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**RURAL MUSICAL CULTURE OF MIGRANTS FROM DINARIC  
REGIONS SETTLED IN CENTRAL SERBIA**

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***Abstract:** Specific culture of the inhabitants of the Dinaric mountains region in the Western Balkans has already been observed primarily by ethnographers, antropogeographers and historians, and in recent times also by ethnomusicologists. This paper is dedicated to intriguing subject of the elements of Dinaric traditional rural musical idiom in the regions where these people settled in central Serbia mainly through their intensive and large migrations during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The prominent elements of their rural musical traditions – interrelations of the folklore genres and melodic models, different structure and stylistic elements – have been kept as recognizable and compact in hilly and mountain regions on the West, but were changed and evolved in new musical forms (mixtures with the elements of other musical traditions/sensibilities) in the East, lowlands of the central Serbia.*

**Keywords:** rural folk tradition, Dinaric migrations, Serbia, two-part singing, highlanders

**1. DINARIC MIGRATIONS FROM  
THEIR HOMELAND TO SERBIA**

The subject of specific culture, character and temperament of the inhabitants of the large Dinaric mountains region (named according to the mountain Dinara in the hinterland of the Adriatic Sea) have already been critically observed by anthropologists and historians; it was found that it is about a specific psychological type (Cvijić [1922], 1966; Dvorniković [1939] 2000:157). Recently, ethnomusicologists have contributed to the research of their musical tradition(s), pointing out both musical and expressive elements that characterize their recognizable rural musical culture. It is significant that main elements of this rural culture have been shared among the carriers of different religions originating from the same cultural milieu – Christian (Orthodox, and both Greek and Roman Catholic) and Islam.

For centuries during the Ottoman rule (from the 15<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> c.) people who have not turned to Islam have migrated from Dinaric (and from other regions) to other Balkan and South Pannonia areas spatially spreading also the influence of their traditional culture. In some areas their rural musical idiom prevailed, while in some other it was overwhelmed by the musical culture of the indigenous or other groups of inhabitants. The case

of the central Serbia to which the Dinaric people (mainly the Orthodox Serbs) massively migrated in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, is especially interesting, because on this territory they met other (mainly Serbian) inhabitants with different musical traditions. In these conditions, some specific general features of the rural musical culture on this territory developed as a symbiosis of Dinaric and of other rural musical sensibilities. Also, this territory is confirmed as a territory of passage between larger, different cultural areas (Jovanović M. 1979:107; Drobnjaković 1932:203). For these reasons, this region might be recognized also as a paradigm of Balkan areas, where larger rural cultural influences meet.

Central regions of Serbia have been also considered by ethnologists and anthropologists as one of the Balkan areas that absorbed the greatest mixture of inhabitants of different origins. At the same time, this is also an area of passage between the larger areas settled (in the West) primarily by Dinaric and (in the East) by Dinaric and other groups of inhabitants, e. g. from: 1) Kosovo and Metohia (this migration stream is considered to be the oldest and of the strongest continuity and consistency), 2) North Greece, Macedonia and South Serbia (so-called migration stream of the Morava and Vardar Rivers), 3) Eastern Serbia (the Timok River and Braničevo vicinity) and 4) Shop

regions (this region encompasses both contemporary West Bulgaria and Southeast Serbia; Drobnjaković 1932:199, 203). On the other hand, there is another anthropologists' division of central regions of Serbia, according to the altitude and geographic configuration of the land: in the West and South West there is mountain region, with the height from 500m to about 1200m, in the middle there are regions of about 300-400m, and in the East, North and North East there is lowland, 300m and less. This has been proved as one of the key factors in "reading" the elements of the traditional culture in their spatial distribution.

This study has been based on the results of the field work conducted mainly in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> and up to the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. That means that the elements of the old layers of the musical tradition have been kept in the living practice approximately until the 1980s. Nowadays, the oldest singers are able to show it for the purpose of recording, but practically never in the original contexts. Thus, the paper shows a kind of a reconstruction of elements of old rural vocal tradition as it surely used to be present in these regions in a long continuity of time up to 1970s and 1980s.

The key historical event that moved a huge migration of Orthodox people from the Dinaric regions is the formation of the first Serbian free state entity after the four centuries of the Ottoman rule: in the region of Šumadija, central Serbia. After the success of the First Serbian Uprising against the Turks (1804-1813), the liberated territory attracted Serbs (and others) from the regions that were still under the Ottomans in the neighborhood or in more distant regions, so they migrated from different areas and settled here. The largest and the most massive migration was the one from Dinaric regions and it occurred in 1809. It was a massive movement from the region of Sjenica (nowadays South West Serbia) where already a mixture of Dinaric people was formed during the previous times (Nedeljković, 2000:102). The migrants were moving in the direction of the North and Northeast. Beside the massive, there were also successive migrations, lasting in phases, but lasting constantly (it could be said, by nowadays). On their way, some of them settled in the regions of West Serbia, before they reached its central parts, so the trace of their path is possible to be followed as a continuation of cultural elements, toponymes, family names and family relations. Dinaric migration stream had several "branches" (term using according to Drobnjaković 1923:249). The first of them was the most massive in the period during the two Serbian Uprisings, in the

period between 1804 and 1815. It moved from the regions of Bijelo Polje, Sjenica, Pešter, Bihor, as well as of Herzegovina and Montenegro, settled Stari Vlah and Dragačevo and highlands of central Serbia. It resulted by settling of numerous families and homes in central Serbia (Drobnjaković, 1923:24; Nedeljković, 2000:111). The second path led from Novi Pazar and Stari Kolašin, through the valleys of the Ibar and Gruža rivers (Drobnjaković, 1923:250); the third group came from the region of Osat in Bosnia relatively late (in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century) and is considered as a "younger" migration stream (Drobnjaković, 1923:251), not compact, but in individual settlements.

Jovan Cvijić supposes that the reasons of Dinaric moving towards the new lands were primarily of historical and psychological, but also of economic nature; in central Serbia there is much more fertile land to till, than in rocky regions in their homelands (Cvijić, 1966:152). In the new settings they also needed a lot of free mountain spaces for cattle breeding as their primary occupation. The mountain regions of central Serbia they recognized as the most suitable for them and most similar to their old homeland (Drobnjaković, 1932a:312), but as more "friendly" to live there. Ethnologists found that, as a result, it turned that "rough" Dinaric features were "gentled" by more comfortable life conditions and friendlier natural environment, but they kept the brightness in their thinking and reasoning and their abruptness. However, coming down to the lowlands, they accepted the other cultural elements and changed many of their recognizable identity features (Cvijić 1966:171), including their speech characteristics. Dinaric settlers were in a kind of "friction" with other, numerous groups of inhabitants; for a long time they did not choose their spouses among them (Cvijić, 1966:68-9). It can be assumed that the process of their socialization in wider society at the same time meant process of loosening their main cultural characteristics and replacing them by the other ones. Observing further to the East and Southeast in Serbia, the features of Dinaric culture are generally less and less recognizable, or completely absent, despite the percentage of people of this origin in the villages (Jovanović, 2014:83). They adapted to the other *cultural environment* and changed their musical expression (Jovanović, 2014a).

It is found that there is an "imagined frontier line" in direction NW-SE that divides the territory of central Serbia with prevailing different groups of inhabitants (Cvijić, 1966:227). In the hilly regions in the West, Dinaric people are present in the number of above 90%. In the lowlands, they

are present practically everywhere, but in number that varies, going up to about 50%; they are also less compact as the population here, so their cultural features are less influential.

It is logical that the area of Dinaric culture was never limited to any state borders. Generally, it could be said that the continuity of this (both material and spiritual) culture spreads in the whole continuity of the Dinaric mountain regions in the direction West-East. (Anthropogeographer Jovan Cvijic considered even the wider area that encompasses Dinaric one as only a part – e.g. the whole of the Dinaric-Pindus geological region spreading continually in direction South and Southeast, to Albania and West Greece. However, it will not be considered within the frames of this paper). Thus, its Eastern region (naturally) encompasses hilly areas of the West Serbia, in geographic continuity of Dinaric mountain complex.

Strong patriarchal family connections are the main characteristics of Dinaric social organization (which are partly kept by today). Thus, despite certain differences that they acquainted in the new life settings of central Serbia, the traces of this kind of social pattern(s) remained also here (Nedeljković, 1996:109), especially in its hilly West and Southwest regions.

## 2. DINARIC RURAL VOCAL TRADITION IN CENTRAL SERBIA

**2.1 Elements of Dinaric rural vocal tradition.** In the regions of central Serbia they have been identified on the basis of comparative insight in existing materials from the successive and original regions of Dinaric people, i.e. in Western and Southwestern areas of Serbia, from Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina – from the depth of the area of Dinaric vocal idiom. Some parallels and similar phenomena have been recognized, and often also existing of geographic continuation of certain elements of Dinaric vocal expression. In East parts of central Serbia where the mixture with other groups of inhabitants is present, the features of Dinaric way of singing are expressed rarely as the whole musical forms, but more typically in traces. The elements of Dinaric speech and music tradition are changed into the idiom of the other groups, even in the regions with Dinaric majority.

In this study the elements of rural musical vocal tradition in central Serbia, recognized as belonging to Dinaric culture will be presented. It will be shown through: folk music genres and related melodic models; musical structure elements

– scale, types of two-part singing, role of the interval of second; stylistic elements in performance according to specific aesthetic demands, also connected to certain genres/melodic models and to private or public context of performance. Dinaric musical idiom is shown as compact and recognizable only in the West of the central part of Serbia. In the East it might be noted only in separate elements, never as a rule and rarely in combination with other elements of the kind (Jovanović J., 2014:292). According to these findings, certain assumptions and conclusions of the Dinaric ethnogenesis in central Serbia have been derived and explained in the author's published doctoral dissertation (Jovanović J., 2014), methodologically based on the experiences of areal dialectological research, primarily applied in Russian ethnolinguistics (see for ex. Plotnikova 2004).

### 2.2 Folk music genres and melodic models.

Genres are (partly) determined by the use of certain melodic models as genre markers, so these two criteria will be discussed here as a whole. The presence of Dinaric (musical) culture may be recognized in: songs that the adults sing to the children, as well as Christmas songs, laments, *slava* songs, so-called *counting songs (brojenice)*, solo travelers', epic and narrative songs (Jovanović J. 2014:89-122; Radinović 2008), as well as a special way of men's public call for the spinning parties. All these genres are marked with the use of certain specific melodic models, applied mainly in Dinaric culture. (There are also some specific forms of ritual speech forms, such as those within Christmas family rituals, as celebration of the Christmas candle (*sjakanje*), and within wedding customs (*aminovanje*), the remnants of Dinaric traditional culture. Since there is no musical component but only speech, it will not be discussed in this paper).

As (one of) the most striking example(s) of specificities of Dinaric vocal sensibility seems to be a genre connected to a specific melodic model: it is about the drone two-part singing (called *na glas*) that has already been identified as one of the general markers of Dinaric culture in the Balkans (Dević 2002:34, 47; **Example 1**). In the central Serbia it is also emically considered as a clear element of Dinaric cultural identity; the emic term for the Dinaric people singing it is *Erci* (meaning people from Herzegovina; this kind of singing is called *ersko*). Elements that mark Dinaric musical culture in this kind of singing are as follows: ornamental tones in lower second alternative breathing, so that the phrase could last long with no pause, singing in rubato rhythm with lots of

agogic freedom, treating the interval of second as a bearer of triple function: signal, sound, cadential, and ornamental/aesthetic (Jovanović, J., 2014:178-179; Golemović, 1996:13-14).

Some of the melodic models (all connected to specific genres) are spread in geographic continuity within the original Dinaric regions, via the successive areas of the migrations, all the way to the central Serbia. However, there is also a case of one of them that can be found only in one original Dinaric region – Sjenica, and in central Serbia, with no geographic continuity between these two areas. This points to the difference in the nature of migrations that brought these models: in the former case, it is about the trace on the way of a successive migration in the longer course of time; the latter case might be a result of the sudden, massive movement from Sjenica and quick spread in central Serbia (at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century), keeping the compactness of the culture elements in the new environments (Jovanović, J., 2014:255-258).

It is significant to note that the difference in the interpretation of melodic models also depends on the geographical configuration of the terrain: in lowlands, there is no signs of Dinaric musical elements (as a whole musical form), despite the majority that they might make in certain areas. This, intriguing geographic aspect of ethnomusicological work has been explained as *ethnogeomusicology* by Izaly Zemtsovky (2005).

**2.3 Elements of the musical structure.** Markers of Dinaric musical idiom among structural elements are these: a specific scale of narrow, non-tempered intervals (Jovanović, J. 2014:155); old two-part singing of heterophonic, heterofonic-bourdon, and bourdon texture, with specific roles of the interval of the second, including the cadences (Jovanović, J. 2014:233) – among the features that differ the musical idiom of Dinaric people from that of the lowland inhabitants is perfect, bright unison rural singing that shows another aesthetics and folklore musical expression (Jovanovic J., 2014:179). Other identified features are refrains longer than a melodic verse (Jovanović, J., 2014:272) and exclamatory syllables *hoj* or *oj* in cadences (Devic, 1986:4).

A scale we are mentioning is also present in rural music tradition in original Dinaric regions: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, partly Croatia, and whole West Serbia (Jovanović, J., 2014:227). In central Serbia it is the musical idiom of inhabitants of Dinaric origin.

**2.4 Stylistic elements.** General elements of the style in Dinaric performances are, on the first place, long, prolonged, steady tones (*ersko* singing,

seen by the lowlands inhabitants as the practice of *Brdjani* / highlanders; Jovanović, J., 2014:208). The “long, continual duration of the song, in which the alternative breathing is of key significance” is seen as part of the heritage of Dinaric musical culture (Dević, 2002:40). Also, there are noticeable accents on melodically and rhythmically emphasized (naturally accented) syllables (**Example 2**; as opposed to soft movements and sometimes to glissando with the aim of peaceful leading of the melody course), so the listener has the impression of somewhat static character of the melodies. Also, the counting songs are sung in a manner of a “motor rhythm” (Jovanović, J., 2014:180-181), and in a kind of rhythmic chant of the text.

**2.5 The context.** Survival of the Dinaric models in central Serbia depends also on private or public context(s) of their ‘life’ in the new environment. It also influences the musical structure, depending on the musical idiom of the people who continue singing these models (Jovanović, J., 2014:261-262). For example, the Dinaric model of the *slava* songs remained longer as a more transparent presence of Dinaric way of singing in the public domain, not only within the family but also during the spinning parties (Jovanović, J., 2014:261-262).

Despite the majority of Dinaric migrants in many regions of central Serbia, including the East parts of the region, their influence on the rural musical culture is nowadays generally not noticeable any more, except in hilly and mountain regions in the West and Southwest. The causes of disappearing of Dinaric way of singing in the lowland may be explained by: change of way of life and of cultural environment in the lowlands; the majority of other groups of inhabitants and prevalence of their cultural influence; lack of the context(s) for performing some folklore genres in the new settings; influences from the town music.

There are points that show two different ways of ‘further life’ of Dinaric musical idioms in the new environment: 1) their disappearance and replacement by elements of other kind; and 2) their survival and implementation into other musical forms.

Speaking of the disappearance and/or replacement of Dinaric musical elements, it is characteristic that in the West and in the East of central Serbia the same melodic models are differently interpreted, depending on the prevailing musical idiom/aesthetics. It may be about: the scale, and/or replacing certain melodic formulae within the same models by the other ones, together with a different musical sensibility; at the same

time it may be singing in two parts or in unison (**Examples 3-6**). There could also be found ornamenting by the movement of lower second in the model of harvest songs (Jovanović, J., 2014:179; **Example 5**).

The implementation of Dinaric musical elements into the music forms of the other kind can be seen in the songs of the newer rural layer, and also in so called *hybrid* forms that encompass both older and newer style (Jovanović, J., 2014:305), developed probably in the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It is about cadences in second, drone-form accompanying lower part, and alternative breathing in newer style of singing (Jovanović, J., 2014:305; **Examples 7, 8**). The obvious testimony of the awareness of our informants about these features as Dinaric is a sentence one of the singers told to his fellow singer: “You prolong the tone like an *Era* [singer from Dinaric regions]!” (Jovanović, J., 2014:180).

### 3. CONCLUSIONS

It is important to stress that the findings of the linguists and ethnomusicologists are in concordance considering these questions (Jovanović J., 2014:307). Dinaric influence both in traditional music and speech is less and less prominent in the lowlands of central Serbia, despite the findings of the ethnologists and anthropologists of their majority in many areas.

Change in the structural features within Dinaric models and their *mélange* with other elements illustrates the phenomenon explained as “crystallization of the mixture”; this term is coined by ethnolinguist Pavle Ivić (Ivić, 1955-1956:104-105; Jovanović, J., 2014:303-305). It is about the establishment of musical and speech forms that appeared as results of pervasion of different features and forming of the new constants in the common tradition.

Generally, central Serbia, with Morava River in the central position of the country, seems also to keep a central position in the Balkan Peninsula as well, being a meeting point and the melting pot of different rural Balkan cultures, as well as of Oriental, Middle European and Mediterranean cultures. That is why in this area many unique rural musical forms can be found, as results of hybridization of these influences during a longer course of time.

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MUSICAL EXAMPLES

Tempo rubato  $\text{♩} = \text{cca } 86$

Oj, y - ve - nu - la (j) šra -

$\text{♩} = \text{cca } 95$

a - a - a o, И! Oj, 'ge su,

ma - la, za - no(j) - ťi - la (j) sa - u!

O.F.

Example 1 – old Dinaric bourdon two-part singing (*na glas*).  
Taken from Petrovic R. and Jovanovic J., 2003, example 15.

$\text{♩} = 80$   $\text{♩} = 94$

С'о - нс стра - нс шве - та - ло ба - грс - њс,

с'о - нс стра - нс шве - та - ло ба - грс - њс.

Example 2 – *slava* and wedding melodic model, with strong accents.  
Taken from Jovanovic J., 2013, example 15.

♩ = 97

Ја ре - ко', ја ре - ко' те - бе, ње - вој - ко.

ја ре - ко', ја ре - ко' те - бе, ње - вој - ко.

o.f.

Example 3 – wedding model from Sjenica region.  
Taken from Jovanovic J., 2014, Appendix IV, example 8.

♩ = 97

Већ то је брат и сес - три - ца.

брат и сес - три - ца.

o.f.

Example 4 – the same wedding model in the East central Serbia.  
Taken from Jovanovic J., 2013, example 7.

♩ = cca 80 Rubato

Ој.

Ој.

♩ = cca 72

ју з - трос ра - но,

ју - трос ра - но, И!

Example 5 – a part of the harvest melodic model in the West central Serbia.  
Taken from Jovanovic J., 2014, Appendix III, example 136.

♩ = 60  
но Еј, на - жње - ва се, на - жње - ва се.

Example 6 – a part of the same model as in the Example 5, in the East central Serbia.  
Taken from Jovanovic J. 2014, Appendix IV, example 12.

♩ = 100      ♩ = csa 50  
Ши - ро - ко је ли - шће о - р'о - во,  
о - р'о - во, ши - ро - ко је  
♩ = csa 70  
ли - шће о - р'о - во.

o.f.

Example 7 – a hybrid form of old and new rural vocal layer.  
Taken from Jovanovic, 2014, Appendix III, example 219.

♩ = csa 60      ♩ = csa 50  
Ми - ле мо - је пре - ко Ја - се - ни - це,  
♩ = csa 53  
ги. Ми - ле мо - је пре - ко Ја - се - ни - це.

o.f.

Example 8 – a song of a newer layer with elements of old Dinaric singing.  
Taken from Jovanovic, 2014, Appendix III, example 274.