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Dimitrije Mladjenović*

PhD student, Department of History, Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade

HISTORICAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE STUDY OF SERBIAN-BRITISH RELATIONS IN THE FIELD OF MUSIC AND CULTURE FROM 1914 TO 1941

Abstract: The paper deals with the relations between the Kingdom of Serbia / Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes / Kingdom of Yugoslavia and Great Britain with special emphasis on their 'encounters' in the field of music and culture during the First World War and then between the two wars, which drew the two fairly mutually distant and insufficiently known 'worlds' closer. That music was an integral part of all major social and state events staged by the two countries at different moments and in different situations throughout the mentioned historical periods can be observed. The paper also shows that research into the role and significance of music in the relations between the two countries and its influence on them was continuously permeated, like a particular 'red thread' – which sublimated the most significant mutual effects of Serbian-British music relations in those times – by the creative work and enthusiasm of Oxford graduate Kosta Manojlović. There is no doubt that all this contributed to a more profound mutual understanding of these peoples and their countries.

Keywords: Great Britain; Kingdom of Serbia / Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes / Kingdom of Yugoslavia; First World War; inter-war period; music connections; cultural relations; Kosta Manojlović.

In addition to being a form of art, music is also an integral part of man's daily life, namely, his private and public spheres, and thus all important personal,

* The author's contact details: mladjenovicdimitrije@gmail.com

social and state events. Music was also an integral part of the events related to the First World War and the inter-war period.

While studying historical and literary materials about the Serbian-British, that is, Yugoslav-British relations during the period 1914–1941 as a historian, I came across some interesting facts about the role of music and musicians in the relations of the two countries and their peoples, both those of a diplomatic nature and those of extraordinary cultural importance.

Through music, all boundaries (state, social, cultural) become permeable, or at least more permeable, both in the basic and the figurative sense. This can be observed in every moment of human history, in the period of the First World War and the inter-war period, in every country, both in Europe and the rest of the world, naturally including Great Britain and the Kingdom of Serbia, the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, that is, the Kingdom of Yugoslavia.

In fact, the aim of this research is to collect all these scattered and relatively rare data about Serbian-British relations in the field of music and culture in general, and create a mosaic that will organise and interconnect them in one place. In that sense, it will be a modest contribution to further research on this and similar topics.

The widely varied and very interesting literature inspired this author to expand his horizons and, in addition to exclusively historical research, also carry out historical music and musicological research. The two works that especially contributed to this research include *Izbeglištvu u učionici: Srpski studenti i đaci u Velikoj Britaniji za vreme Prvog svetskog rata / Exile in the Classroom: Serbian Students and Pupils in Great Britain during the First World War*, co-authored by Miloš Paunović, Milan Igrutinović, Dejan Zec and Filip Baljkas, and *Beograd u hodu ka Evropi: Kulturni uticaji Britanije i Nemačke na beogradsku elitu 1918–1941* by Ranka Gašić. Certain thematic syntheses or, more exactly, collective monographs were also very significant for this research. The collective monograph titled *Kosta P. Manojlović (1890–1949) and the Idea of Slavic and Balkan Cultural Unification*, edited by Vesna Peno, Ivana Vesić and Aleksandar Vasić, includes several papers such as “Kosta P. Manojlović – The Oxford Years” by Verica Grmuša and “Kosta P. Manojlović and Early Music: Echoes of the ‘Elizabethan Fever’ in Serbia” by Predrag Djoković, which were of the utmost importance. The same applies to the collective monograph *U spomen Koste P. Manojlovića, kompozitora i etnomuzikologa*, edited by Vlastimir Peričić, which includes the study titled “Kosta P. Manojlović u medjuratnom razvoju muzičke culture” by Jelena Milojković-Djurić.

Mention must also be made of the historical syntheses such as *Istorija srpskog naroda*, Vol. VI/2, by Andrej Mitrović and *Istorija srpske državnosti 2* by Radoš Ljušić. Other source materials include the manuscript of Marija M. Karan's doctoral dissertation "Muzička koncepcija radijskog diskursa *versus* auditorijum – vidovi transformacija međusobnih relacija sagledanih u interdisciplinarnom polju teorije medija" and Dimitrije Mladjenović's undergraduate dissertation *Prosvetni inspektor u Londonu u medjuratnom periodu*. Other important sources include the virtual exhibition *Note koje su ratovale – Prilozi za istoriju Velikog rata iz Biblioteke Fakulteta muzičke umetnosti* (*The Music Notes that Waged War – Contributions to the History of the Great War from the Library of the Faculty of Music*) and *Britanci o Kraljevini Jugoslaviji 1921–1930 / 1931–1938* (*The British About the Kingdom of Yugoslavia 1921–1930 / 1931–1938*), prepared by Živko Avramovski. In addition to the above mentioned, the source material from the Yugoslav Archives and London Embassy Fund was also used.

The Historical Political Context and Cultural Political Organisations and Societies in London and Belgrade

The Kingdom of Serbia entered the First World War on the side of the Entente.¹ After fairly successfully waging war in 1914, it experienced military collapse in the following year. The Serbian Government did not want to sign an act of capitulation and the only way out of the situation was a constant retreat, with the royal family, the majority of the active army and a part of the population, which implied withdrawal to other countries, primarily Greece and countries in northern Africa. In this context, it was very important for Serbia to retain its international subjectivity and preserve its state and national continuity.²

In view of the fact that Serbia was occupied by Austria-Hungary, Germany and Bulgaria, those countries worked actively on the suppression of Serbian culture.³ The priority for the Serbian state leadership was to send

¹ The Entente was comprised of France, Great Britain and Russia. For more details see: Čedomir Popov, *Gradjanska Evropa (1770–1914)*, Vol. 3: *Društvena i politička istorija Evrope (1871–1914)*, Belgrade, Zavod za udžbenike, 2010, 92.

² See: Radoš Ljušić, *Istorija srpske državnosti 2*, Novi Sad, Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts (Novi Sad Branch), 2001, 325.

³ Andrej Mitrović, *Istorija srpskog naroda*, Vol. VI/2, Belgrade, Srpska književna zadruga, 1983, 301.

young men to the front lines, but Ljubomir Davidović, the education minister (1914–1917), maintained that education was equally important. Thus, many pupils and students were given the opportunity to continue their education during the period of emigration. Later on, they were to become a significant nexus of cooperation with the countries where they were educated during the First World War.⁴ Although the Serbian government had the greatest expectations from Russia as its ally (certainly until 1917), France and Germany had the greatest cultural influence on Serbian intellectuals which, in the case of Germany, was considerably reduced during the war.

As a political ally, Great Britain was no less important, so special efforts were directed towards the promotion of Yugoslavism in that country, which implied Serbia's active and official promotion and the preservation of its intellectuals, the Serbian national identity and education of schoolchildren. In view of the fact that English was still not taught in Serbian schools, this was an opportunity for Serbian pupils to learn that language.⁵ Namely, about 350 pupils attended school in Great Britain during the war and were allowed to complete their studies thereafter. Thus, the conceptions about Englishmen in Serbian intellectual circles, with the exception of a limited number of public figures and politicians, began to be formed more significantly only during the First World War.⁶

After the First World War, the newly established Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes received foreign policy support from its wartime allies, mostly France, so that cultural relations between these two countries were the strongest. However, the relations between Great Britain and the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, established and strengthened during the First World War, were also developing. As the years went by, these relations grew stronger. After the assassination of King Aleksandar Karađorđević and Milan Stojadinović formed a government in 1935, these relations reached their peak, especially in political and economic, but also in cultural terms.

⁴ Miloš Paunović, Milan Igrutinović, Dejan Zec and Filip Baljkas, *Izbeglištvo u učionici: Srpski studenti i đaci u Velikoj Britaniji za vreme Prvog svetskog rata / Exile in the Classroom: Serbian Students and Pupils in Great Britain during the First World War*, Belgrade, Centre for Sports Heritage – South East Europe, 2016, 6, 56.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 92. See also: Ranka Gašić, *Beograd u hodu ka Evropi: Kulturni uticaji Britanije i Nemačke na beogradsku elitu 1918–1941*, Belgrade, Institute of Contemporary History, 2005, 157.

⁶ Ranka Gašić, *Beograd u hodu ka Evropi...*, op. cit., 9, 62, 141.

The decisive role in establishing and maintaining the relevant institutions in charge of our country's cultural relations with Britain was that of the 'networks' of influential people in the society, mutually linked by studying and staying abroad during the war and, later on, by political, family and economic relations. This especially refers to well-organised Anglophile circles that were already involved in the work of various British organisations providing assistance to war victims in Serbia. After the war, they founded their cultural propaganda societies.⁷

One of the first such organisations founded in Britain was the Serbian Relief Fund (SRF, 1914–1921). It was founded in September 1914, under the patronage of Queen Mary. It was headed by Bertram D. Christian and its Secretary was Robert William Seton-Watson, a British political activist and historian, who advocated the creation of Yugoslavia (the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes) throughout his career. During the war, the Fund helped Serbia by providing the necessary staff and finance, especially for hospitals. It also organised the education process for Serbian refugee youth in Great Britain.⁸

During the First World War, the British began work on the institution-alisation of existing contacts with the Serbian and Yugoslav peoples. In 1916, Henry Wickham Steed, the editor of the foreign policy section of *The New Europe*, a weekly magazine (1916–1920), and Robert Seton-Watson, who was also an editor of this magazine, founded the Serbian Society of Great Britain. One member of its governing board was Sir Arthur Evans, President of the Royal Archaeological Society and a scholar who had discovered the Cretan culture, as well as some members of the British Parliament. After the war, the Society of Former Students in Great Britain was also founded. It assembled Anglophiles and those who learned English.⁹

After the First World War, all propaganda abroad was led by the British Council (founded in 1934), the organisation aimed at developing cultural, scientific and educational relations between Britain and other countries. In Yugoslavia, its office was opened in 1936 and, from 1938 onwards, the propa-

⁷ Ibid., 259.

⁸ Dimitrije Mladjenović, *Prosvetni inspektor u Londonu u međuratnom periodu*, undergraduate dissertation (manuscript), written under Dr Ljubodrag Dimić's mentorship and defended at the Department of History of Yugoslavia, Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade, 2017.

⁹ Ranka Gašić, *Beograd u hodu ka Evropi...*, op. cit., 21, 26.

ganda apparatus was also developed in cooperation with the BBC and other informal British institutions.¹⁰

Apart from the British Council, the organisation that especially contributed to the promotion of cultural relations between Great Britain and Yugoslavia was the London-based English-Yugoslav Society. It was a direct successor to the already mentioned Serbian Society of Great Britain. The English-Yugoslav Society was officially opened on March 15, 1928. Its activities, at least public ones, were mostly social and cultural in character. Thus, in 1938, it played host to Vladeta Popović, the first head of the English Language and Literature Department of the University of Belgrade, and his spouse Mary Stansfield-Popović, who was appointed English language lecturer in 1926. The *Mladost Balkana* Choir from Zagreb sang at the reception.¹¹

During the inter-war period, Belgrade witnessed the founding of several new Anglophile societies with identical or very similar aims. Officially, their goal was to deepen political, economic and cultural relations between the two countries with emphasis on cultural events, while unofficially they aimed to expand British influence in the Yugoslav state. The Anglo-American Yugoslav Club was founded in 1924 (hereinafter: Club), The Society of Friends of Great Britain and America was founded in 1930 (hereinafter: Society of Friends), while the Society for the Promotion of Anglo-Saxon Culture in Yugoslavia was founded in 1935 (hereinafter: Society). Although these three organisations had a similar structure, purpose and members, differences were also evident, especially if one bears in mind the external and internal political factors during the entire inter-war period. The Club and the Society of Friends organised various social activities – besides lectures and guest performances, they also staged social events and festivities. In fact, the Club began introducing such novelties in 1932. By 1938, the regular annual ball organised by the Club became an important social event for Belgrade. Namely, the Club played an extremely active role in organising receptions and balls – during 1938, apart from a Christmas Eve, it also organised two receptions and seven balls. On May 15, 1936, it organised a ball in the Officers' Club to celebrate the coronation of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth, later, the Queen Mother. On December 3, 1944, in order to promote English culture, the Society of Friends, together with the Christian Youth Community, organised an English evening at the Ilija M. Kolarac Endowment. The programme included

¹⁰ Ibid., 18, 19.

¹¹ Ibid., 25, 26.

the recitation of William Shakespeare's verses by Dobrica Milutinović and the performance of the First Belgrade Singing Society.¹²

The Period of the Great War

Even before the arrival of Serbian refugees, Great Britain organised many nationwide events showing its support and collecting aid for Serbia. The aim of these events was to improve the British public's knowledge about Serbian culture and win its support for the "Serbian cause".¹³

A concert organised by the Serbian Relief Fund in London in 1915 is of special interest. It was titled "Historic Slav Concert, in aid of the starving and homeless Serbian women and children" and featured Czech, Polish, Serbian and Russian music. The performers were extraordinary musicians,

SERBIAN RELIEF FUND

HISTORIC SLAV CONCERT

IN AID OF THE
Starving and Homeless Serbian Women and Children

CONDUCTORS:

Mr. THOMAS BEECHAM
Mr. ARTHUR FAGGE
M. EMIL MLYNARSKI
AND
M. WASSILI SAFONOFF

THE LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
AND
THE LONDON CHORAL SOCIETY

SOLOISTS:

Mme. D'ALAVAREZ	Mme. LEA PERELLI
M. VLADIMIR ROSING	M. JULIAN BONELLI
M. BENNO MOISEVITCH	M. LEO STROKOFF

At the piano - M. MANLIO DI VEROLI.	
Organist - - Mr. C. H. HEMPLING.	

RUSSIAN SACRED MUSIC
FIRST TIME IN ENGLAND
SERBIAN NATIONAL MUSIC

CHAPPELL GRAND PIANOFORTES.

¹² Ibid., 35.

¹³ Miloš Paunović et al., *Izbeglišтво u učionici...*, op. cit., 296.

Section II.—POLISH.

1. (a) "Anielli" Symphonic Poem L. Rozycki
 (b) Scherzo from D minor S. Stojowsky

THE LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA.
 Conductor—EMIL MLYNARSKI.

2. (a) Etude, Op. 10, No. 3, in E major }
 (b) Fantasia, Op. 49, in E minor } Chopin

BENNO MOISEIVITCH.

3. Mazurka from Opera "Halka" Monuszko

THE LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA.
 Conductor—EMIL MLYNARSKI.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR, M.P.

Section III.—SERBIAN.
 (First time in England)
 (Arranged by Mr. HUBERT BATH.)

1. (a) Overture Stanislo Benitchki
 (b) Three Serbian Dances National

THE LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA.
 Conductor—Mr. THOMAS BEECHAM.

2. Serbian Song ... "Solitude" ... Miloye Milojevitich

Mme. LEA PERELLI.
 At the piano - HUBERT BATH.

It was in the autumn that my hero asked my hand from
 my father; in autumn I was received to this home. And in
 the autumn, alas! he left me and went to the army.
 Rememberest thou, beloved one, those sweet days and our
 love? Oh, solitude; oh, wretched me! Shalt thou come home
 soon, sweet hero!

4

Illustrations 1a, 1b: "Historic Slav Concert, in aid of the starving and homeless Serbian women and children", concert programme

including the London Symphony Orchestra and London Choral Society, conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham (a famous British conductor and impresario), which points to the significance attached to this occasion, used by the Yugoslav Committee to win support among prominent public figures. The main patron of the concert was Queen Alexandra. The programme featured *Uvertira (Overture)* by Stanislav Binički, *Tri srpske igre (Three Serbian Dances)* arranged for orchestra, and Miloje Milojević's song *Samoća (Solitude)* (see Illustrations 1a and 1b).¹⁴

¹⁴ Cf. Verica Grmuša, "Kosta P. Manojlović – The Oxford Years", in: Vesna Peno, Ivana Vesić & Aleksandar Vasić (Eds.), *Kosta P. Manojlović (1890–1949) and the Idea of Slavic and Balkan Cultural Unification*, Belgrade, SASA Institute of Musicology, 2017, 172.

Among other things, at the opening ceremony of the art exhibition of Serbian refugees from Corsica, which was staged on the premises of the Birmingham Society of Artists in November 1916, Serbian boys sang the Serbian national anthem. The exhibition was opened by Anne de Vere Chamberlain, the wife of Neville Chamberlain, the then Mayor of Birmingham.¹⁵

During the war, it was customary in Britain to organise Flag Days, events that lasted a few days and were aimed at collecting aid for occupied allied countries. In August 1915, Liverpool hosted Three Flags Day for which a cultural programme was organised. It featured Serbian national dances performed by Serbian and Belgian refugee boys. There was also a concert performed by Ana Kristić¹⁶ and Vojislav Janjić¹⁷. An identical event was organised twice in Edinburgh, in July 1917 and 1918. Edinburgh's general public pointed out that "the two nations have much in common" and that "Serbs and Scots are the peoples with lofty ideals who had to fight for freedom". It was also recorded that the Serbian people would always remember Scotland as a country that helped them in times of their greatest tribulation.¹⁸

Many renowned British intellectuals financially supported Serbian refugees in Great Britain and wrote about Serbian culture, history and folk customs. Robert Seton-Watson was certainly one of the best known among them, but he was not the only one. It is also interesting to note that, in May 1917 in London, the collection *Serbian Folk Songs, Fairy Tales and Proverbs* was published. It was compiled by Maximilian August Mügge with the aim of increasing the British public's sympathy towards "brave little Serbia".¹⁹ This is how his memories of "brave little Serbia", personified by Serbian boys who arrived in Oxford, were recorded by Webster Wright Eaton, an American who stayed in Skopje as a member of Lady Paget's medical mission in 1915: "Every young man looked like a living example of war hardships. But when they heard that their long sufferings were finally over, and that they would finally have peace

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 298.

¹⁶ Ana Kristić (1885–1977) was a British author and journalist of Serbian descent. During the First World War, she volunteered as a nurse in Serbia, while after the collapse and occupation of Serbia she was engaged in humanitarian and propaganda work in Great Britain and the United States.

¹⁷ Vojislav Janjić (1890–1944) was a Serbian theologian and conservative politician. He also dealt with the history of the Serbian Orthodox Church and Serbian liturgical music. He was the first Minister of Religion of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes.

¹⁸ Miloš Paunović et al., *Izbeglištvo u učionici...*, op. cit., 302.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 298, 300.

and care, they gathered around the big trees in front of the building and sang the national anthem with an enthusiasm that I have never felt before or after”.²⁰

From among a considerable number of shows, lectures and concerts organised in support of Serbian refugees throughout Great Britain, special attention should be devoted to those events in which Vivien Edwards also participated. She spent some time in Serbia as a nurse and, after returning to Great Britain, delivered a number of lectures on the events in Serbia during 1914 and 1915. So, in December 1916, the Art Gallery in Leeds hosted an exhibition of Serbian refugees’ works, which lasted several days. Within the scope of this event Miss Vivien Edwards recited Serbian poems.²¹ She also sang Serbian folk songs and, as it was recorded, she did that very well since she was a trained soprano. In addition, she channelled all proceeds from these events to the account of the Serbian Relief Fund.²² It is also interesting to note that Vivien Edwards delivered the lecture “Serbian and South Slavic Ballads and Folk Songs” at the University College in Reading on November 30, 1916. On this occasion, she spoke briefly about Serbian national history and illustrated the story with the slides depicting the daily life of the people in Serbia. She also recited and sang poems in the Serbian language which, as she explained to the audience, differed from British ones, since they often have an unexpected ending and are permeated with melancholy. Vivien Edwards gave a similar lecture at the Midland Institute in Birmingham on October 17, 1917. On that occasion, she also sang several Serbian ballads. In singing the Serbian national anthem, she was joined by the boys accommodated in the Serbian House in Selly Oak.²³

Apart from the reciting and singing of Serbian folk poetry, national dances were also often performed at these events. Thus, on July 27, 1918, Bridge of Earn in Perthshire, in Scotland, hosted a Serbian Red Cross fund-raising event and the programme featured Highland and other Scottish folk dances, performed by a female dancing group, and Serbian folk songs and dances, performed by Serbian boys in “picturesque folk costumes”. The event also included sports contests, such as the throwing of rings over a set distance, and a performance by the military band of the Royal Scots Fusiliers.²⁴

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 282.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 298.

²² *Ibid.*

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 302, 304.

Serbian intellectuals and artists were the best agents of Serbia's cultural propaganda in every country, including Great Britain. In that sense, they worked on spreading awareness about Serbia in an organised way. The result of Serbian diplomatic propaganda was the organisation of the St. Vitus Day festival, or, more exactly, the marking of Kosovo Day in Great Britain in 1916, which included relevant cultural activities such as the publishing of books and staging of concerts. In that same year, a number of publications appeared in London, which informed the British public about the historical facts about the Battle of Kosovo and its importance for the ethical code of the Serbian people. The Kosovo Day Committee published, inter alia, the Serbian national anthem *Bože pravde* (*God of Justice; The Serbian National Anthem*. London: Kosovo Day Committee) composed by Davorin Jenko, arranged for piano and the text translated into English. The Serbian royal anthem *Bože pravde* was printed in Liverpool (*The Serbian Royal Anthem*. Liverpool: Serbian Red Cross Society) and had at least eleven editions. It was arranged for piano like the London edition. On the front cover it was stated that all proceeds from the sale of the publication would be channelled to the Serbian Red Cross.²⁵

The marking of *Kosovo Day* also served as inspiration to British composers. Thus, Ethel Uhlhorn Zillhardt (1876–1950), violoncellist, composed a song for voice and piano titled *Kosovo – Serbia's Hymn of Glory* (London: Novello and Company, cop. 1919; see Illustration 2) probably prompted by the vivid propaganda by Serbian intellectuals and their British friends in London. As we have learned, the Hymn was composed by the author of the virtual exhibition *The Music Notes that Waged War – Contributions to the History of the Great War from the Library of the Faculty of Music*, based on the English versions of an excerpt from the Serbian folk poem *Sluga Milutin* (“Servant Milutin”) and dedicated to Evelina Haverfield (1867–1920), an English woman who was devoted to the Serbian people from the beginning of the Great War until her death in Bajina Bašta. At the gathering commemorating her death, which took place at Southwark Cathedral in London, *Kosovo* was sung in the presence of its composer Ethel Zillhardt.²⁶

²⁵ Both editions are kept in the Library of the Faculty of Music in Belgrade and are part of the virtual exhibition titled *Note koje su ratovale – Prilozi za istoriju Velikog rata iz Biblioteke Fakulteta muzičke umetnosti* (*The Music Notes that Waged War – Contributions to the History of the Great War from the Library of the Faculty of Music*). Its authors point out that “every publication from the time of the Great War tells a special story about the personalities and ‘music notes that waged war’ not only on the field of battle, but also in the fields of propaganda, volunteering and connecting – not separating – people from different parts of the world.” See: http://www.fmu.bg.ac.rs/virtualne_izlozbe.php

²⁶ Ibid.

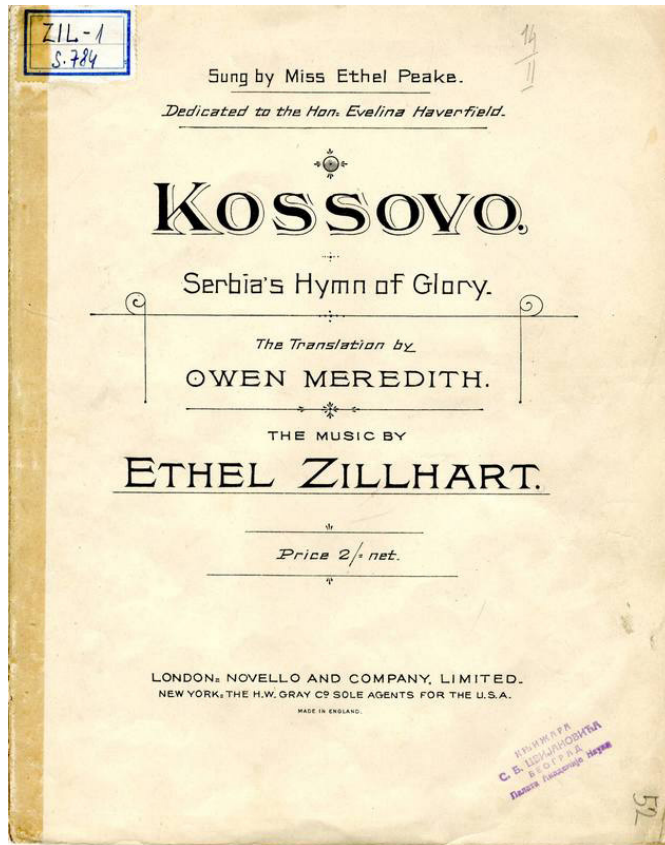


Illustration 2: E. Zillhardt, *Kosovo – Serbia's Hymn of Glory*, front page

In addition, the English composer John R. Heath (1887–1950) composed *Serbian Quartet for Strings* (London: J. & W. Chester; see Illustration 3), inspired by the motifs in the rhythms of Serbian folk songs he heard in Salonika while serving as a physician with the Royal Army Medical Corps during the Great War. *Serbian Quartet* was published in London in 1919 and one copy is kept at the Faculty of Music as part of Miloje Milojević's private library.²⁷ Heath and Milojević probably met in Salonika where the Serbian composer was stationed with the High Command in c. 1916–1917. It is interesting to note that Milojević's *Miniature op. 2* (*Miniatures op. 2*) was published in London in 1917 by the same publisher (J. & W. Chester) who published Heath's works. The London wartime edition of *Miniatures* is the only one having the

²⁷ Ibid.

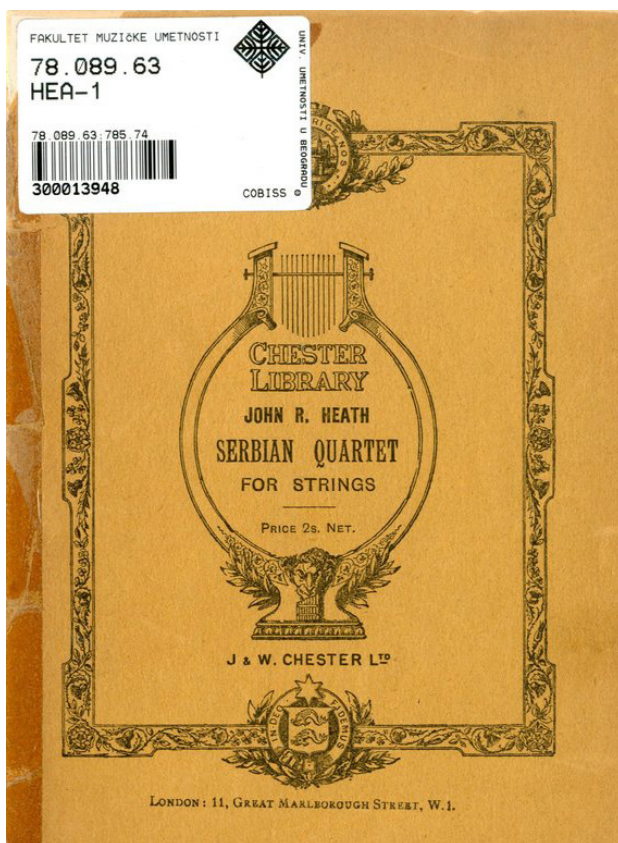


Illustration 3: John R. Heath, *Serbian Quartet for Strings*, front page

national adjective *Serbian* (*Miniatures Serbes*) and was published in order to aid the Serbian Red Cross.²⁸

In 1917, after his retreat through Albania, together with the Serbian army, the future composer, musicologist, conductor, educator, musical life organiser, melographer, ethnomusicologist, musical writer and critic Kosta Manojlović (1890–1949) was sent to Great Britain to continue his Orthodox theology and music studies (which he started in Belgrade and continued in Moscow and Munich during the period 1912–1914). Namely, in 1917, he joined a large group of theology students who were accommodated in Oxford as war refugees with the help of Serbian and British voluntary church organisations. However, instead of continuing his theology studies, Kosta P.

²⁸ Ibid.

Manojlović decided to pursue a career in music. He received his diploma in 1919, after two years of study at Oxford University's New College.²⁹ Manojlović's professor at Oxford University was Sir Hugh Percy Allan, an organist and one of the reputed British musicians of the time, to whom he dedicated a cantata for bass solo, two choirs and orchestra, *Na rjekah vavilonskih* (*By the Waters of Babylon*); one copy is kept in the Library of the Faculty of Music and is part of the virtual exhibition *The Music Notes that Waged War...*; see Illus-

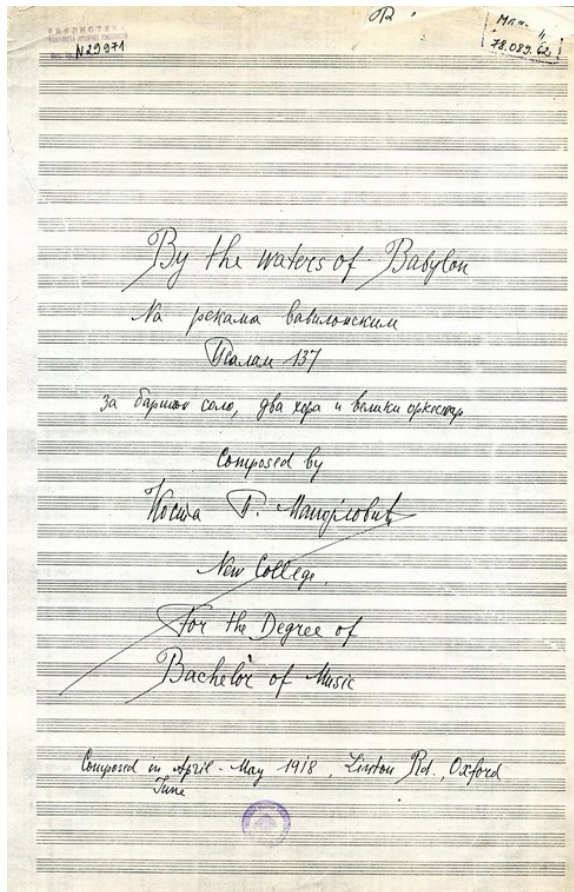


Illustration 4: K. Manojlović, *By the Waters of Babylon*, first page

²⁹ Cf. Miloš Paunović et al., *Izbeglištvo u učionici...*, op. cit., 179.

tration 4). In fact, Manojlović graduated with this composition in 1919.³⁰ At that time, Manojlović became a member of the Oxford Bach Choir, most likely at the invitation of his professor and the choir conductor, Sir Hugh Percy Allan. Manojlović also founded a male choir consisting of Serbian theology students at Oxford University.³¹ This choir, which was conducted by Manojlović himself, staged concerts and participated in Orthodox Church services in Oxford and elsewhere, thus promoting the Slavic repertoire in Britain.³² In addition, Frederick Bridge's book *Counterpoint* (London: Novello, s.a.) with Manojlović's signature on the front page (Oxford, 1918) also represents a specific document about Manojlović's studies at Oxford University. The book is kept in the Library of the Faculty of Music in Belgrade and is part of the mentioned virtual exhibition.³³

The idea of South Slavic unity and the context of the First World War in general were dominant in the years Manojlović spent at Oxford University. This is exactly what influenced the contents of Manojlović's letters to his professor, composer and musicologist Miloje Milojević and what helps us to learn more about Manojlović's private and creative life during his Oxford years. Manojlović was focused on folklore tradition and cooperated with the then prominent supporters of the idea of South Slavic unity, primarily Ivan Meštrović³⁴ and Milojević, which resulted in the emergence and publication

³⁰ Cf. Verica Grmuša, "Kosta P. Manojlović – The Oxford Years", op. cit., 170. The author also writes: "The New College register of candidates for degrees in Music holds no materials dating before the 1930s. The entry for Manojlović (reference UR 2/9/3) gives only the dates of his examinations: November 27, 1917, June 11, 1919, and August 27, 1919 [...] Manojlović's final BMus exercise, submitted to the Secretary of Faculties in September 1919. The degree of BMus was conferred (in absence) on March 3, 1921, and the score deposited a week later."

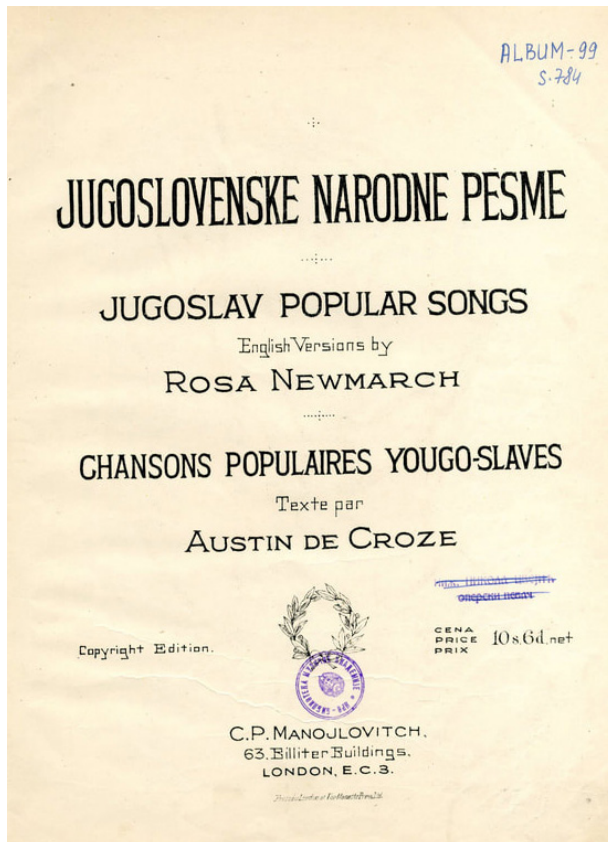
³¹ Cf. Predrag Djoković, "Kosta P. Manojlović and Early Music: Echoes of the 'Elizabethan Fever' in Serbia", in: Vesna Peno, Ivana Vesić, Aleksandar Vasić (Eds.), *Kosta P. Manojlović (1890–1949) and the Idea of Slavic and Balkan Cultural Unification*, Belgrade, SASA Institute of Musicology, 2017, 187.

³² Cf. Jelena Milojković-Djurić, "Kosta P. Manojlović u međuratnom razvoju muzičke kulture", in: Vlastimir Peričić (Ed.), *U spomen Koste P. Manojlovića, kompozitora i etnomuzikologa*, Belgrade, Faculty of Music, 1990, 43.

³³ See: <https://1svmuzikabib.weebly.com/>, op. cit. The exhibition consists of printed music and music manuscripts from the Library of the Faculty of Music in Belgrade or, more exactly, musical compositions of various styles, genres, artistic values and purposes.

³⁴ Croatian sculptor and architect Ivan Meštrović (1883–1962) was a member of the Yugoslav Committee in London during the Great War. With the assistance of the Serbian

of his anthology *Jugoslovenske narodne pesme* (Yugoslav Folk Songs) (Kosta P. Manojlović, ed., *Jugoslovenske narodne pesme*. London: C. P. Manojlovitch, 1919; the front page of this edition was designed by Ivan Meštrović; see Illustrations 5a and 5b). The texts of the songs from the mentioned anthology, which was edited and published by Manojlović in London in 1919, were translated into English by Rosa Newmarch (1857–1940), an English musical writer. Already in 1917, Manojlović gave a lecture and recital devoted to South Slavic folk music at the Oxford Club, where he lectured, sang and played, while the programme included folk songs. In his letter of December 3, 1917 to Milojević, Manojlović writes: “I gave a lecture on folk music in the



Legation in London, Serbian Relief Fund and Serbian Society in Great Britain, two large exhibitions of Ivan Meštrović were staged in London – at the Victoria and Albert Museum in June 1915 and the Grafton Gallery in 1917.



Illustrations 5a, 5b: K. Manojlović, *Yugoslav Folk Songs*, front pages

club on November 7 and the audience was exclusively female. Next month, I should give a lecture in another club. I prepared for this lecture in haste, with music illustrations using a mouth harp and piano. I also sang passionately like Chaliapin, while Godjevac³⁵ nervously played the piano.”³⁶

³⁵ The pianist in question was most likely Vladimir Godjevac who studied anthropology at Oxford University’s New College where Milojević studied music. At the same college, Stevan Jovanović studied theology.

³⁶ Verica Grmuša, “Kosta P. Manojlović – The Oxford Years”, op. cit., 174.

Cultural Relations between the Two Countries during the Inter-War Period

The importance of the sojourn and education of young Serbs in Great Britain was mostly derived from the fact that they could absorb British culture and came to understand the British way of life, and then spread that culture and worldview among their countrymen.³⁷ Young men, who had an opportunity to study at British colleges and universities, later became the bearers of the idea of friendship between the two nations. Thanks to their education in Britain, many became distinguished and influential members of the inter-war Yugoslav society. Many also became university professors, while Kosta Manojlović is credited with founding the first higher educational institution of music in the country – the Music Academy in Belgrade (now the Faculty of Music). He was its first Rector. The great majority of the Serbs educated in Britain remained attached to the friendship of the two peoples and to the political alliance of the two countries.

It must also be noted that, in the aftermath of the Great War, authors and artists, like Manojlović, showed great interest and pointed to the need for gathering and establishing literary and artistic associations that should generally promote cultural enlightenment and raise the awareness of the importance, impact and function of art. One of the first associations to be founded was the society of artists (1919). It was named the *Group of Artists* and, among others, included composers Miloje Milojević, Stevan Hristić and Kosta Manojlović, authors Ivo Andrić, Rastko Petrović, Danica Marković, Todor Manojlović and Sibe Miličić, and painters Branko Popović, Kosta Miličević and Mirko Kujačić. The *Group* organised literary and musical evenings and art exhibitions of its members.³⁸ Immediately after the first recital, in November 1919, an article about it was published in the journal *Misao (Thought)*.

At the same time, upon his return to Belgrade, Manojlović met with a gradual modernisation of musical life in the capital, which was spearheaded by Serbian musicians, who had acquired their education at various music conservatories throughout Europe during the First World War, as well as various foreign musicians who visited Belgrade or lived in it. Thus, in accordance with the above mentioned, Kosta Manojlović became the first musician

³⁷ Cf. Miloš Paunović et al., *Izbeglištvo u učionici...*, op. cit., 392.

³⁸ Cf. Jelena Milojković-Djurić, *Tradition and Avant-Garde. The Arts in Serbian Culture between the Two World Wars*, New York, Boulder: East European Monographs, 1984, 10–11.

to perform English madrigals in Serbia. In 1927, the First Belgrade Singing Society, conducted by Kosta Manojlović, organised an English madrigal concert. Its programme was Manojlović's original idea, undoubtedly originating from the time he spent in Great Britain.³⁹ Prior to the concert, Manojlović organised a short retrospective of early English music which, as an introductory lecture, was presented to the audience by Howard Kennard, the British Envoy in Belgrade. Manojlović also organised a concert of early English music with the same programme two years later (1929) on the occasion of the Exhibition of Contemporary British Art in Belgrade.⁴⁰

In 1929, as the conductor of the First Belgrade Singing Society, Manojlović prepared another very interesting thematic concert. The programme included Christmas songs in general and, in addition to traditional Serbian, Croatian and Bulgarian Christmas carols, the choir also sang English Christmas carols, which Manojlović most likely heard while he was a member of Hugh Allan's choir.⁴¹ There is no doubt that Manojlović was a proponent of English music, which is also confirmed by the fact that, while he was Executive Secretary of the South Slavic Choral Union (1924–1932), he organised concerts of English choirs in Yugoslavia. In August 1930, for example, at the invitation of the Union, the choir consisting of 50 members of several English choirs and headed by Frederick Ermin Woodhouse, a well-known baritone and impresario, sang in Zagreb and Belgrade. The audience in both cities had a rare opportunity to listen to English madrigals performed by English singers. This concert tour was organised by the Yugoslav Legation and English-Yugoslav Society in London, as well as the Central Press Bureau in Belgrade (which provided finance) with the great support of Kosta Manojlović, Secretary-General of the South Slavic Choral Union. In Belgrade, the concert was held at the theatre in Vračar. The choir was also joined on the stage by the South Slavic Choral Union's choirs with conductor Mihajlo Vukdragović.⁴²

³⁹ The programme featured works by William Byrd, John Bull, George Woodward, Charles Wood, Robert Whyte, John Wilbye, Thomas Weelkes, Thomas Morley, Henry Palmer and Henry Purcell. Cf. Predrag Djoković, "Kosta P. Manojlović and Early Music: Echoes of the 'Elizabethan Fever' in Serbia", op. cit., 189.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 189–190.

⁴¹ Cf. Bogdan Djaković, "Između dva svetska rata (1919–1941)", in: Danica Petrović, Bogdan Đaković & Tatjana Marković (Eds.): *Prvo beogradsko pevačko društvo – 150 godina*, Belgrade, Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, SASA Institute of Musicology, 2004, 89.

⁴² Cf. Ranka Gašić, *Beograd u hodu ka Evropi...*, op. cit., 88.

Old English music was also performed at the concert of domestic choirs in June 1934 as well as the concerts of the Fleet Street Choir at the Ilija M. Kolarac Endowment and the theatre in Vračar on February 7 and 8, 1937, which were very successful and professional. In February 1929, the Belgrade Quartet performed contemporary English chamber music. In January 1937, an English Musical Evening was organised. On this occasion, vocal music from various epochs was performed, including the contemporary epoch. The soloists were Keith Falkner and Cyril Smith.⁴³

As a music historian, Manojlović wrote several very important works dealing with British music. The most important one is his 1931 study “Historical Overview of English Music”⁴⁴ from the so-called ‘golden age’ of English history and music, the period during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I and her successors, until contemporary times and the composers Gustav Holst, Ralph Vaughan Williams and Cyril Scott. In 1940, Manojlović published two essays, “Počeci muzike u Engleskoj” (“The Beginnings of Music in England”) and “Renesansa engleske muzike” (“The Renaissance of English Music”), based on his 1931 study.⁴⁵

Guest appearances by British musicians were very rare. The first English performer after the Great War was the already mentioned baritone Frederick Woodhouse, who held a concert of English songs in Belgrade, in September 1924. British musicians held several concerts during 1929 and 1930, thanks to intensified activities by Belgrade’s Anglophiles. Exactly at that time (1929), the Society of Friends of Great Britain and America and the English Language and Literature Department of the University of Belgrade were founded. In December 1919, Scottish pianist Frederic Lamond held a concert at the hall of the Stanković Music School.

In the second half of the 1930s, when Anglophile activities were intensified, there were several significant guest appearances within a short period. Apart from the already aforesaid ones, mention must also be made of guest appearances by Sir Hamilton Harty, an Irish conductor, composer, pianist and organist, who conducted the Belgrade Philharmonic Orchestra in November 1936, and the concert of celebrated pianist Myra Hess in December 1937, while Ethel Lewis, an English folk singer, held two recitals at the Music Academy Club and on Radio Belgrade during 1939.⁴⁶

⁴³ Ibid., 78.

⁴⁴ Kosta Manojlović, “Istoriski pogled na muziku u Engleskoj”, *Muzički glasnik*, 3/4, 1931, 57–78.

⁴⁵ Predrag Djoković, “Kosta P. Manojlović and Early Music...”, op. cit., 193.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 89.

There are mostly no records of guest appearances by our musicians in Great Britain in the relevant sources. What is important for our music, however, was the performance of the works of composer and musicologist Vojislav Vučković at the International Contemporary Music Society Festival in London (June 17 to 24, 1938).

In 1939, London hosted the Russian Girls' Choir from Belgrade, which was led by Maria Alexeevna Nekludova, the former Director of the Smolny Institute in Russia where girls of noble birth were educated. The girls were mostly orphans from Russian noble families, who were brought by Nekludova from Russia to Yugoslavia under dramatic circumstances.⁴⁷

In contrast to musicians, English playwrights were conspicuously present during the inter-war period. This especially refers to the plays by William Shakespeare and Bernard Shaw. In the inter-war repertoire there were 24 Anglo-Saxon plays – 16 English and 8 American. As for British art, the situation was similar. During the first years of the 6 January Dictatorship, large exhibitions of British and Yugoslav artists were staged in Belgrade (1929) and London (1930) respectively. The Exhibition of Contemporary British Art took place at the newly opened “Cvijeta Zuzorić” Pavillion from February 2 to 20, 1929, with the financial support of the Ministry of Education. It was organised by Ivan Meštrović and Milan Ćurčin but, despite the good advertising and organisation of the “Month of English Culture” in Belgrade, it was not well received by critics. Judging also by British sources, it was rather modest in terms of the number and quality of the exhibits and was not representative from any aspect. Nevertheless, some exhibits were bought for the Museum of Contemporary Art. The Exhibition of Yugoslav Artists in London in 1930, organised by the London-based English-Yugoslav Society, attracted great public attention in Britain. For this occasion, Education Minister Božidar Maksimović approved the transportation of artistic works from the National Museum and Museum of Contemporary Art to Britain. The supervision of these exhibits was entrusted to painter Branko Popović, Professor at the University of Belgrade, who was also a member of the Society of Friends of Great Britain and America, which nurtured special relations with the London-based Society. He was also a member of the Yugoslav delegation at this exhibition, along with Ivan Meštrović and sculptor Sreten Stojanović.⁴⁸

As for the influence of the social sciences and humanities, prominent figures in science who visited Britain included philologists Pavle and Bogdan

⁴⁷ Ibid., 92.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 103.

Popović, philosopher Branislav Petronijević and lawyer Djordje Tasić. Pavle and Bogdan Popović visited London in 1931 at the invitation of “scientific circles in England [...] for the purpose of intellectual cooperation”. In August 1929, Vladeta Popović attended the Conference of the World Society for Popular Enlightenment in Cambridge, while Branislav Petronijević and Djordje Tasić conducted their research there.⁴⁹

Since British culture and civilisation were almost unknown in our country before the First World War, domestic lecturers tried to convey their views about England and English people to the Belgrade public. Namely, in January 1929, within the scope of the event “The Month of English Culture”, Bogdan Popović gave a lecture titled *Šta možemo da naučimo od Engleza* (“What We Can Learn from the English”). The most frequent topics of our lecturers were relations between the two countries and their peoples, English language, literature, culture and, to a lesser degree, politics and economy. As emphasized by Ranka Gašić, the lecture topics mirrored the “image of the other” in the eyes of the English and Serbs. English culture was known only to a narrow circle of intellectuals who stayed and studied in England for a while. They glorified English civilisation as a political and ideological model, as well as a model for the culture of social and daily life. As for the English who wrote and spoke about Serbia and Yugoslavia, it was a question of “a sympathetic attitude toward something exotic, the attitude of curious travellers whose interests are anthropological and directed towards folklore and everything different from European civilisation”.⁵⁰

Thus, Pavle Stefanović, a music writer and critic, philosopher, aesthetian, essayist and author, reacted disapprovingly to the lecture given by Lovett Fielding Edwards about Svetomir Nastasijević’s music drama in 1938: “Like numerous missionaries with the Bible in their pockets, those cultural propagandists of a world language and researchers of the passivist capacity of small, poor and undeveloped nations, with an imperial civic assurance in their hearts, swarm the East and the non-European continent and advise them to remain as they are, only specific and only national in the way that will leave them on the margins of the social development process...”⁵¹

However, as Ranka Gašić believes: “Such views of one another, of two very different cultures in terms of power, size and the level of development,

⁴⁹ Ibid., 194.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 212.

⁵¹ Pavle Stefanović, “Fragmenti iz *Medjuluškog blaga* i engleski pogledi”, *Glasnik muzičkog društva “Stanković”*, 10, 1938, 217–219.

and being geographically distant from each other, is far from being unnatural. Serbia's modernisation achievements could hardly impress an observer from Britain or any developed country of Western Europe. Considered from that aspect, the European in Serbia could only be a bad copy of the original, while the traditional and folklore aroused curiosity. On the contrary, Serbia's view of England was one towards something for which one strives."⁵²

During the period after the First World War, the influence of Anglo-Saxon culture also spread through music broadcasts on radio, which increasingly became part of the everyday life of its listeners in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, that is, the Kingdom of Yugoslavia.

Although the first radio broadcasts took place before the First World War (in the United States in 1906, in Europe in 1913), the war postponed the development of this medium. The most significant year for the further development of radio was 1923 when one of the most influential radio stations (which has remained so to the present day), the British Broadcasting Company (BBC), obtained a broadcasting licence. During the inter-war period, radio broadcasting was expanding worldwide, and in our country. It served as a new medium for education, information and entertainment, but especially for raising the cultural level of the society.

During the inter-war period, Great Britain certainly had the greatest influence on radio in Yugoslavia. Moreover, the first financier and owner of Radio Belgrade was the British enterprise Marconi's Wireless Telegraph Company, which possessed the largest capital stock and appeared through one of its shareholders – Julius Hanau (who was the representative of the British engineering firm Vickers in Belgrade and a British intelligence officer) who, as the representative of the mentioned company exerted a significant influence on the operation and editorial policy of the radio station until 1940. He was on good terms with General Manager Danilo Kalafatović and personally appointed the composer and conductor Mihajlo Vukdragović head of the radio music programme.⁵³ In 1931, Radio Belgrade broadcast five articles by English authors, which were recommended by the British Legation, in the Serbian language. As the radio owners, the British were more concerned with the

⁵² Cf. Ranka Gašić, *Beograd u hodu ka Evropi...*, op. cit., 214.

⁵³ Cf. Marija M. Karan, "Muzička koncepcija radijskog diskursa *versus* auditorijum – vidovi transformacija međusobnih relacija sagledanih u interdisciplinarnom polju teorije medija", doctoral dissertation defended at the University of Arts in Belgrade in 2019 (manuscript), 28.

presence of English music on the radio. In 1936, all Yugoslav radio stations received gramophone records with British music as a gift. The English cultural 'offensive' on our country was also felt in this institution in 1937. Stevan Jakovljević was appointed member of the Board of Directors, while Mihajlo Vukdragović became the conductor and head of the Radio Orchestra. The first live radio transmission of a non-musical event took place on May 12, 1937 – of the coronation of George VI at Westminster Abbey. This should not be attributed to a special programme policy, but simply to the fact that the majority owner of this radio was British. In the mid-1940s the management of the music programme was replaced by Stevan Hristić, Svetomir Nastasijević and Kosta Manojlović.⁵⁴

Instead of a Conclusion

In the early stage of Serbian-British and Yugoslav-British relations, which were actually established during the First World War, the cultural and musical heritage had a great influence on their development. Like in all other inter-state and international relations, although foreign policy is the main reason and aim, those relations are impossible without becoming acquainted with each other's culture.

At the beginning, music exerted the greatest influence on these relations through Serbian refugees, who found shelter in Great Britain during the First World War, thus 'marking' them and 'winning them over'. During their private and professional lives, these people did not forget the events of their childhood and youth, so that they represented the most significant nexus between the two peoples and two countries. They organised various cultural events and spread knowledge about each other's culture and, naturally, music. One of the best-known and most significant representatives of this refugee youth was certainly Kosta Manojlović, an Oxford student, who worked directly on linking and acquainting the British music scene with the Serbian music scene. His work contributed in large measure to the familiarisation of the domestic public with English musical heritage, including both early and contemporary English music. In this context, guest tours by British artists were organised in larger cities, like Belgrade and Zagreb, and a guest tour of Serbian and Yugoslav artists was organised in London, which was the next step in the development of cultural relations between the Kingdom

⁵⁴ Cf. Ranka Gašić, *Beograd u hodu ka Evropi...*, op. cit., 112.

of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, that is, the Kingdom of Yugoslavia and Great Britain. The British also exerted great influence through the new medium, radio, which appeared after the First World War, but its true role came to the fore only after the war, during the inter-war period.

Although cultural relations between the Kingdom of Serbia / Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes / Kingdom of Yugoslavia and Great Britain were not the same in terms of quantity like those with some other European countries (especially France and inter-war Germany), they compensated for this 'shortage' of quantity with the level of the quality and importance of both short- and long-term, immediate and delayed effects on relations between the two countries. These cultural, namely, musical and artistic relations in general, subtly and occasionally below the visible level, had great influence on the political relations between the two countries or, more exactly, on the understanding and exchange of more than just cultural values of the two peoples.

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Summary

In addition to being a form of art, music is also an integral part of man's daily life, his private and public spheres, and therefore all important personal, social and state events. Music was also part of the events related to the First World War and inter-war period. While studying historical and literary materials about the Serbian-British, that is, Yugoslav-British relations during the period 1914–1941, as a historian, I came across some interesting facts about the role of music and musicians in the relations of the two countries and their peoples, both those of a diplomatic nature and those of extraordinary cultural importance. The purpose of this research was to collect all the scattered and relatively scarce data about Serbian-British relations in the field of music and culture in general, and create a mosaic that would organize and interconnect them in one place. It turned out, however, that the research on the role and significance of music, as well as its influence on the relations between the two countries was continuously permeated – as a particular 'red thread' that sublimes the most significant mutual effects of Serbian-British music relations during that period – by the creative work and enthusiasm of the composer, musicologist, conductor, educator, organizer of musical life, collector of folk songs, ethnomusicologist, musical author and critic, and Oxford graduate Kosta Manojlović, the founder of the first higher musical educa-

tional institution in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, the Music Academy in Belgrade (1937) and its first Rector. There is no doubt that all this contributed to a more profound mutual understanding of the two peoples and their countries. Although musical and cultural relations between the Kingdom of Serbia / Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes / Kingdom of Yugoslavia and Great Britain were not the same in terms of quantity as with some other European countries (especially France and inter-war Germany), they compensated for this 'shortage' of quantity with the level of quality and importance of both short- and long-term, immediate and delayed effects on the relations between the two countries. These cultural or, more exactly, musical and artistic relations in general, subtly and occasionally below a visible level, had great influence on political relations between the two countries and understanding and exchange of more than just the cultural values of the two peoples.