The Work of the Academician, Vinko Žganec, on the Committee on Traditional Life and Customs of the Yugoslav Academy of Sciences and Arts

Summary

Vinko Žganec became a member of the Committee on Traditional Life and Customs of the Yugoslav Academy of Sciences and Arts (JAZU) in 1948, when it was headed by the academician D. Boranić. He immediately gained attention in the Academy in his role as chief of the section for musical folklore. He continued in this position until Boranić’s death in 1955. When Branimir Gulić replaced Boranić as head of the Committee and expanded its work to cover more contemporary activities than formerly, Žganec was entrusted with heading the ethnomusicological section. He remained at this post until the Spring of 1961, when Professor Ivo Rubin, who had been Secretary of the Committee, died. This post of Secretary was then given to Žganec. Taking up his new duties, Žganec set in to carrying them out with his proverbial enthusiasm. He at once commenced fundamental classification of the Committee’s extensively large archives in manuscript form, which dated from the 19th century. He divided the entire manuscript archives into three large collections: the old and new collections, and the collection of folk songs. He arranged the notation of all items in the collections mentioned and had them catalogued in keeping with modern archival methods; they were thus subsequently available for scientific research work. Apart from that, Žganec personally examined all the manuscripts, adding remarks to many of them, which were very valuable when
they concerned the older items, as they provided information on origins and gave evaluation of their worth. Today, many of Žganec's comments are found attached to individual manuscripts kept by the Committee, as immeasurably valuable documentation. After the death of B. Gulić in 1975, Žganec became the chairman of the Committee on Traditional Life and Customs. Sadly, he did not hold the post for very long, as, in deep old age, he died at the end of 1976.

It can be stated that as a member of the Yugoslav Academy, Vinko Žganec made his most notable contribution in his activities in the Committee on Life and Customs, firstly, as Secretary of its Ethnomusicology Section, later as the long-term Secretary of the Committee, and finally as its Chairman. He was the first to collect and open to the public at large the rich and valuable archives of the Committee. The work Žganec did is shown in numerous minutes taken at meetings of the Committee, where he is shown to be one of its most agile members and leaders. Žganec's name shall remain inscribed in the history of the JAZU as a permanent memorial to this untiring researcher in the field of ethnomusicology and the entire traditional culture of Croatia.