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**Review of the 39th Conference of ICTM
(International Council for Traditional Music)
Vienna, July 4-11, 2007**

The large joint gathering of ethnomusicologists and ethnochoreologists organized by the International Council for Traditional Music – ICTM, held in Vienna from 4 July to 11 July 2007, brought together almost 400 scholars from different countries of the world. The imposing space of the University of Music and Performing Arts in Vienna, the meeting place for the participants and their exchange of thoughts and ideas, also represented a place of gathering for the numerous visitors interested in the field of folk production.

During the six-day active scholarly work of the gathering, 400 thematic units were presented in accordance with the proposed topics of the conference: *Cosmologies and Their Connection with Music and Dance*; *National and Regional Traditions of Ethnomusicology and Ethnochoreology*; *Popular Music and Dance and New Technologies*; *Transmission of Music/Dance through Informal and Formal Education*; and *New Research*. The large number of papers set the pace of daily presentations to as many as eight parallel sessions, which regrettably made it impossible to follow the scholarly gathering in full. Unfortunately, even the planned publication will not provide a complete insight into the presented papers since it will contain, in accordance with the strictest selection, only a small number of the presented papers (the magazine in question is the *Yearbook for Traditional Music*). A publication containing the summaries of all the papers is available to all interested “readers” of this conference.

Bearing in mind the large number not only of presented papers, but also of existing sessions, whose presentation would require a much longer written form, it may be more valuable here to underline some of the methodological tenets and orientations of the scholars, which undoubtedly represent important results of this conference.

The tendency towards interdisciplinary methodology, evident in a number of papers, reflects a global tendency to link the approaches of ethnomusicology and ethnochoreology with approaches of ethnology, anthropology, linguistics, theory of literature, sociology, communicology, semiology, hermeneutics, cognitive psychology, and theory of culture. The application of other disciplines and their characteristic methods in ethnomusicological and ethnochoreological discourses allows for a contextual interpretation of musical, that is, dance

text and the discovery of its meaning in specific situational, historical, geographical, sociological, and other contexts. Besides papers dealing exclusively with the structural analysis of musical or dance text (with the aim of identifying its characteristics, variant process and/or shaping methods), the majority of the papers referred to the semantic dimension of text and the possibilities of its interpretation. The wide spectrum of such topics reflect a scholarly interest in specific subject matter: from the comparison of the views of insiders and outsiders, to the interpretation of text in a cultural context (through the time and space dimension and/or with regard to other texts of a culture, as well as with regard to other music styles in multicultural regions), to the interpretation of principles of traditional memory or the creative way of thinking in musical folklore.

As earlier ethnomusicological tendencies considerably contrasted the anthropologically oriented American (and to some extent Western European) tendency with the musicologically oriented Eastern European one, this conference creates an interesting impression (which can also be gained from more recent literature) that these differences have been reduced in the application of the same methodological concepts by scholars of different provenance. The representatives of Eastern European schools demonstrated a stronger tendency towards a national course of ethnomusicology, as evidenced by the titles and contents of the panels, which represented the histories and prospects of national ethnomusicologies and ethnochoreologies in the Balkans, Hungary, and the Baltic countries.

This ICTM conference saw the participation of ethnomusicologists and ethnochoreologists from Belgrade covering research in the Balkans: Selena Rakočević, MA (who also conceived, organized and successfully led the panel); Dimitrije Golemović, PhD; and Olivera Vasić, PhD. The other participants from Belgrade presented their papers in other sessions. Vesna Bajić and Zdravko Ranisavljević presented a paper on the transmission of traditional music and dance through formal (and informal) education in Serbia and proved themselves to be promising young scholars. Sanja Radinović, PhD and Mirjana Zakić, PhD talked about the cosmological ideas of the circle and the spiral in female initiation rituals of southeastern Serbia, which generated much interest and provoked a stimulating discussion. The noteworthy participation of scholars from Belgrade, who appeared for the first time in large numbers at such an important conference, provides considerable motivation for future joint presentations of ethnomusicologists and ethnochoreologists of the Belgrade school at international congresses.

In the context of reflecting on new perspectives in ethnomusicology, issues concerning the following topics were also analyzed: music of minorities; gender theory (music and gender);

politics and music; policies of applied ethnomusicology; and pop and new technology. Even though these topics are the focus of attention of many contemporary authors, in reality it is the scholars from American and Western European countries that contribute the most to keeping them topical.

Four film sessions screened 9 documentary films, which testified to the function and manner of preservation of certain traditional music and dance forms in the current folk life of some cultures (from the territories of Indonesia, India, China, Siberia).

The programme of the conference also included an exchange of scholarly opinions within working study groups that were particularly oriented towards topical problems from the fields of ethnochoreology and ethnomusicology. The specificity of the ethnomusicological discourse – as speech about music of certain cultures or certain gender – is defined by the following names of study groups: *The Anthropology of Music in Mediterranean Cultures*; *Music of Turkish-Speaking Countries*; *Music of Eastern Asia*; *Music and Minorities*; *Music Archeology*; and *Music and Gender*. The formation of study groups of mentioned or similar thematic orientation in the course of their years-long practice represents an extremely important and productive segment of ICTM's comprehensive work. The study groups also function independently of ICTM's joint, biennial conferences by organizing thematically specialized scholarly symposia.

Simultaneously with the parallel sessions, several plenary sessions were held, from ICTM's general assembly, where discussions included the organization's activities in the previous period and its programme for the upcoming period, information about the team work of UNESCO and ICTM institutions in the field of preserving cultural life, an examination of the concepts of national ethnomusicologies (from a European perspective), and an interpretation of the expressive dimension of performing through the synchronic linking of different elements. The session on the perspectives of ethnomusicology, structured as a contrasting of the national orientation and the more universal, global tendency, provoked an interesting and somewhat heated discussion, which revealed a widely held view that there is a crucial need to foster nationally oriented musicologies.

Thanks to the well thought-out accompanying programme, the participants of the conference had the opportunity to become more familiar with some of the sights of Vienna and attend performances of traditional music of various nations by ensembles that have become popular on the city's cultural scene. A special surprise was the dance training in Austrian national dances (especially the waltz), in which most of the participants of the conference actively participated. The setting up of a stand offering a wide range of books and compact discs of traditional music of different nations enabled the participants to acquire some valuable

ethnomusicological and ethnochoreological publications that are not readily available, and provided them with insight into the latest literature from this field on a global level.

Translated by Jelena Nikezić