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Transition, passage, changeover, going through and transformation, as possible meanings, notional ramifications and problem layers of the Congress’ subject, are implied in the entire music history. They are conceivable in the very matter of music, as well as in its referential extramusical conditions, connotations and position.

In the musical tissue itself, the foregoing notions can imply a compositional-technical, stylistic, or generally poetical-aesthetical background, and regarded contextually from the viewpoint of the diverse extramusical environment of music, the same notions can become primarily figurative and exist as phenomena identifiable and interpretable within various psychological, sociological and political assumptions.

A large number of specified thematic sessions (at any given moment there were up to 19 consecutive sessions with 792 participants!) examined the Congress’ subject. Chronologically, the sessions followed music history in four large blocks: ‘From Antiquity to Renaissance’, ‘17th and 18th Centuries’, ‘19th Century’, and ‘20th Century till Today’. The remaining three groups of sessions presented the problem areas of ‘Genres and National Traditions’, ‘Theory and Methods’ and ‘Interdisciplinary Perspectives’. Each of those groups was, in turn, divided into numerous subtopics and problem ‘units’. That allowed for the Congress’ themes to be approached from various musicological standpoints, methodologically ranging from concrete analytical to complex metaphorical analyses and arguments of the notion of passage/transition in music.

Specific exhibition presentations of current activities, results and research projects of various musicological establishments, such as institutes and societies, also took place besides scientific sessions. Moreover, the organic part of the congressional proceedings was a valuable sales exhibition of music material and musicological publications of the leading publishers, who also offered visitors catalogues of their upcoming editions.

Structurally and organizationally, the Congress consisted of keynote speeches, free papers, symposia of research groups and collective presentations. In following those events, our

selection was guided, on one hand, by the intention to acquaint ourselves with research results within specific topics, and on the other, by personal affinities for certain subjects and musicological approaches of respective researchers, which led us to gain closer insight into current scientific findings. Naturally, those affinities intersected in some co-related and correspondent problem circles to the extent allowed by the overlapping of the events.

Therefore, one of the groups we attended – ‘Narrativity, Signification in Music – Tools for a Transdisciplinary Approach’ – offered a reasonable and articulate general systematization of narrativity. In the most general sense designated as a transition from the realm of one art into another, narrativity here was rightfully considered as one of the outcomes of the change of the music paradigm. That paradigm, based on musicological formalism, reaches for ‘aesthetics of contents’. Of course, that is nothing new today, but some key problems are argued in the works of Márta Grabócz – ‘Théories récentes de la narrativité versus analyse musicale’, Werner Wolf – ‘A Prototypical Narratological Approach to a Vexed Question’, Fred Everett Maus – ‘Tension and Narrative’, and Siglind Bruhn – ‘A Tale of Peace: Reading between the staves of the passacaglia in Alban Berg's Op. 4/5’

Somewhat complementary to this thematic group of papers were symposia dedicated to sign, sense and meaning in music, e.g., ‘Sens et signification en musique’, whose numerous participants approached the subject from the angle of aesthetics, hermeneutics and philosophy, or semiotics and narrative, as well as the very consistent symposium ‘Signs Beyond Signification: De- and Reactivating Semiotic Concepts in Musicological Discourse’. The aim of this research group was to encourage the exchange of opinions on the ‘boundaries’ of a sign, which seem almost outdated given musicologists’ increased interest in corporality, performativity and narrativity. Elena Ungeheuer in the paper ‘Musical Signs in the Focus of Media-aesthetics’, Roland Posner in the text ‘The Semantic Surplus Value of Concrete Sounds’, Christian Thorau in the item ‘Metaphorische Modi von Musik’ and Christian Kaden in the article ‘Bedeutung jenseits von Zeichen’ exposed the personal theoretic specifications of this group’s joint argument, namely that the designators produced as concrete signs during the process of designation may acquire additional features which lead them beyond purely musical meanings.

In the inspired keynote speech titled ‘Topic Theory: Achievement, Critique, Prospects’ Kofi Agawu spoke about the multidimensional character and illusive ontology of topics, about their complex network of multidimensional permeation and intersection as a product of the 20th century and its ‘playing with signs’.

Our attention was particularly drawn by the symposium ‘1968 and New Music’. The items ‘Music and May '68 in France’ by Eric Drott, ‘New Music and 1968 in the Netherlands:

Interventions, Antagonisms, Interpolations’ by Robert Adlington, ‘Von der 68^{er}-Autoritätskritik zur Postmodernen Musik: Neue Musik in Deutschland’ by Beate Kutschke, ‘Ideology and Improvisation in the American Avant-Garde’ by Amy C. Beal and ‘Formen der Gesellschaftskritik durch Musik in Italien um 1968’ by Gianmario Borio, pointed to the student protests’ socio-political influence on music in these countries. Particulars of those consequences in the musical culture of each of these countries nevertheless converge at a few points: immediate knowledge about the compliance between revolutionary impulses in society and in music; stylistic pluralism; (direct or indirect) criticism of institutional authorities, forms and contents of the work carried out on the avant-garde music ‘podium’; genre changes in ‘serious’ music based on the strong influences of rock, jazz and ‘democratic indeterminism’.

During the prolific discussion, which incidentally formed a separate part of the symposium, it transpired that the above mentioned authors had no knowledge whatsoever about the students’ 1968 protest and its musical consequences not only in our country but in some other environments as well. Our contribution to the discussion pointed this out, with examples from June 1968 in Belgrade and from the ensuing music creativity.

Obviously, very little is known about Serbian music as yet. Hence it is all the more valuable that as many as five musicologists from Belgrade took part in the Congress with authority, shedding light on various aspects of our music. Therefore, in the paper ‘Biedermeier in Serbian Music as a Cultural Process of Transition’, presented within the symposium ‘Reception, Center, and Periphery’, Tatjana Marković argued whether the term ‘biedermeier’ could be applied to Serbian music, which used classicist music language to ‘fill out’ the romantic ideology.

Three musicologists from Belgrade participated in a Serbian-Greek-Romanian research group ‘Into Modernism and Out of It: The Balkan Rites of Passage’. In her report ‘*Balkans* as the Cultural Sign in Serbian Music of the First Half of the 20th Century’ Biljana Milanović pointed out the aggravating elements of European views on Balkans’ geopolitical and culturological situation during the formation of (European) modernism in Serbian music. In the text ‘Serbian Music 1985–2005: Preludium, War, and Postludium’ Melita Milin gave a review of Serbian music production from 1985 to 2005, perceiving it as a free rise of creative spirit opposed to the terrible political crisis in the foregoing period. Katarina Tomašević, however, in her contribution ‘Serbian Music in Times of Transition’ focused on the negative aspects of our musical life, which inevitably led to the blurring of the basic coordinates of professional and artistic identity in contemporary Serbian music.

Mirjana Veselinović-Hofman took part in the session ‘Systematics’ with her work ‘Transitional Paths: From the Eye to the ‘Ear of Our Thinking’, Music’. Using examples from

contemporary Serbian music, she discussed the possible forms and transitive, 'reflexive' (hierarchical) feedback between the 'culture of watching' and 'culture of listening' in contemporary music in general.

More information on the sessions and particular works not included in this review can be found in the very detailed and meticulously, but unusually large and therefore somewhat confusing Congress Booklet (386 pages!). It contains complete cross-referenced data on the contents and schedules of the Congress, as well as accompanying events, including the regular afternoon and evening concerts with attractive programmes (e.g. 'Passing through Paris around 1900').

The term of David Fellows, president of the International Musicological Society, ended at the conclusion of this year's Congress. The next congress will be held in five years. During that period, the chairman of the Society will be Tilman Seebass, whose term just started in Zurich. We hope that in that time Serbian musicology will continue its successful international affirmation.

Translated by Goran Kapetanović