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INFLUENCE OF MUSIC ON SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT OF PEOPLES

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Abstract: Music, from its beginning to present time, most directly influences the spiritual development of man. From its beginning, through ancient civilizations to the present time, music has had an immeasurably important role in the formation of personality and, according to recent studies, a very important role in the influence on human health. Music therapy, as a separate branch of medicine, deals with the beneficial effect of music on the disorders in personality development, the treatment of various psychiatric disorders, as well as other kinds of diseases. This paper will show the effects, particularly in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the region, because of the social events of the past few decades, of various musical trends which affect negatively the development of the spiritual side of the personality, and have long-term consequences on the understanding and building up the value system. Additional exposure to media propagation of such music trends, and the negative effects that it entails, requires restoring the true values of art music.

Keywords: influence of music, music therapy, identity crisis, classical music, spiritual development.

Art, as a human creation, has always had a huge influence on all aspects of human life, on the formation of the personality and the quality of his total existence. As a mental and emotional being, man has always had the need, in addition to material satisfaction, to satisfy own spiritual needs.

Without art, as the immortal creation of humanity, human existence and development of spiritual culture is unimaginable.

“The spiritual function of art is associated with aesthetic, spiritual culture as the totality of spiritual values. Culture reaches its peak when something is subjected to what it is supposed to be.” (Koković, 2000).

As an ancient art which is omnipresent and has a universal language, music in the spiritual development of man has a special place among all other types of art.

As some of the old people believed, music with its divine origin has always been an integral part of all the important events in people’s lives and their inseparable part. Music was used in all known human cultures to express all spiritual conditions of man - from the deep sadness, anxiety, anger to elation and a sense of joy and happiness.

Ancient peoples gave great importance to music and they had an insight into what influence it has on the development of personality as a whole, and especially on its spiritual side. The ancient Chinese believed that music can influence the harmony, both within the personality, and the order in the society and state, as it reflects the harmony between heaven and earth, the harmony of the cosmos, so the musicians who did not play precise tones were severely punished, or even killed. “Chinese music is characterized by conservatism, the tendency to preserve traditional forms. Music plays an important role; people used to think that it had magical powers, that it can freeze water in summer, and melt it in winter, that it can influence the very organization of state and government.” (Radović, 1992). The ancient Romans, as the famous conquerors overwhelmed by euphoria and prone to hedonistic entertaining before and after the war conquest, used to raise and strengthen the fighting spirit of their warriors through music, and the Greeks used to think that it had a divine role. They felt that music expresses moods and feelings through

sounds, and influences the formation of the best qualities in a man and the formation of a personality in the most direct way.

In ancient Greece the concept of music, given the fact that in mythology the muses were patrons of the arts, included all the arts that influenced the education of mind and heart.

“Balance of contrary”, according to Pythagoras, was possible to achieve with the power of music. Pythagoreans believed that music can heal - that it helps in collecting one’s soul and the establishment of the always unstable balance. Music therapy, which is getting a very important role today, has its roots dating back to ancient civilizations. “Pythagoras used “musical catharsis” by playing the lyre and singing, and the participants’ conditions improved.” (Radulović, Pejović, 1997).

From the earliest pagan rituals, music remains one of the most important strongholds of religious services, in every religious system. During the period of expansion of Christianity, the role of music in religious service was huge, as well as its influence on the strengthening of the religious feelings of the followers. At the same time, the use of instruments was considered heresy. It was because there was a conviction that with the use of music instruments and thus the rhythm as an integral element of instrumental and vocal - instrumental music, special emotions occur - passion, restlessness, excitement. This is not in accordance with the preferred image the church dignitaries of the time had about the personality of the true Christian - calmness, God-fearing and absolute obedience which they should possess. That is why the use of instruments in religious service was prohibited for centuries. In Orthodox spiritual music it is prohibited even today. “It is not a coincidence that several rules of the Sixth Ecumenical Council (680-681) sought to place new obstacles in the way of the spread of folk music. Thus, the 24th rule set that “no one of those who hold a priesthood or monastic rank is allowed to visit the hippodrome or plays in the theatres. The 51st rule is similar: “This sacred Ecumenical Council forbids the so-called mime and their theatres, and it is also forbidden to perform dance on stage. If anyone should ignore the established rule... if members of clergy - let them be ousted, and if laymen - let them be excommunicated (from the church).” (Hercman, 2004).

When it comes to the Serbian medieval music, it is being revealed only in recent decades, due to the fact that it was mostly transmitted by oral tradition, leaving behind the least recorded works, which, if any, remain unavailable in closed monastic libraries or lost in the ashes of the disaster of the war of this eternally unstable region.

Travelling musicians appeared in the Middle Ages. They advocated and popularized secular music and have been deprived of their rights because of it. They were considered a lower class, and were persecuted at the margins of society. However, at this time a new awareness developed, and also a need to give much more importance to secular music, in addition to spiritual. When it comes to Serbian secular music, it was developing on the same basis as in the feudal countries in the West. “Travelling musicians and performers who were called jugglers, minstrels and jocalators in the West, also existed in the Serbian courts, where they were called: *skomrah*, *gudec*, *sviralnik*, *svirac*, *plesac*, *špilman*, etc. With a stronger influence of church, these kind of people who were the lowest on the social ladder, were persecuted and scorned.” (Djurić Klain, 1963).

With their works which have imperishable and immeasurable artistic value even today, giants such as Bach praised and glorified God, celebrated life, love. Various aspects of the personal and global influence on the works of artists of the time can be seen through the most important works of literature about music.

In the second half of the nineteenth and early twentieth century, dissonance prevailed against consonance in music, harmony gave way to disharmony, the rules established through the centuries were broken and everything that was implied “until recently”, ceased to be an integral part of the composer’s language. Music ceased to be the property of broad stratum of listeners, and in the twentieth century it forgot to speak

to a broad audience, because the avant-garde music became abstract, contradictory to the characteristics of human soul. That is how the music got divided into “serious art” and popular music which does not develop the quality of human soul, as many believe today, but influences the lowest instincts - to put it simply: it does not make a man good, it does not develop his spirit and his positive side, but influences the man adversely, making him aggressive, vicious, or even superficial, unrestrained, immoral. Appearance of different styles, trends and techniques, even in the works of one composer is a characteristic of the music of the twentieth century. “At the beginning of the twentieth century artists across Europe, especially in Germany, directed their interests towards the “aesthetics of ugliness”. This new understanding of the values of art was a revolt against the traditional attitudes about the “beautiful”. In their works, the artists emphasized their own, individual experience of reality which occurred primarily as a reaction to the increasing social, economic and political crisis in Europe.” (Prodanov Krajišnik, 2012).

“Richard Wagner claimed that music “distracts the mind from any consideration of our relations to things outside of us in an instant, and at the same time it distracts us from the time, objectivity, and the outside world by allowing directing the eyes only to the core of being and essence of everything that exists”.” (Dona, 2008).

Nowadays the influence of various types of music on a man is more and more obvious. Music has absolutely mysterious and ineffable influence. There is music that can have a positive influence on improving the quality of human personality, and there is also music that can corrupt it, change the inner rhythm of life and has a disastrous effect on the soul.

Music has an enormous power over the spiritual side of our personality, either being something that “tickles the senses”, or the language of emotions, or the expression of incommunicable, or the knowledge, or none of the above.

“Amazing is the power of music to touch what has never been touched, to make us remember what we have already seen, to reveal the undiscovered and to make the exotic plant of our inner world bloom, even when there is no water, nor place, nor time.” (Radulović, Pejović, 1997).

With the help of music therapy, which started in mid-twentieth century in the United States, we perceive the influence of music on human health. There are numerous conferences and symposiums organized today, whose work achieves improvements and suggests prospects of music therapy. Music therapy is still not sufficiently accepted in the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina. This discipline is still insufficiently known in the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina and is not taught sufficiently to allow for its use.

As shown by many studies, music influences the human brain, human intellect and our entire organism. It is a process in which listening to the appropriate melodic patterns are used to help solve health issues. Thus, for example, it is possible to treat diseases associated with mental disorders, drug abuse, especially when the usual verbal mode of communication is not possible. The role of music is especially interesting in the work with certain forms of mental retardation, where children move to a higher adaptive level of behaviour, establish better relationships and develop their self-esteem, all with the help of music therapy. “One of the biggest problems of the retarded is communication. Either they have limited use of words or, especially in in case of serious disorders, they cannot speak at all. Music, as a non-verbal communication, is a natural medium for the realization of wanted contact,” (Thayer Gaston, 1968).

Numerous studies have proven that the works of the great classics have a calming and relaxing effect on the human organism. Melodious music evokes deep emotions, and rhythmic music can evoke deep passion in the soul. Mozart’s works have a special effect on people. Many studies have shown that there is a tremendous influence of this composer on the intellect. Listening to his works significantly increases the level of intelligence and activates the brain activity. Mozart’s music is unique - it is not fast, or slow, it is

calm, but not boring. This phenomenon has not completely been studied, but it already has a name “The Mozart Effect”. (<http://www.altmedic.ru>, accessed: 25.10. 2015.).

With the help of music it is possible to influence and change the health, affect the level of the intellect, the moral character and development, but it is also possible to collapse the value system, which is evident in the modern age. Music has never been, nor can it be neutral in terms of its influence on a man. It either poisons him or heals him. It exalts him or disparages him. It builds his spirit or the man remains an empty shell without content under its harmful effects.

Ivan Focht, cited Jankelevič (1980: 260): “When the useless chatter stops, the music, like a prayer, fills the empty space; the music thereby reduces the pressure of logos, weakens the unbearable hegemony of spoken words: it prevents what is human to be identified with what is spoken... The music does not only need the words to stop in order for its song to be heard, but the silence resides in it and damps it.”

In addition to the beneficial influence of music on human health, the music can worsen it, by exposure to the influence of certain kinds of music. According to research, listening to the uniform techno music leads to the degradation of the intellect. When listening to such music in the car ability to react while driving can be reduced. There are theories that the music can influence morale, and human tendency to superficial pleasures, and also that it has a positive impact on the man’s brain when thinking and experiencing sublime emotions. “Art and morality overlap in terms of feelings, well-being, harmony, experience, etc. The basis of their unity is the dependency of aesthetic and ethical in the phenomena of social life, their participation in the creation of new reality, and the social and human existence. Art and morality help the man to comprehend himself, his place in the world, the meaning of life, and the values that design it.” (Koković, 1998)

We are exposed to the vast influence of music that has little or no artistic value through various media today. We can conclude that in this way, in addition to spiritual collapse, we constantly endanger our health.

“We live in an age in which the human existence suffers from deep turmoil. Modern man is on the way to completely lose his sense of values and a sense of value differences. Nowadays, there is a tendency towards uniformity in the field of matter, while in the field of the spirit there is a tendency towards suppressing any kind of universalism on behalf of an anarchic intellectualism.” (Focht, 1980).

The fact is that nowadays, in time in which the orientation to the material is primary, we are more and more away from our own essence. Paradoxically, at the same time, our inner essence cries out for fulfilment and peace of mind, now more than ever, and also for internal harmony which has become hardly attainable goal.

Presentation of trivial musical contents and their glorification in the media and the exposure of the man to this content make him a puppet. Over time, even if the essential value of music existed in this puppet, it fades and completely distances itself from the effects that it brings to the spiritual development and builds a new “value system”, not only in music, but also in the model of behaviour and of life. The degradation of moral, human and cultural values in a society goes “hand in hand” with the music which is the product of such an environment, its essence, taste and smell of such social reality.

We are witnesses of recent events in Bosnia and Herzegovina and surrounding countries, where at the time of endangered existence and general deterioration of spirit, musical trends such as the so-called turbo-folk came to the fore, which is an unfortunate reflection of a difficult period. Blurring of reality under the influence of the media and the trivialisation of art, and thus the human values, has become a new trend, a new model of living in which there is room and affinity only for light genres and “yellow press” which accompanies them.

Young people today, unfortunately, mostly do not listen to classical music, but they are not able to understand it, given the imposed contents which are presented to them through the mass media and the Internet. At the time of identity crisis, they become subject to a variety of negative influences. They do not have a critical view of the norms, nor a musical taste based on genuine artistic values.

By nurturing tradition and our own artistic heritage, we will not look like a plant whose leaves start to dry after its roots had been cut... What is now often considered a part of the long-forgotten past with which we do not have a clearly defined connection, is in fact the strongest link with ourselves, in the moral and spiritual sense. "This spiritual, artistic and historical heritage is being studied in the scientific institutions, but it is not present enough in everyday life, at schools, at homes, on the radio and television. It is expelled from our consciousness, from everyday life, in a word, from the educational milieu and universal spiritual literacy. (Petrović, 1991).

The role of music education today at schools which provide general education usually comes down to a basic musical literacy. It just brushes the essence of the significance of music education for the development of children's personality, which certainly has a negative impact on its overall spiritual development and growth. In the absence of appropriate music for children and lack of programs with educational content, children at an early age develop their musical tastes on the basis of the foregoing, the musical content of questionable quality presented by the media.

Going to concerts and listening to "live" artistic music certainly contribute to the formation of critical attitude in relation to other contents, but the role of these different contents is absolutely unequal today. At a time when we are exposed to the influence of different musical "creations" in every moment of our daily lives, the mark it leaves on the immature mind is devastating, given the fact that it is simply imposed, not chosen. The great power of music is reflected in its strong influence on the subconscious of man. Experiences, as it is known, remain forever recorded and influence the forms of behaviour and emotions, so it is very important to know what it that we "feed" our subconscious with is. The affinities for a certain kind of music are the best evidence of human personality. The way we think, behave, dress, and communicate with others, is unmistakably reflected in the choice of music we listen to.

If we are so ruthlessly exposed to the contents which cannot be affected, it is necessary to raise awareness about the possibility of choice - that we choose the music, not the other way around. Certain music trends influence the impulsive part of the personality stimulating the passionate side of the personality, rather than virtue and morality. When an immature personality is continuously presented twisted patterns of behaviour, values and morality, it accepts them as generally accepted and normal. Building of ethical personality structure is prevented in this way, as well as its spiritual development. We are exposed to a certain manipulation which can only be resisted by questioning ourselves and our own feelings, by ignoring our own impulses, which is a time consuming and not an easy job. By offering music that influences the creation of good taste, it is possible to influence the ability to distinguish between good and bad, useful and harmful to our health, enrichment of our personality and overall well-being.

If we compare the time of flourishing of powerful ancient Greek civilization in which the music, in addition to its great power, also had an educational effect, with the time of dominance of Christianity in which the music strengthened the human spirit and with our time in which the power of the mass music has been reduced to the negative attack on the human psyche and the absence of proper norms in the evaluation of its quality, we can consider the role, in the broad sense, of the social context in the development of the spiritual side of human personality. Putting a light on the role of music in this development through the historical aspect reveals inexhaustible possibilities of perception of its influence on man from different aspects.

Guided by the idea that the strength of a man is reflected in the ability of his domination over feelings, we have an obligation in our short and transitory life, in the process of spiritual “decontamination”, to turn to our essence and ask ourselves what our real needs are - what fulfils our soul, and what is it that subconsciously makes us feel bad, exhausted, empty... Nowadays, the very excessive exposure to music is often the cause of these emotions, and this kind of music carves itself deeply into our consciousness with its banal content, and we are not even aware of it. Every form of defence from such influences and attracting young people to learn about the beauty and value of music is the obligation of all those who have closer contact with music. We must not forget for a moment how much the music, with its intangible touch, gently caresses or violates the human soul and that it has the power to change the perception of everything around us.

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