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Project title: FROM ARCHAIC RITUAL PROCESSIONS TO MODERN CARNIVALS (IN THE BANAT REGION)

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The project „From archaic ritual processions to modern carnivals in Banat“ is a multidisciplinary project which focuses on the ethnologic/anthropologic/ethnomusicologic/ethnocoreologic/dialect topics related to folk customs and ritual processions in both Serbian and Romanian parts of the Banat region. Both traditional (researched by narration) and modern (researched by observation) models of behavior of mainly Serbian population but also of other ethnic communities living in Banat (Romanians) were researched. The final part of the project activities included a workshop involving preschool children in the making of traditional masks with the help of teachers and students of Preschool Teachers' Training College in Kikinda, Serbia.

Researches were done in villages (Novo Miloševo, Aleksandrovo – Velike Livade, Sanad, Čoka, Grebenac, Vojlovica, Ivanovo) and towns (Kikinda, Pančevo, Bela Crkva, Novi Bečej) of the Serbian part of Banat and in the Serbian communities of Clisura Dunării (Danube Gorge) in the Romanian part of Banat (Stara Moldava and Nova Moldava, Divič, Požežena, Radmina, Mačević), from June to the end of November 2017.

Given the fact that the field work started in June 2017, the materials collected are mostly related to modern carnival spectacles. Project researchers observed carnivals in Pančevo and Bela Crkva (in June) and the festival *Dani ludaje* in Kikinda (in September). In other communities, narratives were collected from narrators of different ages about winter processions of *koledari/korindaši* in the northern parts of Banat amongst Serbian population, about *dodole* processions and about *lazarica* processions. Existing materials collected in the earlier periods, about the masking practice called *fašange*, were tested and confirmed in Grebenac, in a Romanian community, as well as the materials on *maškare* practiced amongst Hungarians in the villages of Vojlovica, Debeljača, Ivanovo and Skorenovac.

Carnivals are still very popular in southern Banat, while in the northern part only certain variants of masked processions called *koledari* are still practiced, and are known today as *korindaši*. Roma women today practice *lazarica* processions and these can be observed in villages near Kikinda (Novo Miloševo). Processions called *dodole*, in which masked young men participated, were practiced in the Romanian part of Banat until the 1970s. New forms of processions of masked participants have become parts of summer carnivals (in Bela Crkva, Pančevo, Vršac). The celebration of Halloween, which is more a spectacle than a ritual, has been registered, but not in a processional form but only as a fun activity of young people wearing masks (Požežena, Belobeška, Divič in Romanian Banat).

When it comes to the so-called „new forms“, it should be said that the organization of carnivals as specifically articulated events can be observed in the activities of travel agencies of local councils. All such events are organized in summer (mostly in June). A distinctive example is the carnival held in Bela Crkva, a unique event organized during summer that can serve as a model of joining two carnivals, in this case, a winter one – *fašange* and a summer one – the flower carnival. It can be concluded that a distancing from the sacral times has happened and the economically more prolific time has been chosen – the month of June. Both Pančevo and Bela Crkva and their carnival organizations are members of the Federation of European Carnival Cities, which enables their lively exchange of carnival productions with other cities in the region and the whole Europe (from Slovenia, Macedonia, Croatia, Bulgaria, Italy, etc.). Children and adults alike participate in the carnival spectacle, preschool and school children, members of dance schools, folklore groups and adults gather around the shared topic of representation.

After the research, it can be concluded that this topic needs to be further explored; mobility of communities has been observed on various levels (collective – schools, dance schools, cultural associations, and individuals) of the organization of masked processions; the young are accepting this way of communication as a specific part of integration and a way to have fun during the year. Introduction of modern carnival rules, the stepping out of the house and into the streets which then become a stage for the carnival spectacle, as in the models existing in Middle, Western and Mediterranean Europe, clearly defined roles of organizers, participants and audience can all contribute to the studying of new interactional relationships in these spectacles.

Traditional processions of *koledari*, preserved to the modern times as *korindaši* in the northern Banat and transferred to children with distinguished interpretative contents deserve special attention and analysis for the sake of suggesting them to be included in the national representative list of intangible cultural heritage.

Gordana Roganović

Throughout the process of defining the topic and applying for the project “From archaic ritual processions to modern carnivals in Banat”, the authors tried to analyze the elements, various contents and forms, as well as possible amalgamations of the different ways of representing archaic and modern forms of performances (analysis of the artistic, theatrical and dramaturgical ideas). A performance that we now call “archaic” is primarily observed through

the narratives originating in the cultural memories of participants. This is the reason why the observation of the events belonging to modern carnival practices represents the most important and the richest segment of the research conducted on the carnivals held annually in the towns of Pančevo, Bela Crkva and Vršac, in the Republic of Serbia. Here it should be added that the newest form of celebration and carnival behavior related to Halloween is becoming more and more popular in these areas.

Being based on the preliminary results and the materials collected, this short representation can only be sufficient for pointing out several basic notions related to musical, poetic and dance characteristics, as well as the characteristics of authorized choreographic forms – especially when it comes to modern carnival performances in the towns listed above.

When it comes to older forms and archaic ritual processions, older narrators offered partial or incomplete information mainly about the processions of *korindaši* (*koledari*), *fašange*, and *dodole*. It has been noted that in modern practices, especially in urban areas, people tend to celebrate Christmas Eve and Christmas in the churches where the children are given presents. In this way, the original function of visiting other homes and reciting specific songs as older practices instructed is indirectly being changed. To a certain extent, congratulating of Christmas Eve and Christmas is still practiced in accordance with the traditional performance models. Primarily, this implies the traditional way of teaching and learning the children's "rhymes" recited by *korindaši*, within the family, but we also witness such genre forms being introduced into formal education, thanks to the efforts of preschool and elementary teachers. We should keep in mind that *fašange*, as the dominant procession in Southern Banat still actively exists and is accompanied by music (most often accordions) and the members of the groups most often sing somewhat vulgar songs known as *bećarci*. In the evening, a dance is organized, for which professional musicians are hired. Even though there are different forms in the repertoire (folk, pop and in rare occasions traditional folk music), in both rural and urban communities the dominant dance patterns are the dances known in ethnochoreological literature as different types of traditional Serbian dance *kolo*.

Based on the analysis of the materials on modern carnival events, it can be concluded that the authors of choreographies find their inspiration in various and very different music genres. In the performances of dance companies, presence of different age groups was noticed: carnivals involve very young children (about four, by estimation), elementary schoolchildren, teenagers, as well as people over sixty. Surely, this causes differences among the artistic conceptions, artistic quality and movement esthetics. The question of practice and composition in choreography is not necessarily related to the esthetic experience, technical requirements or its artistic value, but with its social function of being good fun.

Carnivals also gather groups of professional or semi-professional dancers (involved in competitions) and these are the participants identified by their choosing of specific dance genres and therefore different structures required by the standards of the given dance genre. Still, besides the genre diversification in dance compositions, there have been observed certain characteristics and elements we can also find in traditional practices (formations, patterns, use of space, and such).

Kristina Planjanin Simić

Various forms of vocal and instrumental music making in Banat as part of winter ritual processions and of modern carnivals

Banat is a multinational region in which different cultures and numerous nations live together in permanent contact, and under similar social, historical and economic conditions. Due to mutual influence and adjustment processes, the taking over or accepting certain types of melodies between the nations has been noted as early as in the second half of the 20th century. Authors who have analyzed this topic (Fracile, 1989; Rakočević, 2002) have noticed that Banat's vocal musical heritage contains archaic songs sung during winter ritual processions and that these songs were most often shaped on infrapentatonic sequences. These simple structures have long lost their ritual meaning and today exist only in the memories of older residents, whereas the existence of simple melodies and poems similar to counting rhymes declaimed by *korindaši*, most often children, is very common. During the latest researches within the field of the phenomenon of carnival processions, it has been noted that playback is the most commonly used form, and there are only sporadic examples of instrumental music making by smaller chamber groups and the use of instruments such as the clarinet. Another interesting characteristic we have noticed in several modern carnivals is the organization of a competition for children solo singers as the opportunity for the most talented children in the region to show their vocal, interpretative abilities with the support of orchestras, modern composers and song writers.

Srbislava Pavlov

Workshop *MASKS AND MASKING – ARCHAIC RITUAL MASKS SEEN THROUGH THE EYES OF PRESCHOOL CHILDREN*

Two workshops with children attending preparatory preschool program in kindergarten „Bambi“ in Kikinda were held on November 23rd and 24th, 2017 as part of the project „From archaic ritual processions to modern carnivals in Banat“ supported by the Ministry of culture and information of the Republic of Serbia. On the first day, the children made masks, and on the second day, they made marker drawings of their masks.

***The structure of the workshop *Masks and masking – Archaic ritual masks seen through the eyes of preschool children**¹**

Goal(s): To introduce children to national customs, beliefs and rituals and provide them with elementary explanations of their meanings related to masks and masking, as well as to create a positive attitude towards the spiritual wealth of our people(s); develop creativity and

¹ Author of the workshop: Srbislava Pavlov; workshop facilitators: students Isidora Cvetićanin, Milica Mirković, Dragana Nedimović

imagination; develop eye-hand coordination and fine motor skills; to encourage positive mood.

Materials needed: cardboard cutouts of ram and bull; pieces of artificial leather and fur, wool, rough fabric, corduroy, velvet, bark of trees, glue, scissors, rubber band.

Introductory part: Children sit in a semi-circle. The facilitator(s) introduce themselves and introduce the children to the topic of the workshop. They start a conversation about masks, encouraging children to talk by asking the following questions:

- Have you ever put on a mask?
- When?
- What was your mask like?
- Who made your mask? Did you help?
- Did you feel good wearing your mask? Why?
- Today people mask themselves for fun, so they would feel good. But, a long time ago, people used to mask themselves in order to defend themselves from the dark forces and scare them away. They usually wore scary masks of animals – most often a ram or a bull, they dressed in furry clothes, banged and rang large bells made for animals and yelled UUU, UUU... *Following the story, the facilitator(s) put their furry robes and masks on, and ring their bells.*
- Would you like to see what the masks were like then? *The facilitators show the children pictures of ritual masks and comment on them.*
- Would you like us to try and make our own masks now?

Central part: All the materials needed are prepared and on the worktables. Children glue small pieces of fabric on the cardboard cutouts of animals. While the children work, the facilitator(s) start and try to maintain spontaneous conversation so as to encourage the children to express themselves as creatively as possible.

Final part: Children and the facilitators form a carnival procession and walk around the room showing their masks and singing the song "Life is a masquerade" (written and composed for the Kikinda children choir „Čuperak“) and dance to the music.

Evaluation: The materials prepared for the first workshop were very challenging for preschoolers, and so the products of the workshop were very creative and imaginative. Children showed great interest in making archaic ritual masks and in the majority of cases, after a child had finished working on a mask, they would ask to make another one, which best indicates their interest in this activity.

Dragana Radovanović

The linguistic aspect of ritual masked processions in Banat (*fašange* – Southern Banat)

The word *fašanga/fašange* is of German origin and, according to Petar Skok, is a synonym for the word *poklade* < from German Vachnacht that with suffix –ing > Fasching and means *before Lenten period* (with confirmations dating from 18th century found in Croatian language). It is clear that the lexeme was adopted by both Serbian and Romanian peoples in Vojvodina from Germans together with accepting the ritual. Except the ritual title *fašange* or *fašanke* (singular form is rarer), none of the other derivatives listed by Skok have been found in Serbian Banat.

The lexeme is also recorded in the Dictionary of Serbian Spoken Language, with different phonetic forms depending on the territory: thus *fašanjke* are found in Krashovans (Serbian dialects in Romania), *fašange* in certain parts of Srem and Bačka, and simply *fašanka* in other Serbian villages. In the definition provided in this dictionary *fašanka* (plural form) is defined as *lorfa*, called informally *maškare*, *mačkare*, *fašanke* and *lorfe*.

All of the meanings listed above can also be found in the Dictionary of Serbian Academy of Sciences and Art, under the entry *vašange/vašanke* with referral to *fašanke*: 1. Joyful masquerade parties organized in carnivals (from Timok; interestingly enough, this word is not included in Timok's dictionary by Jakša Dinić), 2. Masked persons, masquerades – on a broader territory (Slavonia – word collection, and recorded in the ethnic group *Bunjevci* by Erdeljanović). Dictionary of Serbian Academy of Sciences and Art firstly refers the word *lorfu* to the entry *larva*, under 1, where mask appears as the second possible meaning, qualified as obsolete; and then as the second possible meaning, qualified as figurative and pejorative, the meaning we also find in the Dictionary of Serbian Spoken Language under the second possible meaning – „woman wearing excessive makeup“, originating in Srem. Dictionary of Serbian Academy of Sciences and Art also registers the verb *lorfati* – to put on excessive makeup.

In the settlements we studied, both in the Serbian and in the Romanian parts of Banat, in both Serbian and Romanian population, we have recorded *fašanke/fašange*, the lexeme used to name the whole ritual: *we followed those fašange at carnivals / at the time of fašange, they transform themselves in those lorfe* (from latin word *larva* → mask). In the Dictionary of Serbian Spoken Language, *lorfa* is defined as „masked participant in the Eastern procession“, and (2), qualified as derogatory, as „a female wearing excessive makeup“. Therefore, different dictionaries define the lexeme *lorfa* differently – according to the Dictionary of Serbian Academy of Sciences and Art it is a mask (which is the original translation from Latin), and the Dictionary of Serbian Spoken Language defines it, in accordance with its sources from the dialect space, as a masked participant in the Eastern procession. From the materials we bring from Clisura Dunării (Danube Gorge) in the Romanian part of Banat, it can be seen that *lorfa* also denotes a masked participant in these processions.

Carnival ritual in the villages we visited always includes the following processions: ritual wedding procession, *mečke* and funeral, and they are practiced in this specific order. The difference is that in Romanian villages these events start on Sunday and continue during Monday and Tuesday - today, but in the past they lasted eight days. In Serbian villages, these

processions are held during three days, and the first day is different in different villages. For example, in Divič (Romanian Banat), the processions start on Sunday (the same as in Romanian communities); and then in Belobreška and Stara Moldava, we learned that the ritual started on the first day of Eastern Lenten (Monday). On an example found in Romanian Banat, among Serbian population, it is described like this: *First, on Monday, the wedding procession starts. The bride and groom dress up and with them come the best man, musicians, and wedding guests. The girl masks as the groom, and the boy dresses up as the bride and thus they walk around the village singing...* The next procession, called *mečke*, happens on Tuesday (in most villages) or on Thursday (in Belobreška, for example – *on Monday, Thursday and Saturday, fašanke are made, on Tuesday and Friday they are not made*). (Settlements in the Danube Gorge)

This is how our informers describe the procession called *mečke*: *people dress in fur coats and carry those cowbells (percussion instruments are an important prop for scaring away the dark forces), they paint their faces black and tie each other with a string and so they walk along the streets. On Saturday, the last procession is held – the funeral: On Saturday, the funeral is made. They carry the dead man on a stretcher, the procession and the priest follow them, people kiss him, pour wine on him, the candle is carried, old women dress in black and mourn, men wear the traditional apparel. This is done in order to stop those Todorovci to come on Saturday.* (Divič)

When analyzing these complex customs we should take into account that masking and wearing masks during the critical, liminal stage in the traditional culture model, on the shift from winter to spring (White Sunday) was an exclusively male privilege. Women never participated in those processions. Still, today we find proof that women, at least when it comes to our informers (all of them are well over 70), have participated in *fašange* since early youth: *some women masked themselves in lorfe, to look like ladies; and then they make me up as a princess, I had a blouse, a wide skirt with those wires and feathers and a hat, and then they put those curtains over me...* It is the same with children: *we made them look like babies, I put them diapers on...* (Belobreška)

All of the participants use different textiles to cover themselves (*they are covered beyond recognition, by bed linens, white, and curtains, they put on their hats and bee hives, and what not*). Almost every masked participant also covers their face in order to remain unknown during visiting other people's houses.

Vilma Niškanović

One aspect of the multidisciplinary project „From archaic ritual processions to modern carnivals in Banat“ was the defining of the topic *Ritual clothes in masked processions*, i.e. ethnological interpretation of the clothes worn by participants in traditional

ritual processions practiced in Banat today, as well as the costumes in modern masked processions in carnivals held in Pančevo and Bela Crkva. Researches started in June 2017, during the modern carnival manifestations held in Pančevo and Bela Crkva, and they were continued during the summer and autumn of 2017 when spoken testimonies were collected about *archaic* ritual processions practiced during winter and spring months.

From looking into the materials collected we can conclude that the most part of it relates to the contemporary form of the carnival spectacles that were observed, and the lesser part to the traditional ritual processions which the researchers analyzed through narratives. The latter processions ask for further analysis and observation on the field during the cycle of winter and spring customs. The existing and the collected materials testify that traditional ritual clothing is basically ordinary clothes that is applied and adjusted with the aim of disguising. Ritual clothes are collected into a costume that differs from the ordinary way of dress. In these occasions, people wear old, worn out pieces of traditional clothes, sometimes inside out, and wear various masks on their faces, or they simply blacken their faces with ashes.

Participants in ritual processions called *koledari/korindaši*, *fašange*, *maškare*, and such, used to wear parts of traditional clothes and pieces of household textile items, elements that each village household had (towels, curtains, bed linens, bed covers). The process of changes happening in the traditional society can also be noted in the today's composition and look of ritual clothes, masks and props: people intervene by replacing or adding certain parts (work clothes, underwear, sewn costumes, ready-made costumes and masks, etc.).

Modern-day carnivals in Pančevo and Bela Crkva are held, thanks to their cultural heritage, under the umbrella organization – Federation of European Carnival Cities. As members of this organization, they invest significant efforts to satisfy the criteria and demands of mass audience, various contents and programs which last for several days. Local tourist agencies and councils organize and mobilize for this purpose different citizens' groups, institutions and individuals: preschool institutions, schools, folklore associations, dance schools, associations and individuals from both urban and rural parts. In the processions, we can see all kinds of costumes, masks and allegorical dances inspired to some extent by traditional culture (*dodole*), but mainly by literary or cartoon characters, video-game heroes and characters seen in world-known carnivals.

It can also be noted that the audience, mostly children, and the visitors of the carnival spectacles in Pančevo and Bela Crkva also take part in masking (they wear modern masks, hair decorations, parts of clothes and suitable makeup).

The traditional model of ritual processions and their clothes are partly incorporated in the carnival spectacles in Pančevo and Bela Crkva. In this way, a certain level of integration and mutual connectedness has been offered of the individual and the local community who, in their participation in a ritual, learn that they belong to the global world, in parallel to their own cultural identity and territory.