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ETHNOMUSICOLOGICAL RESEARCHES IN ŠUMADIJA

Šumadija is nowadays defined as a geographical area in central Serbia, between the rivers Sava and Danube in the north, Velika Morava in the east, Zapadna Morava in the south, Kolubara in the west and the Kamenica – Čemernica watershed in the southwest.¹ According to a hypothesis made by Petar Ž. Petrović, the name of the region originated in the 17th century², but the first known written mention dates to 1713, in a document of the Metropoly of Belgrade.³

Šumadija is further divided into 14 geographical areas, defined by the vicinity of the above-mentioned rivers or their tributaries: greater Belgrade, Smederevsko Podunavlje and Jasenica, Šumadijska Kolubara, Rudničko Podunavlje, villages of Ljubić, Kosmaj, Takovo, Kačer, Gruža, Jasenica, Lepenica, Belica, Levač and Temnić. Larger towns and cities within Šumadija or on its margins are Belgrade, Smederevo, Smederevska Palanka, Velika Plana, Jagodina, Kragujevac, Batočina, Gornji Milanovac, Mladenovac and Topola.

In spite of the proximity of Serbia's capital, with all its relevant institutions and their rich experience and the tradition of studying Serbian musical heritage, to this day Šumadija has been ethnomusicologically researched to a lesser extent, with only a few monographs available to scholarly readership. Those are collections of tunes accompanied by studies

¹ Mile Nedeljković, *Zapisi o Šumadiji II*, Belgrade 2000, 13.

² Petar Ž. Petrović, «Šumadija, prošlost, ime i položaj oblasti», *Glasnik Etnografskog muzeja* 26, Belgrade 1963, 153.

³ Mile Nedeljković, *Op. cit.* 1, 12.

and commentaries. Available studies are thus in disproportion to Šumadija's territorial expanse and the variety of its musical dialects.

One of the reasons for such current state probably lies in the fact that some of the defining events which influenced the formation of Serbian national identity, played out in Šumadija. The importance of the historical events such as the First and the Second Serbian Uprising at the beginning of the 19th century, followed by the constitution of an independent, modern state founded on European models, is beyond historical doubt. The capital cities of the new state, Kragujevac first, and Belgrade later on, of such importance for the building up of the European cultural profile, are both located in this area. It was for that reason that certain elements of the traditional culture of Šumadija became national symbols, representing the identity of the newly formed national state. Eventually those symbols became synonymous with the Serbian culture in general. Male and female peasant costumes from Šumadija were taken as symbols representing the realm of material culture, while a local folk dance, *šumadijsko kolo*, came to symbolize spiritual culture. It was in that way that the intimate experience of these symbols led many Serbs to a false impression of familiarity and intimate knowledge of the traditional culture of Šumadija, represented in such a simplified way – an experience that does not bear the scrutiny of actual facts.

Physiognomy of Šumadija's cultural profile is defined, first and foremost, by its population and its autochthonous culture. In that respect, Šumadija is a region with complex characteristics. The main contributing factor seem to be mass migrations of the Serbs in all directions, meaning that from the 14th century onwards, particularly over the past 200 years, the area has been a meeting point and a cultural cross-over between many different groups of the Serbian population. Another important factor is the fact that autochthonous population is relatively small, and that the area is populated mostly by people who settled there not more than 200 years ago. Ethnological researches have showed that the western part of Šumadija is populated mostly by settlers coming from western and southwestern parts of Dinara region, while the eastern part of Šumadija is populated by people originating from metanastasic streams from Kosovo-Metohija, Shopi, Timok-Braničevo and Morava-Vardar.

Among Šumadija's geographical areas some are ethnically and thus culturally homogenous, namely the western and central Šumadija

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(settlements on the mountain slopes) whose natural boundaries - mountain saddles – led to greater isolation. That was not the case in the east of Šumadija, where the potential for communication in the lowlands led to greater fluctuation in population and the mixing of heterogeneous cultural elements. This causes difficulties in the study of traditional music of certain parts of Šumadija, especially those in its very centre (Gruža, Jasenica, Lepenica), given that the area is a mosaic of traditional musical dialects. Results of the latest researches have indicated that this mosaic could best be observed by thorough field observations, since the differences between some areas can be surprisingly large.

Ethnomusicological researches in Šumadija began by melographic work of the educated musicians in the 19th century. There are only several transcriptions from Šumadija found among melographic notes published at that time, in the collections of Franjo Kuhač⁴ and Ludvik Kuba⁵, originating mostly in the towns and cities. For some examples we can only presume that they originally came from villages, but those are few. The first comprehensive contribution to the study of musical tradition of Šumadija is Todor Bušetić's 1902 collection, containing tunes from the territory of Levač. Thanks to Stevan Mokranjac, this collection is the first ever published in Serbia that also contained an accompanying ethnomusicological study.⁶

In the first half of the 20th century there were still only few tunes noted down in Šumadija. It is only indirectly that we are able to gain insight into its musical folklore, namely through descriptions found in the work of experts in the fields of folk literature or folklore and customs – descriptions which are not always precise enough or even trustworthy. From that period we have notes of folk song lyrics belonging to different genres, also descriptions and drawings of musical instruments. Composer and melographer Kosta Manojlović took part in a research project in Šumadija organized by the Museum of Ethnography, and a number of interviews were conducted that brought forth useful and important data on the folk music of

⁴ Franjo Š. Kuhač, *Južno-slovenske narodne popevke* I-V, Zagreb 1878, 1879, 1880, 1881. i 1941

⁵ Ludvik Kuba, *Slovanstvo ve svých zpěvech, Písňe jihoslovanské, V – Srbské z kralovství*, Hudební Matice umělecké besedy, Praha 1923

⁶ Todor M. Bušetić, Stevan St. Mokranjac, *Srpske narodne pesme i igre s melodijama iz Levača*, Belgrade 1902.

the area.⁷ Sadly, we do not have any scores or audio recordings from that period. In the middle of the 20th century ethnomusicologist Miodrag Vasiljević made records of folk tunes in the villages of Šumadija, but only few of those are published to this day.⁸

More thorough ethnomusicological researches were conducted in certain parts of Šumadija in the second half of the 20th century, concurrent with the founding of specialized institutions for the study of musical folklore: Institute of Musicology of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts (SASA)⁹ and the Department of Ethnomusicology at the Academy of Music, later renamed into Faculty of Music.¹⁰ Associates of the Radio-Television of Belgrade were also active in field researches.¹¹ In all three institutions field researches led to the formation of audio archives where one can find recordings of the traditional music of Šumadija, among large quantity of materials recorded in other regions. Ethnomusicologists also continue to undertake independent, individual field researches.¹² Another

⁷ This material is the property of Institute of Musicology of Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts in Belgrade.

⁸ See: Zorislava M. Vasiljević, «Šest srpskih narodnih pesama iz rukopisa Miodraga Vasiljevića», *Narodno stvaralaštvo-folklor*, sv. 25, Belgrade, 1968, 96-98; *ibid.* «Vasiljevićeve prvi melografski zapisi», *Narodno stvaralaštvo-folklor*, sv. 47-48, Belgrade 1973, 129-134. The entire Vasiljević's collection of tunes from central Serbia is due to be published, in the collection *Folk melodies from Serbia* (according to Zorislava M. Vasiljević).

⁹ Institute's associates Milica Ilijin and Ana Matović were conducting researches in the Kosmaj area – in Mladenovac and the villages Kovačevac, Jagnjilo (1966) and Nemenikuće (1979). Radmila Petrović made audio recordings in the area of Gruža – in the villages Crnuća, Vračevšnica, Bare and Belušić; also in Lepenica – in Batočina (1970) and in the village of Korman; finally, in the area of Kačer – in Rudnik (data come from Sound Archive of the Institute of Musicology, SASA). Jelena Jovanović made audio recordings in Donja Jasenica – in Natalinci (2007), Lepenica – villages of Veliki Šenj (1989) and Svetlić (2006), also in Kačer – in the village of Bosuta (1996). See footnote 13 for more on her cooperation with the choreographer Slavica Mihailović.

¹⁰ Professor Dragoslav Dević made field recordings with his students in the Kosmaj area (Jagnjilo, Vlaška and Pružatovac), Gruža (Donja Vrbava, Crnuća); he also collected materials from Levač (Dobroselice), while Dimitrije Golemović conducted researches virtually throughout the Takovo area (data taken from the Phono Archive of the Faculty of Music, Belgrade).

¹¹ Ethnomusicologists Petar D. Vukosavljević and Ljubinko Miljković were making audio recordings in Šumadija (Jasenice) for the purpose of radio broadcasting.

¹² Ethnomusicologist Jelena Jovanović recorded in almost entire region of Upper Jasenica (1989-1991), Sanja Ranković recorded in a village in Belica (2007), and Marta Gajić is currently working in the area of Rudničko Pomoravlje (2006-2007).

significant fact is that amateurs, practitioners, and leaders of folk art associations from cities of Šumadija also conduct field researches, for the purpose of collecting data or advancing their personal knowledge of Šumadija's music and dances.¹³

Results of all these researches are, for the most part, not available to academic audience. Unfortunately, Journal of the 26th Congress of the Alliance of Folklorists' Associations of Yugoslavia held in 1976 in Kragujevac, which, among other topics, dealt with the issues of folk art of Šumadija, was never published. During the 1980s and 1990s there were two scientific research projects aimed at the study of culture and traditions of Šumadija,¹⁴ but the resulting ethnomusicological papers are few. Several papers written by ethnomusicologists dealing with specific issues of musical traditions of Šumadija have been published in various publications.¹⁵

Out of the fourteen above mentioned regions of Šumadija, only two and a half, so to speak, have been systematically researched: Levač, in the already mentioned publication prepared by Bušetić and Mokranjac, and Donja Jasenica in the collection of Ljubinko Miljković¹⁶. Takovo has been most fully represented, thanks to the ethnomusicologist Dimitrije Golemović and ethnochoreologist Olivera Vasić. A publication containing

¹³ Slavica Mihailović, choreographer working with the folk arts association "Abrašević" from Čačak, is one of the most conscientious field researchers, known for responsible on-scene use of folk dances and tunes. She collected materials in Lepenica, in the villages of Korman, Botunje, Jovanovac, Resnik and Desimirovac (1996); together with Jelena Jovanović she made audio recordings in Crni Kal and Batočina (2006).

¹⁴ Towards the end of 1980s and the beginning of 1990s, NGO Young Researches of the University of Belgrade conducted a field research in the area of Jasenica and several papers have been published as a result, among them an ethnomusicological and ethnochoreological one: Sanja Stanković, „Igra paun i šareno kolo u Jasenici“, *Zbornik radova VII SNIRS (Sveučilišna naučno-istraživačkog rada studenata)*, Young Researchers of the University of Belgrade, Belgrade 1992, 37-42. Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences in Kragujevac and the University «Svetozar Marković», Kragujevac, started a scientific research project of a long-term interdisciplinary study of Šumadija in 1992. Certain results of that project have been published in the meantime. Unfortunately, not a single ethnomusicologist was included in the project.

¹⁵ Papers were written by R. Petrović, D. O. Golemović, D. Dević, Lj. Miljković, J. Jovanović, M. Vukičević-Zakić et al. See Roksanda Pejović, *Pisan reč o muzici u Srbiji – Kratki članci (1945-2003)*, FMU, Beograd 2005.

¹⁶ Ljubinko Miljković, *Donja Jasenica*, Smederevska Palanka 1986.

an ethnomusicological and ethnochoreological study has been published,¹⁷ together with a compact disc containing selected samples of the musical heritage of Takovo (ed. D. Golemović).¹⁸ Two ethnomusicological monographs were published by the Institute for Musicology SASA, prepared by the Institute associates, which deal with specific questions pertaining to the musical tradition of Šumadija. One is the study of wedding singing in Gornja Jasenica,¹⁹ the other is a monograph on singing and dancing performed by the “Crnućanka” group in Gornja Gruža. The same monograph includes an overview of the musical tradition of Crnuća during the second half of the 20th century.²⁰

It can be deduced that up until now mostly the regions of the so-called Upper (Takovo, Gornja Gruža) and Middle Šumadija (Gornja Jasenica) have been researched and publicised, while the so-called Lower Šumadija was covered to a lesser extent (Donja Jasenica, to this day). Other parts of Šumadija witnessed only few field researches, usually in one up to four villages at a time in any given area.

During the second half of the 20th century field researches dealt with all types of traditional musical expression: vocal, instrumental and vocal-instrumental tradition, music performed in connection with the yearly cycle or the life cycle, including everyday life customs, as well. An older type of rural singing has been detected: in the western (upper and central) parts of Šumadija it is usually two-part, while in eastern (lower) parts it is unison. Contemporary forms of more recent type of rural singing are almost universally observed, together with the presence of the so-called *hybrid forms*

¹⁷ D. O. Golemović and Olivera Vasić, *Takovo u igri i pesmu*, Tipopolastika, Gornji Milanovac 1994; Dimitrije O. Golemović, *Balkanski muzički koreni: Narodna muzika Takova*, Logistika, Belgrade, CD – 5001, 1997.

¹⁸ Dimitrije O. Golemović, *Balkanski muzički koreni: Narodna muzika Takova*, Logistika, Belgrade, CD – 5001, 1997.

¹⁹ Jelena Jovanović, *Starinske svadbene pesme i običaji u Gornjoj Jasenici (u Šumadiji)*, Institute of Musicology SASA, 2002. A CD entitled *Šta se čuje kroz goru zelenu – pevanje i sviranje u Gornjoj Jasenici* by the same author is due to be published by the Institute of Musicology, also a doctoral dissertation entitled *Vokalna tradicija Jasenice u svetlu etnogenetskih procesa*.

²⁰ Radmila Petrović and Jelena Jovanović, *Ej, Rudniče, ti planino stara - Pevanje i sviranje grupe «Crnućanka»*, Institute of Musicology SASA, Belgrade, and Cultural Centre of Gornji Milanovac, 2003.

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which are combination of both types.²¹ Instruments that are used are *svirala* (flute), double pipe, ocarina, accordion, harmonica and string ensembles, as well as *gusle* that accompany epic poems.

There is a distinct problem with the musical notation of the autochthonous rural tunes from the whole of Balkans, including Šumadija, given the specific, non-tempered relations between the pitches. When dealing with this issue, researchers usually use classical musical notation, with multiple accidentals and arrows which in some cases signify noted pitch higher or lower. In that respect, efforts made by Ljubinko Miljković are particularly noteworthy. In his attempt to make transcription of non-tempered tone relations as faithful as possible, he was using notes proposed by Alain Daniélou.²² Sadly, this way of recording tones, due to its illegibility, made Miljković's collections marginalized and removed from the forefront of his colleagues' interest. Thus future researches have the task of reaffirming the results of Miljković's work and using his papers and presented material as unavoidable in their study of the musical tradition of lower Šumadija and, indeed, the whole of Central Serbia.

The scope of ethnomusicological researches in Šumadija to this day has been that of placing the musical research of the investigated areas within the larger context of the musical tradition of Serbia. What have been noted are the musical affiliations between upper and central Šumadija on one hand, and, on the other hand, the regions of western and southwestern Serbia (Dragačevo, larger area around Užice) and farther, parts on the other side of the river Drina and in Montenegro. This conclusion is in line with our knowledge of the ethnic background of the majority of people inhabiting upper Šumadija, i.e. their affiliation with the population of Dinara region. However, lack of systematic researches in lower Šumadija results in the inability to complete the mosaic of the musical tradition of central Serbia and its musical and cultural relations with the eastern, southeastern and southern part of the country. One-part, unison singing in Šumadija in

²¹ The term itself was proposed by Dragoslav Delić in his paper „Hibridni oblici višeglasnog pevanja u Srbiji“, *Četvrti međunarodni simpozijum Folklor-Muzika-Delo*, Faculty of Music, Belgrade 1997, 132-151.

²² Alain Daniélou, *Semantique musicale*, Paris 1967. He was using these notes not only in those papers dealing with the musical tradition of Šumadija, but in all of his collections and articles.

particular has remained insufficiently known and researched, with its peculiar tone rows and melodic patterns.

The future task of ethnomusicologists could be one of more intensive work on collecting the remains of the musical tradition on the field, and publicizing its findings in scholarly publications, so there would be at least one monograph dealing with each geographical area. That would enable multi-layered comparative researches of the musical tradition of the central parts of Serbia, and the rest of the country, especially in terms of the origin of its population and socio-cultural changes that have influenced the development or degeneration of the autochthonous tradition. This would lead to explanation of varieties in the physiognomy of the musical heritage of certain parts of Šumadija. Most interesting questions can be posed about the presence of specific genres, also univocal or two-part singing, as well as particular types of diaphony in relation to various characteristics of performing and the esthetic criteria. All these issues have already been raised by ethnomusicologists experienced in this and related fields²³, providing guideposts for further research.

²³ Ljubinko Miljković wrote about the presence of these varieties in his papers: «Muzička tradicija Jasenice», Rad 26. Kongresa SUFJ u Kragujevcu (summary); also Radmila Petrović, „Narodna muzika Šumadije“, *Traditiones, Zbornik Instituta za slovensko narodopisje* 19, Slovenska akademija znanosti in umjetnosti, Ljubljana 1990.