

Collecting South Slavic Oral Epic in 1864: Luka Marjanović's Earliest Account

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What follows is a translation of Luka Marjanović's preface to a collection of oral epic and lyric songs that he transcribed by hand from singers in northwestern Bosnia and published as a songbook in 1864. Albert Lord described Marjanović as "one of the finest of the Croatian collectors of oral-traditional epic at the end of the last century,"¹ though Lord and others have criticized Marjanović's editorial methods. Marjanović is a significant figure in the history of oral epic studies for the reason that he collected an enormous amount of epic songs from singers in northwestern Bosnia during a decade of fieldwork in the 1880s. The collection comprises, in fact, the first major corpus of Bosnian oral-dictated epic manuscripts that we have, and predates Parry's recordings by many decades. Today Marjanović's manuscript collection is kept in the Academy of Arts and Sciences in Zagreb, Croatia.² The manuscripts were used by editors at the end of the nineteenth century to furnish material for the anthology known as *Hrvatske narodne pjesme* (*Croatian Folk Songs*), the seminal Croatian folklore anthology published in Zagreb from the late nineteenth to the first decades of the twentieth century.³ Volumes three and four of that anthology were devoted to Bosnian oral epic, known as "Mohammedan" epic at the time, and were based on the Marjanović collection, though it cannot be said that the two volumes present even a fraction of the material contained within the manuscript corpus itself.

¹ Lord's critique of Marjanović can be found at Lord 1991:125 and 1995:16-18, 202, note 41, 223, 225. Branislav Krstić (1956) made a thorough study of Marjanović's editorial interventions, as did Djurđica Mučibabić (1981).

² I would like to thank Tanja Perić-Polonijo for her expertise and assistance with the manuscript collection. I would also like to thank the Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Research in Zagreb and its director, Ivan Lozica, as well as the Fulbright Foundation, for supporting my research on the Marjanović manuscripts during the academic year 1999-2000. It was in the Institute's library that I found the songbook published by Marjanović in 1864, the preface to which I am translating here.

³ The multi-volume anthology was published from 1896 until 1942 in Zagreb and remains a fundamental point of reference for Croatian folklore studies (especially the manuscripts that provide the basis for the anthology's selections).

Until Marjanović's work in the 1880s, the Bosnian Moslem tradition had never been systematically collected.⁴ Kosta Hörmann, an Austrian administrator working in Austrian-occupied Sarajevo in the early 1880s, did indeed publish in 1888-89 the Bosnian songs that he had collected, though the amount gathered by him (and his transcribers) cannot be said to equal Marjanović's contribution.⁵ As for Marjanović, in the period of his work for the *Hrvatske narodne pjesme* collection project, it is worth pointing out the number of verses that his team did manage to write down. The results were staggering, by any standards: he and his amanuenses transcribed over 255,000 lines of oral epic between 1880 and 1888. The Marjanović cohort also accomplished a feat that the Parry team⁶ did not attempt, namely, the transcription of the entire repertoires of two of the best Bosnian singers of the day, Mehmed Kolak-Kolaković and Salko Vojniković-Pezić. Each of the two singers performed more than sixty epics for Marjanović and his assistants,⁷ and both were mentioned by other singers belonging to the next generation interviewed in the same locale of Bihać and the surrounding area by Parry in 1934.⁸

Marjanović's collecting activities for the *Hrvatske narodne pjesme* anthology were organized and subsidized by the Croatian cultural organization Matica Hrvatska, an institution founded in the 1830s by Ljudevit Gaj during the heyday of South Slavic nationalism. At the time

⁴ Of the numerous orally transmitted Balkan Slavic genres that have been to date textualized and studied, Bosnian oral epic is important for many reasons, one of them being the unprecedented length (in Europe, anyway) of the songs, as is now recognized in the English-speaking world primarily on the basis of Milman Parry and Albert Lord's publications (but see also Murko 1951:259). For this reason, Bosnian epic tradition has been thought by many to offer the closest comparison to Homeric material of any available European singing tradition ancient or modern. Foley 1988 is the *locus classicus* for an account of the emergence of comparative study of oral traditions from the work of Parry and Lord. His book pays particular attention to the role played by Homeric philology, discusses in detail the many traditions and language areas influenced by Lord's *The Singer of Tales* (1960), and makes important methodological contributions of its own (for example, introduces the parameters of tradition-dependence, genre-dependence, and text-dependence into the philology of orally transcribed texts).

⁵ For the collection itself, see Hörmann 1933 and Buturović 1992. Hörmann's collection is valuable from the point of view of folklore philology for the reason that Buturović made an exhaustive study (1976) of the discrepancies between the final published poems and the original oral-dictated manuscripts available to her. Thanks to her painstaking research, one can now trace the phoneme-by-phoneme and grapheme-by-grapheme changes that were made in the process of transforming the oral-dictated manuscripts into the published edition (which of course appeared in the standard orthography of the day).

⁶ Foley has begun in recent years to refer to the fieldwork accomplished by Parry and Lord as "the research team of Milman Parry, Albert Lord, and Nikola Vujnović" (my emphasis; see Foley 2005). The inclusion of Vujnović as a member of the "team" signals an important development in Foley's thinking on the Parry-Lord material, because it raises important issues in the philology of transcribed texts, for which see Foley's chapter entitled "Nikola Vujnović's Resinging" (2004:145-91). For further information on Parry and Lord's field methods when collecting in Croatia in 1934, see Tate 2010.

⁷ *HNP* 1896-1942, iii:xi-xxiv.

⁸ It is not widely known that Parry and Lord's singers from the Bihać region commented on the same singers that we have in Marjanović's manuscript collection, though David E. Bynum mentions it in his introduction to *SCHS* 1953-, xiv:5-14.

of the Matica's founding, the pan-Slavic movement in Croatia was known as "Illyrianism,"⁹ a movement that strove, in response to Vuk Karadžić's work as well as to political aspirations ascendant at the time, to build unity among speakers of all of the South Slavic languages. Marjanović accompanied the third and fourth volumes of the ten-volume anthology with an informative and colorful introduction that discusses, among other things, the laborious process of oral dictation and the obstacles facing the collection of such voluminous material. His introduction remains one of the best accounts that we have of collecting and transcribing oral epics in nineteenth-century Bosnia, and it is an unfortunate fact that the document has never been translated into any language. Matija Murko praised Marjanović's introduction, first at a meeting in Berlin in 1908 and later in his outstanding *Tragom srpsko-hrvatske narodne epike: Putovanja u godinama 1930-32 (On the Track of Serbo-Croatian Folk Epic: Travels During the Years 1930-32)*¹⁰ for the attention to detail paid by Marjanović to describing the collection process as well as for his insistence on undermining romantic notions of oral epic production and transmission.

What the reader will find in my translation presented below, however, is a report written by Marjanović describing his earliest attempt to collect oral epics in Bosnia during the years 1862-64, fully two decades before the famous Matica-funded *Hrvatske narodne pjesme (Croatian Folk Songs)* collection project. He published the results of this first attempt at epic collecting in the form of a small songbook (1864). The preface translated here is therefore the first in a series of reports on the then-thriving Moslem oral epics of Bosnia written by their first systematic collector, and as such belongs to a tradition of South Slavic oral epic research that includes the writings of Vuk Karadžić, Matija Murko, Milman Parry, Albert Lord, John Foley, and others.¹¹ The preface is brief, dense, and written in a compact style—one might even call its Serbo-Croatian stylistically quaint and colloquial at times—but filled with intriguing revelations and valuable information concerning the singing techniques that Marjanović was witnessing for the first time.¹² For these and other reasons, the preface merits translation on its own but will require further contextualization and commentary from the perspective of modern folkloristics and historical linguistics, which I supply in what follows. Marjanović's preface can also be

⁹ For an account of the founding of the Croatian literary organization and similar organizations throughout the Balkans, see Kimball 1973. For the Croatian Matica in particular, Kimball covers the years of 1842-74, exactly the period when Marjanović wrote the preface translated here. See espec. 1973:39-49, but also Lencek's review (1975) of Kimball's book.

¹⁰ Davor Dukić (1995:51-52) discusses Murko's debt to Marjanović, where he refers the reader to Murko 1909 (the text of the 1908 Berlin meeting), 1919:276-77, and 1951:9. Also essential for grasping his field methods and recording practices are Murko 1912, 1913, 1915a, and 1915b. For further discussion of Murko's methods, see Žele 2003, Čubelić 1961, Buturović 1992:105-48, and Stangl 2000:53-64.

¹¹ In addition to Parry and Lord's contribution, Foley 1988 discusses the work of Vuk Karadžić, Matija Murko, Alois Schmaus, and Gerhard Gesemann, among others.

¹² See Wilson 1970:91-94 for an English translation of Karadžić's preface. Wilson provides context and commentary in the paragraphs immediately preceding and following the translation. Voigt 1994 discusses Karadžić's subsequent influence on collectors throughout Europe.

compared to the preface written by Vuk Karadžić to accompany his own song collection of 1814, since both documents show similarities in style, content, and language.

The Preface: Commentary and Context

In the 1864 preface, the reader will encounter Marjanović's frank comments on the difficulties involved in writing down the songs by hand. The necessity of working in a region well known to the collector is mentioned next, albeit briefly. To read this statement from a nineteenth-century collector newly acquainted with fieldwork is not surprising, since even today, in the twenty-first century, the heterogeneity of traditions and the remote locations of performers in various regions of Croatia and Bosnia (to speak only of regions where the present author has had fieldwork experience)¹³ will cause great difficulties for anyone not intimately familiar with the region. Marjanović devotes the first introductory section of his 1864 preface to this theme.

He next explains that he has decided to transcribe and publish songs that have already been published, for the reason that readers "will learn something" from the variants. Recent work on folklore variation, particularly in Finnish folkloristics, has promoted the study of traditional items in all of their phenomenological diversity, of which minor (and sometimes major) variation is very much a part of the living folklore system;¹⁴ and through this lens we are able to look back at Marjanović's growing awareness of it, too. For understanding the historical context, it is worth mentioning that the songbook and preface were published during the last year of Vuk Karadžić's life. Later in the piece, Marjanović makes clear his dependence on Karadžić's methods for publishing genre divisions and metrical structure. Marjanović also includes a noteworthy comment when he writes that whoever transcribes the words of the song differently than sung will "harm" the song, and will thereby produce a transcription that will no longer be a "true" folk song. In this connection, his statements are slightly curious, since he himself altered verses, word order, and even entire groups of verses before publishing them—though he would continue to repeat the dictum advocating faithful transcription in subsequent publications two decades later. Branislav Krstić, Djurđica Mučibabić, and Albert Lord have criticized Marjanović on this point.¹⁵

In the second section Marjanović explains why some readers will find the orthography of the poems unusual. His explanation is that he wrote down the songs exactly as he heard them, and that he did so "worthily and faithfully" (*valjano i vijerno*), and that for this reason he sometimes wrote down verses that revealed a mixture of dialects rarely if ever heard in daily speech—though such admixtures, he says (and we know today) were typical of the oral epic singing register in these regions, then and now. These passages will be of interest to Homeric

¹³ I would like to extend my warmest thanks to ethnomusicologist Joško Čaleta for taking me into the field, in Croatia and Bosnia, in order to record singers and conduct interviews during 1999-2000.

¹⁴ See Honko 1998 for extended analyses of variation and its role in the textualizing of the Siri epic songs, as well as Honko 2000 for a call to foreground performance variation in future work on living oral genres of performance and poetic transmission.

¹⁵ See Lord 1995:16-18, but also 1995:202-05 and 1991:125; Krstić 1956; and Mučibabić 1981.

scholars, presumably, and they may be of interest to South Slavic linguists and dialectologists as well. It is interesting to observe Marjanović's description of the dialectal admixtures that occur both in the unmarked speech of the regions and in the language of songs. When he comes to discuss the mixing of dialect forms in the songs themselves, he provides a description of the linguistico-metrical phenomenon that Homeric Greek scholars will recognize as a traditionally transmitted *Kunstsprache*.

One of the most prominent differences in the dialects of Bosnian, Croatian, and Serbian is the outcome of Common Slavic *jat*. The *jat*, or *ě*, as it is represented in Old Church Slavonic (and in reconstructed Common Slavic), directly continues Indo-European *ē*, evidence for which is plentiful and easily seen by comparing Latin *sēmen*, Old High German *sāmo*, and OCS *sěmen* (for which we can uncontroversially reconstruct PIE **seh₁*). The various outcomes of *jat* in the Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian languages (BCS hereafter) comprise one of the major criteria for dialect classification.¹⁶ One variant of BCS is known as *ekavski*, because the reflex of *jat* appears as the monosyllabic *e* vowel, whereas the reflex in *ijekavski* is the disyllabic or diphthongal *ije*. Within *ijekavski*, the outcome under certain specifiable conditions was monosyllabic *je*. (On occasion the term *jekavski* is used by scholars in order to refer to the same dialects as *ijekavski*, or even as a synonym for *ijekavski*—a confusing state of affairs for non-specialists but not one that will affect the discussion below.) Finally, in the *ikavski* dialect, the reflex was raised to a monosyllabic *i*. To take an example of this division, the *ekavski* variant for “beautiful” is *lêpo* (two syllables), the *ijekavski* variant is *lijepo* (three syllables), and the *ikavski* variant is *lipo* (two syllables). The three variants comprise a sub-classification of the *štokavski* dialect, the dialect in which the interrogative pronoun for “what” is *što* or *šta*. (In BCS there are two more dialects classified according to the interrogative pronoun, known as *čakavski* and *kajkavski*, where *ča* and *kaj*, respectively, comprise dialectally distinctive equivalents of *što*, “what.”) Before the conflicts of the 1990s, *ekavski-štokavski* was primarily spoken in eastern Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia, while *ijekavski-štokavski* was typical of much of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, southern Dalmatia, and Montenegro (having been promoted by Karadžić and Gaj to a standard form of the Serbo-Croatian language). *Ikavski-štokavski* was typical of parts of northern Dalmatia, western Bosnia, Lika, Slavonia, and certain islands north of Pelješac (for example, Hvar, Lastovo). It is important to note that all of these dialects are further divided into numerous sub-dialects throughout these regions, and that they are further mixed in numerous, and often extremely complex, combinations.¹⁷

The essential point for oral epic studies is that words sung in *ijekavski* offer an additional syllable in place of words sung in *ekavski* or *ikavski*.¹⁸ This is useful for composing epic in this tradition, since the primary prosodic requirement is a ten-syllable verse: metrical bi-forms allow flexibility between one- and two-syllable options for the same word. Hence the listener or reader

¹⁶ For a discussion of the role of reflexes of *jat* in Bosnian women's songs, see Vidan 2003:63-65.

¹⁷ See Jahić 2000:16 for further details.

¹⁸ Foley (1995:85-106, 158-200, and 1999:74-87) describes the phenomenon and its consequences for versification in detail. For an analysis of *jat* and its reflexes as they appear in the famous Erlangen manuscript, now dated approximately to the years 1716-33 on the basis of watermarks, consult the analysis given by Josip Matesić (1959:56-63).

frequently finds dialectally differentiated bi-forms in the same song, and not infrequently in the same verse, on account of the tradition's necessity of filling the obligatory ten-syllable line (*deseterac*), though *not* on account of the singer being imprisoned by one particular dialect or region (the crucial point). Analysis of this phenomenon can become quite complex when examining the audio transcription of a particular singer,¹⁹ but what is so interesting about Marjanović's preface is that he goes to some length to describe the phenomenon already in 1864, at a time when very few researchers were concerned with questions of the kind. In relation to this phenomenon of dialect admixtures, the reader of his preface will encounter an old canard from Homeric studies, namely, the suggestion that chronologically and geographically differentiated populations living in the same region were the cause of the multiple dialect forms in the song. Though still debated among Homerists, very few would accept that a theory of migration alone could adequately account for the mixed dialects found in early Greek epic.²⁰ An additional cause motivating dialect switching, writes Marjanović, and one that I have not seen mentioned before in print, is that the actual *volume* of the word as it was sung produced dialectally different bi-forms—surely an unusual addition to the inventory of performance variations familiar to fieldworkers and researchers of oral epic.

There next follows a discussion of phonological segments that were lost, elided, and compensated for in both the spoken speech and the singing in the region where Marjanović collected. Again, this will interest Homerists and living oral epic specialists. Marjanović also explains in the same passage his discovery of a phenomenon called “synizesis” used by some of his singers, in particular the blind ones, who were, incidentally, he writes, the best singers he knew at the time. Synizesis has long been recognized as a feature essential to the proper scansion of Homeric poetry, and Marjanović seems pleased to have been able to point out its occurrence in the verse-making of his own singers. He also discusses rare words that appear in the poems, noting occasions where particular variants of spoken forms, as well as archaic words, *appear only in the songs, but never in spoken speech*.²¹ He then adds comments on genre boundaries and “women's songs”²²: to arrange the songs in his collection according to a single classificatory criterion, in isolation from other contextual considerations (including the occasion of performance, the gender of the performer, and the semantic content of the song), is not only incorrect but impossible, he notes, because the performance traditions were simply too complex and the boundaries too fluid to allow for such divisions.²³ One of Marjanović's most interesting

¹⁹ See Foley 2004:77-191 for an extended treatment of the matter.

²⁰ Peters 1986 is the most definitive treatment (from the point of view of historical linguistics) that has been written to date against a so-called “Achaean” phase; Horrocks 1999 argues against an “Aeolic” phase.

²¹ It should be pointed out that Vuk Karadžić discusses the persistence of archaisms in oral poetry in his 1818 dictionary.

²² See Coote 1977 on the classification according to “women's songs” in Vuk's and other folk epic collections.

²³ No one has treated the question of classification of South Slavic folk lyric better than Tanja Perić-Polonijo, who takes into account both theoretical and folkloristic methods and problems in her erudite analyses (1989, 1993, 1995, 1996a, and 1996b).

observations, especially from the point of view of the tendency of oral epics to conserve archaic language, is that many of the customs described in the poems had already been lost by the time of their singing for Marjanović, and so it was often impossible, he explains, to determine what customs were being reflected in the songs.

Preface (*Predgovor*)²⁴

Thinking that no one had collected songs in the upper *krajina* [or “region,” a word commonly used and for that reason left untranslated—tr.] in the surroundings of Turkish Croatia, or if they had, that they surely had not collected many, I set out to gather the literary wealth [*književno blago*] myself there and to publish it, as much as might be possible one day. I began this work last year. I barely mustered the courage to do so, since I knew how much effort and what kind of sacrifice it would cost; but I berated myself, saying that there was no sense in fearing the effort, or even more difficult work of its kind, since I was born and raised in this region of our nation, which I know well.

This work is extremely difficult for the person who was not born among the common people, who was not raised among them and who does not live with them.

Maybe it will seem to some that it is easy to write down what he hears among the people, but I can say that it is not. It is extremely difficult to find the strength for that work and difficult to reach every corner where there is national wealth [*narodno blago*], and it is particularly difficult to find and convince someone to recite what they know [*da kazuje što zna*], and even then the most difficult thing is to write down everything correctly and faithfully [*valjano i vierno bilježiti*]; I can say this because I have attempted it all myself.

Many songs have already been collected; but there are still many that we do not know, and indeed only God himself knows how many of them still live among the people!

II

Here in this book are folk songs (*narodne pjesme*) that have been collected by one hand only. If among them are songs that have already been published, it will not do any harm to publish them again, since a song always changes in some way, which can then teach us something again [*jer pjesma se je u čem god promienila, što nas opet more koješta naučiti*].

²⁴ Note on my translation: the parentheses in the translation are those of Marjanović, exactly as they occur in the original, while square brackets enclose my own comments. Footnotes, unless otherwise noted, are those exactly as given by Marjanović in the original text. I would like to thank E. Wayles Browne for valuable comments on the translation as well as for sage advice concerning Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian linguistic matters. The title page appears as follows:

Hrvatske Narodne Pjesme,
što se pjevaju u Gornjoj hrvatskoj krajini i u Turskoj Hrvatskoj,
 Sabrao Luka Marjanović.
 Svezak I.
 U Zagrebu 1864.
 Troškom i tiskom A. Jakića.

I attempted to write down the songs as faithfully as possible, without changing a thing, exactly as I heard them from the singers; had I wished to change something, to add something or to leave something out, I would have harmed the song, such that it would have no longer been a folk song [*da već nebi narodna bila*].

Whoever reads the songs but does not read the lines in this introduction will notice immediately a great inconsistency in the orthography, for which he will not be able to discover the proper explanation.

For this reason it is necessary to mention something about the orthography. In the surroundings from which all of these songs came, the *štokavski* dialect is spoken, with *ikavski* and *jekavski* speech mixed together. The situation is like this in the Bihać valley, and in the village of Zavalje, which is near Bihać but on the Croatian side of the border. About the dialects further south in Bosnia I am unable to say a thing with certainty, but on the Croatian side of the border, in places near Bihać and Zavalje, the spoken language is either pure *ikavski* or pure *jekavski*. But in Bihać and in Zavalje one hears: *biel* (*bio*), *bieliti*, *pobielio* [what today would be called *ijekavski* forms—tr.] alongside *bililica*, *bililja* [*ikavski* forms; the entire list that follows illustrates the mixture of *ijekavski* and *ikavski* in the speech of the region—tr.]; *bježati* alongside *pobići* and *pobignuti*; *diete* (in Bihać even *hete*) and *djeca* alongside *dica*; *sreća*, *srećan* alongside *nesrićan*; *šljeme* alongside *slime*; *sjediti*, *sjesti* alongside *posilo*; *čerati* (normally *tjerati*), *počerati* alongside *potirati* and *potira*; *vjera* alongside *vira* and *neviran*. All of this is spoken one alongside the other, although there is much more of the *ikavski*.

Given that this mixture is the case in everyday speech, it must therefore be the same way consistently in the songs sung in these regions. In a song one hears the same word now with *i*, now with *ije*, or *je*. One might try to explain that perhaps the songs were originally *jekavski* but passed into *ikavski* and when doing so some *jekavski* forms remained; however, this is disproved by what has just been said above. In fact, there are words in these poems that in everyday speech are always *jekavski* but in the songs *ikavski* (for example, in everyday speech *djiete* but in songs *dite*), and the reverse (in everyday speech *diver*, *divojka*, but in poems *djever*, дјевер, *djevojka*, дјевојка). Concerning the word *djevojka* I should say that in everyday speech and in songs it is always *ikavski*, but when it is sung loudly one hears the *jekavski* form *djevojka* instead of the *ikavski* form *divojka*. For this reason, then, there is heterogeneity in the book regarding the orthography with *i* and *ije* or *je*. I have mentioned this only so that it will be clear; the research will be for others.

I also heard spoken *ćiti*²⁵ instead of *htjeti*, *čerati* instead of *tjerati*, *šećati* instead of *šetati*, *mećati* instead of *metati*, so that I also wrote in the same way just what came to me. I wrote *dje* (*hje*) instead of *gdje*, since it is spoken that way; and in the same way I wrote *ći* and *ćerca* instead of *kći* and *kćerca*.

I heard written “h” nowhere in these localities; but in this case it is written where it should be, so that no one will stumble while reading such words. And when “h” is omitted between two vowels, speakers leave a hiatus or else they compensate for it by means of a written

²⁵ Along with this warning, the following words were shortened according to the same principle: not *nehti*, *htio*, *kćerca*, *gdje* but *neći*, *ćerca*, *dje*. And in the same way not *prihvatio*, *uhvatiše*, and *hvatiose* but *prifatío*, *ufatiše*, *fatiöse*, which was just how I heard them from the singer.

“v” or sometimes “j.” One hears then: *graa* instead of *graha*, *snaa* instead of *snaha*, *oraa* instead of *oraha*, *plaovit* instead of *plahovit*, *straovit* instead of *strahavit* [*sic*], *maati* instead of *mahati*, *jati* instead of *jahati*; also: *juva* instead of *juha*, *suva kruva* instead of *suha kruha*, *kuvati* instead of *kuhati*; and then: *dijati* instead of *dihati*, *tijo* instead of *tiho*, *proja* instead of *prova* or *proha*. But this is so mixed up that it is impossible to decide which word cancels the hiatus with a “v” and which with “j.” I heard in one village *graa*, *grava*, and *graja* instead of *graha*. And apart from some one-syllable words that end in “h,” in which this “h” either changes places with a “v” or is completely unpronounced (for example *suv* or *su*, *gluv* or *glu*, *kruv* or *kru*), I nowhere heard “h,” nor was it compensated for with anything. Only *lad* instead of *hlad* is spoken, as well as *lak* for *lahk*, *um* for *hum*, *ikat* for *hukati*; *dodjo* for *dodjoh*, *leg* for *legoh*, and so forth. At least in Turkish Croatia one hears “h” between two vowels and in front of word-initial vowels; but when in word-final position, or when in front of vowels, nowhere do speakers pronounce this “h.” One hears then *kruha*, *proha*, *čoha*, *hoću*, *hoda*, *hadžija*, although this is not so regular either.

What no one has been able to find in folk poems until now is found in these, namely, *synizesis* [emphasis appears in the original, spelled *synicesis* by Marjanović—tr.], a joining of two vowels between two words in one verse where the first word concludes and the second begins with a vowel, so that in reading the verse the two vowels are pronounced as one, and in which case, if one would not do this, the *deseterac* would have an extra syllable. And if someone thinks that such a thing is not to be found in folk songs, or that it should not be there, then it is helpful to testify to it here with examples so that it will be seen that this happens frequently and that it does not disturb the verse as much as may be thought. Furthermore, there is something else, something other than *synizesis*. There are verses that have eleven syllables but in which there is no *synizesis*. These verses are pronounced, just as the reader has it here, so that the first, second, and third syllable seem to be one foot (*jedna stopa*), and the first two count as one long. In poem LIII there are two such verses [verse 4: *Odagnaše ti Turci b'jele ovce* and verse 9: *Ojanjit' će mi ovna razbludnika*; interestingly, however, the song is not an epic in the strict sense, since it has only 12 verses; also, it is printed in the section entitled “women’s songs.”—tr.], and in song II again there are two verses of this kind [verse 133: *Daleko će te ugledati Mile* and verse 222: *Ovo ću ponit' ujni za milošću*]; apart from these there are no others like this in the book. Such verses I received from the same blind singers, who were the best of the folk singers I heard; and if they cause any trouble (luckily there are not many of them), it is necessary to know about them. And when there is one, which spoils the poem and verse (*što pjesmu i stih kvari*), why should there not be *synizesis* that does not spoil the verse? That this is not recommended everywhere—the proof for it is this: it is not found everywhere, everywhere where it could be; rather the vowel in question is more often elided. In the first book of Vuk’s collection there is in song 700 one verse with seven syllables [*sedmerac*]: *Kravu i tele da prodam* [in speech the “i” merges with the “u,” making it a single syllable—tr.] This again, even if it is the only such verse in the collection of our celebrated Vuk Karadžić, offers proof that perhaps this sort of freedom exists in folk singing.

There are all sorts of good and useful things in a folk song [*narodna pjesma*] that would be valuable for us to bring out and learn, but there are also bad things that we do not need to follow. The attentive reader who is skilled in our language will immediately find what is good and what is bad.

Folk songs also contain words that a person would seek in vain to find in everyday speech. I will mention only a few in this book. About the bird by the name *noj* [“ostrich,” an animal not found in Croatia—tr.], at least in the places from which these songs came, no one knows; in song IV, verse 15, they *krčiti* [“to clear a forest,” according to Vuk’s dictionary—tr.] with wine and with brandy [Verse 15: *Koja krči vinom i rakijom*—tr.]. What is more, I heard the verb *turiti* [“to push, shove”] only in song, and in everyday speech one hears the use of *turkati* [“to push, shove”] instead of *turati*, *turnuti* [“push, shove,” perfective in verbal aspect] instead of *turiti*. In the same way in song one hears only *razporiti* [“to cut open,” perfective aspect, Vuk’s dictionary gives Latin *diffendo*—tr.] while in everyday speech it is *razparati* [“to cut open,” imperfective aspect]; in song one hears *hititi* while in everyday speech only *baciti*.

I have divided the songs into heroic and women’s songs [*Pjesme sam razdielio u junačke i u ženske*]. The reason that I did not classify women’s songs according to the occasions in which they are sung is that apart from two or three that were listed according to Vuk’s classification, there are no poems in this entire book that would be sung only on one particular occasion. Since these so-called women’s songs for the most part have amorous themes, they are sung often and on any appropriate occasion. It is simply not possible to decide, according to content alone, to which group any one of these poems would belong. In these localities many of the customs mentioned in these folk songs have been lost, so that if the memory of a certain custom is preserved by the poem it is difficult to determine which custom.

These poems are all from one place, but from several people who had lived differing numbers of years in Turkish Croatia and who brought these poems here with them; again, some people learned these songs directly from people in Turkish Croatia. All of these singers are illiterate, they know neither how to read nor how to write, and they are differentiated only by age. My singers were three older men, two older women, one younger woman, one young man, and four young girls.

Some of the women’s songs transcribed here are a bit different than the songs in the first volume of Vuk’s collection.

Now that I have mentioned all that I think necessary in order to better understand the poems, I must say that I did not have to think for a long time in order to decide what the title of the book should be [*Hrvatske narodne pjesme, što se pjevaju u gornjoj hrvatskoj krajini i u turskoj Hrvatskoj* “Croatian Folk Songs, Which Are Sung in the Upper Croatian Krajina and in Turkish Croatia” is what the title became in the end—tr.]. Concerning the inhabitants of Turkish Croatia I do not know, actually, what they are, since they do not say that they are Serbian or Croatian but say that they are Hungarians and Bosnians; and they speak the Bosnian language. Here on our side of the border people have lost the name “Croatian” (I say this regarding the ordinary population); but all without exception speak and write Croatian, nothing else. This seems like a strange thing; but I am not able or allowed to hide the truth.

The erudite Mr. Franjo Petračić persuaded me to collect useful things throughout the land; I listened to him and the work bore fruit. After him, the erudite Mr. Vatroslav Jagić took an interest in my work, and in spite of all of his own obligations helped in both word and deed to get the collection properly printed. For the kindness of both gentlemen, from whom our book can expect much, I cannot express enough gratitude.

I think and intend, if God grants it, to give the world more such little books filled with national treasures, so that all will finally know their literary riches better.

I did not know how to prepare my first collection, nor would it have happened without the good offices of A. Jakić, who took over the printing of this book at his own expense. So that the poems would be well printed, he chose a format and suggested an orthography that seem the most advantageous to me; and I took the one that had been applied in the best collections of folk songs up until now. For his efforts and endeavors he has my warmest thanks. L. M.

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