

# THE LEGACY OF SINGER HAMDİJA ŠAHINPAŠIĆ IN BOSNIAC ORAL LITERARY TRADITION

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*Hamdija Šahinpašić (1914–2003) was one of those rare individuals able to memorize songs in their authentic traditional form. Šahinpašić belonged to a family known for its songs. In the early 1950s, Miodrag A. Vasiljević recorded Šahinpašić singing dozens of songs at the Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences in Belgrade. A 1967 publication finally included 300 of his songs, published bilingually in Bosnian and Russian. Šahinpašić himself became the focus of attention of numerous ethnomusicologists and folklorists and his repertoire was preserved on recordings of good quality.*

Keywords: *Hamdija Šahinpašić, legacy.*

*Hamdija Šahinpašić (1914–2003) je bil eden redkih posameznikov, ki so si sposobni zapomniti pesmi v njihovi avtentični tradicionalni obliki. Šahinpašić je pripadal znani pevski družini. Miodrag A. Vasiljević je v začetku petdesetih let 20. stol. v prostorih Srbske akademije znanosti in umetnosti posnel številne pesmi, ki jih je pel Šahinpašić. V dvojezično bosansko-rusko izdajo je leta 1967 vključil 300 njegovih pesmi. Sam Šahinpašić je postal središče zanimanja številnih etnomuzikologov in folkloristov, tako da je njegov repertoar ohranjen na kvalitetnih posnetkih.*

Ključne besede: *Hamdija Šahinpašić, zapuščina.*

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## FAMILY AND TRADITIONAL ENVIRONMENT

Hamdija Šahinpašić (1914 Pljevlja, Sanjak of Novi Pazar – 2003 Sarajevo) was one of the most outstanding heirs of the Bosniac oral literary tradition of the generation that could be said to constitute the last genuine guardians of songs of the classical repertoire. Šahinpašić's repertoire, which was amazingly extensive, mainly consisted of lyrical songs and the rather longer ones usually called ballads or romances. In fact, he was a kind of poetic phenomenon, because he knew and sang hundreds of songs. At the peak of his art, at the age of forty or so, Šahinpašić visited the Montenegrin ethnomusicologist Miodrag A. Vasiljević in Belgrade. There, at the Serbian Academy of Science and Arts, he sang more than three hundred songs in whole or in part to the musicologist over a period of just a few days, which were tape-recorded. This resulted in the publication in Moscow in 1967 of a collection of three hundred songs in Bosnian with Russian translations and musical notation, the Bosnian title of which was *Jugoslovenske narodne pesme iz Sandžaka* (Yugoslav Folk Songs from the Sanjak). Unfortunately, because the ethnomusicologist Vasiljević died before he had finished editing the collection for publication, and it was his daughter Radmila that completed the work along with her students, without completing the songs (for many of which the collection gives only the first few verses) and with numerous errors in both the

text and the musical transcription. Šahinpašić's collection has yet to be released in a second, critical edition. All efforts to this end while the singer still retained his powers and while his memory was still fairly fresh came to nothing. The reason was his chronic fear that his songs would fall into the hands of popular entertainers, who would make commercial recordings lacking the authenticity of the genuine article – which did indeed happen, to a limited extent, despite the singer's concern to guard against this.<sup>1</sup> Meanwhile, between the recordings made by Vasiljević and Šahinpašić's death, many ethnomusicologists and literary historians and theoreticians talked to and recorded the singer, but he did not come to fully trust any of them. This paper is part of a more extensive study and summary of numerous meetings with Šahinpašić and working with him over a number of years, but has also been composed in the light of his resolve, which remained firm to the end of his life, not to give his complete trust to anyone.

The guardian of the tradition of singing and recitation in the Šahinpašić family was his mother Šerifa, who had a marked gift not only for singing but also for various forms of handicrafts. She was unable to transmit her immense knowledge and singing skills within the immediate family to a daughter because she raised only sons – five in all, of whom Hamdija was the youngest. He had serious problems with his sight, as a result of which he was obliged while still a small child, although old enough to memorize songs, to wear a bandage over his eyes for months on end. This meant he was constantly in his mother's company. Because women from the neighborhood often came to visit her and she them, whether because of her handicrafts or because of her singing, little Hamdija had many opportunities to listen to the songs, which engraved themselves on his memory. As a result, he learned more songs by heart than any of his brothers, and also learned to sing them most beautifully. The guardian of the family tradition, his mother Šerifa, was often moved to designate him unequivocally as her successor, saying, *Hamdija, you sing most beautifully!*

The extent of Šahinpašić's repertoire was a major contributing factor to his spending a number of years in Skopje when attending a madrasa (religious high school). There he learned some songs in Turkish and Albanian as well as songs in Bosnian that were new to him (which he learned from the Bosniac community living in Skopje). Finally, the fact that he emerged from childhood with permanently impaired sight had a long-term impact on his subsequent career, because he necessarily had to rely on listening and memorizing, which was to be of crucial influence on his personality as a singer.

<sup>1</sup> In 2002 the *Zavičajni klub Pljevljaka i prijatelja Pljevalja iz Bosne i Hercegovine* (Regional Club of the People of Pljevlja and Friends of Pljevlja from Bosnia-Herzegovina) published a new edition of Šahinpašić's collection with a new title, *Po Taslidži pala magla* (A Mist Has Descended on Taslidža), edited by Nijazija Koštović, himself from Pljevlja, who also *illustrated [it] and wrote the foreword*. This edition is a moving expression of the indebtedness of the people of Pljevlja to their favorite singer because the printing costs were borne by voluntary contributions from those that appreciated of Hamdi-beg's singing, but it did not include any critical intervention, although this would have been welcome in the light of the many shortcomings of the Moscow edition. A new edition of Šahinpašić's collection with a critical overview of its forerunner, the Moscow edition, and with a suitable accompanying study on the singer, is a debt owed by the academic community to this outstanding singer.

Šahinpašić's family had emigrated from Bosnia following the Austro-Hungarian occupation of 1878, finding asylum in the Sanjak, which remained under Ottoman rule until the end of the Balkan wars (in 1912). The Šahinpašić family, fond as it was of songs, significantly increased its repertoire in this new environment. Later, Hamdija Šahinpašić finally rounded out his repertoire when he came to Sarajevo at the age of forty, at the height of his powers as a singer.

## LYRICAL SONGS

The majority of the more than three hundred songs recorded by Hamdija Šahinpašić are love-songs, which agrees with the proportion of such songs in oral lyrical poetry as a whole. The range of themes and motifs in Šahinpašić's lyrical repertoire is markedly diverse, as can be seen in greater detail in certain groups of songs, some on the yearnings of the lonely lover, some in praise of boys or girls, some about a frolicsome girl (or boy), others on cheerful love-talk, lovers' meetings or lovers' partings, and yet others on the betrayal of the beloved.

About ten of the love songs in Šahinpašić's repertoire include local Pljevlja or Sarajevo features. This is particularly true of two songs in praise of the singer's home town, using the name it bore during the Ottoman period, Taslidža (Turk. *Taslica*). The first of these expands on the topic of the yearning for the beloved, and only the first verse actually deals with Pljevlja – "Po Taslidži pala magla..." (A Mist has Descended on Taslidža...). The same is true of the second song, a drinking-song in praise of the beloved – "Po Taslidži popala je tama" (Darkness has Fallen on Taslidža). The song "Izvir voda izvirala" (The Wellspring has Bubbled Up) has even more marked local features. Developing the theme of boys competing for girls, after a reference to the Džimova mahala, it goes on to invoke the inhabitants of the Musluk and Močevac mahalas, which is the point of the song, because the young men from this quarter of town, which is celebrated in another three of Šahinpašić's songs, are victorious, carrying off the *lovely maiden* hidden in a *painted chest*. Močevac is the focus of the song "Močeviću, mali Carigrade" (To Močevčić, Istanbul in Miniature), the first line of which suggests the lively nature of this urban quarter of old Taslidža. (This verse framing the events that follow is also to be encountered in songs about Užice and about the Sarajevo quarter of Čemaluša.) Expanding on the topic of a girl's struggles to be allowed to join the one she yearns for, threatening to elope, the song recalls a Ćirkovića Magda, who was renowned for her beauty. The singer recounted that his mother, a faithful guardian of tradition, did not want to alter the words of *her* song after girls with other names were brought into this thematic context, as new characters brought forward by a new age. The first part of the song is particularly striking, and begins by describing Močevac and naming the beauty that had induced the local poets to sing of her:

Moćevčiću, mali Carigrade,  
 dok bijaše, dobar li bijaše!  
 Kroz tebe se proći ne mogaše  
 od čoškova i od mušebaka,  
 od momaka i od đevojaka,  
 od ljepote Ćirkovića Magda....

O Moćevčić, Istanbul in little,  
 As long as you existed, you were good!  
 One couldn't pass through you  
 for your balconies and lattices,  
 for your boys and your girls,  
 for the beauty of Ćirkovića Magda.

Five of the songs in Šahinpašić's repertoire include local Sarajevo features. The context of the first, "Kolo igra nasred Sarajeva" (Round Dance in the Middle of Sarajevo), is a conversation between sisters, praising Babić Ahmed-beg, a boy younger than the sisters, who would not give him up even if offered *half of Sarajevo*. The second recalls the Sarajevo gallant Salih-aga Turnadžija, who features in the song as Šećer Salih-aga, and whose mother reproaches him for his excessive generosity towards girls. Šećer-aga evolved in Bosniac oral lyrics into the developed figure of the gallant and womanizer, much as occurred, in shaping female characters, with the haughty Hana Pehlivana, associated with picturesque Hlivno [Bejtić 1953: 393]. Salih-aga's appeal to the girls that were his contemporaries while he was leading his bachelor life is clear from his nickname Šećer 'Sugar', about which a charming girl's song survives. Incidentally, Šahinpašić's version of the *sevdalinka* on Šećer Salih-aga is basically a conversation between a mother and son, with the son defending himself against her accusations that he is a proper wastrel where girls were concerned:

Majka kara Šećer Salih-agu:  
 "Što god steče, sve đevojci dade!"  
 "A šta sam joj, mila majko, dao:  
 tri fesića biserom kićena,  
 dvije dibe, četiri kadife,  
 i dva ćurka kunom postavljena,  
 i tri pasa, da je u`eg stasa!"

Mother scolds Šećer Salih-aga:  
 "Whatever he earns, he gives to a girl!"  
 "But what have I given her, mother dear:  
 three little fezzes adorned with pearls,  
 two lengths of brocade, four of velvet,  
 and two coats lined with mink,  
 and three belts, for her narrow waist!"

Striking local features of Sarajevo are also preserved in the song "Kolika je Abuhajat jalija" (However Broad the Banks of Abu Hayat), which recalls a girl from the Dženetić family, called Hajrija in Šahinpašić's version. The spacious courtyard of the Dženetić house is compared to the banks of Abu Hayat – the water of life, the spring of immortality – as a plateau on a hill by the Miljacka River, close to the Kozja Ćuprija 'Goat Bridge' not far from Sarajevo. This *sevdalinka* of Šahinpašić's belongs to a group of songs about various girls from the Dženetić family. The earliest mention of a song with this content was made by Ludvuk Kuba in Maglaj as long ago as 1893. Unlike Kuba's version and that of Alija Bejtić, which also recall young men as they sing of the joys of love, some of whom have been identified as historical figures, Šahinpašić's song is basically a lyrical image focusing on a description of the girl as she waters flowers in the garden:

Kolika je Abuhayat jalija,  
još je veća Dženetića avilja,  
tu se šeće Dženetića Hajrija.  
U Hajrije vrlo tanka havlija,  
u ruci joj od biljura maštrafa,  
iz maštrafe tri cvijeta zaljeva:  
bijel amber i alkatmer i ružu.

However broad the banks of Abu Hayat,  
the Dženetić courtyard is larger still,  
and Dženetić Hajrija is walking there.  
Hajrija wearing the lightest of veils,  
in her hand a crystal glass,  
watering three flowers from the glass:  
a snowbell tree, a carnation, and a rose.

Another of Šahinpašić's songs that can be regarded as a Sarajevo *sevdalinka* is the one recalling Mujaga Zlatar, a friend and close associate of Husein-kapetan Gradašćević, the "Dragon of Bosnia." Speaking of Zlatar's loyalty to Gradašćević during the turbulent events in Bosnia in the 1830s, Safvet-beg Bašagić describes it in a nutshell with the observation that Mujaga shared the glory with Husein-beg when he was in his ascendance and his misfortunes at times of persecution [Bašagić 1986: 399]. Following the defeat of the Bosniac army at Zlo Stupa in the Sarajevo plain (1832), Husein-kapetan and his escort fled to Austrian territory, where he was captured. By an agreement between Austria and the Porte, they were transferred to Zemun, and then to Istanbul, where Gradašćević died suddenly – probably poisoned – and Mujaga Zlatar was banished to Anatolia. After serving his sentence of exile, he returned to Sarajevo, where he died in 1863 [Bejtić 1953: 393]. In Šahinpašić's version, as in others, Mujaga Zlatar is remembered as a member of a carefree, debauched crowd, which was associated with the widespread context of this oral lyric: the awakening of a sleeping girl.

Finally, the fifth of Šahinpašić's songs that preserves local features of Sarajevo is basically a song in praise of young men named *Ahmed*, *Mehmed*, and *Mujo*. The reference to the Bjelave quarter, whose green gardens and ice-cold springs are extolled in other songs too, is what marks this as a Sarajevo song.

In addition to those with local features from the Pljevlja and Sarajevo environments, Šahinpašić's repertoire also included ten or so songs that came about in response to historical events; in some cases, the content crystallized the experience of several generations, in others, the songs were prompted by certain major historical events or the actions of individuals from times past. Among the events that were a recurring feature over the generations in the border regions was the practice of forced conversions, the result of taking captives in the countless clashes of arms, incursions, and ransacking that took place on both sides of the border. The song "Štono cvili u Mramorju gradu" (Such Wailing in Mramorje Fort) recalls this practice of times past, although the song names its heroine (*begova Emina*, the lady Emina), who is compelled against her will to adopt another faith. Another, "Odmetnu se odmetnica Mara" (Mara the Outlaw Outlawed), also sums up the experience of several generations, although it deals with a brigand woman, the *harambaša* (leader) of a band of brigands; those who captured her attempted to induce her to renounce her faith, but Mara refused, paying for her daring with her life. Another song that can be seen in the same light

as these two is “Beg Ali-beg ićindiju klanja” (Beg Ali-beg is Praying the *Asr* [Afternoon Prayer]), which recalls the practice among Bosniacs of going to fight in far-off wars in the Sultan’s army; this song is also in part a paean of praise to some notable Bosniac feudal families: the Atlagić, Fejzagić, Branković, and Sijerčić families. A short song in an unusual fourteen-syllable meter, “Sultan sjedi te plače” (The Sultan Sits and Weeps), is a naïve folk response to the Austro-Hungarian occupation of Bosnia in 1878. The song “Sav se asker na Gacko oprema” (The Whole Army is Dispatched to Gacko) recalls the famous Bosniac feudal Smail-aga Čengić in one of the many moves by the Ottoman-Bosniac army from Gacko to Mostar. The song also extols the beauty of the girls of Mostar, with Smail-aga drawing attention to his granddaughter, Dedagina Ruva. A few years later another such move by the Ottoman-Bosniac army, in the same region, is recalled in a song in fifteen-syllable meter, “Koliko je Nevesinjsko ravno polje široko” (How Broad is the Flat Nevesinje plain). Here, the subject is Omer-paša Latas’ campaign against Montenegro, with complex historical events – in which a former Austrian deserter and a quite recent convert to Islam undertake a punitive campaign against their former co-religionists – are condensed into the brief and striking encounter between Latas and Prince Danilo.

The song “Zaplakala Šećer Đula” (Šećer Đula Began to Cry), which was a particular favorite in Sarajevo, deals with the events of the Russo-Turkish war of 1877 or, more exactly, with the battle of Plevna in Bulgaria, the siege and heroic defense of the town, in which Osman-paša particularly distinguished himself, holding the far more powerful enemy forces at bay with his troops for a full five months. When the Russians, with the help of the Romanians, succeeded in cutting off all access to the town, Plevna finally fell and as a mark of respect the Russian Prince Nikola chivalrously allowed Osman-paša – later to be known as the Lion of Plevna, to don his sword when leaving the besieged town. Prior to the Russo-Turkish war, Osman-paša, who was a native of the town of Tokata in Asia Minor, served in Sarajevo (1868) as a *bimbaša* (a rank equivalent to major), and later as pasha and military commander in Trebinje. He was captured in battle with the Montenegrins in Vučji Do (1876), but the Montenegrin Prince Nikola released him on his name-day at the end of the year. It is interesting to note that Prince Nikola released him from captivity “on trust,” after which the pasha met up in Dubrovnik with his wife and children, who had been living in Bosnia in the meantime. Many Bosniacs took part in the Russo-Turkish war and the defense of Plevna, brought there by the commander of the Rumelian army, Sulejman-paša, as soon as Russia declared war on Turkey. The orientalist and folklorist Alija Bejtić assumes that these soldiers from Bosnia sang this *sevdalinka* to their heroic commander. Bejtić maintains that this *sevdalinka* could first have been sung in Bosnia at the earliest in late 1878 or early 1879, *when the first captives and combatants began to return home from Plevna* [Bejtić 1953: 393].

The song “Kad mašina iz Mostara dođe” (When the Locomotive Comes from Mostar) relates to the time of the struggle for religious educational and vakuf-mearif autonomy for the Bosniacs under Austro-Hungarian rule in Bosnia in the early 20th century, the chief protagonist of which was the *Džabić efendija* whom the song extols. This was Ali Fehmi ef.

Džabić (1853–1918), one of the last Bosniacs to write in Arabic, who was mufti of Mostar and taught in the madrasas of Mostar. The Austro-Hungarian authorities took advantage of Džabić's secret visit to Istanbul with his associates to ban him from returning to his home country. Džabić was then appointed as professor of classical Arabic literature at the University of Istanbul and spent the rest of his life in Istanbul, where he died. The oral poet used the real fact of Džabić's forced absence from his own country to weave a tale of his marrying abroad, which is then made the pretext in the song for his dispute with his wife on returning home. Finally, the last song in this group – “Kad mašina kroz Travnik maršira” (When the Locomotive Marches through Travnik) – also belongs to this period, and deals with the disastrous fire in Travnik in 1903, started by a spark from a locomotive, when many of the town's houses were burned down.

## BALLADS

Šahinpašić's collection includes seven oral ballads, proportionately covering the thematic range of Bosniac ballads as a whole, singing of girls or boys of ill-fortune, on the death of the estranged beloved, of grieving parents, and of conflicts within the family. The shortest of the three songs from the first group is a short ballad pithily telling the tale of a dying girl whose entire sorrow in life arose from her agonized yearning for *a young cavalryman* [Vasiljević 1967: 84–85]. The second song in this group deals with the unhappy fate of *katmer [carnation] Kana*, who drowned while trying to cross the Morava. The touching subject of a life cut short, which crystallizes the painful life events of many similar instances of girlhood that end movingly in the grave, is shaped by the ethereal simplicity of the octosyllabic meter [Vasiljević 1986: 117]. Like the latter, the events recounted in third ballad in this group center on the Morava, and probably reached Pljevlja via the Bosniacs that were expelled to Bosnia and the Sanjak following the establishment of the Principality of Serbia. Once again the turbulent waters of the Morava claim their victim; this time the evil destiny befalls a young man, a poor young fellow, whose stepmother visits his grave only three years later to encounter a sight, the symbolism of which is unknown: a peahen and *six peachicks* [Vasiljević 1967: 31]. A ballad on the death of the estranged beloved – “Mujo gleda u mahali Ajku” (Mujo Watches Ajka in the Mahala) – is one of the longest songs in Šahinpašić's repertoire. Yet, with its seventy or so verses, Šahinpašić's version is one of the shorter examples of the songs in the Bosniac environment that recount anew each time, in countless variations, a subject that is very widespread the world over, the unhappy lovers sealing their love in death. A comparison between Šahinpašić's version and a number of other songs on the unhappy beloved that have been recorded in the Bosniac environment reveals that it contains almost all the motifs that constitute the pattern of this appealing subject: the motif of sons competing for their choice of bride, the motif of the encounter in the bedchamber between the unloved bridegroom and the unwanted bride, the motif of

the death of the unloved bridegroom, the motif of the death of the beloved, and the motif of the simultaneous burial of the unhappy lovers.

The thematic group of songs on grieving parents includes the ballad “Rodi majka do devet sinova” (A Mother Bears up to Nine Sons), which reflects of one of the plague epidemics that were not uncommon in Bosnia in the past [Vasiljević 1967: 86–86]. In this context, the songs usually deal with the loss of a mother’s only son, who is then – like the sons in Šahinpašić’s song – buried nearby, in a “green garden.” Šahinpašić’s song also matches the ballads on the death of an only son in the later sequence of events: the mother visits her sons’ graves every day, and discovers, as she talks to them, that neither the *javor-tahte* (maple boards) nor the *suvaldžije* – the angels who, in Islamic belief, question the deceased in his grave after burial – weigh heavily on them, but rather a maiden’s curse. Another song in the group on grieving parents is the ballad “Sjalo bi, sjalo, jarko sunašce” (Shine, Shine, Good Old Hot Sun) [Vasiljević 1967: 92]. The subject of the death of Ibrahim-beg, who, sentenced to death and taken to the gallows, utters his last words asking that his children be cared for and leaving them in the good hands of his brother, was an appealing one for oral transmission. Evidence for this lies in the many different versions recorded over a long period in various parts of Bosnia, as well as in Šahinpašić’s version and in the Sanjak, as well as the fact that this ballad is still sung to this day. A song that recounts the emotional parting from his children with the death of the convicted man, at the very moment when he has no choice but to face death and parting, had to remain on the lips of poets and singers, who have preserved its touching simplicity with only minor changes to this day.

Finally, the seventh and last ballad in Šahinpašić’s repertoire belongs to a group of songs dealing with conflicts within the family, those that sing of incest prevented. Šahinpašić’s song is one of a number of recorded versions that shape the enduring content of the model, and deal with incest frustrated between brother and sister. Brother and sister recognize one another in the bridal bedchamber, as a result of which unintended incest is prevented at the last moment, preceded by a succession of events that differ somewhat from version to version. In most of these songs, the plot begins with the death of the father, leaving no one to care for his children, of whom the brother and sister – in Šahinpašić’s version, Ali-paša and Herzegovinian Fata – take different paths in life, finally to end up as potential bride and groom, unaware that they are about to engage in incest, which is nonetheless prevented at the last moment [Vasiljević 1967: 148].

## ROMANCES

The songs recorded by Hamdija Šahinpašić include seven romances. The first, dealing with an encounter in a *narrow street*, takes place in Sarajevo in Šahinpašić’s version, and in content is associated with the return of the beloved from Morića han. As in many versions of this poetic theme, the example found in Šahinpašić’s repertoire accords with the ap-



proaching meeting between the two lovers and the inevitability of the passionate embrace to which it ultimately leads. The cheerfulness and wit that are the typical literary features of romances in general are seen in this song too, a monologue by a prankish young man in his mock intention to pass by his beloved in a narrow street:

Dockan pođoh iz Morića hana,  
a đevojka iz topla hamama.  
Ja joj rekoh i dva i tri puta:  
“Ljepa curo, uklon’ mi se s puta,  
il s’ukloni, il’ lice zakloni,  
ženjen nisam, belaj će te snaći!”  
Nit’ se htjede cura ukloniti,  
niti htjede lice zakloniti,  
a ja pođoh da mimo nje prođem,  
zakači mi kopča od čakšira,  
za njezine džamfezli dimije;  
ja se sagoh da kopču otkačim,  
zakači mi toka od sahata,  
na njezine dizije dukata,  
a ja pođoh da toku otkačim –  
smrsiše se brci i solufi!

I set off late from Morića han,  
and the girl had left the hot baths.  
I told her twice or thrice:  
“Pretty girl, out of my way,  
out of the way, or cover your face,  
I’m not married, you’ll be in trouble!”  
The girl didn’t want to get out of the way  
nor to cover her face,  
and as I made to go past her,  
my trouser buckle got caught  
in her silken baggy pants;  
I bent to free the buckle,  
my watch-clasp got caught  
in her necklace of ducats,  
and I made to free the clasp–  
moustache and ringlets got entangled!

The second romance in Šahinpašić’s repertoire sings of a lovers’ tiff caused by the boy’s failure to meet the girl as agreed. As in romances in general, however, love triumphs, because the girl cannot resist the boy’s appeal and wins her back with a white mare and a falcon [Vasiljević 1967: 12]. Šahinpašić’s third romance deals with a passionate encounter in a leafy garden. Earlier recordings of romances include more daring erotic situations than in the songs recorded more recently. In Šahinpašić’s version – which includes local Sarajevo features – the encounter in the “green garden” is resolved in the typical manner: continuing to take the erotic initiative, the girl agrees to a date, but her arrival, complete with her jingling *golden ducats*, alarms the young man, who tries to make a getaway, but the girl catches him in time [Vasiljević 1967: 75]. The fourth belongs to a separate group on the subject of erotic meetings, consisting of songs on an erotic wager by a young man on the one hand and a girl or woman on the other. Seen as a whole, as in the previous group of songs on this subject, older recordings are more highly developed and daring in their erotic challenges and meanings than more recent ones. The oldest Bosniac romance on this subject is to be found in the Erlangen manuscript, and sings of the erotic wager by an unnamed lady of good family from Banja Luka and one Subašić Mujo, in which the lady gives a necklace of three hundred ducats as a pledge, and Subašić Mujo pledges a horse and a long coat known as a *dolama* [Gesemann 1925: 74]. As in more recent songs,

in Šahinpašić's version the woman takes the erotic initiative. Almost invariably, it is the girl that takes the role of anathematizing the young man, asking for his generosity in sacrificing and forgetting the pledge. In Šahinpašić's version, the boy's pledges are a saddle and a white mare, and the girl's a necklace [Vasiljević 1967: 74]. The fifth romance in Šahinpašić's repertoire in this group is a song about one of the pasha's enterprising young slave girls that steals from the courts and flees, taking the pasha's son or the treasurer with her. Songs on the pasha's enterprising slave girl constitute a separate group in the romances on prankish girls. The majority of recordings, made mainly in fairly recent times, suggest Herzegovina as the poetic homeland of these romances, in which the same model features in a diversity of variations with the same basic outline. The song on this subject in Šahinpašić's repertoire – "Telal više od jutra do mraka" (The Town-Crier Calls from Dawn to Dusk) – is poetically congruent as a whole and, generally speaking, is among the more successful versions so far recorded [Vasiljević 1967: 105–106]. The sixth romance sings of a faithless lady-love and, in Šahinpašić's version, is a continuation of the traditional trajectory in which the subject is handled using the very uncommon fourteen-syllable meter. It survives in several versions, the most highly developed of which is in Mehmed Dželaluddin Kurt's collection [Kurt 1902: 167–172]. In content, the pattern of this romance largely matches the decasyllabic song from the Erlangen manuscript: a beautiful lady (Jelena) invites a passer-by (Mujo) into her manor house, as did the paramour Porjenova when she lured in "Ture" Hasan-aga. After the lovers spend the night together, the lady's husband returns unexpectedly to find the intruder-lover in his manor house; he allows him to depart in peace, but then punishes his faithless wife most severely. This song is characterized by its lively and witty dialogue and the dynamic alternations of striking poetic images, particularly in the discussion between the returning husband and his faithless wife, in which she adeptly averts his suspicious questions, only at last to reveal the truth about her adultery [Vasiljević 1967: 129–131]. Finally, the seventh of Šahinpašić's romances – "Nuto, moje b'jelo lice" (Behold my White Face) – deals with the topic of passionate and persuasive love-talk: in Šahinpašić's version, which is of anthological poetic value, the gradual verbal competition forms part of a cheerful game in which young people, dancing the round dance, have fun in a whole series of family and other gatherings in the poet's own homeland, Pljevlja, and its environs [Vasiljević 1967: 16].

Finally, a consideration of Hamdija Šahinpašić's poetic repertoire and a comparison with the corresponding range of this type of singing – many examples of which have been preserved in various manuscript and printed collections and in periodicals or on tape – reveal him as a singer of outstanding quality. This is not only because he memorized such a large number of songs, but also because of their variety in thematic range and the meters they employ, the fact that he uses no fewer than ten of the twelve verse forms known in South Slavic poetry, and their exceptional melodic diversity. The painstaking attitude towards both the text and the singing of this guardian of Bosniac oral heritage – which resulted in numerous anthological examples of lyrical songs, ballads, and romances – is reason to state

that Hamdija Šahinpašić was not only an outstanding singer but also a skilled poet within this tradition and, as its heir, a striking symbol its extinction.

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## DEDIŠĆINA PEVCA HAMDİJE ŠAHINPAŠIĆA V BOSANSKEM USTNEM IZROČILU

*Hamdija Šahinpašić (1914–2003) iz Pljevlja – upravna enota (sandžak) Novi Pazar je eden redkih posameznikov, ki so si bili sposobni zapomniti in izvajati na desetine pesmi v njihovi avtentični tradicionalni obliki. Šahinpašića, ki je izhajal iz znane pevske družine, je njegova mati Šarifa, od katere je podedoval svoje talente, večkrat javno označila za najbolj zvestega varuha družinske tradicije (imela je namreč pet sinov). Na začetku petdesetih let 20. stoletja je Miodrag A. Vasiljević v prostorih Srbske akademije znanosti in umetnosti v Beogradu posnel Šahinpašića, ko je prepeval na desetine pesmi, ki so objavljene tudi v antologiji Jugoslovenske narodne pesme. Zbirka Po pevanju Hamdije Šahinpašić iz Pljevlja (Moskva 1967), ki je vsebovala 300 pesmi, je izšla v bosansko-ruski izdaji, žal, s številnimi napakami tako v besedilih kot v glasbenih transkripcijah. Vasiljević je namreč medtem umrl, zato je zbrane pesmi uredila*

*njegova hčerka. Na srečo je sam Šahinpašić živel dovolj dolgo, da je postal središče zanimanja številnih etnomuzikologov in folkloristov, in je tako njegov pesemski repertoar ohranjen v zadovoljivem številu na kakovostnih posnetkih. Prispevek je napisan iz perspektive teoretika ustnega slovstva, ki temelji na dolgoletnih srečevanjih s Hamdijem Šahinpašićem, pevcem lirskih pesmi, balad in romanc.*

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