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ETHNOMUSICOLOGY AND ETHNOCHOREOLOGY AT THE INSTITUTE DURING THE NINETIES

The Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Research is the only institution in the Republic of Croatia in which ethnomusicological research has been carried out — in the sense of research subject (folk music / folklore music / traditional music / music) and/or in the sense of the approach that connects music and culture. During the nineties the paradigm of any music in any context became legitimate but also the individualisation of conceptions, approaches and research themes. In between the principle of researching the plurality of music and music-making and the more narrow priorities of the profession, it is possible to single out several groups of themes and several approach features that appear as a special characteristic of this decade: manifoldness and changeability of folklore music and its role in the construction of identity; music and music-making of recently invisible human groups; music and power in the context of war; de/re-construction of (Croatian) ethnomusicology and applied etnomusicology.

Keywords: Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Research, ethnomusicology, Croatia

The Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Research is the only institution in the Republic of Croatia in which ethnomusicological research has been continuously carried out since its establishment until this day — either in the sense of research subject (folk music / folklore music / traditional music / music) or, more recently, in the sense of the approach that connects music and culture (music in culture, music as culture, culture in music, culture as music). Its associates are the only lecturers of ethnomusicology at degree-granting educational institutions in Zagreb, and among the current eleven holders of scholarly titles acquired on the
basis of ethnomusicological work, six of them are employees of the Institute (three Doctors of Science and three Masters of Science).\(^1\) Therefore, to speak of Croatian ethnomusicology (and of Croatian ethnochoreology, too) during the last fifty years — in the sense of institutionalised, framed and supposedly indisputable production and distribution of knowledge — means in fact to deal with the activities of the Institute’s department for folklore music and dance, even if, at the moment, this comes down to six ethnomusicologists and one ethnochoreologist.

**Folk music, folklore music**

When the Institute was established in 1948, the notion of *folk music* [narodna glazba] was based on the conceptions of the *Seljačka sloga* [Peasant Concord], an organisation that had complete supervision over its definition and public practice in the preceding decade. Folk music was the term for only those *musical products* (songs and dances in view of their sound organisation) that the Concord’s experts had legitimated as Croatian, peasant, old-time and local. These were original, pure and dignified, accepted through oral tradition, resistant to changes caused by foreign influences, collective and unprofessional at the levels of creating

\(^1\) Separate studies of ethnomusicology do not exist in Croatia. Knowledge in this field is acquired primarily within studies at the Department of Musicology of the Academy of Music at the University of Zagreb. The lecturers of ethnomusicological subjects at the Academy of Music have always been part-time professors employed full-time at the Institute: Dr. Vinko Žganec 1949-1966, Dr. Jerko Bezić 1966-1993, Dr. Svanibor Pettan 1993-1996, Dr. Grozdana Marošević 1996-. Since the timetable of the ethnomusicological programme is limited to only two hours a week during two academic years (with the possibility of optional classes in the following two years), studies in musicology do not in fact educate expert ethnomusicologists. Therefore, it is necessary to educate individuals interested in ethnomusicological work after their studies, in most cases by including them in the Institute’s research programmes. In this way the Institute — although a scholarly and primarily non-pedagogical institution — is for Croatian ethnomusicologists a kind of *basic educational institution*. It is also the basic educational institution for Croatian ethnochoreologists who complete their undergraduate studies mostly at the Department of Ethnology at the Faculty of Philosophy in Zagreb. A separate ethnochoreological course of lectures does not exist at this Department, while the ethnomusicological contents are comprised of one single course during only one academic year. As with the Academy of Music, the lecturers are part-time professors employed full-time at the Institute: Dr. Jerko Bezić 1986-1993, Dr. Grozdana Marošević 1994-. (Before Bezić the lecturer was the ethnologist Dr. Milovan Cavazzi).
and performing, and almost identified with national music (see e.g. Herceg 1940:59-60, Bratanić 1941:14, 47).

The ethnomusicologist Vinko Žganec, the Institute's first employee, continued his previously started work on "collecting and notating folk melodies", and as an expert commissioner began attending festivals of folk music and dance. Like the visits to the villages, the festivals offered the opportunity to collect and notate, but the experts were also expected to judge to which degree the performed songs and dances adhered to the current concept of folk music. In the meantime, this concept had lost its stability. Only old-time, only Croatian and only peasant as the essentials for that which was allowed to be called folk, could no longer be valid, at least officially, loudly and publicly. The "brotherhood and unity" of Yugoslav nations (in the case of Croatia, especially that of Croats and Serbs), the "working people" (comprised of the peasantry and the working class), and "enlightenment in the spirit of socialist development" — as the proclaimed principles of the new state — required a new concept of folk culture and folk music within it. How Vinko Žganec and other associates of the Institute mediated between personal and professional beliefs and the requests of the power system, and to which degree the broadening of that time of the approach of Croatian science of (folk) music sprouted from within itself and how much it was a consequence of negotiations with expectations from above, I shall leave to be discerned from the preceding article in this volume.

Likewise, I shall not dwell on the period of the nineteen seventies and eighties. It should however be stated that at that time a second important approach widening was taking place. Under the influence of American folklorists (especially Dundes 1964, Ben-Amos 1971) and folklorists from the Institute's department for oral literature (especially Bošković-Stulli 1973, Lozica 1979), the ethnomusicological paradigm became folklore music [folklorna glazba], i.e. music that is accepted, performed and carried forward freely and spontaneously, through the direct communication of relatively small groups of performers and listeners (Bezić 1981:27; see also Bezić 1974a:151, 1977:23-25, 37, 1985:442). Emphasis was put on the communicational aspect of music. Greatest attention was given to the performance (performing situation) in which the performers and the audience are not separated, but interact with each other and can (and do) exchange roles, so that in the new situation the listeners can (and do) become the performers and vice versa (see Lozica 1979:46, Marošević 1982:1-2). This kind of performance
became the "term of reference of the folklority of music" (Marošević 1993a). The key words of the new approach — context, performance, communication and process were, however, stressed more as terms to which full attention should be given, than actually given such a position. Although the importance of context in which music is performed was observed and emphasised, and the way of life and the particularity of such a performance of musical content were stated even as the basic component... of folklore music, ... the specific manner of [folklore, note N.C.] performance was considered more as an exterior criterion for recognising the musical contents that needed to be studied, and context more as one of the criteria for classifying the collected musical material" (Marošević 1992b:125). More often than not, the central pages of scholarly papers were dedicated to the analysis of the sound aspect of authentic ("still living") regional musical traditions jeopardised by contemporary social change.2 Likewise, in the field of ethnochoreology "dance alone, dance as the result of dancing", reconstructed according to the memories of the older village population, retained the central position, regardless of the idea of the importance of contemporary dance events, context and performance (see Zehec 1996:104).

So, compared to earlier decades, Croatian ethnomusicological texts during the seventies and eighties did not change fundamentally, but there is no doubt that the oppositions to the scholarly relevant — that until then had been excluded from the researches — became worthy of scholarly attention (e.g. new layers of traditional music, urban, author, heterogeneous, historically changeable music and music-making). Field

2 As Edward Shils lucidly noted, tradition is not characterised just by striving to continue the old practice, but also by being unable to separate oneself from it (see Shils 1981:213). Thus, within the framework of Croatian ethnomusicology during the seventies and eighties it was, for example, still necessary, regardless of the "changed" subject of research, to fill in "folkloristics' gaps" i.e. to conduct "basic research" in regions where previously there had been none (see Marošević 1992b:124), as if research of folklore music is possible only on the basis of researched folk music. Methods were not found for researching, for example, music in the city because this would bring up the question of the sample's representativeness, the value of the homogeneous, the objectivity of the scholar separated from his/her own world (of music) and the like. In the thesis of the freedom and spontaneity of folklore music there seems to be an echo of Grimm's belief in the autonomy of the folk who create. It assumes the existence of culture conventions that are recognised and supported by all participants in the performance (see Ben-Amos 1971:9-10; Marošević 1992a:209), which in fact means that they share the same culture. In folklore music there is no question about the relative coherence and interior consistency of a culture that is shared by all its members, however few they may be.
researches, still based on conversation with older narrators and music-making for research purposes, nevertheless began to include authentic performance situations (e.g. observing and participating in real weddings instead of the descriptions of old-time weddings). In addition to the extensive, intensive field research started to be conducted. One of the basic products of the profession until that time — collections of folk tunes of various regions — almost disappeared, while the holdings of recorded audio and audio-visual material have grown. The questions of origin and diffusion of the sound structure of a specific song or dance, or of the certain musical characteristic (tone relations, meter and rhythm, musical forms) left the focus of scholarly interest. If not the actual, at least the normative performance context became an important piece of information that could, as it started to be regarded, contribute to the better understanding of a music phenomenon. The person who performs (and therefore creates, too) a certain music became noticeable (this was less the case with the recipient, even if he/she were a member of the same group). Following Merriam, besides the sound aspect of music, attention was gradually being given to the concepts about music in a certain cultural environment, to the person who is making music, and to the uses and functions of music (see Merriam 1964:32, 210).

Because musicality is a universal, species-specific characteristic

It seems to me that these announced, and partly intentionally cautious shifts fully came out in the second half of the nineteen eighties. Together with the folkloristic literature that was mentioned earlier, two of the probably most influential and most often quoted ethnomusicological books — Merriam’s The Anthropology of Music (1964) and Blacking’s How Musical is Man (1976) started to be read attentively from then onwards. The paradigm of any music in any context became legitimate on one hand, and the individualisation of conceptions, approaches and research themes, on the other. This refers to the discourse of the

3 For corresponding processes in Croatian ethnochoreology see Zebec 1996:99-100.
5 When discussing ethnomusicological activities in Croatia, Pettan refers to Blacking’s definition of ethnomusicology: it is "an approach to understanding all musics and music-making in the contexts of performance and of the ideas and skills that composers, performers and listeners bring to what they define as musical situations" (Blacking 1987:3, Pettan 1993:156). Together with Blacking’s definition, during recent years,
profession, the consensus of individuals — ethnomusicologists gathered at
the Institute. However, the immersion in a cultural, social and political
environment imposes certain priorities. So, for example, no Croatian
ethnomusicologist has tackled the area of so called art music and
therefore, with one exception, no one has researched music cultures
distant to Croatia.6 Since "folklore music and dance are an important...
part of national cultural heritage that deserves and requires continuous
attention", the contemporary ethnomusicological activity of the Institute
is orientated in six directions (see Ceribašić, Marošević and Pettan
1997:6-9):

1. Critical consideration of past and present-day research results and the
work on the synthesis — there is no complete critical bibliography, no
reference book in ethnomusicology for students, nor synthetical
reviews on Croatian traditional music and Croatian ethnomusicology;

2. Examination of insufficiently investigated themes — many relevant
themes have been investigated insufficiently or not at all, owing to
earlier pressures of the communist ideology, due to a small number of

Marcia Herndon and Norma McLeod’s definition has also been quoted. According to
them "ethnomusicology is the study of the music either past or present, of all who
participate in music as creators, performers, or hearers of sound patterns; taking into
account all factors which lead to a better understanding of this particular type of
creative, human display" (Herndon and McLeod 1990:14).

The individualisation of conceptions and approaches is pointed out, for example, by the
attributes given to the word music in recent ethnomusicological works. The terms
folklore music, traditional music and just music are used (see the titles of articles by the
Institute’s associates: Bezić, Bonišćić, Ceribašić, Čaleta, Marošević, Pettan). It should
be noted that the conflict between cultural-historic and anthropologically oriented
ethnomusicology did not happen in Croatia (in distinction from e.g. Finish
ethnomusicology — see Moisala 1994). The anthropological propositions were
introduced gradually, first at the level of ideas, and then, at a much slower pace, at the
level of appliance of these ideas. This was due to three circumstances: the fact that the
Institute is the only institution that assembles the few ethnomusicologists that there are,
the continuous interdisciplinary orientation of the Institute and the personality of Dr.
Jerko Bezić, the professor of the majority employees-ethnomusicologists, whose wide
views, kindness and tolerance have transformed every possible conflict into an
agreement.

6 The exception is Svanibor Pettan who during the eighties (firstly as a student and
afterwards as an employee of Croatian Radio) conducted research in Tanzania
(graduation thesis on the musical life on the Tanzanian islands Zanzibar and Pemba,
1983) and in Egypt (master’s thesis on dance music in Egypt and related phenomena in
the folklore music of Kosovo, 1987). The Institute helped in the realisation of this
research in the sense that it lent Pettan the necessary field equipment and gave him
references.
employees and/or because of a more narrow research paradigm (i.e. traditional church folk singing, musical and dance traditions of Croats in the diaspora, music and music-making of national minorities in Croatia, the field of ethnoorganology, music and dance in the context of politics and war, folk revival);

3. Elaboration, protection and publishing of archival material, especially from war afflicted areas and areas for which the published material is still limited, as well as the protection of the entire material (especially audio material and manuscripts) according to contemporary standards (compact disc, microfilm, scanning);

4. Continuous observation of traditional and contemporary musical and dance phenomena, especially in multicultural and multiethnic regions and in areas in which the population has changed as a consequence of the recent war;

5. Complete and objective presentation of Croatian traditional music and dance abroad — since world ethnomusicological literature lacks data on Croatian music and dance or contains data that is deficient and/or interpreted almost exclusively in a wider Southern Slav (Yugoslav) or Balkan context, it is necessary to intensify the presence of Croatian ethnomusicologists in the international scholarly community and to intensify research from the perspective of contemporary ethnomusicology and ethnochoreology;

6. Efforts connected to improving ethnomusicological studies, either by extending the curriculum, by combining the existing studies with other study groups or by establishing separate interdisciplinary studies.

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In between the principle of researching the plurality of music and music-making on one hand and the more narrow priorities of the profession on the other, without any pretense to comprehensiveness, it is possible to single out several groups of themes and several approach features that appear as a special characteristic of the ethnomusicological activities of the Institute in this decade.

The first group is based on three key words: folklore music or traditional music, manifoldness and changeability. It comprises of mature folkloristic research of music as performance and communication (see Marošević 1990, 1992a, 1993a), of research into the relationship between
the normative and the individual according to the criterion of musical text, texture and context (see Ceribasić 1994), and of anthropologically oriented investigation into the relationships between conceptions about music, music sound and the uses and functions of music (see Bonifačić 1990, 1991a). Therefore, since the a priori definition of music and music-making worthy of scholarly attention has disappeared (and not just as a matter of principle, but in real practice), and since the questions of who, how, when, in which circumstances and why have become equally important as the question of what, "the music world" has shown itself immanently "manifold" and historically changeable.7 It appears as such whether we are dealing with the relatively homogeneous, standard Croatian folklore music regions (see Bonifačić 1991b, Ceribašić 1992, Bezić 1993b), regions that were considered transitive anyway (see Marošević 1993a), Croatian communities in the diaspora (see Bezić 1995a, 1996b, Bonifačić 1996a, Čaleta 1997b), musical genre that, as was thought earlier, represents the source of entire Croatian folk music (see Marošević 1994) or with the manner of reception of traditional music-making during several centuries (see Bezić 1996a). The confrontation with manifoldness and changeability has often been linked to the problem node of constructing the identity, primarily cultural, regional and ethnic. Mostly the attention was directed at the ways of preserving identity through music.

The second, smaller group consists of works in which the focus of interest are human groups that were avoided by research on folk music (because of their emphasised aberration from the canon that is denoted and connoted by the concept of folk music and/or because of their existence on the margin of the discourse of power). Guided by Blacking’s humanizing orientation, the right to their own culture and history was acquired by groups that had so far been scholarly hidden or blurred, such as travelling musicians (see Marošević 1993b, 1997c), women (see Ceribašić 1995b, Marošević 1995b) and homosexuals (see Pettan 1996c). With somewhat less animosity from the perspective of earlier paradigm, these groups could be subjoined, for example, by urban klapa singers (see Čaleta 1997a), Gypsy musicians (see Pettan 1992a, 1992b, 1996e) or uncollective, individual singers (see Ceribašić 1994).

7 Not unintentionally, I am using the key words from the title of one of the articles that paved the way to the new paradigm during the seventies (Bezić 1974b).
The third group comprises of research initiated by the reality of war. In an environment of political changes and war, the context, performance, communication and process flared in their sometimes even shocking changeability. The power of music was revealed as well as the power of wider social strategies over music (this is why in the introduction I have used the syntagm *culture as music* and not just *music as culture*). The ethnomusicological *field* has literally become the entirety of the world in which we live, and not just a special place to which one should travel supplied with audio-visual equipment. The emic and the etic imposed themselves in the pluralism of their relations. The influence of the power system on scholarly writing began to be recognised, the relationship between the researcher and the researched started to be questioned, and rival views on musics and musics as conveyers of different worldviews began to be considered. I would say that the war influenced even the researches that do not deal with it and are apparently very distant from war issues. Once again, more emphasized, there is the question of who is referring to whom and in which situation? In distinction from the seventies, it seems that the shift of the paradigm — with key reference terms: the "subjectivity" of the researcher, the field is everything, I/We and Others, the pervasion of fictional and real — did not occur through the acceptance of contemporary world anthropological and ethnomusicological thought (although the shift in the seventies could/should be examined in the context of the political climate of greater liberalisation of that time), but reversely: personal experience (perceived emotionally first, and then rationalised) had found points of contact with the appearing postmodern critique (e.g. Clifford and Marcus 1986).

In articles more closely connected to the theme of music in the context of war events, the role of music as an incentive and provocation during the process of disintegration of the former state was analysed (see Pettan 1994), the war music production of opposed sides was compared (see Pettan 1993, 1994, Ceribašić 1995a), the national, transnational, cultural and gender stereotypes in/through music were deconstructed (see Pettan 1996a, 1996b, Ceribašić 1995a), the way in which cultural, historical, national and political connotations of tambura musicianship (currently the central Croatian national symbol in music) have been brought to life and transformed was examined (see Bonifačić 1993, 1995), the use of the Slavonian round dance as a political ritual and a symbolic expression of national unity, but also of regional specificity was considered (see Zebec 1995a, 1997), and changes in musical repertoire
due to changes in the political system were documented (see Bezić 1993a, Ceribašić 1993). Rather than at the traditional music, attention was aimed at the field of popular music because it was the central point of encounters, negotiation, conflict, reconciliation and resistance.

Zero years

A separate, largish fourth group is comprised of works that result from a certain sense of zero years. These works include (auto)reflection, summarising and synthesising of the profession and are affirmatively and actively orientated towards the forming of "new times". Already during the war and especially after it, it started to be realised that age, gender, educational, class, ethnic, religious, psychological and other distinctive features that are incorporated in each of us effect our interpretation of data (thus, the scholar contributes to the creation of a certain discourse, too). At the same time, it started to be realised that it is the very self-confrontation with such given conditions (see Ceribašić 1993, Pettan 1993) or the simultaneous double position of the researcher and the active musician (see Čaleta 1997a, 1997b) that leads to better understanding of the phenomenon being researched, even if (or precisely because of the fact that) there is a gradual and unhidden change in the approach to and in the understanding of the researched subject (see Pettan 1997). In a somewhat broader framework of synthetic consideration of the discipline, in recent years emphasis has been laid upon examination of the theoretical framework of communicably conceived folkloristics and on the mode of its appliance in ethnomusicological research in Croatia in the last twenty years or so (see Marošević 1992b, 1995a). Accentuation has also been on investigating theoretical and methodological aspects of ethnochoreological research in Croatia in regard of the achievements of critical ethnology and anthropology, i.e. the European and American paradigm in dance research (see Zebec 1993, 1995c, 1996). On the basis of several decades of scholarly research, Ivan Ivančan wrote a book on Croatian folk dance customs and the scenic application of folklore (see Ivančan 1996). Besides, in this decade several synthetic articles have appeared about a theme which has been relatively neglected till now — traditional church folk singing, especially in the context of traditional customs (see Bezić 1995b, 1997a, 1997b).

The second aspect of the sense of zero years is contained in the consideration of the field of applied ethnomusicology. A very useful potential for Croatia’s reconstruction and development lies in applying
the research results in regard to the life of music in an individual, local, regional, national and transnational context. The breadth of ethnomusicological views as well as interweaving of Croatian ethnomusicological tradition with contemporary world-wide tendencies are a specific guarantee of a balanced relationship between the demands of national culture and the multicultural reality of today’s world (see Ceribašić, Marošević and Pettan 1997:9-10). It is possible to apply the results of ethnomusicological research in the educational and pedagogical process, in programmes that help people to overcome the consequences of war, in mass communication media, in organising folklore festivals, in the work of amateur groups that nurture local heritage, in neo-traditional music and dance, in tourism.

It could be stated that the appliance of ethnomusicological knowledge is one of the traditions of Croatian ethnomusicology. This is especially the case with the participation in the forming of folklore festivals and with the assistance given to amateur folklore groups. In this framework, the basic question which poses itself is whether the foothold idea of genuine traditional values of folk culture (peasant, old-time, Croatian, local, etc.) and of their return to everyday life can and should be still sustained, or could (should) the organised folklore activity and festivals be more open to a wider repertoire and various performers, support various traditional folklore manners of performing, create new performing frames and types of performances, and thereby contribute to the change of a (still frequent) general negative attitude to traditional music and musicians, strengthen local communities in society as a whole and stimulate new forms of national integration based on inclusiveness.

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8 It has already been mentioned that the first ethnomusicologist at the Institute, Vinko Žganec, was also one of the experts that monitored the work of such groups and moulded the programmes of folklore festivals. The same is also true of the most eminent Croatian ethnomusicologist of the following generation — Jerko Bezic, who is, among other duties, a member of the Board of experts of the central Croatian festival of traditional music — Međunarodna smotra folklora [International Folklore Festival] in Zagreb (since its establishment in 1966) and a member of the expert jury at the Festival dalmatinskiхklapa [Festival of Dalmatian Klapas] in Omis (since 1974). All the other (although not numerous) ethnomusicologists and ethnochoreologists that are active today, have also dealt with this segment of applied cultural activity to a greater or smaller degree and for a longer or shorter period of time, although their primary task is scholarly research. This is a consequence of the fact that in Croatia there is no institution whose experts (ethnologists, folklorists, ethnomusicologists, ethnochoreologists) would take permanent care of preserving and reviving traditional culture and traditional music and dance within it.
(see Ceribašić 1996). The second important aspect of appliance refers to the participation in programmes directed at overcoming the consequences of war — building respect and understanding between people, e.g. between the autochthons and refugees that found themselves, as victims of ethnic cleansing, in a new, completely unfamiliar environment (see Pettan 1995a), between people that belonged to opposed sides during the war (see Pettan 1995b) or between different ethnic groups in areas of prolonged conflict (see Pettan 1996d). Music makes this possible because it has the dual power to strengthen identity and stimulate intercultural communication.

The third aspect of the zero years consists of efforts to reconstruct fractions of history very carefully, attentively and as objectively as possible, to collect and arrange fragments of a different, forgotten, disappearing, endangered world (see Marošević 1994, 1997a, 1997b, Bonifačić 1996b). Within the framework of such endeavours, the initiated project of digitalisation and restoration of the Institute’s record and tape library is especially important, and more important than the critical editions of collections of folk songs (e.g. Žganec 1990, 1992). A repeated orientation to the idyllic past? I don’t think so. Rather — everyone’s right to his/her own expression, past and present. Eros instead of Tanatos. Ethnomusicological knowledge and approaches can be of assistance in this.

(Translated by Laurette Rako-Zechner)

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9 The analogous audio material that is stored in the Institute’s Documentation includes 3230 recorded tapes and cassettes (about 4850 hours — as of February 1998). So far about 200 hours have been transferred to compact discs, mostly the material from the earliest period of the fifties. The project started in the middle of 1997. The desired next step consists of preparing a series of discographic editions that will be available to the general public.


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