DOI: https://doi.org/10.2298/GEI2502239B
UDC: 398:784(497.11)
original research paper

LAZAR BARAĆ
The Institute of Ethnography SASA
lazar.barac@ei.sanu.ac.rs
ORCID: 0009-0003-0360-5275

Folk and Its Progeny: The Transformation of Popular Folk Music in Serbia from Its Inception to the Present*

Popular folk music encompasses a wide spectrum of musical practices associated with the "broad popular masses." In addition to reflecting diverse historical, economic, political, social, and cultural conditions, it also functions as a powerful marker of identity, playing a key role in the construction of cultural belonging. The emergence of local popular folk music can be traced back to the mid-20th century, shaped by intensified intercultural exchange, the development of musical technologies, the professionalization and stylization of traditional folk forms, as well as the institutionalization of the popular music industry. Within broader socio-political frameworks, this complex musical form has been deeply embedded in political "struggles" and negotiations over the articulation of an optimal national identity. The trajectory of popular folk music — from neo-folk and turbo-folk to contemporary folk forms such as pop-folk, trap-folk, and folk-drill — reflects a historically contingent and contextually specific transformation shaped by a range of interrelated factors: a) *technological shifts* — from gramophones and radio to digital platforms and artificial intelligence, b) *epistemological shifts* — from modernist to postmodernist paradigm, and c) broader *social, cultural, economic, and political transformations* (socialism, post-socialist transition, neoliberalism). These factors serve as the analytical

* The research is supported by the project funding for scientific research work provided by the Ministry of Science, Technological Development, and Innovation of the Republic of Serbia: contract no. 451-03-136/2025-03/200173 (The Institute of Ethnography SASA).

backbone of the paper and as key contextual and conceptual nodes in an effort to offer a brief and modest reconstruction of the historical trajectory and transformation of this complex and dynamic phenomenon.

Keywords: popular folk music, anthropology of music, neo-folk, turbo-folk, contemporary folk forms

Фолк и његова чеда: трансформација популарне фолк музике у Србији од њеног настанка до данас

Популарна фолк музика представља спектар музичких пракси „широких народних маса“. Поред тога што је одраз бројних историјских, економских, политичких, друштвених и културних околности, она истовремено фигурира као снажан идентитетски маркер и игра кључну улогу у конструисању културног идентитета. Појава локалне популарне фолк музике може се пратити од средине 20. века, у условима интензивираних интеркултурних размена, развоја музичких технологија, професионализације/стилизације традиционалне народне музике, као и институционализације индустрије популарне музике. У ширим друштвено-политичким оквирима, ова сложена музичка форма од свог настанка је дубоко укорењена у политичке „борбе“ и преговарање оптималног националног идентитета. Развојни пут популарне фолк музике — од неофолка и турбо-фолка до савремених фолк форми (поп-фолк, треп-фолк, фолк-дрил) — одражава историјски условљену и контекстуално одређену трансформацију, обликовану низом међусобно повезаних фактора: а) *технолошких обрта* — од грамофона и радија до дигиталних платформи и вештачке интелигенције, б) *епистемолошких обрта* — од модернистичке ка постмодернистичкој парадигми и в) *друштвених, културних, економских и политичких трансформација* (социјализам, постсоцијалистичка трансформација, неолиберализам). Ови фактори ће служити као окосница рада и као кључна концептуална чворишта у настојању да се понуди кратка и скромна реконструкција историјске путање и трансформације овог сложеног и динамичног феномена.

Кључне речи: популарна фолк музика, антропологија музике, неофолк, турбо-фолк, савремене фолк форме

INTRO: MOTIVATION FOR WRITING THE PAPER AND THE OVERARCHING METHODOLOGY

Popular folk music is frequently positioned at the intersection of public controversy and scholarly critique—often framed either as a symbol of societal "decadence" or as an indicator of "questionable" taste. As such, it functions less as a strictly musical category and more as a political and ideological construct (see Gordy 1999; Kronja 2001; Đurković 2004; Kulenović and Banić Grubišić 2019). This makes it a productive object of inquiry, as evidenced by a considerable body of research from both domestic and international scholars across disciplines. Drawing on conversations with colleagues and field interlocutors in Serbia and abroad, I have identified several contextual and conceptual nodes that emerge within the literature—such as technological and paradigmatic shifts, along with broader social, cultural, economic, and political transformations. However, these dynamics have rarely been explored in relation to one another. This paper does not directly refer to the fieldwork or interviews I conducted; rather, it aims to offer a general analytical perspective shaped by that anthropological research experience. Its goal is to provide a modest reconstruction of the historical trajectory of popular folk music, and to contribute to a more nuanced understanding of popular folk music—particularly through the lens of the aforementioned contextual and conceptual nodes.

THEORETICAL KNOT: CONTEXTUAL AND CONCEPTUAL NODES AND THEORETICAL STARTING POINTS

Popular folk music is a complex and somewhat elusive phenomenon, often emerging as an unsystematized occurrence shaped by various historical, technological, political, economic, social, and cultural factors and processes. Due to its "elusiveness" and adaptability, the problem of accurately defining and drawing boundaries between (sub)genres arises. However, within the framework of this paper, the term popular folk music refers to the musical forms that emerge through the modernization and stylization of traditional folk music, facilitated by various elements, technologies, and characteristics of popular Western music. In studies that trace the historical development of folk music, such as those by Mitrović (2017) and Dumnić-Vilotijević (2020a), three major phases in the trajectory of popular folk music are identified, although the genre terminology may vary. Here, this trajectory will be understood as comprising neo-folk, turbo-folk, and contemporary forms such as pop-folk, trap-folk, and folk-drill, which will serve as the analytical point of departure.

Neo-folk (*Newly Composed Folk Music*) represents the first popular folk music format, whose emergence was motivated by the establishment of the radio and recording industries during the 1960s. Advancements in music technology, the rise of market-driven principles in the music industry, and the dissolution of Yugoslavia led to emergence of *turbo-folk* as the new stage in the development of popular folk music, which dominated the 1990s. With stylistic refinement and advancements in audiovisual technology in the 2000s, turbo-folk "evolved" into pop-folk, adopting a more contemporary sound and visual style that dominated the musical mainstream in the first decade of the new millennium (Mitrović 2017). A decade later, as market orientation, neoliberal ideology, and postmodern production logics became increasingly dominant—and music technologies underwent near-total digitalization—new musical forms emerged, drawing on turbo-folk and "folk" elements reminiscent of traditional music. Alongside pop-folk, recent trends blending folk elements with contemporary Western genres, such as hip-hop and EDM, have resulted in the emergence of *trap-folk* (Dumnić-Vilotijević 2020a) and, more recently, a new style known as *folk-drill* ("boorish drill"). In this paper, pop-folk, trap-folk, and folk-drill will be collectively referred to as *contemporary folk forms*.

All three mentioned transformation phases share certain similarities, including the fusion of local folk music with Western musical elements and technologies, the market-driven approach to music production, the existence of a distinct industry, and the integration into the domain of commercial, i.e., mass/popular culture, among others. On the other hand, the differences are evident and largely shaped by social and cultural changes, which have been particularly turbulent in the former Yugoslav cultural space. The interdependent relationship between these forms is based on the principle that each subsequent folk form "evolves" from the previous one, building its style on the tradition of its predecessor (which helps to stay within the boundaries of the *genre convention*),[1] while also introducing certain

[1] According to Cawelti's conceptualization (Cawelti 1969), *conventions* refer to the established and familiar elements of a particular cultural or artistic content that are known and expected in advance by both the creator and the audience. In contrast, *inventions* are the original and novel elements introduced by the creator of the content. Every cultural product is a mixture of these two principles. For example, in the initial phases of turbo-folk, vocal lines, ornamentations (trills), and song themes can be understood as the conventions, while the inventions may include rock riffs or techno beats (which replace previous patterns) that introduce new and unexpected elements into the cultural content itself. Over time, what was once an invention may become a convention, and thus, a given genre transforms gradually through this process.

innovations (which reflect *invention* and distancing from the predecessor) in response to globally relevant musical trends. This principle also reflects the adaptable nature of folk music in its dynamic transformations, which have, in turn, led to the diversification of styles and musical repertoires.

The key contextual and conceptual nodes in the transformation of folk music from the 1960s to the present include: a) *technological shifts*, b) *paradigm shift*, and c) *social, cultural, economic, and political transformations.*

Technological shifts refer to advancements in acoustic, audio-visual, and media technologies which have been crucial for the transformation of the music industry. Popular music and technology are almost inseparable (Hošić 2011; Maglov 2022), as technological development inevitably influences the ways in which music is created, produced, distributed, and consumed (Pinch & Bijsterveld 2004, 635). In this sense, radio and the phonograph – as *the first technological shift* – were pivotal for the development of neo-folk (NCFM) (Čolović 1982, 29; Dumnić-Vilotijević 2020a, 73; Momčilović 2025, 149), as singers were primarily promoted through these media (Nenić 2020, 135), while phonograph records became the primary unit of profit and the key measure of an artist's popularity, thereby establishing the market-driven principle of the music industry. Thus, traditional live performance in real time and space ceased to exist as the only performance format. Furthermore, *the second technological shift* can be understood as the *electrification* – the use of electric instruments, which had the greatest impact on turbo-folk during the 1990s (Milojević 2007, 26; Radović 2010, 125; Nenić 2020, 139; Dumnić-Vilotijević 2020a, 73). Neo-folk singers, along with the transitional generation between neo-folk and turbo-folk, such as Lepa Brena, Južni Vetar, and Svetlana Ražnatović, were among the first to adopt this practice. Finally, *digitalization and cyborgization*, as *the latest technological shift*, have enabled the broadest range of production changes, evident in contemporary folk forms.[2] Modern technologies enable sound to be entirely created and processed digitally (Maglov 2022, 120), while performers themselves can, to a great extent, be perceived as a kind of cyborgs. They incorporate technological and mechanical devices as an essential part of their performance, musical work, and (professional) identity, and the full potential of a live performance cannot be achieved without the use of technology (see Gregurić 2012)

[2] The peak of the production capabilities of music digitalization is evident in AI as the latest technological breakthrough.

The paradigm shift from modernism to postmodernism has unfolded across a wide array of domains—from the social sciences to the arts—entailing transformations in worldviews, epistemological regimes, and perceptual frameworks that significantly shape the production, distribution, consumption, and reception of cultural content (Šuvaković 1995; Đorđević 2009). Postmodern paradigmatic principles are reflected in numerous contemporary musical expressions that can be understood as manifestations of the postmodern cultural logic. Whereas modernism is marked by categorization, rationality, universality, monism, and structural order, postmodernism emphasizes hybridity, fluidity, fragmentation, bricolage, eclecticism, intertextuality, interculturality, and technological mediation (Goodwin 1991; Šuvaković 1995; Đorđević 2009). These features first became evident in later stages of neo-folk, but found fuller articulation in the production of turbo-folk. Postmodern sensibilities, however, reach their peak in contemporary folk forms—especially in trap-folk and folk-drill—where the pervasive influence of neoliberal ideology has transformed both the entertainment landscape and the music industry. Within this context, the eclectic fusion of musical, visual, fashion, and textual codes—aimed at creating intercultural collages—emerges as a key strategy in the branding of performative identity. Such practices, often framed as innovative and attuned to contemporary trends, are designed to attract mass audiences and position performers as neoliberal subjects, reconciling entertainment, spectacle, and consumer culture within a single aesthetic and economic logic.

Finally, by *social, cultural, economic, and political transformations*, I refer to a set of factors and circumstances that have driven changes in the musical landscape. These include: a) the Yugoslav system and its collapse, b) the context of the 1990s, marked by wars, sanctions, inflation, retraditionalization of the society, and the accompanying transformations resulting from the previously mentioned events, and c) the new millennium as an era of rapid technological advancement and neoliberalization of the society.[3] Within this broader framework, capitalism and neoliberalism represent essential components of these changes, as they shape the ways culture is produced, circulated, and valued, including popular folk music. Although this music industry emerged within a socialist context, it bore capitalist features from the outset—such as the possibility of capital accumulation—which became more pronounced during the turbo-folk era and escalated with the rise of neoliberalism in contemporary folk forms. As both an ideology and an economic model, neoliberalism promotes the marketization of culture, encouraging the commercialization

[3] For more on neoliberalism, see Ganti (2014) and Radivojević (2024).

of creativity, the personalization of artistic expression, and the transformation of cultural products into tools for economic success and individual autonomy (McGuigan 2009; Banet-Weiser 2012; León 2014).

HARBINGERS OF THE FOLK SPRING: FOLK MUSIC AND ITS PREDECESSORS

The term folk music can be understood in two ways: a) as music that is transmitted orally from generation to generation within a community and is defined by continuity, variations, and selection[4] (Karpeles 1955, 6); and b) as a new form of folk music that combines elements of traditional music with influences from other musical traditions and industries, and is perceived as part of popular music. The most appropriate starting point for reconstructing the development path of popular folk music is the mid-20th century, as this period marks the establishment of the popular folk music industry. One of the key geopolitical events that influenced the development of Yugoslav popular culture was the "split with the Soviet Union and its Eastern European satellites in 1948" (Vuletić 2008, 862), which led to Yugoslavia's orientation toward Western cultures. Additionally, during this period, the radio device and the gramophone were established as the pillars of musical technologies (Dumnić 2013). As a proto-genre of popular folk music, *the music composed in the folk spirit/ folk song arrangement* can be considered the proto-genre of popular folk music. It involved adaptation, arrangement, harmonization, and stylization of traditional melodies in accordance with classical music principles and was linked to the emergence of professional orchestras and production figures (Vidić Rasmussen 2002, 21; Janjetović 2010, 67; Nenić 2020, 134). Thus, the music composed in the folk spirit was aligned with the Romantic tendencies and cultural policies of Yugoslavia, because – stylized and stripped of its rudimentary elements that opposed modernization – it served as a suitable means for representing Yugoslav identity and the local musical traditions of all the peoples and nationalities of Yugoslavia (Vidić Rasmussen 1995, 243; Janjetović 2010, 64–65). The

[4] *Continuity* implies the endurance of a particular musical tradition across generations; *variations* refer to the ways in which these traditions transform over time; and *selection* denotes the process through which certain elements of the musical tradition are forgotten or discarded, while new ones are created and gradually incorporated into the "established repertoire" (Karpeles 1955). It is also important to emphasize that, in colloquial speech and public discourse in Serbia, this type of folk music is referred to as *tradicionalna muzika* (traditional music) or *izvorna muzika* (original music).

foundation of this musical practice was traditional (*izvorna*) music, so music from various "sources" being selectively canonized and presented as the backbone of radio folk music (Vidić Rasmussen 1995, 243). Some of the key figures in this context were Vlastimir Pavlović Carevac, a renowed violinist who developed the "folk style of performance," and Žarko Petrović, who blended folk music with the principles of Western pop music to make it more contemporary and appealing to younger audience (Dumnić-Vilotijević 2020b, 126–127). These production practices prevailed until the early 1960s when a new generation of performers and producers emerged, adopting a more flexible approach to arranging and stylizing "traditional content" by combining it with elements of Western popular music (Čolović 1982, 29; Milojević 2007, 28). This led to the creation of neo-folk, i.e., newly composed folk music – the first form of popular folk music in the region, which contained the entire "machinery" and metanarrative of the popular music industry (see Vidić Rasmussen 2002).

THE FIRST STARS OF THE SHOWBIZ SKY: NEO-FOLK OR NEWLY COMPOSED FOLK MUSIC

The term *neo-folk* or *newly composed folk music* refers to the music that originated from traditional folk music, but was stylized, arranged, and enriched with various elements of Western popular music of the time. Unlike traditional music, which is passed down from generation to generation as an expression of patriarchal rural society and whose authors are unknown individuals (Janjetović 2010, 63), neo-folk songs were created by professional production figures, were often musically more complex, and formulated according to specific rules. Neo-folk emerged as a result of *the first technological shift*, marked by the establishment and popularization of radio and the gramophone as the region's first popular sound and music technologies. More specifically, the development and expansion of this musical form were enabled by the rise of radio, the emergence of radio stations, and the increasing accessibility of gramophones and radio devices (Čolović 1982, 29; Momčilović 2025, 149).

This aligned with other factors such as the rapid industrialization and modernization of the socialist state (Archer 2012, 179), the development of mass media, the emergence of the folk music market, and the intensification of both internal and external migrations (Nenić 2020, 133). Additionally, the market liberalization of the 1960s (Mitrović 2017, 40) along with the expansion of the radio industry and record companies, contributed to

the establishment of the genre as a commercial and marketable entity (Vidić Rasmussen 1995, 242). This also entailed the development of infrastructure for popular music, including recording studios, music festivals, broadcast and mass media, as well as record companies – terms that are closely associated with the music "showbiz" industry (Beard & Rasmussen 2020, 2).

Although since its inception neo-folk resonated the most with the majority the Yugoslav population, it was not the best-selling genre at first. The dominant share belonged to pop music, largely due to the exclusivity of gramophones – initially owned by wealthier and more educated individuals who purchased pop (*zabavna*) music records (Janjetović 2010, 73). However, with the democratization of the gramophone (and radio), folk music gained dominance and became the most profitable musical genre (Janjetović 2010, 73; Archer 2012, 180; Arnautović 2012, 183). By the mid-1980s, folk music accounted for "58% of the total share in production, pop 29%, and rock 13%" (Hudelist 1984, 54 quoted in Beard & Rasmussen 2020, 2). The mass popularity of the genre and its "folkloric" character sparked fears of "folklorization" of Yugoslav popular music. Additionally, the role of neo-folk in the growth of the record industry, music market, and mass media was criticized, as it did not align with the premises of socialist society (Beard & Rasmussen 2020, 2). Neo-folk stood in opposition to Western-style popular music, which, since the late 1950s, began to be appropriated by the party "in the construction and reinvention of cultural and political identities in Yugoslavia, including the supranational Yugoslav identity" (Vuletić 2008, 862). Furthermore, neo-folk "undermined institutionally maintained boundaries between vernacular folk and Western pop," but also led to heated debates about drawing the line between authenticity and commercialism (Nenić 2020, 133).

The newly composed genre was criticized as an abuse of folk music (Anastasijević 1988), "a distorted and harmful imitation of 'authentic' folk music" (Arnautović 2012, 184), and a contaminated space between the rural and the urban (Simić 2019, 27). As noted earlier, neo-folk began to dismantle modernist categories (see Prica 1988), subtly signaling the subsequent arrival of postmodernism in popular folk music. The perceived harm of this imitation of authentic music stemmed more from its potential to incite nationalism and undermine the ideals of socialist society, than from an elitist understanding of popular music, which the Communist Party favored (Arnautović 2012, 184–185). Therefore, the status of newly composed folk music oscillated turbulently, as political

suitability was more important than marketability[5] (Arnautović 2012, 191), and the relationship to tradition and its contents was perceived selectively, ambivalently, and depending on social, political and economic circumstances. However, over time, the market-driven nature became increasingly important, thus "planting the seed of capitalism" within the industry despite restrictions, censorship, and control. The radio industry depended on its own revenue, so commercialism significantly influenced a more liberal policy toward "new folk music," opening the doors for it to enter the market game and create its own market (Vidić Rasmussen 1995, 245).

The consensually accepted beginning of neofolk occurred in 1964 with the song *Od izvora dva putića* by Lepa Lukić (Šentevska 2015, 157; Nenić 2020, 136). This song marked the start of the market history of Yugoslav neo-folk and introduced terms such as *hit* and *star* into the folk discourse, the terms that were previously associated with pop music (Vidić Rasmussen 1995, 241). The most prominent neofolk performers from the 1960s to the 1980s included Lepa Lukić, Silvana Armenulić, Braća Bajić, Predrag Gojković Cune, Toma Zdravković, Bora Spužić Kvaka, Predrag Živković Tozovac, Šaban Šaulić, Miroslav Ilić, Zorica Brunclik, Mitar Mirić, Nada Topčagić (Čolović 1982, 36). Later, this list expanded to include Lepa Brena, Vesna Zmijanac, and performers from the Južni Vetar production (Nenić 2020, 138).

The performers mostly came from poor rural areas/provinces and a working-class environment, which was an "important part of their biographies and mechanisms through which their stage identity was constructed and presented to the audience" (Mitrović 2017, 46). Therefore, the themes of the songs initially focused on the village and represented its pastoral, traditional, and idyllic image (Čolović 1982, 36). Since these themes resonated with the majority of the (rural) population, the popularity of neo-folk was constantly growing. Soon after the emergence of neofolk, basic themes that constituted its metanarrative were formulated, including: (lost) love and worldview, the village, longing for one's birthplace, regional identity and family, patriotism, the life of guest workers, taverns, and everyday life (Vidić Rasmussen 1995, 249; Đurković 2004, 277). In the

[5] The inconsistency of cultural policies resulted in the "tax on trash" which was paid by all those labeled as trash, most often folk performers (Hofman 2013). Serbia was the first among the Yugoslav republics to introduce this type of tax in 1972 (Momčilović 2025, 151), with a significant amount of the money being directed towards other cultural activities that could not have been financed in any other way (Janjetović 2010, 87; Mitrović 2017, 59).

analysis of the songs, two principles can be identified: one is narrative and modernistic[6] (Čolović 1982, 37), and the other is fragmented and postmodernistic[7] (Vidić Rasmussen 1995, 249). Furthermore, the lyricism, in this case, is colored by colloquial and folk elements (Vidić Rasmussen 1995, 249), and the songs, according to their semantic structure, can be classified as rustic, tavern, abstract, melancholic, and reflective (Čolović 1982).

The issue of the "newly composed audience," i.e. the listeners of neo-folk, represents a complex political and semantic "problem" that will become more pronounced with the emergence and popularization of turbo-folk. The term *newly composed* became established in urban speech as a pejorative expression, used to distinguish urbanites (listeners of pop and rock music who upheld middle-class values) from the "peasant" audience (rurbanites/peasant-urbanites) that listened to neo-folk (Nenić 2020, 133). Accordingly, the urban-rural opposition in the context of popular music became a fundamental dichotomy (Čolović 1982; Simić 2006; Đurić 2019), which gave rise to arguments that stigmatized the audience of newly composed music as uneducated, unliberated, and primitive. This population was associated with concepts such as "novelty, temporariness, bricolage and kitsch; that is, a lack of historicity, stylistic coherence, and aesthetic/artistic attributes" (Vidić Rasmussen 1995, 242). Thus, newly composed peasant-urbanites were viewed as "lost in translation" between the rural and urban, as "half-made" and "people out of place" (Simić 2006, 110; Milojević 2007, 26). Almost without exception, both the audience and the performers came from rural and peripheral areas, and through their existence, reflected the incompatibility with the socialist idea of an industrial modern society (see Simić 1973). They could be viewed as part of the "rural-urban transitional majority," with their rural background being perceived as a safeguard of cultural authenticity and the preservation of a patriarchal ethos, which were then commercialized and turned into pop-cultural commodities (Vidić Rasmussen 1995, 242), even though this "authenticity" was often stigmatized.

Writing about the way in which the newly composed folk audience was perceived, Iva Nenić notes that these social cohorts, migrating from

[6] Observing the structure of the song, Čolović notes that the songs are mostly narrative, with more or less developed plots, narrative exposition, conflict, and resolution, while the main point of the song usually appears in the chorus (Čolović 1982, 37).

[7] Vidić Rasmussen states that the song itself is constructed using the "bricolage" method: "a build up of fragments, symbols and metaphors that produce highly communicative phrase structures" (Vidić Rasmussen 1995, 249).

rural areas to cities, were considered to have lost their connection to their rural environment while seeking to adapt to urban life, but not entirely (Nenić 2020, 136). In this context, neo-folk represented an optimal position predominantly occupied by these groups, serving as a substitute for nostalgia (Dragičević Šešić 1988, 113). As neo-folk consolidated its position as part of the musical mainstream, it became more "problematic," as its popularity was attributed to electronic media, specifically radio stations and record labels, which were considered "the first culprits for the 'degeneration' of culture" (Arnautović 2012, 185). In the process of stigmatization, the audience of neo-folk music was blamed for the degradation of the nation's musical taste (Atanasovski 2012, 164), and by extension, other values represented by music genres. On the other hand, this audience was paternalistically and Adornianly interpreted as "passive, powerless, manipulated by often uneducated individuals, driven by profit, who, for the sake of money, neglected the cultural policies of self-managed socialism and embraced the market principles of the West" (Arnautović 2012, 185). All of this resulted in the perception of neo-folk as a form of moral panic (Vidić Rasmussen 1995, 255).

The assumed "degeneration of culture" stemmed from the fusion of the incompatible – Western music and folk – which were expected to remain within their respective categories. Western music was supposed to be glocalized within the specific Yugoslav context, while folk was to remain "where it belonged," in the realm of the vernacular, the exotic, or outside the sphere of political influence and power. However, the 1980s in Yugoslavia represented a decade during which "the development of the popular music industry and market reached its peak" (Arnautović 2012, 194). This development was influenced by the pluralization of musical practices, the collapse of the socialist order, the strengthening of capitalist market principles, and the increasing electronization of music, which was linked to the global trend of "genre blending" (Arnautović 2012, 194). This shift was further conditioned by the unofficial change from the modernist and categorical to the postmodern, hybrid, plural, and fragmented. This phase of neofolk, in a certain sense, heralded the end of a musical, technological, social and political era. The 1980s were, above all, a turning point both in the music industry and in the political history of Yugoslavia. In the context of the music industry, there was a faster and more intense implementation of new musical technologies and elements of Western popular music, which significantly influenced the transition from neofolk to turbo-folk.

THE "PINK MONSTER" AND THE CACOPHONY OF TASTES: TURBO-FOLK AS A MUSICAL AND CULTURAL PHENOMENON

Turbo-folk is a music genre that combines folk melodies with (a) musical instruments, beats, and patterns from various Western popular music genres such as rock, hip-hop, dance, techno, and other electronic genres on one side, and (b) motifs such as melismas, trills, vibrato, and ornamentation associated with the Orient on the other (Dumnić-Vilotijević 2020a, 73). As such, turbo-folk can be understood as a consequence of *the second technological shift* that occured with the implementation of electric instruments (synthesizers and guitars) into the instrumentation of neo-folk (see Đurković 2001, 27; Mitrović 2017, 21; Dumnić-Vilotijević 2020a, 73). Paradigmatically speaking, the generation of audiovisual content in turbo-folk is largely postmodernist, mixing musical and visual elements from various global cultural industries, with a particular emphasis on Western influence. The social, cultural, economic, and political circumstances that affected this genre represent one of the most striking periods of recent history – the 1990s, which brought the breakup of the Yugoslav state, rampant nationalism, ethnic conflicts, sanctions, widespread poverty, and the collapse of the economic order, along with the dominance of crime and the shadow economy. In the context of already established social and cultural divisions—*civilized*/*primitive*, *cultured*/*uncultured*, *good taste*/*kitsch*—turbo-folk functioned less as a cause and more as a reflection and symbol of such tensions (see Simić 2006; Baker 2007; Kulenović & Banić Grubišić 2019). As the *enfant terrible* of popular folk music, it transcended the boundaries of musical genre and became a broader cultural and political phenomenon of its time. The representation of this genre was built by its first critics[8] (Dragičević Šešić 1994; Gordy 1999; Kronja 2001), thus making turbo-folk an important musical, social, cultural, and political reference.

During the 1980s, neo-folk reached its peak, establishing a solid foundation for a new generation of stars and exhibiting an increasingly strong connection with the market economy (Momčilović 2025, 157). The new stars emerged in the 1990s in (by then already) private production

[8] It is important to emphasize that this critique was established within the so-called "Second Serbia"—a cultural and intellectual nomenclature that challenges the dominant system, nationalism, and conservatism, and is most often oriented towards pro-Western or pro-European perspectives.

companies, television and radio stations (Atanasovski 2012, 158), and in their musical works, they increasingly integrated motifs from other musical pop cultures. Music videos of these stars often recreated audiovisual motifs, aesthetics, and lifestyles of MTV stars, making the genre, despite retaining numerous elements of folk, more oriented toward pop (Radović 2010, 125). This introduced significant innovations in terms of "sound, visual presentation, fashion, and lifestyle in the music industry" (Đurić 2019, 23). Thus, the modernist categorization of pop music as urban and folk as rural culture was disrupted, triggering "disgust", misunderstanding, and fear, as turbo-folk, as constituted, represented the fusion of the incompatible.[9] For this reason, the genre has been labeled as a mega-genre, bricolage, Frankenstein, hybrid, mutant, etc. (Kulenović & Banić Grubišić 2019, 52), reflecting its postmodern dimension.

The hybridization of musical elements and the erosion of genre boundaries are reflected in the very definition of the term turbo-folk[10] as a designation for new versions of folk music (Mitrović 2017, 21). Specifically, due to the porous nature of the genre's boundaries, its key characteristic is indeterminacy, with turbo-folk encompassing even diametrically opposed tracks.[11] Therefore, the issues of terminological, semantic, and genre-related definitions point to the key characteristics of *turbo-folk* in its initial stages. The unsystematic, unplanned emergence and development, adaptability, postmodern premises, the use of intercultural musical motifs (borrowings) in its formation, market freedom without censorship, and the capitalistic market orientation of the folk industry are all essential traits of this phenomenon and the (post-socialist transition) era in which it emerged. However, the core distinction of *turbo-folk* is that, since its "explosion" into the mainstream popular music, it has functioned as a multidimensional focal point around which ideological "battles" have been fought in negotiating collective/national identity and its superiority/

[9] Mary Douglas (Daglas 2001) pointed to the cultural perception of categorization, meaning that certain cultural elements are understood based on whether they belong to their category or lie outside of it; more precisely, what is within its category is considered appropriate to the order, while what lies outside its category is perceived as dirty or dangerous.

[10] Until a few years ago, this term was most often used in a critical context, while "folk" and "narodnjaci" were the most prevalent among the listeners of turbo-folk.

[11] As Đorđević points out, "the elitist critique of turbo-folk overlooks the fact that this term encompasses so many different types of music, ranging from classical `narodnjaci` with patriotic aspirations, to guslars, and all the way to typical MTV dance" (Đorđević 2010, 142).

inferiority (see Simić 2006; Kulenović & Banić Grubišić 2022). The core of these "battles" lies in the bearers of this cultural model—"rurbanites"—and the period in which the genre emerged: the 1990s.

In addition to being associated with "urban peasants" (*rurbanites*) which were considered uneducated, primitive, un-emancipated, and kitsch populations who were not integrated into civic culture, in the 1990s *turbo-folk* was linked to the newly emerging "war-profiteering" and "criminal" elite (Kronja 2006; Živković 2012; Šentevska 2015). The luxurious lifestyle of the newly profiled elite was embodied in *turbo-folk* music videos, emphatically demonstrating status and power in times of general poverty. Furthermore, the connection between crime and the entertainment industry also existed, with most listeners coming from rural and working-class milieus. Thus, the bearers and members of the *turbo-folk* culture were equated with the subculture of the warrior elite, associated with criminal behavior, machismo, commodification of women, anti-civic values, body culture, glamorization of everyday life, and capitalist, consumerist cultural patterns modeled after the West (Kronja 2006, 91-92).

Furthermore, as turbo-folk began to be associated with these groups and nationalist actions, it also became a popular subject for moral panic and criticism on a wide range of issues. At that time, the cultural foundations established in Yugoslav public discourse and cultural policies were "shaken" and replaced with the values that critical currents labeled as primitive. Thus, as Simić notes, turbo-folk became a marker of the issue of being "cultured" or "uncultured", with musical taste becoming a Bourdieuian form of cultural capital (Simić 2006, 112). Besides being a qualifier of (bad) taste, its unpopularity was influenced by its role as an instrument for social advancement within the societal hierarchy. In this way, "primitive peasant-urbanites", among other factors, became the new elite, while the old elite was pushed into political obscurity (Simić 2006, 112).

Among critics, two dominant perspectives emerged: from the point of view of conservative nationalists, turbo-folk was criticized as a degradation, destruction, and "orientalization" of the traditional national culture, while pro-European liberals saw turbo-folk as a threat to (high, elite, and also alternative) culture (Kulenović & Banić Grubišić 2019, 54). Additionally, even the (neo)folk musicians themselves often expressed disdain for this direction, considering it a threat to "real folk music". A specific body of criticism formed around the connection between turbo-folk and the regime of Slobodan Milošević, primarily because turbo-folk

was seen as an imposed instrument of the ruling nomenclature (Gordy 1999; Živković 2012). More precisely, turbo-folk was seen as a means of promoting nationalist goals and "folk" politics, as well as pacifying critical thinking (see Gordy 1999), and later as a "symbol of moral degradation", initiated by the destruction of good taste and continued through support for Milošević's government, which promoted kitsch tied to the rise of the new national elite of war profiteers and mafia members (Simić 2006, 108). The thesis of an inevitable connection between nationalism and turbo-folk became almost assumed in turbo-folk analyses, but this was followed by a wave of counterarguments pointing out that the phenomenon was more complex than the uniform, reductionist interpretations that had previously been dominant (see Đurković 2001, 2004, 2013; Radović 2010; Đorđević 2010; Atanasovski 2012; Blagojević 2012; Dražeta & Guja 2018; Kulenović & Banić Grubišić 2019). It was further argued that the so-called "destruction of good taste" occurred with the market liberalization and the lifting of censorship, allowing what had been censored and suppressed under socialism to surface (Đurković 2001, 26), wherefore turbo-folk subsequently flooded the media space, pushing other genres aside. Therefore, the decline of alternative and other genres was crucially linked to the state's withdrawal from cultural policies, the (non)commercial nature of the new music scene, and the radical market principles that created new consumer needs, and thereby new stars (Dragičević-Šešić 1994, 201; Đurković 2001, 27; Đurković 2013, 223). Additionally, it should be noted that the population of Yugoslavia largely belonged to the "provincial" and "peasant-worker" milieu, and to this population, folk forms were much closer than rock music, which seemed distant, incomprehensible, and "unnatural" to many. Thus, turbo-folk responded to the demands of the new "rural" and "rurban" generations by providing them with a genre that simultaneously resembled the music they grew up with and socialized to, but was also distinct enough to separate them from the generation of their parents, giving them the illusion of being modern, urban, and "chic".

Thus, turbo-folk can be viewed as an essentially post-socialist and postmodern phenomenon that would have occurred in this cultural environment and society, with or without Milošević, the war, and other symbols of the 1990s, as indicated by numerous parallels with other countries (Šentevska 2015, 152; Simić 2019, 26). A wide range of criticisms arose because the cultural policies of Yugoslavia represented rural culture in a stylized, curated, and "ironed out" (thus decontextualized) way. When the then version of rural or rurban culture came to the forefront and its

actors took positions of power, it became a target of criticism and a factor of social regression (Simić 2006).

Finally, as it separates from its original context, the term turbo-folk becomes less problematic as a cultural and musical phenomenon. It is increasingly perceived as an auto-exoticising element (Archer 2012) that many among the new generations interpret in different ways (Barać 2025, 572),[12] thus playing a significant role in contemporary arenas of identity "negotiation" in which young people are involved. In some aspects, the dislike of turbo-folk can be read as snobbery, and its re-emergence is also reflected in popular meme culture. In addition to the removal of ideological connotations that evoke the war for those not inclined toward folk music, younger cohorts today are perceived as cultural omnivores (Peterson & Simkus 1992) who adopt cultural content from various sources and perspectives. Therefore, cultural omnivores are capable of appreciating everything "from Silvana to Nirvana,"[13] visiting dilapidated taverns, theaters, exclusive floating bars, and museums, without stigmatization and prejudice. [14]

AT THE CROSSROADS: CONTEMPORARY FOLK FORMS – CURRENT STATE AND PERSPECTIVES

The new millennium brought significant milestones in music production, which were primarily reflected in technological aspects, but also in the fundamental premises of the music industry. The music industry became increasingly pluralistic, fluid, and intensely market-oriented. These circumstances also influenced the local mainstream music, which today is based on three folk forms that constitute contemporary folk forms as a distinct overarching genre category: pop-folk, trap-folk, and folk-drill (so-called "boorish drill").

[12] One example of the use of turbo-folk as a certain legacy is the alternative music scene of turbo-tronic (see Rašić 2018; Banić Grubišić & Kulenović 2019; Kulenović & Banić Grubišić 2022).

[13] In colloquial speech, this phrase is used to indicate that someone's taste covers a wide range of music genres that, in many cases, can even be mutually exclusive.

[14] Such practices can be linked to the concept of the "Third Serbia," which transcends the conventional division between the "First Serbia" (typically characterized as nationalist and conservative) and the "Second Serbia" (associated with liberal, urban, and pro-European progressives) (see Spasić & Petrović 2012). Although not yet widespread, these practices are becoming increasingly present due to the growing exposure to plural cultural contents through internet media.

a) *Pop-folk:* Turbo-folk of the New Generation

Emerging from turbo-folk, pop-folk – the new generation of turbo-folk – appeared at the beginning of the new millennium (see Mitrović 2017). Due to technological advancements, it was characterized by a higher-quality and cleaner sound, as well as more sophisticated production compared to the 1990s (Dumnić-Vilotijević 2020a, 74). However, the roots, style, and premises of this direction largely remained turbo-folk[15] in nature. While pop (i.e., popular music) and hip-hop were popular during the first decade of the 2000s, turbo-folk/pop-folk was distinctly dominant and firmly entrenched in various media-production structures such as Grand Production (the *Zvezde Granda* show), DM SAT, KCN and similar new television formats, as well as older ones like Palma and Pink (Dumnić-Vilotijević 2020a, 75), which had significantly contributed to the media establishment of turbo-folk in earlier periods.

In addition to its visually similar representation and establishment in TV media as a carrier of commercial music culture, pop-folk retained the themes of turbo-folk, primarily focusing on interpersonal relationships (especially love), taverns and nightlife, youthful life, and similar topics.

During the first decade of the new millennium, pop-folk increasingly aligned with pop music and became more dependent on the development of other genres, including hip-hop and EDM (Dumnić-Vilotijević 2020a). In the 2020s, pop-folk began to be defined primarily through female figures in the music industry, who increasingly embodied postfeminist premises in their songs and music videos. Contemporary pop-folk is largely shaped by a new generation of pop-folk singers, including Aleksandra Prijović, Tea Tairović, Milica Pavlović, and Barbara Bobak. The works of these performers aim to bring back (or continue) the trajectory of turbo-folk, positioning it as a musical and (sub)cultural legacy that is "coming back in style, but reinvented."

[15] In public discourse, contemporary pop-folk is often referred to as turbo-folk or simply classified under that category. The reason for this is the near-identical sound, mannerisms, and visual representations. However, I believe that pop-folk must be distinguished from its 1990s and early 2000s version due to the genre-specific as well as broader cultural characteristics (see Mitrović 2017, 2). Therefore, the simple equating of turbo-folk with contemporary pop-folk overlooks significant contextual features that are crucial for the analytical treatment of a given genre.

b) *Trap-Folk:* Transition to a New Era of Balkanism

Another significant direction that emerged as an important element of the contemporary mainstream music scene is trap-folk.[16] Trap-folk refers to the fusion of trap segments and beats with a "folk voice" and this musical practice became dominant after 2010 (Dumnić-Vilotijević 2020a). This new format was characterized by the use of musical elements and technologies derived from hip-hop, EDM, and similar genres, primarily through the implementation of computer-generated sound, mixing various melodic-rhythmic motifs, and the use of *autotune* techniques, which also significantly influenced pop-folk (Dumnić-Vilotijević 2020a). The beginnings of this genre are associated with songs such as *Noć za nas* (Cvija ft. Dara Bubamara), *Ja volim Balkan* (Dado Polutmenta ft. MC Yankoo & DJ Mladja & MC Stojan), *Lepota Balkanska* (Mia Borisavljević ft. DJ Denial & SHA), *Nisi s njom* (Mia Borisavljević ft. Elitni Odredi), etc. These songs predominantly retain "folk themes," initially centering on nightlife and sexual or romantic relationships. Simultaneously, they evoke the Balkans as a cultural topos—a space that encapsulates the post-war condition marked by economic devastation, the gray economy, and widespread impoverishment (Dumnić-Vilotijević 2020a; Barać 2025). These circumstances are reflected in representations of crime, individual success, luxury, and a hedonistic lifestyle. In this respect, the Balkan topos closely parallels the "ghetto" topos characteristic of the original trap music emerging from the "Dirty South" of the United States (see Barać 2025)

The synthesis of trap and folk reached its peak with the collaboration between Maya Berović and the popular Bosnian-Herzegovinian duo Jala Brat and Buba Corelli after 2016. This collaboration (along with other production actors) introduced trap themes into this genre both musically and lyrically. Trap themes are largely based on a range of signifiers, including nightlife, sex, hedonistic living, crime, "immoral" behavior, hedonism, and status symbols, which are mainly represented by luxury brands, materialism, consumerism, and individual success (Kaluža 2018; Conti 2020; Dumnić-Vilotijević 2020a; Barać 2025). In this sense, trap corresponds not only with the general image of Balkanism constructed during the 1990s, but also with the neoliberal character that increasingly emerged within musical frameworks (Barać 2025).

[16] I also use the term *Balkan trap* alongside *trap-folk*, depending on the specific artist and song, in order to account for the full generic spectrum—ranging from those that lean more toward trap to those that emphasize folk elements (see Barać 2025).

Additionally, trap has complemented the postmodern premises of folk music, pushing them to their limits. The commercial local trap (Balkan trap/trap-folk) is characterized by a highly communicative practice of fragment accumulation, among which the established images of the Balkans, Balkan nightlife, interpersonal relationships, consumerism, and ultimately brands as key audiovisual elements prevail (Barać 2025). These elements reflect core features, such as a postmodern and neoliberal tone, commercialism, hyperproduction, market competitiveness, and similar traits. This partly explains the frequent collaborations between pop-folk performers and trap artists, as well as crossover of trap artists into folk, reflecting the elusiveness, lack of clear categorization, and absence of systematization within the contemporary folk forms, where genre boundaries are highly porous.

Finally, trap-folk marked the third technological shift, as music became almost entirely computer-generated and created, with performers often singing over backing tracks during live shows, making musical instruments almost completely absent. Thus, we can say that the third technological shift also led to the *cyborgization* of performers, as they can no longer recreate even a remotely live experience of their tracks without the digital "musical machinery" that is digital—a phenomenon that is, among other things, often criticized. In addition to technological innovations in sound creation, the distribution and consumption of musical content has significantly changed, as internet platforms have taken precedence over other music consumption technologies. All of these factors have significantly impacted music as a commodity, with evidence that these processes have further strengthened the capitalist/neoliberal ideology within the music industry (see Maglov 2022, 107).[17]

c) *Folk-drill:* "Boorish Drill" – Proponent of Folk Heritage or Its Parody

The latest and most recent format that can be classified under contemporary folk forms is the so-called folk-drill or "boorish drill," which emerged in 2022 with the appearances of Dragomir Despić Desingerica and Luka Bijelović Pljugica. These performers have, in a certain way, fused "drill" (as a subgenre of hip-hop) with melodies of narrow soundscapes, frequent trills and vibrations (resembling oriental tones), and vocal motifs that allude to a "boorish-folk" manner. Unlike Balkan trap and trap-folk, "boorish

[17] Marija Maglov states that all innovations in the field of audio technologies served the purpose of intensifying performance in increasing profits, reflecting the inseparability of these innovations from the capitalist logic (Maglov 2022, 107).

drill" more intensely disrupts conventional boundaries both audibly and visually. The key topoi of folk-drill are based on consumerism, brands, luxury, sex, "primitive" or destructive behavior, psychoactive substances, crime, physicality, misogyny, the reinforcement of toxic masculinity, hustle, business, and so on. While these topoi are present in Balkan trap/trap-folk, in folk-drill, they are much more explicit. Folk-drill almost completely adopts a typical "ghetto" narrative but glocalizes it within the context of the Balkan cultural space, presenting it as a place of crime, struggle, sex, entertainment, hedonism, etc.

The key feature of this direction so far has been performative transgression, i.e., scandalization and sensationalization of the public, both in terms of audio-visual representation and in the performances themselves. This is achieved through the relationship with the audience, where performers would hit them with their shoes, spit in their faces, pour alcohol on the audience, grate cheese over their heads, throw socks at them, and so on. As a result, this performer has become a target for public criticism and an ultimate representation of the "moral and intellectual downfall of new generations," as well as the dominance of the "abnormal," banal, capitalist and above all, the "immoral" and "tasteless" in public discourse. In this regard, it is observed that performative transgression leads to a certain culture of hype, where fans of the genre see "gas" (i.e., thrill) in these practices, viewing them affirmatively as a form of subcultural and generational intimacy. On the other hand, critics emphasize the harmful impact on young people, with their rhetoric often resembling a moral panic. Both forms of hype result in profit and popularity, and it becomes clear that the economic aspect is crucial, with post-cultural, postmodern, and neoliberal premises taken to extremes. Overall, "boorish drill" represents one of the most explicit indicators that music production has undergone numerous contextual, paradigmatic, and technological shifts, and that the future development of this music industry is highly unpredictable.

Outro: Concluding Remarks

This paper aims to trace the historical transformations of popular folk music in Serbia through its key phases—neo-folk, turbo-folk, and contemporary folk forms (pop-folk, trap-folk, and folk-drill)—emphasizing that these (sub)genres have been shaped by technological, epistemological, sociocultural, economic, and political shifts that have influenced the folk music industry. By analyzing this phenomenon through the aforementioned conceptual and contextual nodes, the paper highlights

the role of this music as a dynamic site of cultural and social production, shaped by changes in media culture, ideological frameworks, and market logic. These transformations have significantly impacted the processes of music creation, distribution, and consumption.

Each phase in the development of popular folk music corresponded to specific historical conditions and social contexts. The first phase (neo-folk) was tied to tradition, state mediation of what was considered "folk," and the modernization efforts of socialist Yugoslavia in the realm of cultural policy. Early neofolk production relied on the gramophone and radio, marking the first technological shift in the music industry. The gradual departure from socialist-modernist logic in the creation of musical content led to the adoption of postmodern principles, characterized by bricolage of musical and audiovisual elements from diverse cultural sources. The institutionalization of these principles was further reinforced by the development of media and audiovisual technologies (the second technological shift), which drove the industry toward stronger market orientation during the second phase—turbo-folk.

This second phase introduced deep social and ideological divisions in the context of post-socialist transition and the war-related circumstances that followed the disintegration of Yugoslavia, leaving a lasting impact on the entire social order. The ambivalent aesthetics of turbo-folk—both glamorous and grotesque—reflected the contradictions of a society in crisis while simultaneously shaping a new popular sensibility attuned to post-socialist consumer culture. Seen as a "culprit" in the marginalization of musical and cultural alternatives, turbo-folk became a target of sharp critique and the genre most saturated with ideological tension, signaling a paradigmatic and epistemological rupture with traditional notions of folk music as a linear and (supposedly) "authentic" cultural heritage. Technological innovations, inter-cultural references, and market-driven logic contributed to the erosion of genre boundaries and affirmed the postmodern character of musical practices during this period.

Further technological advancement in music production and the increasing application of postmodern principles in content creation culminated in contemporary folk forms (pop-folk, trap-folk, and folk-drill), which rest on: a) digital and internet-based media and technologies as primary tools for music production, distribution, and consumption; and b) neoliberal logic, visible in independent production models, market orientation, commodification of music, performer branding, competitiveness, the adoption of business models, and audiovisual

narratives that promote the "entrepreneurial self," [18] consumerism, and hedonistic lifestyles—underpinned by the dominance of various forms of capital as the ultimate goal.

Although they retain many premises of previous phases, contemporary folk forms—as the third phase of the transformation—emerge within a fundamentally altered technological and media environment, shaped by social media platforms, algorithmic visibility, and digital self-representation. These forms reflect a new aesthetic regime in which genre boundaries are porous, and performativity is central. Pop-folk (while still drawing on turbo-folk narratives) reconfigures gender and sexuality in line with postfeminist and neoliberal principles—albeit not always explicitly. Meanwhile, trap-folk and folk-drill articulate "paradoxical" representations of economic precarity, marginalization, and hyper-consumption through glocalized sonic codes of global trap. These genres do not necessarily reflect reality; rather, they construct affective and symbolic infrastructures for navigating the cultural logic of neoliberalism in Serbia and the wider post-socialist region. Importantly, these musical forms also illuminate a shift in epistemological authority: from institutionalized folklore and state media to fragmented, self-referential, and affect-driven digital cultures. The developmental trajectory of the genre not only indicates broader cultural transformations, but also manifests the ways in which identities and values are produced, circulated, and contested under changing sociocultural, economic, and political conditions. What remains evident is that popular folk music in Serbia continues to serve as a fruitful cultural, technological, and epistemological arena through which wider processes of social transformation are both articulated and contested.

References

Anastasijević, Branislav. 1988. „O zloupotrebi narodne muzike". *Kultura* 80/81: 147–156.

Archer, Rory. 2012. "Assessing Turbofolk Controversies: Popular Music between the Nation and the Balkans". *Southeastern Europe* 36: 178–207.

Arnautović, Jelena. 2012. *Između politike i tržišta: popularna muzika na Radio Beogradu u SFRJ*. Beograd: Radio-Televizija Srbije.

Atanasovski, Srđan. 2012. "Turbofolk as `Bad Music`: Politics of Musical

[18] See Banet-Weiser 2012.

Valuing". In B*öse Macht Musik Zur Ästhetik des Bösen in der Musik*, edited by Katharina Wisotzki & Sara R. Falke, 157–172. Bielefeld: Transcript.

Baker, Catherine. 2007. "The Concept of Turbofolk in Croatia: Inclusion/Exclusion in the Construction of National Musical Identity". In *Nation in Formation: Inclusion and Exclusion in Central and Eastern Europe*, edited by Catherine Baker, Christopher J. Gerry, Barbara Madaj, Liz Mellish, and Jana Nahodilová, 139–158. London: SSEES Publications.

Banet-Weiser, Sarah. 2012. *Authentic™: The Politics of Ambivalence in a Brand Culture.* New York: New York University Press.

Banić Grubišić, Ana & Nina Kulenović. 2019. „Turbotronik – na granici između lokalne muzičke scene i žanra u nastajanju". *Etnoantropološki problemi* 14 (1): 23–46.

Barać, Lazar. 2025. "Made in the Balkans: A Contribution to Understanding Balkan Trap/Trap-Folk as a Musical Genre and Cultural Phenomenon". *Issues in Ethnology and Anthropology* 20 (2): 559–590.

Beard, Danijela & Ljerka Rasmussen. 2020. "Introduction. Reclaiming of Legacy of Yugoslav Popular Music". In *Made in Yugoslavia: Studies in Popular Music* edited by Danijela Beard and Ljerka Rasmussen, 1–11. New York & London: Routledge.

Blagojević, Gordana. 2012. "Turbo-Folk and Ethnicity in the Mirror of the Perception of the YouTube users". *Glasnik Etnografskog instituta SANU* LX (2): 155–170.

Čolović, Ivan. 1982. „Nove narodne pesme". *Kultura* 57/58: 29–55.

Daglas, Meri. 2001. *Čisto i opasno.* Beograd: XX vek.

Dragičević-Šešić, Milena. 1988. „Publika nove narodne muzike". *Kultura* 80-81: 94–116.

Dragićević-Šešić, Milena. 1994. *Neofolk kultura: publika i njene zvezde*. Sremski Karlovci: Izdavačka knjižarnica Zorana Stanojevića.

Dražeta, Bogdan i Zorana Guja. 2018. „Uticaj muzike na međuetničke odnose stanovnika Sarajeva i Mostara". *Etnoantropološki problemi* 13 (4): 899–925.

Dumnić, Marija. 2013. "The Creation of Folk Music Program on Radio Belgrade Before World War Two: Editorial Policies and Performing Ensembles". *Muzikologija* 14: 9–29.

Dumnić Vilotijević, Marija. 2020a. "The Balkans of the Balkans: The Meaning of Autobalkanism in Regional Popular Music". *Arts* 9: 70–82.

Dumnić-Vilotijević, Marija. 2020b. "Starogradska muzika: An Ethnography of Musical Nostalgia". In *Made in Yugoslavia: Studies in Popular Music,* edited by Danijela Beard and Ljerka Rasmussen, 123–132. New York and London: Routledge.

Đorđević, Ivan. 2010. „Identitetske politike u ritmu 'lakih nota': recepcija neofolk muzike u Sloveniji". *Traditiones* 39/1: 137–153.

Đorđević, Jelena. 2009. *Postkultura.* Beograd: Clio.

Đurić, Jovana. 2019. "Turbofolk: Political (Un)conditionality - What do Outlaw Bikers Have that 'Brand Communities' Lack?" *The Journal of Culture* 8 (1): 22–27.

Đurković, Miša. 2001. „Ideologizacija turbo folka". *Kultura* 102: 19–33.

Đurković, Miša. 2004. „Ideološki i politički sukobi oko popularne muzike u Srbiji". *Filozofija i društvo* XXV: 271–284.

Đurković, Miša. 2013. „Rokenrol i nova narodna muzika u Jugoslaviji i Srbiji". *Sociološki pregled* XXXVII (2): 231–247.

Cawelti, John. 1969. "The Concept of Formula in the Study of Popular Literature". *The Journal of Popular Culture* 3 (3): 381–390.

Conti, Uliano. 2020. "Urban Youth in Transformation: Considerations for a Sociology of Trap Subculture". *Italian Sociological Review* 10 (2): 257–270.

Ganti, Tesjaswini. 2014. "Neoliberalism". *Annual Review of Anthropology* 43: 89–104.

Goodwin, Andrew. 1991. "Popular Music and Postmodern Theory". *Cultural Studies* 5 (2): 174–190.

Gordy, Erik. 1999. *The Culture of Power in Serbia. Nationalism and the Destruction of Alternatives.* Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press.

Gregurić, Ivana. 2012. „Era kiborga – stvaranje „djelimičnih ili potpuno umjetnih bića". *Antropologija* 12 (2): 31–41.

Hofman, Ana. 2013. „Ko se boji šunda još? Muzička cenzura u Jugoslaviji". In *Socijalizam na klupi: Jugoslovensko društvo očima postjugoslovenske humanistike*, edited by Lada Duraković and Andrea Matošević, 280–316. Pula and Zagreb: Srednja Evropa.

Hošić, Jasmin. 2011. „Uloga tehnologije u razvoju pop muzike". *Post Scriptum* 1: 100-105.

Janjetović, Zoran. 2010. „`Selo moje lepše od Pariza` - narodna muzika u socijalističkoj Jugoslaviji". *Godišnjak za društvenu istoriju* 3: 63–89.

Kaluža, Jernej. 2018. "Reality of Trap: Trap Music and its Emancipatory Potential". *IAFOR Journal of Media, Communication & Film* 5 (1): 23–41.

Karpeles, Maud. 1955. "Definition of Folk Music". *Journal of the International Folk Music Council* 7 (6): 6–7.

Kronja, Ivana. 2001. *Smrtonosni sjaj: masovna psihologija i estetika turbo-folka*. Beograd: Tehnokratia.

Kronja, Ivana. 2006. „Urbani životni stilovi i medijska reprezentacija gradskog života i omladinske kulutre: potkultura 'Silikonske doline' i filmska trilogija Radivoja Raše Andrića". *Zbornik radova Fakulteta dramskih umetnosti* 10: 89–109.

Kulenović, Nina i Ana Banić Grubišić. 2019. „`Cepaće se neki narodnjaci!`: nova čitanja turbo-folka". *Etnoantropološki problemi* 14 (1): 47–78.

Kulenović, Nina, and Ana Banić Grubišić. 2022. "'Kap kiše u okeanu za kafanu na Balkanu': balkanski „barbarogenij" u narativima Turbotronik scene". *Etnoantropološki problemi* 17 (1): 159–189.

León, Javier. 2014. "Introduction: Music, Music Making and Neoliberalism". *Culture, Theory and Critique* 55 (2): 129–137.

Maglov, Marija. 2022. „Medijski obrt u muzici: produkcija i recepcija muzike u kontekstu medijske kulture u 20. veku", doktorska disertacija. Fakultet muzičke umetnosti, Univerzitet umetnosti u Beogradu.

McGuigan, Jim. 2009. *Cool Capitalism.* London & New York: Pluto Press.

Milojevic, Jasmina. 2007. „Novokomponovana narodna muzika – potamneli biseri folklornog nasleđa". *Beseda*: 22–28.

Mitrović, Marijana. 2017. „Uloga popularne muzike u konstruisanju rodnih identiteta u postsocijalističkoj Srbiji", doktorska disertacija. Filozofski fakultet, Univerzitet u Beogradu.

Momčilović, Aleksandar. 2025. "`Please, Mile, Don`t Sing Anything Political`: Turbo-folk, politics, and the restoration of capitalism in Serbia". In *The Routledge Handbook of Popular Music and Politics of the Balkan,* edited by Catherine Baker, 147–161. New York and London: Routledge.

Mrvoš, Dragana & Barbara Frey. 2024. „Komodifikacija i kulturna industrija: razumevanje trep folka i `gaserskog` stila u Srbiji i postjugoslovenskom prostoru". *Kritika: časopis Za Filozofiju I Teoriju društva,* 5 (1): 3–23.

Nenić, Iva. 2020. "My Juga, My Dearest Flower": The Yugoslav Legacy of Newly Composed Folk Music Revisited". In *Made in Yugoslavia: Studies in Popular Music,* edited by Danijela Beard and Ljerka Rasmussen, 133–142. New York and London: Routledge.

Peterson, Richard A. & Albert Simkus. 1992. "How Musical Tastes Mark Occupational Status Groups". In *Cultivating Differences*, edited by Michelle Lamont and Marcel Fournier, 152–186. London: Chicago University Press.

Pinch, Trevor & Karin Bijsterveld. 2004. "Sound Studies: New Technologies and Music". *Social Studies of Science* 34 (5): 635–648.

Prica, Ines. 1988. „Mitsko poimanje naroda u kritici novokomponovane narodne muzike". *Kultura* 80/81: 80–93.

Radivojević, Sonja. 2024. „Neoliberalizam". *Etnološko-antropološki pojmovnik srpske kulture.* https://pojmovnik.rs/pojmovnik

Radović, Srđan. 2010. „Juče na Balkanu, danas u vašem stanu. Nekoliko zapažanja o neofolk muzici među publikom u Sloveniji". *Traditiones* 39 (1): 123–135.

Rašić, Miloš. 2018. „Turbotronik: studija slučaja Lenharta Tapesa i Mirjane Raić". *Etnoantropološki problem* 13 (4): 951–969.

Simić, Andrei. 1973. *The peasant urbanites: a study of rural-urban mobility in Serbia*. New York & London: Seminar Press.

Simić, Marina. 2006. „Exit u Evropu. Popularna muzika i politike identiteta u savremenoj Srbiji". *Kultura* 116/117: 98–122.

Simić, Marina. 2019. "Music of the Others. Locating the (Turbo-) Folk Critique". *Contemporary Southeastern Europe* 6 (2): 22–37.

Spasić, Ivana & Tamara Petrović. 2012. „Varijante 'Treće Srbije'". *Filozofija i društvo* 23 (3): 23–44.

Šentevska, Irena. 2015. "`Turbo folk rules!`: Turbo-Folk, Chalga and the new elites of the post socialist Balkans". *Media Studies* 9 (2): 152–171.

Šuvaković, Miško. *Postmoderna.* Beograd: Narodna knjiga Alfa.

Vidić Rasmussen, Ljerka. 1995. "From Source to Commodity: Newly-Composed Folk Music of Yugoslavia". *Popular Music* 14 (2): 241–256.

Vidić Rasmussen, Ljerka. 2002. *Newly Composed Folk Music of Yugoslavia*. New York and London: Routledge.

Vuletić, Dean. 2008. "Generation Number One: Politics and Popular Music in Yugoslavia in the 1950s". *Nationalities Papers* 36 (5): 861–79.

Živković, Miloš. 2012. "Serbian Turbo-Epics: Genres, Intertextuality, and the Play of Ironies". In *Balkan Epic: Song, History, Modernity,* edited by Philip V. Bohlman and Nada Petković. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press.

Примљено/Received: 07. 03. 2025.
Прихваћено/Accepted: 28. 08. 2025.