

Selena Rakočević

**Dimitrije Golemović *ČOVEK KAO MUZIČKO BIĆE (MAN AS A MUSICAL BEING)*,
Biblioteka XX vek, Belgrade, 2006
Editor Ivan Čolović**

Dimitrije Golemović's book *Čovek kao muzičko biće (Man as a Musical Being)* is his second book published in the edition Biblioteka XX vek. The first one, entitled *Etnomuzikološki ogledi (Ethnomusicological Essays)*, was published nine years ago. Even though the book before us has a different title, its concept and content are identical with the previous one. It is a collection of ethnomusicological works, some of which were printed for the first time in this book and all of which were written on different occasions and scholarly gatherings, as commissioned texts and lectures, as noted at the end of the book. Seeing as Dimitrije Golemović's approach involves analyzing, in most of his texts different phenomena relate to traditional music in an essayistic manner, which is an uncommon technique in Serbian ethnomusicology, and thus this book is another collection of essays, that is, the second book of ethnomusicological essays, which make for an interesting reading not only for the scholars, but also for a much wider reading audience.

The resonant title *Čovek kao muzičko biće* does not refer so much to the content of the book as to the guiding idea which has intensively occupied Dimitrije Golemović's attention for the past ten years, channeling his professional interests and shaping his scientific conclusions. This idea, also the leitmotif, is that the manners and characteristics of man's music-making are universal and unchangeable, irrespective of the time and space in which they appear.

Even though he is an expert on music, not only the traditional, which is transmitted orally, but also the artistic, Dimitrije Golemović does not see music as a goal, but only as a means of expressing his own ideas, that is, of "telling the story" about the simple yet perennial ways of expressing human musicality over and over again. The desire to show others this, in his opinion, "obvious truth" is unusually strong and targeted not only at the experts, but also at the wider public. Thus it is understandable that, in addition to meeting academic criteria, the language of this book at the same time tries to communicate with the wider reading audience. Hence the numerous quotation marks in the text which the writer employs to justify the frequent use of expressions from everyday speech.

The texts in this collection are very heterogeneous, revealing the author's wide range of interests. First there is an ethnological study of the role of the woman in traditional music practice, coloured by personal observations on the nature of male-female relationships in

patriarchal society. This is followed by several comprehensive ethnomusicological studies in which the author is absorbed primarily in the structure of traditional songs of rural origin. In the text “*Ajmo reći jedan*“ (*Let's Say One*) Golemović identifies ancient creative principles of shaping the form of the song after which this text was named. They are the homologous and cumulative stanza and the appearance of a refrain. The song from Bosanska Krajina “*Oj, devojko, draga dušo moja*“ (*Oh, Maiden, My Darling Sweetheart*), discussed in a subsequent text, is merely an opportunity to examine the manner of naming songs in the entire traditional singing practice. The text entitled “*Cikobas i foburdon*“ (*Cikobas and Faux-bourdon*) focuses on the identical manners of forming part singing in Serbian rural tradition from the mid-20th century and European church music from the late Middle Ages, while in the text “*Odnos funkcije i forme u narodnom pevanju*“ (*The Relationship Between Function and Form in Folk Singing*) the author concludes that form, albeit one of the most constant parameters in songs, nonetheless changes with the change of function and, in his words, “liberates” the most heterogeneous melopoetic forms. The following are also comprehensive ethnomusicological studies: a text whose title is atypical of scientific works “*O refrenu, opet, ali skoro sigurno, ne i poslednji put*” (*On Refrain, Again, but Almost Certainly Not the Last Time*) examines the origin of songs which are sung to make the rain stop and their interrelationship (*peperude* and *doodle*), while in the texts “*Romi i srpska obredna praksa*” (*Romany and Serbian Ritual Practice*), “*Epsko pevanje: od gusala do debele žice*“ (*Epic Singing: from Gusle to Thick String*) and “*Da li postoji narodna muzička pedagogija?*“ (*Is There Such a Thing as Folk Music Pedagogy?*), the author examines relevant ethnomusicological problems identified in the titles. Another extensive monographic study is the text “*Tradicionalna narodna muzika u vreme Prvog srpskog ustanka*” (*Traditional Folk Music at the Time of the First Serbian Uprising*) in which Golemović reconstructs the music practice from the beginning of the 19th century based on both the writings of Vuk Karadžić and his own field material in which he has identified the oldest forms of music-making that then links it, with greater certainty, to the performing practice from the time of the First Serbian Uprising.

In addition to the mentioned texts, which may be characterized as scholarly works since they mostly use the methodology of an ethnomusicological analysis of the problems in question, there are five more texts in the book *Čovek kao muzičko biće* that gravitate towards the essay genre. In these texts Dimitrije Golemović analyzes specific music phenomena from our everyday life, using them, as he says, as “the material” for personal reflections on Serbian social reality at the end of the 20th and the beginning of the 21st century. Three of them are devoted to new folk music (“*Narodna pesma: od obreda do spektakla*” /*Folk Song: from Ritual to Spectacle*/, “*Nova gradska muzika*” /*New Town Music*/, “*Novokomponovana narodna muzika i novokomponovana*

stvarnost” /New Folk Music and New Folk Reality/). The work entitled “World Music” stands out among the few texts dealing with this phenomenon because in it Dimitrije Golemović typically proposes a classification of the forms appearing on the Serbian world music scene, using the classification that has already proven efficient in the analyses of art music. This classification distinguishes between compositions using “folklore samples” and those using folklore as a model for creating authorial music.

In the last text entitled “Tradicionalna pesma kao simbol novog kulturnog identiteta” (Traditional Song as a Symbol of a New Cultural Identity), Dimitrije Golemović discusses the music practice of the refugees from the former Yugoslavia now living in Slovenia, Austria and Norway, which is based on the repertoire of town songs, mostly love songs, unlike the music practice of the refugees living in Serbia, which is based on vocal forms of rural origin – singing “in bass”.

Judging by the great interest *Etnomuzikološki ogledi* generated not only at home, but also in Europe and even America, the book *Čovek kao muzičko biće* will have a wide reading public, which was one of its author’s main objectives in the first place. Although with a strong authorial stamp, Dimitrije Golemović’s analytical thought remains within the boundaries of deduction in all the essays. Therefore, even though the book *Čovek kao muzičko biće* can be characterized as a collection of essays, it essentially remains scientific reading that will serve as a starting point for all future ethnomusicological research for years to come.

Translated by Jelena Nikezić