

Article received on June 18, 2003

UDC 784.4:061.3

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**The International Council for Traditional Music
15th Meeting of the Study Group on Historical Sources
Schloß Seggau, April 27 – May 1, 2004**

Under the patronage of the Institute for Ethnomusicology of the University of Music and Dramatic Arts in Graz (Austria), the 15th Meeting of the Study Group on Historical Sources of the International Council for Traditional Music was held in the castle Schloß Seggau near Leibnitz. About twenty musicologists, university professors and scholars from institutes that study folklore and sound archives – mostly from Austria, Germany and Norway, as well as a representative each from Denmark, Slovakia, Croatia, Bulgaria, and Serbia and Montenegro – focused their scholarly papers on two topics: 1. *Historical recordings of traditional music: commercial versus archival*, and 2. *The relationship between instrumental and vocal interpretation in a historical perspective*.

Most participants chose the first topic and revealed and presented valuable, previously unknown information and facts about sound recordings of musical folklore carried out in Europe and various parts of the world in the first decades of the 20th century. Susanne Ziegler (Berlin) elucidated and interpreted, from a historical aspect, two famous publications connected with the name of prominent German ethnomusicologist Erich M. von Hornbostel. The first is based on wax cylinders from the Berlin sound archives and focuses on non-commercial, documentary scientific recordings, while the second refers to the recordings of the companies “Odeon” and “Parlophone”, made for commercial purposes. Austrian ethnomusicologist Helmut Brenner (Graz) revealed important information and facts about sound recordings made in Mexico at the beginning of the 20th century, which represent excellent music-folkloric material for evaluating and publishing the oldest folklore recordings of the Mexican people. In the paper “Paul Traeger's Recordings of Albanian Traditional Music from 1903 as an Important Reference for the Research Today”, Ardian Ahmedaja (Vienna) points out, among others things, that these recordings, which were realized by German ethnologist Paul Traeger in collaboration with Catholic and Muslim Albanian narrators, are the oldest recordings of vocal and instrumental music from northern Albania. The author, therefore, believes that these recordings are the source of invaluable information, not only from a musical aspect, but also as a cultural phenomenon from which interesting information can be obtained concerning the way these recordings were perceived at the time of the researcher Traeger.

Reminding the audience that during World War I, German researchers recorded on phonograph the songs and melodies of folk dances performed by prisoners of different nationalities in German concentration

camps, Jürgen Mahrenholz of Berlin spoke, with great inspiration and by providing abundant documentation, about the sound recordings of Arabian and Tartar music and music-folkloric material from western Africa and Georgia dating from 1915 to 1918. Six examples (epics accompanied by the gusla and melodies of folk dances played on the bagpipe) performed by Serbian prisoners were recorded in the German concentration camp Königsbrück in this period (on November 21st, 1916). They have not yet been published or transcribed, nor is our scholarly public familiar with them.

The second topic also aroused the interest of those musicologists present. A work that deserves mention among the presented papers is that of Gerd Grupe of Graz, who demonstrated, based on relevant music examples of “Qawwali” (the term denotes a specific way of vocal performing in the traditional music practice of northern India and Pakistan), the way in which architectural form follows function. Norwegian ethnomusicologist Björn Aksdal from Trondheim interpreted the relationship between vocal and instrumental music from a historical perspective and on the basis of one melody viewed through two performance styles: the vocal (“slåttestev”) and the instrumental (“slått”). The author of this paper paid special attention, from the comparative aspect, to the relationship between vocal and instrumental interpretation in the folk music of Serbs, Montenegrins, Romanians and Walachians, including the process of mutual influences and multiculturalism of these national communities. There were also other noteworthy papers with examples of Hungarian and Russian folklore – which also elucidated the relationship between vocal and instrumental interpretation: Lujza Tari, Budapest, “Lessons on the Relationship between Vocal and Instrumental Interpretation in a Historical Perspective” and Ulrich Morgenstern, Hamburg, “Vocal Imitation of Instrumental Music in the Russian Tradition”.

The presented works provoked a very lively, interesting, provocative, and at times even heated discussion on various issues, including those which refer to the archaism and specificity of music structure. Thus, certain ethnomusicologists from the West find almost unbelievable the music structure of Montenegrin songs, in which one feels a powerful style of performing on the gusla.

Thanks to the active, systematic and highly professional involvement of Professor Gerd Grupe, Ph.D, organizer of the meeting, the symposium was very well prepared and interestingly and successfully realized. Furthermore, this symposium opened the door to uninterrupted scholarly discussions and fruitful dedication to both topics which in many respects transcended the European cultural and scholarly milieu.

The side events of the meeting included a tour of Graz’s historical and cultural sights and tasting excellent wines in the impressive Schloß Seggau cellar, which is over three hundred years old and is situated near the castle of the same name in which the meeting was organized. The presented works will soon be available to a wider scholarly public and the organizer promised they will be printed jointly in English and German. This will provide the participants of the 16th Meeting of the Study Group on Historical Sources,

which will be held in Berlin in 2006, with a more complete and clearer insight into the results of this year's symposium in Austria and enable them to perceive them more profoundly and comprehensively.

Translated by Jelena Nikezić