



Руско-српске културне везе уогледалу музике

Russian-Serbian Cultural Relations Reflected in Music

Гост уредник ВЕСНА САРА ПЕНО Guest Editor Vesna Sara Peno



Часопис МУЗИКОЛОШКОГ ИНСТИТУТА САНУ Journal of THE INSTITUTE OF MUSICOLOGY SASA

Музикологија

Часопис Музиколошког института САНУ

Musicology

Journal of the Institute of Musicology SASA

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28 (I/2020)

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главни и одговорни уредник / editor-in-chief Александар Васић / Aleksandar Vasić

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ISSN 1450-9814 eISSN 2406-0976 UDK 78(05)

БЕОГРАД 2020. BELGRADE 2020

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ДИЗАЈН И ТЕХНИЧКА ОБРАДА / DESIGN & PREPRESS Студио Omnibooks, Београд / Studio Omnibooks, Belgrade

ШТАМПА / PRINTED BY Скрипта Интернационал, Београд / Scripta Internacional, Belgrade

Часопис је индексиран на http://doiserbia.nb.rs/, http://www.komunikacija.org.rs и у међу- народној бази ProQuest. /

The journal is indexed in http://doiserbia.nb.rs/, http://www. komunikacija.org.rs and in the international database ProQuest.

Издавање ове публикације подржало је Министарство просвете, науке и технолошког развоја Републике Србије /

The publication of this volume was supported by the Ministry of of Education, Science and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia



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DOI https://doi.org/10.2298/MUZ2028235R UDC 781.7(497.11) 39:001.32(497.11)

VLACH VOCAL TRADITIONAL MUSIC IN THE REGION OF HOMOLJE FROM THE LEGACY OF OLIVERA MLADENOVIĆ*

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Традиционална вокална музика Влаха у Хомољу у заоставштини Оливере Младеновић

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Received: 15 March 2020 Accepted: 1 May 2020 Original scientific paper

ABSTRACT

Olivera Mladenović researched Vlach culture in the 1980s. Recordings preserved in the archive of the Institute of Ethnography SASA also contain examples of vocal practice of the Vlachs from Homolje region (Northeast Serbia). The material was recorded on six audio cassettes, which were later digitized. As ethnomusicological studies of this area are very scarce, the recorded material certainly represents a valuable testimony to the musical culture of the Vlach ethnic community. The aim of this article is to determine the particularities of the recorded examples, based on ethnomusicological analysis and transcription, as well as to isolate the vocal genres found on these audio cassettes. Vocal examples from the recordings of Olivera Mladenović will be paired with existing examples from the literature, as well as examples of current practice recorded by the author of this article. In this way, at least a partial picture of the Vlachs' musical life in Homolje from the 1980s to the present day will be established, and the comparison will allow us to observe continuity and change.

KEYWORDS: Olivera Mladenović, Serbia, Homolje Region, Vlach music, vocal practice

- * The study was conducted within the Scientific Research Organization Institute of Musicology SASA, funded by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development. Also, the study was presented in one version at the international symposium *Vlado Milošević: Ethnomusicologist, Composer and Educator Tradition as Inspiration*, held in Banja Luka, from 12 to 14 April 2019. Apart from the aforementioned, this study is also part of the author's research within the scope of doctoral academic studies at the Faculty of Music in Belgrade.
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Апстракт

Оливера Младеновић се бавила истраживањем влашке културе осамдесетих година прошлог века. На снимцима који се налазе у архиву Етнографског института САНУ забележена је и вокална пракса Влаха из Хомоља (североисточна Србија), а материјал је снимљен на шест аудио-касета, које су дигитализоване. Будући да су етномузиколошка проучавања поменуте области веома оскудна, забележена грађа свакако представља драгоцено сведочење о музичкој култури влашке етничке заједнице. Циљ рада јесте утврђивање специфичности забележених примера, на основу етномузиколошке анализе и транскрипције, као и издвајање вокалних жанрова који се налазе на тим аудио касетама. Вокалним примерима са снимака Оливере Младеновић биће придружени постојећи примери из литературе, као и примери актуелне праксе које је забележила ауторка овог рада. На овај начин формираће се барем делимична слика музичког живота Влаха у Хомољу од осамдесетих година прошлог века до данас, а њиховом компарацијом сагледаће се континуитет и промене.

Кључне речи: Оливера Младеновић, Србија, Хомоље, влашка музика, вокална пракса

Vlach music of Homolje region in eastern Serbia has been the topic of several ethnomusicological studies to date, though not to a great extent. The beginnings of ethnomusicological research of Vlach music in Serbia date back to the 1960 when the first study that included a review of the music of this minority (namely their vocal practice) was published. Research into these acoustic expressions in the Vlach tradition has intensified since the 1990s, mainly thanks to the work of ethnomusicologists Dragoslav Dević and Dimitrije Golemović. These two doyens undoubtedly influenced their students, who dedicated their seminary, graduate and master's theses to Vlach music. In recent years, interest in the music of the Vlach ethnic minority has intensified, both through the research of the author of the present study, whose doctoral dissertation is dedicated to this topic, and through the work of amateur researchers. Among the Vlachs themselves, the need to learn about their own cultural specificities also arose (Stanojević 2015), encouraged in various ways by the Vlach National Council (Ilić and Keveždi 2014), for the purpose of (re)construction of the cultural values and identity of the Vlachs of northeastern Serbia. When it comes to ethnomusicological research, it should

- 2 For more information on ethnomusicologists' interests in the study of geocultural areas inhabited by the Vlachs, see: Радивојевић 2019с.
- 3 It is the study by Miodrag Vasiljević, presented at the conference of the Folklorist of Yugoslavia in 1958 (Васиљевић 1960/1963).
- 4 Over the last ten years, many changes have taken place that affirm the Vlach culture: numerous festivals and other cultural events have been established; the Vlach alphabet was made and the Vlach

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be mentioned that, aside from Dević and Golemović (Golemović 1997; Девић 2001; Големовић 2016; 2019), authors who also investigated the Homolje were Mirjana Cosić-Dragan (Ћосић-Драган 1988), Larisa Rajić-Radenković (Rajić 1989; Рајић-Раденковић 1995), Selena Litvinović (Rakočević) (Литвиновић 1997), Predrag Poznanović (Poznanović 2006) and Ivana Arsenijević (Арсенијевић 2004; 2008), while current research has been conducted by the author of this study over the last five years. The number of studies examining Vlach music of Homolje is very small, only twelve, and they are devoted to both instrumental and vocal practices (cf: Ћосић-Драган 1988; Rajić 1989; Рајић-Раденковић 1995; Литвиновић 1997; Golemović 1997; Девић 2001; Арсенијевић 2004; 2008; Poznanović 2006; Големовић 2016; Radivojević 2016; 2019a). In addition to ethnomusicology, other folklorists' research involving music knowledge should also be mentioned, among them research done by the Janković sisters (Јанковић and Јанковић 1937; Јанковић 1940), Desa Đorđević (2006) and Dejan Trifunović (2019), who explored the music (songs and gigs) accompanying folk dances, as well as Slavoljub Gacović (2000),5 who devoted the entire monograph to the vocal genre of petrekătura and Sava Janković (1969), who wrote about Vlach ballad songs. Among them is also ethnologist and ethnochoreologist Olivera Mladenović, whose research is in the focus of the current study.

Considering the fact that the Vlach music records of Homolje region are very deficient,⁶ Olivera Mladenović's legacy is an unequivocally valuable contribution to this matter. The audio material was recorded on six audio cassettes, which are preserved in the archive of the Institute of Ethnography SASA in Belgrade, and they are archived as "box 39, cassette 12, 13, 14, 17, 18, 23". Thanks to the courtesy of colleagues from the aforementioned institute,⁷ I was allowed to use all six tapes, which I first digitized at the Phonarchive of the Institute of Musicology SASA, and then I

language was introduced into the school system as an optional subject; printing of books in the Vlach language began; the Institute for the Culture of the Vlachs was established, etc. (Радивојевић 2019с). In this regard, the EU project Awakening the Awareness of National Culture and Belonging to the Vlachs with a Focus on Youth was of great importance, because it included, among other activities, an ethnomusicological study of Vlach music in 2016 and 2017, in which the author of this article also participated (cf: Regionalna razvojna agencija "Braničevo-Podunavlje" d.o.o, 2017).

- 5 This monography also includes a study by ethnomusicologist Sanja Radinović on the musical-formal characteristics of recorded *petrekăturas* (Радиновић 2000).
- 6 In Kučevo, which belongs administratively to the geocultural area of Zvižd, but is located on the slopes of the Homolje Mountains, since 1967, a festival called *Homolje Motives* has been held, which largely shows the Vlach's music and dance heritage (Лајић-Михајловић, Анђелковић-Грашар 2017). Unfortunately, according to data obtained at the "Veljko Dugošević" Cultural Center in Kučevo, the recordings of music performed at the aforementioned festival were not preserved until the 2000s, and continuity in audio-visual recording can be traced only from those years.
- 7 I owe a special thanks for sharing materials to the following staff of the Institute of Ethnography SASA: Miloš Rašić, Researcher Associate, Biljana Milenković-Vuković, Librarian Advisor and Dragana Radojičić, Director.

began record procession, analysis and transcription. The recordings of O. Mladenović have enabled the reconstruction of the vocal practice of Vlachs from Homolje area in the 1980s. The recordings of earlier researchers mentioned above, as well as personal filedwork recordings of the author of the present study will be added to this tally, which also includes contemporary vocal practice. This allows a comparative insight in diachronic perspective to the recorded materials, and a comparison of the examples will highlight the changes that have taken place over the forty-year period, as well as similarities. Beside this, some comparative insights about certain elements of Vlach tradition in northeast Serbia will be given, as comparative data about Vlachs in Homolje and in Mlava and Zvižd, thanks to the author's own field findings. In this way, at least a partial picture of Vlachs' musical life from Homolje will be formed and the main features of their vocal practice will be singled out, given that the recordings of O. Mladenović only contain this type of acoustic expression.

RESEARCH ACTIVITY OF OLIVERA MLADENOVIĆ AND VLACHS

Olivera Mladenović⁸ conducted many fieldwork researches on the territory of Serbia, exploring, above all, folk dances – both contemporary dance practice and reconstructions of old traditional dances. She was predominantly engaged in Serbian practice, in the area of central Serbia (Šumadija and Pomoravlje), as well as the vicinity of Belgrade, Kosmaj, Zaglavak, Negotin Krajina, Ključ, Đerdap and Brza Palanka (Ракочевић 2014; Миленковић-Вуковић 2014). Furthermore, she paid attention to the Vlach ethnic community in several studies in which she examined Vlach dances in the areas of Đerdap, Negotin Krajina and Ključ, while she did not write any studies on recorded material from Homolje region (cf: Ibid). Beside the Vlachs, O. Mladenović also dealth with Slovakian minority in Vojvodina and, in one unpublished study, she focused on the Roma dances (Миленковић-Вуковић 2014). Her ethnological work also encompassed the regions of Budžak and Timok Krajina.

O. Mladenović explored Vlach music in Homolje during the 1980s. As to administrative terms, this region belongs to the geocultural area of Homolje in northea-

8 The ethnochoreological activity of O. Mladenović was discussed by Selena Rakočević (2014), while Miloš Rašić (2018) wrote about the ethnological activity of O. Mladenović. Her biographical data were taken from the aforementioned two studies, as well as from the Lexicon of Yugoslav Music (Kovačević 1984). O. Mladenović was born in Skopje in 1914, but lived in Belgrade since her high school days. She graduated in 1937 at the Yugoslav Literature and Serbian Language Group with the old Slovene Language at the Faculty of Philosophy, but focused her entire life on ethnochoreological activity. She worked at the Ministry of Education and later at the National Folk Ensemble Kolo as one of its founders. In 1958, she graduated from the Ethnology Group of the Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade and afterwards became fully professional in this field. From 1962 onwards she worked at the Institute of Ethnography SASA in Belgrade and became intensively engaged in scientific research work. After three years, she defended her doctoral thesis in the field of ethnochoreology called Kolo with the Southern Slavs (Kolo u Južnih Slovena)

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stern Serbia.⁹ Her fieldwork was multi-locational and the settlements she visited were located in the Homolje Mountains. Those were Žagubica, Krepoljin, Laznica, Sige and Breznica.¹⁰ The area is predominantly inhabited by Vlachs Ungurjans¹¹ and Serbs.¹² Given that the origin of Vlachs Ungurjans has already been discussed in ethnomusicological writings, both those signed by other researchers (cf: Девић 1990; Големовић 2016; 2019) and the author of the present study (Радивојевић 2019а; 2019с), as well as the fact that no new findings have been acquired on this issue recently, either in the field of anthropology, ethnology or history, there is no need for a more detailed explication on this occassion.¹³ However, several important facts need to be recalled. The Vlachs represent a bilingual ethnic community, with Vlach language as their mother tongue (with multiple dialects), while a considerable number of members of this minority speak Serbian as well. According to the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, there are 35,330 Vlachs living in Serbia (Михајловић 2014).¹⁴

At the moment, the questions such as who are the Vlachs who nowadays inhabit the area of Homolje and the whole northeastern Serbia, and where they came from, cannot be given a precise answer. Issues concerning the origins of the Vlachs in this

- 9 Several ethnomusicological studies have already considered the geographical location of Homolje (cf: Рајић-Раденковић 1995; Арсенијевић 2008; Радивојевић 2019а). Homolje is a geographical area in northeastern Serbia, bounded by mountain ranges on all sides. In administrative terms, Homolje belongs almost entirely to the municipality of Žagubica, which borders with the municipalities of Petrovac, Despotovac, Bor, Majdanpek and Kučevo. However, the territory of Homolje can be viewed in a broader sense as well, encompassing all the villages surrounding the Homolje Mountains along their stretch, which are grouped around three centers: Kučevo, Petrovac na Mlavi and Žagubica (Рајић-Раденковић 1995; Радивојевић 2019а). Thus, in some ethnomusicological studies, Vlach music, which administratively belongs to the territory of Mlava or Zvižd, is classified in the Homolje area (cf: Девић 2001). For the purpose of this study, we consider the territory of Homolje in the narrow sense, since the music from the legacy of Olivera Mladenović was recorded precisely in this area.
- 10 As it will be seen later, one of performing examples originated from Milanovac, although no recording has been done in this village by O. Mladenović.
- It was established that the Vlachs are not a single entity in Serbia, but are divided into two ethnic-cultural groups, in scientific circles: the Ungurjans (the Vlachs settled in Mlava, Zvižd, Homolje, Braničevo, Stig, Resava and the vicinity of Ćuprija) and Carans (the Vlachs situated around Negotin, Zaječar and Kladovo) (Vlahović 1984; Недељковић 2001).
- 12 According to the Statistical Office of Republic, in the latest 2011 census in Serbia, 9.024 Serbs and 2.811 Vlachs lived in Žagubica municipality (https://publikacije.stat.gov.rs/G2012/Pdf/G20124001.pdf).
- 13 An exception to this are the monographs *Vlachs of Northeastern Serbia* by Miodrag D. Perić, published in 2016, and an amended version of that edition *National Identity and Tradition of Vlachs of Northeastern Serbia* published in 2018, which advocates the thesis that Vlachs are indigenous to Northeastern Serbia (cf: Перић 2016; 2018).
- 14 However, according to unofficial data taken from the *Gergina* association from Negotin, the majority are ethnically indifferent and still declare themselves as Serbs (about 200,000).

region are not fully understood and this is undoubtedly influenced by current political developments, such as the so-called "Vlach Question" (Novaković, Đurđević 2015) and Serbian-Romanian relations. The historical perception is further complicated by the ambiguity of the ethnonym Vlach, which did not always refer to ethnicity, as well as the fact that this ethnic community has been variously named in Serbia so far: Romanians, Aromanians, Romanivlachs (cf: Vlahović 1984; Nowicka 2016). What is unambiguous is the fact that culturally Vlachs are different from Serbs, but many scholars note that Vlachs are very quickly assimilated by the majority (Serbian) population, so some refer to them as "chameleons of the Balkans" (cf: Λα3μh 1938; Nowicka 2016), which is undoubtedly reflected in their musical heritage as well.

THE LEGACY OF OLIVERA MLADENOVIĆ AND WHAT IT DOES (NOT) REVEAL

Although the sound material in O. Mladenović's legacy is of great importance, interpreting someone else's fieldwork is neither easy nor gratifying. This is due, in the first place, to the lack of personal experience of fieldwork and personal contact with the interlocutors, as well as scarce data on the material collected. O. Mladenović's notes made during the field recording are not available (it is not known if they exist at all), but (some) information is obtained thanks to the data written on the audio tapes themselves. This primarily refers to the places she visited, then the names of the individual informants, as well as the (incomplete) lists of contents of the recorded material. It is not known whether O. Mladenović did this research on her own or if it was part of a larger systematic study, but based on the recordings it is clear that she conducted interviews together with Mila Avramović, probably one of the local residents, who spoke with informants in the Vlach language. What is most surprising is the fact that O. Mladenović recorded only vocal practice of musical heritage, 15 since one would have expected her to be interested primarily in instrumental practices that accompany traditional dances, considering that she was an ethnochoreologist.¹⁶ In addi-

- 15 One of the photographs that are part of the Homolje legacy contains the following information: singer and player [underlined by M.R.] from Breznica, Krepoljin, 1980 (photography 1). However, although there is evidence that the player was interviewed, it is unknown whether he played or just sang. But it should be noted that the recordings of O. Mladenović reveal several facts regarding instrumental music. Although the sound itself was not recorded, there were (scarce) tellings of the instrumentation that was represented. On the occassion of the holiday *Bele Poklade (White Carnival)*, after the *marga* dance is performed (cf: Дурлић 1998; Радивојевић and Томић 2019), the customary practice was for the *laptar* / violinist to play the dance all night. In addition, the composition of the ensemble which played at weddings was also mentioned: clanet, clarinet and drum (toba) (cassette 14).
- 16 The literature indicates that O. Mladenović, as an associate of the Institute of Ethnography SASA, participated in the creation of a capital piece on Serbian music, which might be related to Homolje

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tion to the six audio cassettes on which the music material was recorded, there are twelve photographs in O. Mladenović's legacy (here, the four of them are published: photographs 1, 2, 3, 4), on the basis of which we learn the approximate time interval of the research. One of them was marked in 1980 and four in 1981, while the remaining seven do not reveal when they were made. Also, in the photographs, as well as on the tapes themselves, (incomplete) names and ages of some of the informants are printed. Their names will be presented following the order they appear on cassettes: Cveta and Draginja from Breznica, Marija Dervišević (1932) and Petrija Janošević (1900) from Laznica, Jana from Milanovac (photographs 2 and 3), Persa from Sige, Nikolija Nikolić, Marija and Milan Milojković from Krepoljin (Ibid.), one unknown singer and player from Breznica (photography 1), as well as Desa Jovanović from Žagubica.

Recordings of O. Mladenović contain a total of 18 examples of vocal practice, i.e. songs related to the annual and life cycle of customs (Christmas Eve, burning of ritual fire and posthumous ritual), as well as lyrical songs of general purpose and one example of singing without words. The great value of the recordings also lies in the conversations about songs and singing; since O. Mladenović insisted that song lyrics and terminology related to singing, interlocutors speak in their own (Vlach) language. These examples will be accompanied by examples from the literature as well as with 27 examples from the personal archive of the author of this study. In considering the musical (dis)continuity, Vlach's music recorded by Olivera Mladenović is crucial, since, as mentioned above, examples of Vlach musical heritage from this area are few. During further presentation, each of these genres will be discussed individually, starting with the one most common in the recordings of Olivera Mladenović.

(Dis)CONTINUITY OF THE VLACHS' VOCAL PRACTICE OF HOMOLJE REGION

Olivera Mladenović recorded the highest number of songs related to the posthumous ritual (as many as 8 examples) – precisely of the ritual that occupies a central place in the traditional Vlach culture. Among them are two vocal forms that are

research (Радовановић 1988). Although it may be questioned what the research of the Vlachs' music has to do with the production of a piece on Serbian music, it should be recalled that only after 2000 the Vlachs were granted the status of national minority in Serbia, and that by then, the scientific community had generally pointed out that they had a developed awareness of belonging to the Serbian majority, and were thus observed (cf: Влаховић 1967; 1998; Vlahović 1984; Радивојевић 2019c).

17 I also had the opportunity to interview Marija and Milan Milojković personally in Krepoljin in 2016 (photographs 2, 3 and 5). They are not Vlachs, but Serbs; however, thanks to Milan's hard work, dedication and profession (teacher), he contributed to the spreading and nurturing of both Serbian and Vlach cultures alike, and was a very valuable interviewee in the field.

performed in different consituations: petrekătura and sâ kanta (to sing), the first of which includes 6 examples and the second includes 2 examples. Both categories include group one-part singing with well-established melodic patterns. What sets them apart is the function.

Petrekătura is a song to accompany the deceased to the "otherworld", "to give them direction to heaven" and always has the same textual content. It is one of the most archaic Vlach genres and in a certain way it represents the Vlachs' book of dead. In Homolje region, it is performed several times during the funeral, always next to the deceased, in his/her house or in the house yard, and it was named as "petrješem al mort" and "petres" (literally translated: "to accompany the dead" and "to accompany"). It is gender specific and performed exclusively by women; the recordings of O. Mladenović describe the performance of this form in great detail. It refers to large vocal forms, and the longest performance of a *petrekătura* on audio tracks of O. Mladenović takes just over 26 minutes (cassette 12). In Žagubica, before the singing begins, singers light candles that they hold in their hands during the performance (photography 4), and "dedicate the song" ("sa fije plaćice š petrekut"), and then start performing. They describe the singing as follows: "It is a kind of canon, because it intrudes into one another, it must not end, and then begin" ("To je neka vrsta kanona, jer jedna u drugu upada, ne sme da se završi, pa da počne") (cassette 12). Very often while they are still alive, Vlachs contract the performance of this form at their funeral by saying "when I die, sing to me", "take me across" ("kad umrem, da me popevaš", "da me prevedes"). Recordings of O. Mladenović reveal the existence of 3 different melodic models of petrekătura, which are performed in three ways:

- 1. the first melodic model was recorded in Žagubica, performed by 4 women in canon antiphony, with two exposing one melostanza and the other two repeating it ("the other two 'let voice' before the first two are over" / "druge dve 'puštaju glas' dok prve dve još nisu završile");
- 2. the second melodic model was recorded in Sige, performed in antiphony by three females, so that one is exposing the melostanza and the other two are repeating it; 3. the third melodic model is performed in Milanovac¹⁸ (recorded in Breznica) and sung by one woman (sheet music example 1¹⁹).

In addition to the tune, the poetic texts of the *petrekătura* are also established, within which refrains in the form of exclamations can be found.

- 18 Grandmother Jana, one of interlocutors in the field, before performing this *petrecătura* said that this example originated from the village Milanovac (in Vlach: Magudica). The record iself was made in the village Breznica.
- 19 This study is part of the author's ongoing research for the dissertation, so only one sheet music example will be provided on this occasion. Other sheet music examples of recorded songs in Homolje region will be presented in the author's doctoral dissertation.

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Transcription: Maja Radivojević

J = cca 60

E, moar-će, moa - r - će, njag - ra moar - će,

o.F.

o.F.

Sheet music example 1: petrekătura from Milanovac, recorded in Breznica (source: legacy of Olivera Mladenović, box 39, cassette 17, Institute of Ethnography SASA, Belgrade)

During the 1990s, Slavoljub Gacović recorded the singing of *petrekăturas* in the wider area of northeastern Serbia, and included the territory of Homolje. The third melodic model is also to be found within Gacović's examples, transcribed and analyzed by Sanja Radinović (2000) (sheet music example 2) and performed by the same singer, *grandmother Jana* (baba Jana), as in the 1980s.



Sheet music example 2: petrekătura from Milanovac (source: Гацовић 2000)

Apart from this, the book contains another, fourth melodic model from Krepoljin (sheet music example 3), which is not included in O. Mladenović's recordings, and is performed by a soloist, by exposing each verse of the song three times in a row (Гацовић 2000). Based on this, it can be assumed that as early as the 1990s, the antiphonal way of performing was abandoned, and so was canonical antiphony – i.e. ways of performing that were of crucial importance for the genre, regarding the ritual function of these vocal form. This is, no doubt, the consequence of the lack of women who knew how to perform this form. With the lack of singers in the recent historical period, the function of the song has also been endangered. According to the data obtained in the field during the current research, the last performance of petrekătura in Homolje was in the early 2000s, and they no longer exist in current practice.²⁰

²⁰ In the neighboring areas, Mlava and Zvižd, *petrekăturas* are still performed, although this form is on the verge of extinction (Радивојевић 2019b).

Transcription: Sanja Radinović



Sheet music example 3: petrekătura from Krepoljin (source: Гацовић 2000)

Sâ kanta is a song to invite the deceased to "this world". O. Mladenović's recordings show an example with the typical text beginning with the word vino (come) (cassette 13), and the rest of the text is improvised. Still, the melodic pattern is established. It is performed during funerals and pomanas²¹ or when going to the cemetery on certain occasions; it features group singing and the number of women performing is not limited. The recorded example from Breznica is characterized by singing interspersed with crying. According to informants who were contacted to help in bridging the language barrier on recordings (the author of this study does not speak Vlach language),²² the example of Kinćiku a lu Šerban (cassette 17) also belongs to the

²¹ Pomana is a custom of making a memorial in honor of the deceased, that is, a "feast" for the deceased, by which Vlachs send food and drink to the "otherworld". It is followed by a series of ritual acts and it should be done several times: seven days after death, then, after forty days, after half a year, after a year, three, five and even seven years from the day the person died (data recorded during the author's fielwork research in Homolje).

²² I am grateful to Valentina and Zorica Lezić from Kučevo for helping me in translating the lyrics in Vlach.

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type *sâ kanta*. Like the previous one, this example has an established melodic pattern, but differs from the previous one in that the poetic textual component is also stable (only the name of the deceased is changed). Researchers after Olivera Mladenović did not leave information about singing *sâ kanta* in Homolje, so there is no sound image of this form from the 1990s and 2000s. In the current practice, one example was recorded in the village Osanica in 2017, whose manner of performance corresponds to that recorded in the 1980s, with the difference that the performance was by a solo singer. Field informants have confirmed that this form of singing exists today, but women are reluctant to sing it outside the original context, thus confirming the viability of its function.²³ The confirmation of similarity of the way of performing and the information about its sacred function preserved in the newest times, could testify to the constancy in performing way of this genre and the consistency of its function in Vlach rituals and culture.

Among the recordings of O. Mladenović there are 7 general-purpose lyrical songs, all of which have love content (for example *Źaba bej, źaba mânk*; cassette 18), which can be sung daily, during keeping livestock, leisure, amusement, socializing, courting and other activities that do not have ritual character. The interpretation is solo or unison and is sung by women. Almost all examples are made in the parlando rubato system, containing initial exclamations and exclamations that occur during melostrophy, and the peculiarity is the appearance of a caesura in the syllable (for example *Kobor, koborare* and *Cukuće de kurpinjiš*; cassette 18). An exception in this regard is just an example *Oj, Jon, Jon,* (cassette 18) which has a three-part metric division, otherwise atypical of Vlach heritage (cf: Девић 1990; Рајић 1989; Големовић 2019). Two songs, Njegoćinje, vjađe ćinje and Kobor, koborare are characterized by the appearance of an internal refrain pâp, which is not found in the recordings of the later researchers; moreover, another refrain occurs dor, doriculje, as well as the front refrain pujišorulje, which was also noted by D. Golemović in 1994 in Krepoljin (2019). The poetic textual component is in most cases characterized by an eightfold basis.

The general-purpose examples recorded in current practice are different from those recorded by O. Mladenović. These are actually examples of Vlach songs that were recorded or composed during the socialist period. Almost all of the interviewed singers learned these songs from some existing recordings (which contain interpretations by singers who, today and before, were the Vlachs' singing idols) (Радивојевић 2019b). The recordings also include songs from other parts of northeastern Serbia inhabited by the Vlachs, thanks to which the process of unifying Vlach music can be followed (Ibid). The largest number of recorded examples in the current practice of Homolje is characterized by the distribution meter, neither has exclamations, nor even caesuras in the syllable. They were performed by both men and women (photography 7), and often accompanied by an instrument (flute, violin or accordion) or the whole orchestra (photography 8). The solo and unison performance was retained, as well as the dominant eightfold base of the texts.

The recorded song without words is characterized by the performance of the melody in a neutral syllable $l\hat{a}$ (cassette 18). The melodic base can be any song with poetic textual content, and it is characterized by being sung in the falsetto register. Dragoslav Dević wrote about this type of singing, which he recorded in the area of Crnorečje and pointed out that it had the function of a love call. During the 1990s, Selena Litvinović (1997) also wrote about singing without words, presenting examples recorded by the famous singer Nasta Stepanović from Homolje, who was the last interpreter of singing without words in this area. According to the informants, this type of singing ceased to exist in the aforementioned territory in the 2000s (Radivojević 2016), when Nasta Stepanović died, ²⁴ and it is absent from the present day vocal practice. ²⁵

Koljendra is performed by a group of boys called koljendraši for Christmas Eve (cassette 14). This procession toured the village and performed a special song. Unless they were invited in by a homeowner, they could do him great harm. Singing of koljendra is characterized by a sevenfold textual basis and pronunciation of the text on one pitch. An example has also been reported in current practice, and differs in that, when singing, one hits a specially carved stick on the table (photography 6). The existence of the stick was also mentioned on recordings made by O. Mladenović, but it was used to stir the fire to keep it burning. Today, this type of singing is also performed by girls.

One of the examples recorded by O. Mladenović was sung in the spring, when the fire of the corn stalks was lit. The song is performed by a group of boys, and the tune is based on a trichordal sequence. The poetic text has no logical meaning and consists of repeating the word(s) "olabila" (cassette 14). It has not been recorded by researchers after Olivera Mladenović, and it does not exist in current practice.

The recorded material in O. Mladenović's legacy includes Vlach genres that are represented in the wider area of northeastern Serbia, such as Mlava, Zvižd, Crnorečje and the vicinity of Bor, where Vlachs live in a relatively large number (cf: Девић 1990; Stevanović 1996; Гацовић 2000; Милосављевић 2003; 2013; Големовић 2019). The insight into the material adds to the knowledge not only of the vocal practice of Homolje at one historical moment, but also in diachronic dimension, which contributes to the complete knowledge of the Vlachs' music in Serbia. The cassette examples confirm the characteristics of Vlach singing that have been described hitherto by researchers and reflect many of the characteristics of Vlach's music recorded so far. However, on the basis of these, the local specificities of the vocal practice of the Homolje region can be distinguished.

- 24 Interlocutors in the field could not remember the exact year of her death.
- 25 In current practice, the author of this article has so far only been able to find one singer who can perform songs in the aforementioned way. She is Stana Milovanović from Rakova Bara a settlement belonging to the neighboring Zvižd area.
- 26 This kind of boys' group is also known in other parts of northeast Serbia inhabited by the Vlachs. For example in the region of Crnorečje they were called *kolindreci* and the song accompanying the rite was performed in a similar fashion as in Homolje (cf: Девић 1990).

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The problem with the ethnomusicological interpretation of Olivera Mladenović's material is the lack of relevant data, including the exact time period of the research, the number and names of interlocutors, and the omission of some parts of the interview that would facilitate understanding of the context of the performance. The aim of her research is not known, and since O. Mladenović's activity was primarily ethnochoreological, it is surprising that vocal-instrumental and instrumental examples are absent. What is certainly a valuable asset of the collected material is its ability to provide insight into the characteristics of vocal practice in the Homolje region, which has undergone changes since the 1980s, as compared to the present day. These are reflected both in the loss of certain genres and in the changes that have taken place within the genres that still exist today, especially in general-purpose lyrical songs that have been transformed from vocal to vocal-instrumental expression.²⁷ Yet, there are also similarities, like in case of sâ kanta, that might be marked as constants in Vlach vocal tradition in a wider context. Featured specificities represent an excellent basis for the future research of the Vlach musical life in this area, as well as the definition of the musical dialect of Homolje.

This is the case in almost all territories of northeastern Serbia where Vlachs live (Радивојевић 2019b; Радивојевић and Томић 2019).



Photography 1: singer and player from Breznica, in Krepoljin (source: Institute of Ethnography SASA)



Photography 2: (from left to right) Marija Milojković, Jana, O. Mladenović in Krepoljin (source: Institute of Ethnography SASA)



Photography 3: informers in front of Milojković's house in Krepoljin (source: Institute of Ethnography SASA)



Photography 4: a group of women performing petrekătura in Žagubica (source: Institute of Ethnography SASA)

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Photography 5: (from left to right) Milan Milojković, Maja Radivojević, Milija Radivojević, in Krepoljin (personal archive of the author)



Photography 6: Tanja Sikiruš demonstrates performance of koljendra, Osanica village (personal archive of the author)



Photography 7: (from left to right) Ružica Riđić, Maja Radivojević, Bogdan Nikolić, Marija Novaković, Selište village (personal archive of the author)



Photography 8: Marina Marić and Irena Marić, Osanica village (personal archive of the author)

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Маја Радивојевић

Традиционална вокална музика Влаха у Хомољу у заоставштини Оливере Младеновић

(Резиме)

С обзиром на чињеницу да су записи влашке музике Хомоља веома скромни, заоставштина Оливере Младеновић је недвосмислено драгоцен прилог тој материји. Звучни материјал снимљен је на шест аудио касета, које се налазе у архиву Етнографског институтта САНУ у Београду, а заведене су као "кутија 39, касета 12, 13, 14, 17, 18, 23". Љубазношћу колега из поменутог института, добила сам свих шест касета на коришћење, које сам најпре дигитализовала у Фоноархиву Музиколошког института САНУ, а потом и приступила обради снимака, анализи и транскрипцији. На снимцима О. Младеновић налази се укупно 18 примера вокалне праксе, међу којима су песме везане за годишњи и животни циклус обичаја (посмртни ритуал, Бадње вече и паљење обредне ватре), као и песме опште намене и један пример певања без речи. Велика вредност снимака лежи и у самим разговорима о песмама и певању, будући да је О. Младеновић инсистирала да јој се текстови песама и терминологија везана за певање говоре на влашком језику. Тим примерима биће придружени примери из литературе, као и 27 примера из личне архиве ауторке студије, а захваљујући њиховој компарацији може се пратити (дис)континуитет вокалног наслеђа Влаха из Хомоља.

Иако је звучни материјал из заоставштине О. Младеновић од изузетне важности, интерпретација туђег теренског рада није нимало лак ни захвалан посао. Разлог томе јесу на првом месту изостанак личног доживљаја теренског рада и личног контакта с казивачима, као и оскудни подаци о сакупљеном материјалу. Ипак, и поред свих недостатака, захваљујући снимцима О. Младеновић вокална пракса хомољских Влаха из осамдесетих година XX века реконструисана је у великој мери. Увид у материјал употпуњује сазнања не само о вокалној пракси Хомоља у једном историјском тренутку, већ и целокупна сазнања о влашкој музици у Србији. Примери на касетама потврђују одлике влашког певања о којем је до сада писано и одражавају многе карактеристике до сада забележене влашке музике. Међутим, на основу њих се могу издвојити и локалне специфичности вокалне праксе хомољског краја.

Кључне речи: Оливера Младеновић, Србија, Хомоље, влашка музика, вокална пракса

CIP - Каталогизација у публикацији Народна библиотека Србије, Београд

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МУЗИКОЛОГИЈА : часопис Музиколошког института САНУ = Musicology : journal of the Institute of Musicology SASA / главни и одговорни уредник = editor-in-chief Александар Васић. - 2001, бр. 1- . - Београд : Музиколошки институт САНУ, 2001- (Београд : Скрипта Интернационал). - 25 cm

Полугодишње. - Текст на срп. и више светских језика. - Друго издање на другом медијуму: Музикологија (Online) = ISSN 2406-0976 ISSN 1450-9814 = Музикологија COBISS.SR-ID 173918727