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**BETWEEN AUTONOMY OF MUSIC AND THE
COMPOSER'S AUTONOMY.
NOTES ON MODERNISMS AND TRADITIONALISMS
IN SLOVENIAN MUSIC OF THE 20TH CENTURY**

Abstract: The aim of this article is to examine the relations between the old and the new in the context of 20th-century Slovenian music. The question about the old and the new is seen not only as a question of different facets of an age-old opposition, but also as a complex issue of the epistemological contextualization of those different facets. Centred on the main historiographical entries – the avant-garde, modernity, traditionalism, and post-modernity –, the outline of the 20th-century Slovenian musical culture endeavours to point out what is a common problem of the Western musical heritage from the past century: the problem of defining constituents of the old and the new within different epistemological contexts.

Key words: new music, contemporary music, postmodern music, epistemology of music analysis, sociology of music.

Contents: THE AIM; A HISTORIOGRAPHICAL SURMISE; THREE TURNING-POINTS IN FRAMING THE NEW IN SLOVENIAN MUSIC; First frame; Second frame; Third Frame; A TOPOLOGICAL SURVEY OF HISTORICAL CATEGORIES IN SLOVENIAN MUSIC SINCE 1945; Histories on Slovenian music after 1945; Traditionalism; Modern music; Post-modern music; A TYPOLOGY OF SLOVENIAN POST-MODERN MUSIC; TO CONCLUDE WITH

The aim

My aim is to examine the relations between the old and the new in the context of 20th-century Slovenian music. As one among predominant historiographical premises, comprising different facets of the musical practice, the question about the old and the new is seen not only as a question of different *faces* (M. Calinescu) – individual musical phenomena –, but also as a complex issue of *the eyes* belonging to those different faces.

Thus the goal of this article is far from offering a comprehensive historical sketch of the 20th-century Slovenian music with its epistemological agendas. Nonetheless, centred on the main historiographical entries – the avant-garde, modernity, traditionalism, and post-modernity –, the following outline of the 20th-century Slovenian musical culture aims to point out what is, I believe, a common problem of the Western musical heritage from the past century: a problem of defining constituents of the old and the new within different epistemological contexts.

A historiographical surmise

In the last quarter of the 20th century, usually labelled *postmodernity*, there predominate claims about a loss of different sorts of signposts and of growing differentiation. Consequently, claims predominate about *erasing the gap* between modernisms and (among others) traditionalisms – a kind of irreconcilable *paling* of oppositions into a “myriad of mirrors” of possible, imaginable, available, and once already known, seen, and heard things. This time presumably brings nothing “really” new and emphasizes, with baffling range, merely the process of transformation of the old phenomena. There is much uncertainty concerning the statements about “the fall into the vast freedom” – a recurrent although hardly substantial argument about the “specificity” of the contemporary compositional practices. They do not remain contradictory merely according to the range within which the musical life is formulated, but also through the veiling of otherwise different epistemological foci: Is it necessary to speak “of increasingly richer features” of contemporary music and “of accomplishment” of the ideals of artistic autonomy (devised by the modernists) or of the processes of “dying-off” and of “withering-away” of the once sublime realm of Western music?

Seemingly a personally conditioned question would hardly be worth mentioning, if contemporary music could be set in a row with all those “past’s futures” – the ideas and realizations of new music(s) – that are so specific to the Western art music. The difficulty with postmodern music is not seen in itself, in the differences and paradoxes of the contemporary musical practices, but in the perplexed range of its relations with its past and its (hardly predictable) future.

At least two complementary relations seem to have a vital role in the forming of its elusive identity. The first one could be indicated with a somewhat ironic transfiguration of the metaphor of contemporaneity as a dwarf perched on the shoulders of a giant. The mediaeval metaphor, ascribed to Bernard of Chartres, acquires the background for the musical metaphor of a postmodernity as a dwarf sitting on the giant, but all one can supposedly see is an outline of a thorny path on which giants, having lost their equilibrium, are bumping one into another. In the meantime, the horizon of the dwarfs on their shoulders is bouncing not only forwards and upwards, but also their eyes are compelled to scan the surroundings and the way ahead – the selected compositional and aesthetic nodal points along which their giants are treading. The second relation between the old and the new is more pragmatically focusing on “taking parties” between the ancients and the moderns. It shifts the epistemological context of the dwarf on the giant’s shoulders into a picture of a dwarf talking to other dwarfs about his advantages of a life

freed from many “earthy things” to which their “stupid giants” are bounded up. In other words, what is done by the second view of the relation between the new and the old is to gain an “enrichment of the term ‘modern’ with a number of sharply polemical connotations”¹. This view, bringing nothing new if compared to the first one, contributes a pragmatic aspect to the discussion of the modernisms and traditionalisms that is, after all, a fairly important one in the history of 20th-century music history.

Both indicated relations between the new and the old seem to stir up a number of epistemological questions. As for the “postmodern” music and its putative lack of tangible criteria: it often remains unclear if the negative stance – i.e. the reproaches concerning the contemporary “prisoners of freedom”, various “demises” of the Western musical tradition (as if contemporary music has lost power in a series of bare *effects* and that consequently the proclamation of the disappearance of the possibilities for a long/er-term *effect* of everything that composers create) – or its opposite, the positive stance toward postmodernity as a “final liberation” from the old prejudices, refer to compositional, receptive, or general cultural history. No matter which stance one wishes to advocate, one should obviously differentiate the epistemological – especially between the axiological, etiological as well as heuristic – issues implied in both. Without being able to offer any final claims about the old and the new, a set of threads from which the relations between the old and the new are woven offers an epistemological footing, relevant, I believe, for notions of the *new* and the *old* in (not only Slovenian) 20th-century music.

Three turning-points in framing the new in Slovenian music

In Slovenia – let us say, also – the frequent identification sign is still the persistent division into *modernists* and *traditionalists*: into ideal opposition, inside which a somehow “undefined” plurality of musical poetics is nestled. But at the same time the dividing line of this kind is becoming weaker in its convincing power, elusive are the foundations of the mentality calling for linear antinomies between the “traditional” and the “new”, the “high” and the “low”, the “domestic” and the “foreign”, “the unique” and “a plagiarism”, etc. On the contrary, there is a growing awareness of the debunking of the ideals of progress, revealing the consequences of the *development* process - consequences of the different ways in search of personal artistic truth. Some of them, despite everything,

¹ Matei Calinescu (1996), *Five faces of modernity: Modernism, Avant-garde, Decadence, Kitch, Postmodernism*, Durham: Duke University Press, 35.

have helped to give birth to valuable musical creations that undoubtedly have a broader cultural value.

Naturally, also cultural values are in abundance. But the scatteredness of pluralism is not to be mistaken for the polyphony of differences, for also significant common features could be found where differences are claimed. In a period of emphasizing the simultaneousness of what is different it is precisely the *relations* – or, rather, the tensions between kindred and different phenomena – that are seen either as a bounty or a weakness. These relations, of course, do not refer only to composers and their works, but also to institutions and events, ideas and biases, cultural as well as political conditions. Therefore, I would like to present this mosaic of layers of Slovenian musical practice in the 20th century.

I would be inclined to think in terms of some historians who claim that the Slovenian 20th century began in 1918, after attaining independence from the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. Yet the real calendar differs from the cultural, even more from the psychological one in which art usually dwells. Thus the relations between stylistic features, cultural climate, groups of people or other phenomena specific to certain periods, are knitting scenes that do not allow such an (over)simplification. Instead, in knitting the threads of the Slovenian 20th-century music, three changes need to be mentioned in the first place. They form a kind of reference-web within which the notion of the new has been embedded: the first change could be addressed as a broad *cultural strive toward music as autonomous art*, the second as a more socially determined *necessity for composers' autonomy*, while the third is a set of *habitual issues on cognition of music as artistic expression*.

First frame

The cultural nature of the first turning-point in understanding the new in Slovenian music of the 20th-century can be confined as being on the level of the history of pragmatic ideas. It is a transformation of the ideals from 19th-century national movements, musically bounded to the so called reading-societies – societies that cultivated the idea of a national culture – leading toward the ideals of music as autonomous art. The most obvious sign of this process was the musical periodical *Novi akordi* (*New chords*). As a vernacular counterpart to the older ecclesiastic journal *Cerkveni glasbenik* (*Church Musician*, published 1978–1945, 1976→), *Novi akordi* (*New Chords*) was the first periodical on music that has been published, in contrast to its short-lived predecessors, on regular basis for a longer period of time. At first a bimonthly journal, *Novi akordi* appeared in 1901 as a periodical for solo or chamber scores, in

1910 also the supplement with reviews and articles on music was added, informing and educating the readers. The periodical became a too heavy burden for its editor, Gojmir Krek, a Slovenian living in Vienna, lawyer by profession and *Liebhaber* by vocation.

Now, *Novi akordi* was published within a decade and a half, when the fin-de-siècle spirit pervaded the most advanced idea(s) allowing, soon after the First World War, the Berliner music chronicler Paul Bekker to give a name to an epoch, *Neue Musik* (1919). But *Novi akordi* did have a rather conservative stance toward the novelties, as practiced by E. Satie, C. Debussy, A. Scriabin, Ch. Ives, G. Mahler, I. Stravinsky, A. Schönberg and others (not to mention the futurists). *Novi akordi* only dropped a hint that a new era was emerging with their awkwardly expressed title. With regard to the technical and aesthetic features, all pieces published therein (some of them justifiably, but some among them mistakenly almost forgotten today)² offered the musicians a solid, enjoyable music that – with few exceptions³ – reached, at the most, the happy medium of the 19th-century middle-class private musicianship.

The aesthetics of the then leading German and French music did not find a way in the mental circumstances, in which the newly founded *Slovenian Philharmonics* (1908-1913), a national counterpart to the German *Philharmonische Gesellschaft* (1794), lost its chef conductor Václav Talich because of the intrigues hindering his ambitions of practicing music as autonomous art. Although the Slovenian audience of that time did become aware of the national music as autonomous art, it did not accept the compositional novelties that later on became leading achievements of the 20th-century music.

Nevertheless, the swing of the Slovenian musical life and music (re)production after the First World War bears witness to the efficacy of the Slovenian pre-war music above all in the following institutions: except *Novi akordi*, very active was especially *Glasbena matica* (*Music society*) – the main and only central Slovenian music society until the beginning of World War II; 1872–1945 –, further also *Orglarska šola Cecilijinega društva* (*School for organists at the Caecilian Society*; 1877–1945, 1999→), *Slovensko narodno gledališče* (*Slovenian National Theatre*), and the operatic and symphonic activities of the German community that was fairly strong in this region.

² Choirs, songs, piano pieces, compositions for violin and piano as well as some other chamber miniatures.

³ For example, *Novi akordi* indicated one of the European main music novelties of that time, expressionism, with the piano miniature *Moment* (1912) by Janko Ravnik (1891–1982) and mixed choir *Trenotek* (*Moment*; 1914) by Marij Kogoj (1895–1956).

Second frame

After the First World War, *Glasbena matica* accomplished a half-century-old idea: *Konservatorij Glasbene matice* (*Conservatory of the Music society*) was founded.⁴ The pre-war pedagogical endeavours of Anton Foerster (1837–1926), Fran Gerbič (1840–1917), Matej Hubad (1866–1937), Stanko Premrl (1880–1965) and their colleagues had achieved meritorious success, and the *Conservatory* offered a basis for the changes with regard to the music tradition then stemming mainly from the *Liebhaver*-mentality. Moreover, *Konservatorij* offered a platform for otherwise dispersed individual efforts in “catching up the European streams” and, above all, enabled a mental turn away from a belittling division between “us and them”⁵. Another institutional novelty was born under auspices of *Glasbena matica*. As the former German *Philharmonische Gesellschaft* dissolved, *Orkestralno društvo* (*Orchestral Society*) took over its function as the main local symphonic institution. Anton Lajovic (1878–1960), an influential lawyer and a solid composer promoted it into an institution, as he wrote in the new Ordinance (1921) for this society, that its task is “by and large to cultivate music in Slovenia, especially music of south-Slavic provenance”. *Glasbena matica* preserved this cultural mission until 1945, when the range of activities of this music association, disfavoured by the new socialist regime because of its “bourgeois scent”, was confined to a mixed choir. As late as in the last decade, the original aspirations of *Glasbena matica* as a central Slovenian music institution had been coming to the fore, with different people, of course, but with quite similar idea(s).

Musical life between World War I and II was inspired by two cultural stances: between the flaring national(istic) consciousness of people like Anton Lajovic, and the newly rising opportunities of equating, but above all of juxtaposing, the domestic culture with the “foreign”, especially “Middle-European art”, as favoured by people such as Stanko Vurnik (1889–1932). The German operatic and symphonic activities were brought to an end. Although only in modest range, the operatic scene in Maribor (the second largest Slovenian city) did become enlivened, the Slovenian *Opera*, nationalized in 1920 as a part of the *Ljubljana’s National Theater*, underwent estimable advancement within fourteen seasons of

⁴ The *Conservatory of Glasbena matica* was reorganized in 1927 into a *State Conservatory*, in 1939 was transformed into the *Academy of Music*.

⁵ Cf. Andrej Rijavec, ‘Sloweniens Wünsche an die “Musikgeschichte Österreichs”’, in: *Musicologica Austriaca* 2, Salzburg: Österreichische Gesellschaft für Musikwissenschaft, 59–69 (66); _____, ‘H glasbi na Slovenskem in slovenska glasba – uvodni razmislek’, in: *Informativni kulturološki zbornik*, Martina Orožen (ed.), Ljubljana: Seminar slovenskega jezika, literature in kulture, Filozofska fakulteta (1995) 227–231 (229).

directorship by Mirko Polič, who enabled the change of “a provincial theatre to a national one”⁶.

The period between World War I and II thus brought a new musical bias: if before the First World War the voice-centred Slovenian music tradition prevailed⁷, from the 1920s onward instrumental music began to grow in importance. However, vocal tradition has remained strong up to this day. Between the Wars, the conditions there were dependent on several choral associations. Already before the First World War, the active *Zveza slovenskih pevskih zborov* (*Association of Slovenian Choirs*) was dissolved and, in 1924, the *Jugoslovanski pevski savez* (*Yugoslavian Association for Singing*) was established. In this context, two *župas* (“parishes”) were active – one for the region of Ljubljana (“Hubadova župa”, comprising 36 choirs) and the other one for Maribor (“Ipavčeva župa” with 25 choirs). At the same time, *Pevska zveza* (*Singing Association*) with its 198 choirs was functioning as a link for all the choirs that accepted the “principles of the ‘Slovenian Christian Social Union’, inherited by the Jan. E. Krek”⁸. In the 1930s also the youth choirs experienced institutionalization, although a short-lived one.⁹ A more mottled picture appertains to the instrumental music. Except for different chamber combinations, cultivated mainly by different institutions for occasional performance – and notwithstanding the mentioned activities of *Glasbena matica* – four pillars of shaping the instrumental concert life in Ljubljana should be mentioned for the period between the Wars: *Orkester Narodnega gledališča* (*The National Theatre Orchestra*) had also symphonic concerts, and in 1921 began to give subscription concerts also *Vojaška godba Dravske divizije* (*The Army Band of the Drava Division*). These orchestras were also being joined by individual musicians on regular basis from the *Zveza godbenikov za Slovenijo* (*Association of Musicians for Slovenia*) and, in the thirties, also by students from the *Conservatory*. A further

⁶ Borut Loparnik (2000), “Poličeva doba slovenske Opere: ozadja in meje”, in: *Zbornik ob jubileju Jožeta Sivca*, Ljubljana: ZRC SAZU, 205–224 (221).

⁷ It might seem rather peculiar, but it should be understood as a part of Slovenian culture in its historical heritage, that in a city like Ljubljana, where the *Academia Philharmonicorum* was established in 1701, the first “romantic symphony” composed by a native Slovene composer (Fran Gerbič) was written in 1915 (*Lovska simfonia* [*Hunting Symphony*]).

⁸ Vilko Ukmar (1939), “Slovensko glasbeno življenje v dvajsetletju 1918–1938”, in: *Sporinski zbornik Slovenije. Ob dvajsetletnici Kraljevine Jugoslavije*, Ljubljana: Jubilej, 292.

⁹ Beside *Cerkveni glasbenik* (*Church Musician*), singers acquired their materials from three other journals: *Pevec* (*The Singer*; 1921–1938), according to the Pan-Slavic ideals chiselled music journal of *Pevska zveza*, and similarly conceived *Zbori* (*Choirs*; 1925–1934), published by *Ljubljanski zvon. Grlica* (1933–1935) helped to promote youth choir music, flourishing especially in the youth choir *Trboveljski slavček*.

discernible contribution to the Slovenian musical life in the thirties was given by the *Radio* broadcasting corporation (1928→) and by the *Ljubljanska filharmonija* (*Philharmonics of Ljubljana*) established in 1935. It was *Ljubljanska filharmonija* that tried to fill up a vacancy in a milieu without “properly working” symphonic institution: i.e. after the first *Slovenian Philharmonics* (1908–1913), only *Orkestralno društvo* was formally the main, but – apparently insufficiently active – institution devoted to performing symphonic music.

With the growing appreciation of Slovenian instrumental music between the Wars in the public domain, and not only in the intimacy of the (mainly literary) salons, as in the 19th century, also the idea of new music was gaining in importance – all the more so as the Second World War was approaching. In contrast to the ideals of new music before the First World War, the notion of the new in music received less institutional sheltering. At this time the journal *Nova muzika* (*New music*) propagated new music. Although with much more enthusiasm than before in *Novi akordi*, *Nova muzika* was but another short-lived music journal (1928–1929). It brought, with more or less clearly defined strivings for new music, some idea(l)s of the musically new – but in sum: it was much more a feeble voice of the few against the prevalent utilitarian dealing with music than a mirror of the new musical achievements. Now the proponents of the new did know what they should be opposed to: they battled, as Franc Šturm wrote¹⁰, over “false folklorism”, “stylo-mania” and debatable “Sloveno-philantropy”. But new music in their eyes was vaguely and, from case to case, differently understood, not only in practice but also in terms of music theory and philosophy. Although some interesting composers from that time could be mentioned¹¹, it seems indispensable only to note that the most penetrating compositional figures of Slovenian music between World War I and II, Marij Kogoj (1895–1956) and Slavko Osterc (1895–1941), enabled the generations after the Second World War to dwell on a neat distinction that was to become an idealistic paragon for years to come: between *expressionism* (Kogoj) and *neo-styles* (*neoclassicism* and *neobaroque*, specific to the work of Osterc) – a kind of Slovenian 20th-century archetype which Western art theory usually addresses, with various vocabularies and profound finesse, as the difference between the *emotional* and *rational* approaches to music.

¹⁰ From a letter of Franc Šturm to Slavko Osterc, quoted in: Katarina Bedina, *List nove glasbe. Osebnost in delo Franca Šturma*, Ljubljana: Cankarjeva založba 1981, 15.

¹¹ For instance, besides Karol Pahor (1896–1974) and Danilo Švara (1902–1981), the idea of new music was important to the oeuvre of Pavel Šivic (1908–1995), Demetrij Žebre (1912–1970) and Franc Šturm (1912–1943), Vilko Ukmar (1905–1992), partly and only for this period also the work of Lucijan Marija Škerjanc (1901–1973).

The period between World War I and II thus widened out the ideas on the new in music. At that time at least, the way was paved for a more institutionally recognizable existence of new music, expressed first in the journal *Novi akordi* (1901–1914) and pursued with more persuasiveness in *Nova muzika* (1928–1929). However, the new in music was – a complex notion as it is – a catchword demarcated, on the one hand by several compositional criteria – especially from Prague and Vienna, with which not only the past cultural ties remained strong, but through which also the main advocates of the new in Slovenian music had been at least partly educated – and, on the other hand, by a more culturally conditioned set of beliefs and preferences with regard to one of the central antinomies of 20th-century music: the antinomy between the pragmatic category of *composers' autonomy* and the metaphysical category of *music autonomy*.

Third Frame

If key-notions in the history of Slovenian music after 1945 should be addressed, the choice would have to dwell, with inevitable simplification, on a variegated nomenclature. Apart from neo-style approximations and emphasis on personal musical poetics, three critical catchwords prevail: socialist art (or socialist realism), avant-garde (as the culturally “most advanced” level of modernism), and postmodernity. In more academic terms, Slovenian musicology speaks mainly of three style-bound historiographical premises: traditionalism – modernism – post-modernism.

It may be understood as an irony for the Slovenian cultural tradition – a tradition that in the last fifteen years has been trying to overcome “black&white paintings” of its communistic past – to bring into the focus of discussing postmodernity the same theoretical quandaries that were specific to the notion of socialist art as well as of the avant-gardes. The situation could find parallels with some of those antinomies listed by H. Danuser in the last edition of *Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart* for the entry *Neue Musik*¹²: in all cases, one of the central issues is, as T.W. Adorno aptly admonished in one of his lectures amidst the greatest “avantgardistic fever” during the 1950s, the fast aging of the new music. For Slovenian music since 1945, it seems that post-modern extremes have stimulated a reflection not only on differences, but on pinpointing common denominators, enabling one to distinguish, as semiotic opposition reads, between *types* and *tokens*.

¹² Hermann Danuser (1997), *Neue Musik*, in: Ludwig Finscher (ed.), *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart* Bärenreiter, Sachteil 7, 75–122.

Of course, such a generalized claim can gain some sense only if the details about each little stone in the mosaic of Slovenian music after 1945 can show at this stage, why such an allusion to a universalistic ideal of *the classical* – and it is exactly the utopian *musica perennis* that Adorno's *Das Altern der neuen Musik* is amounted to – should be taken seriously in discussing the otherwise hardly comparable musical topics of socialist realism, modernism and postmodernism.

However, before discussing them in some detail, I would like to point to the third important change in the history of Slovenian 20th-century music. It is a change in the domain of music appreciation, a change – or rather: a still ongoing process of changing – of *habitual issues on cognition of music as artistic expression*. This, I believe typical Western characteristic, seems to pervade in Slovenia from the time since the end of the fifties (since 1958, when a TV set became an indispensable piece of the household furniture, and also other technical facilities for sound distribution became more widely accessible). By comparison with the first half of the century, the rather fast coming changes in aesthetic ideals (not only in Slovenian music since 1945) almost demand one to keep in mind that this social “banality” helped to realize a profound change in thinking about the new – it compelled one to accept the unavoidable pragmatic stance that, to use B. Groys's note: “Das Neue ist nicht bloß das Andere, sondern es ist das wertvolle Andere.”¹³ Groys's claim that only “valuable novelties” are novelties at all could be, of course, differently understood. But at least one of the implicit claims is difficult to overlook: although the values of each style, or musical ideal, could be incommensurate, unique, inestimable for the specific “consumer(s)”, when discussed alongside of some other – as they might be – similarly incommensurable historiographical categories, they become more palpable as far as their common features as well as differences are concerned. After all, only if common grounds exist, do differences appear – as well as different values resulting from ramified relations of power.

Thus a comparison of the content appertaining to the main historiographical categories of Slovenian music since 1945 is given further on (a kind of a “historiographical topology”), followed by more substantial discussion on the compositional practice in the postmodernity. In focusing on the historiographical categories of the Slovenian music since the World War II, the question about *constituting*, of *becoming*, of *forming* historiographical categories has been a main epistemological support. More concretely, I am indebted for a valuable epistemological cue to the

¹³ Boris Groys, *Über das Neue. Versuch einer Kulturökonomie*, München-Wien: Carl Hanser Verlag (Edition Akzente, ed. Michael Krüger) 1992, 43.

German form of structuralism in the so-called history of concepts (Begriffsgeschichte), as developed primarily by the historian Reinhart Koselleck – especially to his focus on a *historical time* and its social and ideological *representations*.

A topological survey of historical categories in Slovenian music since 1945

One could wonder whether different views that can be found in the histories of 20th-century have been founded on similar suppositions. The century of individual musical styles and traditions seems to experience an embodiment of its “myriad of mirrors” in its second half, although its first half does not lack rhizomatic landscapes of individual composers, framed in different geographical and cultural contexts. The more the second half of the 20th-century is seen as a cultural whole, founded on the ruins of the Second World War, the more quandaries arise with defining the present time, called postmodernity, as a part of this cultural whole. Moreover, as postmodernity is fairly often defined as “a sign” indicating “a crisis of defining things”¹⁴, it seems that this cultural whole has at least one constant: a sense of differentiating its pasts and futures.

One can easily agree that it is not always possible to talk about an agreement with regard to *individual* phenomena, past or present. Yet on rare (although by no means less important) occasions, differences do emerge with regard to the thematic premises supporting the argument.¹⁵ Historiographical categories are such premises: for example, aesthetic or sociological “framings” (R. Littlefield) like “modernism” or “avant-garde”, “expressionism” or “post-modernity”. They produce a kind of “notion-webs” that are comparable to one of the classical examples of topology – the underground (transport) map of a big modern city or, we could add, a tourist guide or anatomic sketch: we are not interested in how big or important phenomena are, but how and where are they connected. This might be seen, of course, as a superficial approach, by and large at odds

¹⁴ Wolfgang Iser, *Unsere postmoderne Moderne*, Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2002, 319. Originally Iser's thought reads: “Der Ausdruck [Postmoderne] ist sinnvoll nur als Indiz. Er verweist auf eine Bestimmungskrise, wo eine alte Signatur nicht mehr greift, eine neue aber noch nicht eindeutig in Sicht ist. [...] Dazu will der Terminus anhalten. Er hat Signalfunktion.”

¹⁵ A historian's perspective has been questioned many times not because of thinking in terms of this or that historical category – about these or those musical works, styles, theories etc. –, but because of inappropriate surmises and explanations, even “omissions”, of connections between them: because of the lack of a minimum attention that, in Reinhart Koselleck's words, should be paid to “the before” and “the after”, or to “the below” and “the above” with regard to a discussed phenomenon.

with the ideals of a thoroughness of the contemporary (not only) music research. However, far from sharing this scruple, I believe that such an epistemological compass can offer telling insights into a musical culture and its music. That is the main reason for focusing on historiographical categories concerning Slovenian music after 1945, not, for the moment, on the music “itself”.

Histories on Slovenian music after 1945

As far as the historiography of Slovenian music of the 20th century is concerned, the following information is necessary. At the moment, one book on 20th-century Slovenian music is available. Although some valuable partial studies on Slovenian music after the Second World War have been published, only a handful of surveys have paid a special regard to Slovenian music after 1945.

The main formal difference between historical discussions of Slovenian music is in focusing on either *common features* or *individual* endeavours and achievements. For example, Dragotin Cvetko in his history *Slovenian music in the European context*, published in 1991 as a revised version of his three-volume history from the end of the fifties¹⁶, tried to differentiate the compositional practice in broader descriptive terms centred on the categories in a line traditionalism–modernism–post-modernism. He described “circles” of composers with regard to their relation to ideology (e.g. socialist realism), stylistic features (neoclassicism, different romanticisms), aesthetic universals (expressive, emotional features), “school” of composition (as Osterc’s followers), individuality (as “with academic distance”), features of the entire opus (as instrumental, chamber music), generation, or geo-political characteristics, such as the opposition of living *in Slovenia* or living *abroad*.

Dragotin Cvetko had a sound experiential *common sense* for a selective description of the musical past. His main historiographical categories are derived from the compositional as well as social history. This period is described by Cvetko as a process with three main changes, the first one being a politically oppressive decade of the fifties (with prevalent neo-classicism and different derivatives of romanticisms), followed by the avant-garde sixties (the second highlight of modernism in Slovenian music, embodied in the group *Pro musica viva*), gliding into decentred seventies and eighties, the decades of the vaguely definable post-modernity.

With much more telling details and specific elaborations, but with regard to the categorical apparatus concerning compositional history

¹⁶ Dragotin Cvetko, *Slovenska glasba v Evropskem prostoru*, Ljubljana: Slovenska matica.

identical views are offered by some other authors. I would confine myself to five of them: to Niall O'Loughlin, Katarina Bedina's reflection on the historical categories constituting the identity of Slovenian music, Ivan Klemenčič's anthology of Slovenian music, Jurij Snoj's and Gregor Pompe's survey of notation in Slovenian music, or Lojze Lebič's penetrating historical sketch¹⁷.

In spite of different historical perspectives and attention devoted to the second half of the 20th century, these authors have offered valuable insights into this period. It is probably not too difficult to infer the possible differences between them from the titles of their respective publications. As one can expect from a comparison of a book on history in the traditional sense (O'Loughlin), an article on historical fundamentals of historical identity (Bedina), representative collection of recordings (Klemenčič), history of music notation (Snoj / Pompe), and critical historical overview (Lebič): different emphases on single historical aspects are given to the compositional, aesthetic, social, ideological, cultural, and political past.

An answer to the question, of what the *relations* between the mentioned historiographical categories tell us will be offered after concentrating in more detail on the three main historical notions important for Slovenian music after 1945: traditional, modern, and post-modern music.

Traditionalism

O'Loughlin offers a fine example of *traditionalism*, specific to the 1950's:

“After the Second World War there was great confusion all over Yugoslavia, and in particular the parts closest to Austria. The havoc created by the German invasion and occupation was considerable, to

¹⁷ Niall O'Loughlin, *Novejša glasba v Sloveniji*, Ljubljana: Slovenska matica 2000. Katarina Bedina, 'Zgodovinska izhodišča identitete slovenskega glasbenega dela', in: Dušan Nečak (ed.), *Avstrija. Jugoslavija. Slovenija. Slovenska narodna identiteta skozi čas*, Ljubljana: Filozofska fakulteta 1997, 152–167. Ivan Klemenčič, *Musica noster amor. Glasbena umetnost Slovenije od začetkov do danes. Antologija na 16 zgoščenkah s spremno knjižno publikacijo / Musica noster amor. Musical Art of Slovenia from its Beginnings to the Present. An Anthology on 16 CDs with an Accompanying Book*, Ljubljana: Založba Obzorja Maribor in glasbeno založništvo Helidon, Znanstvenoraziskovalni center SAZU, Slovenska akademija znanosti in umetnosti 2000. Jurij Snoj in Gregor Pompe, *Pisna podoba glasbe na Slovenskem*, Ljubljana: Založba ZRC, ZRC SAZU 2003. Lojze Lebič (1993: I), 'Glasovi časov' (I), in: Naši zbori, 45/1–2, Ljubljana, 1–5; (1993: II), in: Naši zbori, Ljubljana, 45/5–6, 111–118; (1994: III), in: Naši zbori, 46/1–2, Ljubljana, 1–5; (1994: IV), in: Naši zbori, 47/3–4, Ljubljana, 59–65; (1996: V), in: Naši zbori, 47/1–2, Ljubljana, 1–6.

say nothing about the upheaval caused by the Communist revolution. The rebuilding of the country by the new government was obviously going to take many years. Musical institutions were being re-established, but only slowly, as money had to be used for the alleviation of problems caused by the desperate shortage of food and living accommodation as well as for the reconstruction of industry. In the circumstances it is hardly surprising that composers lacked a sense of adventure. With Osterc dead and Kogoj in a mental hospital, their influence was slight. Three traditionally orientated composers whose work has already been discussed, Škerjanc, Arnič and Kozina, were all active in the post-war years. There was not surprisingly scarcely any move to adopt the new techniques that were beginning to find favour in Western Europe. Even those composers who had started to use more advanced techniques, for example, Pahor and Švara, returned to more conservative styles. One may regret the lack of initiative on the part of composers, but it was hardly their fault, as poor communications with the outside world, especially the West, prevented their contact with these new ideas. Although no state pressure was exerted on composers to conform to certain styles and techniques (as in the Soviet Union), composers felt the need to follow a style that would not give offence in the prevailing social climate.

This safe traditionalism did have its advantages. Composers could find their feet without being put under pressure to follow the latest fashion. Some of the music of this period lacks inspiration, but most was competently written. Much, however, is of more than mere historical interest. In addition to those developments already discussed, two approaches found favour among composers: symphonism, mostly in neo-classical styles and folk-music derivatives” (From the original English. Niall O’Loughlin, *Novejša ...*, op. cit. 2000, 109.)

It is probably immediately obvious that O’Loughlin’s elegant description of the fifties unambiguously juxtaposes the aspects of compositional and social history. The social issues have wide focus and comprise at least three main aspects: *political issues* (revolution, forms and range of constraint), *psycho-social aspects* (“composers felt the need to follow a style that would not give offence ...”), general cultural circumstances (post-war confusion, “poor communication with the outside world”), economic issues (desperate shortage, rebuilding etc.), and music institutions. O’Loughlin clearly phrases his cautious, but nonetheless affirmative judgements of the music from that period (music that deserves “more than mere historical interest”). Also from the compositional history, the citation reveals three central categories: substantial models of style (“neo-classical styles and folk-music derivatives”), temporal and value denominator of style (traditionalism, conservative style), and the idea of the authorial autonomy (“composers could find their feet without being put under pressure to follow the latest fashion”).

The relation between compositional and social categories is clear: “safe traditionalism” or “conservative styles” were somehow “natural” due to the social conditions of that time (although O’Loughlin “surprisingly” notes that the “sense of adventure” is not present in the work even of some older composers, previously inclined to the ideas of musical modernism).

Of course, O’Loughlin’s interpretation could be subjected to a rather long line of supplements and additional emphases about single issues, if the current historical revisions would have been taken into account. The views about the truth and untruth concerning politics in the Slovenian music of the fifties are, at the time, a “work in progress”. Far from being a subject of discussion here, I would like draw attention to the *temporal* dimension – more precisely: to the implied temporal embeddedness of the mentioned historiographical categories – in O’Loughlin’s epistemologically dexterous glimpse of Slovenian music in the fifties.

The *temporality* is explicitly stated within the social categories as a process of “rebuilding of the country”. In contrast to the social aspect, temporality is only supposed within the compositional categories. Here it could be recognized in three ways, in two negative terms and one positive: 1) as “in itself” inverted time, as a time of isolation from Western Europe, a time of cultural blockade, as a “time without references”, thus 2) as a time of retrogression as far as style is concerned, and consequently 3) as a time of almost total self-reflectivity, preventing composers from feeling the “pressure to follow the latest fashion”. In all three cases, *temporality* plays a minor role in understanding the relationships between the compositional and social categories. At the same time, O’Loughlin’s description reveals a temporal frame that refers to the immediate past (Kogoj, Osterc) and immediate present (Škerjanc, Pahor, Švara, compositional trends in Western Europe at that time). O’Loughlin’s temporal aspect does not suggest an ahistorical goal-oriented process (this has the role of a modest personal remark about the “more-than-historical” value of several more works from that period). On the contrary, it offers an almost vacuum-like structure of relations between the social and compositional categories.

Without mentioning denotations such as “socialist art” or “socialist realism”, O’Loughlin’s historiographical categories for Slovenian music in the fifties do not differ from those used by the other mentioned scholars. They use the same categorical apparatus to describe the time of “socialist music”. But the differences in designating it as a period of *socialist realism* reveals a rather telling epistemological detail. Lojze Lebič speaks of socialist realism as of a “normative aesthetics”, Katarina Bedina detects it as a cultural “slogan”, Ivan Klemenčič defines it as a

vaguely defined “model” forced upon arts, while Jurij Snoj and Gregor Pompe have labelled it as a “doctrine”.¹⁸

¹⁸ **Lebič:** “Creating art in the shadow of socialist realism. Art to the people. Exclusion from the happenings in the art world in Western Europe and a break with the modernism from the time between the First and Second World War. [...] Two things have defined that time: impetuous passion and happiness after the suffered danger, but for many people also bitterness and fear of the revolutionary takeover of the authorities by the communists [...]. The beginning of the new time is founded on the worst Slovenian self-destruction. Enthusiasm, marches, but in the background liquidations (clandestine, so as the candles on the mass-scaffolds have been lit only recently). Kafkian drama beneath an appearance of victorious happiness. Supervision and control over the artistic domain have been taken over by the agitprop (an agency for agitation and propaganda within the central committee. ‘... Russian model as far as the socialist realism is concerned and a negative stamp for all the arts of the decadent and depraved capitalism ...’ (Boris Zihelr as early as in 1944) [...] The art creation reveals itself in a shadow of this normative aesthetics, above all as a big stylistic, compositional and aesthetical uncertainty and confusion: it is displayed in lofty words, above all hidden in the opuses, destinies and life experiences of individual creators and only in the end in specific sonic shapes or compositional solutions to which they could be attached.” (Lebič 1993: 113–114.)

Bedina: “After the Great War the genesis of musical identification disappeared again. All the slogans from the past won only a new ideological premise in a changed wording – the goal justifies the means when building new socialistic equality. Political emigrants tried to find a way out as they could (we are becoming aware of their work only since 1992). The art music in Slovenia was subordinated to the slogan of socialist-realism: if you are not with us, you are against us. Anew the historical memory lost itself as well as the connection with the spirit of the time. It was not easy to begin anew, even impossible for the musical institutions.” (Bedina 1997: 166. Translated by L.S.)

Klemenčič: “The first fifteen post-war years or so were a time of caesura and a discontinuation of development from the pre-war period. Combined with physical and spiritual isolation these times were marked by the abandonment of autonomous aesthetics and a general moderation and dormancy of style. This was a period of a pre-modernist, particularly revolutionary political spirit, which the outwardly repressed and the inwardly obstructed art, in its negativism, had to reflect. On the directive of the Communist party, art was required to draw closer to the masses, to be in their service, and in this way support the regime, although the model of the demanded socialist realism was not clearly defined. Alongside such ideological pressure, the aforementioned romantic trend was preserved as one level of style, as in the case of L. M. Škerjanc, where it may still be mixed with Impressionism, or with Realism and Naturalism, as in the symphonic compositions of Blaž Arnič [...]. In addition to the romantic realistic versions the objectivism and optimism of neo-classicism was also ideologically acceptable. At the beginning of the 50s, composers of the middle and young generations [...] were adherents of this musical style, later joined by the neo-Baroque and partly expressive composers [...]. During the 50s, the period of already established composer’s internal opposition or adoption, rebellion or conformism, initially moderately a subjectivism of Expressionism began to be revived as a third level. Since it was proclaimed as decadent or by the national socialist totalitarian twin as degenerate art, it was objectively unacceptable and in

These formulations of “socialist realism” demand a wide-ranging scale of research. Socialist realism is in Lebič’s eyes an aesthetic category, for Bedina it is a cultural catchword, for Klemenčič a political category, for Snoj / Pompe more an ideological issue. And each of these epistemological levels urges a historiographer to find different plausible relations with regard to the temporal variables they are referring to – as well as with regard to the contents within them. “Socialist realism” *is* all of what the mentioned scholars have been writing about: aesthetics, a catchword, political issue, an ideological issue, and even more of this. From whatever perspective one tries to grasp it, “socialist realism” brings new emphases to traditionalism within a clearly marked off horizon: beginning in the dawn of an immediately preceding “traditional aesthetic”, reaching its peak in viewing music as autonomous/dependent phenomena, and ending in the politics and musical poetics of selective constraint. It is superfluous to ask whether common features in defining socialist realism and post-modern art exist. On the contrary, it would be interesting to pursue the relations between the ideas and realizations of *traditionalism* in a specific period amounting to its parallels “before” and “after”: its past and its future.

To avoid misunderstandings with regard to “socialist realism” it should be noted that Yugoslavia – and Slovenia as one among its six republics – was at odds with the USSR from 1948. From then on, an idea of “social democracy” was the main political aspiration (and difficulty at the same time), founded on an unwritten but ubiquitous principle of the Yugoslav Communist Party: “We prohibit nothing, if we are not jeopardized.” There was, of course, a kind of totalitarian regime. Without interest in music, it has grown weaker with the years passing from the end of the Second World War.¹⁹ Consequently, it is difficult to claim that

real-socialism was in opposition to the law-entrenched dialectic materialism. An example of how Slovenian music might have developed [...]” (Klemenčič 200: 203–4)

Snoj / Pompe: “A large number of composers [...] remained faithful to the musical heritage of the late 19th century also after the Second World War. This was due to the late professionalisation of the Slovene musical life, the vague relations between post-war Communist political ideology and culture, and then again some of the older composers were not eager to change their accustomed musical language, which also fitted the doctrine of socialist realism.” (Snoj / Pompe 2003: 214)

¹⁹ The question concerning centralism and unified art policies in Slovenia thus reveals itself as a rather complex one. Some features of the perplexed circumstances in the 1950’s have been felicitously pointed out by Boris Kidrič, one of the most influential politicians at the time. In January 1951, two years before his death, Kidrič emphasized “middle-class, blind [elemental] forces” from the report of the spokesman of the “team of the *Central Committee of the Slovenian Communist Party*” Moma Markovič, as the main problem of the Communist party in Slovenia. (Boris Kidrič in a record of a meeting of the politbureau of the Central committee of the Slovenian Communist

the “anti-decadent” musical politics – comparable to that in the Soviet Union and similarly administered countries – had a crucial impact on Slovenian music. The system was practically incapable of implementing radical steps in music as early as in the middle of the 1950’s, although the ideological rhetorics of that time as well as experiences of self-censorship speak of a certain degree of oppression. Although the official politics required “faithfulness” to the communist ideals, an effective repressive apparatus was lacking. It was especially not susceptible to controlling music(ians).²⁰

Modern music

In spite of the otherwise important differentiations new / contemporary, new / modern, contemporary / modern, avant-garde / contemporary, even avant-garde / new music, the terminological quandary does not seem crucial for recognizing the main aim of the constituents proper to all these terms: to distinguish the old from the new. The category of *modernism* of the second half of the 20th century is much more heterogeneous than *traditionalism*. In Slovenia specific for the 1960s with a strong orientation toward the future as well as some ideals from the main European festivals of new music, it is a much more centrifugally determined notion if

party in January, 1951. In: Darinka Drnovšek, *Zapisniki politbiroja CK KPS/ZKS 1945–1954*, Ljubljana: Arhivsko društvo Slovenije 2000, 257.) From the protocol records of the sessions of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Slovenia, where Kidrič’s evaluation of the political situation in Slovenia is documented, as well as from other protocol records of that very influential political agency, it is possible to infer that the “middle-class blind [elemental] forces” referred to 1) clericalism, supposedly one of the the strongest opponents of socialism in Slovenia as well as in Bosnia and Hercegovina, and 2) the Soviet inform bureau.

²⁰ This was probably due not only to the fact that music as an artistic medium was far from having such a socially penetrative force as the written word or film, but also because of the autocracy and national consciousness of the leadership of the Society of Slovenian Composers, founded in 1945, and because of the *modus vivendi* of the executive republic agencies. It seems that the state did not manage to (and partly even did not bother to) constitute an effective supervision of Slovenian musical life. This enabled, for instance, “low-value” music (jazz or foreign popular music) to imbue everyday culture before the end of the 1950s, and to experience a cultural breakthrough in music at the beginning of the 1960s.

There are, of course, more critical interpretations of this period, such as Klemenčič (Ivo Klemenčič, *Glasba in totalitarna država na Slovenskem* [“Music and the totalitarian state in Slovenia”] in: Drago Jančar, ed., *Temna stran meseca* [“The Dark Side of the Moon”], Ljubljana: Nova revija 1998.) But they are founded on some individually suppressed musicians (almost in all cases not because of their music, but because of their social position) and above all, on problematic aesthetical simplifications of the semantic potential of music, musical progress and musical ideals.

compared to the centripetal nature of *traditionalism*, limited to the immediate past and present.

The history of Slovenian modernism of the second half of the 20th century was closely connected to the group of composers gathered under the name of *Pro musica viva* and their chamber ensemble, *Ansambel Slavko Osterc*. Both phenomena of Slovenian modernism have been thoroughly presented by Matjaž Barbo, who proposes the year 1952 as the time of the “first appearance of an approaching new generation of composers”²¹ and argues about the new in their modernism(s) with the following words:

“The new generation of musicians resisted it and formulated a **new modern aesthetic** which once more argued for the **standard of musical autonomy**. It was **oriented against any sort of (romantic) illustrativeness**, be it in the form of a narrative symphonic poem or of leitmotifs associated with music drama. **In the sense of compositional technique, this resistance showed itself in a consistent disavowal of the “general comprehensibility” of the major-minor tonal system**, instead of which **composers searched for and implemented new ways of systematizing and organizing compositional elements**. [...]

The young generation of composers began to search for models other than their immediate predecessors; always determined, **they attempted to surprise the Slovenian musical public with their distinctiveness**, which at the same time **they tried to conclusively substantiate as a generally recognized aesthetic value**. [...]

The central program goals of *Pro musica viva* were three: **to perform “contemporary” Slovenian music** (above all the compositions of the members of the group), **to present “contemporaneous” foreign streams**, and to **awaken the Slovenian historical avant-garde to consciousness**.” (Emphasized by L.S.)²²

In spite of more complex branching of the social and compositional aspects constituting Slovenian musical *modernism* (only indicated in this small fragment from Barbo's otherwise comprehensive study) the forward-looking orientation demands that be paid to the historiographical categories involved – in contrast to traditionalism – as to variables within an open *process*, not so much as a state of affairs. As Barbo shows, the main compositional premise of the post World War II modernism is a constant digression from the past.

²¹ Matjaž Barbo, *Pro musica viva : prispevek k slovenski moderni po II. svetovni vojni*, Ljubljana: Znanstveni inštitut Filozofske fakultete 2001, 37ff.

²² Matjaž Barbo, ‘Skupina *Pro musica viva*’, v: Jernej Weiss / Matjaž Barbo / Leon Stefanija (eds.), *Pro musica viva – 2005: znamenja ob poti*. Ljubljana: Oddelek za muzikologijo Filozofske fakultete Univerze v Ljubljani in Slovensko muzikološko društvo 2005, 4.

If the point of departure of the process of modernization was firmly grounded in the efforts to surpass the old compositional techniques, styles and aesthetics, its unpredictable future was dispersed in favour of autonomous distinctiveness, as it was, for better or worse, the consequence of individual sights and notions of the future and – above all – of what is *distinctive*. The heterogeneity of individual musical aesthetics, an important feature of the modernism in Slovenia as well as abroad, was directed against the compositional past, and instead offered hardly any specific future except an utterly subjective comprehension of it.

At this point, it would be possible to do no more than to direct oneself to the question of *fulfillment or betrayal* of the musical modernisms with which Arnold Whittall discussed the quandaries of interpreting the “ordering principles”²³ that could enable at least compatible and mutually complementary approaches to the heterogeneity of modern music. Namely, it is exactly this heritage of a free-floating “message in a bottle” that seems to be the main turning point towards what happens to be called post-modern music. The pinnacle of modernism seems to be a step into a musical postmodernity, where the ideas of *possible* expression became suspicious, if not superfluous, whilst the main artistic concerns seem to gather – spiritually or opportunistically understood – around *employability*.

Post-modern music

“As might be expected,” to use Carl Dahlhaus’ phrase, “the very same dispute over hierarchy among those economic, social, psychological, aesthetic and compositional factors that impinge on music history crops up again in the controversy over the methodological repercussions of the noncontemporaneity of the contemporaneous”²⁴ especially with regard to the musical postmodernity. Its connection with modernism as well as traditionalism is unquestionable, but the range and particularities involved in it are an interesting stumbling block.

The disputes over the hierarchy of post-modern categories (or rather, in emphasizing different aspects of it) seem to be at odds with the fact that, although in the music since around mid-1970s one can still find there a persistent (explicit or implied) division into *modernists* and *traditionalists*, the term *post-modern* with its derivatives has become a shibboleth for many diverse phenomena ranging from musical works to cultural contexts that jut

²³ Arnold Whittall, ‘Fulfillment or betrayal?’, in: *The Musical Times*, Winter 1999: 11–21 (20).

²⁴ Carl Dahlhaus, *Grundlagen der Musikgeschichte*, Köln: Hans Gerig Verlag 1977/1993. English transl. by J. B. Robinson, *Foundations of Music History*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1993, 143.

out, at least to some degree, on the horizon of both rival categories from the beginning of the 20th century. Postmodernity refers to a “somehow undefined” plurality of musical phenomena as well as to an epoch “without limitations”²⁵. In its compositional repercussions, as a heterogeneous conglomerate of styles,²⁶ the postmodern music is knitting a much more complex web of historiographical categories than modernism and traditionalism. On the one hand, the music of postmodernity is discussed with regard to almost any previously known category of music – be it modernism, traditionalism, socialist music, or popular music, world music etc. On the other hand, its integrative aesthetics – with chameleon-like abilities of incorporating almost any style – enables phenomena to be discussed with similar epistemological freedom of “gliding over the imaginable”, but at the same time – and this is one of the main paradoxes: it claims absolute sovereignty over the individuality and universality at the same time.

Yet, behind the appearance of an irreconcilable complexity of relations between social and aesthetic categories, the temporal perspective – or rather: the lack of it – reveals one of the key features specific to postmodern music. Probably there can be hardly found an objection to the claim that postmodern music is trying to encompass historically and culturally different musical codes, past and present, running the risk of losing its own social as well as aesthetic identity. After the experiences with the avant-gardes of the 20th century and their exhaustive (and exhausted) experiments with compositional techniques, the only (more or less firm) criterion has remained – the composer's autonomy, or rather: his integrity. Of course, with an immense “stockpile” of poetic categories at his disposal and a properly narrowed focus at the same time, expecting from him to find original soundscapes without offering him many choices to attest his “historical place” in the novelties of the compositional technique. In other words: it seems that the post-modernity has pushed away the confines of the historical time. While having erased a demarcation line with the past and scattered around the temporal pointers to the future (although this future is far from an imaginary one, as usually in modernisms), the symbols used to define postmodernity have been demoted to mere indicators of an evasive categorical apparatus. But, is this true? Is the contemporaneity as elusive as it seems at first glance?

Without answering this question – since one can easily confirm or disagree with the answer: both views have comparable arsenals of arguments –, I shall offer only an epistemological footage for answering it.

²⁵ Cf. for instance, Ivan Klemenčič, *Musica ...*, op.cit. 2000: 197ff.

²⁶ Cf. Gregor Pompe, ‘Nekaj nastavkov za razumevanje postmodernizma kot slogovne usmeritve’, in: *Musicological annual 2002/XXXVIII*, Ljubljana, 31–42.

A typology of Slovenian postmodern music

Where is the wisdom we have lost in
knowledge? Where is the knowledge we
have lost in information?

T.S. Eliot, *The Rock* (1934)

Eliot's thought quoted above is one of the many which testify to the uneasiness of the so-called developed civilizations. Speaking of informational (over)saturation alludes to the state of affairs in culture, permeated with the idea of the development as progress. And to understand it, one has to admit that "the progress of knowledge about the circumstances of knowledge" (P. Bourdieu) is a substantial part of this progress – a fact that should be considered also when adopting a historicising, unproblematic standpoint of understanding postmodernity as the "end" of a period.

In contrast to the widespread belief about the continuation of the "project of modernism" in postmodernity, another view is equally recurrent. As tersely formulated by one of the esteemed Slovenian composers, Lojze Lebič – "The wheel has turned full circle" –, the thought about the postmodernity as a concluding phase of modernity, presents the music from the seventies onwards as a concluding section of a dynamic arch which started with premodernity at the break into the 20th century, reached its peak in both avant-gardes, and is fading out in decentred contemporaneity, in which the "crisis of musical language ... in the eighties is deepening".

Lebič's somewhat pessimistic perspective is a part of a widely accepted persuasion that the musical canon of the West, as a module of the musically valuable compositions and compositional attitudes, has become questionable in one essential point: at the crossroads of the compositionally unquestionable contemporaneity and of "what is more" (T.W. Adorno), which the proclamation of postmodernity, of course, unconditionally presupposes. On the one hand, no one denies (or can deny) the importance of the new, while on the other hand many "past futures" have been presented in equally novel ways hindering critiques about "reviving" or "remaking" the past. A series of works written during this period allows one to say that the composers do not seek support in *certain* traditional patterns but rather in the *definiteness* and *distinctiveness* of compositional means. In other words: instead of an "anxiety influence" (H. Bloom) there prevails an "anxiety of inexpressiveness" – despite a number of notable works composed during this period.

It appears that for this reason one should remember the thought about *truthfulness* as one of the key paths towards understanding human activities which J.-F. Lyotard in his report on the postmodern state prefers to the questionable notion of contentual *consensus*. And it would

be hardly an exaggeration to claim that one should seek *truthfulness* in the direction of legitimizing various processes of selection of the compositional means when developing one's personal artistic idiom, and not in the direction of consensus about its values.

It is, of course, problematic to speak about the legitimization of musical phenomena in circumstances where value criteria are being obscured by mediamorphosis and market logic, whereas the composing itself is dictated by the differentiatedness and idiosyncrasies of each individual, specifically to that extent where the search for explicitly common traits becomes suspect. Nevertheless, at the same time it would be suspect to ignore the common ground upon which differentiation is only possible. Hence: differentiatedness or unification? The question is, however, somewhat misleading: the answer is, as so many a time in history, somewhere in-between – on the thin line between the belief in one's own existence and the "licentiousness of the sense for historia" (F. Nietzsche).

In Slovenian music, the share of what is possibly common can be sought on two levels, or more precisely: in the *relation* between aesthetic intentions and compositional poetics. From the standpoint of compositional poetics, there is, on the one hand, an extremely differentiated play of sound which, as a part of the tradition of the avant-garde "emancipation of sound from the tone" can be designated as a kind of *trans-histori(cisti)cal* musical logic of sonorous universals, or rather trans-histori(cisti)cal logic of combining diverse sonorous patterns that sometime have recognizable ties with the musical past (trans-historicism), but mainly they (at least wish to) remain historically unbound soundscapes (trans-historism). On the other hand there are compositional textures that wish either to remain bound up with the traditions of tonal musical thinking ("historism") or emphasize only individual compositional elements of the past (historicism).²⁷

FORMAL/STRUCTURAL or "SONIC" (R. Feller) COMPREHENSION
OF THE AESTHETICAL

HISTORI(CISTI)CAL
MUSICAL POIETICS

TRANSHISTORI(CISTI)CAL
MUSICAL POIETICS

SEMANTICAL COMPREHENSION
OF THE AESTHETICAL

²⁷ Cf., Leon Stefanija, 'New versus old in the Slovenian compositional practise of the last quarter of the 20th century', in: BEK, Mikulaš / MACEK, Petr (eds.). *Horror novitatis*, (Colloquia Mvsicologica Brvnensia, Vol. 37, Vol. 37). Praha: Koniasch Latin Press; Brno: Institute of Musicology, Faculty of Arts, Masaryk University Brno, 2004, 158–172.

The above indicated determinants imply the importance of the opposition between the relatively abstract “structural” interplay of tonal or sonorous patterns and semantic “narrative moments”, that open up the associative flexibility of the musical texture into various directions – historical, social, philosophical, physicalistic, gestural ones etc. Furthermore, both premises of the Slovenian compositional practice discussed above, poetic and aesthetic, seem to lead up to the levelling of historical differences through a kind of logic of “intimate history” – a logic of personal notions about past as well as present notions and ideals of music and its functions. But such a historicizing view unveils above all the genesis of the aesthetic side of contemporary composition and at the same time reveals (clearly, not only the musicological) embarrassment in the search for a suitable cognitive apparatus for the contemporary music – music which does not assent to live overshadowed by the past although, at the same time, wants to remain embedded in its honourable embrace. Because of a series of brilliant compositions from that period it seems sensible to think over not just about postmodernity as a period of “immense greyness” but rather about a “strive for narrativity” of a period for which, like the label postmodernity, are equally suited also, let us say “reflexive modernity” (U. Beck), “post-modern modernity” (W. Welsch), “ars subtilior” (H. Schütz), “ars combinatoria” (G. Rochberg), and the like.

Nevertheless, something does hold good. Compositional tumults that are looking for musical order in the minutely thought-out procedures of evading formalistic schematics, the simplicity and immediacy of expression in the complexity of texture, musical narrativeness not just in simplifications and in the banal, but above all in refined “moments of narration” and its identification with the awareness of the elusiveness of one’s own historical standpoint, have not merely “turned the wheel full circle”. They have turned it again, which is another story. However, for this one, a concluding comment about the levels on which the old and the new in music should be discussed seems inevitable.

To conclude with

Georg Simmel, one of the “older” thinkers in favour with the post-modern thought, believed that: “Das Leben kann eben nur durch das Leben verstanden werden, und es legt sich dazu in Schichten auseinander, von denen die eine das Verständnis der anderen vermittelt und die in ihrem Aufeinander-Angewiesensein seine Einheit verkünden.”²⁸ Simmel’s

²⁸ Georg Simmel, ‘Vom Wesen des historischen Verstehens’ from: *Geschichtliche Abende im Zentralinstitut für Erziehung und Unterricht*, Heft 5, Berlin: Ernst Siegfried Mittler und Sohn, Königliche Hofbuchhandlung.

view could easily fit into almost any historiographical persuasion, irrespectively of its epistemological background (or intentions).

As for the new and the old in music, as generative notions they depend on *contextualisation* of a phenomenon within a certain setting of surmises, questions, ways of discussing them (methods), and answers. And this article has endeavoured to outline some essential features of the new and the old, as applied to Slovenian music, without paying much attention to the levels to which Simmel's above cited thought is referring. This "Schichtenlehre" of epistemological levels seems to have a vital role in understanding the notions discussed. Hence, the concluding remarks aim to suggest a context for understanding what the old and the new in music is dependent upon epistemologically.

Far from intending a thorough survey of questions and methods that are, or could be, reckoned as particles of the hermeneutics of music, I would like to point out to four, probably well known, epistemological demarcations offered by S. Mauser, J.-J. Nattiez, C. de Lannoy, and S. Mahrenholz.

The entry on musical hermeneutics by Siegfried Mauser²⁹ offers the following four foci for interpreting three fields of musical practice³⁰ (author's graphics):

	<i>Author</i> [Autor]	<i>Text</i> [Text]	<i>Performer-Sounding event-Listener</i> [Aufführender-Klangereignis-Hörer]
<i>Level of the factual</i> [Ebene des Faktischen]	[...]	[...]	[...]
<i>Level of the intentionality</i> [Ebene der Intentionalität]	[...]	[...]	[...]
<i>Level of actualization</i> [Ebene der Aktualisierung]	[...]	[...]	[...]
<i>Level of the historical Kontext</i> [Ebene der Geschichtlichkeit]	[...]	[...]	[...]

Mauser's fields of musical practice recall the much discussed application of Jean Molino's tripartite analytic scheme accepted by Jean-Jacques Nattiez³¹:

<i>Poietic level,</i>	<i>neutral level, and</i>	<i>aesthetic level.</i>
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²⁹ Siegfried Mauser, 'Hermeneutik', in: Ludwig Finscher (ed.), *Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart, Sachteil*, Band 4, Kassel, Basel, London&co.: Bärenreiter 1996, 262–270.

³⁰ I use the term "musical practice" in the sense of Kurth Blaukopf (Blaukopf 1986), as a generative notion referring to the activities, goods and ideas in *any* respect connected to the notion of music. (Kurt Blaukopf, *Musik im Wandel der Gesellschaft. Grundzüge der Musiksoziologie*, München: DTV 1986.)

³¹ Jean-Jacques Nattiez, *Music and Discourse. Toward a Semiology of Music*, New Jersey, Oxford: Princeton University Press 1990, 10ff.

The main difference between Mauser's and Nattiez's analytical foci lies in Mauser's differentiation of the three fields of study of musical practice. Another basic difference should be mentioned: Nattiez defines the fields of musical practice in rough but fundamental terms, as cursors pointing to different *objects* (e.g. the poietic level should include anything important to the creation of a piece of music), while Mauser's fields of musical practice are specified concretely in a more narrow sense.

Further, the tripartite scheme of *realities* by Christian de Lannoy³² offers no specific fields of musical practice:

- *reality of things*
[Dingwirklichkeit],
- *reality of experience*
[Erfahrungswirklichkeit],
- *system-reality*
[systemische Wirklichkeit].

It would be similar to Mauser's, if, for example, his two middle foci (*Level of intentionality* and *Level of actualization*) could be mapped in Lannoy's *reality of experience*. But even in doing so, it is obvious that there is something from Lannoy's differentiation that is only hinted at in Mauser's scheme: Lannoy explicitly speaks of the epistemological level, *system-reality* (=systematically "parcelled" picture of a reality), as of a relatively independent level of interpretation. Does also Mauser's scheme imply the level of interpretation also within his cross-section of the third column and fourth row (*Level of the historical context* in the *Performer-Sounding event-Listener* category)? Or is the level of interpretation implied as well in the cross-section between the third row and third column (*Level of actualization* in the *Performer-Sounding event-Listener* category)?

Even if the question of system reality could be raised for both mentioned epistemological levels, further discomfort is encountered with regard to the relations between the more objectivity-claiming level that Mauser calls *Level of the factual* and the three levels following it in the same column below. Moreover, *Level of the factual* – similar to the *neutral level* in Nattiez's scheme or Lannoy's *reality of things* – should

³² Christiaan de Lannoy, 'Variationen im Metakontrapunkt, Ein systemtheoretische Analyse musikalischer Interaktionsprozesse', in: Henk de Berg, Matthias Prangel (eds.), *Kommunikation und Differenz, Systemtheoretische Ansätze in der Literatur- und Kunstwissenschaft*, Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag 1993, 203–227.

be even duplicated from a row into the column. The *level of the factual* is, after all, a counterpart of the other interpretative pole, namely of the level of surmises: without combining the two, hardly a single utterance about music that least implies a claim to interpretation is feasible. In other words, Mauser's hermeneutic scheme has more specifically defined foci *and* fields of musical practice compared to Lannoy's. Mauser's scheme shows a proclivity toward prescribing a way of thinking (although he warns that he offered only a descriptive model, not a "hermeneutic formula"), while Lannoy encompasses rather a huge portion of the world we live in, and our experience of it, in an elemental sense of a descriptive epistemological compass.

Similar to Lannoy, but still new, is the framing of the epistemological levels proposed by Simone Mahrenholz³³:

- (I₃) *Level of conscious experience*
[des bewussten oder bewussthafte Erlebens]
- (I₂) *Level of habitual action*
[Gewohnheits- und Gleichförmigkeitsmuster]
- I₁ *Level of the subconscious*
[die den bewussten Symbolisationsleistungen vorgelagerte Ebene]

If Mauser implies and Lannoy demands the consideration of the "scientific language", Mahrenholz makes a rather smooth crossing from the subconscious domain to the conscious experience, as if all the stages should be subjected to a "scientific language" of music research. She scales the knowledge in terms of epistemological structure leading from the unconscious to the conscious response. Her epistemological levels are as wide as one could only wish the sciences could cope with. It is far from a music-confined division of the epistemological foci, thus allowing a thorough differentiation of the fields of musical practice that should be studied from these perspectives.

And it is, I believe, this widely opened platform of knowledge, ranging from the subconscious toward habitual and conscious domains, that has brought about changes in 20th-century interpretations of music. Whether they have been oriented toward someone's future or past, habitual or subconscious level – forward or backward, "from without" or "from within" – does not seem to matter as much as does the rather banal fact that a process of differentiation, specific for the 20th-century

³³ Simone Mahrenholz, *Musik und Erkenntnis. Eine Studie im Ausgang von Nelson Goodmans Symboltheorie*, Stuttgart, Weimar: Verlag J. B. Metzler, 2000.

compositional as well as epistemological history³⁴, has sharpened and specialized rather than discarded (even less resolved) the question about the new in music.

It seems that the postmodernist version of the metaphor of the new as a dwarf standing on the shoulder of a giant, mentioned at the beginning of this article, transfers the issue on the new towards a complex, epistemologically rather awkward question about the notion of the classical, the valuable, the praiseworthy, about the new as “nicht bloß das Andere”, but, as Groys’s mentioned viewpoint claims, “das wertvolle Andere”³⁵. It also redirects it towards other cognitive criteria besides those on which the present discussion rests. Especially important seem the fields of reception of music, social psychology, the “problem of the mass” (including the relation between the roles of music and the roles of other arts on different levels of human activity). Although similar issues have been only indicated in this article, they are by no means any less important for the understanding of (probably not only the Slovenian) 20th-century music and its drive for novelties.

³⁴ This process – literally: a set of processes – can be neatly illustrated with R. Hatten’s scheme (the left side being a sign of the “old science” or “old musical poetics”, whereas parallels with the right side could be found in the epistemological ideals of the time as well as some compositional currents):

unmarked	↔	marked
	[degrees of the analytic]	
I. general (genus)	[hierarchies of classification]	specific (species)
	[degrees of manifestation]	
II. abstract	[virtual vs. actual] [degrees of characterization]	concrete
III. vague	[pragmatic, in terms of level of application or interest]	precise (deixis or ostention)

Robert S. Hatten, *Musical Meaning in Beethoven. Markedness, Correlation, and Interpretation*, Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press (2004).

³⁵ Boris Groys, *Das Neue ...*, op.cit., 1992, 43.

Леон Стефанија

ИЗМЕЉУ АУТОНОМИЈЕ МУЗИКЕ И АУТОНОМИЈЕ
КОМПОЗИТОРА. БЕЛЕШКЕ О МОДЕРНИЗМИМА И
ТРАДИЦИОНАЛИЗМИМА У СЛОВЕНАЧКОЈ
МУЗИЦИ XX ВЕКА

(Резиме)

Циљ овог прилога јесте да преиспитата релације између старог и новог у словеначкој музици 20. века. Питање релације између старог и новог сагледава се не само као питање различитих лица прастаре опозиције, него као комплексна тематика епистемолошког контекстуализовања тих лица. То је разлог што први део чланка доноси три контекстуализације словеначке музике, које временски заузимају: 1) период од друге половине XIX века до почетка Првог светског рата, 2) време између два светска рата и 3) период после 1945; након тог умрежавања, посебно је представљена друга половина XX века, где је питање новог у словеначкој музици анализирано са гледишта топологије историографских категорија: традиционализам, модернизам, постмодернизам.

Појам традиционализам представљен је у оквиру идеација „социјалистичког реализма“, модернизам – у контексту једног од најизразитијих феномена словеначке музике (група *Pro musica viva*), док се постмодерној прилази са критичким освртом на питања релативизовања идентитета у најновијој музици.

Прилог је концентрисан тако да у главни фокус смешта проблематику композиционих типова најновијег времена, дакле времена које обично означавамо као епоху постмодерне у музици, која је у словеначкој музици везана за период од седамдесетих година XX века до данас. Главни циљ тог фокусирања на епоху постмодерне јесте питање које се из различитих углова назире у свакој историјској епохи, али које се (често без правих аргумената!) везује посебно за „нашу епоху“. Ради се наима, о питању које доноси општу проблематику западњачке музике, наима: проблем дефинисања конститутивних делова идентитета унутар различитих епистемолошких премиса.

У чланку је учињен покушај да се аналитички рашчлане ти делови и да се уз њихову помоћ сагледа словеначка музичка пракса XX века. С том идејом исцртан је крајњи епистемолошки компас, у коме су коментарисане епистемолошке поставке С. Маузера (S. Mauser), Ж-Ж. Натјеа (J-J. Nattiez), К. де Лануа (C. De Lannoy) и С. Маренхолца (S. Mahrenholz), да би се нагласило како је питање новог и старог везано уз игру релација између композиционе, „културно-економске“ и аксиолошке премисе сагледавања музике.

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Никола Вучо
Nikola Vučo