

first publication

1 Stanković, Kornelije: Preface *Pravoslavno crkveno pojanje srbskog naroda* [Orthodox Church Music of the Serbian People]. Vienna: publ. by author 1862, pp. ii-iii.

2 Danica 11 (1861), p. 172.

3 Cf. Said, Edward: *Orijentalizam*. Belgrade: XX vek 2000, p. 35.

4 Cf. Гармонизация, Музыка, большой энциклопедический словарь. Москва: Музыка, 1998, p. 125.

In 1862 Kornelije Stanković, in his preface of his *Orthodox Church Music of the Serbian People* (*Pravoslavno crkveno pojanje srbskog naroda*), written for four-part choir pointed out that:

As far as harmony is concerned, I took great care that it should accord with the religious devotion of our people and the seriousness of the Orthodox Church. Harmonization is a work subjective in form, but not in spirit. Various harmonies can be given to one melody; the only criterion being that they have a national component. This is the difficulty – which a foreign skilled musician would not be able to write down our national melodies unless he came to it with great learning, to be able to grasp the feeling of our people and the spirit of the Church. The melody can only be well-recorded if the musician feels all that people feel.

And continues:

[...] I listened to harmonic singing by our people in various areas, and made great efforts to create harmonies in accordance with this [...] But this work will only have a practical value if it is accepted by the people and harmonization introduced in their way. This is the whole aim of this work.

After necessary acknowledgements he mentions his professor:

It remains to me, with the deepest respect, to thank the »great old man«, my teacher Simon Sechter. I had in him tireless guide in expertise, a sincere friend who, from the love for our old church melodies, showed zeal similar to my aspiration and respect towards this national holy heritage.¹

Together with emphasized national dimension of Stanković's preface, a careful reader will notice several other points. In the context of my subject, I will extract and present them in the form of binary oppositions.

1. Composer/work – people.

Although relied on monophonic Serbian chant, serving as steady, omnipresent element of his music (quoted »faithfully« in soprano part), and established harmonization practice, Stanković makes a clear distinction between his work and its acceptance by the people (»But this work will only have a practical value if it is accepted by the people and harmonization introduced in their way«), hence defining a binary pair: author-audience. This view was confirmed by a Viennese newspaper critic, whose remarks were translated and published in the Serbian press: »Serbian people must be thankful to Mr. Stanković who had artistically set their church chant. It would be useful for them to find the proper place for such a master, and make his efforts precious treasury of all the people.«²

One might ask: why should Serbs accept something that is already present in their churches, something that is traditional and habitual practice? The answer is in representation: Stanković's work is not the Serbian chant, it is not its natural reflection, and his *Pravoslavno crkveno pojanje srbskog naroda* is a representation of the authentic liturgical music. Thus, it does not introduce the question of accurate display or faithfulness to the original, but questions of style, compositional devices, historical and social circumstances, etc. which will be discussed later. This brings us to the very concept of Orientalism in the form defined by Edward Said.³

2. Harmonization: objective and subjective (Harmonization is a work subjective in form, but not in spirit).

Although the difference between the subjective and objective harmonization might be viewed as a divergence between the following rules of a certain system – within particular historical period, style or theoretical system, for example – related to objective harmonization, and the choice of possible variants in accordance with that system, related to the subjective approach,⁴ it seems that Stanković makes a different distinction. What he calls the subjective form is related to the choice of harmonies given

15 Jaklitsch (Wanek), Nina-Maria: Benedict Randhartinger: Zur Vertonung der griechisch-orthodoxen Jahresliturgie [On the Setting of the Greek Orthodox Annual Liturgy]. Unpubl. paper, p. 6.

16 Demelić 1866, p. 217.

17 Cf. Gastgeber, Christian/Gschwandtner, Franz: Die Ostkirchen in Wien. Ein Führer durch die orthodoxen und orientalischen Gemeinden [The East Churches in Vienna. A Guide through Orthodox and Oriental Communes]. Wien: Styria Pichler 2004.

18 Cf. Stanković's letter to Pavle Ridički. In: Veselinov, Ivanka: Iz prepiske Kornelije Stankovića [From Kornelije Stanković's Correspondence]. In: Stefanović 1985, p. 87.

19 This question was widely discussed by Petrović, Danica: Počeci višeglasja u srpskoj crkvenoj muzici [The Beginning of the Polyphony in the Serbian Church Music]. In: Muzikološki zbornik [Ljubljana] 17/2 (1981).

20 Srbski dnevnik, 07.04.1855.

After summarizing these points, three important and closely connected categories appear: self-representation, differentiation between Self and Other and subordinate position, giving us an opportunity to analyze them from the point of Edward Said's orientalism and Maria Todorova's balkanism. Although Todorova has precisely shown differences between balkanism and orientalism, dealing with »historical and geographic concreteness of the Balkans as opposed to intangible nature of the Orient«,¹² the male balkanist discourse (opposed to standard orientalist female discourse), the predominantly Christian legacy, the crossroad or bridge position of the Balkans, etc.,¹³ both theories reveal crucial points when applied to the question of Stanković's harmonization of Orthodox chant.

Speaking on cultural discourse and exchange within a culture, what they usually transmit is not the truth but representation... And these representations are based on institutions, traditions, conventions, agreed codes of understanding their effects [...]¹⁴

Mutatis mutandis, this conclusion might find its application in the context of self-representation in the area of Serbian religious polyphony, especially in the case of Kornelije Stanković.

It is well known that Stanković went to Vienna (from Buda) to study music, and, under the influence of the Russian priest at the Imperial Russian Embassy Mihail Rajevski, decided to collect Serbian chant in monasteries of Fruška Gora and Sremski Karlovci. It is also well known that his professor Simon Sechter, who taught harmony and counterpoint, had spent a lot of time discussing the best way to present this musical genre with the young Serbian composer. But the fact that Simon Sechter completed a similar task with another composer, the Viennese Gottfried von Preyer, a few years before Stanković became his student, has not been connected with Stanković's history. However, Preyer's project was based on Orthodox – Greek – music: in 1842 he had collaborated with the Protopsaltis of St. George church (Anthimos Nikolaides) and the music teacher August Svoboda, who wrote Greek church melodies in staff notation.¹⁵ Preyer had harmonized these hymns, with Sechter's help, for a four-part choir. Is it possible, in that case, that Sechter was a link between Preyer and Stanković? Was he that key figure in the process of harmonizing the Orthodox chant in Vienna? In other words, did he have a certain role in the shaping of the self-representational image of Kornelije Stanković? It seems that the answer is affirmative. Stanković, according to his friend Demelić, used to say: »Someone might say that I am an arrogant artist, but I cannot forget myself and my education gained with so many difficulties and hard work.«¹⁶ Along with the consciousness of his own artist identity, these words show an extreme importance of Sechter's teaching and experience for the young Serbian composer.

Although different nations, Serbs and Greeks were both treated as Greek-Orthodox citizens, using same churches in Vienna until late 19th century when first Serbian church (Sv. Sava) was consecrated (in 1893).¹⁷ Even if the Greek and the Serbian religious chant were different, they had certain similarities: unison singing, system of eight modes, etc. and a new tendency: attempt to adopt Western four-part harmony.

Moreover, Preyer's Greek chant was used in the Greek Orthodox church (*Zur Heiligen Dreifaltigkeit* church, also known as the *Kirche am Fleischmarkt*), as well as Stanković's religious works several years later (in 1852 members of opera choir sang his second Liturgy).¹⁸

Therefore, one might conclude that Stanković's representation of the Serbian religious music was based on institutions (church), traditions (Preyer's approach), conventions (in harmonization process set by Sechter) and agreed codes of understanding their effects (social tendency to adopt new cultural model).

It is known that ecumenical patriarch Anthimos forbid four part singing in Orthodox churches under his direction in 1846; even the other documents sent from the Constantinople patriarchate to the Serbian church authorities, among whom was metropolitan Josif Rajačić, contained request for return of the old church Greek chant. While the Greeks mostly obeyed his official prohibition of tetrachordia, the Serbian metropolitan, later patriarch, Josif Rajačić approved the introduction of choral chant, pointing that there it was »not shallow or an empty fashion«. His decision had a certain political connotation, directed toward the reduction of Greek influence in Serbian church. The other side of his decision had its background in social and cultural issues.

According to the metropolitan Rajačić, the number of congregation members, especially younger, was smaller because Greek chant was widely present but not approved. Therefore, Serbian youth spent more time having fun or going to the Russian instead of the Serbian



21 Todorova 1997, pp. 17/18.

22 Ibid., p. 18.

church. Rajačić believed that an adequate choral singing in Serbian churches could bring young people back to the churches.¹⁹

Closely connected, a differentiation between Self and Other, was highly contextual, embedded in a particular frame of reference and culturally shaped, as reflected in a following commentary on sacred concert organized by Stanković in 1855:

For us, Serbs, is not insignificant when our artist appears in foreign and great world. There are no people that can make advance in learning without more or less talented sons in the art. Almost all our arts were insignificant; some of them were hardly developed, but only among us; however, we do not know whether some Serbian artists were known in the world. Especially our music was so unimportant, forgotten and neglected that no one would say that we do not have musical sense would not make mistake. However, we could answer: it was our misfortune, not lack of talent: there is not a single thing that Serbs could not develop, under adequate circumstances. Kornelije Stanković proved by his harmonized chant that now we have an expert in that field, and that we are proud to present this art to excellent and mastery world.²⁰

This section was not shaped exclusively by outside view, but in coordination of active and passive approach. One side was represented by subordinate, passive position: insignificant arts, neglecting, even oblivion, internal importance and lack of outer recognition are juxtaposed with energy, possibility, chance and presentation of our art »to the excellent and mastery world«. Isn't this, actually, balkanism, a scientific discourse defined by Maria Todorova in her studies of Balkans?²¹ Isn't this »imputed ambiguity« of hers in which »this in-betweenness of the Balkans, their transitional character, could have made them simply an incomplete other; instead they are constructed not as other but as incomplete self«?²²

As we have seen, this incomplete Serbian self was represented by religious music in four part harmonies. It was produced by two sides: Serbian (through Stanković) and Western (through Sechter), which had defined it as incomplete, imperfect (in terms of Orthodoxy, which insisted on monophonic chant; and of the Western musical theory and harmony, which insisted on certain rules that were not followed in Stanković's harmonization) and transitional (in the historical sense). In other words, we have shown – by musicological methods and procedures – that this representation of the Serbian church music was not a »genuine« Serbian chant; it was already its self-representation, harmonized (in both senses: general and musical) to please and be accepted by the Other, that is, arranged for another representations. And this chain of self representations multiplies itself in an indefinite number of discursive versions: the self-representation of Orthodoxy, nation, Church, composers, singers, congregation etc.

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