



Safeguarding our folk dances

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Every generation receives a legacy from their ancestors of a large number of achievements that they must account for to their descendants. To what extent have they managed to retain these? Do they show enough understanding for all these honest efforts, and sufficient love for all spontaneous creations of the mind and hearts of countless strangers that gave joy to them? Is the received legacy transmitted further integrally? The most serious charge that could fall on a generation would be that due to their negligence they ruined something that is deeply embedded into the lives of individuals and entire ethnic community, carrying out a beneficial influence. All the elements that were experienced in the lives of our grandfathers; which mentally resounded in them and so influenced their formation; which gave the texture of things from their outer and inner world, and constituted a prerequisite for us to be the way we are - neither of these elements should be distant, foreign and indifferent to us. Surviving dull and painful days, our nation,^{*1} as is known, kept in itself a sparkle in the world which was ignited at every available opportunity, witnessing the life force and the inexhaustible richness of the inner life of those who did not know what it means to be overruled. That whole tangle of starvation and suffering, the tangle of different set of interests and endeavours, the tangle of drowning, indignation and enthusiasm, expressed in our folk songs, tunes, embroideries and other folk creations - cannot stay without the influence on the later generations. Whether we are aware of it or not, it remains a powerful factor also in our lives, as it will subtly affect the spiritual, mental and moral development of the future generations. The link between us and those hidden life-giving forces in the past is so great and natural that it would be not only incomprehensible but also inexcusable if we show neglect towards them.

And our folk dances,^{*2} considered in this light, certainly deserve our full attention.

*1 [The original word is *narod*, which can be translated as “folk”, “people” or “nation”, even - in the phrase *u narodu* - as “at the source” or “in villages”, depending on the context. All these different nuances of the same word (and its adjective, *narodni*) are taken into account in this translation. Eds.]

*2 [The Sisters, Ljubica and Danica Janković, mostly used a phrase *narodna igra* which when literally translated into English means “folk game”. They sometimes used *orska*

But they deserve it for other reasons, too. At several points, it was already discussed how much significance our choreographic tradition has for us in different ways.¹ The dances collected, both those published and those unpublished, not only confirm but also exceed our expectations. Because, the more we get to know the tradition of folk dances of various parts of Yugoslavia, the greater seems to be its value. Besides the great diversity in terms of shapes, motions, steps, rhythms and feelings, the unknown folk artists choreographers knew also how to bring into our traditional dances large technical requirements, and at the same time preserve the beauty of immediate, clear and unpretentious creation. Therefore, the views of local and foreign artists and scientists are increasingly directed towards this big national treasure.

There is another serious reason which imperiously requires us to wholeheartedly engage in safeguarding our folk dances. So far this has been entrusted exclusively to healthy people's instincts and their profound love for everything that binds them to the past. In the hands of the people as a living tradition, folk dance was able to be refreshed with new elements that folk dancers brought into it, preserving at the same time the spirit of people. Now, however, such safeguarding is threatened from several sides. In the life of our people, the war has carved a deep furrow whose traces have still not disappeared. The post-war period imposed new concerns, new developments and influences, new fashions and habits; the peasant is often removed from his natural track. We know from experience, for example, that in some villages there is a "promenade"^{*3} and that rural young people prefer "to promenade" rather than dance the folk dances of their ancestors, although they still had someone to teach them. In the same way, during certain gatherings old folk dances are not danced just because they are "not modern", although they are still very well preserved in that region. We know also that the real names of folk dances are slowly forgotten and they are replaced with new ones. There are also cases where the opposite applies: the dance is completely lost, but its old name is preserved, which is often linked to a suspicious melody issued from another tradition. And so on. When something starts to spoil, degradation is happening faster than one could have guessed. If we do not become seriously interested in the fate of our folk dances we could lose them forever in a short time.

However, there is a justification for our deep conviction that at this moment it is not too late to take steps to save this vast treasure. If someone with the aim of collecting and studying our folk dances travels throughout the regions in which the old forms of dances are well kept, they will have the opportunity to assure

igra, instead of *narodna igra*. This refers to the word *oro* which is connected with the group of village dances in South Serbia, but they used it with the meaning of "a dance". They often also used other phrases, for example, *orsko predanje* which is translated as "dance tradition". Although in Serbian language (and other Slavic languages) the word *ples* exists, which can be literally translated as a "dance", neither of them used this term (they used it only once in this article). So, regarding their usage and meaning of dance terminology, "folk dance" is a translation of the phrase *narodna igra*. Eds.]

¹ "The Significance of Folk Dances," in *The Folk Dances, I. Collected and described by Ljubica and Danica S. Janković* (Belgrade: 1934), 1-4 and other.

^{*3} [Walking through the village in groups in leisure time. Eds.]

themselves at every step how strong are still the links between these remains of the past and present-day people.

Thanks to the power of that echo from past times we can now still reach the old folk dances. There are numerous examples that show that the love for the choreographic tradition sometimes turns into a cult for some people who until now were the natural and the only guardians of ethnographic dances. Thus, around Bela Palanka, a researcher of folk dances encounters the following picture. An old man sits on a tripod and shells beans with shaking fingers. A conversation starts. The old man is short of breath, his eyes are blurred. With the mention of folk dances, his eyes light up with an inner glow and his lips curl into a smile. Without false modesty, he says that in his time he was the best dancer ("*igraorac*"), that he learnt the folk dances from his father, and regarding the *duduk* [traditional long flute] – nobody had a better one. Now he does not have it any more – it was eaten by rats in a hut in the field. In the absence of his beloved flute he sings perfectly imitating even the colour of the tone of the *duduk*. With such musical accompaniment he dances for us: *Pipaljka*, *Vilajetsko* and *Devla*. In the dance he savours and embodies every movement. At this point the only sign which remind us of his age is his white hair.

The second example. His grandmother, with only three teeth in her mouth, cheerfully joins him tirelessly dancing, smiling, although she worked all day in the field. And then, watching how we write the steps, declares: "Oh, you want to write it down, making thus our dances known equally as Kraljević Marko!"^{*4} After this immediate conclusion she tries to tell us as accurately as possible the lyrics of the song that accompanies the dance.

The enthusiasm of a seventy old dancer from Pirot region while showing the dance *Katanka* is also worth mentioning. This distinctive dance in pairs with crossed hands, because the dancers crouch in certain parts of the dance, is one of our most tiring dances. Regardless of his age, the dancer continued dancing with a youthful fervour; he said he learned the dance from his grandfather.

An eighty-year-old woman from Tetovo, who has already great-grandchildren, immediately started to dance old Tetovo dances with the greatest ease and enthusiasm, without waiting for too long to be asked to dance. She stated that she would like to come to Belgrade, if needed, to show how people danced in the past.

An old man from Kosmaj enjoys making younger dancers tired. When he leads the dance *Groznica*, the young men find it difficult to keep up with him.

But what is even more interesting, folk dance in many regions has its loyal fans and is also safeguarded excellently among younger dancers. This is so in the Skopje Montenegro, as well as in Ohrid area. The best dancer from the village of Labunište, still a young man, lights up as soon as he comes across Ohrid dances: "From Ohrid to Istanbul, he says, there is no more beautiful dance than the Ohrid dance *Teškoto*, and I give a thousand dinars [local currency] to anyone who dances it better than me!"

^{*4} [Kraljević Marko is a famous character in epic poetry. Eds.]

We were told about an interesting bet between a passionate dancer, again from the Ohrid region, and his friends: that he will receive a cow and a calf if he remains still in his place while they dance. The *tupani* and *zurle* started to play his favourite dance. He sticks to a chair and watches. His legs by themselves want him to get up, but – a bet! He struggled for a while, and finally he could no longer resist. He sacrificed a cow and a calf.

A similar enthusiasm for old local dances can be observed in almost all regions where they are still kept.

An excellent example of collective enthusiasm for folk dancing is provided by workers – *pečalbari*,^{*5} brick makers, charcoal makers, masons and others, who after hard work gather in the evening in meadows and private courtyards to dance. Their pure, almost religious fervour, which is the synthesis of all similar things that their ancestors ever experienced, is inconceivable for those who have neither deep roots in the past, nor traditional memories that would link them with the source of folk strength.

From these examples, as well as from many others that can be cited, it is clear that for our people in some regions the old sense of the rhythms is still very lively, and therefore the effort of collecting our old folk dances is not in vain.

But despite the innate feeling for the charm of old dance forms and types, their safekeeping among people in a traditional way is not secured. Because as it is, on the one hand, a comforting occurrence that our old folk dances are in some regions still kept only by instinct, on the other hand, it is a sad fact that they are in some areas completely lost, or suffered some changes; of course, to their detriment. This does not necessarily mean that the threads that bind today's people to the past are broken, but it is certainly a sign of something unhealthy. Already we mentioned the causes that led to this condition. They lie in the many and varied factors of today's complex social life, whose stream inevitably leaves an undesired detritus even in environments that are more skilled and better prepared to protect themselves than broad layers of the masses are.

From all this it stems that it is a high time to put the safeguarding of our old folk dances on a scientific basis, to carry it out in a premeditated and organized way, and with a certain plan. This is so because the safeguarding of folk dances, if it is left only to chance, carries many dangers regarding the circumstances under which folk tradition today has to fight for its survival. Folk dances, left to themselves, under the tangle of different streams and influences – which would certainly interfere (as we have already seen they have begun to interfere) – would inevitably undergo negative changes and would be exposed to much suppression, leading to their degradation and loss. And that is exactly what should not happen and what should at all costs be prevented.

Therefore, planned work on safeguarding folk dance traditions ought to be carried out in two directions: firstly, through *planned safeguarding of the folk dances at the very folk source*; secondly, through *planned gathering, learning and*

^{*5} [*Pečalbari* is the folk term for men that worked away from their home for a long time. Eds.]

studying traditional dances from the folk source. The first would support the deliberate and organized safeguarding and revival of this branch of our folk art in the village, *by tradition.* The second would support its premeditated and organized safeguarding and revival in cities, *through books, courses, schools, sound films, photos and museum material.*

1. The planned safeguarding of the folk dances via tradition at the folk source

There are several ways to achieve better preservation and a stronger revival of folk dances at the very folk source, especially in the village. All these methods generally lead to the same goal: fostering the tradition.

a) It is important above all that *educational workers arouse the awareness of the people of the need to safeguard and revive the inherited treasures* and their values to our national, social and economic life. In this sense, the teachers and priests can do the most, then collectors of folk dances. When people from the villages see how seriously interested, open-minded people approach their creations, sometimes even with admiration, they will know better how to secure themselves against the foreign currents and negative influences that are beginning to threaten our villages. Then the old folk dances will be doubly protected in our nation, because beside the instinctive love that someone feels for them, they will be watchful for an awareness of their beauty and their value. Such a feeling was already expressed on several occasions by folk dancers with whom we have been in touch. Some of them tell us: "Well, only now we know how to appreciate the old dances!" Others say: "From now on, we will dance only older dances!" Charming people from Bukorovac near Bela Palanka say: "Oh, what does that mean for our village! Until now, nobody knew Bukorovac, and now it will be known thanks to our dances!" They continued by saying: "Well, when someone from Belgrade came to record our dances, that means that they are good". People from Lazaropolje comment that now young people dance in the old way and they have realized that it is better than "modern" dancing. And young Skopje Montenegrins tell us that next time we come to record their old dances, they will dance much better. There is already a fairly number of such examples. With an extended application of a unified plan for thoughtful collection and revival of old folk dances, an increased awareness on the importance of the mission would be gained among the masses, which would carry it out by preserving the dances they received and learned from their grandparents in good condition for their grandchildren.

b) *Municipal, provincial and national associations* could likewise encourage people from their region to safeguard and revive old traditional dances. If, for example, the management of these associations would take care to bring to their entertainments and social evenings in the urban centres the best dancers from villages and areas to dance old local dances; if, at the same time, competitions of folk dancers would be also organized; if trips would be organized to places where folk dances are still preserved within folk feasts that incorporate good dancing - all

that could help to raise people's awareness about the need for the safeguarding, maintenance and reviving of old folk dance tradition.

c) *Women's societies* in their committees and subcommittees can in the same way revive interest for true folk dances. Their parties, concerts and other events in a folk spirit – if the best male and female dancers from villages would appear on them – would become a powerful propaganda tool both for a folk dance tradition, and for keeping folk dances among the people.

d) *Folk gatherings* and other feasts that incorporate dancing, if well organised with the aim of highlighting the beauty of the old choreographic tradition and folk costumes, would be a new point of attraction for the development of tourism, promotion of folk art and economic development of the region in which they are organised. It is self-understandable that many localities, especially villages, are yet to be trained in tourism, thus roads need to be built to them, mountain houses and hotels constructed, etc. Only then could choreographic folklore become affordable for domestic as well as foreign tourists. If farmers with an awakened consciousness would experience moral and material benefits from the interests of tourists for their folk dances and customs, they would become immune to outside influence, as it is the case with the villagers in the vicinity of Salzburg, where the old tradition is well-kept despite constant visits by a large number of foreigners.

These methods listed above, in addition to other similar ones, would surely contribute to the planned safeguarding of folk dances at the source, by tradition.

2. The planned safeguarding of folk dances through collecting, learning and studying from the folk source

Although the first way is more natural, the latter is safer and more durable if it is placed on a natural foundation. This condition will be fulfilled if the collection of ethnographic dance is done cautiously, if the data collected and verified is accurately described, if when releasing dances into public circulation nothing is changed and distorted; briefly, if all folk tradition, folk spirit and folk character is preserved during its revival.

In order to completely replace the natural safeguarding by tradition and attain the desired results, the safeguarding of old choreographic elements, formations and rhythms through books, collections, school courses, sound films and museum material should rely on pure traditional dance. Anything else that would be given to the people under that name, and deprive folk dance from its true texture, would not induce echo and understanding by the masses. Folk dances remade in such a way would not be convincing for the people, and their dissemination would only hinder the proper work on this complex task.

As for learning folk dances, this can be implemented in various schools and particular, special courses for folk dances, following the collection, verification, notation and publication of dance tradition.

a) *Nurturing folk dances at primary, secondary and vocational schools.* - We are often asked by teachers and professors of gymnastics about various issues relating to the learning and application of folk dances at primary, secondary and vocational schools. Also, other educational workers, while preparing concerts in a folk spirit, public classes and other school celebrations such as Saint Sava and the Strossmayer celebration, completion of the school year, the celebration of Unity Day, etc., show interest in our traditional dance. Interested individuals usually ask which folk dances should be introduced in our schools, for which occasions, and at what level. Some of them at the same time express a desire for more unusual and less well-known dances, the most beautiful examples of this branch of our national art.

We will here try to answer these questions. We will also touch on some other educational problems that have been posed regarding the proper application and uniform revival of Yugoslav traditional dances through learning. The subject is up-to-date and cannot be delayed because nurturing folk dances in schools should not be left to chance.

First of all, a pedagogue has to ask himself:

To what extent do folk dances have educational importance? And then:

In what way should they be implemented in our school life?

We already discussed the educational importance in our first book.² In this regard, an immediate response to the first question is that the nurturing and reviving folk dances in schools should begin as early as possible, preferably in kindergarten; it has to include all students from elementary school to university. From different sides, there is a tendency to introduce more serenity and joy, more healthy mental and physical food into our school life. Concurrently, there is an endeavour to develop a love of the country, an equal love for all the Yugoslav regions. The main goal of all these efforts is to tie teaching more directly to life, the land, the people, and, with its help, to develop aesthetic, social, national and ethical feelings more strongly. In all these directions, even if, perhaps, at first glance it does not seem so, folk dance, helped by well-organized school tourism with the aim to observe the folk dances at gatherings and other public celebrations, can be a powerful educational tool for the achievement of the tasks set. Also the best folk dancers could be brought into bigger centres to show dances from their region to school youth.

As for the second question, something was also already mentioned in the first book.³ Here we will complete it. To start with, it should be emphasized that in kindergarten, elementary, civic, professional and high school, when speaking about folk dance, only genuine, i.e. non-stylised and unchanged folk dances which are fixed - meaning, checked, noted down and published - should be taught. This issue should be treated in this way for several reasons.

² "The Educational Importance of Folk Dances," in *Folk Dances, I. Collected and described by Ljubica and Danica S. Janković* (Belgrade: 1934), 1-3.

³ "Applying Folk Dances," in *Folk Dances, I-VI.*, 13-15.

First, so that children and youth would be nurtured in the feeling for true folk dances, same as the feeling for true folk poetry and other poetic work has been nurtured.

Second, so that the children would not be too bothered with stylizations that demand, as is well known, professional dancers and artists. School youth needs to be provided with more wholesome entertainment, unforced movement, and genuine bodily and mental refreshment.

Third, because remaking and stylization are matters relevant for artists and choreographers.

Fourth, because other folk creations, such as folk poetry, folk tales, etc. are learnt in school in their unchanged form.

Fifth, fixed dances should be learnt from books that have favourable reviews, recommendations, and approval of authoritative scientific and educational institutions because other folk creations, such as songs and tunes, are also learnt in school from written sources, from the collections of renowned collectors.

Sixth, it is necessary also in order to attain uniformity of teaching.

Seventh, unfixed dances easily become a subject of all conscious and unconscious changes, and thus quickly get warped, spoiled and degenerated. In this way, especially in the cities, they may move away from the folk spirit. If, however, dances are learnt well and properly implemented without any changes, i.e. if during learning, thanks to a textbook, each choreographic, musical and ethnographic detail is controlled, and later, in order not to forget what has already been learned, if the book is again taken for reference as the manual and a reminder, then the preserving of folk dances is ensured as long as they are treated in the same way in their revival. It is not necessary to repeat what has already been said - that in folk dances should breathe a life and that they should not be performed in a cruel, hard or artificial way.

With all this, it is also important that from the first lesson children get used to the melody played or sung precisely. For educational reasons the only exception that may be allowed for folk songs is that some verses can be omitted when singing in schools if the content is not suitable for the age of the children.

As for the curriculum and schedules of teaching lessons, it should be emphasized that dances have to be introduced thoughtfully and treated gradually. It is not relevant which dances are introduced for which school level. It is not necessary to aim to introduce only something rare and unusual. The simplest piece can also leave a very good impression, if it is practiced naturally, rehearsed and mastered uniformly by all the dancers, and if it is filled with enough life and love, i.e. if children can fully enjoy doing it. Teaching should not start from the top, from the most difficult pieces. Moreover, it is dangerous for schools to immediately introduce the most unusual and the most amazing pieces representing an undreamed beauty of this part of our folk tradition. This is so because our school youth have not previously been prepared to receive easily and to immediately absorb folk rhythm that is sometimes worthy of admiration, but which, poorly mastered, may seem funny. For the complex movements in more demanding folk dances, a more atavistic feeling is needed and a natural gift, and so much more

exercise and thorough preparation in advance. As in any other case, if possible, the principles of gradual development and concentric circles should be applied. In schools, dances that are easier and moderately difficult should be introduced, which are at the same time sufficiently beautiful and interesting for beginners.

As long as folk dances from all parts of Yugoslavia are not yet collected, and those collected are not yet systematically arranged and published, our secondary and teacher training schools may, for the beginning, consider some of those dances that are fixed and published, but not all of them. If a larger number of dances are to be collected and published, inasmuch the more difficult ones can be inserted into this schedule to replace those dances that were previously introduced.

When selecting folk dances for schools, we will be guided by national, social and tourism factors to the same extent as methodical-pedagogic, medical, technical, aesthetic and other reasons. All the above reasons should seek to awaken and maintain interest in this branch of our national culture that undeservedly has not been allowed to enter our schools for a long time. Here we will propose a provisional timetable of the material for our secondary education – taking into account the diversity of forms, steps, movements, rhythms, tempos, musical accompaniment, localities and areas in which choreographic-musical elements were recorded; bearing in mind the diversity of feelings, textures, expressions and characters of dance; finally, also not neglecting the influence that it exerts on the dancer, nor the impression that it leaves for the observer. Consequently, teachers from other schools will easily adapt the program and schedule for their educational needs, observing the age of pupils and the duties of the educational institution concerned.

For the beginning, the following material could be taken into consideration for certain classes:⁴

1st class

Dances	Characteristics
<i>Ja posejah lubenice</i>	Round dance <i>thar</i> is a starting point also for children in villages.
<i>Duneranke</i>	Invitation to the round dance with an educational tendency.
<i>Devojčica platno beli</i>	Mimicking dance in which all parts of the body are in motion.
<i>Tasino kolo</i>	Non-symmetrical dance.
<i>Kolariću, paniću</i>	Entangling and unravelling in the round dance.
<i>Tita, tita loboda</i>	In pairs.

⁴ From the first book of descriptions (*Folk Dances, I*) which is connected with collections of folk melodies by Mr. Vladimir R. Đorđević, as indicated next to each dance.

2nd class

<i>Srbijanka</i>	With a break from one direction to another.
<i>Tita, tita</i>	In round dance.
<i>Stara Vlahinja</i>	Non-symmetrical dance.
<i>Ajd' na levo</i>	To the left.
<i>Kurtovića kolo</i>	Opposing chains.
<i>Sremčica</i>	With crossed hands held at the back.
<i>Ajde Veliče</i>	Comical-mimicking dance.
<i>Devojačko kolo</i>	Non-symmetrical dance with cross steps and little jumps. (This tune should not be linked to any words as happened recently with some very distasteful lyrics.)

3rd class

<i>Kraljevo kolo (novo) [new]</i>	With the break from one direction to another like in <i>Srbijanka</i> .
<i>Ajde, lepa Maro</i>	Symmetrical dance.
<i>Čačanka</i>	Non-symmetrical dance with gentle bowing.
<i>Zetsko kolo</i>	Peaceful Montenegrin round dance.
<i>Crnjičko kolo</i>	Lively Montenegrin round dance, or danced in pairs with crossed hands held behind the back with rotation.
<i>Igra kolo na dvadeset i dva</i>	Folk combination of <i>Zetsko</i> and <i>Crnjičko kolo</i> .
<i>Garčanka</i>	Round dance with trembling body.
<i>Nova Vlahinja</i>	Non-symmetrical dance with cross steps and jumps.

4th class

<i>Neda grivne</i>	The directions of movement back and forth, in addition to the normal right and left.
<i>Profesorka</i>	Symmetrical dance.
<i>Trideset druga klasa</i>	Non-symmetrical.
<i>Lepa Maca</i>	Step without pulling towards.
<i>Bitoljka</i>	Folk combination of round dance and pairs.
<i>Polomka</i>	Symmetrical round dance.
<i>Ustaj, diko</i>	The last round dance during the folk dance parties.
<i>Zupčanka</i>	Round dance with jumps, in two parts.
<i>Srba</i>	Non-symmetrical dance, with accentuated last steps.

5th class

<i>Jelke tavničarke</i>	Invitation to the dance.
<i>Zaplet</i>	The circular step.
<i>Đurđevka</i>	Doubled small slant steps with little jumps.
<i>Smederevka</i>	Symmetrical dance.
<i>Troprnalo oro</i>	Leisurely dance.
<i>Gružanka</i>	With little jumps, in two parts.
<i>Sarajevka</i>	Non-symmetrical.
<i>Cigančica</i>	With semicircular steps and tapping on the spot.

6th class

<i>Slavjanka</i>	Effective break in the first bar. In two parts.
<i>Trojanac</i>	Leisurely steps with bowing and trembling of the body.
<i>Gu, gu, guvče</i>	Leisurely round dance.
<i>Šumadinka</i>	Lively, with trembling.
<i>Biserka</i>	Peaceful, non-symmetrical round dance.
<i>Piroćanka</i>	Double small steps with little jumps.
<i>Seljančica</i>	Lively.

7th class

<i>Vranjanka</i>	Arrhythmic relation between dance and melody.
<i>Iz Banju ide</i>	Very lively. Symmetrical.
<i>Omoljka</i>	Non-symmetric round dance with the last steps accentuated.
<i>Sadilo mome</i>	Leisurely round dance.
<i>Bojerka</i>	Non-symmetrical.
<i>Niševljanka</i>	Two-bar stoppage at the beginning. In two parts. Steps with retention.

This arrangement of the items from the first book could be taken into account if students from the first year of the secondary school begin to gradually learn folk dances.^{*6} Otherwise, if dances are introduced in a higher class, then students should returned to a less complex program and start lessons from easier dances, progressing to those more difficult, even if they cannot reach the program which is provided for the class concerned.

^{*6} [At that time, primary school lasted four years and secondary school/gymnasium seven years. Since 1950, the lower classes of gymnasium have been separated and connected to primary schools, so the gymnasium has become a four-year-long. Eds.]

As regards primary school, the proposed arrangement of the material for the lower classes of the gymnasium could at first be applied also to younger children. In a case of male and female students who bring from primary schools some knowledge of these easier dances, they can start with slightly more difficult pieces than are those planned for the initial classes in secondary school.

It is advisable, as in other subjects, to repeat dances from the previous level before going on to the new material. It is important also that children memorize the name of every dance, not only its steps and melody.

The introduction of the examples of the same type has been done for several reasons. First, in this way, pupils get more familiar with the different folk melodies that accompany the dances of the same type, and the textures of each of them. The second reason is due to the fact that some types, for example the type *Devojačko kolo* (non-symmetrical), were also widespread among the folk in villages. Third, it was done in order to apply, to a degree and gradually, the principle of concentric circles.

Dances that are danced while singing are usually easier to perform (excluding Montenegrin dances and the round dance from Vranje "*Iz Banju ide*"). Therefore, they are more prevalent in the lower grades, while in the higher grades more complex and tiring round dances are included.

For teachers and professors of gymnastics this arrangement of material could be a starting point for mastering the first elements of folk dances for pupils, to develop their feelings for folk dances, for the acquisition of basic technical and theoretical education. And when this is achieved in the schooling, such knowledge can be extended to other published dances, whose descriptions are linked to other collections of folk melodies.⁵ Also these dances are very beautiful and suitable for school concerts and other public events.

As for the choice of dances for schools from this second book of descriptions and melodies, the teacher will be guided according to the children's age, according to how the material is mastered from the first book, and according to occasion in which dances have to be applied. It may be noted down that dances from Metohija are easier and therefore in choreographic sense more suitable for a lower level, while Prizren dances can be recommended for a higher level, with the exception of the dance *Da vam kažem* that is especially suitable for small boys. Dances from Kosovo, because of their theatrical-mimical character and diversity of forms, can be used for both younger and older students. Since dances from Kosovo and Metohija are related to certain holidays and special ethnographic moments, the teacher will be able to decide, based on supporting papers and notes, how and for which occasion to choose them.

A need for systematic processing of all dances from the proposed schedule and aforementioned collections applies to the teacher training schools. The easier dances will be learnt for their application in primary schools, the more complex for personal satisfaction of the male and female students themselves. It is important that in the teacher training schools equal attention is paid to both the theoretical

⁵ Danica S. Janković; *Melodies of Folk Dances*. Ljubica and D. S. Janković, *Additional Collection of Folk Melodies for the Book Description Folk Dances, I*.

and practical training; in the same way, it is important that male and female students learn not only to dance, but also to play folk melodies for dancing on the violin.

It is self-understandable that teachers and professors of gymnastics should have previously been well prepared for teaching this subject. Those who have not taken the necessary qualifications from their schools should undergo special courses for folk dances. It would be of great importance if the *School for physical education* would pay a serious attention to this subject and to fundamental education of teachers as expert teachers of old folk dances, thus connecting them also with our sports life.

Besides schools for teachers and the *High school for physical education* (if established), the learning of verified old folk dances should be also included in acting, music, military and vocational schools, and schools of dancing as an obligatory subject.

In this way, our elementary, secondary and vocational schools will revive folk dances not only among our youth, but the old Yugoslav choreographic tradition will move through all the layers of our society and by time it will again establish deep root in our entire nation. In this way a school will worthily conduct a part of this mission as a keeper, interpreter and nursery of this branch of our folk culture.

b) *Traditional dances in Sokol propaganda*. This theme is topical and can be understood in two ways.

First, folk dance as a propaganda tool of Sokolism. With other words, folk dance as an attractive item of the Sokol program, not only as a means of increasing the growth of their members, but also as a way in which they will connect more strongly and more durably to the Sokol movement.

Second, the Sokol movement is a propaganda tool for the folk dances. In other words: the Sokol movement as an organization which helps the old traditional dances to be revived, renewed, expanded and correctly applied.

It must be noted that the first does not exclude the other. What is more, these two directions of work can supplement each other. The Sokol movement and the folk dances will experience full success only if they are directed towards a single track; and this track should be kept straight and lead deep into people's lives. In the absence of special schools for folk dances, our Sokol movement and this branch of our folk art can help each other and strive for ways that would be fruitful for both sides.

Whether it is the word about folk dance as a propaganda tool of Sokolism, or whether it is meant a Sokolism as a propaganda of folk dances, there always comes to mind: 1) *The causes and initiatives* from which this work is approached; 2) *the reasons* why it is worth standing up for this; 3) *the ways* in which it is necessary to carry out propaganda and 4) *the objectives* which are to be achieved.

The causes are easy to guess. But beside those mentioned earlier (negligence of folk tradition because of the influence of foreign choreographic and musical elements), there are also Sokol causes. Because after the war, in a certain number of years, even Sokol entertainment and other events in terms of folk dances could provide nothing other than *Kokonješte* and *Žikino kolo*, while at the same time they

opened the door wider to foreign dances and songs. How big is the emptiness felt in Sokolism due to the ignorance and neglect of traditional dances, their redundancy is especially emphasized. Therefore there was a need to supplement the Sokol movement with this branch of folk art, to introduce more diversity into Sokol work, more serenity into Sokol events, and even more freshness, pleasant mood and joy at the Sokol classes. Folk dances in their various forms, rhythms, movements and other choreographic and musical elements can give all this. These are, therefore, the main causes of actions and initiatives for which the folk dances appeared in Sokol propaganda. It turned out that audiences prefer watching performances with folk dances.

The reasons for Sokol propaganda of this part of our folk art are very much the same. A variety of characteristics of folk dances which were discussed in the first book,⁶ as national, social, touristic, economic, medical, aesthetic, etc., coincide with Sokol ideology. So for now we will not dwell on this.

At this point we are most interested in *the ways* which are needed to carry out a joint propaganda of folk dances and Sokolism.

First of all, special courses of folk dances are needed for advanced participants. This has already been started, thanks to the initiative of the Belgrade III Sokol society, which has organized three courses for advanced members from Belgrade so far, and thanks to the Union of Sokol societies of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, which has prepared two federal courses for advanced students of folk dances from all the regions of Yugoslavia (from 22 to 26 January 1935 and from 14 to 18 April 1936).

At these courses advanced students prepare to become teachers of folk dances by studying theory, not only with practical training. They would gradually be trained so that later on Sokol regional and social classes can teach folk dances to practitioners of all categories. In the safe hands of well-prepared advanced learners, a folk dance will in this way be captured faster and better by the overall Sokol membership, and through this also by Sokol groups.

Practitioners should be prepared to perform folk dances at all kinds of Sokol events, whether they are entertainments, matinees, comradesly evenings, massed rallies, or academic and public classes.

Since practitioners have previously thoroughly learnt some folk dances separately, they can approach the combination of traditional dances in *mixtures*, if they are from different regions, or *medleys*,⁷ if they are from the same region.⁸ Also in these combinations, each dance should remain individually the way it is danced in its original setting; because every folk dance is a spiritualized whole, at least, that is what the people feel. They dance it separately, or several dances are combined into larger units in particular when they are the same type. People from

⁶ "The Educational Importance of Folk Dances," in *Folk Dances, I. Collected and described by Ljubica and Danica S. Janković* (Belgrade: 1934), 1-4.

⁷ Although the more widespread term "suite" can be used instead of "medley", it is more correctly translated from Serbian language in this way, because "suite" refers to the (music) form.

⁸ *Folk Dances, I* (Belgrade: 1934), 14.

Vranje dance the round dances *Vranjanka*, *Daskalica*, *Grčko kolo* with various tunes, without interruption, without gradual transitions and without insertions.⁹ Montenegrins combine various dances and forms, such as: *Zetsko* and *Crminičko kolo*, round dances and dances in pairs, round dance within round dance, round dance on round dance.¹⁰

Whether following Sokol orders dances are danced separately or several of them in a combination, it is important that real folk, non-stylized dances are always represented. Changes of melodies, steps, movements, forms and the lyrics that accompany the dance, as we saw in the previous chapter concerning the application of folk dances in schools, are superfluous and improper in Sokolism. In the same way, in folk dances movements from other rhythmic movement, classical ballet and generally gymnastics, should not be imported because it would not be in style, nor in accordance with the spirit of the folk tradition. Folk dance has its own kind of gymnastics, whose movements are not hard and rigid, but they develop easily and move seamlessly into one another, with the inner subtleties in rhythm, which the best dancers show more or less with all parts of the body. Because our folk dancer (a good one¹¹) also feels a song in his muscles in a still position: his body is easily shaking with vague indications that are barely perceptible, he is counting the entire beats, as in the round dances: *Memete*, *Tetovka*, *Preševka*, *Niševljanka*.¹² A good dancer can never *stand*, but dances in a *quiet* posture, which in fact, strictly speaking, does not exist in our folk dances. However, it is recognized that a bad dancer, although he knows the number of steps and direction of movement exactly, kills a dance even when the rhythm is very much alive. Our people deeply feel this basic requirement of good dancing, and with the dances that they managed to preserve until now, they safeguard this correct understanding, that is the feeling of meaning and beauty of their performance.

To create a good atmosphere in practice lessons, each dance should be danced individually, as well as at parties, gatherings and similar events. But for public events and massed rallies, mixtures and medleys can be made, in accordance with the needs and opportunities, as outlined earlier.¹³

The work started by Sokol regarding the implementation of folk dance should be continued. It is desirable that in the future men also participate in folk dances performances during massed rallies; because, performances of men members beside women, would not only impress the audience more, but will provide greater opportunities for a variety of combinations: including men's dances beside

⁹ *Folk Dances, I*, pp. 105, 107. Danica S. Janković, *Melodies of Folk Dances* (Belgrade: 1937), 10. *Serbian Dances for the Violin*, V. R. Đorđević, pp. *Thirty Five Serbian Folk Songs*, V. R. Đorđević, volume II, 1.

¹⁰ *Folk Dances, I*, 68, 69, 70, 71. Danica S. Janković, *Melodies of Folk Dances* (Belgrade: 1937), 20-21.

¹¹ The Janković sisters used the term "igraorac", which is a folk term present in Southeast Serbia and Macedonia.

¹² *Folk Dances, I*, 127, 64, 116, 84.

¹³ The first attempt to make a mixture of folk dances was made for the Eighth massed rally of Heroes in Sofia in 1935. It was performed by women of the Sokol society from Belgrade under the preparation of the leaders Mrs. Vučković and Žicova. According to the reports of eyewitnesses the performance was received with great enthusiasm.

women's, and mixed and separate round dances, and also dances in groups when male and female dancers are not connected.

When preparing and performing such important pieces as folk dances, with so extensive as mixtures and medleys are, serious attention should be paid to musical education, which is an important condition to ensure that things turn out correctly. From our experience we know that even the best-trained exercise or dance can be ruined by a poor musical accompaniment. There is a need for the accompaniment to be with folk musical instruments, or a Sokol orchestra which in all times and in every situation would be ready to accompany the performance of individual or combined folk dances. The collection of Mr. Vladimir R. Djordjevic: *Folk dances for string orchestra*, Belgrade 1934, is very suitable. It should be emphasized also that it is necessary that the musical accompaniment is good from the first lesson even if it is only using one instrument, such as violin. Otherwise, if the dancers get used to the wrongly played melody and tempo that does not match the dance, they will not be able to dance when it is played well and correctly. What is worse, it would not be possible to develop or to nurture feelings for real folk dances.

Likewise, other gymnastic and rhythmic exercises cannot be done using melodies of folk dances, since they already have their folk gymnastics and rhythmic, i.e. folk dance. Sokol gymnastic exercises can be done to other folk melodies that do not have their own dances. Because when a folk dance, once recorded, and thus fixed under that name is put in circulation, nothing should be changed.

For uniformity in the revival of folk dances in the wider Sokol ranks it is only feasible to learn and practice those dances that are fixed in choreographic, music, folklore and ethnographic terms as was set out in an earlier chapter about nurturing folk dances in schools. Otherwise, learning or combining folk dances that are not checked, recorded and published, so that they are not fixed, is possible only for individuals who know their local dances. The wider application of learning and preparing these dances and their combinations in other places, i.e. in other Sokol groups outside this choreographic field, is not possible until the dances mentioned are checked, recorded and published. In general it is better to dance unrecorded local dances separately, rather than creating medleys of them before they are fixed. This crystallizing of folk dances in Sokol preparation would be quite in the spirit of Sokol ideology that tends to give everything that it provides unity, uniformity, correctness, training and safety.

There are more ways that folk dances obtain full significance in Sokol propaganda, and that the Yugoslav Sokol movement uses them to fulfill a healthy national spirit and the unanimous feeling of the social collective. This is a frequent and careful observation of good dancers from the local people. This can be achieved through excursions to the villages and folk gatherings, or participation in Sokol groups, if these are regions in which the old dances are still retained. This can be achieved also in this way, if the best folk dancers from Sokol groups are brought into the Sokol societies, to dance old dances of their region during Sokol massed rallies and other events. This is not unachievable: the folk people give us a lot of opportunities for this. In this way, at the Sokol massed rallies the best

aspects of the beauty and charm of our traditional dance will be presented. The impression would be augmented with folk costumes and accompaniment by real folk instruments. Mixtures and medleys may be more complex pieces, made with a large number of dancers that can be very well equipped and thoroughly rehearsed, but only the best dancers from the local people, and from certain villages and regions can demonstrate the right texture and original character; they can show technique that impresses, provocation that enchants, with dance movements that are full of enthusiasm. It needs some time to elapse, and the investment of a lot of effort and persistent work, so that the members of the city Sokol societies acquire the technique of folk dancers and their relaxed, soft smooth movements. The revival and the expansion of folk dances in Sokolism are still at their very beginning. Therefore, it takes a lot of learning and practicing for Sokol dancers from the cities to totally absorb folk rhythms and become familiar with the folk tradition once again, so that their dance in the open air is freed from all that was contained by the city walls. It would be ideal if Sokol ranks pay equal attention to the proper application of folk dances in their revival in the cities, and by bringing folk dancers from the Sokol groups to the massed rallies. Also at Sokol events some special, original folk dances, and their mixtures and medleys, should be represented either as they are kept in Yugoslavia or in another Slavic country. All together it would show that the propaganda of this part of our folklore, as the propaganda of their own Sokol societies, can develop as abundantly and more substantially.

It could, moreover, be desired that always, whenever our Sokol team takes part in a competition or an event outside our country, no matter what form it is, they would be ready to dance any folk dance nicely. It is necessary that one group of Sokol men or women members is well practiced in folk dances and, as a Sokol orchestra, is always ready to undertake this. Also Sokol groups in which local folk dances are still kept in good condition, have to be always ready for such a presentation of our national art.

Such work by Sokol on expanding, preserving and propaganda of folk dances, will contribute greatly to their revival in the nation itself. In accordance with previous exposure, it would be a good example and an encouragement to folk dancers not to neglect the old dance heritage. Sokol would thus be able to awaken the awareness of villagers that other folk dances should be kept as well as *Kokonješte* and *Žikino kolo*.

Sokol could contribute to better organization of folk gatherings, and on these occasions the old folk dances can be used for the purpose of Sokol tourism and boosting the economy of the place in which the gathering is held. When the village youth see this, they will no longer allow changes brought about by external influences, and at the same time it will spread interest in the Sokol movement.

During the revival of folk dances from all parts of Yugoslavia, the interest in folk costumes should also not be ignored in Sokolism. It is nice and within the style when the folk dances are performed in traditional costumes. But they also can be performed in the Sokol and in civil clothes. The main thing in this case is that all men and women dancers are uniformly dressed.

Another way of using choreographic folklore for propaganda would be by photographing and filming everything that is considered important in this sense. A special section for folk dances in Sokol propaganda should be established in the Sokol museum. This museum section should show the development of the nurturing and reviving of traditional dance through Sokol units. Film recordings from various events and courses, and other documents could provide testimony about this. The same museum should collect photos of folk dancers in costumes from the regions where they come from, and also of the real folk musicians who accompany the dance on folk instruments.

It also should be mentioned that the Administration and Educational Committee of the Federation of Yugoslavia Sokol Societies can have the lion's share not only in propaganda of Sokol ideas, but also the propaganda of folk dances. Further organizing courses for folk dances, based on recommendations that are sent to Sokol groups for the nurturing of folk dances, such as a type of questionnaire for statistical data that would relate to the situation of traditional dances in some areas (asking for their names, their application in Sokolism, the names of the best folk dancers), thus propaganda can be spread, by collecting the material that would serve useful in further work in this direction.

Sokol newspapers, beside articles on folk dances, reports from the courses and events which they already bring, could direct an appeal to Sokol leaders for preserving and nurturing folk dances.

Finally, that with the living word, through public speeches and lectures can pursue propaganda for this branch of our folk culture, this is something that goes without saying. Sokol technicians, as well as educators should be directed to this.

But work and good examples are always more important than words. If there are more good examples, there will be more actual results, not only within, but also outside Sokol groups. Therefore, the more such success there is, the closer we get to the goals set. The main priority of all of the aforementioned effort would be directed as much to the wide renovation and general revival of dance traditions from all parts of Yugoslavia, as on strengthening the national spirit and refreshing Sokolism using folk dance. Through Sokol contact with other Slovenian nations, more fuel and ideas of Slovenian reciprocity could be acquired using dance tradition. In this way, folk dances would speak for themselves and the Yugoslav Sokol movement, as much as for the all-Slavic fraternity.

The folk people generously offer their choreographic and musical treasures. We get more used to these great riches. We are always grateful to learn from folk life, and for Sokol members this is the duty above all. That duty is at the same time the largest Sokol award; because if one gets closer to the folk life and folk spirit, our Sokol movement will become even fresher and therefore vital. Only such a Sokol movement may radiate further beneficially and gather new strength around it. So the folk dance is an essential part of Sokol's programme, a part with which our Sokol movement can reckon, a part without which it could not get its full meaning. Therefore, folk dance should become an integral part of life for all young Yugoslav generations, just as it was an integral part of the lives of our chivalrous ancestors. Only when this is achieved, we can consider that our Sokol movement is

producing enough propaganda of folk dance, and likewise, that it is used enough as its propaganda tool.

The ultimate goal of this work would be, then, that folk dance again becomes the property of the local folk, that with the help of Sokolism can re-enter the feeling and the soul of the broad masses; and conversely, that the folk people using folk dance see the Sokol movement as a medium for maintaining and strengthening their mental and physical health. When you bear in mind these directions, it is clear that the emergence of folk dances in Sokol propaganda is of actual importance and mutually fruitful.

c) *Folk dancing among the scouts.* An interest in our old traditional dances has also recently appeared among scouts. There we encountered a fine response with the tendency to keep the dances, nurture, expand and use them properly. With the intercession of Miss Olivera Jurković, a student of philosophy, the idea of reviving the old dance tradition is transmitted firstly among mountain women [*planinke*] that accept folk dance and then disperse it within their units. From the Scout news and the Proceedings of rules and regulations, we see that folk dances are increasingly entering into the life of mountain women and the highlanders, that are already represented in the courses and that are also included in programs for the exam. Among the scouts there is a growing desire that a traditional dance is performed whenever there is an opportunity for this: "during group meetings, on trips, at parties and celebrations, on the camps, at gatherings and jamborees".

The principles of preservation, implementation and nurturing of folk dances in schools and in Sokol units, that were discussed earlier, are also applied to the scout groups. When dancing traditional dance in the camps, the scouts would not consider making mixtures and medley. Performing particular dances will give a particular charm and is full of character. A single round dance which happily winds around a campfire should portray to its end an effusion of the joy of life and the generally cheerful mood of the community.

Beside that scouts have other opportunities to experience mental and physical refreshment in the rhythm and the movement, the beauty of natural and immediate folk expression when in summer, in their everyday camp life, they are in direct contact with nature and people.

d) *Folk choreographic motifs and direction.* The problems about stage settings of pieces from our domestic repertoire often introduce among, others, the question of how to present folk dance, if it is one of the integral parts of the action. The issue becomes even more complex if all the work around the selection, decision making and preparation is left to the director. Which and what kind of dance to choose? How many should be represented? What criteria should be applied in the decision-making process to give the right balance? Also, what is the most important, and often the most essential, where to find them, those real dances, that will convincingly talk from the stage portraying that they are from the region whose life they should express, and that can provide the texture and mood that can only and should be caused just at this moment, according to the psychological demands of the pieces?

This problem, taken seriously is most often the concern of a conscientious director. If he will not recourse to mystifications and substitutes (for what reason, after all, there is no need and no reason because so much of the wealth of our people is in folk dances), he has to decide on one of two possible correct solutions: either to take the fixed real folk dance and melody that the actors will have learned to dance accurately and distinctly; or to take real folk dancers, but the best among them, that they instead of the actors perform dances. Both are valid for drama, especially realistic and social drama, into which clean folklore dances, non-stylized and unchanged must be imported.

If you go through certain unfortunate phenomenon such as when on our stage some groups performed some pseudo folk dances prepared carelessly at the event, there are also certain moments in the history of the directing of our domestic dramas that can be underlined with honors when real folk round dances were danced on our stage that have contributed to the local texture of the pieces; although they remained at the same time in their unchanged folk form and the way of performing, and perhaps precisely because of that, in such a way non-stylized, conveniently selected and well-rehearsed, they acted powerfully and convincingly.

Folk dance is, in general, a very much appreciated element of the stage setting of pieces with a touch of folk, when its significance is properly understood. But it is not enough just to develop the round dance on stage, no matter how. It is necessary that the choice of dances and the way of dancing fully meets qualitative criteria.

Fortunately, we started to wake up. In recent years our audience demonstrates a growing interest in folk dance in its pure form and manner of performing. It increasingly requires real folk dances which do not include steps with foreign rhythm, nor movements of classical ballet. It will no longer smile contentedly on grotesque creations that were under the guise of folk dance that has been robbed and has crept into places where for the grotesque there was no place or justification. It can no longer feel warm for the caricature of folk dances where the psychological reasons of the stage setting of domestic drama does not require such a caricature. Our audience will know how to distinguish between true and false, between mystification and authentic folk dance not only intuitively and instinctively, but at the same time knowingly and with understanding. They will not fail to provide the deserved approval to the conscientious director with encouragement for his further work for the stage by nurturing and guarding national choreographic traditions.

It is another thing if it is within a ballet or opera. In this case, for the choreographer, after seriously studying folk choreographic elements, an attempt of artistic processing folk motifs, stylization, creation of art dance in the national spirit remains. Maybe we will finally wait to see artistic choreographic nationalism achieved thus. Until now, it was misrepresented usually in stylizations that underlined that folk dance does not exist at all, and thus were alienated from the folk spirit. This is one more proof of ignorance or lack of knowledge of the basic characteristics of folk choreographic tradition. Therefore, when it comes to speaking about performing our folklore dances, or about the creation of our artistic choreographic nationalism, thorough advance preparation is needed. This

could be successfully achieved if theoretical and practical learning of real folk dances would be introduced as a compulsory subject in drama acting school; and regarding this if a Section for ethnographic dances would be found in our ballet and opera, as it is already done in Russia.

d) *Keeping the ethnographic dances in museum.* Certain documents about folk dances already exist in our ethnographic museums that are kept in the museum libraries, music libraries and photo collections. There, above all, are works of our ethnologists that mention traditional dance. They were published either in special editions, or in magazines. There, you can find collections of descriptions and melodies, either printed, or handwritten. There are also photos of folk dancers, folk dances, drawings, paintings, vinyl records of folk melodies for dance, films etc. But these documents are usually scattered in various departments of the museum, and therefore are not that easy to find.

However, an increasing need is felt, where it has not already been done and where the space permits, to determine special departments and establish sections for folk dances, or at least to provide professional card files for this subject. Thus museum sections equipped with professional catalogs could usefully serve its documents in many directions: for museum visitors this would be more interesting, for researchers of this branch of folk art cleaner, and generally more accessible for getting to know our traditional culture. Over time, this museum-archival material about folk dances will be supplemented. Some museums already devote more attention to this case.

So far the ways outlined for the planned keeping of our ethnographic dances, individually and all together, if they are performed with simultaneous effort and combined forces, not only would prevent a sudden deterioration of our old dance tradition, but would also perhaps, take on new ways to rescue this part of our traditional culture from oblivion.