

FOLK SONG TODAY: BETWEEN FUNCTION AND AESTHETICS

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*The paper deals with the question of the classification of the folk song today. With regard to its lost original context, has the folk song really become no more than an esthetic artifact, or have new circumstances reconstructed the context and thus added a new functional dimension to the folk song? In addition, the author discusses the new communication channels used to reintegrate the folk song in its traditional environment based on the example of the song "Riba Faronika nosi svet" (Faronika the Fish Bears the World).
Keywords: folklore, folklorism, re-creation, Faronika the Fish, function, aesthetics.*

*Razprava se loteva vprašanja o tem, v katero semantično polje uvrščamo ljudsko pesem danes. Ali je zaradi izgube izvirnega konteksta res samo še estetsko dejstvo ali pa zaradi novih okoliščin, ki rekonstruirajo sam kontekst, ponovno lahko opazujemo tudi njeno funkcijsko razsežnost? Avtorica se v razpravi sprašuje tudi o novih komunikacijskih kanalih, po katerih ljudska pesem (na primeru pesmi Riba Faronika nosi svet) ponovno vstopa v tradicionalno okolje.
Ključne besede: ljudska pesem, folklor, folklorizem, poustvarjanje, Riba Faronika, funkcija, estetika.*

INTRODUCTION

The folk song in its natural context is always closely related to a custom, ceremony, or ritual and is integrated into the everyday and festive lives of its carriers [Kumer 1996: 25]. Its original semantic field is therefore related to its role and to the social dimension of people's lives. Its aesthetic dimension, however, is related to the song's text and texture, and prevails as soon as the song's context disappears. The aesthetic dimension plays a particularly important role when the circumstances incorporating the song in the social structure of people's lives change. At that point, the song is rendered into an aesthetic artifact in either literature or music, or as a syncretic combination of text and melody. According to Gusiew, folklore is an indivisible unity of the aesthetic and life functions [Gusiew 1974: 102].

This paper presents the song breaking with tradition, as well as its revival by conscious transfer of the lost tradition to the present day. Serving as an example are field recordings and inquiries about the well-known mythological narrative song "Riba Faronika nosi svet" (Faronika the Fish Bears the World). Such transfer is observed in several contemporary phenomena:

- a) The authentic folk song (Faronika the Fish);
- b) A "folk" adaptation (by the Juhana "folk trio");
- c) Re-creation (by Beti Jenko and Bogdana Herman);
- d) Artistic adaptation (adaptation for choir by Marjan Gabrijelčič and Patrick Quaggiato);

- e) Literarization/folklorization (prose: Pregelj (*Plebanus Joannes*), Gustav Strniša (*Riba Faronika* – Faronika the Fish), Saša Vuga (*Na rožnatem hrbtu faronike* – On Faronika's Pink Back); poetry: Edvard Kocbek, Veno Taufer, Milan Vincetič, Jože Snoj; play: Strniša (*Samorog* – The Unicorn) [Golež Kaučič 2003: 138–142];
- f) Renditions in painting (France Mihelič, Boštjan Kavčič, and others).¹

The most prominent dimensions of the folk song, defining it as such, are its function and esthetics.

THE FUNCTIONAL DIMENSION

The aesthetic role of the folk song is not of primary importance; much more important are its functional elements in the social environment of the song, a kind of social structure of the song in all its instances of a living context [Goljevšček 1982; Terseglav 1987]. The song's distinctive function enables different realizations of the song in the changing life circumstances of its creator. In other words, the song can serve several functions: a narrative folk song may be a children's song (e.g., "Povodni mož" – The River Man), a ritual song (e.g., a well-known Epiphany carol from the Karst region, in which the ballad about Mary and the boatman holds central position), a dance song (e.g., "Pobeledo polje z ovcama" – Field White with Sheep, in which three women rip out a man's heart), or a wake song (e.g., a ballad about the death of a bride on her wedding day, about a widower at his wife's grave, and about the death of a woman who married far away from home), depending on the setting and the occasion on which it was sung. Its esthetic category is always the same,

¹ The intertextual string of Faronika the Fish consists of a folk song serving as a template and several metatexts: Ivan Pregelj [*Plebanus Joannes*, 1920: prose], Gustav Strniša [*Riba Faronika* – Faronika the Fish, 1930: prose]; Edvard Kocbek ["Cerkev v Slovenskih goricah" – A Church in Slovenske gorice, 1977: poetry], Gregor Strniša [*Samorog* – The Unicorn, 1967: play], Veno Taufer [a, b: "Riba Faronika" – Faronika the Fish, 1975; "Plesi in pesmi vodenjakov" – Dances of the Waterlings, 1986: poetry, in which the presence of Faronika the Fish is explicit: "je kaj trden tak konec sveta, ki obrnjen se ne spozna – does it stand firm it will end the world, turning can't see itself"], Milan Vincetič ["Riba Faronika" – Faronika the Fish, 1989: poetry], Jože Snoj ["svéto" – holy, 1989: poetry], Saša Vuga [*Na rožnatem hrbtu faronike* – On Faronika's Pink Back, 1999: prose], and perhaps also a radio play for children by Mojca Jan [*Riba Faronika* – Faronika the Fish, 1998]. The last poem based on the folk song is Aleš Šteger's "Pisoar" [Urinal 2005]. The intertextual string could be further expanded with intermedial renditions of Faronika the Fish in paintings. An interesting painting of it was made by Boštjan Kavčič [*skulpture* – sculptures, Tolmin, 2001], who based it on the first variant published in Štrekelj's collection as well as on records made by Tončka Marolt in 1952. Although the source is not given, her records, contaminated by Murovec's records, appear on the artist's web site. Below the song's lyrics is a commentary, probably the artist's impression of the poem or of the mythological creature in it [<http://www.bostjankavcic.mine.nu/2001/FISH%20FARONIKA/fish.html>]. The academy-trained sculptor Marko Pogačnik also mentions Faronika the Fish on his website: "A tale about Faronika the fish, which bears the world on its back, is an invaluable myth on the making of the World and cyclical metamorphoses of the Earth. It has been preserved in the upper region of the Soča River," [<http://obala.net/index.php?show=news&action=news&id=1041>].

whereas its functional category changes. It was the context and the functional integration into customs and habits (e.g., collective work or wakes for the dead) that enabled many songs to be preserved to the present day [Golež Kaučič 2002: 526; Kumer 1960: 139].

The functional dimension of a folk song is related to the song's context; that is, to all its characteristics beyond the song's structure. A song is more than just a literary artifact; according to Kumer, it is "one of the sources providing insight into the material culture, customs, emotions, and thought of man" [Kumer 1975: 44]. Does the song remain functional only as long as the tradition survives? Or does the song's function change together with the restored customs or habits, after the original tradition has been forgotten, even though it becomes an instance of folklorism? As a consequence, two courses of the tradition's life can be observed. The first is the continuous tradition and the other the restored tradition. In some areas in Slovenia, songs are still part of traditional customs, which means that tradition has never been broken with. Examples of this phenomenon are usually the rituals, customs, or habits that have been preserved through primary traditional elements and without interruptions, notwithstanding the changes in the social circumstances (including political circumstances). Of course, such changes influence the context of the song but they do not destroy it. Among the songs that have been preserved are mostly those that have always been part of a long-lasting, deep-rooted tradition, such as various carols sung on Midsummer Eve ("Bog daj, Bog daj dober večer" – May God Give You a Good Evening: Krašnji Vrh, Bela krajina [Kumer 1995: 209]), St. George's Day ("Al dober večer vam Bog daj" – God Give You a Good Evening: A, 1985: no. 150, [Kumer 1995: 169] and Boštanj, Lower Carniola – no. 153 [Kumer 1985: 172], and St. Florian's Day ("Hvaljen bodi Jezus Kristus" – Praised Be Jesus Christ Č: Precetinci, no. 178). This song is accompanied by the following comment: "The carol was still sung in 1984, when the recording was made. On the day of the feast, 18-year-old boys were admitted to the boys' company. In the ceremony, boys knelt and a thorny crown was placed on their heads". This comment reveals the presence of a ritual initiation [Kumer 1995: 199]. The other course is the revival or reconstruction of a tradition, an instance of positive folklorism, which can be observed in the revival of certain customs or rituals, or even in the revival of certain songs without any explicit connectedness to their social context. This is presented below, through analysis of several field recordings.

THE AESTHETICAL DIMENSION

What, then, is the aesthetical dimension of a song, sometimes referred to as its inner structure, the literary and musical dimension that never changes but always remains the same? A narrative song is always narrative by type, even when functioning as a wake song. However, it can change from a true wake song to a pure narrative, a ballad that has lost its functional dimension (e.g., the ballad "Uboj na vasovanju" – Murder During A Visit to His Sweetheart). The process of losing a contextual function is the opposite of its acquisition,

which was discussed above. During this process, the song's musical image changes as well. The folk song is not a fossilized structure – which is why its wording or dialect can change in the course of transfer from one carrier to another. A lyrical love song can never be something other than lyrical, but can be sung on various occasions that consequently define its different roles. Love songs used to be sung both during wooing as well as on several other occasions, which is why they might have been more susceptible to innovative approaches than narrative songs. The aesthetical dimension of a song is treated as a syncretic unity of its text and texture (melody). The triad of text, texture, and context, as defined by American folklorist Alan Dundes [1965], connects all three elements to a whole, and only all three together can bring a folk song to life. In the past, this triadic dimension confused literary historians, ethnologists, and musicologists alike, which is why the first only researched the song as a literary text, ethnologists were only interested in its context and carrier, and musicologists only looked at its musical image. This means they all took just one or two of the song's essential ingredients and treated them in isolation.

When any part of the triad is missing, it could be a sign that the song is losing its natural environment in which it played a certain role, and is becoming a mere literal artifact without texture, or is entering the world of contemporary artistic modifications. It is then that its aesthetical dimension prevails. Each folk song originally has a functional-poetic dimension; it becomes an aesthetical work of art only after its function, or the context in which the song played a certain role, has died away. Even then, it does not become a purely lexical artifact, but remains a syncretic unity, preserving only its poetic dimension. Therefore, a song is an “artistic category” when the process of its death has started or when it has been excluded from the social context as a folklore phenomenon [Goljevšček 1982: 181; Stanonik 2001: 321]. Its social death is in turn its artistic birth, through which it often changes its audience as well.

FOLKLORE, IMITATION OF FOLKLORE, FOLKLORISM, CARRIER, RE-CREATOR

The folk song today is regarded as a social and artistic artifact existing in a changed contextual setting that influences the esthetics as well as the role of the folk song.

In the past, the context of the folk song [Bausinger 1987: 44; Stanonik 2001: 293–324] consisted of the social circumstances in which it was sung; where and when it was sung, what the occasion was, and who the performer and carrier were (the carrier was also the receiver at the same time). In different contextual settings, the song's function was different. This means that, as Dan Ben-Amos has said, the origination, performance, and dissemination of the song were influenced by its social and probably also its cultural context. [Ben-Amos 1981: 15–30]. The song's contemporary context depends on people's changing lives and historical, social, and cultural circumstances [Toelken 1981: 39, 40, 43, 49], and is also

heavily influenced by the re-creator of the song. The re-creator actively tries to connect the song to a certain contextual environment, has a certain attitude towards it (and expresses it as well), and has an individual esthetic taste that may or may not be compatible with the tradition and the understanding of folklore. The re-creator also changes the way the song is performed and, more importantly, may deny the value of its original interpretation, regarding it as too archaic, obsolete, or even boring. This may imply that the song is given a new meaning in the changed context or that its new meaning joins the old one. In such a context, the song's old life – about which Kumer writes that “people's enthusiasm for singing has always found opportunities to sing” – is something that is now historically, culturally, and socially different because nowadays there are fewer opportunities for spontaneous singing and more opportunities to sing to the audience [Kumer 1975: 43]. Apart from the live song tradition, many music groups have sprung up recently, calling themselves folk singers, only that they do not wish to sing only to their local audience but to the audience in general. Such folk singers believe that their present-day audience is different from the original one, and therefore they feel the need to adapt folk songs according to their own and their audience's tastes. They change the length of the lyrics, condense the text, adapt the melody, try to integrate the song into a new cultural context, and seek to express themselves individually. What is more, they sometimes even fake folk phenomena and add certain elements to songs that otherwise do not belong to folklore at all. They believe their re-creation has a higher esthetic value, although many attempts in this direction end up as “fakelore” (faked folklore), an expression coined by the American folklorist Richard Dorson [1950]. The process could also be called negative folklorism, which, in scientific terms, denotes the pejorative treatment of folklore. The song's context changes according to the circumstances under which the song is performed; it could be for pure pleasure, in closed family circles, on the microphone, in certain events, etc. Each new contextual circumstance changes the rendition of the song. Can a revived ritual, custom, or tradition reintegrate the song into the custom and consequently regain the song's primary function? Or is it just folklorism because a revival of something lost can be nothing but folklorism? When dealing with this issue, it must be borne in mind that folklorism can be either positive or negative, depending on its entertainment and commercialized motives or a true desire to reconstruct the past in order to bring back a part of our cultural tradition or restore our cultural memory. Regardless of how many characteristics are included in the restoration process, it always remains a simulation of a custom or ritual. Having said that, there are significant differences among various creators; folklorism as simulation and folklorism as restoration of a custom also varies greatly in different parts of Slovenia. In this new context, the folk song loses its improvisational character and spontaneity as well as the possibility of constant creation of new variants. Folk singers learn, rehearse, and alter the song in order to satisfy the taste that the mass audience acquired from the media. In such an environment, the folk song does not function in its original form. It is instead an archaic remnant of the past or its imitation unless it is re-interpreted. The folklorist Stanonik wrote:

Folklore is an imitation of originals or of adapted documents taken from real life. They usually rely on forms that have become extinct and can only be found in the archives or artifacts. The third type of manifestation of folklorism is shown by the efforts of those that wish to protect the existing folklore phenomena in their natural environment in order to keep them alive or to develop them. [Stanonik 1990: 22; Burszta 1969: 9]

The imitation of folklore has many different forms; folk singers imitate folk song as a part of their local area's traditional past, but they also change it and participate in the creative process. Unless they are aware of the folk song's characteristics, not settling for mere production, they wish to "complement" it with a contemporary, usually artificial manner of singing. An instance of folklore imitation thus becomes folklorism. There are at least three types of folklore imitation that revitalize folklore: re-creation, musical adaptation, and literarization. These processes bring the song to new re-creational, musical, and literary spheres in a popular way and interpret it as the performers wish. Unless it is commercialized, re-creation has the best revitalizing effect, whereas musical adaptation and literarization of the folk song already belong to "high culture" and therefore transform the folklore to a greater extent. As already mentioned, all these processes include tradition into our modern lives. An especially important difference is that singers no longer wish to sing to themselves, but to perform to a wider audience. This means that the audience is no longer a group of active listeners, but becomes a group of passive followers that no longer participate in singing but only listen to the performance. The singing event is therefore bereft of the essential element of folk singing: the participation of all people present. In folklorism,² singers that present themselves as folk musicians only imitate the choir or artificial renditions of folk songs. If singers follow folk tradition and avoid making changes according to their personal tastes or taste adopted from the media instead, it enables them to restore, revitalize, and preserve folk songs. In this way the songs can serve their cultural function – mostly artistic,³ but also with a preserving and educational function.

The new customs and rituals into which a song has been re-integrated as an integral part belong to a social reality that believes in the value of tradition in present times and restores it accordingly. Positive folklorism enables a part of tradition to be restored in the

² A typical definition of folklorism has been presented by Mirko Ramovš:

Folklorism appears when folk tradition has become extinct or is no longer alive as such and does not develop naturally. Folklorism is always an external intervention in a tradition because it inspires the tradition with new life. It stems from the wish to preserve a tradition as the awareness of values, and the importance of the tradition becomes stronger. Because a tradition is in this way subject to many negative influences that distort it and decrease its value, folklorism normally has a negative connotation, usually overlooking its positive influences. [Ramovš 1988: 215]

³ Stanonik defines five functions of literary folklorism: patriotic, cultural, media, tourist and commercial [Stanonik 1990: 26–28; 1992: 678–680].

right way and be presented as our heritage, contributing to the restoration of our cultural memory without deforming it in the process.⁴

FARONIKA THE FISH BETWEEN LIVE FOLKLORE AND FOLKLORISM

At the beginning of 2004, the Institute of Ethnomusicology was informed that the well-known mythological song “Riba Faronika nosi svet” [Faronika the Fish Bears the World, Štrekelj 1898: 492–494, SLP I/20] was still sung and the tradition of folk singing still alive. Because the Institute had no sound recordings of the song, a field recording session in Podmelec was organized in May 2004. It was soon established that the folk song in Podmelec is no longer sung “in the old way” but as a folk adaptation. “Faronika the Fish,” first written down in Podmelec in the Tolmin area, used to be a well-known folk song in the area and was reportedly sung by a folk singer from the village who, unfortunately, had already died. The Institute’s staff visited Danijela Rejec in order to meet three singers, aged 65, 63, and 35 (born in 1944, 1947, and 1970). The youngest, Danijela Rejec, was the leader of an ensemble that called themselves Tercet Juhana and strived to take folk singing to the level of artistic re-creation. To achieve this aim they used part singing, changes in dynamics and tempo, and giving the pitch with a whistle.⁵ They sang by ear and their repertoire consisted of all sorts of folk songs and even composed songs. They had learned how to sing in choirs and had taken singing lessons, which was noticeable in their singing, especially when they sang folk songs. Danijela (born 1970) commented that folk songs were boring and all sung in the same way. This is why they chose to sing “Faronika the Fish” polyphonically, which they had adapted by ear, and did not take into account the characteristics of the folk song. Although they were taught the song by their parents, mostly their mothers, they no longer wished to sing it in the folk fashion. The learning process and re-creation of the song are typical, and the singers said they did it because they did not wish to sing “so that it is all out of tune and that it doesn’t sound nice!” What happened to Faronika the Fish is very interesting and characteristic of the present day. The singers learned the song because they were asked to perform in dialect, six months later, for an event at the Tolmin primary school. The singers learned that Bogdana Herman had recorded the song and found her CD. Research indicates that they were probably talking about the CD *Z glasbo skozi čas*:

⁴ We can still sing carols, or celebrate St. George’s Day or the birds’ wedding, but does the song in such simulations of the past really serve the same function as it used to? When carols were sung in the past, it was usually for existential reasons – for example, to get something to eat and survive the winter. Carol-singing was rich in strict ritual patterns. In environments familiar with tradition, carols can be a full reconstruction of the past, some sort of folklorism in the form of performative activity (e.g., carol-singing in Šentjernej), or they can just be a social event in which the original context and purpose are excluded, presenting the ritual in a completely different social context as a loose reconstruction or imitation performed for entertainment purposes (e.g., carol-singing at the SRC SASA).

⁵ See the minutes of 23 November 2001.

program poslušanja za 7. razred osnovne šole (With Music through Time: Listening Material for Grade 7), published together with a handbook for teachers by Breda Oblak (DZS, CD1, no. 9). The song is sung by Beti Jenko, who used to be a member of the folk ensemble Trutamora Slovenica, and the recording on the CD was taken from the Archives of Radio Slovenia [DZS 1997]. The lyrics and melody of the song in the textbook were clearly taken from the SLP I, written down by Tončka Marolt, but the source is not given. The singers then said they found the first line of the song and its melody on the Internet, which could not be verified in the research. They took the rest of the lyrics from the first volume of Štrekelj's SNP, the first variant written down in Podmelec. Danijela's daughter brought the CD from school. The singers recorded the polyphonic song on tape and the singer that sings the third voice took it home with her and "practiced." They learned the lyrics from Štrekelj's collection, variant no. 493, which had been written down by Kokošar. The order of the first two lines in this variant is reversed because, instead of Jesus swimming after the fish, the fish swims after Jesus.⁶ This variant is not in dialect but no. 492 is, which is why they used both variants, taking the first two stanzas from the second variant, then continuing with the first one, which is written in more distinctive dialect. They ended the song with the second variant again. We may therefore speak of some sort of contamination of the lyrics sung with Marolt's melody, a fact the singers did not know. Because Danijela said her daughter brought the CD from school, we could assume Beti Jenko's voice was mistaken for Bogdana Herman's. The singers first sang the song in three voices and then repeated it one more time at our request, this time in unison, in the old, folk way. When singing in unison they made mistakes, but the flow of the song was smooth, the text was at the foreground, and the repetition worked well.

Riba Faronika

Podmelec, Primorska

Rubato, $\text{♩} = \text{cca. } 66$

Ri- ba pa mo- rji. pla- wa, ri - ba Fa - ro - ni - ka, Je - zus zanjo - per pla - wa, pa
mor - ja gla - ba - čin. O, le ča ki, ča - ki ri - ba, ri - ba Fa ro - ni - ka, te
bo - ma ki - upra - ša - li, kak se na sveč ga - di?

Figure 1: Faraonika the Fish (GNI M 31. 5. 2005).

⁶ See the note to the second variant of "Faronika the Fish," Valens Vodušek, SLP I/20/2.

Riba Faronika - harmonized

Podmelec, Primorska

Rubato, ♩ = cca. 66

Ri- ba po mö - rju pla-wa, ri - ba Fa-ro-ni - ka, Je - zus za njo per pla-wa, pa

mor-ja glo-ba - čin. O, le ča-ki, ča-ki ri - ba, ri - ba Fa-ro-ni - ka, te

bo - mo ki - vpra - ša - li, kak se na svet ga - di?

Figure 2: Faraonika the Fish – Harmonized (GNI M 31. 5. 2005).

A cultural function can be observed in their singing, which is esthetic on the one hand and educational and revitalizing on the other. However, because the singers could still sing the song in unison, because it is still in their auditory memory, it could be claimed that their interpretation is a case of positive, not negative folklorism. Their esthetic goals for something “higher” and more artistic prevailed over their original wish to sing authentic folk songs. In this case, the esthetic dimension outweighed its functional counterpart, although the singers somehow wished to redefine the folk song and used re-creational processes in order to return its important social position in their local community. The singer’s esthetic horizon, heavily influenced by choir singing and interpretation criteria experienced from the media, influenced their adaptation of folk material. Typical of such an attitude is the statement made by the youngest singer, saying they “don’t like folk songs because they are uninteresting” and that the melody does not change in all the 12 stanzas. In addition, they believed the taste of the audience had changed. The singers said: “nobody would listen to us if we sang the old way”.

The singers clearly believed that interpretation, finding individual expression and creation, was the most important thing. According to them, the song as sung in folk tradition lacked sensibility and was therefore “empty.” They believed the lyrics were not expressive enough unless they varied the tempo and dynamics, paused at the end of the verse, and changed the volume of their voices. They wanted to dramatize the lyrics, which brings us to an important conclusion: they realized the lyrics in narrative songs were more important than the melody.⁷ In all three examples, the melody and the singing manner were subject

⁷ The same song is also sung by Bogdana Herman who, in spite of her own interpretation and re-creation, had a good ear for authentic folk singing and felt no need to change the original dynamics much. Her-

to changes, whereas the lyrics remained the same, fossilized. The only change in the lyrics occurred when the singers used the variant that had the more distinctive dialect. A detailed comparison of transcriptions of all renditions of *Faronika the Fish* mentioned at the beginning of the paper, taking into consideration both the melody and text, would show what changes the song is going through today.

The carriers used several communication channels to revive folk tradition: the folk tradition is still stored in their auditory memory (memory of authentic folk singing of an individual song), published collections of folk songs, a sound carrier on which a contemporary interpretation of the song is recorded, and the World Wide Web, which makes it possible to search for all kinds of information. The song has preserved its message in meaning and content (the singers said the song was prophetic), and the singing of the song to the public played the role of conservation of its cultural and traditional value.

“*Faronika the Fish*” is a folk song, heavily loaded with meaning that is a matter of the past as far as live authentic tradition is concerned. However, its reconstructions and artistic adaptations relate to the past cultural memory that attaches its audience to their tradition, although some innovations might be questionable. The singers from Podmelec reconstructed the song by using their knowledge of the folk song and their attitude towards the song’s esthetic dimension. Because they disliked some essential elements of the song, they changed its musical image and reinterpreted it for a function different from the original one. They performed in front of a passive audience, not an active one. The cultural (revitalizing) and performative functions of the song are now its social functions, whereas its esthetic function has become central because the song is not taken directly from their tradition but was brought back to cultural life by the singers after it had become extinct. The song now functions as a literary and revival artifact in the very environment where it originated.

CONCLUSION

The folk song today is on the one hand an archival relic of the past, enabling preservation of authentic creative currents in Slovenia through authentic field recordings. On the other hand, it is subject to esthetic and non-esthetic transformations and commercialization, serving as an object for creative or quasi-creative transformations. Its original function has been preserved only where the song is still part of customs and rituals, where the tradition has not been broken with, or where customs have been revived in an appropriate way

man used Kokošar’s records of the lyrics and probably Marolt’s records of the melody. Tončka Marolt’s records were also used by the male choir *Komorni moški zbor Celje* [title of the collection: *Musica noster amor*, Ljubljana, 1996]. The adaptation by Marjan Gabrijelčič, performed by the choir *Komorni zbor Nova Gorica* [from concert programs, 1999–2003] shows a completely new musical adaptation of the song which, paradoxically, follows the wishes of esthetic expression of the singers from Podmelec in an artistic way. Gabrijelčič worked on the variant written by Tončka Marolt in Podmelec when sung by Jožef Murovec. The folk melody is intertwined with artistic adaptation, but is still easily identifiable.

and thus reconstruct the song as an integral part of a custom. Apart from this, the song is increasingly perceived only as a syncretic unity of text and texture, becoming a literal or musical artifact. In such conditions, the song assumes different roles, either literary or musical. When it reaches a wide audience, it primarily plays an entertainment role. There is nothing wrong with the entertainment character of the song until the transformation processes that belong to negative folklorism become too widespread. An interesting conclusion is that musical transformations are quite radical in contemporary revival phenomena, whereas the lyrics remain unchanged most of the time, almost fossilized.

Due to its mythological dimension, prophecy, complex contents, and a relatively complex melody, the changes that “Faronika the Fish” has undergone were relatively minor. For the same reasons and due to the fact that no authentic sound recordings of the song exist, it has not become an object of massive transformation. In spite of all this, the song has been reintegrated in the folk tradition through contemporary communication channels. It now only has an aesthetical dimension but no remnant of the functional dimension that used to prevail. Nonetheless, the song’s reconstruction has its own cultural and identity dimensions.

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LJUDSKA PESEM DANES: MED FUNKCIJO IN ESTETIKO

Referat se loteva vprašanja o tem, v katero semantično polje uvrščamo ljudsko pesem danes. Ljudska pesem je v svojem naravnem kontekstu vedno povezana z obredom, šego ali navado, njeno osnovno semantično polje je povezano z njeno vlogo oziroma njeno družbeno vključenostjo v življenje ljudi, njena estetska razsežnost pa je povezana s teksturo in tekstom, ki pa sta poučarjena tisti trenutek, ko kontekst pesmi izgine. Avtorica predstavi šest različnih zavestnih prenosov ljudskega v sodobnost: a) izvirna pesem, b) »ljudska« priredba, c) poustvarjalna izvedba, č) umetniška priredba, d) literarizacija/folklorizacija, e) likovna upodobitev. V ljudskem pesništvu estetska vloga ni primarna, bolj pomembni so vsi njeni elementi, ki znotraj posameznega družbenega prostora, v katerem pesem živi, učinkujejo s svojo funkcijsko razsežnostjo, ki je neke vrste družbena struktura pesmi v vsakokratnem življenjskem kontekstu. Da je funkcija pri ljudski pesmi primarna, estetska pa sekundarna, ponazori s primeri nekaterih pripovednih pesmi, ki so v vsakokrat drugačnem kontekstu pridobili tudi različne vloge: npr. pripovedna pesem Povodni mož je lahko pesem otroku, balada o vdovcu na ženinem grobu je lahko mrliška pesem idr. Govori o vprašanju neprekinjene in prekinjene tradicije, ki je pomembno za ugotavljanje funkcije posamezne pesmi. Nato se sprašuje o estetski razsežnosti ljudske pesmi, ki je notranja struktura pesmi, ali njena literarna in glasbena razsežnost, ki je vedno enaka in se nikoli ne spreminja. Pesem je »umetniška kategorija« takrat, ko se pričanja proces njene smrti, ali ko je kot folklorni pojav, izločena iz družbenega konteksta, ko iz triade tekst, tekstura in kontekst izpade kontekst. Naslednje poglavje je posvečeno vprašanju folklore, imitaciji folklore, folklorizmu in njenemu nosilcu in poustvarjalcu. Ljudska pesem naj bi tudi danes nastopala kot družbeno in kot umetniško dejstvo, v spremenjenih kontekstualnih okvirih, ki nato spreminjajo tako njeno estetiko kot njeno vlogo. Kontekst pesmi v sodobnem času je odvisen od spreminjajočih se življenjskih, zgodovinskih, socialnih in kulturnih okoliščin, močno pa tudi od samega poustvarjalca pesmi. Ta se zelo aktivno vključuje v samo kontekstualno okolje, ima odnos do pesmi, ki ga tudi izrazi, ima svoj estetski okus, ki ni nujno združljiv s tradicijo, oziroma z razumevanjem folklore, poustvarjalec spreminja načine izvajanja pesmi in celo zanika vrednost izvirnega izvajanja pesmi. Zato lahko govorimo o negativnem in pozitivnem folklorizmu, kjer je slednji pozitiven takrat, kadar gre za rekonstrukcijo preteklosti iz želje po oživljanju in ohranitvi ljudskega izročila zaradi krepitve zavesti o vrednosti le-tega. Izogibanje vnašanja lastnega ali okusa, ki so ga privzgojili mediji, pa pri pevcih in poustvarjalcih omogočajo obnavljanje, oživljanje in ohranjanje ljudskih pesmi ter tako opravljajo kulturno funkcijo – predvsem umetniško pa tudi ohranjevalno in poučevalno. Avtorica nato aplicira teoretična spoznanja na sodobno terensko raziskavo o razmerju med funkcijo in estetiko na primeru bajeslovne pesmi Riba Faronika, posnete leta 2004, v kraju prvega zapisa le-te, v Podmelcu na Primorskem. Ugotavlja, da so se pesem tri pevke, ki se imenujejo Tercet Juhana naučile s pomočjo sodobnih komunikacijskih sredstev: zgoščenka za 7. razred osnovne šole, kjer je pesem izvajala poustvarjalka Beti Jenko, skupaj s priročnikom za učitelje, v katerem je bila objavljena tudi celotna transkripcija pesmi, tiskana zbirka ljudskih pesmi (Karel Štrekelj, Slovenske narodne pesmi) svetovni splet ter avdi-

tivni spomin. Pevke iz Podmelca so pesem rekonstruirale s pomočjo vedenja o ljudski pesmi in njihovega lastnega odnosa do njene estetske razsežnosti, ki ji v nekaterih njenih bistvenih elementih niso bile naklonjene, zato so ji spremenile njeno glasbeno podobo in jo interpretirale za drugačno funkcijo, kot je bila izvirna, za nastop pred publiko. Kulturna (revitalizacijska) in performativa funkcija sta torej družbeni funkciji te pesmi, estetska funkcija pa je tako ali tako v ospredju, saj pesem ni vzeta neposredno iz tradicije, pač pa so jo ob procesu »njene smrt«, že kot literarno in preporodno dejstvo, pevke ponovno spravile v t. i. kulturni obtok v ozkem lokalnem prostoru, v katerem je pesem izvorno nastala. V sklepu pa avtorica ugotavlja, da je ljudska pesem danes na eni strani arhivski relikv preteklosti, ki prek izvirnih terenskih posnetkov omogoča ohranitev vitalnih ustvarjalnih tokov slovenskega naroda, po drugi pa je podvržena estetskim in neestetskim transformacijam. Njena prvotna funkcija je ohranjena le tam, kjer je še del šeg ali obredov, kjer ni bilo prekinitev s tradicijo, ali tam, kjer se šege na pravi način obnavljajo in z njimi rekonstruirajo tudi samo pesem, ki je del nje. Drugače pa je med ljudmi vse bolj navzoča le v svoji sinkretični celoti teksta in texture, kot književno ali glasbeno dejstvo.

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