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## DEFENDED DOCTORAL THESES

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**RADOŠ MITROVIĆ\***

University of Arts in Belgrade  
Faculty of Music  
Department of Musicology

### **THE END OF POSTMODERNITY IN EUROPEAN MUSIC AND ITS DEPENDENCE ON SOCIO- POLITICAL AND ARTISTIC CONTEXT**

The central idea of this dissertation<sup>1</sup> was to problematise the questions of the end of postmodernity as a cultural and wider so-

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\* Author contact information:  
radosh.mitrovic@gmail.com

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Commission: Mirjana Veselinović-Hofman PhD (mentor) Full Time Professor – retired (FMA), Vesna Mikić PhD, Full Time Professor, Marija Masnikosa PhD, Associate Professor (FMA), Biljana Leković PhD, Assistant Professor (FMA), Miodrag Šuvaković PhD, Full Time Professor (FMC, Singidunum University).

cial paradigm through an analysis of sociopolitical circumstances and main tendencies in music and arts in the last decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The year 1989 was taken as (the beginning of) the end of postmodernity because it marked (the beginning of) the end of the block conflict, bearing in mind that postmodernity has been defined in a specific historical context of the Cold War period. This year represents the starting point for further analysis of the fate of postmodernity, which loses its vitality and sustainability in new sociopolitical surroundings.

After the introductory part, where the map of the dissertation is drawn and the critical points are accentuated, the text is developed through four large chapters.

The first chapter, “Problem of the Postmodern”, lays out the basic premises and elaborates them through an analysis of the theories of Lyotard, Fukuyama and Cooper. As Lyotard’s postmodern theory is one of the earliest general theoretical works in postmodernity, this dissertation starts with its critique, in the aim of pointing out its failures and problematic conclusions which did not have a foothold in historical reality, i.e. which ignored the context of the Cold

War. By proclaiming the end of history in 1989 in the article *End of History?* Yoshihiro Francis Fukuyama marked the collapse of the postmodern utopia, which included the rhizomical structure of power, the abolition of metanarratives, the relativity of historical truth and the belief in a globalised society. In Fukuyama's writing this collapse of postmodern utopia is interpreted in a utopian way – by formulating the idea of the *end of history*. Robert Cooper, on the other hand, writes that the postmodern still remained in geopolitics thanks to the thesis on the existence of postmodern states and their superiority over modern and pre-modern states. By merging, in a manner of speaking, the previous two theories Cooper concluded that postmodern states are those that have reached the end of history, and now have an obligation to protect themselves from inferior countries by all (imperial) means. The ultimate establishment of the unipolar order was nevertheless brought into question by reality itself, when different (geopolitical) 'cracks' appeared within the global system.

The second chapter, entitled "The New Political Paradigm at the End of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century", discusses the issues of socioeconomic and geopolitical turmoil in the world – the emergence of socialism in Latin America, the rise of Germany in Europe, and the establishment of the BRICS organisation, which are undoubtedly symptoms of the establishment of multipolar global relations. The dissertation proceeds to follow and reconsider the line(s) of theory that problematise the social issues arising from the global order described in such a way. As postmodern is defined through a prism of ideology, the work presents alternative theories that offer a criticism of the

postmodern from different ideological positions, i.e. offer new frameworks in which the problems of the post-postmodern period could be discussed.

In the third chapter, 'Social and Political Theories After Postmodern', the dissertation presents the theories of the 'third way' and the 'risk society' of Anthony Giddens and Ulrich Beck, the theory of globalisation of John Ralston Saul, the theory 'Empire' of Hardt and Negri, the theory of radical democracy of Chantal Mouffe, David Harvey's co-revolutionary theory, the participatory platforms of Michael Albert, and the emancipatory ideas of populism by Ernest Laclau. Special emphasis is placed on the works of Ernest Laclau and his idea of populism, which in reality showed its vitality and provided a clear departure from Western-centric economic and social models.

Drawing a parallel between socio-political circumstances and tendencies in art, which are closely related to the criticism of postmodernism, the fourth chapter ("Aesthetic Theories after Postmodernism") considers various remodernistic tendencies in art (altermodernism, metamodernism and remodernism), as well as specific artistic poetics close to the transhumanist and posthumanist movements. These are important movements that are in close connection with a kind of 'technofanaticism' which had an important place in the theoretical thought at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Presented in contrast to this ideological prism is the technosceptic theory of postfuturism, which is in turn related to the idea of establishing autonomous artistic practices, such that would oppose the semiocapitalist form of the social system which is in favour of technological progress.

Following this line of thought the dissertation considers the poetics of Voren Neidich and Arvo Pärt, authors who use specific 'subversive' strategies of an 'ascetic' relation to the system. Another part of the dissertation is devoted to the concept of 'second modernism', the only manifestly proclaimed movement that can be registered in the post-postmodern period that is related to music. After presenting its characteristics and a case analysis, the conclusion is drawn in the form of the last subsection which is called the "Theory of the Period after Postmodernism". Through a critical examination and re-examination of Mikhail Epstein's idea of *postmodernity* and Terry Smith's idea of *contemporaneity*, this dissertation proposes a new theoretical paradigm – Shilly-shally-ism – (shilly-shally: irresolute, undecided manner)<sup>3</sup>, as a kind of interregnum period, marked by a general social fluctuation and stylistic instability in arts.

The paper thus outlines a map of divergent theories and artistic practices in an attempt to position music in a complex social and cultural environment, as well as in an attempt to offer a clearer understanding of the period after postmodernity, and to formulate a new term that would be adequate for defining it.

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**MILAN MILOJKOVIĆ\***

University in Novi Sad  
Academy of Arts  
Department for Musicology and  
Ethnomusicology

### **DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY IN SERBIAN ARTISTIC MUSICAL OUTPUT (1972–2010)<sup>1</sup>**

The main subject of this work is the analysis and contextualisation of changes in the implementation of digital technology in compositional practice in Serbian artistic music. The aim of the text is to form a musicological narrative about Serbian computer music based upon the succession of technological and musical innovations, relying on the general progress in this domain and related theories worldwide.

The thesis starts with a review of the period preceding computer music, presenting details about early electroacoustic

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\* Author contact information: milanmuz@gmail.com

<sup>1</sup> The dissertation was produced under supervision of Dr. Vesna Mikić, Professor at Faculty of Music in Belgrade and defended on March, 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018 before a committee comprising, apart from Dr. Mikić, following members: Dr Mirijana Veselinović-Hofman, retired professor at Faculty of Music in Belgrade, Dr Miško Šuvaković, Professor at University 'Singidunum', Dr Biljana Leković, Professor at Faculty of Music in Belgrade, and Dr Mladen Marković, Professor at Faculty of Music in Belgrade.

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<sup>3</sup> [Ahttps://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/shilly-shally](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/shilly-shally)