

# The *Sevdalinka* as Bosnian Intangible Cultural Heritage: Themes, Motifs, and Poetical Features

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This paper discusses interpretations, categorisations and inventories of the *sevdalinka*, an oral lyric tradition from Bosnia and one of the country's most important examples of intangible cultural heritage. The *sevdalinka* represents traditional oral lyric poetry, a celebrated form of love song, which came into existence in urban places in a broader region of the Balkans as a fusion of the existing lyrical forms and Islamic influences. The term *sevdalinka* for this kind of songs became widely accepted only at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Before that, this oral lyrical tradition was usually called *sevdalija*. Both terms, *sevdalinka* and *sevdalija*, have their roots in the Arabic word *sawdā* adopted as *sevdah* (meaning love, desire, longing) via Turkish into the languages of some Balkan peoples. In today's context, the *sevdalinka* is most often understood as a Bosnian (or more precisely, Bosniak) indigenous traditional love song. As an important part of the Bosnian intangible cultural heritage, ethnologists, ethnomusicologists, folklorists and other scholars have often used the *sevdalinka* as a source and medium through which to explore various social, historical and cultural traditions in Bosnia. This paper will first provide a historical summary of the records, inventories and research interests in this oral lyrical genre and then offer an overview of the categorisations of the *sevdalinka* in specialized encyclopaedias and literary theory. Finally, by analysing themes and motifs found in *sevdalinkas*, the paper will discuss a number of scholarly examples from manuscripts published in late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Key words: lyric poetry, love song, *sevdalinka*, motif, theme

It is probably safe to say that the most representative portion of Bosniak oral lyric poetry is made up of love songs. The first reliable information about them comes from the second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, and it refers to the poetic attempt of a young man from Klis named Adil, performed at the Split market. There is a recorded reference to him in the testimony of his contemporary, a writer of chronicles, the Duke of Split. Although the original lyrics of the song are not preserved, the entire context leads us to conclude that this was

a lyric form of a love song, which has been described as *sevdalinka* since the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Maglajlić 2006). Before the term *sevdalinka* became standard, this type of songs was also called *sevdalija*.<sup>1</sup> The latter term would later be used to describe an individual who lives in the spirit of the society in which this type of song was created and orally transmitted.

The first examples of literary theoretical classifications of this type of song, albeit very brief, were developed by literary historians Pavle Popović (Popović 1909) and Dragutin Prohaska (Prohaska 1911), whereas more complete encyclopedic descriptions would follow only decades later. In the 1930s the interest in the *sevdalinka* grew, culminating in a series of papers published in the period of 15 years before the beginning of World War II. The papers included Hamza Humo's *Sevdalinka na rubu dvaju društvenih sistema* (The sevdalinka on the Border of Two Social Systems) (Humo 1934) and Ahmed Muradbegović's *Sevdalinka, pesma feudalne gospode* (The sevdalinka, the Song of Feudal Lords) (Muradbegović 1940). During the same period, Bosnian traditional songs, and *sevdalinkas* in particular, started attracting a growing interest of foreign scholars – including the Czech melographer and ethnomusicologist Ludvík Kuba, the German Slavists Leopold Karl Goetz and Gerhard Gesemann, as well as the French publicist Rene Pelletier. After this period, the first translations of *sevdalinkas* into Czech, German and French appeared (Maglajlić 2011: 148).

Different collections of *sevdalinkas* compiled during the period of over a century made a notable contribution to the theoretical classification of this lyric song. The oldest classification appeared in the collection *Hercegovke i Bosanke. Sto najradije pjevanih ženskih pjesama* (Herzegovinian and Bosnian Women. One Hundred Female Sung Songs) (Zovko 1888), written and published in Sarajevo by Ivan Zovko, a teacher and a folklorist. The most recent one is entitled *Za gradom jabuka. 200 najljepših sevdalinki* (Apple Tree Above the City. 200 of the Most Beautiful Sevdalinkas) (Lovrenović 2004) written and published in Sarajevo by Ivan Lovrenović, an author and a publicist.

The period after World War II was marked by much more focused research of the *sevdalinka*. The cultural historian Alija Bejtić explored the historical identity of persons mentioned in some Sarajevo-based *sevdalinkas*, and he published the results in a detailed paper entitled *Prilozi proučavanju naših narodnih pjesama* (Contributions to the Research of our Folk Songs) (Bejtić 1953: 387). Bejtić provided an extensive account of the relation between the

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<sup>1</sup> Since both terms contain the Arabic word *sawdā* as their root, which traveled from Arabic to Turkish and then to some Balkan languages, where it was morphed into *sevdah*, and which Abdulah Škaljić (Škaljić 1966: 561) translated as *love, amorous longing* or *amorous ecstasy* in his dictionary, this wording's inevitable characteristic is its love context. Interestingly, the word *sevdalija* describing Bosniak love songs of folklore origin was used by Edhem Mulabdić and Safvet-beg Bašagić, as well as the Serbian poet Jovan Ilić in their writings.

song and reality, an issue which was first raised in scholarly literature as early as the 1870s. The literary historian and folklorist Munib Maglajlić later addressed the same issue on numerous occasions.

The first comprehensive theoretical description of the *sevdalinka* in general was offered by Muhsin Rizvić in his paper *Ogled o sevdalinci* (An Essay on the Sevdalinka) (Rizvić 1963), which started the analysis of the lyric structure of the love song with an analysis of the word *sevdah*. Describing the melancholic state of mind of the singer or listener enjoying the *sevdalinka*, Rizvić used a poignant essayistic style to emphasize some important characteristics which helped the subsequent scholars to develop more theoretically-oriented explanations:

The sevdalinka, therefore, is not just a song about love, it is a song about sevdah. Its specifics and essence are immanent therein. It is a song of Slavic-Oriental emotional impregnation and merging: Oriental, because of the intensity of the passion, the power of and the potential for sensuality contained in it, and Slavic because of the dreamy, inconsolable and painful sensibility, the breadth of its spirituality. (Rizvić 1963: 455)

The only one to examine the issue of the function of figures of speech in the oral transmission of the *sevdalinka* in detail was the German Slavist Wolfgang Eschker in his doctoral dissertation which was defended in Munich in 1969 and published in the same city in 1971 (Eschker 1971). A theoretical definition of the *sevdalinka* also was provided by Hatidža Krnjević in the paper entitled *O poetskoj prirodi sevdalinke* (Krnjević 1976) (About the Poetic Nature of the Sevdalinka) which was published in Belgrade. Following Rizvić and Krnjević, the trend of exploring the *sevdalinka* in theoretical essays was continued by some other Bosnian-Herzegovinian authors, particularly the leading compilers of *sevdalinka* collections, Munib Maglajlić and Ivan Lovrenović.

Extensive and diverse literature, as well as a series of collections of *sevdalinki*s provided a good basis for their encyclopaedic treatment, which first appeared in Volume 5 of the *Opća enciklopedija* (General Encyclopaedia 1969) published by The Miroslav Krleža Institute of Lexicography in 1969. This was the first encyclopaedic treatment of the *sevdalinka*, albeit a very modest one:

Sevdalinka, love song. Bosnian-Herzegovinian sevdalinka is Muslim urban song; its origin should be sought in our oral song and Islamic-Oriental music. Rich coloration, luscious melodies, free rhythm and dynamic contrasts allow the beauty of the singer's voice and emotional intensity to come to the fore. Because of their sophisticated lyricism and beautiful melodies, many sevdalinki became popular outside the region of their origin. (*Opća enciklopedija* 1969: 689)

The *Sevdalinka* received well-deserved and appropriate attention in the first literature encyclopaedias in the Štokavian language area, which appeared in the 1970s and 1980s. The earliest encyclopaedia entry in this series was published in 1971 in the *Jugoslovenski književni leksikon* (Yugoslav Literature Encyclopaedia 1971) published in Novi Sad. It was written by the literary historian and theoretician Dragiša Živković (Živković 1971). Relying on the available earlier literature, Živković described the *sevdalinka* as a song form which spread and grew from a Bosnian-Herzegovinian to an authentic Balkan phenomenon. Like his predecessors, Živković assigned the origins of the *sevdalinka* to “the ruling Muslim circles (agas and beys) in cities (Sarajevo, Mostar, Banja Luka, Travnik)”. The central part of Živković’s note carries a brief, but remarkable historical and theoretical definition, which was the starting point for later scholars and literary critics in development of their own theories of the *sevdalinka*:

The *sevdalinka* is characterized by sensuality and a specific oriental love longing and desire which are expressed with the word “*sevdah*” (love ecstasy) after which this song was named, and even more – with the Turkish-Arabic expression “*karasevdah*” (black *sevdah*, dark *sevdah*, great love melancholy), which generally describes a deep, sensual-melancholic and sad sense of life. (Živković 1971: 479)

Nada Milošević-Đorđević provided her theoretical definition of the *sevdalinka* in the oral literature encyclopaedia from 1984, entitled *Narodna književnost* (Folk Literature 1984). She wrote, among other things:

*Sevdalinka* (Arabic *sawdā* = black bile). Muslim, urban, “folkloric” love song in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Sad, but also erotic, thematically linked to the confined spaces of the patriarchal society. Emotions are expressed indirectly, often as a need for relief of psychological pressure, as a confession. (Milošević-Đorđević 1984: 230)

The more general *Rečnik književnih termina* (Dictionary of Literature Terminology 1985) from 1985 – which was composed mainly by the leading experts in different literature fields of the former Yugoslavia contains a definition of the *sevdalinka* by Hatidža Krnjević. After general information on the origin of word *sevdah*, this definition focuses on the environment where the *sevdalinka* originated, and its poetic characteristics:

Lyric love song created in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in the urban Muslim environment, but on the basis of lyric oral poetry. The term *s.* is more recent (in use since the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century) than the form it describes...The essence of *s.* consists of a specific emotion of love as unhealable pain, black *sevdah* and

der, a passionate expression of unspeakable secret love bordering on despair. (Krnjević 1985: 715)

Finally, the most recent encyclopaedic definition is offered by Munib Maglajlić, and it is theoretically and historically comprehensive. After providing a review of the history of recording of and interest in the *sevdalinka*, an overview of the different collections as well as a critical review of the most important positions in the literature, Maglajlić offers his own summarized definition of the *sevdalinka*:

1. A folk love song created as an original musical-poetic traditional folkloric composition in the urban areas of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Sanjak of Novi Pazar which came about as a result of infiltration of the Oriental way of life and orally transmitted probably since mid-16<sup>th</sup> century. It was sung in unison or in vocal harmony, mainly as the so-called flat song, usually composed in decasyllable, less frequently in symmetric and asymmetric octosyllable or 13-syllable verse, or rarely in symmetric 12-syllable or 14-syllable verse, with abundant variations of exclamations and refrains as musical accessories, without clearly distinguished stanzas, with or without support of musical instruments [...] 2. Songs modelled after the *sevdalinka*. (Maglajlić 2011: 10)

In an attempt to provide an answer to the question what kind of phenomenon the *sevdalinka* is, Đenana Buturović states

It is an autonomous Bosniak Muslim lyrical poem – but is it just that? Strictly speaking in terms of genre, it is a lyrical poem established and developed in Bosnian cities starting from the late 15<sup>th</sup> century. By the 16<sup>th</sup> century, it had already started to flourish and it continues to do so until this day. (Buturović 2011: 45)

A more recent theoretical definition of the *sevdalinka* has been provided by Enver Kazaz, who begins his paper on the *sevdalinka* by emphasizing the problem of the ethnic nomination of this song and by opposing, in the spirit of the feminine, the subversive writing in the official poetry – not only in terms of its ethnic determination, but also in terms of the phallogocentric approaches to the interpretation of this type of poetry, which is specific for the wide area of the Balkans (Kazaz 2012a). However, regardless of the proposed title and the offered interpretation, the analyses are based on a single ballad, two family songs and a single wedding song. The text also omits the first encyclopaedic definition of the *sevdalinka* published in the already mentioned *Enciklopedija Jugoslavije*. In his subsequent paper, the author analyses a popular *sevdalinka* in which, depending on the singer, the name of the lyrical subject changes. It is Mejra or Mara, and the song usually starts with the

following lines: *Ali-paša na Hercegovini, / Lijepa Mara na Bišću bijaše...* (Ali-Pasha in Herzegovina/Beautiful Mara was in Bišće...). Kazaz believes that the most successful scholarly interpretation of this song is provided by Hanifa Kapidžić-Osmanagić, particularly in the section referring to the highly metaphysical meaning of *sevdah* – the psychological-metaphysical knot which is very similar to the one in the ballad about Hasanaginica (Kazaz 2012b).

Esad Bajtal offers a fresher interpretation of the *sevdalinka* as a love song of the urban environment in his book *Sevdalinka Alhemija duše* (Sevdalinka, the Alchemy of Soul), where he takes an essayistic approach to the analysis of lyrics. However, Bajtal's analyses include a number of songs which have known authors, but they lean on the traditional love song (Bajtal 2012).

Some papers dedicated to South Slavic poetry which combine theoretical and historical insights also contain valuable remarks on the poetic characteristics of the *sevdalinka*. While analysing the love components of oral lyrical poetry of the peoples who used to be connected by a similar language in the former Yugoslavia, Vido Latković notices a more significant connection of family and love songs with the social circumstances of the environment in which they were created as compared to other genres, such as ritual and customary songs: "Indeed, just like family songs, love songs as a rule are more susceptible to changes than ritual or customary songs" (Latković 1967: 196). Referring to the oral lyrical poetry of the peoples living in this part of the Balkans in general, Latković does not miss the opportunity to provide a brief definition of the *sevdalinka*:

Bosnian Muslim songs about love longing often have more spontaneity and sensuality than songs from other areas of patriarchal culture and coastal region... These songs sing about kisses, "ruffling hair" (Vuk, V, 308), about "embracing until dawn" (Vuk, V, 324). Although not all *sevdalinka* songs are so sensual, even though they often contain innocent naivety, we can still say that generally, the images described in them are juicier, and emotions expressed in them are more complex than in songs from the other regions. (Latković 1967: 200)

In the collection of lyrical poetry of the Yugoslav peoples entitled *Jugoslovenska narodna lirika* (Yugoslav Folk Lyric Poetry), Vladan Nedić remarks that love songs, more so than other lyrical forms, have lost many of their motifs in the course of time. Yet some examples have preserved the original medieval motifs such as the hawk flying over the city walls or a young woman at the city gate. In the foreword to the book, Nedić discusses folk love songs in the former Yugoslavia in general, but he does not explicitly mention the *sevdalinka* which is represented in the collection with several examples. However, he connects it in the lyrical review to something which is most rep-

representative for the repertoire of “Bosnian-Herzegovinian singer” as opposed to the coastal, Macedonian or Slavonic singers:

The lyricist of patriarchal regions is smitten by the long dark eyelashes of a young woman; even more so by her modesty. The singer from the coastal region wonders if she was born by an orange, the Macedonian singer wonders if she was gilded by a goldsmith. The Slavonian lyricist seeks a comparison for the colour of her lips. The Bosnian-Herzegovinian singer praises, in wonderful hyperbole, the young woman who set the city on fire with the spark in her eye – *Ej, čarnim okom kroz srčali-pendžer*. (With her beautiful eye, though a glass-paned window). (Nedić 1977: 22–23)

Jovan Deretić pays significant attention to folk love songs in his *Istorija srpske književnosti* (History of Serbian Literature). Besides the claim that most lyrical folk songs sing about love, Deretić notes that love poetry which has reached us, except for some rare examples, does not show signs of great age. Commenting on the different characteristics of folk love songs in different regions, Deretić briefly mentions the *sevdalinka* as well:

This sensual love song expressing love-longing is characteristic for eastern and south-eastern Serbia. A specific form of love song containing many Oriental elements, the *sevdalinka* developed in Bosnia, especially in the Muslim areas. *Sevdalinks* spread outside Muslim areas as well. (Deretić 2007 [1983]: 332)

## **THEMES, MOTIFS AND POETIC FEATURES OF SEVDALINKA LOVE SONGS**

The presented overview of the theoretical definitions leads to the conclusion that the *sevdalinka* covers most of the content of different lyrical oral love songs of the Bosniaks. A vast number of recorded examples shows without a doubt that the scope of themes and motives in the *sevdalinka* is very wide, and the *sevdalinka* is equally dedicated to love joy, love pain, exciting meetings and painful farewells – in endless variations, which is characteristic of love songs in general throughout the world. Although the focus is on the expression of emotions, we sometimes also find surprisingly detailed descriptions of the beloved one, such as in the following example of a young woman’s description of the young man she longs for from the manuscript collection edited by Ivan Zovko:

*Pleća su mu, kano u pejika, / Ruke su mu kano u berbera, / Brci su mu dva kančela zlatna, / B’jeli zubi, dva niza bisera, / Biser usta, šećerna kutija, / Perčin mu je tura ibrišima, / Dvije oči, dvije trnjine, / Obrvice s mora pijavice.*

His chest like a rooster's, / His hands like barber's, / His moustache like to golden coils, / His teeth two strings of pearls, / Pearly mouth, a sugar box, / Hair like a piece of silk, / Two eyes, two little blackthorn berries, / Eyebrows whirlwinds from the sea.<sup>2</sup>

In another example of modification of the same lyrical theme, the young woman is infatuated by the looks and knightly posture of the often mentioned Ali-bey, who is compared to the shiniest object which the unknown author, or a series of authors throughout generations, saw in their environment: the glow of starts and silver, the shine of the sabre.<sup>3</sup>

Sometimes an unusual or special appearance or skill of a young man that sets him apart from others is sufficient to cause admiration for him, even if these characteristics are not the typical characteristics of chivalry which invoke virility. It may simply be something like the ability to play an instrument, which gives a talented and skilful young man the opportunity to bring young women into a state of infatuation:

*U ruci mu sedefli šargija, / A u drugoj sajvat i nargila, / A ja mlada gledam sa pendžera, / Na njemu mi oči ostadoše, / Pa ja stadoh kano ukopana.*

In his hand a šargija<sup>4</sup> made of mother of pearl, / In the other hand a coffee cup and hookah, / And I, a young woman, watching him from the window, / My eyes set on him, / And I stand like petrified.<sup>5</sup>

In another example the young woman – wishing to express the superiority of the young man's appearance which has completely captivated her heart and mind – places her beloved in alleys lit by moonlight, where he strolls with his friends just like a vizier surrounded by his dignitaries.<sup>6</sup> An even more distinct image of a young knight whose appearance takes the chosen young woman into flying ecstasy is described in the lyrics of the *sevdalinka* from Stolac entitled *Poljem se vija Hajdar delija* (Brave Hajdar Runs Across the Field)<sup>7</sup> in which the young woman sends a message to the young man from the gates of the fortress saying that his appearance and attitude lift

<sup>2</sup> *Komšinicе, boli me srdašce*, Rukopisna zbirka Ivana Zovke (*Neighbor, My Heart Aches*, Manuscript Collection of Ivan Zovko) (1893) – *Tisuću narodnih ženskih pjesama* – M. H. 24. sv. III, pjesma br. 173 (A Thousand Female Folk Songs – M. H. 24. Vol. III, song No. 173).

<sup>3</sup> *Beg Ali-beg ata jaše*, Smajl O. Bradarić, Ms 38 (*Lord Ali-Bey Rides a Horse*) – *Narodne umotvorine (iz Dervente i okolice većinom)* (Folk Art –from Derventa and Surrounding Area Mostly) – FAZM, Rukopisna zbirka Odjeljenja za Etnologiju, sv. V (I-V), pjesma br. 206. (Folklore Archives of National Museum, Manuscript Collection of Ethnology Department, Vol. V (I-V), song No. 206).

<sup>4</sup> Šargija is a plucked string instrument similar to the Turkish saz.

<sup>5</sup> *Mimo dvor mi mlado momče prođe* (A Young Man Passed by my House), Zovko, Vol. IV, No. 28.

<sup>6</sup> *Obasjala sjajna mjesčina* (Bright Moonlight is Shining), *ibid.*, No. 173, p. 78.

<sup>7</sup> *Poljem se vija Hajdar delija* (Brave Hajdar Runs Across the Field), *ibid.*, No. 781, p.176.



her spirits, and he concisely responds in a couplet which sums up his even greater infatuation with the young woman:

*Ajko djevojko, i kose tvoje, / Tvoje me kose po polju nose!*

Ajka, girl, you and your hair, / Your hair is taking me across the field!

Songs depicting beauty and desirable behaviour of a young man are balanced out by songs depicting the same characteristics in a young woman, such as the *sevdalinka* originating from Sarajevo describing the beautiful maiden Mulija, a member of the famous Dženetić family, whose beauty is compared with the beauty of a tulip flower, one of the favourite garden flowers described in this love song. Praise for the beauty of this young woman from the Sarajevo-based Dženetić family is expressed through the competition of three opponents whose names are known. One of them – Avdaga Bakarević – is deeply in love with the very name of the young woman:

*Ko je tebi tako ime nadio, / Handžar mu se u srdašce zadio!*

Who gave you such name, / May a knife pierce his heart!<sup>8</sup>

In another example of the same thematic direction, two honourable suitors are enquiring about a young woman of noble origin after they heard only good things about her. In an extraordinary personification by the unknown poet, young men are talking to a messenger pigeon, checking the rumours about Umihana's nobility:

*Nosi l' ona mrki fesić nad očim' / Nosi l' ona od džanfeza dimije, / Nosi l' ona ha-  
zna kolan od zlata, / Nosi l' ona od hakika nanule, / Je li ona k'o što ono kazuju.*

Does she wear a dark cap above her eyes, / Does she wear silken harem trousers, / Does she wear a precious golden necklace, / Does she wear slippers made of agate stone, / Is she what people say she is.<sup>9</sup>

Since young women described in this way always became a growing challenge for young men, male imagination increasingly spun around them, as well as rivalry among the most handsome young men who competed for the affection of the young woman described in the song.

Very often, mothers are also involved in shaping the oral myth about the beauty of a young woman. In order to achieve their goal, they keep their daughters in the secrecy of their homes, far away from curious eyes, respect-

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<sup>8</sup> *Kolika je Dženetića avlija*, *ibid.*, No. 988, p. 212.

<sup>9</sup> *Polećela dva bijela goluba*, *ibid.*, No. 182, p. 813.

ing the social norm expressed in the phrase describing a desirable bride who is “as if she grew up in a birdcage”. Such treatment could not be pleasant for young women. In one of the songs, a lonely maiden confides in a bird on a tree branch that she cannot meet anyone else in her isolation:

*Mene majka u kafezu drži, / Da ne vidim sunca ni mjeseca, / Nit' bijela danka,  
nit' junaka.*

My mother keeps me in a cage, / So I may not see the sun or the moon, / No  
bright day, nor a hero.<sup>10</sup>

Traditionally, there are only a few recorded examples of young women addressing young men first. On such occasions, a young woman is seeking a way to draw the attention of the young man, but without jeopardizing her own dignity. The task set before the young woman is not always a simple one, especially if she is facing the young man's obvious indifference. In one of the examples, the young woman sees the young man she longs for, who is getting ready either for a wedding or for the battlefield. Faced with the lack of interest for her on his part, she jokingly pleads with him:

*Moj se dragi po avliji šeta, / U čizmama i u kalčinama; / Da bih rekla da će po  
djevojku, / U njega je na blizu djevojka, / Njega sa mnom samo perda d'jeli, / Da  
bih rekla da ide u vojsku, / Nema sada nigdje vojevanja.*

My darling is strolling in the courtyard, / Wearing socks and boots, / So I may  
think he is going to get his bride, / But his bride is nearby, / Only a curtain  
separates him from me, / Or so I may think he is going to battle, / But there  
are no battles now.<sup>11</sup>

A stunning young woman sometimes has to make the first move after all and send a direct message to the young man she longs for. In the song *Banjaluko i ravnine tvoje* (Banja Luka, You and Your Valleys)<sup>12</sup> a young woman uses a trick to draw the attention of the young man she fell in love with, claiming that she allegedly found his lost embroidered kerchief and ducats. When her manoeuvre proves to be effective, i.e. when the young man falls for it, she responds in a dominant and humorous way, openly indicating how she wants the episode to end:

*Srce, dušo, Pr'jedor kapetane, / Jagluk ću ti u ruhu don'jeti, / A dukate pod bi-  
jelim vratom!*

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<sup>10</sup> *Bumbul pjeva u ruži rumenoj* (A Nightingale Sings on a Red Rose), *ibid.*, No. 107, p. 346.

<sup>11</sup> *Jutros rano na vodicu pogjoh* (I Went to Fetch Water Early This Morning), Zovko, I, No. 69.

<sup>12</sup> *Banjaluko i ravnine tvoje* (Banja Luka, You and Your Valleys), *ibid.*, No. 9.

Darling, sweetheart, Captain of Prijedor, / I will bring the kerchief with my dowry, / And ducats on a string tied to my neck!

Unlike young women, young men are more relaxed when expressing their desires, because, according to tradition, they can behave with much more freedom at such occasions. Still, even young men are not always successful in their feats. In one of the songs, a worried suitor complains to the young woman because there are no opportunities for him to see her:

*Kuća ti je onkraj puta, / Na dan prođem po sto puta. / Što ja dušo više prođem,  
/ Tebe dragu rjeđe vidam!*

Your house is close to the road, / I walk by a hundred times a day, / The more often I walk by, / The more seldom do I see you, darling!<sup>13</sup>

Very often, the young man dearest to a young woman's heart is the one who is the closest, very often it is the next-door neighbour.<sup>14</sup> In some examples of daydreaming about a prospective groom, there are expressions of common sense and practicality, encouraging the young woman to choose a young man who is closer to everyday life rather than one who is closer to learning and books:

*Pisar ljubi kad se god probudi, / Ćullah ljubi, kad mu na um dođe.*

A scribe will kiss you whenever he wakes up, / A worker will kiss you whenever he feels like it.<sup>15</sup>

Contemplating the important, fateful question: Whom to marry? – a young woman comes to the subtle realization of different dimensions of this decision, whereby the most decisive factor should be undeniably requited affection:

*I onu bih četvericu dala, / Za onoga jedinog u majke, / I onog bih jedinoga dala,  
/ Za onoga kojemu sam draga.*

I would exchange all four of them, / For the one who is his mother's only child, / But I would exchange that one, / For the one who loves me.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> *Karanfilu, sitno sjeme*, (Carnation's Tiny Seeds), Ludvík Kuba (1984).

<sup>14</sup> *Sve jezero, sve zeleno* (Entire Lake Entirely Green), Zovko, Vol. III, No. 242.

<sup>15</sup> *Nije moje lice za ćullaha* (My Face is not For a Skull Cap), Zovko, Vol. IV, No. 17.

<sup>16</sup> *Da sam paša čudna zulumčara* (If I Was a Pasha of a Strange Tyrant), *ibid.*, Vol. I, No. 98.

If the young woman is not clear about her feelings or if nobody has appeared in her life who stole her heart, she will reluctantly accept what is offered to her. But if there is somebody she cannot forget, the young woman will have difficulties in making new friendships. However, the situation is especially difficult when the young woman does not share the affection a young man has towards her, while at the same time her affection for another young man remains unrequited. The following verses depict such a situation:

*Vazdan tuži drvlju i kamenju, / Mrkom vuku i morskom hajduku; / Kad akšamu, mraku i oblaku, / Kad jaciji, sjajnoj mjesečini, / Kad zorici, studenoj vodici: / Nek i voda moje jade znade, / Drag me neće, a nedrag me hoće.*

She complains all day long to the trees and rocks, / To the dark wolf and the sea pirate, / Sometimes to the sunset, darkness and cloud, / Sometimes to the night, the shiny moonlight, / Sometimes to the dawn, or cool water / Let the water know about my troubles too, / The beloved one does not want me, and the unloved one wants me.<sup>17</sup>

In another example, the young woman's heart is taken by a student, so compared to him, all other young men become less important; moreover, the young woman is convinced that she will be pampered and respected in the best possible way in marriage with the student, not just by her husband but also by her social environment.<sup>18</sup> In other examples, the young woman fantasizes about marrying a man of high social status and influence, because she expects that in this way, she would secure a high status and an easy and pleasant life for herself:

*Da Bog dade da mi bude vezir, / Da veziru posjedim na krilu, / Pa da budem vezirovo zlato!*

May God give me a vizier, / So that I may sit in the vizier's lap, / And be the vizier's darling!<sup>19</sup>

Prevailing opinion expressed in Bosniak love lyric is that only black eyes possess hawk-like clarity, which makes them superior, but there are also examples of rare situations when a young man or a young woman is infatuated by blue eyes. In one song, a young woman wonders how it is possible that something outside the prevailing norm is happening to her:

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<sup>17</sup> *Vazdan tuži lijepa djevojka* (A Beautiful Girl Complains All Day Long), *ibid.*, Vol. IV, No. 120.

<sup>18</sup> *Ječam jesam, a karišik n'jesam* (I Am Barley But I Am Not a Mongrel), *ibid.*, No. 134.

<sup>19</sup> *Sretna li mi godinica dođe* (What a Happy Year I've Had), *ibid.*, Vol. II, No. 76.

*Crne oči svakome su drage, / Meni mladoj omilile plave, / Jer su plave u dragoga moga.*

Everybody loves black eyes, / But I like blue ones, / Because my sweetheart has blue eyes.<sup>20</sup>

In a similar example, a young man falls in love with a blue-eyed young woman, but since he feels obliged to eliminate the prejudice against blue-eyed young women, he comes up with a possible solution described in following verses:

*Draga će surmu kupiti, / Draga će surmu podvući, / Dragoj će surma ujisat', / Dragi će dragu sevdisat'!*

My sweetheart will buy kohl, / She will apply kohl, / The kohl will suit her, / The boy will love his sweetheart!<sup>21</sup>

The power of the “beautiful eye” has become almost mythical, and exaggeration about the extent of passion they can cause in the hearts of lovers, or about what kind of commotion they can stir up in general is the theme of many love songs. In a famous *sevdalinka*, a young woman from Travnik sets the city on fire “with her black eye through a glass-paned window”,<sup>22</sup> and in another *sevdalinka* a young woman from Derвента seduces the entire neighbourhood with her hawk-like eyes;<sup>23</sup> A young woman from Mostar is beloved by the entire Mostar because of her eyes, and “beloved the most by Alajbeg”.<sup>24</sup> In another example, a black-eyed young woman is admonished because she caused utter chaos:

*Sve si momke do jednoga, / Svojim licem primamila, / A divojke rasrdila, / Crnim okom i pogledom!*

All the boys to the very last one, / You enticed with your face, / And you made all the girls furious, / With your black eyes and your gaze!<sup>25</sup>

When it comes to the expression of unbridled sensuality, it is more prevalent in the male perspective, i.e. in the songs which can be described as presenting a “male voice”, but there are also examples of young women very openly

<sup>20</sup> *A moj dragi, moj biserli cvitu* (Oh My Darling, My Pearly Flower), Muharem Kurtagić – *Muslimanske narodne pjesme, ženske* (Muslim Folk Songs, Female) – M. H., Vol. VI, No. 127.

<sup>21</sup> *U gori ruža procvala* (A Rose Blooms in the Mountain), Zovko, Vol. II, No. 31.

<sup>22</sup> *Što se ono Travnik zapalio* (Why Is Travnik on Fire), Stevo K. Kukić, Ms 102 – *Narodne pjesme iz Bosne* (Folk Songs from Bosnia) – FAZM, Manuscript Collection of Ethnology Department, No 40.

<sup>23</sup> *U divojke oči sokolove* (Girl Has Hawk's Eyes), Bradarić, Vol. V, No. 261.

<sup>24</sup> *Što s' na Mostar sinja magla svila* (Why is Mostar Covered By Dark Fog), Zovko, Vol. II, No. 38.

<sup>25</sup> *O djevojko karakašli* (Oh Girl with Dark Eyebrows), *ibid.*, Vol. II, No. 25.

singing about their desires. Still, open expression often follows a subtle gradation. In the verses of the song *Uzor' mi dragi ravnine* (Sweetheart, Plow My Fields),<sup>26</sup> a young woman tells a young man that her heart belongs to him, no matter what he does:

*Te posij dragi, jadove, / Ako ti nikne šenica, / Šenuću, dragi, za tobom, / Ako ti nikne miloduh, / Miluj me, dragi, tvoja sam.*

Darling, sow your grief, / If wheat springs up, / Darling, I will go crazy for you,  
/ And if you hyssop springs up, / Caress me darling, I am yours.

Since the society which gave birth to the *sevdalinka* considered shyness a virtue, there are only a few recorded instances where young women openly speak about their desires. Such songs were composed in solitude, in all-female gatherings, over silent work, embroidery or cradle; in any case far away from male audience. As a rule, young women rarely confided in anybody, and if they did, they carefully selected the listener. Because of experience and wisdom that comes with age, as well as closeness to their daughters, it is understandable that mothers were the first who could work out the secrets of their daughters' hearts. However, just like with anything else, exaggerated shyness can be fatal for the happiness of a young woman, as described in the song *Tri su vile kroz goru letile* (Three Fairies Flew across the Mountain). This belief makes the theme of the song. While two sisters were able to get what they wanted by openly showing their affection and openly expressing their desire, the third sister, who was the shy one, had to accept the young man that remained.<sup>27</sup>

Besides shyness, pride can also be the cause for severe love pain. Very often, young women would be very reserved in expressing their affection for young men because of pride. The consequences of this would often be dramatic. Very often a choosy young woman who had the most suitors would remain unmarried in the end. The most evident testimony of this unpleasant development is provided in the *sevdalinka* *Kolika je šehar Banja Luka* (How Big is the City of Banja Luka).<sup>28</sup> A heroine in the novel with basically the same lyric theme, Avdaga's daughter Fata from Velji Lug near Višegrad, is the tragic character in Ivo Andrić's novel *The Bridge over the Drina*. In this novel, Andrić provides interesting observations about the origins of songs such as the Višegrad's *sevdalinka* about the beautiful but unhappy Avdaga's Fata.

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<sup>26</sup> *Uzor' mi dragi ravnine* (Sweetheart, Plow My Fields), Bradarić, Vol. I, No. 169.

<sup>27</sup> *Tri su vile kroz goru letile* (Three Fairies Flew across the Mountain), Kurtagić, Vol. I, No. 50.

<sup>28</sup> *Kolika je šehar Banja Luka* (How Big is the City of Banja Luka), Bajraktarević, No. 8. This *sevdalinka* served Ivo Andrić well in reviving the memory of the historical figure of Avdaga's Fata from Velji Lug in his novel *The Bridge Over the Drina*. Her remarkable fate became part of collective memory through a song.

In folk songs, young women most frequently confide in their mothers, telling them about their love grief. In many examples, a young woman mourns her lost happiness, complaining about intrigues aimed against her. Sometimes she realizes that the cause for her grief is unrequited love, which was frequently the troublesome reality for both the poet and the song. In many songs, the young woman laments over her sweetheart unexpectedly marrying another woman. Affected by the undesired event, the young woman often comes to the conclusion that somebody slandered her in front of her beloved one. Often, the culprit was the young man's mother or brother.

One of the extremely frequent motifs in Bosniak oral poetry in general, including love poetry, is the motif of a young woman's curse which can be real and apparent or pretended. The form and the meaning of the curse can be different. In its primary meaning, the young woman puts a real curse on a young man who crossed her. In the alternate meaning, based on the principle of the opposite of what is expected, the form of the curse is used to strongly emphasize what is desired: may the young man be imprisoned in a dungeon – not a dark and damp one, but imprisoned in the young woman's embrace; may he be chained – not with iron chains but with hands of the beloved one; may he be thrown into shackles – not heavy steel shackles but shackled by the young woman's bracelets; may he be bitten – not by poisonous snakes but by the young woman's white teeth; may he be carried away by water – not to a faraway and dangerous place but to the young woman's home; may he be hanged – not on an evil tree but on his sweetheart's neck; may a gun shoot him – not with lead bullet but with the young woman's ducats...

Some of the most beautiful verses depicting a young woman's curse can be found in Vuk's collection of Bosnian songs in the song beginning with the verse *Djevojka je livadu gojila* (The Girl Grew a Grass Field).<sup>29</sup> In this example, the noble Mujo plucks flowers infatuated by a young woman's beauty, and she uses a curse to bring illness upon him, but in reality she wishes him a love encounter and seducing care:

*E da Bog da, ljepši bolovao! / Ja ti mlada ponude nosila: / Šećer s mora, smokve  
iz Mostara, / I janjeta prije premaljetja, / Zeljanice prije kukavice, / Karašlame  
u medu kuane...*

May God give you illness, / So that I can bring you gifts, / Sugar from the sea,  
figs from Mostar, / Lamb meat before spring, / Spinach pie before dawn, /  
Black cherries cooked in honey...

These love songs also preserve the memory of rare occasions when the cheated young man curses a young woman. The male curse is different than

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<sup>29</sup> *Djevojka je livadu gojila* (The Girl Grew a Grass Field), Karadžić, p. 119, No. 180.

the female: it speaks, almost without exception, about strong anger and desire for revenge. In one such song, the young man wishes a young woman the same painful suffering that he is experiencing:

*Ti si mene mlada prevarila, / Prevarila, u zlu ostavila, / Da Bog dao, zlo te sustignulo, / Kao što je mene sustignulo!*

You cheated on me, / Cheated and left me in an ill state, / May you encounter evil, / Such as I have encountered!<sup>30</sup>

Unpleasant developments between two lovers caused by a young man's departure are also depicted from the perspective of a witness to the young woman's grief. In many of the verses, the oral poet deals with this state. Similarly to the themes of some ballads, a lyric song describes the words of a young man who confides in his mother message in a message from the afterworld:

*Nije meni crna zemlja teška, / Nisu meni šimšir daske mračne, / Nisu meni zebanije strašne, / Već su teške divojačke kletve.*

Black soil is not heavy on me, / Boxwood planks are not dark, / Hell's guarding angels are not scary to me, / But girls' curses are difficult.<sup>31</sup>

Such verses influence the folk belief that the one who betrays a young woman will in the end meet her – and her family's – tears and curses spoken out in moments of heavy and painful anguish.

But young men also feared a young woman's betrayal or her possible infatuation with a stranger or an attractive marriage proposal for her. Therefore, a young man would, often secretly, inquire about the events at the young woman's home and about life of his sweetheart while he was away. In one example, a brave young man asks his hawk – his trusted companion on the battlefield and in the hunt and a dear friend at home in peacetime – about what the hawk could spy with its sharp eyes inside the beloved young woman's home, and about the way she treats the gifts he brought her from his journey:

*Nosi l' Fata od džamfeza dimije, / Nosi l' Fata od kadife jeleke, / Nosi l' Fata od sedefa papuče, / Ima l' Fata sad k'o dosad prosaca?*

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<sup>30</sup> *Znaš li mila, kad si moja bila* (Do You Remember, Dear, When You Were Mine), Zovko, Vol. II, No. 54.

<sup>31</sup> *Sine, Mujo, je l' ti zemlja teška?* (My Son Mujo, Is the Soil Heavy on You?), Bradarić, Vol. V, No. 381.



Does Fata wear the silken pants, / Does Fata wear the velvet waistcoat, / Does Fata wear the slippers decorated with mother of pearl, / Does Fata have many suitors like she used to have?<sup>32</sup>

The trusted bird usually responds affirmatively, because the reality of life often provided many examples of kept promises and faithfulness of the young woman even in cases when the young man was absent for a long time, away on the battlefield to which he was called by a royal edict. Moreover, a young woman was under the influence of the prevailing belief at the time that breaking a promise was unacceptable.

Everyday harmless and relaxed encounters of young people leave no room for jealousy, which was a frequent occurrence in courtship, usually caused by hurt egos, doubts and anxieties. On the other hand, unwritten rules for courtship and meetings on the window, at the gate, at the fountain...included certain rights and certain freedoms which were not subject to public condemnation. This is reflected in one of the songs which shape and preserve the basic foundations of the *sevdalinka* love code, where the young woman responds to her sweetheart's jealousy:

*Ako sam ga okom pogledala, / Nisam njega srcem sevdisala!*

If I looked at him with my eye, / I did not like him with my heart!<sup>33</sup>

In a similar example the surprised young woman expresses the same conviction in a slightly different form, in a more recent rhyme:

*Oči moje svakog gledat mogu, / Ali srcem sevdise ne mogu!*

My eyes can look at anybody, / But my heart cannot love them!<sup>34</sup>

In cases when a young man is involved in courtship with more than one young woman, which was not uncommon in the lives of *sevdalinka* poets, jealousy is often suppressed by curiosity and a wish to find out who the favourite young woman is. This inquiry in order to detect a dangerous opponent can sometimes bring true relief, such as in the cheerful argument between lovers in the song *Istrgoh stručak sa zemlje* (I Plucked a Bouquet) where the worried young woman asks:

*Tako ti neba i zemlje, / Imaš li dražu od mene?*

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<sup>32</sup> *Oj Boga ti siva ptico sokole* (Oh Grey Hawk), *ibid.*, No. 112.

<sup>33</sup> *Ne čuđim se mraku ni oblaku* (I Am Not Surprised by Darkness or Cloud), *ibid.*, Vol. VI, No.132.

<sup>34</sup> *Umori' se ruže trgajući* (I Got Tired Plucking Roses), Bradarić, Vol. III, No. 30.

By heaven and by earth, / Do you have anyone you love more than me?

And the cheerful young man replies teasingly:

*Imam ih devet i tebe, / Ti si mi, draga, najdraža!*

I have nine and you, / You are my sweetheart I love the most!<sup>35</sup>

In many examples, the young woman is troubled by doubts caused by jealousy, so she makes inquiries about her young man, anxiously asking water, her girlfriend, mountain, hawk, mother, as well as hidden mythological creatures – anyone whom she may tell her secrets even in a fantasy – What is her loved one doing? Often she does not tell him directly what she wants to say because she fears that her open, undisguised desire could bring her and her loved one apart.

Only an encounter with the loved one can heal the wounds caused by longing and unfulfilled dreams, so in the verses of the following song, the saddened young woman, pressed by excruciating loneliness, wonders:

*Što moj dragi za sunca ne dođe, / Što ne dođe, da mi kahar prođe?*

Why didn't my sweetheart come during the daylight, / Why didn't he come, so my sadness may go away?<sup>36</sup>

Longing for the loved one leads to the creation of enticing daydreams, so typical of the *sevdalinka*, brimming with sensuality and filled with erotic dreams. In one of the examples providing a variation to this theme, the young woman wishes she could miraculously become a “sugar box” and spill her content on her darling's mattress, so that her desire could come true:

*Kad se prene, neka šećer bere, / Kad se budi, nek me mladu ljubi!*

When he startles, may he pick up sugar pieces, /When he awakes, may he kiss me!<sup>37</sup>

Lifted by ecstatic sweetness of the closeness of her beloved, one self-confident young woman raises her voice in praise of the young man, ending it with an exclamation:

*Pram tebi je šerbe gorko, šećer gorčiji, / Muhamede ti si sladak od sveg najsladi!*

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<sup>35</sup> *Istrgoh stručak sa zemlje* (I Plucked a Bouquet), Kuba, No. 625, p. 152.

<sup>36</sup> *Kamen gori, a biser govori* (Stone is on Fire, and Pearl Speaks), Zovko, Vol. II, No. 202.

<sup>37</sup> *Da sam Bog d'o kutija šećera* (I Wish I Was a Sugar Box), *ibid.*, Vol. III, No. 28.

Compared to you, sherbet is bitter and sugar bitterer, / Muhamed, you are sweet, sweeter than anything!<sup>38</sup>

Various adventures related to courtship led to the conviction – shaped with numerous variations in the Bosniak love lyric poetry – that young women cannot do without courtship. Something that they surely cannot do without is linked in song verses to the major Bosnia and Herzegovina's cities, whose young folk produced the highest number of most beautiful *sevdalinks*, mentioning different locations of the cities as the stage for their love adventures. The inevitability of love affairs in the lives of young people – described in female songs about irresistible attraction of courtship – is compared to the force connecting birds with mountains and fish with water. This important component of the love code is described in the following decasyllable verses, cut and shaped by numerous generations of poets:

*Sultan' Selime, car gospodine! / Može li biti riba bez vode, / riba bez vode, ptica bez gore? / I Banja Luka bez kadiluka, i šeher Travnik bez vezirluka? / I Sarajevo bez gaziluka, a ja djevojka bez ašikluka?!*

Sultan Selim, master and emperor! / Can fish be without water, / Fish without water, a bird without a mountain? / And Banja Luka without a court, and the city of Travnik without the vizier's palace? / And Sarajevo without heroism, and I without courtship?!<sup>39</sup>

The scholarship about the *sevdalinka* notes that this song form – in addition to describing local events related to courtship, which were mentioned in chronicles and annals of the time – also makes reference to numerous notable personalities. The main distinctive characteristic of a *sevdalinka*, compared to love songs in the neighbouring oral literature traditions, is the description of numerous cities of Bosnia and Herzegovina or Sanjak, or the description of individual locations in these cities. It is also noticeable that the overall *sevdalinka* heritage can be divided into two basic groups: one consisting of the lyrical expression of lovers or their conversation, sometimes even competing, and the second one consisting of songs with local characteristics in different forms (Maglajlić 2010).

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<sup>38</sup> *Muhamede, šećer puce* (Muhamed, Sugar Button), *ibid.*, Vol. II, No. 107.

<sup>39</sup> *Djevojka viče s visoka brda* (Girl Shouts From a High Hill), *Meraklije*. Prepared by Vehid Gunić, Zagreb – Tuzla 1994, p. 46. Sung by Hanka Paldum.

## THE SEVDALINKA IN THE CULTURAL-HISTORICAL CONTEXT – WHAT KIND OF A PHENOMENON IS IT?

*Sevdalinks* with a direct expression of love were closer to the intimate world of the lyrical subject, with differences with regard to the gender of the author. Songs that could be heard sung by male singers were created in circumstances different from the circumstances which shaped the female lyrical expression. Male songs were mainly created in larger family gatherings – often over a glass of alcohol, or rarely in solitude or during courtship under the young woman’s window, where even an odd explicit or sensual verse could come up in the relaxed atmosphere. Female songs were mainly created in romantic solitude or during all-female gatherings, but in any case far away from the ears of the object of desire: males and females were separated in bigger family gatherings (Hangi 1906). Rather than sad, lonely, mainly female songs, the songs sung at larger gatherings and social events had much merrier themes, such as the songs praising cities and their picturesque scenery, which often mentioned famous individuals from the local society of the poet.

Finally, going back to the literary history of the *sevdalinka*, we will recall one event remembered by Safvet-beg Basagić that can point to the importance of the *sevdalinka* in Bosniak society. When the Turkish parliament convened for the first time in the second half of 19<sup>th</sup> century, some famous Bosniaks met in Istanbul, at the house of Fehim ef. Đumišić. On that occasion, a Bosniak singer sang a well-known *sevdalinka* that starts with the verses:

*Kun' ga majko i ja ću ga kleti, / Ali stani, ja ću započeti: / Tamnica mu moja  
njedra bila...*

Curse him mother, I will curse him too / But wait, I will start first: / May my  
white bosom be his dungeon...

A well-known philosopher of the time, Arif- beg Rizvanbegović Hikmet Stočević (originally from Herzegovina) stood up when he heard the song and proclaimed: “My people are the best poet!” (Bašagić 1912: 162–163). That speaks enough of the *sevdalinka*’s popularity among Bosniaks more than a hundred years ago. Today, we are witness to many musical adaptations which make this kind of song very popular in Bosnian society, not only among the Bosniaks. The case study involving the Mirojević family, described below, illustrates the atmosphere of listening to *sevdalinks* and singing *sevdalinks* as songs sung in a specific place, on special occasions and during family gatherings. A member of the family, Leila Mirojević, describes how the tradition of the *sevdalinka* is still cherished and preserved in her family:

For more than 130 years, members of the family would gather on special occasions such as holidays, engagements, marriages, births, etc., usually at the home of the oldest family member. Attendance can be quite large, ranging between 20 and 50 people, members of the family and a few selected, very close family friends. The hostess would serve refreshments and a light dinner. Guests would sit together, eat and chat. One or several guests would bring instruments. In the earlier days, the instrument of choice was usually the saz, in modern times it was the accordion or guitar, or both, and sometimes accompanied by the darbuka. Usually, one person would start singing, and others would join in. This tradition still lives on. However, present generations prefer the modern interpretations of *sevdalinks* and new performers, such as Damir Imamović, Amira Medunjanin, Vanja Muhović, Božo Vrećo and the *sevdalinka* band Divanhana.<sup>40</sup>

In conclusion, comprising a broad range of themes and motifs, the *sevdalinka* as a specific love song, remains the most widespread lyrical form within the Bosniak oral poetry. The essential emotion in these songs is romantic love, usually between two young lovers, rarely love between spouses. It varies between longing, subtle tremors and loving glances, and extremely open, sensual and even sexual emotion. In this form of Bosniak lyric poetry, this endless love emotion is described in different styles and meters, and it ranges from joyful encounters and meetings, to unexpected difficulties and obstacles, from anxious waiting and longing, to painful farewells and deep disappointments, and sometimes despair. The *sevdalinka* is not just an oral lyrical love song; it is more than that, it is a medium through which emotions are conveyed in a socially acceptable manner. As such, the *sevdalinka* belongs to everybody who loves, enjoys and listens to it.

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<sup>40</sup> Told by Leila Mirojević (born in 1980) in Sarajevo, April 2015.

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## **SEVDALINKA KAO NEMATERIJALNA KULTURNA BAŠTINA BOSNE: TEME, MOTIVI I POETSKE ZNAČAJKE**

U ovom se radu raspravlja o interpretacijama, kategorizacijama i inventarima sevdalinki, usmene lirske tradicije iz Bosne, koja je ujedno i jedan od najznačajnijih primjera njezine nematerijalne kulturne baštine. Sevdalinka kao tradicijska usmena lirska poezija i slavna ljubavna pjesma nastala je u gradovima u široj regiji Balkana kao spoj postojećih lirskih oblika i islamskih utjecaja. Sam termin sevdalinka za tu vrstu pjesme postao je općeprihvaćen tek krajem 19. stoljeća. Prije toga se ta lirska tradicija obično zvala sevdalija. Oba naziva, sevdalinka i sevdalija dolaze od arapske riječi *sawdā* koja je preko turskog usvojena u jezike nekih balkanskih naroda kao sevdah, što označava ljubav, ljubavni žar, ljubavnu čežnju. Danas se sevdalinka najčešće smatra bosanskom (točnije bošnjačkom) domaćom tradicijskom ljubavnom pjesmom. Etnolozi, etnomuzikolozi, folkloristi i drugi znanstvenici sevdalinku su, kao važan dio bosanske nematerijalne baštine, često koristili kao izvor i sredstvo istraživanja različitih društvenih, povijesnih i kulturnih tradicija u Bosni. Ovaj rad započinje povijesnim pregledom zapisa, inventara i načina istraživanja tog usmenog lirskog žanra, a nastavlja se pregledom leksikografskih i književnoteorijskih kategorizacija sevdalinke kao posebne vrste lirske usmene pjesme. Na kraju se u radu, na temelju analize tema i motiva iz sevdalinki, raspravlja o različitim primjerima rukopisa objavljenih krajem 19. i početkom 20. stoljeća u Bosni i Hercegovini.

Ključne riječi: lirska poezija, ljubavna pjesma, sevdalinka, motiv, tema