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**TOWARD REMOVING THE BORDERS BETWEEN THE
CENTRE AND THE PERIPHERY – THE NEW SOUND AT 25**
(A Word From the Editor)

In its tradition spanning 25 years, the *New Sound* journal has sought to contribute toward solving the most pressing issues of Serbia's musical life since the 1990s, when the journal was first established,¹ issues that simultaneously had an international scope, theoretical significance and 'legitimacy'.

¹ International Journal of Music *New Sound* was launched in Belgrade at the end of 1992, and the first issue was published in 1993. For the first five years, i.e. until 1998, it was published by SOKOJ (*Savez organizacija kompozitora Jugoslavije* [Union of Yugoslav Composers' Organizations]). From 1998 to 2009 it was published by MIC–SOKOJ (*Muzički informativni centar* [Music Information Centre]), but the co-publisher of Nos. 30 (II/2007), 31 (I/2008), and 32 (II/2008) was the Department of Musicology of the Faculty of Music in Belgrade, which in 2009 fully assumed the role of the publisher.

The journal's character was international from the very beginning, although its international Editorial Board was formalized in 1999. Since the first issue, *New Sound* has been published bilingually, in English and Serbian (...), with two issues per year and, resources permitting, with a compact disc accompanying each issue. The discs contain recordings of musical content featured in the appropriate issues of the journal. Starting from No. 33, the *New Sound* has been printed only in English, while the Serbian version has been uploaded on the Web. (M.V.H., "A Note From the Editor", *New Sound*, 40, II/2012, 79).

Since 2011, the *New Sound* has appeared in the European Reference Index for the Humanities (ERIH).

The time when the *New Sound* was founded was thus characterized by a musical postmodernism in full swing, as well as a postmodern musicological practice that in many ways sought to critically re-examine itself, especially from the perspective of an already expansive globalization, a process wherein musicology, too, among many other phenomena, undertook various attempts at defining its own global attribution. That, however, kept eluding a more precise explanation, already because of the absence of a more specific meaning and definition of the global world itself, primarily regarding the relation on which that world is being built – the relation between the *central* and the *peripheral*.

In the Serb-populated part of the world, the onset of the 20th century's closing decade saw that relation additionally burdened by international sanctions, as a consequence of a conflict between the political combinatorics of the *periphery* and the *centre*; at any rate, between various aspects and impacts of the *centre*, which in practice sought to deepen Serbia's peripheral position, through a wide variety of ways of marginalizing and internationally isolating its achievements and strivings in every sphere – artistic, scholarly, cultural... In such conditions, the institution of our musical scholarship had two options. One was to acquiesce to a life under a twofold 'penal regime', i.e. a two-sided policy of isolation: on the one hand, coming from the outside, imposed by the *centre* on its Serbian *periphery*, and, on the other hand, an internal policy of isolation, xenophobically and masochistically exacerbated by the periphery itself. The other option for our musicology was to oppose this policy of marginalization and exclusion from the international 'ontological' and communication map by transcending politics, by building a 'dam' against political influences, using only extra-political means. In other words, by defending the autonomy of the profession, its sanctity and inviolability. And it was precisely that option that became the backbone of the *New Sound's* programme conception.

As such, it implied several crucial and mutually closely interrelated endeavours, which today still inform the Journal's activities. These include international collaboration in addressing current issues in Serbian and international music and musicology. Then, there is the Journal's position regarding the relationship between the national and the international, the peripheral and the central, which, again, also includes taking a stance regarding the global study of music, that is, the study of music in the age of globalization.

In that regard, international collaboration was conceived as a project that naturally stems from the meaning and 'core' of the phenomenon of *music* in terms of civilization in general,² which the *New Sound* posited as the main object of its explorations. And the specifying qualifier of the *New Sound* (its sub-

² Cf. Мирјана Веселиновић-Хофман [Mirjana Veselinović-Hofman], "Реч уредника" / "Editor's Note", *Нови Звук / New Sound*, 1, 1993, 5–6.

heading) as an *international journal of music* presents one of the Journal's central points of orientation: its international character. And this despite the fact – or perhaps precisely because to it! – that the Journal is based locally, both in geographical and infrastructural terms. But precisely with its subheading, which qualifies the journal as international, the *New Sound*, still based nationally, implies its position that the essence of this notion of the international lies in communication between the local and the global, whereby the latter is viewed not as a configuration of variously permeable *borders* between the *centre* and the *periphery* (in terms of the relation between the respective positions of that which is leading and that which must adapt to it), but as a *de-hierarchized* network of communication between various musical/musicological environments and entities. Therefore the very accessibility of local musical and musicological artefacts, materials, and reflections, their global accessibility as well as participation in likewise global cultural exchange, already emerge as the main coordinates of the global character and purpose of that network.³

In it, the study of music is posited in line with the overall complexity of its nature as well as current musicological methodology. In the postmodern era, it includes not only the principles of *intra*-disciplinarity, but also those of a pluralist disciplinary perspective. It also includes the principles of *inter*-disciplinary linkages, placing various singularist approaches in mutual relations, and a manifold multiplicity of interpretative principles.⁴ Again, all of this implies an openness to collaboration not only with musicologists espousing various methodological views, but also with all those scholars, aestheticians, philosophers, and art theorists in general for whom the world of music always means an open challenge in terms of problems and themes.

In other words, the '*New Sound* musicology' exists as a discipline *on the move*: not only in communication and exchange between various authorial voices 'heard' from a multitude of countries and cultures, but also in a diverse, factual, methodological, and contextual type of communication between different scholarly disciplines. One could therefore argue that the kind of thinking on

³ For more on this issue, cf. Veselinović-Hofman, "Music at the Periphery under Conditions of Degraded Hierarchy between the Centre and the Margins in the Space of the Internet", in *Identities: The World of Music in Relation to Itself*, ed. Tilman Seebass et al., Belgrade, Faculty of Music, 2012, 23–33. The text was first published in "Савремена музика на периферији" / "Contemporary Music at the Fringe", a special issue of the *New Sound* (38, II/2011). Also, cf. Mirjana Veselinović-Hofman, "Multimedia Archives as a Step towards World Music", *New Sound*, 24, II/2004, www.newsound.org.rs / "Мултимедијски архиви као корак ка светској музици", *Нови звук*, 24, II/2004, 23–31.

⁴ Cf. Michael Krausz, "Interpretation", in: Michael Kelly (editor-in-chief), *Encyclopedia of Aesthetics*, Volume 2, New York–Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1998, 520–523.

music that the *New Sound* has offered in all of its activities so far in general stems from a variety of perspectives and involves multiple dimensions.

Likewise, the *New Sound* advocates its basic orientation in this, its most recent issue, in its standard, main sections. Nonetheless, at the same time, following the Journal's usual practice, those sections are not filled 'mechanically'; they are not treated as if they were 'petrified', but are innovated, their form is modified regularly, they are complemented with new sections...

Thus the fact that this issue marks a double jubilee of the *New Sound* (its 25th anniversary and 50th issue!) made a significant impact on the overall conception of the issue as a symbolic gathering of many of its contributors, old and new alike, free to choose their own topics. Interestingly, nonetheless, those topics still coalesced around several problem spheres, thus highlighting some prevailing musicological interests and the 'spirit' of research at this moment in time. Roughly speaking, those interests point here to the relations between music and politics, music and mathematics, as well as music and temporality. This applies not only to the "Studies", but also to contributions in some other sections – the "New Works" and "Analytical Perspectives" (formerly known as "Analyses" and now renamed due to the diversity of analytical areas pursued in this issue).

The "Composer Speaks" section (occasionally also "Musicologist Speaks" and the like, depending on the author), i.e. "Conversations" (as it was renamed in the previous issue) also underwent a change. The change in No. 50 concerns its form and content alike, with the section now conceived as a virtual roundtable involving three members of the *New Sound*'s editorial board discussing the future of printed media, the status of musical and musicological journals, and, in that context, other modes of activities that the *New Sound* might pursue in the future.

On this occasion, in line with the thematic areas and formal articulation of the contributions, two new sections were inaugurated – "Auto-poetics" and "Sound Postcards".

Also, there is a special section dedicated to the memory of Prof. Dragoslav Dević, a member of the *New Sound*'s editorial board since it was founded, a leading figure in Serbian ethnomusicology who left us during the preparation of this issue. On this occasion we are publishing his last, previously unpublished work.

Although the *New Sound*'s activities will probably undergo many more changes in the future – ranging from 'updating' its technical standards to micro-formal and editorial re-articulations, depending on current developments in the global *world of music*, the *New Sound* will continue to act according to its basic orientation. For, precisely in that orientation the Journal sees a perspective for a realistic and vital understanding of the global being of contemporary musicol-

ogy. Moreover, the Journal has failed to identify such a perspective in any new redistributions of political or economic power in the world, or in the establishment of any 'new' *centres* or *peripheries*, but only in the neutralization of the borders separating them, by encouraging professional exchange, whereby any musicological entity may be *the main one*.