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CONTEXTUALITY OF MUSICOLOGY – WHAT, HOW, WHY AND BECAUSE

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Tijana Popović Mladjenović

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UNIVERSITY OF ARTS IN BELGRADE
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MUSICOLOGY IN THE CONTEXT OF MEDIA – MEDIA IN THE CONTEXT OF MUSICOLOGY*

ABSTRACT: The main subject of this paper is the relationship between musicology and the vast corpus of theoretical knowledge that could be recognized under the umbrella term of media studies or media theory. Although some aspects of media studies have been used in musicological studies, and music in media has been a subject tackled by theoreticians of other disciplines, it seems that the nuances of the incorporation of media studies' concepts into musicological discourse have not been the subject of much discussion, at least as compared to other disciplines. Thus, the specifics of music(ology) in the context of media culture, as well as media technology as a subject of interdisciplinary musicology will be discussed in an attempt to think about the increasing visibility of mediatised music in musicology.

KEY WORDS: musicology; context; media studies; media culture; media technology; mediated music; mediation.

Although we can agree that only with the expansion of electronic media the importance of mediation has entered our 'sight', we surely can accept the fact that not only our contemporary/digital culture is based on different mediation processes that, besides technological, also involve social, economic, political and many other issues as well. Paradoxically, it looks as if the same, predominantly media culture that showed us, taught us of mediation, and has produced a theoretical framework for understanding media and mediation processes they perform, tries to make media 'invisible' and to 'abolish' them.

Vesna Mikić, "Old/New Music Media:
 Some Thoughts on Remediation of Music"¹

The above cited quotation from the musicologist Vesna Mikić's paper on remediation serves as a starting point for the discussion in this paper. The main concern of the present study is rooted in the question of the contextuality of

* The research for this article was financed by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia (RS-200176).

¹ Vesna Mikić, "Old/New Music Media: Some Thoughts on Remediation of Music", in: *Music Identities on Paper and Screen*, ed. by Mirjana Veselinović-Hofman, Vesna Mikić, Tijana Popović Mladjenović, Ivana Perković (Belgrade: Faculty of Music, 2014), 28.

music(ology) in terms of its relationship with media, media culture, media technology and media studies. While the above quotation was the basis for Mikić's further work introducing idea of (re)mediation into musicology, mainly concerned with contemporary/digital culture, for me it was an impulse to think about the time before the digital revolution, and more precisely, about the relative 'invisibility' of 'old' media in musicological discourse. I understand this 'invisibility' as a state in which we come into contact with music (by producing, listening, enjoying, learning, etc.) without really thinking about the ways in which we do so: via the various mediators and conditions for their use we find ourselves in as in specific context. This does not mean that media have not been the subject, in different forms, of various musicological studies – on the contrary. However, there are many approaches and many meanings of 'medium' and 'media' in musicology, as well as inconsistent relationships with different media theories. The understanding of the concept and clarification of what exactly about media is going to be examined depends on the specific object of interest of individual items of research. So, if a musicologist is interested in media, it seems important as a first task to distinguish what exactly about music and media is of particular interest or, more specifically, what the particular research subject is. In general, "to think about music and its media, is to think over/rethink the questions about how we listen to, how we learn (about) and conceive music."² On the other hand, the field of media studies in broader terms is one that does not have definite methods and tools. It could also be argued that this elusiveness of media studies for musicology is the reason why there are no consistent interdisciplinary studies of music and media as compared to the interdisciplinary results of studies incorporating music and, for example, gender studies, psychology or semiotics (to mention only a few examples). Could it be that the above stated 'invisibility' of media is the reason for this? And what exactly do we want to discuss when we talk about medium/media in musicology?³

Bearing in mind the stated points of departure, the problems to be addressed in this paper relate to: 1) the context of musicology in understanding music-media relations, and 2) the context of media theory as it relates to interdisciplinary musicological research (while in the age of media through which we experience and conceive music). The interdisciplinary relationship between the vast corpus of media theory and musicology is approached and understood within the model of interdisciplinary musicological competence suggested by Mirjana Veselinović-Hofman.⁴

² Ibid., 28.

³ Cf. Marija Maglov, "O čemu govorimo kada govorimo o mediju/medijima u muzikologiji?", in: *Zvuk i reč: 70 godina Muzikološkog instituta SANU. Program proslave*, ed. by Ivana Medić, Katarina Tomašević, Miloš Marinković (Beograd: Muzikološki institut SANU, 2018), 15.

⁴ Mirjana Veselinović-Hofman, "Contextuality of Musicology", in: *Post-strukturalistička nauka o muzici*, specijalno izdanje časopisa *Novi zvuk*, ed. by Mirjana

Structurally, paper is divided into several parts. First, I will address the general notion of media in relation to musicology. Second, I will try, briefly and in a manner as condensed as possible (always remembering the challenges of such an endeavour and its inevitable limitations) to remind us of certain specifics of both areas of knowledge. This will serve as the basis for seeing what the challenges are when working between these fields. Finally, I will return to the question of the ‘visibility’ of media in music and the notion of the contextuality of musicology in relation to media.

* * *

Speaking of media in the context of musicology might refer to a range of different problems. First, the term medium could encompass very different meanings, with the most general being that of “an agency or means of doing something; a means by which something is communicated or expressed”.⁵ In its plural – media – it refers to the (electronic) media of mass communication. This distinction is evident in musicological discourse. To put it simply: when speaking about a medium there usually follows a discussion on a means of expression (that is, an artistic medium, which might be music or painting, but also specific instruments, be they acoustic or electronic) and when speaking of media, there is generally analysis of music as the content of various media or music/sound in the age of media. Thus, musicological takes on media in general vary, because the equation is: something is seen as a means of communication in a process/context, and that ‘something’ can be music itself, mass media, the body, a music genre, an instrument, and so on.⁶ As Mikić notes, there are several possible conceptualizations of the music-media relationship: 1) music’s media, 2) media of/for music and 3) music as media.⁷ The academic curricula of courses and modules dedicated to music and media are generally concerned with musical content in mass media.⁸ On the other hand, it is striking that media (in both meanings) are rarely the concept present when we consider music encyclopaedias, key concepts or musicological studies interested in the history of musical-

Veselinović-Hofman (Beograd: SOKOJ, MIC, Fakultet muzičke umetnosti, 1998), 13-20.

⁵ <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/medium>, acc. 4.09.2018.

⁶ For this variety of topics, see for example: Vesna Mikić, Tatjana Marković (eds), *Music and Media. The 6th International Symposium Folklore * Music * Work of Art. Belgrade, 14-17. November, 2002.* (Belgrade: Faculty of Music, 2004).

⁷ Vesna Mikić, “Old/New Music Media...”, op. cit. 28.

⁸ Compare descriptions of courses and/or programs dedicated to the subject of music and media at the Faculty of Music, Belgrade, Academy of Arts in Novi Sad and Faculty of Arts in Kragujevac.

ogy. For example, Julie Thompson Klein and Richard Parncutt provide a long list of “relevant disciplines” that have expanded musicology, and media studies (or a similar field) is not among them.⁹ This is certainly due to the interdisciplinary nature of media studies itself. Thompson Klein and Parncutt notice that links between musicology and these types of interdisciplinary studies are “neither fully identified nor robust”.¹⁰

In order to better understand why these links between disciplines are so vague and open to many possible interpretations, I will try to look back at some of the defining features and main concerns of both fields of interest. Specifically, in order to avoid too broad an approach while choosing topics related to media and music, I chose to go back to concepts that are understood as crucial to the discipline of musicology and to see how and in what capacity they could be understood in relation to media theories and studies. On the other hand, I will try to present those fields where concepts related to the complexities of media (its culture, technology, process of mediation and so on) are articulated. The crucial questions for me here are: what happens when there is an interdisciplinary connection between musicology and media studies, and how does the emphasized notion of media relate to the traditional concepts of musicology?

* * *

A single comprehensive definition of musicology is hard to give. In general, it could be said that musicology is “the thinking about and study of music”¹¹ and that it “includes all research about all music”.¹² Musicology could be seen in its duality as both a general science that puts together different knowledge about music and as a general science on music as art (while ethnomusicology deals with knowledge about music cultures).¹³ The complexity and heterogeneity of musicology, according to Thompson Klein and Parncutt, exist because of: 1) the broad scope of the definition of music itself, dependant on its historic and cultural contexts, 2) the fact that music can be presented in different ways (e.g. as an acoustic signal, as an individual experience, as a score, as being constituted through social practice and so on), and 3) the context of the scientific (acoustics,

⁹ Cf. Julie Thompson Klein, Richard Parncutt, “Art and Music Research”, in: *The Oxford Handbook of Interdisciplinarity*, ed. by Robert Frodean *et al.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 138.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 144.

¹¹ David Beard, Kenneth Gloag, *Musicology: The Key Concepts* (London: Routledge, 2005), x.

¹² Julie Thompson Klein, Richard Parncutt, “Art and Music...”, *op. cit.*, 136.

¹³ Miško Šuvaković, *Diskurzivna analiza: prestupi i/ili pristupi ‘diskurzivne analize’ filozofiji, poetici, estetici, teoriji i studijama umetnosti i kulture* (Beograd: Orion Art, 2010), 250.

psychology and computing) versus the cultural subdisciplines (history and cultural studies).¹⁴ While definitions pretend to acknowledge this complexity of musicology, tacitly at least, it mostly remains historical.¹⁵ In that sense, this essay relies on the commentary on the existing dominant narrative and possible excursions from it. Speaking of the object of research, contemporary musicology has noticeably broadened its scope to include what Richard Middleton would call “the whole musical field”.¹⁶ Nevertheless, there is still a strong notion of musicology defined as a field dealing with the canon of Western artistic music (although that has been significantly redefined over recent decades)¹⁷ and with the concept of the musical work (as the end product of composer’s creative process and as an aesthetic object) at the centre of its investigation.¹⁸

The contextuality of musicology, to use Veselinović-Hofman’s term,¹⁹ arose with the shifts brought by the new musicology wave of the 1980s, mostly concerned with the critique of positivism and formalism, as well as with the need to include the notion of the social and cultural context of musical works in the quest for its meaning. Influenced by the then-novel poststructuralist tendencies, many studies (which were, among themselves, very different in approach) set the path for the contemporary striving “to provide a thicker discursive context for musical works and genres by applying the methods and frameworks of reception history, feminist theory and gender studies, Marxist theory, post-colonial theory, and other forms of textual criticism”.²⁰ The main tensions arose around the question of the close reading of the text (musical work) and engaging with different disciplines “outside” musicology.

Obviously, new musicology was still very much concerned with the musical work and the Western canon, which drew criticism from the position of what David Beard and Kenneth Gloag call critical musicology. This stream is concerned more with the production and consumption of music, the economy of music and, in general, social questions on how music is used, relying on inputs

¹⁴ Julie Thompson Klein, Richard Parncutt, “Art and Music...”, op. cit., 142.

¹⁵ As seen with programmes of academic institutions or structure of capital editions such as *Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, Ibid., 143.

¹⁶ As quoted in: David Beard, Kenneth Gloag, *Musicology: The Key...*, op. cit., xi.

¹⁷ Cf. Miško Šuvaković, *Diskurzivna analiza...*, op. cit., 251; Justin London, “Musicology”, in: *The Routledge Companion to Philosophy and Music*, ed. by Theodore Gracyk, Andrew Kania (London: Routledge, 2011), 496; Mirjana Veselinović Hofman defines it as a Western music in its professional tradition. Cf. Mirjana Veselinović-Hofman, *Pred muzičkim delom: ogledi o međusobnim projekcijama estetike, poetike i stilistike muzike 20. veka: jedna muzikološka vizura* (Beograd: Zavod za udžbenike, 2007), 18.

¹⁸ David Beard, Kenneth Gloag, *Musicology: The Key...*, op. cit., x; Mirjana Veselinović-Hofman, *Pred muzičkim delom...*, op. cit. 14; Miško Šuvaković, *Diskurzivna analiza...*, op. cit., 245.

¹⁹ Mirjana Veselinović-Hofman, “Contextuality of ...”, op. cit.

²⁰ Justin London, “Musicology”, in: *The Routledge Companion...*, op. cit., 497.

from critical theory.²¹ This stream, however, has remained on the margins of musicology or in its niche, perhaps exactly because some traditional concepts such as the musical work, the musical score, the composer as a sole author, and so on, are not at the core of its inquiry, indicating that those categories still cast shadows on what musicology is perceived to be. The emergence of the music score and consequently musical work²² enabled the legitimization of musicology as a science, since music as an event performed in time could not otherwise be seen as a fixed object of research.²³ Thus, musicology was, according to some definitions, “grounded in and on the study of artefacts”.²⁴ In that light, what was once observed as the “satellite” position of music practices that do not find their place within the musical “mainstream” (such as popular or experimental music)²⁵ is understood through their non-conformist relationship to traditional musicological concepts (the very concept of a work, of singular authorship, of performance and so on). It seems that the idea of contextuality is also rooted in the concept of the work, as it is either the cultural/social context of the emergence of the work, or the context of the specific theories which are key to reading the meaning of the work.

However, it seems there is a danger in giving too much attention to the work at the expense of human agency. Richard Taruskin explained that the long standing tradition of eliminating human agency in musicological writings (by engaging the passive voice and not naming actors) is “calculated to protect the autonomy of the work-object and actually prevent historical thinking (...)”.²⁶ Taruskin points to Howard Becker and his idea of the “art world”, which “is the ensemble of agents and social relations that it takes to produce works of art (or maintain artistic activity) in various media. To study art worlds is to study processes of

²¹ David Beard, Kenneth Gloag, *Musicology: The Key ...*, op. cit., 28–9. They mention authors such as Lydia Goehr, Richard Middleton, Georgina Born, Jaques Attali.

²² Concept of musical work itself came to prominence in the specific social context of rising bourgeoisie and its culture of public concerts, with the score printing becoming important for the development of music culture, as was shown by authors such as Lydia Goehr and Tia DeNora, for example. Cf. Lydia Goehr, *Imaginary Museum of Musical Works: An Essay in the Philosophy of Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992); Tia DeNora, *Beethoven and the Construction of Genius: Music Politics in Vienna 1792–1803* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).

²³ Moreover, Eduard Hanslick’s concepts of absolute music, musical form and music as aesthetic object were essential in this sense. Cf. Miško Šuvaković, op. cit., 244.

²⁴ Justin London, “Musicology”, in: *The Routledge Companion...*, op. cit., 496.

²⁵ Peter J. Burkholder, “Museum Pieces: The Historicist Mainstream in Music of the Last Hundred Years”, *The Journal of Musicology*, 2/2 (1983), 129.

²⁶ Cf. Richard Taruskin, “Introduction. The History of What”, in: *Oxford History of Western Music*, Vol. 1 by Richard Taruskin (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), xv. Taruskin analyses two excerpts of musicological writing in order to argue for the need to grasp the whole network of artworld with the goal of understanding historical conditions of composer’s work.

collective action and mediation, the very things that are most often missing in conventional musical historiography.”²⁷ Taruskin calls for historians to study not only the great masters, but also the “changing demographics and technologies that alter conditions within which they do.”²⁸

It seems that this last phrase, especially when read with an emphasis on technology and altering conditions, introduces thinking about media and the changing conditions they bring, and certainly, another level of complexity of discourse: that of mediation and the tools used in the process. When speaking about the cultural context, we include the network of people and events surrounding the musical work. But with media, we include not only those human factors (or agents), but also non-human factors, in the sense that those technologies used to produce a certain content (to create music or to record the existing repertoire) and reproduce it, have their own conditions of usage to which we are attuned by the manner of accepting them. Each specific media culture gives another form of contextuality that could, but will not necessarily, concern the musical work, and also informs the process/conditions of both the production and reception of music.

While it was necessary that musicological discourse take a course that would allow the flourishing of interest in the direction of media and the conditions created by media technology, it was also essential that media theory and theories of mediation articulate specific concepts that allow musicologists to use them as a means for understanding the reality of mediated music.

* * *

In general, the object of the media studies are ‘media’ as a term that could refer to the institutions and organizations of communication media, the cultural products of those institutions and the material forms of media culture.²⁹ As with musicology, a comprehensive definition is hard to give. There is one additional “difficulty” with media studies/theories, and that is their inherent interdisciplinary nature. The variants of the field’s name, such as “media studies” or “media theory” have been labelled as generic, since they are vague and combine “a genuine diversity of possible approaches”.³⁰ Media studies (sometimes paired with communication in their name) lack their own disciplinary identity, since they

²⁷ Ibid., xvi.

²⁸ Richard Taruskin, “Agents and Causes and Ends, Oh My”, *Journal of Musicology, Special Issue 1 in Honor of Richard Taruskin*, 31/2 (2014), 282.

²⁹ Adam Briggles, Clifford G. Christians, “Media and Communications”, in: *The Oxford Handbook of Interdisciplinarity*, op. cit., 221.

³⁰ Geoffrey Withrop-Young, Michael Wutz, “Translator’s Introduction: Friedrich Kittler and Media Discourse Analysis”, in: *Gramophone, Film, Typewriter* by Friedrich A. Kittler, transl. by Geoffrey Withrop-Young and Michael Wutz (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), xiii.

are often combined with the methods of philosophy, linguistics, economics and so on.³¹

Adam Briggie and Clifford G. Christians note that there are two main streams of media studies: one socio-scientific and the other humanist. The latter, closer to musicology in its dominant humanist orientation, has its origins in critical theory and post-structuralism.³² Historically, academic interest in media started after the World War I and the idea that mass communication provided mechanisms of social integration lost after the disintegration of traditional societies.³³ During the 1960s, the transition from content to form as the main interest of media researchers occurred because of the effects of Louis Althusser's so-called "paradigm earthquake" through his idea of ideology and the subject (or the idea of selfhood) that is constructed not by mere content but also by the structure of communication.³⁴ Althusser's influence, as well as the influence of French post-structuralist, Marxist thought, and some aspects of the critical thought of Frankfurt School, all found their place within the Media Studies Group of the Birmingham Centre for Cultural Studies. The work carried out within this group was highly influential in the Anglo-American academic world and its general methods became most associated with the idea of media studies.³⁵ Some of the general characteristics of the Media Studies Group are their tendency to draw on Althusser's concept of ideology, the semiotics and methods of textual analysis, the concept of media as apparatus, questions on class, gender and racial representation, the idea of the audience as an active member in the process of communication, and finally, on Michel Foucault's concept of discourse and discursive practice.³⁶ It should be noted that the idea that media are not direct representatives of reality but rather the constructor was explored not only within the Media Studies Group, but notably by theoreticians not generally considered to be theoreticians of the media – such figures as Guy Debord (with his elaboration on the society of spectacle) and Jean Baudrillard (introduc-

³¹ Adam Briggie, Clifford G. Christians, "Media and...", op. cit., 223.

³² Idem.

³³ Ibid., 225. Possibilities to critique or to explore goals of mass media in the terms of market exploration led to the division of two approaches: critique of Frankfurt school and quantitative analyses of North-American scholars. Cf. Idem; Adam Briggie, Pol Kolbi (ur.), *Uvod u studije medija*, transl. by Irena Šentevska (Beograd: Clio, 2005), 10.

³⁴ Cf. Adam Briggie, Clifford G. Christians, "Media and...", op. cit., 226.

³⁵ As Stuart Hall wrote, they redefined work on media on several levels within general framework of cultural studies, mainly as a response to American audience-survey method and idea of media's "direct influence" on recipients. Stuart Hall, "Introduction to Media Studies at the Centre", in: *Culture, Media, Language: Working Papers in Cultural Studies 1972-79*, ed. by Stuart Hall et al. (London: Routledge, 1980), 104.

³⁶ Ibid., 105-109. For example, Douglas Kellner follows this line of theorisation with his book on media culture. Cf. Douglas Kellner, *Media Culture: Cultural studies, identity and politics between modern and postmodern* (London: Routledge, 1995).

ing the concept of the simulacrum).³⁷ However, media itself were not at the centre of inquiry. As Adam Briggs and Paul Cobley note, the social and political implications of media are of concern for theoreticians, and not the media itself.³⁸ For those authors specifically, it is the media in the chain of communication that draws their attention.

The contemporary subjects of media studies/theories are connected to networked societies and new (digital) media, with some of the topics concerning the relationship between old and new media (and the idea of remediation), utopias and dystopias, computer-mediated communication, and cyber culture.³⁹ In terms of the latter, the idea of media “shaping entire value systems and basic concepts, and patterns of life” became crucial.⁴⁰ However, it could be noted that this idea of media-shaping ability influenced more than thinkers concerned with new media. Following the trends of the sociology of technology, mediation and actor-network theory, where technology and its capacity to act takes centre stage, contemporary media theorists put more emphasis on media itself.

One example is the work on media technology by Joost van Loon, who uses actor-network theory (ANT) as a method while discussing media theory. He explains that “most media analyses have focused on either the political economy of media production, the semiosis of media texts or the sociopsychological effects of media consumption”.⁴¹ On the other hand, there is the possibility of focusing on the process of mediation within mediated communication - which itself is “something we do rather than think about”.⁴² This remark is important to emphasize, because it is similar to Mikić’s statement on the ‘invisibility’ of media and indicates that a focus on media itself was not always central even when media theory was in question. Thus, media are mostly seen as phenomena in the service of something else. Although the author agrees that media are not only technologies, but also “social systems, organizations, businesses, cultural phenomena and political actors”,⁴³ he sees these approaches as dominant in the literature, with less emphasis on the use of media technology and the potential ways that media structure our thinking. Van Loon highlights several authors in whose texts he can see “media-technology at the heart of understanding cultural changes”,⁴⁴ although they belong to different traditions. Marshall McLuhan’s work, although criticized notably because of its technological determinism, has received new recognition because of the idea that the medium cre-

³⁷ Adam Briggles, Clifford G. Christians, “Media and...”, op. cit., 226.

³⁸ Adam Brigs, Pol Kolbi, *Uvod u studije...*, op. cit., 11.

³⁹ Adam Briggles, Clifford G. Christians, “Media and...”, op. cit., 227.

⁴⁰ Cf. *Ibid.*, 229.

⁴¹ Joost Van Loon, *Media Technology: Critical Perspectives* (Maidenhead: Open University Press, 2008), 5.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 2.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 8.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 17.

ates structures and codes of understanding, as well as technology's power in framing reality.

Friedrich Kittler is another author worth mentioning in this overview because of his genuine interest in media technology. Relying on French post-structuralism, mainly in the guise of Foucaultian and Lacanian thought, but accentuating the importance of thoroughly knowing technology itself, Kittler drew the thesis that media determine our situation. In that sense, they determine our intellectual operations,⁴⁵ in line with the Nietzschean idea that “our writing tools are also working on our thoughts”.⁴⁶ He develops his idea on the discursive network as “the network of technologies and institutions that allow a given culture to select, store, and produce relevant data”.⁴⁷ Although relying on Foucault, Kittler criticizes him “for neither reflecting on the mediality of the discursive practices he analyzed nor going beyond the confines of the Gutenberg Galaxy”, because “discursive analysis cannot be applied to sound archives and towers of film roles”.⁴⁸ Thus, he criticizes the exclusivity of methods drawn from literary studies, when the subjects of the study obviously have more to do with other media. For Winthrop-Young and Wutz, Kittler's theory – media theory – represents the third step in the paradigmatic sequence of French theory: 1. The recognition that we are spoken by language, 2. Language appears in the shape of historically limited discursive practices, 3. These practices depend on media.⁴⁹

* * *

By drawing an analogy between Kittler's paradigmatic sequence and the development of musicology, justified by new musicology itself being influenced by post-structuralist theories, we can develop further this line of thought: if the changes in musicology since the 1980s were triggered by post-structuralism and lean on the discursive practices of Foucault, then the next logical step could be seen in showing more interest in the processes of mediating those discourses through technologies. What contributes to the argument that we do not think about tools that shape our thought (or their ‘invisibility’), is, in a way, the idea that musicology is rooted in the study of written text and those musical practices that rely on the score as the main source of factual material. While there are certainly many arguments as to why relying on the score is important, and in some cases crucial, as the main denominator of a musical piece, such as melody, rhythm and harmony can thus be fixed and ready for analysis, many other factors that could be of interest to musicologist are not covered, because

⁴⁵ Geoffrey Winthrop-Young and Michael Wutz, “Translator's Introduction...”, *op. cit.*, xxi.

⁴⁶ As quoted in: *Ibid.*, xxxi, 200.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, xxiii.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 5.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, xx.

of this limitation placed by the medium itself. Moreover, as stated before, what was referred to as a “satellite” practice is not recognized as the central object of interest for musicology. Because of the ‘invisibility’ of media, we may easily skip the fact that this reliance on the text and the score is rooted in musicology’s close relationship with literary studies and is in fact a borrowing of their methods. If we recognize this fact, and think of the history of music as always actually being the history of mediated music,⁵⁰ it is possible that some traditional musicological categories can be looked at with this awareness in mind, and more easily redefined, in accordance with the actual musical practices of the past century.

Here, the interdisciplinary relationship between musicology and the vast field of media studies/media theory comes to the forefront. As has been seen, the influence of post-structuralism in media studies was, as in musicology, shown through the methods of textual analysis. This is where the line of similarity can be noticed. However, the texts that are analysed in media studies are various types of media content: music can be one of them and analyzed as such (for example, music on the radio, on television, as a sound carrier, in the organizational system of the music industry and so on), and this certainly adds to the knowledge of music in culture, which many valuable studies have shown. However, if we move towards the questions of mediation, and include the idea of media technology’s agency within the process of mediation (that also includes political, social, economic and cultural aspects), we can see how the categories of the composer, the compositional process, the musical work, production and reception, to name a few, change in the musicological discourse and open the possibility of strengthening the interdisciplinary and contextual relationship between musicology and media studies.

I will give two simple examples in which this relationship has already been achieved in specific ways. The first will briefly consider Simon Zagorski-Thomas’s notion of recorded music as an object of inquiry for musicologist.⁵¹ In the process of working in a music studio, the idea of the individual composer as a creator no longer exists, since it is a whole group of musicians, technicians and producers that is involved in the process of making music. The result is not music written in a score, but immediately ‘made’ in the studio, with the recording as the final product – one that, in a sense, takes the place of the musical work. It is not the composition *per se* that is ‘the work’, but the recording as a whole. Thanks to the possibility of fixing sound by recording it, the idea of

⁵⁰ “To understand this, one needs to look at the history of music cultures as media-constituted music cultures (...). Communication and media studies conceptualise music as the overall process of its mediated production, allocation, perception and use”. Cf. Carsten Winter, “Media Development and Convergence in Music Industry”, in: *Media and Convergence Management*, ed. by Sandra Diehl and Matthias Karmasin (Berlin, Heidelberg: Springer-Verlag, 2013), 264.

⁵¹ Simon Zagorski-Thomas, *The Musicology of Record Production* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

musical reification emerges, as the materialization of sound. In the network of actors working in the studio, there is significant accent put on the technology itself – the one used in the studio and the one aimed to be used by listeners. It is striking that some side-branches of musicology, like organology, have received more interest from researchers in this context, since here it is precisely the idea of the tools used that comes to the forefront. On the reception side, listening to recorded music has its specifics, which are mostly related to its two-dimensional nature. In the cultural sense, recordings exist within the system of the music industry and the logic of the music business, that are the broader framework influencing the production, distribution and reception of music. Thus, music on a recording – or a sound carrier in its many forms – is where the accent of research inquiry is, and this opens many opportunities for musicologist to employ his/her expertise.

On the other hand, in the completely different niche of 20th century music, the media of radio was crucial in shaping practice of *musique concrète* and Pierre Schaeffer's experimental take on music categories. As Biljana Srećković comments in the context of Schaeffer's peripheral position in the music canon as compared to Pierre Boulez, Schaeffer is more radical because he takes (the then new) media as his starting point, as they were not conditioned by the conventions.⁵² Schaeffer was familiar with Marshall McLuhan's and Walter Benjamin's work, and through his concept of *Art-relais* (art that transmits a message), he discussed three options of mediated art: the deforming of traditional art, the role in its distribution, and finally the possibility of transforming traditional practice through the means of new media technology.⁵³ The key points of Schaeffer's poetics are defined through the mass media and radiophony: the relationship between traditional and new models of art, the importance of technology improvements, the recording and reproduction of sound, redefining the concept of musical work, performance, the score and the composer, the process of perception, and radiophony as a basis for the development of electronic music and work in contemporary music studio.⁵⁴

While the above mentioned practices share a similar need for the redefinition of musicological argumentation, but also many characteristics of its working environment, it is the final sound result, as well as the cultural context of its existence, that makes all the difference. What these examples show is that if the "satellite" practices of popular and experimental music are to be tackled within musicological discourse, traditional musicological concepts need to be re-approached with the sense of the media through which they are executed and performed. However, it is not just the question of media determining the situa-

⁵² Biljana Srećković, *Modernistički projekat Pjera Šefera: Od ispitivanja radiofonije do muzičkih istraživanja* (Beograd: Fakultet muzičke umetnosti, 2011), 16-17.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 20-22.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 27.

tion, but also the situation determining the media. In that sense, not only do we need to analyse the media and mediation in music, but also the specifics of music, musicians and the cultural context that required that precisely those media should be used. Things and ideas are co-constitutive,⁵⁵ and, bearing that in mind, musicological expertise is what leads to a more nuanced approach to music in media, which represents more than what would be contributed if we only followed the ideas of media theoreticians.

In that sense, when we speak of the contextuality of musicology with media and media theories in mind, we are adding the element of mediation and technology – of making visible the tools and their specific agency as contributing to our actions of producing or receiving/consuming music. How is this subtle addition to the notion of context going to be executed within the interdisciplinary musicological study? Veselinović Hofman's model of interdisciplinary musicological genre is in that sense flexible, since it acknowledges that: "the basic assumption of this is that all fields of knowledge that stand outside the history of music are considered to be equally potential concerning their function within musicological research, and not as borderline, 'sister', auxiliary."⁵⁶ The novelty of this model – its reliance of principles of *mixed-*, *poly-*, and *intermedia* – presents the opportunity to dismiss the questioning of whether introducing the chosen problems of media theory into musicological discourse is possible, and instead focus on the ways in which these disciplines are used to contribute to basic musicological questions and materials.⁵⁷ The way in which this is executed is related to the formation of the research question. In the case of mediated music, it need not be a question about the type (genre, style) of music, or a specific musical work, but, as Zagorski-Thomas would put it – about the type of information we are looking for.⁵⁸ The field of mediated music certainly evokes a lot of question, including those on the material and technological conditions of the production and reception of music, and the whole network of agents and processes of their activities – which ultimately makes facts of music history. Media in the context of musicology thus become visible, as a third party in the line of interaction – one that is an intermediary that makes all kinds of differences to the final output. The focus is not just on that output itself, but on the processes, where the tools used are seen as a crucial factor in the dynamics between creators, society and technologies. Musicology in the context of media theory gains new tools which enable its practitioners to articulate that visibility of media and the impact they produce. Finally, the contextuality of musicology could be understood not only in terms of the social, political and cultural context, but through those artefacts of media technologies that give structures to the

⁵⁵ Adam Briggles, Clifford G. Christians, "Media and...", op. cit., 230.

⁵⁶ Mirjana Veselinović-Hofman, "Contextuality of...", op. cit., 16.

⁵⁷ Cf. Ibid., 19.

⁵⁸ Cf. Simon Zagorski-Thomas, *The Musicology...*, op. cit., 17.

codes of thinking of that context, and music in the whole process. The model of the contextuality of musicology allows for this complex situation to be conceptualized and thought of within the ever-expanding and potent terrain of musicology as a primary interdisciplinary field concerned with all aspects of music's existence.

SUMMARY

This paper is dedicated to the topic of music and media, with more specific the emphasis on the notion of the interdisciplinary relationship between musicology and media studies and media theories. However, a comprehensive approach to those distinguished understandings of media in musicology is still to be developed. It seems, that the role of specific media as an intermediary has not been examined *per se*. This follows the trends in media theories. The idea presented in this paper is that media technology could be seen as a specific form of context that crucially shapes musical practices. It is important to note that this role of technology is not understood as being deterministic. The idea is to place emphasis on the technological framework and the conditions which bind creators and audiences alike when dealing with media of mass communication as a specific context. What contributes to the argument that we do not think about the tools that shape our thought (or their 'invisibility'), is, in a way, the idea that musicology is rooted in the study of written text and those musical practices that rely on the score as the main source of factual material. The texts that are analysed in media studies include various media content: music can be one of them and analyzed as such (as music on the radio, television, as a sound carrier, in the organizational system of the music industry and so on), and this certainly adds to the knowledge of music in culture, which many valuable studies have shown. However, if we move towards the questions of mediation, and include the idea of media technology's agency within the process of mediation, we can see how the categories of composer, compositional process, musical work, production and reception, to name a few, (understood as defining categories of musicology as a discipline), actually change in the musicological discourse and open the possibility of strengthening the interdisciplinary and contextual relationship between musicology and media studies. The interdisciplinary relation between the vast corpus of media theory and musicology is approached and understood within the model of interdisciplinary musicological competence suggested by Mirjana Veselinović-Hofman. Media in the context of musicology thus become visible, as a third party in the line of interaction – one that is an intermediary that makes all kinds of difference to the final output.

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