

RESEARCH ON TRADITIONAL ISTRIAN MUSIC AND DANCE WITH AN EMPHASIS ON REVITALIZING AND PRESENTING TRADITIONAL CHURCH (GLAGOLITIC) SINGING PRACTICE

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This article emphasizes various research intentions and goals, paradigms, and themes that used to occupy researchers' interest in the past as well as those at the center of attention today. The Institute of Ethnology and Folklore in Zagreb and its researchers have played an important role in collecting and recording the traditional cultural heritage of Istria, especially musical and dance traditions. The claim that previous research generally emphasized collected, archived material reflects the general attitude towards research on traditional heritage, maintained almost until the beginning of the twenty-first century. One of the basic models of musical heritage preservation was its presentation in the form of public performances (e.g., thematic concerts and festivals). The author analyzes the current state of traditional church singing in Istria through presentational models established in the last two decades in processes in which the author's personal involvement played a crucial role (as part of a process of applied ethnomusicology).

Keywords: traditional church music, Istrian traditional music, Glagolitic singing, applied ethnomusicology

Namen prispevka je predstaviti različne raziskovalne paradigme, cilje in teme, ki so nekoč in danes v središču pozornosti posameznih raziskovalcev. Raziskovalci Inštituta za etnologijo in folkloristiko iz Zagreba so imeli pomembno vlogo v procesih zbiranja in snemanja predvsem glasbene in plesne kulturne dediščine Istre. Trditev, da so se predhodne raziskave posvećale predvsem zbiranju in arhiviranju gradiva izraća splošen odnos do raziskav tradicijske dedišćine skoraj do zaćetka tega stoletja. Eden osnovnih modelov ohranjanja glasbene dedišćine je postal njena predstavitev v obliki javnih nastopov (tematskih koncertov, festivalov). Avtor trenutno stanje tradicijskega cerkvenega petja v Istri analizira prek teh modelov, ki so se uveljavili v zadnjih dveh desetletjih, s poudarkom na procesih, pri katerih je bila pomembna njegova osebna vpletenost (kot del procesa aplikativne etnomuzikologije.)

Ključne besede: tradicijska cerkvena glasba, istrska tradicijska glasba, glagoljaško petje, aplikativna etnomuzikologija

Istria has always been of interest to researchers of traditional culture and heritage, especially music and dance. It is a place where the interests of Croatian, Slovenian, and Italian researchers have met and complemented one another.¹ In Istria, I had the opportunity to meet Julijan Strajnar at the Istrian ethnomusicology gatherings that we have been holding since 2000 in the village of Roć in central Istria. In a time of intense discussions on protecting musical heritage, Julian Strajnar raised the questions (*who, how, and why*) of responsibility for protecting traditional music when talking about Istrian musical traditions, and their historical and geographical boundaries (Bosanac 2004: 275).

To a certain extent, we can find possible answers to these questions in the work of our many colleagues, and one of the goals of this article is to demonstrate the continuity and diversity of approaches to research on traditional music and dance in Istria. I place

¹ Numerous travelogues by eminent travelers noted and described musical phenomena in Istria. There is also significant research on traditional (and church) music by Italian researchers, such as Giuseppe Radole (1968), Roberto Starec (1986, 1987), and others.

a particular focus on the research in the last sixty years in Istria by researchers from the Institute of Ethnology and Folklore in Zagreb. It must be pointed out at the outset that they are neither the first nor the only researchers in Istria. This article emphasizes the various research intentions and goals, paradigms, and themes that used to occupy researchers' interest in previous periods as well as those at the center of their attention today. The claim that previous research generally emphasized collected, archived material reflects the general attitude towards research on traditional heritage, which was alive almost until the beginning of the twenty-first century.

THE ISTRIAN TRANSCRIPTION PARADIGM

In order to clarify the transcription paradigm that has dominated research, I start with an exceptional example from the period before the founding of the Institute of Ethnology and Folklore. In 1863, the most significant pioneer in research on Croatian traditional music and the most prominent researcher of his time, Franjo Ksaver Kuhač, spent time in Istria and the northern Croatian Littoral as part of his extensive twelve-year field research. Together with his field-research associate Jakov Volčić, he collected and recorded 187 folk songs: ninety-eight in the northern Croatian Littoral and eighty-nine in Istria. Most of the collected songs are Croatian, and about ten are Slovenian (Marošević 1999). Along with that material, he transcribed fourteen examples of traditional church songs (out of a total of 277), which can still be found in his unpublished handwritten collection *Zbirka crkvenih napjeva* (Collection of Church Songs; Doliner 1984). In his four-volume *Južno-slovenske narodne popevke* (Folk Songs of the South Slavs), Kuhač also published eighteen songs from Istria (Kuhač 1878–1881).² In 1941 a further twenty-nine songs from Istria were published in his fifth collection, edited by Božidar Širola (Kuhač 1941).³ The reasons for not publishing even more examples must lie in the very specific features of traditional Istrian music, which created problems for him not just when trying to transcribe it, but also when trying to harmonize it; that is, adding a piano accompaniment, which he did for all of the collected songs intended for publication. In doing so, he wanted to make them more accessible to urban audiences so that they could be played in an urban environment

² As Grozdana Marošević states: “The collection *Južno-slovenske narodne popevke* (Folk Songs of the South Slavs) is a starting point for research on traditional music heritage in any area, and for research on any musical form or ethnomusicological problem. This is why ethnomusicologists repeatedly go back to it in their work, and each time find new problems and interesting and academically relevant material in it.” (Marošević 1989: 108)

³ The Croatian ethnomusicologist Grozdana Marošević repeatedly analyzed Kuhač's impressive work in collecting and publishing musical material. She presented an overview of his activities in Istria at the conference *Musica in Istria e musica istriana: Patrimonio e tradizioni musicali istriane/Glasba v Istri in istrska glasba: Istrsko glasbeno izročilo*, held in Koper on September 23rd, 1999 (Marošević 1999).

and performed at concerts (Marošević 1984: 92). On the other hand, Kuhač also aimed to familiarize composers with the process of harmonizing folk songs.

The practice of publishing collections of arranged folk songs continued throughout the twentieth century. The first collection of Croatian songs from Istria, Matko Brajša Rašan's *Hrvatske narodne popijevke iz Istre* (Croatian Folk Songs from Istria), published in 1910, was motivated by a similar impulse as Kuhač's. It contains fifty secular and church songs arranged for male and mixed chorus (Brajša Rašan 1910). The basic objection that later collectors and arrangers raised against the work of Kuhač and Brajša concerned their approach to arrangement based on the western European diatonic, major-minor musical tradition. This approach fundamentally clashed with the chromatic, microtonal system of traditional Istrian music.

In contrast to Kuhač, who was interested in collecting all musical material found in situ, popularizing folk music, and making it more accessible to urban audiences, the transcribers of the early twentieth century focused on writing down the oldest layers of their folk heritage. Amateur music lovers, as well as many composers, were mostly interested in the older, rural, mostly vocal musical tradition. Most of them engaged in field research with the aim of collecting and recording folk music to look for inspiration for their own work. They believed it was precisely that segment of folk music that would reveal specific features of authentic Croatian culture. Musical repertoire in which foreign influences could be detected—such as examples of more recent rural traditions, the music of urban and urbanized communities, and most instrumental music—was not particularly valued and was generally neglected in field research and collections. At that time, less work was done in Istria in transcribing music due to political circumstances as well as the inability to faithfully capture the real tonal landscape, which usually differed from typical tempered tonal relations. The only collection of folk songs from the area published in that period is *Čakavsko-primorska pjevanika* (Chakavian-Littoral Songs) by Ivan Matetić Ronjgov (1939). That collection, which contains 128 two-part songs, is primarily intended for schoolchildren. The distance from continental Croatia is why Božidar Širola's dissertation *Das istrische Volkslied* (Istrian Folk Song), defended before Guido Adler in Vienna (Širola 1921)—making him the first qualified Croatian ethnomusicologist—is not based on his own field research, but on Kuhač's and Brajša's earlier records and data, which were available to him in published literature.

Another interesting topic for many musicians and transcribers in the interwar period was the "Istrian scale." This was an intriguing subject, profoundly marking the period and becoming almost the key symbol of efforts in music research at the time. Discussions on the authenticity, practicality, and perseverance of the Istrian scale continue to this day. Modern ethnomusicologists, notably Ruža Bonifačić and Dario Marušić (Bonifačić 2001: 90; Marušić 1993, 1995), approach the problem from the angle of music performers; that is, bearers of a tradition whose terminology and (traditional) musical practice do not recognize externally imposed tempered tonal relations. Ruža Bonifačić's article is the best

critical analysis of ethnomusicological approaches to formulating the musical and theoretical practice known as the Istrian scale.

The overview starts in the first half of the twentieth century, when an interesting and rich discussion was led on the stability of tonal relations in the Istrian scale. At that time, two distinct schools of interpretation developed trying to analyze this type of music. The first one was founded on the insights of western European music theory at the beginning of the twentieth century, and the second one considered previously unrecognized anthropological determinants. The first one prevailed, coining the name that survives to this day, even though the term *scale* does not reflect the actual phenomenon found in situ or the fact that this musical phenomenon cannot be standardized due to its microtonality: it varies from one manifestation to another and from one locality to another. The author suggests the general, neutral term “narrow-interval style of the Istrian-Littoral region” and *kanat* (for singing) and *sop* (for playing) “of the Istrian-Littoral region”⁴ (cf. Bonifačić 2001).

RESEARCH ACTIVITY AT THE INSTITUTE OF FOLK ART (TODAY'S INSTITUTE OF ETHNOLOGY AND FOLKLORE)

Based on the foundations described and the following established traditions, an institution was founded after the Second World War with the main task of conducting systematic research on Croatian folk-music heritage and practice. The newly founded institution was of the greatest importance for the further development of Croatian ethnomusicology. From its very beginning, the Institute of Folk Art directed its activities towards multidisciplinary research. Along with Vinko Žganec as a folk-music researcher, the institute gathered researchers of oral literature and folk dance, and later also of folk drama as well as traditional customs (i.e., folk art). It provided solid foundations for planning and launching projects aimed at studying regional characteristics of traditional culture in Croatia. Istria was the first region where the institute's researchers performed fieldwork. In 1952 and 1953, Maja Bošković-Stulli and Olinko Delorko studied oral literature, Nikola Bonifačić Rožin collected various folk tales and information on folk customs, Ivan Ivančan and Ljelja Taš studied folk dance, and the external associates Ivan Matetić Ronjgov and Nedjeljko Karabaić, and later also Fra Andrija Bonifačić (Bonifačić 2001: 80), were commissioned to collect and record

⁴ Owing to the efforts of these ethnomusicologists, the perception of traditional music-making in Istria and the northern Croatian Littoral has changed profoundly. Perhaps the most obvious evidence of this is the fact that a new term was introduced when this element was nominated for addition to UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity: *Dvoglasje tijesnih intervala Istre i Hrvatskog Primorja* (Dvoglasje 2007); that is, two-part music with narrow intervals from Istria and the Croatian Littoral. At the same time, the English translation of this name remained connected to the “old” school of interpretation: Two-Part Singing and Playing in the Istrian Scale. In 2009, this musical phenomenon was included in the UNESCO list and the ethnomusicologist Naila Ceribašić played a major role in drafting the application proposal.

the traditional music of the region. In addition, music was recorded by the ethnochoreologist Ivan Ivančan; from this material, Stjepan Stepanov transcribes thirty-two records of instrumental and vocal music (Marošević 1999). All of the manuscript collections from that research are kept in the institute's archives. Among all of the researchers mentioned, only Karabaić published the findings of his research, doing so in 1956, immediately after the research was finished. His own edition presents a selection of forty-two transcriptions in the small (in terms of scope and format) but extremely valuable (in terms of content) musical volume *Muzički folklor Hrvatskog primorja i Istre* (Musical Folklore of the Croatian Littoral and Istria). Karabaić's booklet, accompanied by vinyl records of folk music, is a significant and valuable work (Bonifačić 2001: 83). The first publication of the results of his thorough research was not just a collection of written records, but a study that offers a classification of the music in this area, observations on musical structure and performance practice, notes on the customs and the role of music and dance in them, information on the influences between Italian and Croatian folks songs, and the consequences of the influence modern music has on traditional music. Karabaić's volume, including this additional content, was the seed for and an indication of ethnomusicological concepts that developed later and were aimed at more comprehensive research.

The works cited above involve considerable transcription activity. Following the founding of the institute, it became very comprehensive and systematic, but mostly in terms of material that is available today in the institute's archive to new generations of researchers, and that serves as a good starting point for interesting comparative research. It was not until 1963 that the first significant results in research on traditional music and dance appeared, in Ivan Ivančan's *Istarski narodni plesovi* (Istrian Folk Dances, 1963), whereas Matetić's material was published only in 1990 in the collection *Zaspal Pave* (Paul Fell Asleep), edited by Dušan Prašelj. In 1970, Jerko Bezić, taking pride in the material collected at the institute, published an article about it, and in the same year the first compilation of Croatian traditional music, *Da si od srebra, da si od zlata* (If You Were Made of Silver, If You Were Made of Gold) was published, containing examples of traditional music recorded in Istria found in the institute's archive (Bezić, Ivančan, and Rihtman-Auguštin 1970). At that time, with the exception of sporadic individual research by the institute's ethnomusicologists and ethnochoreologists, there was no significant research activity. In the 1980s, Tanja Perić Polonijo continued with field research and the collection of oral literature, but no major research projects were undertaken by ethnomusicologists. The only one that visited the area during that period was the ethno-organologist Krešimir Galin. Perhaps one of the reasons lies in the fact that ethnomusicology activities were taken over by the local research associates of the Department of Ethnology and Ethnomusicology at the North Adriatic Institute, which was headed until the late 1960s by Slavko Zlatić, the associates of Radio Pula, Renato Pernić and his family, the Ivan Matetić Ronjgov Public Institution, and Dušan Prašelj.

NEW PARADIGMS AND RESEARCH ACTIVITIES SINCE THE 1990S

In the late 1990s, the institute continued publishing traditional music compilations (Marošević 1997; Pettan 1998) containing archival examples of Istrian musical tradition. The latest compilation, *Hrvatska tradicijska glazba* (Croatian Traditional Music), published in 2000 (Čaleta and Ceribašić 2000), has proven to be a milestone in terms of presentation of material due to the fact that all of the musical examples on that recording represent contemporary traditional music practices. Inspired by professional activities related to holding the Zagreb International Folklore Festival, the authors started studying traditional Istrian music in the contemporary context. Today's ethnomusicologists are no longer interested only in the old, archaic aspect of traditional music-making, even though they appreciate it at every encounter. They are interested in the context of contemporary traditional music, and its self-preservation and coexistence in various social interactions. Music and gender, music and minorities, festivalization and mediatization of music, global influences on local musical expression, applied ethnomusicology—these are some of the topics that appeal to ethnomusicologists at the Institute of Ethnology and Folklore. The music that they study is no longer exclusively traditional, but includes various forms of urban music as well as popular music related to Istria. It must be pointed out that microtonal singing is no longer the dominant mode of music-making.⁵ Tempered music is characteristic of the Croats, Italians, Slovenians, and Istro-Romanians. Exchange of repertoire (both lyrics and music) between the three ethnic groups (Slovenians, Italians, and Croats) is also typical of Istria, resulting in folkdance groups and choirs performing multilingual repertoires, and the widespread use of lyrics in more than one language. It has been observed that in practice it is the Slovenian and Croatian singers that more often perform traditional Italian songs (Orlić 2005: 92).

During that period, much less material was stored in the institute's archives. The material is also no longer exclusively in the form of audio recordings; it is being recorded with video cameras, and not just by the institute's associates, but also by local enthusiasts that are storing their audio and video recordings on CDs and DVDs. Long-term field trips are no longer the norm because improved traffic connections between Istria and Zagreb have made one-day visits a viable research option. The topic that dominated the standard view of traditional Istrian music—the Istrian scale—has been demystified in this period

⁵ According to Dario Marušić: "Judging from what we know, historically tonal music from learned European sources has been connected to northern Istria, the coast, and several large settlements in the interior. Today, it is found throughout the peninsula, and has significantly influenced older heritage in all ethnic communities, especially two-part singing in the Istrian scale. Today's custom of combining *sopela* with the accordion is an example of this process. The old untempered instrument is combined with a tempered one, which completely dominates it. Even though the *sopac* continues to play its old tune, in order for the final musical product to be acceptable, it has to change its intonation slightly, at least for the long tones. This is why the repertoire is limited exclusively to dances." (Marušić 1995:14–15)

in the work of Ruža Bonifačić, and the nonexistence of tempered creations in traditional musical practice has been theoretically explained. However, it must be pointed out that the deliberations of this school of thought left a major mark on today's performance of traditional music.

THE TRADITIONAL ISTRIAN MUSIC AND DANCE MICROCOSM AND ITS PRESENTATION

When looking in retrospect at the shift of ethnomusicological activity to Istria, one can observe its importance, symbolic value, and actual necessity. In terms of necessity, this activity is related to a change in the professional and general view of Istria as the region of the Istrian scale and *balun* dancing, which had dominated Croatian professional and wider cultural circles throughout the twentieth century. This view has changed radically in the past two decades into a view of multiethnic and multicultural heritage of music and dance in Istria. The activities of the institute's ethnomusicologists and field experts in adding traditional Istrian phenomena to the registry of intangible cultural assets of Croatia include three Istrian musical traditions: two-part music with narrow intervals of the Istrian-Littoral region, the practice of playing violin and *bajs* (Istrian double-bass; known collectively as *gunjci*), and the *bitinada* singing of Rovinj. A joint step in presenting the area's multiculturalism to the world was Croatia's nomination of traditional Istrian music for the 2003 UNESCO program "Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity" under the title "Istrian Ethnomusical Microcosm." It incorporated Istrian cultural diversity through the inclusion of both the dominant population's musical heritage as well as that of the Italian, Istro-Romanian, and Montenegrin ethnic minorities,⁶ which are also present in public music-making in Istria (Brnabić 2003).⁷ Unfortunately, this interesting proposal, which foregrounds the community's diversity and pluralism, was not recognized by UNESCO's board, which added "Two-Part Singing and Playing in the Istrian Scale" to its list in 2009.

⁶ More information and a description of Montenegrin musical traditions (*pojanje*) is found in Naila Ceribašić's article (2009: 309–325).

⁷ In order to illustrate this "musical world," I quote Dario Marušić, a renowned Istrian musician, transcriber, and ethnomusicologist, and one of the authors of the proposal: "There are four different traditions in Istria, and two of them are individual musical languages. It is a serious misapprehension to say that music is a universal language—it is universal in its mode of communication, but it has various dialects and languages that should be learned and understood just as in verbal communication. Characteristic of Istria is two-part music with irregular intervals, but that is naturalistic music. These traditions are completely different from so-called western music, which predominates in the media today. It is a microcosm of its own. All western music since Bach has modified intervals, making everything that is considered regular actually wrong. The naturalistic scale of Istrian music is unusual only because there are so few opportunities to hear it." (Milović 2007)

Another specific feature that drew many ethnomusicologists to Istria is the tradition of publicly practicing music and dance traditions there. Whereas in other parts of Croatia folkdance events are categorized by size (at the local, regional, county, and national level) and are typically general representations of musical and dance traditions, Istria is characterized by many specialized events, festivals, and gatherings. Apart from the central Istrian Folklore Music and Dance Festival held since 1966 and the event's local pre-festivals, there are numerous interesting one-day gatherings and events that focus on a particular musical tradition (Orlić and Gortan-Carlin 2014: 129). Roč hosts an international gathering of diatonic accordion players (*Z armoniku u Roč*, since 1989), Draguč hosts the international *bajs* players' gatherings (*Bajsi u Draguču*, since 1990). Since 1995 Žminj has been the location of accordion players' gatherings (*Armonike zad kaštela*), Gračišće is the location of harmonica players' gatherings (*Zasopimo na organić*, since 1996), an event has been held since 2006 in Grimalda (*Supci pud mavricun*), and Raša hosts a gathering of Istrian *meh*, *dvojnice*, *šurle* and *sopelice* players (*Meh na srcu*, since 1996). Among other events dedicated to traditional singing, of particular interest is a gathering of traditional church singers (*Maša po starinski*), which is part of a festival in Sveti Petar u Šumi (*Smotra starocrkvenog pučkog pjevanja*, since 2008). Among the modern vocal traditions that have recently gained evident popularity in Istria, the festival of Istrian klapa singing and vocal ensembles in Buzet (*Pivajuči sva smo blaga stekli*, since 1998) have had a significant influence on the development of klapa singing.⁸

In conclusion, what becomes clear is the richness of expression that can be observed through the prism of musical styles, genres, instrumental repertoires, and dances of the narrow intervals tradition. Opposed to this is the equally important Istrian tonal tradition historically connected to northern Istria, the coast, and several large settlements in the interior, but now present throughout Istria. It is important, however, to point out that currently the two Istrian traditions very often combine to form a complex unity. Individuals and folkdance groups are often successors to both traditions, which supports the theory of the cohesion and unity of Istrian music and dance traditions. The same can be said of the tradition of traditional church singing in Istria, which to this day contains rare but extremely interesting examples of microtonal musical heritage supplemented with modern tonal musical practice.

⁸ In addition, there is an international folkdance festival in Vodnjan (*Leron*, since 2001), the Mediterranean folkdance gathering in Poreč (*Zlatna sopela*, since 2001), a gathering of players of traditional instruments from central Istria in Pagubice (*Nadalinu u pobode*, since 2003), a gathering of players and singers of traditional Istrian music in Boljun (*Zasopimo i zakantajmo po stare užance*) and in Barat (*Zakantajmo istrijsanske kante*, since 2004), a gathering of violin and other *gunjei* instrument players in Hum (*Z vijulini soppu muškardini*, since 2006), a gathering of players on improvised instruments in Lindar (*Fešta prez štrumententi*, since 2007), a northern Istrian traditional music festival in Lanišće (*Zarozgajmo na Čičariji*, since 2008), and other events in Buzet (*Subotina po starinski*, since 2002) and Kršan (*Kršonski pir*, since 2006; Orlić and Gortan-Carlin 2014: 129).

APPLIED ETHNOMUSICOLOGY BASED ON EXAMPLES OF
REVITALIZATION AND PRESENTATION OF CHURCH SINGING IN
ISTRIA

The activity of the institute's researchers in Istria culminated at the beginning of the twenty-first century in a single, very specific locality. Roč, known for its Glagolitic written tradition and for a gathering of diatonic accordion players, becomes a place of gathering for the ethnomusicologists of the region. Four gatherings of ethnomusicologists initiated by local music activists (Emil Zonta and Dario Marušić) and associates of the Institute of Ethnology and Folklore (Naila Ceribašić, Joško Čaleta, Irena Miholić, and Mojca Piškor), and supported with excellent logistics from the hosts led by Ines Greblo, resulted in the publication of two volumes of proceedings (Ceribašić and Greblo 2002; Ceribašić 2004). The highlight was the international gathering of the ICTM Music and Minorities Study Group, also held in Roč (Ceribašić and Haskell 2006). Gatherings in Roč connected local community activists with researchers, and their collaboration has continued for more than twenty years. In addition to the gatherings, activities in applied ethnomusicology have also developed through concrete interactions, most notably with the presentation of traditional Istrian music and dance at the forty-third International Folklore Festival in Zagreb in 2009. The organization of one thematic evening of the festival dedicated to the tradition of traditional church singing was entrusted to the author of this article, an institute associate with longstanding experience in conceptualizing and organizing concerts of traditional secular and sacred vocal music.⁹ The emphasis is primarily on musical traditions which, due to their distinctiveness and quality (vocal style and performance modes), deserve to be presented outside of their original context. This is particularly true for traditional (Glagolitic) church singing, where in cooperation with the performers (folk singers) a music and stage performance is to be conceived that would present this musical tradition to a new audience in a dynamic and more appealing way. The results of this kind of research (applied ethnomusicology) have manifold effects both on the local community (its prominent performers whose singing skill deserves to be publicly presented to a wider audience) and on the results of research and knowledge about the music, which the researcher acquires in a more immediate, direct—and, I would say, realistic—way. In the last twenty years or so, there has been major interest in the presentation of traditional church singing in the form of public performances (i.e., concerts). This musical phenomenon, which I have been actively involved in, has made me think about the reasons for the popularity of this type of presentation of musical cultural heritage and the ways that heritage is presented. Having

⁹ The Zagreb International Folklore Festival has been the central stage for presenting church folk singing. Since the 1990s, it has held a service in the Zagreb cathedral for the festival participants and included thematic concerts of church folk music in its regular program. The tradition of concert presentation of church folk singing has developed thanks to the International Folklore Festival as the leading model, which was later adopted by numerous local and regional events.

started my research, I realized that it was a truly complex phenomenon that requires serious insight into the history of church singing and the performance practice of the specific repertoire. I indicate briefly just a few of the facts related to concert performances and media presentation of church folk songs and the church folk-singing repertoire (Ćaleta 2014: 263–284).

Personal research experience and application of knowledge and insights to the development of this music scene have helped me gain a clearer view of the complex state of affairs. I can illustrate this with just one of the many examples that I have personally encountered in the last twenty years. The example is related to the oldest and most complex phenomenon of church folk singing: Glagolitic singing. Studying the work of Jerko Bezić, which is mostly related to musical traditions of Glagolitic singing, I decided to follow his lead and determine the present state of practice some fifty years after his research. Glagolitic singing has been preserved through oral transmission for over ten centuries as a distinct Croatian component of liturgical singing following the Roman Catholic rite:

In the narrowest sense, the term “Glagolitic singing” refers to the singing by the Glagolitic priests and clerics that performed liturgical acts in Church Slavic written in the Glagolitic script. In the broad sense, it includes all singing by priests and laymen, common since ancient times: liturgical, paraliturgical, and other church singing of the Western rite, which had its roots in church singing in Church Slavic, and as early as the Middle Ages included church singing in Croatian (the living vernacular). (Bezić 1989: 11)¹⁰

All of this bears testament to a rich and complex history that is today marginalized in the former centers of Glagolitic singing. Research, recording, and presentation of the older stratum of Glagolitic singing following the footsteps of Jerko Bezić have confirmed its existence, which I also tried to document and present in concerts. In many cases, the audio recordings made in the 1960s by Jerko Bezić have helped me in my research. With the recordings of previous generations, collective musical memory associatively connects the oldest experiences and memories in gatherings with the singers, culminating in very interesting, positive reactions, and in attempts to revive the older stratum in a new way and pass it on to the next generations (Marjan 2013a, 2013b; Marjan and Nimac 2013). A positive example of interference in one community is soon reflected in neighboring localities. Oral transmission and “good neighborly relations,” in which each local community

¹⁰ The most comprehensive study of the interaction between secular and sacred music for Glagolitic church singing is Jerko Bezić’s *Razvoj glagoljaškog pjevanja na zadarskom području* (Development of Glagolitic Singing in the Zadar Area, 1973). In addition to the elements of eastern (Byzantine) church singing and the characteristics of the western (Roman Gregorian) chant, this singing also incorporates “features of secular vocal folk music from those geographical areas in which it developed: Istria, the Kvarner islands, the northern Croatian Littoral, and Dalmatia” (Bezić 2003: 35).



Female singing group from Lanišće performing at the concert of *Istrian traditional church music* in St. Catherine church, Zagreb, as part of the 43rd International Folklore Festival, 2009 (photo: Davor Šiftar, MSF (IEF) archive, no. 3768).



Noel Šuran (Lindar) and Zoran Karlić (Kršan) performing at the concert of *Istrian traditional church music* in St. Catherine church, Zagreb, as part of the 43rd International Folklore Festival, 2009 (photo: Davor Šiftar, MSF (IEF) archive, no. 3780).

tries to stay up to date and outperform its neighbors, have a major influence on future developments, which I have personally experienced in this case. Due to all of these reasons and the sociocultural changes making concerts the most acceptable form of musical events, the practice of public presentation of church folk singing—especially the older, almost forgotten stratum—has become one of the basic models of “preserving” the musical heritage of church folk singing.

As opposed to some other Croatian regions (e.g., Dalmatia and Slavonia), Istrian traditional church singing does not have such a rich tradition of concert performances. One of the reasons is the instrumental (tempered) accompaniment (on organs, regals, and harmoniums) that takes church singing away from the archaic microtonal vocal tradition in Istria. This same fact helped introduce standard church repertoire in the area in the mid-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. However, even today there are still places where one can hear singing in the “old key” during church services.

Traditional music, as well as traditional church singing, functions today as a result of preserving and collecting “memories” of old musical practice bestowed upon future generations. Changes in the meaning, use, and function of traditional music and church folk singing are the result of changes in institutionalized social practice along with the new situations. These strata of musical tradition, as reminders of musical practice in the more or less recent past, automatically earn epithets such as “antiquated,” “old-fashioned,” and “archaic,” alluding to the fact that it is impossible to generalize the definition of a musical term according to uniform parameters.

The first significant attempts to present this type of church folk tradition in Istria began in 2008, when Bruno Krajcar founded the event Old-Fashioned Mass (*Maša po starinsku*) in Sveti Petar u Šumi.¹¹ It was through his efforts that this event turned into another professional gathering, typical of traditional music-making in Istria, with continued annual events. Thanks to its continuity and good media coverage, it became an important place of learning about traditional church singing in Istria.¹² Attempts were made to revitalize Glagolitic singing, remnants of which are present in Istria, by using examples of it from southern Croatia, where the tradition is still very much alive, to

¹¹ Interestingly, at the first several events, the Istrian mass (*maša po istrijski*) was sung by guest groups: at the first event in 2010, this was done by Burgenland Croats from Frankenau, Austria (Šišović [no year]). The following year it was singers from Punat on the island of Krk, and the year after that singers from the parish of Desne in the Neretva Valley (Maša 2010).

¹² The success of the first events “allowed” the organizers to dub the gathering the National Festival of Glagolitic and Old Church Folk Singing (Maša 2010). The overstating of the significance and importance of this event, which attracted media attention by its presentation format, among other things, can be read from these newspaper lines: “With its continuity, and particularly with the extraordinary historical value of its repertoire and the artistic quality of the interpretations, *Maša po starinski* has developed over the years into a reference points when it comes to events dedicated to this specific musical genre. This unique ethnomusicological event of exceptional cultural value for the valorization and preservation of this segment of our rich heritage, which many consider to be the most significant one for the preservation of our cultural identity, marks its sixth year of existence.” (Šesta 2013)

revive this church-singing tradition in the Istrian peninsula. Today, in most cases the definition of “old-fashioned” traditional church musical tradition would match that of Glagolitic singing, which, incidentally, was included in Croatia’s registry of intangible cultural assets in 2008.¹³

In preparing the Zagreb concert, I drew upon the experiences of gatherings in Sveti Petar u Šumi; renowned folk-singing groups (in Lanišće and Lindar) and church choirs (in Marčana, Sveti Petar u Šumi, and Žminj) that performed at the Zagreb concert also performed at the first event in Sveti Petar u Šumi. The concert was conceived as a presentation of interesting renditions of the integral parts of a church service, interesting variants of archaic forms of liturgical and paraliturgical songs that can still be heard in church services in Istria throughout the year. Public (concert) performance is a category I am particularly interested in because, in the case of church folk singing, one can talk about permanent musical practice that is regularly a public performance. What sets it apart from today’s notion of public performance is its contextual dimension: religious ceremony accompanied by singing would be the definition of music-making through church folk singing. Archaic modes of singing entail the participation of the entire auditorium in the process of creating musical patterns (i.e., church songs). In this case, prominent singers are leaders or initiators that use their skill to influence the quality of the final musical product. With public performances of this type, a musical event is transformed from a ritual into a concert type of public performance. Through this transformation, the musical performance becomes a public musical work, and as such subject to the rules of performance, which automatically introduces the question of copyright.¹⁴

I looked for inspiration for the concert repertoire in conversations with narrators and in the Sunday services at various locations in Istria. The aim of the research was to awaken and encourage the narrator’s positive attitude towards tradition that is familiar to them and that they can masterfully present. Gatherings with distinguish singers revealed numerous interesting facts related to the local traditional church music performance practice. Like many times before, it confirmed the theory that loaned repertoire is the most common, both in practice and in the collective memory of local communities. Moreover, my narrators

¹³ Official decisions on intangible cultural assets of Croatia are not publicly available on the Croatian Ministry of Culture’s website. I found the decision on the addition of Glagolitic singing to the official registry on a website run by music enthusiasts that care about making information about this musical phenomenon available to the general public (Čikeš 2010).

¹⁴ All public performances in Croatia are considered copyrighted works whose public performances are paid for in line with the Regulation on Public Performance Fees and Fees for Communicating Musical Works to the Public (*Official Gazette* no. 80/92, 72/93, 29/95, 50/95, 1/97, 75/97), which includes the following: “public performance and communication of musical works protected by the Croatian Composers’ Society (HDS), except performances and communication of musical works by those users with whom HDS has signed a separate agreement regulating the performance license (i.e., the payment of fees), is subject to payment of fees based on the tariffs for public performance and communication of musical works to the public.” (Pravilnik i tarifa [no year])

avoided any reference to the “Istrian touch,” claiming that “that was not how you sang at church; there was the organ there and it had the dominant role” (Ćaleta 2009: 8).

There was always a teacher that was also the organist, and, wherever he came from, he brought with him what he learned and that’s how we learned to sing. Our teacher Bolonić worked a lot with the choir, and he was from the island of Krk. We sang a lot with Reverend Marijan Milovan, a lot of new songs. Even after the Council, he regularly held Great Vespers at Christmas and Easter. (Ćaleta 2009: 9)

Most singers are “attached” to “reading” the lyrics while singing. Many of the photocopied lyrics are written in standard Croatian, even though in conversation and in performances a clear difference between the standard vs. the local repertoire (i.e., “our” or “old-fashioned repertoire”) written in dialect can be observed.

We sing the other, old lyrics more than these new ones.
 These words are truly ours!
 We’ll sing our own way, the way we do our song! (Ćaleta 2009: 7)

In the narrators’ minds, using the local *beside* ‘words’ is associated with the specific musical repertoire of especially Lent, Holy Week, and funeral ceremonies. Memories of the older responsorial and antiphonal types of singing crop up, which has almost disappeared, replaced by church choir singing. The reading of the *pištule* ‘epistles’ is also mentioned, which is not part of today’s practice, as well as a number of other memorable situations that are etched in the narrators’ memories. A connection to the older stratum is drawn, with slower singing as opposed to today’s rhythmic and faster singing. Also notable are the absence of male singers and the domination of women, who took over and in many cases preserved the tradition. Women can still much more easily than men remember the way people used to sing in the past. The organist in Sveti Petar u Šumi told me that the singing of the hymns in two choruses was *strahljivo* ‘fearsome’.

For the ember days it was customary to build a catafalque and then vespers was sung for the dead. The custom is long gone, ever since the Council, but we still remember it because it was special. They mention stomping, rackets, *skrebetalnice*, *baraban*, names that are familiar, but vaguely recalled. They say they could hardly wait for the moment when they would let their feet loose, furiously stomping against the church floor during *baraban*; she adds: “We are old, but we can still remember the way it used to be!!!” (Ćaleta 2009: 7)

Previous practice has shown that the activities involved in preparing the Zagreb concert triggered renewed consideration of old repertoires in local communities. The concert in

Zagreb had a positive influence on the interest and versatility of approach to the organization of the second consecutive concert, called *Dan od gnjeva* (Dies Irae, or Day of Wrath) held during the 2010 *Pasiionska baština* (Passion Heritage) event.

Just like the earlier stage performances of musical works following this model of public presentation of the church-singing tradition, the concert was conceived as a representation of musical and performing units composed of musically interesting parts of Lenten, Holy Week, and Easter sung masses and rituals. Representation of the *Uličnica* (from *ulika* ‘olive tree’) procession was the first part of the program. The second part introduced interesting renditions of Lenten songs and Way of the Cross procession songs. Next on the program were parts of the mass for the dead, Good Friday ceremonies, and hymns from the Easter Vespers (*Večernja na Vuzam*), and the last part of the concert included Easter songs, thus ending the first presentation of Lenten singing traditions of Istria for the anniversary edition of the Passion Heritage event in Zagreb. This versatile approach represents the true musical richness expressed in a range of different paths leading toward the same goal: satisfaction in a high-quality public performance. The singers from the Zagreb concert repeated this satisfactory experience by performing concerts at various locations in Istria during Lent in the following years. The response of the narrators to the advice and concrete actions of ethnomusicologists in preparing the Istrian church music concert program confirms that the modern approach of ethnomusicologists is in tune with people’s mentality today. Further testimony to this is the newly established tradition of “repeating” the Zagreb concert with the same participants, program, and mode of presentation, which clearly appeals to both performers and the audience, which shows great interest in the annual performances throughout Istria.¹⁵

¹⁵ A report from the Žminj concert in 2014:

A joint concert by several choirs entitled *Stala plačuć tužna mati...* (Stabat Mater) was held on April 6th in Saint Michael’s parish church in Žminj. Church folk songs of central and northern Istria characteristic of the most important part of the liturgical year—Palm Sunday, Holy Week, and Easter—were performed by Saint Peter and Paul’s Parish Choir from Sveti Petar u Šumi, folk singers from Lindar, the female Lanišće Vocal Group, and Saint Michael’s Parish Choir from Žminj. Vitorio Prenc from Saint Peter and Paul’s Choir greeted the audience and briefly described the concert program. In the following seventy minutes or so, the large audience gathered in the Žminj parish church had the opportunity to hear old church folk songs, parts of old church masses, and carefully selected pieces from Istrian folk vocal heritage sung during Lent and Holy Week, and at Easter. The concert began with the singers symbolically entering the church following a cross and holding olive branches in their hands, while the choirs from Žminj and Sveti Petar u Šumi, and the Lanišće Vocal Group, performed their renditions of the songs “Slava čast i hvala ti” and “Na gori Maslinskoj molio se Ocu.” The program continued with Lenten folk songs and local ethnomusicological curiosities of the Way of the Cross, followed by the choirs’ presentations of folk songs from their communities sung at funeral ceremonies and at the mass for the dead. Two folk singers from Lindar, Vinko Zidarić and Noel Šuran, presented characteristic selections from Lindar’s mass for the dead, and the choirs from Žminj and Sveti Petar u Šumi performed “Day of Wrath,” an old traditional song found in the folk musical heritage of many regions, distinctive in each of its variants due to its specific, recognizable sonority. Noel Šuran and Zoran Karlić presented the old folk prayer “Oj, Ivane vandeliću” sung *na tanko i debelo* (literally, “the thin way and the thick way”).

The Istrian model of presentation through specialized events has proven appropriate again. Among the singers of the local communities, this event initiated the incorporation of the new/old practice of musical expression into regular church events, which are an integral part of the church-singing repertoire. Keeping the “old” and incorporating the “new,” or combining various types of music-making, is an indicator of the relationship that the local community has with its singing traditions, with the musical idioms that they considered representative of their musical expression. The influence of ethnomusicologists as well as festival institutions such as the International Folklore Festival or the Passion Heritage, which have repeatedly revived forgotten traditions and given them a new, dignified (albeit concert) place in the traditional musical life of the community, again culminated in a “new tradition” celebrating music, tradition, and customs in a new and more appealing way for the modern world.

The process of creating the concert program presented in these examples is an indicator of the current situation in the practice of public performance of church folk singing. In this way, by following the current models of public presentation, it supports the preservation and relative popularity of the older traditions of church folk singing. It seems clear that without such efforts these older traditions would die out and soon be forgotten. On the other hand, it is also necessary to stress the importance of the researcher-practitioner, who, with knowledge of the (older tradition) of singing material and the basic rules of stage performance, is able to mediate between tradition (in this case, the tradition of church folk singing), its bearers (church folk singers), and the new audience, which, with its interest in and approval of the performances, gives deserved recognition to the performers and their tradition, and supports their future development.

Next on the repertoire were songs from the Good Friday service, where the singers symbolically performed the ritual kissing of the cross. In that part of the concert, the singers from Sveti Petar u Šumi performed “Tvome križu klanjamo se,” and the others parts of their songs from the Good Friday Reproach and “O My People.” The concert continued with performances of the Great Vespers and Psalms, with particularly interesting songs from Lanišće: “Uzveliči duša moja Gospodina” and “Na Janca piru kraljevskom.” At the end, Easter songs were performed, and “Kraljice neba raduj se, aleluja” was jointly sung by all performers while leaving the stage.

According to the organizers, the idea of presenting Istrian Lenten musical heritage came from the ethnomusicologist Joško Čaleta in 2010, and the project was first presented as part of the Passion Heritage event at Sacred Heart of Jesus Church in Zagreb, and to the Istrian audience in March 2012 at the Euphrasian Basilica in Poreč. Čaleta selected the songs and scripted the concert, which is definitely very idiosyncratic, with choirs moving throughout the church and singing from various positions in the chancel and the side naves.

The performers and the visitors were greeted by the local priest, Jordan Rovis, who expressed his satisfaction with the fact that Saint Michael’s parish church in Žminj could host this concert. Žminj, located in the heart of Istria, is a place where the tradition of old church folk songs written in dialect is still carefully preserved and cultivated, and the Žminj Parish Choir is one of the major musical forces in church singing during large diocesan events. Furthermore, singers from Žminj regularly contribute to the program of the Chakavian Assembly by performing a mass in Church Slavic. (U Žminju 2014)

In conclusion, it seems clear that models of public presentation are one of the important and key factors in the process of reconstructing, revitalizing, and representing archaic traditional musical worlds. Public performance helps the tradition bearers recognize the true value and significance of music that has been bequeathed exclusively to them.

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PREUČEVANJE TRADICIJSKE GLASBE IN PLESA V ISTRI S POSEBNIM
POUDARKOM NA REVITALIZACIJI IN PREZENTACIJI CERKVENE
LJUDSKE (GLAGOLJAŠKE) PRAKSE

Istra je bila od nekdaj zanimiva za raziskovalce ljudskega izročila, še posebej glasbe in plesa, prav tako pa je prostor, kjer so se pogosto srečevali in nadgrajevali interesi hrvaških, slovenskih in italijanskih raziskovalcev. Namen tega dela je opozoriti na kontinuiteto in raznovrstne pristope v raziskavah tradicijske glasbe in plesa v Istri. Na podlagi pregleda raziskovalnih spoznanj, zlasti tistih, ki so jih v zadnjih šestih desetletjih objavili raziskovalci Inštituta za etnologijo in folkloristiko v Zagrebu, predstavljam različne namene in cilje raziskovanja, paradigme in teme, ki so usmerjale raziskovalce v preteklosti in danes. S tem je povezana tudi trditev, da sta bila v preteklih raziskavah poudarjena zbiranje in ohranjanje gradiva, kar se kaže tudi v splošnem pristopu raziskovanja tradicije, ki je bil aktualen do začetka tega stoletja.

Na začetku 20. stoletja so se melografi osredinili na zapisovanje izključno najstarejših plasti folklorne dediščine. Notalni ljubitelji glasbe kot tudi mnogi skladatelji, ki so na terenu zapisovali ljudsko glasbo, so iskali gradivo za svoja glasbena dela, zanimala pa jih je predvsem stara podeželska, v glavnem vokalna glasbena tradicija. Menili so, da bodo prav v tem segmentu ljudske glasbe našli specifične značilnosti avtohtone hrvaške kulture. Glasbeni repertoar, za katerega so ugotovili, da se je oblikoval pod »tujimi« vplivi, kakor na primer glasba nove podeželske tradicije, glasba mestnih in primestnih središč in večji del instrumentalne glasbe, ni bil posebno cenjen in je bil zaradi tega pri zbiranju najpogosteje zanemarjen. Druga tema, ki je pritegnila pozornost mnogih glasbenikov in melografov, je t. i. istrska lestvica. To je bila mikavna tema, ki je pomembno označila in postala glavni simbol glasbenih prizadevanj tega časa. Razprava o preverljivosti, rabi in obstoju istrske lestvice pa se je nadaljevala do današnjih dni.

Za novejši čas je značilno aktivno delovanje etnomuzikologov v Istri, kar je hkrati pomembna simbolična in dejanska potreba. Povezano je s spremembo strokovnega in splošnega pogleda na Istro kot regijo istrske lestvice in baluna, ki je prevladoval v hrvaški strokovni in širši kulturni javnosti v 20. stoletju. Ta pogled se v zadnjih dvajsetih letih korenito spreminja v smeri razumevanja multietničnosti in multikulturalnosti istrske glasbene in plesne dediščine. Dejavnost etnomuzikologov iz zagrebškega Inštituta in strokovnjakov s terena je vidna tudi pri vpisu istrskih tradicijskih pojavov v register nesnovne kulturne dediščine Republike Hrvaške.

Bogastvo glasbenega izraza je razvidno tudi v raznovrstnosti glasbenih slogov, žanrov, glasbil in plesov tradicije tesnih intervalov; slednji se enakopravno pridružuje istrska tonalitetna tradicija, ki je bila v preteklosti značilna za severno Istro, obmorske kraje in nekaj večjih mest v notranjosti, danes pa je zagotovo navzoča po vsej Istri. Poudariti je treba, da obe omenjeni tradiciji danes najpogosteje delujeta kot skupna, kompleksna celota. Posamezniki in tudi folklorne skupine so pogosto nosilci obeh, kar podpira tezo o nedeljivosti in enotnosti istrskega glasbenega in plesnega izročila.

Enako lahko trdimo za izročilo cerkvenega petja v Istri. V njej so ohranjeni redki in izjemno zanimivi primeri netemperirane glasbene dediščine, ki jih simbiotično nadgrajujejo

novejše tonalne prakse. Ohranjanje »starih«, prevzemanje »novih« in kombiniranje različnih načinov muziciranja kažejo na odnos lokalne skupnosti do »svoje« pevske tradicije, do glasbenih idiomov, ki so označeni kot markerji njihovega glasbenega izročila.

Vpliv etnomuzikologov praktikov in festivalskih ustanov, ki so dozdam že večkrat »prebudile« pozabljene tradicije in jim dale novo, primerno (sicer koncertno) mesto v tradicijskem glasbenem življenju skupnosti, je tudi v primeru predstavljanja istrskega cerkvenega ljudskega petja dosegel vrhunec v »novi tradiciji«, ki slavi glasbo, tradicijo in šege na nov, današnjemu svetu sprejemljiv način. Proces nastajanja koncertnega programa, ki je v članku predstavljen z omenjenimi primeri kaže na trenutno stanje javnega izvajanja cerkvenega ljudskega petja. V proces so vključeni sodobni modeli javnega nastopanja, kar omogočata obstoj in sorazmerna popularnost starih načinov cerkvenega ljudskega petja. Sklenemo lahko, da bi starejši načini ljudskega petja brez takšnih posegov izginili in bili popolnoma pozabljeni. Po drugi strani pa je treba poudariti zelo pomembno vlogo raziskovalcev – praktikov, ki imajo s poznavanjem (starejšega načina) pevske zgradbe in osnov scenske postavitve možnost, da na zanimiv način posredujejo med tradicijo (v tem primeru cerkvenim ljudskim petjem), njenimi nosilci – ljudskimi pevci in novim poslušalstvom – občinstvom. Slednje pa s svojim sledenjem tradiciji in odobravanjem izvedbe izvajalce in njihovo tradicijo priznava in jih pozitivno spodbuja za nadaljevanje »življenja« predstavljene tradicije.

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