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**Marijana Kokanović Marković, *The Social Role of the Salon Music in the Life and the Value System of the Serbian Citizens in the 19th Century*, Belgrad: Institute of Musicology SASA 2014**

Salon music, which marked the private sphere of music life during the 19th century, until recently represented an aesthetically uninteresting phenomenon. Musicological researches were, primarily, focused on art music, while the research of salon music was at the margin of scientific interest. However, emergence of new scientific approaches based on theoretical concepts in social sciences and anthropology resulted in actualization of researches in different aspects of private lives from the past. That is how 'salon', as a special form of 'half-public privacy', and in that way, salon music, became a new challenge for field researches. Salon music can nowadays be seen as a historical form of the popular music, which production and distribution were under control of the free-market rules. Salon repertoire, with its pan-European commonalities, represented an all-European trend which in the 19th century spread over the areas inhabited by the Serbs. The chronological frame offered (until 1914.) matches the standard periodization of the European history (the Long 19th century) and it coincides with the political, social and cultural events of the time. In that period, during the creation of modern civil state, a specific domain of private life, as well as a value system, mostly taken from Central Europe, was constituted. Salon music was seen as a specific product, medium of a lifestyle and mentality of one particular era. In order to get answers to the questions on place and function of the salon music in a life and value system of one society or social group, it was necessary to step out of the traditional musicology into the field of interdisciplinary research that includes sociology, history of culture, everyday life, and social history.

During the archival research in Novi Sad, Belgrade and Vienna, a rich body of salon compositions by Serbian, as well as foreign composers, who lived among the Serbs, was collected, to clearly show channels of intercultural exchange and communication. The catalogues and list of music publishers were studied with the utmost care, which in turn provided an

insight into supply and demand in the music industry at the time. Articles on music, published in daily and periodical newspapers, were a significant source of information, too. Valuable information was provided through diaries, memoirs, and literary works which pictured the lives of the Serbian citizens in the 19th century, as well as other various books and manuals in which it was depicted what were the socially desirable norms of conduct that enabled decoding of bourgeois way of life, and upbringing of children, girls, especially. Finally, significant tiles in completion of the mosaic were the historical items like: concert programs, ball invitations, letters etc.

Important guidelines for better understanding of the salon music phenomenon were derived directly from practice. While editing the album of the salon compositions for the piano, titled, *From the Salons of Novi Sad*, the so-called ‘road’ from manuscripts to the note publications, that is, from archives to performers, was finally ‘crossed’ in practice, too.<sup>1</sup> Another angle of looking at things, were the concerts of salon music held in Sremski Karlovci and Novi Sad, which I organised with my students from the Academy of Arts in Novi Sad. This particular reconstruction of salon music performance, as well as the direct insight into the relationship between the performers and the audience, resulted in better ‘sounding’ and understanding of the topic.

“The introductory chapter” contains an explanation of titles and subjects of the research, critical analysis of previous musicological works on Serbian salon music of the 19th century, and a review of relevant theoretical discourse on the salon music of the considered period.

The following chapter is devoted to the “Music Publishing and Salon Music Production”. This chapter discusses the issues on the specific conditions of production in Serbian salon music in 19th century. The author points to what were the forms of salon music publishing and how the salon music was put on the music market. Special attention is paid to the salon music composers and their relation with music publishers, the genres they composed, and finally, the question of the status of women dealing with that kind of composing music is introduced.

In Chapter “Salon Music in the Life of the Serbian Citizens” it has been pointed out to how the salon music was integrated into a bourgeois way of life. Of great importance is the reconstruction of everyday way of life

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<sup>1</sup>*From the Salons of Novi Sad*. An album of salon dances for the piano, edited by Marijana Kokanović, Novi Sad: Matica srpska 2010.

of the social class, which was the bearer of that kind of music. Special emphasis is placed on the social function of music education for children, especially young girls.

Within sub-chapter “The Social Function of a Salon”, the questions regarding the role of a salon in one’s house, its public function, salon furniture, have been discussed. It has been explained what were the causes for social gatherings in the salons, which differed in relation to: part of the day, season in which they were hosted, visitors (women, men, or both), type and scope of gathering (regular weekly visits, or salon evenings organized for large number of guests). In the sub-chapter “Court and Bourgeois Salons”, it has been pointed out to different types of salon socializing in court, as well as, bourgeois circles. No doubt, the salons played significant role in new, social, reception of music. Since in public life there were not that many opportunities to listen to music, the salon in its various manifestations, compensated for the lack of public associations and professional institutions. Thanks to the mediating role of the salon, the former possibility of music reception was greatly expanded in terms of genres and kinds, and music became an important part of society’s social representation. At the same time, it was through the role of the salon, that educated female citizens constituted the new role of women in the society.

In the fourth chapter “Functions of the Salon Music”, compositions have been interpreted in the interactive relationship between: work – performer – audience. Objective of the musical work analysis was not to assess the artistic quality or non-quality of the salon music, in order to distinguish between successful and less successful compositions. Far more important was the awareness that at the time, the artistic quality with consumers of salon compositions (performers as well as audience) played no important role. Analysis of a musical work no longer sought aesthetic values in music opus, but qualities and features that a certain musical work must have in order to fulfill its purpose and function. Parameters of musical language, expression and style are put into service of historical and sociological approach, which reveals the true meaning and significance of the salon music.

The final chapter “The End of the Era of the Salon Music” discusses the issue of ‘disappearance’ of salon music in the context of socio-economic changes at the beginning of World War I. It points out to what influenced the gradual disappearance of the salon music: invention of the gramophone, radio; changes in the way of women’s education; appearance of the ‘new’ type of popular music.