

---

SLAVICA TER  
СЛАВИКА ТЕР

17

---

SLAVICA TERGESTINA

European Slavic Studies Journal

VOLUME 17 (2016)

The Yugoslav Partisan Art

EUT



SLAVICA TER  
СЛАВИКА ТЕР



—  
**SLAVICA TER  
СЛАВИКА ТЕР**

**17**

—

**SLAVICA TERGESTINA**  
European Slavic Studies Journal  
**VOLUME 17 (2016)**

**The Yugoslav Partisan Art**



ISSN **1592-0291** (print) & **2283-5482** (online)

WEB **www.slavica-ter.org**

EMAIL **editors@slavica-ter.org**

PUBLISHED BY **Università degli Studi di Trieste**  
*Dipartimento di Scienze Giuridiche, del Linguaggio,  
dell'Interpretazione e della Traduzione*

**Universität Konstanz**  
*Fachbereich Literaturwissenschaft*

**Univerza v Ljubljani**  
*Filozofska fakulteta, Oddelek za slavistiko*

EDITORIAL BOARD **Roman Bobryk** (*Siedlce University  
of Natural Sciences and Humanities*)  
**Margherita De Michiel** (*University of Trieste*)  
**Kornelija Ičin** (*University of Belgrade*)  
**Miha Javornik** (*University of Ljubljana*)  
**Jurij Murašov** (*University of Konstanz*)  
**Blaž Podlesnik** (*University of Ljubljana, technical editor*)  
**Ivan Verč** (*University of Trieste*)

ISSUE COEDITED BY **Jernej Habjan and Gal Kirn**

EDITORIAL  
ADVISORY BOARD **Antonella D'Amelia** (*University of Salerno*)  
**Patrizia Deotto** (*University of Trieste*)  
**Nikolaj Jež** (*University of Ljubljana*)  
**Alenka Koron** (*Scientific Research Centre  
of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts*)  
**Durđa Strsoglavc** (*University of Ljubljana*)  
**Tomo Virk** (*University of Ljubljana*)

DESIGN & LAYOUT **Aljaž Vesel & Anja Delbello / AA**

Copyright by Authors

# Contents

## ARTICLES

- 9 **The Yugoslav Partisan Art: Introductory Note**  
*Югославское партизанское искусство: Введение в тему*  
✦ GAL KIRN
- 18 **The Partisan Symbolic Politics**  
*Партизанская символическая политика*  
✦ RASTKO MOČNIK
- 40 **The Partisans in Print**  
*Партизаны в печати*  
✦ MIKLAVŽ KOMELJ
- 70 **A Further Note on the Partisan Cultural Politics**  
*Дополнительная заметка о партизанской культурной политике*  
✦ RASTKO MOČNIK
- 86 **The Partisan Art Revisited**  
*Еще раз о партизанском искусстве*  
✦ MIKLAVŽ KOMELJ
- 100 **Towards the Partisan Counter-archive:  
Poetry, Sculpture and Film on/of the People's Liberation Struggle**  
*К партизанскому анти-архиву:  
поэзия, скульптура и кино в/о народно-освободительной борьбе*  
✦ GAL KIRN



- 126 **Slovenian Sociology of Literature and Slovenian National Poet: France Prešeren between the Partisans, Dissidents and Theorists**  
*Словенская социология литературы и словенский национальный поэт: Франце Прешерн между партизанами, диссидентами и теоретиками*  
✦ JERNEJ HABJAN

## REVIEWS

- 148 **The Return of the Partisan Art**  
*Возвращение партизанского искусства*  
✦ ANDRAŽ JEŽ
- 160 **It Is About 'Now', Comrades. On Gal Kirn's Partizanski prelomi**  
*Речь идет о «сейчас», товарищи. О книге Partizanski prelomi Гала Кирна*  
✦ BORIS BUDEN
- 172 **On the New Life of the Partisan Songs in ex-Yugoslavia**  
*О новой жизни партизанской песни в бывшей Югославии*  
✦ SRĐAN ATANASOVSKI
- 178 **Retracing Images after Yugoslavia**  
*Отслеживание образов после Югославии*  
✦ STEFANO PETRUNGARO





# ***On the New Life of the Partisan Songs in ex-Yugoslavia***

**REVIEW OF**

HOFMAN, ANA, 2015: *Glasba, politika, afekt: novo življenje partizanskih pesmi v Sloveniji*. Ljubljana: Založba ZRC, ZRC SAZU.

HOFMAN, ANA, 2016: *Novi život partizanskih pesama*. Beograd: Biblioteka XX vek.



For decades, songs by the Yugoslav Partisans and masses have been something of an ostracised topic in musicology and ethnomusicology. Even before the break-up of socialist Yugoslavia, a tide of laudatory essays praising the role of these songs in the liberation and rebuilding of the country was largely ignored by scholars, as neither their historical impact nor aesthetic value were deemed worthy of thorough scholarly treatment. And once new national borders were eventually imposed on the Yugoslav space, and new parochial agendas were introduced in the humanities of the new countries, a renewal of the scholarly interest in the Partisan songs seemed almost impossible. However, Ana Hofman's book *Novi život partizanskih pesama* (The New Life of the Partisan Songs), which was just published by the renowned Belgrade publishing house Biblioteka XX vek, proves not only that the Partisan songs are a viable research topic but also that it is possible to swim against the mainstream and actually pursue the topic. The book itself comes from Hofman's ethnographic research in the practices of post-Yugoslav self-organised choirs from Skopje, Belgrade, Zagreb, Ljubljana, Pula, Vienna and elsewhere. The book published in Serbian is largely based on Hofman's Slovenian book *Glasba, politika, afekt: Novo življenje partizanskih pesmi v Sloveniji* (Music, Politics, Affect: The New Life of the Partisan Songs in Slovenia), which appeared in 2015 with the publishing house of the Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts and focuses on the Ljubljana-based self-organised choir Kombinatski. However, through the prism of this case study Hofman manages not only to speak about the importance of reviving the repertoire of the Partisan songs in the ex-Yugoslav space but also to address wider questions of the politics of empathy in the conditions of neoliberal capitalism.

Hofman divides her book in six chapters and a conclusion. In the first chapter, she introduces the Partisan songs in the ethnomusical discourse on heritage, unravelling the long history of mainstream deprecatory comments on the Partisan songs and showing how the concept of heritage is by itself unavoidably exclusivist. Hofman pays particular attention to the specific position of the Partisan songs in Slovenia compared to the rest of Yugoslavia; specifically, she focuses on the contested processes of post-Yugoslav ‘nationalisation’ of Slovenian Partisan songs, through which the ruling elites have endeavoured to divest these songs of their explicit anti-fascist legacy and to interpret them as a kind of ‘national songs’. Hofman uses her second chapter to introduce the reader to her case study, in which she positions the above-mentioned Ljubljana-based choir in the wider landscape of ex-Yugoslav self-organised choirs. Founded in 2008, Ženski pevski zbor Kombinat was conceived as a women’s choir, yet it also comprises a group of male instrumentalists who accompany the performances. Dedicating her attention to the inner dynamics of the choir, Hofman succinctly delineates the vicissitudes of a self-organising community. Openly presented as an amateur and egalitarian community, the choir struggles with its own success in order to maintain these principles: as their activities gain more prominence in Slovenia, Kombinat’s inclusiveness is challenged by the sheer number of membership applicants, and the management of the choir is increasingly prone to taking into account the applicants’ vocal qualities. Hofman is particularly sensible in describing the implicit structures of power within the choir as well as the members’ different agendas and interests, which range from female solidarity and political engagement to enjoyment in perfecting the musical performance itself.

In the third chapter, Hofman addresses the very theoretical lens through which she interprets the music practices she writes about, namely the so-called affect theory. Hofman's use of affect theory is inclusive, and while the main tenants of the theory she uses are of Deleuzian lineage, she also engages throughout her book with the linkage of affect and emotion in order to reframe the autonomy of the affect by insisting on the material messiness of the sound. While this chapter partly aims to fill in specific gaps in the post-Yugoslav ethnomusicological studies, which rarely discuss affect theory, Hofman is never too far from the object of her study, using affect theory to underpin the historical narratives on the Yugoslav Partisan songs as well as to interpret the experience of singing in *Kombinat*.

Hofman uses the last three chapters of *Novi život partizanskih pesama* to offer three different yet complementing views on *Kombinat*, conceptualising their practices as partaking in anti-sentimentalism, resistance and protest. Engaging with the discussion on the ideology of Yugonostalgia, which is centred on the accusation of defeatism, Hofman analyses the position of *Kombinat* as one of open anti-sentimentalism, as the choir refuses the label 'nostalgia' and discusses the revival of the Partisan repertoire as a contribution to anti-fascism. However, Hofman is critical of *Kombinat*'s membership referring to their repertoire solely in terms of songs of resistance; she poses the question whether a practice which reduces rather than accrues meaning can truly be politically engaged. In other words, is it possible to divest the Partisan songs of the deeply embedded layers of historical meaning that has come to be rather undesirable as it is connected to the experience of socialist Yugoslavia, and still employ them as a potent vehicle of social change? This question is reiterated and left open to interpretation in the last chapter, in which Hofman tells the

story of Kombinat's local involvement with mass anti-austerity protests in 2012.


Hofman's account of the revival of the Partisan songs in general and the activities of Kombinat in particular has immensely benefitted from her relentless commitment to rigorous ethnographic research due to which she is able to contextualise the social micro-practices she is observing. One of the most engaging aspects of this study is that it often offers more questions than answers. In a time when we are constantly reminded of the importance of social resistance, Hofman writes about a music collective which openly embraces the position of resistance and uses the repertoire which is inconsistent with the prevailing neoliberal ideology, to say the least. However, in her search of radically different material practices, practices which are truly irreducible to the neoliberal agenda, Hofman cannot refer to the activities of Kombinat as a whole: under the veneer of their rhetoric of resistance, their activities are often more distant to radical amateurism or anti-consumerism than one might guess as an outsider. But Hofman's investigation does not stop there: it is in the micro-practices of self-organised collectivity and in the common engagement with the affect of sound that she finds the truly unique realm of empathy and solidarity. In this way, Ana Hofman makes the promise of radical social change seem more distant and at the same time closer than one might have thought before reading her book—which is an invaluable scholarly and cultural achievement in itself. ♡

## **Srđan Atanasovski**

*Srđan Atanasovski is Research Assistant at the Institute of Musicology and Ethnomusicology, Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts. He graduated from Musicology at the Faculty of Music, University of Arts in Belgrade, where he is currently a PhD student of Musicology. Atanasovski has received research scholarships from the Austrian Agency for International Cooperation in Education and Research (OeAD), the Coimbra Group and the University of Graz, as well as the award of the National Office of the President of the Republic for academic achievement and social engagement in 2009. His articles have appeared in Musicologica Austriaca, Musicology and Musicological Annual. He is an assistant editor at the Don Juan Archiv Wien Forschungsverlag, where he works on the transcription and editing of unpublished compositions of Joseph von Friebert. He also works as a music critic and broadcast editor at the Third Programme of Radio Belgrade and regularly collaborates with the Belgrade Cultural Centre.*








**SLAVICA TERGESTINA** volumes usually focus on a particular theme or concept. Most of the articles published so far deal with the cultural realm of the Slavic world from the perspective of modern semiotic and cultural methodological approaches, but the journal remains open to other approaches and methodologies.

The theme of the upcoming volume along with detailed descriptions of the submission deadlines and the peer review process can be found on our website at [www.slavica-ter.org](http://www.slavica-ter.org). All published articles are also available on-line, both on the journal website and in the University of Trieste web publication system at [www.openstarts.units.it/dspace/handle/10077/2204](http://www.openstarts.units.it/dspace/handle/10077/2204).

SLAVICA TERGESTINA is indexed in *The European Reference Index for the Humanities (ERIH PLUS)*.



ISSN 1592-0291

17



9771592029007