Music from the Island of Krk, Yugoslavia

Recorded by Wolfgang and Dagmar Laade
SIDE 1

DIAPHONIC SONGS
1. Dobrinj je bili grad (Dobrinj is a white town)
   Sung by Dobrinj group (1:05)
2. Lošinjanke moje drage mile (Lošinj women so dear)
   Ivan Gršković & Ivan Conić ( :40)
3. Zrasla mi mrvica (The Mulberry Tree)
   Ivan Gršković & Ivan Conić (1:30)
4. Bolčica pa Mari (The Little Sore)
   Ivan Jacominić & Marijan Tabako ( :41)
5. Cviće mi polje spokrilo (Flowers Have Covered the Field)
   Mixed choir from Polje (1:00)
6. Oj Marice, Marice (Hey, Mara, Mara)
   Marija Malcetić & three men ( :42)
7. Vozili se bratač i sestrica
   Ivan Cubranić, Mate Ivanović & Anton Dminić (2:27)
8. Hitala je Mari pesčića va more (Mary threw pebbles into the sea)
   Ivan Cubranić, Mate Ivanović & Anton Dminić (1:15)
9. Izvela me Divorjka (The girl led the water)
   Ivan Cubranić, Mate Ivanović & Anton Dminić (1:52)

SIDE 2

WEDDING & GLAGOLITHIC MASS
1. Sophile Instrumental
   Vinko Trubić & Ivan Drjanić (3:30)
2. Vocal Song
   Young man & woman at wedding ( :31)
3. Mantinjada Instrumental
   Wedding guests (2:53)
4. Tanec Instrumental
   Dance with wedding guests (2:05)
5. Extract from a “Glagolithic” Mass (8:45)
   a. Pristup: Pravedan jesi, gospodi (Choir)
   b. Gospodi pomiluj (Choir)
   c. Intonation, and Slava va višnih bogu (Priest & choir)
6. Vesper sequence (4:00) (Priest & women’s choir)
   a. Bože va pomć moju vanni
   b. Rojstro slave nešteje Devi Marije
   c. Reče Gospod

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Recorded by Wolfgang and Dagmar Laade
DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ARE INSIDE POCKET

COVER DESIGN BY RONALD CLYNE

ETHNIC FOLKWAYS RECORDS FE 4060
THE DIAPHONIC MUSIC OF THE ISLAND OF KRK, YUGOSLAVIA

Recorded in 1961 on the island of Krk by Wolfgang and Dagmar Laade. Notes and photographs by Wolfgang Laade. Song texts transcribed by Veselka Bašić.

Krk is the largest of the Yugoslavian islands and with about 20,000 inhabitants the densest populated. Located in the Quarnero, i.e. the bay of Rijeka, the east of the Istrian peninsula, it is also the northernmost island off the Yugoslavian coast. Originally settled by the Illyrian-Celtic Liburnians it became part of the Roman province of Liburnia in the year 35 B.C. and had two important Roman towns: Curici in the Roman province of Liburnia in the year 35 B.C. and had two important Roman towns: Curci (now the city of Krk) and Plimphenium, the latter also called Vicentina. From Curci the Slavic name Krk was derived and from Vicentina the Italian, Veglia. Roman ruins have mainly been excavated around the present town of Osoraj. In 624-36 A.D. the Croats came across the Danube and immigrated the mainland of Croatia. They also took possession of the island and held it for four centuries. In the year 1,000 it was conquered by the Venetians. Under the reign of the Croatian king Petar Krešimir (1058-78) Krk fell back to the Croats and became a center of the flourishing Croatian national church. This church propagated the use of the own Slavic language in the liturgy and thus Krk became also a focus of vehement feuds between the local and the "Latin" clergy. Despite many pontifical bans the Slavic services were continued, and bishopric Krk (already founded in the 6th century) now established new monasteries and convents (the finest still existing are St. Buzon near Plavatište) and developed an active mission work. Moreover, the Croats have always tried to play off against each other Byzantium and Rome remaining vague between the two. Thus, in order to bring Krk (and the Croatian coast) under its influence Rome found itself forced to certain concessions and finally tolerated the use of Glagolitic writing and the Slavic language. When, in 1097, the kingdom of Croatia, and in 1105-11 also Dalmatia and the coast, were conquered by the Hungarian King Koloman also Krk fell into his hands. After his death Venice took the island again. The republic encroached the island to Dalmatia, ancestor of the mighty Frankopani family. The Francopani soon extended their power, and owing to the location of the lands in their possession had to recognize the Pope as well as the Hungarian-Croatian king. Pressed by high tributes to Venice the noble family sought closer relation with the latter, and by the treaty of Zara (1357) Krk and the whole of Dalmatia were given to King Ladislo I. of Pest. At that time the Francopani held the highest ranks as Slovenian, Croatian and Dalmatian barons and even the Pope recognized their successful activity (1250). When inner discord shattered the power of the family in the latter part of the 15th century Hungarian king Matthias Corvinus took the island by surprise. The Francopani called Venice for help. The Venetians came, took the island for themselves and interred Prince Frankopan. This event is still a subject of Krkian songs. Krkian music remains Venetian until the decline of the republic (1797). For some years (1809-13) it belonged to the French and for the next century, until 1918, to the Hapsburg monarchy. Since World War I, it forms part of the Yugoslavian republic of Croatia and was only for a brief period in World War II occupied by the Italians.

The island is montaneous and barren, the stony gardens near the villages yielding scarce produce. Only the western coast is fertile and maize and other cereals, olives, grapes, figs and tomatoes are grown in large quantities. There is some sheep-breeding. But many villages live entirely on fishing. The lack of industries has led to a great number of men working on the Yugoslavian mainland and overseas. Strangely enough, all the old men whom I made the recordings at Vrbnik had spent many years working in Australia and still spoke some English. Seeking for work away from home seems to be typical of many Mediterranean island populations.

For considerable time Krk has been the center of Slavic Christianity and Glagolitic literature. Glagolica is the name of one of the alphabets derived from the Greek in which the oldest Slavic church literature was written (the other being Cyrillic). It was still in use in the 16th and 17th centuries. Many Glagolitic documents have survived in Krk and are now held by libraries at Vrbnik (Viterovik's library) and Krk (Algarot's library) and in some monasteries. Apart from church writings they include chronicles and political and juridical documents. Sv. Ludivj church at the little village of Jurin dvor near Banja houses the oldest existing Slavic written document, a stone-engraved writing, the so-called "Bačanska ploča" (tablet of Bača) from the year 1100. Other treasures of the island are the Ptolemaic atlas and an old gisak at the acoustic library of the small island of Kolišnjak and Kocher's atlas from 1718 at Vaterovik's library at Vrbnik.

Music

One of the characteristic features of Krk is emphasized in the music. The duets in seconds (or octaves) as they are similarly found in isolated pockets in the Dalmatian mountains and parts of Bosnia. Thus the performance of a song needs at least two singers, and the music follows the same principle if sung by a larger group. The tonal range of the songs is mostly very narrow spanning a third, a fourth or a fifth of the "Istrian scale". There are lyrical songs and dance songs the latter often imitating the music of the figure of Krkian which is unvariably played in pairs and in the same diapason which characterizes the singing.

All songs contain many meaningless syllables, an "oj" frequently beginning or ending a song. Often whole refrains are built on groups of syllables like "kominom" or "trajnina". In neighboring Istria these songs are therefore called tarakanci and the singing of such songs tarakanci or taralanci (Sar., p.275). The songs were equally often sung by voices of the same kind (only men, only women) as by contrasting voices (man and woman); in one instance two men were singing, one with normal voice and the other with falsetto. If there are more than two singers the lower part is normally doubled or multiplied. The end of a song or verse is often marked by an upward glissando on the syllable "oj".

The town of Krk with the castle of the Frankopani.
Melody and text belong together. The singers at Vrbnik explained that each tune has only one particular text, new texts are never made to existing tunes. This sounds somewhat astonishing as the small store of notes of the melodies seems to allow little variation for the composing of new tunes.

The diatonic songs sung in seconds, minor thirds and unisons form the only existing traditional repertoire of vocal music of the island. It is still an unbroken tradition, even with the young generation, although singing in thirds or sixths has filtered in with modern popular Dalmatian songs.

The main and most typical musical instrument of the island is the sopile, a shawm. It is always played in pairs the smaller and higher-pitched leading instrument (vela sopile - small sopile) being accompanied by the larger, low-pitched one (vela sopile - big sopile). Both have six finger holes and below these some additional holes for special tuning. Sopile music is played in the same diapason which characterizes the vocal music, with sevenths, sixths and octaves. Like the songs also the sopile music mostly end with an upward glissando. The sopile duets are mostly heard during weddings and other village festivities where they are indispensable.

The main and most typical musical instrument of the island is the sopile, a long, conical oboe. It is always played in pairs in the same instrument in a higher pitch than the other. Both have six finger holes and below these some additional holes for special tuning. The sopile music is played in the same diapason which characterizes the vocal music: with seconds and unisons. Like the songs also the sopile music mostly end with an upward glissando. The sopile duets are mostly heard during weddings and other village festivities where they are indispensable.

The dvojnic or dvojkinic is a double recorder. Its right tube has four, its left tube three finger holes. It is played in the usual Krkian diapason with many seconds. The instrument, still so popular on the mainland, has become rare in Krk.

The bagpipe, called mislice (once also named calabrese) is said to have existed on the island but has entirely disappeared.

The Mass

In the village churches of the island of Krk the Mass is usually celebrated in the Old Slavic language the written form of which is the Glagolica. Masses in this language are also held in certain mainland churches, e.g. at Senj, Zadar, Bišnik and Dubrovnik. On the island of Krk it was found that in the city of Krk (predominantly Italian settlement of Venetian times) the choral parts were usually sung in thirds or sixths, the solo parts of the liturgy being Gregorian chant. In the village of Polje the choral parts were also sung in thirds but here this meant clearly a modern development. Old Slavic singing in seconds is still best preserved in the churches of Omisalj (see Kouchminder) and Dobrinj (where our recordings were made).

It is worth mentioning that the singing in thirds in Krk and Polje was always performed by church choirs composed of women only while at Dobrinj the old Slavic parts of the liturgy (ordinary, etc.) were performed by the men alternating with the women (without repetitions of the text) and the whole congregation singing.

The ordinary parts of the liturgy alternate with church songs of manifold origin, songs which can be compared with the English hymns, the German chorals and the French canticles. Some are folk tunes with Christian texts added to them. Some are special church compositions. But even art songs have found their way into the church without the singers always being aware of that fact. Thus, the tune of C.M. von Weber's 'Erlkönig', 'from Weise' from 'Der Freischütz' (probably introduced during the Napoleonic wars) was used for one of the songs recorded at the church of Polje. Upon my question the priests called it a 'modern folk song'. All these songs differ markedly from the older, traditional parts of the liturgy, and they are invariably sung in thirds by a women's choir. From these songs (or from the more recent popular Dalmatian songs) the singing in thirds or sixths may have filtered into the ordinary parts (like in the recorded mass at Polje) which now are also sung by the women's choir. It was, however, told that the traditional tunes of the ordinary portions are retained although now performed so differently. Erotic intonation in these parts seemed to indicate the state of change which is still going on.

Suggested Reading:


The Recordings

(The song texts were translated by Veselka Ražič)

SIDE 1: DIAPHRAGM SONGS

Band 1. "Dobrinj je bili grad" (Dobrinj is a white town). Sung by Dobrinj. Sung by a group of men and women at Dobrinj.

Dobrinj je bili grad, poludjelo je otoka.
Hut se nemo ne neg pribok potoka.
Nutru su divjache, sve su crna oka.
There the girls have black eyes.

Band 2. "Losinjanke moje drage mile" (Losinj women are dear). Sung by Ivan Grčković (aged 50) and Ivan Cončić (aged 71) from Polje. Losinj is one of the southern Quamerian islands.

Losinjanke moje drage mile (sung: mi-(mi)-le)
Ka noci se murića (sung: muri-(mi)-le).
Brozo če vam druge moda partii,
Da čote vi kapelin nositi (sung: nosi-(mi)-t).
Translation:

Losinj women so dear and handsome You are dressed in silk.
Before long the new vogue will come to you
And you will wear hats.

Band 3: "Zrala mi murića" (The Mulberry Tree). Sung by the same singers.

Zrala mi murića (sung: muri-(mi)-ca)
Ze Amelić pred dvorcem,
Ma noci se murića (sung: muri-(mi)-ca)
Ma bioje i rumane.
Translation:

There is a mulberry tree In Amie's courtyard.
It has mulberries on it
White ones and red ones.

Band 4: "Bolšica pa Mari" (The Little Sore). Sung by Ivan Jakmečić (aged 23) and Marijan Tabako (aged 25), from Polje.

Bolšica pa Mari, bolšica boluje,
The little sore is aching,
Nina ni naj maj,
Nina ni naj maj.

Bolšica boluje,
The little sore is aching.
Nina ni naj maj,
Nina ni naj maj.

Bolšica boluje i draga šaljaje,
And the dear girl is greeted.
Nina ni naj maj,
Nina ni naj maj.

Bolšica boluje i draga šaljaje,
And the dear girl is greeted.
And the dear girl is greeted.
Band 5: "Cvitoč mi polje spokrilo" ("Flowers Have Covered the Field"). Sung by a mixed choir from Polje.

Cvitoč mi polje spokrilo
samo mi stazica ostala. Flowers have covered
the field
Only the path has
remained.

Band 6: "Oj, Mariće, Mariće" (Hey, Mara, Mara"). Dance song: taranjanke for kolo dance. Sung by
Marija Maločić and three men from Dobrinj.

(The first part is not recorded)

Oj, Mariće, Mariće
Zaš te majka, kara
Da ne primaš dara
Od malog tornara
Jer je u tornara vjera
Nevjera, pa će te premariti
Frelipa Marić,
(recorded from here)

Oj, Mari jenu curb od is godina,
A kao ne će tebe prelipa Marić
Oj, Mariće, Mariće
Nijela golubice
Za koga ti goljfin
Tvogol bijelo lice
Ni ga goljfin zate
Htiti za drugog (dragoc-jec)
Koji sum pravo
Telju sro da mog
Pov gao te vil
Glave slaviti niti
Ču na tvoju glavu
Krunu postavit.
Ni-na-mi-ne-na
Mala moja oj....

Band 7: "Vozili se bratra i sestrica". Sung by Ivan
Cvitačević (age 77), Nete Ivanović (age 72), and
Anton Đanić (age 71), all from Vrbnik. The
upper part is sung by one singer only, the
lower part is doubled.

Vozili se brata i sestrica
Oj vozili se brata i sestrica
Oj lapod bila grada Biogradu
Bratci zapava sestra povogava
Sestra brata iglicom budila
Stani brate Biograd ti gori.
Oja ninena nenina.
Neka gori da bi izgorio,
Tri sam lijepu u njen služio.
Oja ninena nenina.
Pro lito za oružje svijalo
Drugo lito za vesna konjica.
Oj treće lito za malu divojku.

Band 9. "Irvela me divojku" ("The girl led the water").
Sung by the same singers.

Irvela mi divojku, oj,
Iz kemena mi vodu, vodu.
Mirule dragule (sung: dra-(nananana)-gule)
Don mi dobrovič moj.

Ona mi ju irvela
Ka Vrbniku mi gradu, gradu.
Mirule dragule (like above)
Don mi dobrovič moj.

Translation:
The girl has led the water
Out of the rock.
Mirule drage,
My dearie, give me.

She has led it
To the town of Vrbnik.
Mirule drage... etc.

SIDE II: WEDDING AND CULTRAL MUSIC

Band 1. The following recordings were made during a
wedding at Gostinjac, on September 9, 1961. The music of
the sopile was mainly recorded. The sopile players are
Vinko Trubić (aged 59) from Gostinjac, and Ivan
Đanić (aged 49) from Vrbnik. Trubić is a well-known
musician. He has taken part in several folk music
festivals and also performed abroad.

This recording is an extract of the many bridal serenades
played during the procession to the church. The two
musicians led the procession and were followed by the
bride and her brother. The footsteps on the pebbly
road can be heard.

Band 2. Every now and then some people in the pro-
cession struck up a song, like the young man and woman
heard in this selection.

Band 3. Mantiniada, a very distinct type of music
played in front of the church while the couple is being
married and congratulated in the church. The music is
played three times. After the third time it develops
into a march accompanying a circular procession of the
couple and all guests on the square in front of the
church. Here only the first portion of the mantiniada
is given: this whole part is played three times with
considerable variation in the upper part. The upper
part is clearly solfistic while the lower is accompan-
iment based on a chromatic ascent and descent.

Band 4. After the circular procession the people have
proceeded to the bridegroom's house. The musicians have
taken seats in the wide yard and started playing dance
music. The instrumental portions alternated with songs
sung by a group of young men (probably bachelors and the
bridegroom's personal friends). Behind this group of
young men a group of girls was standing in a half-circle
also singing songs from time to time. These songs and
dances were alternating for about one hour.
This selection is a tanoj, an old dance, a running and skipping dance of a chain of girls moving around the young men. After some time the men joined the girls in the dance. Bride and groom were still separated the bride being still in her brother's company, also in the dance. Only in a later dance the couple was joined while young men and girls formed a circle around them. After the dance the couple was symbolically tied together with a paper loop. After playing for about one hour and alternating with the songs of the boys and the girls the spilje players left and a musician with an accordion provided modern dance music for ordinary ballroom dancing.

Band 5. Extract from a "Glagolitic" Mass recorded during the service in the church of Bobrija, on September 17, 1961.

This selection contains a) Pristup (Introit) "Pravedan ješi, gospodi" sung by the men simultaneously with chanted prayer of the women, b) Gospodi pomiluj "(Kyrie) sung antiphonally by alternating groups of men and women, c) intonation by the priest and "Slava va vžinih Bogu" (Gloria), sung in the same manner.

a) Pravedan ješi, i prav sud tvoj! stvori s rahom tvom po milosti tvojej. (Pa. tao!) Hlašeni neporočni, v puti: hodeče v zagon gospodini.

b) Gospodi pomiluj, (3x
Hraste pomiluj, (3x
Gospodi pomiluj, (3x


Band 6. Vesper sequence, "Bože va pomoci moljo vami", "Rojsto slave nasihe Devi Marije", and "Rece Gospodi", sung by the priest and the church choir of Polje. This shows the singing in thirds by a women's church choir.

Wedding at Gostinjac: The bride with her brother. Between the two bridegroom can be seen.

Wedding at Gostinjac: The bride with her brother. Between the two bridegroom can be seen.