

A CONTRIBUTION TO THE PERIOD OF PRE-RENAISSANCE DRAMATIC LITERATURE AND SOME REMARKS ON DUBROVNIK DRAMATIC LITERATURE LANGUAGE FROM THE PERIOD OF HUMANISM, RENAISSANCE AND BAROQUE

Summary

On publishing the book of prof. Dr. Petar Marjanović's - Short history of Serbian theatre (13th - 21st century), by the Museum of Theater in Vojvodina, Novi Sad, (2005), we got most relevant insights into the various issues dealing with theatre matters.

The first segment of this contribution is related to the achievements of pre-Renaissance dramatic literature of Boka Kotorska, i.e. those church plays which have not found their place in this book.

The transcripts of the texts of church plays appeared during the period of Baroque, but by most authors who were dealing with this topic, they were treated as Baroque texts, classified according to the time of appearance of their transcripts.

In this paper, the author underlines the fact that the time of their origin comes much earlier. These plays actually appeared in the Middle Ages and as a form they represent the accomplishments and achievements of pre-Renaissance literature.

The plays of Boka Kotorska cycle, as well as Boka itself and its historical development, are specific in relation to those appeared in other parts of the Adriatic coast, Croatian littoral and Dalmatia. The author makes the assumption that the plays appeared in Boka and saw their development there, regardless of the fact where the impetus for their creation had come from, and perhaps initiated the origin of such form in other areas of the Adriatic littoral.

The collection of Boka Kotorska church plays counts 22 local texts, which are the achievements within the very activity of the Roman-Catholic church, and quoted according to the chronological order of their appearance. These are the texts which range from the monologue type to the ones with developed plots. They all fall into the first degree of the development of church plays, characterized by the originality and anonymity.

The author stresses that the adaptation of texts to local traditional speech is in fact a firm proof that these examples of the dramatic literature in Boka were being prepared to be performed and most certainly performed, with the assumption that they had background music.

In this paper, we conclude that, through the development of the medieval church plays, theatre itself was being cherished, theatrical tradition was being maintained, which meant the preparation for the penetration of a new era in the history of scenic events. It will bring to the stage new personalities, new contents, and above all it will enable the penetration of the secular theatre and secular drama, paving the way to big literary and theatrical names from this area, especially from the period of Baroque, and even later.

The stated survey of church plays is supplemented by a considerable element of secular themes rich dramatic creation which is mostly linked to the period of Baroque. The author assumes that this is a Baroque transcript of an earlier original, most probably from the times of the late Renaissance.

This unprinted work, instead of the title, bears the note: Ovdi počinje boj Kneza Lazara i zla svrha Miloša Koviljića i izdajnika Vuka Brankovića i 9 braće Jugovića na Kosovu polju na 24 đunja godišta 1348 (Here starts the battle of Prince Lazar and evil purpose of Miloš Koviljić and the traitor Vuk Branković and 9 Jugović brothers at Kosovo plain on 24th June 1348). The author is an unknown person from Perast, although it was formerly assumed that the author of this dramatized epic is Andrija Zmajević. It was written using the coastal verse, dramatic and epic poetic art, 12-syllable verse with caesura and rhyme in the middle, which used to be the favourite verse of Dubrovnik Baroque drama of that time. It is hard to find the links with any known author from Perast of that time, and the language of the play, in the form known to us, which belongs to the Baroque Perast. In the studious work of Miroslav Pantić Prince Lazar and Kosovo battle in the antique literature of Dubrovnik and Boka Kotorska, it was established that this is not the original Perast work, but a taken over prose text of the ancient Serbian literature – Emperor Lazar’s life and its adaptation to the area and the language of Perast.

This is not the only form for expressing the knowledge of this important event from the Serbian history in our coastal area. In Perast, apart from this dramatized epic, there is a preserved “bugarštica” – folk poem. Besides this one, even Dubrovnik knows of works which are thematically linked to the legend of Kosovo battle and its participants. Thus, it seems that multi centuries’ long

life of the legend of Prince Lazar and Kosovo battle was very interesting in the territory of Dubrovnik and Boka Kotorska.

The above mentioned list of pre-Renaissance dramatic texts has been supplemented by a work from the period of Baroque, by Ivan Antun Nenadić (1723-1784), doctor of church law, St. Eustache's church parish priest in Dobrota and Kotor Bishop Vicar General, highly educated theologian and writer. In the opus of a series of Nenadić's works his literary achievement Passion Play, appeared in the mid-18th century (probably before the year 1750), is in fact a real drama which appeared after centuries' long literary works and presentations of dialogue poems and church plays. The author also deals with the examples of performing this drama in the second half of the 20th century.

The review of the work of Ivan Antun Nenadić and his attitudes on the literary language and on his orthography are the introduction into the second segment of this work – the issue of Dubrovnik dramatic literature language.

The author discusses the issues of Dubrovnik language, its shaping and names, as well as its similarities to the literary language of Boka Kotorska at the example of a series of authors.

Particularly emphasized are the accomplishments of the works on joint language from the 16th and the 17th century by Marin Temperica and Bartol Kašić, and this again fits into the achievements of the work of Vuk Stefanović Karadžić in the 19th century.

It can be easily noticed that Dubrovnik and Bokelian literary language of the time which this paper talks about – 16th, 17th, 18th century, is the same with minor differences in dialect. In fact, it is the studies of historical dialectology that are dealt with and the segment of it related to the presence of vernacular in literature, i.e. especially in dramatic literature of that time, since that part proves the expressed assertions.