

## THREE CONTRIBUTIONS TO COMPARATIVE EPIC CRITICISM

### SUMMARY

Comparative study of oral epics often fails to differentiate between simple motifs, such as the incomplete invulnerability of epic heroes (Z311 in Arne-Thompson), and complex motifs such as Lord's model of "absence - destruction - home-coming - revenge - marriage", which encompasses the elementary pattern of the epic plot among numerous oral epic poets. Although scholars such as Veselovski, Frings-Braun and Patzer have worked out models which facilitate such distinction, prevailing comparative criticism ignores this essential difference. However, just as simple themes continue to reappear throughout various traditions, the repetition of complex motifs or topics can also be established over broad spans of time and space, and eras of civilisation and culture. The complex theme of the "surmounting of the hero's alienation through reconciliation with the enemy's representative" in Homer, the *Chanson de Roland* and in *Banović Strahinja* is considered in detail. There can be no question of any mutual influence here, so there must exist some joint ethical and psychological, sociological or even philosophical elements which have led to the coming into being of epic songs dealing with similar themes.

(Translated by Nina H. Antoljak)