

## SEMIOTICS OF FILM / SEMIOTICS OF FILM MUSIC

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**Abstract.** *Film music in postmodernism can be seen as applied music that together with text and images creates a film narrative<sup>1</sup>. In relation to the theory at the very beginning of film art and the period of classical film theory, the postmodern era perceives all the disciplines that make a film as equally important. When we look at music in this context, we notice that directors have often used it as a narrative tool, but to decipher the semantic aspect of music, the recipient needs prior knowledge or an adopted musical cultural code. However, with music as an abstract art, it is very difficult to symbolize the idea of a film director in the right way, so for that reason, music as a symbol of the director's imagination can be interpreted differently.*

**Key words:** *film music, semiotics, cultural code, popular song, signifier*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The topic of this work is based on the assumption that music as an equal part of the film's narrative process is actually a semiotic representation of the film's plot, for which in order to fully understand its action it is necessary to investigate its cultural symbolism organized in the world of symbols as Umberto Eco believes. Song in the film initiates three levels of meaning, image, melody and text, and for this reason we can understand the semiotics of film music as abstract. In the introductory part of the paper, I will present the semiotic theories of Ferdinand de Saussure, Charles Sanders Peirce, Christian Metz, James Buhler, John Blacking, Philip Tag and Eero Tarasti. Their research was largely based on the meaningful aspect of music in film, as well as music in general. According to Saussure, whose research on the subject of semiotics is most often taken into account, the relationship between the signifier and the signified is the most difficult to find in music precisely because of its abstractness. Based on John Blacking's analysis, we understand that the sociological and cultural impact of music is different and relative from community to community, due to the fact that in different parts of the world music

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<sup>1</sup> This applies to film music in general, but in the critical theory of film music and film in classical and "silent" films, music is seen as otherness and had a role in filling the frames.

is perceived differently on a cultural level, and to understand the semiotic meaning of the music of a certain community, it is necessary to know its culture. Philip Tag believes that popular music cannot be analyzed with the tools of musical artistic practice of the classical period, for the reason that popular music is intended for mass distribution and socioculturally heterogeneous groups of consumers. Perhaps the most extensive research on the subject of music semiotics was done by the Finnish musicologist and semiologist Eero Tarasti, who starts from the assumption that all music has a meaning, as well as that it has meaning and represents an activity, and it is very important for researchers to investigate musical activity as a form of communication. In his study *Music Models Through Ages: A Semiotic Interpretation* (1986), in the first part of the work, Tarasti prepares methodological tools for the analysis that follows in the second part of the work, that is, he deals with the comparison of different models of musical-historical thought and the division into lived and thought-out civilizational models.

In the part of the work that is reserved for the specific application of the previously presented models of semiotic research, the world's cinematographic achievements will be used, such as: Kubrick's film "A Space Odyssey 2001" (1969), "Dirty Dancing", Emil Ardolino (1987), "Titanic", James Francis Cameron (1997), "The Wizard Of Oz", Victor Fleming (1939), "Breakfast at Tiffany's", Blake Edwards (1961) and "Pretty Woman", Garry Marshall (1990), in which a popular song was used, which should actually contribute to the atmosphere of the film with the melody, and participate in the narrative process with the text. While in the movie "A Clockwork Orange", Stanley Kubrick (1971), the music serves to characterize the characters. From domestic cinematography, the films chosen to show the effect of musical semiotics are: "National class", Goran Marković (1979), "King Peter the First", Petar Ristovski (2018), "Clip", Maja Miloš (2012), "Black bomber", Darko Bajić (1992), "The promising boy", Miloš Radivojević (1981), "Strangler against strangler", Slobodan Šijan (1984), "Taiwanese canasta", Goran Marković (1985), "Zona Zamfirova", Zdravko Šotra (2002), "Powder keg", Goran Paskaljević (1998), "We are not Angels", Srđan Dragojević (1992), "Belgrade Phantom", Jovan Todorović (2009) and "Before the rain", Milčo Mančevski (1994), Macedonian director.

## 2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Starting from the linguistic theories of Ferdinand de Saussure and Charles Sanders Peirce, semiotic is defined as "the science of signs, meaning and sign systems" (Stam et.al 1992, 1), and film semiotics, according to Christian Metz in his book *Essays on the Meaning of Film* (1973), "is naturally inclined to investigate his field with the help of methods inspired by the science of language" (Metz 1973, 40). The semiotic approach is common to film studies and musicological theory, but each art form, that is, each system of communication, Metz argues, contains material that separates it from other systems. Film semiotics is most often focused on the denotation/connotation of the image (cf. Stojanović 1984, 107–200), however, according to Metz's understanding, the raw structure of the film determines five audio-visual elements: image, speech, music, sound effects and graphic traces. Following the general semiotic formula of the sign, he states that the connection between the signifier and the signified in sound is much looser than that connected to the image. Contemporary interdisciplinary interpretations of the work of art give equal importance to the visual and the auditory in the film.

When looking at film music from that position, it is noticed that the authors take care to use music as a means of meaning in addition to images (and dialogue). This is the reason why film music, as a popular music song (regardless of whether it is used in a film or is used as an independent form) can be attributed a semiotic aspect, in other words film music can be analyzed through semiological analysis. When we look at music in this context, we notice that it is often used as an element of a narrative device, especially when it comes to a song that carries the same meaning both in the melody and in the text (words, verses of the song). Also, in order to decipher the meaningful aspect of music, the recipient needs prior knowledge or an adopted musical cultural code, which Umberto Eco spoke about. With music, as an abstract element, it is very easy to create a symbolic plane of the film, which can be interpreted in many ways. As a relevant interpretation of semiotic principles in film music and music in general, Eco sees the meaning of the sign as a cultural unit in his research. In order for the recipient to understand what the director wanted to say with the music at a given moment by implementing it in a certain scene, it is necessary for the viewer to know the musical cultural code or to have some prior knowledge of a certain melody. Thus, a song in a film has three levels of marking: image, music/melody and (corresponding) text (words, lyrics of the song). Accordingly, the musical cultural code can also be understood as a symbol that has value only if it is organized in the world of symbols. It is any concrete sign that evokes something that is absent or impossible to perceive. A sign can become a symbol even if it is lonely, isolated. At that point it is necessary to recognize it in that role, confirm it and use it in the same way by the entire communication community (eg state – coat of arms – anthem). If the communication community that inaugurated a sign as a symbol were to disappear, it would suffer the same fate (Eco 1979). An example of this claim is that with the disappearance of the SFRY, the anthem "Hey Slavs" (Samuel Tomašik), as well as many other songs that use to have a festive character, such as "Yugoslavia", Danilo Živković, Milutin Popović Zahar, (1980), whose verses are "From Vardar to Triglav, from Đerdap to the Adriatic..." performed at many official state gatherings, they replaced the former connotative meaning of the idea of brotherhood and unity with Yugonostalgia.

In his study *Theories Of The Soundtrack – Semiotics of Film/Semiotics of Music* (2019), James Buhler presented the views and analyzes of theorist Christian Metz, who believes that film semiotics tends to approach its subject of analysis with derivative methods. In linguistics, Ferdinand de Saussure in the book *A Course in General Linguistics* (1916), notes that the relationship between the signifier and the signified is the most difficult to find in music as the most abstract art, where a certain musical background is actually needed to understand the semiotics displayed by music. So for example, if a composer chose to use a popular song in a waltz rhythm, rock genre, disco genre or any other genre in a film, the basis for understanding can be found in the cultural association of those musical genres. Also, the composer can choose different types of articulations, instruments, rhythm or tempo to indicate the film or certain scenes. If a certain song is played on the bagpipes, it can for example represent Scotland, or if it is fast-paced, it can indicate the speed with which the film's story unfolds, etc. It can be said that it is not easy to culturally define the notion of music and what it represents for a society as a whole. The notion of music and musicality in different cultures was dealt with by John Blacking. According to his empirical study, it can be concluded that music is experienced through different cultural codes (Blacking 1992).

What is quality music for a person from Western culture and what he perceives as musicality, a person in Africa, that is, in the Wendi tribe, which was the subject of his research, would not be recognized as valuable. The author of this book has presented the

theory of musicality in a very good way, and the focus of his work is the artificiality of the concepts of elite and so-called folk music. It examines the phenomenon of the creation of a piece of music, in order to clarify the concepts of creativity and musicality in the best possible way. Through a detailed analysis of the music of the Wendi tribe, Blacking shows us the great influence of the cultural development of a community through the experience of music, which, as the author claims, is very relative from community to community, from culture to culture. The sociological and cultural impact of music is very different in different cultures, that is, in different parts of the world, and it results from the way of life and the very understanding of music. So, for example, the Wendi tribe perceives as valuable and high-quality music only that which has the effect of gathering a large number of people to socialize and dance together. If there is no such effect, there is no cultural influence and true experience<sup>2</sup>.

Philip Tagg states that popular music cannot be analyzed using only traditional musicological tools developed in relation to European art music of the classical period. The reasons for such a statement are that popular music is intended for mass distribution to large and often socioculturally heterogeneous groups of listeners. To be stored and distributed in written form, then, is possible only in an industrial financial economy, where it usually becomes a commodity, subjecting under capitalism to the laws of free enterprise according to which it should ideally sell as much as possible. On the latter point, popular music should, if commodified as a recording, show love when first listen to presumed buyers if the song stands a chance of selling. This means that the music produced under such conditions will often use easily recognizable stereotypes of the musical code as a basis for producing (new or old) complex affective messages (Tagg 1987, 285).

### 3. SEMIOTICS OF MUSIC / FILM MUSIC EERO TARASTI

Eero Tarasti, is one of the most important theorists who extensively discussed the semiotics of music and published several scientific studies and papers on it. In the book *Musical Semiotics – a Discipline, its History and Theories, Past and Present* (2016), the author believes that musical semiotics starts from the assumption that music is a significant phenomenon. However, the field itself has developed along two distinct paths. The first begins with a consideration of music and its history. For example, in the study of classical music one will begin with a consideration of rhetoric and influences during the Baroque and then move on to consider themes of classical style or interpretive aspects romanticism. The second path consists instead of applying general semiotic theories to music. However, Eero Tarasti believes that a more correct approach is somewhere in the middle: it should configure general semiotic concepts with specific or historical problems of music. Also, in its actual form, musical semiotics exists either as a branch of general semiotics, as an application of some general semiotic theory to music, or "as a subdiscipline of musicology, a musical science that studies both European and non-European, classical and popular forms of music" (Tarasti 2016, 19). He wonders how it is possible to reasonably study the

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<sup>2</sup> In Western culture, individual musicianship is considered a quality and such an individual is considered musical. Art music in Europe has no effect on the community and each individual has his own experience of a composition. One can say that a piece of music is of higher quality because it is primarily recorded or performed by several instruments, or it takes a certain amount of time to perform. But English music can be performed by a very small number of people, if we talk about percentages it is 1 to 3%, while Wendy music can be performed by almost everyone. That is why it is very difficult to compare the musicality of those two cultures (Bleking 1992).

semiotics of music, if it is extremely numerous (even ephemeral) in its existence. All musical semiotics starts from the assumption that music has meanings, that it possesses meaning and that it represents a significant activity. Therefore, if for a semiotician music has meaning, then researchers are tempted to investigate it as a form of communication. When talking about the application of general semiotic theories in music, Tarasti dares to say that if one goes directly from semiotic theory to musical practices, one would probably miss, and for this reason the theory must first be reinterpreted in a musical sense, i.e. there must be an intermediary level of analysis, taking into account all the achievements of traditional musical research on musical meaning and communication. Otherwise, the danger of starting with musical semiotics immediately from the abstract, semiotic conception of musical reality is that it could forcefully tend to adapt music to foreign concepts. This is a problem, because a lot of musical semiotics has been developed from linguistic theories that have as their starting point the assumption "that music is a language" (Tarasti 2016, 21).

In the scientific work *Music Models Through Ages: A Semiotic Interpretation* (1986) by the same author, the text consists of two parts (Tarasti 1986, 3–28). In the first part, methodological tools are prepared for what follows in the second part, in other words, it deals with the comparison of different models of musical-historical aesthetic thought and the division between lived and thought-out models of human culture. The question is, in fact, whether the history of art is a lived model, i.e. whether there really is progress and development in the sequence of musical events and facts, or the rationality of musical changes can be attributed to thought-out models that the writer of history or an aesthetician brings into it with their subjective feeling. In the latter case, the history of music would be reduced to narrative based on the study of Carl Dahlhaus. In order to be able to compare different thought-out models throughout musical history, it is first of all necessary to determine some categories, dimensions of a musical-aesthetic or semiotic nature in order to see similarities across different periods. Those categories and concepts would form what Eero Tarasti here calls a hypothetical universal model, which of course naturally belongs to the class of thoughtful models. In relation to film music, a well-thought-out model should be a popular song, which, when used in a film, changes the postulates of using film music as part of a film system. The idea of a popular song is built on lived film/musical practice. The aforementioned hypothetical model serves as an interpretive scheme or reading model by means of which we interpret different musical thinkers. Therefore, this reflection takes place within the discussion of music, while the validity of those discussions remains outside the consideration of this Tarasti study. The hypothetical universal model is based on the assumption that music forms a kind of production process. This is how the levels of real, actual and virtual states differ in music, where each one has its own modalities. In this scientific article, Eero Tarasti takes into account the semiotic, but not the syntactic, dimension of music. Here it is thought that the aesthetic and semiotic content of music can be shaped as a production process that begins with modalities, and in which some configurations, create what is called passions in music. Furthermore, when passions are organized into a syntagmatic order of emotional states, then we can talk about narrative in music. Therefore, narrative must be considered a strong model in the history of the musical art of Western culture, and it especially flourished in the era of Romanticism, when musical compositions were created that described the lives of composers, and at that time musical speech was considered a type of narrative.

In his capital work *A Theory of Musical Semiotics* (1994), the author presents in detail his models for the semiotic analysis of musical structure and semantics, as well as a detailed insight into the strategies and scope of interpretive musical semiotics. The author examines the variability of the semiotics of music in the search of some universal musical categories, which are at the base of every musical activity, and cites the opinion of Charles Seeger, who sees the problem of musicology in the gap between two types of knowledge about music.<sup>3</sup> To Seeger's doubt that musicology can bring knowledge about the inner logic of music, Tarasti offers three possible answers (Tarasti 1994):

- that two sets of universalities (linguistic and musical) overlap and that language can express essential aspects of music, which the author rejects this due to the existence of separate discourses about music in almost all cultures;
- that musical and verbal knowledge exclude each other because it is superfluous to explain music. It is enough to perform it. However, this attitude does not satisfy Tarasti who considers that "musical tradition is essentially transmitted through verbal expressions, and no sign system in any culture functions without the help of other modeling systems" (Tarasti 1994, 3);
- that it is verbally possible to say something true about music while at the same time accepting the fact that some aspects of music cannot be described verbally, which is actually the most reasonable approach, and Tarasti bases his theory of narrativity on this possibility.

Based on the previously presented model, it can be said that film music often has a subjective effect on each recipient individually and that it is not possible to determine/describe with certainty how and in what way each individual experiences it, because music as an abstract art is perceived in accordance with the individual parameters of the individual. On the other hand, the general meaning of a certain music or film song can always be presented. Tarasti also reminds that musical reality is not limited to sound statements: "musical reality manifests itself in different ways, we should ask ourselves what is the relationship between expression and content (signifier and signified), in each modality (visual, physical, phenomenological) and that whether different musical modalities can be translated into one another, which would enable the continuity of the musical process" (Tarasti 1994, 4). The author then identifies two basic types of theories and methods of musical semiotics: structuralist, which implies the reduction of sensory reality to a small number of categories, and anti-reductionist or iconic, whose advocates believe that music needs to be reduced to abstract categories that function outside of musical processes, but that the meaning is iconic based solely on the self, emphasizing the "sensory processual aspects of music" (Tarasti 1994, 5). Film semiotics/semiotics of film music can be viewed anti-reductionistically in the example of a popular song, for the reason that the implementation of a popular song almost always carries with it, in addition to its visible meaning, a cultural pattern that attributes to such music an abstract function. These statements of Tarasti are actually the basis for understanding the action of film music in relation to the image, as well as the cultural association noted by John Blacking. Harmonization, rhythm, melody, can form an autonomous language, where the music is determined by the film context itself and assumes meanings through the value of its position in the film.

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<sup>3</sup> Charles Seeger lists two types of knowledge about music: internal knowledge of music (it is felt instantaneously, thanks to the producers and receptors of the music), mediated, verbal knowledge "outside" the musical process (Tarasti 1994).

#### 4. APPLICATION OF FILM MUSIC SEMIOTICS

Stanley Kubrick's film "A Space Odyssey 2001" (1969) is presented as an example of the semiotic aspect of film music. The beginning of the film takes place in the form of image, sound and music, while the first utterance of words is delayed until the thirtieth minute. The dialogue then conveys simple information, before expressing the characters' emotions. The colorlessness of the voices and measured communication served to emphasize the visual and sound side of the film, whose images and music have become iconic scenes in the field of film art. There is no originally composed music in the film, although it was originally planned, and the indication of how to use film music is clear from the beginning. The famous scene in the history of the film "about the dawn of our civilization" begins with a black screen and is followed by György Ligeti's composition "Atmosphères", composed for a classical orchestra, whose role is to provide the atmosphere, i.e. to trigger anticipation in the viewer/listener and interest in what comes next. Such a role of Ligeti's music can be presented as a signifier of the image, i.e. Kubrick uses music to denote the black image at the beginning of the film as the time before the creation of the world/universe, and we must also use the religious terminology and say that it is darkness over the abyss as it is written in the Old Testament.<sup>4</sup> Or it can be said that the director used the black screen at this point as a symbol of the darkness over the abyss and the music as a marker of time before the very beginning of the creation of the world. So, the darkness over the abyss is the signified, the black screen is the symbol, and Ligeti's "Atmosphere" is the signifier. Then, in the film "A Space Odyssey 2001", the Sun, Moon and Earth appear on the screen in conjunction with Richard Strauss's composition "Thus spoke Zarathustra". In this scene, "the light represents consciousness. All nations have myths about the creation of the world, which they refer to as the creation of light. These myths relate to the creation of the Ego, the light of consciousness, which grows out of the darkness of the unconscious. Similarly, the dawn is the birth of the light of the sun and an adequate representation of the consciousness that is being born" (Zečević 2020). In this way, this scene can be understood as the creation of the world, the creation of consciousness, intelligence. In other words, the appearance of light symbolizes the very beginning of the creation of life in the universe, so the image on the screen represents a symbolic relationship with Kubrick's real idea.

How semiotic tools are used to understand film music and popular songs can be seen on the example of the film "Dirty Dancing", Emil Ardolino (1987), in which the romantic song I've Had time of my life, the mainstream of the entertainment genre, signifies the entire Movie. This popular song could be understood as a signifier, considering the cheerful and moving mid-tempo melody with love lyrics performed by one male and one female vocalist (which could also be defined as a love couple in the movie). The symbol should be the main actor of the movie Johnny played by Patrick Swayze, because in the lyrics of the song we recognize his life, as well as the regret for the missed chances that he manages to make up for together with his dance partner Baby (Jennifer Grey). In the movie "Titanic", James Francis Cameron (1997), the popular song "My Heart Will Go On" performed by Celine Dion is a romantic and sad ballad in a fun genre with a slow tempo. This popular song also represents the entire plot of the film, and marks the main character Rose (Kate Elizabeth Winslet), who falls in love with Jack Dawson (Leonardo DiCaprio) during a trip on the "Titanic". Their love is interrupted by his death after a ship accident, and the message of

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<sup>4</sup> The religious consideration of the film is perhaps the basis for understanding the entire work, because Kubrick himself said that this film is about God and the human path to self-knowledge and the final union with the creator (Zečević 2020).

the song can be understood as her sadness towards the young man and the struggle in her heart to continue life. Similar observations can be seen in the films "The Wizard of Oz", Victor Fleming (1939), dominated by the song "Over the Rainbow" performed by Judy Garland, "Breakfast at Tiffany's", Blake Edwards (1961) with the song "Moon River", "Pretty Woman", Gary Marshall (1990) with the song having the same name performed by Roy Orbison, as well as many other popular examples.

The characterization of characters using music is also visible in the film A "Clockwork Orange" (1971), where Kubrick uses music as a narrative tool, and provides theorists with an example of an interesting application of signs and symbols when it comes to film music. Opposite Kubrick's opus, and with the joint activity of popular melody and text, stands the clearly marked character of the main character of the domestic film "National class", where in the opening scene, the director described the character of the main character to Brana (Dragan Nikolić) with the lyrics of the popular song "Floyd". This leads us to Eko's considerations that quite often in order to understand the meaning aspects of (film) music, the recipient needs prior knowledge or an adopted musical cultural code of a certain society and climate. In this sense, the action of the sign in the context of film music can be interpreted as the basis for the creation of cultural units, the basis of which is the prior knowledge of a certain melody, the recognition of the musical cultural code and further multi-layered connection with social, artistic and cultural identity.

In recent national cinematography, the film "King Petar The First", Petar Ristovski (2018) is essential for the relationship between film semiotics and film music semiotics. The original music for the film and series was composed by Miodrag Cicović, and a special place is given by the last scene, in which King Petar, played by Lazar Ristovski, sings the song "Far away", in a tortured, hoarse and barely audible voice. With this song, the director masterfully marked the suffering of the Serbian army that retreated from the enslaved land, and the text refers to the longing for the homeland. On the three levels of image, melody and text, the song inspires patriotic feelings and connects viewers with national identity in many ways. The film "Clip", Maja Miloš (2012) mostly relies on already existing songs of the turbo-folk genre. This popular music genre is synonymous with wild parties where consumers use alcohol and narcotics, on which the plot of this film relies. Maja Miloš used the turbo folk as signifier to denote the dominant discourse of the film, and at the same time she designed the characterization of the main actors in the film with the turbo-folk genre. According to Eko's claim that the song in the film has three levels of signification, the film "Black Bomber", Darko Bajić (1992) can serve as an example, in which the correlation between image, dialogue and music (melody) is crucial in the scenes when Crni (Dragan Bjelogrić) loses consciousness, which is evoked in the picture by his subjective plan through which Luna (Anica Dobra), the girl he meets and who becomes important in his life, (miraculously) floats away and gets closer. In one of these scenes, he says with regret that he doesn't remember important parts of his life, and he won't even remember if anything happened between the two of them at that moment, saying: "I have black holes in my head, in my memory, and in fact, I don't remember any of my pranks, I don't remember the better half of my life". The scene is marked by the musical theme of "Black Hole" (Srđan Gojković Gile and Vlada Divljan). Also, this theme can be understood as a musical sign and leitmotif for every scene in which the main actor loses his memory, and by the very appearance of the musical theme (signifier) the viewers are able to immediately recognize the event (read its signification).



With the popular song "I walk like a zombie now" (cover by Roky Ericson) in "Black Bomber", the essential thought of the film was marked by the text, which actually described the young generation, lost (at the time of the film's creation, very visible) in the political and media control of the ruling establishment. Symbolically, the melody and the text of this song follow the image of a mass student protest, whose participants enthusiastically greet Crni, who opposes the regime with his views as a radio host, and has the pseudonym "the walking ghost". Additionally, in numerous Yugoslav films, musical groups perform songs on stage (an iconic relationship between the signifier and the signified through an analog connection), which is the case in the films "The promising boy", Miloš Radivojević (1981) and the songs "We drive on Saturday afternoons" (Game of glass beads), "Stifiling humidity above the Europe / Schwule Uber Europa" (VIS Idoli), "The ballad of firm breasts" and Slobodan (Dušan Kojić), then in the movie "Strangler against strangler", Slobodan Šijan (1984) the rock group of Spiridon Kopicl performs the song "Baby, baby", while in the movie "Taiwanese canasta", Goran Marković (1985) group Ekatarina Velika plays the song Tattoo in the club. In the movie "Black Bomber", the main actress performs songs with the band (Formal white shirts, Srđan Gojković Gile) and contacts Crni so that he can play their songs on the radio. Interestingly, the plot is similar to the film "Lightning", Raša Andrić (2001) with the song "You have Rizla, but you don't have an ID card", which is also directly performed. The "Black Bomber", shown at the very beginning of the disintegration of SFRY and "Lightning", one of the first films after the October 5<sup>th</sup> changes, in a semiotic sense, they are films of similar symbolic power.

The film "Zona Zamfirova", Zdravko Šotra (2002), based on the novel by Stevan Sremac, is one of the films that present the traditional cultural pattern of southern Serbia. For this reason, the director entrusted the music to singer-songwriter and performer of popular music Nenad Milosavljević, leader of the music group Galija, with the music of traditional songs in the film which was also performed by Biljana Krstić, both natives of those parts of Serbia. The entire film narration starting from scenes, costumes, images, dialogues and music is semiotic in the spirit of the time in which the novel was written. The film begins with the traditional song "Rooster singing". It is also from the south of Serbia, and reflected in the melody and text with the recognizable dialect of those regions, which directs the recipient to the possible place where the action takes place. In order for the viewer/listener to recognize the meaning of this song, it is necessary to know the dialect of the place where this song was created, which points us to the knowledge of the cultural code that Umberto Eco spoke about, and for this reason, the song enters the diegesis of the film, in other words, realizes a multimodal role. Also, a hint of the film plot is presented by the text of this traditional song:

*„Petlovi pojev Morava dzmni, puštaj me zlato moje da idem... al to su mori petlovi lžovi, legaj mi zlato moje kraj mene...“*

By looking at the text and the melody at the very beginning, the recipient can conclude that the film will feature a love theme that took place in the far south of Serbia. In the scenes of the wedding and the celebration of the marriage of Haji Zamfir's daughters, the wedding guests play the Serbian *kolo* accompanied by a live brass band. Also, in the scene when Vaska the maid (Sloboda Mićalović) puts Hadži Zamfir to sleep, she sings a song:

*„Slavuj pile ne poj rano, ne budi mi gospodara, sama sam ga uspavala...“*

The light motif of the scenes in which Zona Zamfirova appears is the main song of this film, Zona's song has a non-diegetic role and in an instrumental form, but in each scene in which Zona appears, the main melody is performed differently or is performed on different

instruments. So, for example, in the scene of Zona's descent down the stairs, as well as the walk through the city with her aunts, the same recognizable melody is used in instrumental form, but the way of performance is different. It can be said that the discourse of the film from the semiotic aspect refers to the correlation of image, scene, dialogue and music in the presentation of traditional culture.

In the film "Powder keg", Goran Paskaljević (1998), one gets the impression that composer Zoran Simjanović softened the gloomy and dark atmosphere of the film, intertwined with interpersonal relationships, with music. The action takes place in a complicated political and economic moment in Serbia. The musical theme, which appears sporadically in certain scenes, is at first irresistibly reminiscent of the melody from the film "The smell of field flowers", Srđan Karanović (1977), for which the music was also composed by Simjanović, but this time it was performed by a symphony orchestra with a violin as a solo instrument. In the continuation of the composition, the main melody is brought by the electric guitar alternately with the violin, flute and trumpet folk orchestra. By inserting different instruments in the interpretation of the main melody, the composer actually semiotically depicted people from different social categories who share the same fate of unresolved relationships, some of which ended in murder. It can be said that the images, scenes and dialogues in this film work in structuring the storytelling, while the music actually softens the heavy atmosphere of the film, but at the same time follows and signifies the social class represented in the film.

"We are not Angels", Srđan Dragojević (1992), composer Aleksandar Eraković, is a film in which the director assigned music a leading role in the creation of the storytelling process. The plot of the film is based on animosity, but also a kind of cooperation, that is, the necessity of the existence of good and evil in the human life cycle, represented by the comedy genre. In the song "Let's do drugs", that conflict is expressed by the simultaneous action of the rock genre in the sense of the accompanying sound and a specific singing performance in the turbo-folk "singer" style. From a semiotic point of view, this song hints at the film genre that the viewer could expect in the further presentation, and the merging and interpretation of absolutely incompatible musical genres can be defined as the merging of two absolutely incompatible characters presented by the main actors Nikola (Nikola Kojo) and Marina (Milena Pavlović). In the further exposition, the songs "Bebe", "On Saturday evenings" and "A teenage girl in love", are in the style of the sixties of the twentieth century and describe the main currents of the film's plot with the text, while expressing the romantic context that was dominant in that time period. It can be concluded that these songs actually represent Marina's feelings and her attitude towards the love she has for Nikola. On the other hand, the songs "Let's do drugs" and "Do not ask me" describe Nikola's current attitude and interests. Total confusion in the text, music, interpretation with unclear melodic line, jumping out of tonality and unclear rhythm, semiotically represent Nicole's confused way of life, lack of interest, aimlessness and wandering. At the end of the film, in the scene when Nikola and Marina are leaving in a taxi, the song "A teenage girl in love" is heard in a non-diegetic form that signifies the victory of love and romantic feelings.

In the film "Belgrade Phantom", Jovan Todorović (2009), at the very beginning of the film archive footage of the welcome of Josip Broz Tito was shown. It was presented with the musical song "My land", *Ambasadori* (1976), which was labeled as patriotic by representatives of the ideology of the time. The text of this popular song inspires Yugoslav patriots, devoted to the ideals of brotherhood and unity of the Yugoslav peoples, as well as to the then socialist social order, based on idolatry/idolatry towards the symbol of that ideology, Josip Broz. At the end of the film, the director described the scene of the police

chase and the Belgrade phantom in a Porsche, with the popular song "Never again", Bisera Veletanlić (1976). With this song, the director actually marked the spirit of the time in which the action takes place, and the articulation and gradation of the tempo described the scene that takes place in the film. Instrumental music that was created in such a way that its folklore marks the place and culture where the main actors of the film come from, but at the same time, evokes in the recipient a feeling of complex and complicated interpersonal relations in the Balkans, is shown in the film "Before the rain", Milčo Mančevski (1994), the music was composed by the Macedonian musical group Anastasia.

### CONCLUSION

On the basis of the presented models for the semiotic analysis of film and film music, i.e. how music works/acts in the film, it can be said that to understand the music as part of the narrative, prior knowledge of the meaning of the music used within the cultural symbol of the community from which the music was used is required. Film music, i.e. a popular song, could be defined as a thought-out model that changes the postulates of film music by implementing it in a film, as noted by Eero Tarasti. As can be seen from the attached examples, the directors used a popular song to represent, for example, the main actors who are in a love relationship, such as in the movie "Dirty Dancing" or "Titanic 2", then the yearning of "The Wizard of Oz", "Breakfast at Tiffany's", "Pretty Woman"... it can represent character characterization as in the movie "Clockwork Orange" or character characterization by musical genre with the lyrics of a popular song, "National class" and others. Also, the music of a particular genre can mark the cultural pattern and identity of a group or the cultural identity of a subject such as in the films "Black Bomber" and "Taiwanese canasta".

In the film "Zona Zamfirova" music works in correlation with the aspects of the film, in order to describe the traditional culture of a certain region, but at the same time, to understand the semiotics of musical songs, it is necessary to know about the culture of that traditional cultural pattern, as well as the meaning of the implemented song in the given film. By using a specific musical genre, composers are able to depict different social categories and social classes (Barrels of Gunpowder, We are not Angels). In the end, what was often used in the film as an influential medium in the creation of social identity was the use of patriotic songs to affirm patriotism and nationalism, such as in the film "Belgrade Phantom". It can be said that music in a film can act independently in the storytelling process, but most often filmmakers and composers use it together with other elements of the film in order to structure meaning.

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## SEMIOTIKA FILMA / SEMIOTIKA FILMSKE MUZIKE

*Filmska muzika u postmodernizmu se može sagledavati kao primenjena muzika koja zajedno sa tekstom i slikama kreira filmski narativ. U odnosu na teoriju na samom početku filmske umetnosti i perioda klasične teorije filma, postmodernistička era sagledava sve discipline koje čine jedan film kao jednako važne. Kada u tom kontekstu posmatramo muziku, primećujemo da su je reditelji često koristili kao narativno sredstvo, ali je za dešifrovanje značenjskog aspekta muzike recipijentu neophodno predznanje ili usvojen muzički kulturni kod. Međutim, muzikom kao apstraktnom umetnošću je vrlo teško na pravi način simbolizirati zamisao filmskog reditelja, pa se iz tog razloga muzika kao simbol imaginacije reditelja može različito tumačiti.*

Ključne reči: *filmska muzika, semiotika, kulturni kod, popularni song, označitelj*