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Traditional Music as the Sound of Space: Examples from Bosnia and Herzegovina

Tradicijska glasba kot zvok prostora: primeri iz Bosne in Hercegovine

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IZVLEČEK

Povezava med tradicijsko glasbo in njenim ambientom skozi obstoječi prostor – rezultat naravnih in človeških faktorjev – se zrcali v družbenem in glasbenem vedenju (elementi stila), akustičnih fenomenih in pravilih ter v notranji arhitektoniki ali strukturi posameznega izraza tradicijske glasbe.

ABSTRACT

The connection between the traditional music and its ambient through the existing physical space, a product of nature and human activity, is reflected in the social and musical behaviour (elements of style), acoustic phenomena and rules, and in the inner architecture or structure of the particular traditional musical expression.

Introduction

Traditional music of a particular human community is generated from its accompanying space, formed by nature or human, and the ancillary ambient – the physical and nonphysical dimension of the overall context. The architecture of space and the associated ambient cause specific behaviour and customs, the ways of nonmaterial expressions such as music. The ubiquitous liaisons and the mutual conditionality of traditional music and its space/ambient are reflected in social and musical behaviour, or the elements of style, the acoustic phenomena and rules, and finally in the inner architecture or structure of one traditional musical expression.

Beginning with the traditional music of Bosnia and Herzegovina, this research aims to understand the inner rules of the relation between the music and the space of traditional cultures in general. Through pointing out to the differences between specific traditional musical expressions and their spaces, it strives to explore their mutual similarities, with the effort to recognize certain universal rules – as the foundation and the source for the better understanding of the human (musical) behaviour.

Semiotics of Space

“A place is worth for what it is, and for what it can or desires to be...”¹

The terms “space” and “ambient” are difficult to precisely define, because their value is multidimensional, and depends on the perspective and the context. Space, by definition, is “a boundless, three-dimensional extent in which objects and events occur and have relative position and direction”², and the ambience³ is “an environment, surroundings, milieu”⁴, “the character and atmosphere of a place”⁵. Still, a semiotic reading and the phenomenological experience are important in the understanding of these categories, almost certainly coming eventually to the foundation of their (practical) definition – human being, who is the ultimate consumer and reader of the space and ambient in which he/she resides, and dreams.

Traditional music, as a part of particular customs and rituals related to one local context (which is a multidimensional space-ambient of geographical, social, economic, political or cultural factors) is a product of human spirit and actions, *anima* and *animus*, as is the space-ambient of a specific traditional music. A human being provides a meaning to his/her space, or the *house* – the one that is an outside reality and the inside, intimate space, *birth house*. French mathematician, epistemologist, philosopher and “a theorist of a poetic imagination”⁶ Gaston Bachelard (1884–1962) stated that “our house is our corner of the world. (...) it is our first universe, a real cosmos in every sense of the word. If we look at it intimately, the humblest dwelling has beauty. Authors of books on ‘the humble home’ often mention this feature of the poetics of space. (...) Finding little to describe in the humble home, they spend little time there; so they describe it as it actually is, without really experiencing its primitiveness, a primitiveness which belongs to all, rich and poor alike, if they are willing to dream. (...) all really inhabited space bears the essence of the notion of home.”⁷ Home in this context is for Bachelard a native, oniric one⁸, the inner cosmos of a human soul, the space of feelings and imagination, a refuge and a sanctuary, “a body of images that give mankind proofs or illusions of stability.”⁹

1 Alvaro Siza, *Zapisi o arhitekturi* (Zagreb: AGM, 2006), 170.

2 “Space,” accessed on March 28, 2016, <http://www.britannica.com/science/space-physics-and-metaphysics.html>.

3 Lat. *ambiens, ambient-*, present participle of *ambire, to surround, to go round or go about*.

4 “Ambijent,” accessed on March 28, 2016, <http://www.hrleksikon.info/definicija/ambijent.html>.

5 “Ambience,” accessed on March 28, 2016, <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/ambience.html>.

6 Sreten Marić, introduction to *The Poetics of Space*, by Gaston Bachelard (Beograd: Prosveta, 1969), V.

7 Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space* (Beograd: Prosveta, 1969), 31.

8 Greek *oneiros*, dream.

9 Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, 45.

On the *outer* side, German cultural theorist Siegfried Kracauer wrote that spatial images are “the dreams of society. Wherever the hieroglyphics of any spatial image are deciphered, there the basis of social reality presents itself.”¹⁰ Furthermore, “the surface-level expressions ... by virtue of their unconscious nature, provide unmediated access to the fundamental substance of the state of things. Conversely, knowledge of this state of things depends on the interpretation of these surface-level expressions.”¹¹ A mere semiotic¹² reading of sings of the outside reality of space is not sufficient without a phenomenological experience of its multidimensionality. One completes the other, but it is additionally transformed by the multi-layered nature of certain context and, finally, individual and subjective perspective of a reader.¹³ Certainly there is no absolute¹⁴ image or experience of a particular (architectural) space and ambient, so it is a collection and diversity of impressions and interpretations, through the levels, language and meaning of the physical structures and their contents.

“We (...) have to ask ourselves whether the sense of togetherness has any true relation to architecture, in other words, whether it has any connection with architectural constructs. Because, when there is no mass, football game, theatre performance..., architectural spaces are perhaps beautiful, but endlessly desolate places; there is no greater loneliness than the one when you are alone in a ‘space of togetherness’.”¹⁵ A human gives a meaning to the space, through its experience, residence and reading. With dreams and actions he/she creates the spirit of the space, its ambient. “In one of his texts about Euro-Islamic architecture, Christian Welzbacher¹⁶ formulated the following: ‘A mosque is no more than a space oriented toward Mecca. Everything else is a product of human imagination.’”¹⁷ With our desires, needs and behaviour, we – alone and in a community, define certain physical space that is anyway a construct of our own nature. However, an existing architectural space does not need to have a meaning by itself, particularly if that is an example of a modern architecture subjected to mere function. Of course, “the notion of universality” has a certain role, “making efforts to achieve an independent assembly with the habits and rituals of one’s own culture or religion, within which it will be possible to determine one’s own place.”¹⁸ Still, despite the universal elements of a specific space that point to certain roots, a human being is eventually the one who defines the space in entirety with his presence, by creating and experiencing its nonphysical dimension of ambient.

Sometimes, “it only takes an oak to weave the magic of togetherness around it”, an axis which gives “a spatial frame” for the magic of ambient.¹⁹ But, as ambient is

10 Siegfried Kracauer, “On Employment Agencies,” in *Rethinking Architecture*, ed. Neil Leach (London: Routledge, 1997), 60.

11 Siegfried Kracauer, “The Mass Ornament,” in *The Mass Ornament: Weimar Essays*, trans. and ed. Thomas Y. Levin (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), 75.

12 Semiotics, also called semiology (Greek *semeiōtikós*, observant of sings; *semeios*, sign) is the study of signs and sign-using behaviour. Accessed March 28, 2016, <http://www.britannica.com/science/semiotics.html>.

13 Italo Calvino in his work *Invisible cities* contemplates on the ways that a city can be read over again and in various way.

14 Absolute (lat. *absolutus*) “according to the philosophical dictionaries (...) could be anything (...) that is free of connections and limitations, something not dependent of anything else, that it has its own reason, cause and explanation.” (Eco 2011, 36)

15 Tomislav Pavelić, “On Togetherness and Solitude,” *Oris* 59 (2009): 155.

16 Christian Welzbacher (1970) is a rewarded German art historian, journalist and curator.

17 Boris Podrecca, “White Space of Light,” *Oris* 71 (2011), 36.

18 Podrecca, “White Space of Light,” 42.

19 Pavelić, “On Togetherness and Solitude,” 157.

generated from the human relation toward a certain physical structure, it analogously emerges as a nonmaterial dimension of a wider spatial image, that reflects a particular human community or society – its culture, economy or politics. This is a context, which is a summary and mutual conditionality of the space and the ambient, multidimensional universe so significant and meaningful for everything questioned by the ethnomusicology. Finally, the source of this (humanly defined) context is the human spirit itself, its *birth house*, which through music, as well, strives for dreaming or creative freedom, in a physical space of a worldly house necessary for the realisation of this need.

Traditional Music of Bosnia and Herzegovina: Urban and Rural Vocal Practice

“Sevdalinka becomes what it is only when true singer performs it. Not in the letter or notes, nor words and sound, but in the emotion and experience lies the strength of every song, and in particularly sevdalinka. It is sung with the most intense feeling, full of emotions. That is sevdalinka’s way of singing.”²⁰

Sevdalinka²¹ in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as the song of urban environments – cities, developed during the Ottoman rule (1463-1878), and it can be considered that the golden age of its life lasted until the Austro-Hungarian occupation, in 1878.²² As a “melopoetic phenomenon”²³ and the form carrying a distinctive *charge*, it surely inherited something of the local musical expression, but is mostly leaned on the influences brought by the Oriental Islamic culture²⁴. In that sense, sevdalinka became the lyrical monologue of the individual in the city – also the main urbanism unit of the Ottoman Empire, where it acts as a social, acoustic and formal expression of the urban culture of living, in its every manifestation.

On the other hand, polyphonic singing of rural areas in Bosnia and Herzegovina is much older than sevdalinka. According to one of the first Bosnian ethnomusicologists, Cvjetko Rihtman, the polyphonic vocal expressions originate from the ancient Illyrian times²⁵, before the arrival of Slavic people in the Balkan region. During his many years of fieldwork researches, conducted for four decades in the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Rihtman came to a conclusion that certain polyphonic vocal expressions coincide geographically with the territorial organisation of the old Illyrian tribes, having natural borders such as mountains, as their lines of separation. Being classified into the older and newer practice, in accordance to their accompanying contexts, these vocal forms can be a part of the nature cycles (harvesting, mowing...), life cycles (lullabies, wedding songs, laments...) and religious rituals. “There-

20 Vlado Milošević, “Sevdalinka - bosanska varoška pjesma,” *Putevi* XIX (1973): 488–489

21 There is no reliable data of the precise time and the way of the term “sevdalinka” came into being, but it is quite certain that the first researchers of the folk tradition in this region, Franjo Kuhač and Ludvik Kuba, do not mention it anywhere. (Fulanović-Šošić 1991, 65) The name of the song is most certainly generated from the word “sevdah”.

22 Munib Maglajlić, *Od zbilje do pjesme* (Banja Luka: Glas, 1983), 21.

23 Milošević, “Sevdalinka - bosanska varoška pjesma,” 488.

24 Oriental Islamic culture was the culture of Ottoman Empire.

25 Cvjetko Rihtman, “O ilirskom porijeklu polifonih oblika narodne muzike Bosne i Hercegovine,” *Muzika* II/1 (5): 6–12.

fore, it can be said that the rural vocal traditional practice is fundamentally social one and particularly functional.”²⁶

Social Aspect: The Song of the Individual or the Group

Vocal expressions of rural areas in Bosnia and Herzegovina are characterised by the condensed tone scales, two- (and rarely three-) voice polyphony, with the dominant interval of second treated in the local traditional context as a consonance. The tone relations are mostly non-tempered or unstable, and on that basis, among other, the archaic character of the song is determined. Groups of two to six performers are of the same gender (mixed groups are product of modern times), spatially organised into semi-circle formations. The voices match according to their quality, volume, timbre and they are equalised in every performed tone with the aim to accomplish the sound unity. Communication is conducted through the face-to-face interaction, and often even the physical contact among performers is important, in terms of sensing other's body vibrations during singing.²⁷

Figure 1: Traditional vocal group, Prozor-Rama, Herzegovina (source: www.prozor-rama.org, accessed 18.10.2016).

²⁶ Tamara Karača Beljak, *Zvučni krajolici. Pogled na vokalne fenomene Bosne i Hercegovine* (Sarajevo: Muzička akademija, Institut za muzikologiju, 2014), 60.

²⁷ Karača Beljak, *Zvučni krajolici. Pogled na vokalne fenomene Bosne i Hercegovine*, 61.

Generally, “performers sing exclusively with ones they communicate easily in all performing contexts, whom they know well and practice with.”²⁸ Group members, as in the village social community, are in respect of the common or mutual interest, continuously communicating with each other in somewhat selfless interaction. Therefore, we can say that the rural vocal tradition of Bosnia and Herzegovina presents a form of dialogue between members of the group, which is organised, synchronised and coherent.

Opposite to the rural polyphonic expressions, urban love song *sevdalinka* presents a kind of intimate monologue.

“The word ‘sevdah’²⁹ in Turkish signifies love yearning and love rapture, and its origin can be found in the Arabic expression ‘sāwda’, which implicates and denominates the term ‘black gull’. The old Arabic, and Greek doctors considered, in fact, that the black gull, as one of four basic substances which are found in the human organism, influences emotional life and causes melancholic and sensitive mood. From there derives the Greek expression ‘melancholy’ with the allegorical sense of a direct projection of the basic meaning: *melan holos* – black gull. Since love is the cause of that same mood, in Turkish language these terms are brought into the close relation of a semantic identity, which comes to achieving the conceptual result of a double projection of the basic meaning.”³⁰

Figure 2: Emina Zečaj, *sevdalinka* singer (source: www.gramofon.ba, accessed 17.10.2016).

28 Karača Beljak, *Zvučni krajolici. Pogled na vokalne fenomene Bosne i Hercegovine*, 62.

29 “Sevda” in Turkish language means “love”.

30 Muhsin Rizvić, “O lirsko-psihološkoj strukturi sevdalinke,” *Iznad i ispod teksta: ogleđi i kritike* (Sarajevo: Svjetlost, 1969), 190–191.

The term *sevdalinka* was probably born from the word “*sevdah*”, which was pointed out by the Bosnian ethnomusicologist Vlado Milošević who thoroughly researched this melopoetic form. Milošević wrote the following: “This term was made from the word *sevdah*. As the word itself says, it is the love lyricism. It formally encompasses all the occurrences of a love experience, but essentially in its true meaning *sevdalinka* is the song of a life ache, longing, resignation and melancholy. Admirers, lovers of *sevdalinka* are sensible people. They seek something from life, but do not find it.”³¹ *Sevdalinka* expressively leaves an impression on the emotional and the psychological constitution, soul and mind, and from somewhere inexplicably becomes the expression of “the state of one who sings the song and the one who listens to it”.³² Muhsin Rizvić³³ notes that *sevdalinkas* “within their poetic character (...) have in themselves something of an importance of a *ballad*, its dark tragic of painful feeling which was left by some occasion or happening. The difference is that *sevdalinka* has no action in its distinct development or a dynamic flow, but only an occurrence-event in the subconsciousness, in its full brevity and sidewardness, more as a cause or a resume, from which the significant thing emerges – love sigh as a fateful lyrical-erotic epilogue. Or it represents only the survival of an outcome that occurred, the important fragment of an event, one that carries the full emotional, lyrical potential and results with a moan, cry of yearning and love ache. That is why *sevdalinka* is, in fact, the lyrical monologue (...), a resonance and a comment of love and life.”^{34 35}

The city (in the past *kasaba* or *varoš* – a smaller urban unit), as the life space of the community of individuals, is the place of individual speech and expression presented through the *lyrical monologue* of the urban song *sevdalinka* – monologue that is awoken in an individual and then transferred, in accordance to the introvert nature of this musical form, in the interior of a private or public space of the urban structure.

Acoustic Aspect: The Song of The Urban Interior or the Rural Exterior

In the times when the urban song *sevdalinka* evolved, cities of Bosnia and Herzegovina lowered down from the medieval heights to the plains and valleys, by the riverbanks and important roads. There, in the Ottoman times they developed into a new form - made according to the human scale, in the proportion pleasant for the human beings, where they felt natural and in the unity with nature.

31 In his article “*Sevdalinka – bosanska varoška pjesma*” (“*Sevdalinka - Bosnian town song*”), Vlado Milošević also writes: “And the forest met with the leaf, and I don’t have anyone”, says one line of the song that lives even today, known from the Erlangen manuscript. That ultimate thing in this lyricism is the black and hard, incurable *kara-sevdah*. It can bring to the state of madness in love, that eats with its spite the core of one’s own being. That condition takes to paroxysm, into the irrational. Mara from Bišće decidedly sends message to Ali paša: ‘If you would propose to me, I wouldn’t say yes; If you would marry, I would poison myself’”. (Milošević 1973, 487–488).

32 Vlado Milošević, *Ravna pjesma* (Banja Luka: Glas, 1984), 8.

33 Muhsin Rizvić (1930–1994) was a well respected Bosnian and Herzegovinian writer and professor at the Faculty of Philosophy in Sarajevo.

34 Rizvić originally writes: “That is why *sevdalinka* is, in fact, the lyrical monologue of a woman, one which on the emotional-subjective plan follows a subtext happening in its abstract flow and after that, the monologue of her own feelings as a resonance and a comment of love and life.”

35 Rizvić, “O lirsko-psihološkoj strukturi *sevdalinke*,” 192.

Architectural theorist Dušan Grabrijan, who researched and wrote about the Bosnian and Herzegovinian traditional architecture, of village and (Oriental) city, described the basic spatial organization of a typical Bosnian city, and recognizing its five main units, provided characteristics of the so called unwritten laws of construction in Bosnia and Herzegovina. He notes: "Under the influence of traditional concepts, Orient, and the political, economical and cultural trends, the city of Sarajevo gradually started to form in the valley of the river Miljacka. The city's builders were, without doubt, led by the desire to respect the unwritten architectural laws of Bosnia: the road is the city's spine, and the valley its form, *čaršija* (economical center) its heart, vegetation its lungs, and the river its soul."³⁶

Ottoman Islamic culture was primarily an urban one – it was expressed through the city, with the city being the main element of its further development.³⁷ Urban zone was differentiated into *čaršija* – economical/trading zone and *mahala* – residential quarters. *Mahala*³⁸ presented the private part of the city, and its most introvert element was the Bosnian traditional house of the Oriental type. The house is coalesced with nature, and with its composition, incorporating inner gardens, it opens a small part of the sky for everyone. It corresponds with the human scale, as the concept of the Oriental city in its entirety. This kind of house, of an average well-situated family, has certain standard and usual spaces³⁹, with the basic division to the male part *selamluk*, and the female part *haremluk*, "male and female gardens, enclosed by high walls and wooden boards, so the faces of women would be protected from the outside glances, but also to be hidden, (...) in their maiden ages, from their own relatives, grown men."⁴⁰ Although it carries a somewhat introvert quality, the house within its interior imposes a spontaneous and unwritten rule of behaviour with nobody turning his/her back to anybody. Finally, despite the formal division, the traditional Bosnian urban house of the Oriental type was informally a woman's world. Only there could a woman do what was usually socially unacceptable in the patriarchal ambience of her strict separation, "demanded by the Islamic moral".⁴¹

36 Dušan Grabrijan, *The Bosnian Oriental architecture in Sarajevo* (Ljubljana: Dopisna delavska univerza Univerzum, 1984), 22.

37 In the 17th century Sarajevo was probably the most important city inland, western of Thessaloniki. Beautiful description of the city was left in his journal by the Ottoman travel writer Evlija Čelebi who noted in his time that Sarajevo has 17.000 houses, 104 mosques and *čaršija* with 1.080 shops that sell merchandise from India, Arabia, Persia, Poland and Czech Republic. "Since this is a pleasant climate, people are predominantly with rosy skin. At all four sides there are mountain pastures and an abundance of liquid water." One French travel writer of the same period also notes the following: "There are very beautiful streets, wonderful and well built wooden and stone bridges, and 169 nice drinking-fountains." (Čelebi 1996, 190) Intangible cultural treasure of Bosnia and Herzegovina from the Ottoman time is also significant, and certain data show that before the brutal devastation of Sarajevo during the recent aggression from 1992–1995 there were 7.500 manuscripts stored in Gazi Husref bey library, 5.000 in the Oriental Institute, 1.762 in the Historical archive and 478 in the National library.

38 There were 93 mahalas at the end of the 16th century in Sarajevo.

39 Housing architecture of the Ottoman Empire in Bosnia and Herzegovina was very rich. Its significance lies in the spatial – formal solutions interesting due to the overlapping of closed and open spaces (*divanhanas*), built spaces and *avlijas* and gardens. The specific elements of one wealthy Bosnian urban house of the Ottoman type are division to the male and female section – *selamluk* and *haremluk*, dynamic disposition, multifunctional spaces and high living standards. The characteristics of the outside shaping are playful facades, cubic forms and accented *doksats*, full surfaces without decoration, open *divanhanas* and wide canopies.

40 Maglajlić, *Od zbilje do pjesme*, 16.

41 Maglajlić, *Od zbilje do pjesme*, 15.

Figure 3: Surzo's House in Sarajevo, exterior/inner garden (source: www.muzejsarajevo.ba, accessed 17.10.2016).

Figure 4: Surzo's House in Sarajevo, interior (source: www.muzejsarajevo.ba, accessed 17.10.2016).

"On the place where it is sung and for whom it depends how it is going to be sung: for the intimate, narrow, or family circle, but also for the public. That is the estrade singing of kafana which due to the frequent accenting of decorative elements can be distorted into a futile flamboyance."⁴² This is how Vlado Milošević writes when he contemplates on "the Bosnian city song" sevdalinka. He makes a difference between the two types of this song, or singing, of which one is related to the ambient of the intimate, and the other of the public space. Similarly writes Miroslava Fulanović-Šošić: "Sevdalinka, as the product of certain socio-cultural environment and time, surviving through the ages of social-historical events, has lived in various forms, in different conditions and functions. It was the song of intimacy, where personal feelings were expressed and melancholic moods were relieved. Later, sevdalinka was sung in kafanas, as well, where its aim was to entertain, but also to awaken the sensuous feelings of guests..."⁴³ As "the song of intimacy" or the public space, in the context of its performing ambience, sevdalinka corresponded to a certain interpreter. Basically, female sevdalinka belonged to the intimacy of home, and male one to the public context of čaršija or markets. Although both sevdalinks are *lyrical monologues*⁴⁴, first one seems more lyrical than the other. "Male lyrical monologues were sung under the window of a beloved one in the silence of the night and in solitude, or at special gatherings of men with a glass, akšamluci, which began at sunset at čardaci, in gardens, at river banks or generally the places from where one's eye was exposed to a pleasant view." Those sevdalinks were "because of their lascivious tone, called *bekrijske* or *akšamlučke* songs. Female lyrical monologues were sung in a lonely detachment, at girls' meetings with derdef, weaving machine or some other form of a handmade work."⁴⁵ Women sang to themselves or for the other women "between the four walls" of their home, and their subtle and sophisticated song with a hint of eroticism expressed through a metaphor was the way of liberating female being from the patriarchal socially acceptable frames. Men, however, could openly sang in that kind of society, publicly and of whatever they wished, so their song itself represented the more explicit reflection of that freedom, and was more "relaxed and lascivious" in words.⁴⁶

Rural singing, opposite to sevdalinka which is generally performed in the interior, with subtle voice and from the diaphragm, is performed outdoors, from the throat and with a great intensity, usually with "performers standing in semi-circle and turned to one imaginary point to which they direct their voices. As the final result, the sound of high energy level is achieved. (...) In the aesthetic concept, loud singing is obligatory and significant component."⁴⁷ Also, the density of the specific interval of second

42 Milošević, "Sevdalinka - bosanska varoška pjesma," 489.

43 Miroslava Fulanović-Šošić, "Melodijski modeli bosansko-hercegovačke sevdalinke," *Folklor i njegova umetnička transpozicija* (Beograd: Fakultet muzičke umetnosti, 1991), 71.

44 Professor Munib Maglajlić (1945-2015) distinguishes in his work *From the reality to the song. The essays of the oral poetry* (1983) sevdalinks that are primarily "lyrical monologues" from the ones with "local features", and among the first ones he differentiates the male from the female songs.

45 Maglajlić, *Od zbilje do pjesme*, 20.

46 Tamara Karača Beljak, "Bosnian urban traditional song in transformation: from Ludvik Kuba to electronic medias," *Traditiones* (2005): 166.

47 Karača Beljak, *Zvučni krajolici. Pogled na vokalne fenomene Bosne i Hercegovine*, 61-62.

further contribute to the sonority of rural vocal forms, but also the hypothesis that the “intervals are not acoustical but social facts” and that functions of tones, in relation to one another, cannot be explained adequately as part of a closed musical system without considering the structure of social-cultural systems to which musical system also belongs.⁴⁸ Finally, with its inner structure, sonority and the manner of interaction between the performers, rural vocal polyphony is adjusted to its environment – living with the nature and from the nature, which “demands an exceptional ingenuity, endurance and courage. (...) The tone and the exclamation dominate. Because this is the singing in the open space where it is difficult to control the sound resonance and reflection, (...) the special technique of shaping the voice and the performance is developed, for providing the optimal spreading of the performing form.” Various techniques of singing “are perceived in the performer’s consciousness as the primary carriers of the evocative message that ‘carry the song far away’”.⁴⁹

Figure 5: Village Lukomir, Bjelašnica mountain (source: www.travelbosnia.com, accessed 17.10.2016).

⁴⁸ John Blacking, *How Musical is Man* (London: Faber and Faber, 1972), 75.

⁴⁹ Karača Beljak, *Zvučni krajolici. Pogled na vokalne fenomene Bosne i Hercegovine*, 70–72.

Figure 6: Village Lukomir, Bjelašnica mountain, stećci (source: www.travelbosnia.com, accessed 17.10.2016).

Structural Aspect: The Principle of Monody or Polyphony

Cvjetko Rithman divided the rural traditional vocal music into two categories – the old, or the second (II) one, and the new, or the first (I) one.⁵⁰ The main characteristics of the second category are the interval of second, which is considered in the accompanying context as a consonance, and the horizontal polyphonic structure in which voices are equally important – they overlap, crossing one another and most often end on the interval of second, as well. The first category has a vertical structure (as a kind of homophony), with one voice being the lead and the other being the accompaniment. Structurally, both categories of vocal rural tradition reflect the accompanying social organisation of the community where there is, perhaps, one who is the elder or senior, as the one who starts the song (*počimalja/počimatelj*), but he/she and everyone else in the group/community acts, in the mutual respect, for the well-being or harmony of the unit.

50 Cvjetko Rithman, "Polifoni oblici u narodnoj muzici Bosne i Hercegovine," *Muzika* VI/1 (19): 6–41.

Figure 7: "Oj, djevojko, moje janje malo" (Bradina, Herzegovina), older polyphonic vocal practice, II category.

Figure 8: "Preli prelo milo do miloga" (Glamoč, southwestern Bosnia and Herzegovina), newer polyphonic vocal practice, I category.

On the other hand, when it comes to *sevdalinka*, one must remember the following lines of Muhsin Rizvić, who wrote that *sevdalinka* is "the song of the Slavic-Oriental emotional impregnation and connection: Oriental by the intensity of passion, by the force and the potential of sensuality in it, Slavic by the dreamy, inconsolable, painful sensitivity, by the broadness of its soulfulness."⁵¹ From the Slavic side Vlado Milošević relates it to the Bosnian "ravna song" or "poravna", for which "he inquired (...) with our *sevdalije*" and they "told that *poravna* is the one which can be sung with many lyrics and it is accompanied with *šargija* and has a typical instrumental introduction."⁵² *Ravno* singing is at the archaic and autochthonic beginnings of something that will later become a richer "varoška song" *sevdalinka* – "ravna song in its development, (...), *popijevka* on a higher level of evolution", through the process "reflected in the progressive expansion of richness of tones, namely in the tone scale and the tone movement."⁵³ *Sevdalinka* became a complex and a demanding musical form, and an auditive experience whose effect, if the song is correctly interpreted, carries an unusual power. Still, *sevdalinka* is a monodic form, although in its distinctive complexity a great challenge even for the most skilful singer. With its structure of monody it appears like a respond to the urban way of living with the individual as its epicentre, and Bosnian and Herzegovinian urban residential house of the Oriental type as her or his intimate world.

51 Rizvić, "O lirsko-psihološkoj strukturi *sevdalinke*," 191.

52 Milošević, *Ravna pjesma*, 8.

53 Milošević, *Ravna pjesma*, 11.

Figure 9: Sevdalinka “Aj, sunce zade, a mjesec izade” (Tuzla, Bosnia and Herzegovina).

Figure 9: Sevdalinka “Mujo dogu po mejdanu voda” (Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina).

Urban traditional vocal musical practice SEVDALINKA	Individ- ual	Mono- logue	Interior	Mono- dy	Subtle sing- ing from the diaphragm
Rural traditional vocal musical practice POLYPHONIC SINGING	Group	Dialogue	Exterior	Polyph- ony	Loud sing- ing from the throat

Table 1: General differences between the vocal traditional musical practices of urban and rural areas in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Instead of a Conclusion

Being an urban love song, sevdalinka is also the voice, or the lyrical **monologue** of an **individual** – the fundamental constitutive social element of the city, which ‘thinks’ monophonically. Rural communities function in accordance to their ‘polyphonic’ organization of a **group**, and lacking the technological advantages of the urban space, they are much more oriented towards their natural environment, on which they are directly dependent. Village inhabitant needs the support of the community, due to the necessity and significance of the mutual cooperation in the challenging rural context. This is why the singing in the rural areas is also the kind of **communication**, a tendency towards togetherness and equality, while in the city it represents an intimate, lyrical monologue. Social organisation of the village is different from the one of the city where life is, basically, adjusted to an individual and his own desires and activities. In the social-political and cultural ambience of the city it is very much insisted on the importance of the individual freedom and voice that is also manifested through the melopoetic form of sevdalinka. As the song of human intimacy, sevdalinka is performed indoors, in the **interior** of a home or kafana. Its content and performer condition the place for the performance, so in its most subtle form sevdalinka demands the privacy of a home. Opposite to the rural singing whose **throat** interpretational technique and **high intensity** is intended for the outdoor performance - the **exterior**, urban song sevdalinka is performed from the **diaphragm**, with the **subtlety** corresponding to the acoustic qualities of the interior space. The lyrical content of sevdalinka reflects this intimate ambient, because it carries personal stories that demand an intensive engagement – of the interpreter and the listener. The city love song as the way of storytelling travels ‘from on heart to another’, while in the village the traditional music is in function as a part of ritual and customs, aimed for the collective and its needs. In terms of the inner structure, or the architectonics of melopoetic vocal forms of the city and the village, their relation to the accompanying social-cultural ambience and the architectural space can also be noticed – from the rural sphere emerge the **polyphonic** musical structure and the lyrical content connected to the ritual-custom practice of the community/group, and from the urban context the principle of **monody** and lyrics that correspond to the lifestyle of a city dweller. Her or his house is the physical space of the song that resonates in the interior to which it is adapted, in terms of interpretation and lyrics, in the city that promotes and supports the individual freedom, while simultaneously producing solitude and loneliness.

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POVZETEK

Tradicijska glasba Bosne in Hercegovine, sledeč njenemu pripadajočemu (naravnemu in arhitekturnemu) prostoru, se običajno deli na urbano in ruralno glasbo. Sevdalinka, urbana ljubezenska pesem, je lirični monolog posameznika - temeljni socialni element mesta, ki 'misli' monofono. Podeželske skupnosti pa funkcionirajo v skladu z njihovo polifono organizacijo skupine in jim manjkajo tehnične prednosti urbanega prostora; veliko bolj so usmerjene v naravno okolje. Tradicijski vokalni izraz podeželskih območij prav tako

prikazuje načine sporazumevanja, ki se izvaja na prostem, peto iz grla in z veliko jakostjo, kar je v nasprotju z značilnostjo sevdalinke, ki - peta iz prepone - sovпада z notranjostjo doma ali taverne in je prilagojena notranjim akustičnim lastnostim. Notranje strukture teh melopoetičnih urbanih in ruralnih oblik naposled zrcalijo okolje (naravno in arhitekturno, pa tudi socialno-kulturno); posledično je značilna vokalna polifonija znotraj ruralnih obrednih praks skupine in monofoničen princip in lirika kot izraz življenjskega slogs mestnega prebivalca.