DOI https://doi.org/10.2298/MUZ2436103D
UDC 791.636:78
78.071.1 Бреговић Г.
791.633-051 Кустурица Е.

"Two Wild and Crazy Guys, and a Gal" – Unresolved Trauma and Balkan Stereotypes in the Music of Emir Kusturica's Film *Podzemlje* (*Underground*)

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„Два дивља, луда момка и једна цура" – неразрешена траума и балкански стереотипи у музици за филм *Подземље* Емира Кустурице

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Received: 5 March 2024
Accepted: 9 June 2024
Original scientific paper

Abstract

One of the manifestations of unresolved trauma is associated with the use of Balkan stereotypes and self-Balkanisation in films. In this paper, I explore the connection between unresolved trauma and the music used to express Balkan stereotypes, focusing on a case study dedicated to Goran Bregović's soundtrack for Emir Kusturica's film *Podzemlje* [Underground] (1995). I analyse the track "Mesečina [Moonlight]" featured in the film, and observe how the music goes hand in hand with the portrayal of some of the main characters as "wild Balkan men" associated with a myriad of negative characteristics and stereotypes.

Keywords: unresolved trauma, Balkan stereotypes, Emir Kusturica, Goran Bregović, self-Balkanisation, *Underground*, "Moonlight."

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Апстракт

Једна од манифестација неразрешене трауме повезана је с употребом балканских стереотипа и самобалканизацијом у филмовима. У овом раду истражујем везу између неразрешене трауме и музике која се користи за изражавање балканских стереотипа, фокусирајући се на студију случаја посвећену музици Горана Бреговића за филм Емира Кустурице *Подземље* (1995). Анализирам нумеру „Месечина" из наведеног филма и посматрам како музика иде руку под руку с приказивањем ликова као „дивљих Балканаца" повезаних с многобројним негативним карактеристикама и стереотипима.

Кључне речи: неразрешена траума, балкански стереотипи, Емир Кустурица, Горан Бреговић, самобалканизација, *Подземље*, „Месечина".

Introduction

The difficulty of speaking about war trauma is generally present in media in post-Yugoslav space and in the post-Yugoslav cinema. The society that went through a horrific civil war and political turmoil in the 1990s, decades later, still finds it hard to adjust to the traumatic events and experiences and accept the accountability instead of shifting the blame. The consequences of unaddressed (and therefore unresolved) trauma can be found in different forms across a traumatized society living in denial. One of the manifestations of unresolved trauma, according to film scholar Dijana Jelača (2016), is associated with the use of the Balkan stereotypes and self-Balkanisation in films.

In her book, Dijana Jelača analyses different ways in which war trauma presents itself in films created after the break-up of Yugoslavia (2016). For that purpose, she draws on Sigmund Freud's term "screen memory" and how it gets *dislocated* because "the films that speak to and about the same historical event – or series of events – inevitably address the question of what their own collective role in archiving, creating, or re-creating the public memories of such an event is" (2016, 19). Jelača also writes about the urge to use the stereotypes in films and rely on them in order to tell a story as one of the effects of unspoken trauma. She observes that post-Yugoslav war cinema is haunted by the question of why "war recurs, and violence becomes instigated in such a veracious manner rather than pushing against the fact of its existence altogether" (2016, 40). However, she also notices that the films do not even consider that "violence perhaps recurs as a result of the suppressed, unresolved traumas of the past – traumas that have not been meaningfully worked through" (2016, 40). She analyses the trope of "ancient ethnic hatred" between former Yugoslav nations present in many

war-related narratives that "acts as a kind of screen memory itself," where screen memory is understood as a memory that masks a different kind of hidden and painful memory (2016, 41). This trope then functions as "a fictive memory that works to obscure and further repress the more historicized and contextualized memories of violence, which it is actually about" (2016, 41). Hence, self-Balkanisation, the process of internalisation of an externally imposed stereotype, could be more complex than initially thought, and "act as a complicated mechanism by which collective traumatic memory is being addressed through the screen memory of a constructed trans-historical animosity" (2016, 40–41).

The unresolved trauma that Jelača writes about is connected to transgenerational trauma and perennial mourning as observed by psychologist Vamik Volkan (1997; 2007) as well as sociologist Ivana Spasić (2011), while Jeffrey Alexander observes it as cultural trauma, arguing that "for traumas to emerge at the level of the collectivity, social crisis must become cultural crisis" (Alexander 2012, 15). I argue that the cultural trauma that leads to the narrative of "ancient ethnic hatred" according to Jelača, is represented in music by the stereotypical use of traditional music elements. The various uses of traditional music contribute to the set stereotypes employed in films. Regarding Jelača's observations in connection to trauma and Balkan stereotypes, I explore how music responds to these observations through the example of the track "Mesečina [Moonlight]" from Goran Bregović's soundtrack for the film *Podzemlje*.

Podzemlje is a story about two friends, "two wild and crazy guys" (Goulding 2002, 199),[1] their love interest and their more than 50-year-long friendship/love triangle, shaped by the historical circumstances of the WWII, the Cold War, and the break-up of Yugoslavia. At the beginning of the film, Marko Dren (Predrag Miki Manojlović) and Petar Popara Crni (Lazar Ristovski) are members of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia in 1941. As the war progresses so do their military operations, making Crni wanted by the Gestapo. When he gets seriously wounded, Marko hides Crni in his basement, where their extended family and friends are already living in hiding. They nurse Crni back to health as they live underground waiting for the war to be over. The Cold War part of the film is set in 1961, where Crni is presumed dead and celebrated as

1 The section of the title of this paper "Two Wild and Crazy Guys" references popular sketches in the American variety show *Saturday Night Live* where Steve Marin and Dan Aykroyd played Yortuk and Jorge Festrunk, two brothers from Czechoslovakia visiting New York. Martin and Aykroyd portrayed the characters with thick Czech accents, in elaborate clothing and over-the-top behavior that is "wild and crazy," which became their catchphrase as the skits became regular in the 1978 season of the this popular and long-lasting variety show, and were referenced in several other skits throughout the years. See Perkins, 2022. This reference is slightly changed in the title of this paper to accommodate the *Podzemlje*'s three main characters.

war hero while he is actually still living in Marko's basement waiting for the war to be over. Marko is now an important government official who built his reputation on his involvement in the WWII and the great Partisan victory. He is married to Natalija (Mirjana Joković), an actress and a former love interest of Crni. Marko and Natalija keep this charade going until the underground people manage to build a tank and accidently shoot their way out. An abrupt cut takes us to the early 1990s and the beginning of war conflict in former Yugoslavia in which Crni is now commanding paramilitary troops that capture and execute two war profiteers, who end up being Marko and Natalija.

The cyclical structure observed in this film was often used in post-Yugoslav films and it is supposed to prove the inevitability of the never-ending war in the region as the past keeps brutally and repeatedly materializing in a vicious time circle (Daković 2008, 79). This was a prominent way of connecting history and then-current events in the post-Yugoslav films, dealing with the subject the breakup of Yugoslavia. Nevena Daković coined the term "neowar film," which refers to a substantial part of film production in the 1990s that was dedicated to the war and the break-up of former Yugoslavia, and it is also a part of her further discussion on the Balkans as a film genre of its own. The prefix "neo" acknowledges the existing legacy of the Yugoslav war cinema in the genre of Partisan war films. The term also recognizes that not all films that fall under the "neowar" category are set on the battlefields of former Yugoslavia. Rather, the films of this subgenre are mostly set in unoccupied territories (cities, or rural areas) and are focused on individuals and how their lives have been affected by the war raging far away, and/or the economic and psychological consequences of the break-up of the former country.

Balkanism as a Manifestation of Trauma

During the 1990s, six former Yugoslav nations were establishing their own identities and independent integrities while, at the same time, they were being perceived as part of a collective Balkan identity. The political turmoil and civil war that followed the break-up of the country resulted in Western media affiliating Balkan countries with war and destruction, as well as establishing certain negative stereotypes in connection to people from the Balkans. This recreated the configuration of sociopolitical dynamics that Maria Todorova theorized as the Balkanism.[2]

2 The discourse on Balkanism is based on Todorova's writings (2009; first published in 1997), which draw on Edward Said's discussion of Orientalism, but is also strongly reflected in Gayatri Spivak's (Morris and Spivak 2010) ideas about the subaltern, specifically that one must take

Todorova writes that "'Balkanism' expresses the idea that explanatory approaches to phenomena in the Balkans often rest upon a discourse or a stable system of stereotypes" (2009, 193). She states that the term took a pejorative turn in the early twentieth century "triggered by the events accompanying the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire and the creation of small, weak, economically backward and dependent nation states, striving to modernize" (2009, 194). The modernization was a difficult and long process accompanied by nationalistic policies creating "a situation in which the Balkans began to serve as a symbol for the aggressive, intolerant, barbarian, semi-developed, semi-civilized, and semioriental" (2009, 194). Over time, these characteristics became stereotypes that, according to Todorova, have shaped the attitudes and actions towards the Balkans.

Writing about post-Yugoslav cinema of the 1990s, Žižek sees *Podzemlje* as "the ultimate ideological product of Western liberal multiculturalism" (1995, 38, cited in Keene 2001, 241; Iordanova 2001, 130), because it perpetuates stereotypes regarding the Balkans and offers a "timeless space in which the West projects its phantasmatic content" (Žižek 1995, 38, cited in Keene 2001, 241). Iordanova writes about this "readiness to cast a gaze at oneself as an exotic object" as a common trope in the 1990s Balkan cinema (2001, 153).[3]

On the other hand, citing Frederic Jameson's explanation of "global cinema" that "adopts Hollywood stereotype and aesthetic codes in order to subvert them," Dušan Bijelić writes that "Serbian cinema succeeded in exploiting the [Balkan] stereotype brilliantly, using Hollywood's own language of cinema to turn the global media against itself" (2005, 103). Bjelić sees the stereotype of "the wild man from the Balkans" as one of the aesthetic codes that, when subverted, creates an innovative aesthetic form (2005, 104). In his analysis, Bjelić focuses on Serbian cinema of the 1990s that "inherited the Hollywoodization of domestic ideology that typified the 1970s [Yugoslav war epic spectacles], and deployed the stereotypes of the wild Balkan man, an ideological and global media cliché of the 1990s, in order to confront both nationalism and globalism at once" (2005, 105). The trope of the wild Balkan man emerged in this social context, characterized by elevated tensions created by nationalism and ethnic divides that infused the conflict between the nations and weakened the local economy. Bjelić argues that by using stereotypes surrounding the Balkan men and Balkanism perpetuated by Western media and Hollywood productions,

on a culture's ways of knowing in order to bring that culture into dialogue with the dominant cultures.

3 Iordanova also finds Milcho Manchevski's film *Before the Rain* (1994) to be "moving within a prescribed conceptualization mirroring long standing stereotypes of the Balkans as enigmatic and attractive but impossible to deal with" (Iordanova 2001, 63).

Serbian filmmakers in the 1990s managed to subvert the Hollywood cinema language and its mainstream aesthetics, which gave Balkan cinema its geo-aesthetic significance (2005, 103). In a way, Kusturica's success with *Podzemlje* proves Bjelić's point as the film was shortlisted for many international film festivals and won *Palme d'Or* at the Cannes Film Festival in 1995. After its premier in Cannes, however, the film raised plenty of controversy as it was seen as glorification of the Serbian point of view of the break-up of Yugoslavia.[4]

Bjelić's idea about subverting Balkanism for your own gain also echoes in the popular music of the Balkan region. In her writings about Balkan music and self-Balkanisation, or "autobalkanisation" as she calls it, Marija Dumnić Vilotijević at first explains Balkan music as "a pan-Balkan phenomenon, in terms of similar music practices, which implied performances in taverns, networking of musicians, the same types of ensembles and similarities in musical forms, even the same tunes" (2020, 4). As a music genre, Balkan music "contains divergent music content (meaning not only from different locations, but also ranging from 'authentic' folklore to hybrid artistic forms and arrangements, with all their inner diversities)" and encompasses a very diverse mix of popular music genres that employ many of the characteristics she lists and market themselves as "Balkan music" (Dumnić Vilotijević 2020, 4). However, she also observes that the stereotypes regarding the Balkans and the Balkan music are internalized in the Balkans as the Balkan music label is used primarily for exported music as "the connection of music and place is constructed in order to mark one particular genre (consisting of various forms) in the global (but first of all Western) music industry" (2020, 4). This supranational umbrella term, the "Balkan music," also allows the performers to avoid nationalistic adjectives in their names (as well as the names of their projects) in favor of the more politically neutral one – "Balkan." The diversity of use of the term in music has possibly led to a subversion of the Balkan stereotypes because it has shown other sides of Balkan music and once again united the region after the war years.

In film music scholarship on war trauma in European cinema the focus is on the diversity that comes from the variety of perspectives in the post-WWII Europe and its complex socio-political context. However, it is a part of a wider context of

4 The controversy in international media continued, especially after the award ceremony, when several film critics attacked the Cannes Film Festival Committee for giving the prestigious award to such a film. Probably the harshest review came from film scholar Dina Iordanova who described Kusturica as the Leni Riefenstahl of Slobodan Milošević's regime, comparing *Podzemlje* to Riefenstahl's Nazi propaganda films (1999; 2001). Iordanova explained the controversies in more detail in her book *Cinema of Flames* (2001). In the section "The Acquittal," she writes about how the opinions and circumstances surrounding the film have been changing in the turbulent years after the film's release (2001, 129–131).

trauma studies that analyze trauma through interdisciplinary lenses. Maria Cizmic writes that "definitions of trauma tend to be shaped by disciplinary concerns – and since trauma forms a genuinely interdisciplinary topic, there exists a range of interpretations" (2012, 14). Here, she includes music studies as well, noting that representation of trauma in music occurs in many ways (Cizmic 2012, 14).[5] She concludes that, regardless of the involvement of music, "aesthetic media might open up possibilities for people to empathetically imagine another's suffering, which can lead to positive outcomes regarding communications, understanding, education, and social justice [...], while cultural trauma can allow people to share in suffering they did not directly experience, and thereby build collective identities and a sense of community" (2012, 173–174). Films can be understood as types of testimony to the traumatic events in their own right. Cizmic concludes that "if truth is located in fragmentation, disruption, gaps of silence, then capturing these experiences in literature and film provides a way of keeping faith with trauma, truth, and history" (2012, 18). Certain narrative methods, such as flashbacks and mixing of timelines and chronological disorder, can also be interpreted as manifestations of trauma. These interruptions are also reflected on the soundtracks, whether through the use of traditional music elements that resonate musical stereotypes, or through popular music that invokes a nostalgic response. Before discussing how trauma is embedded in the music of post-Yugoslav war cinema and in which way we observe it in the two tracks from the *Podzemlje* soundtrack, it should be noted how trauma is addressed in the political and social narratives of the war in Yugoslavia, or rather the lack of it, through the interdisciplinary writings of Dijana Jelača, Vamik Volkan, Jeffrey Alexander, and Ivana Spasić.

Dijana Jelača explains her approach to post-Yugoslav war films "primarily as expressions and channels through which trauma narratives get played out at the level of culturally circulated affect that permeates post-conflict spaces across national and ethnic lines" (2016, 19–20). That takes her to consider trauma as a key point in redefining certain aspects of these films and the issues addressed in them. In one of her observations, she considers post-Yugoslav war cinema to be "trauma cinema."[6] Jelača also explains trauma cinema as being

5 Her research on trauma and music is informed by Judith Herman's seminal work *Trauma and Recovery* (1992), as well as Cathy Caruth (1995, 1996) and Shoshana Felman's (Felman and Laub 1992, Felman 1995) psychological views on trauma adapted to the analysis of films and literature as testimonial acts. Both Felman and Caruth see films and literature as aesthetic forms that can fill the gaps in memory caused by trauma.

6 This term was introduced by Janet Walker (2005) and further explored by Raya Morag (2009), who noted that, although war cinema is usually understood as portrayal of historical events, because of the fragility of the factual side of this portrayal, it might be better to consider it trauma cinema, "and relieved of the burden of historical accuracy, since traumatic recurrence rarely answers to the compulsion to be factually accurate" (Jelača 2016, 11).

"about memory's inadequate relationship to past events and their recurring role in the present" (2016, 11), which can be found in many post-Yugoslav war films. On that note, she also proposes understanding the history of violence as the history of trauma. This opens a possibility of understanding the recurring wars and violent conflicts in the Yugoslav space as a consequence of unresolved trauma from previous wars, mostly the WWII, but also the Balkan wars, the nineteenth century freedom uprisings, and the Ottoman occupation, that is passed on through generations, often contributing to the "ancient ethnic hatred" amongst the former Yugoslav nations.

The perennial mourning caused by unresolved transgenerational trauma present in the post-Yugoslav film narratives can be associated with the use of traditional music elements in the soundtracks. This is particularly true in films that evoke the "mythical" and "glorious" past through the use of "old and forgotten" traditional music. Jeffrey Alexander writes about the importance of language as a tool that helps one gain reflexivity "to move from the sense of something commonly experienced to the sense of strangeness" (2012, 7). In the post-Yugoslav cinema of the 1990s, the idea about a glorious and mythical past is often mentioned as it became a trope in the war narrative and, therefore, a media narrative of the war conflicts in the former Yugoslav states as well, while the trauma narrative is non-existent. The music in films appears through this mythological narrative and it is thus perceived as ancient, seminal, and primordial. In this way, traditional music elements used in the soundtracks signal perennial mourning and suppressed and unresolved societal traumas.

In his study of ethnic violence, psychologist Vamik Volkan (2007) analyses various historical circumstances that have led to ethnic violence, including a case study of the conflict in former Yugoslavia. Looking at these cases through the psychological lens we discover how certain historical events, like great losses in battles and wars, can be understood as trauma that, neither resolved nor addressed, can have a huge impact on both individuals and the entire societies. Volkan explains that suppressed and unaddressed trauma can lead to perennial mourning which occurs when the process of mourning is not completed. In cases of massive nationwide trauma such as war, societies sometimes go through mourning ("societal mourning"), expressing a "shared sense of humiliation and a helpless wish for revenge" (Volkan 2007, 104). If this feeling is experienced by people who are a part of the same large group identity defined by nationality and/or religion, then the society can experience perennial mourning and the shared response to what has been done to them can lead to it becoming a political ideology, which is exactly what happened in Yugoslavia in the 1990s.

Jeffrey Alexander comes to a conclusion similar to Volkan's in his writings about the cultural trauma. Here, Alexander observes how "in the course of

defining national identity, national histories are constructed around injuries that cry out for revenge" as "angry nationalist groups, and their intellectual and media representatives, assert [that] they were injured or traumatized by agents of some putatively antagonistic ethnic and political group, which must then be battled against in turn" (2012, 13). Cultural trauma, according to Alexander, "occurs when members of a collectivity feel they have been subjected to a horrendous event that leaves indelible marks upon their group consciousness, marking their memories forever and changing their future identity in fundamental and irrevocable ways" (2012, 6). Volkan examines those "marks," referring to them as societal processes or "symptoms," which accompany societal mourning that, in the case of the former Yugoslav nations, became a cultural crisis.

Providing an example from Serbian history and Slobodan Milošević's regime, Volkan examines three of these processes – building monuments, chosen trauma, and the establishment of the entitlement ideologies (2007, 105). He defines chosen trauma as "the shared mental representation of an event in a large group's history in which the group has suffered a catastrophic loss, humiliation, and helplessness at the hands of enemies" (2007, 106). It is also possible to pass the chosen trauma to the offspring if the society and its members are not able "to mourn such losses and reverse their humiliation and helplessness" (2007, 106), which is when the transgenerational transmission of trauma occurs. He examines the Battle of Kosovo in 1389, and its 600th anniversary in 1989, which has been used to "reactivate Serbian perennial mourning." The anniversary ceremony and the processions around it, according to Volkan, created a "time collapse" that denoted "the conscious and unconscious connections between a large-group historical trauma and contemporary threats [...] that typically emerge when a chosen trauma is dramatically reactivated" (2007, 107–108). In this way, Volkan concludes, "the Serbian leadership turned a 'memory' of an historical event – associated as it was with losses, inability to mourn, and the difficulty of shared mourning – into a tool of revenge" (2007, 108).

Sociologist Ivana Spasić also writes about Kosovo as Serbian trauma that "involves a whole knot of entangled traumas" (2011, 99). She argues that this trauma, put in the larger context that started in the 1990s and has expanded to this day,

> might also hide traumas of the Yugoslav wars, including the "trauma of perpetrators" [Bernhard Giesen 2004 quoted in Spasić 2011]; the trauma of being caught in an irresolvable conflict with a neighboring people, Albanians; the trauma of Serbia's exclusion from European integration; the trauma of living in a faulty democracy and continuing economic stagnation; and also,

> perhaps, the trauma of being forced into a traumatic identity and lacking the language in which to express one's dissent without being called a traitor" (Spasić 2011, 99).

Dijana Jelača sees these events as resulting in trauma that is not resolved and that, in her opinion, led to self-Balkanisation present in many aspects of the post-Yugoslav life, which is very noticeable in post-Yugoslav films, as well as their soundtracks. The same stereotypes that the filmmakers have used in the narrative of their films, have been applied by the composers in the soundtracks, which we will see below in the analysis of the *Podzemlje* soundtrack. Folk-like musical elements became a part of the corpus of Balkan stereotypes used in the films and other media because of their frequent use in this context. In the following paragraphs, I will look into traditional music elements as Balkan sound stereotypes and investigate the connection between unresolved traumas which applies to the musical stereotypes as well, on the example of two tracks from the *Podzemlje* soundtrack.

The Trumpets of the Underground

Goran Bregović, the composer of the music for this film, is a well-known figure in the former Yugoslavia[7] and his music is often described by some music journalists and critics as the prime example of the "Balkan music." In its colloquial use, "Balkan music" usually implies presence of certain musical elements which are characteristic of the Balkan region, such as: complex meters, local traditional instruments like accordions, different types of trumpets, clarinets, and drums; or traditional singing styles such as melismatic singing or the use of characteristics exclamations of the syllable "oj." By combining different music traditions, Bregović created his own musical style which, due to the popularity of Kusturica's films and the soundtracks, became the prime example of what came to be perceived as world music from the Balkans, thus making the terms "Balkan," "brass" and "Gypsy" interchangeable in marketing, as Carol Silverman notes (2014, 193).[8] In Kusturica's film *Dom za vešanje* [Time of the Gypsies] (1989) Bregović created a soundscape that became connected to the Roma through the story in the film. As Kusturica continued this creative path in an auteur-like manner going into his following films, *Arizona*

7 Bregović was the leader of the Yugoslav-Bosnian band *Bijelo dugme*.

8 Bregović's music is often classified as Roma music rather than the traditional music associated with any former Yugoslav nation. Carol Silverman understands this as Bregović "transcending the conflicts of the Balkans through Gypsy music" (Silverman 2014, 203).

Dream (1992) and *Podzemlje*, he extended his collaboration with Bregović. At that time, it could be argued that Bregović's music in Kusturica's films was "a key thematic element and a marker of authorial style" (Gorbman 2007, 149), which would make Kusturica a *mélomane* in Claudia Gorbman's terms, an *auteur* with a strong and authentic musical imprint.[9] Bregović's musical imprint on Kusturica's films was substantial enough to make *Dom za vešanje* and *Podzemlje* also considered in terms of film operas (Ćirić 2020).

Soundtrack for *Podzemlje* is considered under the obscure lines of the world music label while creating its own subsection under the term "Balkan." By using this term, the application of nationalistic implications that were so popular at the time is avoided and all the variations of the different national traditional music are incorporated in this supranational geographic term, while, at the same time, it takes in all the stereotypes previously connected to the Balkans embodying them through Kusturica's characters. The soundtrack also combines elements of several different music genres and traditional music originating from different cultures and/or subcultures or considered a part of subcultures. The most prominent tracks in the film are the two brass band songs – "Kalašnjikov" (and its instrumental version "Ševa") and "Mesečina," as well as "Underground Tango," arranged for string orchestra. Other tracks that are heard throughout the film are either brass band tracks titled *čoček* on the official soundtrack ("Čaješukarije čoček," "Underground čoček," "Wedding čoček," and "Belly of the Beast"), or variations on the tango theme, such as in the track "War" which has added lyrics from the old-town song "Stani, stani, Ibar vodo [Slow down, Ibar River]" by Dragiša Nedović (1916–1966). On the official soundtrack, there is another variation of the tango theme performed by Cape Verdian singer Cesaria Evora. The track is titled "Ausencia [Absence]," and it is based on the string quartet arrangement used in the film with some pizzicato parts that come from "Underground Tango," with added lyrics in Portuguese that talk about loneliness and inability to fly away from the fears and be free. This track creates something Vesna Mikić calls "Balkan sung tango" by mixing and matching "tango's generic, passionate longing and Balkan 'dert'" (2017, 265) that is, like Portuguese *saudade*, an untranslatable word signifying similar mix of emotions of sadness, unease, nostalgia, and mourning. The soundtrack also contains a brass band cover of Lee Dorsey's song "Ya Ya,"

9 However, it needs to be noted that in his later films his *mélomane* music expression has not been as potent as it was during his collaboration with Bregović. He can still be considered an *auteur*, even though his artistic style has changed significantly since *Podzemlje*, but the music does not hold the same gravitas as it did before. At the same time, Bregović's brass band music became his own trademark sound that he used throughout the film and continued to use in his work after the collaboration with Kusturica has ended.

which is used in the film in Djordje Marjanović's 1960s translated version of the song as "Ringe Ringe Raja Twist."

"Mesečina," the track on which I particularly focus on, is one of the popular brass band tracks that supports representation of the film's characters in this film as stereotypical "wild Balkan men." This song is closely connected to all three main characters – Marko, Crni, and Natalija. It is heard twice in the film, and both times it is used diegetically and sung by these characters. Only the chorus is used in the film. It starts slowly and very quiet (*piano*) as it sets the melancholic tone of the song. As it progresses, the music gradually speeds up, layering percussion and brass sections in a crescendo that finishes in an upbeat instrumental section performed by the full brass band.

The first time the song is heard is in the first part of the film set in the period of the WWII, during the aftermath of Natalija and Crni's interrupted wedding. Before the wedding ceremony, while waiting for a priest, the couple and their best man, Marko, get drunk, and in a drunken haze at sunrise they sing the chorus of the song, dancing and singing tightly in a circle. The camera is below them, in the middle, catching them from a low angle, and rhythmically spinning to their singing, gradually speeding up. The scene is replicated in the second part of the film at the wedding of Crni's son Jovan. Natalija and Marko attend the wedding as well, but they are very tense because they are still hiding the secret that the war is over. In order to loosen up a bit, they again reach for singing and drinking and end up singing the same song, thus mirroring the scene from before.

Film and media scholar Pavle Levi explains the "Mesečina" scenes as Kusturica's "libidinal outbursts," as "moments that suspend all narrative/thematic expectations for the sake of elevated, first-degree scopic pleasure" (Levi 2009, 137). These and their *mise-en-scene* that "includes circular movement and rotation of human bodies in ecstasy, perform significant 'centrifugal effect' [...] as the song follows the movement of the scene – it starts with a cappella singing in slow motion and as the camera speeds up so does the singing" (Djordjević 2021, 241).

The setting of both scenes is very similar. Both are happening at the weddings that get interrupted – the first one by the Nazi soldiers, and the second one by Soni, the monkey, which gets in a tank and fires the gun, thus opening the underground passages and releasing the people out of the basement, exposing them to the outside world. Both scenes are set in closed, interior spaces – the first one in the cabin of a small boat, while the second one is set in an underground bunker. In the first scene the music stops after the arrival of the German soldiers looking for Marko and Crni, while in the second scene the musical number is much longer. After singing the chorus

with Marko and Crni hugging in a tight circle, Natalija breaks off and joins the band that continues with the instrumental part of the track. The band stands on a scaled-up replica of a three-tier wedding cake that spins. Natalija joins them while they are still playing and spinning, and every time she spins towards the men, she hits one of them with a wooden pole shouting foul words to them, calling them names, etc. She has shown her disapproval of the whole underground ordeal earlier in the scene, which she now expresses by hitting the men with the wooden poll as she spins while the band continues to play. The scene is shown from Natalija's point of view, accentuating the centrifugal effect of the circular movement, as noted by Levi (2009, 139), while the music contributes to the surreal and fantastical *mise-en-scene* of the underground wedding.

Beneath the carnivalesque surface of the song, the lyrics of "Mesečina" express pain and possibly hidden trauma. Marija Ćirić, who regards the film *Podzemlje* as a film opera, describes this scene in terms of Lacan's concept of *jouissance*, which is particularly expressed in this film in its "Mesečina" scenes. She argues that this track comprises pleasure, lust, tension, and pain that correspond to the "never quiet Balkan region, as well as Balkan (film) genre" (Ćirić 2020, 96). While her explanation is in line with the settings of the "Mesečina" scenes, the lyrics of the song point to the war trauma that is not addressed in any other way:

Nema više sunca,	The Sun is no more,
nema više meseca,	The Moon is no more,
nema tebe, nema mene,	You are no more, I am no more.
ničeg više nema, joj.	Ay, there's nothing anymore.
Pokrila nas ratna tama,	The war darkness covered us,
pokrila nas tama, joj.	Ay, it covered us.
A ja se pitam moja draga,	And I ask myself, my dear,
šta će biti sa nama.	What will become of us?
[*Refren*] Mesečina, mesečina,	[*Chorus*] Moonlight, moonlight,
joj, joj, joj, joj.	Ay, ay, ay, ay,
Sunce sija, sunce sija,	The sun is shining, it's shining,
joj, joj, joj, joj.	Ay, ay, ay, ay,
Sa nebesa, zrak probija.	A ray pierces from the sky,
Niko ne zna, niko ne zna,	But no one knows, no one knows,
niko ne zna, niko ne zna,	No one knows, no one knows,
niko ne zna šta to sija.	No one knows what it is.

The similarities between the Moon and the Sun that are indicated in the lyrics illuminate the perspective of the people living in the basement for many

years. For them, and especially for their children born and raised underground, the difference between the moonlight and the sunlight is unclear. This becomes evident when Crni's son Jovan, born and raised underground, goes outside for the first time, and points to the Moon asking if that is the Sun. The short chorus of the song touches on this issue, "pointing out that there is a light in the sky and that no one knows if it is moonlight or sunlight" (Djordjević 2021, 241).

Since both the characters and the band know the song by heart, it can be argued that, according to the film's timeline, the song had been well-known before they went underground. In this light, the song's lyrics could be interpreted as descriptions of the uncertainty of war times and a display of transgenerational war trauma. In addition, trauma can be interpreted from the lyrics, which address the darkness of the war and the feeling of utter hopelessness. However, these emotions are not reflected in the music nor acknowledged by the characters, who just "dance it off" in a hopeless drunken haze (Djordjević 2021, 242). In this sense, the film's "Mesečina" scenes re-affirm the Balkan stereotypes discussed earlier in the context of this film.

In these scenes, the three main characters, Natalija, Marko and Crni, sing "Mesečina" on two different yet similar occasions and in similar circumstances that stereotypically include drinking, dancing, frolicking, being violent and obnoxious, and similar negative characteristics associated with "the wild Balkan men" stereotype. The dystopian lyrics of this song about the war darkness that covered everything, however, posing the question "what is going to happen to us" reveal a hidden trauma. Behind the excessive enjoyment portrayed in the film, behind all the stereotypical portrayals of characters and their actions as "wild Balkan men," lie layers of historical war events, some of which appear in the film. The unspoken trauma of those events is then presented through the metaphor used in this song.

Conclusion

As described "Mesečina" scenes indicate, the part of the *Podzemlje* soundtrack based on brass band music goes hand in hand with the portrayal of the characters as "wild Balkan men" associated with a myriad of negative characteristics and stereotypes. The characters are portrayed as very loud and disruptive, short-tempered, surrounded by alcohol, drugs, guns, and prostitutes, and always accompanied by a brass band playing up-beat music. As part of the diegesis, music actively participates in the narrative not only by accentuating the negative stereotypes, but also by working as a catalyst in some scenes to initiate the bad behavior and violence (as in the second "Mesečina" scene). The soundtrack of *Podzemlje* enhances the stereotypes presented in the film

while at the same time, due to the popularity of the soundtrack, the brass band music becomes a stereotype in its own right.

Unresolved and unaddressed generational trauma peeks through the details in film such as the "Mesečina" scenes. The meaning of this song, in the historical and social context of the *Podzemlje*, combined many Balkan stereotypes that the film encompasses, supporting Jelača's observations regarding self-Balkanism and trauma in post-Yugoslav cinema.

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Ана Ђорђевић

„Два дивља, луда момка и једна цура" – неразрешена траума и балкански стереотипи у музици за филм *Подземље* Емира Кустурице

(Резиме)

Рад се бави међусобном повезаношћу стереотипа о припадницима балканских народа и неприхваћене и неразрешене ратне трауме. Полазиште теоријских разматрања чине истраживања Дијане Јелаче, која је проучавала аспекте ратне трауме и сећања у филмовима постјугословенског периода. Јелача, наиме, сматра да у овим филмовима постоји директна веза између друштвених и историјских траума кроз које је друштво прошло, њихове репрезентације на филму и употребе балканских стереотипа од самих балканских аутора. У тексту је ова проблематика детаљно представљена, с фокусом на студију случаја посвећену музици Горана Бреговића за филм *Подземље* (1995) Емира Кустурице. Утврђене су вишеструке интерференције између музике и поменутих стереоптипа, а истраживање се усмерило на питања о томе како су у музици за овај филм манифестоване везе између стереотипа и неразрешене трауме. Анализирана је нумера „Месечина", која има централно место у филму, а детаљно су сагледане и сцене у којима се нумера јавља. Такође, поред утврђивања повезаности балканских стереотипа с музиком Горана Бреговића као компонентом филма, у раду је предочено да Бреговићева музика, кроз употребу у Кустуричиним филмовима, и сама постаје музички стереотип народа Балкана, те тако поприма негативне конотације које ови стереотипи са собом носе.