

1-1-2004

Balkan as a metaphor in the film composition of Goran Bregovic

Nela Trifkovic
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**BALKAN AS A METAPHOR IN THE FILM
COMPOSITION OF GORAN BREGOVIC**

Ms Nela Trifkovic
submitted in partial fulfilment of the degree
Master of Arts (Creative Arts)
Communications and Creative Industries
Edith Cowan University
Perth, Australia
May 2004

ABSTRACT

The focus of this paper is the film composition of composer Goran Bregovic (born 1950) and the country of his birth Yugoslavia.

*Yugoslavia has undergone many major political changes over the past century and its ethno-political history over the past fifteen years could be considered as one of the most turbulent of our time. The aim of this thesis is to uncover the conceptual principles behind Bregovic's unique approach to soundtrack music in order to create appropriate musical analogies in film composition. Bregovic's musical career in the iconic Yugoslav rock band *Bijelo dugme* (White Button), his interest in the traditional Balkan music and collaborations with the Yugoslav film director Emir Kusturica were the stepping stones for him to develop an artistic profile as one of the world's most demanding film composers.*

*This dissertation addresses Bregovic's initial conceptual approaches to the soundtrack writing in both Yugoslav and international film productions. Starting with the first international success, the score for Kusturica's *Dom za vesanje* (Time of the Gypsies), Bregovic's approach to soundtrack writing has mainly been conceptually relevant to the particular ideological nomenclature of the depicted theatrical conflict in the given films. Such ideologically based compositional principle has enabled Bregovic to work with various types of recontextualisation of traditional Balkan music in both Yugoslav and international film productions. The research unfolds the concepts behind the metaphoric use of Balkan music in three analysed films and connects the compositional frameworks to the socio-cultural history of Yugoslavia (and particularly the composer's native Bosnia and Herzegovina from the early thirteenth or fourteenth century to the present day), Bregovic's musical history prior to these film productions and the film directors' approaches to the depicted dramatic conflict in the given productions.*

The final part of the thesis discusses the relevance between the researched topic and the author's own creative work in the field of original composition that is inspired by various types of traditional Balkan music.

Candidate's Declaration

I certify that this thesis does not, to the best of my knowledge and belief:

incorporate without acknowledgement any material previously submitted for a degree of diploma in any institution of higher education;

contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text; or

contain any defamatory material.



Nela Trifkovic

02/09/04

Acknowledgements

I wish to thank all the lecturers at the West Australian Academy of Performing Arts, the School of Contemporary Arts and the department of Communications and Creative Industries. The most special acknowledgements go to my supervisor Lindsay R. Vickery for years of trust, patience, wisdom and support, to the Head of Research Dr. Maggi Phillips for clarity and guidance and Associate Professor Domenico de Clario for keeping the course existing, possible and flexible to various research tastes and interests.

Even more special acknowledgements go to my own and all other courageous and supportive families of arts' researchers, those who convince us in and remind us of the ability to persevere with enthusiasm, curiosity and generosity of spirit.

Finally, to friends, because it sometimes seems like there won't be any left by the end of the course, for proving us wrong and making our creativity come true. A special thank you to the students of the West Australian Conservatorium of music and my amazing classmates and fellow students from the Masters of Creative Arts course.

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BALKAN AS A METAPHOR IN THE FILM COMPOSITION OF GORAN BREGOVIC

INTRODUCTION - BALKAN MUSIC IN SOUNDTRACK COMPOSITION: a metaphor of theatrical conflict

The focus of this paper is the film composition of composer Goran Bregovic (born 1950) and its conceptual relationship to the country of his birth Yugoslavia.

Yugoslavia has undergone many major political changes over the past century and its ethno-political history over the past fifteen years could be considered as one of the most turbulent of our time. The aim of this thesis is to uncover the conceptual principles behind Bregovic's unique approach to soundtrack composition. I believe that composer Bregovic uses aspects of the Balkan conflict to create appropriate musical analogies in film music.

Bregovic himself acknowledges that the lack of a definitive Yugoslav national identity during his lifetime has played a significant role in the development of his creative output.

My music? It's a mixture born from the Balkan frontier; a mysterious land where three cultures cross each other: Orthodox, Catholic and Muslim.

(Bregovic in Fabretti, C., 2003)

Bregovic's musical career began during the time when the formerly separate states were united under the Socialist Federation of the Yugoslav Republics (SFRY) and matured through a tumultuous period when savage war and national rivalries resulted, once again, in the division of Yugoslavia into a number of small independent states. Having commenced his career as a rock musician, Bregovic did not initially show much interest in Yugoslav film circles in the 70s. In 1978, his band Bijelo dugme (White Button) played a live concert near one of the main squares in Belgrade. The performance was filmed and director Milivoje-Mica Milosevic used a section of his

documentation in his movie *Nije nego*¹ (Nevertheless), made the same year. This appearance marked the first unplanned entry of Bregovic's music into film. The following year brought Bregovic's first real soundtrack project: providing music for Aleksandar Mandic's film *Licne stvari*² (Personal Affairs). The film was successful within Yugoslavia, but it was not until a decade later that Bregovic seriously plunged into the film music world. The incredible national and Eastern European success of his rock band "White Button" left very little time for other projects during the first two decades of Bregovic's musical career.

Some of the most significant Yugoslav successes in the world of film and film music began to emerge as the country started disintegrating politically. *Time of the Gypsies*, featuring what many regard as Bregovic's breakthrough soundtrack, was made while SFRY was in its terminal phase in the late 80s.

The production of director Emir Kusturica's film *Time of the Gypsies* (1989) was almost parallel with the release of *Ciribiribela* (1988) the last album that "White Button" recorded together as a band. *Djurdjevdan* (St George's Day) the most popular song from this album became the *Time of the Gypsies'* Soundtrack theme.

Roughly two years later, Sarajevo, both Bregovic and Kusturica's hometown, was burning in the flames of the ethno-religious war that consumed the entire state of Bosnia and Herzegovina³ within just over a month. Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia and Herzegovina, has occupied the front pages of different newspapers around the world

¹ Synopsis: a film is made about a group of high school students who are generally interested in sport and romance but reveal a more thoughtful perspective on their school as they are interviewed. The plot thickens when a drawing, accusing a teacher of making sexual advances on his students, appears on the blackboard and the parents are brought into the matter until the truth is discovered. The film also fetures a part of the live oncert that "White Button" played in Belgrade and shows the music and popular culture of the Yugoslav youth. For more information access: <http://www.balkanmedia.com/magazin/film/240.html>

² Synopsis: a young grammar school graduate takes us through her dreams and aspirations as she spends the summer holiday between graduation and the first year of university with a group of school friends. For more information access: <http://www.enel.it/eventi/bregovic/filmografia2.asp-17k>

³ Bosnia and Herzegovina is one state that includes two different regions.

for the past fifteen years. The images and stories from this period are mainly connected to the Yugoslav civil war that was at its bloodiest and most terrifying in this tiny state. However, there have also been happier and more inspiring reasons for Bosnia and Herzegovina and its citizens to occupy the newspapers. Dating back to the peaceful days in SFRY and productions such as *Time of the Gypsies* to more recent times, Emir Kusturica and Goran Bregovic remain Sarajevo's most invaluable cultural and artistic ambassadors.

Bregovic was forced to mature quickly as a film composer against a shifting backdrop of ethnic rivalries in the former Yugoslavia, but this did not discourage him. On the contrary, he made a quantum leap in the world of film composition during the early 90s. His work as a film composer continues to the present day, sometimes taking him back to a part of the former Yugoslavia or sometimes to other European countries.

Already from the *Time of the Gypsies*, Bregovic's soundtracks were as distinctive as Kusturica's films, and together they were considered by many to be the hallmark of the Yugoslav film. Even in more recent years, when defining a Yugoslav identity is a constant challenge, anyone who has ever heard this music or seen these films can easily recall the sound and character of the music. Bregovic's compositional voice is distinctive, created from intricate traditional and rock fusions, built from songs written with the members of "White Button" and developed from his chosen and enforced travels and relocations.

This paper examines the socio-compositional concepts behind Bregovic's film music, with regard to his ability to recycle the pre-existing "White Button" rock materials and to fuse them with different ethnic, classical and contemporary musical traditions to create new hybrid forms. The aim of this research is to consider Bregovic

as a highly respected international film composer and to explain the evolution of his signature musical style with its deep roots in the traditional Balkan sound. The study explores creative applications of the traditional Balkan musical elements in wider cultural and artistic contexts and addresses their socio-musical appeal in the soundtrack genre.

I propose that the effectiveness of Bregovic's music resides in his ability to fuse socio-historical, cultural and political issues explored in the given films through musical use of "Balkan" as a metaphor of the dramatic conflict in the given films. I am asserting that, in his film soundtracks, Bregovic exploits the inherent tensions of both his Balkan and specifically Yugoslavian identities, as exemplified by their highly varied and characteristic musical traditions, to provide musical analogies of the dramatic circumstances portrayed in the analysed movies.

Rather than just following or supporting the conflict depicted in the film, his soundtracks recreate or reconstruct the suggested filmic or dramatic development in their own medium of music and their own ethno-cultural (Balkan) musical genres.

I have chosen three motion pictures featuring Bregovic soundtracks as exemplar works for my thesis: *Time of the Gypsies* (Kusturica 1989), *Arizona Dream* (Kusturica 1992) and *Queen Margot* (Patrice Chereau 1994).

Time of the Gypsies set in a Macedonian-Gypsy ghetto in ex-Yugoslavia, *Arizona Dream* set in Arizona on the border between the United States and Mexico and *Queen Margot* set in France, have been chosen because their extremely varied cultural, geographic and historical dramatic subjects throw into relief the stylistically similar nature of Bregovic's soundtracks. They highlight the fact that Bregovic's approach to

providing music to support the dramatic development is very similar in each movie despite the films' highly varied geographic and historical backgrounds locales.

The soundtrack analyses will be conducted through a comparative discussion regarding the musical source materials and their treatment in relation to the film's plot developments. The analyses will show how Bregovic's methods were applied to create music that facilitates an effective synthesis of image and sound even when the elements derive from vastly different cultural and stylistic genres and historic periods.

The research questions address:

- the underlying concepts behind Bregovic's film music;
- the recycled rock materials and the traditional music selected by the composer;
- the creative application of the analysed materials within the specific genre (soundtrack);
- the use of the Balkan music as a metaphor for the presented dramatic/theatrical conflict and the new perceptual and conceptual order that it proposes;
- the value of the uncovered research outcomes for other composers interested in similar creative concepts and genres.

Definition of terms: cultural approaches to theory and established research terminology

The terminology referring to the range of music under discussion reflects a number of culturally embedded dichotomies. The term "ethnic music", because of its frequent and sometimes indiscriminate use, has acquired an ambiguous or at least broad range of definitions. The first is the by-product of a culturally Eurocentric approach in which all Non-Western music is defined as an ethnic musical "other". Increasingly the term is used more generally to refer to non-art music, a distinction perhaps

imperialistically implicit in the previous definition. This broader definition, although perhaps still implying another dichotomy – the hierarchy of “High” and “Low” art – goes some way to addressing the existence of art music of equal or greater sophistication “outside” the West.

Many researchers discuss an alternative to the Eurocentric view through the use of the term “world music” to imply a wider classification than the term “ethnic music”. After all, “world music” can be traditional, popular or even art music.

I have opted to use the terminology that describes the analysed examples as specifically as possible (ie. Serbian Orthodox Chant⁴.) The recurring terms, folk and traditional, are used in a more general sense (ie. Traditional Yugoslav Melody or Yugoslav Folk Music.) This terminology is particularly applicable in the analysis of original composition inspired by traditional music as the created references are not always evocative of a specific piece – they allude to the more general traditional sound. The term “ethnic” appears only if it is necessary to refer to a specific ethnic group in musical descriptions (ie. Vocal Inflections typical of Bulgarian Ethnic Music.) The term “world music” is used rarely in this paper and for very general descriptions that would include several ethnic associations (ie. clearly influenced by a number of “world music” Styles.) I will use the most specific geographic reference wherever it is possible if the ethnic associations are related to a specific part of the world (ie. Balkan music⁵.)

⁴ In such instances I will try to explain some differences between the vocal aesthetic of the sacred (Eastern Christian) Orthodox and sacred (Western Christian) mainly Catholic type of singing.

⁵ This classification is also inclusive of other non-Yugoslav Balkan nations – Bulgarians, Romanians, Greeks, Albanians, etc.

Ethnic Music and its creative application in soundtracks – models for the developed research framework

The use of ethnic elements in soundtrack composition was recently the main topic of *The Online Magazine of Motion Picture and Television Music Appreciation*⁶. Mark Neyrinck's article titled *Ethploitation: The Use of Ethnic Film Music* was published in the magazine's November 2001 edition. Neyrinck discussed many aspects of "ethploitation" (his term denoting the exploitation of ethnic music in soundtrack composition) which provide a useful research framework for my own work.

Neyrinck recognises several important analytical distinctions:

- the use of ethnic music and ethnic elements in original soundtrack composition as two different notions;
- the distinction between source music (music which, in the world of the film, the characters on screen would presumably be able to hear) and background music (background score that is used to heighten the dramatic needs of a particular moment/scene in the film);
- distinctions of the major theatrical functions of ethnic materials and/or ethnic music in soundtrack composition.

Neyrinck divides these theatrical functions into three major categories:

- Ethnic materials as a source of ideas for the composer;
- Ethnic materials as tools for the establishment of the film setting (ie. geographical location);

⁶ Neyrinck, M., (2001) Ethploitation: The Use of Ethnic Film Music, In: The Online Magazine of Motion Picture and TV Music Appreciation, for further information access: <http://www.filmscoremonthly.com/articles/2001/29_Nov_Ethploitation_The_Use_of_Ethnic_Film_Music.asp>

- Ethnic materials as tools for the establishment of the conceptual distance from self-identification as “other” (Orientalism) or the conceptual proximity to self (Occidentalism).

I propose that it is also important to observe the following aspects in every soundtrack and film-score:

- the prevailing compositional form throughout the entire soundtrack (ie. a leitmotif, a dance form, etc.);
- the prevailing soundtrack instrumentation (ie. symphonic orchestra, a specific chamber configuration, a solo instrument in acoustic compositions, or a particular electronic/electro-acoustic set-up with prevalent use of certain software);
- theatrical functions that are served by the prevailing compositional and instrumental form/forms the film (ie. historical or geographic accuracy, portrayal of the dramatic conflict, etc.).

The final chapter of the thesis is an extension of the last outlined research question. I will show how these methods influenced my own creative output during the course of research and project development. My creative project is a setting of the Yugoslav poet Vasko Popa’s cycle of poems titled *Vrati mi moje krpice* (Give Me Back My Rags) to music. The composition consists of thirteen movements (the thirteen poems from the cycle) and incorporates both the original Serbo-Croatian⁷ text-setting and the English translation. The Serbo-Croatian setting is sung and the English translation is spoken over the musical accompaniment.

⁷ I continued to use the expression Serbo-Croatian for the native language of the four republics in ex-Yugoslavia (Serbia, Croatia, Montenegro and Bosnia & Herzegovina). Although in current times the language is (politically or linguistically) divided into Bosnian, Serbian and Croatian, the selected terminology alludes to the period when the works were created and the artists’ creative, artistic and cultural alignment as expressed through the continual promotion of the Yugoslav identity.

*All of the music for **Give Me Back My Rags** is strongly anchored in different types of the traditional Eastern and Southern European music. The cycle, like a lot of my other composition has been a product of the heavy influences of Goran Bregovic's music on my own creative output and of the inspiration that derives from soundtracks for Emir Kusturica and Tony Gatlif's films.*

*Give Me Back My Rags is my musical attempt to create a meeting point for the sounds evocative of the soundtracks for **Latcho Drom, Vengo, Gadjó Dilo, Time of the Gypsies, Arizona Dream, Queen Margot and Black Cat White Cat**. ...And anyone that has ever seen any of these films or heard the soundtracks knows that there will be music, tears, laughter and smashed plates at that imaginary musical meeting point of mine!*

Trifkovic, N., (October, 2003) Give Me Back My Rags –Graduation
Recital Programme Notes

CHAPTER I - CREATIVE EXPRESSION IN PLURALISTIC SOCIETIES: Relevant history of the Balkans and the future of the Yugoslav States

Nationalism in music: pluralist and dialectic styles

This discussion addresses the “Nationalist Movement” as a predecessor to the contemporary hybrid genres such as Bregovic’s soundtrack opus. The “Nationalist Movement” introduced new more complex musical styles through fusion of “Folk” and “Western Art Music”. The term “complex” does not imply any particular level of compositional intricacy in the studied examples, it is used to describe the multiplicity of the musical aesthetics (deriving from both art and folk musical traditions) portrayed in this music. The focal geographical point of this discussion is Yugoslavia.

The “Nationalist Movement” was initially connected with “Western Art Music” in Eastern Europe (particularly Russia, Czechoslovakia and later Hungary.) The impact and developments of the “Nationalist Movement” in Yugoslav music are not part of the general Western historical canon. Reasons for this situation include the formation of Yugoslavia, its surrounding countries with their cultural and artistic influences and the overall impact of “Nationalism” as an extension of “Romanticism” in music.

“Nationalism” in Southern, Northern and Eastern Europe was an artistic attempt to declare a non-Western identity by incorporating pre-existing cultural traditions as a reaction to the growing influence of Western traditions in art music. The “Nationalist Movement” across many different parts of Europe is a good example of the aesthetic pluralism in art music in comparison to some world examples of the totalitarian approach of destroying (burning) all Western instruments and manuscripts and replacing them with traditional models (ie. post-revolutionary Iran.) I have opted to use the terms “Pluralist Musical Nationalism” to describe the European examples and “Dialectic Musical Nationalism” for descriptions of more totalitarian models. The

concept of “dialectic” derives from the descriptions of various societies (see later in this chapter) and describes a unitarian model of musical “Nationalism” based upon the specific cultural elements of a particular tradition without any regards for the other possible minor influences within the dominant ideology. “Pluralism” of the European musical “Nationalism” is manifested through two significant aspects. The first one relates to the national expression portrayed through the aesthetic multiplicity in the given musical style. The European form of “Nationalism” is derived from both “Western Art” and traditional music of each particular country. This is the first dialogical quality of such style. Secondly, at the end of the nineteenth and in the beginning of the twentieth century, many “Nationalist” composers in Europe increasingly incorporated various “oriental” references alluding to Asian and Islamic cultures and to minority groups increasing living in their societies.

The most famous Russian examples with such references are Nikolay Rimsky Korsakov’s (1844-1908) opera, *Scheherazade* (1888), and Mily Balakirev’s (1837-1910) solo piano work, *Islamey*, sometimes also entitled as *The Oriental Fantasy* (1886). Polish composer Karol Szymanowski (1882-1937) is a much less known example. His intense interest in the Islamic world led him to write *The Love Songs of Hafiz* for voice and orchestra (1911), setting Hans Bethge’s adaptations of the Arabian texts by the sixth century poet Hafiz to music. Szymanowski’s second work with a similar subject is the collection of songs titled *Songs of the Infatuated Muezzin* (1934).

In the former Yugoslavia, Stevan Stojanovic Mokranjac (1856-1914) wrote short cantatas for mixed vocal ensembles. The fifteen cantatas (1883-1909) are all titled *Rukoveti* (this expression literally translates to hand-made creations, but the widely recognised translation is “Song Collections”) and each one is based around folk

melodies from a particular region of the former Yugoslavia (these collections include works from Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia, Kosovo and Macedonia).

“Nationalism” in the music of former Yugoslavia is as complex as are the concepts of both Yugoslav music and Yugoslav identity. The interrelated nature of the political and artistic scenes together with its “pluralist” society that always seems to be in greater dialogue with the surrounding foreign countries rather than with the neighbouring states within the actual borders of the country(ies) are the main contributing factors in the development of the complex Yugoslav musical expression.

Yugoslav music or music in Yugoslavia?

For just one very special night, Goran assembled artists from countries that he calls his “musical feeding ground”- between Budapest and Istanbul.

(Unattributed, undated, Available from:
http://www.goranbregovic.co.yu/foreign/films_eng.htm

How is it possible for a composer to have such a geographically and culturally wide feeding ground? Is this Bregovic’s indulging statement that alludes to his favourite types of traditional music or some kind of an unwritten description alluding to the variety of Yugoslav cultural and artistic expression?

Yugoslavia has been formed, reformed, integrated and disintegrated several times between the nineteenth century (the rise of the “Nationalist Movement”) and the present day. The multiplicity of the Yugoslav identity is suggested by its geographic location, by its very name (see below in the following section) and by the diverse ethnicities that have been populating the country since the Middle Ages. The focal discussion addresses the influence of these cultural elements on the diversity of traditional music in Yugoslavia and relates this national and artistic multiplicity to hybridity in music and development of new genres. As this section mainly addresses

the “Nationalist Movement” in music, it is most important to list the various configurations of government arrangements under which the country/countries had existed during the nineteenth and the early twentieth century.

The beginning of the musical “Nationalist” period in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe mainly occurred in the later part of the nineteenth century. Most of Yugoslavia was under the Austro-Hungarian occupation until the beginning of the First World War and the country did not officially gain its name until 3rd October 1929, so all the “Nationalist Movement” composers from this period were not really Yugoslav composers during that time.

The land of Southern Slavs

Yugoslavia is a compound word. It is constructed from two words: *Yugo* and *Slavia*. *Yug*⁸ is a Slav word for the south; *o* at the end of *yugo* was probably added to smoothly connect this word to *Slavia*, which is a feminine noun that defines a Slav-populated place. So, etymologically Yugoslavia is the “Southern Slavic Land.”

Prior to the 1991 war, Yugoslavia functioned as a Socialist Federation comprising the Republics of Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Macedonia. The fact that all these states, (now largely independent countries) were previously federated, highlights the country’s geographic and ethnic complexity and unravels the “pluralist” state of its society. Identification of the states that used to complete the “Yugo-puzzle⁹” and of the neighbouring countries that surround the former Yugoslavia also describes the country’s location. Socialist Federation of the

⁸ originally spelled as *jug* in Serbo-Croatian, Yugoslavia is spelled as *Jugoslavija* in Serbo-Croatian

⁹ I have constructed this term as a reference to the visually-catchy symbol that use to appear on some Yugoslav TV news during the early 90s: the symbol consisted of a puzzle representative of the Yugoslav map and presented different states as pieces of the puzzle that were added or cut from the country according to the changing political circumstances.

Yugoslav Republics (SFRY) was surrounded by Bulgaria, Romania, Italy, Greece, Albania, Hungary and Austria. These countries and ethnic configurations formed the borders of the old country that disintegrated during the war in the early 90s. For later musical discussion in the paper, the Federated Socialist Yugoslavia is the most important country. However, this country was established well after the beginnings of the musical “Nationalist Movement” during which period Yugoslavia was under the Austro-Hungarian occupation.

Creative sources and influences in the Yugoslavia-to-be

Composers in this region of the Balkan Peninsula were influenced by a complex mixture of strong forces including their religion, ethnicity and the variety of cultural elements and traditions from other surrounding states and countries.

Depending on the overall impact of these sources, composers from different regions turned to various types of inspiration. The country that later became Yugoslavia was always the home of several different ethnic and religious groups.

Ethnic groups such as Serbs, Montenegrans and Macedonians are predominantly religiously East Christian (Orthodox), Croatians and Slovenians are predominantly West Christians (mainly Catholic), while Bosnia and Herzegovina remains the most ethnically diverse state with significant Islamic and Jewish communities and both Orthodox and Catholic Christian populations. This tiny state, situated in the middle of the Balkan Peninsula became the homeland of the Orthodox, the Catholics, the Muslims (some of this population are the formerly Christian Slavs who converted during the Ottoman occupation period) and the Jewish people who came in exile from Spain and Portugal. Bosnia and Herzegovina, very much like Serbia, Montenegro and

to smaller extent Croatia, also became one of the oases for future Yugoslavia's large Gypsy minority groups.

What were some of the significant musical influences?

The Orthodox Church music was heavily influenced by the Russian tradition and, from the 1700s, the services in the Orthodox Church in both Serbia and Montenegro were performed in the so-called Church Slavonic language¹⁰. Under the Russian influence, non-liturgical chant started developing as secular theatre music in the Serbian dramas.

The other significant religion-based connection was between Orthodox Serbia and Orthodox Greece. Although still under the Austro-Hungarian government, the Serbian *intelligensia* opened a Greek Singing School in 1721. The influence of Greek language was a significant factor both in the development of the later Serbo-Croatian language and in the Slav-language subcategory of the Southern-Slavics (Serbo-Croatian, Macedonian and Bulgarian.)

The compositions from these regions were mainly choral pieces, solos and vocal theatre pieces, symphonic and chamber works being much less frequent. Just like in the other non-Western countries, the Balkan composers tried to express and strengthen their national identity through music and to make it a creative link between their already scattered people. These creatively-unifying aspects and solidarity of the Balkan nations were particularly significant given their ethnic and cultural differences and the tragic end of Yugoslavia just over a decade ago.

The musical life of Serbia blossomed under the composer, pianist and director Kornelije Stankovic (1831-1865). Stankovic composed and performed and also

¹⁰ For further information access: Roksanda Pejovic's "Medieval Music" published in: Ivic, P. (1995) "History of Serbian Culture", Porthill Publishers, Edgware, Middlesex, England, Available from: http://www.rastko.org.yu/isk/rpejovic-medieval_music.html

recorded and collected traditional music. His compositional concepts were deeply rooted in traditional music.

The most important Serbian operas from this period are Stanislav Binicki's (1872-1942) *Na uranku* (Rising Early, 1903), Isidor Bajic's (1878-1915) *Knez Ivo od Semberije* (Prince Ivo of Semberija, 1911) Stevan Hristic's (1885-1958) chamber opera *Sumrak* (Twilight, 1925) and two operas by Petar Konjovic (1883-1970) *Zetski princ* (The Prince of Zeta, 1929) and *Kostana* (1931). The importance of these operas is in their continuation of Stankovic's "National style." The operas use Serbian folk tales and mythology for libretti and incorporate traditional theatre with music.

The most prolific name in both, ex-Yugoslav and Serbian composition remains Stevan Stojanovic Mokranjac (1856-1914) whose contributions were multi-faceted. His compositions remain the most virtuosic and sophisticated pieces of music that emerged from the as yet unformed Yugoslavia of the future. They are also the most versatile and insightful data collections of the folk music across the Balkans and the Yugoslavia-to-be.

Rukoveti (Song Collections, 1883-1909) are choral journeys through folk music of different parts of Yugoslavia. This music is prophetically inclusive of the diverse future-Yugoslav ethnicities – it was written almost seven decades before the country was created in that multi-ethnic form. This feature of Mokranjac's compositions might have been a creative reflection of the desired sense of unity among the people from these regions as advocated by the composer or his own private artistic and cultural choice.

Mokranjac and Bregovic are musicians whose work establishes them as "the complete or uncompromising Yugoslavs outside of the Yugoslav time." Mokranjac

united the country in his music long before it was actually created, while Bregovic still remains the rare musical link of these scattered and separated nations after the dissolution of Yugoslavia.

Contrary to this unifying aspect characteristic of Mokranjac's creative opus, the future Yugoslavia's other most distinctive geographic and ethnic feature was its outward rather than inward outlook as its states were also strongly informed through their foreign neighbours, rather than their future immediate compatriots. So the future Yugoslavia was always incidentally or deliberately cultivating an ethnic paradox as its most intricate national feature.

The Catholic-populated regions are strongly anchored into the Mediterranean tradition, particularly the regions near the Adriatic Sea. Partly because of its geographic location and partly because of the cultural and religious influences, Croatia always had a continuing form of creative connection with Austria, Hungary and Italy.

During the rule of the Habsburg Dynasty, the Croatian musical scene was very quiet. The first Croatian opera *Ljubav i zloba* (Love and Virulence) was written in 1846 by the composer Vatroslav Lisinski (1819-1854) who also wrote an opera *Porin* (1851). Croatian "Nationalism" (quite similarly to the Southern Slavic "Nationalism" in general) was at its most pronounced between the two world wars, despite the fact that both Vatroslav Lisinski's *Porin* and Ivan Zajc's (1831-1914) *Nikola Subic Zrinjski* (1876) were written in the late nineteenth century. Both of these operas tell stories about the lives of national heroes.

The early twentieth century saw the real rise of national expression in the Croatian music with operas such as Blagoje Bersa's (1873-1934) *Oganj* (Fire, 1911), and

Jakov Gotovac's (1895-1982) *Ero s onog svijeta* (Ero the Joker, 1935.) These operas follow the increase of the folkloric expression in Croatian music.

The concept of the two opposing forces---the search for unity and homogenic Southern Slavic expression and the outward outlook on the neighbouring foreign countries---may be the possible precursor for the powerful conflicting analogical qualities in the more contemporary Yugoslav musical genres (ie: Bregovic's composition).

The former Yugoslav Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina remained musically anonymous during the "Nationalist" period. A possible reason for this is the fact that the Bosnian nation is a mixture of different ethnicities from the other states¹¹ (ie. Serbs, Croats, etc.) and various minority groups (ie. the Jewish and Gypsy populations). Interesting research aspects of the cultural and creative development of Bosnia and Herzegovina include this ethnic multiplicity of its population and the state's geographic location.

Bosnia and Herzegovina is the most inwardly influenced of the future Yugoslav states. Placed between Serbia and Croatia, this state has borders only with other (future) Yugoslav states, unlike all the remaining ones that generally also have at least one foreign border¹². The combination of both the state's location and the ethnic multiplicity of its population, led Bosnia and Herzegovina (and its capital city Sarajevo in particular), to turn inwardly. Both the state and its capital look into itself and develop a specific cultural and creative life-style that was more pluralistically conceived there than anywhere else in the future Yugoslavia.

¹¹ this is also the reason why the section also introduces the musical "Nationalism" of Serbia and Croatia, as these are two significant groups living in Bosnia and Herzegovina

¹² the only foreign border of Bosnia and Herzegovina is the so-called water border (with the coastline), the Herzegovinian city of Neum has a miniature (6 km) border that leads to the Adriatic Sea which separates it from Italy

Sarajevo – Bosnian version of Borges' Aleph¹³

Whether this double line of defences against the outside world obliges the city "to look inwards", to turn completely in on itself, or for some other reason, very soon after its foundation Sarajevo became a metaphor for the world, a place in which the different faces of the world, gathered in one point, just as scattered rays of light are gathered in a prism. Some hundred years after its foundation, the city had brought together people of all monotheistic religions, and the cultures derived from those religions, numerous different languages and the ways of life associated with those languages. It became a microcosm, a centre of the world which, like all centers in the teaching of the Esoterics, contains the entire world. That is why Sarajevo is without question an inward city, in the sense attributed to that world by the Esoterics: everything that is possible in the world may be found in Sarajevo, in miniature, reduced to its essence, it is there because Sarajevo is the centre of the world. Like the fortune teller's crystal ball, which contains all events, everything that any human being might experience, all things and all phenomena of the world, just as Borges' Aleph displays in himself everything that has been, that will be and that could be, Sarajevo contains everything that is the world to the West of India.

(Karahasan, Dz., 1994, pg.90)

Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia and Herzegovina was founded in 1440 by Isa Bey Ishakovic. In his description, Dzevad Karahasan¹⁴ discusses the double isolation of Sarajevo, referring to its geographical location – in the valley of the Miljacka River, surrounded by the hills that isolate it from everything external. He also attributes a further isolation to the city centre which is located in the valley bottom, surrounded by the suburbs that are spread over the inner slopes of the hill and which then again shut off the city centre from the rest of the world. So, Sarajevo was always destined to turn in on itself, to look inwardly and to firstly create from the multitude of its inner riches and then to look for an external point of communication.

Immediately after the city was founded, representatives of three monotheistic religions, Catholicism, Orthodox Christianity and Islam, moved into Sarajevo. They

¹³ For further reference consult: Borges, J.L.(1949/1983) *The Aleph*, Alianza Editorial, Madrid, Spain

¹⁴ Dzevad Karahasan (born 1953) is a Sarajevan author, theatre critic and drama lecturer at the University of Sarajevo, has three published prose works and is the editor-in-chief of *Izraz* (Expression) – Bosnian journal of literature and criticism.

spoke Bosnian, Croatian, Serbian, Hungarian, Italian, German, Turkish, Persian and Arabic. About half a century later, the Jewish population arrived in search of a shelter, escaping from Queen Isabella and King Fernando's Spanish persecution. They brought a fourth monotheistic religion and two other languages – Hebrew and Spanish. This convergence of cultures turned Sarajevo into a kind of a new Babylon and new Jerusalem, giving the entire state a specific multi-cultural life-style and supporting the rise of a particular multifaceted Herzeg-Bosnian¹⁵ culture.

It is interesting to note the three levels of isolation or the triple inwardness that have been presented to describe Bosnia and Herzegovina. The first level refers to the inward state of Bosnia and Herzegovina in an externally oriented Yugoslavia. Earlier descriptions show no foreign borders between this state and others – all of its borders were with the future Yugoslav republic¹⁶. The following level relates the city of Sarajevo's geographic location with its inward socio-cultural nature. Finally, the city centre is further isolated from the suburbs, completing the triptych of the Bosnian isolation and inwardness within its cultural, creative and artistic development. In spite of its inwardness and geographical division from the rest of the country and the world, Sarajevo quickly developed one of the most dynamic and intricate cultural systems in the country and later on, in Europe. What are the features of this cultural system?

Such a cultural system is further described as “dramatic” and its fundamental characteristic is “pluralism”. A dramatic cultural system is diametrically opposite to many mono-cultural systems which still exist in different, apparently much more outward-looking parts of the world. Heightened cultural identification among the

¹⁵ this old adjective that is in reverse order to the name of the country was kept even in modern Serbo-Croatian language. The adjective alludes to the old name for Bosnia and Herzegovina that was Herzeg-Bosnia. This name dates to the pre-Ottoman rulership period.

¹⁶ excluding the coastline border and looking into continental borders only

contrasting factors in such a society is accurately described and linked to the creative arts through the metaphorical use of the concept of dramatic tension.

The fundamental principles of the Bosnian cultural system are similar to the principles on which drama is based. Notably, the basic relationship between the various elements of the system is tension, which means that the elements are placed in opposition to one another and linked together precisely by the opposition which defines each of them; the elements become part of the system (the larger whole), without losing their original nature, ie. the characteristics they have outside the system they constitute. Each element becomes part of the whole system by acquiring new characteristics, and not by losing any of those it had before: each of these elements is itself a "complex" whole consisting of two opposing parts.

(Karahasan, Dz., 1994, p.92.)

Karahasan's portrayal of Sarajevo as the metaphor of the world bears a direct connection with both Kusturica and Bregovic's recontextualised use of "Balkan" to artistically portray the concepts of conflict and tension. Furthermore, Karahasan suggests that on a molecular level the individual elements of this "pluralist" society can look inwardly inside itself and develop a "dialectic" system within their own conceptual split.

If the fundamental relationship in a dramatic cultural system is tension which confirms the primary nature of both actors, in a dialectic system the fundamental relationship is mutual penetration, or the containment of the lower in the higher, the weaker in the stronger. To each member of the dramatic cultural system the Other is necessary as a proof of his own identity, because his particular nature is articulated in relation to the particular nature of the Other. In the dialectically constructed system, the other is only apparently Other and actually a disguised "I". That is, the other is contained in me, since in the dialectical system (and in dialectical way of thinking), the opposing factors are actually one.

(Karahasan, Dz., 1994, p.93.)

This conceptual split within an individual element is the most important analytical tool in further outlines of the case studies (see chapters III, IV and V). I have described this phenomenon as the "inward Sarajevo principle."

The twentieth century Yugoslav musical “Patriotism” as “Nationalism” during the Socialist regime

The roots of the Yugoslav musical divisions, as traced back to the “Nationalist” period, play an important role in later perceptions of both art and popular musical genres during the modern period in the Socialist Yugoslavia.

There are two reasons why it is possible to jump from the late nineteenth–early twentieth century Nationalism in music straight to the 1980s where similar musical divisions can be found across different musical genres.

Firstly, some of the issues in the Socialist Yugoslavia spring from its unifying aspect under which all tensions remained frozen for several decades. Although the future Yugoslav states were already “pluralistic” even during the “Nationalist” period that musically started almost a decade before the formation of SFRY, their “Pluralism” was highly “dialectic” in relation to the Socialist approach. Despite the fact that the musical expression of the “Nationalist” period is “pluralistic” through its unifying art and traditional musical aesthetics and the references to the cultures other than the dominant nationality, the core of musical expression was patriotic, related to a specific national identity. Such a “patriotic” approach from this musical period becomes “nationalistic” in the eyes of the Socialist government. Secondly the musical life of Bosnia and Herzegovina was at its most resourceful during this period in SFRY.

Previous research uncovers Mokranjac as an exception of the “art music” scene through his prophetically Yugoslav vision. Likewise, Bregovic is an exception of today’s society, but it is interesting to discover that this “uncompromisingly Yugoslav” approach of the current day has its roots in the non-politically oriented

subculture with which Bregovic tried to identify himself and his band from the 1970s and 1980s.

The increasing influence of the pop and rock musical genres on the contemporary society is addressed through the discussion about Bregovic's band Bijelo dugme (White Button). The discussion and description is led with regards to the band's reliance/popularity of imports from traditional ethnic sources in rock writing and the impact that such work had on both the Yugoslav society at the time and the evolution of Bregovic's compositional language to the present day.

CHAPTER II - MUSIC AND POLITICS IN COMMUNIST AND WAR-TORN YUGOSLAVIA: Provocative and successful Genres through the ethno-rock of “White Button” and the musical endem called the “Newly Composed Folk”

Introduction

The first part of the chapter addresses the history of Bregovic’s band “White Button” taking into consideration their national and international success and the relationship between their creative work and the political situation in Yugoslavia. The second part introduces “Newly Composed Folk” (the most popular musical genre in the Communist Yugoslavia) in comparison to the folk-inspired rock of “White Button”.

“White Button¹⁷” – the most effortlessly pro-Yugoslav Rock band of all times

“White Button” was one of the most influential rock bands both in the former Yugoslavia and on the Eastern and South Eastern European music scene during the 70s and 80s. The band’s influence within the former Yugoslav borders lies in the creative reinforcement of the “pluralist” concepts of both Yugoslav and Bosnian societies as expressed in the band’s eclectic musical opus. Outside of Yugoslavia, this band quickly became the Rock ambassador of the country’s multi-culturalism, portraying the unique Yugoslav nation as an ethnic, cultural and artistic Slav-Mediterranean hybrid.

The discussion is constructed in relation to the following subjects:

the formation of the band

their fast growing popularity in the country

“White Button” and their brief film history

¹⁷ The band name is translated to “White Button” without the definite article to follow both the English tradition of naming the bands without articles (ie. Pink Floyd) and to preserve the original Serbo-Croatian flavour (There are no articles in Serbo-Croatian)

“White Button” as a spring board for Bregovic’s growing musical career

“White Button” – related band history and its connections to Bregovic’s future musical concepts

“White Button” was named on New Year’s Day 1974. But what are the origins of this group and their name?

Introduction to the band and the evolution of its musical directions are the most important links to Bregovic’s more recent film-composition career because of the recycling techniques that he continues to apply in his soundtrack music.

Bregovic’s musical history began with several years of unenthusiastic violin studies at the children’s instrumental department of the local Conservatory, after which he commenced guitar lessons in the early 60s. His explanations about the sudden interest in guitar playing and rock music are honest, natural and somewhat comical.

You were entering the world of rock’n’roll with a very simple reason – girls always preferred guitarists to car mechanics. This is exactly the same everywhere and it is no secret. Later on, those more talented players find a valid reason to stay in this business.

(Bregovic, October 2001)

Bregovic became the bass guitarist for the school-band *Izohipse* (Isohipes) in the first year of high school, but soon decided to transfer to a different department. Change of schools was followed by a change of bands, too. Bregovic moved to *Bestije* (Bitches).

Association with this band exposed Bregovic to *Kodeksi* (Codexes) one of the most prominent Sarajevan bands of that time. Zeljko Bebek, the lead singer of “Codexes” attended one of *Bestije’s* concerts together with members of *Pro Arte*, a Yugoslav soul music icon of the 60s, and noticed a young promising guitarist. Bregovic was not

entirely attracted to *Pro Arte's* visions of soul music and he quickly became much more interested in “Codexes”. His musical evolution in “Codexes” is very important for later developments in hybrid genres that include rock and folk music.

One of the crucial moments during Bregovic’s involvement with “Codexes” was the 1969 Neapolitan season during which he changed from bass to the solo guitar position in the band. This transition later took him to the lead guitarist/singer profile that continues to the present day.

Although “Codexes” arrived in Italy ready and rehearsed to play the contemporary standard cover band repertoire (ie. *Cream* repertoire) it was not long before their impresario Renato Pacifico instructed them to consider an entirely different programme of Balkan folk music, and asked them to prepare *cocek*¹⁸, *kolo*¹⁹ and other similar traditional works despite their obviously rock-oriented band configuration. Although busy with playing and adapting the traditional repertoire for rock instruments, “Codexes” were still also rehearsing their standard cover band numbers during this time. In 1970, while still in Italy, Bregovic and Bebek decided to bring two other members into the band. Shortly after this decision, musicians Zoran Redzic (guitarist) and Milic Vukasinovic (drummer) arrived from Yugoslavia. Vukasinovic’s arrival immediately started changing the musical expression of the band, as he was more driven towards the artistic expressions similar to *Black Sabbath* and *Led Zeppelin*. The band, having so far followed the commercial repertoire, took on this musical adventure with great enthusiasm, but this stylistic change soon proved to be a growing difficulty for the lead vocalist Bebek. This stylistic input is also significant

¹⁸ Cocek is a moderately fast dance in a duple time, mainly associated with the *Roma* minority in ex-Yugoslavia, particularly Macedonia. It is a line dance, dancers hold hands, their arms bent in the elbow and are lifted up thus forming V shape (both arms are in W shape.) For further information access: <http://www.sacredcircles/THEDANCE/HTML/DANCEPAG/COCEK>

¹⁹ the traditional ring dance of moderate to fast speed danced in Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Macedonia

for Bregovic's development as a rock guitarist, as it improved his perception of the popular Western rock music of the time and helped him develop clearer frameworks for his already evolving ideas about the hybridity of rock and traditional music.

The stylistic change led Bebek to leave "Codexes" in the autumn of 1970 while Bregovic, Redzic and Vukasinovic remained together, returning to Yugoslavia the same winter. The trip to Italy was very significant for Bregovic's future work as it gave him a clearer perspective about the interests that the neighbouring countries (Italy in particular) always had in the traditional Balkan music. Such trips and international gigs were also the best external contact points for artists from the inwardly oriented Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Bregovic met guitarist Ismet Arnautlic in 1971 and they formed a new band *Jutro* (Morning). This band consisted of the three old members of ex-"Codexes" and Arnautlic. In "Morning" Bregovic began experimenting with composition for the first time in his musical career. Despite the bad dynamics from the 1970-71 Italian season, the members of "Morning" started recording with the former singer of "Codexes", Bebek, again in 1972. Bebek made his return to ex-"Codexes" now "Morning" and recorded five songs including the famous big hit single *Kad bi' bio bijelo dugme* (If I Was a White Button) that also determined the final band name.

Guitarist Arnautlic left the band in 1972 and took with him the authorisation rights to use the group name "Morning". Bregovic and the other members tried to fight the case and most of 1973 went by in endless debates about that authorisation. During this time the ex-"Morning" members found two new players, Vlado Pravdic (keyboardist) and Goran "Ipe" Ivandic (drummer) and perfected some of the recordings of the previously existing materials. They still needed a band name.

Arnautlic's "Morning" was functioning from Ljubljana, and the audiences were already familiar with the hit single *Kad bi' bio bijelo dugme* (If I Was a White Button) so the ex-"Codexes", ex-"Morning" members opted this catchy visual symbol as their new name.

The band was baptised *Bijelo dugme* (White Button) on 1st January 1974.

"White Button" – the favourite musical button on every Yugoslav's coat

Rejected by a Sarajevo-based recording house *Diskoton* in 1974, "White Button" members signed a five-year contract with *Jugoton*, the most prestigious Yugoslav recording company. Shortly after signing the contract, the band embarked on their first collaboration with a famous Yugoslav poet Dusko Trifunovic. His poems *Glavni junak jedne knjige* (The Main Character From One Book) and *Bila mama Kukunka, bio tata Taranta* (There was Once Mamma Kukunka, There Was Once Daddy Taranta) quickly became the band's new hit singles. These collaborative choices exemplify Bregovic's strongly text-based musical tendencies and his interest in work with the intricacies of poetic language.

During the recording of these singles, contrary to the standard rules and regulations, Bregovic signed a double deal with both *Jugoton* and *Diskoton*. This scandalous move made the band into an absolute headline and actually helped them sell the records from both sources.

In May of 1974, they appeared at the Slovenian-based rock spectacle *BOOM Festival* and won the hearts of Yugoslav audiences across the entire country. "White Button" was becoming the best Yugoslav band faster than the members were even realising it. The first album *Kad bi' bio bijelo dugme* (If I Was a White Button) was officially released in October 1974.

The 1974 *Festival of Skopje* performance in Macedonia was one of the band's early attempts to declare their absolutely multi-culturally Yugoslav and non-political orientation, and they chose to perform a work by Grigor Koprov, a prominent Macedonian text-writer of the time. The band's musical attempt to declare their all-nation-loving Yugoslav identity also remains one of their more embarrassing career-moves. Although Serbo-Croatian and Macedonian languages are very similar, Zeljko Bebek's performance of the song was always described as very awkward.

Croatian journalist Drazen Vrdoljak describes "White Button" as *pastirski rock* (shepherdic rock) during this time. This expression has two possible meanings. "Shepherdic" in its derogatory form in Serbo-Croatian language alludes to tastelessness and lack of sophistication, sensitivity and precision. From this angle, Vrdoljak may have been addressing the awkwardness of Bebek's vocal performance in Macedonian language. More positively, "Shepherdic Rock" might have simply been a clear allusion to the band's growing musical orientation towards traditional Yugoslav materials. This expression remains a somewhat mysterious yet highly accurate description that combines both the 1974 festival performance and the continuing stylistic musical tendencies of the band.

Bregovic made it to the top four in the 1975 *Kongres Rock majstora* (Congress of Rock Masters). "Congress of rock masters" is a yearly presentation of prominent rock guitarists in the country for both solo artists and band members. The aim of the event is to uncover four of the country's best guitarists. Bregovic's achievement propelled the profile of the band even more, but also put him even higher in the rock music hierarchy.

The other congress advantage is the recording opportunity that it provides for these four players. Each of the four chosen guitarists records a side on a double album.

Bregovic chose to work with his band in collaboration with the string quartet from Zagreb. This was one of the first collaborations with classical music ensembles – such collaboration later becomes Bregovic’s artistic signature in film composition.

The retrospective compilation album from 1976 included works by “White Button” as existing since 1974, and some materials by “Morning” during their various musical stages and ensemble configurations. This album also exemplifies the stylistic evolution with regards to the band’s growing folkloric tendencies in rock writing. The new album *Eto bas hocu* (So, I Really Want To) released in December 1976 includes one of the most famous Yugoslav rock ballads *Lose vino* (Bad Wine) performed by Zdravko Colic who even today remains one of the leading solo pop-rock artists in Yugoslavia and Bregovic’s favourite film collaborator²⁰.

Bregovic wrote the soundtrack for Patrice Chereau’s film adaptation of Alexander Dumas’ play *Queen Margot* almost twenty years after the release of “Bad Wine” and made Colic the most memorable performer on the soundtrack compilation through compositions such as *Rondinella* and *Ruda Neruda* (see Chapter V.)

Despite the success of the 1977 Polish tour, the band was going through an enormous internal turmoil and this year marked their first weak point in the four-year period since their formation. This led the members to play a free concert that was also described as Bregovic’s farewell to the fans before going to compulsory army service. The concert, which was the band’s attempt to calm down the raging internal group dynamics, was held on 28th August 1977 near *Hajducka cesma* (literally translates to the Rebel’s Tap – a small fountain at one of the central squares in Belgrade, Yugoslavia). *Koncert kod Hajducke cesme* (The Concert at the Rebel’s Tap) was

²⁰ for further information about Colic’s impact on the band and why he never actually became the lead singer of “White Button” consult the 1997 on-line *Heineken Rock Interview*, available from: <http://www.bijelodugme.trc/>

recorded on the day and soon became an album with the similar name. This was an absolute success with over 27,000 audience members. One part of this incredible atmosphere was documented in Mica Milosevic's film *Nije nego* (Nevertheless).

The 1979 album *Bitanga i princeza* (A Thug and a Princess) featured the hit-single *Na zadnjem sjedistu moga auta* (On the Backseat of My Car). This song is heard in its American appropriation *In the Deathcar* as a part of the Arizona Dream soundtrack (see Chapter IV.) Bregovic wrote his first soundtrack for Aleksandar Mandic's film *Licne stvari* (Personal Affairs, 1979).

The 1980 album *Doživjeti stotu* (To Live for a Hundred Years) marks a slight change of the band style: instead of their usual group view as expressed through the music, this recording is a collection of more personal individual colourings and opinions. Bregovic's interests in traditional music are particularly accentuated in this compilation.

In 1982, "White Button" played 41 concerts in Bulgaria. This tour exposed Bregovic to the traditional music of the neighbouring Bulgaria and its strong vocal traditions that have inspired so much of his later film music.

The self-titled album *Bijelo dugme* (White Button, 1984) wrapped in a controversial album cover featuring the painting of *Kosovka devojka* (The Maiden from Kosovo) is the band's most explicit return to the roots of traditional music. The accentuated folk tendencies are exemplified in collaborations with the *Jugoslovenski orkestar tradicionalnih instrumenata* (Yugoslav Orchestra of Traditional Instruments) and the traditional female vocal ensemble, *Ladarice*²¹. The hit single, *Da te Bogdo ne volim* (I Wish to God I Didn't Love You), was later recycled in the making of the

²¹ Ladarice is an unaccompanied female vocal ensemble, quite similar to the Bulgarian singers that still frequently feature in Bregovic's film music.

Arizona Dream soundtrack into Iggy Pop's *In the Deathcar* (see Chapters IV and VI.) The album also includes the band's most famous ethno-rock number *Lipe cvatu* (Blossoms Bloom), embodying both their familiar rock sound and the musical expression of the Macedonian zurnas and Serbian bass drums. "White Button's" "Shepherdic Rock"²² has reached a mature and sophisticated level by this stage.

Bregovic continues his experimental hybrids of rock and folk music on the 1986 album *Pljuni i zapjevaj moja Jugoslavijo* (Spit and Sing My Yugoslavia). This album also includes two important songs that appeared later in his soundtrack opus. *Haj'mo u planine* (Let's Go to the Mountains) became *Get the Money* in the *Arizona Dream* soundtrack (see Chapter IV). *Nocas je k'o lubenica pun mjesec iznad Bosne* (The Moon Over Bosnia is as Big and Round as a Watermelon Tonight) was arranged into an instrumental titled *La chasse* (The Hunt) in the *Queen Margot* soundtrack (see Chapter V.)

The last album *Ciribiribela* (1988) was released during the period when the situation in SFRY became undoubtedly politically tense with no quick or simple resolutions forthcoming. "White Button" offered another amazing album wrapped, this time, in an almost prophetically controversial cover with an image of "Noah's Boat", as if to clearly suggest the Biblical floods which will soon sweep the country in the form of a civil war.

The hit from this album is an old Gypsy theme, *Djurdjevdan* (St. George's Day), the future theme song for Kusturica's film, *Time of the Gypsies* (see Chapter III). "St. George's Day" remains one of those unbeatable hits of Yugoslav music that can

²² referring back to Drazen Vrdoljak's comment about the performance at the festival of Skopje (see earlier in the section)

still today make those who know it laugh, cry, table-dance and smash plates and glasses immediately upon hearing this tune.

The number of ingredients in Bregovic's ever-growing hybrid art increases through collaborative work with the *Hor Srpske Pravoslavne Crkve* (Choir of Serbian Orthodox Church), members of *Prvo beogradsko pevacko drustvo* (Belgrade's First Singing Society) and a singing group called *Klapa Trogir* (The Trogir Ensemble). Some of his musical gestures from this album begin the creative formulae displayed in his later film composition.

After the last album *Ciribiribela*, Bregovic continues developing his career as a film composer re-starting²³ with projects such as Kusturica's *Time of the Gypsies*.

With the war breaking out, Bregovic leaves the country, together with his compatriot director Kusturica shortly after their collaboration on the film *Arizona Dream* in 1992.

"The war in the former-Yugoslavia just exploded." Bregovic remembers. "Emir and I escaped to America to take the film. Then we met again in Paris, with many friends from Sarajevo. Yes, friends: intellectuals and artists of the pacific and cultured Bosnia, blown away by the grenades. The old comrades of the clubs where Kusturica showed his early films and played the bass in a punk band."

(Bregovic in Fabretti, 2003)

"White Button" and the politics of Pop and Rock music in the Communist Yugoslavia during the 1970S and 1980S

Bregovic has said that singing in the rock band was the only way to express his opposition to the government without risking jail time in then – communist Yugoslavia.

(Chernov, 2002)

Although the focus of the discussion is the album and the title song *Pljuni i zapjevaj moja Jugoslavijo* (Spit and Sing My Yugoslavia, 1986), "White Button's" work has been the subject of Socialist censorship on several occasions since the 70s.

²³ alluding to the brief soundtrack experience from the 70s

The 1979 album, *Bitanga i princeza* (A Thug and a Princess), is one of the best known examples.

Firstly, the album cover where a young woman is kicking a guy between the legs was rejected. The most beautiful ballad *Sve ce to mila moja pokriti snijegovi, ruzmarin i sas* (Snow, Rosemary and Grass Will Cover Everything My Darling) included a controversial line *A Hrist je bio kopile i jad* (And Christ was a bastard child and misery). The line was altered by changing the noun into a personal pronoun to *A On je bio kopile i jad* (And He was a bastard child and misery). The non-political “White Button” provoked constant political attention from the Yugoslav government.

The album “Spit and Sing My Yugoslavia”, wrapped in yet another provocative cover featuring a painting of a Chinese Modern Revolutionary Dance, was Bregovic’s musical attempt to gather all Yugoslav public enemies in one place. This album can also be viewed as the band’s musical reawakening to the idea of brotherhood and unity during the increase of political instability in their home country. Perhaps the idea of so many “apparently” public enemies was either meant to urge the people to stay together or to realise that the concept of brotherhood and unity was in some instances a pure farce, an idea imposed on the people by the law.

The album opens with a World War II revolutionary number of the oppressed Yugoslav people *Padaj silo i nepravdo* (Fall You Force and Injustice) that is sung by an exiled war hero Svetozar Vukmanovic-Tempo and a choir of children from the orphanage “Ljubica Ivezic” in Sarajevo.

The very album title together with the theme song of the same name carried certain provocation. Bregovic frequently comments²⁴ that this phrase had all the Communist

²⁴ Popovic, P., On the Ruins of Bregovic's Yugoslavia, 14/01/1996 available from http://meri.yurope.com/zines/SAM/arhiva_2/0004.html Accessed on 10/11/2003

committees discussing whether the phrase alluded to the positive Socialist thought of spitting on your hands or it meant “the other bad thing²⁵?”

The Serbo-Croatian expression “spit on your hands and get to work” is the equivalent of the English saying “roll up your sleeves and get to work.” “Spit And Sing My Yugoslavia”, with its optional negative translation alludes to shame and degrading qualities of its apparently peaceful call for “brotherhood and unity” which is actually imposed by the law. Southern Slavs from the Balkans spit only when utterly outraged or disgusted. “The other bad thing” suggests the disgrace of spitting on hands – the most intimate symbol of human labour²⁶.

Another interlude of tension between “White Button” and the Socialist Yugoslav government took place in 1976. After the release of *Retrospektivna kompilacija* (Retrospective Compilation), the band members were planning a trip to the United States and some possible performances for the Yugoslav migrants in America, but the government was very suspicious of this decision. Aware of the possible accusation of a “pro-Western orientation”, Bregovic made a wise diplomatic move and went on work experience with the entire band. This work experience was common in the Socialist regime countries after World War II, and it was designed to assist the post-war rebuilding of the destroyed regions, involving different types of construction work and even physical labour. Such an exceptionally patriotic move by the entire band served as a powerful shield against any “pro-Western orientation accusations”,

²⁵ this is an example of the fickle nature of symbolism that points to something that is tangible enough for an aware listener to translate into particular codes, but is also abstract enough not to land the composer in prison or worse, the expression (“the other bad thing”) itself is an example of the Socialist censorship as expressed through lack of freedom of speech

²⁶ Although still in primary school at the time, I vividly remember the release of the album. I attended a “White Button” concert in 1987. The youth of Yugoslavia, and particularly Bosnia and Herzegovina loved the album, loved this band and the fact that we were celebrating our Bosnian “pluralism”. The band had a habit of starting the concerts with the Yugoslav national anthem, and we all danced and sang along –perhaps only because we were disempowered.

and although they gave up on the idea of playing concerts, all members still travelled to the United States later that year.

I remember that we went on work experience to bring some discipline into the whole thing. I don't know why but I do believe in structure, in a frame for things. Especially in a frame for human freedom. So I don't know what exactly we were doing during that time, but I had an unexplainable need to return somewhere where there was that frame constructed for us, a smaller frame than the one we would have enjoyed. I thought we needed it for something. We went for work experience and worked, not played during this time. Still today I think that this was somehow useful. Regardless of how we look at those Socialist Actions today, from the current perspective, we used those instances for private reasons and you could even say for recreation.

(Bregovic, November 2001)

Bregovic always referred to a duality between the Yugoslav political situation and the conditions under which the artists were creating during the 70s and 80s. From his interviews we find out that, despite his totally pro-Yugoslav attitude, he found the Yugoslav idea of “brotherhood and unity”, as pushed to the people by the government, completely artificial and over-the-top.

But since we are talking about that kitsch I must say it was always so cute I could not have been nasty about it. I loved his leather coat that turns a man directly into a statue. Things have gone in and out of cupboards, but that leather coat in which you immediately become a human statue stayed, I kept that one maybe even for ten years. I got a watch from Zdravko Colic –a holographic portrait of Tito appears and disappears on the watch-face. My mum loved dressing like Jovanka (Tito's wife) wearing her hair in a bun.

(Bregovic, November, 2001)

“His leather coat that immediately turns a man into a statue” refers to President Tito's coat, which gave him a rather austere look. Such coats, very much like the Nazi coats during World War II, were suddenly highly fashionable in Yugoslavia. It is interesting to observe how Bregovic relates to these items, as if they are theatre props intentionally generating a particular pro-Communist appeal.

Like in many other communist countries, the Yugoslav presidential couple was more than politically influential: they were immediately two cultural icons setting examples for the nation. Jovanka, Tito's wife, was a tall dark woman, with thick black hair, always up in a high bun and, as Bregovic suggests, all women tried to hold themselves like she did.

The most interesting of all is the mention of the watch with Tito's holographic face on it. This watch appears in Kusturica's film *Underground* (see Chapter III, Kusturica's film featuring another Bregovic soundtrack). Both the title and the filmsetting are powerful metaphors for the Yugoslav leader Tito's attempt to freeze the apparent ethnic tensions.

Fashion was, together with the arts, formed through a politically influenced framework that suggested a particular life-style with specific behavioural codes. Communal consciousness was framed by the political orientation of the dominant ideology. Bregovic's description of the particular Socialist-style fashion and Kusturica's metaphoric application of these items as theatrical devices portray the restrictions and the human/art/fashion-laboratory that was created to support the politically endorsed communal thinking.

Bregovic's descriptions suggest a similar kind of "love-hate" relationship like that of the "inward-outward" Yugoslav nation. Every state was influenced by the neighbouring foreign countries, but also continuously aimed towards artistic and cultural reunion with its other Yugoslav compatriots. Bregovic described the events of the past as "Socialist kitsch" but used the work experience as recreation together with political reasons. He ridiculed the President's military attire, but kept a similar coat in his wardrobe.

Subculture – the Third Option

According to the Bosnian writer and critic, Tarik Jusic there are five categories that define aspects and roles of rock music in the Communist countries:

- *A rehearsal for the future revolution*
- *Self-organisation of the repressed society*
- *A specific medium of articulation of disenfranchised population and an alternative public sphere outside of state control*
- *A form of identification of disoriented youth in conditions of the collapsing Communist societies*
- *A specific form of national identification in multinational Communist societies such as the former Yugoslavia and USSR*

(Jusic, 2003)

Jusic's first point suggests rock music as a rehearsal for the potential revolution. The ideology of "White Button" exposes the constrictive nature of both Jusic's analytical framework and the political situation in Yugoslavia. Their non-political approach to music led them to creatively explore highly politically ticklish subjects that, regardless of their actual artistic symbolism, could never avoid the attention of the Yugoslav secret police.

Bregovic has always proclaimed the band's lack of interest in politics, although it is virtually impossible to separate politics from any aspect of life in South- Eastern Europe.

So how can we perceive Bregovic's musical views through Jusic's analytical framework?

The best things staying in the culture at the end of the millennium are those that came from the subculture. Culture comes from something with which it is terribly connected, and that is politic and less and less people want to be involved in it. However, when you enter a subculture anything is possible. At least that is how I feel about things and where I see them going.

(Bregovic, 2003)

All arts were observed primarily through their relationship to and portrayal of the political regime during the time of Socialism. According to the hard line division that suggests the *pro* and *anti* or streams, it is possible to say that Bregovic explored the third option which would be *senza* or “without”. Such an option is either completely impossible or is perceived as an implicit version of *anti* under the political circumstances of the time. Bregovic’s “subcultural” implications point to the peaceful basis of a future revolution that due to the circumstances appeared as highly unlikely.

“Spit And Sing My Yugoslavia”, is a song with interesting lyrics that could be translated in many different ways.

“Jugoslavijo, na noge,

Pjevaj nek te cuju,

Ko ne slusa pjesmu,

Slusace oluju.”

“Yugoslavia, get up,

Sing let them hear you,

Those who won't listen to the song

Will listen to the storms.”

(Bregovic, 1986)

Closer to the present day, this chorus line was frequently described as a prophetic rock statement during the Yugoslav civil war, but what was its meaning during the period when it was written?

Although it is possible to look at this music politically, the majority of the Yugoslav youth actually addressed music like this (and music in general) as an alternative to being politically involved.

“Those who don’t listen to the song will listen to the storms” suggested the disempowered state of the Yugoslav youth trying to find a politics-free sphere.

“The third option” concept also exemplifies Jusic’s second and third analytical points according to which rock music is seen as a form of organisation of the

repressed societies and as an alternative sphere outside of state control. The two points actually support each other – initial organisation of the repressed society starts in the alternative sphere, even if the sphere is of a projected or imaginative order. Bregovic's work with "White Button" shows many such examples prior to the album "Spit And Sing My Yugoslavia".

The success of the song *Kosovska* (From Kosovo) stopped Bregovic from leaving the band in 1983. The entire text for the song *Kosovska* was written and performed in Albanian language. According to the Socialist outlook, the song can be perceived as a musical commentary about the growing political and ethnic tensions that were already apparent in the autonomous province of Kosovo, but Bregovic has always denied this explanation. He talks about meeting Albanians while serving in the Army and how they always sung in the Albanian language in the dormitory. Because of this one song in Albanian, Bregovic claims to still today get free *burek* (traditional Turkish pastry with meat or vegetables) in an Albanian *buregdzinica* (pastry shop) in Zagreb²⁷.

In his final two points about rock and politics, Jusic discusses the tools of identification for both the young generation in the collapsing Communist societies and of national identification in the multi-cultural societies such as USSR and ex-Yugoslavia. Both types of identification as expressed through the music of "White Button" show that the band was creatively celebrating the "pluralism" of the Yugoslav and particularly Bosnian societies. Bregovic discusses "White Button" as the musical parallel of the multi-ethnic Yugoslavia. The disintegration of the band and the country are historically and politically synchronised.

²⁷ Taken from: Popovic, P., On the Ruins of Bregovic's Yugoslavia, 14/01/1996, translated by the author, available from http://meri.yurope.com/zines/SAM/arhiva_2/0004.htm Accessed on 10/11/2003).

From this distance a person could look at some parallel events. Back then, who could imagine that the things in Yugoslavia would go like that! The problems were probably visible. Now I can't imagine "White Button" even if it didn't have any connections with me. Not a band like that under these circumstances. That is something that simply went naturally in the given time.

(Bregovic in Popovic, 1996)

Bregovic always openly discussed his artistic intention and interest in the multiplicity of the Balkan nation as well as the more functional aspects behind some of the production choices that he made during the period with "White Button":

I grew up among Serbs, Croats and Muslims. The rest of my life continues under similar circumstances. I was listed in Slovenia because of the most favourable tax amounts. I loved Sarajevo more than anything else on the face of the Earth, longed for that city whenever I was away for an extended period of time, but it was stupid to pay so much tax there.

(Bregovic, November 2001)

If the political disinterest of "White Button" was translated as a potential anti-government orientation what were some of the successful musical genres in the country during the peak of the band's career?

Popular Folk- an Endemic Musical Virus of Yugoslavia

Immediately after Tito's death, Yugoslav togetherness was crowned in a "masterpiece" (even "musical idiots" produce masterpieces!), in the new style "folk song" Yugoslavia, which the entire country sang ad nauseam, just as if it sensed its forthcoming disintegration. The song gushed out of all the radio stations, television screens, out of the remotest village inns, people hummed the song on the street, it resounded at football stadia. The lethargic pulse of the Yugoslav community was quickened by the adrenalin shot of that cheap, folksy anthem.

(Ugresic, 1994, p. 11.)

The impact that "the newly composed folk songs" has on the development of the popular Yugoslav genres is addressed with consideration to the following aspects:

- the styles and subject matters of "the Newly Composed Folk songs";
- their impact on the society and on the other artists and musical genres in the country.

The discussion focuses on the concept of “unity” as proposed by “the Newly Composed Folk Music”. This is a popular genre like “Pop” or “Rock” – it is the musical style of the common people that tells the stories of their lives and of patriotism towards Yugoslavia, globally. “Newly Composed Folk Music” was not itself a political genre; it quietly supported the system from which it had grown.

Almost everything about this genre is summed up in the opening quote; “the Newly Composed Folk Music” advocated cultural unity at the same time that the multi-ethnic Yugoslavia was inexorably fragmenting.

It is possible to say that this genre about the common people’s problems used the “Socialist kitsch” framework of stereotypical expression of communal consciousness to address personal matters.

More importantly “the Newly Composed Folk Music” was also a façade for the growing national turmoil during the pre-war years in Yugoslavia. One of the most famous songs from this genre, *Jugoslavija* (Yugoslavia) was both an absolute national anthem and the main entertainment attraction for all foreign tourists.

In this respect, “the Newly Composed Folk Music” remains in total opposition to the popular genres (i.e. rock) and to the music of “White Button” in particular. “White Button’s” celebration of the pluralism in the Yugoslav society, propelled through their emotional, cultural and artistic rather than political connection to the country, exposed rather than camouflaged many political conditions and accentuated the absurdity of “the newly composed folk music” as a façade for the changing political dynamics.

Ugresic discusses the absurdity of the Yugoslav “new folk” obsession and of its immediate impact on most of the foreign tourists.

Tanned, with burning eyes and strained veins on their necks, the English tourists were singing at the top of their voices, "Jugoslavijooo, Jugoslavijooo", joyfully stumbling over such refrains as Od Triglavaaaa, do Vardaraaa (which, of course, described the beauties of Yugoslavia and its geographical unity). Enchanted with Yugoslavia, the English tourists promised that they would come again the following year, they demanded that my acquaintance supply them with cassettes and before they left they danced the traditional ring dance!

(Ugresic, 1994, p.12.)

Once absurd and façade-like, "the Newly Composed Folk Music" developed a completely different role during the turbulent period of the Yugoslav civil war and became a kind of glue among the different ethnicities of the once complex and "proud of it" Yugoslav nation. This genre projected that remaining shared passion even during the most difficult times of raging national hatred.

On an individual level, we see a similar situation occurring with Bregovic as a contemporary composer. Just as he remains one of the few "uncompromisingly Yugoslav" artists in today's ethnically divided-society, "the Newly Composed Folk Music" remains favoured across different states (now countries) of the former Yugoslavia.

"The Newly Composed Folk Music" was born and raised in Yugoslavia. It was there when the Yugoslavs obtained their first radios, their first televisions and refrigerators, to speak in the vernacular language of the common people and watch over their pains, happiness, losses and triumphs, over love and grief, families and friends.

This music was like the Bible and the Koran of the Southern Slavs: it covered all subjects and if something had not been sung about by the "folksy-divas" or "folksy-masters" that was probably because it had not happened yet (very much like the description of the Indian Mahabharata).

With its flexibility and adaptability, this musical genre was quickly in danger of being misused as virtually everyone and anyone had a fair share of “the Newly Composed Folk” in the former Yugoslavia. This faithful companion of the ordinary man was quickly adapted during the periods of political changes in the country. Being what it is, a highly mobile form sensitive to all aspects of its society, “the Newly Composed Folk Music” quickly became political propaganda and soon also the musical assistant of the war industry. National leaders and their political agendas were transformed into sung verses that were accessible to and understandable by a common man.

However, the most wanted war criminals in the former Yugoslavia remain listed in the media, namely the newspapers, television and radio. “Newly Composed Folk Music” is not high on this list of war criminals. Why not?

Its form and purpose suggest a very self-evident answer: for every possible nationalistic song or a number about war propaganda, there was a song of hope for peace and reconciliation, a song to soothe the pain. Even to the present day, when so much has been destroyed in the former Yugoslavia, countless cities, towns and villages, not to mention the number of human victims of the war, “the Newly Composed Folk” lives on. The song which drove people to war is now transformed into lament sung over these people’s graves: the melodies of hatred that separated the neighbours are now hummed in refugee camps and the song which once encouraged hatred now blames unhappy faith for everything.

Fifteen years ago, one could have called it “a song for every occasion” understanding the cheapness of its context in relation to its artistic integrity. Today one feels the sadness and understands the black humour behind the phrase “a song for every occasion.”

Different genres and their musical intention: issues of musical purpose and musical essence – “The Psychology of Hybridity”

Both, “the Newly Composed Folk” and rock with traditional elements (frequently labelled as “ethno-rock”) are mixtures of traditional elements and contemporary musical genres, but what are the fundamental differences between them?

“The Newly Composed Folk Music” is a somewhat shallow attempt to urbanise the traditional sound and place it into an unnatural context that alienates it from its purposes and origins. Despite the fact that this musical genre was and still is highly appealing to the general Yugoslav musical audiences, it simply takes the folkloric tradition outside of its time and appropriate contextual frameworks.

Such extraction from its usual environment is not stylistically successful because “the Newly Composed Folk Music” is not a new hybrid form and therefore it doesn’t really dialogue with the traditional concepts. So instead of folk, the listener is left with the music written in the last few decades by contemporary text writers, orchestrators and arrangers who use *folk trikovi*²⁸ to embody the traditional sound in “the Newly Composed Yugoslav Folk.” Although folk treated by contemporary writers and arrangers must of its very nature be a form of hybridity (even if unintentionally so) the concept labelled as “the psychology of hybridity” does not only address the technical aspect of orchestrating, arranging and stylistic musical appropriations. Because of further discussion of hybridity and fusion in Bregovic’s soundtrack genre, this concept addresses the sociological and cultural dialogue among the fused styles as the basic premise for hybridity.

²⁸ Folk tricks – a Yugoslav expression used to describe the ways in which the creators of newly composed folk steal and plagiarise motives and ornaments from traditional music and insert it into new folk.

With its roots in story-telling, folk music informs of traditions and customs from the life of an ordinary folk. The best known function of traditional music is the creative communication that is achieved in such genres through rich aural traditions.

Lack of both, musical purpose and hybrid-qualities between the fused contemporary and traditional elements makes “the Newly Composed Folk” impersonal on an emotional and cultural level. It also shows that the *folk trikovi* are only skin deep and that there are no strategies and techniques for plagiarising the real emotional intensity of folk music. Why did the audiences love them so much and why was it described as people’s music?

Pure traditional music of any culture is a complex musical genre with an enormous sociological value in ethno-cultural studies. This musical genre forms a sound laboratory of ethno-cultural issues about a given culture and ideology. The common factor in both “Western Art Music” and “folk music” is that most audiences are initially not great fans of these musical genres. Most of these audiences become increasingly more interested in both, the traditional music of their culture and “Western Art Music” as they grow into more experienced, mature and informed listeners.

“The Newly Composed Folk” offers an easy musical escapade into the quasi-folk world where the ethno-cultural issues of the traditional musical rhetoric are lightened-up by the entertainment qualities of this musical genre and are therefore less confronting for all audiences.

What is the psychology of hybridity in the style sometimes described as “ethno-rock”?

The development of “ethno-pop” and “ethno-rock” in the former Yugoslavia was a form of musical rebuilding of “Nationalism” in music through the use of popular genres.

The ethno-rock and ethno-pop were the new generation’s musical acknowledgment of the traditional music and acceptance of their musical roots through hybrid creations. The entire concept is parallel to “Nationalism” in “Western Art Music”. These “ethno-pop” and “ethno-rock” musicians made their musical beginnings with the Western pop and rock musical models as their basis and, just like the “Nationalist” composers in the latter part of “Romanticism”, they began declaring national identity and cultural heritage through assertion of the traditional sound in their music.

Regardless of their intentions, “White Button” did assist the development of the nationally aware popular culture together with many other Yugoslav bands (ie. Macedonian group *Leb i sol* [Bread’n’Salt]) that openly acknowledged the traditional resources in their music.

“The Newly Composed Folk” managed to obscure the traditional sound through cheap renditions that apparently united folk music with the popular culture. The so-called “Shepherdic Rock” as compared with “the Newly Composed Folk” remains a more significant contribution to the introduction of traditional music in the popular genres than does popularising folk music.

What I have called “the order of hybridising” enables the composer to create more conceptually integrated hybrids that lead to new sophisticated genres suitable for stylistic composition (ie. soundtrack writing). “The order of hybridising” refers to the concept of a retrospective creative outlook on different musical genres – from rock as

a world accepted Western musical phenomenon to the traditional music of any individual culture.

This “order of hybridising” is missing in “the Newly Composed Folk” – there is no retrospective outlook on the involved musical styles and their dialogical qualities. “The Newly Composed Folk” music fails to popularise traditional music without clear acknowledgment of the socio-cultural points of identification between these styles because it imposes the contemporary elements onto the traditional basis without developing the bridging or pivotal materials where these two genres may actually meet.

Bands like “White Button” took the traditional materials as beginnings of the national and cultural musical language of Yugoslavia and related it to the developing musical language of their day –popular culture. Bregovic’s history in different bands exemplifies how this concept become applicable in his work – from the *Cream* and Jimmy Hendrix covers to the traditional repertoire during his Italian gigs with “Codexes” to the “Balkanised Rock” with “White Button” and the traditional Gypsy music in his more recent band career.

With his “musical feeding-ground stretching from Istanbul to Budapest²⁹” and his musical experience ranging from Hendrix, *Cream* and *Led Zeppelin* to *cocek* and *kolo*, Bregovic developed complex forms that quickly became more applicable in wider context of stylistic composition (ie. From rock-band contexts to films from different countries /traditions /cultures). The success of such music resides in Bregovic’s ability to fuse popular Western styles (and their identification with the youth culture) with a wide and sophisticated variety of traditional styles (that also bear political/social/identity for the listeners across different cultures).

²⁹ see Chapter I about the relevant history of the Balkans

Bregovic's metaphoric use of the traditional materials with naturally encoded socio-cultural and political implications makes these forms close to the theatrical world of character development and dramatic circumstances commonly used by filmmakers.

CHAPTER III - GYPSY FILMS AND RELATED SOUNDTRACKS: culture specific genres as bases for further conceptual frameworks

Introduction

This chapter consists of two sections. The first part addresses the development of Gypsy related films in Yugoslavia during the final stages of the dissolution of its communist regime. The second part is a specific case study of a feature film, *Time of the Gypsies*.

Gypsy films in Yugoslavia

The fall of the Iron Curtain marked some significant differences in the artistic representation of Gypsy-related subjects in Balkan and Eastern European countries. Gypsy-related subjects are rarely featured in any art forms (specifically in films) prior to the dissolution of Communism. When Gypsies were present, the exploited themes addressed their cultural rather than socio-political and economic life within the dominant ideology. Generally Gypsies were over-romantically presented, whether positively (as prodigy musicians, fortune-tellers, alluring dancers, etc.) or negatively (as alcoholics, baby-stealers, street beggars, etc). Communism promoted films with themes about the national heroes so Gypsies, together with Jewish people, were mentioned only with regards to the Nazi persecution of these minority groups.

As the most progressive Communist country,³⁰ ex-Yugoslavia has been the motherland of two very successful films about the Gypsies, prior to Kusturica's work. These were Aleksandar Petrovic's *Skupljaci perja*³¹ (I Have Even Met Happy

³⁰ Although under the Socialist regime, Yugoslavia was not in the Eastern Block, it belonged to the movement known as the "Countries of Non-Aligned". The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) started as a group of countries refused to side with either USSR or USA during the Cold War. For more information access: http://www.hindustantimes.com/2003/Apr/07/674_225042_003100040001.htm

³¹ Synopsis: The director offers a poetic look into the multi-cultural Northern Serbia and the life of its Gypsy minority. The plot follows the lives, struggles and love affairs of several characters involved in intricate tragi-comic relationships full of love, hatred, affection, betrayal and forgiveness. For further information access: http://www.ce-review.org/00/14/kinoeye41_partridge.html

Gypsies, 1967) and Goran Paskaljevic's *Andjeo Cuvar*³² (Guardian Angel, 1987). Kusturica's *Dom za vesanje* (Time of the Gypsies, 1989) was the first internationally acknowledged film to highlight the Roma culture.

The fall of the Iron Curtain marked the beginning of significant changes in all artistic disciplines including the film industry. Directors started taking extra steps toward more authentic representations of the Gypsies.

Gabor suggests that there are four reasons for the extra-steps that were taken towards the film representation of the Gypsies after the fall of the Iron Curtain:

- *significant increase of numbers of Gypsies in the last twenty years (1980s-2000);*
- *dissolution of Communism around 1989 which has resulted in further Gypsy migration to Non-Roma lands, such as to the Western and Northern Europe;*
- *increasing political mobilisation within the Euro-Gypsy communities;*
- *as the media has been freed from the Communist censorship, Western and Eastern distribution networks have intersected their territories, bringing Gypsy topics to the audiences that were not previously familiar with them.*

(Gabor, 2003, pp.8-9)

Emir Kusturica – *Gadjo Dilo*³³ of the Yugoslav Film Scene

Gadjo (in singular) or *Gadje* (in plural) is a Romany word that describes a foreigner or stranger, primarily signifying that this person is not a Gypsy. This expression is quite descriptive of the Sarajevan director Kusturica who is not of Gypsy origin himself, but who has portrayed issues of this minority group with a lot of love and compassion. Kusturica's obsession with the *Roma* culture in Yugoslavia led to the prominence of this subject matter in his films. Bregovic became his soundtrack composer during this period, which coincided with the release of the last

³² Synopsis: A young social worker follows the life of a Gypsy child. This case becomes a window into an entire underground sub-culture of child trade that still exists between Yugoslavia and Italy. For further information [access:http://www.gerila.com/video/katalog/3v.htm](http://www.gerila.com/video/katalog/3v.htm)

³³ *Gadjo Dilo*- a crazy foreigner in Gypsy language, this expression is world famous from Tony Gatlif's film of the same title. Synopsis: a young French ethnomusicologist travels to Romania in search of a Gypsy singer. His journey exposes a whole new subculture, love, passion and a chosen family.

album that “White Button” made together. This soundtrack project marks the beginning of Bregovic’s film-composer career that also furthers his compositional explorations of traditional Balkan music.

The late 80s saw both Bregovic and Kusturica artistically focusing on the Gypsies. The following decade brought about a complete disintegration of Yugoslavia. Did all Yugoslavs become Gypsies? Was Kusturica, *gadjo dilo* of the Yugoslav film, intuitively preparing the rest of his country for this eventuality by writing and directing works about those who were already constantly living in exile?

With the political circumstances changing daily in the Balkans it is possible to say that the ex-Yugoslavs have become one of the most pronounced minority groups in the world. Bregovic, an exiled Sarajevo musician talks about the psychology of the Gypsy culture.

The Gypsies teach us about a traditional system of values when freedom was different and more precious than it is now.

(Bregovic in Byrne, 2000)

Kusturica’s later directorial move from the Gypsies to other ethnic groups both in Yugoslavia and abroad exemplifies certain reappearances of dramatic concepts and subject treatments, developed when the director’s interest was focussed on the *Roma*. The films that support this theory are *Arizona Dream* (1992) set in Arizona, the United States of America, and *Underground* (1995) set in the former Yugoslavia. Bregovic composed both soundtracks.

Gatlif and Kusturica – a *Roma* and a *Gadje* director

The difference between Gatlif (as a director of Gypsy descent) and Kusturica (of non-Gypsy descent) is quite pronounced in their directorial approaches to the portrayal of Gypsies. Gatlif represents various aspects of Gypsy life across different parts of the world, and portrays his native minority in wider geographic, social and

cultural contexts. He also rarely works with a soundtrack composer. Gatlif's soundtracks are gathered from authentic traditional band repertoire and feature as scene music (heard by the characters in the moment of the performance) much more frequently than they do in the background.

Kusturica does not leave the borders of his native Yugoslavia. As a non-Gypsy, he treats the materials of the known, familiar and experienced from a neighbouring gadjo point of view. He is the Sarajevo version of Gatlif's Frenchman in *Gadjo dilo* – not a Gypsy by birth and origins, but a Gypsy by choice and by interest. Kusturica's passionate love for and fascination with the *Roma* has enabled him to both celebrate and ridicule them in his work. This director's ability to also ridicule and celebrate the Gadje without any reservations or white-man's favouritism keeps his work universally and personally informative through the continuously evolving portrayal of the Gypsies.

Andrew James Horton (2000) wrote for the Central European Review that Kusturica's Gypsy films draw on his childhood lived in a sprawling near-shanty-town of a suburb at the edge of the multi-ethnic Sarajevo. According to the interview, Kusturica considered himself lucky to have grown up among the *Roma* who "*started drinking earlier than us, they started sleeping with girls earlier than we did. So, every spiritual process that every man has to go through they had instantly and with no problems*" (Horton, 2000).

Unlike Gatlif, Kusturica also has a specific soundtrack composer responsible for most of the film score, although live music also frequently features in his films and becomes part of the original soundtrack together with the background scenic compositions. Composer Bregovic's musical work moves in synchronicity with Kusturica's idealism. He uses both arrangements of traditional music and original

compositions to create appropriate musical analogies of the depicted dramatic conflict.

Music for Kusturica's and other Yugoslav films about the Gypsies

The most significant Yugoslav films about the Gypsies before *Time of the Gypsies* are Aleksandar Petrovic's *Skupljaci perja* (I Even Met Happy Gypsies, 1967) and Goran Paskaljevic's *Andjeo cuvar* (Guardian Angel, 1987.)

The literal translation of *Skupljaci perja* would be "Feather Collectors", with the title alluding to the trade of selling goose-feathers for pillows and doonas. This trade is particularly famous among the Gypsy clans in Vojvodina, the North Serbian region close to the Hungarian border. This production remains one of the most famous films about the Gypsies in Yugoslavia. The soundtrack is a compilation of music by various Yugoslav *Roma* and *Gadje* artists.

Paskaljevic made *Guardian Angel* just a year and a half before Kusturica's *Time of the Gypsies*. Both films share a specific subject about the illegal child-trade that still exists between Italy and Yugoslavia. Authorities from both countries avoided this topic for a very long time probably because the sold and stolen children are mainly Gypsies or *Roma-Gadje* half-casts born out of wedlock and raised in poverty in their underprivileged (mainly Gypsy) families.

Kusturica's previous films, *Sjecas li se Dolly Bell?* (Do You Remember Dolly Bell?³⁴) and *Otac na sluzbenom putu* (When Father Was Away On Business³⁵) which are not about the Gypsies, feature soundtracks by Yugoslavia's prominent film and television composer Zoran Simjanovic.

³⁴ Synopsis: A sentimental story about a young man's growing-up divided between his own interests and wishes and his father's authoritarian views. For further information access: <http://www.foreignfilms.com/9803.asp>

³⁵ Synopsis: A story of a political prisoner in the 1950s Communist Yugoslavia as told by his five-year old son who is told that father is away on business. For further information access: <http://www.foreignfilms.com/films/2208.asp>

Paskaljevic also hired Simjanovic for the *Guardian Angel* soundtrack. Less than two years after the production of *Guardian Angel*, Bregovic developed music for Kusturica's *Time of the Gypsies*. It is possible that Kusturica did not want to have the same composer as Paskaljevic because of the similarity of the film subjects. This is the first of Kusturica's internationally acclaimed films without Simjanovic's musical input. Bregovic's soundtrack for *Time of the Gypsies* was as successful as the film itself and led to two other film-music projects for Kusturica – *Arizona Dream* and *Underground*.

Conceptual Conditioning and Analysis Outline

Time of the Gypsies follows the “inward Sarajevo principle”, a concept extrapolated from the socio-historical information about the development of the Herzeg-Bosnian society. The “inward Sarajevo principle” exemplifies the musical use of “Balkan” as a metaphor and is developed within Neyrinck's analytical framework about the use of ethnic music in soundtracks. *Time of the Gypsies* exemplifies Kusturica's directorial frameworks that reappear in future productions and portray the development of Bregovic's analogical approach to soundtrack writing that continues to the present day.

Kusturica avoids the second level ideology that would clearly present two conflicting groups. There is no established relationship between the *Roma* and *Gadje*, so the conceptual “proximity” and “otherness” are established through the conceptual split within an individual character. The second level ideology with its two conflicting groups is replaced by the presentation of hierarchies within one minority group, subsequently breaking down the harmonious ideology projected about a Gypsy clan.

Bregovic is both, a composer and a cultural appropriator bringing the life of a minority group closer to the dominant ideology through a simple homogenic soundtrack.

And then, I am so happy that Djurdjevdan is the most important song in my career. It has international success, the entire soundtrack for Time of the Gypsies is based upon that song.

(Bregovic, November 2001)

Karahasan's (see Chapter I) concept of an element that becomes a part of a larger structure by acquiring new elements without losing its pre-existing form until it becomes a complex whole derivative of two opposing parts is the basic premise for the development of the implicit musical portrayal of the conceptual "proximity" and "distance".

The questions in the case-study analyses of *Time of the Gypsies*, *Arizona Dream* and *Queen Margot* address:

- 1) Composer's stylistic evolution propelled through arrangements and re-cycling of pre-existing musical materials
- 2) Stylistic aspects of such evolution as compared to the compositional development propelled by newly written materials
- 3) Musical metaphor of the depicted dramatic conflict expressed through specific ethnic appropriations ("Balkan as a metaphor") and the conceptual reasons for these stylistic choices

The opening part of the discussion for each case study (Chapters III, IV and V) includes the synopsis of the film and defines different analytical angles and their application in the given research.

The analytical procedures explored in this paper involve:

- 1) Use of Kusturica's films *Time of the Gypsies* (Chapter III, for the analytical table see Appendix) and *Arizona Dream* (Chapter IV, for the analytical tables see Appendix) as exemplars of Bregovic's developing musical style within the soundtrack genre and of Chereau's *Queen Margot* (Chapter V, for the analytical tables see Appendix) to demonstrate creative applications of the developed style/techniques in a foreign production.
- 2) Individual analysis of each soundtrack and comparative discussions with regards to their common stylistic and compositional gestures that translates the depicted theatrical conflict into music according to the suggested ethno-conceptual principle. The section also defines Bregovic's compositional gestures with specific attention to his appropriations of the pre-existing "White Button" repertoire.

***Dom za vesanje (Time of the Gypsies*³⁶)**

Synopsis

The story follows the lives of several characters in *Suto Orizari*³⁷ a Macedonian Gypsy ghetto. Perhan is a young drifter, caught between youthful dreams of love for a young girl called Azra and adult responsibilities for himself and his younger sister Danira who desperately needs a leg operation. His elderly grandmother remains the pillar-stone of the family. She takes care of Perhan, Azra (later his wife), Danira and Merdzan, her son and Perhan's uncle. Merdzan is a gambling, lying and thieving middle aged Gypsy man constantly on the verge of a nervous breakdown of his own doing.

³⁶ the Serbo-Croatian title *Dom za vesanje* literally translates to *House for Hanging*

³⁷ Macedonia is the only European country where the Gypsies have their own municipality - *Suto Orizari*. More information about the municipality can be found in: Bajic, Z. (2000) *Life Is No Film*. Available from: <http://www.aimpress.ch/dyn/trae/archive/data/200002/00226-trae-sko.htm>

Ahmed, a Gypsy gangster returns from Milan to visit the ghetto and offers Perhan a bright future and his little sister a promise to arrange the necessary medical help.

Perhan farewells his young bride, old grandmother and a drunken uncle and, for the first time in his life, leaves the ghetto with Danira.

Brother and sister are separated immediately upon their arrival to Ljubljana – Danira is apparently to be hospitalised in the Slovenian capital. Perhan goes to Italy to work for the gangsters. His jobs include various illegal activities that highly amuse him in the beginning, but begin to take its toll over time. The plot thickens with the death of his young wife during childbirth, Ahmed's stroke that leaves the old gangster half paralysed and with Perhan's realisation that Danira is not actually in hospital but is begging for money on the city streets in Rome and stealing for the gangsters.

Perhan manages to find his sister, and pretends to make a truce with Ahmed promising to find him a new Gypsy bride for his second marriage. The wedding is turned into a tragedy when, in the heat of the plate-smashing celebration, song, dance, tears and laughter, Perhan applies his tele-kinetic skills and sends a fork straight into Ahmed's throat. The chase for the killer is long and ends when Ahmed's newly widowed bride kills Perhan. His death symbolises the only true step towards the ultimate freedom he had desired since childhood.

Conceptual proximity and distance in *Time of the Gypsies* – *Roma* and *Gadje* principles instead of Orient and Occident

Gabor (2003) discusses Kusturica's approach to the Gypsy culture from two angles:

- 1) The internal *Roma* perspective, documentation and portrayal of their life and customs;

- 2) The negative *Gadje* perspective of the Roma, portrayal of their bad qualities as stereotypically perceived by the non-Gypsies

“The *Roma* Principle” alludes to both the directorial and compositional acknowledgment of the Gypsy life-style and their practised customs and traditions. It also refers to the conceptual proximity of the Gypsy characters, the first ideological level, at which the film is conceived wherein the *Roma* are still pure and in their natural environment. This principle is musically supported by the traditional Gypsy songs that are heard as source music and are played live by the characters (musicians) on screen and Bregovic’s appropriations of the same music into both vocal and instrumental arrangements that feature only as background compositions.

“The Negative *Gadje* Principle” does not mean that Gypsies at their worst are portrayed as *Gadje* (non-Gypsies). Negative transformations of the Gypsy characters are in this instance expressed through the stereotypical bad *Gadje* view of them. These stereotypical views include negative perceptions of Gypsies as thieves, criminals and people of easy virtue. Although the positive stereotypicalisation is much less obvious it includes the (quasi-magical) portrayal of the Gypsy healers (witch doctors).

Whenever the characters diminish their values and beliefs, Kusturica uses the “Negative *Gadje* Principle” to portray these transformations. In such instances, Bregovic acts as the cultural musical translator. He musically translates the negative *Gadje* perception of the Gypsies through arrangements that involve traditional musical forms from both *Roma* and *Gadje* cultures. The spirituality and strength of the traditional music that constitutes the “*Roma* Principle” is replaced by the over-orchestrated brass extravaganza of the “Negative *Gadje* Principle”. Bregovic musically gives the *Gadje* the opportunity to hear and experience how they actually

wish to perceive the Gypsies. The confrontation comes from the realisation that the exploited music is also very popular in the *Gadje* culture. The expression “Negative *Gadje* Principle” here gains a dual meaning, thus alluding to the negative perception of the Gypsies and the real negativity of the dominant ideology, the diagnosis that is quickly prescribed to the minority and ignored in the main culture. As the pieces in the “Negative *Gadje* Principle” category are the works that are popular among both the *Roma* and the *Gadje*, they are less frequently text-based. Instead of songs, this category includes more traditional dances and other such musical forms. It is possible that the occurrence of more instrumental forms in this category also highlights the negativity of the *Gadje* toward the *Gypsies* and is portrayed in the resentment of their language and acceptance of music that does not include text.

Roma and Gadje Principles in Bregovic’s soundtrack for Time of the Gypsies

1. Scena pojavljivanja majke (The Scene of Mother Appearing)

Music for this scene is based on the traditional Gypsy song *Alo mange liloro* (*Ederlezi Avela*).³⁸ This is the most important piece in the soundtrack together with various arrangements of *Ederlezi* (St George’s Day). The version heard in this scene is a sparse instrumental arrangement. The sung version of *Alo mange liloro* is not included on the soundtrack, but features in the scene prior to “The Scene of Mother Appearing”. Mother is one of the strongest symbols both in this film and in Gypsy culture in general. The soundtrack adequately supports the underlying matriarchal concept of the film. Purity innocence, strength and courage of the Gypsy soul are all presented through Perhan’s grandmother Hatidza, his wife Azra and even his little sister Danira. These three women are all musically supported by the song *Alo mange*

³⁸ *Alo mange liloro* is known as *Crni voz* (Black Train) in the Serbo-Croatian speaking parts of the former Yugoslavia. For text and further information access: <http://www.galbena.co.yu/>

liloro (*Ederlezi Avela*) both in its original form and in various instrumental derivations.

2. Scena Perhanove pogibije (The Scene of Perhan's Death)

Music for “The Scene of Perhan’s Death” consists of two sections. In the first section, the magnitude of *Ederlezi* is brought into an intimate setting though sparse instrumental arrangements and the composer’s favourite musical device – a child-like solo voice. Bregovic returns to the traditional *Roma* sound and language in this scene and musically finalises the last moment of that innocent state in which the character was initially presented in the film. The solo-voice becomes both the voice of dying Perhan and his little orphan son. This can be read as a metaphor for purity of a child’s heart and the positioning of an innocent Gypsy who has nothing in the material world but possesses enormous inner treasures.

The second section features the Gypsy brass and accompanies the funeral preparations at the house of Perhan’s grandmother. The music supports the tragicomic end of the film in which Perhan’s little son steals the gold coins that the grandmother traditionally places on her dead grandson’s eyelids to wish him a safe and prosperous journey into the Heavenly Kingdom.

3. Kustino oro³⁹ (Kusta's Ring Dance)

Bregovic’s use of terminology is slightly confusing in the titles of the next two tracks. *Oro* is a synonym for the Serbo-Croatian word *kolo* – the ring dance.

These ring dances are found in the Gadjje tradition more frequently than in the *Roma* culture. In both “Kusta’s Ring Dance” and “Bora’s Ring Dance” (see the next soundtrack number), Bregovic appropriates traditional *Roma* music to portray the

³⁹ The title suggests that the piece is dedicated to Kusturica, as Kusto is a nickname that derives from the abbreviation of his surname.

descent of Gypsy morals through the negative *Gadje* perception. Following the “Negative *Gadje* Principle”, he is once again the cultural translator who appropriates the traditional sound into a quasi-*Roma* arrangement and musically accentuates the characters’ internal conceptual duplicity.

4. *Borino Oro*⁴⁰ [Bora’s Ring Dance]

In Ahmed’s character, Kusturica expresses the bulk of the *Gadje*’s stereotypical negative associations with the Gypsies: violence, lack of moral values, weak character, sexually threatening behaviour towards both *Roma* and *Gadje* women, laziness and tendency to over-indulge in material possessions of questionable origins.

Both “Kusta’s Ring Dance” and “Bora’s Ring Dance” are actually arrangements of the traditional dances from the Gypsy-populated regions in Southern Serbia and Macedonia.

Borino oro and Kustino oro⁴¹ – the evolution of *cocek*

Bregovic uses the expression *oro* but both dances are in the form of a *cocek* – a popular dance form among the Gypsies. “Kusta’s Ring Dance” is heard several times during various celebrations regardless of their purpose: Ahmed’s return to the ghetto, Perhan and Azra’s wedding and Ahmed’s second wedding. The appearance of this piece in the wedding scenes is appropriate, as this is Bregovic’s arrangement of the most popular Gypsy *cocek* – *Sunen Romalen Sunen Cavalen*⁴² (Listen Gypsies Listen People).

⁴⁰ This is a dedication to the actor Borivoje Todorovic-Bora who plays the character of Ahmed . Bora is a nickname abbreviation for Borivoje.

⁴¹ Both dances also appeared later on Bregovic’s compilation titled *Songbook* (see the reference list) as new collaborative versions with international artists. Kayah from Poland sings *Borino oro* in the appropriation *Sto lat modej parze* (A Hundred Years Old Couple) and Greek singer Alkistis Protopsalti sings the appropriation of *Kustino oro* titled *Venzinadiko - Gass Station*.

⁴² As acknowledged in the closing credits of the film together with the other traditional *Roma* songs used in the soundtrack (see the reference list). In its original form this *cocek* can also be found on: Devic, D. (2000) *Basalen Romalen* (Play Gypsies) a compilation of Gypsy music from Serbia and Macedonia, PGP-RTS Radio Television of Serbia, Belgrade Yugoslavia

5. Glavna tema (The Main Theme)

The main theme is another musical derivation of *Ederlezi* (St George's Day) – the most substantial soundtrack composition.

The theme reinforces the conceptual positioning of the pure Gypsy characters who don't experience the destructive transformation of diminishing their values and strength; together with *Alo mange liloro* it accompanies the courageous female characters. This music follows the development of Perhan's wife, Azra's character: from her youthful days, through her turbulent short marriage with Perhan and to her death at childbirth. Unlike in "The Scene of St George's Day Celebration on the River" and in "The Scene of Perhan's Death", this arrangement of the song accentuates the vocal deliveries of the mixed large ensemble. This theme is heard in the scene of Azra's death during childbirth and in the closing credits of the film and is performed by Bregovic's old collaborators from his "White Button" period – *Prvo beogradsko pevacko drustvo* (The First Belgrade Singing Society).

6. Tango

Bregovic musically introduces the audience to the streets of Rome during Perhan's desperate search for his sister Danira. This is a bittersweet introduction to Rome, the city of art and culture that also swallows thousands of Gypsy children-beggars.

7. Pjesma talijanska (Italian Song)

Bregovic creates a musical analogy for Kusturica's portrayal of conceptual duplicity within one character. He arranges the melody for solo accordion, solo piano and for a small ensemble. Perhan plays it in the film; the accordion version represents his favourite song. We see him as a young Gypsy boy clumsily playing the tune while he is completely besotted by Azra, the girl he wants to marry. He also plays it for his grandmother and his ill little sister.

The piano version is heard when Perhan, now a young gangster breaks into a big, rich house in Italy and finds a grand piano in the living room. His instant reaction is to sit down and play the Italian tune. That motive becomes both, a momentary return to his old conceptual proximity of the original Gypsy-self, and the reminder of the distance between that personality and the new transformation. Even the symbolism constructed in the scene accentuates the vanity and fake glamour developed at the expense of character and morality. Perhan wears nice Italian clothes and plays on a grand piano, but his fingers are out of practice, the tone is harsher and his hand stumbles across the keys even more clumsily than it does on the accordion.

The small ensemble version becomes the leit-motive for the life on the streets of Milan.

8. Ederlezi (St George's Day)

I frequently wonder if Bregovic could have ever known that *Ederlezi* (St George's Day) would remain one of the rare pieces of music that still today has the power to glue together the broken former Yugoslav ethnicities at least for a few minutes of its duration. It really is as though, Yugoslavia's favourite other, the Gypsies, have become the connecting point for the raging Gadge. Bregovic, himself talks about the unique appeal of *Ederlezi*, a song so essential it does not even need to be recognised by the composer who wrote it.

I am happy that over time it is forgotten who composed it, instead it is sung in the taverns as traditional. And that happens once in a life-time of some composer – to write something and for the work to have a nature not of something deliberately composed, but rather of something that was self-created.

(Bregovic, November 2001)

Ederlezi remains Bregovic's masterpiece that initially placed him on the world map of soundtrack composition. It is also interesting to mention that St George is probably the only Saint whose day was celebrated by all the nationalities and religions

in the former Yugoslavia as it signifies spring and rebirth. It is not surprising then that the essence of this Gypsy song still remains as the last connecting point of the broken Yugoslav nation.

Nostalgia is the essence of Gypsy song, and seems always to have been. But nostalgia for what? Nostos is Greek for a "return home"; the Gypsies have no home, and, perhaps uniquely among peoples, they have no dream of a homeland. Utopia-ou topos-means "no place." Nostalgia for utopia: a return home to no place. O lungo drom. The long road.

(Fonesca, I., 1996 p.8.)

Ederlezi, as heard in "The Scene of St George's Day Celebration" is the most compositionally substantial work in the entire film. It is also the most complex piece portraying Gypsies from the "*Roma Principle*".

Kusturica exposes the *Roma* lifestyle and their customs in their most natural form, without any directorial alterations of the documented celebrations and traditions. Everything is important in Kusturica's films: the foreground, middle ground and background, all these aspects are naturally amplified through the sheer magnitude of the St George's Day ritual. This scene captures the art of Gypsy life – as one with nature, respectful of the Earth, the four seasons and of oneself and the others.

The ritual alone is so artistic that it transforms realistic filming into magic realism. A similar concept occurs in Bregovic's composition – this work needs no hybridity or cross-traditional gestures. The magnitude of the composition comes from the greatness of its purpose and intention – this is a ritualistic musical analogy of the scene.

Other functions of traditional music in the Time of the Gypsies

The analysis of the *Time of the Gypsies* soundtrack is in reverse order to Neyrinck's usual outline according to which the musical portrayal of the characters'

conceptual basis is usually the final analytical point (preceded by the analyses of traditional music as a source of inspiration and a tool of establishing the setting).

The aim of this analysis is to uncover Bregovic's initial analogical use of traditional music in a local production that marked the beginning of his musical use of Balkan as a metaphor for the depicted dramatic conflict.

Neyrinck's first function – the use of traditional music and folk elements is self evident in *Time of the Gypsies* because of Bregovic's musical history since the "White Button" period and the importance of the theme song *Ederlezi* in the overall soundtrack. The concepts of traditional music and folk elements are almost unseparable in this case as *Time of the Gypsies* remains Bregovic's most thematically homogenic soundtrack – all folk elements in original pieces derive from the arranged traditional music.

Traditional music as a tool of establishing setting is at its most essential in this example as the film documents the life-style of a particular subculture. It is virtually impossible to separate the explored film themes from the accompanying music. Bregovic's work is based on a solid stream of pre-existing folk materials that are all genre and purpose specific. In "The Scene of St George's Day Celebration", he is able to work with the traditional Roma song *Ederlezi*. The wedding scenes are accompanied by the Serbian and Macedonian Gypsy wedding dances such as the famous cocek *Sunen Romalen sunen cavalen*.

Music as a tool of establishing setting

1. Geographic Setting

The geographical setting is musically supported through the entire score. Even the Gypsies' travelling connections to Italy are musically referenced in Bregovic's soundtrack. He creates a piece that resembles some old traditional Italian melody

(Pjesma talijanska) which is quite similar to many Yugoslav and *Roma* traditional melodies.

This type of music would be particularly appealing to the Gypsies and the neighbouring Yugoslav population (together with their largest minority-the *Roma*) who would have had opportunities to hear such music even in their home country.

2. Historic/period Setting – Traditional Timelessness of the *Roma* minority

Kusturica sets *The Time of the Gypsies* in the present time though, at the same time, it is very hard for the audience to judge the period of the film from the presented documentation of the Gypsy life-style.

Kusturica grew up in the Herzeg-Bosnian capital Sarajevo; his neighbourhood was almost entirely populated by Gypsies. As they did not follow many of the dominant *Gadje* ideology's rules and regulations, the Gypsies preserved their customs, rituals and traditions.

The *Roma* can appear as more educationally backward and with their living standards frequently lower than the *Gadje*'s. They exemplify the traditional life-styles with obvious ethnic and cultural customs, largely because developments of the urban tradition have not entirely (or in some remote communities have not at all) entered or transformed their traditional living order. This aspect of the *Roma* life-style sometimes makes it difficult for the audiences to recognise the period of the filmsetting (this is sometimes the case even for the native audiences in the filmmaker's home country).

Time of the Gypsies is a particularly specific case as there is no presence of the second outside group and references to the dominant ideology are rare. A similar characterisation is appropriate for the soundtrack as Bregovic is heavily reliant on the

timelessness of traditional music, or at least on the width of its possible periodic range. This directorial and compositional approach is directly aligned with “the inward Sarajevan principle” where both the director and composer work from the *Roma* inside using the outward dominant ideology only as a reference point rather than to portray the expected conflicting side.

3. Dramatic Setting – Occasion Specific Traditional Music

The dramatic setting is a fruitful discussion point in this musical section because of the appearance of occasion-specific music within the traditional repertoire.

The main purpose of any traditional music is to portray the life traditions of a certain culture. This function leads to the development of occasion-specific works that are suitable for specific situations (wedding dances, funeral procession music, etc.)

Bregovic exploits these aspects of traditional music through multiple use of traditional Yugoslav *Roma* dances specific to different social occasions. “Kusta’s Ring Dance” is based on a well-known Gypsy *cocek*. A piece with a similar title (although this is an arrangement of a different song and with a subtitle *Caje Sukarije Cocek*) features on the soundtrack album for Kusturica’s *Underground* that was made about half a decade after *Time of the Gypsies*. This recurrence of Bregovic’s dedication expressed in the title suggests that *cocek* might be one of the director’s favourite traditional musical forms.

Bregovic’s most commonly used rhythmic pattern in any *cocek* arrangement is to write the two beats in the 2/4 bar in a form of a crotchet triplet. This rhythmic element is normally heard in the low brass parts (tuba) while the percussion instruments play in two (listen to both examples from the film.)

Even his more recent collaborations show many such examples. The recycled coceks retain the rhythmic and harmonic languages from the soundtrack productions. Bregovic himself discusses the limitations of his musical choices referring to both his film and band composition.

Objectively, I have a very small, not very cooperative brain and when I also work on diminishing it, the end product is minimal knowledge and ability. However this gives me openness to many things. I can probably work with synthesis more freely than a specialist in the field would. For those who don't know miracles happened in the process of synthesis. Knowledge gravitates towards the known. The difference between a spontaneous and an educated musician is that the spontaneous musician always completes the given task more perfectly.

(Bregovic, October
2001)

Ederlezi (St George's Day)

The various Balkan spellings (Herdeljez, Erdelezi) are merely variants on the Turkish Hidrellez (I is not dotted), a holiday signalling the beginning of spring, occurring approximately 40 days after the spring equinox. The Balkan Slavs added the Christian layer of St George's Day (Gjuorguovdan, Dzurdzovden, Gergjuovden.) Hidrellez is a very significant day in Anatolia. The word itself is very significant; it is the combination of names of two prophets: Hizir & Ilyas. Hidrellez signifies rebirth of nature and is also considered to be the beginning of summer. According to Anatolian people's beliefs Hizir and Ilyas are two prophets who drank the water of never dying: they are brothers and friends. They have given each other promise to meet on this night of May 5th every year to give rebirth to nature. Hizir is the protector of plants; he gives life to plants. He helps poor people. Wherever he goes, he brings abundance. Ilyas is the protector of waters and according to some, the protector of animals. Wherever he goes, animals become healthier. People believe that wishes made on this night will become true. They also believe that sick people will become healthier and it will be the end of bad luck and misfortunes. There are also a lot of rituals that people perform. Some people put a coin inside a red cloth and then hang it on a rose branch. In the morning this money is put into the valet so that it will bring abundance. It is also believed that if you go out, have a picnic and be in nature on this day, your days in winter will have less hardships.

(Unattributed, (undated) Ederlezi, Available from:
<http://www.angelfire.com/music4/bregovic/lyrics/ederlezi.txt>)

The St George's Day river ritual and its song are two world famous excerpts from the Yugoslav film and soundtrack history. Bregovic creates a magical atmosphere through appropriate arrangements of the traditional *Roma* song threaded through his

own original musical concepts and ideas. Already in *Time of the Gypsies*, we hear the sounds that ten years later become the musical signatures of the brass players from his “Weddings and Funerals Band”.

Although simple in compositional structures, the piece is grand in its intensity and musical message. This scene is one of the most magical moments in the world cinema. Kusturica treats all three elements; foreground, middle ground and background with similar importance. Under his direction “The Scene of St George’s Day Celebration” becomes one of the most vivid and intricate paintings in the contemporary European cinema. Bregovic musically follows Kusturica’s directorial idea of three equal, yet independent levels. His foreground is a solo voice of a young Macedonian Gypsy singer Vaska Jankovska, while the middle ground is the mixed choir and the background is minimal electronic accompaniment.

Ethnic music and traditional elements as a composer’s sources of inspiration

Time of the Gypsies is Bregovic’s most thematically homogenic soundtrack. All folk elements in original pieces derive from the arranged traditional music and the St George’s Day song - *Ederlezi*. There are three pieces of background music that exploit the musical themes from *Ederlezi*. These are pieces for “The Scene of St George’s Day Celebration on the River”; “The Scene of Perhan’s Death” and “The Main Theme”.

“The Scene of Perhan’s Death” initially brings the magnitude of *Ederlezi* into an intimate setting through thinner instrumental arrangements and solo voice. Although the orchestration is thinner the composer returns to the original use of language in the vocal part, but in a much smaller form without the sung chorus. The second part of it

introduces the Gypsy brass as a suggestion of Perhan's upcoming funeral as we see him in an open coffin in his grandmother's house.

"The Main Theme" captures the beauty of *Ederlezi* in a more vocally conceived version for a large mixed voice ensemble, while "The Scene of St George's Day Celebration on the River" incorporates all elements except for the brass.

Alo mange liloro (Ederlezi Avela) the second important theme

The famous Gypsy song *Alo mange liloro (Ederlezi Avela)* plays an important role in the soundtrack. It is heard in various arrangements throughout four different scenes. It is possible to symbolically translate this piece into the leit-motive for all female characters. Although the song has already been mentioned and described in the previous sections, it is important to state its significance and connect all its derivatives that appear in the overall soundtrack pattern, as the composer himself does not talk about the importance of this arrangement.

The song is first heard in the scene of Perhan and Danira's departure from the ghetto. Four Gypsies play the song as Perhan and Danira part from their grandmother and begin the trip into the unknown.

The second time it appears, the song is reduced to a sparse instrumental arrangement in "The Scene of Mother Appearing". The music is an analogy for Danira's mixture of courage and fears as she imagines that the ghost of her dead mother has appeared on the bus window during the travel to the hospital.

In the third instance, *Alo mange liloro* is again heard as source music during Perhan's drunken night at the ghetto tavern. He is disappointed to find Azra heavily pregnant upon his return home and does not believe that the child is his and decides to

drown his pains in alcohol and music. His grandmother and Azra find him at the tavern and try to talk him out of further drinking.

The final version is again a sparse instrumental arrangement of the song. It is heard as background music as Perhan finally finds Danira on the street of Rome.

The piece is always heard in connection to the brave female characters whose courage and strength also exposes the conceptual split within Perhan's character. In the scene of the departure from the ghetto, the trip to Italy and reunion with Danira, we see Perhan as his honest, innocent Gypsy self. The scene of the reunion is also powerful because of Perhan's return to this character; the boy brought up by his brave grandmother. The drunken scene in the ghetto tavern amplifies the descent of Perhan's morality and values in spite of the honesty and boldness of his grandmother and Azra's fears.

Source and Background Music

All of the *Ederlezi* derivations (music for "The Scene of St George's day Celebration on the River", "The Scene of Perhan's Death" and "The Main Theme") are always used as background music; their importance is to portray the characters according to the suggested analytical principles within the given conceptual structure. This is a musical analogy for the documentation of the Gypsy life style.

Tango is a background composition primarily used to portray the *Roma* from the negative *Gadje* perspective as we hear the stereotypical idealisation of Italy (as seen through the eyes of the Yugoslav Gypsies) with the almost silent film like soundtrack⁴³ during the introduction to the streets of Rome.

⁴³ Kusturica and Bregovic both pack the whole moment with stereotypes. We see the café strips, the street players the Italian architecture and Bregovic's music resembles the tunes from silent films or documentaries about Italy and emphasises the stereotypical perception Romantic Latin spirit.

The ring dances (*Kustino oro* and *Borino oro*) are largely heard as source music and in all the wedding and celebration scenes we mainly see the Gypsy band that plays them. One of the rare moments where a cocek is heard in the background is in a gambling scene in Ahmed's caravan.

All of the source music mainly rests on the traditional repertoire that is acknowledged in the closing credits.

Various arrangements of "Italian Song" are representative of both source and background music. In the background version we hear small ensemble arrangements, while Perhan plays the source music version.

Internal-external cultural perspective

Although *Time of the Gypsies*, a simple and homogenic soundtrack, is almost entirely based on the St George's Day theme-song *Ederlezi*, its analogical connection with the portrayed dramatic conflict creates a valuable framework for further analyses of Bregovic's film opus. The "internal-external perspective" as portrayed through "the *Roma* and the *Gadje* principles" is the basis for the future analogical scores and the exploration of the "Oriental" and "Occidental" conceptual bases in internal productions where there is no real outside group.

CHAPTER IV - RECONTEXTUALISATION: Bregovic's soundtrack conceptualisation for Kusturica's Balkanised American debut

Kusturica's non-Gypsy films and Bregovic's relevant soundtracks: the Gypsy conceptualisation and the "inward Sarajevan principle"

The repercussions of Kusturica's work with the Gypsies are obvious in his treatment of characters in various other environments (ie. *Arizona Dream*). Bregovic musically follows similar concepts in the related soundtracks.

Is it possible that Kusturica, *gadjo dilo* of the Yugoslav film, was prophetically sensitive to the disintegrating fate of his home country (post 1989) which would turn even the Yugoslav *Gadje* into a dislocated minority dispersed across the world? Or are there other more significant artistic and conceptual approaches that continuously reappear in Kusturica's work?

Time of the Gypsies was followed by Kusturica's American debut *Arizona Dream* and the Yugoslav production *Underground*. These three films share one strong conceptual connection – absence of an outside group. From *Suto Orizari*, the Gypsy ghetto in *Time of the Gypsies*, to the unusual characters whose lives in Arizona constitute the *Arizona Dream* to the *Underground* community of the Yugoslav World War II survivors in *Underground*, Kusturica always presents the internal turmoil through an inward portrayal of a particular group.

Although the films may not seem that inward, they are all built upon the principle of a second level ideology where there is no outside group to generate the conflict.

The Gypsies in *Time of the Gypsies* are torn by internal turmoil and so are the characters of *Arizona Dream*. The *Underground*-based World War II survivors in *Underground* are actually the victims of their own country's political repression.

In *Time of the Gypsies*, we are instinctively prepared for the *Gadje* and their persecution of the *Roma* and in *Arizona Dream* we wait for the mainstream society to frame the outlandish minorities found in Arizona. *Underground* is a particularly interesting case as we think that all is revealed in the beginning and that this is a film about World War II. Approximately three hours later, we find out that the Yugoslavs have really kept themselves in the *Underground* through self-inflicted repression and that the return to the upper world results in another war.

Kusturica even Balkanises his American debut and Bregovic's musical metaphors become even more appealing as a result of such a conceptual approach.

But what are the roots of such creative outlook?

Kusturica and Bregovic are two of the greatest Sarajevan artistic imports from the “inward city⁴⁴ of Sarajevo.” It is possible to suggest that some Sarajevan artists look inwardly at the city's social and cultural “pluralism” and create metaphors for other such societies and cultures based on the same sense of the city being a microcosm of the world. “The inward Sarajevan principle” becomes a conceptual framework for the artists' creative output.

Conflict is built upon the multiplicity of elements within the same group – this ideological support is made manifest in most of Kusturica's films. Bregovic follows similar principles in his analogical soundtracks for both Kusturica and other international directors' films.

***Arizona Dream* – Soundtrack Analysis**

Synopsis

Axle is young drifter caught between childhood dreams and fantasies and the bitter realities of adult life. He lives and works in New York, but news of his uncle Leo's

⁴⁴ for further information return to Karahasan's descriptions of Sarajevo (Chapter I)

wedding lead him back to his hometown in Arizona where he stays and meets a wealthy widow Elaine and her stepdaughter Grace.

The plot thickens when Axle ends up in a love triangle with Grace and Elaine and decides, against his uncle's wishes, to stop working at Leo's Cadillac shop and to move in with the two women. Elaine and Axle spend most of their time building a flying machine for Elaine and thus fulfil her desire to fly. Although Axle is in love with Elaine from their very first meeting at Leo's car shop, their relationship is shaky and becomes progressively difficult over time.

Axle's growing alienation from Elaine after his uncle's death slowly brings him closer to her stepdaughter Grace who has always secretly admired him. Their romance is short lived. Torn between her stepmother's selfishness and jealousy and her own eccentricity and sensitivity, Grace accidentally kills herself shortly after promising Axle to leave Arizona with him. Her death leaves Axle all alone once again – alone with the realisation that not everybody survives growing up, that bittersweet nightmare that separates children from adults.

Introduction

The most important analytical aspects for both *Arizona Dream* film and its soundtrack address Kusturica's dramatic techniques of exploring different ethno-cultural issues through the "inward Sarajevan principle" and Bregovic's concurrent development of the relevant musical analogies.

The recontextualisation techniques accentuate the elasticity and flexibility of Bregovic's compositional language based on folkloric analogies of the theatrical conflict and incorporations of old "White Button" rock materials into new concepts and dramatic circumstances. Kusturica's directorial signature style is exemplified

through similar theatrical devices that reappear in a variety of geographic and dramatic settings. Following the “inward Sarajevan principle”, both artists always look inside the dynamics within one society whose “pluralism” supports the intricacies of the dramatic conflict. The multiplicity of the explored musical and dramatic subjects allows the creation of great theatrical tension without the necessary outside group – the conceptual splits can exist on an individual level just like they would between different groups. Just like Sarajevo was taken as a metaphor of the world during the time of its creation, its artists continue to bring concepts and conflicts to explore this internal, inward level in which one looks at oneself both, artistically and culturally before observing any outer or external societies. The stereotypical first level ideology outlook is not necessary in these “pluralistically” conceived concepts. The main premise of such conceptualisation (similar to the cultural premise in such society) is that multiplicity is the main cultural element in the dramaturgy and conflict is observed more internally, unlike it would be according to the outward “dialectic” principle.

Visual recontextualisation – Balkan and Gypsies as a metaphor

Kusturica’s running conceptual and directorial framework is exemplified through linking similarities between the explored subjects and theatrical devices used to portray them in the American-based *Arizona Dream* and his other Yugoslav productions. One of Kusturica’s strongest visual and musical film features is the presence of live musicians. The Gypsies are his favourite Yugoslav solution for this idea. In *Arizona Dream*, he indulges in both the music and the presence of Mariachi bands in the Mexican-populated Arizona. Just like the Gypsies in the internally-Gypsy *Time of the Gypsies* (and later in the internally-Yugoslav *Underground*), the

ensemble of colourful sombreros celebrates and suffers together with the outlandishly lovable characters of *Arizona Dream*.

This time Bregovic Balkanises the “American Dream”, thus musically reminding the world that outsiders exist on many levels, even within the same system and that the worst destruction can be created internally, without any external influences.

Kusturica presents the Mexican minority of Arizona through his Yugoslav conceptual framework from the Communist period films with Gypsy characters. Although they are minor characters, we witness the romantic idealisation of the Mexicans – the street musicians, the natural healers (witch doctors), which portrays them as the dominant ideology’s romanticised, exotic other. The portrayal of the Mexicans is not ideologically significant in the film; it is a conceptual backdrop that amplifies the more inward conflict of a specific group of characters. Just like in *Underground* where we firstly focus on the external German enemies or in *Time of the Gypsies* where we are to expect the conflict of the *Roma* and *Gadje*, here we may initially expect some conflict between the Mexicans and the American authorities. Kusturica is able to ridicule the Gypsies in the Yugoslav productions because this treatment metaphorically exposes the real disorders of the dominant regime. In *Arizona Dream*, we watch a few brief drunken Mexican street fights that illuminate the real conflicts of the small group of American characters – the real internal conflict.

Arizona Dream – the complex ingredients of a doubly ethnic soundtrack

The most important feature of the *Arizona Dream* soundtrack is its dual ethnicity. The soundtrack is a complex mixture of Bregovic’s original music, traditional Mexican Mariachi music and some early 1920s jazz style music.

The early jazz music is used very sparingly; it features in only two scenes and has no greater impact on the developed analysis.

The primary analytical focus is on Bregovic's original work. The huge soundtrack section consisting of the traditional Mariachi repertoire is addressed more as Kusturica's theatrical device that carries certain connotations related to his directorial style.

The story is set in a small town in the middle of Arizona and Kusturica makes continual references to the presence of the two cultures – Mexican and American.

The traditional Mexican music establishes the film's ethno-geographic identity. Neyrinck's concept suggests that traditional music or traditional musical elements are used to establish two possible mediums – geographic setting of the film and the conceptual basis of its dramaturgy. Both ideas are supported through acknowledgment of both musical components in this film – Bregovic's writing and the Mariachi repertoire. Bregovic's entire work on the *Arizona Dream* soundtrack is of a metaphorical and conceptual nature. Mexican music describes the location and the Balkan sounds create the conceptual basis of the depicted conflict.

This film is Kusturica's Western debut about American life. Although the location of the setting is accompanied by the geographically appropriate traditional music, the conceptual world remains musically portrayed by the sounds of the director's home culture.

Kusturica's dramatic topics – inside the edges of the society

One of the greatest things about Emir's movies is that they show life exactly as it is – full of holes, hesitations and unexpected events. It is this imperfect, unorganised side that I wanted to preserve above all.

(^{Bregovic} undated, Goran Bregovic's music for movies, Available from: http://www.goranbregovic.co.yu/foreign/films_eng.htm)

In *Arizona Dream*, Kusturica gathers an eclectic bunch of characters. Elaine, a wealthy American widow, and her stepdaughter Grace live on a farm in the middle of nowhere in Arizona. Axle is a young drifter who after several years of living and working in New York returns to Arizona together with his wannabe-actor friend, Paul. Axle's Uncle Leo is a Cadillac salesman who is getting married to a young Polish-American woman.

How do these characters achieve autonomy in the mainstream society and where are they placed in relation to the dominant ideology?

In his quotation about Kusturica's films, Bregovic explains the importance of the under-explored elements in different societies.

Arizona Dream exposes the living condition of a small group of characters. There is no presence of an outside group, so the viewer learns of the characters' minority status through the portrayal of their internal dynamics and manners of interaction. Kusturica's character treatment with its absence of an outside group also leaves the viewer wondering if this really is the inside of a minority group or if the mainstream society is actually based on a multitude of such minority groups? Suddenly it seems that the society's largest parts are its edges. "The holes, hesitations and unexpected events"⁴⁵ that Bregovic mentions are personified through the *Arizona Dream* characters who seem to gain autonomy and freedom of expression only through isolation.

The second powerful component of Kusturica's portrayal of the society is expressed through the fantasy principle. The characters, perhaps aware of the unusual

⁴⁵ Referring back to Bregovic's quote about the greatest things from Kusturica's movies (see the section titled "Kusturica's dramatic topics – inside the edges of the society" for further information access: http://www.goranbregovic.co.yu/foreign/films_eng.htm).

nature of their isolation, dream of different fantasy-lands where their emotional and behavioural codes would be more acceptable. All these places suggest life in isolation.

So the characters' autonomy is not expressed in comparison to the dominant culture and ideology: they live according to their internal individual laws and without much connection with the outside world. The previous case study exemplifies the same concept – the Gypsies in *Time of the Gypsies* are in their ghetto in Macedonia, just like Elaine, Grace and later on, Axle and Paul are all on a farm in the middle of Arizona, somewhere between the American and the Mexican border.

The composer's conceptual and metaphoric musical choices widen in the *Arizona Dream* soundtrack with both the isolation component and the fantasy principle. Various musical analogies become appropriate in a soundtrack that supports metaphors of the perceptual and conceptual order. Kusturica's disinterest in perfect characterisation allows for flexibilities of the musical form which then capture these imperfections in various, somewhat strangely-appealing creations. The entire soundtrack is recorded with very raw, unpolished mixing and audiences and listeners allow for Bregovic's musical "holes, hesitations and unexpected events" to become the sound portrayal of the equally unorganised side of life expressed in *Arizona Dream*.

Traditional elements and folk music

The music for the *Arizona Dream* soundtrack contains both traditional music and different folk elements in original composition.

The most easily identified traditional examples are the Mexican Mariachi songs.

Bregovic's arrangements of folk songs are more difficult to identify because they are incorporated in original compositions inspired by traditional Balkan music.

The soundtrack includes both more sophisticated collage compositions such as *7/8&11/8* and *Death* and some of Bregovic's recycled ethno-rock numbers that are "Americanised White Button" pieces.

The very opening number, *In the Deathcar*, is a truly unique ethno-rock piece. Humming female vocals bring a quasi-Bulgarian flavour to the chorus section and support Iggy Pop's dark and guttural vocal deliveries. A similar mixture of rock and traditional music is heard in *Get the Money*, which is played as bar music during Axle's first meeting with his long lost friend Paul.

7/8 & 11/8 and *Death* are two fairly similar versions of a piece that is heard in different film scenes. This composition consists of two distinctive sections. The first part is an original electro-acoustic work. It is evocative of traditional Balkan music through its elaborate use of folk instruments (recorder) and rhythmic and melodic configurations that derive from Southern Slavic folk. The second section is an arrangement of a traditional song⁴⁶ in which Bregovic plays with his favourite vocal configuration – a female traditional ensemble.

In this instance, Bregovic is a real craftsman, placing this particular vocal element in wider compositional context. His arrangements are not simple transcriptions of traditional music – they are complex yet effortless creations in which the original and the traditional, the old and the new become inseparable. Both *7/8&11/8* and *Death* are modern and ancient at once – Bregovic's work is simultaneously universal and highly personal, progressive and traditional.

Source and Background Music

⁴⁶ see the section titled "Thematic connection between Kusturica's film topics and Bregovic's traditional music choices – Jana's house as Grace's house"

Arizona Dream is a film full of source music. The characters on screen spend many occasions listening to the live Mariachi band – this is the music typical of their geographic surroundings. The bulk of Bregovic’s soundtrack role does not include the source music of these characters’ “reality” – his task is clearly targeted more towards the musical outline of a conceptual order. “The fantasy principle” (see later in the chapter) plays a very important role in such an analysis.

Only two of Bregovic’s compositions are in the source music category. Both pieces (*TV Screen* and *Get the Money*) are collaborative works featuring Iggy Pop and are heard in the bar scene during Axle’s reunion with his friend Paul.

7/8&11/8, *Death* and *In the Deathcar* are Bregovic’s collage works that incorporate arrangements of traditional music and become the composer’s musical solutions for various needs of the background music.

In the Deathcar is slightly more difficult to categorise. Although heard as background music, it remains stylistically closer to the source compositions *TV Screen* and *Get the Money*. All three pieces are developed from recycled materials of Bregovic’s “White Button” repertoire.

I live abroad and when I give Iggy “On the Backseat Of My Car” he makes “In the Deathcar” as a result of it.

(Bregovic in Popovic, 1996)

Different functions of traditional music and folk elements

Function I – Ethnic music as the composer’s source of inspiration

Nothing less easy to introduce and less civilized than Goran Bregovic’s fundamentally unpure art. Just a few bars filled with joyful melancholy, and here you are, shaken to the guts by a sound without equal; irreparably embarked in the wild farandole of a colossal and mad brass band with a delightfully tormented orchestration, from which suddenly arise, like coming from another age, the angelical purity of a kid’s voice; buttonholed by the baroque and poetic melting pot of a music alive to excess, both modern and archaic, illuminated by an intense grace under its underpolished appearances,

committed in a crazy and rattling race, with this festive lightness in the pace, this unsound rhythm, both grave and volte-facing, constantly off unbalance, that finally leads you straight to the graveyard...

(“Songbook” 2000, notes from CD sleeve, unattributed)

As the analysis so far, has uncovered the continuous presence of traditional elements in Bregovic’s post-” White Button” film music, the quotation from the *Songbook* CD sleeve is a brief, poetic attempt to describe the full scope of complexities found in such writing.

The components of the *Arizona Dream* soundtrack are not different to those from his other film works. From the arrangements of traditional Balkan songs to the implicit folkloric codes in his rock writing, Bregovic recontextualises the music of his homeland into soundtrack analogies and “*brightens the traditional nostalgia of the eternal Slavonic soul*”(Grunberg, S. 1998, Les Cahiers du Cinema, notes from CD sleeve for Ederlezi)

Function II – traditional music as a tool of for establishing setting

As Bregovic’s work on the film music is mainly conceptual, his musical output is less significant for this function. This particular approach to soundtrack writing creates a subcategory that is more appropriate for analyses of the third function – “the subcategory of the conceptual setting.”

1. Geographical setting

Wider geographical location is established through the use of traditional Mexican music.

The configuration of the Mexican ensemble also frequently assists in portraying smaller specific locations of the scene or supports its dramatic need – the Mariachi play for Elaine’s birthday or for different national celebrations. These occasions are portrayed through musical analogies of the appropriate traditional sounds.

Iggy Pop's collaborative contribution assists in the Americanisation of Bregovic's Balkan ethno-rock sound. Bregovic and Pop's collaborative work can be heard in numbers such as *Get the Money* and *TV Screen*, where these pieces establish the bar atmosphere and the appropriate scene location. Although used to support the smaller location specific setting, these compositions also assist Kusturica's Balkanisation of the *American Dream* as a concept and are metaphorically significant in the given context.

Balkanisation of the *Arizona Dream* soundtrack in the bar scene is an immediate audio declaration of the proposed conceptual principle.

2. Historical Setting

This category is not really relevant in the given production. With its elements of "fantasy" and "reality" (the present day) as dramatic settings, the historical accuracy is much more visually rather than audio driven in this production.

3. Dramatic Setting

The thematic dramaturgy is largely explored through the notion of dreams and fantasy. This surrealism or perhaps magic realism allows for extremely outlandish ethnic musical choices to become strangely appealing under the given circumstances.

In the opening scene of the film, a young Eskimo man travels through the endless whiteness of Alaska and almost faces death while trying to cross the frozen lake with his dogs. Bregovic musically accompanies this moment with one of his signature-style compositions that combines an original work with an arrangement of a traditional Balkan song (see later analysis).

Function III – conceptual principles of the theatrical conflict expressed through the metaphoric use of traditional music and folk elements in soundtrack writing

Issues of Cultural Perspective in Analytical Terminology: Cultural Alignment cancelled out through Metaphor

The analysis up to this point clearly establishes that Bregovic's conceptual formula for soundtrack writing utilises Balkan music as a metaphor of the presented theatrical conflict.

The metaphors are developed from the conceptual and cultural multiplicity of the Balkan traditions. Earlier, I have noted Bregovic's reference to the Balkans as the meeting point of three cultures Orthodox, Catholic and Muslim.

Bregovic's metaphoric approach helps him to create a conceptually relevant framework that follows conflicts of a specific situation even outside or not directly concerned with these cultures.

Arizona Dream is set many worlds away from Bregovic and Kusturica's native former Yugoslavia, yet the thematic structure of the film is a natural non-Balkan extension of Kusturica's perpetual work about the lives and conflicts within a minority group.

Here we see a double use of Balkans as a metaphor – from the director and the soundtrack composer.

Kusturica's Balkanised American conceptualisation

Kusturica uses Elaine, Grace, Axle, Paul, Leo and his young bride Milly and even the waitress at the bar, Blanche, to portray a small group of characters who are supposedly in the real world – mainstream society which creates the "Occidental" conceptual basis.

The nature of the characters' fantasies is the conceptual "otherness." Axle dreams of the endless whiteness of Alaska and an Eskimo named Dooley, Elaine of the wild jungles of Papua New Guinea, Grace of the land of smiling turtles and Paul's

theatrical world is framed by the scenes and monologues from the movies *The Godfather*, *The Raging Bull* and *North by North-West*.

There is no real portrayal of the outside society; it is communicated to the audience through the eyes of these unusual characters who achieve autonomy only through utter isolation.

Both levels of the conceptual basis are developed within this ideological group. “Occidentalism” does not refer to the outside mainstream society in this case but is developed through the characters’ isolated reality and their curious life-styles. “Orientalism” is actually their perceptual “otherness” that is constructed from dreams and fantasies. It is also possible to say that under such conceptual and dramatic circumstances, “Orientalism” can be perceived as a desired version of a more tolerant and different “Occidentalism” that, may sadly, only be possible in dreams and fantasies.

This creates a further metaphor even within the analytical framework where the “unknown” signifies a desired “proximity.”

Metaphorical duplicity – Balkanisation of both “Orientalism” and “Occidentalism”

Bregovic’s music for *Arizona Dream* can be divided into two groups:

- ethno-rock collaborations with Iggy Pop;
- arrangements of traditional music and folk influenced original compositions

Ethno-rock is mainly used as character music because of the similarities between these American characters and those from *Time of the Gypsies*.

Johnny Depp plays the lead character – a twenty-three year-old man from Arizona called Axle. Depp’s appeal is much more than simply aesthetic since his appearance

creates a complex web of unanswered questions regarding his origins and nationality. Kusturica does not explore the “American Dream” by mesmerising the audience with a tall, blonde, blue eyed, well- proportioned lead character with good teeth. Rather, in this Arizona we are taken by a young, dark, possibly partly Native American Indian man who is not afraid to cry, to laugh and to seize his lover (played by Faye Dunaway) by the hair.

The meeting place of two friends (Axle and Paul) is equally unusual and appealing. From the very first moment, the bar appears to be the favourite hangout place for the minorities. *Get the Money* and *TV Screen* feature as two bar-music compositions. This place is a simultaneously Balkanised New York and Americanised Balkan.

Its visitors include Kusturica himself, as one of the customers sitting at the bar. Bregovic’s *Get the Money* is heard in the background, interrupted by an angry telephone fight between some American guy and his Yugoslav girlfriend/lover whose surname he can’t even pronounce. Axle and Paul’s conversation is musically accompanied by a more intimate sounding instrumental section from *TV Screen*.

The bar owner is not a regular American girl either. With her bleached blonde hair, thick dark eyebrows, shiny tight outfit and a very indefinite foreign accent, which could well be Yugoslav, Blanche appears as a character transported into this scene from a Yugoslav popular folk music video clip. Her manner of interaction with Axle and Paul suggests that both of them are regulars in the bar.

Although it is possible to say that the bar staff and customers across the world have many similarities, the metaphor becomes visually active in combination with the accompanying soundtrack.

The film was made during the very beginning of the civil war in the former Yugoslavia. This scene in combination with Bregovic's music can also allude to the integration issues of the refugees – Kusturica takes us into the bar of American ethnics and misfits and exposes the real situation of global refugees that exist on many levels. The whole atmosphere is factually American with a slight exotic twist, achieved largely through the unique appeal of the Bregovic's composition and Iggy Pop's interpretative skills. Even the conceptual proximity is musically conceived through metaphors from a different culture. Axle and Paul, unlike so many of their equivalents from popular culture, both find refuge in the meeting places of ethnics and misfits (the bar) or in isolation from the every day world (in the middle of nowhere in Arizona). The music is also metaphorically popular with its roots in the Balkan rock.

“Orientalism” according to the “fantasy principle”

In the Deathcar – a musical transition between ““Orientalism”” and “Occidentalism”

Kusturica's entire production conceptually follows the “inward Sarajevan principle” through its absence of the outside group. The ideological split is personal here, brought to the individual character rather than to a group. The conflicting natures within one character are not violently opposed; Kusturica actually portrays them through the child-like frame in which we face an imperfect reality and a faultless fantasy. The frame itself develops further throughout the film, and becomes more adult-like when we face “holes, hesitations and unexpected events”⁴⁷ even in the fantasy world. Its only difference from reality springs from the characters' idolisation of this imaginary location.

⁴⁷ Referring back to Bregovic's quote about the greatest things from Kusturica's movies (see the section titled “Kusturica's dramatic topics – inside the edges of the society” for further information access: http://www.goranbregovic.co.yu/foreign/films_eng.htm.

In the Deathcar is a transitional composition between “Occidentalism” and “Orientalism”. Although the piece is closer to the style of *Get the Money* and *TV Screen* than anything else in the soundtrack, the conceptual principles that it portrays separate it from other Bregovic/Pop collaborations.

In the Deathcar is a hybrid developed from two melodies. The first one is recycled from Bregovic’s old “White Button” song *Na zadnjem sjedistu moga auta* (On the Backseat of My Car) while the second is a new musical fragment with bolder traditional references in its melodic outline. This second melody is mainly heard as an instrumental interlude between verses, but also as a counter-melody to the first (sung) theme.

The most interesting feature of these recycled materials is Bregovic’s ability to find thematically relevant materials among both his pre-existing “White Button” repertoire and the traditional Balkan music. These subjects are linked directly to the explored dramatic problematic of the film. Bregovic discusses the importance of the mother tongue in the works of text based artists.

In any case, I am left without homeland. That is a disability for those who write songs, because I can no longer write songs, can no longer write in my language. That is why I only recycle songs now.

(Bregovic in Popovic, 1996)

The significance of text and language is equally important in these conceptually based soundtracks. Bregovic’s collaboration with Iggy Pop is based on Pop’s Americanisation of Bregovic’s ethno-rock, just like Depp, Gallo, Dunaway, Thompson and Lewis⁴⁸ Americanise Kusturica’s Balkan vision. Iggy Pop is Bregovic’s musical translator in this American production just like Bregovic brought

⁴⁸ Johnny Depp, Vincent Gallo, Faye Dunaway, Lily Taylor and Jerry Lewis – the cast of *Arizona Dream*

the *Roma* culture closer to the Yugoslav and world *Gadje* through his work on the *Time of the Gypsies* soundtrack.

Away from its language implications on a purely conceptual level, *In the Deathcar* becomes more than just a quirky number with an interesting text since it forms a musical bridge between the reality in which the characters have to survive and the fantasy of which they dream. This is the music of Axle's first moment of falling asleep and the music of the first few moments of his awakening. Importantly, it is music about cars and Axle's Uncle Leo sells cars and wants Axle to do the same. This is the life of routine and adulthood, the world of lack of freedom and survival, the world that Axle continuously tries to escape.

Iggy Pop expresses this contradiction beautifully in the chorus line of the song

"*In the deathcar, we're alive*⁴⁹..." thus, commenting on the adult compromise between the desired world of creativity and the necessary functional world. Bregovic's *Na zadnjem sjedistu moga auta* (On the Backseat of My Car) becomes Bregovic and Pop's *In the Deathcar* talking about Leo's cars, Axle's cars and Kusturica's favourite theatrical devices –cars in vast landscapes, vehicles which are more than transport tools, visual metaphors for economic, cultural and class identification.

In the Deathcar is heard in the opening and closing credits of the film. This music is suggestive of Axle's journeys in the first scene, supporting him waking up in the back of an old truck, and is heard as background music during the final scene in which Axle returns to his Eskimo dreamland together with his uncle Leo.

The "Oriental fantasy" portrayed through the traditional Balkan sound

⁴⁹ Iggy Pop, 1991 *In the Deathcar*, collected by the author as heard in the closing credits of *Arizona Dream*. Kusturica, E., (1992) *Arizona Dream*, video recording, Constellation-UGC-Hachette Premiere.

“Orientalism” and its expression through dreamland and fantasy concepts musically begin after *In the Deathcar*. The dual role of the traditional music and folk elements suggests that they musically portray both “Occidental” and “Oriental” conceptual bases.

The opening scene in which a young Eskimo man travels through Alaska and almost dies trying to cross a frozen lake is also the scenery of Axle’s dreamland and is musically accompanied by traditional Balkan sounds. The composition is a powerful combination of original music mixed with an arrangement of a traditional song. The outlandish quality of this folk choice is a perfect metaphor for its unique fantasy aspect.

As Bregovic’s use of traditional elements in rock writing establishes the metaphoric principle according to which the characters are already in the “Occidental” musical basis, the next conceptual level rests on stylistically different treatment of traditional music which gives it even deeper metaphorical dimension.

The traditional choices and folk references become even bolder in “Orientalism”. Eskimo Dooley’s journeys are musically supported by distinctive Balkan music flavours, using meters such as *7/8 and 11/8* and ethnic instruments (ie. recorder). The work finishes with an arrangement of a traditional Balkan song.

The piece titled *Dreams* is an example of Bregovic’s favourite configuration for the musical representation of fantasy – the large (frequently unaccompanied) choir with prominent vocal solo writing. Bregovic uses his signature concepts once again – references to the sacred Orthodox music are heard in the vocal parts. Vocal chanting of the Belgrade State Choir becomes the silent voice of Kusturica’s silver fish that seductively wanders through the Arizona landscape in one of the dream scenes.

Thematic Connections between Kusturica's Film Topics and Bregovic's Traditional Musical Choices – Jana's House as Grace's House

In the Deathcar exemplifies Bregovic's capacity to find thematically relevant music for Kusturica's film topics in his pre-existing rock repertoire. His capacity to also find thematic relevance between the explored dramatic topics and traditional Balkan music is even more interesting.

In the opening scene of *Arizona Dream*, an Eskimo man almost dies on his way home. Roughly an hour and a half later Grace, one of the four main characters dies shortly after promising Axle that they will run away together as soon as she gets rid of her house. Part of the background composition is an arrangement of a traditional Yugoslav song '*Ajde Jano* (Come Jana).

Interestingly enough the text of this song is:

*"'Ajde Jano kucu da prodamo,
'Ajde Jano, 'ajde duso kucu da prodamo,
'Ajde Jano, 'ajde duso kucu da prodamo ..."*

This text translates to:

*"Come Jana, let us sell the house,
Come Jana, come sweetheart let us sell the house,
Come Jana, come sweetheart let us sell the house ..."*

'Ajde Jano (Come Jana), traditional, translated by the author, the Serbo-Croatian text available from:

<http://www.guca.co.yu/links/Php/links.php?action=popular>

Kusturica's characters, regardless of their reality or fantasy appearance in this film all seem to have more than a slight aversion to the ideas of house, home, responsibilities and adulthood.

The fish with both eyes on the same side of the head symbolises the transition from childhood to adulthood.

Grace does not survive this transitional nightmare and does not achieve an adult level where things are addressed rationally. In Grace's nightmare, "the house is tied

around her neck with a rope that catches fire and the flames climb up the rope but she wakes up before they burn her neck⁵⁰.”

The one eyed fish disappears into the sky several moments after Grace’s death. The transition from childhood to adulthood is lethal for Grace – her accidental death actually symbolises the fall under the heavy burden of her house.

In the traditional Yugoslav song, we never really find out whether Jana sells the house or not. We know that she’s invited to do so, actually in the full version of the song which is not entirely heard in this soundtrack, Jana is encouraged to sell most of her property which ties her down and to “just dance.”

“...*da prodamo samo da igramo,*
hajde Jano, hajde duso kucu da prodamo” “...*to sell, just to dance, come Jana,*
come sweetheart let us sell the house”

(‘Ajde Jano (Come Jana), traditional)

The fantasy principle of Kusturica’s dramaturgy in *Arizona Dream* is musically supported by the fantasy or the idyllic life-styles that are frequently described in traditional music. The visual ideas of Axle’s Eskimo land are musically underpinned in similar folkloric concepts – the imaginary land of singing, dancing and celebrating.

Similarly to Kusturica’s Gypsies from *Time of the Gypsies*, the characters of *Arizona Dream* are searching for ultimate freedom. One of the main obstacles in the mentality of the Gypsies, the drifters from *Arizona Dream* and characters from Yugoslav traditional songs is the symbol of the house. The house is tied around Grace’s neck, Jana is continuously urged to sell the house and a house is suspended on a rope in mid-air twice in the film *Time of the Gypsies*.

Internal-external conflict perspective

⁵⁰ *Arizona Dream* (1992), screenplay by David Atkins, story by Emir Kusturica & David Atkins, spoken by the character of Grace (Lily Taylor), paraphrased by the author (for further information see the reference list)

The portrayal of internal dynamics inside a complex small group of outsiders in a foreign debut of his compatriot director Kusturica enables Bregovic to recontextualise the analogical approach to Balkan traditional music in film composition. This recontextualisation also establishes a framework for analysis of any such internally based conflict regardless of the historic or geographic setting of the film subject.

CHAPTER V - METAPHOR: Bregovic's Soundtrack Conceptualisation for a foreign production

Introduction

The final analysis uncovers Bregovic's analogical approach to the soundtrack for a French production of Patrice Chereau's *Queen Margot*.

Queen Margot

Synopsis

August 1572 – France is torn apart in a bitter religious war between the Catholics and the Protestants. The country is still ruled by a Catholic family, wherein King Charles IX is at the throne, even if only as a figurehead. It is his ruthless mother, Catherina de Medici who really rules the country together with her favourite son, Anjou. The political power of the Protestants led by Henri de Navarre is constantly growing and the ruling Catholic family decides to reunite France through a marriage between Margot, King Charles' sister and Catherine's daughter and the Protestant Count de Navarre.

The marriage is obviously as artificial as is the peace between the two religious groups and, six days after the wedding, the infamous St Bartholomey's Day massacre takes place in Paris, encouraged by Catherina de Medici. Thousands of Protestants are brutally slaughtered, but one of them La Mole is badly wounded and knocks on Margot's door in a desperate attempt to escape. She takes him in and, for the first time in her life, she falls in love – with the enemy.

Margot and La Mole's secret love affair during the Catholic-Protestant turmoil is as amazing as Henri de Navarre's bold courage and desire to live even amongst the ruthless ruling Catholic family. While the Protestant leader manages to survive the dark and dangerous corners and corridors of Louvre, the decay of the royal family is

sped up by their own doing: in her brutal attempt to poison Henri, Catherina de Medici poisons her own son – King Charles.

Henri manages to escape to Navarre and sends La Mole back to the Louvre to rescue Margot. Both La Mole and his Parisienne Catholic ally Coconass are captured and executed, despite Margot's countless attempts to beg her dying brother Charles for their lives. With Charles' death, his younger brother and Catherina's favourite son, Anjou becomes the new king of France, while Margot escapes to Navarre only taking with her the head of her executed lover La Mole.

Introduction

The main analytical tools are two tables that outline different research angles (see Appendices.) The soundtrack intricacies are uncovered in the constructed tables and related to both, Neyrinck's framework and the "inward Sarajevan principle", that exemplify the development of Bregovic's career as an international film composer based on analogical compositional principles.

Neyrinck's analytical framework is most applicable in this example where Bregovic collaborates with a French director, Patrice Chereau, and not with Kusturica. The metaphoric use of the Balkans, "the inward Sarajevan principle" and the functional use of ethnic music in soundtracks all come together in this example.

Traditional elements and traditional music

Neyrinck's first point addresses the distinction between the use of traditional music and folk elements in original soundtrack composition. Once again Bregovic uses recycled "White Button" materials and folk elements in original compositions, with the exception of the traditional Dalmatian song, *U te sam se zaljubia* ("I'm in Love With You"), which is heard during the opening credits of the film.

Source and background music

The first piece of source music is *Gloria*, performed during the wedding scene (on the recording this track is entitled *Le marriage* according to the scene in which it features). This stylistic composition resembles a movement from a mass.

Rondinella and *Ruda Neruda* are the only other two compositions that appear as source music, both presumably heard by the characters in the moment of their performance. *Rondinella* is a secular composition, played at the wedding party in contrast with the *Gloria*, played during the church service in the marriage scene.

Ruda Neruda is quite similar to *Rondinella* in its compositional style and orchestration. Both works are light-hearted and scored for the period instruments. These qualities enable the sound to support the historical and the dramatic accuracy of the scene - setting.

Function I – traditional music as the composer’s source of inspiration

In the case of Bregovic’s compositions for *Queen Margot*, traditional music is always a source of inspiration. Although the composer’s musical history alone clearly suggests these composition gestures, developing analyses reveal further conceptual intricacies of his stylistic choices.

Function II – traditional music as a tool of establishing setting

The previous section addresses three pieces: *Gloria*, *Rondinella* and *Ruda Neruda* – all of which are categorised as source music. The fact that the characters presumably hear them in the moment of their performance immediately classifies them as compositions that also potentially support the historical setting of the film. These three compositions are also evocative of the places where and occasions for which they are performed.

Although *Rondinella* exhibits the use of the “quasi-Italian⁵¹ language”, the overall soundtrack does not exploit language as a tool for geographic or historic accuracy. On the contrary, the actual use of language to identify the filmsetting can be very deceptive in Bregovic’s musical work as his language choices are of a more metaphorical nature.

Apart from these three compositions there is no other source music in the soundtrack, as all the remaining works are in the category of background music.

Margot’s character is fairly consistently supported through the predominant solo and ensemble use of female voices in all of the music that portrays her circumstances, regardless of their nature – romantic, political, familial, etc. Her representative compositions are *Le matin, Margot* and *Elo Hi*.

Despite the continuous variation in the size of the ensemble and the language of the text setting, the unification of “Margot’s music⁵²” is achieved through the familiarity of its sentiment and the linking musical motives that reappear throughout each piece.

The music always alludes to her character and its imaginary perception of the given circumstances regardless of the number of other characters that may feature in the scene and interact with Margot. Such conceptual patterning in music is successful because it complements the film’s dramaturgy and the placement of Margot’s character in the overall dramatic structure.

La chasse, the music for the hunting scene, is an adaptation of Bregovic’s old song *Nocas je k’o lubenica pun mjesec iznad Bosne* (The Moon Over Bosnia Tonight Is As Big and Round As a Watermelon) from “White Button’s” 1986 album “Spit and Sing My Yugoslavia.” The folkloric tendencies of Bregovic’s rock writing are easily

⁵¹ the expression relates to the ensemble of Yugoslav singers improvising a non-grammatically correct language that resembles Italian

⁵² I will continue to use the expression in relation to the three pieces used to portray Margot’s character

transformed into the quasi-baroque arrangements. The song that would have fallen into the category of Bregovic's "shepherdic rock" during the time when it was first written becomes a brief instrumental number backing the hunting scene. Strings replace the electric bass and the vocals are replaced by recorders creating a perfect hunting atmosphere. Sounds propel the dramatic setting of the scene, although we never really see it, and the viewer is aurally persuaded that the actual period instruments, such as hunting horns, may actually feature in this scene. Audiences are able to imaginatively create possible source music through successful background composition.

Queen Margot is not a tragic love story set in a turbulent historical period. Despite the similarities between their story lines, this is not the French equivalent of *Romeo and Juliet* set in 1572 that is musically enhanced through traditional music and folk elements. This narrative is rather, an intimately personified representation of the repercussions of the Saint Barthelemy's Day massacre. Historical information is amplified through the familiarity of the exploited subject – romantic love.

Incidentally, this dramatic treatment of socio-historical information through personalised subjects is very familiar to any person of Bregovic's origins. There has been virtually no more popular technique of documenting the circumstances of the ethnic war in the former Yugoslavia, and particularly in Bosnia and Herzegovina, than through the "mixed-marriage medium" (marriage between members of different ethnicities in the former Yugoslavia, particularly common to Bosnia and Herzegovina). So, "Margot's music" is not necessarily only her musical analogy or merely a character's running motive, for it conceptualises the character and her relationship to others and to the given dramatic circumstances.

Function III – conceptual principles of the theatrical conflict expressed through the metaphorical use of traditional music and folk elements in soundtrack writing

The complete soundtrack recording consists of fourteen compositions. The proposed analysis is developed and applied in the ten tracks that most clearly outline the discussed principles. It is also important to take into consideration that different variations and arrangements of the same piece frequently occur on soundtracks.⁵³

The opening chapter unravels Neyrinck's framework for the analysis of conceptual proximity and conceptual distance that also suggests that "Occidentalism" presents the known or established and "Occidentalism" stands for the unknown. In order to apply this analysis to the *Queen Margot* soundtrack it is important to link the framework to the film's characters and the depicted dramaturgy.

Queen Margot is a film that takes us through the battle for rulership in religiously-divided France. The Catholics are in power, ruled by the scheming and plotting Catherina de Medici who decides to give her daughter Margot's hand in marriage to Henri, the Protestant count. This marriage would unite France and prevent the war.

In the very beginning, the story is brought to us from the court of the ruling Catholic family. The power and rulership together with the initial story-ground suggests the conceptual proximity. The Catholics become the "Occidentalists" and the persecuted Protestants are the "Orientalists".

The main characters who represent different sides of the conceptual basis are Margot and La Mole. Margot is the princess and the queen-to-be, the central "Occidental" character and La Mole is a young Protestant man of noble birth who becomes her lover – the main "Oriental" character. Apart from those two there are

⁵³ Tracks number one and number fourteen are similar, the latter one is a shorter version of the same song.

several supporting characters, who can all be identified to one of the two conceptual categories.

Catherina de Medici and her three sons are all “Occidentalists”; coming from the same line as Margot herself. Henri of Navarre, Margot’s husband is, apart from La Mole the most important “Oriental” character.

How does this relate to the film soundtrack and, more importantly, to the use of traditional music and folk elements in film composition?

How does Neyrinck’s framework apply to Bregovic’s traditional musical choices in soundtrack composition?

Hypothesis

The application of Neyrinck’s framework of conceptual proximity (“Occidentalism”) and conceptual distance (“Orientalism”) on the soundtrack suggests the following structure:

Bregovic has used traditional musical elements more explicitly to musically portray the “Oriental” characters. Although his use of such musical elements is fairly consistent throughout the entire score, there are some specific placements where these assist the compositional portrayal of the characters.

Bregovic musically translates the Protestants as “the unknown” or “the other” because they are portrayed this way in the film. The Protestants are presented as a mysterious force that is threatening the ruling Catholic French dynasty.

Instead of exploring the musical traditions of France, Bregovic’s musical analogies of the proposed concept are always heavily rooted in the traditional music of his origins. Bregovic musically follows the development of characters and conceptual

bases from his home ground – the Balkan Peninsula and collaborates with artists from other cultures, such as the Israeli singer Ofra Haza. His use of Balkan music as a metaphor for the depicted dramatic conflict is as multi-faceted as are his ethnic origins.

Analysis application and process discussion

The second table (see Appendices) lists the functions of traditional music and folk elements in the soundtrack. The presentation of the three functions demonstrates that the portrayal of “Orientalism” and “Occidentalism” in the soundtrack is the most dominant conceptual function of traditional music and folk elements. The order of tracks as presented in the table is a mixture of the chronological appearance of music and its conceptual function. Ten listed tracks are grouped into seven corresponding brackets.

The first listed track, *U te sam se zaljubia* (I’m in Love with You), is heard during the opening credits of the film. This is an arrangement of a traditional song from Dalmatia, a musical prelude to the idea of the “conceptual otherness”.

The romantic topic is musically identified at the very beginning through this love song, and its “Oriental” nature is portrayed through its traditional musical setting. The “unknown” or “the conceptually distant” is familiarised, to a certain degree through the romantic appeal of the portrayed emotion.

The second track, *La Nuit*, represents two aspects of the conceptual distance: “otherness” and “mystery”. It serves as background music in the scene of the Protestants’ arrival in Paris for Margot and Henri’s wedding. They arrive on “Occidental” ground and are perceived accordingly through musical analogies – their

“Orientalism” is portrayed in the mysteriously soft sounds of traditional string instruments from the Balkans.

The third track in the table still follows the chronological order of music in the film. *Le marriage* is source music for the wedding scene. Both its dramatic and historic purposes in the film make this composition slightly more difficult to discuss on the conceptual level. A comparative study of *Le marriage* in relation to the other two stylistic pieces is the most informative approach to the analysis of its conceptual portrayal.

Gloria, one of the movements of the mass, accompanies the marriage scene. Although it completes certain stylistic requirements, further comparative analysis also uncovers the conceptual function of this work in relation to the other two stylistic pieces.

Both *Rondinella* and *Ruda Neruda* are, similarly to the wedding scene music, pieces with strong setting-establishment and historical-accuracy supporting function. With these factors taken into consideration it is obvious that Bregovic still gives these compositions a very strong traditional flavour. Creative application of these works in the relevant scenes grounds them in the “Oriental” conceptual basis and supports the growing impact of “otherness” in the overall development of the plot. Conceptual comparison of these stylistic compositions exposes the “Occidentalism” of the marriage scene music that is portrayed through its placement in the dramatic conflict and the created musical and conceptual metaphors.

La nuit de la Saint Barthelemy is the most conceptually complex composition. This is background music for the scene of St Bartholomey’s Day massacre in which the French Catholics slaughter thousands of Protestants within a few hours.

“Orientalism” is most transparent in this composition; the distance is portrayed through heavy use of vocal music with traditional references. Given that the voice is the first and most natural “human instrument” and a basic communication tool, it is quite easy to imagine that the musical analogy of “otherness” is possibly most explicitly presented through use of a completely different vocal aesthetic to that of the “Western Art Music” singing style.

The viewer is seduced into the world of “otherness” through music that is simultaneously somewhat confronting and emotionally rich and evocative. Rough, unpolished male voices become the screams of the slaughtered Protestants, the “unknown” is no longer mysterious, and everything is visually witnessed and musically supported on both dramatic and conceptual levels.

La chasse is a contrasting musical analogy to the usual “Occidental” portrayal so far since the hunting scene music exposes the courage and strength of the “Oriental” characters. King Charles is attacked by a wild boar while hunting with his friends. Although both of his brothers are with him, neither comes to his aid. Instead, his Protestant brother-in-law, Henri rescues him. The music is crucial in the establishment of the scene setting and it also conceptually empowers the “Oriental” characters, which is highly suitable for the dramatic conflict at this point in the film. The conceptual “otherness” is, at least momentarily, presented in a powerful position of equality and humanity. We are not watching the Protestants getting slaughtered or sneaking around trying to hide and survive, but rather we witness Henri de Navarre rescuing the Catholic King whose people have killed almost of the Protestant men. Not only is the mystery uncovered for its internal humanity, but the roles are turned both dramatically and musically in that the viewer witnesses enemies also existing within the same group, and the “other” is not necessarily dangerous.

Musical and dramatic symbolism of Rondinella

Rondinella is a source composition for the scene of Margot and Henri's wedding after-party. The name as well as the musical form of this composition suggests connections with the Rondo form. Rondo literally translates to a round form and the structure of the composition is cyclic, following the A-B-A form with a Coda.

This composition is the most curious artistic invention that incorporates tunes evocative of English folk songs, Balkan-flavoured percussion writing and most interestingly, some unusual self-devised form of Italian language, or more probably just something in the style of Italian. It seems that the Yugoslav vocal ensemble attempts improvising a language that is possibly based on their aural memories of Italian or on the Italian dialect from the regions on the former Yugoslav border.

Together with this most curious linguistic invention, it is important to mention the actual singing techniques and the performance style of this piece. The work consists of two sections: the sung verses and the improvised vocal sections in the style of the traditional singing from Herzegovina – *ganganje* (see the next section).

The male ensemble of the *Rondinella* singers performs the first line of text and then performs a wordless repetition on the suggested melody using low, nasal, guttural singing. This style of vocalisation also forms the middle or B section of the entire *Rondinella* structure and provides the transitional motif between the two verses.

Rere and Ganga⁵⁴

⁵⁴ the whole section was developed after the research from an article by Dubravka Ugresic, Rere published in Labon, J., (1994) *Balkan Blues; Writing Out of Yugoslavia*, Storm Magazine, London

Rere is one of the oldest forms of folklore that has survived in the Dalmatian hinterland and in the very south of Herzegovina and it involves wordless intoning of a few notes within a limited melodic range. A form of *rere* that includes words/text is called *ganga* and such a form of singing is called *ganganje*.

Ganganje can also involve wordless singing that is shaped to melodically resemble the previously sung line with text, so it becomes a vocal impression of a specific text setting. Thus, *ganga* can be purely textual or both textual and wordless. Ugresic describes a *ganga* performance: “*The men sing in a group, their arms round each other’s shoulders, the veins on their neck swollen, their faces red, their legs placed wide apart-emitting strong, guttural sounds in a range of two or three notes*” (1994, p.7).

Symbolic Qualities of Rondinella – Two Circles and Mandorla

The symbolism of *Rondinella* as implied through both its title and musical structure suggests a circle or cyclic shape⁵⁵. Interestingly enough, the two circles are seen in the wedding after-party scene. The first one is the circle of the local wedding guests from the outskirts of Paris where the women are dancing around the ensemble of the court musicians while the children are playing hide-and-seek in the crowd.

The second circle, much less elevated and optimistic in its spirit, shows the wrestling men. Although the wrestling initially appears as the sport that these men favour, the atmosphere darkens as one Catholic and one Protestant are in the circle and the hatred of the two religious groups is brought to attention once again.

The two circles form an old symbol of Christianity since in the old times one of the ways for Christians to silently declare themselves was to draw two interlocking

⁵⁵ *rondare*(Ital.) or *rondar* (Spanish) – to circle

circles. The space where the two circles intersect forms *la mandorla*⁵⁶ - the symbol of Christ. Although the Italian translation suggests an almond shape, the usual description for the *mandorla* also refers to the stylised fish shape.

Mandorla is symbolic of the interactions and independence of opposing worlds and forces, and it also may be taken to represent spirit and matter or Heaven and Earth.

The two circles in the film are symbolic of Catholic and Protestants and how together they seem to fail to realise that they are all Christians - united in the same *mandorla*.

Rondinella also forms its own *mandorla* within the Rondo form. Two sung verses representative of section A interlock into the middle B section, into a “sound mandorla” in which Bregovic explores the evocative qualities of the *ganganje* flavoured vocal writing.

Mandorla instructs people to reconcile and is extremely important in any power torn world, including both 1572 and the present day. It appears that Bregovic’s experiences of the Balkanian conflicts in the former Yugoslavia expressed through music become highly applicable in wider contexts. From “his Balkans”, as Bregovic frequently calls them, travelling backwards and forwards throughout the centuries, these musical motives evoke the potential healing process for the torn worlds.

And what is that healing process? It seems that both Bregovic and Chereau suggest that greater attention needs to be given to the symbolic meaning of *mandorla*.

The symbolism and importance of Canto Nero – “Orientalism” as the Cult of Black Madonna

This composition caught my attention at the very beginning of this research. The work *Elo Hi* is also subtitled as *Canto Nero*. The subtitle *Canto Nero* is thought

⁵⁶ la mandorla-Italian for an almond or an almond shape

provoking although there is virtually no information on its meaning or symbolism both in general or in relation to this particular soundtrack.

Regardless of this shortage of information, there have been many interesting connections between the possible meaning of this musical form and the suggested conflict between the Catholics and Protestants as portrayed in the film.

The choir singers chant the words *canto nero* in both *Elo Hi* and *La nuit de la Saint Barthelemy* and in both cases this motif becomes the counter-melody to the main compositional material.

The subtitle *Canto Nero* possibly suggests certain connections with the Cult of Black Madonna. The Cult of Black Madonna is not some kind of a Devil worshipping sect, rather this term was used (particularly throughout the Renaissance and the Baroque) to describe those who indulged in the acts of Nature and Mother Earth worshipping.

This film introduces us to the exiled Protestants living in the province of Navarre. Their life connects with nature. In the film, Henri, Margot's husband, makes references to the love of life, nature, people, food, etc. On the opposite side, the Catholics are living in their oppressive and self-destructive glamour. The ruling family is portrayed through their hypocrisy and debaucheries. In the scene of Henri's conversion to Catholicism, there is a brief mention of the return to the Apostolic Catholic Church and of the rejection of heresy and sects such as the Protestant sect.

Such statements (discussing cults and sects) combined with the film's portrayal of the Protestant life-style and the creative application of the traditional musical motives to evoke "Orientalism", all suggest that the Protestants could have been perceived by the Catholics as the worshipers of Black Madonna. Following the suggested

implications, the expression *canto nero* becomes a perfect analogy for the communal Protestant character in the film. The motif of *canto nero* is more than just musical symbolism of the “Oriental” conceptual basis, it is the example of conceptual “otherness” expressed from the “Occidental” reference point.

Compositional Techniques as Unifying Audio Conceptual Elements

Having established the analytical pattern for metaphorical contextualisation of the soundtrack, it is important to also compare the impact of the musical analogies in relation to the visually transmitted facts. If film is primarily a visually received medium what is the full capacity of other types of information transmission?

Can we describe the soundtrack as an audio-conceptual film script (the sound script) and what is the supporting evidence for such assumption?

How much does film music extend beyond a supporting role and is it a possible sound laboratory for the dramatic conflict and socio-cultural issues of the given film material? And how does the composer treat this possible soundtrack capacity in his/her creative applications? Does Bregovic’s metaphorical conceptualisation heighten the dramatic impact of music in the given films?

The previous section refers to the establishment of the conceptual basis through use of traditional music and folk elements in original composition. The entire section has accentuated an analysis on an “Oriental” conceptual basis, because of the particular ethno-cultural qualities of the soundtrack music and Bregovic’s metaphorical application of the traditional sound. In order to unify the two bases and present this soundtrack as a relevant audio-conceptual tool, it is important to explain the musical relationship of “Orientalism” and “Occidentalism” and trace their meeting points in the studied compositions.

The music for *La nuit de la Saint Barthelemy* has already been described with regards to the establishment of “Orientalism” in its overall structure. Given the nature of the scene and its dramatic conflict and the proposed musical metaphors of the soundtrack, it is crucial to also discuss the “Occidental” musical references. This particular marriage between the conceptual proximity and distance is also one of Bregovic’s most distinctive musical features in his soundtrack opus.

His complex compositional gestures are not lacking in organisation, both individually and when contextualised in the overall conceptual patterning of the film. Bregovic’s works in the *Queen Margot* soundtrack are not the random Balkanic overloads that they first may appear to be. His eclectic reunions of the modern and traditional, chaotic and organised, improvisatory and formalised are placed with such precise reference to the characters on screen that their intentions and actions become perfectly aligned with the analogies of the proposed conceptual analysis. The success of Bregovic’s musical dialogue between “Orientalism” and “Occidentalism” is in their actual thematic closeness to one another. His musical conflict is created through a paradox of musical similarities in these (apparently) disparate musical fragments.

The music for *La nuit de la Saint Barthelemy* involves two different treatments of musical materials. The first one is anchored in the compositional principles of “Western Art Music” (the choral section of the composition), while the second is based upon the traditional principles of vocal folk music (the small vocal ensemble section). These elements are always in counterpoint with one another and, like two dialects of an essentially similar language, they fully display possible stylistic appropriations and transformations of melodic fragments and rhythmic structures within one musical framework.

For every “Occidental” musical motif which is portrayed through the use of choral writing in the style of sacred “Western Art Music”, there is a folklorically conceived “Oriental” equivalent. These motifs of conceptual otherness are musically portrayed in quasi-traditional arrangements of the previously heard materials that are heavily “ethploited⁵⁷”.

Bregovic’s socio-musical wit hides in his bold musical statements that define the opposed religious and ethnic groups in the film as conceptually different yet essentially similar. If these ideas are taken into consideration, his Balkanic overload is not over-orchestrated but is as dynamic and different as the world and humanity are, and is universally acceptable in its emotionally intelligent chaos and applicable in wider conceptual contexts. Every perfect musical phrase with faultless harmonic language and immaculate vocal intonation has irregular melodic and harmonic equivalents favouring rough, unpolished vocal deliveries. Bregovic has expressed his love for the spontaneity of traditional music on many different occasions.

It’s much better a Gypsy brass band, even if out of tune, than a Madame Butterfly imprisoned by the routine.

(Bregovic in Fabretti, 2003)

Margot is similar to ***La nuit de la Saint Barthelemy*** in its socio-musical implications. However, the “Oriental-Occidental” duality of this composition is even more fascinating than the previous example because it assists the conceptual split within one person – princess and later Queen Margot. The communal conceptual division of characters suggests that Margot is an “Occidentalist”. Paradoxically to the communal conceptualisation, she is individually portrayed, both musically and dramatically as an outsider among the “Occidentalists”.

⁵⁷ a linguistic hybrid between “ethnic” and “exploitation” extrapolated from the title of Mark Neyrinck’s article (see the reference list)

Margot's character music is a powerful hybrid of vocal musical traditions roaming between the realms of the "Western Art Music" styles and a traditional musical aesthetic. The meeting point between the two is even more implicitly witty in this example. Margot's loneliness that is the result of her misplacement in "Occidentalism" is clearly portrayed through classically based vocal configurations evocative of Western Art sacred choral music.

Contrary to that, her "Oriental tendencies" (her dissatisfaction at the French court, rejection of her family's principles, love for La Mole, loyal friendship to her Protestant husband Henri, etc.) are musically portrayed through smooth transitions of musical materials from "Western Art" musical style choral writing to more folkloric vocal deliveries.

The choir music is on the far "West" of Margot's conceptual basis, while in the far "East" she is serenaded by the mystical qualities of the female singing in the styles of both Balkan traditional secular and sacred Orthodox music. This composition alone embodies the weight of her "Occidental" status (as a member of the royal family and a potential queen) and the intimacy of her "Oriental" intention (as a lonely person and a young woman in love).

Margot's conceptual conversion – the visual and factual verses the audio-conceptual

The last three compositions in the second table (see Appendix) are most challenging to describe. *Le matin, Margot* and *Elo Hi* are different layers of Margot's character themes. The intricacy of these compositions is in the conceptual aspect of the Margot that they portray.

In the hypothesis, Margot is essentially presented as an "Occidental" character. Her conceptual positioning shifts throughout the development of the story. At the same

time, her three pieces all feature strong “Oriental” conceptual characteristics. All three are heavily flavoured with folk music and are vocal compositions.

The first piece, *Le matin*, covers Margot’s wandering down the streets of Paris on the day of her first encounter with her future lover La Mole. Although, as an audience, we know the story line so far, and realise that Margot, an outsider in her own family and culture, is misplaced in her native environment, the musical allusion to the conceptual distance has more impact than anything else that is visually perceived. The soft, chanting female voice leads us to imaginatively start believing that maybe Margot will somehow challenge the pre-conceived conceptual order and make the transition from the known “proximity” into the “unknown” distance. This composition is a hint of Margot’s forthcoming transformation and is heard before we see her encounters with La Mole or any further development of her interaction with other “Occidental” characters.

Margot is background music for several scenes. It first appears in the in the massacre scene while Margot is nursing the severely injured La Mole who knocked on her door in his desperate attempt to escape. This music is heard in the moment of Margot’s realisation that the man she has been trying to forget has returned to her on that horrid night.

The same musical motif is heard during one of Margot and La Mole’s secret meetings. More elaborate treatment of the ethnic materials this time suggests a further push of Margot’s character into the conceptual distance. Her involvement with the unknown is audio-conceptually supported in the soundtrack as it progresses in the story line.

This composition also goes a few steps further in its romantic expression than *Le matin*. The treatment of the melodic materials is developed through quasi-Romantic gestures, including a rich use of choir voices. The importance of the female solo is stated through long, hauntingly beautiful lines. Traditional materials are treated with great attention to detail and with an elaborate accentuation of the different aesthetic qualities between traditional and classical singing.

Elo Hi is the last composition in the film. It accompanies the final scene and the closing credits. Margot gets in the carriage that will take her to the province of Navarre, carrying the head of her executed lover La Mole wrapped in a piece of silk. She is musically supported by the haunting voice of the Israeli singer Ofra Haza, as she literally makes her way to “otherness”. In this scene, we see only several seconds of her journey to Navarre; the rest of it is a journey of perceptual or imaginative order, as created for the audience through the audio-conceptual power of the soundtrack and the “Oriental” function of its traditional musical elements.

Although the audience watches the scene of Henri’s conversion to Catholicism during the first half of the film, Margot’s audio-perceptual conversion as heard through the use of traditional musical elements that allude to her “Oriental” involvement is much more powerful for the viewer and listener.

Queen Margot – a French production that follows the “inward Sarajevan principle”

In *Queen Margot*, Patrice Chereau presents a journey into the war-torn France and portrays some aspects of the Catholic-Protestant conflict of that era. Bregovic’s soundtrack remains faithful to his musical feeding ground that stretches from the Middle East to Central Europe. The discussion addresses his musical use of Balkan as

a metaphor, but do the reasons for these choices stretch beyond cultural familiarity and musical heritage?

In this film, we again see the conflict of two apparently opposing groups. *Rondinella* symbolically unites them into the interlocking circles which intimate that they both share Christian and French heritage. In *La nuit de la Saint Barthelemy*, the Protestants and the Catholics are musically reunited through Bregovic's juxtapositions of the Western Art and traditional Balkan musical exploitation of thematically similar materials.

Although we see two different groups, identify the "Orientalists" and "Occidentalists" and watch the tension, conflict and its outcomes, the musical analogies and visual symbolism instruct us to see that there really is no second group.

Just like in Kusturica's films, where there is really no second conflicting group, in Chereau's production of *Queen Margot*, we learn of that intricate opposition among the members of similar group.

The film always takes us back inwardly, to Paris and to the Louvre as the heart of France, whereas the province of Navarre comparatively informs us of the situation at the court.

The beauty of the Protestant life-style in Navarre exposes the destruction evident at the French court. The conflict with the Protestants also speeds up the decay of the royal Catholic family. This is more damaging to their rulership than the thousands of Protestants that they slaughtered in the massacre.

These dramatic qualities enable Bregovic to observe the conflict with a similar outlook to that applicable in Kusturica's films. The dramatic tension of the multi-faceted Balkan artistic expression creates suitable analogies for the given dramaturgy.

Following the “inward Sarajevan principle”, Bregovic turns back to his musical heritage just like Chereau portrays an essentially inward conflict in France.

France, one of the most powerful European and world forces throughout the socio-political history from before the time of *Queen Margot* to the present day, is musically portrayed by the analogies of the small turbulent Balkan nations.

Bregovic’s musical appropriations expose the similarities between the internal political, religious and national tensions in different cultures. The meeting point between him and Chereau becomes that inward conceptualisation that takes us back to the metaphor of the world, of the universe and Borges’ “Aleph”.

Bregovic’s musical portrayal of character duplicity – Margot as a representative example

Although *Queen Margot* is Chereau’s French production, the analysis has unravelled many similarities between the conceptual principles of this film and the two case studies directed by Kusturica.

The most important common element among these three examples is the conceptual duplicity that occurs within an individual character as is always the case with the main characters. The case-study analyses have presented Kusturica’s films as conceptual training ground for Bregovic’s soundtracks, so in the *Queen Margot* soundtrack we witness a mature and thorough approach to the use of Balkan as a musical metaphor of the presented theatrical conflict.

In *Queen Margot*, we follow the development of the character’s musical theme from the large vocal ensemble setting during Margot’s “Occidental” positioning, to more intimate solo voice settings as she recognises the love that she feels for a member of an enemy group. This new feeling takes her to the “Oriental” positioning that develops further throughout the film.

The most powerful visual and musical moment that portrays Margot's conceptual duplicity is the scene in which she recognises that the wounded man that she rescued is La Mole.

Margot and her servant Henriette take the man covered in blood into their chambers and try to undress him and wash his wounds. This moment is musically accompanied by the large vocal ensemble chanting Margot's theme.

In the next moment, Margot holds the delirious man who is muttering, as he thinks that she is an angel taking him into the other world. She realises who he is, and in that moment we hear the solo voice chanting Margot's theme. There is a momentary close up on Margot's beautiful and fragile face and we hear the mystical voice of Bregovic's soloist. The singing style has changed from the "Western Art Music" choir style singing to the vocalisations more commonly heard in Orthodox sacred music. The singing is more resonant, the vibrato is lighter and the vocal placement is more chest and throat based than it is in sacred West Christian music.

Internal-external cultural and conflict perspectives

Queen Margot soundtrack exemplifies Bregovic's analytical framework established through both the "inward Sarajevo principle" and Kusturica's productions. France is musically reunited into a complex whole with different opposing parts. Just like in Karahasan's metaphorical descriptions of Sarajevo (see Chapter I) where it is possible for an element to acquire many contradictory aspects without losing its previous characteristics, in the *Queen Margot* soundtrack Bregovic uses simple melodies and chord progression mixed with various Balkan traditional and "Western Art Music" ingredients until new musical analogies are created. The

following chapter uncovers the main unifying points and compositional strategies behind Bregovic's film opus.

CHAPTER VI CONCLUSION: Metaphoric use of Balkan Music as Bregovic Compositional Formulae; loss of mother-tongue and development of recycling and collage techniques

Recontextualisation of Kusturica's theatrical devices as conceptual frameworks for Bregovic's soundtrack composition

Bregovic's conceptual framework for development of world film soundtracks was largely extrapolated from recontextualisation of the techniques applied in composition for Kusturica's films that share many similarities despite their historical and geographic setting. Comparative observation of *Time of the Gypsies* and *Arizona Dream* shows many such examples.

Both film locations are similar because of their isolation from the outside society. The Macedonian Roma ghetto *Suto Orizari* appears just as cut off from the rest of the world as does the little farm in the Arizona desert. In both cases we hardly ever see the characters interacting with the dominant ideology.

The character similarities are even more interesting:

Perhan is a young Gypsy dreamer, Axel is his American equivalent. Perhan has a pet turkey and Axel works with fish. Both turkey and fish become more than the character's theatrical devices, these are the most powerful visual symbols in the given films. Axel's fish wanders through his imaginary Alaskan landscape, just like Perhan's immaculately white turkey flies into the highest spheres during the last moments of his life.

The connection of Perhan's wife Azra and Axel's second lover (and his first lover's daughter) Grace is not as obvious, but is still strong. Both Azra and Grace stand by Perhan and Axel through most of their difficulties and are in many ways the strength and courage that is waiting for them on the other side of their turbulent

reality. Both Azra and Grace die, and they are the purest most innocent losses in these films.

Kusturica uses many similar theatrical devices for these two characters; they are both in white in their death scene, they die on a stormy night and their white veils or hats fly symbolically across the sky.

Elaine is a strange female version of the mafia boss Ahmed. Although she is not involved in the mafia as we see it in *Time of the Gypsies*, her weak neurotic character is contributing to the destruction of Axel, just like Ahmed is slowly destroying Perhan.

Although Perhan's grandmother Hatidza is a much stronger symbol of stability than Axel's uncle Leo, they are both equally representative of the previous generation and their love and warmth towards the children/grandchildren. Grandmother and Leo connect in their relationship towards the destructive characters (grandmother's lack of trust towards Ahmed and Uncle Leo's strong dislike for Elaine).

Axel's best friend Paul and Perhan's uncle Merdzan are both portrayed as similarly neurotic womanisers. Although Axel and Paul are much friendlier than Perhan and Merdzan are, in both instances the dynamics between the given characters are highly reliant on the outlandish vibrancy of their turbulent love-hate, support-rejection relationship. It is almost as if those supporting characters capture the essence of the socio-conceptual principles behind the complexities of both Yugoslav and particularly Bosnian (and Sarajevan) societies.

Finally, one of Kusturica's most important re-appearing theatrical devices is the presence of live musicians. This is also an important contributing factor for the soundtrack composer as it signifies that the cultural traditions are supported through

the appropriate source music. The Mariachi of Arizona appear in a similar fashion to the Gypsy brass band in *Suto Orizari*. These live musicians follow the joys and pains of the characters; they are the ever-ready musical commentary to the given dramatic development. *Besame mucho* (Many Kisses), an old Mexican traditional song from *Arizona Dream* has its theatrical equivalent in the Roma number *Alo mange liloro* (Black Train) from *Time of the Gypsies*.

The main characters of both films have interesting skills or at least unusual hobbies. Perhan spends most of his time practising his tele-kinetic skills, while in Arizona Axel becomes obsessed with making his lover Elaine a flying machine. Both Axel and Perhan also have a huge intuitive internal world. The symbolism of their dreams creates the most powerful messages in these films.

In the final scene of *Arizona Dream* we see Axel and his uncle as two Alaskan Eskimos. The fish from Axel's dreams slowly descends into the sky, accompanied by the soft sounds of *In the Deathcar* in the background and signifies the end of growing up – the nightmare that separates children from adults. Contrary to the dream in the closing scene in Axel's opening scene dream we see a young Eskimo who barely survives crossing the frozen lake – signifying that Axel has not yet made it through the dark nightmare that separates children from adults.

In one of Perhan's dreams during his stay with Ahmed and his mafia we see his pet turkey appearing on the window as if it was trying to warn him. Hatidza, Perhan's grandmother plays with a blood-red ball on the main square in Milan while next to her we see a moving petrol tank. In the next scene we are back in Perhan's house where both Danira and Hatidza don't seem to be able to see Perhan. There is a little statue of the church from the main square in Milan on the kitchen table. Danira is circling around it with a ball of twine that is tied around the little statue. The ball of twine is a

guiding symbol that leads the hero back home as suggested in the Greek mythology. Perhan walks into the house followed by the moving petrol tank and grandmother hugs the tank without any notice of her actual grandson. We also see the house and the whole yard burning down together with the image of Perhan's burning white shirt hanging on the washing-line. The petrol tank stands next to the burning house that is slowly ascending tied on a rope.

The first time that we see the house tied on a rope is in the scene of Perhan's uncle Merdzan begging his mother to help him pay the debt from gambling. As the family tries to explain that there is no money Merdzan ties the roof of the house to a thick rope that he connects with his little van and drives until the house is suspended in mid air. In Perhan's dream we see a similar suspension only the house is also burning – signifying that this type of blood money earned from stealing and child-trade brings even more destruction than gambling. Perhan's internal world is musically portrayed by his favourite tune – *The Italian Song*.

Another interesting theatrical device that also creates a lot of the source music for both films is Kusturica's use of the piano accordion. In *Arizona Dream* we frequently see and hear Grace playing the so-called *Snake Charmer's Tune* while Perhan's accordion performance is the introduction to the *Italian Song* (which he also plays on the piano, in the scene of the house robbery).

The Psychology of Bregovic's Music – Sound Synthesis of the Balkans⁵⁸

Brutal Realism and Explicit Emotionalism

Bregovic's compositions are more than just pompously chaotic, overly orchestrated Gypsy extravaganza – his every work is a huge musical laboratory of the intricate

⁵⁸ The second part of the title "The Sound Synthesis of the Balkans" was extrapolated from the journalist Alvaro Feito's article with the title: "Bregovic-Sound Synthesis of the Balkans" (El Mundo, 26/04/01)

Balkan issues. This interest in human conflicts gives him the intuitive knowledge that “when the cultural connotations of any composition are stripped from that particular piece the audience is still left with the musical flow of events concerned with essential human emotion universal to any person⁵⁹.”

Bregovic’s adapted and recontextualised music, very much like Popa’s translated poetry gains bluntness of expression that is propelled even further in translation.

If we take into account that explicit emotionalism is a cultural quality in the Balkans and the Mediterranean, is it possible to say that such musical characteristic in the soundtrack heightens the realism of the given film?

Balkanisation of the *Arizona Dream* soundtrack heightens the realism about the issues of tolerance and equality in any society. The director’s use of fantasy elements and the violent emotionalism of the soundtrack music push these issues into some painfully appealing dimension because of their bold qualities.

Hughes (1978/79, p.3) described Popa’s and many other Slav and Mediterranean artists’ poetry as writing which utilises the formula of “*the return to the simple animal courage of accepting the odds.*”

Popa’s poetic formula is not very different from Bregovic’s musical concepts that heighten the conflicts portrayed in Kusturica and other director’s films to the point of brutal emotionalism.

It’s a formula that melts Bartok and jazz, tango and Slavic folk, Turkish suggestions and Bulgarian vocals, Orthodox sacred polyphony and modern pop beats.

⁵⁹ To pre-empt some of the topics from the final chapter I connected Bregovic’s techniques of appropriation to some ideas about Vasko Popa’s (the writer whose poetry I used in the creative project) work. According to Ted Hughes (see reference list) “*Popa’s language is universal (and close to music, in that respect), therefore when the poetic texture of the verbal code is cancelled (in translation to other languages) the readers are left with a solid stream of events that are meaningful in a direct way.*”

(Fabretti, 2003)

The brutality of the Queen Margot story line is replayed in its violently emotional soundtrack utilising the described elements. Bregovic musically portrays everything to the extremes – ranging from the gentle sadness of Margot’s love and loneliness, through Henri and La Mole’s courage to the cruelty of the Medici family.

Even in the local Yugoslav production *Time of the Gypsies* the *Roma* and *Gadje* soundtrack principles heighten the character duplicity and replay the conflict in its own cultural and ethnic musical idiom.

Bregovic’s music does not only “support” the given dramaturgy, it replays (or perhaps more appropriately “resounds”) the given circumstances its own creative medium – this is why the ethno-cultural associations related to any traditional music are not restrictive. Instead of restrictions these qualities provide solid framework for development of musical analogies that appropriate the dramatic conflict into musical concepts. If we consider that a large body of soundtrack music is of programmatic nature because of its relationship to the depicted dramaturgy it is possible to say that Bregovic’s programmatic approach is established through specific conceptual and metaphoric principles.

Stathis Gourgouris⁶⁰ discusses Balkan soundtracks with comparative reference between the Greek director/composer duo Theo Angelopoulos/Eleni Karaindrou and the Yugoslav-born Kusturica and Bregovic.

According to Gourgouris the main difference between the two collaborative duos is that Angelopoulos’ films together with soundtracks by Karaindrou refuse to embrace

⁶⁰ Gourgouris, S., (2002) Hypnosis and Critique (Film Music From the Balkans), In: D.I.Bjelic & O. Savic, *Balkan as a Metaphor; Between Globalisation and Fragmentation*, Cambridge, London, (part III)

history according to one's ideological expectations which is precisely what opens history wide within oneself.

Contrary to this, Gourgouris discusses Kusturica and Bregovic describing their films and music as connected to the most brutal realism. He suggests that even in Kusturica's Yugoslav productions, such as *Underground* "*the indigenous culture renders the invading culture in its own idiom*"(p.340).

In *Queen Margot* Bregovic creates musical metaphors for Chereau's portrayal of historical facts about the French history, while in *Arizona Dream* he aligns the musical metaphors of his soundtrack writing with the director's analogies of a particular socio-dramatic problem.

Are we in the era of "Neo-Nationalism" or in the era of "Nationalism" as a metaphor?

Bulgarian academic Ivaylo Dichev⁶¹ discusses the Balkans an example for his research about "National Identity in the Post National World".

Dichev discusses reversal of interest in the modernist figures of universalism from the Balkan region, such as dramatist Ionesco, literary theorist Kristeva or director Angelopoulos and composer Karaindrou, in favour of exclusive resellers and re-tellers of the local culture and colour such as Kusturica and Bregovic.

When you watch TV you'd say that we were never as colonised by the West as we are now. But, believe me that the Western culture has never been under greater influence of the small culture than it is now. I know this from personal examples of my music.

(Bregovic, 2002)

Closer to home, Macedonian-Australian artist Robert Sazdov (a.k.a. Maxim) works with the idea of the continuation and evolution of the traditional Macedonian music.

⁶¹ Dichev, I., (2002) The Eros of Identity, In:D.I.Bjelic& O. Savic, Balkan as a Metaphor; Between Globalisation and Fragmentation, Cambridge, London, (part II)

His concepts address further development of traditional Macedonian music through creative use of tools/instruments of the current time.

Sazdov talks about his beginnings, from the discovery of music that he heard while studying at the Sydney Conservatorium to crystallising his interest in electronic evolution of the traditional Macedonian music. Further research and creative applications led Sazdov to believe that any sound or any instrument can be customised.

During the initial stages of his research in this field the world was already swept with the idea of technology being culturally non-specific regardless of which part of the world it was developed in. This creates no issue as Sazdov and other musicians in similar field use technology simply as an auxiliary transition tool – computers become musical instruments for such artists.

My interview questions to Sazdov are similar to those I would have asked Bregovic. They address the evolution of the artist's signature-style with regards to the technique and development of any particular compositional formulae with specific attention to the altered and preserved musical elements used as source materials.

Sazdov's signature style and the compositional formulae derive from the researched traditional music. He even describes the process using the expression "deliberate formula" to accentuate his interest and desire in the evolution and preservation of the traditional music.

Sazdov explains that he aims to avoid writing in the Western styles, but admits that none of us can fight certain subconscious influences of today's environment and its contributing factors. He continues to research, write and rewrite in order to preserve the traditional flavour.

Bregovic still remains the most intricate “re-teller and re-seller⁶²” as he has taken the local culture over the precipice of the exclusively indigenous production and into an international sphere. His music is applicable in wider dramatic contexts because of the conceptual exploitation of the multi-layered ethnic structure of the Balkan population.

Sazdov on the other hand, conceptually synthesises the ideas of one part of the Balkans, and exposes its individuality and independence. This concept of “Neo-Nationalism” is not new and is particularly exposed in the multi-ethnic ex-Communist societies such as the former Soviet Union and ex-Yugoslavia.

Bregovic is propelled by his uncompromisingly Yugoslav vision, acknowledgment and understanding of the perpetual absurdities and inspirations of the Balkan conflict which he uses a metaphor in his cross-disciplinary work.

Sazdov’s evolution of tradition is aligned with the latest developments in the world of music and creative technology, while in his soundtrack opus Bregovic takes tradition forward on a more perceptual and conceptual level.

Bregovic – the controversial cultural ambassador and his metaphoric recontextualisation

Bregovic has always been a controversial figure in the music world. In frequent conversations with musicians from the former Yugoslavia who now live and work all over the world I came across many different responses to his work. Many people are disappointed because he does not seem to write much new music in his film opus or for the live tours with the “Weddings and Funerals Band.” The rest of the world seems to love dancing under the stars to the sounds of the “Weddings and Funerals Band.”

⁶² Paraphrasing Dichev’s terminology for the Balkan artists promoting the local culture

The controversial ambassador's more current creative work, his retrospective outlook on the transition from rock to Balkan ethnic music and development of hybrid genres are portrayed through "Bregovic about Bregovic" framework that is constructed from his descriptions and explanations about the evolution of his musical processes.

Significant aspects that are valuable to both my theoretical research and development of creative projects address Bregovic's acknowledgment of the relationship between emotional, cultural and artistic connections with the homeland and his creative output.

He discusses the Yugoslav war and loss of homeland, on an emotional, artistic and creative, but not political level. Some of this discussion explains his choices to recycle music even in foreign productions. Bregovic even talks about his laziness. His discussion about the importance of mother tongue (specifically for songwriters and other text-based musicians) is particularly important.

The loss of homeland and of the opportunity to express his artistry in his mother tongue led Bregovic to collaborate with other musicians and appropriate his text-based works according to different project requirements.

Bregovic talks about all these aspects of his post-"White Button" career with funny, yet sentimental honesty.

I never liked working. My biography is a typical biography of a lazy man. As a pensioner I discovered that I liked working. I never worked in my life, except for the past two years, and that came as the result of the war. The consequence of the war is that I also do not have a homeland.

When I talk of homeland, for someone who writes songs that has different connotations then for those who simply left their houses. Of course, I left my house too, but that does not matter. In any case, I am left without homeland. That is a disability for those who write songs, because I can no longer write songs, can no longer write in my language.

That is why I only recycle songs now. I live abroad and when I give Iggy "On the Backseat Of My Car" he makes "In the Deathcar" as a result of it. I am forced to make compromised derivations; I can no longer control my materials from beginning to end.

I am extracted from my homeland, culturally, mentally and emotionally and in the beginning I was frightened and repulsed by it, but now I am enjoying it. If I look back now I feel my city and my country as some sort of a frame, and objectively a small frame, but the one I enjoyed back then.

(Bregovic in Popovic, 1996)

Both *Arizona Dream* and *Queen Margot* soundtracks show many examples of musical recycling. In the *Arizona Dream* soundtrack Bregovic displays several of his "White Button" songs as appropriated in collaboration with Iggy Pop.

In the Deathcar is an arrangement of *Na zadnjem sjedistu moga auta* (On the Backseat of my Car) from the 1979 album *Bitanga i princeza* (A Thug and a Princess). *TV Screen* was recycled from *Da te Bogdo ne volim* (I Wish to God I Didn't Love You) that was on the band's self titled album from 1984. The provocative 1986 album *Pljuni i zapjevaj moja Jugoslavijo* (Spit and Sing My Yugoslavia) seems to be the most resourceful source of materials that were recycled for the two soundtracks. *Get the Money* from *Arizona Dream* is an arrangement of *Haj'mo u planine* (Let's Go to the Mountains).

There are several examples of recycled works from this album on the *Queen Margot* soundtrack. The most famous theme from this soundtrack is *Elo Hi* performed by Ofra Haza – this is an arrangement of the song *Te noci* (On That Night). The track titled *La nuit* that is heard in the opening film scene is an arrangement of the song *Ruzica* (Little Rose). *La chasse* – music for the hunting scene is developed from the recontextualised instrumental section of *Nocas je k'o lubenica pun mjesec iznad Bosne* (The Moon Over Bosnia Tonight is As Big and Round As a Watermelon).

Bregovic also recontextualises his use of various ensemble configurations.

Dreams from *Arizona Dream* and *Le matin* and *Margot* from *Queen Margot* exploit vocal writing in a similar fashion – large vocal ensembles accompany a solo female voice. In both cases the melodies are evocative of traditional Balkan and even of sacred Orthodox music –this musical quality highlights their conceptual importance and places them in the overall ideological structure of both the film and its accompanying soundtrack.

In his portrayal of the conceptual “otherness” Bregovic accentuates the traditional elements in original composition and diminishes the rock influences of his pre-existing materials. In *Queen Margot* we are audio conceptually brought to understand the “Orientalism” of Margot’s position through the power of her accompanying musical motives. The depth and importance of dreams and fantasy for the film characters in *Arizona Dream* are amplified through the quasi-liturgical qualities of *Dreams*.

The recycling of old materials have resulted in the recurrence of musical forms in Bregovic’s soundtrack opus. *Elo Hi* from *Queen Margot* and *In the Deathcar* from *Arizona Dream* have a similar structure. Both works are recycled from Bregovic’s pre-existing rock materials. The melodies of the verses are as similar to the old versions in Serbo-Croatian as possible because the new texts are written in other languages. Bregovic also develops the second melody that sometimes serves as the counter-part to the sung one or as an instrumental bridge between verses.

Finally, the portrayal of the “Orient-Occident” duplicity and the introduction to big “turning points” in all three films is expressed through big choral and electro-symphonic writing. The representative compositions include the two versions of

Ederlezi (the electro-acoustic version heard in the scene of St George's Day celebration and the vocal version from the scene of Azra's death), *7/8 & 11/8* and *Death* (from the scene of Dooley's journeys through Alaskan whiteness and the scene of Grace's death) and *La nuit de St Barthelemy* (from the scene of St Barthelemy's night massacre.)

Bregovic – the controversial Balkan musical ambassador also discusses those less flattering aspects of his creative history. Using informal Serbo-Croatian full of colourful expressions that describe his lack of formal musical training Bregovic talks of his work, of the democratisation of music and its accessibility to people with different levels of ability and educational background.

Fortunately we always had enough money, to pay someone who knew what I needed - I always had the best musicians and conductors. And my role was to have it all blowing around me.

(Bregovic, October, 2001)

Bregovic's work with different aspects of traditional music has not only led him to expose the Balkan music in cross-genre collaborations, but has also provided solid ground for many other artists with similar interests and led to various further collaborations. It is also interesting that many of Bregovic's partners from film projects have some collaborative past among themselves. One of such collaborative partnerships is between Iggy Pop and Ofra Haza⁶³.

Haza also remains one of the key musicians that inspired Bregovic to continue the work with traditional music. He frequently talks about the impact she had on his

⁶³ Iggy Pop (Bregovic's main Arizona Dream collaborator) appears on Ofra Haza's album *Kirya*, as the narrator in *Daw Da Hiya*, an ethno-pop number about traditional life-style in the Middle East. For further details access: Haza, O., (1992) *Kirya*_Shanachie Entertainments Corp./East West Records, Germany.

understanding of the importance of traditional music both on the world music scene and in the development of any individual musician's creative consciousness.

I remember the first intense emotion on the MTV awards night. Can you imagine what it looks like, what a parade of stars? Ofra Haza appeared in the middle of it all. She came on all alone, dressed in a traditional costume and performed a traditional song. The night had been full of good music up until that point, but what made me say “God why haven’t we got this?” was the pride and conviction with which she performed that song. Proud that she sings a song from Yemen, the country that is difficult to find on the map, but she believed that what she had sung is valuable, worth singing that night – that is something we have always missed.

(Bregovic in Popovic, 1996)

The beautiful voice behind the most famous *Queen Margot* soundtrack number *Elo Hi* remains one of the contributing forces that inspired Bregovic to make a new creative beginning built upon recycling of his old materials. International success has not changed Bregovic’s views on the importance of traditional music. He discusses his choices through various quirky metaphors.

It’s like going for a quick bite in Macdonald’s. When you are eating seriously, you eat your food, the same with music. You listen to MTV quickly, but seriously you listen to your own music.

(Bregovic, 2002)

CHAPTER VII Documentation of the Practical Activities and the Outline of the Links between Theoretical Research and Creative Applications

Introduction

The following discussion involves both practical and theoretical research, including various experiments and trial performances.

The discussion addresses:

the large scale compositional project (*Vrati mi moje krpice*) **Give Me Back My**

Rags – its nature and associated issues;

the ensemble/ orchestration (the issues arising from the use of an idiosyncratic ensemble based on an “ethnic” model);

the significant minor projects (projects that include recycled materials from the large-scale project or other relevant works);

various performances conditions and different performance outcomes of the large scale project;

the interrelated nature between the project and the thesis – theoretical questions that developed from compositions and musical material that was written as a result of research.

Three most important minor projects discussed in this section are:

- *Valhalla* (a performance art adaptation of Richard Wagner’s *Ring Cycle*);
- *Plea to my Mother-Equinox Jam Session*;
- *Sybil in a Suitcase (a cabaret odyssey)*

The large-scale project: its nature and associated issues

On the poet Vasko Popa, his work and its ideology

Although Vasko Popa's output is vast, it is fair to say that "Give Me Back My Rags", written in 1956 is one of his best known cycles of poetry. But who is Vasko Popa?

Vasko Popa, Zbigniew Herbert and Miroslav Holub belong to the Eastern European generation of poets who were caught by World War II in mid adolescence. Their work can also be described as a reaction to the European Surrealism that was predominant in the continental literature during the fifties and the sixties. Each individual poet's reaction was either a matter of personal temperament or a gesture reinforced by the situation in the writer's country of origin.

Vasko Popa is a particularly interesting case. His work was always full of folkloric symbolism highly evocative of Serbian culture and mythology. During the time of Socialism in SFRY, this type of work was not appreciated and Popa was blacklisted as a nationalist and a separatist. Although he was to live in exile or to keep a low profile (of which he chose the latter), Popa's work still made its way to many Yugoslav readers of all nationalities and religions, and made a particular impact on the educated Serbian population.

Popa's works, regardless of their subject matter, are always anchored in reality. They seem closer to real destinies (those which would be possible under the circumstances of the time when the works have been created) of his compatriots than to some idealistic dreams which fuelled many writers' inspiration.

It seems closer to the common reality, in which we have to live if we are to survive, than to those other realities in which we can holiday, or into which we decay when our bodily survival is comfortably taken care of, and which art, particularly contemporary art, is forever trying to impose on us as some sort of a superior dimension.

(Hughes, 1978/79, pp.1-2)

I believe that Ted Hughes suggests that the fundamental difference between Popa (or perhaps the whole generation of writers from Eastern and South-Eastern Europe which he represents) and the Central and West European writers is that of the world or the environment from which he/they drew their artistic inspiration. The quotation suggests that his inspiration derived from the realism of the socio-political condition, while the West was heavily driven by the idealism of the socio-political condition to be.

Give Me Back My Rags

This cycle is in a league of its own amongst Popa's works of poetry. Human beings rarely appear in Vasko Popa's poetry; instead the reader faces magically vitalised objects with strangely familiar (quasi-human) qualities. Like many writers of his generation Popa also avoids writing in the first person.

Give Me Back My Rags is a marvellous artistic invention in which the allegorical monster becomes the subject of the story. The monster portrays basic elemental laws of human chemistry. The centre of gravity is inside the person's sense of self and subjectivity as described through a particular view of and attitude towards the subject, the allegorical monster.

"Rags" are symbolic of life with the monster – a life which must have been led prior to the monster's arrival, but becomes the object of the poetic drama, because it seems impossible without (and therefore after) the monster. These "rags" portray the degraded remains of the narrator's life, the threads of his/her identity that must be regained.

The cycle is written in a language full of old Slavic expressions and folkloric metaphors. Ted Hughes (1978/79, p.3.) describes Popa's poetic expression as "*a return to the simple animal courage of accepting the odds.*"

The Musical Adaptation of the Work – Songs and Narratives

One of the easier decisions in this adaptation regards the vocal delivery of the text. As the composition is influenced by the traditional music of the Balkans, the vocalist sings the setting of the Serbo-Croatian text to music, while the second performer (preferably an actor) speaks the English translations.

I made some musical decisions to connect the language of the text to the particular forms of vocal production characteristic of Yugoslav folk singing. The English translation is never sung because the language does not suit the chosen vocal style that bases many of its techniques around the sound production used in the Southern Slavic languages.

The singing style that inspired most vocal lines and the overall ensemble composition is evocative of the traditional vocal deliveries heard in Macedonia, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Bulgaria. It explores intense, raw-sounding singing that uses widely open throat and nasal sound production. In such vocal deliveries, the breath in is taken in right to the bottom of the abdominal region and husky, resonant laughter is released upon exhalation. This quasi-belly laugh is then musically notated into simple melodies.

My work is an exploration of the traditional influences situated in the context of the contemporary "Western Art Music". The composition is essentially my personal reaction to the Balkan music. Initially, I attempted setting the English translation of the poetry to this style of singing. My first discoveries were that English was too

sharp and disjointed to be throat vocalised. It was difficult and physically uncomfortable to sustain a vocal line because some of the consonants are sharper than they are in the Slavic languages and there seem to be fewer vowels. On a more subjective note, there was a part of me that felt extremely unauthentic about the ideas of setting the English text to ethnically flavoured music.

I was also attracted to the challenge of translating Popa's poetic techniques and strategies into music.

Popa's language is extremely rich and imaginative: except for special effect he avoids terms recently borrowed and smacking of the international urban culture; he prefers older, native Slavonic words for which he draws on medieval literature, folk, poetry, charms, riddles, games and legends: sometimes he also invents new compounds on traditional models. He manages to do this without becoming obscure or artificially folksy: he is not trying to take the language back into an older period, but is enriching it and showing it a way forward.

(Pennington 1979,p.11)

I found this description of Popa's language very similar to Bregovic's concepts of traditional music as an inspiration and a form of expression even in the popular musical genres. Having studied both Bregovic's source materials (the "White Button" repertoire) and his adaptations (the recycled and appropriated soundtrack examples), I attempted to create an original work in which the original source material (the sung Serbo-Croatian text setting) and its possible adaptation (the spoken word English translation) are applied simultaneously.

The English text is narrated during various sections in the music, and it is used in three combinations with the sung Serbo-Croatian setting: overlapping the sung text, running simultaneously with it and running independently of it, during different musical sections.

This placement of the English translation suggested slightly more complex adaptations of the original material than applied in Bregovic's work.

In Bregovic's soundtrack recycling, the melody lines are kept to the closest possible version and new texts are written in different languages or translated from the Serbo-Croatian originals. In my song cycle, the spoken English text is placed in specific sections of each composition and does not melodically resemble the source material in Serbo-Croatian, as it is not sung.

Certain musical motives in these songs were inspired by the musical qualities of the spoken phrases in Serbo-Croatian. In the first movement, the very phrase: "Give me back my rags" (spoken or sung in Serbo-Croatian) suggests a rhythmic and melodic pattern that becomes the foundation of the entire composition. This phrase was crucial in mapping out the architecture of the cycle as a compositional construction.

The Architecture of the Musical Setting

My introduction to the cycle of poems was in the original Serbo-Croatian version, after which I started reading the English translation, always returning to the original and comparatively observing the expressive qualities of the two languages.

It became apparent that poems/movements no. 1,7,9 and 13⁶⁴ carried particular structural key points that I needed to follow in order to connect with the composition's literary unity. There were also different levels of anger and compassion, hope or desperation, triumph or loss that needed a lot of attention. The reader of this poetry was, very much like a Butoh performer; about to encounter the origins of his/her fears magnified through the allegorical monster and the rags. Those

⁶⁴ for the English translation of the poetry see appendix

four movements (1,7,9,13) were important because they all clearly addressed both the subject and the object of the poetic expression – the “monster”⁶⁵ and the “rags”.

Because of the strong thematic link across the entire cycle, it was important to find textual cells that produce similar or close musical equivalents. The title phrase and the opening line of the first movement “Give me back my rags” suggested certain melodic and rhythmical patterning that built one of the first musical motives of the work.

This musical development reinforced the alteration of textual use. The phrase “Give me back my rags” appears both independently and is followed by the conclusion “Give me when I ask you nicely”. The implied motivation led me to repeat the phrase several times both in the sung text and the instrumental allegories of the line.

The first setting technique appearing in the composition was textual manipulation and fusion of texts. As the cycle starts with a prologue and then the first poem (movement), I decided to blend them into one composition with a purely instrumental interlude between the poems in order to preserve the poet’s literary structure. Although the phrase “Give me back my rags” does not appear in poetry before the first movement, I musically anticipated it during the prologue and increased its structural influence during the instrumental bridge. The arrival of the actual sung text was a natural progression of the pre-conceived musical idea.

The musicality of the opening phrase provided a solid musical structure for the final, movement, which once again addresses the same text in its closing lines.

There are two movements that could function as the central or the middle point in this cycle. The seventh movement would be a perfect mathematical middle, especially

⁶⁵ Although the monster is boldly present in the second movement, immediately after the prologue and the opening number, the second poem provides a place for exploration of the contrasting musical elements to portray similar literary subjects to the ones from the previous numbers.

after the musical compression of the prologue and the first movement into one, while the ninth movement is a somewhat delayed middle – the golden section of the entire work.

Chants of the ancient Balkan churches (movt.1.) are explored, as are the contemporary reactions to the traditional dances (movt.2- based around “kolo”-the ring dance in 5/8). The tavern songs of the Bosnian and Serbian villages (movt 3. with its clarinet melody evocative of musical numbers from Kusturica’s films) are followed by the sounds of the Sarajevan and Belgrade underground performing arts scene (movt.4. inspired by the late-night jam sessions in the Yugoslav artistic underground).

After this, the listener is taken through the world of the army tales (movt 5. inspired by the East European military band music) and through the Balkan mythology (movt. 6 with its use of old Slavic words and musical returns to the sounds of charms and riddles). The circus and cabaret sounds (movt.7.) are a musical homage to the road-life of the ever-travelling circus performers and musicians. In the next song we are on the Adriatic coast with its alluring love songs inspired by the Italian language and this neighbouring culture (movt 8. is a seductive love song, inspired by both Dalmatian *klapa*⁶⁶ songs and *canzone* (songs) from the neighbouring Trieste in Italy).

The ninth movement is a culmination of the presented styles, recalling the thematic and the compositional structures of the opening prologue and the first song, but in a more contemporary, minimalist-inspired compositional manner. So after the chant, the ring dance, the tavern song, the jam session, the soldier’s tale, the curse and riddle, the circus, the love song and the climax, the final third is a reflection of the journey. After

⁶⁶ *klapa*-(a group, a gang) this expression is frequently used in Dalmatian music as a name for unaccompanied vocal ensembles

the ninth movement, we are already on the other side, the lights are dimmer and the circus is now quieter, in a post-performance mood (movt.10 musically fuses aspects of both film noir and an imaginary freak show). The tavern songs and the late night jam sessions are now fused into an early-morning tango (movt.11) and the curses, riddles and the love songs are melted into a nursery rhyme- like song (movt.12). The closure (movt.13) forms a perfect circle and takes us back to the ancient Balkan sounds of the opening bars, only this time not in pain and rage of the “Just come to my mind, my thoughts will scratch out your face” prologue-lines, but through hope and forgiveness of “Give me back my rags, I’ll give you yours”.

This final third is a return to optimism and courage with greater understanding of the reality of living. Popa and his contemporaries have always been described this way, and I could not have found a nobler creative example to follow.

Like men come back from the dead they have an improved perception, an unerring sense of what really counts in being alive.

(Hughes, 1978/79, p.3)

The Ensemble

Ash Randomly is a student band formed in April 2002 during the early performance stages of sketches for the cycle, *Give Me Back My Rags*.

Two of the most important role models for *Ash Randomly* were Boris Kovac’s *LaDaABa* and Bregovic’s *Price i pjesme sa svadbi i sahrana* (Weddings and Funerals Band).

But who are these two bands?

LaDaABa (*La Danza Apocalyptica Balcanica*)

La Danza Apocalyptica Balcanica is, in short, my answer to the offered “choice” between two kinds of oppression I experienced in the last years: one of Milosevic’s dictatorship regime and another of the NATO air campaign in Yugoslavia. My answer is: “Just imagine, there is only one starry night left til

the end of this world...What would we do? Let's dance, let us be happy at least one more time in life!

(Kovac, 2003)

The saxophonist and multimedia artist Boris Kovac leads the six-piece band **LaDaABa**. These musicians from Pannonia, in the North-Serbian region on the Hungarian border, indulge in the wild rides across the musical languages of the Balkans and also enjoy other eccentric dance-cycles including: tango, calypso, waltz or rumba, to name a few.

The members of **LaDaABa** are mainly children from various Balkan mixed marriages between Serbians and Hungarians, Muslims and Jews, Croats and Austrians, etc. That wild and furious ride across the musical languages is not a merely self-indulgent musical step – this is their creative homage to the eclectic Balkan population.

Weddings and Funerals Band

They really play in the weddings and in the funerals, as in the Orthodox tradition. After the funeral ritual you've eaten, you've drunk so, for a while, your pain is estranged by the music.

(Fabretti, 2003)

Bregovic, the leader of “White Button”, the Yugoslav and Eastern European legend of rock music, spent the entire first decade after the disintegration of his band in the late eighties without performing live in concerts.

The situation was drastically changed in 1995 when he returned to performing live together with ten traditional musicians, a choir of fifty voices and a symphonic orchestra. This was just the beginning. Today the “Weddings and Funerals Band” consists of a Gypsy brass band, a string orchestra, a large choir, several traditional Bulgarian singers (who sometimes go under the name **Paganke** [“Pagan Women”]), a

percussion section led by the Yugoslav marimba virtuoso Ognjen Radivojevic and Bregovic himself on the guitar.

“Weddings and Funerals Band” celebrates the culturally and ethnically multi-faceted Balkans – their work is a sound documentary about the political, ethnic, cultural and sociological issues of the Balkan Peninsula and their raging music advocates tolerance and acceptance.

Some of Bregovic’s recent and upcoming projects with *the* “Wedding and Funerals Band” are *Hot Balkan Roots* in which he was asked to be the guest of honour for the festival of music from Orthodox countries. For this occasion, Bregovic gathers three brass bands from Romania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia and teams them up with the Russian female choir.

Hot Balkan Roots were followed by the *Big Wedding in Palermo* in which Bregovic gathered his “Weddings and Funerals Band” to play all night under the stars at the main square in Palermo. At dawn, the band was joined by about eighty newly married couples, approaching the square from all sides to dance their final wedding dance to the sounds of this eclectic and flamboyant ensemble.

The most moving and both, politically and culturally significant project in recent times is Bregovic’s *Moje je srce postalo tolerantno* (Tolerant Heart) premiered in the Basilica of St Denis in Paris. The project is Bregovic’s musical overview of the past and current political situation and of the growing tensions and lack of tolerance that unfortunately still exists in the world.

Moje je srce postalo tolerantno gathers three star singers from three religions (Christian, Jewish and Muslim), an Orthodox Church choir from Moscow, a string ensemble from Morocco and the brass players from “Weddings and Funerals Band”.

The work has since then been performed at the Academia di Santa Cecilia in Rome (composer and Head of the Academy Luciano Berio made a special invitation) and in Milan.

Bregovic's most recent project, *Carmen With a Happy End*, is the first "Carmen with a Balkan accent" and it incorporates a fake documentary (collaboration with countryman videographer and multi-media artist Milos Radovic), naïve theatre and live music. The controversial Balkan ambassador continues touring Europe and South America with his "Weddings and Funerals Band" – the road-life continues for the Gypsies, and those who love them and musically celebrate them like Bregovic has for over a decade now.

Ash Randomly

Ash Randomly is my attempt to develop a band inspired by the examples of *LaDaABa* and "Weddings and Funerals Band" in my creative, student and living environment.

Closer to *LaDaABa* in numbers (always between 6-10 members) and still stylistically near "Weddings and Funerals Band", this student ensemble from Western Australia presented the songs and stories from the song-cycle *Give Me Back My Rags* and enabled my Balkans to live both in music and creative concepts.

The rehearsals are not only focused on articulation and intonation perfecting, because *Give Me Back My Rags* is essentially about story telling. Players have also spent time acquainting themselves with characters from Kusturica's films and concepts from Bregovic's music.

Interpretation of each individual movement was developed in discussion with players through theatrical instructions implied in the musical concepts. Although the

band might initially visually appear as a regular university music ensemble, the theatricality of their performance is more implicit and understood in the performance, rather than through any elaborate staging design and other theatrical tricks and embellishments.

Just like dramatic and agitated playing is meaningless if it is not supported by the adequate sound that explains the gesture, *Ash Randomly* does not need an elaborate stage design. They create their own stories and journeys through the multiplicity of their musical expression.

Minor Projects

The selected projects are all related to the large-scale work and the dissertation research.

Valhalla

Valhalla (2002) was conceptualised by a Visual Arts Honours student Emma Margetts who wanted to work with the impact of the socio-cultural concepts that the given Scandinavian mythology, presented in Wagner's work, could have on contemporary society. She was also interested in exploiting the climax scene in each opera. The concept supported the climax as the emotional heart of the entire work, and a team of performers including actors, musicians and visual artists was gathered to create a short story.

I was involved in the third opera *Siegfried* and had a role of the hero's totem animal –his faithful bird. The bird character was given to me as to the only musician in this ensemble, so the requirement was also an original music score that would be performed live during the show.

Give Me Back My Rags *in* Valhalla

During the time of the *Valhalla* project I was three quarters of the way through the song-cycle project. As the project developed, the cast became increasingly aware of the mythological implications and the metaphorical power that reaches to the present day. This realisation instantly attracted my allegorical monster from the Vasko Popa cycle. Although the *Siegfried* music consists of many different motives that are very loosely or not at all connected with the large-scale work, the main motive structure derives from some song-cycle fragments. During this project, I understood Bregovic's concepts about the importance of language for text-based artists.

Although I have received extensive musical training and am not primarily a text-based artist, the *Valhalla* project includes a large body of poetry set to music. The most substantial vignette in the "*Siegfried* collage⁶⁷" is the final song for voice, piano and the dancer character of Mother Earth.

Si la muerte (If Death) – Spanish version of Koren ti i krv i krunu (Damn Your Root and Blood and Crown)

Si la muerte (If Death) a poem written by Miguel Huezo Mixco⁶⁸ is an entirely contrasting work to this writer's more politically coloured opus. The violently emotional poem is very similar to Vasko Popa's expression. Readings of the Spanish text uncovered many similarities between the flow of music and words. The song developed from the recycled first melody of the sixth movement from the song-cycle *Koren ti i krv i krunu* (Damn Your Root and Blood and Crown) and the second theme deriving from one of my short solo piano pieces. This fusion is similar to Bregovic's recycling techniques that fuse various materials into new homogenic collage work.

⁶⁷ I continuously refer to the work as the collage as it consists of several *vignettes* that take us through the character development and the story line in a miniature form.

⁶⁸ Miguel Huezo Mixco (born 1954) a poet, journalist and writer from El Salvador is a prominent cultural ambassador of the Central American culture and a recipient of many awards across the Americas.

The “cut ‘n’ paste” method as I sometimes call it resulted in a very stylistically appealing and emotionally evocative choice. The process and the outcome are both very close in their concept and musical framework to Bregovic and Iggy Pop’s work on *In the Deathcar*, in the *Arizona Dream* soundtrack. The text is appropriated, the language is changed and the second theme, recycled from the piano work serves as an instrumental bridge and a contrasting motive to the sung verses.

Spanish Song in Scandinavian Mythology

A long time ago I read some wonderful books about three integral elements of flamenco: singing, dancing and instrumental (mainly guitar and percussion) playing. Throughout the course of research, I discovered that one of the most important rituals in the Spanish Gypsy mythology is the Spring Rite – the ritual of Mother Earth worshipping. The Spanish Gypsies have also transmitted these rituals to many other European cultures. As the last scene of *Siegfried* was the dance of Mother Earth [Queen Erda in Scandinavian mythology] I found this musical choice evocative of the explored social commentary.

Just as Bregovic uses the Balkans as a metaphor for theatrical conflict I used the music and mythology of both the Balkan and the Pyrenean Peninsula as a metaphor for the last scene in *Siegfried*.

Sybil in a Suitcase [a cabaret odyssey]

Sybil in a Suitcase is a cabaret odyssey devised in collaboration with the writer/director Francis Italiano and writer/performer Michelle Hovane.

The character of Sybil (played by Hovane) portrays an oracle who, after a sexual encounter with the God Apollo receives a gift of eternal life. Sybil’s habit of always being the last one to leave the party leaves her, once again roaming throughout the

centuries and desperately in need of a good drop. She has had a particular liking for the world hot-spots which take her through Paris during the time of the Commune, through the great siege of Leningrad and to Havana and Guantanamo Bay during the Cuban missile crisis.

Sybil's prophetic songs travel the world with her as Italiano, Hovane and I explore our interests in different cultures and their histories through text, movement and sound.

Sybil/Sibelline/Sibilochka and Machka/La Gata (Sybil and the Cat)

The Sybil project brought me the role of the prophetess' pet cat together with the collaborative role of a composer/performer/musical director. Sybil's songs are her own cries as well as well as the distant echoes performed by the ghost of her Machka/La Gata.

Together we performed most of the songs in two-part harmony, but also introduced several solo numbers for both Sybil (*The Prophetess' Song*, written in the style of Marlene Dietrich songs) and the Cat (*Little Song of an Unborn Child*, a setting of Federico Garcia Lorca's poem to music).

Following Bregovic's tradition of ethnic music arrangements in combination with original materials, I arranged the Russian song *Podmoskovnija vjecora* (Moscow Nights) for Sybil's Leningrad section of the play. The arrangement also included a small instrumental bridge of original material developed as a variation of the given melody. The second arrangement in the Leningrad scene incorporated the melodic outline of *The Internationale* accompanied by a bass line extrapolated from one section of *Necu te uprtiti* (I Won't Carry You) the third movement from the song-cycle.

Chika Boom [Don't Underestimate the Rhumba] – Sybil's Cuban Song was also a source of many leit-motives throughout the entire scene. Although largely based on original materials, ***Chika Boom*** is a rhythmic potpourri of many different elements from the large-scale project.

With a pinch of tango from ***Izbrisao sam ti*** (Erase – movt 11. From ***Give Me Back My Rags***) and even some Cubanised cocek from “I Won't Carry You”, ***Chika Boom*** also combines the newly developed materials ***Boleros Tristes*** and ***Rhumba***.

During this project I also studied the solo-piano works of the Cuban composer Ernesto Lecuona. His opus for solo piano is large and consists of small character pieces, based on Spanish, Portuguese, Central and South American and African dance forms. These works are very significant, as a lot of Lecuona's compositions are also rich and evocative of the Central American salon-style entertainment music.

Both, the Paris Commune song ***Unruly Women*** and the opening number ***Miseria es el Rio del Mundo*** (Misery's the River of the World) recalled the Kurt Weilesque qualities of my own creative opus and some other references to both Latino and East European cabaret (as appropriate according to the scene).

In Sybil's final lullaby, ***Little Song of the Unborn Child***, I close the play with the musical homage to the main character's everlasting life. Based on Garcia Lorca's poem, the song is essentially about the closeness of a curse and a blessing and the severity of world disasters that keep this prophetess as innocent as an unborn child despite her ancient wisdom.

Supplica a mia madre (*Plea to My Mother*) - tonglen

[Equinox jam session]

“Plea to My Mother” was a poem Pier Paolo Pasolini wrote in 1966 on learning that his mother had been diagnosed with a terminal illness. The spring

equinox might be seen to constitute a time of fecundity during which we might thank our biological mothers, the mothers of our children and Mother Nature for firstly providing and then nurturing life. Two strangers improvise throughout this spring equinox night on two pianos facing each other, but configured as one. They share common origins rooted in the same narrow strip of coast that stretches from Venice all the way down to Albania. Their common history is connected to the history of the Adriatic Sea. As they touch the keys a kind of language may be sounding, that belongs to neither and to both. In this way they attempt to celebrate a return to increasing light yet again, as the cycles of birth and death are repeated endlessly in a dance in which the quest for harmony might seem to be the only principle that prevails over time and space. There are no desired outcomes here except to wait awake till dawn, I'm told wildflowers bloom now in the sand...

Tonglen is a Tibetan Buddhist practice that proposes breath as the instrument through which darkness might be inhaled and then light exhaled: it's considered to be the most useful practice sentient being can engage with in order to benefit the whole creation; this equinox event aligns breath with the movement towards increasing light."

(De Clario, 2003)

The Equinox jam session was Professor de Clario's and my musical attempt to explore some of the concepts of the spring rituals that are celebrated widely around the world.

The thematic and ritualistic closeness of this concept to the *Valhalla* project and the research of Kusturica's *Time of the Gypsies* immediately gave me many ideas.

Although it is quite difficult to recall all the processes that developed throughout this "dusk to dawn jam session" some of the most important structural elements that linked my improvisation possibly derive from Bregovic's *Ederlezi* (St George's Day) and different appropriations of fragments from the song-cycle and the "*Siegfried* collage". This twelve-hour process brought together many elements of all the musical materials that have been developed for the past two years.

The other important structural element was Pasolini's poem "Plea to My Mother" that serves largely as a conceptual basis for both players. This material is also important in its connection to text-based artists and their emotional, cultural and

creative links to the text – we read both the Italian original and the English translation. Italian is de Clario's mother tongue and still has an enormous impact on his creative consciousness.

As the improvisation is developed between two players, the dialogical qualities of its structure gave us both different roles; more and less dominant participation, equality of team work or entirely soloistic roles. The second part of the challenge was the developed/trained musicianship (my own) in combination with de Clario's entirely intuitive approach to music, which gave our dialogue even more musical layers. The outcome is not defined (as de Clario described in the programme notes.) There are no requirements, except to honour this process in its entirety, and embrace its multiple possible outcomes.

Various Performance Conditions and Different Performance Outcomes of the Large-Scale Project

Some of the fundamental questions to address are:

the nature and intention of the work (*Vrati mi moje krpice*) *Give Me Back My*

Rags;

the associated issues (liberties or restrictions that such work proposes);

suitable performance conditions (the perfect events, venues, audiences, etc.)

The nature of *Give Me Back My Rags* is not far away from that of Bregovic's Weddings and Funerals Band as the work journeys through many different places and the magnitude of its musical formulae celebrates the cultural and creative multiplicity of the Balkans.

The intention of the work is to tell a story and create a journey – this music is experiential and inclusive because of its constant attempts to give an insight into the human essence.

It is my belief that there are really very few or almost no restrictions in such creations and that the liberties are endless. *Give Me Back My Rags* and my student band stand somewhere between **LaDaABa**, “Weddings and Funerals Band” and the world of “Western Art Music”.

Unlike my two idols, I have spent many years at the conservatory studying piano and composition. I thought that the formal training would give me greater opportunities to return to the roots of traditional musical expression and to those essential parts of creativity that transmit stories of the beginning and the development of the world.

The song-cycle is based on the conceptual synthesis of different traditional influences into the contexts of “Western Art Music”. The intention is close to traditional music concepts, the execution classical, and what propels the work is the equilibrium of these two components.

The ensemble *Ash Randomly* gathered classically trained musicians who have other strong musical interests. *Give Me Back My Rags* is my artistic attempt to provide a space in which such musicians can enjoy the virtuosity and knowledge of the conservatory training in a more robust context.

Some music institutions in the world have lost the power to encourage an individual to own the work to the maximum because of one’s creative development.

In the beginning of the project development, the song-cycle was not written for specific players, but it took more individual shape as certain instrumentalists joined the team. Although the music is fully notated, all players were asked to individually consider their part in relation to the surrounding ones, to the topic of each song and to their potential part in that story.

In most such bands this individuality is a factor that is inseparable from the music. Bands such as Kovac's *LaDaABa* and Bregovic's "Weddings and Funerals Band" are as homogenic as the individuality of their players.

The song cycle *Give Me Back My Rags* has been performed on numerous occasions and for various audiences. The performances include an appearance at the West Australian monthly New Music event Club Zoo (May 2002) and 3 presentations at the West Australian Academy of Performing Arts. Among these three performances are the annual Totally Huge New Music Festival (April 2003), the Conservatorium Lunchtime Concert (June 2003) and the graduation recital (October 2003).

Retrospective outlook on these performances suggests that *Give Me Back My Rags* was conceived for the audiences similar to those who normally attend the concerts of Bregovic's "Weddings and Funerals Band" or Kovac's *LaDaABa*. The work and its performers seek listeners who journey together with the ensemble, travel with the music and allow for the music and their reaction to it to completely overtake their entire persona.

Song-cycles – traditional large-scale journey works

An acting student once told me that she felt extremely self-conscious among an audience of classical music students. Upon asking her to explain what she meant, I was very sad to find out that this person, trained not to be embarrassed of the sensual and impulsive nature of human responses to creative art felt inappropriate in the room full of silent, polite listeners.

Operas (from as early as during the baroque period) were written for completely reactive, crying, laughing, cheering and "booing" audiences.

Most of the performances of my song-cycle were delivered to very sedate audiences of expressionless faces. Although there has been a lot of constructive criticism after the concerts, I found it fascinating to observe that there were not too many immediate reactions throughout the journey. You don't see the audiences at **LaDaABa** and "Weddings and Funerals Band" waiting for Goran Bregovic and Boris Kovac after the concert to give them constructive criticism.

During my next meeting with the same acting student, I shared some new understanding of the audience reactions to my music. One of the key factors is the performance venue. Many music auditoriums and various other halls in conservatories and other such institutions frequently carry an aura of certain expected behavioural codes.

During the graduation recital, my supervisor and the conductor of the song-cycle Lindsay Vickery made a brief speech about the song-cycle tradition in the history of music. This compositional form has certain characteristics that accentuate the importance of the journey and an allowance for that journey overtakes the listener's polite, rational or even socially acceptable (according to the "Western Art Tradition") essence. I sometimes imagine the listener of such music like a wild rider travelling across the emotional spectrum of the set poetry.

One of the most interesting and possibly delicate subjects is whether such work is appropriate for assessment purposes in academic institutions. The importance and value of this type of composition as a vehicle of (deliberate or incidental) socio-artistic commentary still does not seem to be completely understood or acknowledged in all institutions. There are still many schools of music in the world where the composition graduate is almost by definition expected to be a follower of Pierre Boulez and Luciano Berio.

Interestingly enough, inspired and moved by the socio-artistic impact of Bregovic's work "Tolerant Heart" Luciano Berio, the head of Academia di Santa Cecilia in Rome invited the performers to play a concert for the academy students and general public.

Give Me Back My Rags with all its guiding models and the psychology behind its concepts remains a work with possible social impact, a composition that will not change the world-situation, but may make some difference to those who have heard it or performed it. Just like Kovac's *Balkanski Apokalipticni Tango* (Balkan Apocalyptic Tango) or Bregovic's *Hot Balkan Roots*, the cycle is based on a traditional principle, executed through classical concepts and inspired by the multitude of different musical genres. The aim of all these elements is the same – to always tell a story, warm the hearts and move the feet. This cycle is not a palette of the studied compositional techniques, it doesn't demonstrate the years of conservatory lessons. It is more of a creative space where the players can explore their intuitive musicianship.

They are in their element, all immersed in a culture with those with little possess inner riches, and the music they play is guided by pure instinct. They are themselves, living life to the full.

Tony Gatlif (notes from "Vengo" CD sleeve, 2000, Warner Music, France)

The work aims to take the traveller/listener through many different places during its first two thirds of the cycle. The final third is a reflection of the entire emotional spectrum explored throughout the journey.

The journeying qualities of such music accentuate the importance of live performance and the band's musical and theatrical impact on the audience during and after the performance. Just like Bregovic's "Weddings and Funerals Band" and

Kovac's *LaDaABa* repertoire, the songs and tales of *Give Me Back My Rags* (as told and sung by the vocalist and the actor) echo long after the final chord has been struck.

Vengo is primarily about that: a call, a song, a hymn to life, to love, to mourning, to blood money. A hymn to the Mediterranean spirit.

Tony Gatlif (notes from "Vengo" CD sleeve, 2000, Warner Music, France)

And the song-cycle *Give Me Back My Rags* is primarily about that too: it is my hymn to life, to music, to story telling, to dancing under the stars: a hymn to the beauty of music as a creative cultural connection among the nations.

The interactive qualities between the project and the thesis: questions that developed from compositions and music that was written as a result of research

The most significant connection point between the theoretical research and the creative applications addresses the purpose and intention of traditional music and folk elements in original composition. Theoretical analysis of the studied soundtracks together with evaluation of the creative projects shows that such elements heighten the sense of story telling and the theatricality of music. Some of the most powerful suggestions for the compositional framework of the song-cycle developed from Neyrinck's analogies of "Orientalism" and "Occidentalism" as portrayed through use of traditional elements in original composition.

"Orientalism" and "Occidentalism" in Vasko Popa's poetry – "Damn Your Root and Blood and Crown" as an exemplar

During the course of research and project development, I constructed a compositional pattern based on Neyrinck's analytical framework. The pattern is most obviously applied in the sixth movement of *Give Me Back My Rags* as the "Oriental/Occidental" principle can be followed in Popa's poetic expression through his use of old traditional Slavic expressions and more modern language.

The sixth poem titled “Damn Your Root and Blood and Crown” is a gigantic curse, expressed through two very distinctive poetic voices. The first one is pathetic in a modern way – the pain is expressed in the contemporary urban Serbo-Croatian. The second voice uses the language frequently found in the ancient Slavic mythology – this is the language of the charms and riddles.

Damn Your Root and Blood and Crown⁶⁹

*Damn your root and blood and crown
And everything in life*

*The thirsty pictures in your brain
The fire-eyes on your fingertips
And every every step*

**To the three cauldrons of crossgrained water
Three furnaces of symbol fire
Three nameless milkless pits**

*Damn your cold breath down your gullet
To the stone under your left breast
To the cut-throat bird in that stone*

**To the crow of crows the nest of emptiness
The hungry sears of beginning and beginning
To heaven’s womb don’t I know it**

*Damn your seed and sap and shine
And dark and stop at the end of my life
And everything in the world*

This dichotomy of poetic expression in Popa’s language also divides the compositional story into two voices. If we consider that these words are expressed by one character, it is possible to relate the analytical framework to the second level ideology conceptual split that is present in Chereau and Kusturica’s films.

Just like Perhan is an innocent Gypsy boy and a gangster, Axel is a dreamer and a fighter and Margot is the daughter, sister and wife of a king and a lover of an enemy,

the italics – the first modern poetic voice
the bold letters – the second ancient poetic voice

this poem exposes the devil and the muse of one's internal essence as the two voices slide around each other in a complex and bitter interplay.

The other important aspect of Popa's poetic expression in this example is that the "Orient" is the conceptual angle of the past. If we take the voice expressed in the modern language as "Occident" (proximity) then the "Orient" is not only the other but also a legend. This also opens the possibility that the "Orient" was actually once proximity and it became simultaneously past and distant. In this poetry, the "Orient" is distant because it is ancient. This is the conceptual other which is really the forgotten conceptual self – otherness is reinforced by evolution.

In Popa's poetry, the "Orient" presents the cradle of emotional essence which is now addressed as other in relation to the urbanised "Occidental" awareness.

Epilogue

This paper has been both a valuable research document and a stepping-stone in my personal acknowledgment of the necessary principles that assist in the development of any composer's creative consciousness. The principles include:

Acknowledgment of traditional music as a part of the artist's socio-creative consciousness;

Acknowledgment of the conceptual principles as tools for creating musical analogies in applied composition (with specific references to the soundtrack genre).

My concepts are based on the idea of "roots" (traditional music) as a possible creative and cultural reference point for any artist. Recognition must not be misunderstood for acceptance, since that part of the process is every individual's

personal decision. Socio-cultural awareness is always a possible framework for one's artistic discourse.

Acknowledgment of the conceptual principles in applied composition (particularly in the soundtrack genre) provides solid frameworks for the creation of musical analogies that replay the depicted dramatic conflict in their own creative medium.

I found Bregovic's use of the Balkans as a metaphor to be a very encouraging method for many misplaced artists around the world. It is common that migrants and refugees go through tremendous psychological crises throughout their assimilation process, and just like Bregovic discusses in the section about the recycling and collage techniques in composition, many artists feel incapable of continuing their creative work in these different environments. The metaphorical use of one's own socio-cultural creative resources narrows the ethnic, cultural and emotional gap between the artist in exile and his/her new environment. Although arts do have their own independent languages, many creative forms are still very reliant on verbal language and cultural understanding. This is why these flexible frameworks that are based on metaphors and analogies become possibly the most powerful tools of creative commentary.

In Bregovic's sound analogies both, "Orientalism" and "Occidentalism" are translated into "Balkanism", as its cultural and conceptual multiplicity finds possible answers for both of these elements⁷⁰. So if we look at the conceptual principles in applied composition from the cultural perspective, it is clear to see that not only did Bregovic use the Balkans as metaphor, but that he specifically used this paradoxical sense of identity to portray conflict.

⁷⁰ My old history teacher in Yugoslavia use to say: "The paradox of the Balkan identity is that our Ottoman heritage constantly verses our European dream."

In a recent interview in Yugoslavia a journalist asked whether the world recognises Bregovic's composition as Balkan music or Bregovic's music.

What would I know? They (international audiences) know my name. I am first and foremost a Balkan composer and my musical address is Balkan. The music is inspired by the Balkans and written for the Balkans. The fact that the world has accepted it – that is really nice.

(Bregovic, 2002)

Increasing acceptance of different types of ethnic music in the contemporary arts and the reconstruction of preconceptions and taboos have taken a long time. Perhaps the next paradox for us all to realise is that even this freedom and acceptance does not resolve everything. It only provides more options and potential answers because when all is taken into account any artist's creative journey is just like the nostalgic subject of a Gypsy song – *o lungo drom* (the long road).

Table 1. TIME OF THE GYPSIES

(According to characters' duplicity and conceptual principles as portrayed in the soundtrack)

Absence of an outside group brings this concept down to the second level ideology – the analysis focuses on duplicity within each character. *Conceptual proximity* is expressed through the *Roma principle*, accentuating purity of the traditional Gypsy life-style, while the *Distance* represents characters' evolution through continuous decay of their values and morality. This idea derives from the stereotypical negative portrayal of the Gypsies by the Gadje and is therefore labelled as *Gadje Principle*.

Track list	Proximity (the character's initial portrayal) ROMA PRINCIPLE	Distance (evolution or transformation to the other) NEGATIVE GADJE PRINCIPLE
<p>1. Scena pojavljivanja majke (The Scene of Mother Appearing)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mother as a symbol of stability and strength of character (<i>fixed character without transformations</i>) • musical association with Alo mange liloro - <i>proximity of the character in their purity of conceptual, musical + geographical setting- Roma principle</i> 	
<p>2. Scena Perhanove pogibije (The Scene of Perhan's Death)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perhan's death as the return to the purity of childhood • musical association with Ederlezi-<i>proximity of the character in their purity of conceptual, musical + geographical setting - Roma principle</i> 	
<p>3. Kustino oro (Kusto's Ring Dance)</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recontextualisation of the ring dance(Gadje dance) to musically portray the decay of values and morality in Gypsy characters - <i>musical portrayal of transformation of Perhan's character according to the negative Gadje principle</i>
<p>4. Borino oro (Bora's Ring Dance)</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recontextualisation of the ring dance(Gadje dance) to musically portray the decay of values and morality in Gypsy characters Ahmed -fixed negative character without transformations presented according to the negative Gadje principle
<p>5. Glavna tema (The Main Theme)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • adaptation of Ederlezi for more leitmotivic purposes of scene music • musical reminder of the conceptual positioning on an abstract level <i>reinforcement of the Roma principle</i> 	
<p>6. Tango</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • hybrid musical form with Italian stylistic references <i>(the presentation of art, beauty and culture in Rome and Milan accentuates the portrayal of the Roma in Italy according to the negative Gadje principle)</i>

<p>7. Pjesma talijanska (Italian Song)</p>	<p>(accordion version as played by Perhan in the ghetto)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • musical adaptation of a traditional Italian tune <i>portrayal of Perhan's character according to the Roma principle</i> 	<p><u><i>(piano version as played by Perhan as a gangster in Italy)</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • musical adaptation of a traditional Italian tune <i>(Perhan's individual character as the representative of the portrayal of Roma in Italy according to the negative Gadge principle)</i>
<p>8. Ederlezi (St George's Day)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • celebration of St George's day <i>portrayal of a Gypsy ritual according to the Roma Principle</i> 	

Table 2. ARIZONA DREAM

This table categorises compositions according to Neyrinck’s framework addressing their main musical characteristics and purposes in the given soundtrack. The table presents the following aspects of each composition: its source material (ethnic elements in original music or arrangements of traditional music), whether it features as source or background music and the three musical function of ethnic elements. These are: source of inspiration, tool of setting establishment and metaphors of the conceptual basis (proximity and distance) of the film characters This table contains only Goran Bregovic’s compositions, both his solo and collaborative work.*

Track list	Ethnic elements or Ethnic music	Source or background	Musical function of ethnic music or elements
7/8 & 11/8	2 distinctive sections: 1st section -ethnic elements incorporated in composition 2nd section – an arrangement of a Serbian folk song <i>Hajde Jano (Come Jana)</i>	Background music	1. Conceptual source of ideas (provides a solid framework for characterisation) 2. Conceptual distance exposed through ethnic musical metaphors (portrayal of the fantasy principle)
Death <i>this composition is a derivation of 7/8 & 11/8</i>	2 distinctive sections: 1st section -ethnic elements incorporated in composition 2nd section – an arrangement of a Serbian folk song <i>Hajde Jano (Come Jana)</i>	Background music	1. Conceptual distance exposed through ethnic musical metaphors 2. symbolises the characters’ (Eskimo man and later Grace) struggles and Grace’s death
Get the Money	Ethnic elements in a recycled rock composition	Source music	1. Assisting dramatic needs of the scene 2. Establishing the location of the scene (bar) 3. Balkanised conceptual proximity (metaphor for refugees and misfits)
In the Deathcar	Ethnic elements in a recycled rock composition	Background music	Transitional composition in the conceptual category –takes the characters (particularly Axel) from the proximity into their desired distance

* I have chosen to be specific about the work of Goran Bregovic, as the soundtrack for the film is a complex mixture of Bregovic’s music and traditional Mexican Mariachi repertoire. The composition titled *American Dreamers* is omitted from research (both table and text) as it does not fit into any discussion category and it is used very minutely.

TV Screen	Ethnic elements in a recycled rock composition	Source music	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assisting dramatic needs of the scene 2. Establishing the location of the scene (bar) 3. Balkanised conceptual proximity (metaphor for refugees and misfits)
<i>Dreams</i>	Ethnic elements and sacred Orthodox musical references in original composition	Background music	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assisting dramatic needs of the scene 2. Conceptual distance expressed through sacred Orthodox musical analogies

Table 3. FUNCTIONS OF ETHNIC MUSIC/ETHNIC MUSICAL ELEMENTS IN THE SOUNDTRACK COMPOSITION FOR “ARIZONA DREAM”

This table includes all compositions used in the film (Goran Bregovic’s original music, some early jazz and traditional Mexican music) and exemplifies different influences in Bregovic’s writing their function and comparative relationship to the other two types of music that feature in the film.

Functional track numbering/grouping	Type of function		
	1. Source of ideas for the composer	2. Tools for different setting establishment	3. Tolls for the establishment of the conceptual basis
Group 1. <u>MEXICAN</u> <u>MUSIC</u>		Mexican music is always used as source music and serves to establish geographic setting and to support the dramatic qualities of the scenes.	The large body of traditional Mexican Mariachi music used in the soundtrack establishes the conceptual proximity (Occidentalism) bringing the reality of the Arizona life
Group 2. <u>EARLY JAZZ</u>		This music is briefly suggested as the radio or gramophone music in Elaine’s house, it supports the dramatic needs of the specific scenes in which it features as source music.	Conceptual proximity (Occidentalism) of the characters’ environment
Group 3. <i>Traditional Balkan music and its elements</i> <u>1.7/8&11/8</u> <u>2.DEATH</u> <u>3.DREAMS</u>	Traditional elements used as linking motives between the original writing and the traditional musical arrangements in compositions with two distinctive stylistic sections (ie. 7/8 & 11/8, Death) In Dreams the source of ideas comes from Orthodox church music.		Conceptual otherness (fantasy world) the ethnic metaphor expressed in the folkloric musical choices assists the uniqueness of the film’s fantasy aspect.

<p>Group 4. Bregovic's <i>recycled "White Button" music</i> 1. GET THE MONEY 2. TV SCREEN 3. IN THE DEATH- CAR</p>	<p>Bregovic's recycled rock materials from the Yugoslav band "White Button" exemplify that traditional music has always served as inspiration in writings of this band. Elements of folk influence are obvious in the melodic lines and the vocal aesthetic used in the chosen singing-style (particularly in "Get the Money")</p>	<p><i>"TV Screen" and "Get the Money" are source music in the café scene – establishing the location specific setting</i></p>	<p>"TV Screen" and "Get the Money" are used as café music and are representative of Occidentalism, the reality of the minorities through Balkan rock metaphors.</p> <p>"In the Deathcar" is transitional music between Axle's reality and fantasy</p>
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Table 4. QUEEN MARGOT

This table categorises compositions* according to Neyrinck's framework addressing their main musical characteristics and purposes in the given soundtrack. This table presents the following aspects of each composition: its source material (*ethnic elements in original music or arrangements of traditional music*), whether it features as source or background music and the three musical function of ethnic elements. These are: source of inspiration, tool of setting establishment and metaphors of the conceptual basis (proximity and distance) of the film characters

Track list	Ethnic elements or Ethnic music	Source or background	Musical function of ethnic music or elements
<u>Elo Hi (Canto Nero)</u>	Ethnic elements in a hybrid composition <i>(notion of hybrid suggests Bregovic's cut'n'paste method of combining recycled materials with the new ones)</i>	Background music	1. Conceptual source of ideas (provides a solid framework for characterisation) 2. Conceptual distance exposed through ethnic musical metaphors
<u>Rondinella</u>	Ethnic elements in stylistic composition	Source music (courtly dance)	Establishing setting 1. historical period 2. geographic location
<u>Ruda Neruda</u>	Ethnic elements in stylistic composition	Source music (courtly dance)	Establishing setting 1. historical period 2. geographic location
<u>La nuit de la Saint Barthelemy</u>	Ethnic elements in a hybrid composition Extension of <i>Elo Hi (Canto Nero)</i>	Background music	1. Assisting dramatic needs of the scene 2. Conceptual distance
<u>Le matin</u>	Sacred ethnic elements in original composition (sacred Orthodox music as a source of inspiration)	Background music	Conceptual distance (Balkan as a metaphor through the use of sacred Orthodox music)
<u>U te sam se zaljubia</u>	Ethnic music Arrangement of a Dalmatian traditional song	Background music	Conceptual distance (musical allusion to the love story through the use of Dalmatian love-song)
<u>La chasse</u>	Ethnic elements in a hybrid composition	Background music	Conceptual distance
<u>Margot</u>	Ethnic elements	Background music	Conceptual distance (musical metaphor for transition of an initially conceptually proximate character into otherness)
<u>Le Mariage</u>	not relevant to the given category, stylistic composition	Source music Church ceremony music	Establishing setting 1. historical period 2. situational location Conceptual proximity
<u>La nuit</u>	Ethnic elements in hybrid composition	Background music	Conceptual distance

* The composition titled *Recontre* ("Return") is omitted in the analysis (both tables and writing) because it does not exemplify the discussed functions.

Table 5. FUNCTIONS OF ETHNIC MUSIC/ETHNIC MUSICAL ELEMENTS IN SOUNDTRACK COMPOSITIONS FOR *QUEEN MARGOT*

This is a development of the third column from the previous table. It focuses entirely on the three functions of ethnic elements and traditional music in soundtrack composition. Each function is presented in a column and some tracks are grouped according to their corresponding musical analogies that they portray throughout the soundtrack.

	Type of function		
Functional track numbering/ grouping	1. Source of ideas for the composer	2. Tools for different setting establishment	3. Tolls for the establishment of the conceptual basis
<u>1. U te sam se zaljuba (I am in Love With You)</u>	Probably not a direct source of ideas, but a topic-related choice for the conceptual establishment of characters and circumstances (more explanation in column 3.)		<p><i>Pre-empting the idea of conceptual otherness in a traditional arrangement of a love song: motivic subject identification through relevant musical topics</i></p> <p><i>Portrayal of the conceptual identities of different characters</i></p> <p>Balkan music as a metaphor of the film subject</p>
<u>2. La Nuit</u>	Source of ideas and an example of musical recycling of pre-existing materials		<p><i>Orientalisation (conceptual other also suggested as the unknown.</i></p> <p><i>Musical characterisation of the conceptual distance from the proximity viewpoint</i></p>
<u>3. Le Mariage</u>		<p><i>Location setting</i> Supporting the historical and situational need of the scene</p>	Occidentalisation-proximity as the prevailing concept
<u>4.a Rondinella</u> <u>4.b Ruda Neruda</u>	Ethnic materials combined with specific stylistic composition	<p><i>Location setting</i> Supporting the historical and situational need of the scene</p>	Transformation of conceptual basis, challenged Occidentalism; musical metaphor of Orient as the prevailing force in the overall conceptual basis
<u>5. La nuit de la Saint Barthelemy</u>	Ethnic singing as a source of ideas in a hybrid form		Orientalism at its most uncovered Most explicit use of the ethnic element-vocal music/ conceptual distance musically portrayed through different vocal aesthetic

<u>6. La chasse</u>	Source of ideas and example of musical recycling of pre-existing materials	<i>Location setting</i>	Occidentalism in a Balkan musical metaphor Humanisation (appropriation) of the unknown through musical analogies
<u>7. a Le matin</u> <u>7. b Margot</u> <u>7.c Elo Hi</u> <u>(Canto Nero)</u>	Ethnic singing as a source of ideas in a hybrid form Source of ideas and example of musical recycling of pre-existing materials		Transformation of a character's conceptual basis through music (Margot - an Occidental character portrayed through music representative of Orientalism) (Margot closer to an Oriental concept through a relationship with an Oriental character La Mole) (Margot clearly anchored in the Oriental conceptual basis.)

Vasko Popa: Vrati mi moje krpice

Padni mi samo na pamet

Misli moje obraz da ti izgrehu

*Izidi samo preda me
Oci da mi zalaju na tebe*

*Samo otvori usta
Cutanje moje da ti vilice razbije*

*Seti me samo na sebe
Secanje moje da ti zemlju pod stopalima raskopa
Dotle je medu nama doslo*

1
Vrati mi moje krpice

Moje krpice od cistog sna
Od svilenog osmeha od prugaste slutnje
Od moga cipkastoga tkiva

Moje krpice od tackaste nade
Od zezene zelje od sarenih pogleda
Od kože s moga lica

Vrati mi moje krpice
Vrati kad ti lepo kazem

2
Slusaj ti cudu
Skini tu maramu belu
Znamo se

S tobom se od malih nogu
Iz istog canka srkalo

U istoj postelji spavalo
S tobom zlooki nozi

Po krivom svetu hodalo
S tobom gujo pod kosuljom
Cujes ti pretvornice
Skini tu maramu belu
Sto da se lazemo

3
Necu te uprtiti na krkace
Necu te odneti kud mi kazem

Necu ni zlatom potkovan
Ni u kola vetra na tri tocka upregnut
Ni duginom uzdom zauzdan

Nemoj da me kupujes

GIVE ME BACK MY RAGS

*Just come to my mind
My thoughts will scratch out your face*

*Just come to my sight
My eyes will start snarling at you*

*Just open your mouth
My silence will smash your jaws*

*Just remind me of you
My remembering will paw up the ground under
your feet*

That's what it's come to between us

1
Give me back my rags

My rags of pure dreaming
Of silk smiling of stripped foreboding
Of my cloth of lace

My rags of spotted hope
Of burnished desire of chequered glances
Of skin from my face

Give me back my rags
Give me when I ask you nicely

2
Listen you monster
Take of that white scarf
We know each other

Since we were so high
Guzzled from the same bowl
Slept in the same bed
With you evil-eyed knife

Roamed the crooked world
With you snake in the grass

Do you hear dissembler
Take of that white scarf
Why lie to each other

3
I won't carry you pick-a-back
I won't take you wherever you say

I won't not even shod with gold
Nor harnessed to the wind's three-wheeled
chariot

Necu ni s nogama u dzepu
Ni udenut u iglu ni vezan u cvor
Ni sveden na obican prut

Nemoj da me plasis

Necu ni pecen ni prepecen
Ni presan posoljen
Necu ni u snu

Nemoj da se zavaravas
Nista ne pali necu

4
Napolje iz mog zazidanog beskraja
Iz zvezdanog kola oko moga srca
Iz moga zalogaja sunca

Napolje iz smesnog mora moje krvi
Iz moje plime iz moje oseke
Napolje iz mog cutanja na suvom

Napolje rekao sam napolje

Napolje iz moje zive provalije
Iz golog ocinskog stabla u meni

Napolje dokle cu vikati napolje

Napolje iz moje glave sto se rasprskava
Napolje samo napolje

5
Tebi dodu lutke
A ja ih u krvi svojoj kupam
U krpice svoje kože odevam

Ljuljaske im od svoje kose pravim
Kolica od svojih prsljenova
Krilatice od svojih obrva

Stvaram im leptire od svojih osmeha
I divljac od svojih zuba
Da love da vreme ubijaju

Kakva mi je to pa igra

6
Koren ti i krv i krunu
I sve u zivotu

Zedne ti slike u mozgu
I zar okca na vrhovima prstiju
I svaku stopu

U tri kola namcor vode

Nor bridled with the rainbow's bridle

You can't buy me

I won't not even with my feet in my pocket
Nor threaded through a needle nor tied in a knot
Nor reduced to an ordinary rod

You can't scare me

I won't not even grilled and double-grilled
Nor fresh nor salted
I won't not even in a dream

Don't kid yourself
It's not on I won't

4
Get out of my walled infinity
Of the star-circle around my heart
Of my mouthful of sun

Get out of the comic sea of my blood
Of my flow of my ebb
Get out of my stranded silence

Get out I said get out

Get out of my living abyss
Of the bare father-tree within me

Get out how long must I cry get out

Get out of my bursting head
Get out only get out

5
You get harebrained puppets
And I bath them in my blood
Dress them in rags of my skin

I make them swings of my hair
Prams of my vertebrae
Kites of my eyebrows

I shape them butterflies of my smiles
And wild beasts of my teeth
For them to hunt to kill time

A fine sort of a game that is

6
Damn your root and blood and crown
And everything in life

The thirsty pictures in your brain
The fire-eyes on your fingertips
And every every step

To three cauldrons of crossgrained water

U tri peci znamen vatre
U tri jame bez imena i bez mleka

Hladan ti dah do grla
Do kamena pod levom sisom
Do ptice britve u tom kamenu

U tutu tutinu u leglo praznine
U gladne makaze pocetka i pocetka
U nebesku matericu znam li je ja

Seme ti i sok i sjaj
I tamu i tacku na kraju moga zivota
I sve na svetu

7
Sta je s mojim krpicama
Neces da ih vratis neces

Spalicu ti ja obrve
Neces mi dovek biti nevidljiva

Pomesacu ti dan i noc u glavi
Lupices ti celom o moja vratanca

Podrezacu ti raspevane nokte
Da mi ne crtas skolice po mozgu

Napujdacu ti magle iz kostiju
Da ti popiju kukutke s jezika

Videces ti sta cu da ti radim

8
I ti hoces da se volimo

Mozes da me pravis od moga pepela
Od krsa moga grohota
Od moje preostale dosade

Mozes lepotice

Mozes da me uhvatis za pramen zaborava
Da mi grlis noc u praznoj kosulji
Da mi ljubis odjek

Pa ti ne umes da se volis

9
Bezi cudo

I tragovi nam se ujedaju
Ujedaju za nama u prasine
Nismo mi jedno za drugo

Stamen hladan kroz tebe gledam

Three furnaces symbol fire
Three nameless milkless pits

Damn your cold breath down your gullet
To the stone under your left breast
To the cut-throat bird in that stone

To the crow of crows the nest of emptiness
The hungry shears of beginning and beginning
To the heaven's womb don't I know it

Damn your seed and sap and shine
And dark and stop at the end of my life
And everything in the world

7
What about my rags
Won't you give them back won't you

I'll burn your eyebrows
You won't be invisible to me forever

I'll mix day and night in your mind
You'll come beating your head on my door
I'll cut off your singing nails
So you can't draw hopscotch through my brain

I'll hound the fogs out of your bones
So they drink the hemlock off your tongue

You'll see what I'll do to you

8
And you want us to love one another

You can shape me from my ashes
From the debris of my guffawing
From my leftover tedium

You can gorgeous

You can seize me by the hair of forgetting
Embrace my night in an empty shirt
Kiss my echo

Well you don't know how to love

9
Flee monster

Even our footsteps bite each other
Bite behind us in the dust
We're not meant for each other

Rockfast cold I look through you
I pass through you from end to end
This is no game

Why did we ever mix the rags up

Kroz tebe prolazim s kraja na kraj
Nista nema od igre

Kud smo krpice pomesali

Vrati mi ih sta ces s njima
Uludo ti na ramenima blede
Vrati mi ih u nigdinu svoju bezi

Bezi cudo od cuda

Gde su ti oci
I ovamo je cudo

10

Crn ti jezik crno podne crna nada
Sve ti crno samo jeza moja bela
Moj ti kurjak pod grlo

Oluja ti postelja
Strava moja uzglavlje
Siroko ti nepocin-polje

Plameni ti zalogaji a vostani zubi
Pa ti zvaci izelice
Koliko ti drago zvaci

Nem ti vetar nema voda nemo cvece
Sve ti nemo samo skrgutanje moje glasno
Moj ti jastreb na srce

Manje te u majke groze

11

Izbrisao sam ti lice sa svog lica
Zderao ti senku sa svoje senke

Izravnao bregove u tebi
Ravnice ti u bregove pretvorio

Zavadio ti godisnja doba
Odbio sve strane sveta od tebe

Savio svoj zivotni put oko tebe
Svoj neprohodni svoj nemoguci

Pa ti sad gledaj da me sretnes

12

Dosta recitog smislja dosta slatkih trica
Nista necu da cujem nista da znam
Dosta dosta svega

Reci cu poslednje dosta
Napunicu usta zemljom
Stisnucu zube

Give them back what do you want them for
There is no use their fading on your back
Give them back flee into your nowhere land

Monster flee from the monster

Where are your eyes
Over here there's a monster too
10
Black be your tongue black your noon black your
hope
All be black only my horror white
My wolf be at your throat

The storm be your bed
My dread your pillow
Broad your unrest-field

Your food of fire your teeth of wax
Now chew you glutton
Chew all you want

Dumb be your wind dumb your water dumb
flowers
All be dumb only my gnashing aloud
My hawk be at your throat

Terror your mother be bereft

11

I've wiped your face off my face
Ripped your shadow off my shadow

Levelled the hills in you
Turned your plains into hills

Set your seasons quarrelling
Turned all the ends of the world from you

Wrapped the path of my life around you
My impenetrable my impossible path

Just try to meet me now

12

Enough chattering violets enough sweet trash
I won't hear anything know anything
Enough enough of all

I'll day the last enough
Fill my mouth with earth
Grit my teeth

To break off you skull-guzzler
To break off once for all

I'll be just what I am
Without root without branch without crown
I'll lean on myself
On my own bumps and bruises

Da presecem ispilobanjo
Da presecem jednom za svagda

Stacu onakav kakav sam
Bez korena bez grane bez krune
Stacu oslonjen na sebe
Na svoje cvoruge

Bicu glogov kolac u tebi
Jedino sto u tebi mogu biti
U tebi kvariigro u tebi bezveznice

Ne povratila se

13
Ne sali se cudo
Sakrilo si noz pod maramu

Prekoracilo crtu
Podmetnulo nogu
Pokvarilo si igru

Nebo da mi se prevrne

Sunce da mi glavu razbije
Krpice da mi se rasture
Ne sali se cudo s cudom

Vrati mi moje krpice
Ja cu tebi tvoje

I'll be the hawthorn-stake through you
That's all I can be in you
In you spoil-sport in you muddle-head

Get lost

13
Don't try your tricks monster

You hid a knife under your scarf
You stepped over the line you tripped me up
You spoiled the game

So my heaven might overturn
The sun smash my head
My rags be scattered

Monster don't try your tricks with the monster

Give me back my rags
I'll give you yours

(Translation by Anne Pennington, 1979)

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