

CULTURAL ENGAGEMENT IN APPLIED ETHNOMUSICOLOGY: EXAMPLES FROM BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA A CONTRIBUTION TO APPLIED SCIENCE

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Abstract: This paper should not be understood as the promotion of a new direction, new ideas, but rather as a kind of reading on what has happened and what is happening in field of the traditional/folk musical opinion in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The focus of our interest is on ethnomusicologists of the older generation, active in the period from 1960s to 1990s, although in the end, instead of the conclusion, we will present what is visible in field of applied ethnomusicology for period from the 1990s to this day.

Key words: Bosnia and Herzegovina; ethnomusicologists; applied ethnomusicology.

“The fundamental issue with respect to the applied science in general, and therefore to the applied ethnomusicology as well, is how to link the level of knowledge and understanding of the research subjects, which is as a rule limited to a relatively small number of people (scientists, members of academic elite) to the level of research subject, which includes a considerably greater number of people (who are typically not part of academic elite).”
(Pettan, 2010, 197)

An encounter with the traditional music can be surprising, alluring, inspiring, a positive or a negative one?! We can simply listen to it, accept it, and discover whether we like it or not. When encountering the traditional music of Bosnia and Herzegovina, we remain overwhelmed and wondering before the diversity and beauty, before the fact that the climate and local architecture intensely and profoundly affect the creation and apprehending the sound structures, and how diverse this soundscape is. We are surprised by how pronounced is the difference between the rural and the urban sound environments revealed in shaping and building instruments, dance movements, and singing styles.

In case of traditional music, we sometimes have difficulties with accepting the fact that it is the meaningfully organized sound, the behaviour that is guided by rules, i.e. which proceeds on these grounds although, of course, it is performed freely and spontaneously, and is also spontaneously listened to, accepted, adopted, performed again and transmitted further. It is completely clear that

variants and mutual adaptations occur continuously. Thus the ethnomusicology's task, among other things, begins to include discovering and understanding these rules and principles.

We also observe that it is about the traditional musical culture, which is in a permanent process of changes and adjustments to the social and societal environment. It also happens that old patterns disappear as the culture, rites, and customs they have served change. They disappear together with the disappearance of the corresponding context.

Sometimes we sense and recognize them – transformed and stylized, in performing contexts of festivals and reviews, in endeavours by individuals or local communities, i.e. in the attempts of revitalization, preservation, or touristic presentations.

These are the starting points for ethnomusicologists of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Their approaches differ, the same as the circumstances they worked in. However, their contribution to what we nowadays recognize as the applied science is immeasurable. Starting from the listed facts, the intention is to investigate ethnomusicological contexts, through the research and other folkloristic activities by Miroslava Fulanović-Šošić, Dunja Rihtman-Šotrić, Jasna Spaić, Ankica Petrović, and Vinko Krajtmajer. They were ethnomusicologists, the contemporaries and the students of Cvjetko Rihtman (1902–1989), who were of slightly different age, but whose versatile and diverse activity marked the 1960s, 70s and 80s. Besides research, their activities were focused on media (radio and television), pedagogy, and amateurism, which together has paved a sound way for the development of a separate scientific area presently known as the applied ethnomusicology. From this perspective in the time of post-socialist Bosnia and Herzegovina, i.e. a transition society burdened with war happenings and still burning nationalism, i.e. a society which favours gender issues and the promotion of the value and significance of the traditional culture (particularly non-material heritage), we can(not) (not to) see and (not) perceive consistency, methodical conduct, diligence, creativity, favouring the new in science, and authority of the listed ethnomusicologists at the level of both local and regional communities, and broader.

This text therefore provides their brief biographies. Besides, I focus on their diverse orientations and interests. In this way one can observe differences and similarities in their approaches in ethnomusicology, i.e. their understanding of Bosnian and Herzegovinian musical identities. I believe that by highlighting their experiences we can get a useful insight - both into the development of Bosnian and Herzegovinian ethnomusicological thought and into the development of applied ethnomusicology.

Miroslava Fulanović-Šošić (1932–2015)¹. As a music editor at Radio Sarajevo, she worked on innovating the music programs by presenting the traditional music in an educational, popular and receptive way. She intensely monitored and, in numerous programs, presented epic singing with *gusle* accompaniment. “For over ten years, she systematically attended *gusle*-playing reviews in the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina and beyond, and searched for *gusle*-players and excelling connoisseurs of this kind of expression in the field.” (Karača Beljak, 2014b, 114). Miroslava Fulanović-Šošić is also credited for a cycle of programs *Etnomuzikologija* (Ethnomusicology), broadcast from the establishment of the III Channel of Radio Sarajevo (1972).

“Working on this task, she continuously and in a planned way gathered ethnomusicologists from whole of Yugoslavia so as to present the results of their activities, giving them the opportunity to introduce themselves to broad audiences. In this program, she also presented the most significant achievements of the contemporary ethnomusicology in the world.” (Ferović, 1990, 4).

Former *Radio Sarajevo* listeners to also remember Miroslava Fulanović-Šošić by programs *Zvuci i odjeci* (Sounds and echoes), *Gdje je zrno klicu zametnulo* (Where a grain germinated a sprout), *I bješe pjesma i osta pjesma* (There was the song and there remained the song). For the program *U posjetu Šekovićima* (Visiting Šekovići), she was awarded the expert jury’s prize at the radio program contest in Ohrid in 1987. Furthermore, exhaustive manuscripts, program synopses and scenarios, personal letters and correspondence with colleagues from other radio centres in former Yugoslavia, and the accurate documentation of field recordings and archival material² bear witness to her sincere and profound need to promote and appropriately professionally and scientifically evaluate the traditional musical practice of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and certainly to allow for its better understanding in a broader ethnomusicological context. In the same time, those make it easier for consequent later researchers to go through the valuable sound material stored in the record and the tape library of former Radio Sarajevo.

¹ She completed the general education high school and high school of music, department of harp in Sarajevo. She was the first ethnomusicology student. She completed Academy with excellent grades, graduated (1961) and took her master’s degree (1974) in Prof. Cvjetko Rihtman’s class. As a student, she worked for the Institute of Folklore Studies on transcribing and documenting music recordings. Since 1956, she has been employed as Ethnomusicological seminar expert associate at the Academy of Music in Sarajevo. In the early 1970 she transferred to Radio Sarajevo, where she remained until the retirement in 1992. In the Folk Music Department of Radio Sarajevo, she worked as a senior music editor and columnist, which was the highest-rank journalist position. She managed the Folk Music Department and was an editor at the III Channel of Radio Sarajevo.

² Since 2013, the entire material has been stored at the Institute of Musicology of Academy of Music in Sarajevo.

Dunja Rihtman-Šotrić (1944–2009)³ In parallel to her scientific and pedagogical work, Dunja Rihtman-Šotrić paid a particular attention to the recognition and presentation of folk music in field of cultural-artistic amateurism in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia. A particular significance can be attached to her work with vocal groups in cultural-artistic societies in Sarajevo *Miljenko Cvitković* (later KUD *Bašćaršija*), *Saobraćajac*, and Academic cultural-artistic society AKUD *Seljo*.⁴ After 2000, upon an invitation by the Institute of Ethnology and Folkloristics from Zagreb, Dunja Rihtman-Šotrić participated in the preparation of collection *Tradicijske glazbe Hrvata Bosanske Posavine* (Traditional music of Croats in Bosanska Posavina) and then, upon the invitation by Sarajevo-based HKD *Napredak* she prepared a paper entitled *Glazbena tradicija Hrvata na području Rame* (Musical tradition of Croats in the Rama River Valley). She was also an associate working on the book by choreographer Miroslav Šilić *Narodne igre, plesovi i običaji Hrvata sjeverne Hercegovine, Završja i Kupresa* (Folk dances and customs of Croats in north Herzegovina, Završje and Kupres). Her cooperation with Sarajevo-based publisher *Gramofon* is equally important, since she thoroughly studied the field in the post-war Bosnia and Herzegovina for this publisher. These field materials were intended for the project *Visoka umjetnost* (High art). Since the project was never completed, the materials are not available either to public or to younger researchers. Ethnomusicologist

³ She completed a classical-education high school and the high school of music in Sarajevo. She graduated (1968) and took her master's degree (1974) from the Department of Musicology of the Academy of Music in Sarajevo in academician Cvjetko Rihtman's class. Upon the completion of studies (1968) she moved to Zagreb, where she worked at the Institute of Folk Arts for the following four years (until 1972). In late 1972 she moved back to Sarajevo. In the manuscripts for her autobiography, Dunja Rihtman-Šotrić recorded: "When I completed studies I worked in Zagreb (...); the materials that I recorded on the island of Brač and in the territory of Slavenska Požega at the time are still stored, together with field notes and collection of musical transcriptions and lyrics in the Institute's archives. Because of my father's retirement I returned to Sarajevo in 1972, and until the end of 1986 I took over and continued his pedagogical work at the Department of Ethnomusicology at Academy of Music. In early 1987 I transferred to the National Museum (...), Department of Ethnology, where I revived the institutional ethnomusicological work in this institution (...)" (Rihtman-Šotrić, 2000).

⁴ Dunja Rihtman-Šotrić wrote the following about her activities in cultural-artistic amateurism and cooperation with other folklorists: "(...) even after I left Zagreb, my ties with colleagues, professionals from Zagreb and Croatia continued. On behalf of BiH, I was a member of the expert board for the International Folklore Review for many years, as well as a member of the expert board for *Review of Folklore of Tri-Border Region* organized by then Tourism Society Lapad (Dubrovnik) and, for a while, an associate at the manifestation *Vinkovci Autumnns* (Vinkovci), lecturer at Badija school and later on in Novi Vinodol, and Lipik. I was also an associate for the musical section in the book *Narodni plesovi Bilogore* (author: Dr. Ivan Ivančanin), and *Narodni plesovi iz okoline Jastrebarskog* (author Branko Kostelac, a Zagreb coreographer). I co-authored Croatian folk dances from Bosanska Posavina staged in KUD Zagreb (...) and in Zagreb-based ensemble *Lado*" (Rihtman-Šotrić, 2000).

Dunja Rihtman-Šotrić was extremely committed to pedagogical work and work in amateurism. Her strong will, discipline in work, systematic approach to field work and recorded materials, as well as perfectionism in making musical transcriptions and conducting analyses left a deep impression both on her colleagues – ethnomusicologists and other folklorists, who gladly relied upon her professional help. Sincerely socially engaged during her life and career, she has worked hard on promoting the traditional culture of the region she was born and professionally grew in. She believed that we cannot understand traditional *music idioms* of the others without knowing our own.

Jasna Spaić (1943)⁵ Together with Miroslava Fulanović-Šošić and Ankica Petrović, she was a pioneer in the area of applied ethnomusicology, applying the theoretical ethnomusicological knowledge in preparing stories, programs and other complex radio and TV achievements. In our conversations, Jasna Spaić repeatedly pointed out that radio was her most precious professional experience.

“I began to work at Radio Sarajevo in 1966, in Danijela Ozme Street. Today, when I pass by this building my heart beats faster and my gaze rises toward windows of the second floor, where my Department of Folk Music used to be. For me, Radio Sarajevo has remained an institution, a media space where the cultural identity of our region was created and confirmed.” (Karača Beljak, 2014a)

While working at Radio Sarajevo and, later on, at Radio of Federation Bosnia and Herzegovina, this consummate ethnomusicologist made thousands of minutes of programs, creating programs on musical heritage, following contemporary musical developments and participating at international competitions of radio programs.

“Jasna Spaić has created a program with the symbolic and metaphoric title *Iz naroda u narod* (From people to people which featured authentic recordings of huge documentary value. Most of these recordings were subsequently permanently stored in the records and tapes library of Radio Sarajevo and are still available. For her contribution to radiophony, and for the presentation of traditional expression, i.e. for an exquisitely made recording of the extremely well performed female ganga *Điduka*, recorded in the field at Gornji Ograđenik near Čitluk, ethnomusicologist J. Spaić was awarded the PRIZ Bratislava 1974 prize.” (Karača Beljak, 2014b, 113-114)

⁵ She completed the classical-education high school and high school of music, piano department, in Sarajevo. She studied at the Academy of Music in Sarajevo, Department of Musicology. She graduated (1968) and took her master's degree in academician Cvjetko Rihtman's class. She began her career at RTV Sarajevo, first as music associate and then as music editor at TV, and then at radio in the folk music department. She retired in 2008 from the Radio of Federation Bosnia and Herzegovina. Over the forty years of her career, she systematically worked on researching the traditional music of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Ethnomusicologist Jasna Spaić is one of the people who introduced the traditional music into radio and television programs in the second half of the 20th century, thus paving the way for younger generations, encouraging them to create various media contents. Through her own example, she showed that it was possible to present scientific facts both in the educational and in the popular way, in a language attractive to broad audience.

Ankica Petrović (1943)⁶ In the period from 1968 to 1979 she worked as a music associate and then as editor in a Radio Sarajevo department. She first prepared a series of programs *Muzika svijeta* (Music of the world), and then focused on field research of local communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina. "I felt a need to find the original musical material myself, by working in the field, to experience it in the authentic environment and situation and communicate my own experience to the audience in the form of documentary thematic programs." (Petrović, 2014)⁷ Then, following her own inclinations and estimates, she prepared programs for the III Channel of the Radio. In 1974, she was awarded the second prize for the recording of a traditional wedding song on the mountain of Janj at the international Prix Bratislava contest. Two years later, she was awarded three prizes at the JRT contest of radio programs in Ohrid, in the categories of musical illustrations, documentary music program and experimental music program.

From 1992, she has worked at seven US universities. At the time, together with American ethnomusicologist Theodor Levin (?), she has published a compact disc with the traditional music of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, entitled *Echoes from an endangered world: Bosnian Muslim music*. Her experience at radio, i.e. the previously prepared gramophone record *Tradicionalna muzika na tlu Bosne i Hercegovine* (Traditional music in the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina)⁸ was crucial for the implementation of this project, which was intended to draw attention to people of Bosnia and Herzegovina affected by war. Her media experience also resulted in the shooting of the documentary *Ključ Španije* (Key to Spain). The film is a recording about

⁶ She completed the secondary education in Sarajevo. She studied at the Academy of Music in Sarajevo, first at the Department of Theory and Pedagogy, from which she graduated in 1968, and then at the Department of Musicology, from which she graduated in 1974, in academician Rihtman's class. Next year, in 1975, she applied for doctoral dissertation at the Department of Social Anthropology with Queen's University in Belfast (Great Britain). She worked on the dissertation entitled *Ganga – A Form of Traditional Rural Singing in Yugoslavia* under the supervision of dr. John Blacking (1928–1990) and defended it in Belfast in 1977. Until 1990s, she was the only doctor of science among ethnomusicologists in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

⁷ The manuscript is part of comprehensive material intended for writing a monograph about Radio Sarajevo.

⁸ The record was published by Diskoton-Svjetlost in Sarajevo, in 1986.

Sarajevo Sephardim Flora Jagoda (1925), keeper of songs sung in Ladino language.⁹ Ankica Petrović has finished her career at the UCLA in the USA.

Ankica Petrović was one of the first people who pioneered ethnomusicological research among minority ethnic groups in Bosnia and Herzegovina, mostly focusing on the Sephardic music. She revealed a particular sensitivity to women – the carriers of traditional practices, thus also focusing on gender ethnomusicology. It is owing to Ankica Petrović that the 1970s witnesses the beginning of a new era of BiH ethnomusicology. In these years, the subject of BiH ethnomusicology has been extended to studying the context and function of music, which strongly links ethnomusicology with the sociology of music, anthropology, ethnology, etc.

Vinko Krajtmajer (1940–2008)¹⁰ “Our inner soundscape can be a vast meadow, deep sea, a mountain idyll or a space odyssey. We can feel good, safe, satisfied and calm in ourselves and our own music.” (Karača Beljak, 2007) These are the words of a man who believed that we should first come to terms with ourselves and only then with others. Vinko Krajtmajer’s professional and scientific activity was related to the areas of solfeggio, and ethnomusicology. His point of view was visible in his public presentations at lectures, seminars, forums and reviews on radio, television, and particularly through his participation at various academic events. In these fields, he prepared and published most of his studies through communications at symposia, professional journals, and publications. In the field of solfeggio, Krajtmajer was involved in issues of developing creativity, and possibilities and effects of using folklore in the teaching process. Krajtmajer dealt with the creative process and prospects of developing individual sensibility, in papers pertaining to the issue of improvisation as one of the most prominent creative procedures. Krajtmajer mostly discussed the issue of improvisation by comparing the folk and contemporary art music. He was the first to use this method in the territory of former Yugoslavia, and was the first who presented results of his experimental research at the ISME Congress in Montreux in 1976. Using the method of improvisation on a given folklore model, Krajtmajer “discovered” the consonance of second dissonance and double tonicity in the

⁹ Ladino is the colloquial term for Judeo-espanol (Judaeo-Spanish), a language that is presently spoken by very few people in Sarajevo.

¹⁰ In Tuzla, he completed the primary school, general-education high school, primary and high school of music and the first degree of Faculty of Mining. In 1963, he moved to Sarajevo and enrolled at the Academy of Music, where he graduated in 1967, at the Department of Theory and Pedagogy with Elly Bašić (1908–1998) as his mentor. Twenty years later, he also graduated from the Department of Musicology, major in ethnomusicology, in Cvjetko Rihtman’s class. He took his master’s degree in 1994, on a topic in polyphony, from the Department of Composition in Prof. Josip Magdić’s (1937) class. He defended the doctoral dissertation in the area of ethnomusicology at the Department of Musicology of Academy of Music in Sarajevo in 1995 in Prof. Ivan Čavlović (1949) class.

same way in which the two sound terms are used in the West-European music. Other significant fields of Vinko Krajtmajer's professional activity include writing textbooks for primary and secondary schools, writing in press, activity on TV and original music for films, and making arrangements and composing. He was the author of ten scenarios for the RTV Sarajevo programs: *Muzika i mi* (Music and us), *Predanja* (Lore) and *Mali koncert ozbiljne muzike* (Little concert of Serious music). Sarajevo theatre audience remembers Krajtmajer by exquisite music composed for the play *Macbeth* directed by Dino Mustafić (?). Krajtmajer made over a hundred arrangements of compositions of various styles, from the Renaissance music to contemporary jazz genres, for the needs of the Dance orchestra of Musical Youth, Vocal octet *Collegium artisticum*, as he worked as its artistic director for many years. The life and professional stories of Bosnian and Herzegovinian ethnomusicologists covered in this text help us understand the social and historical context in which they worked. Indeed, in this way we can learn more about their understanding of traditional *musical idioms*, institutional ethnomusicological research and about what influenced their personal development in science. Ultimately, I understand this text also as a possibility to discover cultural messages of the period of time discussed. Finally, this is not an analysis which would imply opening the space for more profound contextual research and interpretations of historical circumstances. This is simply a contribution to applied ethnomusicology.

Instead of conclusion

**What are ethnomusicologists currently doing
in the field of applied ethnomusicology?!**

or

**Under what circumstances is applied ethnomusicology possible
in Bosnia and Herzegovina?**

Ethnomusicologists that have been working since the 1990s to the present day and their predecessors have been active in the areas of pedagogy, media and audio-visual production. It is proved by numerous discographic editions, radio and television programs, work with ensembles and folklore reviews. Still, presently we are perhaps more than ever before aware of the fact that by performing traditional music and its possible recording on sound-recording media, only for listening sake, this practice is separated from its actual context, and that in this way the functional values of certain music forms are mostly lost. We are aware that our notions of traditional music are a result of the mass media supply (audio and video recordings). However, we must not forget that musical phenomena are considered as traditional, i.e. folklorist in a broader sense, when they have arisen

from the live practice in which they were included by their performers free will, and that these expressions live in the immediate contact of the given community. To avoid falling into the trap of conservation endeavours – generally deadly for all forms of the folk music practice, we can consider that the way in which music forms from the area of oral transmission can be viewed in the context of the contemporary Bosnian and Herzegovinian society, i.e. what are challenges and prospects in presenting these forms of non-material heritage. Possible questions for which we should seek answers, pertain to performing contexts, aesthetics, historical background, activities that include music, music repertoire (elements of style, genres, lyrics, melodic patterns, way of transmitting and adopting, dance elements and gesture), and material culture. Today more than ever we need audio and video recordings, from the most ancient ones to the recent times – including websites and various databases of private collectors, record and tape libraries, music sheet libraries, and archives of public RTV stations. Besides, in the context of music and material culture, i.e. folk music and applied ethnomusicology, it is necessary to discuss the effect of electronic media, since at present audience more than ever listens to music through mass media and in this way forms their tastes and relations toward folklore practice – old and new phenomena.

Without dealing with details, I would like to point out that, for Bosnian and Herzegovinian ethnomusicologists, the field of applied ethnomusicology is challenging and “dangerous” in the same time. It is dangerous because ethnomusicologists are often subject to their personal interpretations and estimates, sometimes interpretations of suspicious quality, on the border to sink into amateurism, kitsch and various stylizations. This is particularly true when it comes to work with ensembles and creation of various discographic editions. It is challenging because it relies upon enthusiasm, volunteering, and a desire to apply the acquired theoretical knowledge at a practical level. Actually, these attempts are a distinctive pursuits of beauty. Perhaps more importantly, these attempts are a message to the academic community and broader public, who marginalize folk culture or else rarely recognize it as a cultural or tourist product, that it is worth preserving (though not in the form of conservation because ultimately it is not possible) because of the profound understanding of their own past and developing a sense of difference and diversity. Despite the globalization and modernization of society, cultural and musical identities remain complex, and are composed of both local and regional, and professional or social particularities. Thus, it becomes evident that ethnomusicologists possess the knowledge that, somewhat ambiguously, derives from the needs of the society they live in.

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