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## PATTERNS OF MUSIC TASTE AS MARKERS OF SOCIOCULTURAL TRANSFORMATION IN SERBIA BETWEEN THE TWO WORLD WARS: THE EXAMPLE OF JOVAN FRAJT'S MUSIC PUBLICATIONS\*

**ABSTRACT:** The available printed scores from Jovan Frajt's collection, as well as the preserved fragments of his catalogue, are analysed thoroughly. The results of the analysis are explained in depth using the published statistical data from different sources. The aim is to assess the significance of Frajt's collection in the research of sociocultural tendencies in Serbia between the two World Wars.

**KEY WORDS:** Jovan Frajt; printed music; interwar period; sociocultural trends; consumption patterns; music taste; Serbia

The printing of music scores began to develop in Serbia during the nineteenth century mostly due to political and socioeconomic factors. Because of the activities of the amateur choral singing societies established in urban centres, which were political propaganda to an extent, there was a need for music scores of different generations of Serbian and Slavic composers, mostly those that relied on music folklore or patriotic subjects. The growing number of amateur choirs in Serbia and in the regions of Austro-Hungarian monarchy populated with Serbs (Vojvodina, Bosnia and Herzegovina, western Romania) stimulated both the production and the publication of such pieces, thus influencing the foundation and expansion of the music printing markets. That process was also vigorously prompted by the rise of bourgeois class in towns of Serbia and Vojvodina in the second half of the nineteenth century. Although the population of well-educated, wealthy families was very small, their interest in amateur music performance and music education contributed not only to the changing social perception of music activities – actually to their prestigious status in the process of socialization of individuals – but also to the diversification of music printing supply.

Still, except for the occasional printing endeavours that were taking place chiefly in Novi Sad and Belgrade, systematically designed publishing projects

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before the First World War were rare.<sup>1</sup> The situation changed thoroughly in the interwar period, when many small private entrepreneurs began the music printing business.<sup>2</sup> Among the most ambitious and prosperous of them was Jovan Frajt, a member of a Czech family that moved to Belgrade in the beginning of the twentieth century and left a strong imprint on the city's musical life. He founded a private publishing enterprise that regularly supplied amateur and professional musicians with the music of Serbian, Yugoslav and European authors.

Jovan Frajt started his publishing enterprise after the First World War, while selling music instruments and music equipment at the same time. The majority of the published pieces were under license, and Frajt strictly complied with the intellectual property regulations. Unusual in Serbia and Yugoslavia of that time, such practice contributed, among other factors, to the distinctive position of Frajt's products on the local market. It was probably one of the reasons why he could not make large profits from publishing and why he also focused on trading musical instruments.

Nonetheless, the fact that his business survived throughout the interwar period and that his catalogue was constantly expanding with the inclusion of newly composed pieces, to reach huge dimensions, is very important for several reasons. First of all, this phenomenon can be seen as a symptom of the transformations of Serbian and Yugoslav society in the interwar period. It is possible to interpret the existence of systematic and continual music publishing process as an important sign of the evolving need for the music scores on a more massive

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<sup>1</sup> The detailed analysis of the music printing in Serbia and Vojvodina from the second half of nineteenth century until the beginning of the First World War can be found in the unpublished doctoral dissertation of Marijana Kokanović Marković. See in: Marijana Kokanović Marković, *Društvena uloga salonske muzike u životu i sistemu vrednosti srpskog građanstva u 19. veku* [The Social Function of the Salon Music in the Life and Value-Orientations of the Serbian Bourgeoisie in the Nineteenth Century] (Ph.D. dissertation, Academy of Art in Novi Sad, 2012).

<sup>2</sup> Music printing in Belgrade in interwar period was progressing via the activities of state publishing companies (Državna štamparija), state funded music societies (Južnoslovenski pevački savez), academic societies (Univerzitetsko društvo *Collegium musicum*), private societies (Udruženje prijatelja slovenske muzike), and private publishing houses (Geca Kon, Zlatibor, Strahov, Kosta Bojić, Jovan Frajt etc). Most of the publishing houses, whether state funded or private, focused on printing works by Yugoslav and Slavic authors composed for piano, voice with piano accompaniment, violin and larger vocal ensembles. Beside the music scores from the local publishers, printed music from international publishing houses was available in music stores and bookstores. For example, the music store *Harmonija* was an authorized retailer of the publishing house *Schott's Söhne* from Mainz, while the bookstore *Sveslovenska knjižara J. M. Stefanovića i druga* offered music scores from the catalogues of distinguished European music publishing houses. Apart from that, it was possible to order music scores of the publishers from London or Czechoslovakia (J. & W. Chester Ltd, Edition Hudebni Matice, Mojmir Urbánek etc.) either directly or through the intermediaries. Cf. Ivana Vesić, *"Između poetike i politike": polje muzičke produkcije u Srbiji i njegov odnos prema društvenoj stvarnosti u periodu između dva svetska rata* [Between Poetics and Politics: the Field of Music in Serbia in Interwar Period and its Relations to the Social Reality] (M.Mus. thesis, Faculty of Music in Belgrade, 2007), 48–54.

scale compared to the previous period. If there had not been a substantial interest in published music in Belgrade, as well as in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, the publishing business would not have been developed or lasted for a long time. The permanent growth of the consumption of printed music in the interwar period should be treated as an indicator of a lifestyle change in a part of the Serbian and Yugoslav society, as well as the class structure in urban areas.

Potentially wide scope of interpretation of the long-lasting existence of Frajt's enterprise, and also of the type of music products he sold, is partly limited because of the lack of thorough investigation on socioeconomic and sociocultural trends in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, especially in its urban areas. With the exception of Mari-Žanin Čalić's extensive research of Serbian social history from the nineteenth century to the Second World War,<sup>3</sup> there are not many examples of detailed research studies dedicated to the explanation of the effects that broader social and cultural changes in Serbia and Yugoslavia had on the social reality and social worlds of the different strata between the World Wars.<sup>4</sup> Unlike the political circumstances of that period, which have been observed and interpreted from many different angles, cultural and social phenomena have not been approached systematically, apart from the fact that there are many valuable resources – including official statistical data, saved archival material of the important cultural institutions, reports and articles from newspapers and journals, published memoirs and recollections of influential cultural actors etc. – that can serve as a reliable basis for further scholarly analysis.

Without more general insight into the sociocultural processes in Serbian and Yugoslav society of the interwar period, one that should necessarily include critical examination of the existing statistical and historical data, research focused on the particular events or processes typical of the field of cultural production risks becoming 'short-sighted' or incapable of adequately contributing

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<sup>3</sup> Mari-Žanin Čalić, *Socijalna istorija Srbije 1815–1941: usporeni napredak u industrijalizaciji* [Social History of Serbia 1815–1941: The Delayed Industrialization], transl. by Ranka Gašić (Beograd: Clio, 2004).

<sup>4</sup> Still, we need to mention some of the important books that provide an insight into the socioeconomic and social processes in interwar Serbia/Yugoslavia: *Srbija u modernizacijskim procesima XX veka* (saopštenja sa naučnog skupa) [Serbia in the Modernization Processes of the Twentieth Century /conference proceedings/] by Latinka Perović, Marija Obradović and Dušanka Stojanović (Beograd: Institut za noviju istoriju Srbije, 1994); *Srbija u modernizacijskim procesima 19. i 20. veka. Položaj žene kao merilo modernizacije* (saopštenja sa naučnog skupa) [Serbia in the Modernization Processes of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Century. The Status of Women as an Indicator of Modernization /conference proceedings/] by Latinka Perović (Beograd: Institut za noviju istoriju Srbije, 1998); *Srbija u modernizacijskim procesima 19. i 20. veka. Uloga elita* [Serbia in the Modernization Processes of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Century. The Role of the Elites] by Latinka Perović (Beograd: Čigoja štampa, 2003); *Srbija u modernizacijskim procesima XIX i XX veka. Žene i Deca* [Serbia in the Modernization Processes of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Century. Women and Children] by Latinka Perović (Beograd: Helsinški odbor za ljudska prava, 2006).

to the existing body of scholarly knowledge. The main problem lies in the process of generalization from the analysed data. Although there are many theories that can explain merging the micro- and macrolevels of sociocultural phenomena in Yugoslav context, the absence of investigations on the characteristics of the Yugoslav society in the interwar period, on the cultural effects of its social structure, on the lifestyles of different social groups, and also on class boundaries and distinctions complicates the construction of hypotheses and the creation of inferences.

Having in mind the limited knowledge on the Serbian and Yugoslav society and culture in the interwar period, I am aware of the imposed narrowness of the interpretation of the socio-cultural importance of Frajt's collection, hoping that when the adequate research is done and published, the hypotheses and conclusions I reached would become more firmly grounded. In the following chapter I will give a detailed description and the analysis of Frajt's surviving printed collection and also of his published catalogues. Comparing the obtained results with the data collected from different sources, mostly from the polls and statistics of Radio Belgrade as well as the published newspaper reports and official reports on cultural consumption, I intend to give an insight into the music consumption patterns in the interwar period, trying to explain specific historical, economic and social factors of their formation.<sup>5</sup>

### **Description and analysis of Jovan Frajt's printed collection and catalogue**

It is not possible to estimate fully the content and size of Jovan Frajt's printed collection since the complete list of printed works is missing and the printed material is scattered across public and private libraries and archives. Keeping in mind the fact that Frajt used to mark the music scores with numbers, their quantity can be estimated only by the data available in the preserved copies of his catalogue, some of which can be found on the last pages of the published works. Thus, we believe that Frajt's collection included more than 900 printed music scores, because one of the largest numbers that has appeared in the analy-

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<sup>5</sup> Insights are based on the existing theories and research on taste patterns, class induced distinctions of lifestyle and cultural preferences and needs and the wider social significance of the consumption practices. See, for example, in: Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction* (Paris: Minuit, 1979); Bethany Bryson, "'Anything But Heavy-Metal' Symbolic Exclusion and Musical Dislikes", *American Sociological Review*, 61/5 (1996), 884–99; Douglas B. Holt, "Distinction in America? Recovering Bourdieu's Theory From its Critics", *Poetics*, 25 (1997), 93–120; Paul DiMaggio and Toquir Mukhtar, "Arts Participation as Cultural Capital in the United States, 1982–2002: Signs of Decline?", *Poetics*, 32 (2004), 169–94; Oriel Sullivan and Tally Katz-Gerro, "The Omnivore Thesis Revisited: Voracious Cultural Consumers", *European Sociological Review*, 23/2 (2006), 123–37; Alan Ward, David Wright and Modesto Gayo-Cal, "Understanding Cultural Omnivorousness: or, the Myth of Cultural Omnivore", *Cultural Sociology*, 1/2 (2007), 142–64.

sed material is 932. In the process of reconstruction of Frajt's printed legacy, which implies the examination of stylistic traits as well as genre diversity of the published works, we had access to two different kinds of sources. One is the large pool of Frajt's printed music scores which was bestowed to the Institute of Musicology of Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts in Belgrade in 2011 by Mr Lalović, a family member. It has been classified, enumerated and catalogued by the researchers, and is now available both to scholarly community and general public. The other valuable source were parts of printed catalogue of Frajt's collection, as well as typed lists of the published works, preserved by Hristina Medić, musicologist and music specialist, one of several heirs to the Frajt family possessions. She kindly offered the foregoing documents, and also gave very useful information on the history of the Frajt family and its most prominent members, including Jovan Frajt.

By the detailed and systematic comparison of the catalogue of Institute of Musicology SASA with the preserved fragments of Frajt's catalogue, we identified 546 printed units, which make about 59% of the complete collection. Investigation of this large sample, containing 247 printed works stored at the Institute of Musicology SASA in Belgrade and 299 listed works, revealed many interesting facts. First of all, the sample we analysed shows the prevalence of the pieces written for voice and piano and solo piano, which accounts for the 88% of it. This group of works is obviously dominated by the compositions for voice and piano (57%), compared to the ones for piano solo (30%). The remaining part of the sample consists of the pieces for solo violin, violin and piano (about 8%), choral songs and pieces for solo guitar.

The sample and its sections can be divided into smaller subgroups according to several criteria: 1) the type of music practice that the pieces are connected to (art music, popular music, music folklore), 2) genre characteristics of the pieces (type of instrument/instrumental ensemble the piece is written for), 3) the status of the composers in the national/international music history (distinguished/unknown, educated/amateur etc.). Of course, it is possible to fragment the sample further still, using the criteria of compositional and technical complexity, but, on the one hand, we realized that the results would be obscured by the fact that printed versions of majority of the analysed works are not available, and, on the other hand, that the conclusions we have reached would largely remain the same. Still, the notes on compositional properties of the works published in Frajt's collection are taken into consideration in our analytic comments.

The largest subgroup of the sample, namely the pieces for voice and piano, contains arias from the operatic works, arias from operettas, songs, arrangements of folksongs, *Schlager* numbers from the popular movies of that time, *Schlager* numbers composed by the local artists and songs in the rhythm of popular dances (tango, foxtrot, slow fox etc.). This segment of the sample includes 312 units, which are almost equally subdivided according to the types

of music practices that are represented. Arias from operas and operettas, as well as songs, having a 34% share, slightly outnumber popular songs (33%) and arrangements of folksongs (33%). This part of the sample is made of the arias of famous Italian, French, Czech and Russian operatic composers from the Romantic period (Giuseppe Verdi, Ruggero Leoncavallo, Pietro Mascagni, Giacomo Puccini, Jacques Halévy, Charles Gounod, Georges Bizet, Charles Louis Ambroise Thomas, Bedřich Smetana and Peter Tchaikovsky), arias from operettas of Hungarian composers Emmerich Kálmán and Franz Lehár, songs from a local type of *Singspiel* written by one of the most influential composers in Serbia in nineteenth century Davorin Jenko, songs by Schubert, Schumann, Rubinstein as well as established Serbian composers from the *fin de siècle* and the first decades of the twentieth century (Davorin Jenko, Josif Marinković, Stevan Mokranjac, Petar Krstić, Stanislav Binički, Mihovil Logar, Stanojlo Rajičić). In this group there are also a few pieces by less known authors, such as Ivan Dominis, Jovan Srbulj, Josip Rajhenić-Raha, Svetislav Anđelić, Kosta Bojković etc. Folksong arrangements contain music materials from Serbia, Bosnia, Macedonia and Dalmatia, mostly shaped and harmonized by Jovan Frajt and, in small number of pieces, by Stevan Frajt, Ivan Dominis, Vaclav Vedral, etc. The group of popular songs includes the songs by composers from Yugoslavia (Jovan Frajt, Miša Arandelović, Lav Wesselovsky, Ratko Lazić, Nikola Butaš, Ivo Tijardović, Jovan Urban, Vjekoslav Klaić, M. Mihajlović, M. Marković etc.), as well as German and Austrian composers of film-*schlagers* (Carl Hohengarten, E. V. Malderen, K. Schröder, Haschler, Hirsch, etc).

Unlike the subgroup of works for voice and piano, the subgroup of works for piano solo includes a lesser number of pieces composed by the established European composers (Ludwig van Beethoven, Georges Bizet, Johannes Brahms, Antonín Dvořák, Edvard Grieg, Moritz Moszkowski, Camille Saint-Saëns, Franz Schubert, Bedřich Smetana, Giuseppe Verdi and Peter Tchaikovsky). The remaining pieces for piano solo belong to Austrian, Czech, French, Hungarian, Italian, German and Russian composers of salon music and operettas (e.g. Alfons Cizbulka, Gustav Lange, Emmerich Kálmán, František Kmoch, Paul Lincke, Jacques Offenbach, Auguste Durand, Friedrich Baumfelder, Leon Jessel, Florian Hermann, Robert Planquette, Hermann Riedel, Ludwig Siede, Robert Vollstedt, Émile Waldteufel etc) as well as the composers from Serbia and Croatia (Davorin Jenko, Ivan Zajc, Jovan Frajt, Božidar Joksimović, Ivan Dominis, Vaclav Vedral, Mihovil Logar, Milenko Živković, M. Nikolić, etc). With the exception of Logar's *Sonatina*, the majority of works belong to the category of stylized dances – primarily marches, Serbian folk dances, oriental dances, waltzes, tangos. There are also examples of lyrical character pieces.

The analysis of divergent samples from Frajt's published collection and catalogue shows the scarcity of the complex, technically and formally advanced compositions on the one hand, and, on the other hand, the prevalence of the

simple, dancelike pieces. This is apparent in the case of the works for piano solo, where there are no examples of etudes, sonatas or more demanding character pieces. The fact that these genres are not represented in Frajt's collection and the fact that there is a predominance of the compositions from the Romantic period with lyrical content and dance rhythmic patterns leads to conclusion that the collection was not primarily intended for the use in music education, but for the purpose of entertainment. Since there is a lack of information on the numbers of sold copies of Frajt's music scores, on the overall finances of his music printing business and on the social characteristic of the average buyers, it is impossible to make any generalizations without examining many valuable secondary sources. In the absence of macrooriented research on cultural and music consumption in Serbia/Yugoslavia of that period, we will focus on the different types of published statistical data on the cultural and music preferences of Belgrade inhabitants. Analysing the Radio Belgrade polls and comparing their results with tendencies in consumption observed through the other available statistical data, we will attempt to explain the significance of the sample of Frajt's collection in the research of broader sociocultural trends in the interwar period.

### **Sociocultural trends in Serbia in interwar period: the view from the published statistical data**

The rising interest for entertainment among the population of Serbia and Belgrade after the First World War was manifested by different indicators. Except for the appearance of popular magazines with detailed reports on fashion, film, music production (for example *Film i moda /Film and Fashion/*, *Ženski svet /Women's World/*, *Moda /Fashion/* etc.) as well as special supplements in daily newspapers dedicated to popular culture, the growing need for the different sorts of entertainment came to the fore through the expansion of number of institutions of popular and high art culture in the 1920s and 1930s, the divergence and magnitude of offered cultural products and the level of expenditure on cultural products.<sup>6</sup>

The official statistical records from 1929 until 1940 that were published in several volumes of *Statistical Yearbook (Statistički godišnjak)* do not include the precise data on the number of visits to the institutions of high or popular culture,

<sup>6</sup> See in: *Beograd u sećanjima: 1919–1929* [Belgrade in Memories] (Beograd: Srpska književna zadruga, 1980); *Beograd u sećanjima: 1930–1941* [Belgrade in Memories 1930–1941] (Beograd: Srpska književna zadruga, 1983); Dimitrije Knežev, *Beograd naše mladosti. Zapisi o Beogradu 1918–1941* [Belgrade of Our Youth. Notes on Belgrade 1918–1941] (Čikago, 1987); Predrag J. Marković, *Evropski uticaj na proces modernizacije Beograda od 1918–1941* [European Influences on the Process of Modernization of Belgrade From 1918 to 1941] (Beograd: s.n., 1990).

or on the social characteristics of the consumers. Actually, the systematic publication of the data concerning theatrical, film and radio production, distribution and consumption started in 1932, including the information on the number of theatres, cinemas and radio stations by region per year, number and types of theatrical productions, as well as the number of sold tickets, number and types of film projections and sold tickets, number and types of radio program formats. The collected data give some insight into the popularity of certain forms of cultural consumption, but more detailed information on the consumer response to the specific theatrical or film genres is necessary in order to make general assumptions on the taste patterns. Certainly, the findings about the social position of the consumers of specific cultural products would contribute immensely to the broadening of reflexions on the correlation of socioeconomic and cultural phenomena.

In order to collect more accurate data on the range of consumption of different types of musical products in Belgrade in 1920s and 1930s, we had an access to the preserved official documentation from the National Theatre (Belgrade) and many private music theatres that were founded at that period. These materials are conserved at the Archive of Yugoslavia, in the section of the Ministry of Education.<sup>7</sup> Examination of these materials revealed many important facts about the aesthetical, political, organizational and financial problems of both state-funded and privately funded theatrical enterprises. Still, apart from the reports on salaries of the employees of the National Theatre's orchestra, choir, operatic and ballet ensembles, as well as the overviews of the incomes of the operatic and ballet sector, there are no records on the financial success of specific productions or on the average number of spectators per performance. The financial aspects of the performances of operettas and so-called music reviews by private theatres and companies, including the statistics on their consumption, are even more difficult to assess.

Unlike the scarcity of data useful for making inferences on consumption patterns of Belgrade population, both in official statistical records and the archived documentation of most important cultural institutions in the interwar period, a lot of very useful information can be detected in the published statistics of Radio Belgrade. The management of Belgrade radio station collected annually the data on the number of its consumers as well as their social 'profile'. As a result of their endeavour to meet the needs of listeners more extensively, a detailed research on the listeners' preferences was initiated in 1934 and contin-

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<sup>7</sup> AJ 66, Ministarstvo prosvete Kraljevine Jugoslavije [Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia], 599, 995; AJ 66, Ministarstvo prosvete Kraljevine Jugoslavije [Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia], 359, 599; AJ 66, Ministarstvo prosvete Kraljevine Jugoslavije [Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia], 617, 1023; AJ 66, Ministarstvo prosvete Kraljevine Jugoslavije [Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia], 619, 1099.

ued in the following years. Consequently, in 1937 radio officials conducted a large-scale poll intending to shape the content of the radio program in accordance with the listeners' desires.<sup>8</sup> This poll was not based on the advanced statistical techniques, e.g. the technique of sampling which was used since the early 1930s. Because the sampling was not applied, the poll took more time and money, and the collected data could not be generalized completely. The total of 60,000 questionnaires was sent by mail with approximately 45% of the responses (26,800). The results showed that 76% of the respondents preferred more folk music in the program, 68% opted for so called light music that included genres of military music, popular dance music (tango, foxtrot, slow fox, shimmy etc.), folk dances, jazz music and operettas, while only 50% voted for classical music (mostly symphonic music, chamber music and operas). The large number of respondents also gave their support to music from gramophone records (72%) and insisted on the more frequent live broadcast from taverns (68%).

Management of the radio station did not consider more detailed analysis of the results of the poll, which disables any speculation on the correlation of the social characteristics of the respondents (age, education, occupation and incomes) with their music preferences. Some assumptions, though, can be created indirectly by using the data about the subscribed radio listeners collected by the radio officials every year. These data reveal the occupational structure of the large part of the radio listeners. For example, reports from the 1932 demonstrate the prevalence of private administrative workers (19.4%), merchants (17.5%), craftsmen (15.5%) and clerks (13.7%) among the subscribed listeners, while the reports from 1938 show slight differences with the domination of craftsmen (19.9%), private administrative workers (15.49%), merchants (14.17%) and clerks (13%).<sup>9</sup> Therefore, we can assume that the majority of registered radio listeners belonged to the more educated and wealthier part of the society – actually, to the middle class, which was not a very numerous group considering the total population of Serbia and Yugoslavia, but was highly represented in urban areas.<sup>10</sup> In Belgrade, it created a very large segment of the population although it is not very easy to estimate its dimensions because of the type of classification used in the official statistical records. In fact, since only the citizens' professions were taken into consideration, without reference to education and incomes, the class boundaries cannot be defined with precision. Still,

<sup>8</sup> "Rezultati ankete kod radio pretplatnika izvršene početkom ove godine" [The Results of the Poll of the Registered Radio Listeners Conducted in the Beginning of the Year], *Radio Beograd* [Radio Belgrade], 23 (1937), 1–3.

<sup>9</sup> See in: Mirjana Nikolić, *Radio u Srbiji (1924–1941)* [Radio in Serbia /1924–1941/], (Beograd: Zadužbina Andrejević, 2006).

<sup>10</sup> See in: Ljubodrag Dimić, *Kulturna politika u Kraljevini Jugoslaviji: 1918–1941. Društvo i država* [Cultural Politics in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia: 1918–1941. Society and State] (Beograd: Stubovi kulture, 1996).

even the existing data suggest the probable number of the middle class people in the Belgrade area.<sup>11</sup>

The Radio Belgrade polls, as well as its program that tended to conform to the preferences of the listeners especially after 1934, could be interpreted as a reliable indicator of the cultural needs of Serbian and Yugoslav middle class, in addition to their music taste. Besides this, newspaper reports on the cultural and music consumption of the inhabitants of Belgrade, concert reviews, published analyses of local music life and memoirs of the contemporaries, as well as the unpublished archived materials that contain comments and insights of important cultural personalities, enable us to assess the taste patterns of different social groups with some degree of reliability. By scrutinizing these sources we came to some important findings. First of all, it is apparent that more artistically aspiring or more complex types of music products did not attract attention of Belgrade audiences. Among other things, the reports of the state tax collecting agencies, published in newspapers in the early 1920s, display popularity of commercial types of music products like variety shows (music hall) as well as the urbanized folk music.<sup>12</sup> The published memoirs about the interwar period restaurants, in accordance to the archived correspondences of the National Theatre officials, also confirm the enthusiasm of the audiences for the variety shows (music hall) or other sorts of popular multimedia forms, dancing and live performances of folk music in taverns.<sup>13</sup> Lastly, as it is known from the reviews of the operatic performances in the National Theatre in Belgrade, the audience preferred listening to 'less serious' works with comic or vaudeville-like content, showing interest for the performances of operettas and comic operas.<sup>14</sup>

Although the social characteristics and class position of the consumers of different types of music products – artistic or commercial – cannot be appointed with certainty, we can assume that the available data on music consumption mostly reveals the practices of the middle-class and the upper middle-class population, while the practices of numerous members of Belgrade working class is less visible.<sup>15</sup> Using them as a source for further inferences, our aim is to judge

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Predrag J. Marković, *Evropski uticaji...*, op.cit.

<sup>12</sup> "Beograd koji se zabavlja" [Belgrade and Entertainment], *Politika*, 24 July (1923), 5.

<sup>13</sup> For instance, see in: Dimitrije Knežev, *Beograd naše...*, op. cit. 41–66, 119–22; AJ 66, Ministarstvo prosvete Kraljevine Jugoslavije [Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia], 599, 995; AJ 66, Ministarstvo prosvete Kraljevine Jugoslavije [Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia], 619, 1029.

<sup>14</sup> See in: Roksanda Pejović, *Muzička kritika i esejistika u Beogradu (1919–1941)* [Music Criticism and Essay Writing in Belgrade /1919–1941/] (Beograd: Fakultet muzičke umetnosti, 1999), 80–7, 135–40, 179–85.

<sup>15</sup> This assumption is based on the estimation of the affordability of different types of music performances. Judging by the newspaper reports, operatic performances were affordable to a smaller number of consumers with substantial economic and cultural capital, while the performances of operettas and music hall required certain amounts of economic and cultural capital

the importance of Jovan Frajt's collection for research of the cultural (music) consumption and overall sociocultural trends in interwar Serbia/Yugoslavia.

## Conclusion

Analysis of the collected data on the music consumption in Belgrade throughout the 1920s and 1930s enables the construction of hypothesis on the consumption patterns in different social strata. Comparison of the results of Radio Belgrade polls and statistical data with the findings on Frajt's collection from other available sources leads us to several conclusions. First of all, we can assume with some certainty that there was an analogy between radio listening, attending live music performances and spending money on printed music, bearing in mind the social profile of the consumers. The individuals who performed music in the amateur circles must have had some basic music education, must have possessed music instruments and enough free time, which implies that they relied on the substantial cultural and economic resources typical of the wealthier part of the middle class in the interwar period. The same type of resources (economic and cultural), but probably to a lesser degree, were needed for the consumption of radio program as well as different types of music performances. Hence, we presume that the Belgrade middle-class consumption of music was heterogeneous in nature, as a result of predisposition for the popular works of classical music, operettas, music hall, jazz music and urban folk music alike. Focusing on different types of music products of high art, popular and commercial music practices indicate a tendency towards omnivorous nature of consumption of the large part of Belgrade middle-class population. It is possible that the other social classes shared the same inclination towards omnivorous taste, considering the preference for the more inclusive type of consumption based on combination of divergent music products. Still, the range of exclusivity among upper and lower classes, compared to the middle class, was probably higher.

The tendency toward less exclusive music taste patterns among different social groups, especially among the middle class which was extensively internally divided because of the divergence of capital structure of its subjects, can be explained by the socio-historical factors like the late modernization of Serbian/Yugoslav society and unbalanced economic growth of its regions. These factors caused the concentration of the more educated and wealthier segment of the population in urban areas, where they were exposed to extremely diverse cultural forms imported from European centres. Without the created or inherited habit of exclusive consumption in the upper classes, and even less so in the

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mostly unattainable to the lower social strata. See in: "Narodno pozorište za činovnike: povlastica u cenama za 50 od sto" [National Theatre for Clerks: The Discounts on the Price of Tickets for 50 Percent], *Politika*, 2 November (1922), 4; "Slavni Tita Rufo u Beogradu" [Famous Tita Ruffo in Belgrade], *Politika*, 25 March (1931), 6.

lower ones, because of the scarcity of cultural institutions before the First World War, consumption practices tended to intersect between the distinctively positioned social groups. Since the so-called luxurious taste was not defined very strictly, which is the prerequisite for the more clear delineation of taste patterns of different social groups, it generated porous borderlines in the consumption of music products, making it more open. Apart from that, it made taste patterning highly flexible and less predictive.

These assumptions have significance for the research of the processes in the field of music and cultural production in Serbia and Yugoslavia in the interwar period, and also for the assessment of the functioning of music institutions. They also attest to the importance of Jovan Frajt's printed collection as a valuable source for the investigations of divergent sociocultural phenomena from this period, including the analysis of urban lifestyles, cultural consumption, class induced distinctions in music preferences and needs, value orientations of different social strata, etc.

### *Summary*

In this paper we are focused on the analysis of Jovan Frajt's collection of printed music, which is one of largest preserved collections from the interwar period. The Frajt catalogue contains hundreds of music scores written for various instruments and ensembles, which belong to different genre types. A thorough examination of both the available parts catalogue and published music scores reveals some important facts concerning the establishment of music taste patterns in the realm of music consumption in Serbia of that time. Comparing the obtained results with the data collected from different sources, mostly from the polls and statistics of Radio Belgrade as well as the published newspaper reports and official reports on cultural and music consumption, we will give an insight on the music consumption patterns in the interwar period trying to explain their formation by specific historical, economic and social factors. Taking into account different criteria, such as the genre of compositions, complexity of music form and content and the social and cultural status of the music products that were consumed, it is possible to discern some tendencies in music consumption. Using the available data on the social position of the consumers enables us to make a correlation between the social status and the music preferences and needs for consumption, as well as the assumptions on music taste patterns. These assumptions are important for further investigations of the socio-cultural trends in Serbia and Yugoslavia between the two world wars, in accordance to the research on field of music and cultural production of that period.