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RADIO BELGRADE IN THE CONTEXT OF THE MODERNIZATION OF SERBIAN SOCIETY IN THE INTERWAR PERIOD¹

Modernization means examining the relationship between “traditionalism” and “modernism” and is interpreted as “a global transformation of the traditional, that is, the transforming of stagnant societies into dynamic systems” (Gredelj, 1997; 41).² Modernization can also be understood as “a process of social change, where less developed societies adopt characteristics that are common in developed societies” (Marković, 1990; 8).³ The appearance of modernization, therefore, indicates “social development”, as well as “the intensifying of the process of social differentiation and the constant changing of internal and external circumstances of a social system” (Gredelj, 1997; 41).⁴

The medium of the radio represents a paradigmatic example for examining the process of modernization in the first half of the 20th century.⁵ The radio first appeared as a means of communication, alongside the telegraph and telephone, in the context of the development of industrial capitalism in the late 19th century (Middleton, 1990; 84).⁶ It was not until the second decade of the last century that the radio acquired its specific forms (broadcasting) and new social function, that is, became a mass medium (Middleton, 1990; 84).⁷ The expansion of radio as a medium of mass communication contributed to quicker and more efficient penetration of advanced models into traditional societies, which meant that, by listening to the radio programme, listeners became participants in modernization on the level of local, that

¹ We would like to point out that this paper was written in the fifth year of musicology studies, during the school year of 2005/2006, under the mentorship of Vesna Mikić, PhD, and we would like to take this opportunity to thank her for her help and cooperation.

² The theory of modernization was particular topical in the 1960s, while after that period it was belittled as “an ideology of western imperialism” (Berger, 1992, cited from: Gredelj, 1996; 239). Half a century later the problem of modernization has once again become an object of interest.

³ The theory of modernization and its application to examining life in Belgrade in the interwar period is the topic of Predrag J. Marković’s master’s thesis entitled *Evropski uticaji na proces modernizacije Beograda 1918-1941 (European Influences on the Process of Modernization of Belgrade 1918-1941)*, (for more details, see: Marković, 1990). This study was the starting point for our analysis of the process of modernization.

⁴ The appearance of the modernization process is indicated by the following formal characteristics: influence of foreign capital, growth of economic participation (expressed in the growth of per capita income), sense of national belonging, political participation (reflected in the population’s voting), secularization (the separation of religion from the state), increased social differentiation, industrialization, urbanization, great empathy, expansion of literacy and mass communication media (Marković, 1990; Gredelj: 1996; 242).

⁵ In the remainder of the text, we shall use a lower case letter when referring to the radio as a medium and upper case for the radio as an institution.

⁶ The earliest practical application of radiotelegraphy in the world dates back to 1896 (it was first used by Guglielmo Marconi), while radiotelephony was first applied in 1902.

⁷ On the significance of the radio for the development of media communication, see: Frith, 2004; 96; also cf.: Negus, 1996; 75 - 83.

is, global cultural space (Marković, 1990; 102).⁸ In that sense, it would be important to ascertain to what extent the development of radio and radio technology influenced the modernization of Serbian society, that is, the Belgrade cultural milieu.⁹

It seems justified to examine this problem, if we bear in mind that the first public broadcasting station – Radio Belgrade – was founded in Belgrade in the late 1920s, which points to the fact that Serbian society was involved in the process of modernization.¹⁰ Therefore, we shall use Radio Belgrade as a model for examining the parameters of modernization and, by analyzing the specific characteristics of this broadcasting station in the first decade of its development, we shall attempt to demonstrate to what extent Serbian society adopted the principles of the functioning of developed societies. It is particularly important to examine to what extent music, whose broadcasting constituted most of the programme on Radio Belgrade, contributed to the diffusion of advanced models. We shall base our analyses of the

⁸ Marković points out that the radio laid the foundations of the globalization principle (Marković, 1990; 103). Globalization is based on “removing social activities from local knowledge and placing them into networks in which they are conditioned by world events” (Smirs; 2003: 124). The final result of globalization is “monoculture” – “a global homogenization of culture and lifestyle, as well as an equalization of the technological level, which is accompanied by the disappearance of local traditions and economies” (Mander and Goldsmith, 2003; 7 - 8).

⁹ According to Predrag Marković, the process of modernization in Belgrade began in 1878 at the latest. Marković characterized the type of modernization of this milieu as “the most contradictory example of a society in transition” (Marković, 1990; 313). The contradiction thesis is based on the fact that Serbian society never underwent complete modernization, but instead wavered on the line between traditionalism and modernism. The term “society in transition” implies a “set of activities by means of which relationships, institutions and values of western society are transferred to the territory of Eastern European countries” (Gredelj, 1996; 242).

¹⁰ The special needs for communicating imposed by war circumstances (the reference is to the First World War) brought about the appearance of the first broadcasting stations (Simović, 2000; 15). The first radiotelegraphic station in Serbia was founded in 1915 in order to establish a connection between the High Command and the Serbian government in the First World War (Gašić, 2005; 106). The same period saw the appearance of the first broadcasting stations in other European countries as well (for example, in the Netherlands, Germany and France the first broadcasting stations began to appear in 1919). A significant contribution to the development of radio in Serbia was made by the French company TSF, which had the permit to build a radiotelegraphic network through which the radio signal between Europe and the Near East was broadcast. The transmitting station (located in Rakovica) was one of the strongest radiotelegraphic stations in this part of Europe. The aforementioned station initially had a connection only with Beirut, but later on, when the signal was improved, the broadcasting area expanded (for more details, see: Marković, 1990; 103). Radio Belgrade, as the ninth broadcasting station in Europe, began broadcasting an experimental programme on October 1, 1924 (initially on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays). The true beginning of “the epoch of the radio” in Serbia came with the regular broadcasting of the programme and the foundation of the company *Radio Beograd a. d.* (in 1927), that is, when the national radio network was institutionalized – on March 24, 1929. However, since there were difficulties in broadcasting in the medium-wave system, a short-wave station was also founded to facilitate more efficient functioning. The short-wave station was founded in 1936 with the aim of distributing the radio programme into remote areas of Yugoslavia. This station was dominated by the aspirations of the Yugoslav government, which meant that the main portion of the programme consisted of news which were prepared in the Press Office of the Representative Body of the Government and broadcast daily in eight foreign languages (for more details, see: 1937, no. 17; 1). This was the beginning of the politicization of radio. Even though the joint-stock company *Radio* had been granted a fifteen-year concession, in 1939 the Ministry of Post and Telegraph took away the concession on the broadcasting station from the company and in 1940 a new management board was appointed. The Radio's headquarters in the building of the Academy of Sciences, where the studio was located, was bombarded at the beginning of the Second World War. The broadcasting of the programme was resumed after 1944 (for more details on the functioning of the radio in the years after the Second World War, see: Simović, 2000; 29 - 58).

aforementioned problems on the reading of *Radio Beograd* magazine,¹¹ that is, issues of the magazine published in the period from 1929 to 1940.¹²

THE MEDIUM OF THE RADIO IN THE BELGRADE CULTURAL MILIEU – ANALYZING ELEMENTS OF MODERNIZATION¹³

Characteristics of economic modernization

Economic modernization is conditioned by natural and historical circumstances in which a society develops. When those circumstances are unfavourable, the investment of domestic and foreign capital provides an additional stimulus for social progress (Marković, 1990; 30).¹⁴ This is precisely the case with the appearance and activity of Radio Belgrade.

The French company TSF was the first to get a permit to build a radiotelegraphic network in Yugoslavia, while from the 1930s onwards the majority of the capital was in the hands of English investors.¹⁵ Austrian capital also had a substantial share, which is witnessed by the fact that official records were maintained in German (in the first years of the Radio's operation) (Gašić, 2005; 108). It should be underlined that the market was dominated by German, Dutch and American distributors of

¹¹ *Radio-Beograd* magazine was published three times a week with the aim of informing the listeners. Informing meant providing information about the radio programme, radio technology and current events and later it included publishing texts on different subject matters and supplements, which were usually broadcast before being published. It was emphasized that the main purpose of the magazine was "to be at the service of all those interested in broadcasting and those who wanted to use this great invention" (1931, no. 6: 1). That the publishing of such a magazine was in keeping with European trends is demonstrated by a research entitled "How Many Radio Magazines There Are in Europe", which underlined that Belgrade was lagging behind Germany in the number of radio magazines (there were 61 in Germany at the time), but was not behind Italy, Switzerland or Romania (those countries had one magazine of this type each) (1929, no. 5; 16). The first issue of the magazine was published on March 17, 1929 as a weekly, continuing until 1940. The magazine was not published during and after the Second World War. From 1960 onwards, with the development of television, *Radio-Beograd* magazine was replaced by newsletters, information sheets and yearbooks dedicated to the activities of Belgrade Radio Television. All the aforementioned publications can be found in the archives of Radio Belgrade. It should be mentioned that we shall not correct spelling or grammatical mistakes when quoting contents printed in the magazine for reasons of authenticity.

¹² This paper is a result of a research of the Radio Belgrade archives, which was conducted with the help of Gorica Pilipović (Second Programme of Radio Belgrade) and the staff of the archives and we would like to take this opportunity to thank them for their help.

¹³ We shall examine the parameters of modernization on the economic, political and social levels.

¹⁴ In the context of the development of Serbian society, we can understand the term "modernization" as a synonym for "Europeanization", since it was European influences that had the most effect on the transformation of society (Marković, 1990; 32). In addition to European influences, American influences were also pronounced in the field of mass culture, which means we can speak of a form of "Westernization" (even though American influences were adopted via the European ones) (Marković, 1990; 32).

¹⁵ At first, government representatives resisted foreign investors and one of the conditions for the establishment of the broadcasting station was that the management board of the company *Radio a. d.* had to include citizens of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenians. Since local investors were not particularly interested in investing, foreign capital played a crucial role in the founding and subsequent functioning of the broadcasting station (Marković, 1990; 106).

radio sets (*Telefunken, Siemens-Halske, Brown, Förg, Phillips, Standard Electric, Crosley, Philco*).¹⁶ Thus foreign investors influenced the development of the market and the society, establishing models that determined the process of modernization in Serbia, that is, the acceptance of postulates of modernization by the listeners.

Additionally, in a way, the needs of foreign investors steered certain segments of the programme. This is suggested by foreign language learning via the radio, initially French and German, and later on Czech (from 1932), Polish (from 1934), and English (from 1936). The programme also included lectures of foreign authors translated into Serbian, as well as broadcasts of lectures in foreign languages. Another popular part of the programme were educational lectures, broadcast mainly with the aim of familiarizing the public with primarily European and American culture and tradition.¹⁷ Live broadcasts of various (music and non-music) events taking place across Europe also indicated a need to become part of the current, mostly European, scene.¹⁸

Another important phenomenon in the process of economic modernization was related to familiarizing the listeners with technological innovations, that is, with radio sets and the potential of radio technology.¹⁹ Although many listeners resisted innovations (or “the modern”), there was a lot of propaganda in promoting new technology.²⁰ Each issue of the magazine featured texts on “topical issues of radio technology”, including schemes for assembling and installing radio sets, which was further accompanied by “evenings of technical advice” (for example, 1929, no. 1, 1; 1929, no. 2, 2; 1929, no. 5, 1; 1936, no. 1, 4). Notwithstanding such a promotion of the radio, acquiring a radio set was not a simple

¹⁶ These companies distributed radio sets and record players, and we found an abundance of different advertisements for these pieces of equipment in *Radio-Beograd* magazine.

¹⁷ Lectures on America predominated, such as: “Kalifornija raj na zemlji” (California, Heaven on Earth), “Indijanci u Americi” (Indians in America), “Kultura starih američkih naroda” (The Culture of Native Americans), “Kolumbija radio u Americi” (Radio Columbia in America), “Amerikansko knjigovodstvo” (American Bookkeeping), “Jugoslovenski radio u Americi” (Yugoslav Radio in America) and the like (1929, no. 3, 3; 1929, no. 6, 6; 1932, no. 1, 8; 1932, no. 9, 1; 1932, no. 13, 8; 1936, no. 5, 1). Lectures on India and Africa were also occasionally broadcast (for example, 1932, no. 2, 4).

¹⁸ The radio broadcast concerts from Vienna, Prague, Munich, and Berlin, while the first non-musical live broadcast was the coronation of the British King George VI (which is understandable, given that British capital was dominant at the time) (1937, no. 19, front cover).

¹⁹ Initially the listeners had a negative attitude towards the radio, because they felt that the set itself looked odd and unattractive (according to: 1932, no. 4: 4). The first radio sets had earphones and it was only later, with the improvement of technology, that loudspeakers appeared – “the most important instrument for the playing of reproduced music” (1930, no. 1, 11). The most primitive type of loudspeakers could be constructed even by amateurs. Radio sets with loudspeakers were bulky, cumbersome and very expensive. That made the radio set a privilege of the affluent, which meant that listeners often gathered in each other’s homes to listen to the radio programme (for more details, see: Negus, 1996; 75 - 76). In time, the radio became a part of everyday life of all the social classes – “nowadays the radio set is a part of household appliances in almost every home” (Švarc, 1932: 45). Television, which is first mentioned (in the magazine) as soon as 1932, became the new phenomenon. At the time it was claimed that the basic technical problems had not been solved and that “television will not diffuse among the masses any time soon” because of it (1932, no. 16, 4). Even though the technical capacities did not exist, there was an awareness of the expansion and the need for introducing new media and the following decade was marked by the analysis of prerequisites necessary for the introduction of television.

²⁰ A very important role was played by radio clubs, whose members contributed to the expansion of the network and the increase in the number of radio sets though their amateur work (Gašić, 2005; 107). The first radio club was founded in 1924 and it brought together people of different profiles and from different social classes (Gašić, 2005; 107).

procedure, since each user had to submit a request for installation and pay a fee and the subscription, which resulted in a small number of subscribers (1929, no. 5: 11). Numerous advertisements dedicated to the radio and radio equipment were printed and radio exhibitions were organized with the aim of popularizing the radio (medium/set) as an everyday part of life.²¹ The radio was, therefore, one of the first widely-used electrical appliances, so that in a certain sense the expansion of the radio signaled a new phase in the modernization process – “the wave of electrification” of households.²²

Characteristics of political modernization

The greatest results of modernization in Serbian society in the first half of the 20th century were achieved on the state and political levels (Marković, 1990; 32 - 33). The shift in the “sense of belonging” from the regional to the national is a testimony of this political modernization (Marković, 1990; 11).²³ The national state of the Serbian people existed in the 19th century and the moment of the creation of Yugoslavia (1918) marked the end of nationalism in the narrower sense of the word.²⁴ National ideology continued to exist, only this time in interaction with the cosmopolitan ideas of liberalism, which made the penetration of European influences all the more evident.²⁵

It was believed that the radio played an especially important role in promoting the doctrine of rationalism and that “the expansion of the use of radio was a national need” (1931, no. 5, 10).²⁶ It was emphasized that “the general task of cultural activity determines the progress and flourishing of national cultures of individual nations” and that “the more cultural the nationalism of a nation is, the greater the value of that nation will be” (1930, no. 6, 1). Preservation of the mother tongue is one of the elements conditioning national identity, which made it important for the listeners to hear announcements in “their

²¹ At radio exhibitions, visitors had the opportunity to record their own voice, song or business letter (1938, no. 2, 1). This allowed the listeners to become acquainted with the possibilities of radio.

²² The year 1956 saw the beginning of the so-called “wave of electrification”, that is, a sudden increase in the purchase of household appliances. At the time, the radio was already widespread and the refrigerator and the stove became the new popular and sought-after appliances (Marković, 1995; 259).

²³ In determining the notion of the national we refer to Timothy Baycroft’s definition of nationalism. Nationalism is a doctrine which is based on the preservation of the common characteristics of a nation, that is, a national community, with the aim of achieving independence (in terms of its meaning, nationalism is above patriotism). It is believed that the significant achievement of nationalism is the appearance of national dialects, that is, of a national language, as well as the formation of educational institutions, in order to help the diffusion of cultural heritage and its acceptance among the people (Baycroft, 1998; 4 - 5; 33 - 41).

²⁴ In smaller nations, as parts of multinational states, the national movement was directed towards achieving national independence, so that the promotion of the national implied a negative attitude towards foreign influences. However, as we have already stressed, foreign influences spread simultaneously with the development and strengthening of national ideology, which reflects the contradictory characteristics of modernization.

²⁵ Such a view emerged in the context of the development of the liberal movement – “the liberals perceive Yugoslavism as the end of our saturated, realized and definitive nationalism and the beginning of accepting the idea of uniting mankind-the Slavs... Yugoslavism was treated as a form of realizing cosmopolitan, universally humane ideas” (Žutić, 1994; 4-6).

²⁶ Keith Negus emphasizes that from the 1920s onwards the broadcasting of a radio programme had to serve national interests on the one hand, but also implied the fulfillment of requirements of the global commercial market on the other (Negus, 1996; 80).

native language”.²⁷ Shows dedicated to the preservation of the Serbian language, culture and tradition were broadcast with that aim in mind, among which the show “Srpsko veče” (Serbian Evening) had a special place on the programme (1930, no. 12, 1; 1929, no. 12, 14).²⁸ From the 1930s onwards, the emphasis on the idea of “Serbianism” was replaced by the promotion of the concept of Yugoslavism and the politics of “national reconciliation”.²⁹ In that period, Radio Belgrade collaborated with broadcasting stations from Zagreb and Ljubljana (from 1930),³⁰ while from 1933 onwards, *Radio-Beograd* magazine temporarily changed its name to *Radio Beograd, Zagreb, Ljubljana*. Nonetheless, even though an atmosphere of celebrating the union prevailed on the radio, political life was wrought with disagreements caused by the distancing from the Yugoslav idea and turning to individual national issues.³¹ Regardless of the existence of political friction, it seems that state representatives were trying to paint a different picture by means of the Radio. Thus, the year 1935 saw the introduction of the show “Nacionalni čas” (National Hour) which included different topics from Serbian, Croatian and Slovenian history and whose concept was to have all three broadcasting stations working together on the realization of the programme.³²

Furthermore, there were also other evident characteristics of political modernization, such as a greater effort to attain the ideals of equality. The phenomenon that completes political modernization, that is, the struggle for greater equality and participation of the population in political life, is the struggle for women’s rights (Marković, 1990; 34). At the time women were still a legally and politically discriminated segment of society and when we analyze “texts” from the radio we perceive that there was indeed a need to solve this problem in keeping with the trends of modernization. The radio programme occasionally featured broadcasts of lectures on the position of women in public life, often with a pronounced feminist connotation (which is illustrated by titles such as “Majka feminizma” /The Mother of Feminism/, “Muškarci i feminizam” /Men and Feminism/, “Radio i žena” /The Radio and Women/, “Žene u službi radija” /Women in the Service of the Radio/ and the like) (1930, no. 2, 17; 1930, no. 3, 1; 1931, no. 3, 1; 1939, no. 7, 1).

²⁷ It is interesting to mention that in the initial phase of the magazine’s distribution, texts were written in both the Latin and the Cyrillic alphabets (1929, no. 1, 8).

²⁸ In addition, there were commemorations of anniversaries of different historical events important to the Serbian people, such as the Battle of Kosovo, the breach of the Thessaloniki Front and the like (for example, 1939, no. 26, 1).

²⁹ In view of that, the magazine regularly featured statements such as “the country of our three tribes, the Serbian, the Croatian and the Slovenian, bears just one name – Yugoslavia” (1932, no. 4, 1).

³⁰ The first broadcasting station in Zagreb was founded in 1926 and the second one in Ljubljana in 1928.

³¹ Already in 1929 King Aleksandar Karađorđević indicated the possibility of the Serbs and the Croats separating. The King threw the political situation into additional turmoil by setting up a dictatorship, dissolving Parliament and suspending the Constitution, which had a negative impact on the preservation of Yugoslav ideology.

³² However, it can be assumed that there was some politicization of the radio, even though it was believed that “the radio should not serve as a propaganda tool for one particular group or party” (1933, no. 15, 1).

Characteristics of social modernization

The expansion of new media in Serbia³³ in the interwar period was very significant for the acceleration of the process of modernization of society (Marković, 1990; 102). At the time, the radio was represented to the public as “one of the greatest cultural achievements of mankind” (1931, no. 5, 10). Therefore, it had a major influence on empathy, that is, “one of the basic psychological mechanisms that lead to social change” (Marković, 1990; 102). If we bear in mind the fact that less literate and industrialized environments accepted the influence of radio more easily because they lacked a strong “visual organization of experience”, we realize the importance of this medium for the progress of Serbian society (Milenković, 2000; 98).³⁴

We can examine to what degree social modernization was realized by analyzing the social structure of the listeners. Namely, it was emphasized that the function of the radio was to serve as a “public service”, since “in that way our country gets one broadcasting station that will be useful to both the individual and the whole country” (1929, no. 1, 1). It was felt that the radio must serve general interests, “bring all individuals and the nation together” and “be available to all social strata” (1931, no. 5, 10; 1931, no. 7, 1). On the one hand, there was a need for a “universal” content intended for members of all social structures, that is, for the entire population. Such a programme concept was aimed at promoting the entertaining, educational and informative functions of the radio (musical, literary and scientific programmes, foreign language learning, lectures, news and reports).³⁵ That made every individual a part of the local (and global) network of the radio programme, a consumer, as shown by the following statement: “Suddenly I am no longer alone, I become a member of a great, invisible, yet present mass of listeners” (1933, no. 15, 1).

On the other hand, since the social structure of the population (the listeners) was not homogeneous, openness towards “all social strata” implied a differentiated programme that was determined by the demands of diverse, specific social classes. The most numerous members of the social structure (farmers, rentiers, officers, and students) were mostly not radio subscribers, which meant that

³³ We are referring to the two media that were current at the time – radio and film. It is important to mention that the radio also contributed to the popularization of record players, since records were very expensive and the radio often broadcast “Koncerti gramofonskih ploča” (Concerts of Gramophone Records) (1931, no. 1, 5).

³⁴ Milenković quotes the public communications theoretician Marshall McLuhan, who categorizes the radio as “hot media” in his work *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* and “a hot medium is the one that intensifies one single sense in high definition”. Consequently, hot media invite a small degree of participation on the part of the audience (cited from: Миленковић, 2000, 97).

³⁵ Music dominated the programme (about 60%), while the remainder of the programme consisted of talk shows – news (water level bulletins, news reports, economic news, stock exchange quotes, sports news), comedy and drama shows, lectures, language courses, and gymnastics classes (according to: 1933, no. 15, 1). Such a programme concept was similar to programmes of European broadcasting stations, because the general aspiration was to become part of the European communication space. It is interesting that the listeners could also participate in the formation of the programme by filling out poll slips where they wrote what they would like to hear. In addition, there was a show called “Želje slušalaca” (Listeners’ Wishes) (1936, no. 3, 1).

there was a need to attract these groups by a specific programme content.³⁶ It was underlined that “radio was not intended only for the more affluent circles” and that it also had to be “useful to our common folk” (1929, no. 1, 8). Thus, for one hour twice a month, the radio broadcast a variety show called “Radio za radnike” (Workers’ Radio) as well as the show “Emisija iznenađenja” (Surprise Show) intended for “our common man whose struggle for survival prevents him from devoting his free time to enjoyment during workdays” (1931, no. 7, 1; 1938, no. 11, 3). It was believed that “the radio should also be useful to the broad masses of farming folk”, which led to the introduction of a show called “Čas za seljake” (Farmers’ Hour), based on lectures on economy, hygiene and announcements of the Association of Serbian Agricultural Cooperatives (1929, no. 1, 1; and 1930, no.1, 14). Other important target groups included children, to whom the show “Dečji čas” (Children’s Hour) was dedicated, and the youth, because “they are the quickest to accept technical innovations” (1931, no. 11, 5). Thus, even though the majority of subscribers belonged to social groups that were characteristic of modern society (entrepreneurs, clerks, and the modern working class), there was a tendency to orient the programme concept towards other social structures as well.

The level of social modernization is also determined by “the social acceptance of the values of modernization”, that is, by the shift towards industrialization (Marković, 1990; 37). Regardless of the social differences among the listeners, one of the causes of the mass fascination with the radio³⁷ is the fact that it was the first time that different social classes had been offered something common – a full-day radio programme from which each individual listener could choose. The radio was presented as an affordable and economical medium, but also as a medium that “contributes to the national revenue in the form of tax”³⁸ and gives “a strong impetus to the industry” (1933, no. 6, 1; 1933, no. 8, 6).³⁹ The period

³⁶ In the beginning, the radio was a privilege of intellectuals and wealthier classes. The subscribers were mostly private employees, traders, craftsmen, and civil servants (for more details on the division of radio subscribers based on their occupations, see: Marković, 1990; 108 - 109).

³⁷ From the very moment of its foundation, the propaganda of radio as a unique medium began. The radio was promoted in a variety of ways, one of the interesting ones being the “playing car”. This car had a large loudspeaker mounted on its roof, through which the radio programme was transmitted. According to records, there were only twenty such cars in Europe at the time (1930, no. 26, 6). Another interesting way of promoting were jokes about the radio, printed in almost every issue of *Radio-Beograd* magazine, and texts underlining the benefits of the radio. Thus, for example, there was a belief that the radio contributed to the suppression of alcoholism, accompanied by the claim that “alcoholism has declined because most citizens go home in the evening to enjoy the radio” (1932, no. 20, 3). Slogans were printed on the covers of the magazine, pointing out the importance of the radio and underlining that “today the radio is a basic need”, “a friend, advisor, source of information, the pulse of modern life” (1938, no. 15; 1938, no. 17). Lotteries were also organized with the aim of popularizing the radio. For the sake of comparison, the winner received a prize of 500 dinars, the average price of a radio set was about 1000 dinars, the average income of Belgrade inhabitants was around 1200 dinars and *Radio-Beograd* magazine cost 5 dinars. However, there was a problem with listeners who did not pay the subscription, so that there was no increase in either the number of stations or the quality of the sets (1935, no. 2, 1).

³⁸ Subscription was introduced in 1924, with the percentage of radio subscription in Yugoslavia being the lowest in Europe (in 1933 only 0.3% of the listeners were paying the subscription fee). The small number of subscribers was caused by the high cost of radio sets. In addition, “illegal radio hunters”, that is, unregistered listeners who “listen to the programme, but do not pay anything to the state” were cited as the main problem. Fines were introduced for unregistered listeners in order to solve this situation, so that, for example, in 1937 the number of radio subscribers rose to 45%, that is, 26,800 (1929, no. 2, 1; 1937, no. 23, 1-2).

of the radio's appearance and expansion saw the establishment of a new model that determined the way in which new media functioned in the context of the development of the culture industry.⁴⁰ Namely, studios produce the goods, that is, the programme, which is then sold through the payment of subscription. In the moment of consumption, that programme becomes the producer, which produces the audience, after which the audience is sold to the advertisers (Fisk, 2001; 35).⁴¹ Thus the medium of radio indicates the functioning of two systems – the financial (which includes the circulation of profit) and the cultural (which implies the circulation and production of meaning). In that sense, the appearance of radio established and promoted the key demands of industrial society.

One of the characteristics of social modernization is the establishment of a new quality of everyday life and the mapping of elements of popular culture (Marković, 1990; 37).⁴² Namely, the everyday cultural life in Belgrade in the interwar period was marked by new social phenomena such as following fashion, fostering the cult of the body⁴³ and of health,⁴⁴ as well as attending sports events.⁴⁵ The said phenomena were the result of American influences, which penetrated Serbian society to a great extent via the American film industry, among other things.⁴⁶ The development of popular culture in Belgrade was, therefore, a progressive process, initiated under the influence of European and American models of behaviour, that is, industrialization and modernization. However, unlike the demands of modernization for social differentiation, the products of popular culture strive to negate social differences and become attractive to everyone (Fisk, 2001; 36).⁴⁷ This leads to an abolition of elitist cultural practice,

³⁹ We would like to point out that all the aims, requirements and activities of broadcasting stations were prescribed by the Rule Book on the Operation of Broadcasting Stations, which was printed in its entirety in the magazine (for more details, see: 1933, no. 17, 1).

⁴⁰ The term "culture industry" was first used by Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer in 1947 with the aim of describing the system of the functioning of "mass culture" (according to: Storey, 2003; 27).

⁴¹ Here I am retroactively applying Fisk's interpretation of the economy of television to the radio.

⁴² When we say "popular culture", we are referring to the phenomenon determined by the following parameters: it is attractive to the wide population, intended for mass consumption and opposed to high culture (Storey, 2004; 12 - 17). Popular culture is "the active process of creating and transferring meaning within a certain social system" (Fisk, 2001: 31).

⁴³ The year 1931 saw the first appearance of texts on the fashion industry, fashion trends and the history of fashion, and some time later cosmetic advice and statistical data on the use of cosmetics also became popular (see: 1939, no. 21: 13; 1940, no. 1: 12). From 1932 onwards, classes of gymnastics (first in the evening and later on in the morning) and dance were broadcast on the programme.

⁴⁴ There were also numerous lectures on health and hygiene as part of the show "Čas narodnog zdravlja" (National Health Class) (1930, no. 1: 19). In addition, special attention was also paid to nutrition in the show "O veštini kuvanja" (On Cooking Skills) (1931, no. 1, 19).

⁴⁵ After the First World War, sports became very popular all over the world. It was becoming less and less a privilege of the rich and becoming more and more available to the wider social population (Gašić, 2005; 133). Football, basketball, and tennis were the most popular sports. The first lectures on sports were broadcast in 1930, while the first (football) game was transmitted in 1931 (1931, no. 12, 8).

⁴⁶ The import of films was not legally limited, so that by 1941 Yugoslav audiences had the opportunity to see all the major film hits. The greatest favourites of the Belgrade audience were Hollywood stars, especially Charlie Chaplin (see: 1938, no. 7, 1, also cf.: Baronijan, 1970a; 212 - 214).

⁴⁷ An important phenomenon indicating a new way of thinking were commercials – "a commercial tries to preserve the greatest possible correspondence between social differences and differences in products... and to create the possibility of controlling social differences" (Fisk, 2001; 39). Different commercials demonstrating the needs of modern society were broadcast, ranging from commercials for radio sets, to commercials for shoes, cosmetic products and hair salons, to those advertising "sexual weaknesses" or the state lottery.

whose consumers are representatives of high social classes, that is, to a mass distribution of cultural products to different social classes (Storey, 2004: 14). The general aspiration was for the homogenization (universalization) of culture with the aim of developing cultural economy and conquering the market (for more details, see: Storey, 2004; 85 - 88).⁴⁸

Based on the aforementioned facts, it can be concluded that Serbian society was on the right track to overcoming the process of transition⁴⁹ and accepting changes and new models of functioning. We shall also verify this conclusion on the basis of an analysis of the presence of music on the Radio.

MUSIC ON RADIO BELGRADE IN THE CONTEXT OF MODERNIZATION

Through the medium of the radio, music became an integral part of everyday life and thus influenced the formation of the music taste of individual listeners, as well as the whole society, acting as a form of social communication and a sign of numerous social phenomena (Frith, 2002; 96 - 97). Therefore, by analyzing the music programme of Radio Belgrade, we shall try to establish to what extent Serbian society accepted the influences of modernized societies. If we bear in mind that music accounted for more than half of Radio Belgrade's broadcast programme, examining these elements seems particularly significant.

The music programme was stereotypically conceived and included different types of music, because "the radio requires variety, contrasts, instruction and entertainment" (Švarc, 1932; 48; cf.: Vukdragović, 1931; 2 - 3). It was required that music have "an educative effect on the masses", which made it necessary to achieve a balance between the educative and entertaining functions of music (1930, no. 14, 1; 1939, no. 1, 1). The music programme was differentiated so as to satisfy all social strata and their needs, because "the programme of the radio has to be compromising" (1936, no. 14, 1).⁵⁰ Namely, it was emphasized that the listeners distinguished between two types of music – while "one is easily accessible" so that "its melodies enter the ear on their own and its rhythm moves us on its own", the other one "is much less accessible since it makes higher demands not only on the ear but on a man's entire being" (1933, no. 12, 1). In the beginning of radio's development, classical music was prevalent on the

⁴⁸ This view was first advocated by the representatives of critical theory with the aim of emphasizing the negative connotations of mass culture. A similar view was also held by Guy Debord, who claims that "the image of blissful social unification through consumption merely postpones the consumer's awareness of the actual divisions until his next disillusionment with some particular commodity... The unreal unity proclaimed by the spectacle masks the class division underlying the real unity of the capitalist mode of production" (Debord, 1992; 68 - 70).

⁴⁹ Gredelj writes about "the magic quadrangle" which is based on the relationship between tradition, change, transition and modernization (Gredelj, 1996; 242). In that context, transition usually implies "a special stage in the evolution of a society, the stage in which it encounters increasing internal and external difficulties in reproducing economic and social relationships that it is based on and that give it a special logic of functioning and forms of development, and when, at the same time, new economic and social relationships appear, which will, with more or less speed and violence, spread and become the conditions of the functioning of a new society" (Gredelj, 1997; 42).

⁵⁰ One of the characteristics of modern society is its functioning through consensus – individuals make personal decision on public issues, after agreeing with other individuals (Gredelj, 1997; 43).

programme and listener polls led to the conclusion that “there is too much serious music”,⁵¹ so that many of the listeners asked for “a song and a tune” in the extended time of the broadcast (1936, no. 14, 1).⁵² Therefore, there was a need to satisfy diverse music tastes, but, at the same time, the goal was to create an integral programme based on entertainment music (in keeping with the needs of everyday life).⁵³ It is important to underline that in other European countries as well, the music programme implied the domination of classical music, which was broadcast with the aim of helping the audience develop “a more serious taste”, but, on the other hand, a greater prevalence of popular music for entertainment and relaxation (Negus, 1996; 78).

Entertainment music is a model example for studying elements of modernization and foreign influences, so that we shall take a more detailed look at the prevalence of this type of music on the programme. It became dominant as a consequence of “the influence of radio on the people’s psyche”, that is, as a symptom of the change in the listeners’ music taste and their need to be entertained when listening to the radio programme (1930, no. 14, 3). One form of music for entertainment was entertainment music for dancing, that is, dance music.⁵⁴ The most evident influence in that area was that of Northern and Latin American, as well as English dances,⁵⁵ including the Charleston, Andaluz, foxtrot, shimmy, tango, paso doble, rumba, lambeth walk and others.⁵⁶ In order to make the experience of listening to dance music more complete, the Radio broadcast “Časovi igranja” (Dance Lessons) and the magazine featured demonstrations of dance steps through pictures (for example, 1929, no. 6, 14).⁵⁷ At first, dance music was played on gramophone records, but later it was broadcast live from social events or performed by a jazz band in the studio (Savić, 2000; 189).⁵⁸ In that case they performed numbers that probably included a

⁵¹ There was a lot of propaganda popularizing classical music. Every issue of the magazine contained supplements about performed works, story lines of broadcast operas and biographies of composers with pictures. Problem texts were also broadcast/printed, such as “Problem tragične ljubavi u muzičkim delima” (The Problem of Tragic Love in Music Works), “Muzički romantičari” (Music Romanticists), and others (1930, no. 7, 2; 1930, no. 8, 7).

⁵² In a 1937 poll, 76% of the listeners chose folk music, 68% “light” music and 50% “serious” music. It is said that similar needs of listeners existed in Western European countries as well (1937, no. 23; 1 - 2). However, based on a 1939 survey, we can see that even later on the situation did not change much to the listeners’ benefit. Music accounted for 58.54% of the total programme, with the greatest prevalence of “serious” music, while “light” and folk music had almost equal ratings (for more details, see: 1940, no. 4, 1).

⁵³ Terms used as synonyms for entertainment music were “light”, “popular”, or “cheerful” music.

⁵⁴ Even though Negus states that entertainment music is “an interzone between dance music and serious music”, based on the examination of Radio Belgrade’s music programme, we have observed that dance music was only a form of entertainment music (see: Negus, 1996: 78).

⁵⁵ From 1936 onwards, English music became more prevalent on the radio, since at the time all Yugoslav broadcasting stations were presented with records of this music (Gašić, 2005; 112). In addition, the Radio broadcast special shows dedicated to English music (for example, 1938, no. 2, 5).

⁵⁶ The popularity of dance music can also be observed on the programmes of other European stations.

⁵⁷ This trend was prevalent in the early 1930s. Later on, there were no lessons of that type on the programme.

⁵⁸ Famous parties were held at hotels “Ekscelzior” (one of the more famous haunts of foreigners) and “Palas”, the restaurants “Mon-repo”, “Auto-klub” and “Ruska lira”, and the tavern “Moskva”. Music was probably performed with piano accompaniment, since the programme always mentioned the piano manufacturer. Such shows were broadcast in the afternoons or the evenings, from one or more venues, which appeared in the programme under the title of “Šetnja kroz beogradske restorane” (A Promenade through Belgrade Restaurants), “Beogradske noći – muzička reportaža” (Belgrade Nights – Music Report) and the like (1930, no. 3, 19; 1938, no. 2, 5). However, some listeners (primarily members of the intellectual class) resented the performing of music in taverns (Švarc, 1932, 49).

vocal soloist, since every number had a specific title and entry pertaining to a certain dance.⁵⁹ In addition to new dances, the listeners had the opportunity to hear some old (traditional)⁶⁰ dances, such as the waltz, polka, czardas and kolo, while sometimes new and old dances were broadcast at the same time, that is, during the same show.⁶¹ This helped connect listeners of different profiles and interests – those who were attached to tradition and those who accepted modern trends. This conclusion is in keeping with the theory of modernization, which does not imply the abandoning of traditional heritage, but rather its transformation (Gredelj, 1997; 42).

Dominant genres of entertainment music on the programme of Radio Belgrade included pop songs, chansons, and serenades.⁶² These genre reference points indicate entertaining vocal-instrumental music, often dance music, written to texts whose subject matter is love. These characteristics, along with the titles of songs, suggest a connection to dance music, primarily American music.⁶³ Furthermore, these genres also included music from “sound films” of the time (1932, no. 8, 5). The popularity of pop songs, chansons, and serenades is witnessed by the fact that *Radio-Beograd* magazine occasionally published the texts of certain numbers in Serbian. In addition, listeners also had the opportunity to hear versions in English and Spanish and less frequently, in French and German (for more details, see: 1929, no. 5, 6; 1929, no. 6, 5; 1933, no. 2, 2).

The abovementioned genres were often broadcast under the common name of “light music” (less commonly “drawing-room music”). Based on the analysis of the programme, we have established that “light music” represented a synthesis of all the current genres of entertainment music at the time. Such music was based on dance and instrumental numbers and popular vocal genres. In addition, the “light music” type included numbers of entertaining, dance character, mainly from operettas, by composers of

⁵⁹ Some of the titles of numbers were: *Dve plavuše* – fokstrot (*Two Blondes* – foxtrot), *Ice cream* — fokstrot (foxtrot), *You're the cream in my coffee, I'm on a diet of love* — fox, *Bella ciolitta* — tango, *Flores Negras* — tango, *Ramona* — boston, *Noga (Leg)* — one-step, *Rio de Janeiro* — one-step, *Looking for love* — quick step and the like. We would like to point out once again that we did not correct the mistakes in song titles in order to preserve authenticity.

⁶⁰ In a 1936 poll, listeners expressed the greatest interest in dance music, folk songs, “light” music, music performed by tambura ensembles and broadcasts from taverns (1936, no. 22, 1). Mihajlo Vukdragović, who became the music editor in 1937, claimed that “the old waltz and the modern dance the Lambeth Walk are as entitled to be on the programme as a stylized dance from a ballet, or a primitive folk song, alongside an artistically arranged one” (1939, no. 1, 1).

⁶¹ For example, the radio quartet performed the bourrée, gavotte, landler, czardas, waltz, kolo, tango and foxtrot in the show “Razne igre” (Various Dances). A Gypsy orchestra also performed a similar programme. We assume that the music performed by these ensembles was arranged on the model of music from records.

⁶² The said genres were presented in cycles entitled “Veče šansona” (Evening of Chansons), “Sezonski šlageri” (Seasonal Pop Songs), “Moderni šlageri” (Modern Pop Songs) and “Popularni šansoni” (Popular Chansons). Some of the broadcast numbers were entitled *Lady divine*, *Araca Corazon*, *Ogo de agua*, *Lola*, *Sousa*, *High society blues*, *Mickey Mouse* and the like. These shows were particularly intended for women, since “there are many women in the world who rarely or never hear the words of love” (1936, no. 3, 9).

⁶³ In fact, it remains unclear whether “pop song” was one of the synonyms for the term “dance music”, since we come across pop songs entitled *Happy feet* — fox or *Husion* — tango, *Fiesta* — rumba and the like. However, what mattered in these numbers was vocal quality, which can be concluded on the basis of the printed names of foreign performers. It is important to mention that domestic singers frequently included members of the ensemble of the Belgrade Opera (for example, Vasilije Šumski).

“classical” music (such as Edvard Grieg, Jacques Offenbach, Maurice Ravel and Johann Strauss)⁶⁴. Music was played from records, but there were also live performances in shows such as “Zabavni concert velikog radio-orkestra” (Light Concert of the Large Radio Orchestra) and “Kabaretsko veče” (Cabaret Night) (for example, 1930, no. 7, 17). The show “Kabaretsko veče” was particularly popular because it discussed contemporary phenomena through popular music.⁶⁵ The “light music” subtype also included “morning light music”, consisting of “marches and waltzes, chansons and pop songs and was intended for listeners who had just woken up and are getting dressed, eating breakfast or browsing through the morning paper” (1936, no. 16, 1). Listening to this type of music did not require great concentration, which is why shows consisted of “light, cheerful, almost insignificant pieces that one could listen to ‘with one ear’” (1936, no. 16, 1). The so-called “Schrammel Music”, that is, “cheerful, unpretentious music” was also broadcast as a subgenre of “light music” (1936, no. 20, 8). “Schrammel Music” also represented a kind of potpourri of instrumental dance numbers, sometimes in combination with vocal numbers, and was performed by an instrumental quartet (comprised of two violins, a guitar and an accordion).

In addition to dance music, the first contact of Belgrade listeners with contemporary American music culture was established through jazz, which would undergo a major expansion after the Second World War (Gašić, 2005; 131). However, since the title in the programmes always read “broadcast of the music of a jazz band”, we cannot be certain whether they were actually performing jazz. We believe that “light music” genres were prevalent after all. Jazz was mentioned mainly in the context of dance music, that is, as a type of dance music (for example, in the show “Čas džez igranja” /Jazz Dance Lesson/),⁶⁶ and it is mentioned that the jazz band also performed pop songs. This type of music was usually played from records in the afternoons and performed live in the evenings.⁶⁷ It was under the influence of these recordings that jazz bands were formed (Baronijan, 1970b; 105). There were four jazz bands in Belgrade – the radio jazz band, the “Soni boj” jazz band, the “Sadžo” jazz tango band and the balalaika jazz band.⁶⁸ Lectures on “black music”, based on the historical approach and emphasis of the value of this type of music, were broadcast with the aim of popularizing jazz (1932, no. 2, 4).⁶⁹

The great prevalence of entertainment music bears witness to the fact that radio audiences accepted current musical trends, mostly imported from American culture via European culture. There is no way of telling how “aware” the listeners were that by consuming such music they were in fact

⁶⁴ For example, the programme included numbers by Offenbach – *Orpheus in the Underworld*, Ravel – *Waltz*, J. Strauss – *Viennese Bonbons*, *Waltz* and others.

⁶⁵ These shows consisted of different popular numbers and if we look at their titles (*Mis Jugoslavije /Miss Yugoslavia/*, *Ja nemam auto /I Don't Have a Car/*, *Kupite radio /Buy a Radio/*, *Zar srce nije džas-band /Isn't the Heart a Jazz Band/*), we can recognize a need to follow phenomena from modern life and popular culture.

⁶⁶ The connection between jazz as “black music” and dance is obvious – “basically, black music is the music of the body” (Negus, 1996; 101 - 102).

⁶⁷ For example, the numbers performed at the concert of the large radio jazz band included works by Geo Gershwin (the reference is to George Gershwin) – *Rhapsody in Blue*, Frank Churchill – *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* and Johann Strauss – *The Emperor Waltz*.

⁶⁸ It is said that with the incursion of sound film in the 1930s came the foundation of the jazz band of Milorad Jovanović Štula, which was entrusted with performing dance music (Savić, 2000: 189).

⁶⁹ There was a collaboration with American diplomats in Belgrade who held lectures on American society and culture.

receiving foreign influences, but there is no doubt that American culture was more liberal, which was probably what attracted the audience (Storey, 2004; 9).⁷⁰ Americanization was also connected with the expansion of popular culture and was perceived as a “collective dream world” and an escape from reality (Storey, 2004; 9). Therefore, if we bear in mind that the political, economic and social situation in the Serbian cultural milieu was very unstable in the period between the two wars, the adoption of these influences becomes especially understandable.⁷¹

The acceptance of entertainment music was greatly influenced by integration into the trends of the industrialization of culture. Music was represented as merchandise that was sold and brought profit to composers and performers, which made them respect the listeners’ wishes. It was emphasized that “broadcasting stations are now the composers’ biggest employers...” and that “they provide profit to composers by paying them royalties” (1930, no. 14; 1 - 3). Although some claimed that “the radio will destroy music and musicians” precisely because of the commercialization of the market, it turned out that the radio “was beneficial for all its victims” (1936, no. 12, 3). It was stressed that the main quality of this medium was its economy, because “much in the same way that the introduction of machines into industrial companies brought about a complete transformation in the type of production, the radio, thanks to its inexpensiveness, provides those who have previously been far from music culture with the pleasure of a music work, which used to be accessible only to the more affluent” (1930, no. 14, 3). Therefore, there was an awareness of market demands, which is a characteristic of economic and social modernization.

As we have already highlighted, a large part of the programme consisted of music from gramophone records. In addition, a special phenomenon, previously unfamiliar to many listeners, was the broadcasting of live performed music, which made the radio “an intermediary between the music producer [performer, note B.S.] and the consumer” (Švarc, 1933; 46).⁷² Broadcasts of live music performances enabled listeners from lower social classes, who had not had the experience of attending the institution of a public concert, to “participate” in that event.⁷³ This information is all the more valuable if we bear in mind that “the music life in our capital [was, note B.S.] rather poor” (1936, no. 7, 1). Namely, the music on the radio became a medium for erasing boundaries between different social classes, even though fundamental boundaries between those classes did exist. That is precisely what Rikard Švarc

⁷⁰ If we briefly review the music situation after the war, we will realize how much more liberal and willing to accept foreign influences Belgrade society had been in the interwar period. Namely, after the Second World War, the ruling communist regime characterized jazz music as decadent and as having too much rhythm, so that compositions in this spirit were forbidden. Similar disapproval was also expressed of rock ‘n’ roll (Marković, 1995; 292 - 293). However, such phenomena were not rare in Europe or America either.

⁷¹ The interwar period in Serbia/Yugoslavia was particularly tumultuous on the political level. This is witnessed by events such as the assassination of King Aleksandar Karađorđević in Marseille (1934), the establishment of Milan Stojadinović’s regency regime (1935), the collapse of Stojadinović’s government (1939), the creation of the Banovina of Croatia (1939), the coup d’état, the overthrowing of Dragiša Cvetković’s government (1941) and the German occupation, that is, the beginning of the Second World War (1941).

⁷² The broadcasting station had two studios – a smaller one for lectures and news and a larger one for music performances. The first regular performing ensemble was the radio quartet, while the radio jazz band, the Gypsy orchestra, the radio wind septet and the radio orchestra were founded later on.

⁷³ It is emphasized that “statistically speaking, the radio replaces first and foremost the concert hall (60%), then the lecture and literature hall (24%), the information bureau (10%) and current events (3%)” (1931, no. 10, 1).

talked about: “Therefore, as much as the radio somewhat reduced the audience in the concert halls..., on the other hand, it equally popularized music art and expanded the circle of music consumers to the greatest possible degree” (Švarc, 1932: 47). The development of popular culture, that is, the improvement of the quality of everyday life, made it possible for different social structures of listeners of music on the radio to connect.

A large part of the programme consisted of folk music.⁷⁴ The conventional wisdom is that folk music is associated with traditional music, lower social classes (which are often linked with rural life),⁷⁵ and even with primitive societies (Middleton, 1990; 127). However, there are interpretations according to which the penetration of folk music is part of the process of modernization of traditional societies, which is supported by the fact that many folklore genres influenced the development of popular music (Middleton, 1990; 129). On Radio Belgrade folk music was in fact interpreted as a form of entertaining, “light”, music, typically referred to as “folk playing”.⁷⁶ Folk music performers were diverse and included vocal soloists, instrumental soloists (mainly playing the accordion, less frequently the gusle or bagpipes), the orchestra of Serbian Gypsies, the folk ensemble of Radio Belgrade (founded in 1935) and the tamboura radio orchestra (founded in 1936). Folk music was mostly performed live (in the evenings) and less often played from records (typically in the mornings). The most popular among the performed numbers were folk dances and vocal compositions (“folk playing with singing”) to texts based on love or entertaining themes, which were occasionally accompanied by the publication of the songs’ texts and music. It is difficult to determine the genre of the songs more precisely, although we assume (based on the texts and names of songs) that the dominant songs were old-town songs and love songs and the prevailing instrumental composition was kolo (some of the folk songs were played in the show “Muzika za igru” /Dance Music/).⁷⁷ It was believed that this type of music is particularly characteristic of the Belgrade area, since “Belgrade should give us what we cannot hear anywhere else except in Belgrade, which is our songs, our love songs” (1936, no. 14, 1). We can, therefore, observe analogies between characteristics of folk music and popular entertaining music (their entertaining, cheerful, dance character,

⁷⁴ Even the intermission signal was a motive from a well-known folk song “Milkina kuća na kraju” (Milka’s House at the End of the Road” (1933, no. 14, 5).

⁷⁵ One of the consequences of industrialization (modernization) is the fact that “capitalist production has unified space, breaking down the boundaries between one society and the next... economic history, whose entire previous development centered around the opposition between city and country, has now progressed to the point of nullifying both... the mutual erosion of city and country appears” (Debord, 1999; 137 - 142). In interwar Serbia the dichotomy between city and country was not overcome, but it is evident that there was an exchange of influences.

⁷⁶ We would like to reiterate that in the 1937 poll the majority of the respondents opted for folk music (1937, no. 23, 1-2).

⁷⁷ *Čeznuće za dragim* (Longing for My Sweetheart), *Sinoć mi se rasrdio dragi* (Last Night My Sweetheart Got Angry), *Ah kad tebe ljubiti’ ne smem* (Oh, Since I Can’t Love You), *Svilen konac* (Silk Thread), *Prošla moda devojkama* (Girls Went Out of Fashion), *Moj dilbere* (My Darling), *Daj da pijem* (Let Me Drink), *Žikino kolo* (Žika’s Kolo), *Mangupsko kolo* (Kolo of Rogues), *Ala uze ženče* (What a Wife I Got Myself) and others. Thematic cycles of songs were also broadcast – “Nema ljubavi bez suza” (There’s No Love without Tears) or “Pesme lepim ženama i devojkama” (Songs for Beautiful Women and Girls).

love as their subject matter, their acceptance in broader circles of listeners), which additionally points to the fact that folk music was a part of popular culture.⁷⁸

We have already pointed out that political modernization is characterized by awareness of national belonging, which can also be observed on the basis of certain segments of the music programme. The rule book on the operation of broadcasting stations contained a provision stating that the programme had to include national, Slavic and foreign music and that vocal music had to be in the official language, with the possibility of exceptions (1933, no. 17, 1). It was emphasized that music could not be understandable to all nations, that is, could not be “international”, which made it necessary for each nation to have its own music (1933, no. 3, 1). Consequently, Serbian music, especially songs from older folk tradition, occupied an important place on the programme (1933, no. 3, 4).⁷⁹ At the same time, the idea of Yugoslavism was also present, so that the radio broadcast shows consisted of “Yugoslav ballads” and “Yugoslav songs”. In that sense, a part of the music programme was determined by political events.

One of the important questions of the classical theory of modernization is the postulation of the dichotomy between “traditionalism” and “modernism” (Gredelj, 1997). On the one hand, we have mentioned the “modern” music phenomena, but on the other hand, the daily broadcasts of liturgies indicate a still-present traditional system, which is characterized by the prevalence of religion on a state level (Marković, 1990; 11). However, “the struggle between tradition and innovation, which is the basic principle of the internal development of the culture of historical societies, is predicated entirely on the permanent victory of innovation” (Debord, 1999; 146).⁸⁰ Regardless of traditional tendencies, European and American music constituted a large portion of the programme, which the listeners applauded. And that is precisely one of the most evident signs of integration into the modernization process.

CONCLUSION

Based on an analysis of Radio Belgrade in the interwar period, conducted by reading *Radio-Beograd* magazine, we can conclude that conditions for the modernization of Serbian society did exist. On the one hand, we have observed that Serbian society was in a period of transition toward modernization, and on

⁷⁸ Fisk is categorical in his claim that “folk culture” is not popular culture. “Folk culture”, unlike popular culture, “is the product of a stable, traditional social order, in which social differences are not of a conflicting nature. Popular culture, contrary to folk culture, is unstable and transitory.” He also underlines that popular culture, unlike “folk culture”, is produced by industrialized societies (Fisk, 2001; 195 - 196). However, we cannot agree with his conclusions. If we remember the criteria determining popular culture (attractiveness to a wide population, mass consumption, opposition to high culture), we cannot completely exclude folk music from this group. Our view is supported by the opinion of John Storey, who stresses that “the first concept of popular culture emerged with the development of interest in folklore in the late 18th, the 19th, and early 20th century”. Later on, the idea of popular culture as “folk culture” was developed among intellectuals across Europe and the United States of America (Storey, 2003; 15).

⁷⁹ In the show “Specijaliteti raznih stanica” (Specialties of Different Stations) the Belgrade station advocated the broadcasting of “Serbian music”, old Serbian folklore tradition or songs with a national connotation (*Marš na Drinu* /*March to the Drina*/, *Marš Kraljeve garde* /*March of the King's Guards*/ and the like).

⁸⁰ Therefore, tradition is not a mere opposite of modernism, but rather a basis that has to be transformed in order to fit into the process of modernization (Gredelj, 1997; 42).

the other hand, we have realized that modernization was accomplished in certain segments of the political, social and cultural life. The investment of foreign capital was one of the key factors in the initiation of the modernization process, which brought about a more rapid expansion of foreign influences (European and American). In that sense, the development of the culture of everyday life, popular culture and music contributed to the more efficient acceptance of the models of modernization. In the interwar period, the music broadcast over the radio was one of the most effective systems of “conveying” the messages of modernization in the Belgrade sociocultural milieu. By examining the music programme, we have ascertained that it was precisely through music that the key formal indicators of the modernization process (great social differentiation, industrialization, great empathy, mass communication, influence of foreign capital, sense of national belonging, secularization) had great potential for social application. Since undeveloped and smaller societies always resisted adopting models of developed communities, it turned out that the system of connecting through the media was the most acceptable for captivating a wider population. In that sense, the medium of radio, as well as the music broadcast over the radio, represent key mechanisms that contributed to the integration of Serbia/Belgrade into modern European trends.

Translated by Jelena Nikezić

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