

Snežana Nikolajević

ROKSANDA PEJOVIĆ
MUZIKA MINULOG DOBA (MUSIC OF TIMES PAST)
Belgrade, Portal, 2004

Knowledge, diligence, devotion, systematism and perseverance characterize the scholarly and creative work of Professor Roksanda Pejović, Ph.D. A recent symposium dedicated to her at the Department of Musicology and Ethnomusicology of the Faculty of Music demonstrated not only what is already known – the breadth of her study into the history of national and European music – but also revealed the impact of her work on numerous fields and the influence on the orientation of her colleagues, particularly her students. They continue to develop, in a similar manner and, it seems with the same diligence, the paths she had paved. A step further was her collaboration with students closest to her in their work method and thought process on a project such as *Muzika minulog doba (Music of Times Past)*. It is a history of music from its beginnings, from the first indications of the most rudimentary music expression, the scream and the hitting of stone against stone, up to and including the Baroque and the pinnacles of that age and style – the works of Bach and Händel.

We should immediately point out that this is not the first history of music written by Roksanda Pejović. It was back in 1959 that her handbook *Istorija muzike od prvobitne zajednice do Betovena (History of Music From the Primitive Community to Beethoven)* appeared, after which on a number of occasions she undertook the unrewarding and extremely difficult task of chronologically systematizing knowledge in the domain of Serbian and European music of particular periods. These are all books that are incredibly useful to a wide circle of readers and above all, to pupils of music schools and students of music, as an organized and exhaustive basis to be built on – depending on the extent of individual willingness or energy and ability. Notwithstanding previous works by Stana Djurić-Klajn, these were the first attempts and isolated efforts in our country to produce new chronologically arranged material which incorporated knowledge from new research.

The new history entitled *Muzika minulog doba (Music of Times Past) (Portal, Belgrade, 2004)* is far more voluminous and expanded than the previous ones and includes not only the results of research and findings of Roksanda Pejović, but also those of her students, who by now can be considered experts on particular periods and fields of music. Thus, Ivana Perković, M.A., is the author of the texts *Muzika Vizantije (Music of Byzantium)* and *Srpska muzika 18. veka (Serbian Music of the 18th Century)*, while Tatjana Marković, Ph.D., presented Baroque opera in great detail. These texts are interpolated into a chronological

order applied in this book, through which the exciting development of music unfolds before the readers from its very beginnings in primitive communities to the pinnacles of the Baroque.

The story begins with the text *Traganja za počecima muzike (Searching for the Beginnings of Music)*, which presents hypotheses about the first music expressions of the Neolithic man, based on research into the archaic melodies of African tribes and representations of instruments discovered in various parts of the African continent. Sumero-Babylonian, Egyptian, Jewish, Arabian, Indian and Chinese music is examined within the general cultural milieu of antiquity as a whole and within individual civilizations. Numerous melodic patterns, types of instruments and the most important forms – mainly stage forms – are defined. The music of Greece and Rome is analyzed in a similar manner.

Following a text on medieval monophonic and polyphonic singing, there is a chapter on the music of Byzantium. Different forms of secular music are mentioned, while sacred music is examined in detail – from the structure of the liturgical ritual, to a detailed hymnography, to the structures of melodies and notation. This is followed by a chapter on Serbian music, with three units – Serbian medieval music, the period of the Turkish rule and music of the 18th century – which is immediately followed by an analysis of church and secular music of the West up to the Renaissance, with a series of examples and theoretical principles based on the practice of monophony and polyphony.

A large chapter on Renaissance music is divided into vocal and instrumental practice, within which the most important authors are highlighted. The chapter on Baroque music, with large units on opera, vocal-instrumental and instrumental music, is organized according to countries and their most significant representatives, particularly singling out the works of Johann Sebastian Bach and Georg Friedrich Händel.

It could not be said that this book has brought new revelations concerning the history of music with regard to already established values. This was not the aim of its authors in the first place. Its value lies in the extremely systematic handling of broad developmental lines of the music of an extensive period and dynamic and intense events, when forms matured and harmonic structures were formed, on many of which music still rests today.

The structure of each of the chapters has certain similarities – in the division into vocal and instrumental music, in the emphasis on differences between particular countries, in highlighting the most significant representatives of certain epochs, the most important authorial works or characteristic forms – as well as differences in the treatment of these units, depending on their place and importance in the epoch being analyzed. This gives the book both vividness and a system. The numerous analyses and the musical texts these analyses refer to provide the clearest explanations of particular notions and phenomena, while a special segment of the book contains only musical texts of the more important works from that period. Using the benefits of multimedia equipment, the authors also designed a compact disc with compositions or parts of

longer cyclical forms which are characteristic of both the epochs they were created in and the production of their authors.

This book started a project which will, with further chronological development of the material, certainly gather new collaborators and by extension strive both for the creation of comprehensive surveys and general views and for a further study of each individual thematic unit. There will be many dilemmas concerning the relationship between European and our music heritage, the issue of the choice and standing of authors and their work and the relationship between the micro and macro structures of the text itself. Nonetheless, many indications seem to show that, by its historical, theoretical and esthetical achievements, our musicology is able to rise to this challenge.

Translated by Jelena Nikezić