



BALLADS AND MEMORY

C o n f e r e n c e A b s t r a c t s

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Conference Abstracts

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Fictional Past Meets Lived Present: Society, Singers' Experiences, and Song Interpretation

Ingrid Åkesson

Many narrative motifs in the Scandinavian so-called medieval ballads are connected to (sometimes fatal) pregnancy and childbirth, sexual violence, abduction, or women being punished for lack of obedience etc., – in short, power relations and gender. The stories often reflect values and norms of a pre- or early-modern society; many of the ballads have been performed in Scandinavia since the sixteenth century; the majority of ballad variants, however, were documented in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. What can we learn, through close reading and “fieldwork in the archive,” about how singers in the latter period have reacted to and interpreted these dramatic ballads where the plot may show parallels to real cases in their own time? Are there signs of the old songs having been used as a means for processing or negotiating similar experiences in their own lives or their own neighbourhood? What does the rich multitude of different variants, telling quite different tales and representing different ethical and psychological modes, tell us about the possible encounters between a fictional past and the singers' present? Is it reasonable to speak about interpersonal experiences, stretching over several layers of time, co-existing in the moment of performance?

In my paper, I aim to discuss these questions on the basis of examples from the Swedish/Scandinavian corpus of ballads, against a backdrop of mental and social history and theories of masculinity, as well as an ethnomusicological framework. The case study is part of an ongoing book project.

Charting the Eighteenth-Century “Old Ballads” in England, c. 1730–1780

David Atkinson

When it comes to thinking about the ballad repertoire of the eighteenth century, it is not immediately obvious where to look. Child’s volumes of the *English and Scottish Popular Ballads* privilege on the one hand ballads from sixteenth- and seventeenth-century print, and on the other those collected in Scotland around the beginning of the nineteenth century. The folk song collecting of the years leading up to the First World War cannot simply be projected back in time, not least because so much of what was recovered then was of nineteenth-century origin. At the same time, a few of the ballads canonised by Child were found to be still in circulation, which served to reinforce the hegemony of that particular repertoire. This paper describes an alternative core repertoire of narrative ballads actually in circulation in eighteenth-century England, c.1730–1780, and considers its implication for received ideas about “the ballad.”

“Swords in the Stories:” The Ballad of Kinmont Willie

Valentina Bold, University of Strathclyde

This is the story of a song, and a sword, that represent the violent culture of sixteenth-century Scotland – and its afterlife in the national consciousness. “The Ballad of Kinmont Willie” was first published in Walter Scott’s *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* in 1802. It tells the tale of a notorious reiver, his illegal capture, and subsequent jailbreak from Carlisle prison, aided and abetted by a band of rank outlaws, including Scott’s ancestor Auld Wat Scott of Harden and led by Walter Scott of Buccleuch, Warden of the West Marches. Recently, I had the good fortune to meet with a sword attributed to Willie, and in the collection of Annan Museum. Funded by the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, and supported by the Royal Society of Edinburgh, I co-curated an exhibition, “Swords in the Stories,” at Dumfries and Annan Museum, featuring this iconic cultural item. The paper will consider the construction of the story around the sword, and into ballad, and suggest that this story – with input from contemporary, documented sources – was largely constructed by the imagination of Walter Scott, as an unattributed ballad imitation. He needed the story to retell his Borders, as a central Scott narrative within the tradition of riding ballads.

La destinée des chansons historiques dans la mémoire des communautés francophones d'aujourd'hui

Robert Bouthillier

Les chansons de tradition orale du domaine francophone présentent des caractères narratifs – thèmes universels, usage de clichés, « impersonnalité » des protagonistes, etc. – qui rendent difficile, voire impossible, l'établissement de leurs origines. Il en existe toutefois un certain nombre qui se réfèrent à des événements historiques connus et documentés qui permettent d'affiner les hypothèses de datation et, par conséquent, d'identifier plus précisément les prémisses de leur parcours dans la mémoire collective.

On pourrait dès lors s'interroger sur l'existence ou non d'un « modèle type » d'évolution des chansons dans le temps et l'espace. Des chansons dont l'origine remonte avec certitude aux 16^e et 17^e siècles, selon l'événement ou le personnage auquel elles font référence – par exemple la captivité de François 1^{er} après la défaite de Pavie en 1525, la prise de Rome en 1527, l'exécution du maréchal de Biron en 1602... – ont-elles suivi un parcours identique entre leur création et l'état dans lequel on les a retrouvées dans la mémoire populaire des communautés explorées par les folkloristes des 19^e et 20^e siècles?

Or, aucune de ces chansons « historiques » n'a suivi un parcours identique, et l'examen de quelques cas démontrera que l'établissement d'une loi générale sur les processus d'élaboration qui ont mené d'un éventuel archétype à l'état composite où on les a retrouvées dans la tradition orale relève de l'illusion. Alors que certaines versions issues des collectes de la « période folklorique » ont conservé une trame narrative cohérente, d'autres ont profondément modifié ou perdu les références historiques, les dates, le nom des protagonistes, voire la logique de la chronique qui permettait leur rattachement à l'Histoire dans leur forme archétypale. Dès lors se pose la question du sens: comment et pourquoi des chansons qui ne parlent plus à la perception consciente des communautés qui en sont toujours les porteuses et les interprètes peuvent-elles avoir perduré en dehors de toute référence à l'histoire qui leur a donné naissance?

Sans apporter de réponses définitives à ces questions, cette communication proposera des pistes de réflexion sur le devenir des traditions orales dans la mémoire collective contemporaine, entre disparition annoncée et résurgences étonnantes.

Paper given in French with an English slides.

“Die een ou spook was vet en die ander ou spook was maer:” Ghosts, Memories, and a Ballad

Matilda Burden, University Museum, University of Stellenbosch

With reference to the Call for Papers for this conference this presentation may not be a conventional reflection of “memories” in the sense of “capturing the memories of a people or community,” but it is capturing memories nonetheless; certainly capturing cultural experience and giving “expression to the ‘cultural preoccupations of [...] a given group’.” It is a ghost story in ballad form which reflects the human preoccupation with the supernatural, specifically ghosts.

The invitation for papers can be interpreted in different ways. While it is true that songs often capture memories and in this way form a record of human experience, it is also true that they often capture *events* that can later be remembered by listening to or singing the songs and thus become memories. And then thirdly, songs can just evoke memories that have no relevance to the text or the stories told by the songs. The memories may be connected to the song because of what has happened to the individual while listening to the song in another place and time. This link between songs and memories are discussed extensively by Christopher Bergland in his article “Why do the songs from your past evoke such vivid memories?” It is however not this third instance of memories and songs that is foremost in the discussion in this paper, but rather the second instance: a song created by a singer, telling the story of a particular episode, and then reliving the memories by singing the song.

The paper will investigate the human emotions of fear and anxiety when confronted with the supernatural, and the way of coping with the unknown and incomprehensible by creating stories or songs.

Transmitting Cultural Memory in *Pansori*

Hye-Jin Choi, Mokwon University, South Korea

Pansori is an epic poetry (story song) made around late seventeenth century and early eighteenth century in Korea. Currently, there are 5 pieces of *Pansori* that are passed down; “Chunhyangga,” “Simcheongga,” “Heungbuga,” “Sugungga,” and “Jeokbyeokga.” This *Pansori* is performed for at least three hours to maximum eight hours with one performer and one drummer. *Pansori* which has been passed down for more than three centuries integrates various cultural memories of the medieval time. *Pansori* has no exact creator. Reflecting on demands of community and group culture, the length increased, and musical *Pansori* school developed. Currently, Korean *Pansori* is passed down focusing on five pieces. These pieces contain growth and awakening of ordinary people who lived the time of transition from feudal age to modern times. *Pansori* expresses cultural memories of eighteenth to twentieth centuries in arrangement, description, exaggeration and conversation. This presentation will introduce research about form of transmission of cultural memories, Korean style expression and style of writing.

“Inolus, Inolus, corde mihi solus:” A Latin–Hungarian Prisoner’s Song from the Eighteenth Century

Rumen István Csörsz

One of the most mysterious text families in eighteenth-century Hungarian popular poetry emerges in both Latin and Hungarian version, primarily in Transylvania and later around Debrecen too. The secret hero of the prisoner’s song “*Inolus, Inolus*” is a jailed robber who was sentenced to death. He mourns his own fate leaving a moral for those around him or for posterity. According to some researchers this song is about a Rumanian outlaw leader, Gligore Pinteá (Warrior Pinteá), although his destiny was different: he died in battle. Other tried to identify the vague Armenian references in the text. Reassuring solution has not been found yet. However, one thing is certain: stylishly phrased, not sociographical but rather allegorising prisoner’s song became a fixed pattern of the lament tradition of the Hungarian popular poetry and the folklore. Both its contextual research and its historical poetical analysis can bring us closer to the Hungarian values and typical features of this genre group.

Identity, Genres, and Murder in Three Traditional American Folk Songs

Delia Dattilo

In 1952, anthropologist and film-maker Harry Everett Smith systematised the repertoire of Anglo-American traditional music at his disposal (78-rpm) in the *Anthology of American Folk Music*

(Folkways) in which he classified and organised those records in three 33-rpm volumes (Ballads, Social Music, Songs). Each of them were created following internal rearrangement criteria. In my speech I will discuss the origin, transmission and dissemination of three specific ballads as taken from Smith's *Anthology*: "Omie Wise," as recorded by G. B. Grayson in 1927 (vol. 1); "The Coo Coo Bird" in Clarence Ashley's version of 1929 (vol. 3) and Casey Jones as played by Furry Lewis in 1928 (vol. 1). "Omie Wise" (Roud 447) is a classic murder ballad; the American variant of "The Coo Coo" (or "The Cuckoo," cf. Butterworth 1912: 12 and Sharp 1906, 1917) is an obscure reelaboration of an ancient ballad from the British Isles, that shows how Anglo-Americans perceived their identity (cf. Marcus 1997: 19-20). These two folk songs have found their continuity during the twentieth century discography (cf. Doc Watson, "Omie Wise," 1964, former Pentangle member, Bert Jansch, "Omie Wise," 1971; Bob Dylan, "The Cuckoo Is A Pretty Bird," 1962, Mike Oldfield, "The Cuckoo Song," 1977 just to make some examples). Casey Jones was both a murder ballads and a railroad song (cf. Odum 1925: 208-209; Sandburg 1927: 366-369; Scarborough 1937: 249-250); it became a blues in Furry Lewis's version ("Kassie Jones") and its persistence belongs to the transmission strategies carried on by revivalist of the 50 s and 60 s which caused a migration towards popular music (e.g. The Grateful Dead's version) and popular culture contexts. With regard to "Omie Wise," and in general to the murder ballads that summarise the transmission process of a very specific topos - namely the murder of a young female lover - I will illustrate some examples coming from the Mediterranean areas (among which, Fabrizio De Andrè's "La canzone di Marinella" (The Song of Marinella)).

Memory in the Sephardic Ballads of Mrs Batševa Altarac

Simona Delić, Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Research,
Zagreb

This paper will focus on a manuscript, dated 1983, gifted to me by Mrs Bjanka Auslender, a survivor of the Shoah, now held at the Institute of Ethnology and Folklore in Zagreb, Croatia. The song texts in it are from Mrs Auslender's aunt, Mrs Batševa Altarac, who lived in Mostar during the Second World War. Most of the songs are Serbian and Croatian, but it also contains valuable Sephardic songs and ballads in Judeo-Spanish, one of which is the ballad on the "Warrior Maiden" – "La doncella guerrera".

The manuscript is handwritten in blue ink and partially enumerated, and it seems that the folklore material is noted down in moments of leisure and free time. Many songs are of the *sevdalinka* type, a genre typical of Bosnian traditional communities, focused mainly on love in women's lives, and one that is well suited to Sephardic folk melodies (e.g., "Kad je pođem na bembășu").

This collection is a good example of how the international community and the family are aware of the intrinsic value of individual heritage, and the songs preserved by it, the family, and the broader Jewish Community.

Folk Song as Collective Memory: Historical Circumstances and National Community

Arbnora Dushi, Institute of Albanology, Prishtina

The role of folk song in the evocation of memories is very powerful, in both the collective and the individual plan. Many songs, created for certain and even historical circumstances, remain layered in collective memory. Then, whenever we hear, they revive on us the same emotions and restore our historical memory for events and dates that we have experienced, or just heard about them earlier.

Through analyzing folk songs that shape our collective memory, we are able to discover part of our cultural identity, which together with the shedding of the circumstances when they are created reveal our national character and our unwritten history. Ballads and folk songs preserve our national features formed under certain circumstances, which memory has brought us to this day.

These thoughts will be materialised by taking into consideration an Albanian folk song that can be categorised as a historical ballad, which brings evidence from a historical event that happened during Ottoman period in the Balkans. The Antigone motif, the sister that sacrifices for her brother characterises this song, and also reveals other features of the community's character, such as honor, hospitality, revenge, etc. Its presence in the Albanian oral tradition is very old and long, while many years ago it was also realised in theater as very successful drama.

What should contain a folk song to remain in collective memory? What "feeds" it to stay alive? What is the social power of a song? What is the role of the message that carries a folk song? Can ballad or folk song serve as a testimony for the history? What is the role of folklore in constructing of collective memory?

I will attempt to shed a light on these issues while creating a theoretical framework based on the works of authors Maurice Halbwachs, Jan Vansina, Alessandro Portelli, Paul Thomson, Pascal Boyer, David C. Rubin, Donna A. Buchanan and others.

Ballads as a Repository of Cultural Memory and as Carriers of Canonised National Tradition

Marjetka Golež Kaučič

Based on theoretical premises about cultural, collective, historic, social and individual memory (Halbwachs, Assmann, Bergson, Burke, Juvan), the Slovenian folk ballad heritage has been defined as one of the so-called cultural canons and a medium of collective memory. Ballad texts are seen as traces of past experiences, mentalities, heritages. Ballad could be identified as a prototype genre on which new texts arise and, through processes of canonization, shape cultural identities. I argue that a ballad is a creative image of reality and as such could be perceived as a “vessel” for the memories of historical events (“Pegam in Lambergar/Pegam and Lambergar,” “Kralj Matjaž reši svojo ugrabljeno ženo/King Matthias saves His Kidnapped Wife,” “Turki pred Dunajem/Turcs in the sight of Vienna,” “Laudon/Laudon”), customs (“Krvno maščevanje/Blood Revenge,” “Desetnica/The Tenth Daughter”), elements of law (“Brat ali ljubi/The Brother or the Beloved,” “Obsojena detomorilka/The Condemned Infanticide”), family and gender relations (“Mlada Breda/Young Breda,” “Umor iz ljubosumja/Murder out of Jealousy,” “Lahkoživčeve sanje/A Rake’s Dream”), etc. Ballads can preserve old images of the world, with the latter being reshaped by contemporary socio-cultural contexts when entering literature, folk revival, and new media.

Les phénomènes de réactualisation historique dans les complaintes en langue bretonne entre le 16^e siècle et la Révolution française

Éva Guillorel, Université de Caen Normandie

Les complaintes historiques en langue bretonne (connues sous le nom de *gwerzioù*) forment un riche corpus de chansons recueillies à partir du 19^e siècle – et pour certaines toujours chantées aujourd’hui – mais qui relatent souvent des événements locaux s’étant déroulés entre le 16^e et le 18^e siècle. L’analyse des formes de conservation et de renouvellement du chant aide à comprendre les mécanismes de transmission orale de telles complaintes, entre stabilité et variabilité. Dans cette intervention, l’accent portera en particulier sur les phénomènes de réactualisation des textes par leur inscription dans un contexte historique ultérieur à celui qui leur a donné naissance, ce qui permet de leur donner une nouvelle jeunesse. La période troublée de la Révolution française, particulièrement féconde en renouvellements de chants plus anciens, sera analysée en priorité. Les événements traumatiques qui l’accompagnent sont en effet parfois restés bien ancrés dans les mémoires, en particulier dans les espaces fortement marqués par la guerre civile entre partisans du nouveau régime et défenseurs de l’ordre ancien: des chants initialement composés dans le contexte des guerres de religion du 16^e siècle ou dans celui de soulèvements du début du 18^e siècle sont ainsi réactualisés dans le cadre historique de la période révolutionnaire.

Paper given in French with an English slides.

Danish Occasional Songs as Collections of Family Memories

Lene Halskov Hansen, Danish Folklore Archives, Royal Danish Library, Copenhagen

Occasional songs are personalised songs written for festive occasions in the family, for example birthdays, confirmation parties and weddings. They are also written for special occasions such as anniversaries or celebrations in social, cultural or political societies. Of course, Denmark does not have a monopoly on occasional songs, but we do have a long living tradition for these community songs, often written by family, friends or colleagues. There is no expectation of a high lyrical standard. The text is just expected to fit to the chosen tune, and rhyme – or at least almost rhyme (failures in this regard will often be a part of the entertainment). I will give a historical overview of the tradition and particularly look closer at how family memories and social processes interact in these songs.

The Evolving Role of Folk Song in Russian War Films: The Case of *The Young Guard*

Adrienne M. Harris, Department of Modern Languages and
Cultures, Baylor University

Every year leading up to Victory Day on May 9th, Russian screens, large and small, show feature films, documentaries, and miniseries about World War II, or as the war is known in Russia, the Great Patriotic War. These films have helped unify Russian citizenry and develop patriotism—especially important after the cultural ambiguities of the 1990 s. The year 2015 proved to be notable for war cinematography: four feature films and one twelve-part miniseries premiered in honor of the 70th anniversary of the Soviet victory over Nazi Germany. While all of these cinematic releases retell or engage with well-known narratives, these remakes reflect tensions surrounding the conflict that erupted in Ukraine following years of increasing strained relations with Russia. “The Evolving Role of the Folk Song in Russian War Films: The Case of *The Young Guard*” analyzes the incorporation a Ukrainian folksong into the twelve-part miniseries, *The Young Guard* in juxtaposition to predecessors: Sergei Lialin’s four-part miniseries *The Last Testament* (2006), Sergei Gerasimov’s feature film *The Young Guard* (1948), and Aleksandr Fadeev’s novel (1946, 1951). In every cinematized version of *The Young Guard*, music has played a significant role. The presenter asks how nationality and the performance of nationality evolve in this well known, initially Stalin-era, narrative, which takes place in Krasnodon, Ukraine, in one of the present-day contested regions of Ukraine. Contextualizing her analysis in scholarship related to collective memory, nostalgia, and intertextuality, she argues that in the latest version of *The Young Guard*, the inclusion of Ukrainian folk music problematizes the dichotomy of Ukrainian (cruel fascist collaborators) / Russian (loyal and humane citizens) that the rest of the film advances.

The Hurricane Chronicles: Memory, Environmental Tragedies, and Religious Belief in Extreme Weather Disaster Corridos

María Herrera-Sobek, University of California, Santa Barbara

There is a long tradition since the early twentieth century of memorialising environmental and man-made disasters in Mexican ballads. In this study, I focus on environmental disasters caused by extreme weather conditions such as hurricanes. More specifically, I center my analysis on hurricanes that have devastated the Texas-Mexico borderlands such as hurricanes Beulah, Irma and Harvey. These hurricanes have been immortalised in the lyrics of such corridos as: “Tragedia del Huracán Beulah” (The Hurricane Beulah Tragedy), “Corrido del Huracán Irma – el fin del mundo” (The Ballad of Hurricane Irma—the End of the World), and “El Huracán Harvey” (Hurricane Harvey).

My analysis explores the religious expressions of faith related to hurricanes and the destruction they rain upon the population. The people struck by hurricanes, in their suffering and loss of life and property, seek to find answers and explanations for such environmental disasters in the religious beliefs they hold. The faithful turn to their God for answers regarding the furious and uncontrollable forces unleashed on them; they also wonder if they are responsible for nature’s wrath either through moral failings or not taking care of the earth. For example, the lyrics of the Corrido del Huracán Irma—el fin del mundo” (The Ballad of Hurricane Irma—the End of the World) state:

Huracanes como nunca	Hurricanes like never before
La furia se ha desatado	Their fury has been unleashed
Hay muchos arrepentidos	There are many who have repented
De lo mal que se han portado.	About how badly they have behaved.

(written by Miguel Gastelum, published 6 September 2017)

Singing Bells: First World War Songs in Romanian Tradition

Sabina Ispas

The centenary of the end of the Great War, the War of Nations, First World War, has multiple meanings, expressed concretely in European geopolitics. This event, which occupies an exceptional position in the history of the last century, has led to the appearance in folklore of an epic-lyric category with specific peculiarities, Songs of Military and War.

In the Romanian folk literature, there is an impressive number of such poetic texts. Along with other categories of war memories – personal histories, family histories – and the versified letters of the soldiers, they make up a unitary and rich chapter of war folklore. In the occupied areas there were requisitions of all kinds: clothes, food, animals, objects, etc., especially bronze objects for the manufacture of weapons. Such requisition took place in the village of Poiana Sibiului in Transylvania.

On this sad occasion, the villagers attended a ceremony that reminds of the funeral ritual. The girls composed a song of mourning with which they accompanied the bells on their way to the station where they were climbing to the train to be taken to the metal foundry. They called it “The Song of the Bells.” The text was published in the volume *Songs of War Gathered from the Girls in Poiana Sibiului*, which was printed in 1917.

Together with the texts of the war songs and the letters in the verses of the soldiers, they make up a “chronicle” of the world’s first conflagration

Songs and Identity in Welsh Patagonia

E. Wyn James

Over the centuries there has been a number of attempts, for political, religious, and economic reasons, to create Welsh settlements overseas. The most successful of these, in terms of longevity at least, and perhaps the best known of all Welsh emigration ventures, was the attempt in 1865 to establish a Welsh Settlement in Patagonia, in what is now the Province of Chubut in Argentina, where perhaps as many as 5,000 of the inhabitants still speak Welsh.

The preservation of Welsh identity was central to the Patagonian project, which aimed to create a new Welsh-speaking, self-governing Wales overseas, founded on Christian and democratic principles. From the outset, songs played an important role in fostering the ideals that inspired the founders of the Settlement, ideals that would come progressively under threat as the Argentinian Government increasingly asserted its authority over the Settlement, promoting Argentinian identity and replacing Welsh with Spanish as the medium of education.

This paper will explore the importance of song in nurturing the dream of the founders of the Welsh Settlement in Patagonia, and will concentrate in particular on the work of one of the key figures among the pioneer settlers, namely Richard Jones Berwyn (1837–1917), who wrote the words for the anthem the first group of settlers sang as they set sail from Liverpool in May 1865 and who also wrote one of the most popular of the songs that are a prominent feature of the annual celebrations of the landing of those first settlers in Chubut on 28 July 1865.

“Czech songs should be lyrical, not epic!” Czech ballads and balladry between Romantic Nationalism and academic interest

Petr Janeček, Charles University, Faculty of Arts, Department of Ethnology, Prague, Czech Republic

Since the early days of Romantic Nationalism, genre of ballads enjoyed ambiguous position in Czech culture and society. Heavily influenced by Romantic and nationalistic reinterpretation of Herderian ideas about “Slavic peacebleness” and “Slavic lyricism,” ballads and epic songs in general were, especially in the 19th century, partly perceived as non-Czech (maybe even Germanic) form of popular expression, alien to predominantly lyrical Czech collective poetry. On the other hand, “artificial” literary Romantic ballads inspired by demonological legends and full of supernatural, such as “Toman a lesní panna” (“Toman and the forest fairy”) by František Ladislav Čelakovský (1839) and especially hugely influential *Kytice z pověstí národních* (“A bouquet of Czech folktales”) by Karel Jaromír Erben (1853), enjoyed great success and are very popular even now, inspiring contemporary pop-cultural renditions in movies, comics books and horror stories. Other genres of literary ballads also became popular since the 19th century, especially so-called realistic “social ballad” providing social commentary to industrialization and ballads imitating historical ballads of other nations.

Although many oral folk ballads have been collected on the territory of Czech lands (especially in eastern and south-eastern regions of Moravian Wallachia and Moravian Slovácko) by important early folklorists František Sušil and František Bartoš (especially those dealing with themes of social bandits and wars with the Ottoman Empire), ballads are still predominantly interpreted as “not typically Czech” genre by many folklore ensembles, folk music enthusiasts and even general public.

The paper tries to interpret this peculiar cultural position of balladry in Czech society, both historically and now, when ballads are still partly seen as genre delegated mostly to other cultures and/or artificial music. Major academic works which tried to overcome this notion will be also critically reflected, especially several published volumes of academic index of Czech folk ballads by Marta Šrámková and Oldřich Sirovátka (1970, 1990) and important general works on balladry such as one by Marta Šrámková (1983).

Arbëresh Scanderbeg Songs as an Expression of Collective Memory, Longing, and Belonging

Lumnije Kadriu and Leontina Gega-Musa, Institute of Albanology, Prishtina

Scanderbeg is the main constitutive figure in the collective memory of Arbëreshs in particular and of Albanians in general. As such he also is the main figure in the history of Albanians that inspired many artistic and scholarly works in different disciplines including oral tradition, history, literature, ethnology, etc.

In this paper authors by using as a tool two folk songs in regard to two main events in Scanderbeg's life, namely that of his marriage and his death, will try to elaborate the ways the collective memory is constructed, transmitted and interpreted. First will be elaborated Jeronim De Rada's role in collecting Arbëresh folk songs, including these two, and in raising cultural awareness and identity among Arbëreshs. These two songs will be juxtaposed with the historical facts as described in Harry Hodgkinson's historical book about Scanderbeg, trying to see and compare the folk creativity in folk songs and different ways of interpretation of same historical facts.

The final attempt of this paper will be to theorise on how historical facts, transformed in both oral tradition and scholar interpretations, are used in shaping collective memory-(ies) that forge identity-ies of groups in different temporal and spatial levels, i.e. local, regional, ethnic and national. Considering the fact that they are still continuing to be interpreted, these songs also represent ways of expressing their longing and belonging to a certain common "golden age." How much imagined and/or real is this "age," and to what extent makes it as such the historical figure of Scanderbag will be also discussed throughout the paper.

The Ballad of Dullah Bhatti: Cultural Contestations in Contemporary Punjab, Pakistan

Sara Kazmi, University of Cambridge

“The Ballad of Dullah” captures the contest between the Mughal emperor Akbar and Punjab’s “Robin Hood” figure, Abdullah Bhatti. “Dulle di vaar” chronicles Bhatti’s rebellion in verse, culminating in his capture by Akbar’s army. He is eventually hanged publicly in Lahore, Punjab, the seat of Mughal power in sixteenth-century India. To this day, “Dulle di vaar” remains the most popular oral ballad in Pakistani Punjab. Performed by hereditary mirasi musicians for mostly rural audiences, the ballad offers us a unique insight into alternative cultural memory in Punjab, revealing a history of local resistance against Muslim invaders that subverts the religious and nationalist divide that has characterised the region since its violent partition in 1947. In postcolonial Pakistan, figures such as Dullah Bhatti have increasingly been marginalised in the nationalist narrative in favor of a monolithic Islamic identity, with the state attempting to limit cultural identity and collective memory to the historical interaction with Islam and the Arab world. This paper seeks to break with the silence on subversive folk narratives in Pakistan, by examining contemporary engagements with the ballad of Dullah Bhatti in theatre and film. Combining an analysis of the traditional bardic performance with the re-writing of “Dulle di vaar” by the postcolonial nation-state and Left-wing urban intellectuals, I will explore how the ballad of Dullah Bhatti is reshaped and reused to contest hegemonic framings of postcolonial Punjabi identity.

“That night in Caperquin:” The Agency of Memory in Scottish Ballads

Thomas A. McKean, Elphinstone Institute, University of Aberdeen

Once narrated, the past [...] becomes part of an experience which at least partially enables us to face and cope with what is coming to us [...] an existential ingredient in our strategies for survival.

– W. F. H. Nicolaisen

This presentation will look at the agency of memory and remembering, mental mechanisms that serve diverse functions within the ballad tradition, and which allow characters, and us as listeners, to shade experience from the past into the present, bridging time and distance, and leading us to rehearse the future, as Bill Nicolaisen puts it.

The Child ballads begin famously, and characteristically, *in medias res*, in the middle of the action, with a great deal of backstory unknown, or, perhaps, assumed. I have shown how, in some cases, the backstory is provided by communal cultural knowledge or by explicit narration before the song is sung and during its performance (McKean 2015), but through the device of recall, the backstory can sometimes make an appearance within the body of the song, forming a complex concatenated structure that unfolds in performance and upon apprehension by a listener into a multi-valenced constellation of action and meaning.

I will explore remembered action, recalled relationships, and retained loyalties in relation to the unfolding of the ballad story and its narrative repercussions, looking at how memory serves as a fulcrum, a catalyst, and narrative device.

African American Disaster Songs and Memory: The 1936 Tornado in Tupelo, Mississippi

Luigi Monge

Tragedies and disasters have permeated centuries of American and African American history. The concept of *memory* in its many meanings is the common thread running through all the tragic historical events recounted by African American professional or amateur singers. Memory pervades black topical disaster songs regardless of the singer's mode of expression, moral purpose (if any), and viewpoint. Whenever African American folk blues and gospel singers recall a tragic event from their own viewpoint, they more or less consciously do so also on their community's behalf, thus turning personal memory into collective memory. The different meanings of memory as "remembrance," "retention" and "commemoration" have all contributed to mold black collective memory.

The analysis of some of the most representative lyrics by African American (and for comparative purposes white) singers dealing with prototypical disaster ballads, blues and gospel songs about the 1936 Tupelo, Mississippi, tornado paints a picture from which it is possible to draw general conclusions, such as:

- How these catastrophes affected the black communities;
- Whether these collective tragedies prompted a different reaction in white people and, if so, why;
- What role memory played in recounting and commenting on historical and cultural facts that contributed to shape the African American community.

José Pina e Maribela: A Ballad on a True Suicide Pact

Ana Maria Paiva Morão, CLEPUL/Grupo de Investigação de Tradições Populares Portuguesas, University of Lisbon, Portugal

This paper is a study on how a community memory is perpetuated or re-shaped through a song, in this case a “narrative song” of the Portuguese contemporary oral tradition. “Cantigas narrativas” (literally “narrative song”) are a sub-genre of Oral Traditional Literature (which is transmitted orally, “travels” along generations through time and space, of unknown author) although they differ from other traditional poetic texts as old “romanceiro” (pan-hispanic ballads) or “romances vulgares” (literally “vulgar ballads”) in what concerns origins, versification and rhyme. According to researchers as Dias Marques and Carlos Nogueira, narrative songs have been marginalised relatively to “romances.” This may happen because their subjects usually concern common people, focusing on extraordinary or shocking events like crimes, scandals, disasters or unhappy love stories but also they tend to include moral advises.

Based on twenty four versions of the narrative song “José Pina e Maribela,” collected from oral tradition on several Portuguese regions, since 1967 till 2018, this paper analyse how a certain event is told, focusing on narrative stability and variation, following the studies of Diego Catalán and Bráulio do Nascimento.

On the 13 September 1914 at Sarnadas de Ródão, a very small inland Portuguese village near Tagus river, a boy and a girl from different social-economic classes accomplished a suicide pact because their families disapproved their love. The violent death of these youngsters imprinted a strong impression on the small Portuguese community where it happened and the case was perpetuated on narrative song “José Pina e Maribela” that spread in several versions along the years to other regions of the country.

The paper also refers to the appropriation process of the song by some entities in order to built a regional touristic product.

“Land of Streams and Valleys:” Remembering and Reimagining Place in Traditional Irish Hunting Songs

Kara O’Brien, Irish World Academy, University of Limerick

Ireland’s traditional songs often reflect a deep sense of place, many containing lists of place names or local landmarks as a central feature of the lyrics. These songs serve as orally transmittable maps and ways of remembering a landscape which has changed or been left behind.

Hunting songs lend themselves particularly well to this oral representation of place. The narrative structure of the songs allows the singer and listeners to mentally traverse the landscape along with the hunt—reliving both the excitement of the chase and the details of the places (real or imagined) in which it occurred.

This paper explores different manifestations of “place” in traditional Irish hunting songs: the use of actual landmarks and place names within the lyrics, the use of landscape as a metaphor, and the reimagining and romanticisation of places of the past. Through textual analysis, performance practice, and ethnographic interviews, I will explore the role of Irish hunting songs in preserving a folk memory of local places, and pose questions about the sociopolitical and cultural implications of these depictions. I will also explore the importance of these songs in reinforcing the Irish sense of place (Sheeran 1988), and their function within broader Irish culture (Ó Madagáin 1985).

Remembering the Poor in Serbian and South Slavic Oral Poetry

Sonja Petrović, Faculty of Philology, University of Belgrade

Memory of the poor and the poverty in Serbian and South Slavic oral poetry is linked to contradictory beliefs: poverty is explained by reasons of fate, some offence, sin, misfortune, however the poor (as well as orphans, widows, wretched etc.) are considered to be intermediaries between this world and the next, therefore close to God and the ancestors, and possess certain healing and miraculous powers. These beliefs were intermixed and merged with other ideas about the poor that entered the oral tradition through human experience and everyday life, influenced by the historical, social and economic changes (the poor who do not work or do not wish to contribute to community became a social threat and their lifestyle and use of welfare was disapproved).

In Serbian and South Slavic folk songs and ballads, representations of the poor and poverty are diverse with regard to various aspects, such as the selection of motifs and genre, time, place, context of recording, etc. Representations of the poor and poverty in Serbian and South Slavic oral poetry vary from tragic to comic, from idealistic to ironic, or the subject can be depicted from a moral or realist standpoint. Poverty is usually related to the private life of the person, his or her feelings, moods, but also may reflect attitudes toward family, nature, community, society. Different portrayals of the poor and poverty may reveal personal experiences, collective customary law and practices, way of life, ethical and religious norms, system of values, as well as psychological motivation or background. The special attention will be paid to poverty as a fact of daily life, and to realistic details which make the songs and the characters particularly convincing and vivid.

The Roma Ballad of the Walled-Up Wife: The Nine Brothers

Trajko Petrovski

The ballad motif of the walled-in bride is prominent in Roma folk art. One of the most widespread and beloved Roma songs is the ballad for Master Manol and the bride built into the foundations of the bridge. This motif has an ancient origin, widespread in the folk art of many nations in the world. For this reason, it has been widely studied by researchers, ethnologists, anthropologists, and folklorists. During my field research in 1988 in Macedonia – Skopje, Radovish, Strumica, etc. – I found several ballads featuring the motif.

In the village of Kalugerica, we found the Romanian ballad, “Desuduj phralja phurt kerena” (Twelve Brothers building a bridge), sung by Veiz Veilov, born in 1916. In 1989, I recorded another, longer variant of this ballad in Skopje sung by Jordanka Petrovska born in 1931.

As for the motif itself, it is clear that it comes from the idea that no large building can survive if a human sacrifice is not built into its foundations. It is clear that this belief originates in the distant human past, since, according to ancient beliefs, the human sacrifice is the most valued.

According to Roma belief, every construction, each house has its own *sajbija* (landlord), and is related to today’s custom of giving Roma *kurban* on every building, or during an annual holiday. The poor Roma will slaughter a rooster, and the richer a beaver. Afterwards, the blood is put to soak into the foundation where the head of the sacrificial animal is built-in. This kind of sacrifice is a replacement for human sacrifices of the past. The man in the Romani variants of the ballad for the built-in bride appears to be Manol.

In the Romanian ballad of the built-in bride, the condition for building the bridge is to include a human sacrifice. The workers agree to build in the bride, who will bring lunch the next day. The masters swear that no one will tell their bride at night. But only one of the masters will remain on the promised word, which is Manol, a very famous variant in the Romanian ballad in Macedonia.

“On the grand tour in quest of old ballads:” (Re-)Visiting Blackhouse in the Scottish Borders

Sigrid Rieuwerts, Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz

When Sir Walter Scott edited his *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* in 1802, he went “on the grand tour in quest of old ballads,” including into the valley of the Yarrow, Teviot and Tweed. He returned to Edinburgh, as he said in his letter to George Ellis, dated 17 October 1802, “loaded with the treasures of oral tradition” and this formed the basis of a third volume of his ballad collection.

In my paper, I would like to discuss the ballads Sir Walter Scott received from Blackhouse, the home of the Laidlaw family, in the Parish of Yarrow in Selkirkshire. He visited the farm several times in 1802 and 1803 and met not only William Laidlaw, but also James Hogg and his mother Margaret Laidlaw – all active tradition bearers. These visits and his friendship to William Laidlaw was to have a profound impact on his understanding of the cultural memory of the Scottish Borders in general and his edition of the *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* in particular. By re-visiting the topic of Blackhouse and the Laidlaw-Hogg families, I will examine their contributions to our stock of ballad lore and explore their underlying understanding of memory and oral tradition.

The Broken Token: Recognising and Remembering

Andrew Rouse

There are sufficiently many songs with a “broken motif” for them to be seen as a category or type of song. But to what extent is the idea of two young people splitting an object and keeping half each a declaration of undying love, and how much a very practical means of recognition after a period of separation in a world preceding the camera and lacking (for most) even a portrait of one’s nearest and dearest?

Since the advent of advanced software coupled with heightened security at airports and use of CCTV in crime work, much research has been done and continues on facial (and body) recognition by machines, but comparatively little on the ability (or lack of it) by humans to recognise even those previously close to them after the passing of medium-long periods of time.

The present study was ignited by an event in my own family in the present millennium where upon arrival at their doorstep a son was not recognised by his parents after a space of around 10 years (in the former’s middle age). To what extent is this extreme? Is it possible that the relatively large number of “broken token” folksongs suggests evidence that loss/lack of recognition of others once romantically closely engaged was a “common” or “usual” phenomenon,” or is it maybe just a great theme for a story?

Memory and Formulas in Moravian and Slovakian Traditional Songs

Ondřej Skovajsa, Department of Ethnology, Charles University

The paper will summarise the results of my emerging second PhD dissertation on “Memory and Formulas in Moravian and Slovakian Traditional Songs,” which places the singer’s and singing community’s memory at the center of analysis.

First part of the talk will focus on an armchair textual analysis of selected Moravian and Slovakian songs using the criterion of memory. After briefly discussing the mnemonic role of incremental repetition, apostrophe, parallelism, dialogue, assonance, numbers, length, and genre; the mnemonic role of bodily movement as recorded by scholars (Marcel Jousse, Vladimír Úlehla) will be discussed, and a hypothesis of mental maps will be presented. Attention will also be given to allegorical mnemonic formulae, main traces of communal memory, shaped like pebbles by communal memory, and the value system they represent shall be explored.

Second, the paper will sum up results of a recent field research based in Horná Mariková and Papradno, Slovakia, which takes advantage of comparison of 1961-textual record of Jaroslav Smutný and current 2018 audio recordings. The focus of attention will be the recordings of two now sister-singers, Cecilia (84) and Anna (78) Patáčíkovy. Apart from tracing the variation process, it will explore on the ways the tradition bearers learned their songs, how learning the music corresponds with learning the text, the (absence of) songbooks, how their memory recalls, what it forgets and how it creatively makes up the forgotten; the way they claim some of the traditional songs as their “own,” and how they understand the allegorical mnemonic meanings.

Third, the talk will briefly introduce a digital humanities project www.folksong.eu on whose future development I am a co-worker, and which I use as an analytical tool.

Memory and Aspects of Women's Lives in Korean Narrative Songs

Youngsook Suh, Hannam University, South Korea

This article examines how Korean narrative songs have formed and transmitted the memories and features of women since the Middle Ages. These narrative songs have been created and handed down mainly by women, reconstructing women's specific experiences and memories. Korean narrative songs in traditional society are mostly concerned with the life of a woman in a male-centered patriarchal society. The features of women expressed in these songs show how Korean women recognised their social reality. The features of women in Korean narrative songs are as follows: a woman who suffers from the abuse of family members, a woman who commits suicide because of her husband getting a concubine, and a woman who curses a man who betrayed her. These features of women have been repeated in women's memories and are embodied in narrative songs. This shows women's tragic reality and their perception of reality in Korean traditional society. However, some songs show a sense of resistance to the reality of women through a paradoxical solution, such as the union of husband and wife (or lovers) after death. These songs were released on record and revived as songs of resistance by the popular singers and progressive students who demanded democratization during the era of dictatorship in South Korea.

Emigration as Drama: Personal and Collective Memories in “The Girl of the Waves”

Olimbi Velaj, Albania

Albanian emigration was very dramatic since the fifteenth century, when the Ottomans established definitely in their territories. Emigration was permanent and massive especially in south Albania. As a consequence, male members of families were often abroad, if they were in a certain age. In social frames, emigration was a huge drama, with personal and collective memories often expressed in ballads or folk songs.

This paper considers how “memory” became part of the ballad tradition through the very popular song, “Girl of the Waves,” which describes the faith of a poor, orphan girl. Her lover has gone abroad, and they promised each other that they would meet again and marry one day. The girl is waiting by the seaside, but eventually loses hope and died of sadness. The ballad is based on a real situation, passed down through time, and recorded for the first time in Paris in 1930.

The motif of the ballad is represented across the Mediterranean area, and I will explore how the ballad reflects the personal and collective situations, describing other forms of the song, modern versions with melodies in the end of the twentieth century and the early twenty-first century.

Räuberballaden in der Tschechischen Republik und der Slowakei

Adam Votruba

In der Tschechischen Republik findet man die traditionellen Balladen mit Räuber- und Banditenthematik nur in den östlichen Gebieten, d. h. in den Bergen im Osten von Mähren und Schlesien. Diese Lieder sind mit Balladen in der Slowakei und auch in Polen verwandt. Die Räuberballaden sind daher typisch für die Karpatengebiete dieser drei Staaten. Es gibt fast keine traditionellen Bauernlieder dieser Art westlich der Karpaten. Der Vortrag vergleicht beide Orte aus der Perspektive epischer Lieder und sucht auch nach Verbindungen zu bestimmten Kriminalitätsformen auf dem Land.

Der Historiker Eric Hobsbawm verwendete den Begriff Sozialbandit für die Banditen, die in ihrer Dorfgemeinschaft bleiben und nicht für ihre Tätigkeit hier verurteilt werden. Räuberlieder gibt es in der Tschechischen Republik und in der Slowakei, wo es in der Vergangenheit Sozialbanditen gab. Besonders in den Gebieten, die mit der Schäferkultur und der Bergschafzucht verbunden waren. Diese Kultur beinhaltet auch eine Idealisierung der Räuber, die als Helden gelten. Die Hauptcharaktere der Volkstradition sind zwei Banditen aus dem Anfang des 18. Jahrhunderts – *Juraj Jánošík* aus der Slowakei und *Ondráš z Janovic* aus Schlesien. In den Balladen findet man überhaupt ein negatives Bild von den Räubern, doch auch diese Balladen wurden nur in den mit dem Sozialbanditismus verbundenen Gebieten gesungen.

31 August		
15:00–18:00	Registration	
	Introductions	
18:00–19:00	Petr Janeček	“Czech songs should be lyrical, not epic!” Czech Ballads and Balladry Between Romantic Nationalism and Academic Interest
19:00–19:30	Adam Votruba	Räuberballaden in der Tschechischen Republik und der Slowakei
1 September		
09:00–11:00	History and the Historical	
	Marjetka Golež Kaučič	Ballads as a Repository of Cultural Memory and as Carriers of Canonised National Tradition
	Robert Bouthillier	La destinée des chansons historiques dans la mémoire des communautés francophones d’aujourd’hui
	Lumnije Kadriu and Leontina Gega-Musa	Arbëresh Scanderbeg Songs as an Expression of Collective Memory, Longing, and Belonging
	Arbnora Dushi	Folk Song as Collective Memory: Historical Circumstances and National Community
11:00–11:30	Break	
11:30–13:00		
	Rumen István Csörsz	“Inolus, Inolus, corde mihi solus:” A Latin–Hungarian Prisoner’s Song from the Eighteenth Century
	How Ballads Work	
	Thomas A. McKean	“That night in Caperquin:” The Agency of Memory in Scottish Ballads
	Ondrej Skovajsa	Memory and Formulas in Moravian and Slovakian Traditional Songs
13:00–14:00	Lunch	
14:00–16:00	(Re)Living the Past	
	Valentina Bold	“Swords in the Stories:” The Ballad of Kinmont Willie
	Éva Guillorel	Les phénomènes de réactualisation historique dans les complaintes en langue bretonne entre le 16 ^e siècle et la Révolution française
	Hye-Jin Choi	Transmitting Cultural Memory in <i>Pansori</i>
	Delia Dattilo	Identity, Genres, and Murder in Three Traditional American Folk Songs

16:00–16:30	<i>Break</i>	
16:30–18:00	Matilda Burden	“Die een ou spook was vet en die ander ou spook was maer:” Ghosts, Memories, and a Ballad
	Simona Delić	Memory in the Sephardic Ballads of Mrs Batševa Altarac
	Adrienne M. Harris	The Evolving Role of Folk Song in Russian War Films: The Case of the <i>Young Guard</i>
2 September		
09:00–10:30	<i>Family Matters</i>	
	Lene Halskov Hansen	Danish Occasional Songs as Collections of Family Memories
	Ana Maria Paiva Morão	“José pina e maribela:” A Ballad about a True Suicide Pact
	Andrew Rouse	The Broken Token: Recognising and Remembering
10:30–11:00	<i>Break</i>	
11:00–12:00	Youngsook Suh	Memory and aspects of Women’s Lives in Korean Narrative Songs
	Olimbi Velaj	Emigration as Drama: Personal and Collective Memories in “The Girl of the Waves”
12:00–19:00	<i>Excursion to Kouřim Open Air Museum, with Lunch provided</i>	
3 September		
09:00–11:00		
	<i>Disaster, Violence, Poverty, and War</i>	
	Luigi Monge	African American Disaster Songs and Memory
	María Herrera-Sobek	The Hurricane Chronicles: Memory, Environmental Tragedies, and Religious Belief in Extreme Weather Disaster Corridos
	Sabina Ispas	Singing Bells: First World War Songs in Romanian Tradition
	Sonja Petrović	Remembering the Poor in Serbian and South Slavic Oral Poetry
11:00–11:30	<i>Break</i>	
11:30–13:00	<i>Using Song</i>	
	E. Wyn James	Songs and Identity in Welsh Patagonia
	Sara Kazmi	The Ballad of Dullah Bhatti: Cultural Contestations in Contemporary Punjab, Pakistan
	Ingrid Åkesson	Fictional Past Meets Lived Present: Society, Singers’ experiences, and Song Interpretation

13:00–14:00	<i>Lunch</i>	
14:00–15:00		
	Kara O'Brien	"Land of Streams and Valleys:" Remembering and Reimagining Place in Traditional Irish Hunting Songs
	Trajko Petrovski	The Roma Ballad of the Walled-Up Wife: The Nine Brothers
15:00–16:00	Business Meeting of the KfV – all welcome	
16:00–16:30	<i>Break</i>	
16:30–18:15		
	<i>Ballad Scholarship</i>	
	David Atkinson	Charting the Eighteenth-Century "Old Ballads" in England, c.1730–1780
	Sigrid Rieuwerts	"On the grand tour in quest of old ballads:" (Re-)Visiting Blackhouse in the Scottish Borders
	Teresa Catarella (chair)	Roundtable Discussion
19:30	<i>Conference Dinner</i>	

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CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

31 August

15:00–18:00	Registration
18:00–19:30	Introductions
19:30–	Dinner at restaurant “Vidlický a noze” (drinks included, meals not)

1 September

09:00–11:00	Papers
11:00–11:30	Break
11:30–13:00	Papers
13:00–14:00	Lunch
14:00–16:00	Papers
16:00–16:30	Break
16:30–18:00	Papers
18:30–	Folk music concert (list TBA)

2 September

09:00–10:30	Papers
10:30–11:00	Break
11:00–12:00	Papers
12:00–19:00	Excursion to Kouřim Open Air Museum, with Lunch provided

3 September

09:00–11:00	Papers
11:00–11:30	Break
11:30–13:00	Papers
13:00–14:00	Lunch
14:00–15:00	Papers
15:00–16:00	Business Meeting of the KfV – all welcome
16:00–16:30	Break
16:30–18:15	Papers
19:30–	Conference Dinner at restaurant Kolkovna Savarin

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