Department of Musicology, Faculty of Music, University of Arts in Belgrade MUSICOLOGICAL STUDIES: MONOGRPAHS

CONTEXTUALITY OF MUSICOLOGY - WHAT, HOW, WHY AND BECAUSE

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CONTEXTUALITY OF MUSICOLOGY

What, How, Why and Because

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Tijana Popović Mladjenović Ana Stefanović Radoš Mitrović

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AN APPLE ON THE MOON: KARLHEINZ STOCKHAUSEN'S TELEMUSIK*

ABSTRACT: This paper focuses on Stockhausen's first journey to Japan, the first of two important journeys that marked the beginning of Stockhausen's integration of the most prominent features of Japanese culture into his production and also the beginning of his developing interest in the folklore of other countries, with an aim of developing his own concept of the *music of all countries and races*. These aspirations will be examined via the piece *Telemusik*. The author suggests that Stockhausen reached his hand out to the music of other cultures with the intention of presenting his opinion of the events that took place in the 1960s, and most importantly, the Vietnam War, via this piece.

KEY WORDS: Karlheinz Stockhausen; *Telemusik*; intermodulation; 1960's; Vietnam War; Japan; Japanese culture.

His first visit to Japan in 1966 helped Stockhausen (Karlheinz Stockhausen) broaden his views that would be of great importance for the creation and development of new concepts in his philosophical thought. First, after two¹ very important visits to Japan, we see the beginning of Stockhausen's efforts to integrate elements of Japanese culture into his poetics, both in the musical and nonmusical sense, and afterwards, his efforts to examine the idea of the integration of various musical cultures with the goal of developing the concept of the *music for all*² come to fruition. This paper is an attempt to grasp the insight into

^{*} This article was realized as a part of the project 177004 – *Identities of Serbian music between local and global frameworks: traditions, changes, challenges*, financed by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia. It is an exam paper on the subject of the *Electroacoustic music* defended during my first year of Doctoral studies on the Faculty of Music (University of Arts), under the mentorship of Prof. Vesna Mikić.

¹ Моника Новаковић, "Формула као средство прокреације: Мантра Карлхајнца Штокхаузена", in: *Музички иденшишеши и евройска йерсйекшива 2: Иншердисцийлинарни йрисшуй*, ed. by Марија Масникоса (Београд: Катедра за музикологију, Факултет музичке уметности, 2017), http://fmu.bg.ac.rs/dokumentacija/elektronske_publikacije/Muzicki%20identiteti%20i%20evroska%20perspektiva%202%20Interdisciplinarni%20pristup%2018.12.pdf, 175–193.

² Stockhausen had a dream about writing pieces for the whole world – his music was not the music of one person, one nation or one culture, but the music of the whole

Stockhausen's Japanese experiences more fully, together with his second visit that I have discussed elsewhere.³ The title of this paper was extracted from the discussion⁴ that Stockhausen and Jonathan Cott had about recognizable and non-recognizable things and the world around us – this topic will be of consequence for the piece under discussion here.

Stockhausen was invited to Japan by his composition student, Makoto Shinohara (1931), to visit the Japanese radio station NHK (Nippon Hoso Kyokai) – the place where Shinohara himself was employed – and Tokyo in 1965, so as to complete a commission in their electronic studio together with four technicians, with the goal of marking the 50th anniversary of NHK.⁵ Unfortunately, due to other tasks he had to complete, Stockhausen did not fly to Tokyo at first, but due to the pressure the organizers placed on him, he travelled to Japan on 19th January 1966.⁶ This electronic composition⁷ (or rather, the *electronic-concrete* composition)⁸ was completed in a period of five weeks – from 23rd January to 2nd of March 1966.⁹

Telemusik represents a miniature Japan – not only in the musical, but also in the cultural sense. Not only did he incorporate the sounds of Japanese instruments, gagaku music, and the music of religious ceremonies in Japanese temples, Stockhausen also invested his own experiences into the very core of the composition – the ones that are connected to learning about Noh theatre, the omitzutori ceremony in a Japanese temple, sumo wrestling and tea ceremonies. The thread that connects the above-mentioned cultural and social features of Japan are their unique concept of time. The proof that Stockhausen was very impressed

world, of all countries and all races. Cf. Tim Nevill, *Towards a cosmic music – texts by Karlheinz Stockhausen*, (Shaftesbury, Dorset: Longmead, Element Books, 1989); Jerome Kohl (ed.), *Hymnen/Anthems* (1966/67), http://home.earthlink.net/~almoritz/hymnen-intro.htm; *Lecture 6 – TELEMUSIK* (1972) *Karlheinz Stockhausen*, 45:44, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=odbvoUqq3EA,; Björn Heile, *Weltmusik and the Globalization of New Music*, (Glasgow: University of Glasgow, Ashgate, 2009), first published in: Björn Heile, *The Modernist Legacy: Essays on New Music*. (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009) 101–121.

³ Моника Новаковић, "Формула као средство прокреације..., ор. cit.

⁴ Jonathan Cott, Stockhausen: Conversations With The Composer, (London: Pan Books, 1974), 34.

⁵ Cf. "Telemusik", https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Telemusik, acc. 27.3.2018.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ This piece is written after the piece *Solo* (1965–66), and is followed by the pieces *Adieu* (1966), *Hymnen* (1966–67; second version 1969), *Prozession* (1967) and *Stimmung* (1968). See: Karlheinz Stockhausen, *Stockhausen on Music* (*Lectures and Interviews Compiled by Robin Maconie*), (London, New York: Marion Boyars Publishers, 1989), 187.

⁸ Ibid., 11.

⁹ Jonathan Harvey, *The Music of Stockhausen – An Introduction by Jonathan Harvey* (London: Faber & Faber, 1975), 99.

by this concept are the composer's own words, stating that to every Japanese person that asked him what the most characteristic aspect of Japan was in comparison to Europe, ¹⁰ he answered with the words: The *Japanese sense of time in everything*. ¹¹

Noh theatre was important because of the polyphony of the actor's movements; omitsutori (the water sanctification ceremony)¹² was his role model for the treatment of form in the sense of the alternation of fast and slow segments in a musical piece, while, on the other hand, sumo wrestling and tea ceremonies provided Stockhausen with new insight into different approaches to the passing of time. Stockhausen came to Japan with the following idea:

I wanted to make a new piece exclusively for tape performance and to try to use not only electronically produced sounds, but also, if possible, include already existing music. For years, I had thought about integrating music from different countries and of the most diverse musical styles into my work. Besides, I wanted to try to make a piece that would include as much as possible of what I would experience in Japan – a country I had never visited before.¹³

Hence, the idea to compose a piece in which he would present a certain musical microcosmos already existed. Bearing in mind the events that took place at the time of writing this composition (especially the ongoing Vietnam War), it comes as no surprise that the piece contains a musical kaleidoscope (dedicated to the Japanese people), and Stockhausen's endeavor to write the music of the whole world – the topic that Björn Heile discussed in his paper. Pursuing this further, Heile argued that Stockhausen, when discussing *Telemusik*, pointed out that "in the piece he wanted to 'get closer to realising an old and recurrent dream', namely 'not to write 'my' music, but the music of the whole [planet – M.N.] earth, of all countries and races." ¹⁴

Writing the music of the whole world was the level Stockhausen reached afterwards, in the process of writing *Telemusik*. The piece was dedicated to the Japanese people and their efforts to build a new Japan;¹⁵ however, Stockhausen came to the realization of one more fact – having read the newspaper *The Japan*

¹⁰ Karlheinz Stockhausen, *Telemusik: Vortrag, Radio lecture 1966*, transl. by Jayne Obst in Stockhausen Text-CD 16, (Kürten: Stockhausen-Verlag, 2008), 5. http://www.stockhausen.org/Text-CD%2016_translation.pdf, acc. 27.3.2018.

¹¹ Idem.

¹² Milica D. Jotov, *Sociolingvistički aspekti jezika u periodici Japana u doba produžene stagnacije (2000–2010*), doktorska disertacija, (Beograd: Filološki fakultet, Univerzitet u Beogradu, 2012), 118. https://fedorabg.bg.ac.rs/fedora/get/o:6977/bdef:Content/get, acc. 28.3.2018.

¹³ Karlheinz Stockhausen, *Telemusik: Vortrag, Radio lecture. 1966...*, op. cit., 1.

¹⁴ Björn Heile, Weltmusik and the Globalization of New Music..., op. cit., 158.

¹⁵ Jonathan Harvey, *The Music of Stockhausen - An Introduction by Jonathan Harvey...*, op. cit., 100.

Times, 16 he learned about the events in Vietnam, and the way in which the Vietnamese people was presented in the news about the war. 17

It is very interesting that the other cultures, besides that of Vietnam, to whose music Stockhausen paid attention while working on this composition, are seen as Other in comparison to what is Japanese in this piece, but not less important when considering the way Stockhausen treated the material using the technique of *intermodulation*. This inclusion of other musical cultures was the most important step in Stockhausen's work, which he explained by saying that "the occupation with the music of other cultures is no hobby but an essential prerequisite for being able to understand other people better and thereby to awaken and cultivate the whole person." ¹⁸

In that sense, we can consider the music of Vietnam, Bali and China,¹⁹ Hungary, the Shipibo tribe from the Amazon,²⁰ Spain²¹ and others that are, according to Stockhausen, "modulated, transformed, harmonized and absorbed into the new-found world of electronic music; totally integrated so that there should be no loss of identity or reduction to the mean."²²

Intermodulation is a process defined by Stockhausen as the modulation of a certain characteristic of one *found* object, with a certain characteristic of another found object.²³ Basically, it is the process of combining the parameters of different musical materials. For example, the melody of a children's lullaby can be modulated with the rhythm of Spanish guitar music from Seville and so on.²⁴

However, Stockhausen is not talking of layering different parameters of different musical materials, but of a transformative process involving ring-modulator. When the said material is inserted into ring-modulator, the end result is, essentially, a new sound that can be modulated with other material and their

¹⁶ Lecture 6 – TELEMUSIK (1972) Karlheinz Stockhausen, 45:44, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=odbvoUqq3EA, acc. 27.3.2018.

 $^{^{17}\,}$ Vietnam became very visible globally due to the media coverage of the events that happened there.

¹⁸ Karlheinz Stockhausen, "World Music", The World of Music, 21/1 (1979), 12.

¹⁹ Claire Elizabeth Richardson, *Stockhausen's Influence on Popular Music: An Overview and A Case Study on Björk's Medúlla*, MA thesis, (San Marcos: Texas State University, 2015), 14. https://digital.library.txstate.edu/bitstream/handle/10877/5536/RICH-ARDSON-THESIS-2015.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y, acc.19.3.2018.

²⁰ Karlheinz Stockhausen, Jerome Kohl, "Electroacoustic Performance Practice", *Perspectives of New Music*, 34/1 (Winter, 1996), 94.

²¹ Barry Bergstein, "Miles Davis and Karlheinz Stockhausen: A Reciprocal Relationship", *The Musical Quarterly*, 76/4 (Winter, 1992), 507.

²² John Kelsall, *Compositional techniques in the music of Stockhausen (1951–1970)*, PhD thesis, (Glasgow: University of Glasgow, 1975), 186. http://theses.gla.ac. uk/1306/1/1975kelsallphd.pdf, acc. 21.3.2018.

²³ Lecture 6 – TELEMUSIK (1972) Karlheinz Stockhausen, 55:55.

²⁴ Ibid., 50:00.

result, or, on the other hand, the new sound could subsequently be modulated with its own original sound. Consequently, Stockhausen is creating interrelations between the music of different cultures and electronic sounds,²⁵ which do not exclude the mutual²⁶ modulation of categories. Intermodulation was key to the composer's creation of a virtual world. In an interview with Tim Nevill, Stockhausen underlined the fact that what he was trying to do:

(...) so far as I'm aware of it, is to produce models that herald the stage after destruction. I'm trying to go beyond collage, heterogeneity and pluralism, and to find unity: to produce music that brings us to the essential One. And that is going to be badly needed during the time of shocks and disasters that is going to come. Models of coming together, of mutual love, of love as a cohesive force, I'm sure that if I'm in my best state, my music will have a unifying effect.²⁷

In the virtual world of *Telemusik*, music is the cohesive factor that brings different cultures together under one roof, or the surveillance of the One. Is Stockhausen the essential One? Clearly, he is, bearing in mind that he is the creator and the manager of the virtual world whose order he created. The title of the composition symbolically implies the goal of the intermodulation in constructing this electronic piece. The world *tele* in Greek means *distance* – Stockhausen argues that it means "to bring something close into one space, one time, which has been previously very far away and spread over several places and spread over the time of history." ²⁸

Stockhausen's words are of particular importance: "Every human being has the whole of humanity within him- or herself" and that "the most important obligation of our time is: to conserve as many musical forms and performing styles as at all possible." We can conclude from these statements that the idea of a miniature model of our planet or even a completely new virtual planet³¹, and the togetherness of all cultures and nations, was nurtured by Stockhausen

²⁵ Robert Gluck, *Between, Within and Across Cultures*, (New York: Department of Music, University at Albany, 2008), 146.

²⁶ One musical culture and the other musical culture, one electronic sound and the other electronic sound; a found object with the new electronic sound and so on.

²⁷ Tim Nevill, *Towards a Cosmic Music – Texts by Karlheinz Stockhausen*, (Shaftesbury, Dorset: Longmead, Element books Ltd., 1989), 12.

²⁸ Lecture 6 - TELEMUSIK (1972) Karlheinz Stockhausen, 01:34.

²⁹ Tim Nevill, *Towards a cosmic music...*, op. cit., 27.

³⁰ Karlheinz Stockhausen, "World Music", The World of Music, 21/1 (1979), 4.

³¹ Even though the most of the authors speak about globalization or even some kind of neocolonialism and cultural appropriation in this, and in Stockhausen's other pieces, we may truly speak of virtual culture or a virtual planet that represents a conglomerate of all these cultural groups. Paul Virilio (1932) states that "there is no such thing as globalization, there is only virtualization". See: Steve Redhead, *Paul Virilio: Theorist for an Accelerated Culture*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 149.

for a very long time. That idea will be manifested in the later composition $Hymnen^{32}$ (which exists in three versions) ³³, that is following the line of *Telemusik*, and which includes various anthems of various countries around the world. Hymnen was supposed to be the first composition that was to realise Stockhausen's endeavors in writing compositions, or to put it another way, to write the music of all countries and races. However, Telemusik became the first completed composition in that field, the expression of his struggle to connect the music of different ethnicities, and also make connections between them with the aid of intermodulation. ³⁴ Elsewhere, ³⁵ I have pointed out that Stockhausen spoke of world culture, saying that the first stage of the "rapid process of dissolution of individual cultures into a more unified world culture" is "sameness and leveling down." ³⁶

What is the goal of the intermodulation process and why intermodulation? This technique was very necessary to Stockhausen for the creation of the new world and the transformation of sound. Intermodulation produces a special sound quality, due to the inventive play with the frequencies of the sound material. Speaking of inventive play, I must mention now Stockhausen's explanation not related to the context of this composition, but certainly applicable to this case study – the *Apple on the Moon* phenomenon. In a discussion between Stockhausen and Jonathan Cott, Stockhausen stated that he intended to be an abstract composer and to sever connection with everything that falls into the category of the known world, "the recognizable has become very mysterious, very magical. If you found an apple on the moon, that would make it even more mysterious." 37

An everyday object would not be interesting to us in our usual context of life, but that same object, placed in another context that is completely unknown to us, gains a certain value. That is exactly what Stockhausen achieves via intermodulating the musical material in *Telemusik*, by the constant transformation of (to the listener) known material until it is completely unrecognizable. The apple is, therefore, in both a musical and virtual sense, a recognizable object, and the Moon is the new context in which that apple is being placed.

³² Karlheinz Stockhausen, *Hymnen - Notes on the Program*, 1971, http://www.stockhausen.org/hymnen_notes.html, acc. 29.3.2018.

 $^{^{33}}$ Karlheinz Stockhausen, $\it Hymnen-Introduction, http://www.stockhausen.org/hymnen_intro.html, ac. 29.3.2018.$

³⁴ Jerome Kohl (ed.), *Stockhausen Hymnen/Anthems* (1966/67), http://home.earth-link.net/~almoritz/hymnenintro.htm, acc. 29.3.2018.

³⁵ Monika Novaković, "Process in the Aesthetical and Theoretical Thought of Karlheinz Stockhausen", *INSAM Journal of Contemporary Music, Art and Technology*, 1, (2018), (Sarajevo: INSAM Institute of Contemporary Artistic Music), 32.

³⁶ Tim Nevill, *Towards a cosmic music...*, op. cit., 28.

³⁷ Jonathan Cott, Stockhausen: conversations with the composer..., op. cit., 34.

The result of the intermodulation process makes this composition music for all in the sense of the media³⁸ in which it was created; however, it is far from being music for all in the sense of the musical language that Stockhausen shapes using intermodulation. If we bear in mind that Stockhausen is a very evolutionary composer and that he conquered the electronic medium in the 1960s, which we can see in *Telemusik* as well as in the other compositions, then surely that concept was more of a suggestion of the general direction in which music should go, not just his, but that of other composers too. There also exists the possibility that Stockhausen, in the light of the events he read about, felt the need for some form of activism, and hence, reached out to these creative solutions.

It is necessary to remember the very important fact that, two years after *Telemusik*, Stockhausen moved towards *intuitive music* with the composition *Aus den Sieben Tagen* (1968) where he gave control over the performers. However, not pleased with the results and the performances of his pieces in the domain of intuitive music, he returned to total control by writing the composition *Mantra* (1970) – the only intuitive activity in this composition is the intuitive activity of the composer, and not the performer.³⁹

An echo of Marshall McLuhan's ideas can be heard. We see the parallel in Stockhausen's own words on bringing different cultures into one mutual space, recalling McLuhan's statement that the whole world is one global village. Björn Heile argues that Stockhausen's adoption of McLuhan's ideas happened in the period from 1966 to 1969, when the composer highlighted the importance of media communication in bringing the different cultures of the world together in his interviews. Furthermore, Björn Heile claims that McLuhan's key work, where he mentioned that concept for the first time, *The Gutenberg Galaxy* (1962), was translated into German in 1968, and therefore it is most likely that Stockhausen had a chance to have direct contact with McLuhan's views, whether via translations or via scientific papers. Heile also gives his opinion of the globalization discourse, as well as that of Westernization and neocolonialist exploitation which, in his opinion, are misunderstood by Stockhausen and McLuhan respectively – they fail to understand these discourses because the processes of the integration of different cultures that they describe are not abso-

³⁸ Robin Maconie underlines the fact that Stockhausen was brought up in the culture of radio, a medium that had a crucial effect on his childhood, his life, and of course, his creations. Maconie believes Stockhausen's music demands a listener that is familiar with the radio, demands people who were brought up on radio and therefore, who understand it. See: Robin Maconie, "Music in the Atomic Age", *The Musical Times*, 148/1899 (Summer, 2007), 72–80.

³⁹ Моника Новаковић, "Формула као средство прокреације: Мантра Карлхајнца Штокхаузена..., ор. cit., 178.

⁴⁰ Björn Heile (ed.), *The Modernist Legacy: Essays on New Music*, (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 2009), 105.

⁴¹ Ibid., 105-106.

lutely well-intended, but rather directed by specific political and economic interests. ⁴² It has already been pointed out that it is very likely that Stockhausen felt the need for some form of activism, and indeed, it is not completely clear whether certain other intentions existed besides creating a virtual utopian world such as is found in *Telemusik*.

Cultural (neo)colonialism or not, it is a fact that many cultures found their place in *Telemusik* and that such a configuration of the said virtual world became possible due to technology that removes any distance between them.⁴³ In the Kittlerian (Friedrich Kittler, 1943–2011) sense, the cultures are being adjusted to the machine, or the media by which this virtual world is mediated⁴⁴.⁴⁵ Besides, the real question is related to the way in which cultures are juxtaposed inside such a virtual world⁴⁶ – intermodulation is just one side of the relationships-between-cultures coin. The other side of the coin is the very manipulation of different sound samples via media that changes it until they are unrecognizable, therefore presenting a challenge for the listener. The challenge lies in the comprehension and recognition of world cultures that are brought into the framework of the composition, and besides that, the auditory availability of the piece that demands special perception that a generation of listeners brought up in a highly visual culture do not possess in the same quantity as the generation that was raised with a radio culture.

In the end, *Telemusik* is a piece that embodies the concept of intermodulation that would be very important for Stockhausen's later works. The ideas he came up with in this piece would be further developed in *Hymnen*. *Telemusik*, being the musical miniature of Japan, grew to be a miniature model of the Earth, due to technique of intermodulation, as well as Stockhausen's reaction to the socio-political events of the 1960s. This virtual world has its own sense of time, its own inhabitants, its creator, and its special sonority that poses a challenge for the listeners.

⁴² Ibid., 108.

⁴³ Stuart Jeffries, "Friedrich Kittler and the Rise of the Machine", *The Guardian*, 28.12.2011, https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2011/dec/28/friedrich-kittlerrise-of-the-machine, acc. 20.5.2018.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Friedrich Kittler states that the piece *Hymnen* has war written in its international cry for peace. See: Larson Powell, "The Technological Subject, Music, Media and Memory in Stockhausen's Hymnen" in: Nora M. Alter, Lutz Koepnick (eds.), *Sound Matters: Essays on the Acoustics of German Culture*, (New York: Berghahn Books, Oxford, 2005), 228–241.

⁴⁶ Trevor Wishart suggests the term *surrealistic landscape* for such gathering of the cultures under one virtual roof. See: Trevor Wishart, "The Relation of Language to Materials", in: Simon Emmerson (ed.), *The Language of Electroacoustic Music*, (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire, London: Palgrave Macmillan, The Macmillan Press Ltd, 1986), 41–60.

Playing with timbre, connecting cultures via sound that reminds us of a radio transmission to a distant planet, a new concept of time – all of these are thoughts that Stockhausen became aware of and further on worked as a part of his first journey to Japan. The vision of a planet on which people live in peace and listen to music that will lead them to the universal One, was further developed in the composition *Mantra* that Stockhausen wrote on his second journey to Japan in 1970, now in the form of one galaxy with special relationships between planets and the final implosion of the cosmos, whose genetic code is the *formula*, or rather, *mantra*.

SUMMARY

The article deals with Stockhausen's first journey to Japan that affected his later production and worldview. The composer was fascinated by Japanese culture, which inspired him to integrate it into his composition that is the case study of this paper – the piece *Telemusik*. Stockhausen's idea to present a musical microcosmos was already brewing in his mind when he decided to travel to Japan. The composer received an invitation from his student, Makoto Shinohara (1931) to visit NHK (Nippon Hoso Kyokai) radio in Tokyo, Japan, where Shinohara was employed. Japanese culture was not the only culture that intrigued Stockhausen. He felt the need to comment on the events of the Vietnam War and the presentation of the Vietnamese people in the media. Besides elements of Japanese and Vietnamese culture, there are also the cultural elements of Bali, China, Hungary, the Shipibo tribe from the Amazon, Spain and many others that are *modulated*, *transformed*, *harmonized and absorbed* into one piece via the method of intermodulation, something that was key to the composer's creation of a virtual world.

The process of intermodulation was relevant to later works by Stockhausen, but in this particular case, it is used to combine different musical materials – the composer himself defines it as a modulation of the certain characteristic of one found object, with the certain characteristic of another found object via ring-modulation. This is, in essence, a transformative process upon which the virtual world of *Telemusik* is based. Additionally, the goal of applying this technique was to create a new sound world.

The topic of this piece's auditory availability was also touched upon. The piece presents a challenge to the listener, especially to those listeners who were not raised in a radio culture – the challenge lies in the comprehension and recognition of the various world cultures that were brought here under one roof. Nevertheless, playing with timbre and the new concept of time, Stockhausen managed to create a whole new virtual world, that is under his surveillance – under the surveillance of the One.

CONTEXTUALITY OF MUSICOLOGY What, How, Why and Because

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