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# VINKO ŽGANEC AND THE ETHNOMUSICOLOGY OF THE XX-TH CENTURY

*GHISELA SULTEANU*  
*Str. Zlatescu, 30, Bloc V. 5, București- 73276*

Vinko Žganec (1890-1976) appears as one of the most important exponents of Croatian ethnomusicology. The present paper has in view: 1. conditions of preparation and international and national development of ethnomusicology activity, especially in the 4th to 7th decades of the 20th century; 2. an attempt to refer Vinko Žganec's activity to the stages of development of Croatian ethnomusicology, as well as of the other Yugoslavian peoples; 3. the relationship between the multilaterality and stylistical stock. Theoretical and methodological implications; 4. the characteristics of monophonic and polyphonic executions in the collections of Vinko Žganec; 5. relationship with some features of Central and Southern European contemporary stock.

If nowadays - in spite of its youth - ethnomusicology is situated among the sciences which seem already to have found a complete theoretical and methodological outlining, this is due firstly to research by those individuals who have, for over a century continued to discover various (new) aspects concerning the wonderful field of knowledge of traditional music of different peoples. At present we can even affirm that we have assisted - from the beginning of our century- to add an especial effervescence in this sense, by the presence among almost all peoples, of researchers particularly preoccupied with musical folklore phenomena. Their realizations appear to us - on the one hand - to link a chain of continuity over several generations, with their beginnings at the end of the XIX-th century, evidencing, at the same time, certain stages which have marked the development of ethnomusicology up to the present day. So, it is not by chance that, following the conception of these researchers, the way was pointed to also for the creation of

authentic schools of ethnomusicology such as the European ones, from Germany, Austria, Romania, Poland, Hungary, England, the USSR, and Yugoslavia, and, relatively more recently, beginning from the mid. century, those from other countries, such as Bulgaria, and the American ones.

The somehow more favourable situation, initially, in the center and South-East of Europe, was stimulated by the existence of three main factors.

I. The advanced level of researchers of (oral) literature, and also of psychology and sociology;

II. The existence of a rich folklore stock thanks to materials more accessible for study as compared with the taking into consideration of music; and

III. The movements of national renaissance; which found strong support in patrimony for the respective peoples' folklore.

For the present paper, and considering the time at disposal, we had in view only four situations considered to characterize the relationship between Vinko Žganec and the ethnomusicology of our century.

1) The aspects of ethnomusicology in the light its combined development as a scientific discipline in the XX-th century;

2) The contribution of Vinko Žganec's activity to the creation of the Croatian School of Ethnomusicology and, implicitly, to the development of the Yugoslavian one;

3) The relationship with some features of Central and South European contemporary stock; and,

4) Theoretical and methodological consequences at the level of international ethnomusicology.

I. The history of European ethnomusicology, as well as that of America, which grew out of the former, offers us the image of nearly unitary development with unavoidable discrepancies of time, and has to the present day followed seven principal evolutionary stages.

The observed similitudes in the development of ethnomusicology as a scientific discipline, offered us the possibility to deal with the presence of these stages with each people separately, each of them receiving a methodological comparative value of norm. In this way, the musical activity of Vinko Žganec also appeared to us to be naturally placed in the development of ethnomusicology itself, so that the reference to the seven stages could be delimited as:

**I. The romantic stage of collection of songs for the sake of the emotional content of tradition on the psycho-physiological and historical line of the folklore fact's function, possibly to be placed in the first part of the last century. This stage constituted otherwise the basis of activity of Vinko Žganec's precursors.**

**II. The stage of necessity for collection and valorization through harmonization and composition, as yet methodologically undefined, the beginning of which may possibly be placed in the second period of the last century. The commencement of activity of some personalities also belongs**

to this period; for example Kuhač, who prepared for the following stages, and those who passed on towards future stages.

**III. The stage of forming the first theoretical and methodological determinants**, corresponding to the period between the end of the last century and the second and third decades of the XX-th century, represented by personalities such as: Franjo Kuhač<sup>1</sup>, Miodrag Vasiljević<sup>2</sup>, Dumitru Chiriac<sup>3</sup>, Béla Bartók<sup>4</sup>, Constantin Brăiloiu<sup>5</sup>, George Breazu<sup>6</sup>, etc.

In this stage also, Vinko Žganec made an important contribution to the continuing of precursors' research on the way to a more thorough knowledge of musical folklore.<sup>7</sup>

**IV. The stage of affirmation of methodology and study with the perfecting of morphological analyses**, by which research from the preceding stage was understood to contribute strongly to the continuation of ethnomusicology as an independent discipline, a stage in which Vinko Žganec again made an important contribution.

**V. The stage of considering ethnomusicology as a key-science of several sciences**, a stage which became specific beginning with the seventh decade of our century.

This stage appeared as the result of inter- and intradisciplinary investigation and enjoyed contribution from famous researchers such as John Blacking<sup>8</sup>.

**VI. The stage of inter- and intradisciplinary research<sup>9</sup>.**

**VII. The stage of computerization and experiments in cybernetic valorization.**

1.1. The ethnomusicological activity of Vinko Žganec appears predominant and, at the same time, representative for the periods II, III and IV, naturally paving the way for the following stages. In the same way as the contemporary stage of the ethnomusicological discipline, it comprised equally the aspects of the pedagogical, musicological, comparative, and the creative. For each of them, Vinko Žganec's

<sup>1</sup> Franjo Kuhač, "Prilog za poviest glasbe južnoslovenske", *Rad JAZU*, knj. 38, Zagreb, 1877, 1-78.

<sup>2</sup> Miodrag A. Vasiljević, *Narodne melodije leskovačkog kraja*, Beograd 1960.

<sup>3</sup> Ghizela Suljčeanu, "Cu prilejul aparitiei volumului 'D.G.Kiriac' - Cîntecele populare românești" - *Revista de Folclor*, București, tom VI, nr. 3-4, 1961.

<sup>4</sup> Béla Bartók, *Cînteca populare românești din Comitatul Bihor*, Academia Română, Sedința dela 13 maiu, 1911. Din vicața poporului Român. Culegeri și Studii, București, 1913.

<sup>5</sup> Constantin Brăiloiu, *Opere vol. I-VI*, Edit. Muzicală, București, Și Emilia Comișel, *Aportul lui Constantin Brăiloiu la dezvoltarea folcloristicii muzicale românești* - *Revista de Etnografie și Folclor*, tom XIV, Buc. 1966.

<sup>6</sup> George Breazu, *Patrium Carmen*, Contribuții la studiul muzicii românești. Edit. Scrisul Românesc, Craiova, 1941.

<sup>7</sup> Jerko Bezić, "Etnomuzikološki rad akademika Vinka Žganca", in *Narodno stvaralaštvo - folklor*, god. VII, nr. 25, January 1968, p. 1-10.

<sup>8</sup> John Blacking, *How Musical is Man?* Faber and Limited, London, 1976.

<sup>9</sup> Ghizela Suljčeanu, *Cercetările inter-și intradisciplinare în etnomuzicologie*.

works constituted and continue to represent a source of richness and originality in treatment of the discipline.

1.2. On the other hand, the experiment confronting the activity of Vinko Žganec with that of similar researchers of other peoples, as well as considering the ethnomusicological stages to which they belong, leads us towards the reenforcement of features so inter-related that it indicates their belonging to a discipline already precisely outlined on the way to independence.

1.3. A contemporary of researchers such as the Russian, Viktor Beliaev and the Romanians Sabin Dragoi, Ion Ursu, Constantin Brăiloiu and George Breazul, the Bulgarian Vasile Stoin<sup>10</sup> etc., Vinko Žganec appears to us to be representative for the situation in the ethnomusicology of this part of Europe. The path of his activity marks the passing from beginnings dominated by musicology and composition, towards greater emphasis on the function of the folklore phenomenon and that of the holding human factor.

2. The contribution of Vinko Žganec's activity to the creation of the Croatian Ethnomusicology School and, implicitly, to the development of the Yugoslavian one, appears embodied by a series of characteristics such as: a) the attention given to collecting among several of the Yugoslavian peoples; b) the special importance given to morphological musical analysis as evidence of some characteristic; c) the modality of stylistical dealing through harmonization; d) active participation in the Union of the Folklorists Societies of Yugoslavia (SUFJ) and IFMC meetings, and e) the widening of study horizons towards knowledge of old Orthodox music of Byzantine facture, as well as towards ethnography. The modality of dealing with these preoccupations indicates his interest in completing data obtained by precursors, utilizing the great Kuhač especially as the model.

2.1. In the ethnomusicological conception of Vinko Žganec, this appears to us to represent the crossroads between the enthusiastic stage of collecting of musical folklore, and the move towards the following stages, with accent on stages III and IV. In this way, his interest is demonstrated in not only knowledge of Croatian folklore, but also folklore of other peoples he felt pulsating around him. So he was also preoccupied in gathering the Romanian, Serbian, Ukrainian and Hungarian folklore of Vojvodina, where he lived between 1927 and 1941. This material constitutes nowadays a precious document not only as regards the existence of these peoples in Vojvodina, but especially as a testimony of their spiritual relationship with the great mass of the respective peoples. He could see a similar situation among Croats who lived outside Croatia, as for example those of Austria or Hungary<sup>11</sup>.

2.2. The importance which Vinko Žganec attached to knowledge of the morphology of popular music, appears materialized by the taking into consideration in the first line - as did his precursors Franjo Kuhač and Bela Bartok- of the sonorous, and of form substratum.

<sup>10</sup> All these appear as belonging to the same period from the ethnomusicological evolution in the framework of the respective peoples' ethnomusicology.

<sup>11</sup> Dr. Vinko Žganec, *Hrvatska pučke pobjevke iz Zeline i okolice*, Zelina, 1979, p. 289.

Utilization, according to the theory of Ilmar Krohm and Bela Bartok, of the *sol* Finale - theory subsequently shaken by the reality of the complex existence of musical folklore -, appears also in notation by Vinko Žganec, with a wider opening. So, it can often be found in the quality of second or even third degree, as if obliging the directing of comparative considerations towards a reconsidering of the theory of reference to an unique finale (See music examples No. 1-2, attached to this paper).

2.3. On the other hand, the presence in his collections of Croatian and Serbian folklore, of the finale on the second degree, to which one attributes the virtual dependence on a certain third degree, leads us towards one of the most interesting morphological peculiarities in ancient South-East European musical structure. So, if the attribution of the quality of second degree appears most of time in the relatively newer European context<sup>12</sup>, at the moment of polyphonic execution on a harmonique interpretation, in exchange it seems to have its origin in a musical sonorous stratum of premodal tri-tonic and tetra-tonic nature, where the degrees hold a gravity equal to the attraction - in a newer evolutionary stage - towards the quality of finale in the respective musical type. Here also Vinko Žganec felt the necessity - as did other researchers of musical folklore - to place a harmonical interpretation specific to popular melos, where the norms should follow the native way of its development. Taking the songs from the booklets "*Sto hrvatskih narodnih pjesama*"<sup>13</sup>, this is where we find a predominantly harmonical interpretation, along with the arrangement for piano; in the other works, Vinko Žganec tries to keep the popular style through its adequate solutions.

2.4. A special place is also occupied by mention of style of execution, according to case, antiphonal or polyphonic harmonic nature.

If antiphony appears to be mentioned sufficiently, the modality of harmonic treatment is present under the form of direct connection with popular interpretation of the sonorous systems under two main aspects: the aspect of preference for the execution on two voices with the development at intervals of thirds and sometimes of fifths (Mus. ex. 3), and the monophonic aspect where the finale is also usually on the second degree.

The harmonical accompaniment is presented as a latent possibility always ready to materialize in two voices, as in the first aspect, and with the liberty to finish on the first, second or third degrees (Mus. ex. 4).

In this also, Vinko Žganec shows himself as an exponent of his time, but permit us to observe, that in face of the monophonic style, the singing of several voices in the contemporary form among the Croats, indicates a more evoluated stratum as compared with the monovocal one. This results from the confronting of

<sup>12</sup> At the same time with the utilizing by European composers of the criteria of Occidental theory and in harmonization of the popular song, a phenomenon which occurred relatively later, seeming to have started in the first half of the XIX century, was strongly influenced by the choral practice of songs created in popular style.

<sup>13</sup> *Sto hrvatskih narodnih pjesama*, publication of "Sklad", Zagreb, V. Žganec made arrangements of 6 songs in the second booklet (1940), of 8 songs in the third booklet [s. a.], and of 7 songs in the fourth booklet [s. a.]

some monophonic variants found in the collections of Kuhač, with variants of Vinko Žganec which he harmonized.<sup>14</sup>

2.5. As for the modality of noting the morphology of text, similarly to his generation of researchers, he adheres to mentioning the syllable number on the extent of a verse, corresponding in its turn to the musical sentences of the form, a system planned by Béla Bartók and adopted by Vinko Žganec, as did Miodrag Vasiliević - for Serbian musical folklore - referring at the time to the versification specific to Croatian folklore, evidenced by metrico-rhythmical peculiarities.<sup>15</sup>

2.6. The special interest which Vinko Žganec had for the collections of his precursors, especially those of Franjo Kuhač, is also reflected in relatively rich reference to this in almost all his publications. On the other hand, the procedure of classification of Croatian folklore material according to literary thematic criteria as is mentioned in his work on the Croatian folklore collecting in the Zelina Area from 1946,<sup>16</sup> indicates his tendency towards theoretical and methodological considerations, which would constitute the preoccupations of the Institut za narodnu umjetnost.

2.7. Another important feature of his activity as a musicologist with implications in ethnomusicology, constituted his preoccupation with the old glagolitic church chant and its relationship with the secular folk songs.<sup>17</sup> This is evidenced by the religious fund of Byzantine structure, prior to the influences of the Catholic Church, which was able to maintain itself until the present day both due to its relationship with musical popular stock, and the softer stance of the Catholic Church regarding Customs in this part of Europe.

2.8. It also appears to be in keeping with his era that he paid attention to ethnography, through descriptions of the functions of different examples which complete the rendering of music customs.

We deal here with the broadening of ethnomusicology towards that which would later become a necessity in interdisciplinary research. Moreover, the inclusion of ethnography provided both a richer area for comparative study, and added to ethnography itself; and ethnomusicology discovered a valuable attestation to the spiritual life of the people or peoples involved.

2.9. Among the valuable contributions made by the contemporary ethnomusicological activity of Vinko Žganec, we also wish to mention his active participation in meetings of the Savez udruženja folklorista Jugoslavije, as well as to various congresses of the International Folk Music Council, including that held in Bucharest, in 1958.

<sup>14</sup> Dr. Vinko Žganec, *Pučke popijevke iz Medimurja*, Zagreb, 1916. Sabrao, harmonizovao i izdao.

<sup>15</sup> Vinko Žganec, "Muzički folklor naroda u panonskom bazenu", *Rad kongresa folklorista Jugoslavije u Varaždinu 1957*, Zagreb 1959, 71-76. - and - "Metrika i ritmika u versifikaciji narodnog desetorca", *Narodna umjetnost*, knj. 2, Zagreb 1963, 3-37.

<sup>16</sup> Vinko Žganec, *Hrvatske pučke popijevke iz Zeline i okolice*, chapter "O terenskom sakupljanju glazbenog folkloru u Zelini" (p. 257-259).

<sup>17</sup> Vinko Žganec, "Odnos glagoljaškog crkvenog i svjetovnog narodnog pjevanja u kvamerskom području". *Rad XVII Kongresa Saveza udruženja folklorista Jugoslavije*, Poreč 1970, Zagreb 1972, p. 93-98.

I had the occasion to make his acquaintance in Celje in 1965, where I met the Russian musicologist Viktor Mihailovič Beliaev, then in Jajce, in 1968.<sup>18</sup> Knowing the other personalities of Yugoslavian ethnomusicology of his generation, for example, Academician Prof. Dr. Cvjetko Rihtman of Sarajevo, I realised - even without knowing the details - that I was dealing with one of the promoters of Yugoslavian ethnomusicology. Subsequently, consulting Vinko Žganec's works and especially knowing closely the activity of the Zagreb ethnomusicological center, with the school headed by Prof. Dr. Jerko Bezić, I could see that the present advanced stage of research work, represented a stage on the path to a real school of ethnomusicology; with its roots in the achievements of Vinko Žganec.

3. Allow us also to utilize the present paper for touching on one of the problems which has preoccupied us for a quite some time.

After consulting the created material, I could envisage a certain relationship in musical folklore with one of the contemporary characteristics of musical folklore stock from Central and South-East Europe. This appears in the proceeding of execution in two voices in which we frequently find the accompaniment on the third.

The presence of this phenomenon in the greater part of Europe, including the Southern half of Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Eastern and Southern Italy, among the Czechs and Mediterranean Greeks, and, as regards Yugoslavia, in Croatia, along the Dalmatian Coast, and partially in Serbia and in the other republics, caused us the to endeavour to explain it.

3.1. In the contents of the present paper we have referred to an antique fund and to polyphonic execution. This could have subsequently generated the present stage of evolution in group singing in the category of everyday songs, in which inflexions of composition harmony are felt.<sup>19</sup>

It seems that in the past in this part of Europe a polyphony of primary nature was used, traces of which still exist nowadays in certain folklore categories, such as funeral ceremonies and wedding songs. This can be observed experimentally comparing the different modalities of execution, modality where either traditional norms or those of scholastic harmony predominate.

3.2. Having in view that at this moment, we are dealing with a coexistence of several strata of development, we may also attribute one of them to the time when harmonization began more and more to make a place for itself in the people's conception. The habitude of singing with an ensemble, usually familial, or with friends, characteristic to the folklore of the peoples in question, could be influenced by the Sunday Church Choirs, as well as by various amateur choirs already organized as such.

<sup>18</sup> I had the pleasure to participate at an emotional moment on the anniversary of 60 years of folklore activity, at Jajce, when Acad. Prof. Dr. Vinko Žganec received the then latest issue of the review *Narodno stvaralaštvo folklor*, dedicated to this laborious activity. Op. cit.

<sup>19</sup> We attribute to the term of "composition" the action of musical creation according to written (literary) norms, in contrast with the term of creation of musical folklore of a spontaneous nature, traditional and implicitly oral.

3.3. In the morphological structure of each of these productions, one feels the original people's stock from which it springs. The notations and the compositic style found in the material collected or harmonized by Vinko Žganec confirm this.

4. Closing this review of an important part of Vinko Žganec's activity, we wish to accentuate both his representative place in ethnomusicology in the first part of the XX-th century, and the contemporary theoretical and methodological directions suggested by his conception of research.

Adopted by his Zagreb Ethnomusicology School, these can be summarized as follows:

- a) Constantly elaborated continuation of the analyses of morphological structures of text and music;
- b) Special importance given to the comparative method in its rich and varying aspects;
- c) Following systematization and classification of procedure through means of modern apparatus;
- d) Searching for principles and laws governing the musical folklore phenomenon;
- e) Preparing the field for inter - and intradisciplinary research;
- f) Utilizing the statistical method;
- g) Attention given to the socio-historical existence of the human factor holder of traditional music;
- h) Prospects of psychological (psychophysiological) interpretation;
- i) Completing collections from different demographic units in Croatia;
- j) Completing collections among Croats outside the frontiers of the country;
- k) The relationship between popular music and religious music;
- l) The relationship of folk' music with certain strata of music created according to literary norms.

Each of these points, which in reality contain the main features of ethnomusicology, can be adapted to the study of the musical folklore of any people in the world, and thus the activity of Vinko Žganec can contribute to opening wide for us the Gates of Knowledge.



Dr. Vinko Žganec  
Hrvatske pučke popijevke iz  
Zeline i okolice, Zelina, 1979.

pg. 103, ex. 75

### Ex. 1

AAB - 7,7,9

Ko-privica ma-le-na, ko-privica malena,  
ko-pri-vi-ca (du-šo) ma-le-na!

Ibid. pg. 66, ex. 53

### Ex. 2

I. ABAB - 8,7,8,7

Oj kršćani prelu-be-ni, čujte vi po treći krat,  
da se I-sus u Be-tle-mu po-ro-đil je za sve nas.  
Bog po-ži-vi ja-pi-cu, a Ma-ri-ja ma-mi-cu, tu  
naj bu Bog, de je-ste vi, tam naj bu Jezus kam pojdmo mi...

Ibid. pg. 104, ex. 76

### Ex. 3

*Lento, AB-8(9), 8(9)*

Ra-sla mi be-la ko-pri-va, ra-sla mi be-la ko-pri-va.

The diagram shows a sequence of notes: A, B, A, B, with arrows indicating the flow between them.

Ibid. pg 49, ex. 37

### Ex. 4

*Andante ABCD-8,4,8,4*

Sun-će-ce je na za-ho-du, zaj-ti mu je —, dje-voj-či-ca na po-ho-du, poj-ti joj je —.

The diagram shows a sequence of notes: A, B, A, B, with arrows indicating the flow between them.