

ACQUAINTANCE WITH CROATIAN ORAL SONGS OF MEDIMURJE BEFORE THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE RESEARCH ACTIVITIES OF DR. VINKO ŽGANEC

SUMMARY

Despite the fact that the beginnings of Žganec's ethnomusicological activities can be interpreted in the context of the times in which his formation as an intellectual took place, together with the context of certain somewhat delayed recidivism of romanticism active in the small North Croatian province - Medimurje - at the same time, a series of facts indicate that other assumptions - perhaps even polemic ones - existed which could have influenced Žganec's very early entry into ethnomusicological work.

When that Croatian folk songs of Medimurje are in question, present day research shows that traces of their being known can be noted very early on. As early as from the 16th century, various song-books and collections are found to contain songs which more or less certainly came into being in the region of Medimurje. The number of collectors of both texts and melodies increased during the 19th century, together with an increase in the number of collections in manuscript form of Croatian oral songs from Medimurje. From 1861, when Medimurje again came under the rule of Hungary, literary life in Medimurje - both due to language reform in Croatia, and increasing Hungarisation - suddenly began to wither away. When the periodical publications *Medimurje/Muraköz* and *Medimurski kalendar* (Medimurian Calendar) started to appear, despite their bias, they were unable - both because of their contributors and their readers - to detour around the Croatian oral poetry of Medimurje. From its first issue, *Medimurje/Muraköz* presented an abundance of stories, sayings and oral songs (part of this material also appearing in *Medimurski kalendar*). This can be seen in the 6th number of *Medimurje/Muraköz*.

Under the title *Medimurje*, Juraj Gerencer, a teacher from Nedelišće, published a song which we find given as Number 3 in Žganec's *Medimurje u svojim pjesmama* (Medimurje in Her Songs), while Florijan Andrašec published the first three stanzas of the song as the motto of his collection *Medimurske fljolicе* (Medimurian Violets). In number 40 in the 2nd year of publication of *Medimurje/Muraköz* one find *Pesem od Belusine* (Belusin's Song) from Donji Vidovec. At the end of the same song there is a note: "From the collection of Medimurian traditional songs of Anton Medimurac". The collection referred to has remained lost to the present day. In the 13th number of *Medimurje/Muraköz* in 1989, *Popevka od protuletja* (A Song of Spring), a song made up of 12 quatrains, was printed. It was signed by Duro Cirkvenčić from Benkovec (near Mala Subotica).

In his book *Hrvatske pučke pobjevke iz Medimurja* (Croatian Folk Songs from Medimurje) Vol. 1, Žganec gives 5 stanzas of this song under Number 462.

Interest in Croatian oral literature was even more intense when Ferencz Gönczi and József Margitai started writing articles in *MedimurjelMuraköz*. In 1889, in numbers 10, 15 and 17, József Margitai wrote an article *Muraközi horvát népdalok* (Medimurian Croatian Folk Songs). In his paper Margitai also published the songs *Zahman je žitek* (Life is All in Vain), *Lep nam je vrt ograjen* (Our Lovely Flower Garden is Fenced) and *Sejali smo bažulka* (We Have Sown Beans). In later annuals of the periodical, numerous Croatian folk songs appeared along with descriptions of folk customs. It is fair to say that besides Croatian writers and scholars, at the end of the 19th century, and Hungarian ethnographers and ethnomusicologists started to show interest in the Croatian folk songs of Medimurje.

Apart of that of Gönczi, the work of other authors was not known in science to the present day.