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## ALBANIAN WEDDING SONGS OF KOSOVO

Marriage songs play an important role in Albanian lyric poetry by virtue of their musical and poetic structure and their subject matter which involves an important event in the lives of the people. The literary and aesthetic merit of these songs is related to the larger genre of Albanian familial poetry. On the other hand, the wedding songs display a unique quality with their own poetic and symbolic expressions emanating from the emotional life of the people. The songs of marriage reflect the essence of the lives of the Albanians of Kosovo, and are indirectly linked to ancient beliefs which also express the basic preoccupations and aspirations of the people. The songs express the worldview and ethical perspective of the Kosovo Albanians in the themes which underlie the familial and social life of the people.

Within the context of traditional Albanian life based upon a patriarchal, tribal family structure, marriage is carried out in the interest of the community. Through marriage, an additional person is added to the family's work force. In bearing children, the bride numerically strengthens the family cooperative. The primary rationale for the existence then is in her role as the natural producer. The *Canon of Lekë Dukagjini* set down the rules which were the basis of Albanian family life in the past and to some extent today. The *Canon* states: "A family is a gathering of closely tied members living under one roof, whose premise is to grow in number, aided by marriages, and to grow in physical, mental and emotional strength."<sup>1</sup> The rationale for bringing the young bride into the family was, "To marry under the *Canon* means to create a home, to gain another member, one more hand for work, and the means to provide for future gene-

<sup>1</sup> Shtjefen Konst. Gjeçovi, *Kanuni i Lekë Dukagjinit (The Canon of Lekë Dukagjini)*, Shkodër 1933, 109:18.

rations."<sup>2</sup> Since times of old, poetry has claimed an important place in the patriarchal wedding customs. The rituals and songs sung during them are performed to introduce the bride into the cult of the family and to her responsibilities as a member of the family, to protect her against demons, and to insure harmony in the family. Personal needs come second when the good of the collective is in question. No one in the household has the right to infringe upon the intimate life of the wife, though in other senses she is common property of the household. The songs also express a spiritual unrest on the part of the woman, especially when she is forced to marry a man who she finds inadequate. Some of the songs express the youth's dissatisfaction with the patriarchal marriage system which often prevents them from marrying the partner of their choice.

Long ago Maksimilian Lamberti researched the theme of the girl's discontent as expressed in Albanian wedding songs — her sorrow in leaving her family for a boy she did not desire.<sup>3</sup>

The bride's characteristic psychological disposition is expressed in some of the Kosovo wedding songs. In most areas, both in the past and today, two members of the same tribe do not intermarry. (Although today in Kosovo the tribes are spread out over a wide area, and in many cases the whole tribe is not directly related.) In most cases in the past, the girl married a man she did not know from a distant village. In our research we have not encountered any marriage contracted between two people of close or distant kin.<sup>4</sup> From the beginning, the songs sung were about exogamous marriages. We have found cases in which a younger, unmarried brother will marry the widow of his deceased brother to keep her and the children within the same household. There are also songs of "sororation" — the marriage of a widower with the sister of his deceased wife, especially if he has been left without children, as the two families do not want to lose their bond of friendship which the marriage had created. There are also cases in which "sororatin" is proposed before the death of the wife. For example, in a song about a wife who was walled up in the "Bridge of Moaning" on the Drim River near Gjakovë, the wife had instructed her mother to give her husband her younger sister as a wife.<sup>5</sup>

Monogamy is usually the rule among Albanians in Kosovo. There are rare cases of bigamy, which, though prohibited by

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 111:28.

<sup>3</sup> M. Lambertz, *Die Volkspoesie der Albaner (Albanian Folk Poetry)*, Sarajevo 1917, 58.

<sup>4</sup> The *Kanuni* forbids any marriages among blood relatives. If someone disobeys this, he may be expelled from the tribe or have his house burned. *KLD* 39, 695—697, 704, etc.

<sup>5</sup> *Kangë popullore shqiptare të Kosovë-Metohisë* (Albanian folk songs from Kosovo-Metohija), V. Dançetović and K. Halimi, (eds.), I, Prishtina 1952, 18—20, etc.

modern law, was historically a common practice. Bigamy is treated mockingly in the songs of today.

The strong anti-patriarchal sentiment expressed in cotemporary Albanian wedding songs is a reflection of the emancipation movement among women, especially in villages. The folk poetry reflects the struggle for a new ethical norm which is counter to the patriarchal system.

Most of the Kosovo wedding songs published to date and those we have encountered in our research are related to the actual marriage rituals. Some of these concern the voluntary and involuntary abduction of girls, brides or married women. These abduction songs contain elements of epic and ballad poetry. The seriousness and intensity of these songs derives from the fact that the act often results in a blood feud between two houses, especially when an engaged girl, bride or wife is in question. The *Code* considered abduction a transgression.<sup>6</sup>

There are also songs which tell of marriages which are the result of an agreement between two families contracted by the matchmaker ("mësit" or shakues"). These songs cover the process from the beginning of engagement to the conclusion of the wedding. The imaginative lyrics invoke an air of solemnity expressing life drama in the village milieu. The contemporary wedding songs include innovative poetic elements, sometimes outside of the traditional form of expression, sometimes remaining within it while taking on a contemporary quality.

On order to clearly examine the thematic and structural characteristics of these songs it is essential from a methodological standpoint to look at archaic elements in the texts and their gradual evolution in the themes of engagement, dowry preparation and wedding customs. It is also necessary to look at songs about family life and their connection to marriage. We are attempting to look at the evolution of the wedding songs on the basis of systematic fieldwork. The majority of songs presented here are complete texts or new variations published for the first time.<sup>7</sup> There are many cases in which identical songs are found in different areas, and we have limited our examples to include only one example of each of these songs, to cover a wider geographical area.\*

<sup>6</sup> KLD 29. c) "To abduct a girl or woman is against the Canon."

<sup>7</sup> Most of these songs were gathered during a long period of research in many regions. The majority of songs were taken from Kosovo girls and women. Some were collected by students and teachers. The informants and their locations are listed.

\* The original text of the songs in Albanian is found in: »Buletin i Muzeut të Kosovës — Glasnik Muzeja Kosova« (The Journal of the Museum of Kosovo), Vol. XI, Prishtina 1972, 551—108.

*Non-Ritual Marriage Songs*

Songs of marriage abduction constitute an important category of non-ritual marriage songs. The songs sung by men have a strong sensual element and are basically love songs. Abduction songs involve a struggle which usually has tragic results, and can be placed between epics and ballads, while some of the songs fall into the category of epic songs of bravery. Songs of bravery describing the abduction of foreign women have been developed with considerable skill. Some of these songs are sung in Kosovo, but are also part of the general group of legendary songs of bravery found among Ghegs in other regions.

Abduction is also found among other ethnic groups as a natural phenomenon in the social evolution of the past. Based on examples from the Turkish period, it is clear that this was an early theme in Albanian oral folklore. Another widespread theme among Albanians is abduction by the Janissaries. Some examples are presented here as illustrations of this theme. Among the Albanians of Italy a song is sung about the beautiful Rina who was abducted by the sailors, but escaped by jumping from the boat into the sea where the waves carried her to the shore of Koroni. There the local women mourned her and built a church in that place.<sup>8</sup> In a song about the tribe of Kelmendi (who, after living for a period in Kosovo moved in the 18th century to Srem in Vojvodina),<sup>9</sup> and in two other Albanian songs from Montenegro (from Oblika of Anamali and Ljara of the Titograd Highlands),<sup>10</sup> the boy abducts the girl and takes her across the ocean on the advice of his mother. In two similar songs from Šestani (Shestani) of Kraja (Montenegro), a brave man (called Dardhojmel, or Dardhamel) abducts the beautiful Mrikalem against her will.<sup>11</sup> In two other similar songs from Shestani, Ali Beu (or Halil Begu) abducts a girl and with one-hundred wedding guests, and sets off for his home. On the way the mountain breeze lifts her veil and the guests go mad over the beauty of the bride. Two of them shoot the bridegroom so that they may take the bride for themselves.<sup>12</sup> In some other Albanian songs the abduction of a girl or bride involves the motif of recognition between a sister and her brother, preventing their marriage. Gjino Vaku from Great Labova of Albania kills all of his wedding guests, abducts the bride, but does not marry her because at the moment

<sup>8</sup> *Mbledhës të hershëm të folklorit shqiptar* (Early collections of Albanian folklore), I, Tiranë, 1961, 186—187.

<sup>9</sup> *Këngë popullore legjendare* (Legendary folk songs), Q. Haxhihasani (ed.), Tiranë 1955, 92—95.

<sup>10</sup> *KPL*, 96—97; *Gjurmime Albanologjike* (Albanology Journal — Folklore and Ethnology series), Prishtinë, 1, 1971, 278—279.

<sup>11</sup> *KPL*, 33; *Gjurmime Alb.*, ed. cit., 277—278.

<sup>12</sup> *KPL*, 34; *Gjurmime Alb.*, ed. cit., 274—276.

of betrothal learns that she is really his sister.<sup>13</sup> Gjon Pretika from Shestani abducts Fasile and as soon as they see they are in truth brother and sister die of sorrow.<sup>14</sup> In the songs of the Albanians of Italy, the Turkish Janissari Vllastar abducts Olympia, but also does not marry her when a black-winged bird reveals to them that "the brother is kissing the sister".<sup>15</sup> A tragic end is expressed in the song, "Two mountains are broken and shattered... for a young maiden-o" from Shestani.<sup>16</sup> According to this song, the husband kills his wives would-be abductors who turn out to be her brothers, outlaws she herself had not recognised. In another example of misplaced identities, a bride is purchased with her brother's money unbeknownst to him. This song is from the Turkish period and is related to Luto Fukaran.<sup>17</sup> In North Albania and Kraja similar songs are related to Ali Borxhalisa.<sup>18</sup> All of these songs contain a tragic end for the brother, reflecting the prohibition against endogamous marriages among Albanians. Unlike other areas, in Kosovo the abductor always meets with a tragic end. In a song from Kamenica, Isuf Aga murders Maleshin in a duel. Isuf also killed a friend who harassed him while assisting him in an abduction. Her family, to punish their daughter's misdeed, gave her young sister to the groom.<sup>19</sup> Another example from the village of Kabash is a well-known tale of Fetah Ysë Murati who killed his wife's abductor because he was not able to bear the shame of this stain upon his reputation.<sup>20</sup> In a variation of this song Murati kills the abductor Imer, and it is understood from the context that he also kills his wife and is put in jail and executed by the state. The song glorifies his bravery because from the perspective of the patriarchal ethical norm, he was duty-bound to avenge the stain upon his character.<sup>21</sup> This is revealed at the end of the song:

... Fetah Hysa, you are dying,  
But let your soul be at peace,  
You were fighting in defense of your honor!<sup>22</sup>

<sup>13</sup> KPL, 62.

<sup>14</sup> *Op. cit.*, 62—63.

<sup>15</sup> *Op. cit.*, 60—61.

<sup>16</sup> *Gjurmime Alb.*, ed. cit., 273—274.

<sup>17</sup> KPSH (see citation no. 5), I, 23—25; Lorenc Antoni, *Folklori Muzikuer Shqiptar*, II, Prishtina 1961, 63—65; *Jehona*, Skoplje, nos. 7—8, 1969, 273—274.

<sup>18</sup> *Visaret e Kombit (Treasures of the People)*, II, Tiranë 1937, 259—264; KPL, ed. cit., 63—64; *Gjurmime Alb.*, ed. cit., 246—248.

<sup>19</sup> KPSH, I, 108—111.

<sup>20</sup> KPSH, II, 187—188.

<sup>21</sup> KLD, 600: "He who's honor is shamed dies before the Canon" and, d) 601.

<sup>22</sup> The song of Fetah Hysë Murati was recorded in 1959 in Gjakova from the group of Ymer Riza.

We find another example in a well-known song of Kosovo in which Dem Salihi from Žur (Zhur) kills his maternal uncle and his fiancée's lover at the moment she is asking the chief of police to marry them.<sup>23</sup> The song emphasizes the anti-patriarchal deed of the youths with the support of the uncle. It expresses the girl's courage in not taking into consideration the danger, as she refuses to marry a man she does not desire.<sup>24</sup>

Historical evidence of the abduction of women in Kosovo is found in the legends and on the gravestones of the bride's relatives in Drenica, in the area around Dečane, Đakovica (Dečan, Gjakova), Prizren, etc.<sup>25</sup> In these graves are buried the bride's relatives who were killed defending her. In former times the frequency of abduction was greater due to the difficult economic plight of the time which sometimes prevented the men from taking the woman of their choice.<sup>26</sup> From this, we come to understand the songs sung by the groom going to another village to abduct the girl.<sup>27</sup> The following is an example of a woman's song from Zhur:

We are off to Opolje (Opoja) to fuel the fire,  
To take the flower and retreat!  
Why do we sing by moonlight?  
Because we are taking the flower from her mother.  
Why do we sing in the dead of the night?  
Because we are taking the flower from her father.  
Žur (Zhur), December 1968

The songs also tell of the boy's attempt to abduct the girl without her consent. In former times the boy's bravery and skill were admonished. An example:

If you are a man, take to your pistol or to your knife,  
It is no small matter to seize the girl, ha!<sup>28</sup>

In the newer songs there are cases in which the abduction occurs with the consent and even instigation of the girl. This may occur when the bride's parents have prevented her marriage

<sup>23</sup> We are aware of several variations of the songs of Demë Salihi, which should be published and commented upon in a separate work.

<sup>24</sup> See *KLD* 43, according to which if a girl refuses to go to the boy to whom she has been promised, her parents send her against her will, for if not, she may not marry as long as her fiancé lives. The fiancé may kill a girl he catches running away, and the blood is lost (her family cannot avenge the killing).

<sup>25</sup> Petar Z. Petrović, *Iz naše narodne prošlosti (From our folk history)*, I, Beograd, 1959, 23—31. There are also examples of graves of the wedding party in North Albania.

<sup>26</sup> *Historia a letërsisë shqipe (The history of Albanian literature)*, I, Tiranë 1959, 36.

<sup>27</sup> Thimi Mitko, *Bëleta Shqypëtare, Aleksandri, 1878*, we cite ed. II of Vjena, 1924, 51.

<sup>28</sup> A personal recollection. A variation is noted in Lorenc Antoni, *Folklori muzikuer shqiptar*, I, Prishtina 1956, 18.

to the man of her choice by engaging her to another. This is expressed in a beautiful song from Opolje (Opojë) in a dialogue between the two partners:

— Oh dear one at the garden door,  
Are you a bride or a girl?  
— I am not a bride but a girl,  
And am untouched.  
— Have you given your word to be taken?  
— I have given my word,  
My mother has given me,  
I cannot break bread for the woe I suffer.  
When night falls,  
I will hide my dowry in the bushes.  
When the black dog barks,  
I will know it is you who have come for me.<sup>29</sup>

Another example is from Kaçanik, March 1969, sung by a group of girls, involving the abduction motif as expressed in the boy's monologue:

Oh Hasan, what are you thinking?  
I want to take the girl I love!  
I will ask her father  
And if he refuses, I will seize her!

Today, as the patriarchal norm is disrupted by the new ideas of the youth, they become freer to realise their own desires for marriage. Songs of abduction have consequently begun to disappear. The newer songs expressing the desires of the youth against the patriarchal norm express the continuous struggle for social rights among the youth.

### *Songs of the Marriage Ritual*

Folk poetry, to the accompaniment of various types of music plays an important role in the marriages in Kosovo, especially in the villages. The songs, which occur at every stage of the rituals, express the changes in the social attitudes. In examining these songs we will take into account the extent to which traditions are maintained, the aesthetic qualities of the songs, their social function, structural origins, and contemporary evolution. We begin with engagement songs (the exchange of promises), the bride's dowry preparation, the setting of the wedding date, and the beginning and process of the wedding at the house of the bride and the groom. We use the term "Songs of Marriage" rather than "Songs of the Wedding" because the former is more inclusive of the wide range of events taken into

<sup>29</sup> FMSH (see citation no. 28), 94—95. I collected this song together in the field with Antoni.



account. We have included the traditional marriage customs common throughout Kosovo.

a) *Songs of engagement* are only sung in the home of the groom. In the bride's house, usually in the guest room, in the presence of male relatives, friends and invited guests, the girl's father gives his word for the girl to the matchmaker. With the solemnity befitting the occasion, the men bind the engagement without the presence of any women or of the two young people. In the groom's house the songs express the joy of the occasion. These songs are called "Songs of Engagement", or in some regions (Opolje, Lab, Salja, Bajgora — Opojë, Llap, Shalë e Bajgorës, etc.) are called by the older name "Songs of the Scarf", the scarf being the symbol of the promise given by the girl's family to the matchmaker to bring to the boy's family. The girls in the groom's house play the tambourine ("def" or "daire") and sing, congratulating the master of the house and wishing him well-being.

The swallow flies to the rooftop,  
 Blessings to you father, for the engagement promise!  
 Our hearts are filled with gladness, father, on this day,  
 We have awaited this day with great joy!  
 We have awaited this night with great joy,  
 So happy to be gaining a new sister-in-law!

In this song from the village Sazli near Uroševac (Ferizaj), collected May of 1960, we find the symbol of the swallow which signals the arrival of spring and new life, giving the house a new future with its new member. The word "kulm" (rooftop) is a metaphor for the throne where the primary forces of the house rest, the forces which now must accept a person from another tribe into the cult of the house.

Another song series expresses a different moment in the engagement process — the expectation of joy to befall the family.

To us a promise has come,  
 To us a word has come.  
 It came so easily,  
 Like picking a pear.  
 Like pulling a pear off the branch.  
 Her father gave her up reluctantly, the scoundrel.  
 But he who brought us her hand,  
 Oh, Hasan has hands of gold.\*

Plešina (Pleshina) near Uroševac (Ferizaj), May 1960

\* Hasan = the matchmaker

Come, let us sing, sisters,  
 To congratulate the engagement of our brother.  
 Not only the two of us bring blessings,  
 But all the friends offer their congratulations.  
 It will be broadcast over the radio,  
 That all Albanians will hear!

Drvare, Vuçitrn (Dërvar, Vuçitërn), March, 1971

Our flower, you have blessed the master of the house,  
 You have come to a fine boy.  
 Our flower, you have blessed the mother,  
 You have taken a boy with two diplomas.  
 Two diplomas he has in his pocket,  
 One to be a teacher, one to be a doctor.  
 Zasela — Mitrovica (Zasella — Mitrovica), Jan. 1971

The house cries with happiness,  
 Because our brother is engaged.  
 And the mountain birds are full of happiness,  
 The mother has taken a bride for her son.  
 The birds of the sky are filled with happiness,  
 The sisters have taken a bride for their brother.  
 Light the fire so the smoke will be seen,  
 The promise has come for Mustaf the brave!  
 Sazlija — Uroševac (Sazli — Ferizaj), Sept. 1960

Come set fire to the plains and to the mountains,  
 For the maiden, for the teacher o!  
 Come sisters, let us sing o,  
 A handsome young man we have engaged o!

Let us go out to sing on the veranda o,  
 Let the bride hear, who is not far o!  
 Let us sing to the tambourines o,  
 With pleasure they have given us the bride o!  
 Let us go out and sing in the garden o,  
 We will seize the bride!  
 The bride goes out to the garden to hear o,  
 Mother, oh mother, how the girls sing o,  
 Come inside, naughty girl,  
 Because they give the promise for you!  
 Come inside, little devil,  
 They sing for their brother who is to wed!  
 Pakaštica — Podujevo (Pakashtica — Podujeva),  
 April 1971

Also in the songs of engagement we find the firing of pistols, spreading the news of this important moment in the life of the family:

The guns fire around the house,  
 The word has come to us.  
 The guns fire across the fence of stone,  
 The promise of a bride has come to us.  
 The guns fire across the veranda,  
 Blessings to the master of the house!  
 The guns fire and the water in the pitcher gurgles,  
 Luck to the brothers of the bride!  
 The neighbors harken to the sound,  
 We have taken the promise for a bride.  
 All those around harken to the sound,  
 We have taken the promise for marriage!

Prapaštica — Priština (Prapashtica — Prishtina),  
 Feb. 1970

The following song, in finalising the engagement, announces the joy which will come with the wedding, culminating in the firing of pistols:

Sir Driton, where is your heart's desire?  
 In that village we will place the wedding banner!  
 We will take Bahrijo as the bride.  
 We will enflame the village with festivity!  
 We will enflame the village with rocket fire,  
 To be remembered as long as we live!  
 As long as we may live,  
 To remember who was married here!

Pakaštica — Podujevo (Pakashtica — Podujeva),  
 April 1971

Many engagement songs are sung about the matchmaker who plays an important role in relation between the families of the bride and groom. The songs point out his positive and negative characteristics. On the conscience of the matchmaker nests the fate of the union. The two examples which follow from Bajgorska Šalja (Shalë e Bajgorës) mark the matchmaker's arrival to the boy's house and the act of giving the promise:

The matchmaker has come as light as a feather,  
 You have made our hearts happy!  
 The matchmaker comes as light as eggs,  
 You have made our mouths smile with gladness!  
 The matchmaker comes through the garden,  
 Asking for embroidered socks.\*

Bajgorska Šalja (Skroma — Shala e Bajgorës),  
 Oct. 1966

(\* for the service he has rendered)

As the sun rises in the garden,  
 So the matchmaker has arrived, open the door!  
 Open the door, the word is given,  
 Take the scarf with health!

Ibid

All over Kosovo songs are sung about the service performed by the matchmaker as the necessary link in the patriarchal engagement. The following song from the Catholic Albanians of Gornje Stubline (Stubllës e Epërme e Viti), recorded in February of 1970 concern the giving of the promise:

The dog barks at the garden door,  
 Lush-aga announces the arrival of our matchmaker.  
 Come inside, what do you have to tell?  
 — I bring the promise.  
 — Rise to greet our guest,  
 Serve the coffee in the coffee cups.  
 In the cups and on the tray,  
 Our young matchmaker has come.  
 Oh young matchmaker,  
 Can you give us the promise on credit,  
 Until a week from today,  
 When I will sell the steer at the market?

Among these songs there are also those which ask the matchmaker to shoot off his gun to intensify the solemnity of the occasion:

Oh matchmaker, young matchmaker,  
 Shoot off your pistol!  
 If you are miserly about wasting a bullet,  
 May your house go up in smoke!  
 If you don't want shoot off your gun,  
 May your jacket burn!  
 Sibovac — Podujevo (Sibovac — Podujeva), April 1971

Songs are also sung when it is time for the matchmaker to get up and give to the master of the house the promise of the girl's hand which he has taken from her father. The solemnity of the occasion gradually rises to a climax at which point the promise is exchanged in front of those present. This usually happens the morning after the matchmaker's arrival at the groom's house.

Why does the matchmaker get up?  
 To give us the promise he has taken.  
 Get up father and take the promise,  
 Brothers, shoot your guns!  
 Everyone in the house is joyful,  
 The matchmaker has given the promise!  
 Stimlje (Shtimje), April 1961

Another song tells of the matchmaker bringing the scarf, symbol of the promise, from the girl's house along with sugar and candy as enticement:

Oh matchmaker, your honor to increase,  
 You have brought to us sugar with the scarf!  
 With sugar and candy,  
 And when may we bring our flower to our house?  
 Orahovac (Rahovec), Feb. 1970

If the matchmaker stalls before giving the promise:

Our matchmaker has been drinking brandy,  
 And doesn't know to give the promise to our young  
 bachelor.  
 Hurry, oh matchmaker, as night is falling,  
 And something dreadful may befall your house!  
 Stimlje (Shtimje), April 1961

The girls, in their songs, also express a series of metaphors about the matchmaker. These include humorous and satiric expressions if he has been irresponsible in his duties. He must attend to matters of material interest, obtaining the customary money and presents along with the promise.<sup>30</sup> The Songs are

<sup>30</sup> According to article 38 of *KLD*, the matchmaker is entitled to 50 "groshë" (100 new dinar), to pay for the shoes he wore out completing his task. Other money is exchanged, including extra money given to the

intended to make sure the matchmaker is fully conscious of his duties. The verses have two figurative dimensions — on the one hand expressing gratitude, on the other scolding him if he has failed. Here is an example from Opojë:

... If a fine bride comes to us,  
 May your garden be filled with roses!  
 If an untamed bride comes to us,  
 May you grow a rooster's tail for a beard!  
 If a bad bride comes to us,  
 May you grow a cat's tail for a beard!<sup>21</sup>

In the end, the songs wish him a good journey:

Oh safe journey to you matchmaker,  
 And greetings to our new friend!\*  
 Warm greetings, and not to be sad,  
 For in a year she will be ready!  
 Veliki Alaš — Lipjani (Hallaq i Madh  
 — Lipjan), March 1966  
 \* = the girl's father

Other songs ask the matchmaker to persuade the girl's father to have her ready by the next summer:

Good journey, oh matchmaker,  
 And give greetings to our new friend,  
 And tell him to have her ready in time to mill  
 the grain!  
 Drenovac — Deçane (Drenovc — Deçan), Dec. 1960

Good journey, oh young matchmaker,  
 After this one, three more matches to make!  
 If the bride is a fine one,  
 Bless you and may you receive much money for  
 your efforts!  
 Harilač — Priština (Halilaç — Prishtinë), Feb. 1970

Here are some songs presenting a contrasting theme. They express the girl's opposition to marriage contracted by the matchmaker, and her determination to marry the man of her choice.

... The moment has come for me to wed,  
 To go to the old buzzard.  
 I told my mother:  
 This is not the man for me!  
 He is an old one,  
 Old and with a beard.  
 Let him take another,  
 And let me take a young man...<sup>22</sup>

matchmaker "nër dorë" (in the hand); the money that the bride's family receives which does not contribute to her hopechest preparation is called "hupëse".

<sup>21</sup> Sh. Pllana, *Kangët e marhamës në Opojë* in *Jeta e Re* (New Life), Prishtina, no. 5, 1957, 407—414.

<sup>22</sup> Irman Pepshi recorded this from Hajrija Morina in Junik, January 1960.

\* \*  
\*

Who wants the matchmaker?  
He has an evil soul!  
His grave will cave in!  
He has the face of a fool!  
His children to die!  
May he have sorrow in every season!  
He does not know how to be a proper guest\*!  
No one will take him in their home,  
And in his house no fire burns in the hearth.  
His house will fall!<sup>35</sup>

\* These are among the most serious  
insults among Albanians.

— Oh dear one, sweet blessings to you.  
So great is your love for me,  
Why can we not be wed?  
To the factory together we will go,  
To work side by side,  
To find a better life.  
Our hearts are to be wrenched apart,  
For we can never live as man and wife.<sup>36</sup>

This and similar songs among our examples reflect the essential difference in the personality and social position of part of the women's sphere, portrayed in the idealic, emancipated life in contrast to the girls engaged under the patriarchal system of matchmaking. These last songs represent a woman who is not subjugated by the marriage norms according to which she has no rights in the choosing of her fate but must go where her family has designated.<sup>35</sup> This contemporary poetry of our Kosovo women, with simple but passionate words, has a functional character and with her weapon in hastening emancipation. The verses curse the matchmaker and on the other hand idolize life together with the loved one, who is usually pictured as a young man of favorable social standing. At the same time the songs contain sensual expressions related to the older layer of love lyrics, some of which may be considered love songs.

On the other hand, engagement songs are also sung in the cities, exclusively in the groom's house. These songs are also sung in other Albanian regions including Albania, Macedonia and Montenegro.<sup>36</sup> Clearly, these songs are outside the traditional

<sup>35</sup> Irman Pepshi recorded this from Beqir Musa in Beleg, March 1960.

<sup>36</sup> Sh. Pllana, »Puna në kangët popullore shqiptare«, *Gjurmime Alb*, ed. cit., 193, 187—194.

<sup>35</sup> *KLD* article 31.

<sup>36</sup> These songs are to be found in the three volumes of *Folklorit muzikor shqiptar* of Lorenc Antoni and in the seven volumes of folk-songs of Qamii i Vogël, published in Prishtina from 1957—1972.

engagement customs which have been fairly well-preserved in the Kosovo villages.

b) *Songs about the bride's hopechest preparation.* From the announcement of the engagement until the wedding itself, a period extending over a summer or several years if the boy is still young, the girl prepares her hopechest. From long ago it has been the custom that the boy's family bears the expense of hopechest preparation as the girl will eventually bring the contents to his house on the wedding day.<sup>37</sup> The boy's father goes with the matchmaker to the girl's house to bring money, sometimes several times, until the hopechest is completed. This is expressed in songs sung by the girls in the home of the fiancé.

Oh, who comes across the field?  
The boy's father comes bringing the money.  
He brings the money, he brings the gold.  
Ah, the cloth looks very expensive!  
It undulates like a snake,  
As a snake slithering through the grass,  
As a snake slithering through the hills.  
Oh, my brother will have three-hundred guests!  
Three-hundred guests, and three wedding banners.  
Rise brothers, and make way for the guests!

Rogačica — Kamenica (Rogačica — Kamenica),  
January, 1969

The song expresses the difficult work requiring endurance, skill and aesthetic taste of the bride and her sisters and cousins in the decoration and embroidering of the hopechest contents.

A song from the village Elezovic (Elezaj) near Uroševac (Ferizaj) addresses the fiancée, comparing her beauty to the sun and moon.

Oh, our flower is a dreamer.  
When the new moon has risen we will send the  
hopechest money.  
We will send money for the »shingjergj«,<sup>\*</sup>  
Dance the »qiqek« as you wait for the father of  
the groom.  
Dance the »qiqek« as you wait for his brothers.  
He will converse well, our new friend.<sup>\*\*</sup>  
Our flower is as the sun and the moon.  
They have said that you are very good.  
Very good, so they say,  
Such that you are the envy of all your friends.<sup>\*\*</sup>

\* St. George's Day  
\*\* the girl's father

<sup>37</sup> According to article 20 of *KLD*, the girl does not receive any inheritance from her parents, nor do her parents have to contribute to the hopechest preparation, the expense, of which must be covered by the boy's family.

<sup>38</sup> *Jeta e Re*, Prishtina, no. 4, 1954, 387—388.

Another song expresses the greed of the bride's family in seeking the means of preparing the hopechest, ending with the customary resignation.

Who comes across the field?  
Halil-aga is bringing money.  
Bringing money, and gold,  
And is clothed in fine socks and good shoes.  
He brings the money in a box,  
But the girl's father thinks it is not enough money.  
— Wait friend, I will fetch more!  
It will be enough, do not fear!  
Seret — Uroševac (Sherret — Ferizaj), April 1961

This custom does not exist in the cities where the bride prepares the hopechest with money from her own family. It is also disappearing in the village with the rise in the standard of living.

In the wedding songs of the village girls, especially of those attending school, there is a burning desire for cultural emancipation. Through poetry, the girls condemn the patriarchal system. They want to abandon the toilsome preparation of the hopechest which hurts eyes from the endless embroidery and weaving.

We are girls in school,  
And have our books in hand.  
We come home and complain,  
Asking that they let us continue in our studies,  
That the father will not engage us through the  
matchmaker,  
For then we will have but to work on our  
hopechests —  
The work that blinds us.  
Always to go to school,  
And to take the husband we love.  
To marry a man who has been to school,  
Both of us to earn money,  
And so to prosper.  
Drenovac — Deçane (Drenovc — Deçan), Dec. 1960

The songs are in the local, popular language, but contain elements of the literary language, as some of the girls are now attending school.

Songs of sadness are represented in the following verses which tell of the death of the bride on her wedding day from a serious illness attributed to the work involved in the preparation of the hopechest. There are also details which reveal the spiritual bonds she has with her friends who will be continuing school:

Oh, woe that befalls us,  
Last our Zejnepi has died,  
And we had put the henna on her fingers!  
She will go to her grave accompanied by  
the school girls.



»Oh, let the hopechest burn,  
 How I worked to clean these things!  
 To clean and scrub,  
 I sat on a rock and worked,  
 And my love heard my pains.  
 For three years the pain did not stop.  
 I spit blood into the warp of the loom.  
 I spit blood, black blood,  
 And my mother comforted me,  
 And with a scarf shooed away the flies.  
 Zasela — Mitrovica (Zasella — Mitrovica), Jan. 1971

Another example collected twelve years ago expresses the suffering of a village girl engaged to a boy, nothing but a child. The girl refuses to work on her hopechest as the work reminded her of the man she loved but could not marry:

Oh coo coo, what have they done to me?  
 Much material they have brought to me,  
 But my heart cries to me not to work!  
 How to work for a man who is still a child,  
 When I will be always thinking of you?  
 Let all of these thing, all of these socks,  
 Let all of the material burn!  
 Let another woman take these things,  
 I want never to see them again!<sup>39</sup>

c) *Songs of marriage* among the Albanians of Kosovo are sung at all phases of the wedding ritual and mark various moments in the separation from unwed life. They reflect the difference between the old and modern life styles in the villages. We present characteristic examples from various regions to show the process of the wedding from beginning to end in both the houses of the bride and the groom.

The women of the house sing when the wedding date is determined. According to custom, the date which cannot be altered is decided upon by the boy's father and the matchmaker with the understanding of the girl's family.<sup>40</sup> One of these songs expresses the honor bestowed upon the girl when the boy's father goes to her parents to decide the day of the wedding. The women of the boy's house are singing.

<sup>39</sup> Sh. Pllana, "Tri kangeë — tri dëshira (three songs, three desires) from contemporary women's poetry, *Rilindja*, March 27, 1960, 10.

<sup>40</sup> According to article 54 of *KLD*, the day the wedding party goes to fetch the bride cannot be altered, regardless of whether the bride is ill or there is a death in one of the families: »And if there is a death in the family, the wedding party is to depart; the bride enters the groom's house, and the corpse of the dead is carried out. There to mourn, here to sing..."

Oh flower in your calico "dimia",  
 Today the wedding date will be set.  
 Oh flower, come outside the door,  
 And give welcome to the boy's father!  
 Go and see to his horse!  
 A week from today you will go as a bride,  
 And from today we will sing for you!

Sazli — Ferizaj, Sept. 1960

Come, oh flower, to see our house in the summer.  
 There are white grapes upon the arbor.  
 You have entered the door to our house.  
 And Mustafë is a first-class teacher.  
 The arbor is laden with grapes.  
 Mustafë is the director of the school!

Ibid

The bride has sent word to a bird,  
 To tell the master of the house to sell his white  
 horse.  
 To sell his horse and to take the money,  
 To come on Sunday and decide the day.

Ibid

The bride's trousseau is beautiful,  
 As will be that of the groom.  
 He shines as light,  
 And if it is dark, his brightness will make it light!  
 How lovely it will be on Sunday at dusk,  
 When the bride will appear in her storebought  
 clothes!  
 Ibid

The song also describes the return of the members of the boy's family after delivering the bride's things to her:

Welcome, "petkaxhi",\*  
 How ary you received at the bride's?  
 — Our new friend made good conversation,  
 And in a week's time we will go to fetch the bride!  
 Ibid (\* Five men who deliver the bride's things.)

The song repertoire increases the week before the marriage when the wedding celebration actually begins. Women and girls announce the beginning of the wedding with songs sung to the accompaniment of the tambourine.

We begin the wedding with two tambourines,  
 And call the guests through the newspaper.  
 They don't answer the newspaper's call,  
 So we go to fetch them by car.  
 What is that red color we see in the distance?\*

Our brother goes to gather the guests.  
 To gather our guests, to gather our friends.  
 Our wedding begins with the sound of the drum!

Ibid

(\* The bridal wagon covered by red carpets.)

The singers then congratulate the boy's father and the bride and groom. The song begins with a couplet about the sifting of flour, the task which on Monday signals the beginning the preparation of the wedding cakes, symbolizing the economic prosperity of the family as reflected in the addition of a new member to the household.

Sift the flour into the new "maxhe!"\*  
 Happiness to you, father, for she is a young bride!  
 Sift the flour into the old "maxhe",  
 Next year another son will be wed!  
 Sift the flour into the red "maxhe",  
 Luck to you mother, for this bride!  
 Sift the flour, mix it with water from the earthen  
 pitcher.  
 Luck to you, brothers, for your new sister-in-law!  
 Ibid (\* the trough where bread dough is worked)

The songs describe the gunfire made by the guests as a sign of congratulation. According to the old world-view this was performed to prevent evil spirits from entering the wedding event. Today this gunfire serves primarily as entertainment and a signal of commencement of the wedding.

The rifle is shot, the revolver is shot,  
 Young Mustafë is to marry!  
 His fate gladdens us,  
 The lovely bride has black eyes and a long throat!  
 Ibid

This kind of song is found throughout Kosovo.<sup>41</sup> Here is an example of the kind of song the girls sing throughout the wedding expressing their happiness:

Since our birth and childhood,  
 Such joy has never befallen us.  
 Since our birth and the days of our youth,  
 Never have we had such happiness.  
 Our hearts are filled with joy,  
 The bride comes to us as a fountain of beauty.  
 As a fountain, so appears the bride.  
 So fine, as a big as two people put together!  
 Brus — Janjevo (Brusë — Janjevë), Sept. 1964

There is no greater happiness,  
 Than when you take a bride for your brother.  
 There is no greater joy,  
 Than when we take the bride this year!

Ibid

<sup>41</sup> See the songs of Jakup Citaku in *Kangë dasmash llapjane* (Wedding songs from LLao), *Përparimi*, Prishtina, no. 8—10, 1968, 997—1008.

In the three following examples we find ironic expressions about the parents of the bride:

The wedding began and the cakes were baked,  
 You have kept your daughter at home long enough,  
     oh Hysen the blacksmith!  
 You have kept her at home and watched her suffer  
     long enough!  
 With the sheep and goats you have sent her.  
 — I did not send her to watch the sheep and goats!  
 I have kept her at home to do the housework.

Kamenica, April 1971

Come bride, gather your aprons,  
 Tonight at our house the corn is prepared.  
 Come bride, gather your scarves,  
 Because tonight Hasan-aga will gather his friends.

Ibid

Hasan-aga looks like a summer pear.  
 Where did you finish grammer school?  
 I went through grammer school non-stop,  
 And all the highest marks did I receive!

Ibid

Here are some examples from another area which develop other motifs from the house of the bride which are dedicated to her, invoking her name:

Come to our house, bride, where the watermelon is ripe,  
 Come to our house, bride, where the radio plays.  
 All the houses in our village have radios,  
 And our brother has two television sets,  
 One in the guestroom, one in the main house.  
 Do you know how to work it, oh lovely flower?  
 Our bride sits upon the bed,  
 Her tears fall because she is to wait no longer.  
 — Why did you give me away this year, father?  
 I am young, and do not yet know how to serve the family.  
 — Our bride, your eyes are like chestnuts,  
 We will take care of you as if you were a doll,  
 As a doll in the store, oh Aman.  
 You will clothed in nothing but the best!

Blace — Suva Reka (Billacë — Suhareka), Dec. 1960

We have baked the wedding cakes today,  
 And thirty chickens will be butchered.  
 Why does the rooster crow?  
 — Because the girl is going to eat me!  
 — Why does the rooster laugh?  
 — The girls are going to put me in the oven to bake!  
 Who is going to bake the wedding cakes?  
 Let her hands get fat!  
 Who is going to bake the wedding biscuits?  
 Let her marry a policeman!

Ibid

The bride's mother went out to a stone,  
 And cried for her daughter who now goes to be wed.  
 The younger sister said, "Be still mother,  
 When the guests come to take the bride, they will  
 bring wedding cakes!"

The bride's father went out to the well,  
 — From this day forward a pauper I will be!

Ibid

In the majority of songs, the women sing while playing the tambourine, expressing the happiness which is felt throughout the family. Through song, they address the relatives and friends who have come to the wedding, praising the uncle who brings a ram as a gift, and honoring the other relatives of the groom who bring gifts, especially those who have traveled a great distance.

Of interest are the songs which describe the maturity of the boy in entering his new life, symbolically telling of his departure from boyhood. They also express the brother's desire to keep looking after his sisters — he does not want to exchange the scarf given to him by his sisters for the one his bride will bring.

I put the scarf upon my shoulder, but do not know  
 where it has fallen.  
 And I have washed the garden with my tears.  
 — Do not cry, young Mustafë,  
 Because when your flower comes she will bring you  
 another!

— I do not want the one she will give,  
 For the one I lost is the one my sisters gave to me!  
 I will ask my sisters to give me another!  
 — Come brother, we will give you another!  
 With even more splendid embroidery!

Sazlija — Uroševac (Sazli — Ferizaj), Sept. 1960

Other songs idealize the desire of the young people to continue their educations, and having reached a higher social standing, to merit wedding guests who are of comparable status.

What is that by the well?  
 It is Mustafë-aga, the first married.  
 He was married first, but against his will,  
 For he wanted to earn his diploma.  
 When he got his diploma,  
 Only then to take his bride.  
 Said Mustafë-aga, "Oh what happiness,  
 Many sisters have I!  
 Half of them dance, half of them sing,  
 Because on this day their brother marries!"  
 All the more happiness we have,  
 Because we have made it ourselves!  
 All the guests will be professors,  
 And the wagon-driver will go to take all the ladies  
 in order!

All the guests will have their brushes,  
 And the wagon-driver will take all the women  
 in order.  
 The guests will be of high standing,  
 To Čërnillën\* they will go!  
 Ibid (\* The bride's village.)

The verses idealize the aspirations of the youth to raise their educational and cultural level. The bride expresses her uncertainty as to whether she will measure up to the status of the boy's family:

Sevdija went out by a tree weeping,  
 — Oh my sisters, it is such a classy village to  
 which I go!  
 Such a smart village, with high culture,  
 And Mustafë-aga is a boy with a diploma!  
 — Oh Sevdija went out crying by the window,  
 And sensed the smell of cigarets — the arrival of  
 the family of her groom.  
 Their carriage is beautifully ornamented,  
 And the guests come in fine clothes of black.  
 Such a fine carriage,  
 The guests come in fine clothes of white.  
 Oh why have the people gathered at Čërnilla today?  
 They have come to fetch the bride!

Ibid

In these examples we see aspects of Albanian folk-poetry which are based upon innovative ideological and aesthetic notions. The earlier songs emphasize the boy's bravery and skill, idealizing the girl's beauty and virtue.<sup>42</sup> The songs acquaint the girl with the fine house she is to enter into, and in contrast to her hard work in the home of her family, describe the technical advancements which will insure a bountiful harvest in the groom's family.<sup>43</sup>

Come to us for we are a large family!  
 We have radio and television,  
 Two wells in the garden.  
 And we plow the fields with a tractor!  
 Sojevo — Uroševac (Sojeva — Ferizaj), Sept. 1960

On the other hand, the songs express the bride's happiness that the husband is not a laborer, and they will have a higher living standard:

Our bride has a signet ring on each finger.  
 She is a fine woman and her husband has a  
 good job.  
 Come, magnetic lady,  
 Student from the college.

Ibid

<sup>42</sup> See these collections: *Visaret e Kombit X (Lahuta e Kosovës)*, Tiranë 1944; *KPSH*, III, Prishtina 1953 and other works cited in this article.

<sup>43</sup> *Gjurmime Alb*, ed. cit., 167.

Come bride, for life is fine at our house!  
 We are a good family and there are many of us.  
 We have three machines in the garden:  
 One for cleaning the wool,  
 One for sewing more quickly,  
 One for threshing grain,  
 And we won't make you work alone!  
 Ljubovac — Srbica (Lubovec — Sërbica), March 1971

These songs reveal the interest of the younger generation in attaining a measure of self-determination in their lives. Along with the innovative ideas in the songs are introduced new vocabulary. The importance of this poetry lies in the fact that it is a reflection of the general social progress and in hope for a better future. The girls express their desires to break from the conservative lifestyle of their parents and to become part of an emancipated family, to create better lives for themselves.

There are a substantial number of songs about the bride's wagon, the "kocisë së nuses" which will take the bride to her future home on the wedding day. The songs express the pride of the bride's family when the guests from the groom's house arrive to fetch the bride. In Kosovo this wagon is called "kerri i nuses" (the bride's car) or "kerri i kuq" (the red car) because the wagon, usually drawn by horses, is covered with multi-colored carpets dominated by red. The carpets conceal the women inside from public view in accordance with Moslem tradition. The song describes a lovely, tall, mature and obedient bride being brought in the wagon. The following examples describe the customs performed when the guests go to take the bride. Reference is made to abduction and the shooting of firearms:

The black horse will not go,  
 Until the groom shoots off his gun.  
 The red horse will not go,  
 If the groom is not in among the guests.  
 Sazlija — Uroševac (Sazli — Ferizaj), Sept. 1960

In the wagon which we have adorned,  
 In an hour's time you will be taken.  
 Once you start you will not stop,  
 Until you arrive in our palace!

Ibid

The same singers greet the guests and address the head guest (comparable to the best man), extending wishes for the success of the journey:

Safe journey, first guest,  
 And all the best to you in the performance of  
 your task!  
 To bring the bride with the lily-white face!

Ibid

Good journey, you who go to fetch the bride!  
 Luck to the first guest!

Wait a moment,  
 For the groom has two words for you:  
 "Tell the bride to cry gently,  
 To cry gently and without tears,  
 For we are not taking her by force.  
 By the weapons which I carry,  
 You will not be parted from my side,  
 For without you I would shrivel up like a  
 dead branch.  
 Ibid

Here is a song which tells of the girl being taken in an automobile with a wedding banner, rather than in the traditional cart:

We will take our flower from the plains,  
 We will go to fetch her my car.  
 A car with a banner,  
 With my brother as the chauffeur!  
 Ibid

Here some additional examples which demonstrate the broad distribution of this type of song:

Oh Ibadete, my flower,  
 We will come to fetch you by car.  
 The car is well-equipped,  
 And to Kačanik it will go in style!  
 We will start before the morning moon is seen,  
 While the people of Kačanik are still asleep under  
 their quilts —  
 Only the bride's father is awake.  
 — Wake up everyone, for the guests have arrived!  
 The villagers have come,  
 To take our bride as the "calgija"\* plays!  
 Dubrava — Kačanik (Dubrava — Kačanik),  
 April 1970  
 (\* City orchestra usually composed of hour-glass  
 drum, clarinet, violin.)

We will go to get the bride by train,  
 Oh my village, never to see you again!  
 Never again because I am tired of you!  
 Because for so long I have tilled your earth,  
 Because of the tedious hand-work I have done.  
 I lost the embroidered socks,  
 And when I arrived home my father hit me!  
 Ibid

People from Zajcevci, make room for us,  
 Because we have arrived by automobile!  
 Oh Shaban, the devil to take you,  
 Why do you persist in going in the red wagon?  
 Prapaštica — Priština (Prapashtica — Prishtina),  
 Feb. 1970

One day before the guests arrive to fetch the bride, (this was Thursday and is now Sunday) the bride's relatives and friends gather round her and sing as they undo her braids,



an act symbolizing her departure from girlhood. After this they color her hair and parts of her face, hands and toes with henna which was sent the previous week by the grooms's family along with the rest of her trousseau. The girls present also color their fingers and hands symbolizing the weddings of the past in which a group of girls were all married on one day to defray expenses. This solemn occasion has several names: "nata e kanës" (night of the henna), "nata e bojës" (the night of the coloring), or more frequently, "kenagjegje" or "kanagjeq" from the Turkish "kinagecesi" (night of henna). The accompanying songs are known as "kangët e këmagjegjes" (songs of the night of hena), "kangët e kanagjeqit" or "kangët e bojës". These songs develop the theme of the passage from girlhood to married life. There is always reference made to the comfort of life with her parents in contrast to the severity of the life to come with her in-laws. The bride's weeping at this time is a complex phenomenon, a sign of her struggle against the pain of leaving her kin and her family cult. The crying is also a form of initiation.<sup>44</sup> Some examples of "kangët e këmagjegjes":

Who has undone your braid,  
 May both their hands be cut off!  
 Oh dear girl, oh my little fool,  
 The henna comes in a clay dish.  
 Do you know the promise that you gave to us?  
 "My white hands will never receive the henna!"  
 If you don't want to see them put on the henna,  
 Get up and put out the light!  
 Seret — Uroševac (Sheret — Ferizaj), April 1960

The song also describes the process of applying the henna:

Put on the henna, bit by bit,  
 Mother, you have had a daughter who's beauty is  
 as a banner.  
 Put on the henna with small red dots,  
 Your daughter will be the prettiest of all the brides  
 Put on the henna with large spots,  
 Your daughter will be the prettiest of all the women.  
 And what will you leave your mother for her  
 suffering?  
 I will leave the mark of five hennaed fingers upon  
 the wall.  
 Ibid

Cry dear girl in the red "dimia",  
 You will be the prettiest of all the brides!  
 Cry dear girl in the polka-dot "dimia",  
 You were the prettiest girl.  
 Cry dear girl in the striped "dimia",  
 You will be the prettiest of all!

Ibid

<sup>44</sup> *Visaret e Kombit* X, 21—30; *KPSH*, III, 87—95.

Cry my dear with full voice,  
 Because never again will you be a girl.  
 Cry your heart out at the hearth,  
 And greet your brothers and sisters!  
 Cry my dear one, cry my flower,  
 Now the wedding guests await you.  
 "Let them wait and explode with waiting,  
 It is with great sorrow that I leave my people!"

Ibid

Cry girl, hu hu hu,  
 Because you wanted to wear the "dimia" of the bride!  
 And when your "dimia" are old,  
 Then the weariness will come to you!

Zaskok — Uroševac (Zaskok — Ferizaj), April 1960

Other songs related to henna are sung as the girl departs from her family to become a bride, leaving behind all the memories associated with work in the fields, tending the livestock, etc.

Cry my sister, until your eyes ache with crying,  
 You who have worked in the fields,  
 Cry sister at the garden wall,  
 You who have gone to harvest the wheat.  
 Cry sister, with tears the size of walnuts,  
 You who used to go to await your father.  
 Cry sister at the white garden wall,  
 Because your father calls to you to go to the fields.  
 In you, your father had a fine worker,  
 One who worked much and talked little.

Ošljane — Vučitrn (Oshlan — Vucitërnë), Feb. 1971

Cry sister without stopping,  
 For even the bread-trough cries for you.  
 Cry sister, your tears as rain falling,  
 For the house which you have cleaned cries

for you.

Cry sister, so you will be heard as far as the river,  
 Your mother calls you to wash the clothes.

Ibid

We have picked the grapes from the vine,  
 oh from the vine,  
 And Hajrija leaves her girlhood,  
 oh leaves her girlhood.

Oh Hajrija do not cry,  
 oh do not cry,  
 Because now we have all begun to cry,  
 and we have all begun to cry!

Štimlje (Shtimje), April 1961

Mother went to gather the hay,  
 Searching for Sevdija by moonlight.  
 Mother went to gather the grain,  
 Searching everywhere for Sevdija.  
 Come let us eat dinner,  
 Your place has been left empty.  
 Your bread has been left untouched,  
 Your spoon is dry.

Crnilo — Uroševac (Černilla — Ferizaj), May 1961

Who has assembled Hajrija's loom?  
 — The uncle's wife, and may her hands be broken!  
 Who hid the scissors in the hopechest?  
 — The little sister, so she will not have to begin  
 her dowry.  
 Drenovac — Dečane (Drenovac — Dečan), Dec. 1960

Some songs express the girl's pain at leaving her friends, the dancing, and especially the school:

Cry sister, at the pantry door,  
 Will you miss dancing at the "Shingjergj?"  
 And your friends call you to dance.  
 Your mother went out to the door, crying,  
 "I am left alone for the summer work!"  
 Doganjevo — Uroševac (Doganaaj — Ferizaj),  
 Oct. 1971

Oh dear girl under the apple tree,  
 Will you miss the school you have loved?  
 "It is such pain as to lose both eyes,  
 But I cannot say no to the promise father  
 has given.  
 I had wanted to finish school,  
 But my wishes were not fulfilled.  
 Ibid

Take care girl as you enter the wagon,  
 Be careful not to step on your father-in-law's foot!  
 "I want to step on him and stir up dust!  
 He never brought more than a kilo of cotton,  
 But just a kilo's worth, carried in his sash.  
 I want to step on him and squish him into  
 a board,  
 Because he didn't bring the wool by the bagfull.  
 This father-in-law is so rich,  
 And holds up his pants with a cord!"  
 Poklek — Glogovac (Poklek — Glogovc), Sept. 1967  
 Your tears fall as pebbles,  
 All of these tears because your husband-to-be,  
 Comes across the field.  
 Cry your heart out, oh flower!  
 The groom comes through the mud,  
 A friendless pauper.  
 "Get lost fool, you owe me nothing!"  
 The groom comes across the meadow,  
 Alone he comes, with a donkey in the lead.  
 The groom comes to the threshing floor,  
 And cries that he has lost his moccasins.  
 "Quiet, fool, or the whole village will hear!  
 We will make you new moccasins of felt!"  
 Ošljane — Vučitrn (Oshlan — Vučitërn), Feb. 1971

When your mother-in-law tells you to milk the cow,  
 Take the scissors and cut her hair!  
 When your mother-in-law tells you to milk the goat,  
 Take the scissors and cut out her eyes!  
 When your mother-in-law tells you to milk  
 the sheep,

Take a basin and pull out her brains!  
 When your mother-in-law tells you to tie up the dog,  
 Tell her that for the love of God you don't know  
 where it is!  
 When your mother-in-law tells you to set the table,  
 Tell her you are too lazy!  
 When your mother-in-law tells you to lay down  
 to sleep,  
 "My God, this I will do with no hesitation!"

Or this other ending:

No sister, we were just kidding,  
 And you mustn't feel hurt!

Talinovac — Uroševac (Talinovac i Muhaxherëve—  
 Ferizaj), May 1960

These songs which tell of the girl's pain in leaving the home of her family come to a climax in verses about a dead mother or father who's soul, according to popular belief, wanders about in the house of the family. The songs develop this theme in a very intense way, such that those listening are deeply effected. An example of a song about a dead mother:

Cry at the window my sister,  
 So your mother can hear you from her grave!  
 We have sent the money to the grave,  
 So she will be able to come to us for two nights,  
 To prepare her daughter to be a bride,  
 Because her daughter is an only child.  
 Mother has spoken these words —  
 "Daughter, blessings to you,  
 For I cannot leave my grave!"

Belačevac — Priština (Bellaqevc — Prishtina),  
 March 1967

In a similar way, the girls of Sojevë call the girl's father with song. Here there is an emphasis on his burning desire to accompany his daughter and to host the wedding guests as dictated by custom:

Cry at the window my daughter,  
 Because your father will not hear you from  
 the grave!  
 He wants us to send him money,  
 So that he can come away for two nights,  
 For the sake of his daughter,  
 To make conversation with the guests!

Sojevo — Uroševac (Sojeva — Ferizaj), Sept. 1960

These verses awaken profound emotions in their listeners, and throughout the wedding create an intense spiritual atmosphere. The crying of the bride and of all the girls present is their way of giving vent to the frustration associated with their suppressed position in the patriarchal society, and with the difficulty of entering the groom's family. These songs are also

sung the day after the "kanagjegj" when the guests come to fetch the bride. The female guests from the boy's house are also known as: "bulla", "bullaqina", "janxhika", "gra të kerrit", "kerxhiket", etc. Before these guests arrive, the girls sing:

Why are the guests late?  
 They had clothes to repair.  
 Where have their forsaken wives gone?  
 Through the neighborhood to sing and dance.\*  
 Cabić — Dobra Voda (Çabiq — Ujmir), March 1969

(\* This is intended as a slur on the men for not having control over their wives.)

Songs are sung to welcome the guests as they arrive at the bride's house:

Oh "bullaqin" with your long hair,  
 Welcome dear sisters-in-law!  
 Enjoy your coffee with plenty of sugar,  
 Blessings to you who have arrived in the wagon!

Ibid

If the groom is discovered among the girls much fun is made of him, as it is the Moslem custom that the groom must not go with his relatives to fetch the bride:

Oh lad you have a head like a frying pan!  
 You would do well as a blacksmith.  
 Why do you gaze up at the ceiling?  
 You would do well as a "tupan" player!

Ibid

When the bride is introduced among the guests, the girls sing:

The bride is as beautiful as a mountain,  
 When she is among the others she makes them look  
 like toroises!

Ibid

Then the female guests dance several dances to the accompaniment of the tambourine and the bride's friends ridicule them:

The sugar has been put on the tray,  
 For the good of the bride's house.  
 We have not heard well of the other girls...  
 The sugar has been offered, and has been taken.  
 Let the other girls go 'round the wagon.  
 We have brought a long wagon,  
 Big enough for all the girls and women.

Ibid

We have many examples of this kind with different figurative motives and expressions. Here are some examples sung by women of the bride's house:

Oh guests, safe journey to you.  
 The women in the wagon we would take,  
 To give to our brothers,  
 But the women are good-for-nothings.  
 We would take them only to work as maids,  
 Only to work in the fields,  
 Only to clean the barn and care for the livestock,  
 Because our brothers have gone to work abroad.  
 Poklek — Glogovac (Poklek — Gillogvc), Sept. 1967

Your wagon has run into the fence,  
 Our bride will bring luck to you!  
 Good journey, sisters!  
 And don't forget to come visit us!  
 To see us and talk with us,  
 About how it is at the groom's.  
 The oldest brother had promised,  
 That he would go to visit her.  
 Good journey to you, sister!  
 Bow your head and work,  
 Be a good girl,  
 Because the people of Llaushë are hard task  
 masters!  
 Ibid

When the bridal wagon finally departs from the garden of the bride's house the guests in the wagon are more free to express themselves and the verses take on the form of answering back the women of the bride's house:

Now, as in the future,  
 You are our's.  
 You may fall apart from sorrow, friend,  
 Because we have taken your daughter forever!  
 Đurakovac (Gjurakovc), Dec. 1960

These satirical songs reflect the conflict between the two sides of the marriage, harkening back to marriages of the past and bride abduction.

The female wedding guests sing continuously while the wagon is in route to the groom's house to the accompaniment of two tambourines. The songs describe the beauty of the bride, from her hair to her toes. Common metaphors are: her eyes like grapes, her mouth like a box or a date seed, her teeth like pearls or river pebbles, her neck as a pigeon's her body like a slim-waisted cypress, etc.<sup>45</sup>

Oh my beauty in the thicket,  
 I begged you and begged you until summer.  
 Until summer, and then the autumn came,  
 I alone took you, I alone desired you.  
 I alone desired you, I alone took you,  
 To the suffering of my friends.

Lipljane (Lipjan), Sept. 1971

<sup>45</sup> In reference to works cited in this article.

When the bridal wagon enters the groom's garden, it is greeted by all the women of the house who sing to the accompaniment of the tambourine:

The wagon arrives at the garden door.  
This bride who comes is like a falcon.  
The guns and pistols resound.  
Are you weary, my brothers?

Drenovac — Dečane (Drenovac — Dečan), Dec. 1960

Oh flower, who do you resemble?  
She looks like the half-moon in the heavens,  
The moon which lights the night sky,  
Such is the sister-in-law we have taken!  
Elezović — Kačanik (Elezaj — Kačanik), March 1968

Come flower along the path.  
The path looks like a garden strewn with flowers.  
Come flower, to the edge of the field,  
Which looks like strawberry fields on the mountains.  
Sojevo — Uroševac (Sojeva — Ferizaj), Sept 1960

Why has the sun not risen?  
Our beautiful bride has taken the shine from  
the sun.

Oh bride, oh radiant brightness,  
When it is night, you light the sky.  
Oh bride, apple and quince,  
Of all the brides, you are the most beautiful.  
Đurakovac (Gjurakovc), Dec. 1960

When it rains and a rainbow appears,  
It is as our bride coming out of the wagon.  
When it rains and the flowers bloom,  
It is as the others coming out of the wagon.  
Gornji Livoč — Gnjilane (Livoč i Epërm — Gjilan),  
Oct. 1971

When the bride came to the door,  
It was January, but she brought with her summer.  
When the bride came into the room where she  
would sleep,  
It was winter, and she brought the summer.  
Doganjevo — Uroševac (Doganjaj — Ferizaj),  
Sept 1971

The bride has a moon over her forehead,  
And is the prettiest of all the girls in the  
neighborhood.

Her face is like a Turkish delight,  
And she is the prettiest of all the girls in  
the village.

With two black eyes,  
She is the envy of all the girls.  
Zaskok — Uroševac (Zaskok — Ferizaj), April 1960

There are also songs which tease the bride with reference to her parents, sometimes emphasizing the fact that they could have bargained for more money from the boy's parents for her dowry preparation:

Oh flower, why do you tremble?  
 Are you afraid or do you shiver from the cold?  
 And why do you look askance?  
 Has your father frightened you?  
 Oh flower, why do you hold yourself so rigidly?  
 Until yesterday you only took care of the goats.

Seret — Uroševac (Sherret — Ferizaj), April 1960

A number of other songs are sung by the groom and have an epithetical character. The verses are of a symbolic nature, as, for example, they invite the groom to throw off the clothes of his boyhood, to leave the carefree life of bachelorhood, and to don the clothes of manhood — an act marking his entrance into the serious matter of matrimony. The song expresses the sisters' pain in seeing their brother take on the burden of family life. Also of interest is the way in which the girls and women sing of the groom's entrance into the wedding chamber where his bride waits:

Oh Hasan, our groom,  
 What have you dreamed tonight?  
 "What I have dreamt will come to pass:  
 The bride was standing motionless in the corner.  
 — Come on Hasan, you want to go in!  
 The door is open and the lamp is lit,  
 The bed is laid and the bride waits motionless."

Šajkovac — Podujevo (Shajkovc — Podujeva),  
 March 1969

In another song of this kind from the same area, the groom is thrown into the wedding chamber in a ritual manner. In a symbolic way the lightning blesses the unification act, while the new clothes symbolize entrance into a new life:

Whispering and murmuring,  
 In Hasan's room the lightning flashes.  
 The lightning flashes on the trunk,  
 Which holds the new clothes for Hasan!  
 The clothes which he alone will wear,  
 Which he will wear in health!

Ibid

The moonlight falls upon the bed,  
 The bride a lady, the groom a gentleman.  
 The moonlight falls upon the rooftop,  
 As the two pigeons lay under the quilt.  
 To us has come a bride,  
 Who in a year's time a son will bear!

Junik (Junik), Dec. 1960

These songs express the sensuality of the union of the bride and groom. Outside of the marriage ritual, the men sing openly about their erotic exploits on the wedding night and of the bride's beauty. These songs are of an intimate and intense nature, lacking the discretion of the women's songs.



...The boy does not concern himself with  
the dowry,  
The bride is looking up from under her veil:  
White face and black eyes,  
Her shoulders are wide under her vest,  
Her long hair hangs to her waist.  
The bride a lady, the groom a gentleman,  
They go to lay in the bed,  
The bed is laid and the room is lit,  
The room is aglow with beauty,  
As the two lie together,  
Together they lie, nestled together,  
And in a year's time a son will be born!<sup>46</sup>

The three last verses emphasize the union of married life — the first, the entrance, the second, the sexual act itself, and the third fertility, expressing the patriarchal desire for a son and descension through the male line.

There are also songs from the morning after the wedding night, called in scientific terms "obada" from "aubade" or "alba" — dawn. These are sung by the women early the next morning. They emphasize that the bride must not sleep long, but must get up early to finish all of her domestic chores.

The rooster is singing, "greka-greka",  
Rouse yourself bride, for it is late.  
When the rooster crows for the first time,  
The fire must be lit.  
When the rooster crows for the second time,  
The bread must be made.  
When the rooster crows for the third time,  
The bread must be ready.  
When you enter, bride, to sweep the hall,  
Take care not to glance to the road outside!<sup>47</sup>

The songs describe the process of the removal of the bridal veil which in the village is a scarf or other thin cloth. This process takes place in the morning in front of friends and relatives who offer greetings and money and take a piece of the bride's wedding cake and other sweets.

Oh our flower under the veil,  
Fair skin and black eyes,  
Our flower removes her veil,  
Happines to the family and to the house,  
On this day she leaves her childhood behind.  
No longer are you a girl,  
But have become a bride.  
You are not a girl working at the loom,  
But a bride in the service of her family.  
You are not a girl gazing from the window,  
But a bride in servitude.  
Sazlija — Uroševac (Sazli — Ferizaj), Sept. 1960

<sup>46</sup> *Visaret e Kombit*, ed. cit., 27—28.

<sup>47</sup> Lorence Antoni, *Folklori muzikor shqiptar*, III, Prishtina, 1964, 33—34.

Break apart the wedding cake, bit by bit,  
 A year from today the bride will bear a son!  
 Break apart the wedding cake as a fig,  
 In two years the bride will bear a daughter!  
 Blace — Suva Reka (Billacë — Suhareka), Dec. 1960

Do not take rest father,  
 Until you have two-thousand dinars for your new  
 daughter!  
 Gornji Ladovac — Podujevo (Ladovo i Epërm —  
 Podujeva), March 1961

Other songs welcome the bride to her new home and acquaint her with the members of her new family. At this time bits of wheat, corn, beans, etc. are thrown out into the garden. The bride then fetches water from the well as an act of purification. Long ago these acts had the intention of protecting the marriage from the curse of the evil eye and insuring marital harmony, fertility and economic stability.

Oh cherry flower,  
 Make your blessing to the housetop!  
 Oh the leaves of the quince,  
 Make your blessing to the garden!  
 Oh leaves of the oak,  
 Make your blessing like the graceful curves  
 of the grape vine.  
 Dubrava — Kačanik (Dubrava — Kačanik),  
 April 1970

Oh our lovely flower,  
 The grace of your "temeny" would bring a  
 high price.  
 When you placed your foot in the stirrup,\*  
 Did you think of the consequences?  
 Oh foolish girl,  
 Doesn't the water pitcher remind you of  
 your mother?

Oh my brother, I swear to you,  
 It is just as my mother!

Ibid  
 (\* mounting the horse which would take her to  
 the groom's house.)

The marriage customs preserved in the villages of Kosovo do not have the significance that they once did. They have taken on new meanings — the changes in the customs and songs paralleling other changes in the society. The wife's role is changing and the youth are exercising more freedom of choice in their marriages. In the wake of economic and social emancipation, some of the young people are breaking away from the patriarchal structure of the extended families to establish nuclear families of their own. Naturally this is a gradual process evolving with the modernization of village life. In the songs we also find examples of the use of the literary language — a further indication of the advancement in education among the youth.

c) *Various songs about marriage and married life.*

Many songs in Kosovo are about wedding rituals and subsequent married life. Some of these tell of ill-fated matches, the wife expressing her unhappiness about her unsuccessful marriage. According to patriarchal traditions, the male is accorded a privileged position both inside and outside the tribal community. Nevertheless, the mother is the central figure in the home. The female children especially take refuge in the mother's experience and love. In the girl's songs the mother is always presented as a symbol of well-being, comfort and spiritual protector. In men's songs, especially in lyrical songs and ballads, the character of the mother also appears. These songs often involve conversations between the girl and her mother about her marriage. In an example recorded in Carrabreg near Dečan in December of 1960, the mother is reminded by the girl that she wanted to be married this year, but that she kept her at home to work. The girl expresses this in an allegorical manner, leaving out Wednesday in counting the days of the week. (Perhaps because Wednesday, according to older traditions, would be the wedding eve.)

Oh, Monday, Tuesday, then comes Thursday.  
 Wednesday I have forgotten to say.  
 Mother was listening at the door.  
 "Are you crazy daughter?  
 You have forgotten Wednesday!"  
 "Oh mother, my tongue to shrivel up,  
 Such is life mother,  
 Six years ago I should have become a bride,  
 Three years ago you promised me,  
 But you kept me at home to work for you!"

We also have examples in which the daughter contradicts her mother due to her desire to stay longer with her own family, and her reluctance to go to the unknown family where difficult trials await. Here again the mother is pictured as warm and brave.

- Why have the wedding guests arrived, my dear mother?
- They have come to take you, dearest daughter.
- Do not open the door, my dear mother!
- I will open the door just a little, dearest daughter,  
 To offer them coffee and lemonade, dearest daughter.<sup>48</sup>

In many Kosovo songs the women express their unhappiness about the marriage bargain. In a song from Gjurakovc near Peć collected in 1830 by Vuk Karadžić, the daughter protests getting up on the horse which will take her to the groom's house where

<sup>48</sup> *FMSH*, I, 77.

harsh treatment awaits her.<sup>49</sup> There are songs which tell of the hard work performed by the wife, and songs which tell of the bride's unhappiness in marrying a husband she does not desire, who is usually described as ugly or physically flawed.<sup>50</sup> This touches on another patriarchal custom in which a mature woman is matched with a young man or child for economic reasons.

I began to make the bread,  
 And the boy followed behind.  
 — Oh my dear nanny,  
 Give me a piece of bread!  
 — I am not your mother, woe is me,  
 The mountain spirits to seize you,  
 I am your wife, and more's the pity.  
 Be gone!  
 The bride went into make the bed,  
 And the boy followed behind.  
 — Oh dear nanny,  
 Tonight we will sleep together!  
 — I am not your mother, oh woe is me,  
 The mountain spirits to seize you,  
 But your wife, and more's the pity.  
 Be gone!  
 All of my friends have had children,  
 All but me, oh woe is me,  
 My husband is not yet ripe,  
 Oh woe, woe is me!<sup>51</sup>

It is not unusual in the patriarchal setting where the marriages are arranged, for the wife, discontented with her husband, to nourish desire for another man. There are also instances in which a young bride is wed to an older man. This is expressed through songs which point out that he is bald, he isn't handsome, or is in some other way inadequate, in contrast to the man she loved from girlhood who she continues to love secretly after marriage.<sup>52</sup>

Especially today the girls complain when they are married to an older man, for whom they express great hatred. We present an example of a recently composed song which expresses a hopeless situation in which the girl is the victim of spiritual resignation and fallen health. Her complaint is directed against her uncle who married her off in an unsuitable manner:

<sup>49</sup> Norbert, Jokl, »Vuks albanische Liedersammlung« *Journal of Linguistic Studies*, Beograd, 1921, 63—64. This song is one of 11 others from Gjyrakovci collect by Vuk Karaxhiq, published in *Mbledës të hershëm të folklorit shqiptar*, I, ed., 42—47.

<sup>50</sup> *KPSH*, III, ed, cit., 95—97; *FMSH*, I, ed., cit., 29—30; *FMSH*, II, ed. cit., 62—63, etc.

<sup>51</sup> I recorded this song in Pleshinë near Ferizaj in September, 1958. Other songs related to this theme are to be found in *KPSH*, III, 117—120 and *FMSH*, I, 45—46, 61.

<sup>52</sup> *KPSH*, III, 121, 123—124.

When the sunshine falls upon the rocks of marble,  
I will be a flower of heaven!  
A flower of heaven I will be.  
How has my uncle seen fit to cast me off,  
to sacrifice me?

My uncle gave me to a younger boy,  
My heart and soul are aflame.  
It was with relish that my uncle sent me to an  
old man.

Oh may his house be left empty!  
An empty house, with bolted doors,  
That he may never again see the summer!  
How did he inflict such pain upon my youth?  
May he lose his health forever!

Dečane (Dečan), December 1960

We also have a considerable number of Albanian village and city songs created in Kosovo or imported from other areas which develop the marriage theme and deal with the issue of emancipation. Among these are the well-known songs: "Ani mori nuse, ani qaf' gastare" (Oh my bride, with throat like a goblet), "Na ka dalë nusja e mirë, of aman, aman" (To us a fine bride has come), "Kur ma gitën bojën, ula kryet e mshela gojën, Destano" (When they applied the henna, she bowed her head and closed her mouth).<sup>53</sup> In the song, "Po vijnë krushqit maleve" (When the wedding guests come from the mountains), the guests bring the bride through the mountains and fields in great joy, and are astonished at her beauty. One stanza describes the groom's house in which pancakes with honey have been prepared for the guests, an act which long ago represented an offering to placate the spirits of the dead who still haunt the house.<sup>54</sup> The song, "Ani moj Hatixhe, an shamikuqe" (Oh my Hatixhe, oh re scarf) tells of a bride who is marrying for the second time, and is not sad about the sons and daughters she left with her first husband.<sup>55</sup> In "Na ka cu Dudija letër, hajde n'Prizren" (Dudija has sent us a letter, we are off to Prizren) the bride invites her loved one to come and take her by carriage, motorcycle or car to wed.<sup>56</sup> These kinds of songs may accompany dancing and are often sung during weddings and other ceremonial occasions.

Some songs, more typically from the towns, include the mention of wine and brandy. We present a characteristic example. In the first verse only the color of the bottle is changed for the sake of rhythm and thyme. Then there is a logical progression: the first presents a metaphor about the girl, the second about the boy, and the third about their union:

<sup>53</sup> *FMSH*, I, 6, 18—20.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid*, 23.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid*, 49—50.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid*, 55—56.

We drink brandy from the red bottle,  
The girl is married and becomes a wife,  
Oh, aman, aman, aman, aman!

We drink brandy from the white bottle,  
The boy marries, a bachelor no more,  
Oh, aman, aman, aman, aman!

We drink brandy from a black bottle,  
The promise is give,  
Oh, aman, aman, aman. aman!<sup>57</sup>

The refrain with Oriental interjections maintains the emotional tension in the song.

In the villages, usually in the guests sitting room where no women are present, the men entertain themselves with song, principally epic songs. These are performed by specially invited singers who accompany themselves on the "citeli" (strummed instrument with two strings) or on the "sharki" (strummed instrument with from three to twelve strings). Lyric songs and ballads are also sung which may have an indirect connection to the marriage ritual. Among the most popular songs are the epics which develop the theme of faithfulness between husband and wife — the song of Ymer Aga<sup>58</sup> and Ali i Vogël<sup>59</sup>, who recognise their wives upon returning from enslavement, prevent the wives from remarrying another.

The study we have made demonstrates the creative ability of the Albanian singers of Kosovo in expressing various aspects of the marriage theme, an extremely significant aspect of their lives as individuals and as members of the familial and social cooperative. The marriage songs, both old and new, shed light upon the talent of the creators and their ability in the complex and broad development of the theme in words. In terms of both literary and musical quality, the songs make a substantial contribution to the wealth of Albanian folk poetry.

(Text translation by Janet Reineck.)

<sup>57</sup> Ibid, 32.

<sup>58</sup> The song of Ymer Aga is known throughout Kosovo. An interesting version is sung by Rizah Bllaca, a well-known singer from Bllaca of Suhareka, now living in Ferizaj. See also *KPL*, ed. cit., 52–56.

<sup>59</sup> *KPSH*, I, 84–91.

## АЛБАНСКЕ ЖЕНИДБЕНЕ ПЕСМЕ НА КОСОВУ

## Резиме

У окриљу албанске породичне лирике важно место припада албанским косовским женидбеним песмама које се истичу својственим захватом шире животне тематике као и у погледау њихових песничко-музичких структура. Највећи део ових песама је везан за свадбене обреде, који имају за циљ да уведу невесту у нови дом, да одстране демонске утицаје, да супружницима обезбеде плодност и брачну хармонију.

У оквиру неритуалних албанских косовских женидбених песама спадају оне које опевају отмицу девојке, невесте, ребе удате жене, а и бежање девојке од родитељског дома своје младићу. Те песме су и еротски обојене, од којих има и чисто љубавних. Иначе, пошто су везане борбеним подухватима а и трагичним исходима, имају и приповедни карактер, те поједине стоје између баладичних и епских песама, чак и припадају и јуначкој епизи. У данашњим промењеним условима живота и друштвених схватања, млади могу лакше остварити женидбу и удадбу по својој вољи, него што су то могли раније. Зато су овакве песме о отмици или бежању девојке изгубиле своју ранију подлогу у стварности. Иначе, то је законити фолклорни процес кроз који је прошло народно песништво сваког балканског народа, код којих су такође присутне песме које опевају сличну тематику.

У окриљу албанских ритуалних женидбених песама на Косову прво долазе веридбене песме, које се певају у кући вереника, а никако код девојке. У верениковом дому бива свечаност којом приликом укућанке опевају уз звуке дефа свадбену радост: честитају домаћину новог члана породице уз жарке жеље за добробит породичне заједнице. У веридбеним песмама опевају се лепота и општа вредност веренице, мужевност и етичке вредности вереника. Поједине веридбене песме опевају позитивне одлике и мане наводације, који игра важну посредничку улогу између двеју породица, о чијој савести зависи срећно или непогодно спајање двоје младих.

Песме опевају затим спремање невестиног руха. Оне сликовито износе тежину и истрајност у раду верене девојке, али и њену естетску умешност у уштравању задивљујућих орнамената у невестиног рухо. У савременим песмама косовске девојке се одупиру патријархалној удаји од стране њихових родитеља посредством наводације, те се противе и напорном спремању невестиног руха по старинским обичајима. Тај мукотрпан посао — како оне саме певају у стиховима — одваја их од школе, губи им здравље а и води ка слепилу током бесконачног везења и ткања.

Свадбене песме опевају све фазе свадбених свечаности и различите тренутке човечје радости и преживљавања у његовом преломном животном чину. У њима се огледају и облици ранијег и данашњег колективног и интимног живота у албанском косовском селу. Пре свега, женикове укућанке опевају тренутак дуго очекиваног дана свадбе када ће по невесту отићи сватови, углавном у већем броју, обично до три стотине са заставама. Песме оглашавају сам почетак свадбених свечаности и прате све ритуалне радње кроз цео процес свадбе у жениковој и невестиној кући. Оне и овом приликом истичу марљивост и чојство младожење и изразиту лепоту и етичке врлине невесте. У савременим песмама уз то се наглашава и друштвена вредност мааденаца, често идеализујући њихов бољи економски, друштвени и просветни положај који заузимају. Самим тим у њима се јављају подоста иновација како у мотиволошком, фигуративном тако и у лексичком погледау, које нису биле познате у ранијем албанском косовском народном песништву. Као изразито естетски вредне истичу се песме које опевају канирање (бојадисање) невесте дан пре одласка мужу. Те песме, које певају њене

робаке и другарице, опевају невестино болно опраштање од оца, мајке, браће и сестара, којом приликом евоцирају и успомене на њихов заједнички рад у пољу, чувању стоке, тренутке девојачких весела, а у новијим песмама и сећања на заједнички живот у школи. Но, интензитет болног расанка од родитељског дома постиже кулминацију када песме подсећају невесту на евентуално умрле родитеље, оца или мајку, који нису у стању да буду уз њу и да је лично предају сватовима, као што је обичај.

На крају се у студији разматрају различите албанске косовске песме које стоје у вези са женидбом, породичним животом супружника, као и оне које су, задржавајући женидбене мотиве, превазишле оквире свадбеног ритуала и постале општедруштвене народне песме које се, сем на свадбама, певају и у осталим приликама.



