Music in Serbian Sacred Medieval Literature

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Abstract. The wide range of research techniques is necessary when dealing with medieval sacred music preserved in a limited number of scattered sources, as in the case of Serbian culture. Turning to Serbian literary sources, particularly rich in mentions of music, is appropriate to the study of many phenomena relevant to music history. The interdisciplinary approach to music and literature has been attracting musicologists and literary scholars for a long time (Calvin Brown, Stephen Paul Scher, Lawrence Kramer, Eric Prieto, to mention just a few of them); however, in the past this method has not been used systematically in the study of musical culture of medieval Serbia. Any discourse embracing literature and music is encountered with different horizons of expectations. How could (if could at all) the literary sources be used as an evidence of musical realities of the time, especially in the devotional context? Is it possible to read Serbian hagiography (so called žitija, lives of the Saints) with the aim of revealing names and usage of hymns, descriptions of liturgical situations where music was present, or concrete historical personalities and their connections to sacred music, for example? I do not necessarily deny such a possibility, but I prefer different ways of understanding the relationship between music and literature. Basic premises run along the lines of what St Gregory of Nyssa (who influenced Serbian medieval culture) designates "meaning hidden <in simple melodies> behind the words", or what Lawrence Kramer calls "mythical union of a lower reality embodied in language and a higher one embodied in music". In other words, this interdisciplinary approach will help in broader theological, philosophical and ethical context of understanding of music, the understanding that would not be apparent from within the narrower perspective of the single discipline.

Περίληψη. Η στροφή στις Σερβικές λογοτεχνικές πηγές, τις ιδιαίτερα πλούσιες σε μουσικές αναφορές, είναι απαραίτητη για τη μελέτη πολλών φαινομένων που σχετίζονται με τη μουσική ιστορία. Η διεπιστημονική προσέγγιση στη μουσική και τη λογοτεχνία έχει τραβήξει την προσοχή των μουσικολόγων και των φιλολόγων εδώ και πολύ καιρό, όμως αυτή η μέθοδος δεν έχει χρησιμοποιηθεί συστηματικά στη μελέτη του μουσικού πολιτισμού της μεσαιωνικής Σερβίας. Πώς θα μπορούσαν οι λογοτεχνικές πηγές να χρησιμοποιηθούν σαν ένδειξη της μουσικής πραγματικότητας εκείνης της εποχής, ιδιαίτερα στο λατρευτικό πλαίσιο; Είναι δυνατόν να διαβαστούν οι Σερβικοί βίοι των Αγίων (žitija) με σκοπό να αποκαλυφθούν, για παράδειγμα, ονόματα και χρήσεις των ύμνων, περιγραφές των τελετουργιών ή συγκεκριμένες ιστορικές προσωπικότητες που σχετίζονται με την εκκλησιαστική μουσική; Δεν αρνούμαι απαραίτητα μια τέτοια πιθανότητα, αλλά προτιμώ διαφορετικούς τρόπους κατανόησης της σχέσης της μουσικής με τη λογοτεχνία. Βασικές προϋποθέσεις βρίσκονται παράλληλα με αυτό που ο Άγιος Γρηγόριος Νύσσης (ο οποίος επηρέασε το σερβικό μεσαιωνικό πολιτισμό) χαρακτηρίζει «σημασία κρυμμένη <σε απλές μελωδίες> πίσω από τα λόγια» ή με αυτό που ο Lawrence Kramer αποκαλεί «μυθική ένωση μίας χαμηλότερης πραγματικότητας ενσαρκωμένης στη γλώσσα και μίας υψηλότερης ενσαρκωμένης στη μουσική». Με άλλα λόγια, αυτή η διεπιστημονική προσέγγιση θα βοηθήσει σε ευρύτερα θεολογικά, φιλοσοφικά και δεοντολογικά πλαίσια την κατανόηση της μουσικής, μια κατανόηση που δε θα μπορούσε να γίνει εμφανής από την στενότερη προοπτική μιας μόνης επιστήμης.

The wide range of research techniques is necessary when dealing with medieval sacred music preserved in a limited number of scattered sources, as in the case of Serbian culture. Moreover, available neumatic manuscripts, earliest dating from the 14th century, do not provide sufficient data on musical culture in general, its' philosophical and aesthetic context, overall signifying structure, discursive nature, cultural position, historic mode of existence, etc. For that reason other sources, such

as iconography, legal and historical documents, travelogues, etc., are used, too. Combined with medieval literature, these documents do not provide complete picture of Serbian medieval music, but they offer insight into provocative questions that might have not been answered by studying solely musical manuscripts.

Relatively small number of researchers, Serbian musicologist Dimitrije Stefanović being one of them [1], called attention to the issues surrounding the relationships between Serbian liturgical hymnography and music, pointing out the importance of integrating knowledge of this particular area with historical issues on Serbian medieval music. However, his approach was more of cataloguing nature than substantial, because he comprehended musical references in services as material for the terminological dictionary and created a brief one-page long dictionary of terms related to music.

However, Serbian medieval literary sources, particularly rich in mentions of music – as we shall see later - are appropriate for the study of many phenomena relevant to music history. The examination of textual sources may focus researcher's attention to issues of the constancy of presence and types of usage of musical references, classification of categories of references, framing similarities and differences between their usage in different literary genres, certain historical trajectories in the hymnographic / hagiographic approach to music, special historical evidences on cultural and ethical mission of music, as well as the position of musical references in the context of medieval literature and Orthodox thought in general. The last issue, dealing with mode(s) of existence of musical references, belongs to the field of poetics, in a sense of identification of normative codes, a set of unwritten "rules" whose usage is almost obligatory within a genre. In that sense, structural matters of a written text, as a particular form of expression and communication within a certain social context, show how a rather insignificant element in the general context of liturgical literature was affected by all important components of Orthodox Christian concepts and their ritual realization, historical and cultural circumstances [2].

MEDIEVAL LITERARY SOURCES

The rich system of medieval literary genres in Serbia was adopted from Byzantine tradition, and there is not a single Byzantine genre that was not present in the creative output of the old Serbian literature. For the purpose of our research two main genres stand out, due to number of works, their historical continuity and richness of musical references. These are: *žitije* (life of a saint) and *služba* (service to the saint).

The main content of a *žitije* – life of a saint– is based on historical or legendary data on that particular person, and it has a certain dimension of a historical source. The genre of *žitije* is hagiologically oriented and directed toward identification and description of certain distinct attributes of a saint, with clear narrative structure. However, it is marked with certain "metaphysical historicism", directed towards the depiction of the "eternal" side of the person. Biographical data are, from the perspective of genre itself, less relevant then religious ideals.

St. Sava (1175–1235) with his "Life of St. Simeon" (1208) was among the first and most prominent hagiographers. Stefan Prvovenčani was the author of "Life of St. Simeon" (1216), while hieromonk Domentijan wrote "Life of St. Sava" (1253–54) and "Life of St. Simeon" (1264). One of the leading Serbian medieval writers – Teodosije – created "Life of St. Sava" and "Life of St. Petar Koriški". Danilo from Peć (Danilo II, cca 1270–1337) was the author of the first collection of biographies, known as "Životi kraljeva i arhiepiskopa srpskih" known from 16th century versions; his anonymous pupil completed lives of Stefan Dečanski, emperor Dušan, and Danilo II. Grigorije Camblak and Konstantin the Philosopher wrote some important contributions to this genre, such as "Žitije of the Stefan Dečanski" (Camblak, 1403–1404) and "Žitije of the despot Stefan Lazarević" (Konstantin Filozof, 1433–1439).

Žitije has its liturgical function and it is read regularly at services. There are several subgenres of this type of literature, short žitije (used in regular services and read between hymns dedicated to the saint), and long žitije (used in monasteries and read in monastery dining halls during the meals) being the main element of them [3].

Similarly to the hagiographic genre, Serbian hymnography was rooted in Byzantine sources, in their formal and poetic foundations. Its full manifestation is in services (*služba*) dedicated to local saints. Early services were included in different types of manuscripts, mostly of Menaion type from the

thirteenth century [4], while Srbljak, as a distinctive type of liturgical book, with services to Serbian saints, came into use during the eighteenth century. However, the tendency of collecting services to a local holy man in the single volume was present since the beginning of the sixteenth century [5].

The first manuscript collection under the title of Srbljak was created in 1714; being written by hieromonk Maksim in the Fruška Gora monastery Rakovac, it became known as *rakovački Srbljak.* This collection, today known by descriptions of linguists, contained 18 services. In 1761, Srbljak in the Church-Slavonic language was published in Rimnik (today in Romania). It is known as *rimnički Srbljak* and its 15 services were edited by Arad bishop Sinesije Živanović. The third Srbljak (*Beogradski Srbljak*), prepared by Belgrade metropolitan Mihailo, appeared in 1861, with 23 services. The main subject of my research was the last edition of Srbljak, published in 1986. Its basis was *Beogradski Srbljak*, and it was edited by Pavle, Metropolitan of Raška and Prizren. This edition contains 47 services.

The historical period of the creation of services to Serbian saints lasted over eight centuries; not a single century passed without the writing of at least a small number of them. During the thirteenth century 10 services were created, between the fourteenth and seventeenth centuries services to new and old saints were created, until the stichera to St. Lazar written by Kiprijan Račanin at the end of the seventeenth century. This was the last national service written within the borders of old Serbian literature. After that, between the eighteenth and twentieth century, fourteen more services were added. [2]

INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACH

Any discourse embracing literature and music is essentially interdisciplinary, because the common material is investigated through a variety of disciplinary lenses, while respecting methodology and language of the each discipline. Integration of disciplinary insights is essential for the creation of new synthesis of knowledge and is encountered with different horizons of expectations [6].

The interdisciplinary approach to music and literature has been attracting musicologists and literary scholars for a long time. There is a lot of vagueness, limited arguments, lack of clear ideas and inconsistencies in the theoretical and practical approaches to the field of music and literature, and significant differences in the understanding of the basic parameters of the field have led to the fact that – even after several decades of research – some of the basic research elements are not defined. Thus, for example, fifteen years ago proceedings with the subtitle "Defining the field" were published, though the field was established in the mid-20th century.

Eric Prieto considers common problems in this field through two prevailing and mutually incompatible approaches: "anyone who has grappled seriously with this aspect of the relation between the two arts or has read through the abundant critical literature on the subject knows that there are two risks inherent on the study of music-and-literature: the temptation to seize on musical metaphors and use them indiscriminately, as if they had some kind of magical explanatory power, and the temptation to become so preoccupied with the uncertain status of such metaphors that it becomes impossible to make any significant determinations about the texts they are meant to describe[7]." However, in the past, none of these methods was used in the study of musical culture of medieval Serbia.

As Stephen Paul Scher noticed, interdisciplinary approach is inherent to the field of word and music studies, but its' scope has been widened by poststructuralism, hermeneutics, semiotics, reception aesthetics, deconstruction, as well as by the new historicism [8]. From the extensive range of possible approaches to research of music in the Serbian medieval liturgical literature, those associated to relations between the symbolic modes of the two arts seem the most useful at the particular moment. Prieto defines them as "zones of semiotic overlap between music and literature[7]." Instead of direct comparison between musical and literary works, study in the light of more general principles is more adequate, especially in the context of medieval poetics. The main purpose is to observe interart analogies not as goals per se, but as "cues that point to the underlying principles that govern relationships between the arts[7]."

An encounter between medieval literature and music takes place in the context of intermediality, since the arts do not have the same status: they are both functionally and semantically present in different ways. Intermediality may be seen as a particular relation "between conventionally distinct media of expression or communication: this relation consists in... direct or indirect participation of two

or more media in the signification of a human artefact[9]." When included in the main text, pretexts affect the meaning, but do not generate it. Thus, the interpretative relations "lead" the intermedial discourse, and the post-text tends to find in its' pretext something new, implicit in it.

In other words, interdisciplinary and intermedial approach will be used in order to answer certain questions. How could (if could at all) the literary sources be used as an evidence of musical realities of the time, especially in the devotional context? Is it possible to read Serbian hagiography with the aim of revealing names and usage of hymns, descriptions of liturgical situations where music was present, or concrete historical personalities and their connections to sacred music, for example? I do not necessarily deny such a possibility, but I prefer different ways of understanding the relationship between music and literature. First, the medieval writers of sacred literature were not too interested in the representation of the concrete outside world: if they were using realistic elements, their goal was not to achieve the documentary quality, but to achieve the higher purpose, which is to reach out to what is "behind", "there" and "beyond". Hence, basic premises of my methodology run along the lines of what St. Gregory of Nyssa designates "meaning hidden <in simple melodies> behind the words", pointing out to elements that had that special quality of "ineffability" or inaccessibility to language, or what Lawrence Kramer calls "mythical union of a lower reality embodied in language and a higher one embodied in music [10]". In other words, the interdisciplinary approach is necessary for understanding in broader theological, philosophical and ethical context of understanding of music, the understanding that would not be apparent from within the narrower perspective of the single discipline.

Comprehensive, interdisciplinary understanding of the relationship between medieval sacred literature and music will be systematically analysed through three close, but substantially different types of comparisons. These are relations between: 1) language and music, 2) text and music and 3) literature and music.

LANGUAGE AND MUSIC

Relationship between language and music is based on the broad definition of language as determined system of a conventional signs used in the purpose of communication, while its' functions include expression, emotional release, imaginative expression, identity matters, etc. In this context one is attracted mostly to linguistic matters, such as syntax, semantics and lexis, but the basic element for the comparison is that language, as well as music, involve complex and meaningful sound sequences that are converted into "perceptually discrete elements... organized into hierarchical structures that convey rich meanings [11]". In other words: the music *of* language, as well as the music *in* language. As Lawrence Kramer points out, there is a mythical union of a "lower reality embodied in language and a higher one embodied in music. Through song... language is represented as a broaching the ineffable [10]".

Language of the Serbian medieval literature was, as Dimitrije Bogdanović pointed out, from the very beginning, in a way, an artificial language, which was not used by ordinary people.It was a language designed to convey spiritual content, biblical and other sacred texts, whose aim was not to be used in everyday situations. Many features of the Greek koiné language had influenced the Church Slavonic, especially in terms of syntax and lexical fund, which was not typical of "live" Slavic languages. For this reason, literary historians point out the existence of diglossia: Old Church Slavonic intended for literature, and Serbian, used in the vernacular occasions, as well as in certain documents, business, commercial or public occasions. In that way a kind of polarization of language was achieved, and Church Slavonic sought to "ensure availability of sacredness and spiritual secrets (in mystical, sacramental sense), the nature and position of the 'higher' knowledge, in contrast to the 'lower'"; at the same time, there was the other opposite the tendency, "with the goal to transfer the higher spiritual content into the consciousness of the people and enrich them with the ideals of the Christian faith [3]." Church Slavonic was therefore marked by properties of specificity and particularity, and was more dignified then the plain language.

Approach to the language and music of the medieval time is based on the common acoustic nature of the "basic material". In this context, particular importance is given to the phenomenon of

musicalization, that is, insistence on certain acoustic qualities of language: sound quality, euphony, melody, rhythm, dynamics... In fact, in Slavic and especially Serbian sources from the 13th to the 15th century there is a specific "philologically oriented" approach to words, characterized by stringing words according to their semantic criteria, creating new words, use of calques, neologisms, compound words, complex linguistic associations... Technique known as *izvitije sloves*, "weaving" words that have the same root, is one of the particularly effective methods. That procedure has a strong effect on musicalization, and it is equally important as the use of the same etymological extensions. "High" genres of medieval literature - hagiographic, hymnographic and chronograph - tend to emphatic phrases, expressiveness and extreme emotionalism, and they are distinguished by unrest search for adequate expression, the tendency toward abstraction, the eternal doubts of the writer about the possibility of adequate expression. In addition, the style properties are classified and long enumeration, the accumulation of epithets, stringing synonyms, tautologies, repetitions, and losing the "real" meaning of the word. After all, the vocabulary has, as Djordje Trifunović says, "spread its' meanings and possibilities of the material and spiritual connection [12]." As Lihačov notes, writers of the 14th and 15th century "tended to get out as much as possible external effects from the words, with virtuoso playing words, creating a variety of symmetric coupling, flamboyant *'pletenije sloves'*, 'spider web' of words [13]". With captivating harmonies, rhythmic repetitions and melodiousness of the Slavic language, the path to nonstandard solutions is opened, regardless of the fundamental importance of the canon during the middle ages.

Thus, in the work of Archbishop Danilo II (Danilo from Peć), so-called *pletenije sloves* (weaving of words) gets important place in the organization of literary expression, becoming its dominant specificity and fundamental poetic category. For example, in his sticheron "Today shines well-lighted memory" in the sixth mode, from the "Service to the holy Archbishop Arsenije", Danilo extensively used ornate rhetorical style of weaving words.

CHURCH-SLAVONIC (phonetic transcription)
Vasija vasesvetlaja danas svetitelja pamet,
vernije prosveštajušti
i toki neoskudno blagouhanija točešti,
va nju že sabravše se,
cveti dobropesnimi vrhi svoje uvezše,
prosveštenago Arsenija hvalami poštem
i sego osveštenej glave radosno vazglasim:
Raduj se, božastavna lastovice
vasem glasešti put pojakanija,
raduj se, blagouhanijem raki tvojeje
javlj žitije svoje,
raduj se, nadežde vasem hvaleštim te,
priležno moli o dušah naših.

SERBIAN
Zasija svesvetli danas svetitelja spomen,
verne prosvetljavajući
i potoke blagouhanja neoskudno točeći,
u koji sabravši se,
cvetovima dobropesmenim glave svoje ovenčavši,
prosvetljenog Arsenija hvalama štujmo
i osveštanoj glavi njegovoj radosno uzglasimo:
Raduj se, božastvena lastavice
što svima glasi put pokajanja,
raduj se, što blagouhanjem grobnice tvoje
pokaza življenje svoje,
raduj se, nado svih što te hvale,

priležno moli za duše naše.

ENGLISH
Today shines well-lighted memory of the saint,
enlightenment to the faithful
and streams of the odour of sanctity are profusely pouring,
and let us, gathered here,
with heads wreathed by flowers of good songs,
praise enlightened Arsenije
and let us joyfully exclaim to his consecrated head:
Rejoice, you divine swallow
that shows the path of repentance to everyone,
Rejoice, because the odour of sanctity of your grave,
showed your life,
Rejoice, you, hope of all that praise you,
and fervently pray for our souls.

Multiplication of assonances and alliterations at the beginning of the sticheron (in Church Slavonic version) favours not only the sonority of syllables *ve, sve, va; ja, je; ti, te, ta...* but brings closer the keywords in the text. The connection is not accidental, but deeply meaningful. In addition, the beginning of the song seems to approach the formal verses, due to the balanced number of syllables in the first four "lines" (16-8-16-7), and impression of versification is reinforced by rhyme between the second and third lines (prosveštaju*šti* - toče*šti*).

Anaphora "Rejoice" is interesting, too. It is the apparent result of normative influence of the oikos, and it is repeated three times in the second part of the hymn. It is used in the asymmetric opposition, between binary praise and request in the third repetitions. As Lihačov points out, binarism is combined with other procedures, "or it gets its' 'resolution' in the cadence. Cadence does not violate the binarism, but, on the contrary, emphasizes it [14]."

Our attention is particularly attracted by the verse "cvetovima dobropesmenim glave svoje ovenčavši" ("with heads wreathed by flowers of good songs"): this rich phrase, full in meanings, carries a complex symbolism and it is an excellent illustration of those properties of the technique of *pletenije sloves* which are important, in the context of discussions about the relationship between music and language. In the first place, this is material and spiritual merging: of (conditionally) real, concrete, floral wreaths on heads of the people, and the spiritual, abstract coins, such as "dobropesmeni" (literally: "good-songed"). This poetic neologism, in which the root is the word "song", does not strive to the obvious and picturesque, it's not trying to bring specificity of the described phenomenon, but "reverses" sense of the poetic image in the abstract direction, creates a semantic shift, thus building the impression of depth, and the mystery that may not be expressed by the words. Epithets in the Slavic medieval literature, as Lihačov points out, do not depict concrete characteristics of the phenomenon, but demonstrate its' "eternal" essence, an ideal feature and spiritual sense [13]". In other words, unambiguous musical reference, the term "pesmenost" ("songfulness") especially enhanced in its' meaning by the prefix "dobro" ("good") serves to Danilo II to highlight the special, new nuance of dominance of the spiritual over the material principle. This verse may be viewed from the perspective of multiple symbolism of the wreath, as the Christian attributes, but this is the subject of another study.

It is not difficult to conclude that the creation of amalgams which, from our point of view, do not make sense, actually creates the effect of annulled meaning. The result of this procedure is the 'eloquent silence', that is, the silence that has gnoseological dimensions. This silence becomes the symbol of knowledge. As Dimitrije Bogdanović writes, the technique of *pletenije sloves* "creates the hypnotizing effect, on a psychological level, and from this arises the paradoxical result of the muted thought, extremely rich and meaningful silence [3]."

TEXT AND MUSIC

From the theoretical perspective, relations between text and music may seem even more complex than those between language and music. There are many radically different or even conflicting interpretation of the term "text", used for diverse purposes, but the main distinction is related to differences between classical and contemporary concepts of text, that is, between 1) text in linguistic or written domain, as written message, and 2) much broader view, based on the understanding that all the objects of aesthetics, or even the world itself, may and should be treated as texts [15]. My approach will be based on the first concept, but it will be broadened with Genette's theory of paratext, influential in literary studies over the past three decades. True, this is not about the verbal (and nonverbal) components such as title, contents, dedication, illustrations, etc., which are usually taken into account when dealing with the phenomenon of paratext. It is the "paratextual thematization", or, as Werner Wolf formulated it, in his thorough systematisation of thematizations of music in literature, drawing on Gérard Genette's concept of paratextuality, "the authorial paratextual thematization [9]."

This phenomenon is present in one of the typical hymnographic procedures, such as an acrostic. In fact, a large number of services includes acrostic (constructed from the initial letters of the troparia from the canon) with musical references. So, for example, Teodosije Hilandarac (whose services are otherwise, scarce in musical references), writes in his "Service to St. Simeon" following acrostic: "I, unworthy Teodosije, sing to you, father Simeon", while Marko from Peć, in his "Service to St. Archbishop Nikodim", writes "With ease I sing to the great Saint Nikodim". There are other examples, too: Grigorije Camblak in his "Service to saint King Stefan Dečanski" – "I offer this new song as a gift to the new martyr"; Pajsije Janjevac in his "Service to Saint emperor Uroš" – "I, unworthy Pajsije, sing to you, blessed Uroš", etc. Although they cannot be heard during canon performance, these paratextual layers are the specific authorial thematization (indeed, in terms of poetics in which the principle of the authorship has the different meaning than in the recent literature), which provides one possible "key" for reading, and a possible way to "decode" the text, valuable precisely because it is the only layer of its kind at the paratextual level.

LITERATURE AND MUSIC

The third approach is oriented towards artistic nature of the literature and music, instead of their media (sounds and words). In both arts referential, mimetic or conceptual elements are put aside with formal models that do not depend on external meanings [10]. In both arts "the alliance of connotative and combinatory features become significant in two ways: intertextually, through allusion, generic affiliation, and the play of stylistic codes, and intratextually, through rhythmic design and the play of likeness and difference among particulars [10]." Although Kramer deals with poetry, not literature as a whole, his argument that literature and music may converge on a structural rhythm "that a shared pattern of unfolding can act as an interpretative framework for the explicit dimension of both works... structural rhythm of one work may provide an interpretative framework for the structural rhythm of the other" can be very useful starting platform. As for medieval literature, poetical principles of creation are essential, in terms of referring to the model of the world whose characteristics are clearly defined.

Properties of poetic totality, such as expressed religious character, the Neoplatonic ideas that reality is reflection of higher spiritual prototypes, where the essence is "truer than the thing itself", synchronic and diachronic unity, the absence of the principle of individualization, communication at the level of general topoi, etc., determine interpretative framework when medieval art is concerned [3]. In this context, on this occasion we highlight issues related to literary etiquette, which is, in the opinion of Lihačov, "the most typical medieval conditional-normative connection of content with form [13]." It is important in terms of transfer of entire passages from one work to another, relocation of topoi, symbols, metaphors, and so on. References to other works, especially to the biblical texts, emphasize instructive meaning of the text, while, at the same time, affirm their unequivocal belonging to the corpus of church literature.

So Hesychius of Jerusalem explains the use of the existing work in the creation of a new in his work "On saints Peter and Paul": "It is useful therefore, to bring ourselves the spring flowers from

time to time, and to smell them, but if you take them with a lily... the smell of the mixed fragrances doubles and hence causes delight of odour of sanctity [13]."

Among so many quotations that build the fabric of the Serbian hagiography, special importance belongs to Psalm verses, whose importance in the medieval literature was truly special. For example, the so-called pupil of Archbishop Danilo, whose name is unknown to us, in his book "The life of King Dušan", created during the second quarter of the 14th century, writes:

> And the King, hearing this, had opened his God-thanking mouth, praising God of all, and sang the God-praying song with David: "Great is our Lord and mighty in power; his understanding has no limit [16]."

Additionally, the writer adds several other Psalm verses and other biblical citations, noting that it was the song through which King Dušan expressed his gratitude to the Lord for victory over the army of the Hungarian King Charles Robert in 1336.

Two things are important in this passage. First is the song of gratitude, in which the act of singing is seen as something deeper, more sublime and more important than ordinary words; the other is the intertextual intervention. King Dušan, as described, joins the biblical King David, who is not just the symbol of sacred Kingship, but also the guarantee of the deeper spiritual meaning and the internal cohesion of the whole world. And this mystical unity is achieved through singing, which, obviously, is viewed as a sign of profound, elevated and infinite potential of this unity.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The compatibility of music and literature in Serbian medieval hagiography and hymnography is far from being fully discussed in the previous chapters. This is a topic that requires more extensive insights, in the form of monograph on which I am currently working. However, these concluding remarks will be helpful in defining the path for some major results, stemming from the interdisciplinary research of music in literature. The following particular issues are important: What is justification for need of specifically musical references in analysed texts? What is this that music can offer to medieval writer about the art of creating hymn or life of the saint? Would there be any differences if the words singing, hymn or choir would be replaced by praise, poem and community, respectably? What motivated writer's turn to music, instead of other arts? What consequences has the use of musical references for the interpretation and understanding of the text?

As contemporary psychological research of relation between music and worship shows, music is extremely effective as source of strong personal associations, powerful "evoker of other times and other places". As such, it can help in self-examination, which is also an important element of worship. The other significant aspect is ineffability of music, which is associated with unique semantic range of music that is not comparable to that of language. As Prieto remarked "music can be taken as a figure of that point at which metaphor spills over into ineffable. The apparent semantic muteness of music, in other words, can... be interpreted as a sign of infinite semantic potential and access to anagogic meaning [7]." The prominent position of the anagogical sense in religious experience is, to some extent, comparable to that side of the ineffability of music. It is possible, as John Sloboda notices, that sense of being in the presence of that which is beyond capture by human concepts, relevant for worship through the "ineffable core of the human experience of God", as well as for music, in its' possibility to express the implicit without articulating it, provided a model for the medieval "decoding" of musical references. Sloboda's metaphor of understanding-as-peeling-the-onion-from-the-inside, characterized by another and another "higher level of explanation beyond the one that has been discovered [17]", may be the thread connecting views on music and principles of creativity of that time.

Another point is relevant for philosophical and aesthetic context of the problem, too. It is the Neoplatonic framework, in which the music is appreciated as reflection of the divine architecture of the universe, "a mantra of the Middle Ages [7]." Regardless of the fact that the Neo-Platonism influenced the Serbian literature only indirectly, primarily through the idea of "transformation of man

from physical and mental being in the spiritual personality [3]", it must have affected Early Christian theologists, such as St. Gregory of Nyssa, who had more direct impact on the Serbian writers. In his commentary *On the Inscriptions of the Psalms,* St. Gregory of Nyssa calls the universe "a diverse and variegated musical harmony [18]", thus pointing out to transcendental and cosmic level of music. For that reason, as well as those mentioned before, music in Serbian medieval literature was not just a part of the imagery, or a mode of expression. On the contrary, it was something that possessed a kind of metaphysical purity that allowed it to move away from the prosaic constrains of the ordinary communication.

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