9 July 1934, The legacy of Petar Krstić, Archives of the Institute of Musicology, SASA; Serbian Singing Association, Letter to Petar Krstić, Detroit (Michigan, USA), 16 August 1933, The legacy of Petar Krstić, Archives of the Institute of Musicology, SASA.

17 Gesamtausgabe Serbischer Osmoglasnik (Blažena, Kondak, Prokimen) in kirchenslawischer Sprache nach Stevan Stojanović Mokranjac zur Liturgie (Diakon Marko Ilić) Tabor 7155, Ton-Archiv zum Byzantinisch – Ostkirchlichen Ritus, Munich, 1974.

18 St. St. Mokranjac. *Осмогласник. Српско црквено појање. Вечерње, јутрење и литургија* (Београд, Задруга православног свештенства 1987[89]; 2000) (ур. Раде И. Зеленовић).

Stevan Mokranjac.¹⁹ Occasional examples of the unison chant may also be found on recordings of various choirs, together with examples of the medieval church music and choral repertoire.²⁰

Special and unique audio examples of the Serbian chant are the recordings made by an exceptional chanter, Sava Vuković, bishop of Šumadija, during the last decades of the twentieth century. Bishop Sava had a depth of knowledge, both practical and historical, about Serbian church chant, and dedicated a great deal of his energy to its cultivation and promotion. He grew up in the surroundings strongly influenced by the rich and vibrant heritage of the Metropolitanate of Karlovci, which was especially felt in the orderly structure of liturgical life and liturgical singing. He learnt church chant from the best Karlovci chanters of that period, among whom were protopresbyter Branko Cvejić, who left one of the largest collections of Serbian church chant written down in musical notation, and Damaskin (Grdanički), Metropolitan of Zagreb, a student of Stevan Mokranjac.²¹

Bishop Sava was dedicated to the study of Serbian church chant, and during his student days and early career as a bishop, he often used to record Metropolitan Damaskin in the Belgrade Cathedral and at the Patriarchate.²² Although he wholeheartedly supported the publication of church chant in its written form, he taught church chant at the seminary of St Sava in Belgrade without the use of written materials, relying primarily on the audio recordings which he prepared for these lessons. The great importance he attached to the availability and accessibility of the authentic recordings is clearly demonstrated in his endeavour to publish the recordings of the Vespers to St Sava sung by the clergy choir of Šumadija diocese (1980) – the first published complete recording of a church service in Serbia. The same choir later published also a selection of hymns for Christmas and Theophany (1987).²³

Serbian Chant in the Twentieth Century – the Chant Treasury of Bishop Dr Sava (Vuković), ed. Danica Petrović, published by the Institute of Musicology SASA in 2013 is a collection of recordings made by bishop Sava during the 1980s and 1990s, also for educational purposes – this time for his pupil Nenad Ristović, and for the sisterhood of Grnčarica monastery. The collection contains examples of festal chant, hymns from the Menaion, Triodion and Pentecostarion, as well as a selection of hymns from the Octoechos. The melodies of most of the recorded hymns have not been written down in musical notation before, and even those that exist in written-down form were sung with some alterations to the “standardized” variants available in the notational scripts by famous melographers of the Serbian church chant. In addition to his outstanding knowledge of hymnography and his remarkable

19 For more about the recordings of the Octoechos according to Mokranjac see Romana Ribić, “Audio recordings of hymns from the Octoechos as written down by Stevan Stojanović Mokranjac,” *New Sound – International Magazine for Music* 43, 1 (2014): 22–36.

20 Andrejević, „Звучни снимци“, 76.

21 Nenad Ristović, „Епископ Сава Вуковић и српско црквено појање,“ *Зборник Матице српске за сценске уметности и музику* 48 (2013): 215–230.

22 Ibid, 220.

23 Ibid, 224.

skill in setting melody to text (the so called 'tailoring' - *krojenje*) which always took into account the theological and philological considerations of the text, Nenad Ristović sees the exceptional quality of Bishop Sava's interpretation of the chant in the recognition of phrases, the skilful use of tempo changes, dynamics, and the overall musical expression. He also emphasises the significance of the influence of active choral singing and the experience of a listener of classical music for the formation of a distinctive style of this extraordinary church chanter.²⁴ The presented edition of the recordings of Bishop Sava's chant provides not only an exceptional example and an important historical resource, but also a model for those who are learning church chant and who see church music as a path for their own personal, spiritual and musical growth.

ARCHIVE FIELD RECORDINGS (1970s, 1980s)

Extensive, mostly unknown to the public, recordings made as a part of musicological field work represent another group of invaluable audio testimonies of the live and dynamic tradition of Serbian church chant during the twentieth century. During the 1970s and the 1980s, musicologists from the Institute of Musicology, Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Dimitrije Stefanović and his colleague Danica Petrović, recorded traditional Serbian church chant in many Serbian monasteries. The recordings are kept in the phonographic archives of the Institute of Musicology SASA. It might be presumed that this collection is testimony to the preservation of the authentic church chant practice in the centres of Serbian spiritual and cultural life over the centuries.

Especially valuable are the recordings from Hungary (Szentendre, Lovra, Eger, Pomaz, Mohacs), which confirm the continuity of the care for church music heritage among the Serbs in the territory of former southern Hungary (the area where the Serbs settled during the migrations in the seventeenth century).²⁵ Equally important are the recordings from the monasteries in Fruška Gora (St Petka, Ravanica), the spiritual centres of the Serbs and the main dissemination points of knowledge of church chant and practice during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Together with the numerous recordings made in the monasteries of central Serbia (Studenica, Žiča, Velučje, Naupara, Nikolje, Đunis, St Petka, Gornjak, Manasija, Blagoveštenje) and Ovčar and Kablar region (Vavedenje, Vaznesenje, Sretenje), the recordings from Bosnia and Herzegovina (monastery Gomionica), Dalmatia, Croatia (Krka monastery) and Slavonia, Croatia (Lepavina monastery), are especially interesting for comparative research.²⁶

24 Ibid, 221.

25 An addition to the important testimonies concerning Serbian church chant practice in the territory of Hungary (Battonya and Magyarcsanak) can be found in audio recordings of several church hymns made by composer and ethnomusicologist Tihomir Vujičić in 1958/59: <http://vujičics.zti.hu/sr/zvucni-snimci/crkvene-pesme-srpsko-narodno-crkveno-pojanje/>.

26 Similar recordings made among the Serbs in Romania might also be significant for further comparative research. Valuable archival research conducted by Dejan Popov, engineer and excellent

In most cases the chant was recorded in its authentic context, during church services. The recordings contain festive vigils from monasteries, vespers and matins, liturgies, memorial services (panihida) and commemorations of patron saints, and sometimes include spiritual and other traditional folk songs, which represent a specific form of folk music tradition. All liturgical music is sung in Church Slavonic, the liturgical language of the Serbian Orthodox Church, while a small number of non-liturgical spiritual songs are sung in modern Serbian. In addition to the audio recordings that bring to life the sound of church chant form over 50 years ago, segments of these recordings contain also valuable meta-data: recorded (sometimes also notated) comments of the researchers doing field work (Dimitrije Stefanović, Danica Petrović), information about the recorded material, comments about various oral traditions, and conversations with the singers/chanters and monks.

The most representative examples from the abundance of the recorded material show a high level of chanting skills and musicality of the chanters, many of whom were priests, monks and novices in monasteries.²⁷ Very noticeable is good intonation (the singing from the monasteries of Vavedenje, Vaznesenje, Nikolje and Naupara, for example), the great care to carefully create a logical melodic phrase during the setting words to melody, as well as the clear enunciation of the text (Ravanica, Vavedenje, Vaznesenje) the correlation of the chosen tempo with the pace of the monastic services (depending on their place in the church services, hymns were faster and more dynamic or slower, etc.). Especially noteworthy and interesting for this analysis are examples of the hymns, sung in two voices, sometimes with the melody of the accompanying voice carefully thought out and defined (the monasteries of Nikolje, Veluće, Gornjak). Equally important are the example of the choral monastic singing as an authentic illustration of the practice of choral chant entirely based on the traditional, unison church chant. At the request of the nuns from the monastery of Nikolje, composer and conductor Vojislav Ilić, former seminary pupil and especially dedicated to the field of Serbian church music, held, on his frequent visits, choir rehearsals with the nuns to practice choral chanting and even wrote simple choral arrangements of the traditional melodies.²⁸

church chanter and dedicated researcher of Serbian church music and cultural history, especially among the Serbs in Romania, reveals important information about the recordings of Serbian church chant. One of the examples of exceptional importance for the comparative studies are the audio recordings that testify to the preservation and cultivation of the so called 'older melodies' (with a characteristic minor third in the melodies of the second, fourth and sixth tones) among the older Serbian church chanters in Pomorišje (historical area around Mures river, inhabited by Romanians, Serbs and Hungarians) who had learnt church chant at the beginning of the twentieth century. Cf. Dejan Popov, „Особености певничког појања у српским црквама у Поморишју – резултати досадашњих теренских и документарних истраживања,“ In *Арад кроз време*, бр. 17 (2017): 136–148.

For further comparative analyses, more detailed information about the whole collection of the recordings made among Serbs in Romania will be needed.

²⁷ Unfortunately, there are no detailed written documents about the singers on the recordings; only their names are mentioned.

²⁸ An exceptionally important source is the unique recording of the chanting of the nuns at Nikolje monastery: *Nikoljski Uskrs* (Jugoton, Jugoslavija 1976).

POSSIBILITIES THAT OPEN UP THANKS TO RECORDINGS

Detailed examination of the mentioned editions and archival phono collection opens possibilities for research of the Serbian church chant throughout the period in which the recordings were made, and more broadly for a study of the development of the chant tradition among Serbs in the mid to late twentieth century. Recordings of chant in its authentic setting, during church services, will be especially important for future comparative studies, providing the opportunity to focus on detailed analysis of the liturgical repertoire, regional chanting practices, characteristics of local variants of church chant and individual chanters or differences between the monastic and the city practices etc. The characteristics of individual recordings also present us with some questions of aesthetics of musical performance: differences among the material recorded for education purposes, studio recordings vs. field work recordings, facets of concert performance of traditional church chant.²⁹ Another interesting topic of study would be the study of characteristics of chant in female monasteries in comparison to 'male-led' church chant. Future research questions are also discernible in the phenomenon of chant and migration, more precisely in the role of church chant in shaping, understanding and preserving cultural and spiritual identity.

The already-mentioned audio collections of church chant need to be examined in the context of the socio-political circumstances in the twentieth century, which had a strong influence on the preservation, cultivation and survival of church chant – from the creation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (1918) which introduced new education laws and removed church chant from the school curriculum, to the creation of the socialist state and a period unfavourable for the preservation, but especially for the study and performance, of religious musical heritage.³⁰ The aforementioned archival material collected during field studies, as well as compiling and editing sound publications, also sheds light on the role and the contribution of individual researchers (Dimitrije Stefanović, Danica Petrović) to the history of study of Serbian church music.

Opportunities arising from the use of the mentioned audio recordings are numerous, not only for research, but also in publishing.³¹ Audio recordings are inevitably linked to the other types of archival materials (correspondences, notes from field work extremely important to complete the metadata and to arrive at a broader picture of the recorded materials, segments from the inheritance of well-known, but also lesser-known

29 Cf. Jerome F. Weber, "Liturgical reconstruction as reflected in recordings," *Historical Performance* (1991): 29–37.

30 Petrović, „Традиционално српско народно црквено појање у XX веку“.

31 The original 78rpm records, the recording of the Conservatory of the Serbian Church Chant, as well as most of the field work recordings here mentioned – done on magnetophones and tape players, have been digitized as part of individual project of the Institute of Musicology SASA. Cf. Andrejević, „Звучни снимци“; Marija Dumnić, Rastko Jakovljević, „Дигитализација грађе Фоноархива Музиколошког института САНУ,“ In *Фоноархив Музиколошког института САНУ: историјски извори у дигиталној ери* (Београд: Музиколошки институт САНУ, 2014), 13–25; Marjanović, „Заоставштина Лазара Лере“.

church chanters, composers and other individuals who contributed to the preservation of traditional Serbian church chant). Future comparative studies of historical recordings and current chant traditions based on new field work in regions where the same chant tradition is preserved would be of great interest. The information available from the metadata (chanters' names, sometimes a year of birth etc.) could guide new research towards the study of the activities of the "heirs" of the recorded chanters, that would show the characteristics of today's practice, with the goal of gaining a better understanding of the dynamics of the tradition, specific changes in the chanting tradition, repertoire, musical expression etc.

From the analytical, theoretical angle, the more frequent editions of different church music traditions over the last five decades were studied with a focus on the relation between the recording and the actual liturgical musical repertoire.³² It was noticed that on the one hand the recordings could be seen as a reconstruction of the liturgical musical sequence and a unique display of the liturgical repertoire current at a certain point, while on the other side these recordings have the potential to become a model for an authentic presentation of the liturgical music in different contexts. It was possible to conclude that the revitalization of the older music through audio recordings, i.e. through the process of recording itself, may have influence especially on performing practice itself. As invaluable musical testimonies, the recordings I have presented in this paper also become a key that can unlock the path towards historically informed performance, i.e. historical interpretation.³³

Last but not least, the publications of the selection of representative archival recordings is the precondition that will enable the wider public to access these examples of church chant, and support the preservation of Serbian church chant as an unique cultural heritage. Considering that teaching of Serbian church chant in our surroundings is still primarily dependent on oral methods and oral traditions, despite a number of valuable, written musical sources, it is certain that wider accessibility of the recordings of the church chant would increase their didactic potential. These recordings open numerous options to become acquainted, study, learn and pass on this oral musical tradition.

UNESCO POINT OF VIEW

Over the last decade, referring to the UNESCO-defined concept, ethnological and anthropological studies have increased their focus on the importance of music as an intangible cultural heritage. Although the basic characteristics

32 Weber, "Liturgical reconstruction" (1991): 29.

33 This term is used from the end of the 20th century, mostly in the domain of the repertoire of the early music, (considering the music of pre-classical periods) and refers to the idea of 'authenticity', 'authentic' performance, based on study of historical evidence, old manuscripts, treatises, surviving authentic sources, etc. Predrag Đoković, Утицај европског покрета за рану музику на извођачку праксу у Србији, докторска дисертација, рукопис, Факултет музичке уметности, Универзитет у Београду, 2016, 8, 38. See also: Jerome F. Weber, "A Century of Chant Recordings." In *Calculamus et Cantemus, Towards a Reconstruction of Mozarabic Chant*, ed. Geert Maessen, Gregoriana (Amsterdam 2015), 119–136.

of music are deemed intangible phenomena, it is emphasized that music has a concrete role in the description, interpretation and evaluation of different cultures, given that the specific forms of music are considered defining characteristic of the identity of a certain community. Music is defined as an intangible cultural heritage given the crucial role of the experience of the individual, a specific group or a community, as a form of a 'shared experience'.³⁴

A fundamental basis for the assessment of the Serbian Church Chant as an intangible cultural heritage is offered by the definitions which recognize intangible cultural heritage in the oral tradition, language, songs, traditional music, and according to which it is 'dynamic and vital heritage, a form of national property',

'(...) a living heritage which is happening in the present (...) It does not just represent inherited traditions, but more importantly their modern manifestations, those that above all play an important role in the everyday or celebratory-religious life of a community that recognizes them as a part of their own cultural identity, traditions that have a living function in the lives of their heirs/guardians'.³⁵

Some of the most important stipulations of the UNESCO Convention specify that: certain cultural practices are recognised as intangible cultural heritage by the communities, groups and individuals who practise them; these traditions have been transmitted and at the same time adapted to new cultural, historical and societal changes over several generations; this heritage is an anchor for the identity and the cultural uniqueness of its creators and bearers, and an implicit condition of 'authenticity'.³⁶ It is emphasised that an important role in preserving intangible cultural heritage is played by the nation state, but also by the community as creator, bearer, promoter and transmitter that recreates, but also shapes a certain heritage. It is also very important to mention that these communities are not necessarily tied to a specific territory, but they have to be 'actively participating in the identification and defining of their own intangible cultural heritage, as well as its direction'.³⁷ Under 'preservation' UNESCO understands a wider spectrum of practices that ensure the 'usability' of intangible cultural heritage such as: identification, documenting, research, protection, promotion, appraisal, transmission through formal and informal education and revitalisation of various aspects of such heritage (UNESCO 2003 [2010], § 2(3)).

The already-mentioned recordings provide testimony of a live, vibrant tradition of Serbian church chant which has been preserved, mostly

34 Cf. Marija Ristivojević, „Muzika kao nematerijalno kulturno nasleđe,“ *Antropologija* 14 (2014): 135–142; Ronald J. Inawat, „Music as Cultural Heritage: Analysis of the Means of Preventing the Exploitation of Intangible Cultural Heritage.“ *The John Marshall Review of Intellectual Property Law* 14 (2015): 228–248.

35 Jelena Todorović, „Разумевање нематеријалног културног наслеђа,“ *Нематеријално културно наслеђе* 1 (2011): 76–79.

36 Federico Lenzerini, „Intangible Cultural Heritage: The Living Culture of Peoples,“ *The European Journal of International Law* 22 (1) (2011): 101–120.

37 Entoni Kraus, „Konvencija o zaštiti nematerijalnog kulturnog nasleđa iz 2003. godine: izazovi i perspektive,“ *Nematerijalno kulturno nasleđe* 1 (2011): 10–14.

orally, until the present day in recognizable variants. In reference to the stipulations of the UNESCO convention, they are important as an indicator of the activity and engagement of the individuals (chanters) and groups, as well as (monastic) communities, but also communities of faithful people, laymen who sing together during the services and in their daily practice care for and preserve the Serbian Church Chant as a cultural heritage.

It is precisely this caring attitude towards the heritage that represents one of the more important criteria for the collective understanding and valorization of national identity.³⁸ Active preservation of the traditional Serbian church chant is a “reflection of the collective identity, based on the common feelings and the perception of continuity between the generations, where cultural meaning circulates through interaction, as a sum of common values and experiences”.³⁹

The importance of traditional church chant as a part of Serbian spiritual and cultural identity is reinforced by the fact that it lives in its traditional form in the liturgical practice of the Serbian Orthodox Church both in Serbia, and around the world, wherever the Serbian Church has parishes and holds services, in Europe, North America and Australia.⁴⁰ Worth mentioning are the music collections with Serbian church chant hymns, as written down by Serbian musicians, but with the texts translated into English or German language, for the needs to the Serbian diaspora.⁴¹ In order to preserve their cultural, ethnical and national identity, the Serbian diaspora is very active not only in its endeavours to maintain language, traditional customs, songs and dances, but also to learn and preserve traditional church chant through foundation of parish choirs, who primarily sing at the church services, but also give concerts and participate in other cultural programmes.⁴²

In addition to its primary, liturgical context, over the last decades the traditional Serbian chant has frequently been found in the repertoire of different ensembles and performed on concerts. Serbian choral church music, based on unison Serbian chant, is also a testimonial regarding specific ways in which this tradition has been maintained.⁴³ Serbian traditional church chant has been the topic of numerous musicological, theological, sociological, anthropological and culturological studies.

38 Ljiljana Rogač Mijatović, “Национално памћење као нематеријално културно наслеђе,” In *Очување и заштита културно-историјског наслеђа Србије у иностранству* (IV), ур. Видоје Голубовић, Петар Петковић (Београд: Институт за међународну политику и привреду 2012), 168.

39 Antoni Smit, *Национални идентитет* (Београд: Библиотека XX век. 2010); Rogač Mijatović „Национално памћење“, 171.

40 Cf. Marina Mitrić, “Улога и значај културно-уметничких друштава и других сродних удружења у очувању етничког идентитета Срба у иностранству,” In *Очување и заштита културно-историјског наслеђа Србије у иностранству* (IV), ур. Видоје Голубовић, Петар Петковић (Београд: Институт за међународну политику и привреду 2012), 458–474.

41 Nikola Resanović, *Anthology of Serbian Chant (Notni zbornik) – with English text – Based on transcriptions of Mokranjac, Barački, Lastavica, Cvejić, Stanković and Kozobarić* (Serbian Orthodox Church in the USA & Canada, Central Church Liturgical Music Committee 2005).

42 Vidaković Petrov, “Улога Српске православне цркве”, 224, 225.

43 Bogdan Đaković, “Новија звучна издања српске духовне хорске музике,” *Зборник Матице српске за сценске уметности и музику* 26–27 (2000): 217–221; “Појава нових звучних издања православне духовне музике као одраз данашњег станја овог жанра у нас,” In *Muzika i mediji*, ур. Vesna Mikić, Tatjana Marković, (Београд: Signature, Fakultet muzičke umetnosti 2004): 212–231.

CONCLUSION

Even today the oral tradition has a strong impact on the process of learning traditional music heritage, while on the other hand modern technologies (audio recording, digitized music collections, the possibility of a rapid reproduction of the printed music as well as of the recorded sound) open numerous new opportunities for the advancement of the methods of learning and preserving oral traditions. The increasingly easy ways to distribute audio recordings to the wider public in themselves represent an interesting phenomenon, which merits a separate study with a focus on the already mentioned challenge of conservation and revitalisation, but also the aesthetics of the intangible cultural heritage. New developments in the field of ethnomusicology point out additionally the importance of the preservation of audio and audio-visual materials during the processes of documenting, according to the UNESCO's basic concept, the intangible cultural heritage of Serbia. The high value of archival recordings for research, presentation, study and the revitalization of music traditions considered as intangible cultural heritage has also been emphasized. Noted especially was the importance of published audio material for the perception of the concrete element of the heritage among researchers, performers and the members of local communities.⁴⁴

The archival audio recordings that have been introduced in this paper present a source with large potential. Analysis, and especially the wider accessibility of these audio collections, which would make them available to the general public, would undoubtedly have a positive impact on the assessment and evaluation, promotion and revitalisation of the traditional church chant as one of the pillars of Serbian religious, cultural and national identity, and on its place in the wider context of the cultural and church music history.

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⁴⁴ Marija Dumnić Vilotijević, "The Relation of Music Archiving and Intangible Cultural Heritage in Serbia," *Musicologist* 3 (2) 2019: 172.

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