

## Women as Folk Song Collectors in Slovakia. From Romantic Nationalism to the Beginnings of Modern Research

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Collecting activities were an important cultural and social phenomenon in 19<sup>th</sup> century Europe. Women also participated in these activities, although in many cultures their role and the results of their collecting work have not yet been adequately evaluated. Taking the example of Slovakia, it is possible to highlight the contribution of women in collecting folk songs, while encompassing those features which are specific to the regional circumstances. Women took part in all important collecting projects of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in Slovakia. Reconstruction of their socio-cultural background highlighted the fact that at the inception of these projects women of the aristocracy and gentry were active collectors. The majority of female collectors came from families of the Slovak intelligentsia, who belonged to the middle class. By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century many such families had become part of the contemporary elite of Slovak society. We focus on two research questions: 1, how did the gender category of the collector condition the record of song material (an aspect of the collection concept); and 2, what contribution did women's collecting activities make to the study of traditional song culture (an aspect of the collected material). A definition of women's concept of collecting, with primary orientation on song lyrics, was deduced from the 19<sup>th</sup> century preference for the national language and the role of Slovak women in its diffusion in private as well as public life, and from analysis of the genre structure of the collected material. The romantic concept of collecting in Slovakia is compared with an early concept of documentation at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century which derived from abroad, although some of its elements were beginning to take effect also in domestic collecting activities.

*Keywords:* collecting activities, folk song, gender, concept of collecting

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## INTRODUCTION

The theme of women as collectors of Slovak folk songs first emerged in research on the history of music folkloristics<sup>1</sup> and ethnomusicology. When these scholarly disciplines began in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, their initial work included preparing a material base: collecting, collating, publishing and archiving songs (Urbancová, H., 2016). A more detailed treatment of the theme was undertaken in a research project “Woman in Traditional Music Culture” where selected segments of music culture of a traditional, pre-modern type were examined from the standpoint of historical musicology and ethnomusicology in the context of gender studies. An article on women collectors of Slovak folk songs, published as part of this project, made available the initial findings from primary source research, with a critical evaluation (Urbancová, H., 2017a). The source base of this article encompassed both published song collections in their original form (5 printed editions)<sup>2</sup> and 14 manuscript song collections, not processed hitherto, from the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup>.<sup>3</sup> Using this source material, the scope and content of collecting activities by women was defined. A more detailed analysis was made of the manuscript song collections. These provide a more authentic picture of song-collecting and transcribing, as compared with the published editions, which are generally products of selection and intervention by editors or publishers.

Further treatment of this theme needs to take into account two broader research contexts: the history of collecting activities and their concepts in Europe, and gender studies in relation to the research of traditional music.

Important ethnomusicological syntheses, appearing in the last two or three decades (Nettl, [1983] 2005: 406-409; Myers, *Ed.*, 1992: 337-348; Stone, 2008: 145-152), have provided new findings encouraging gender studies in the field of traditional music (Koskoff, *Ed.*, 1989; Herndon, Ziegler, *Eds.*, 1990; Moisala, Diamond, *Eds.*, 2000; Haid, Hemetek, *Eds.*, 2005). They point to the importance of gender identity in researching traditional music cultures, not only from the perspective of research informants but also of researchers themselves. A fact which they emphasize is that the gender category influences all phases of the study, from field work, through analysis of materials, down to the assessment and interpretation of the findings. Although field work is of key importance for all further phases of study, ethnomusicologists have given relatively less attention to its description in their works: this is pointed out in an attempted summary of the experience of work in the field (Barz, Cooley, *Eds.*, [1997] 2008), including the gender aspect (Babiracki, 2008). We have attempted to apply this issue to a historical theme, namely to the collection of folk songs in Europe, as a historical movement which developed in the context of contemporary ideas and concepts.

Collecting activities as a cultural movement represent one of the relatively well-covered themes, being an all-European phenomenon which was formed in regional

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1 We employ the term music folkloristics in its historical meaning as the study of traditional European folk music, principally folk music of one's own ethnic group (Tyllner, 2010: 82-84).

2 *Písneň swętské* [Vernacular Songs] (1823, 1827), *Národné zpiewanky* [National Songs] (1834, 1835), *Sborník slovenských národných piesní...* [Collection of Slovak National Songs...](1870, 1873), *Písneň slovenské* [Slovak Songs] (1880) and *Slovenské spevy* [Slovak Songs] (1880-1926).

3 The manuscript sources are deposited in the Archive of Literature of the Slovak National Library, and in the Slovak National Museum in Martin.

conditions and in trans-regional linkages. They were formed in the intellectual context of the national movements and the quest for new collective identities in Europe (Bohlman, 2004). The collection of folk songs drew stimulus from these intellectual sources. What this involved was not only written records of songs but also their further evaluation and publication. However, the participation of women in these activities has been specifically traced only in exceptional cases.

The key monographs on traditional music in Europe regard the collection movements as part of the history of documentation and study of traditional singing (Danckert, [1938] 1970; Stockmann, *Ed.*, 1992; Ling, 1997; Tyllner, 2010). Collecting and editorial activities are assessed in relation to the collected and published material. They are interpreted as a prehistory of the modern scholarly approach, during which several scholarly disciplines in their incipient stages were formed. Most of these European syntheses overlook the participation of women in such activities. Details about women as collectors and editors are found in specialised encyclopaedias. However, a lot of information on female collectors from extra-European regions, in particular North America, may be found in an encyclopaedia on folklore and the ethnography of women, produced from a gender studies perspective (Locke, Vaughan, Greenhill, *Eds.*, 2009). The most extensive space hitherto given to women in the collecting activities in Europe is in certain specialised studies and monographs, where their participation is assessed in terms of regional cultures (Gregory, 2010; John, *Ed.*, 2003).

Taking the Slovak material as our example, we would like to point to the potential for combining historically orientated research and gender studies in the area of traditional music culture. Our historical reconstruction of women's collecting activities proceeds from the study of primary and secondary sources (song collections, journals, personal correspondence), using the procedures of historical ethnomusicology. In this article we focus on two research questions: 1, how did the gender category of the collector condition the record of song material (an aspect of the collection concept); and 2, what contribution did women's collecting activities make to the study of traditional song culture (an aspect of the collected material).

## WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN COLLECTING ACTIVITIES: EUROPEAN CONTEXTS AND SLOVAKIA

Collecting folk songs was an important European cultural movement, which made an impact on all regions. It was formed on the basis of enlightenment ideas, transmuted in a bond with romantic nationalism (Leerssen, 2013), and it culminated in modern research of traditional music cultures in Europe (Stockmann, *Ed.*, 1992: 1-48). This movement is linked with a period stretching from the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, with lesser time shifts depending on the specific conditions of its emergence, expansion and exhaustion in the individual European regions. During its more than 150-year existence there were changes of approach in field work, techniques and methods of record and transcription, and also in the forms of utilisation of the folk material. Collecting activities in Europe were generally associated with three fundamental ideas: rescuing folk songs from extinction (the collector "is saving" something that

would otherwise vanish forever); the folk song as a basis of national culture (creating a national canon of literature and music); and the edification of the people (the folk song as a source of moral, ethical and aesthetic values) (Ling, 1997: 13-14).

At the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century many intellectuals from Slovakia were studying at universities in Germany. Here they came into direct contact with the ideas of Johann Gottfried Herder and transmitted them immediately to the domestic milieu. Herder stimulated a systematic interest in the folk song, not only in the area of collecting and publishing but also in literary poetry and composed music. The response to Herder's ideas in Slovakia paralleled their reception in other European regions. Besides the common features, however, there were certain characteristics which may be regarded as specific to the Slovak milieu. The first published collections of texts of Slovak folk songs appeared early in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Bohuslav Tablic 1806, Pavol Jozef Šafárik 1817), and the first musical adaptations for piano in the 1830s (Martin Sucháň 1830; Vladislav Fűredy 1838).

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, in several European regions the collection (and also publishing) of folk songs was a product of the independent, often isolated activities of individuals, for example in Poland (Oskar Kolberg), Serbia (Vuk S. Karadžić), Finland (Elias Lönnrot), and Great Britain (Cecil Sharp) (Ling, 1997: 5-21). Collection in the Slovak milieu relied to a greater extent on a mass base and had a collective character. The reason was that for Slovaks collecting and publishing folk songs was not purely a cultural activity. It became an integral part of the national movement and assumed its features. The folk song was one of the means of spreading national awareness and forming the national identity of the Slovaks.

The collection movement in Slovakia passed through a number of phases during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The beginnings may be evidenced in the first two decades of that century, the peak at its close, and the final fading and expiry in the opening decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Elscheková, Elschek, [1962] 2005: 26-40).

At the core of the collection movement, there were organised activities of an all-Slovakian scope. While these were coordinated by individuals, such persons were drawing on the results of work by a wide circle of collaborators and contributors. These efforts culminated in the publication of the most important 19<sup>th</sup> century editions of Slovak folk songs: *Písneň swětské* [Vernacular Songs] compiled by Ján Kollár and Pavol Jozef Šafárik (1823, 1827), *Národné zpiewanky* [National Songs] edited by Ján Kollár (1834, 1835) and *Slovenské spevy* [Slovak Songs] prepared by a group of editors (Ján Kadavý, Karol Ruppeldt, Ján Meličko and Miloš Ruppeldt, 1880-1926). Song editions published in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century included song texts without tunes, similar to most editions of songs in other European regions (Ling, 1997: 13-14). The monumental edition of *Slovenské spevy*, spanning the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, was the first that systematically made available Slovak folk songs together with their tunes. On the other hand, the rich collecting activities led to the emergence of collected material which remained in manuscript and became the foundation of archival and museal collections (for example, Andrej Halaša's stock of song texts). Alongside the organised collection movement, there were isolated collectors' activities existing simultaneously. These, however, did not achieve more than a local significance, and they were limited by the collectors' individual interests.

In the first printed editions there was a formulated concept of collection, directing collectors' attention to certain song categories which editors regarded as particularly

important in terms of the national and cultural identity of Slovaks (Kollár, Šafárik, [1823, 1827] 1988: 40–41, 194–195). These included above all songs which bore witness to the historical continuity, ethnic definition and cultural specificities of Slovaks (e. g. ceremonial songs of the calendar and life cycles, historical songs, songs associated with work in the mountain environment, occupational songs, and ballads). Furthermore, the folk song was bound up with the language, which was one of the fundamental attributes of national identity (Škvarna, 2004: 29).

Women were involved in all phases of the collection movement in Slovakia. They engaged in song-collecting both on the territory of Slovakia and in Slovak enclaves on the territory of historical Hungary (Dolná zem [Lower Land]), especially if they came from the given locality, lived there, or were temporarily working there.

The intensity of women's collection work varied. It encompassed random and occasional written song records and short-term interest, as well as systematic collecting activity sustained for many years. Similarly variable was the number of written song records by individual women collectors: this extended from a group of a few songs, through some dozens of songs, to more extensive collections numbering about 150 songs. In preparing the personal database of female collectors, we took into account all sources testifying to the collecting activity of women, irrespective of the quantity and quality of the written records. By this means, 46 women in all were identified who had functioned during the designated time period, from the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, as collectors of Slovak folk songs (Urbancová, H., 2017a: 218–219).

The beginnings of women's involvement in the collection movement in Slovakia can be traced via the editions of song texts published in the 1820s and 30s. Here the results of their collecting work were presented publicly. These women were regarded from the outset as important participants in the collection movement. Concluding his preface to the second part of *Písneň swětské*, Kollár thanked the collectors whose written records had contributed to this edition. Listing the most important of them, in the first place he gave the names of a number of women (Kollár, Šafárik, [1827] 1988: 198–199). The second part of *Národné zpiewanky* gives a list of contributors at the conclusion, with accompanying information about their collections. A number of women, from Slovakia and Lower Land, appear among them (Kollár, ([1835] 1953: 572–179). These first song editions, then, already indicate the distinctive role of women in collecting and recording songs, predominantly their texts (for example, Agnesa Andreanská, Terézia Artner, Apolónia Baltazarová Füredy, Jozefína Guotovna, Rozina Hrenčík, Zuzana Lešková, Sofia Medvecká, the Mojžišovič sisters, Antónia Mrlianovna, Amália Petianovna, Agnesa Veselovská).<sup>4</sup>

The extensive song collection of Andrej Halaša, which remained as a whole in manuscript, comes from a wide time-span in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup>. This collection contains written records of song lyrics without tunes. Halaša produced it based on his own collecting activity and complemented by written song records from other collectors. He acquired them as an organiser and coordinator of several collection actions on the territory of Slovakia and in Slovak

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4 We give the names in modern orthography, but in the original grammatical form, hence as they are found in the historical sources.

enclaves in the Lower Land. He attempted to revive collecting and to stimulate the broad public to engage in this activity (Sedláková, 1990, 1996). His aim was to prepare a representative corpus of Slovak folk song lyrics.

Many patriotically orientated women responded to his appeals. They offered him already-written records of theirs, or they were directly motivated by him to undertake collection work. Halaša worked freely with written records from other collectors, selecting songs and rewriting them for his manuscript collection. He did, however, archive the original sources. That has made it possible to assess not only his method of selection but also the collection range of several women (for example, Mária Horváthová, Anna Hudobová, the Klimo sisters, the Kolenyi sisters, Mária Rudinsky, Ludmila Riznerová). What Halaša published was a selection from his manuscript collection, including song records from a number of women, which appeared in *Písne slovenské* [Slovak Songs], a publication of song lyrics (Praha 1880). Its importance was overshadowed, however, by another edition of songs in that same period which began publishing texts of songs with tunes.

The three-part edition of *Slovenské spevy* began to be published in the early 1880s. It was the product of a broadly organised and conceptually directed collection movement, which was associated with a public appeal for the collection of songs. This appeal encompassed a set of instructions, representing the first methodological directions issued in Slovakia for the field work of a song collector (Francisci, Mudroň, Halaša, Kadavý, 1879). Included was the instruction to write down the song together with its musical component. That mode of collecting was then standard in many European regions, although there were differences of appreciation of the importance of the musical element (Ling, 1997: 13-15).

This edition only has rare instances where women collectors contributed complete records of song texts together with tunes (Mária and Kristína Royová, Ludmila Podjavorinská, I. Zochová). Larger song sets with complete records were, for the most part, products of collaboration with men. The women made transcriptions of lyrics (K. Križanová, Ludmila Šeňšelová); the tunes were recorded by men with music education, who were working as music teachers, composers and performers (Karol Ruppeldt, Ludovít Izák). In exceptional cases women were not only collectors but also performers of songs, while a man transcribed the song or its tune, based on their vocal interpretation (Ludmila Markovičová and Blažej Bulla).

In the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, women in some European regions (e.g. Great Britain, Germany and Norway) began to publish their song collections as individual and autonomous editions (Danckert, [1938] 1970; Gregory, 2010: 130-132). In Slovakia women were active only in the area of collecting. They did not themselves publish their material, nor did they participate in the work of song-editing. The institutional background which would have supported such activity was lacking in Slovakia at that time. There is not a single extant publication from the period studied whose contents women collected and which they would also have edited. With the unique exception of a Slovak female collector who published a selection of her records abroad, the majority of women left their collections as a whole in manuscript.

## THE SOCIAL, CULTURAL AND PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND OF FEMALE COLLECTORS

Collecting and transcribing songs was one of those activities which required not only preparation but also certain qualities of disposition. Until the invention of a technique of sound recording and for a long time afterwards, this activity was dependent on direct contact with a singer. As a rule, the transcription of the song was based on the singer's repeated performance. This form of record made demands on hearing, memory, and skill in transcribing. The collectors of folk songs in Slovakia devoted themselves to these activities outside their professional callings and without any institutional background.

During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the image of women as collectors of folk songs did not correspond with traditional ideas of the role of woman and her mission in life. In broad layers of the society in Slovakia, up to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the prevailing opinion was that a woman's role was primarily to be mother, housekeeper and wife, without seeking to assert herself beyond the private sphere, in public and social life (Dudeková, *Ed.*, 2011). It was in the Slovak intellectual milieu that an image of women as song collectors was created, with the aim of supporting the participation of women in activities of national interest. From the outset, the collecting activities of women were publicly presented and acknowledged in parallel to those of men. Such involvement was understood as a worthy activity of importance to all of society, and a contribution to the national emancipation of Slovaks. Research of the history of gender relationships in Slovakia emphasises the fact that the process of women's emancipation overlapped chronologically with the processes of national emancipation (Kodajová, 2011: 542). For example, in the first printed song editions of the 1820s and 30s the names of women were published as authors of manuscript collection and written records, and in prefaces the editors officially thanked them in the first place. Women were also acknowledged among the patrons and financial donors of these editions<sup>5</sup> (Kollár, Šafárik, [1827] 1988: 198; Kollár [1835] 1953: 572–578).

The support such women received came especially from the collecting activities in their organised forms. When they pursued individual collecting activities, however, the response was not so emphatically supportive. That was one of the reasons why all of their collections remained in manuscript. They served as a source from which written records were taken for the preparation of collective song editions or national song corpuses.

The female collectors of folk songs came from several types of social setting and had varying educational backgrounds. In a time span from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century to the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, their social, cultural and professional affiliations changed.

During the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century there were women of aristocratic origin, with education corresponding to their status, among the collectors. One such was **Terézia Mária Artner** (1772–1829), from an aristocratic family in southern Slovakia with a multi-lingual background. She was active as a writer, poet, playwright and translator.

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5 The list of financial donors, which contains important details of historical sociology, was omitted from the modern critical edition of *Národné zpievanky* in 1953 and is found only in the original version.

During seasonal stays in western Slovakia from 1806 to 1815 she collected texts of Slovak folk songs, tales and legends.

Many of the female collectors in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century came from families of the gentry. These included **Apolónia Baltazarová, née Füreedy**, sister of Vladislav Füreedy (1794–1850), a close collaborator of Ján Kollár and author of the piano adaptations of Slovak folk songs from Kollár's edition *Národné zpiewanky*. We have very few biographical details regarding this collector: she lived in a Slovak enclave near Budapest, where she collected Slovak folk songs.

In the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century most such women came from the nationally conscious intelligentsia. Although initially there was only a narrow circle of families with a Slovak awareness, on that foundation a Slovak patriotic society emerged during the period in question. The 1860s brought the first important successes of the national movement, namely the foundation of cultural and educational institutions. After the Austro-Hungarian Compromise (1867), however, these institutions were closed. There followed a period of Hungarianisation (Magyarisation) of all ethnic groups in historical Hungary, which lasted until the dissolution of the monarchy (1918). During those years the ideas of the Slovak national movement sustained their continuity primarily in cultural activities. Among such activities was the collection and publication of Slovak songs.

Representatives of the middle class, with the teaching and priestly professions to the forefront, were the core of the Slovak patriotic community (Hučko, 1974). The women who collected folk songs belonged to families who had participated actively in the integration of the patriotic community. They were wives, sisters and daughters of priests, teachers, doctors, lawyers, notaries and officials. By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century many of them came from families who had become part of the contemporary elite of Slovak national society. The education, opinions and interests of such women were not formed exclusively by their narrow family setting. In their collection work they could rely principally on the support of a Slovak patriotic community with a wide network of social and cultural contacts.

The sisters **Mária Royová** (1858–1924) and **Kristína Royová** (1860–1936) have a place in the history of Slovak music, in particular as authors of hymns and editors of hymnbooks. They completed primary school and acquired the basics of music education from their father, a Lutheran vicar; the musically talented Mária studied privately with the local organist. She is credited with the authorship of over a hundred hymns and a number of attempts at musical composition. Kristína was active in the literary field, as a writer, editor and translator. Together they wrote down folk songs in the surroundings of Stará Turá, their native town, where they lived their entire lives. Another example is the writer **Ľudmila Riznerová Podjavorinská** (1872–1951). From a family traditionally associated with the teaching profession, she was a niece of the Slovak bibliographer, linguist, ethnographer and historian Ludovít V. Rizner (1849–1913). After completing primary school, she continued her education by self-study; later she attended lectures from an introduction to philosophy and a course on social welfare. She too made her mark as an author of literature for children, translator and publicist. Riznerová Podjavorinská collected songs in her native village of Bzince pod Javorinou. Uniquely, she also published her song records abroad: selections from her manuscript collection appeared over a decade in the ethnographic journal *Český lid* (1902–1912).



From the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, women began to assert themselves not only as nationally motivated collectors but also as specialists with an interest in scholarship. They carried out their collecting activity in the context of incipient ethnography and folkloristics. Several of them had a broader and more complex interest in traditional Slovak culture. Besides songs and other genres of Slovak folklore, as collectors they paid attention to ceremonial culture, customs, belief, clothing and embroidery, and other objects of material culture. They took an active part in building up the first ethnographic collections.

**Mária Oľga Horváthová** (1859–1947) came from the family of a Lutheran vicar in Martin, a centre of Slovak national life. Besides her collecting work, she was active as an actress, artistic reciter and writer. Having received a musical education by private tuition, she sang and played the piano, including in public concerts. As a collector she was in contact with ethnographer Andrej Halaša (1852–1913) and wrote down folk songs in the Turiec region. Another female collector with a scholarly profile was **Drahotína Kardossová, née Križková** (1867–1944). She came from the family of the historian, archivist and folk song collector Pavol Križko (1841–1902) and was a sister of the female composer Ludmila Lehotská (1863–1946). Having finished Hungarian primary school, she completed her education with her father (studying Slovak and Russian) and especially by self-study. Her literary works included memoirs, travel writing and translations. She collected songs and other genres of Slovak folklore, customs, children's games, and material objects of traditional culture. Kardossová Križková became a recognised expert on folk embroidery, which she began to study at the suggestion of ethnographer Andrej Kmeť (1841–1908). Her manuscript collection of folk song lyrics, acquired in several regions of Slovakia where she was temporarily engaged, is little known.

Most of these women were educated within the family, by self-study or private study. Their collection of songs was done in symbiosis with other activities. On the one hand, this meant cultural and educational work, on the other hand creative art: literature, visual art and music. Writers, translators and publicists, playwrights, actresses, painters, figured among the female collectors. What predominated, however, was working with language and an interest in performing arts (theatre, music). A basic training in music was part of their broader education. Many female collectors were active also as singers and pianists, though they were not directly engaged in a musical profession. They used singing as one of the forms of active “collecting”: learning and making their own of the folk song repertoire.

All such activities were considered untraditional and uncommon for women. These women broke free from the contemporary stereotypes, according to which a woman was predestined to take her place primarily in the household and in a narrow family circle. The second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was a period when many activities were professionalised. “Non-traditional” activities of women required the appropriate professional schooling, or they were connected with talent and natural gifts (Kodajová, 2011; Lengová, 2011). The women involved in collecting folk songs were principally those who were inclined towards the “modern” professions (for example, teacher, editor or translator).

At first sight, it is surprising that we do not find members of specifically musical professions among them. We would have assumed that women with a higher music

education, and thus qualified to take music transcriptions of a professional standard, would be prominent among those who collected folk songs. During the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century music education was part of the essential educational equipment for the women of aristocratic and middle-class society. It was not intended, however, to lead to a professional career, but to personal development (Lengová, 2011: 598-611). Contrastingly, in the second half of that century women were already accepted as music teachers, performers and composers. From the currently available facts, however, it is evident that they did not involve themselves in any notable degree in the collecting activities, and they did not contribute to the work of transcribing the musical component of Slovak folk songs.

In exceptional cases, those female collectors who had acquired the basics of music education (as part of their general preparation for the teaching profession) recorded the songs together with their tunes. One of these was **Želmíra Duchajová, née Švehlová** (1880–1955), Slovakia's first female painter with an academic education. She was the daughter of a Lutheran vicar and a niece of the female collector and ethnographer Mária O. Horváthová. Duchajová Švehlová studied at the Teachers' Institute in Bratislava and art academies in Berlin and Munich. Until the early 1930s she was a teacher of drawing. Later, she worked on a freelance basis as a painter and organiser. She collected folk songs at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when for a brief period she was working in her native village as a young teacher and church organist.

Based on the available data, one may say that the majority of women who engaged in collecting activities did so at a young age, which again has its European parallels (Gregory, 2010: 132). For some of them, involvement in the collection movement inspired them to undertake more systematic collection on their own initiative, not merely of songs but also of other forms of traditional culture. These women gradually acquired the status of experts in the fields of ethnography and folkloristics. M. O. Horváthová worked in the Ethnographic Museum in Martin as curator from 1919. D. Kardossová Križková, in the capacity of "research assistant", provided folklore material from her own collecting activity to ethnographers A. Kmeť and Adolf P. Záturský (1834-1904). As an outstanding expert on folk clothing and folk embroidery, however, from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century she collaborated in her own right with several museums in Slovakia, Moravia and Bohemia.

## WOMEN'S CONCEPT OF COLLECTION AND ITS CHANGES

Collecting approaches were closely bound up with the ideas of the 19<sup>th</sup> century national movement. From the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, they began to overlap with the idea of scientific documentation, as a professional activity serving to gain new knowledge (and not merely the gathering of materials). From this standpoint, one can distinguish a number of approaches to folk song collection:

1. In the early 19<sup>th</sup> century the **enlightenment conception of collecting, translating and publishing** folk songs, was still current. Herder had published a volume of song lyrics acquired from several European ethnic groups in German translation in the 1770s, republished posthumously under a new title in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century (*Volkslieder*, 1778-1779; *Stimmen der Völker in Liedern*, 1807). The translation of folk song lyrics into

a literary language was associated with the interest educated Europeans took in unknown, exotic and rural cultures, including “marginal” European regions (Ling, 1997: 8).

A unique example in Slovakia was the aristocratic lady Terézia M. Artner, who was active as a German-language writer. She made adaptations of Slovak folk songs, tales and legends, translated them into German, and offered them for publication (*Taschenbuch für vaterländische Geschichte III*, 1822). Her translations of folk song lyrics were intended to communicate regional material to an international community of interested readers. An example of her song written records, in the Slovak language, appeared after her death in *Národné zpiewanky* (Kollár, [1834] 1953: 44). Here, however, her collecting work appeared in a different framework of national ideas, unconnected with the original purpose of the collector. Regarding her collecting work, we have very little information, and even that little comes from secondary sources.

2. **The idea of romantic nationalism** took shape at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Leerssen, 2013: 9–12). In Slovakia this idea had a long-term influence on the collection movement, even to the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Collecting songs was not simply an individual need of particular persons. It was regarded as a socially requested activity: its findings helped to legitimate the national emancipation of Slovaks. The corpus of Slovak folk songs, prepared by collectors, was intended to testify to the historical continuity of their own ethnic group, and it provided a basis for the creation of Slovak national culture.

At first, the collecting activities of women sprang from whatever caught their interest and whatever they regarded as worthy of being recorded. Editors of song editions in the 1820s and 30s made selections, according to their own ideas and purposes, from the written records which collectors offered for publication. Information on the manuscript collections which were forwarded is provided only in secondary sources: addenda, appendices and commentaries as part of published editions. From these we learn that several women put entire manuscript song collections at the disposal of the editors (Kollár, [1835] 1953: 573–774, 576–577). Outstanding among them was Apolónia Baltazarová Füredy, who in her native village of Péterka, near Budapest, wrote down the local Slovak folk song repertoire. Of her manuscript collections, only a fragment found its way into the editions of *Písně světské* and *Národné zpiewanky*.

Equally, the late 19<sup>th</sup> century editors of *Slovenské spevy* took a selective approach to the manuscript song collections sent to them. Unpublished written records, however, appeared additionally as part of the modern critical edition (Galko, *Ed.*, [1880–1926] 1972–1989). Entire sets of songs were made available there, as their collectors had sent them to the editors for publication. Collecting activity was promoted so as to help in the preparation and publication of *Slovenské spevy*, and the organisers issued public instructions, including the requirement that songs be collected together with their tunes (Francisci, Mudroň, Halaša, Kadavý, 1879). This edition thus, for the first time, directed women’s attention towards the musical component of the song. The female collectors accordingly tended to collaborate with male collectors who had musical competence, or in rare cases to make their own musical transcriptions. Kristína and Mária Royová’s set of song lyrics together with tunes is associated with the micro-region of Stará Turá and was the result of their joint work of collection and transcription. These isolated efforts notwithstanding, female collectors persisted in the reduced record of song texts. We believe that this reduced approach was connected not only with the long-continuing

image of Slovak women as cultivators of the national language but also with their language-related professions. That is the reason why, in such a wide-ranging edition of songs, so few of the contributors were women.

3. The period associated with the breakthrough of women into the modern professions (Dudeková, *Ed.*, 2011: 540–627) brought changes also in the attitude to collection: there was a shift from incidental and occasional collecting activities to **more systematic collecting work**. The new approach to written records of songs employed some elements of documentation, especially by providing accompanying data with the given song. Such data had not been usual hitherto, either in manuscripts or in printed collections in Slovakia. The collecting approach with elements of documentation was employed especially by those women who had wider experience in describing and systematising the artefacts of traditional culture. Their experience had been acquired in preparing museum collections, which laid the basis for Slovakia's modern memory institutions in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century (Urbancová, V., 1987: 219–237).

As an example one may take the manuscript collection by D. Kardossová Križková, which contains song lyrics from the regions of Orava, Ponitrie and Podpoľanie. This is the product of educated collection work, which includes accompanying information (even if not thorough) about the songs. The collector states the locality of the song, the occasion of singing, and the song's function or genre, even making use of folk terminology; additionally, there is sporadic dating of the record, or a reference to the singer. Despite being restricted only to song lyrics, here we meet with elements of interest in the musical component of the songs: alongside her references to “travelling” tunes, in some few cases she also attempted a musical transcription. These are music sketches which contain the melodic line (tone pitches) with a schematic record of the time relations (rhythm and metre).

The published edition of *Slovenské spevy* introduced a new standard (in the Slovak context) of working with folk song material: writing down the song together with its tune. Such an approach was not usual among Slovak female collectors at the turn of the 1900s. An exception was Ž. Duchajová Švehlová and her manuscript collection of 143 folk songs with tunes from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, when she was briefly employed as a teacher in her native village of Lazy pod Makytou. Her collection is an example of comprehensive documentation of the local song repertoire. The record of tunes has features of the more up-to-date approaches to transcription at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, represented by *Slovenské spevy*. Furthermore, there are notes which testify to comparison of the collected songs with already published material from the edition of *Slovenské spevy*, with the aim of identifying song variants.

4. At the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, we can follow the transition from collecting towards **documentation with features of the modern scientific approach** in a broader European context. The folk song was no longer a means of supporting the ideas of the national movement, though the connection of traditional singing to national culture in many regions continued even into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. However, it also became an object of documentation that was aimed at the acquisition of new knowledge. The concept of documentation either was realised beyond the collection movement, or it was that movement's continuation on a new level. It influenced all phases of work with the song material, including the methods and techniques of field work. Attempts at sound documentation (recording), using a phonograph, were a component part. Use of sound

equipment to record singing and music was associated with the professionalisation of collecting work and the establishment of a new scholarly discipline – ethnomusicology in its historical forms of music folkloristic and comparative musicology (Stockmann, *Ed.*, 1992: 14–21).

Two women researchers with this new attitude to field research came to Slovakia to record traditional Slovak singing.<sup>6</sup> The Moravian music folklorist Františka Kyselková (1865–1951), whose documentary contribution has been evaluated in other contexts (Krekovičová, 1996: 67–68), researched Slovak singing, using a phonograph, in collaboration with composer and folklorist Leoš Janáček (1854–1928). In the course of this collaboration, in 1910 she conducted sound recordings of songs directly in the field, in villages of the Púchovská and Marikovská valleys (Procházková, *Ed.*, 2012). The Russian music folklorist Yevgenia Lineva (1854–1919), who was studying Russian vocal polyphony, made a phonograph recording in 1913 of multi-part singing in Kysuce during her research journey to the Austro-Hungarian Empire (Elscheková, Elschek, [1962] 2005: 34, 87).<sup>7</sup> In both cases the sound documentation was conducted with a primarily scholarly interest. Furthermore, Lineva was undoubtedly motivated by intentions of comparison. She was not guided by the ideas of the national movement with its collecting activities, but rather by a new approach to the artefacts of traditional culture. Principally this involved a new relationship to the material, its recording and evaluation, with respect for the facts and an attempt at objective interpretation (Urbancová, V., 1987: 219). This approach took shape at the close of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and led to an independent status for scholarly disciplines dealing with traditional culture (ethnology and folkloristics, ethnomusicology, ethnoorganology, ethnochoreology).

Based on a synoptic view of the findings from the collecting work of women, one may define a number of common features:

Such women as a rule did not undertake “journeys in search of the folk song” to distant places. According to contemporary stereotypes, their life space was confined to the narrow circles of the family and the private sphere (Dudeková, *Ed.*, 2011). However, they were able to overcome this restriction. Involvement in the collecting activities took the form of gathering songs in their local surroundings: native village, place of residence, or temporary work location. In line with the prevailing concept of the Slovak folk song, collecting was done predominantly in the traditional agrarian milieu. If the collectors came from a town or worked there, they focused their interest on its rural surroundings. Their written records were probes into the song repertoire of one locality (A. Baltazarová Füredy, L. Riznerová Podjavorinská, Ž. Duchajová Švehlová) or micro-region (K. and M. Royová), and only later did they have a regional (M. O. Horváthová) or, exceptionally, a wider territorial scope (D. Kardossová Križková). Women collected songs in a setting they were familiar with, and this influenced their selection of singers and the recorded repertoire. Good orientation in the social and cultural setting led either to a selection of singers as representative bearers of the local repertoire, or to a record of the local repertoire in its breadth and diversity.

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6 The first sound recordings of Slovak folk songs using a phonograph were made in Slovakia in 1901 by the Slovak ethnographer Karol A. Medvecký (Urbancová, H., 2016: 13–14).

7 Lineva’s sound recordings, and her contribution to the documentation of traditional Slovak singing, still await evaluation.

The romantic conception laid stress on the phenomenon of collectivity in folk singing; this was what best corresponded to the anonymous category of “the folk” (“the people”) or “the nation”. During the period of national emancipation this idea performed an important integrating function in contemporary society (Burlasová, 2013: 189-194). Female collectors, however, relatively soon began also to notice individuals: the singers who dominated in the local setting via their repertoire, mode of performing, or creation of new songs. They adverted to this fact in their manuscript collections. There was a spontaneous interest here which was not directed by instructions from organisers of the collection movement. Women approached the work of collection with a greater empathy, realising that in their field work they were not communicating with the anonymous category of “the folk” but rather with particular singers as subjects of folk culture. For example, at the turn of the 1830s A. Baltazarová Füredy wrote down songs from a blind female singer, the bearer of the local song tradition, in her native village of Péterka, near Budapest.<sup>8</sup> D. Kardossová Križková wrote down spring ceremonial songs from a female singer of the oldest generation in her locality. E. Riznerová Podjavorinská gave a place in her collection to a new song composed by a local singer.

The song repertoire corresponded to the aim of collecting either selected song categories or the widest repertoire. To a great extent, it was influenced by the contemporary understanding of the folk song and its importance for the national movement. Women were interested in traditional rural culture and its bearers and did not pay attention to the urban milieu or the singing of the educated strata. The structure of the repertoire differed according to how extensive the gathered materials were. In the case of smaller collections, the collectors were often orientated towards song genres associated with women as their bearers (e.g. ceremonial and work songs, lullabies, ballads and love songs). For example, Anna Hudobová’s collection contains 38 records, with a predominance of wedding songs, work songs and dance songs. The wide-ranging collections, however, show a balanced interest also in songs that were part of male singing (e.g. war songs, drinking songs and humorous song repertoire). In her collecting work in her native village E. Riznerová Podjavorinská aimed to “record everything that anyone knew”.<sup>9</sup>

A special component in women’s concept of collection was interest in children’s folklore, which was manifested, however, mainly as a collector’s specialisation (Locke et al., 2009; Gregory, 2010). In Slovakia it was women who were active also as writers of children’s literature who recorded children’s folklore during the period under review. For example, E. Riznerová Podjavorinská when collecting gave particular attention to children’s folklore, as proved by the published examples from children’s plays and riddles in her manuscript collection (Podjavorinská, 1902). Today she is well known as one of classic authors of Slovak literature for children.

The mode of written records corresponded to the standard of the time, when the basic principles of recording and transcription had not been formulated. As regards women, however, there is one striking attribute which may be traced in the collecting activities in Slovakia throughout the entire period: a long-term tendency to collect and

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8 This is one of the first proofs of interest by Slovak collectors in an individual singer and her song repertoire (Urbancová, H., 2016: 89).

9 From personal correspondence (Urbancová, H., 2017a: 220).

write down only the texts of songs. During the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, this corresponded to the contemporary European approach to collecting and publication of song material. The predominant interest then was in the song lyrics, with the tune being regarded merely as a means of its dissemination (Ling, 1997: 15). Later, however, this approach came to be regarded as conservative and outdated. That was reflected in the assessment of women's collecting activities from the standpoint of modern field documentation. By the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the collectors' continued one-sided focus on song texts had become an anachronism and was regarded as an unnatural reduction of the song (Elscheková, Elschek, [1962] 2005: 37).

However, the conservative character of late 19<sup>th</sup> century collecting work by women did not express their "incapacity" to transcribe the tunes. The lack of interest in recording the musical component of songs was so widespread among female collectors in Slovakia that one cannot ascribe it to deficiencies of basic predispositions or insufficient technical preparation. In our opinion, it was associated with the tasks expected of Slovak women, having regard to their "national mission": to teach, disseminate and cultivate the national language (without regard for its variants). And this not only in private life but in public also, according to formulations which appeared in the contemporary literary sources, for example in a magazine article entitled "A Call to the Daughters of Slovakia", from the early 1860s: "You should be proud of our beautifully sounding language; you must bring it into the halls and salons, to courts, to entertainment events, to theatres, in short everywhere in public; it is a matter of honour to cherish it by not keeping it behind doors in a corner but seating it with you wherever you are at the table [...]" (Krčméry, 1862: 391). Here one may see the significance of Slovak women's participation in the 19<sup>th</sup> century collecting activities: they recorded, first and foremost, forms of language culture. The folk song was a source of ethical and aesthetic values, but it was also the bearer of a language (Leerssen, 2013). These tasks of women persisted into the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, even as the unpropitious cultural, social and political situation of Slovaks in the Austro-Hungarian Empire persisted also. In the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries Slovak women collected songs with their tunes only in exceptional cases (K. and M. Royová, Ž. Duchajová Švehlová). In such instances they had received a qualified music education, either by private study or at one of the pedagogic schools.<sup>10</sup>

For comparison we may take a contrasting example from another European region: Great Britain (Gregory, 2010). The Victorian era (1837-1901) was a period of all-round British prosperity. At its close, the individual and isolated efforts of collectors were transformed into a cultural movement which culminated in the foundation of several important institutions of music folkloristics. Women from the middle class played a key role in these processes as collectors, editors and organisers. Though their numbers were not large, each of them produced results which shifted this movement in the given region towards modernisation of the work of song collection. Their personal contribution consisted in documenting the musical component of songs, in which they also collaborated with local musicians. It was actually women who drew attention to the importance of song tunes and made the music culture of the English countryside

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<sup>10</sup> These female collectors made records of the songs in direct contact with singers, as the majority of Slovak collectors did at that time.

accessible in all its diversity. We suppose that it was precisely their empathy and sensibility in field work which led women to discover the vitality of rural music culture – and the song tunes were part of that.

## CONCLUSION

The number of female collectors who engaged in collecting and writing down Slovak folk songs, from the early 19<sup>th</sup> to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, is not negligible: almost fifty women. It indicates a broad basis, and in this the women's work is inseparable from the essential nature of the collection movement in Slovakia, which was not only a cultural but also a national phenomenon. Collecting and publishing folk songs actively contributed to the support of national identity among Slovaks. The collecting activities functioned against the background of national ideology, and it was in this context also that women's concept of collection was formed. Generally, this is connected with the promotion of women in nationally orientated sciences, where one may find many parallels (e.g. Laakso, 2006).

In conclusion, we will give summary answers to the two questions in the introduction. The first question (regarding the concept of collection) encompasses the fundamental problem, of why women for such a long time recorded only song lyrics.

As our enquiry into the collectors' professional background has indicated, it was principally women with an interest in language who engaged in song collecting. Research in the field of music historiography has thus far not discovered any evidence of Slovak women with a higher education in music, who were professionally active as composers or performers, giving attention also to the collection and transcription of folk songs. Among female musicians we find artistically sophisticated performers of folk songs, but not active participants in the collecting activities (Lengová, 2019: 30).

The role which the Slovak patriotic community ascribed to women (Krčméry, 1862) had a lasting influence also on their interests as collectors. The reduced form of writing down songs practised by women, without song tunes, corresponded to the European standard for the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Later it lost currency, given the changing requirements of the collection movement, which was differentiated according to regional needs. By the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century it was no longer in accordance with the modern approach to song documentation. In Slovakia, however, it endured as a legitimate form of song collecting. The reason for this may be seen as closely connected with the tasks which the patriotic Slovak community in the 19<sup>th</sup> century ascribed to women, namely care for the language and language culture of the Slovaks. This “national mission” of women endured to the opening of the 20<sup>th</sup> century; one must see its longevity as linked also with the non-fulfilment during that period of the Slovak national movement's demands. Besides this aspect, however, one must bear in mind a further set of reasons, which were connected overall with the emancipation of women in Slovakia (Hollý, 2011).

Women's concept of collection was a result of overlapping historical, cultural, social, gender and personality aspects, as evidenced also by findings from other European regions (Vysloužil, 1955; Gregory, 2010; Zakić, 2014) and in contemporary reflections on personal experience in field work.



The second question is connected with the results of women's collecting activities, hence with the fund of recorded songs. Do the findings we have reached possess only the significance of historical, cultural or sociological information, or can we see these women as also contributing in terms of the collected song material itself?

Song texts written down without tunes, which predominated in women's collecting activity, need to be interpreted as a type of historical source. The significance of such written records for ethnomusicology has been justified, precisely from the historical standpoint (Urbancová, H., 2017b). If, taking that standpoint, we look at the results of the female collectors' work; we regard the larger collections, comprising 120 to 150 songs, as especially valuable. They are either small song monographs of a single village, or probes into a regional repertoire. The smaller song groups have their value as orientation to a certain micro-region, selected genres, or thematic categories.

Generally, however, in the contemporary context, one can regard most of those common features which we have defined (comprising the basis of women's concept of collecting) as contributing to the study of traditional song culture. They include good orientation in "the field" from a social and cultural standpoint, approaching the folk song through the person of the singer, selection of tradition bearers from determinate social or age groups, and a tendency to specialised collection, either in terms of song categories (genres) or territorial scope. Up to now, however, there have been an insufficient number of studies assessing women's participation in the collecting activities in 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century in other European regions, which would make possible comparisons in a wider cultural context.

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