

Ana Đorđević

University College Cork, Ireland

“The soundtrack of their lives”: The Music of *Crno-bijeli svijet*

Abstract: *Crno-bijeli svijet* [*Black-White World*, HRT, 2015–] is an on-going Croatian television series set in the early 1980s depicting the then-current pop music scene in Zagreb. The storyline follows several characters whose lives are intertwined by complex family relations, while also following the beginnings of new wave/punk rock bands and artists, and their influence on the Yugoslav youth who almost religiously listened to their music, like some of the series’ characters do.

The role of music in television series is a complicated question that caught the attention of film music scholars in recent years. The significance – and, at the same time, the complexity – that music produces or can produce, as the bearer of cultural, social and/or political meanings in television series brings its own set of difficulties in setting out possible frameworks of research. In the case of *Crno-bijeli svijet* that is even more challenging considering that it revolves around popular music that is actively involved in, not just the series soundtrack, but several aspects of different narrative elements.

Jon Burlingame calls the music of American television “The soundtrack of our lives”, and I find this quote is appropriate for this occasion as well. The quote summarizes and expresses the creators’ personal note that is evident in the use of music in this television series and myriad ways music is connected to other narrative and extra-narrative elements, and in a way, grasps the complicity of the problem I will address.

Keywords: film music; pre-existing music; new wave; Yugoslav pop music; Croatian television

Supporting his argument about the importance of popular music in films, Jeff Smith quotes director Allison Anders and her statement about popular music as “the only reference point we hold in common anymore”.¹ She continues and elaborates that “we are not all the same religions, we don’t hold the same views on whether we eat meat or we don’t eat meat, whether we are monogamous or we’re not, so there’s no common ground except for popular culture, and in a way that’s what’s holding it all together.”² After carefully watching and analyzing the Croatian television series

¹ Jeff Smith, *The Sounds of Commerce: Marketing Popular Film Music* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 232.

² Ibid.

Crno-bijeli svijet [*Black-White World*, or "the world in black and white"], I was under the impression that its creators had something similar on their minds while working on this series. For filmmakers popular music "serves as a common reference point" because it is "a very handy marker of time and place, it carries a built-in resonance [...] with film's larger patterns of signification and intertextual association."³ Music in this series works in similar ways throughout each of the episodes as a solid reference point and common ground for the audience to connect and identify with, but it also sets the mood for the time and the place of its story, and within that story provides viewers with a wide range of audio associations that connect different elements of the portrayed socio-cultural context.

In this article I will analyze the series' soundtrack and its place in the complex narrative of the series, its connection to the characters and their development, and will also trace some musical references that I found important and used in interesting way from today's point of view and the historical distance afforded by more than three decades.

About the series

Crno-bijeli svijet is an on-going Croatian television series set in Zagreb in the early 1980s. It describes in a dramatic and humorous way the everyday life of an extended family through three generations, whose stories are intertwined by complex family relations and influenced by urban culture and Zagreb's music scene. The focus of the series is on the presentation of everyday life in Zagreb in the early 1980s, and that point is insinuated even in the opening credits, which feature colorful images of the City of Zagreb in the year 1980 (some New Year's decorations appear with the year's number on it), people on the streets, in parks, in concerts, in front of famous Zagreb cafes. Characters' storylines are constructed in a similar manner, dealing with everyday situations and problems including first love, joining the army, enrolling in high school or college, problems at work or home, holidays, and going to football matches or concerts, to name a few. Shown in parallel to the characters' stories are the political and social aspects of the period in question, including the illness and death of President Tito, turmoil in Yugoslav Communist Party, federal issues leading to state problems, and youth work actions and its revival, among others.

The series premiered in March 2015 on channel one of Croatian Radio-Television or Hrvatska radio-televizija (HRT). The second season aired in October 2016, and the third is currently being filmed. The series is produced by HRT and Interfilm, an independent production company. Both seasons had twelve episodes each, with a running time of 50 minutes per. The creator, producer, editor and script writer is Goran Kulenović, creator of HRT's hit sitcom *Bitange i princeze* [*Tramps and Princesses*, 2005–10], whose main collaborator is Igor Mirković, journalist and author of *Sretno*

³ Ibid.

dijete [Happy child, 2003], a book and documentary film about punk and new wave music in Zagreb in 1980s.

Before airing of the first episode, *Crno-bijeli svijet* was advertised as a big-budget hit show financed by HRT as a public service broadcasting company. In promotional materials and interviews Kulenović and Mirković talked about their devotion to historical accuracy in depicting the selected period of time, i.e. their "ambition to create a show for which no one will say 'that's not how it was'⁴. That is why they said that they insisted on details in costumes, make-up, locations, venues, vehicles, etc., in order to "revive the spirit of the eighties through visual components, archive sounds and video inserts, and so recreate authentic surroundings of that time."⁵

The storyline of the series revolves around several characters, members of large two-part family and their friends. One part of the family is set around Ksenija Kipčić, a single mother of two sons, high-school boy Željko (nicknamed Žac), and student-journalist Voljen (called Kipo, after his last name). The other part is set at the household of Ksenija's ex-husband and the father of her sons, Jura, his wife Jagoda and her daughter, high school senior, named Una. Kipo is an aspiring journalist at *Studentski list* [Student paper], and works closely with his best friend, Đermano Kurtela (called Žungul), the paper's photographer. At the beginning of the series, Kipo meets Marina, the paper's new copy-editor and gradually falls in love with her during the course of the series. Also at the beginning of the first season, Ksenija introduces Dominik to the family as her new husband, but, at the same time, the brother of her friend and upstairs neighbor Dunja, an eccentric artist and painter. The family's older generation is represented by Rudi, Ksenija's father, and Jagoda's father (who appears in the second season). Rudi is an anti-communist, pre-war bourgeois retiree that openly comments on and criticizes the Yugoslav communist system. This somewhat reflects on his daughter, Ksenija, although she is not very open about her political views. Her ex-husband Jura, on the other hand, is openly politically active both as manager in one of Croatia's top state companies and as a member of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia. Although he is in the top management in his firm, he is critical towards some state and party policies, which leads to conflict with his superiors. As part of Zagreb's urban setting, most of the characters belong to the socialist equivalent of the middle class: they are educated and well-read, working as administrative or office workers, or they are attending art and music schools, studying languages, arts, ad philosophy, and traveling to Western countries and enjoying Western pop culture, as well as popular music. New wave music comes as part of that urban setting. An important music and cultural phenomenon that appeared in the late 1970s and early 1980s, new wave is embedded into almost every aspect of this series. Kulenović and Mirković recognised it as an "explosion of city youth's creativity"⁶, and tuned the series to portray

⁴ Marija Ajduk, "Vesele' osamdesete kroz prizmu televizijske serije *Crno-bijeli svijet*," *Antropologija* 16, 2 (2016): 14.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid, 15.

it in that manner. Either it is directly addressed in dialogue, or indirectly shown as background of this urban setting, new wave is shown as essential part of the Zagreb soundscape of the early 1980s.

Most of the young characters are set in some type of becoming-of-age story: finding their passions and interests, discovering themselves, and creating personalities and identities. Music choices count as an important classification trademark in that setting. Žac is a high school student with a crush on his stepsister Una and an intense admiration for British punk music (bands like The Clash), and Yugoslav new wave groups like Prljavo kazalište and Azra, from Zagreb, but also Paraf, from Rijeka, and Šarlo Akrobata, Idoli, from Belgrade, as well as Pankrti, Lačni Franc and Buldožer, from Slovenia. Una is a high school graduate who plays bass guitar in local punk bands and eventually enrolls into Zagreb Academy of Dramatic Arts with the aspiration of becoming an actress. Kipo is studying Russian literature, but also wants to become a respected journalist, and together with the photographer Žungul, stereotypically portrayed as *bonvivant* Dalmatian man, is in search of a story that will be their big break. All of them are portrayed as independent thinkers, rebellious towards their parents, school, and local authorities, deflecting the stale social norms in creating their own paths in fashion and appearances, and even names, since they address each other using mostly nicknames.

Other characters are shown as slightly more critical towards the Yugoslav socialist system, especially the workers' self-management system. However that is shown in passive, illustrative way. In the case of Jura we see the consequences the country's centralized management had on local companies. However, the series also illustrates unprofessional behavior among company's management, Jura included. Ksenija's position as a typing assistant shows lower management and their indifference towards their work and their company. Dominik is the only example of a working class man since he works as taxi driver, but not by choice. By the end of first season it is revealed that he served prison time for dealing forged art, so he has no other option but to work for minimum wage. His position becomes more politically complex throughout the second season, when he is approached by the Yugoslav State Security Service (UDBA) to be their informant during the state's petrol crisis.

Complexity of the series

The described setting of this series provides a wide range of possibilities for complex narrative action that includes music in many different ways. Jason Mittell describes complex television series as "an alternative to conventional television narrative form", and so defines narrative complexity as a distinct narration mode that "redefines episodic forms under the influence of serial narration".⁷ He states that the best defin-

⁷ Jason Mittell, *Complex TV: The Poetics of Contemporary Television Storytelling* (New York: New York University Press, 2015), 18.

ing characteristic of complex narrative series is its unconventionality that is reflected in a few distinctive elements. One of them is connecting episodes' storylines in a cumulative narrative that builds over time rather than providing every episode with its own plot closure. Season-long narrative arcs are reasons for (or sometimes products of) that style of narrative. Sometimes within those arcs there is episodic coherence that provides resolutions of narrative events that are in connection with future events. That kind of narrative usually requires a clear distinction between major events "central to the cause and effect chain of events in the plot" ("kernels"); "satellites", minor events that "provide texture, tone and character richness", however are inessential to the plot and "could be easily omitted from the plot without impacting narrative comprehension".⁸ However, there is always a possibility that satellite turns into kernel as the time and episodes progress since conventional narrative pillars are shaken.

Seriality is also defined by its "essential structure made of story instalments parceled out over time with gaps between entries through a strictly regimented use of screen time."⁹ In that way a series is usually presented to the audience via the television medium as weekly instalments (episodes) in limited, strictly-controlled narration time. Collecting episodes into DVD box sets or the Netflix manner of boxed distribution of entire seasons at once to its digital libraries drastically changed the serial experience, corrupted strict television schedules, and in so did "forgo the gap-filled serial broadcast experience altogether"¹⁰. The disappearance of time gaps between episodes reflects on extra-narrative elements like opening credits and recapitulations, as well as on narrative itself. No time gap means a thicker narrative and no need for subtle cues in dialogue or character actions to draw special attention to previous events.

In my analysis I came to the conclusion that *Crno-bijeli svijet* has an unconventional season-long narrative arc that is mostly defined by series story time. That is also dictated by actual historical events carefully pinpointed in the story. Narrative is thick and filled with references on past events that happened throughout the series, as well as in mentioning and referring to historical events that happened at described moment. The plot of each episode is connected to the next without any special reminders. There are no major and minor events mostly because there is no strict plot ("story about nothing"), however, since every "satellite" has a potential to become a "kernel", each ongoing plot and arc demands invested cumulative knowledge since events and characters' actions are connected across episodes.

Distribution of the series was different for each season, which had its influence on the series' seriality. The first season was released in March 2015 and aired over three weeks, four days a week. That is unconventional for this type of series that is not of the multi-episode 'soap opera' series genre. The second season had a more conventional release date and schedule time: it opened in October, aired every Friday evening for 12 weeks, providing the audience with a more conventional television

⁸ Ibid, 23.

⁹ Ibid, 27.

¹⁰ Ibid, 41.

experience. Reruns had different air times depending on the individual TV stations' schedules (weekend evening, or workdays evening airing, or even everyday afternoon airing). Because of its thick plot packed with different types of references, in relations to characters and previous events and storylines, but also cultural and historical/periodical references, daily airing (similar to "binge-watching") helps viewers keep track of even the most subtle reference layer. Distribution of the first season, although highly unusual for this type of TV network, was justified by the plot itself. In the second season's plot there are longer time breaks in series story time, so weekly episodic regiment are somewhat justified. However, this decision could be also affected by series' popularity and the market laws for prolonging its distribution for the sake of promotion and publicity.

The music and musical references

As mentioned above, music plays major part in this series and is embedded into every aspect of it. At some points it is elevated to the central role of the plot because of characters' strong feelings and connections towards it, and even a series metaphor¹¹ that can be traced even to the series name and opening credits song.

The series contains original music by Dubravko Robić, but Robić's score serves as accompaniment to pre-existing popular music that is the focus of the series. The creator of the series uses popular music and its power to denote time and space in line with the commonly cited quote: "Contemporary music doesn't merely tell a story or set a mood; it is the story and it is the mood."¹² Locating music in a particular socio-cultural milieu informs viewers that characters are consumers of this music, and in that way popular music is used to provide "patterns of musical allusions" interwoven with configurations of characters (signifying identity markers like age, class, social standard, political views), theme (identifying events, situations, places, locations, etc.) and authorial expression.¹³

Creators added musical references in every aspect of the series: the main title of the series, as well as titles of each episode, are connected with song titles, some characters are named after certain songs, and the appearance of several then emerging musicians as cameos and supporting roles is prominently used with along their music. Although the focus is on Yugoslav new wave music, other music genres could be traced throughout the series as well, and that is mostly in relations with new wave, or as its opposite. New wave music is considered the sound of young characters. Commercial pop and rock n' roll music are in connection with their parents that have no understanding for this "new rough, loud music sound". On the other hand, folk music

¹¹ James Deaville, "A Discipline Emerges: Reading Writing about Listening to Television," in *Music in Television: Channels of Listening*, ed. James Deaville (New York: Routledge, 2011), 8.

¹² Smith, *The Sounds of Commerce*, 163.

¹³ Ibid.

denotes a rural setting as the opposite of new wave, which represents an urban, city soundscape. That opposition follows the 'great divide' between these two music genres in Yugoslavia with the understanding that folk music promotes negative values, and punk/new wave the opposite. By protagonists of new wave (artists, journalists, music critics) folk music was considered to have negative influence on young audience because it was largely focused on commercial success on the extent of the quality of its musical elements. On the other hand, Yugoslav new wave artists promoted good values such as creativity, free thinking, positive messages, while also paying more attention to the quality of music and lyrics since commercial success was not their primary focus.

That opposition continues even in the contemporary post-Yugoslav context. Over time new wave protagonists created this mythical position of that genre and were insisting on its good values as opposed to folk music and especially turbo-folk, its contemporary derivate. So by evocating the 1980s and focusing on this particular genre and story lines, the creators of the series *Crno-bijeli svijet* are giving their contribution to promoting new waves values in a contemporary socio-political context.

Further in this chapter I will present the analysis of said references in particular scenes that are good illustrations of the creators' intention to use new wave music as the 'sound of an era'. In next paragraphs I will present an overview of musical references placed in the titles, the use of song lyrics for characters' names and script lines, plus musical references denoting places the appearance of musical artists as cameo characters.

Crno-bijeli svijet [*Black-White World*] is the title song of the second studio album by Croatian and former Yugoslav rock band Prljavo kazalište, released in 1980. Apart from the name of the series, this song is also used in the opening credits of each episode. For the opening credits the entire song is juxtaposed with photos of Zagreb from the beginning of the 1980s. While lyrics of the opening song describe the world in black and white with "black and white TV, rarely night tram, white girlfriend, imported exclusive program", the opening credits show colorful photos of the city life. At the end of the opening credits the title of the episode appears. All episodes are named after songs from this time period. Their titles are usually used in connection with the content of the episode, e.g. *442 do Beograda* [*442 to Belgrade*], a song by Belgrade band Bajaga i instruktori that is the title for the fifth episode of the first season in which Una's band goes to play a concert in Belgrade. However, the title songs are rarely used as soundtrack. In that way the series creators used symbolic and transference of meaning without using the actual music, but still achieving the desired effect. An example of that is the use of Azra's song titles and keeping their important musical legacy present in the show without using any of their music.

A similar homage to Azra is presented in the names of characters that are borrowed from Azra's songs. Kipo and Marina, two important characters in the series, are named after Azra's songs.¹⁴ Apart from song titles and their names, the relationship

¹⁴ *Kipo* is fourth song on Azra's second album *Sunčana strana ulice* (Sunny side of the street, 1981), and *Marina* is eighth track on Azra's first album – *Azra* (1980).

between these two characters in the series resembles the lyrics of Azra's song *Marina*. However, the song itself is heard only once when Kipo sings its opening in the shower after Marina helps him with his article (season two, episode 10).¹⁵

The lyrics of some songs are used as part of script without audio reference, but just as part of conversation or reason for dramatic conflict in the plot of an episode. In the first episode of the second season, Lada, Žac's girlfriend, and her family are preparing for their trip to the seashore, when her father reads the list of things they need, and the list is part of the lyrics of Haustor's song *More, More* [*The sea, oh the sea*]. The entire plot of episode nine in season two revolves around Bijelo dugme's song *Selma* – Kipo references it in a conversation with Marina, and later a girl introduced as Selma answers his add about a room that he is renting, so he assumes that it's Marina, because he knows she is looking for a room, but it turns out it is not. However, Marina calls later anyway, and dramatic conflict is achieved.

Throughout the series many musicians make cameo appearances, either as themselves (like Slađana Milošević and Davorin Bogović), or as characters who interact with the main characters. Scenes show characters involvement in musician's creative process by giving ideas for songs, like when Kipo meets Darko Rundek, leader of the band Haustor, and hints to him the idea of a summer-light song about girls in summer dresses, that ends up being the single from 1981's *Moja prva ljubav* [*My first love*], with the penning lines "Djevojke u ljetnim haljinama volim" ["Girls in summer dresses I love"] (episode 7, season 1). A character's involvement in a musician's performance occurs when Una's band prepares to open the concert for Prljavo kazalište, but gets thrown out. A few moments later, the bass player of Prljavo kazalište, Nino Hrastek, hurts his hand, and Una jumps in as his substitute, performing onstage with the rest of the band (episode 12, season one).

Interaction connected with the storyline happens when Kipo's family is visiting him in the army and Žac, Kipo's younger brother, meets Goran Bregović, leader of band Bjelo dugme, in a restaurant bathroom in Niš (episode 2, season 1). They talk about music and Žac tells him that he is not a fan of Bregović's "commercial rock music", but he also tells him that he is visiting his older brother stationed in Niš. Bregović then gives him a demo cassette of a song for their next album that will be "less commercial and more progressive". The song on is *Pjesma mom mlađem bratu* [*Song to my little brother*] that appeared on their album *Doživjeti stotu* [*Live to be 100*] in 1980 and which Bregović dedicated to his younger brother while he was serving in the army in 1978 in Niš – just as Žac's older brother was at that moment. On their way back home, they play this cassette in the car and its gentle, sentimental music underscores Žac's inner thoughts about his brother being in the army. Also the lyrics mention the city of

¹⁵ There are few songs with the name Marina in their title in Yugoslav pop music. One of them is used in season one episode 11, while Kipo is courting Marina and asks a DJ in the club to "play a song for Marina". The DJ plays easy, light pop song *Noć tajanstva* [*Night of mystery*] by *Grupa 777*, with the chorus "Marina, to je noć tajanstva" [*Marina, that's a night of mystery*]. When Kipo confronts him, the DJ says that Johnny (referring to frontman of Azra) took away all Azra's records. In that way the creators are indirectly disclosing a confrontation they had with Branimir Johnny Stulić, Azra's frontman, about copyrights for Azra's songs, and that is the reason for absence of Azra's music in the series soundtrack.

Niš, which brings us to the next point describing how music is used to denote places and different locations in the series.

New wave music is used as a marker for urban city areas and city youth that listen to it almost religiously. Folk music is used in presenting rural areas, like Struga, Kipo's second place of military service. After serving in the city of Niš, he gets sent to Struga, a small town near Ohrid, in far southwest of Macedonia ("from Zagreb to Struga is the same distance as from Zagreb to Paris"). Kipo's military days in Struga are filled with constant struggle between him and his commanding officer that is of opinion that "rock'n'roll music is polluting the combat readiness of young soldiers and Yugoslav youth in general". There Kipo and some of his friends from his unit get into fight with locals in a tavern after the bartender switches the radio music from Vlatko Stefanovski's guitar music to some popular folk songs (season one episode four). Although Stefanovski was locally famous, his music was not a part of rural tavern atmosphere, and the changing of the music resulted in physical conflict.

The generation gap between characters is presented by music in nearly strict use of music genres. New wave and punk are genres of the young generation, heard as diegetic music in clubs and at live gigs, and via a few dearly obtained records. Characters are also portrayed through songs' lyrics that are used to 'speak for [the] characters', and tell the story not told by visuals and dialogue. Middle aged characters have no apparent musical representation, apart from the occasional mainstream music from the official radio station. The older, pre-war generation, though, in the second season, with the appearance of Jagoda's father, who listens to old records, gets musical background in crooners and music by Ivo Robić, a Croatian chanson singer from the 1960s.

The show's creator's focus is undoubtedly on Zagreb's new wave music of the 1980s, together with few other notable new wave artists from other Yugoslav republics. At the time, new wave music was considered a progressive, underground genre that evolved in urban areas. Folk music, pop singers and mainstream rock n' roll bends (like *Bijelo dugme*) were commercially more successful. However, after the break-up of Yugoslavia and rise of turbo-folk, Yugoslav new wave became its mythological counterpart, 'good opposition' and part of a nostalgic view on the former country and collective past that peoples' of Yugoslavia share today. So we can conclude that the creators' strong input is imprinted in portrayal of the Yugoslav music scene in the 1980s with the creators' specific viewpoint on the music scene of that period. In that light, in the next chapter I will present three scenes from the series that reflect the use of new wave music as subtle illustrative 'rebellious' acts in connection with historical political and social events shown in a series reflecting the creators' contemporary point of view.

New wave (of) 'rebellion'

The focus of the first season is on music, with many cameo appearances and music related subjects that are guiding lines for characters' storylines and development. In the last episode we witness the change of character when Jura gets inspired by Una's music. He comes home from work agitated and hears Una's band practicing in the basement. He comes down, as it appears, to confront them because of the noise, but ends up standing by the door, listening to the song and its lyrics – "Come on, move yourself, wake up, don't be afraid, maybe you are the one that says it's not the end" ["Ma daj, pokreni se/ma daj, ne boj se/Ma daj, možda ti si taj koji kaže nije kraj"]. He seems affected and empowered by the song and even the band is surprised when he walks in and congratulates them on their good work on a good song. After that point Jura's actions change as he becomes more critical towards the party and its political decisions, and expresses his views more freely, and this scene could be one of *satellite events* that affected the rest of his character development.

A political note is noticeable in many different aspects in the series, and this is more prominent in second season. The subjects characters deal with almost always have an added political tone. Creators of the series included different political decisions and events that occurred in that time, like the Kosovo riots in 1981, oil crises and the 'even/odd plate numbers' petrol policy. Also they insist on raising social questions that were kept away from the public eye, like military medical leaves due to fake insanity, the revival of youth work actions (organized voluntary labor activities used to build public infrastructure after World War Two, organized by Communist Youth and became popular social activity) and its demise, queues for food and other necessities, society's approach to the Croatian Revolutionary Movement (Ustashe), etc. Characters developed in that way as well: Kipo moved on to writing about socially important questions for prestigious Zagreb newspapers and making an impact with his stories.

One of scenes that illustrate some of above-mentioned elements are the first scenes of the second season. Opening conversation between Žungul's father, major Kurtela, and Kipo, revolves around Žungul's army-induced insanity in military station in Kosovo in 1981, and major Kurtela's talk about "these *p.u.n.k.* signs all over Zagreb, that must be political provocation with the riots in Kosovo", because he sees those signs as acronyms for banner "Pomozimo ustanak narodu Kosova" ["Help the Riots of Kosovo People"]. Even in that way of misconception and paranoid misunderstanding of it, punk is considered as signifier of rebellion. However, as Žac's Marxism professor explains (episode eight, season two), since punk music and cultural movement developed as working class rebellion against upper classes, in Yugoslavia's communist, classless society that kind of class rebellion is redundant. In the Yugoslav social context, new wave music had a rebellious drive with its progressive sound, socially critical lyrics, and performers' non-conventional appearances. One scene in the series (episode nine, season one) employs all of those meanings in illustrative and symbolic

way in order to show the creators' view on the political situation then from today's perspective with the knowledge and preconception of events that occurred.

The fourth episode of the first season deals with the death of Marshal Tito, and the ways it affected people in Yugoslavia. In the episode prior, Jura celebrates his birthday and gets one of the newest pieces of technology: a video recorder that can record live television programs. In the ninth episode, he has disagreements with his supervisor at work, and, as a means to work them out he mentions that he recorded the live television broadcast of Tito's funeral on his video recorder. As a way of reconciliation of their differences, Jura invites his supervisor to watch the recording of Tito's funeral, but few minutes after its start, the video is cut by television performance of the song *Novo vrijeme* [New Age] by Slovenian New wave band Buldožer. It appears that someone recorded over Jura's video. Tito remained one of the key symbols of Yugoslavia even after his death, and his funeral was an internationally acclaimed event that was also televised live all over the country; only a lucky few could have made a home recording of it. Recording over it – and, thus erasing the footage – meant losing forever this unique historical artifact. However, losing it to a new wave musical recording puts a new insight to it from today's perspective, especially if the song is about the dawn of new age in the country.

Conclusion

Jon Burlingame calls the music of American television "the soundtrack of our lives".¹⁶ Since strong authorial expression is evident in this series regarding music, I feel this quote could be appropriate for this occasion as well given the use of music in this television series and the myriad of ways music is connected to other narrative and extra-narrative elements. The use of music created in the time period portrayed in the series was supposed to provide it with the sense of authenticity of the historical period, not merely an 'authentic undertone' which was the creators' original idea. In that manner, after the first few episodes aired, some discrepancies were noticed regarding a number of details and presentation of historical moments and events. It is evident that this is not a documentary series, although it was perhaps advertised in that manner, so many viewers were disappointed by the way Kulenović and Mirković chose to present everyday life in Yugoslavia in the 1980s.¹⁷

On that note comes the question Kathryn Kalinak asked regarding Mike Curb's quote from the liner notes on the *Zabriskie Point* soundtrack album. As a way to prove that popular, contemporary rock n' roll music used as compilation score in that and other similar films (like *American Graffiti*, *The Graduate*, *Easy Rider*, etc.) compliments the film's storyline in best way possible, Curb notes that "contemporary

¹⁶ James Deaville, "The 'Problem' of Music in Television," in *Music in Television: Channels of Listening*, ed. James Deaville (New York: Routledge, 2011), 1.

¹⁷ Miljenko Jergović, "Mit osamdesetih, 2015, <https://www.jergovic.com/sumnjivo-lice/mit-osamdesetih/>, acc. April 30, 2018.

music *is* the story and it *is* the mood". In these cases, however, the entire scoring process became, as Jeff Smith says, a matter of spotting song selection, and in that process, according to Kalinak, fundamental principles of film music seemed ignored. She explains that film music principles like the use of music to illustrate narrative content or provide structural unity, or direct synchronization of music and image are ignored for the sake of contemporaneity that "failed to support the story and mood because it *was* the story and mood".¹⁸

In that manner, regarding this series the question could be asked: is used, pre-existing music part of the series unconventional narrative that is strongly suggestive, seductive and uses musical elements that are there to support the storyline, and not to act as soundtrack? Is used pre-existing music too tangled into character development and intertextual suggestions so that its acts on that narrative layer rather than as compilation score? In that case, could music be considered part of creators' narrative tools rather than musical ones? There are arguments for both sides because music within its sound inevitably carries other non-musical information regarding the composer, performer, performance. In the case of *Crno-bijeli svijet* it might seem that extra-musical narrative elements prevail, but that wouldn't be possible if there were no quality musical elements in the first place.

References

- Ajduk, Marija. "Vesele' osamdesete kroz prizmu televizijske serije *Crno-bijeli svijet*." *Antropologija* 16, 2 (2016): 9–25.
- Deavile, James. "The 'Problem' of Music in Television." In *Music in Television: Channels of Listening*, edited by James Deavile, 1–7. New York: Routledge, 2011.
- Deavile, James. "A Discipline Emerges: Reading Writing about Listening to Television." In *Music in Television: Channels of Listening*, edited by James Deavile, 8–34. New York: Routledge, 2011.
- Jergović, Miljenko. "Mit osamdesetih." 2015. <https://www.jergovic.com/sumnjivo-lice/mit-osamdesetih/>. Accessed April 30, 2018.
- Mittell, Jason. *Complex TV: The Poetics of Contemporary Television Storytelling*. New York: New York University Press, 2015.
- Smith, Jeff. *The Sounds of Commerce: Marketing Popular Film Music*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1998.

Article received: March 31, 2018

Article accepted: May 10, 2018

Original scholarly paper

¹⁸ Smith, *The Sounds of Commerce*, 164.