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Abstract:

This paper presents a review of the history of tamburitza tradition in the region of Vojvodina emphasising the need of its preservation and nurture. Publishing houses are showing less and less interest in recording and publishing quality, professional tamburitza music from the region of Vojvodina, thus moving away from our traditional expression, diminishing the significance of individuals who have contributed to the professionalization of traditional instruments, literature, performances, forms. Performers, composers, managers, fans, admirers of tamburitza music are left with networking and meetings at festivals dedicated to tamburitza music. In this way, the tamburitza tradition will be preserved, but systemic solutions are also necessary.

Key words: *tamburitza, tamburitza orchestra, Vojvodina, preservation of cultural heritage*

INTRODUCTION

VOJVODINA

The Autonomous Province of Vojvodina is located in the northern part of Serbia, in the Pannonian Plain and Central Europe. Like the Danube itself, an international river flowing through ten countries, Vojvodina is famous for its national, cultural and linguistic diversity. Twenty-six ethnic groups live in Vojvodina, speaking six official languages. It is this cultural and historical wealth of the region itself that contributes to the diversity of traditional music practice (multicultural and multilingual heritage of the population). Thus, Vojvodina is rightly called "Europe in small".

THE HISTORY OF THE INSTRUMENT OF TAMBURITZA AND TAMBURITZA ORCHESTRA

„Travel and musical echoes of tamburitza music make a complex field of cultural communication in a contemporary context in which technological achievements have accelerated the transfer of traditional knowledge and creative expression“ (March 2003: 170).

Tamburitza is a national musical string instrument, with four to eight strings, similar to folk instruments of other nations, such as mandolins, Spanish guitars, lute, etc. It has wide application both in tamburitza ensembles (orchestras), and as a solo instrument. Various interpretations can be found related to the origin of the tamburitza. One of them is that the name of the tamburitza comes from the Persian word *Tn* which – in translation stands for a string; further there are the words *denbar* (Persian) and *tambur* (Arabic). There is also a data that it has evolved from a string instrument already known in the ancient culture of Mesopotamia and Egypt. There are also images of a long-necked instrument and a small pear-shaped corpus carved in stone in the 3rd century BC. Art monuments displaying the precursor of tamburitza have been preserved in Thebes and Egypt; this instrument is called lute there.

There is not much information about how the tamburitza "entered" the central Europe. It already existed during the Byzantine Empire, and the Greeks and Slavs called it the *pandouras* as an ancestor of modern buzuki (Jeffreys at all 2008). In the Byzantine Empire the instrument is called *thampourin*.

Also, there is an opinion that the first tamburitza orchestra originated in Hungary in the 19th century (Volly 1964). The names of the instruments originate from the Hungarian names of musical instruments of the symphony orchestra (*cselló* meaning cello, *bőgő* meaning double bass) and Hungarian Romanies bands (*bőgős*, *prim*, *kontra*). These orchestras soon began to form on the territory of today's Bosnia, Austria, Slovenia, the Czech Republic and Slovakia.

As for our region, for the first time, the tamburitza was mentioned in the 16th century (1551) by travel writer Nikolaj, who was staying in our region as a companion of the French consul on his way to Turkey. The

oldest tamburitza, which is still kept in the museum today, is owned by Paja Kolarić from Osijek, and it dates from the middle of the 19th century (1847). He founded the first amateur orchestra, after which the tamburitza music began to spread to other parts of Serbia, Slovenia, Bosnia, Macedonia, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and then, with our emigrants to other countries and continents. The names of the tamburitza in Vojvodina originate from the Latin language: prim, basprim, tercbasprim, cello, kontra, bass, which denote the role of instruments in the orchestra composition, and which vary in size and colour of sound.

The tamburitza orchestra can have 7-8 tamburitza players, but there may be more. The tamburitza orchestra is guided by prim player, who usually plays the prim has the best performing technique.

THE PLACE OF TAMBURITZA, PROFESSIONALIZATION AND POPULARIZATION

Recipients see the tamburitza orchestra as a group of performing ensemble, which they associate first with celebrations, parties, restaurants, taverns or weddings. They rarely associate it with halls and concert performances. That would indeed be the fate of the tamburitza orchestras if it weren't for the musicians, who started composing for this instrument, and thus enabled the tamburitza music to be performed. The tamburitza and tamburitza orchestras belong to a group of urban musical instruments, or compositions, which primary purpose is not playing in taverns.

The professionalization of tamburitza music primarily involves raising amateur performances to a higher level - the level of artistic music.

The professionalization of tamburitza ensembles is contributed by institutionalization, the founding of musicians' associations, their education and payment method, the professional status of musicians, performing in a public place, audience reception, administrative visibility, media representation of the ensemble, a certain look at the rehearsals and significance of concert practice, the standardization of the repertoire, aesthetic criteria led by the members of the ensemble (leadership and specialized engagement in the group).

The first indication of the professionalization of the ensemble was the founding of the association in 1929 under the name "The society of musicians, tamburitza, accordion and other players, male and female singers in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia", as well as the establishment of the "The alliance of folk musicians and singers of both genders in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia".

The Society and the Alliance attempted to set up the postulates for the selection of musicians, and in particular they paid attention to those persons who would be the ensemble leaders. It was envisaged to take the exam before a three-member Commission, consisting of two members from the Ministry of Education and Society, and one member, who would be a musician. The candidate should be an experienced musician with excellent technique and at least three years of musical experience, furthermore, musically literate, knowledgeable about musical instruments, and with the ability to arrange musical compositions. However, state authorities were aware of the fact that a large number of excellent performers were musically illiterate, and this type of "exam" did not come to light. In order to issue licenses, and therefore make a step from street musicians to musicians, i.e. from the entertainer to the artist, the Alliance collected data on the previous music education of the candidates, the places where the candidates performed, the number of members of the

orchestra, and the number of compositions in the repertoire. It is interesting to point out that the range among licensed musicians was from self-taught to those who were educated in the conservatory (Dumnić 2014: 129).

The crucial moment in the institutionalization of tamburitza ensembles is the establishment of Radio Stations. Radio Novi Sad, from the first day of its founding, on 29 November 1949, paid great attention to tamburitza. Slavko Subotin, one of the best prim players, was the leader of a small tamburitza orchestra since 1949. By establishing the Great Tamburitza Orchestra in 1957, significant changes were made in the way of work and composition under the composer Sava Vukosavljev, who composed and arranged several compositions for the tamburitza orchestra and published a comprehensive book "Vojvođanska tambura". With its high-quality and rich musical contents under the leadership of Sava Vukosavljev, the Great Tamburitza Orchestra affirmed Novi Sad and Vojvodina. In 1984, the role of Sava Vukosavljeva was taken over by composer Zoran Mulić, who composed, arranged and introduced the repertoire of the orchestra and transcription of compositions from the world music heritage. Of course, there is a notable contribution of the prim player Janika Balaž, who was a member of the Tamburitza Orchestra of Radio Novi Sad (from 1951 till the end of his career) and who popularized both the instrument and the tamburitza music throughout the world.

According to the data Sava Vukosavljev mentioned in the book "Vojvođanska tambura" in the beginning of the 20th century Vojvodina had 58 professional tamburitza orchestras playing in Europe, and in 1990 there were 104 youth tamburitza orchestras and 30 children's tamburitza orchestras in Vojvodina.

Today, the tamburitza is taught in music schools (Novi Sad, Subotica, Ruma, Sremska Mitrovica, Pančevo and Kula), as well as in cultural and artistic associations. When it comes to university level, a tamburitza department has not yet been established.

Significant role in the popularization of the tamburitza had some performers, such as the aforementioned Janika Balaž and the vocal soloist Zvonko Bogdan, as well as the festivals: *Zlatna tamburica*, *Vojvođanske zlatne žice*, *Tamburica Fest* (in Novi Sad), *Festival tamburaških orkestrara Srbije* in Ruma, *Međunarodni festival malih tamburaških orkestrara Bisernica Janike Balaža* and others. In addition to the festivals, a significant role in popularization, but also in professionalization, has the *Veliki tamburaški orkestar RTV Novi Sad*, which was founded in 1957.

REPERTOIRE

In the period until the Second World War, in our region, the tamburitza orchestras experienced expansion and laid the foundations for the founding of a new musical genre, the so-called "parlour music" (old urban music) (Dumnić 2014: 128).

The first composer of tamburitza concert compositions was Mijo Majer (1863-1915), followed by others: Milutin Farkaš, Pera Ž. Ilić, Marko Bajuk from Osijek, Milan Stahuljak and many others. Among the most important composers that significantly influenced the development of tamburitza music, orchestral sound and the tamburitza itself are: Dr Josip Andrić, Branko Čenejac, Tihomil Vidošić, Mihajlo Vukdragović, Stipan Mukić, Vasa Jovanović, Marko Nešić, Joco Milinko Mimika, Isidor Bajić, Spasoje Tomić, Pero Tumbas - Hajo, Aleksandar Aranicki, Milos Pilić,

Lazar Malagurski, Isidor Hadnadjev, Branko Rakijaš, Antoni Lorenc, Julije Njikoš, Maks Popov, Sava Vukosavljev, Zoran Mulić and others.

In addition to the composers, conductors and artistic supervisors of the orchestra play a significant role in the development of tamburitza music: Jovan Janika Balaž, Zdenko Obad Šćitaroci, Ivan Sabo from Novi Sad; Maksa Popov from Belgrade; Pera Tumbas Hajo, Lazar Malagurski and Stipan Jaramazović from Subotica; Dragoslav Krsmanović from Šid; Milenko Bobić from Sremska Mitrovica; Boško Bogičević from Ruma; Žarko Škorić and Jelena Obad Šćitaroci from Futog; Franjo Knežević from Kikinda, Budimir Stojanović from Pančevo, and many others.

"In the beginning the work Tamburitza Orchestras was focused on the instrumental accompaniment of singers and playing folk dances, while today more complicated musical compositions and forms can be heard" (Brković 2014: 88).

The repertoire of tamburitza ensembles can be divided into three groups:

1. Songs, dances and instrumental compositions - traditional repertoire.
2. Arrangements of compositions from classical music literature.
3. Contemporary compositions of popular music - to attract attention, but also to point out the skills and capabilities of tamburitza compositions.

CONCLUSION

Tamburitza tradition will over time certainly be changed under the influence of technological, political or other changes that occur in society. It is extremely important to pay attention to the positions of tamburitza ensembles in the context of the environment in which they act, because globalization, which includes mass media, threatens the disappearance of tamburitza and other musical ensembles. New ways of communication in a modern context need to be found, in which technological achievements have changed the way of traditional expression and "playing music".

Publishing houses are showing less and less interest in recording and publishing high quality, professional tamburitza music, music from this region - the area of Vojvodina, thus moving away from our traditional expression and diminishing the importance of individuals who have contributed to the professionalization of traditional instruments, literature, performances, forms.

Performers, composers, executives, fans, and admirers of tamburitza music have networking and meetings at festivals dedicated to tamburitza music. In this way, the tradition of tamburitza will be preserved, although this is not and cannot be the only way to preserve this aspect of art. Systemic solutions that require special attention in designing and implementing are needed because it is the issue of an intangible cultural heritage.

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