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THE DEDICATION OF MAKSIMOVIĆ TO MOKRANJAC
Rukovet (Garland) for the violin, flute and string orchestra

Abstract: In the article THE DEDICATION OF MAKSIMOVIC TO MOKRANJAC, the author questions Maksimović's relationship towards Mokranjac's work in his composition *Garland for the violin, flute and string orchestra* (performed in October 2005 at the concert of the Ensemble for New Music at the 14th International Tribune of Composers in Belgrade). Maksimović is the first Serbian composer to use the term *rukovet* (garland) in instrumental music and thus it is interesting to point out how Maksimović's work relates to Mokranjac's *Garlands*.

Key words:

Music analysis, Serbian music, Rajko Maksimović, contemporary music, garland

The closing concert of the 14th International Review of Composers saw the premiere of Rajko Maksimović's new work *Rukovet (Garland) for the flute, violin and strings*,¹ a composition which the author characterizes as a specific dedication to Stevan Mokranjac, adopting the title of the work from the legendary *rukoveti* written for a choral ensemble, which, in Maksimović's words, made Mokranjac "a great Serbian classic".² In a brief explanatory note, the composer also underlines that Mokranjac used the term *rukovet* as a designation for "works based on the folklore material of the Balkan people", which leads to the conclusion that he has no interest in a more precise determination of the genre and the form of *rukoveti* and that, in that sense, the title of his instrumental composition does not indicate any additional (possible) intentions other than wishing to pay his respect to Mokranjac. In his composition *Rukovet*, Rajko Maksimović did not attempt to transpose Mokranjac's compositional principles from *rukoveti* or their thematic material, so that the composition will be analytically examined without an attempt to draw an analogy with *rukoveti*.

Rukovet was written for the flute, violin and chamber string orchestra, with the flute and the violin, two representatives of different groups but of the same, soprano section, being treated

¹ Performers: Ljubiša Jovanović, flute, Marija Špengler, violin, Ensemble for New Music of the Department of Music with Biljana Radovanović, Belgrade Cultural Centre, October 31.

² Analyzing Maksimović's attitude towards one of the most significant segments of the tradition of Serbian music – Mokranjac's *rukoveti* – I wrote about the issues of genre determination in Maksimović's new work in the article *Tragom tradicije: Rukovet za flautu, violinu i gudače Rajka Maksimovića* in: Dimitrije Golemović (editor), *Dani Vlade S. Miloševića – naučni skup* (collection of works), Banja Luka, 2006, pp. 165–171.

as soloistic rather than concert instruments. Even though demanding in terms of performing, it does not reach for virtuosic elements, but to a certain extent establishes an interaction in the relationship between the soloists and the orchestra that are similar to Corelli's balanced treatment of the concerto grosso and concertino. The cycle in four movements is also based on the principles of the Baroque sonata, with contrasting changes of tempo and meter typical for Baroque cycles:³

<i>Andante rubato – Allegro moderato – Andante, poco rubato/Tempo giusto – Allegro</i>			
6/8	alla breve	5/8, 8/8, 5/8, 8/8...	2/4

Similarly with the Baroque suite, one can also talk about the unity of thematic material of all the suite's movements, although the manner of constructing motives is not Baroque, as it produces a synthesis of the techniques of development from the initial nucleus that are always differentiated in Baroque and metric-rhythmic transformations of motives in contrasting pairs of dances. The compositional techniques applied in constructing the thematic material and the form indicate in a much more essential way the folkloric practice of formation (singing-dancing) rather than Baroque compositional principles, that is, to the approach of folklore typical of Tajčević.

The initial motive of the solo violin, which functions as the thematic starting point of the entire *Rukovet*, also bears the stamp of folklore.⁴ The melody is intoned on the bourdon pedal and the theme is developed from the initial second nucleus with a characteristic appoggiatura (bar 1). The basic tetrachordal foundation of the melody (bars 3-6) provides the intonational material of all the movements of the cycle (example 1). The combination of evolutionary and variational expositions used in this theme is characteristic of instrumental folkloric thinking, while the harmonies of melodies with the bourdon fifth provide the basis for the entire vertical which is dominated by fourth-second chords. The melody itself is modally coloured (*e* Aeolian, *a* Aeolian with a characteristic mutation into the Phrygian, bars 17-18 and 25), which will also be used in further exposition as a turn of specific colouring. Structurally speaking, the introductory melody can be analyzed as follows:

³ Vlastimir Peričić observes the similarity of the *Ninth* and *Thirteenth Rukovet* with this type of cyclic form. Vlastimir Peričić, Mokranjac – Rukoveti in: Stevan Stojanović Mokranjac, *Svetovna muzika, I, Rukoveti* (edited by Vojislav Ilić), Nota – Zavod za udžbenike i nastavna sredstva, Knjaževac – Beograd, 1992, XVII.

⁴ In the formal sense it can also be interpreted as an independent introduction to the entire work, although the similarity of the thematism of the introduction and the first movement causes them to be perceived as a whole, so that the composer also marks them as such. The durations of the performance of the solo violin and the tutti performance are almost identical (in the score they are marked 1:45' and 1:50').

[1 + 1]	[3 + 3]	[5]	[6]	[2 + 2 + 1 + 2]
repeated introductory motive (thematic nucleus)	exposition, periodic structure (a)	First developmental stage (b)	second developmental stage (b ₁)	reprise function, completion (a ₁)
E Aeolian			a Aeolian/Phrygian	e Aeolian/Phrygian

It has a ternary structure with clear expositional, developmental and reprise levels, but it is also possible to observe very characteristic repetitions within that flow:

Bar	Bar
1	1, 19, 26
3–4	6–7
4–5	15–16
5	11, 16, 21
7–8	20–21
11–13	21–23
8	13, 23, 24

These repetitions of melodic-rhythmic wholes of different duration,⁵ asymmetrically positioned, are perceived as gravitational centres which the melody moves away from and then, almost obsessively, returns to once again. Here, it should be noted that the rhythmic component plays an extremely important part, because the number of rhythmic repetitions is even more pronounced, but takes place without mechanical regularity: a repeated motive is followed by a rhythmic development that provides energy for the motion (compare bars 3, 9, 14) and leads to the culmination (bar 15), while the repetition of the model brings a subsiding and a completion with the repetition of the initial bar.

⁵ Repetitions at different pitches are also taken into account.

Example 1

a
Пример 1
увод, т. 1-26

Andante rubato
 sempre sul G + D bourdon

p

mf

f

sub p

mf

p

The principle of constructing the form established in the introduction is applied in all the movements of the suite: the repetition of shorter and longer motives-themes in characteristic responsorial dialogues of the soloists (interactively) and with the orchestra and the variant reshaping of the material through which the intonational potential of the theme is developed. The bourdon part is given a new dimension in the rhythmised ostinato of the orchestra, with a complementary rhythmic motion and repetitive models which avoid the traps of mechanical repetitions and sequences, and instead unfold as an inventive game of “vying in playing”. The structure of the introduction is repeated in the orchestral part of the first movement with minimal changes. The responsorial dialogue of the first violin and flute which produce the initial nucleus, is followed by a dialogue between the flute (an augmented exposition of the *a* motive of the introduction, number 2) and the orchestra (the theme is borne by the violoncellos, number 3, *uniti, molto espressivo*) in the *a* part, but the three-bar motives from the introduction have been developed (7+9). After the four-bar transition with a characteristic Lydian motive in an ascending and descending motion, the *b* and *b₁* material of the introduction are developed in the second section, this time in the dialogue of two solo instruments. The movement is completed by an orchestral exposition, which is thematically and formally identical to the introduction.

In terms of thematic material, subsequent movements of the suite bring a variational-evolutionary development of the initial material. The composer's playing with motives captivates by its inventiveness: a dancing potential (shaped in different ways in even, quick movements, compare examples 2 and 3) is also revealed in it (the motive), and it is expanded and developed in the humorous playing of the soloistic parts (example 4) and persistently keeps coming back to the basic form (the duet of the transformed material in the violin and the basic material in the flute (example 5). The metric-rhythmic transformations in the mixed bars of the third movement give it new character in the alternations of the singing and the dancing, while the atmosphere of a closing *kolo* is provided in the playful complementary rhythmic dances of the finale.

Due to its apparent simplicity and unpretentiousness, Rajko Maksimović's *Rukovet* might seem like a retrograde turn in the compositional style of the once modernistically orientated author. However, a careful reading of the score shows with how much meticulousness and inspiration the composer sculpted this fresh miniature composed "in Mokranjac's honour".

Exapmle 2

Пример 2
II став, т. 1-6

Allegro moderato $\text{♩} = 60$

Vnl *mf*

Exapmle 3

Пример 3
IV став, т. 1-10

Solo Vn *f*

Example 4

Пример 4
II став. бр. 5, т. 3-15

(Allegro moderato)

f
colla gioia
Vn solo

Example 5

Пример 5
II став. бр. 9 и 10

(Andante moderato)

Fl. *f*

Vn. solo *f*

5 *ff*

5 *ff*

10

10

Translated by Jelena Nikezić