

SUMMARY

JOSIP SLAVENSKI'S MASS SONGS FROM THE ARCHIVED COLLECTION AT THE FACULTY OF MUSIC IN BELGRADE. AN ATTEMPT AT CONTEXTUALIZATION

In 2016 and 2017 the Serbian Musicological Society published two volumes of collected choirs by Josip Slavenski (1896–1955). The first volume contains mixed choirs, with the second containing children, female and male choirs. Although the idea was to publish collected choirs, a significant number of mass songs (excluding *Partisans' Folk Songs* for mixed choir a cappella) were excluded. In the composer's manuscript legacy, which is to be found, since 1998, at the Faculty of Music library in Belgrade, there is a collection of mass songs, circa 30, some of which were published separately in the early years after World War II. One of the reasons to exclude them from the aforementioned volumes would be the somewhat *ad hoc* ensembles required to perform them (choir – male, female or mixed, orchestra or piano, if available), although that cannot be considered to be a valid excuse, bearing in mind that several choirs involved in the two published volumes have overcome similar problems (noted as NB, in both manuscripts and published volumes). Therefore, in this paper we summarise the composer's written legacy, considering the mass song collection through the prism of Jan Assmann's theory of cultural heritage. This German Egyptologist argued that there were four versions of the "outer dimensions of memory": namely *mimetic memory*, *object memory*, *communicative memory* and *cultural memory* (Assmann 2005: 22-24), whereas cultural memory, as a memory distanced from everyday life, has these characteristics: connection of identity, capacity to reconstruct, formation, organization, obligation and reflexivity (Assmann 1995: 129-132). These categories are regarded as key to constructing cultural memory and have been used to indicate the potential value of several almost unknown works by Josip Slavenski. Although we do not expect a fundamental re-evaluation of the composer's opus through this overview of these mass songs (a genre whose authors remain mostly anonymous), we would like to point to their place in the complete opus, but also to the means of discovering elements of the social context and cultural politics of that time, and, maybe, some of the composer's personal ideological beliefs and contributions to the construction of cultural memory.

Keywords: Josip Slavenski, mass song, Faculty of Music Library Archives, cultural memory, cultural heritage