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TRACES OF ORAL NARRATION IN KONAVLE

The style of this article avoids the usual scholarly fashion. The author has already written several studies about Bogišić's collection in a more "scientific" way: In this text, M. Bošković-Stulli follows the paths of her own wanderings and the stories she heard all over Konavle forty, and even more than forty, years ago — she tries to conjure up at least something of the narrators of that time, of the local stories, and of that landscape seen through its legends.

Keywords: Croatian oral literature, oral prose, Konavle

I feel the presence of Konavle now, to use the words of Villon, as my "snows of yesteryear" — as *les neiges d'antan*. Born and raised in northern inland regions of Croatia, the encounter with the landscape and history of that Mediterranean rural community near the City of Dubrovnik, everything I got to know and accept in that part of Croatia, was brought home to me in the family circle of my husband, who was born in Dubrovnik, and his relatives.

Most of my Konavle narrators — male and female — whose oral narratives are the subject of this article, are long dead or in very advanced years now. Many of the younger ones have probably emigrated and also grown old — and I have never heard from them again.

Finally, the war at the beginning of the 1990s: Konavle devastated and destroyed. People driven out, houses demolished and burnt to the ground. Those houses which live on in my memory, the large kitchens and the pergolas beside the houses where we usually sat and talked, no longer exist. Nor do my narrators, the people who lived in them.

I visited Konavle twice as a researcher "in the field" i.e. I listened and recorded or wrote down folk narratives and ballads: in 1954 (in the villages of Čilipi, Popovići, Komaji, Obod, the township of Cavtat), and again in 1961 (in the villages of Pridvorje, Lovorno, Dunave, Pičete, Zastolje, Gruda, Uskoplje, Ljuta, Bačev Do). Turning the pages of my collected material, I see that there is a lot that I have forgotten, while there are some places, people and narratives which are still very much alive in my memory. These collections and recordings are kept in the Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Research in Zagreb.

Together with these oral stories from Konavle collected in this century, 19th century notations kept in the Baldo (Baltazar) Bogišić Library in his native Cavtat make up a complete whole. (Bogišić was a notable legal historian, researcher of common law, publisher of old texts of traditional verse, and the like. He lived from 1834 until 1908). In my work for the Institute in Zagreb I compiled a list of various folk tales and ballads preserved in the Bogišić manuscripts, and, what was most important: I found notations of tales and legends in Bogišić's library collected for him during the 1880s in Cavtat and its surroundings by his sister and some other local collaborators. Transcriptions of these texts can now be found in the Institute referred to above (MS 189). I have written two articles about the Bogišić collection (Bošković-Stulli 1984:207-305; 1993a:9-28 = 1994:153-166). Some of the tales and legends from Konavle have been published in reviews: Bošković-Stulli 1993 (26 texts), 1997a (21 texts; some of the tales and legends appear in both texts).

It will be seen later how those notations from the last century are of great importance for what I wish to say about Konavle folk narratives and ballads in more recent times.

However, to start with we will briefly remind readers of previous mention of Konavle narratives.

Written tradition linked Konavle with the Greek mythical couple, King Cadmus — the founder of Thebes, who killed the Dragon — and his divine consort, Harmonia, who, according to sources from Antiquity, settled in the land of Illyria in the southern Adriatic around Budva and

Risan, and at the end of their lives were turned into a dragon and a snake by the gods. In his paper on the Encheleians (1995:211-303), Radoslav Katičić gave a comprehensive and exhaustive study of this theme from antique mythology and literature. The theme was also interpreted by Nenad Ivić (1992) as it appeared in the work by the Thomas [Toma], the Archbishop of Split. Thomas the Archdeacon — who lived during the 13th century — was the first to identify the dwelling place of these two famous mythical personages in the Konavle region: "In the tales of the poets, it was said that Cadmus came to the same province, and it was here that he was transformed into a snake. And his city was Epidaurum which was near Ragusa [Dubrovnik], in which there is a great cave. And it is still believed today that a dragon lives there." (*Epitaurum* or *Epidaurum* is modern-day Cavtat.)

According to Katičić: "Illyrian Epidaurum is not mentioned anywhere in antique literature as Cadmus's city", while Ivić assumes that "Thomas could have found the story of Cadmus's arrival in Epidaurum (...) in Priscian's translation of Dionysius Periegetes (Katičić 1995:298-299; Ivić 1992:19, 30).

Apart from locating Cadmus and Harmonia in the Konavle area, for our purposes in this article Thomas the Archdeacon's text is interesting in that he referred to living belief among the people of that time: "And it is still believed today that a dragon lives there". After Thomas, the legend of the mythic divine couple in Konavle was mentioned a number of times in literature. According to the Dubrovnik Latin writer, Đuro Ferić, their graves are high in the Konavle cliffs. (Bogišić 1982:125)

The Austrian historian, J. Ch. Engel, wrote about their graves in his *Geschichte des Freystaates Ragusa* (1807), which was mentioned by his translator Ivan Stojanović in these words: "(...) that his tomb, like that of his wife, should be sought in those caves and crags which are still there today on Sniježnica Mountain or among the Konavle boulders, in Konavle (...) Great, frightening snakes used to hatch in those caves, and are mentioned in that regard in the tale in which Cadmus and Harmonia transformed into snakes at their death (Stojanović 1922:1-2).

The English writer, A. J. Evans, spoke at the end of the last century in his travelogue about his journey through Bosnia-Herzegovina about a cave in the mountain above Cavtat, which was connected with the transformation of Cadmus and Harmonia, and, later, with the cult of Aesculapius (Katičić 1995:257-258).

The traditions about of the transformation of the divine creatures Cadmus and Harmonia into a snake and a dragon found fertile soil in the Illyrian regions, among that ancient people in which the cult of the snake was very pronounced — and this is given detailed attention by Katičić in his article (256-258, 288 *passim*). According to Aleksandar Stipčević, the snake had been a cult animal and tribal symbol among the southern Illyrians, and later in legend represented the pagan divinity in the battle with Christianity (Stipčević 1989:149-151).

This ancient connection with the cults of snakes and dragons was shown in another Konavle tradition, maintained in oral narration right up until the present day: the one about Saint Hylarion, in which there are indications of the traces of pagan and Christian legends. Saint Jerome (turn of the 4th to the 5th century) described in *Život blaženog Hilariona* [The Life of the Blessed Hylarion] how the saint had arrived in Epidaurum in the year 365, and had defeated and burned with the strength of his Christian faith a huge and dangerous snake called Boas and liberated the masses from this monster (Katičić 1995:257; Ivić 1992:30-31). Thomas the Archdeacon referred to earlier also mentioned the legend of Saint Hylarion (Ivić 1992:19). It also featured in the anonymous Dubrovnik *Kronika* [Chronicle], the 16th century Italian *Povijest Dubrovnika* [History of Dubrovnik] by Serafino Razzi, in *Pavlimir* written by the poet Palmotić in the 17th century, in various popularisations, as well as in oral legends in which Saint Hylarion dragged the dragon beneath the sea "from Šipun to Mlini (Bošković-Stulli 1997:40). The mysterious cave near Cavtat, "the fateful Šipun, the evil cave" in Palmotić's *Pavlimir*, has remained the gathering place of diabolic creatures in folk narration right up until the present day, as will be seen later in this text.

A number of literary stories about the origin of the name Konavle (from *kono* = canal) deriving from the antique aqueduct there, have appeared with etymological interpretation of local names.

In his play, Junije Palmotić named Cavtat after Cavtislava, the daughter of King Krunoslav in the Epidaurum of the time, while Ferić connected the name with the verb *captjeti* (to bloom), similarly as in the very lovely modern oral legend (Palmotić 1883:163; Bogišić 1982:125; Bošković-Stulli 1997a:No.151).

Vid Vuletić-Vukasović has a story called *How [the Village] of Mrcine Got Its Name*: he heard the "lovely folk tale" from the late Father Pavlić, a priest in Pridvorje in Konavle. However, it is not really a "folk

tale" in either literary stylisation nor content: Epidaurum (Cavtat) was ruled by a malevolent Roman called Valerius. His daughter was in love with Duke Stjepan from the fortress of Sokol, but her father wanted to give her in marriage to the Latin Fabius. The maiden was promised to the one who did the best deed, so Stjepan promised to bring water to Cavtat; but the other suitor pushed a huge lizard into the completed aqueduct, and it killed the maiden. It was then that the land was named Konavle, after the canal or aqueduct. The ill-fated prospective bridegroom carried off the maiden to his fortress of Sokol, where he made love to her dead body for three whole days, so the place was then called Mrcine (today's village of Dubravka) (Vuletić-Vukasović s.a.:102-109). The magazine *Domaće ognjište* [The Domestic Hearth] printed an article titled *Odakle je došlo ime Cavtat, Konavle, Vodovalje i Mrcine* [The Origins of the Names of Cavtat, Konavle, Vodovalje and Mrcine] adapted by Pavlina Bogdan-Bijelić, with the annotation *based on folk narration* (1906, No. 10:205-206). The text *Kako je postala voda Ljuta u Konavlima* [How the Ljuta Stream in Konavle Originated] also bears the note, *based on folk narration* (Dubrovnik 2, 1898:173-179).

Interpretations of the origins of locality names as the core of these stories could have come from oral tradition, while their literary adaptations reverted to their place of origin and were well received in Cavtat and through the Konavle area, where literacy and reading were not a rarity. Bogišić's manuscript collection contains oral legend, obviously from literary sources, about the king of Epidaurum Dolabel and his daughter Cavtislava, who gave her name to Cavtat; she was proposed marriage by two sovereigns; one would bring her marble, and the other water. However, there was a snake in the water brought to Cavtat by the "king of France" and it killed Cavtislava (MS 189:37; MS 106). I was told a similar story by one of my female narrators from Čilipi, which she herself said she had read somewhere, while in Pridvorje I heard a story obviously based on Vuletić-Vukasović's text, but also, at the same time, very original (MS 171:89-90; MS 394:No. 15).

In 1934, Vuletić-Vukasović's highly stylised oral legends from Konavle were published in the *Zbornik za narodni život i običaje* [Review of the Folk Life and Customs of the Southern Slavs] while the text of his article "Prizrijevanje" [Apparitions] (Vuletić-Vukasović 1934a) in the *Srpski etnografski zbornik* [Serbian Ethnographic Review] presented unornamented short legends about supernatural creatures from

Dalmatia, largely from Konavle. P. Bogdan-Bijelić (1908) provided information on beliefs and a number of legends about witches.

Krsto Kuraica, a teacher, spoke in *Slovinac* magazine about Niko from Lovorna, a comical character from Konavle (1879), while almost one hundred years later I listened to similar stories about Kojo Prokurica in Pridvorje: "He used to concoct all sorts of lies (...), books could be written about him such as those about Khoja Nastradin." Like Niko's, his stories were a pack of falsehoods in the Münchhausen style: how he had climbed up the stalk of a broad-bean plant and reached the heavens; how defrosted ducks in a sack had flown up into the air together with his donkey (Bošković-Stulli 1963:23 and No. 106).

I heard a number of stories in Pridvorje about Kojo Prokurica, a local jokester, and spinner of comical tales, an anecdotal character who lived a hundred years ago, some were told to me by his descendants who bore the same surname (MS 394:3, 4, 6-9 and 12). I have now come nearer to what I would like to say about Konavle oral narratives. This article will not be focusing on the contents (types of folk tale) nor on descriptions of the diverse mythical creatures in the legends and beliefs, which have been recorded in numerous quantities. However, I am taking another course: following preserved traces in narratives written down and evoked at the beginning of this article — about the narrators, on the longevity of the local legends and their closeness with domestic localities, all things which no longer exist.

In my research in Konavle, I did not come across female narrators of tales of magic which enriched the repertoire during the last century when Bogišić's Cavtat female collaborators were at work. Apart from a few individual notations, it was only in Čilipi that I found a real narrator of tales of magic in Mara Kordić, who was then a woman of seventy-one. She had heard her tales from an old lady who was her neighbour while she was still a child in her native village of Drevenik. This neighbour had spent her earlier years working as a nanny in Dubrovnik. When her charges had been chastised by their parents, they had run to their nanny and listened to her tales of magic. Later, Mara had told the tales to her grandchildren. It is very likely that some of the tales had thus been brought from the City of Dubrovnik to the village, and not the other way round which is the more stereotyped conception held.

However, unlike Mara's wonderful tales of magic in MS 171, some of which were later published, I heard many domestic Konavle legends from old people, but also from young girls. The attitude towards these

strange domestic supernatural events differed among my young narrators from the tradition of their elders, some of whom listened to and remembered them with a certain reserve, but at the same time were attracted to them by their unusual, somewhat irrational although domestic aura.

In a notation from the 19th century we read how Tondica Čuklić once found a goatskin filled with oil at the top of Zviždine Street in Cavtat. He lifted it onto his neck and carried it along, but when he took hold of one of the legs so that it would not slip, a voice spoke out: "What! Are we going to start biting?" The goatskin was in fact a *tenac* (or werewolf). In 1954, Luce Antunović who was then seventeen year old and attending a vocational school in Cavtat, told me a story she had heard from some older woman in Cavtat. It was about the same event; however, instead of Tondica Čuklić who had really lived there, it was now about "some Cavtat man from the time of Antiquity" who was coming home from fishing along the *Ulica od Šušnja* Street. Luce mentioned his poor family and the delight when he found the goatskin full of oil. She gave a more detailed description of the conflict with the ostensible goatskin, who also talks in this story: "When we start biting, we really will be biting". In the text from the last century the event was reduced in spare words to the reality of a spectral encounter whose authenticity is accepted, while Luce freely and animatedly spun the tale about the same event.

Luce spoke about various frightening creatures in a similar fashion: about witches, *mòras* [bloodsucking witches], the dead, about mermaids, fairies' caves, pestilence and about the Greek treasure near her native village of Molunat (MS 171).

In the same year in Obod near Cavtat a fifteen-year-old school-girl called Anka Guliermović recounted to me the local mythic legends which had been told — to her, or in her presence — by her father and grandfather, while she listened to them with slight shuddering; but later she remembered them from a rational distance: "I was always frightened before to walk past Milova Valley, which is a small, small cave. Grandfather used to say that fairies lived there." She also told me about the *tintilini*, about Saint Hylarion and the dragon in Šipun Cave, about witches, and about the *tenac* [werewolf] in the guise of a donkey, about the Evil Eye, about the ferns which flower on the eve of Saint John's Day, of the evergreen oak in front of the cave near Glavska and the knife which had been cleaned upon its trunk and had left its bark stained with the blood of people slaughtered long ago (MS 171).

The widely-known Mediterranean story about the witches or fairies who magically rowed in a stolen boat to the shores of some distant land across the ocean and returned the same night, but were uncovered the next day with the help of an unusual fruit picked by the owner who had been hidden in the boat is well-loved throughout Dalmatia. We are following the local Cavtat tradition from manuscripts written in the 19th century up to my young narrators within the firm framework of the same event. In Bogišić's collection, Pero Lukaća Katušić, "the father of the mother of the wife of Andro Miljan" caught sight at night in the moonlight in Cavtat of creatures "like black friars, while they had turkey heads". Without speaking, they forced him to "put in the rudder, raise the sails and equip the boat". A strange wind blew them across the sea to a far-off land where he picked a branch bearing fresh dates. The dates brought him good fortune and since then "happiness and plenty [is] always in his house, just as it is today". There is a brief account in the same collection about fairies conferring happiness on the house of Lukaća, and that the deceased Pero Lukaća had travelled with them to Alexandria — "they went there and back in two hours" — (MS 189). In 1962, Jozo Nardelli, an old seaman, spoke to me in Plat in Župa Dubrovačka about the same experience of a man surnamed either Lukaća or Miljan. In 1954 in Cavtat, sixty-five-year-old Eugenija Casilari (MS 414) recounted to me the identical experience of "old Lukaća Katušić"; how he had found twelve fairies in his boat "and that they took him to Apulia under a walnut tree and that he brought back a branch full of dates from Italy and that they brought him luck" (MS 171). (The motif of good fortune conferred by fairies in this tradition about Lukaća differs from the majority of the others, in which the witches were discovered and humiliated.)

My young female narrators told me the same legend, but to them it was primarily an adventure story. Luce Antunović heard it in the Lukaća family. "A man from Cavtat called Lukaća spent the whole day equipping his boat beneath the monastery". He noticed that something was wrong, hid under the bow of the boat and, waiting "he lit a cigarette to quieten his nerves". Five or six witches untied the boat "and in five to six strokes of the oars they found themselves in Italy in Apulia under a walnut tree at a witches' coven. They had gone to a ball...", and he stealthily picked some "horse-bean which only grows at that time in Italy". On the return journey, the witches smelt the aroma of tobacco, but they had to hurry to be back before the cocks started crowing (in some older versions they

smelt the Cross i.e. Man). The next day he discovered them with the help of the horse-bean.

In Anka Guliermović's story, they travelled with the aid of the formula "one stroke of the oars, one hundred miles" even as far as India, where the man picked some *Indian cane* (bamboo). Anka's grandfather had known the man's name but she no longer remember it (MS 171).

Another Cavtat legend from local tradition is not at all poetic, but rather dark and terrible, and that is perhaps the very reason for it's having been remembered for so long. It is obviously based on an actual event. Ivo Miljan, a priest, tells the story of Baldo Bogišić ("the grandfather of our relative Baldo") who had two apprentices who stole a boat, intending to run away to Albania. However, the owner and a few others "prepared Marko Cuklić's fishing boat" and set out after them, found them and killed them in the Konavle rocks. Since then, a terrible howling is heard at night in Cavtat and two donkeys can be seen, which crash about and frighten people. In another version, two bakers stole Cuklić's boat, while the remainder of the story is the same. Later, "a small black donkey" was seen beside Cuklić's boat (MS 189). The same legend was told to me after many years in almost the same way by Anka Guliermović as she remembered it from her father, and she explained that the donkey in question was, in fact, a *tenac* — werewolf (MS 171).

From these few legends one can discern the continuity of the recounting of the legends about local events, without written intervention. The period is not very long — some eighty years, or even more — because the legends in the Bogišić collection from the last century spoke about something which had occurred earlier. There are a considerable number of such examples in the collections. However, the description of the events, the names and the localities are somewhat different each time; they vary just as the time-frame has changed the attitude towards the legends.

Some very extended, and even international, content in the legends about mythical creatures or unusual events are gathered around the native localities and disseminated as if they are really authentic here, and this process can be a very long-lasting one. However, I am not concerned here with research into beginnings, but will rather try to conjure up something of the legendary landscape of Konavle.

Even when I was travelling around Konavle, older people did not often tell the traditional stories, but they still had not been forgotten. In the village of Uskoplje, Niko Gluhan (born in 1884) evoked things as they once were: "My goodness, it used to be so in Konavle, those stories about *lorci*, about fairies, about lost souls in Purgatory. But it's different now, nobody ever talks about it any more. To tell you the truth, when I was small, people used to come to the bees and there was a lot of that sort of story-telling. And to be honest I was frightened to go outside to pass water because of their stories. It all stopped between 25 and 30 years ago." (Niko spoke to me in 1961).

Fairy caves are distributed throughout the rocky Konavle landscape. There is a house named *Zvonica* in the rocky crags above Lovorno; it seems to have been carved into the stone and fairies lived there. One can still see their shelving. Near the village of Dunave there is a deep cavern called the *Fairy Cave*; in the past the villagers regularly brought the fairy food, at which times she would let down her long hair in front of the cave. A *Fairy House* can be seen in the rocks above the church in Sokol; there are child-sized footprints in the floor of the cave and a stone table. There is also a *Fairy House* above the village of Ljuta which is nestled under Lučine Mountain; the cave has a stone table in it and small stone stools. In the distant past, fairies used to carry large stones suspended from their necks and also spun hemp; and they had a cave on the top of Dubrava where they used to fry fritters, and you can see their stone cistern and their water trough. Another fairy lived on the top of Varino Hill, and, as the story goes, "she carried on her back that largest stone tablet from a grave, and even spun hemp". On the hill near Gruda there is a *Fairy Cave* where one man met a fairy child. And there is a *Fairy House* above the Church of Saint Peter with a stone table and stone stools on which the fairies sat. There is also a cave called *Vilin kuk* with stone stools inside it in the cliffs above Rajčević in Uskoplje. Another *Fairy Cave* is located near Đurovići (Čilipi), and yet another in the Lokvica forest above the Konavle cliffs. A cave called *Fairy Chamber* is located near Komaji, where the fairies did their cooking, and one can see in the stone where they slept and sat. Milovo Valley near Obod has already been mentioned. Near Molunat on Kuk Hillock there is a cave which contains a *tavolin* [small table] with benches, and a comb and fairy's mirror.

People had encounters with the fairies, and they were often calamitous. Old Dindon from Cavtat broke his leg on the terrace of the

Vodopić family because he interrupted the fairies while they were dancing. Antun Karaman was walking at night from Brotnice to Močići, and he lit his *čibuk* [a long Turkish pipe] from some fire, with no inkling that fairies were dining there and that he had stepped into their served meal. From that moment onwards, his face, head and body became deformed. Old Luko Srgota from Cavtat experienced a similar fate when he went fishing for sardines below Šipun Cave, stepped into the servings of a fairy dinner, and since then his toes and those of his descendants "have turned up from their feet". A fairy dressed "in white with a broad band around her waist" appeared to a man near Pridvorje on the crossroads beneath the Dragavine Spring; while a fairy flew down onto a large stone tablet on Vasiljište; a young shepherd, related to the narrator's father, let down her hair and received money for his efforts. In Crljene stijene [Red Rocks] above Pridvorje a man let down a fairy's hair and she gave him good fortune in return, which still lasts in the family cooperative house of Obrad "which has stayed together right up until today". Near Baletini house in Obod, at a place called Rudina, powerful fairies made their presence felt in the past, most of them in Crljene stijene. According to the legend, a *vilenik* came to the house of a midwife in Cavtat to ask her to help a fairy in childbirth. Her reward was an onion skin which turned into gold ducats. In another version, the midwife encountered a frog at night and scolded it: "May God grant that I be your midwife when you have your young". One night someone knocked on her door and called her to come and assist in childbirth. It was a fairy who was giving birth (i.e. the frog she had met). She was given the husks of onion, which turned into coal when she threw them away; in different circumstances it would have turned into gold. This was regarded as "the truth in Cavtat". And a woman in the village of Ljuta found a frog which transformed into a young girl. She was given an apron full of burned grass, which would have turned into gold if she had not peeked too soon, and "that happened here near me a few houses up. It happened to Dobrašin's wife" (MS 189; MS 171; MS 394; Bošković-Stulli 1993 and 1997a).

Unlike those with homes in the fixed local fairy caves, some mythic creatures appear at various unforeseen places, but they, too, have their most frequent habitats. The *tintilini*, children who have died before being baptised, weep all night long and wear little red caps; anyone who manages to grab one of these caps will receive anything he desires from the *tintilin*, just for returning it. In Pridvorje a man saw a tiny *tintilin*

one night in a field. "He was wearing a friar's robe girded with rope and a hard *kanotijera* [a flat-crowned hat] on his head. And he was also seen in Pridvorje "by old Pave Majčica's husband" but he did not manage to catch him and take his little cap. A *tintilin* was seen in Uskoplje "actually by this neighbour Mijo Ivaniš (...), a small child in a little suit, sitting in a flower pot". Fishermen from Donji Obod were out fishing near Molunat. There is the "*Cave of San Davolo*", a wild fig-tree growing at its entrance with small footprints visible in the soil. The fishermen saw that "a fire was burning in the cave and small children were jumping around the fire and dancing". The fishermen rowed away in a hurry, "while these *tintilini* continued to dance their *kolo* [round-dance]". (These excerpts are from the manuscripts referred to above and, in part, from Bošković-Stulli 1993 and 1997a.)

As we have mentioned, it was not only about beautiful fairies and graceful *tintilinići* that they recounted legends in Konavle, but also about *lorci* [vampires], *tenci* [werewolves], devils, monsters of the night, and the walking dead who terrify the living. Encounters with these creatures were experienced by neighbours and relatives, people with a forename and a surname, and it was known when this occurred and where. The mother of Ana Veselić in Pridvorje saw a *lorko* [vampire] at the spring below Miočević, "it was a man in red trousers, standing beside the cave and leaning on a cane". Jozo Zlovečera recounted in Pridvorje, on the basis of what older people had said, how they had seen "*lorke* [vampires] returning from the graveyard and that they had to leave dinner for them there, without lamps and without spoons"; otherwise the *lorko* would smash "all the dishes in the kitchen". They would hear the noise, while everything would be unbroken in the morning. Luce Zlovečera — like the woman from Pridvorje — went out early in the morning into the fields, and thinking it was already dawn she saw a woman, "with fire burning beneath her feet", and eyes the same as those of a woman who had recently fallen from an olive tree and broken her neck.

In Obod they told the story of someone from Župa who was walking home at night and overtaken by a donkey. The Župa man mounted the donkey and after they had travelled half of the way home, the donkey spoke up "that he had carried him enough, and that now the man would carry him, the donkey", and then the man felt a great burden on his back. It had been a *tenac* [werewolf]. A man from Konavle went out at dawn to dig in the field near Saint Đurađ in the hills above Cavtat. Near the church he found a small piece of cloth and picked it up; it then went

"rrrrzz up into the air". Walking along the seemingly peaceful path from Obod to Cavtat, a man came across the deceased Luka Kalačić leaning on a dividing wall at "the large river", and when he crossed "the small river" he found waiting for him something "like a goatskin which started fighting with him"; reaching the top of the cove he saw a black dog by the dividing wall and threw a stone after it. And beneath Donja Tiha beside the sea he heard something "clanging buckets together".

Ivo Palikuća in Cavtat was wooing Kata Lukačin, so one night he was crossing the hill when he saw a beautifully outfitted, saddled white horse, tied up at Stanôša Pond. He mounted the horse which then flew with him down the Street of Saint Nicholas, across the wharf, along the Ulica od šušnja Street, and up the hill almost as far as Šipun Cave. Just before the entrance into the cave the young man somehow managed to throw himself to the ground, "while the horse plunged into the depths of Šipun". People say that Šipun Cave is full of fairies but that they are "bothered by the processions around Cavtat". Before when people used to go fishing for sardines "they would hear in the deep water in Šipun Cave the playing of a violin and some sort of voices singing", while fairies and *pustolovice* [female aerial demons] would call out to them by name. Another story of a similar event in olden times: the mother of Đivo Litrica noticed that something was eating the cabbage in her garden; she caught a horse there and led it to her son who was standing guard at the church by the monastery in Cavtat. The young man mounted the horse, which flew with him across the square and up the hill with such speed that the people could not catch up with them. Later they found the young man's shoe in Šipun Cave and the young man himself, half-dead, in Ključice.

Souls from Purgatory were encountered during the processions and masses of the dead. Such encounters are widely spread in Croatia and there are similar encounters in scattered places throughout Europe. And, of course, such meetings also occur in Konavle. It was said "that there were processions of the dead, because they did not pray to God in this world, so they did so from the other world".

"In olden times a woman from Cavtat called Slava went to knead bread at Marija Čosina's place" — a peaceful and ordinary everyday beginning. But it was almost midnight. Slava met "a large procession in which everyone was carrying their own candle". The last woman in the procession gave her a lighted candle and told her to return it to the same place on the following day. When she got home, Slava put the candle in a

chest. But in the morning when she found the lower leg of a corpse instead of the candle, her hair went grey from fright. At midnight she saw the procession leaving the Saint Rok graveyard, she went down and returned the candle "and the candle came alight once again".

A similar experience of the same Slava: In olden days Slava Markovica, "the aunt of the mother of the late Vukotinkas" heard bells at night, so she got up and went to the church. She found the door ajar and the church full of people who were all singing. However, she did not know anyone there. Suddenly, everything disappeared and she was left in the dark, alone in the church and locked in. The next day people thought she had come there to steal from the church.

Both stories about Slava appeared in Bogišić's 19th century collection. I heard an identical story in Cavtat about another woman, and both narratives obviously derived from the same tradition: Katica Zviždina was baking bread when suddenly her candle blew out. She went outside and saw a procession "going down Saint Rok from the graveyard" — and the story continues as in the first one about Slava. Mare Vragolov from Cavtat, who has since died, told my narrator that she herself had "heard the procession praying to God beside the road".

In Pičete I heard about the father of Jana Miloglav who had gone at night to the Grad, riding on a donkey. (The term *Grad* [City] means Dubrovnik in the local vernacular). Near the Church of Saint Peter he met a priest beside the road, who asked him to help him serve the mass. "Inside the church the priest put on his vestments, all the candles came alight, and he started to read the mass". However, the man made an unintentional mistake and looked at the priest, and so the priest did not find salvation.

Legends about meetings with mysterious creatures such as *vile* [fairies], *tintilini* [children who have died unbaptised], *lorci* [vampires] and *tenci* [werewolves], dead souls etc. occurred at times and in places foreseen for such events, but are not as firmly located as, for example, the fairy caves. However, there are many legends whose content goes far back in time, with unusual traces preserved and identifiable in the local environment — such as old buildings, ruins, large very old piles of stones placed in heaps long ago, and strange natural phenomena.

Stories about the Greeks who fled from these parts because of years of drought and buried their treasure before they left are always very precise about the locations, so precise that geographical and

archeological maps could be drawn of the sites where the treasure trove is buried. Greek treasure is hidden in Račevo field, between Pločice and Đurinići and in front of Saint Rok's small church. People try to find it at night, but every morning the soil is levelled out again. People have peeped through the hole in the church door and seen two white foxes coming down the hill and across the little valley to level off the ground. They are Greek souls who have stayed behind to guard the treasure.

Luce Antunović's grandfather remembered when a Greek sailing ship came to Molunat. The Greek sailors set out for Đurinići towards a huge stone-pile which they dug through thoroughly until they found a flat stone as large as a table. They found a small opening in the stone, and gold fell out. The Greeks hid the gold and they are the only ones who could find it again. A similar story from Gruda has a Greek ship sailing near Poljice. A Greek sailor asks for the Church of Saint Elias, and a man from Konavle goes there with him to show him the way. He then carried a stone to the Greek ship. The Greek takes a ducat out of the stone and gives it to the Konavle man.

In Brgat in Župa it was recounted how two Greeks came to Komaji by *trabakul* [a two-master] and asked about some valley in Mrcine in Konavle, where there was a stone which was all drilled with holes. They found the stone and men carried it to the sailing ship for them: it was full of gold coins, as was "written in their books", and all the gold was theirs only. There is a grave full of money in the same place, but it will belong only to the person who allows a snake — in fact an enchanted girl — to lick his face.

Niko Sturica from Cavtat told the story of the Greeks burying treasure above Obod, while another Cavtat story has the Greeks burying the treasure "in the Supilo field" — but added that they had come at night and taken it away.

There are numerous legends about the unsuccessful attempts to dig up the treasure. Apart from the one about the white foxes, diggers are often cheated by a Greek newcomer. In Mijanići near the Church of Saint Michael two men from Konavle set out to dig for the treasure in a stone-pile near the church, all according to the Greek visitor's instructions. However, somehow he managed to cheat them and he himself collected the treasure, while all the men found later were "two broken clay pots".

In Uskoplje the story was that the Greek came to Cavtat and told Luko Bijelić that there was buried treasure in a stone-pile "there behind

the hill in Radivača". While they were digging speech was forbidden. However, one man said something and "it was over, there was no more".

There was once a Greek fortress in Brežine above Konavle Fields near the Church of Saint John; today the place is called *Gradine* [a fortress], even though the land is a flat meadow. It was here that the Greeks buried their treasures. Children going out to pasture with their livestock used to look for the gold but all they found were "black lumps, like soil, like coal".

My narrator had known a brother and sister who had been digging in the field when "a little pot of gold appeared" to them, but then a breeze blew and everything disappeared. She remembered an event which had occurred thirty years previously when a Greek had come by sailing ship and asked Mato Pulić where the fortress of Kopilice was, somewhere near Mrcine. However, Mate did not know. It used to be said in Gruda that "there is a golden clucky hen with twelve golden chickens buried" near the school. The small chapel there is in ruins, and "that Mato" had dug it all up, but had not found the treasure.

Natural phenomena in the rocky *karst* soil have inspired many stories: about the caves mentioned, about lost subterranean rivers, and strange figures in the stone. In Čilipi I was told that there had been a fresh spring below the Županov house. Pirates used to come from the sea to take water there, and on one occasion they had captured and taken with them two shepherdesses. After that the people filled in the spring and the water now emerges at a point under the sea, where there is a reversed whirlpool.

The Ljuta River in Konavle above Gruda used to rise in Zubci in Herzegovina and was called the Trebišnjica. A shepherdess lost one of her lambs which fell into the abyss, and she fell in after it. Grief-stricken, her mother went out into the world begging for a bundle of wool. She used the wool to fill in the spring and "the river plunged into the earth and emerged in Konavle". It was said that "the ground roared for three days and three nights until the water burst forth".

There are stories about wedding party graveyards, places where it is said that opposing wedding parties would fight if they met each other. The folk tale from Dunave is as follows: "One party was taking a bride up [to the mountains] from Konavle, and the other was taking its bride from the mountains down to Konavle. They met below Odra — that's a mountain peak — and cut each other to pieces. You can still see the blood

there now, there are blue lines on the stones, and crosses have been carved into them."

Right throughout the Mediterranean karst regions, similar stories exist about an old woman and February. On a February day when it was fine and warm, an old woman took her lambs up into the mountains and mocked February, so February borrowed a few days from March and the cold *bura* wind started blowing and snow fell, and froze the old woman and her lambs — and they can still be seen today turned to stone together with the old woman. The story is also known in Konavle, and sometime localised in neighbouring Herzegovina.

In Uskoplje I heard that an old woman had gone out to pasture with her lambs in February in Čemerna, and she, too, had frozen according to the well-known model. "And the story remains: an old woman froze to death in Čemerna. All that was left was a piece of ice". In Dunave a narrator recounted this story to me, but the setting was in the surroundings of Bileća in Herzegovina. "Cold winds blew and froze the old woman and all the lambs. The place is called Old Woman's Water — because water came out of both her openings, water came out of her cunt and her backside."

There is a similar and very beautiful story from Pičete about an old woman who was leading a mule loaded with "two full goatskins of cheese" down from the mountains, but they were met by a man who said that they were *kami*, or stones. At that moment "the goatskins came down from the mule — and the mule and the goatskins and the old woman all turned into stone. Even today Herzegovinians claim you can tell where that place is from the stone, and you can recognise the rope with which the goatskin was tied, and the mule can be recognised and the woman".

One could write about local Konavle stories in another way in a more scholarly fashion, which is what I tried to do in other articles about Bogišić's collection mentioned in the text. However, that was not my intention with this article. Here, my purpose was to follow the paths of my wanderings and the stories I heard all over Konavle forty, and even more than forty, years ago, and, with the help of the old manuscripts in the Bogišić collection, to try to conjure up at least something of the narrators of that time, of the local stories, and of that landscape seen through its legends. All things which are no more.

(Translated by Nina H. Antoljak)

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