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Popular Music and Producing Collectivities: the Challenges of Audience Research in Contemporary Musicology

Ana Petrov¹

Academy of Arts, University of Banja Luka

Abstract

In this paper I deal with the ways in which the audience functions as a means of producing collectivities. I define audience as a material body that is a carrier of affective potential in a certain time and space. Taking Yugoslav popular music as an example, i.e. the concerts of performers from the territory of former Yugoslavia, I analyse two crucial issues: the audience at popular music concerts in Belgrade in the period after the dissolution of Yugoslavia, and the audience that is created virtually through social networks.

Key words

Audience, Yugoslav popular music, collectivities, contemporary musicology

Introduction

The last two decades of the 20th century, as well as the very beginning of the 21st century, were marked by numerous changes in the humanities and social science discourses. The transformation of musicology was caused mostly by interdisciplinary connections between the musicological and other discourses, which have inevitably led to an expansion of the potential themes in musicology. Music has been linked to a wide range of social phenomena, meaning that the topics have sometimes broadened the very object of musicological research, including the analysis of music practices in relation to politics, ideology, identity, and social groups (Petrov 2009). Within new perspectives in music research, popular music studies have always conducted a dialogue with musicology. As Richard Middleton points out, “the musicological side of this conversation has more often than not been marked by insult, incomprehension or silence; and popular music scholars for their part have tended to concentrate on musicology’s deficiencies” (Middleton 1993: 177).

However, within numerous new approaches in contemporary musicology, as well as in the sociology of music, audience research appears to be a rather neglected issue, especially in the post-Yugoslav

¹ anapetrov82@gmail.com

scholarly discourses. In dealing with the reception of Yugoslav popular music in contemporary Serbian society, I have come to realise how crucial this aspect of the musicological research could be, especially when dealing with the issue of producing collectivities through music. In investigating the audience in contemporary Serbia, I draw on the studies of new materialism, the body, and affect theory. This article also takes into account Bruno Latour's discussions on the material world and social structuring (Latour 1993), and Alfred Gell's understanding of mediation as a construal of music's social, technological and temporal dimensions (Gell 1998). Additionally it draws on Georgina Born's analysis of music's mediations taking a number of historical forms, which cohere into assemblages defined as a particular combination of mediations which can be sonic, visual, temporal, discursive, artefactual, technological, or social (Born 2005).²

I apply the mentioned approaches to the case study of the reception of Yugoslav popular music in contemporary Serbia. I will firstly explicate my theoretical approach by defining the entity of audience, according to the mentioned theoretical background. Next, I will analyse the concerts of performers from the territory of the former Yugoslavia, by singling out two crucial issues: the actual (physical, material) audience in the popular music concert spaces in Belgrade in the 2000s, and the audience that is created virtually through social networking. In conclusion, I will suggest a perspective for construing the audience as a means of reconnecting collectives through the sharing of common cultural memories.³

Audience as a Body and Music as a Mediator

This article puts forward the thesis that audience experience is a relevant and appropriate part of certain musical events.⁴ It draws

² Theories of mediation have been central to the development of both critical musicology and the cultural study of music. The issue was set out initially by Theodor Adorno. The claim of later writers on mediation has been that it is only through empirical and historical research that it is possible to analyse both how music and its meanings are constructed by wider discursive and social formations, and how in turn music – and its emotive, symbolic, corporeal and material properties – become a resource “for semiotic activity”, i.e. for “doing, being and naming” social reality (DeNora 2000: 44).

³ The process of remembering that unfolds in a certain community, one defined as having a history, is constituted by the community's past, and for this reason we can speak of a real community as a “community of memory”, one that does not forget its past. In order not to forget that past, a community is involved in retelling its story, its constitutive narrative. Finally, a community is involved in mnemonic battles – battles over the correct way to interpret the past (Olick and Robbins 1998: 112).

⁴ In dealing with the musical event I draw on this concept as defined in Tia DeNora's approach – as an event that is equivalent to the concept of the social event in social theory (DeNora 2003).

on research that shows how the perception of the audience's role has changed. Instead of the understanding of the audience's role as being mostly passive, recent research has acknowledged that the audience also contributes to the production of the atmosphere⁵ and the meaning of a certain event.⁶ Drawing on studies of new materialism, the body, and affect theory, I define audience as a material body that is a carrier of affective potential in a certain time and space.⁷ As such, the body of the audience needs to be analysed as an entity for producing supposedly intimate feelings and making them common and public. In this regard, I follow Sara Ahmed's approach to the analysis of emotions. She sees emotions as a capacity to work in order to secure collectives, through the way in which they read the bodies of others. Thus, emotions that are carried through the body work to align subjects with some others and against other others, playing a crucial role in surpassing the boundaries between the individual and collective bodies. With this in mind, emotions are not considered to be a "private matter", but rather, as Ahmed puts it, they "define the contours of the multiple worlds that are inhabited by different subjects" (Ahmed 2004: 25).

When the audience is not understood as a passive mass but rather as a vibrant body that helps to produce collective feelings, it is possible to deal with an individual's experience of place, which arises in part out of the capacities of his/her body to produce and sense the

⁵ Drawing on Teresa Brennan's concept of "affective atmosphere", I also want to point to the ways of networking in the discourses on certain music, and the affective atmospheres produced through this networking (Brennan 2004). For more on the issue of affective atmosphere in the context of neo-Marxist theoretical framework, see Anderson 2009.

⁶ The relevance of the audience has also been recognized in the research of performative arts, where the audience used to be understood as a completely passive entity. However, it has been shown that it can contribute to, and even have a creative role in, the whole artistic process of performance. Thus, for instance, theatre can be defined as "the communicative intersection between the performer's actions and the spectator's reactions" (Sauter 2000: 53). On the research of audience in performative arts, see also Radbourne, Johanson, Glow and White 2009. Audience research is also relevant in media studies, such as in the investigation of the audience's taste, as well as the ways in which it can be controlled and modified (Born 2000).

⁷ I deal with affect defined as "feelings of actors in situations" (Redlawsk 2006: 1) and I apply the concept in order to point out how these feelings are produced because of and through concerts, which brings into question the intertwining of the issues of identity, control, action, and meaning. Bruno Latour has linked the problem of affect to a reformulation of bodies as processes rather than entities, and invites us to consider not "What is a body?", which implies that the body is reified as a thing or an entity, but rather "What can a body do?" (Latour 2004: 205). Following this approach, I deal here with the question of how bodies are entangled processes, and importantly defined by their capacities to affect and be affected (Blackman and Venn 2010). These capacities are mediated and afforded by practices and technologies which modulate and augment the body's potential for mediation (Wegenstein 2006).

atmosphere around it through the music that is performed. Underlying this kind of analysis (in which concerts as sites serve to shape the collective feelings through one collective body) is, on the one hand, an understanding of the capacity of the body to sense, and, on the other, the capacity of all bodies to affect others through gestures, bodily movements and voice.⁸ Since we are moved by the “proximity of others” and “we feel with and for others” (Ahmed 2008: 10), it is relevant to pose the question – if emotions are sociable, what is the role of music in the process of being sociable in a concert space?

In order to analyse an audience in the way I have described, the concept of music needs to be redefined. Music seems to be a powerful mediator. The research on music that is embedded in mediation studies approaches music as an entity that takes myriad social forms and embodies divergent orders of social mediation. It produces its own varied social relations – in performance, in musical associations and ensembles, and in the musical division of labour. In the recent discussions on music and mediation, mostly in the discourses of the sociology of music, the analysis of music’s mediation has been linked to the attempts to theorize music’s changing ontology. Even though a significant number of theoreticians have raised the question of using an approach that incorporates understandings of the social, technological and temporal dimensions of music, such an approach is offered by theories of mediation, in which, according to Born, three related arguments that build on this perspective can be outlined. The first concerns music’s social and temporal mediation and its nature as a distributed object. In this approach music is revealed as a medium that destabilizes some of our most cherished dualisms concerning the separation not only of subject from object, but present from past, individual from collectivity, the authentic from the artificial, and production from reception. The second argument is that music’s mediations have taken a number of forms, cohering into what we might term assemblages, which themselves endure and take particular historical shapes. The third is that this approach has a value in highlighting shifts in the dominant historical forms of musical assemblage (Born 2005: 8).⁹ In the following text I deal with the

⁸ For similar approach in the analysis of the audience in festival spaces see: Duffy, Waitt, Gorman-Murray and Gibson 2011.

⁹ More specifically, some authors track how musicians are engaging with digital technologies to generate new models and new practices of difference and interrelation in music (Born 2005). DeNora argues that music is active within social life: just as music’s meanings may be constructed in relation to things outside it, so, too, things outside music may be constructed in relation to music. Her emphasis is on agency, interaction and world-building – on how those who listen to music make connections, in their everyday consumption practices, between musical and non-musical domains. Mediation in this sense refers to what DeNora calls the “co-productive” or two-way interrelations between music and social life (DeNora 2002). In these sorts of music

question of how music mediates affects and memories in a concrete space through the audience body.

The Audience at a Concert

This article sets out to prove the above-mentioned thesis about the relevance of the audience experience through participant observation at popular music concerts in Serbia. In this case, I analyse the ways in which the collectivities are made in a concrete space, at a certain time, as a result of listening to the same music. The gist of my dealing with the issue can be recognized in the following question: what kind of “broker of social situations” (DeNora 2002: 176) is certain music in a given context? Furthermore, I want to probe how the body of the audience is shaped through the music and what kind of collective feelings are being produced during concerts.

Regarding the role of the audience, it is relevant to bear in mind the following pieces of information related to the organization of popular music concerts in the post-war Yugoslav space. Starting from the late 1990s, several musicians from the territory of the former Yugoslavia gradually embarked on a project of giving concerts in Belgrade, the capital of the former country. Among them, many had been rather popular in Serbia and they continued to perform there regularly quite soon after the end of the Yugoslav wars; among them were Kemal Monteno, Boris Novković, Goran Karan, Massimo Savić, Josipa Lisac, and groups such as Crvena Jabuka, Hari Mata Hari, and Magazin. In fact, a few of them regularly put on concerts after 2000. Hari Mata Hari gave seven concerts in a row in Sava Centar as early as 1999. Alka Vuica performed soon after, as well as the punk group KUD *Idijoti* and then others followed, although not all of them were actually well-known before the 1990s. Other famous musicians, on the contrary, adamantly refused to perform in Serbia after the wars, the most well-known of them being Oliver Dragojević, Tereza Kesovija and Dino Merlin. Their statements about refusing to perform in Belgrade ever again were often commented on in the Serbian press, which led to creating a negative attitude towards these musicians. However, when some of them changed their mind and eventually came back to perform in Serbia, it provoked new reactions.¹⁰

research, the music “itself” is understood as a musical object that is repeatedly relayed and transformed across time, space and persons. Throughout, key motifs are mediation, creativity, and the negotiation of difference (Born 2005: 7).

¹⁰ Tereza Kesovija and Dino Merlin decided to give concerts in Belgrade in 2011, thus provoking new reactions, especially in the nationalistic discourse, which was particularly (but not only) evident in the case of the supporters of Serbian extremist groups (Naši, Dveri and 1389). The reactions against those particular musicians were provoked by the fact that both of them supposedly promoted the discourse of hate

My research was extensive, including most of the concerts of former Yugoslav performers in Belgrade from the late 1990s to the present day. Although the research included the analysis of data in the press, Internet forums, fan pages and similar Internet sources, the very informative official sites of the performers, and the official sites of extremist groups, I also paid special attention to the part of the research that included participant observation. The discourse produced by the performers on the concerts themselves was also one of the crucial parts of the analysis, since this discourse helped produce the specific atmosphere in the concert spaces, actually affecting the ways in which the members of the audience reacted.¹¹ I also analysed the bodily responses both of the performers and the audience during the events.

Since there is a large body of material illustrating how certain concert-goers appear to be an entity that can be recognized as one collective body, I chose to single out a few of them, but also to make a comparative overview of the examples of the issue in question. Some of the first come-back concerts provoked more emotional reactions, such as in the cases of the above-mentioned Dino Merlin and Tereza Kesovija concerts, unlike the later ones which provoked mild but still visible reactions, most commonly of a nostalgic and Yugo-nostalgic nature. There were also a few concerts that included a significant number of performers and produced a moderate, but clearly expressed (Yugo)nostalgic atmosphere.¹²

Two bodies were produced in the concerts – the bodies of the performers and the collective body of the audience. Performing specific “body images” which often included physically expressed emotions (such as crying, sighing, staying speechless), the musicians provoked the audience to react in the same fashion.¹³ The most explicit example was Tereza Kesovija, who spent a significant amount of time during her first concert in Belgrade in 2011 talking and clearly verbally expressing her emotional state, which was accompanied with tears and sighs. The crucial consequence can be recognized in the audience imitation of her overwhelmed emotions. In fact, in this case, the performer’s body and the audience body were being made

towards the Serbs during the war, since they were both directly affected by the war. Tereza’s house in Dubrovnik was ruined during the bombing of the city by the Yugoslav people’s army, while Dino was an active participant in the war in Sarajevo.

¹¹ In addition, since I was a part of the researched target group – the audience – I did not hesitate to incorporate some of my own personal remembrance of the reactions of the events. Also, my own reactions during these concerts stimulated me to talk with other people in the audience.

¹² For more on these concerts see Petrov, forthcoming. On the concept of Yugo-nostalgia see, for instance, Volčič 2007.

¹³ Body image is a mental image of the body as it appears to others (Featherstone 2010: 193).

simultaneously due to the occurrence of “carnal encounters” between them (Atanasovski, Petrov 2015). In addition to the reactions that were provoked before and during the events due to the discourse that was being produced, I argue that the very body of the audience was shaped on the spot in the process of interaction between the people in the audience, as well as between the collective body of the audience and the performers. Since “power works in the depths and on the surfaces of the body, and not just in the disembodied realm of ‘representation’ or ‘discourse’” (Shaviro 1993, viii), the concert spaces can be seen as territories in which the avenues of carnal encounters were opened up between the body on the stage and the body of the audience. Thus, the political potential of the concerts is recognized in the affective ideology which is “immediately inscribed in/on the body and not exclusively in the spheres of representations and discourses” (Atanasovski, Petrov 2015: 22). In fact, feeling and performing feelings that were supposed to be intimate were transformed in the concert spaces. The concert spaces seem to offer channels for “emotions to work” (Ahmed 2004), securing collectives via the process of reading the bodies of others. I am here referring to the ideology of love that was inscribed in the body of the audience and was addressed to other people in the audience, to the performer and the music, as well as the former country. The following two examples will explicate this thesis. I will continuously discuss both the bodies of the performers and the body of the audience, since they were being shaped mutually. Once the affective ideology of love was being inscribed in one’s body it was simultaneously present in the others and vice versa.

From the moment the public learned of Tereza Kesovija’s come-back concert in 2011, the first (slightly reserved and moderate) reactions to its announcement escalated and burst into something that I here call a “collective feeling” (Ahmed 2004: 25) of love and nostalgia. Namely, unlike their opponents, Kesovija’s fans (as well as most of the official discourse about her concert) propagated the idea of love (which was clearly verbally expressed by both Kesovija and the members of the audience during the concert); that love could be a love towards the music, as well as towards the Yugoslav past and their past in general, i.e. the youth that the people remembered through the music. This love should be felt and performed through music both in relation to Kesovija and to the memory of the former country. From this perspective, nostalgia meant the following: loving the songs was often equal to a love for Yugoslavia (which was explicitly stated during the concert by both the performer and the audience), which, furthermore, included the renarrativisation of

the past (sometimes even that connected to the Yugoslav wars).¹⁴ The characteristics of the audience's collective body during this concrete evening were the following: crying and sighing together, highlighting pain (thus showing how moving the atmosphere was), as well as chatting about the past that was obviously remembered by the music, so that certain songs were triggers for emotional talk among the people. The majority of the audience reacted to Kesovija's performance emotionally, showing their support by applauding and singing, as well as feeling overwhelmed by the atmosphere – a nostalgic, emotional, touching atmosphere – atmosphere being defined as the environment, or the transmission of the other's feelings (Brennan 2004: 1). The atmosphere and the process of producing the collectivity of the audience can be described in the following way: people were commenting a lot before, after and during the concert; they were rarely reserved but rather open in sharing what they were thinking about; they also sang enthusiastically; additionally, as I mentioned, they cried and showed explicitly that the whole event was an emotional experience for them. The audience's reactions were mostly visible in bodily changes (the sighs, the crying, the applauding, the singing, and the shouting), pointing to the fact that our emotions are not our own, but, instead, collectively and mutually produced. Both for the singer whose music they love, and for themselves, the people in the audience thus found reassurance on their own views and feelings about the shared (Yugoslav) past.

The second example I want to single out is a concert that was given in Belgrade in November 2014 in homage to famous Yugoslav composer Đorđe Novković, bringing together the most famous names of the Yugoslav popular music scene. Including Yugoslav stars such as Boris Novković, Kaliope, Gabi Novak, Tereza Kesovija, Željko Bebek, Vlado Kalember, Goran Karan, Kemal Monteno, Neda Ukraden, and Hari Mata Hari, the concert was easily labelled as being connected to the Yugoslav past, which certainly influenced the way the audience perceived it. Thus, the dominant ideology of love was the one towards Yugoslavia, i.e. Yugo-nostalgia, which was channelled through loving Yugoslav music. Through suitable songs, the love towards the former country helped produce love as a supposedly neutral and universal category between people. Unlike some concerts, including those given by Kesovija, which were discursively marked as politically problematic, this one was "just" a homage to Yugoslav popular music, allegedly without directly

¹⁴ Kesovija, for instance, did not avoid talking about the "cruel times" of the past, thus giving the love narrative a forgiving potential – she wanted to stress that she had felt loss, but was willing to forgive, forget and love again (Petrov forthcoming).

referring to the past. However, the concert space again appeared to be adequate for producing collective feelings, leading to the construction of one collective body of the audience joined through the affective atmosphere transmitted through the music.

The Yugo-nostalgic atmosphere could be located in the statements of both the performers and the people in the audience who expressed their regret for the “better past times” in which everything, including the music, was superior. As such, the collective feeling of love and nostalgia was channelled in a specific way that no other concerts had – through the cult of personality. As a sort of embodiment of his own late father, Boris Novković’s body truly became a transmitter of the affects in the concert space. He talked and sang about his father, marking him as a symbol of the “better past times”, acting emotionally and thus inscribing his emotional state into the body of audience. He was not alone in the process of connecting the past, the audience and the music with a musician who could not be physically present but who was certainly affectively present through the music that provoked reactions – other performers also connected these elements in the same fashion, thus constructing a mythical figure of the Yugoslav “musical giant” who is being transmitted by his son, as Kesovija stated, “visually, through his appearance, and auditorily, through the songs”. Having been a Yugoslav song writer who truly marked the sound that has become recognisable as Yugoslav, Novković posthumously became a symbol of past times. Similarly to the period of the war, when performers of different ethnic origins underwent a process of recontextualization in the context of the ethno-political conflict (Baker 2012), in the post-Yugoslav era there has been a revitalisation of the ‘great’ names of Yugoslav popular music history. An especially touching moment was the performance of the song *A gdje si ti* (“And where are you”), which Boris Novković composed for his father. It was announced by the performer as “very emotional” and “an unusual dialogue between a father and a son”, because “certain things had to be said”. This scene is relevant because it triggered the creation of other personal remembrances in the audience that were correlated to the remembrance of the late composer.

The aforementioned cult of personality, which was performed due to the presence of the composer’s son as a channel of the remembering process and a means for blurring the boundaries between the public and private feelings present that evening, was further empowered by another symptomatic moment – a scene in which all the present singers invited, in their own words, “a legend of Yugoslav popular music” Đorđe Marjanović.¹⁵ Helping the singer

¹⁵ Kemal Monteno even made a lapsus during his performance, talking about Đorđe

to come up on stage, the participants of the event almost stopped the whole concert, focussing on this single emotional moment. This moment was dedicated to a cult of personality – from the present Boris, through the implicitly present Đorđe Novković, to Marjanović, who served as a unique bond of all the present discourses and affects produced on the stage and in the audience that evening. The atmosphere in the audience was not overly emotional – a certain level of emotion was usual at these sorts of events, as already pointed out. However, the choice of the songs was conducive to the creation of a warm nostalgic atmosphere, as well as commenting after the concerts. The escalation of the emotional reactions of the audience was obvious during the mentioned scene with Marjanović, as well as at the end of the concert, when the song *Nek živi ljubav* (*Let love live*) was performed. The combination of the channelling of the emotions through the cult of personality, and singing a song that is a prayer for peace, finally created a platform for further strengthening of the collective. Leaving the concert hall, people talked about the past, the music that helped them feel better, as well as the last song they heard. *Let love live* was a sort of refrain in the conversations between the audience members after the concert.

The Audience in the Virtual Space

While the body of the audience was produced during the concerts as the result of common reactions, there have been other ways of listeners networking before and especially after concerts.¹⁶ Using media, new virtual communities have been created, thus marking the groups of fans and opponents of certain music. I will explicate this in terms of the two examples mentioned above.

When the news about Tereza Kesovija's first concert appeared in the Serbian public sphere, there was a public discussion about it, as well as a heated discussion on media forums among the supporters and opponents of her persona and her music. Since some concerts, including the one mentioned, provoked negative reactions and even an opposition towards Kesovija's concert, it seemed that the public sphere must be divided. Musicians, journalists and the people who planned to attend the concert appeared among her supporters – especially those who self-declared as “nationalists”.¹⁷ Apart from the

Marjanović instead of Đorđe Novković.

¹⁶ Unlike common sociological approaches to the analysis of audience, I do not pay special attention to the issues of age, gender and social background of the audience. Understanding it in the Latourian fashion – as the vibrant potential of the body – it is the capacities and actions of the body that are relevant here, rather than its social structuring.

¹⁷ The most well-known of these was Serbian rock star Bora Đorđević. The gist of the

comments and certain vague proclamations that protests would be organized on the same day as the concert, no actual protests took place. Still, the tense atmosphere before the concert and the warm one during it influenced the people's reactions before and after the event. A few of my interviewees confirmed to me that they had doubts about their own security if they decide to attend Kesovija's concert in January 2011. This atmosphere of fear was even more emphasized before Dino Merlin's concert in November of the same year. Additionally, in the case of most of the concerts of musicians from the territory of the former Yugoslavia, even when there was no fear involved, certain groups were always created – the groups of “us” and “them” (which has generally been a common feature in post-Yugoslav musical practices, see Baker 2006).

The formation of the audience as a collectivity in the period after the actual event had finished took place virtually and was shaped discursively. The triggers for the production of this collectivity were usually headlines in the press dedicated to certain concerts. The concerts were regularly described in detail and commented on in newspapers in the days following the event, while the forums discussing the concert provided further insights into the reception of the event, most of them pointing to the supposed universality and transnational values of music in general and this kind of music in particular (Petrov forthcoming).¹⁸

Regarding my second case study, the headlines in the press also helped in connecting the past, the emotions and the music; these could be formulated either explicitly or implicitly, but were most certainly present. One typical symptomatic example was the title: “Emotional Musical Time Machine”, which talked of how

opposition against the very idea of giving the concert was most poignantly expressed in an article entitled “Serbian singers: boycott Tereza!” published in the Serbian newspaper *Kurir* about a month prior to the concert (Katić 2012). The article not only expresses a negative attitude against the concert, but also propagates an actual invitation to boycott the singer's concert. Directly referring to the war in which Kesovija was labelled as “anti-Serb”, the singers (Zorica Marković, Maja Nikolić, Nada Topčagić and Bora Đorđević [Čorba]) appealed to the “moral feeling” of those who were considering attending the concert.

¹⁸ Such as: “Music for All Tastes”, “Evergreen Love Songs”, “Music that Cannot be Forgotten”, “Songs for Old Friends”. The comments included an invitation to forgive and forget: “Who cares what someone said a long time ago. Love and sing and forget everything that is bad in the Balkans”; “So what if Tereza said some bad things in affect, she was only nervous because her house was destroyed”; “She came! That is the only thing we need to know!”; “The Balkan People, they have always been like that... We hate each other and then we love each other, that's normal for us”. A different group of posts contain comments that do not refer to the past connected to the war, but rather the distant ‘happy’ past, including the music that was listened to at that time. All mentioned comments are found after the text of the review of Kesovija's concert in the newspaper *Politika* (“Tereza Kesovija u punom Centru ‘Sava’” 2011).

the “biggest Stars of Yugoslavia” were singing in honour of Đorđe Novković. Furthermore, the articles in Serbian newspapers regularly commented on the repertoire, referring to the songs that are “timeless” and that “marked the Yugoslav era”. The concert was also marked as “a treat for the Yugo-nostalgic people”.¹⁹ It is important to stress that there was a change in the discursive reactions of the audience. The first concerts of the former Yugoslav musicians were obviously extremely emotional events. The recent ones show a moderate, but still clearly expressed nostalgic love narrative. Thus, the comments on this concert mostly included expressions of gratitude, first of all for the good performance and good music, often including labels such as “legends” of Yugoslav music, which referred both to the performers on the actual stage and those in whose honour the concert was organized. However, there were emotional reactions, rather similar to those discussed earlier, as some people wrote about crying together with their partners and feeling emotional because of “going back in time” and “remembering their youth” thanks to the music.²⁰

Conclusion: Concerts as Mediators of Memories and Audience as Affect Transmitters

To return to the question I posed earlier – if we are moved by the “proximity of others” and “we feel with and for others” (Ahmed 2008: 10), i.e. if emotions are sociable, what is the role of music in the process of being sociable in a concert space? As my research shows, this music played a crucial role in the multifarious processes related to the remembrance of the past. It seems that the conception of love and forgiveness influenced the audience and the reception of the concert, forming an imaginary framework for dealing with the traumatic past through “affective sociality”, which helped form the social relations (Raffles 2002: 325) that took place in the virtual post-concert space. The atmosphere in both presented concerts in Belgrade offered examples of the “collective transformation” (Hardt and Negri 2004: 43) of a specific kind of collective body – the unique body of the audience that was made solely as a result of these concerts.

In this article I wanted to point to one of the aspects of contemporary popular music analysis – the audience. Trying to connect and apply the discourses of musicology, sociology of music and body studies, I located the ways this issue can be addressed. In both perspectives of dealing with the audience – the audience as a concrete material body

¹⁹ The article is available on the link: <http://www.svet.rs/najnovije-vesti/emotivni-muzicki-vremeplov-odrzan-koncert-dordu-novkovicu-u-cast> (accessed 20th November, 2014).

²⁰ All the comments are available after the article on the link given above.

and the audience as a virtual community – I wanted to emphasize how the entity of the audience as an affective community is formed as a result of the choice of attending a concert or enjoying a certain kind of music. Finally, having in mind the potential of music to be engaged in memory production, I located the mechanisms that can explicate the extent to which the mentioned concerts have become specific affective sites of memories, pointing to the role of contemporary musical practices in the construction of the discourses on historical past and the ways the discourses help to create divergent (historical, musical, emotional) remembrance of the past. By analysing the discourses and their emotional concomitants related to two case studies – Tereza Kesovija's concert and the concert dedicated to Đorđe Novković – I discussed the process of remembering the past and the mechanisms that enable music events to function as platforms for constructing divergent historical narratives, as well as channels for provoking dissimilar affective reactions, some of them being directly expressed verbally and others being evident in expressions during the event.

On a more general level, I wanted to address the question of the potentials music can have, detecting its ability to influence people's behaviour in the sphere of discourses (both "public" and "intimate"), media, affects and bodies. Finally, I want to point to the further potential of the issue, arguing that Yugoslav popular music appears to be one of the tightest bonds between the people who used to live in Yugoslavia and who have since been living in changeable post-Yugoslav societies. Additionally, it is important to underline the fact that dealing with questions related to audience research is a relevant issue in contemporary musicological investigations.

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Ана Пејров

ПОПУЛАРНА МУЗИКА И ПРОИЗВОЂЕЊЕ
КОЛЕКТИВИТЕТА: ИЗАЗОВИ ИСТРАЖИВАЊА ПУБЛИКЕ
У САВРЕМЕНОЈ МУЗИКОЛОГИЈИ

(Резиме)

У овом раду бавим се карактеристикама, улогом и значајем публике у савременим музиколошким истраживањима популарне музике, а посебно начинима на које публика функционише као средство произвођења колективитета. Надовезујући се на студије новог материјализма, студије тела, као и на теорију афекта, публику одређујем као материјално тело које постаје носилац афективног потенцијала у датом простору и времену. Узевши као пример југословенску популарну музику, односно концерте извођача с територије некадашње Југославије, анализира сам два кључна проблема: публику на концертима популарне музике у Београду у периоду после распада Југославије и публику која се формира виртуелно у целом постјугословенском простору. У првом случају, анализира сам начине на које се стварају колективитети у конкретном простору у одређеном тренутку путем слушања исте музике, а у другом је било речи о начинима умрежавања слушалаца путем нових медија, те о стварању виртуелних заједница обожаваца и противника одређене музике. У оба случаја, показала сам како се формира ентитет публике као афективне заједнице помоћу избора о одласку на одређени концерт, као и уживања у одређеној врсти музике. Позвавши се на концепт „афективне атмосфере” Терезе Бренан (Teresa Brennan), желела сам, такође, да укажем на начине умрежавања дискурса о датој музици и афективних атмосфера произвођених путем исте. Коначно, имајући у виду потенцијал музике да учествује у производњи сећања, указала сам на начине на које су поменути концерти постали својеврсна афективна места сећања. Дискутовала сам о томе како садашње музичке праксе учествују у продукцији дискурса о историјској прошлости и како ови дискурси омогућавају стварање различитих (историјских, музичких, емотивних) сећања прошлости.

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