

General paper

**TREATMENT OF THE POETIC TEXT OF CRNJANSKI
AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE HARMONIC LANGUAGE
IN THE SUMATRA SONG BY SVETISLAV BOŽIĆ**

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Abstract. *The inspiration of Svetislav Božić by the literary works of Miloš Crnjanski, which dates from 1989 to the present day, resulted in numerous works by which we can trace the connection between the two artists, as well as the style, aesthetics, artistic fantasy and creative credo of the composer. The subject of our research is a song for female voice and piano – Sumatra, the key poem of the cycle on which Crnjanski conceived an entire poetic-theoretical concept of the avant-garde literary program – Sumatraism. The work follows Božić's "librettistic" work on the poetic template whose continuity and integrity are retained by the composer using minimal interventions, additionally emphasizing the value of Sumatra, as well as other poems. Božić's creative path starts from a complete analysis of the poetic text, positioning the main points of emotional experience, the atmosphere of sensory images and the "space of happiness", and musicalisation of the literary source without transforming it. In the architecture of Sumatra, attention is drawn to the diversity of the harmonic palette: from consonant modal chords in triad and expressive seventh-chord forms to the particularly significant role of colouristic nuances of the minor ninth-chord in sporadic gradation to the eleventh chord and the sonority of the whole-scale feature on the stylistic basis of Debussy – Scriabin, but always in the strict function of musical dramaturgy with the preservation of tonality. In this context, the stylistic corridor of Sumatra follows a wide arc of intertwining of Romanticism and Impressionism origin with a national idiom of a wide range of means, radiating precious, complex meanings. Despite the accumulation of heritage of European music that belongs to him in terms of artistic freedom, Božić does not fall under its influence, since the dominant principle of his expression is created by national indigeneity in the use of modernized elements of national tradition, sometimes discreetly interwoven, thus confirming that "under other conditions, in another time, does the same thing as Mokranjac".*

Key words: *Božić, Crnjanski, Sumatraism, text, harmony, chord.*

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You know that I have a crazy theory of 'Sumatraism': that life is not visible, but dependent on clouds, ruddy shells, and green grass even on the other end of the world." (Miloš Crnjanski 1993, 19)

1. INTRODUCTION

The ever-present issue concerning the synthesis of text and music with expressive-colouristic means whereby each own way and in total reflects the unity of poetry/drama and music, thus revealing the dramaturgical-aesthetic concept of the work, is a multi-faceted research problem approached from different aspects. This is how French musicologist R. Rolland described it: "Poetry has its own laws, music has its own. How are they to be reconciled? Poetry, especially dramatic, tends towards action. Music likes to dwell on feelings. It easily surrenders to their flow, forgetting the goal, being all in dreams" (Rolland 1986, 35–36). On the other hand, Russian composer B. Asafyev stated that "the realm of Lied (19th-century German song) can never be a complete harmony, a unity between poetry and music. It is mostly an agreement on mutual aid, even a 'battlefield', a fight" (Асафьев 1971, 233–234). Russian musicologist I. Lavrentyeva cites the "triple synthesis – words, vocal melodies and instrumental accompaniment [which] determines the variety of problems" as a specificity of the genre (Лаврентьева 1978, 3). Let us recall here Debussy's dramaturgy and aesthetic principle of the type of opera in which "music begins where words are unable to provide expression" (Popović-Mladenović 1997, 55–56). The answer obviously lies in the complementarity and integration of two autonomous, yet mutually dependent expressive components whose cooperation, struggle in mutual dialogue or supremacy, or else hinting at something unutterable for the other component, resulted in many immortal works of the vocal-instrumental genre throughout the history of music. In any case, whether the artistic combination of poetic elements carries a generalizing or detailed elaboration of thematic material, the expected "possibilities of music in manifesting the emotional-psychological subtext – the hidden meaning of the song... [as well as] vivid-visual possibilities of music, based on associative connections are large; the musical image can use its means to 'upgrade' what is said about in the text, creating 'sound images' that complement the poetic image" (Лаврентьева 1978, 3). In this context, "very close and almost one", says one of the classics of Serbian art music – Svetislav Božić, "poetry and music have their own special zones where they want to remain narcissistically alone, not to materially touch each other, not to compete in beauty with available means. Songs without words and words without songs (without melody) are numerous constellations that accompany both poetry and music" (Božić 2005, 62–63).

The artistic physiognomy of the composer, music theorist, pedagogue and writer, academician Svetislav Božić (1954) is more than well known today. Although unequivocally cosmopolitan, he is first and foremost a composer of national determination on the solid ground of the tradition founded by the progenitor of our artistic music - S. St. Mokranjac. Božić's work begins in a broad arc from Hilandar to the Serbian sanctuaries in Kosovo and Metohija, then spreads from Byzantium and the Oriental Levant, Pan-Slavic, Russian potentials to Italo-Mediterranean and Gallic cultures, radiating a wide range of energy and spirituality, contemporary stylistic influences. always controlled and monitored by the language of tradition. In his numerous compositions (more than 220), often performed outside the borders of our country, Božić was inspired by the works of our great writers: B. Radičević, J. Dučić, S. Raičković, M. Nastasijević, V. Popa, M. Pavić, D. Medaković,

etc., but it seems to us that he achieved special attention and intimacy in contact with Crnjanski's poetic expression. The composer's contact with the literature of Miloš Crnjanski (1893–1977) from 1989 to the present day resulted in numerous compositions in which one can trace the connection with Crnjanski and his artistic fantasy, as well as the composer's aesthetics, style and creative credo. The common denominator of the being and spirit of the two artists, and the complete inventiveness of Crnjanski and Božić is undoubted loyalty to their native land, and then the permeation of similar artistic beliefs, viewpoints and principles. The composer himself does not hide the reason for his natural connection and affinity towards Crnjanski's work: "Miloš Crnjanski and the poetics of his thought and language touch the very essence of my musical intonations. This relationship is unforced and unprogrammed. This is how it has been since the first acquaintance with Crnjanski's work and it has remained the same until today" (Vojvodić and Marinković 2018, 119). However, perhaps the fundamental point of connection and intimacy between the two artists, and the basic coordinates of the match, can be found in the following Božić's interpretation: "Crnjanski is a key that is not simple, but the melody of his language and his thought is so profoundly Serbian, that without him no one can deal with the Serbs unless they take into account the melody of Miloš Crnjanski. He was not a composer, but the melody of his soul and his spirit and his sentences and thoughts in general is so deep, so deeply Serbian, while neither pathetic nor transparent."¹ "Melodic line," states S. Rakitić "as an expression of exceptional soulfulness is preeminent in Crnjanski's lyrics; more precisely, melodic specificities and individuality are the basic characteristics of his poetry in general" (Rakitić 1985, 90). And it is exactly these "emotional and melodic components" as well as the "outstanding philosophical assumptions" of Miloš Crnjanski's lyrics, the so-called 'thoughtful lyricism' (Ibid) that permeated the creative imagination of Svetislav Božić in the modelling of a longing Sumatraist vision of the real and the unreal, a manifest sensual image such as the song *Sumatra* is. The goal of our research follows from the above: to shed light on Božić's creative procedure in a new nuance, primarily the harmonic, but also melodic musicalization of Crnjanski's poetic text.

2. SUMATRAISM IN THE POETRY OF MILOŠ CRNJANSKI

Crnjanski himself, in his ideological struggle for freedom of artistic expression, in his authorial text "For Free Verse", cited a number of authentic, influential poetic schools/styles against rhyme: "the great influence of Chinese and Japanese lyricism, the most beautiful in the world..., an attempt at new and modern American lyrics... Even the symbolists [the poet continued], from whom the deep renewal of lyrics began, although considering the music of verse the most important, introduced free verse" (Crnjanski 1991, 13). Obviously under the influence of Japanese poetry, which he studied and knew exceptionally well², as well as under the influence of symbolist tendencies, especially Mallarmé and Verlaine, Crnjanski paid attention to new contents, his lyrics "turns to the cosmos – puts life into it, – with miraculous and wonderful colours, moods and sensations of the heavens" trying "to create an original verse for himself, and in the spirit of our language and tradition". In that mysticism, Crnjanski further stated, "words acquire a new radiance and colour, new nuances (cf. of the authors: nuances),

¹ From the interview with the composer on 28 February 2023.

² In *Letopis Matica srpska* in 1932, our poet published two important texts, almost analytical studies: *Poems of Old Japan* (vol. 311, pp. 127–141) and *Haikai* (vol. 312, pp. 292–303).

notions of rhythm, verse, and form change" (Ibid., 13). However, despite striving for a big step forward in creating a new path of Serbian lyricism, the poet neither breaks nor forgets the connection with tradition and the preservation of the identity of the national poetic expression and statement. Crnjanski expressed a negative attitude towards the rhythm, claiming that "we have lost the feeling" and that "rhythm is not what makes a song the song, and rhythm is not just tapping the twelve-syllable verse". He saw mathematics in the previous rhythm and wondered how the poetic determinant that "we receive sadness and joy in the same rhythm... did not trouble our hearing and brain" was possible. For the new concept of "breaking the metrics and creating a new one with a melodic free rhythm line" Crnjanski cited "ecstasy, what is most precious in a poem, independent of philology" (Crnjanski 1991, 13–14). The described postulate and its mechanisms of faithful and objective expression gain strength in the quotes of Crnjanski that "the free rhythm is true, the lyrical rhythm is immediate, tied to the mood. It is a seismologically accurate rhythm of mental disorders. In lyric poetry, that immediacy is the most precious. Words and expressions received a new colour" (Ibid., 14). And it is actually the artistic, ideological and spiritual sphere that leads from Romanticism to Impressionism and Modernism, connecting Vojislav Ilić, Branko Radičević, Dučić and Crnjanski, with Konjović, Hristić and Božić, and leads back again to Mokranjac, Janacek, Mussorgsky and Debussy. The importance of rhythm and its identification with ecstasy leads to Crnjanski's negation of rhythm as "the number of longer and shorter syllables, stressed and unstressed... It is known by those who followed the struggle of Debussy [who] abandoned the phonetic physical order and advanced towards a psychological law... Rhythm is ecstasy, instead of iambs and trochees of grammar, iambs and trochees of the soul [must be achieved]." Emphasizing the statement "rhythm is ecstasy" as a leitmotif several times, Crnjanski, starting from presentation of examples of Dante's "prose" from the *New Life* and the *Divine Comedy* in which the author abandoned his own invention of the three-line stanza (*terza rima*), and arrived at apostrophising the fact that "on Good Friday in our churches, all... the Gospels are read in free verse." The importance of rhythm is thus all the more because it is "in thought and in feeling. It is like a whisper of love when each word has its own breath, its own colour, its own duration," continued Crnjanski (Ibid., 14).

Explaining "his 'Belief' about poetry" further (Crnjanski 1993, 235), Crnjanski bore witness to his new poetic and philosophical program and system, principle and complex of ideas where the content is dominant, the so-called *Sumatraism*, as kind of manifesto of a new poetic-theoretical concept. Sumatraism, as the most significant part of Crnjanski's philosophy and creative imagination, gave birth to a new wave of poems, among which *Sumatra* (1920) became "a programmatic poem of a literary movement or, perhaps better said, a view of the world that its author designated as Sumatraist... Comfort to the lyrical subject of Crnjanski's "Sumatra" is brought by remote [utopian] regions to which one does not go" (Avramović 2013, 462–463). Crnjanski explained: "We broke with tradition, because we are throwing ourselves headlong into the future. We rejected the former laws... We write in free verse, which is a consequence of our essence! This is how we hope to reach original, which means 'pedigreed' expressions". Emphasizing the "existence of new values" among members of the avant-garde and the aspiration to express "the changing rhythm of mood... the exact image of thoughts, as spiritually as possible", Crnjanski continued: "Let us use all the colours, the floating colours of our dreams and premonitions, the sound and whispering of things ..." In the poet's attitude that the Sumatraist form is "influenced by the forms of cosmic forms: clouds, flowers, rivers, streams" (Crnjanski 1993, 237–238), we find the justification of N. Petković, who defines Sumatraism as a

"poetic discovery of universal connections between man and nature, and 'a happier form of life' exactly in 'plants and leaves'" (Petković 1996, 127). Emphasizing that the metric of the avant-garde he represents is "personal, spiritual, hazy, like a melody", Crnjanski highlighted the value of the ecstasy of verse and its seismographic synergy with the emotional world: "we are trying to find the rhythm of every mood in the spirit of our language" (Crnjanski 1993, 238). After further promotion of the manifesto: "we are consciously trying to show these new ingredients in love, in passion, in pain", Crnjanski ironically introduces into the story "how the poetic, hypermodern, ravings, such as *Sumatra*, come about" (Crnjanski 1993, 237). In fact, expanding the boundaries of the human spirit, inspiration and visions searching and finding new sources of artistic emotion, which the followers of this movement find in the faith in "deeper, cosmic law and meaning", distant areas. This type of new and free way of expression are some of the peculiarities of the new poetics, which B. Stojanović–Pantović interprets as an expressionist variant in the work of Miloš Crnjanski (Stojanović-Pantović 2013, 61–70).

3. BOŽIĆ'S TREATMENT OF THE SUMATRAIST TEXT OF CRNJANSKI

In accordance with the poet's manifest program of breaking metrics and freedom of rhythm, *Sumatra* was "written in a new spirit, independent of all rules and canons of beautiful style and expression" (Cvetković 1993, 41). "Rhythm ecstasy" as an essential element of Crnjanski's expression conditioned the concept of a freer, heterosyllabic organization of verses: from six to thirteen, with a predominance of nine and ten. The changing rhythm of the mood and "trochees of the soul", however, are expressed in the second and fourth stanzas through a structure that remotely resembles "banal quatrains", while instead of the quatrain, the poetic expression of the first stanza in tercet, and the third in quintain is applied. Despite denying tradition and striving for poetic ideological freedom, Crnjanski would keep rhyme as a traditional component of established poetic expression. The freer treatment of Crnjanski's rhyme in *Sumatra* as a manifest poem of the entire literary movement is shown in the dominant interrupted feminine rhyme of the last three stanzas (II: ABAB; III: ABCB; IV: ABCDB) and the paired feminine rhyme of the first stanza (I: AAB).

Being aware of the high literary value of the poems he "shapes" into songs, Božić, under the title, emphasizes the author of the poetic source that he musically processes, which additionally shows the homage to the poet with whom he shares his artistic fantasy, but also the breadth of the spiritual horizon and the greatness of Božić as an artist – creator – man. But before we start a comparative analysis of the poetic and musical narrative of the two artists, let us look back at the statements of E. Rucevskaya that "the interpretation of the text, the identification of the subtext is exactly what determines the type of development in the vocal work" (Ручьевская 1988, 82–83). Thus, the first stage of Božić's compositional work on a song consists of the selection of a poetic source and its detailed analysis, and only then the musical realization/dramaturgy, as pointed out by the statements from the composer's website about the essence of the opera *Melancholic Dreams of Count Sava Vladislavić*: "Božić once again shows that he is not too burdened either by the old or the new, but above all by the balance of those states that meaningfully concentrate on hearing the entirety of the experience that is the object of musicalization" (<https://www.svetislavbozic.com/biografija>). Obviously, Božić's "meaningful concentration on hearing the whole experience", and enjoying the ecstasy of Crnjanski's verse resulted in the intention to preserve the authentic poetic narrative line, so that the songs would not change the basic note, tone and spirit of the organic whole, hence

in *Sumatra*, the composer's interventions on the poetic text are minimal. In this way, the relationship between Crnjanski and Božić strengthens, because the structural, expressive and colouristic characteristics of Crnjanski's sensuous images in *Sumatra*, as well as in other poems, obviously find an extraordinary reception with the erudite Božić, a good connoisseur of national poetry and of the philosophy of Crnjanski's creativity. Precisely those minimal interventions by the composer on the poetic template further highlight the value of *Sumatra* and other poems, unequivocally indicating the special connection between the two artists, as well as refinement in terms of a new artistic quality, while preserving the integrity and continuity of the work of art.

Just like in the songs *Grotesque*, *Hopelessness*, *Hymn* and *Premonition*, Božić's interventions on the poetic template of *Sumatra* refer primarily to the final verses of the stanzas. The composer's changes to the poet's text actually represent a repetition of the final lines with the intention of additionally underlining and emphasizing the emotional realm of the inner world as an expressive accent and echo of the poetic subject. Thus, in the first stanza, by simply repeating the final thought of the poetic subject ("how silent, snowy peaks of the Urals are.") Božić achieves a deep suggestiveness and impressiveness of the image. The repetition of the final part of the last verse of the third stanza ("from the homeland, cherries.") is probably an expression of the composer's emphasis on nostalgic sensuality in evoking the native image of cherries in the childhood of most people, as the beauty of nature, but also overcoming the "morning in a foreign country" with a longing memory of a pleasant, red colour of cherries from homeland. The change of the second letter in the word "twists" brings the new word "kills", with which the composer essentially strongly dynamizes the feeling of pain "abroad". On the other hand, Božić explains the omission of the phrase "blue seas" as follows: "I didn't need that element to close my emotion... I need dynamics that correspond to my goal, a musicalized goal, not the goal set by the poet... that is the charm of artistic interpretation, and even creative interpretation."³

Finally, out of Crnjanski's intimacy with the final lines of the fourth, final stanza: "distant hills and icebergs", Božić becomes intimate only with distant hills during the repetition, emphasizing the epithet "gently". With this procedure, it seems to us that the composer's subjectivity sets the limit of his sensuality on the positive side of his touch, interaction with nature, as if Božić's pleasure were based on "hills", in whose caress, like Crnjanski, he finds comfort, while "icebergs" belong to another, the negative side of the emotional experience. The emotional component of Božić's lyrics and creative conception are better suited to distant hills, and the composer does not hesitate to opt exclusively for them in his variant repetition of the verse. In this way, Božić draws the line of intimate etherism and Sumatraism in the context of concluding peace, bliss and consolation on the coordinates of the "distant hills" close to him. Thereby, the composer additionally completes the blessed idyll achieved in the first stanza thanks to Crnjanski's epithets "carefree", "easy" and "gentle". In this way he realized an almost magical power of calmness and serenity of the poetic/musical subject, but also of the listener, as well as the lyrical unity of the song.

³ Interview with the composer conducted on 2 February 2024.

4. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE HARMONIC LANGUAGE OF SVETISLAV BOŽIĆ

By "meaningfully listening to the entirety of experience" of the poetic text, the composer realizes his Sumatraist vision, like Crnjanski's "all of shadow, dream and illusion" (Petković 1996, 101), on a colouristic-expressive tonal platform of "soft, dark, painful, 'pessimistic'" minor (Despić 1989, 15). After the C sharp Minor of *Grotesque* and *Hopelessness*, and the F Minor of *Premonition*, the intimacy of confessing *Sumatra* as a sensuous image of distant spaces led to Božić's choice of F sharp Minor for the basic key of the song. The previously mentioned, certain tonal correspondence between the songs arose, probably, due to the similar lyrical-contemplative philosophical space of Crnjanski's Sumatraist poems, while the "expressiveness of tonality" (Вашкевич 2006, 19–31) of F sharp Minor, the personal experience of its expressive features and qualities as "excited" (Ibid, 20), probably his mysticism and transparency, corresponded to the creative demands and views of Božić. Božić's idea of F sharp Minor can be interpreted in the sense of a dreamy-meditative framework for the intimate-confessional tone of *Sumatra* and the unhidden melancholy present in Crnjanski's "distant and pure, cold and carefree, pleasant and attractive, privileged, almost transcendental... 'spaces of happiness'" (Džadžić 1995, 28). Thus, even in the extensive piano introduction of 43 bars, Božić realizes the musical imagination of *Sumatra* in a typically pianistic, Chopin-like texture of broken chords in an ostinato quaver movement in a moderate rhythm. The "pictorial-illustrative background" function of the rhythmic ostinato, exceeds the illustrative role of the piano accompaniment from the very beginning, achieving a significant "psychological-expressive function" (cf. Лаврентьева 1978, 13). The figured double pedal, as a traditional element of national schools, significantly contributes to the creation of the introductory atmosphere of a song with an unusual colouristic and expressive impression of the musical image. The composer himself bears witness to the role of the pedal in his works: "the role of lying, pedal tones is extremely important, which, onefold or multiple, placed in the lower or upper part... create a special vertical effect, energetically potent and very economical" (Božić 2005, 9). The energetic potency of the vertical is contributed by Božić's initial architectural double-voiced idea in the upper score of the musical fabric, which associates harmonic inversion of the (incomplete) VII⁷ (without the third and the fifth), and brings restlessness over the pedal vault. The same double-voiced inversion is associated with the incomplete equal-third chords of minor subdominant of the A Major and the dominant of its parallel F sharp Minor (D-F- C♯-F~E♯), even if the first chord seems to represent a multiple suspension before the second. The creation of the musical-poetic atmosphere of the Sumatraist search for peace in the distant vastness of the Urals continues with the evolution of simple melodic ideas in the A eolian expression and the highest part, accompanied with scale chords. It is an eight-bar quasi-periodic structure with a final pulsation of the dominant in the accompaniment and melodic endings on the second degree of the F♯-Aeolian mode, which irresistibly looks Mokranjac-like, here modernized by Božić's emphasis on the tritone (D-G♯). In these resonances, the restrained spiritual expression of Mokranjac seems to pulsate, by which Božić continues the path of our national school. Emphasizing the gift and importance of Mokranjac, and his "belonging to the ancestry, which is a characteristic of all great people at all times" (Božić 2007, 67), the author unconsciously seems to bear witness of himself and his own stylistic positioning on the broad ground of Serbian *Modernism*, unequivocally rooted in tradition.

Example 1

Суматра
поезија Милош Црњански

Светислав Божић (1997.)

1 Умерено брзо

Глас

Клавир

p

(S_{III}) (S_{III})

fis: [VII⁷] D (VII⁷) D

mp

D VI s II

VI D⁹

The introduction to the first stanza is conceived in the airy texture of the initial piano accompaniment and the pulsation of quavers that suggest excitement. Unusually conceived, one would say in a late Rachmaninoff manner, the inversion of the seemingly half-diminished subdominant seventh chord and the major seventh chord (with minor third) of the F \sharp -Minor tonic "hides" the chord VII of the seventh chord with the fourth instead of a third, given in the second turn with a resolution to the dissonant seventh chord of the tonic. It is actually a varied repeated three-bar introduction with the suggested equal-third chords in the upper section of the piano score. The simplicity of expression is given by uniform syllabic singing that refers to national spiritual sources, thereby close to spoken intonation. A certain stinginess of the vocal melodic expression of only two adjacent tones suggests the subject's inner world, which surrenders to the desired peace and purity of the Ural Mountains, the endless vastness of imagination and the "space of happiness". Božić realizes the tinting of the poetic narrative and the colouristic shading of the musical flow through the use of a tonic chord with an added sixth, and a harmonic shift to the sixth degree, which again points to the national sources of harmonic

thinking. The epithets "carefree, easy and gentle", followed by the previously mentioned harmony shift symbolize the positive context of the subject's psycho-emotional world, with the emancipation of the G# tone and the accentuated fourth movement of the inner voice (D-G# - C#) in the piano accompaniment, with a slight dissonance that indicates a complex psychology of the emotional experience.

Example 2a

The musical score for Example 2a consists of two systems. The first system (bars 41-44) features a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line has lyrics: "(SIII D) Сад смо". The piano accompaniment includes a treble clef with a *p* dynamic and a bass clef with a *pp* dynamic. Chord markings include VII^4_3 and VI^7_3 . The second system (bars 45-48) continues the vocal and piano parts. The vocal line has lyrics: "без - бри - жни ла - ки и неж - ни" with the instruction *sempre legato*. The piano accompaniment includes a treble clef and a bass clef with a *t* marking. Chord markings include VI^6_3 and VI^6_3 .

The recognizable piano texture with the symbolic meaning of the quaver pulsation as the subject's mood, with the long duration of the III7 chord of the F sharp -Phrygian mode, is found in the further development of the poetic narrative. The widely placed sound surface of the dominant seventh chord with the gradation of dissonance to the ninth chord, eleventh chord and return to the ninth chord, along with the simultaneous colouristic shimmer of the passing sixth and its emancipation in the fourth movement (bars 56–62) is a harmonic factor in the nuancing of the subject's emotionality. Although the sound value of this chord is colouristic and almost devoid of harmonic dynamics, at times it seems as if the tonal orientation is inclined to Scriabin's "brilliant" (Despić 1989, 13), tonal plateau of D Major. The expressiveness of this dissonant chord and its harmonic dynamics give way to colouristic and illustrative features and action. In this way, along with the descriptiveness of the poetic narrative in the epithets "quiet, snowy", Božić's musical illusion of peaks of the Urals creates an image of a beautiful and stable "space of happiness" to which the poetic/musical subject surrenders. Including a brief occurrence of melisma (bars 59–60), the recitative vocal narrative leads to a culminating note of F#2, not accidentally, on the essential key word "Urals". By simultaneously abandoning the quaver pulsation of the accompaniment in favour of a simultaneous chord texture and a hint of an "estam" beat, the composer underlines an important point of the subject's internal world and the object of interest. The harmonic component achieves significant accents by repeating the expressive dissonance of the major seventh chord (VI65), broken by an auxiliary harmony with an accented tritone in lower section of the piano score. The described harmonic procedure has the role of a dramaturgical element symbolizing the sensory experience of a distant scene, while

the upper line of chord successions manifests the tonal orientation, with descending steps F#2-C#2-F#1. The symbolic underlining of a distant, untamed, even transcendent landscape continues with the colouring of the harmonic fabric with a whole-tone hexachord (D-E- F#-Ab-Bb-C) in the instrumental commentary caused by the image of an imaginary scene and the psychological rest of the vocal soloist. In this way, Božić, as the undisputed interpreter of Crnjanski's verses, communicates with the poet, musically proving his attitude that "singing [as] super-consciousness, super-mind, is the inspiration, the consciousness of a higher order... and the voice sung or the silence that exists through the voice, is something the most valuable" (Božić 2005b, 7).

Example 2b

The musical score for Example 2b consists of three systems. The first system (measures 56-60) features a vocal line with the lyrics "ти хи снег" and a piano accompaniment with a *mf* dynamic. Chord diagrams below the piano part show (D: D)⁷, fis: III⁵, 9, and 11. The second system (measures 61-65) has the lyrics "ни вр-хо-ви У-ра ла" and includes a *f* dynamic marking. Chord diagrams show 9, III⁵, VI⁶, and VI⁵. The third system (measures 66-70) shows the piano part with chord diagrams VI⁶, CD, and 8.

The bliss of the utopian landscape of the Urals in the first stanza will give way to the elegiac, melancholic domain of the second stanza. Božić again abandons the piano accompaniment in the uniform quaver pulsation of broken chords after the first couplet of the second stanza. Some previous analysis that it is a stanza break and a mere instrumental transition seem wrong. In fact, the instrumental development initiated by the detail of the two-line text that evokes sadness "If we are saddened by some pale figure, that we lost him one evening" refers to real piano dramaturgy in the form of deepening the emotional realm of the artistic image. Leaving the mentally significant detail of the poetic text, Božić seems

Example 3

116

јед - но ве - че

fis: t $\overset{14}{D^5}$ t

t m̃ t m̃ t p d m̃ s̃ms̃ m̃ md̃ d s̃m̃ s̃md̃

t s̃ms̃ m̃s̃ t s̃ms̃ m̃s̃ s̃m̃ m̃s̃ s̃md̃ s̃m̃ m̃s̃ s̃md̃ s̃m̃ m̃s̃ s̃md̃

s̃m̃ m̃s̃ s̃md̃ t

f *decr.*

to give an affirmative answer in the form of a musical development that takes on the contours of a miniature fantasy of 27 bars. Mediant chords, as a typical romantic tool, emphasizes expressiveness dynamizing and deepening the lyrical side of the poetic template, while the positioning of simultaneous chord successions without functional connection, with the colouristic role of a recognizable impressionist treatment points to Božić's creation of the psychological atmosphere of the musical image. The domain of the subject's negative emotions is realized by Božić with the dramatic sharpness of the narrative of the piano score, in the form of mediant, but also polar and chromatic harmonic relations in the semantic dissonance of the shaken tonal orientation. Thus, the composer adds a strong authentic self to Crnjanski's poem, where Božić, being a counterpart to Crnjanski – "a poet of sensual refinement" (Petković 1996, 7), expresses himself as a composer of sensual refinement. In an authentic expression of the composer's entity and the evidence of his excellent knowledge and sense of tonal colours, the emotional-psychological commentary of the piano in the form of parallel movement of exclusively

minor triads, he relativizes the harmonic dynamics, irresistibly reminding of Debussy's texture and colouristic shading within the broader tonal background of F sharp Minor.

A specific curiosity is the composer's concept of the third stanza, realized in a dynamic and expressive anticlimax. Since the stanza begins without a caesura and instrumental transition, the subject's feelings have already reached the highest level of emotional tension, as emphasized by the initial A_2 culminating tone of the solo section. The vocal declamation receives a striking pathetic expression of painful and longing languor in the form of combining repetitive and gradually descending recitative intonations. In a wide range of "sliding" descending minor tenths ($A_2-G\sharp_2-G_2-F\sharp_2-E_2-D_2-C\sharp_2-B_1-Bb_1-A_1-G_1-F\sharp_1$), after the initial "painful-sobbing" chromatic ($A-G\sharp-G-F\sharp$) to the elegiac text ("One love at a time, the morning, in a foreign land"), the core of the vocal expression is formed by two segments of the diminished scale ($E-D-C\sharp-B-Bb; Bb-A-G-F\sharp$) that inexorably lead into the indispensable, expected peace and comfort at the end of the stanza. Vocal "stairs" of descending second steps in themselves cause psychological tension and trigger a whole series of dissonant chords, as well as tonal instability and inflection towards the subdominant minor key, recalling the expressions of painfully emphasized, sensuous sensitivity to Wagner's harmony of tension. Thus, even in the initial forte dynamics, the word "love" comes with a chromatic collision of the vocal melody and the upper score of the piano accompaniment with the bass in the lower score. Obviously bringing a negative context in suggesting unhappy love, the dissonant harmony of the related bichord introduces the lability of the tonal basis. The evidence on the experience of loneliness continues with a successive image of the morning in a foreign land with a harmonic narrative of a diminished seventh chord and a dominant seventh chord. In addition to the immersion of the soloist element, the weight and anguish of the subject's mental state is also shown by the composer's change of the following text ("kills our soul" instead of the poet's "twists our soul"), as well as the harmonic-tonal break to a lower tonal platform of B Minor. In the follow up, the composer Božić harmonizes the text with "peace" – an altered ninth chord of the chromatic type (in the basic form $C\sharp-E\sharp-G-B-D$), whose plagal resolution on the tonic emphasizes the calmness of the dramatic element (Bars 170–172). In the context of the musical-poetic image of "red grains of coral", the chord linking of the expressive-colouristic feature and effect leads to the fluctuation of the tonal base with a conditional interpretation of the change to G Minor (in the vocal part, the descending diminished tetrachord from third to seventh degree in G Minor: $Hb-A-G-F\sharp$ is revealed). The dissonance of the musical flow and the impaired functionality led to the fluctuation of the tonal background, like the suspicious flow of the subject's consciousness that seeks refuge. According to the composer himself, "it is dominated by B Minor, which has masked its scattered tonal contours with full-scale structures. Those full-scale structures are Lydian-Mixolydian (acoustic)"⁴, evident in bars 181–183. After the aforementioned colour darkening, a return to F sharp Minor follows with a symptomatic tritone bass relation on the dominant chord ($II > - D$), a realteration of the fifth and the disappearance of the seventh. Its tonicization and permeation with minor is the continuation of emotional colouring, while the vocal part of the Phrygian undertone is enriched with melismatic expression in the positive context of evoking native cherries. The musical narrative of the piano score does not bring the stanza to a close, but continues the narration through the seventh chord of the second degree, which leads to further instrumental development – the transition to the final stanza.

⁴ E-mail correspondence between the author of the text and Svetislav Božić [on 2 February 2024].

Example 4

162 *f* *
 јед - на љу - бав ју - тро у ту - ђи - ни, лу - шу нам у - би - ја све

mf (II)

fis: t VII^6_5 h: VII^4_3 VII^4_3 D^9

теш - ње бес - крај - ним ми - ром, из ко - јих *mf*

(II₇) (DD₁₂) *mp*

D^9 t II^6_3 t

цр - ње - ње зр - на ко -

t sm^7 D^9_{III} DD^9 (?)
 (g: t⁷) 9

ра - ла ка - о из

D^{12}_3 (g: s⁷)

за - ви - ча - ја тре - шње из за - ви - ча - ја треш - ње.

mp *decrsc.* *p*

D^{12}_3 Fis: T t II^4_3

Božić introduces the pleasant mood and blissful feelings of the fourth, final stanza with a simple thematization of the zestful character in the instrumental accompaniment, within a simple, airy texture. The very beginning of the arioso solo section is conceived in the Aeolian "soft... dreamlike modality" (Božić 2005v, 80), as the composer experiences it. Namely, the high level of the positive side of the subject's emotionality was determined by a more developed, charming tone of the solo narrative than in the previous stanzas. In this sense, the harmonic static of the strophic beginning on the tonic of F sharp-A eolic mode indicates the dominance of the linear, gradual vocal development of the material from the beginning of the piece. On the other hand, the discrete colouristic shimmer of the Doric sixth in the piano accompaniment changes the musical flow into the Fsharp-Doric mode according to the principle of mutation i.e., mode change without altering the modal centre "as a frequent principle of Božić's modal expressive-colouristic code" (Milenković 2018, 190). The real arioso development will emerge on the word "moon", when Božić, after seven bars of fluttering, melismatic expression achieves an expansion of meditative lyricism. By underlining the word "moon", the composer promotes the cosmic symbol of the Moon and its importance for the subject's emotional world, thus realizing lovely musical accents with a sensitive and tender expression of a captivating wavy melody. The composer harmonically colours the image of the smiling subject on the magical "moon with a bow" with a long harmony of the subdominant in the form of a dominantseventh chord, and then a ninth chord, devoid of harmonic dynamics. The irrational verse detail of the moon's "bow" is emphasized by the impressionistic chord VI_V^9 with a striking suspending "sigh" of the culminating tone of the stanza – G_2 with a traditional resolution. Refraction of the energy of the composer's passion towards the psychological state of the subject leads to a major tonic calmness and tranquillity, not by chance, but on the word "we caress", as a positive connotation of the sensual image. With the appearance of the minor sixth chord "blurred" by the flickering dissonances of the diminished seventh chord, the soloist element in melancholic immersion brings the tones of the diminished scale, generating a colouristic-expressive impression and spectrum of Scriabin-like ninth-chord harmonies. Leading into an expressive anticlimax, the vocal element radiates a Phrygian modal expression (bars 249–251), with a characteristic emphasis on the tritone poles in the bass ($F\sharp-C-F\sharp$), the appearance of the tonic with the thematic reminiscence of the beginning of the composition⁵ and a strong impulse of the ascending whole-scale sound in the role of painting complex, philosophical world of the subject.

Example 5

221

про - бу - ди - мо - се

pis:t

(VI...)

(s...)

⁵ It is about the association of third related (tree) diphthongs over the current double pedal.

The musical score consists of six systems, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 4/4. The tempo and dynamics are marked *mf*.

System 1: Lyrics: но - гу и сме - ши - мо дра - го на. Harmonic annotations: 6^+ and t in the bass line; $(7-)$ below the piano part.

System 2: Lyrics: ме - сит. Harmonic annotations: S^7 and $(E:D^7)$ below the piano part.

System 3: Lyrics: са за - пе - тим лу - ком. и. Harmonic annotations: S^9 and $(E:D^7)$ below the piano part; VI_V^9 below the vocal line.

System 4: Lyrics: ми - лу - је - мо да - ле - ка бр - да. и. Harmonic annotations: T^6 below the piano part; t^6 and (VII_s^2) below the vocal line; (VII_s^2) below the piano part.

System 5: Lyrics: ле - де - не го - ре бла - го. Harmonic annotations: DS^9 below the piano part; P^9 below the vocal line.

System 6: Lyrics: бла - го ру - ком. Harmonic annotations: P below the piano part; t below the vocal line; $(s_{III}-D-t-s_{III}-D-)+$ below the piano part; CDS at the end of the system.

Additional markings include *decresc.* in the piano part of the final system.

5. CONCLUSION

Viewing the vertical-horizontal threads of the musical fabric of the song *Sumatra* by Svetislav Božić, we cannot evade the impression that he who dared describe subtle mental processes and moods, and colour the Sumatraist sensuous images of Crnjanski's poetry must be a master who not only dared, but also completely succeeded. The creative path followed by the composer begins with a complete analysis of the poetic text, setting the main points of emotional experience, the atmosphere of sensory images and the "space of happiness", and musicalisation of literary source without its radical transformation.

The rich scale of emotionality of Crnjanski's poetry found a magnificent expression in the music of the composer Božić, who showed an exceptional poetic and philosophical, as well as dramaturgical gift, realizing in *Sumatra* and other songs as vocal-instrumental works, a dialogue with Crnjanski and the personal musical-psychological-philosophical view of the topic he dealt with, giving particular attention to the semantically significant segments of the poetic text. Commenting on the "freer movement of the musical flow within the observed poetic or prose whole of the text used", the composer bears witness to a personal creative treatment, thus expressing the view that this is made possible by the "presumed worldliness of the texts upraised by the human voice" (Božić, 2009, 34). So, thanks to Crnjanski and Božić, we travel from the distant Scottish shores in the song *Premonition* to the snowy peaks of the Urals in *Sumatra*, and then from the blue seas with red corals to the native cherries and the Moon, enjoying with all our being the wonderful sensual pictures painted by the inventive creative writing of the authors from Banat and Loznica, in all the grandeur of their refined creative expression.

The thematic material and texture of the piano introduction in *Sumatra* is an important architectural element of the entire piece, with a significant pulsating, quaver movement of the subject's "troche of the soul", but also symbolic, destined inevitability. In the musical-poetic evolution of the subject's psychological-emotional realm, Božić is brilliant as an outstanding connoisseur of the vocal script, using the entire spectrum of nuances of vocal expression: from restrained quasi-spiritual chanting and inert recitative expression with a focus on one tone, to arioso contours of refined, colourful melodiousness. The domain of "negative" emotions, from sadness to resignation, is interpreted by Božić in minor keys. The composer bases the musical image of *Sumatra* and the manifest model of the poet's Sumatraist world on the unity of modal and tonal harmony in the traditional way of building chords based on thirds, with discrete hints of fourth impulses in the piano accompaniment. In that sense, the daughter of the composer, J. Jelenković states that "the presence of tonal and modal patterns in Božić's language is not the result of mere mannerism and a passive 'look into the past', but the mentioned act of their affirmation in the given historical context and within the particular poetics of the composer should be seen as a kind of symbolic gesture, by which tonality and modality are not set only as a language but also as a sign of a special property" (Jelenković 2018, 76), but also tradition, we would add here. The search for an adequate expression led Božić from the national source of simple melodies of the modal concept to Bartok's Lydian-Mixolydian scale, and the diminished scale of Rimsky-Korsakov and Scriabin, which he uses in vocal and instrumental musical tissue, aimed at most faithful expression, as well as stimulating the listeners' sensibility. In the architecture of *Sumatra*, attention is drawn to the diversity of the harmonic palette: from consonant modal chords in three-tone and expressive four-tone forms to a particularly significant role of colouristic nuances of the chord with the structure of dominant ninth chord in the

sporadic gradation up to the eleventh chord and typical impressionist sonorities of the whole scale feature on the stylistic basis of Debussy – Scriabin, but always in strict function of musical dramaturgy, while preserving tonality. In this context, the stylistic corridor of *Sumatra* follows a wide arc of interweaving Romanticism and Impressionism origins with a national idiom of a wide range of means, radiating precious, complex meanings. However, despite the accumulation of European music heritage that rightly belong to him in terms of artistic freedom, Božić does not fall under their influence, because the dominant principle of his expression is national authenticity using modernized elements of national tradition, sometimes discreetly interwoven, in accordance with the Sumatraist theme he is working on. Finally, Svetislav Božić, undoubtedly a great cosmopolitan as well as a nationalist, knew very well that like Hristić, "under different conditions, in another time, he does the same thing as Mokranjac" (Hristić 1924–1925, 11).

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TRETMAN POETSKOG TEKSTA CRNJANSKOG I OSOBENOSTI HARMONSKOG JEZIKA U SOLO PESMI SUMATRA SVETISLAVA BOŽIĆA

Inspiracija Svetislava Božića književnim opusom Miloša Crnjanskog, koja datira od 1989. godine do današnjih dana, rezultirala je mnogobrojnim delima u kojima možemo pratiti vezu dvojice umetnika, kao i stil, estetiku, umetničku fantaziju i stvaralački kredo kompozitora. Predmet našeg istraživanja predstavlja solo pesma za ženski glas i klavir – Sumatra, ključna pesma ciklusa na kojem je Crnjanski koncipirao čitav jedan poetsko-teorijski koncept avangardnog književnog programa – sumatraizma. U radu se prati Božićev „libretistički“ rad na poetskom predlošku čiji kontinuitet i integritet kompozitor zadržava minimalnim intervencijama, dodatno ističući vrednost Sumatre, kao i drugih pesama. Božićeva stvaralačka putanja upravo polazi od kompletne analize poetskog teksta, postavljanja glavnih punktova emocionalnog doživljaja, atmosfere čulnih slika i „prostora sreće“, te omuzikaljenja književnog izvora bez transformacije istog. U arhitekturi Sumatre pažnju privlači raznovrsnost harmonske palete: od konsonantnih modalnih akorada u trozvučnim i ekspresivnim četvorozvučnim vidovima do naročito značajne uloge kolorističkih preliva malog durskog nonakorda u sporadičnoj gradaciji do undecimakorda i zvučnosti celostepenog obeležja na stilskoj osnovi Debisi – Skrjabin, no uvek u strogoj funkciji muzičke dramaturgije, uz očuvanje tonalnosti. U tom kontekstu stilski koridor Sumatre kreće se u dinamičnom luku prožimanja romantičarske i impresionističke provenijencije sa nacionalnim idiomom širokog dijapazona sredstava, isijavajući dragocena, višeslojna značenja. Uprkos akumulaciji tekovina evropske muzike koje mu po umetničkoj slobodi pripadaju, Božić ne potpada pod njihov uticaj, budući da dominantno načelo njegovog izraza kreira stvaralačka autohtonost u korišćenju osavremenjenih elemenata nacionalne tradicije, nekad i diskretno protkanih, potvrđujući da „pod drugim uslovima, u drugom vremenu, čini ono isto što i Mokranjac“.

Ključne reči: *Božić, Crnjanski, sumatraizam, tekst, harmonija, akord.*