

**Lada Stevanović**

*The Institute of Ethnography SASA, Belgrade, Serbia*

**Afterlife of Yugoslav Popular Music (Afterlife of YU-POP).  
Book Review: Ana Petrov, *Jugoslovenska muzika bez  
Jugoslavije. Koncerti kao mesta sećanja [Yugoslav Music  
without Yugoslavia: Concerts as Memory Sites]*. Beograd:  
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The book *Jugoslovenska muzika bez Jugoslavije. Koncerti kao mesta sećanja [Yugoslav Music without Yugoslavia: Concerts as Memory Sites]* concerns Yugoslav music during the period when Yugoslavia itself ceased to exist. Specifically, it deals with the reception of Yugoslav music in Serbia based on research of the concerts performed in Belgrade by three musicians who had forged their careers in the framework of Yugoslav popular music. However, when the war started and Yugoslavia disintegrated, all three musicians – Tereza Kesovija, Doris Dragović and Dino Merlin – continued their careers in the new political circumstances and claimed they would never again perform in Belgrade. Thus, apart from mentioned concerts, the book focuses also on the war and periods before and after. The volume's research and theoretical analysis are performed delicately and regarding the issue's complexity, as a study of Yugoslav popular culture and music, i.e. its *afterlife*, revealing that Yugoslav culture outlived the state that created it.

Popular culture, as well as tradition or heritage, are categories that are being produced, always for the needs of present time. However, as this book reveals, in spite of the fact that tradition and heritage are constructed, they may have *afterlife*, continuing their independent *existence* even after hegemonic structure stops producing them. The tastes of the Yugoslav popular music audience were cultivated for many years and, thus, impossible to modify overnight. Under these changed circumstances, the war and the breakdown of Yugoslavia, the meaning of this aspect of popular culture ceased to be linear and predictable, thus becoming complex, more interesting and exciting for research and interpretation, as recognized by author Ana Petrov. *Yugoslav Music without Yugoslavia: Concerts as Memory Sites* is a multidisciplinary work, theoretically and methodologically belonging to memory studies, affect theory and Yugoslav studies (meaning socialist and post-socialist studies) in particular Yugoslav music, the field from which a similar theoretical position was researched by

\* Author contact information: [lada.stevanovic@gmail.com](mailto:lada.stevanovic@gmail.com)

Ana Hofman and Catherine Baker. The research doesn't focus exclusively on musical performances and their reception; phenomena related to the socio-political contexts such as war and postwar trauma also factor in, as does hatred and general hostility and fear, the kind that marked musicians as 'traitors' and raised the specter of boycotting undesirable musicians. Mechanisms of overcoming trauma, in particular the construction of 'love', sometimes as universal, other times that of the political kind (towards one's former country or members of other nations) are also covered. In order to represent the context and concept of emotions on and around the concert, crucial theoretical perspective has been given through the concept of memory. Petrov enters the field of memory studies, which regards that collective memory is defined by official and dominant politics, mediated from 'above', unlike unmediated and personal individual memories. The author's position being presented and successfully argued throughout the book is that individual and collective memories always exist in correlation, and that both phenomena should be regarded as processes. Therefore no individual memory is completely independent from the dominant politics that create collective memory, even when it opposes hegemonic narratives. As a process that always starts in the present moment which is transitional, the memory is directed towards the past and exactly this relationship points to the conclusion that it may not be fixed. That is the reason why there is no memory that bears the privilege to be one, only and objective, wherefore we may only consider pluralities and different webs of remembering.

The wide context of the research of nostalgia (in the frame of the complex issue of *Yugonostalgia* and individual memory, seen as the memory of the auditorium, is framed within dominant discourses (of unfriendly or neighboring nations). The author's key theoretical approach to audience analysis and their emotions is new materialism, in particular regarding the corporeal studies and affection theory. Petrov accepts the position of Tia deNora, that the musical meaning is always constituted in the relation to the world and that music influences social life. Another key thesis related to the audience is that it is not regarded as a unique and homogenous group, but rather as heterogeneous (regarding gender, age, class etc), in spite of the fact that it shares the same concert space. The experience of the auditorium is analyzed through affect theory, according to which the audience is not a passive recipient, but rather an active participant in the production of atmosphere that, logically, originates from the performer but does not exist independently. Such definition of the body of the audience is important for the research of intimate and personal emotions of the individuals from auditorium, which are, according to the author, actually produced. Adding another level of interpretation and complexity, Petrov introduces theory of Sara Ahmed, who claims that emotions are represented as the potential that enables creation and preservation of the group through the reading of the bodies of others. Regarding this, emotions are not spontaneous or personal, but rather relational and always defined with the help of the others (like-minded or not). Petrov analyses emotions and the manner of their construction in both the concerts and the political context, exactly

through the complex web of mentioned relations. Thus the author theoretically approaches the emotions of love or nostalgia, revealing that, as much as it appears to us, these emotions are personal (and for those who experience them, they definitely are), they are produced and provoked.

As an illustration, I will shortly mention some of the emotions the author analyses. The most remarkable example is the performance of Tereza Kesovija, characteristic for the emphasized emotionality, including the mentioning of the war, but also discussing friendship and love, that, as the author points out, provoked similar emotional reaction and response from the audience. Comparing her performance regarding music, gesture, expression of emotion and posture with that of Doris Dragović, whose performance does not include mentioning the war at all, the author directs us to recognize that Kesovija constitutes love as a political category, while love sung by Dragović is exclusively romantic and related to February 14<sup>th</sup>, Valentine's Day and the date of her concert.

Connecting emotions to the body, the author again turns to new materialism, corporeal theories and affect studies. The influence of Bruno Latour and his materialism is mirrored in the constant research effort to overcome the unambiguous answers and questions. The binary worldview that often traps us is constantly avoided through new research directions: individual memories are viewed in the context of the group i.e. audience, but the group is not homogenous, and individual memories are not exclusively personal, depending on external factors; the audience is regarded as a body that actively participates and creates effects together with the performer on the stage. Instead of offering answers to the posed questions, Petrov actually multiplies them, rejecting the position 'or-or' and changing it with the 'and-and' position, that does not exclude but includes, offering wider perspective and more complex understanding of the phenomenon. Such a position is particularly important and fertile when we consider that it goes about the research of post-war societies that have yet to overcome the war trauma, while concerts of the performers from Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina still provoke among some people protest, hatred narratives and the affections of fear. On the other hand, Petrov shows that it is exactly these concerts that have a therapeutic effect on the audience (in the physical concert hall or in virtual space). The author, indirectly, points to the emancipatory potential of nostalgia that, despite being trapped by the view to the past, bears the potential for reconciliation and the active attitude towards the future, even in the frame of popular culture. This theoretical position is generally underestimated in the studies of nostalgia, while Petrov's book points out that it is the aspect worthy of further research and problematization.

The enjoyment in the mentioned concerts has influenced methodological approach of Ana Petrov and that is a method of participant observation, fruitful approach for a researcher who succeeds to take a distance from her own involvement and personal experiences. The auto-ethnography is written into the segments in which the author expresses her emotions, memories, and her own attitude towards the concerts and performers (particularly, I think, regarding the Kesovija's concert, which inspired

the entire research and book), after which she critically turns to her own impressions successfully establishing a distance with the help of an excellently worked out theoretical framework that I have attempted to present in the main points. Actually, my decision to devote as much space in a review to the theory and its brilliant elaboration is that exactly this aspect enabled sophisticated analysis of the ethnographic and auto-ethnographic research.

Fulfilling precise demands of academic work, this precious and very complex study is read with pleasure, the way in which the author enjoyed in its writing. If we apply the theory of Sara Ahmed also to the enjoyment in the reading, the readers of *Yugoslav Music without Yugoslavia: Concerts as Sites of Memory* may enjoy the book, the same as I did.