MEMORIES OF MUSIC IN THE CROATIAN COMMUNITY IN SYDNEY, CAPE BRETON

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Croatians populated Cape Breton Island in Canada in the early 20th century to work in the mines or in the steel industry, and were one of the less visible minorities of the Island. As evident from narratives about music in their interviews, music played multiple roles in their lives, both as a vehicle for social cohesion and as part of creating family bonding. The interviews with the members of today's Cape Breton Croatian community also reveal that *tambura* is highlighted as an instrument which represented Croatian culture in the previous generations, as opposed to the traditions of *gusle* and *ganga* that were appreciated only privately.

Keywords: Cape Breton, Croatian diaspora, tambura, gusle, ganga

Encountering the narratives about the past is almost an unavoidable part of ethnographic research. Although ethnographic fieldwork is necessarily placed in the present, the inclusion of discourses about the past can broaden the context of the researched subject. In Philip Bohlman's words, "whereas the everyday and its practices would seem to unfold within the present, the culture of the Other requires a systematization, even ossification of moments gone by" (Bohlman 1997: 140). During my stay and ethnographic research on Cape Breton Island in Canada among the local Croatian community, most of my interviews revolved around the past, because the Croatians now living on the island were members of the second and third generation immigrants who wanted to share stories about their parents and grandparents. In those stories, there was also occasional mention of music that some of the community members experienced in their childhood. Although the memories of experienced music were very rarely specific about the music itself, they did reveal some aspects of the emotional and identificational meaning of the experienced music. Also, since music events were brought to memory and articulated through the context in which the music was first performed or heard, these memory discourses revealed the multisensory ways in which people perceived and remembered music.

In this paper, I will discuss the issues of music and memory based on short analyses of fragments of interviews where people talked about experiencing music in the past. Instead of "simply gather[ing] individual and collective verbal memories shared during interviews", my attempt is to "elaborat[e] memories in and about musical performance into narratives about the past" (Kaufman Shelemay 2006: 18).

CAPE BRETON ISLAND AND ITS CROATIAN COMMUNITY

I came to Sydney, the largest town on Cape Breton island in Canada's Nova Scotia Province, in October 2013 and stayed there for five weeks. During that time, I worked as a research assistant on the project on Central and Eastern European communities in Cape Breton Island, hosted by Cape Breton University and financed by the Wirth Institute at the University of Alberta. The project leader, Dr. Marcia Ostashewski, started the project by exploring Cape Breton's Ukrainian community and discovering that the Island's industrial development in the 20th century attracted a great number of workers from Central and Eastern Europe. Ostashewski's aim was therefore to uncover these hidden minorities and to mobilize "existing and emerging research that moves beyond Cape Breton's more familiar Scottish and Acadian characteristics", to explore "the island's Eastern and Central European antecedents, [...] , thus more fully redefining the island's diverse ethnocultural profile" (Ostashewski 2015: 225). Aside from emphasis on Celtic and Acadian identity, the invention of Nova Scotia's "folk identity", heavily exploited by the tourist industry, relied on the romanticist ideology of peasants and fishermen being the "pure" and "essential" core of the folk, leaving out industrial workers and everyone else (McKay 1994: XV-XVI). My task as a research assistant was to explore the Croatian community in Sydney together with another colleague, Jana Zorić, who was also employed on the project. As we were both working with Cape Breton's Croatians, we conducted most of the interviews together and collaborated on all other aspects of our research.[1]

Cape Breton's and especially Sydney's history in the last 100 years was defined by the development of coal mining and steel industry, both of which attracted workers from the less prosperous parts of Canada (Newfoundland), Caribbean Islands and Europe. Larger waves of migration from Europe coincided with the increase in the steel plant's work demand or economic and political changes in Europe. Subsequently, most of the Croatians who came to live and work in Cape Breton came in the first half of the 20th century. We also found that they predominantly came from the same region, Herzegovina, now part of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, mostly populated by Croats.[2] This prevalence of

[1] Some of our fieldwork experiences were described in Ostashewski et al. (2013).

[2] The term *Croatians* was already being used in the project before I started my research. By using the name *Croatians* instead of *Croats*, Dr. Ostashewski and others who worked on the project wanted to include the possibility of other ethnic groups who might have come to Canada from Croatia, but were not ethnic Croats. We did indeed meet one family from Croatia who belonged to the Greek Catholic Church and whose

Herzegovinian Croats among the Cape Breton Croatian community was not a coincidence, considering that many of them were either related or had other close connections. Most steel plant workers, especially lower income ones, built houses in the part of town known as Whitney Pier, in the vicinity of the factory. The Pier was separated from the rest of Sydney by parts of the steel plant (now dismantled). Even today, the only way to commute to the Pier from the rest of the city is across a bridge which was built in the 1960s as a passage over tar ponds and parts of the factory's infrastructure. This detachment from the rest of the city, especially its "nicer" and richer parts, gives Whitney Pier a *ghettoesque* impression, only enhanced by the fact that most minority immigrant groups, including Croatians, settled there. The steel plant gradually reduced its production and eventually closed in the 1990s, but many of the former workers or their families still live in Whitney Pier, whose history is currently in the process of being recognized as well as romanticised.[3]

Those Croatians still living in Sydney predominantly belong to the second, third and fourth generation immigrants, that is, children, grandchildren and greatgrandchildren of the first settlers. Even though most information on Croatian immigrants to Cape Breton which we gathered[4] referred to those who came in the 1920s and 1930s, we did not find many of their living descendants.[5] This could in part be due to the fact that these, predominantly male migrants, tended to come to Canada alone, and some of them either never married or never brought their families along. Those who did get married and who started families, either brought wives from Croatia/Herzegovina or married members of other Whitney Pier communities (Polish, Ukrainian, "English", i.e. Anglo-Saxon or other).[6] The Croatian community also never had its own church, and predominantly belonged to the Polish Catholic church, or alternatively, to the Ukrainian Greek Catholic church. The small size of the community, as well as inter-ethnic marriages, may have been the cause of a decrease in the use of Croatian. According to the Canadian census, only ten people in Cape Breton listed Croatian as their mother tongue, five of whom from Sydney.[7] Given

members were not sure about their ethnicity. But, we also stumbled onto a paradox of referring to Herzegovinian Croats as "Croatians" even though they came from another country, Bosnia and Herzegovina. In this article, I will predominantly use the term *Croatians* to respect both the intentions of the project leaders and other ethnic groups from Croatia in Canada, but when referring to the specific group from Herzegovina, I will use the term Herzegovinian Croats.

[3] As evident in the book *From the Pier, Dear*, published by the local Whitney Pier Historical Society (Beaton and Keating 2001).

[4] Our main source of knowledge were the interviews, as well as some rare written documents, like Steel Plant HR Records. A list of 46 (presumably) Croatian names among the Steel Plant workers with their birth dates can be found on the web portal: http://diversitycapebreton.ca/islandora/object/diversity%3A194 accessed 15th April 2017.

[5] A rare document on the migratory experience of this generation is an interview with Cris Mayich published in Cape Breton's Magazine in 1983, which can be read on the project's web portal: http://diversitycapebreton.ca/islandora/object/diversity%3A211/datastream/OBJ/view accessed 15th April 2017.

[6] For more on dwelling and marital customs of Sydney Croatians, see Jana Zoric's contribution in Ostashewski et al. (2013: 18–19).

[7] Census data available on the web page: http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2011/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=POPC&Code1=0913&Geo2=PR&Code2=48&Data=Count&SearchText=&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&B1=All&Custom=&TABID=1 accessed 15th April 2017.

that there is a lack of any accurate information on the current or the previous size of the community, we used our interviews to compile a list of some 30 Croatian family names that used to make up the Cape Breton community around the middle of the 20th century (keeping in mind that many of them were related and bore the same last name). To our knowledge, at least nine of those families still have a descendant in Sydney. We were able to speak to 14 people, most of whom were born in Canada (with the exception of one man and one woman) and who mainly did not speak or understand Croatian. Still, many of our informants have visited Croatia or Herzegovina or had plans to do so in the future and had some form of contact with their relatives there.

The Croatian community was culturally active until the mid-1960s through communal celebrations and gatherings, traditional Croatian picnics and dances in the short-lived Croatian Hall. Since the Croatian minority is not active as a community today, in the interviews with our research participants, we had to ask a lot of questions about the past, when most of the interviewees were only children. Conversations about music developed around the public or the private domain, each with its own specifics. Music in the private domain, within family homes, was present in the form of radio transmissions and gramophone records (many of which were brought from "the old country")[8] as well as through children's songs and nursery rhymes that children learned from their parents and grandparents. The public domain of the Croatian community's cultural and music activities had a relatively short and disrupted history. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, a Croatian Hall was built, but was in operation only for several years, because the community had not managed to obtain a liquor license, which would have been essential as a means of financing the Hall. During the period when the Hall was active, most celebrations (showers, weddings, dances and such) were held there. Traditional Croatian picnics were another form of socializing in the community. They were held on the coast in South Bar and consisted of roasting a pig or a lamb, drinking, music, and dance. It seems that one musician, Polish accordion player Johnny Paroush, was particularly active and popular across the whole Whitney Pier, since his name was most often mentioned in relation to all of these occasions. Alongside him, there were a number of singers who also occasionally sang at some of the Croatian celebrations. There did not seem to be a lot of active Croatian musicians, with one exception, that of the *Croatian Tamburitza*[9] *Orchestra*. This Orchestra, a male ensemble of

[8] Although only recordings of traditional *gusle* and *ganga* music will be mentioned in this article, it is worth noting that we also found records of Croatian popular music which one of the women we met (born in Croatia, later entered into an arranged marriage with a Cape Breton Croatian) brought to Cape Breton in the 1970s and 1980s after her holiday visits to Croatia.

[9] The term *tamburica* is a diminutive of the word *tambura*. The spelling *tamburitza* where "tz" replaces the letter "c" is characteristic of Anglophone and non-Slavic countries. In order to avoid the confusion by using different spelling variants, the word *tamburitza* will be used exclusively as part of the name of Sydney's Croatian Tamburitza Orchestra, whereas *tambura* will be used when referring to the instrument itself. *Tamburica* or *tambura* is a traditional plucked string instrument that came to South-Eastern Europe from Asia around the 15th century through Turkish conquests (Andrić 1962: 3). The Croatian nationalist movement in the mid-19th century had a decisive impact on the popularity and perception of *tambura*, resulting in its gradual inauguration as a national instrument (see Bonifačić 1995: 205). Since the 19th cen-

traditional string instruments, was active from the mid-1930s until the beginning of the 1950s.[10] The ensemble consisted of seven members and apparently regularly played at community events as well as at the Sydney waterfront park on the esplanade every other weekend. We also learned that an LP record was made using material from the orchestra's performance for the local CBC radio, but neither members of the community nor the radio archive were able to provide a copy of this recording during our stay. Based on a photo we received from one of the Orchestra member's family, the Sydney Croatian Tamburitza Orchestra consisted of 2 *bisernicas*, 3 *bračs*, 1 *bugarija* and 1 *bas*.

REMEMBERING THE *CROATIAN TAMBURITZA ORCHESTRA* IN SYDNEY

Since some of the older interviewees experienced performances of the *Tamburitza Orchestra* first hand and had recollections of it, we were very eager to find out about their repertoire. The information we obtained, however, was very scarce as to the repertoire, and although some of our research participants had very vivid memories, no one was able to remember a single specific song or dance that the *Tamburitza Orchestra* used to play. The only detail concerning the repertoire we were able to obtain was that they played polkas and waltzes and *hrvatski* [Croatian] music. We were disappointed at the time by the fact that we were not able to identify the *Tamburitza Orchestra*'s repertoire, which would have allowed us to analyse and compare it to the repertoire of similar ensembles in Croatia or elsewhere in North America. However, the information that we did collect was particularly revealing as to the way in which this music functioned as an identification marker in both public and private contexts.

Mary[11] was one of the few Croatian people I interviewed who witnessed the performance of the *Tamburitza Orchestra*. She called the *Tamburitza Orchestra* simply "*Hrvatski* orchestra". We also found out that the Orchestra used to perform in the Polish Hall (since they were active at the time when the Croatian Hall had not been built yet) and that they had a *tambura* teacher, Joe Jelenich, whom everyone referred to as the Professor. She also named the other players.

Mary: We also had a *Hrvatski* orchestra, do you know that?
Jelka: Mhm, the Tamburitza orchestra, do you remember?

tury, *tambura* also experienced changes in construction and function, transforming from a village soloist instrument into various sized instruments for larger ensembles and orchestras forming in towns, modelled on bourgeois singing choirs.

[10] The activity of the Orchestra was interrupted by the Second World War. Since some of its members returned from the War with physical and psychological injuries, as we found out through our interviews with family members, its activities in the 1940s were probably only occasional. Despite its short and poorly documented history, this Orchestra is significant for being the only organized Croatian musical group in Cape Breton.

[11] I will only use the first names of my interlocutors throughout this paper. The only last names revealed will be the ones of the members of the *Tamburitza Orchestra*.

> Mary: Yes! And they used to play down at the old Polish Hall, down on Wesley Street and they, um, we used to call the man that taught, who was their leader, we used to call him, pro...I think it was the Professor. But he worked at the plant. There was a Peter Yelowich, John and Stanley Mayich, Tommy Granich, and I think it was a... the Markotich boys, too.[12]

But, when I asked her about the repertoire and the music they used to play, this was what she answered:

> Jelka: Do you remember what kind of music they used to play?
> Mary: They used to play our own music. Their... *hrvatski* music. And they used to... they had a beautiful uniform! It was like a white shirt, I think white pants and a little wide hat with a little tassel or something.
> Jelka: But, do you remember what specifically..., do you remember like some of the songs they used to play?
> Mary: Lots of polkas and waltzes, but... it, it... I was only a kid then, you know. But I loved it! And the old Polish Hall, now... see where my doorway is? That was the stage, and in front of the stage, and all up around the sides were all chairs, and I used to sit right in the front and I'd turn around and look right up at them while they were playing. It was just beautiful!

Instead of focusing on the repertoire I kept asking about, through her remembering process, Mary offered me a detailed narrative describing her experience of the performance of the *Tamburitza Orchestra*: location, spatial and visual details, and her position and view of the whole event. Later during the interview, I asked her about the music at the Croatian picnics in the South Bar. Unfortunately, at one point in the conversation, I interrupted her and led her answer toward accordion music, since we had heard about the accordion player Johnny Paroush in some of the previous interviews. Despite of my interruption and eagerness to find out the details about the music performed, Mary still managed to bring out aspects of her experience of the music during the Croatian picnics:

> Jelka: So, when you were saying how you used to have music at the picnics and used to dance, do you remember who used to play?
> Mary: No, I can't remember!
> Jelka: But there was music there?
> Mary: There was music, yeah! We used to...
> Jelka: Was it, like, accordion music?
> Mary: I believe it was, I'm not absolutely sure, but it was music that I grew up with, you know, and we danced the whole afternoon!

Another person we talked to about the Orchestra was Carolyn, woman of Croatian descent younger than Mary, whose father and uncle were members of the Orchestra. The interview with Carolyn was collaboratively led by both Jana Zorić and myself. Carolyn was born in the 1950s, when the Tamburitza Orchestra was no longer active, but she still

[12] As with most immigrant family names, there are different variants of their spelling in Canada. In order to offer some clarity, along with every name in the English spelling variant, I will include the Croatian spelling as well. The family names of the Orchestra members were: Jelović, Majić, Granić, Markotić.

had some memories of hearing about it from her family members and she still keeps her father's instrument.

> Carolyn: I think they used to practice, like, at our house, I think. I think that's where the practice was all the time. Yeah, um, I'm not a hundred percent sure, but that, sort of, is in the back of my mind, Dad saying that. [...] I remember my grandmother saying that she did a lot of tailoring. I know she didn't make them [uniforms], but I don't know if she hemmed them, if she repaired them, but I remember, you know, her saying that she was doing something.
> Jana: Maybe she decorated some of...?
> Carolyn: Maybe she did, I don't know. Again, see, like, you know, you hear these things and this is just what I'm remembering from my childhood, and you know, kicking, kicking myself. And even when my daddy got sick, um, why didn't I sit down and ask him stuff?

Carolyn's perspective was similar to Mary's. They were both children when the events we asked them about had occurred. The difficulties they had with remembering have to do not just with the fact that it happened a long time ago, but also with their young age at the time. Carolyn's memories, like Mary's, were slowly awakened through a set of association (from "the back of her mind"), first her father talking about rehearsals at their house, than her grandmother saying how she had to work on their uniforms, and finally, Carolyn's regret about not finding out more about her father's musical activities when he was still alive. Afterwards, we asked Carolyn, who still keeps her father's *tambura*, if she would be willing to lend it to us to take photos of the instrument and examine it. In her answer, she also revealed her personal and emotional connection to the instrument itself.

> Carolyn: I would be heartbroken if anything ever happened to that [*tambura*], or if it ever disappeared. [...]
> Jelka: Did your father used to play afterwards, when the band broke up?
> Carolyn: No, I don't think he did. When...I remember when we were kids, different times, because he was telling us stories, about, you know, what they did or whatever, and he would just bring it [*tambura*] out and just play a little bit for us. But that wasn't like a very frequent thing. It's not like every evening he would bring it out, but um, and that was when we were, we were still relatively young, so it's just, um, I guess that was just part of his, part of his past.

Unlike Mary, who experienced the *Tamburitza Orchestra* in the public, at the Polish Hall, Carolyn's reflections on the Orchestra are very private, deeply entwined with the memory of her late father. The Orchestra and the instrument itself represent a part of her father's past that she wished she knew more about. The *tambura* also evoked memories of her own childhood, which is why she would be "heartbroken" if anything ever happened to it. One aspect of her father's playing she was very sure about is that her father, as well as her uncle, had not played the *tambura* prior to their arrival to Canada.

> Jelka: Do you maybe remember if your father and your uncle played the *tamburica* back home?
> Carolyn: They didn't. [...] No, I know that. That they didn't play any musical instruments, they learned when they formed the band.

Though it might not seem like it at first, the fact that the band members learned to play a Croatian instrument in diaspora, was not surprising. Carolyn's father and uncle were both from Herzegovina, a region with its specific music idioms (some of which will be described later in the paper) but which traditionally do not include the *tambura*. The *tambura* is most commonly found in the Pannonian region of Croatia and Serbia. The fact that Croatians in Sydney, in order to preserve their cultural heritage, did not turn to *gusle* (an instrument much closer to their regional affiliation), but *tambura*, has to do with the *tambura*'s aforementioned status as a Croatian identity symbol. Richard March, researcher of the history of *tambura* in North America, draws a clear connection between the Croatian 19th-century nationalistic movement and national ideology of the first Croatian immigrants to the United States. In the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, "the underlying impetus for the formation of tamburitza societies playing patriotic repertoire on the national instrument was as much a Slavic opposition to Austrian, Hungarian, and Italian political and cultural hegemony as it was an appreciation for music" (March 2013: 76). Similarly, immigrants "in Europe and in North America, Croats and Serbs needed to validate the value of their culture and to resist denationalizing pressures from the government and the country's elite" (ibid.: 86). They did that, again, with the help of organized *tambura* orchestras. First *tambura* ensembles in North America were formed in the early 1900s. So, by the time the Sydney Orchestra was formed in the 1930s, there was already a whole North American *tambura* infrastructure in existence: sheet music, *tambura* manufacturers and teachers, magazines and *tambura* player networks. Nada Bezić found that the information and sheet music travelled both ways, since some of the *tambura* ensembles in Croatia performed popular American songs as early as 1905 (Bezić 2001: 107). Because of the *tambura* ensembles being such an emphatically public and representational aspect of Croatian cultural heritage, many of the other music traditions were neglected. Such traditions include *gusle* and *ganga* music, both cherished privately in the families of the first Sydney Croatians.

MEMORIES OF MUSIC IN CROATIAN HOMES IN SYDNEY

Like Carolyn, most of the people we talked to, experienced fragments of Croatian music and culture in their own homes, since, as I mentioned, public Croatian communal activities were not many since the second part of the 20th century. The Croatian LP records some of the families had frequently mention two music idioms, *gusle*[13] and *ganga*,[14] both characteristic of Herzegovina and the Dinaric part of South-Eastern Europe.

[13] *Gusle* is a one or two-string bowed instrument held in the lap and played by a single player/singer. *Gusle* music refers not only to playing the instrument, but also to the singing, since *gusle* is commonly used to accompany a singer-storyteller, and the melody played on the instrument is only a slightly ornamented version of the melody performed by the voice. The instrument itself is completely subordinated to the story-telling and "purely instrumental playing on gusle can only be heard in preludes, interludes, while the singer rests his voice and in the end when he stops singing" (Bezić 1967: 186)

[14] *Ganga* refers to a "vocal genre characterised by performance of two voices" whose melodies are "based on limited tonal scales, mostly chromatic, with interval values which do not respond to today's common intervals (untempered singing)" (Ćaleta 2012: 34).

Part of the conversation with Carolyn revolved around her grandparents' recordings of *gusle* music:

> Jana: How about your grandparents? Did your grandmother use to sing, when she was looking after you?
> Carolyn: She did. And my grandfather, too. They…and you know what, now that you… when I think of it, I can see that, the little gramophone on the porch, and they had, they had records.
> Jana: What kind of records did they have?
> Carolyn: There was Croatian music, I don't remember, and a lot of *gusle*. [Imitates the sound of *gusle* with her voice]. It used to drive us crazy as kids, we never got that! But I don't know if the others were folk songs or what…and where are all those records, I don't know!

The sonic impression of the sound of *gusle* was the most memorable aspect of Carolyn's hearing of her grandparents' records. *Gusle* music is characterized by a very narrow range of melody and tone rows with intervals smaller than semitones, which often occur through the technique of sliding on the string. Carolyn underlined these aspects in her short vocal demonstration by imitating that sliding. After the demonstration, she exclaimed: "it used to drive us crazy as kids, we never got that!". To understand the reasons why this music used to drive the children crazy and what part of it they could not understand, we should consider that, unlike *tamburitza* ensembles, the narrow interval style of the *gusle* is not easily translatable into the western music system. Some of the other people we interviewed also remembered the experience of hearing the *gusle* as an uncomfortable one. Among those people were siblings Frank and Rosalie.

Frank was the first Croatian person we met in Sydney. His late grandfather, Križan or Cris, used to be the president of the Sydney lodge of the Croatian Fraternal Union and was considered to be the head of the whole community. Cris came to Sydney as early as 1926 and later helped a lot of other Herzegovinian Croats to migrate to Canada. Frank also told us about his grandparents' *gusle* records and expressed a certain level of embarrassment by the fact that he did not like them as a child.

> Frank: We had a few Croatian records around. My grandfather, it was, was, you're probably gonna be shocked now, when people see this, but he loved *gusle* music. I… *gusle* is a one-string instrument, so, to make music with a *gusle*, it didn't seem to be very imaginative and I'm probably gonna be shot for saying that, but they, they, my grandmother always listened to *gusle* music and, and they used to…
> Jana: Did they have *gusle* in the house?
> Frank: No, no, no. They just, she'd just listen to [it]…

A couple of days after this interview, I met Frank's sister, Rosalie, who came to Sydney for holidays. During her vacation, she stayed at her parents' house in Whitney Pier and shared her memories of her grandfather's records:

> Rosalie: My grandfather used to love this music… I don't, I tried to look it up once, because all I remember it being called *gusle* music. Is that it? The name of it? And when

> we would come to his house, he had that music on all the time! And it was, he loved it very loud, and we would come in and we would be trying to talk, but the music would be playing. And of course, we were just young kids and it was like folk music, and we didn't understand the words, because, they seemed to be, the music was loud, but you couldn't hear the words, though, well. But he loved that music, yeah.
> Jelka: And you not so much?
> Rosalie: Well, at the time I didn't, but I've heard it since, when I've looked it on the Internet, when I tried to find out what the words meant and I've heard some…and I like it, yeah. I like it. And he had lots of records. I don't know whatever happened to those records.

The only person who mentioned her mother's *ganga* recordings was Katie, a second generation Croatian woman:

> Jana: Did they teach you about Croatian culture at home? Did they sing songs, or…
> Katie: *Ganga*.
> Jelka: Really?
> Jana: Did they teach you how to sing?
> Katie: No. But she would listen to it. She would listen to it.
> Jana: Oh, she had records?
> Katie: Yup, I might still, I don't know if there, when she went, when we went in '69, of course, she bought records.

In addition to Katie's family, some of the other Croatians were familiar with *ganga* and even knew how to sing themselves. We know this from a story that two Croatian sisters told us about their parents singing with some of their friends on a beach during holidays. Apparently, this only happened once, since some of the neighbours heard them singing and they were too embarrassed to ever sing again. *Gusle* music and *ganga* seemed to be a less comprehensible part of Croatian cultural heritage for the children and grandchildren of Croatian immigrants and were also considered inappropriate for their parents to practice publicly. Except for the records of awkward-sounding music, some people had fond memories of their parents and grandparents singing and teaching them Croatian children's songs. Since Rosalie was 11 years younger than Frank, she had much more vivid memories of spending time with her mother and grandmother at home. For example, unlike him, she was also able to remember some of the Croatian children's songs that their mother used to sing to them.

> Jelka: Do you maybe remember, Frank told us that your mother used to sing, like, nursery rhymes and stuff, do you maybe remember some of the songs?
> Rosalie: Yeah, yeah, two of them I remember. One is… actually, *djedo*, my grandfather, is the one who used to sing it to us as well. But mum sang it too, it was:
> *Kiša pada, trava raste, to je moja godina, Rosie ima crne joči, po ni [pa mi] dodija!*[15]
> [laughs]

[15] A few of the words were mispronounced. A rough translation of the Croatian text would be: It is raining, the grass is growing, this is my year, Rosie's eyes are black and she is teasing me.

> And then the other one that my mum would do with us all the time was in our hands and she would do:
> *Mali miše, di se [si] bila, u bar bila, šta ti radija, pila vina, jes' li meni donila, jesem-nisam, tu-tu-tu-tu!*[16]

The melody of the rhymes she recited was a three-tone sequence, typical of children's songs. The closing verse in both rhymes was descending in pitch and accelerating in tempo. For the second rhyme, Rosalie put her left hand on the table with her palm turned upward and made circling movements on the palm surface with her right hand, like her mother used to do with her.[17] Her memory of her mother singing children's songs, along with all the other details, included this tactile impression as well. The interview with Rosalie was perhaps the most emotionally intense one I experienced in Sydney. During our conversation, we had to stop recording twice because she started to cry while remembering her late mother and grandmother.

Although Rosalie was the only one who was able to recite Croatian nursery rhymes from her childhood, it is possible that the other interviewees knew similar songs, but were not able to remember them right away like Rosalie did. For example, Julie mentioned her father teaching her a children's song as a part of their playing and bonding:

> Jelka: Was there ever any music? Did they [parents] play records, or...
> Julie: No, no, they didn't. My mother would have the radio on and listen to easy listening music or whatever the popular songs were of the day. They didn't. They talked... it was mostly the food and the language. My father talked a little bit about growing up in Herzegovina. He talked about, um... he taught me little sing-song things like *Cica-maca*[18] and stuff like that, that you tell little children and then you were playing, like, little games or whatever. And then we used to sit down and eat green onions and salt and bread, and that was our little treat. And he called it [the onions] *kapula*. And he said: go out and pick some *kapula*. And he watched me through the window, and I'd pick some up and he cleaned it off, and we'd take a piece of bread and we'd load salt on it and we'd put the *kapula* and the salt and eat the bread. And that's something that we used to do, so that was our little father – daughter bonding thing [laughs].

Although Julie obviously didn't consider "little sing-song things like *Cica-maca*" to be music, the *Cica maca* song must have had an emotional impact on her, because she still remembers it decades later. For both Rosalie and Julie, these children's songs were a part of growing up and learning their parents' culture. The cultural aspects that they learned at home also form a part of their own identity, their cultural ancestry and memory of their late family members.

[16] The translation of the Croatian text: Little mouse, where were you, you were in a bar, what were you doing, drinking wine, did you bring me some, I did, I didn't, tu-tu-tu-tu.

[17] Zorica Rajković found this game with a similar text while researching children's folklore in Zagreb in 1970. In Rajković's case, the game came to Zagreb from Konavle through the child's grandfather (Rajković 1978: 41).

[18] *Cica-maca* is Croatian for kitty-cat.

WHAT CAN WE LEARN ABOUT MUSIC FROM THE MEMORY NARRATIVES?

By extracting fragments of the interviews which describe the experience and memories of music, I tried to contribute to a better understanding of experiences of the Croatian community in Sydney and the ways in which music remains in people's memories and plays an important role in the process of their self-identification. Sydney Croatians adapted and re-invented their own national identity in Canada, which is clear from their acceptance of *tambura* as a representational national music symbol. It has already been noticed that migrant groups in the diaspora can be "actively involved in reviving their ethnic and cultural identity, and they use music as one of their tools" (Hofman and Marković 2006: 317). Hofman and Marković found that organized and institutionalised music activities play a significant role in this process. Cultural aspects of ethnic communities in the diaspora can also be revisited or reinvented. Similarly, Susan Motherway in her study on the creation and global production of Irish songs found that in the diaspora, the "validation of the homogeneous dominant culture often leads to the marginalization of internal ethnic groups" (Motherway 2013: 83). The Herzegovinian Croats in Cape Breton can be perceived as such a group, being on the margins of Croatian culture both in their homeland and in the diaspora. As a marginal group, in order to strengthen their national identity, they adopted a national symbol already rooted and recognized in Croatia and the Croatian diaspora, the *tambura*, simultaneously leaving out some of their own regional cultural specific characteristics.

Although we could not reconstruct the repertoire of the *Croatian Tamburitza Orchestra*, we can assume that it did not exclusively play Croatian music, given that most North American *tambura* ensembles did not have such restrictions. On the contrary, performing popular American repertoire on the *tambura* in the Unites States "might have been understood as an affirmation of Slavic culture" (March 2013: 114) while the "inclusion of Slavic performers in the emerging American entertainment industry provided them an incentive to diversify their musical expression" (ibid.). Since the *Sydney Tamburitza Orchestra* did not only play in the Polish Hall, but also did a recording for the CBC Radio and played on the town's esplanade every other Sunday, I suppose that they must have adapted their repertoire for diverse audiences. Still, Mary and some of the other people who listened to the *Tamburitza Orchestra* expressed pride in their performance of *hrvatski* [Croatian] music. The designation *hrvatski* here may refer to the language of the songs; or maybe not even that, the music might have been perceived as Croatian simply because of the fact that it was performed on Croatian instruments and by Croatians. Because of this perception, the *Tamburitza Orchestra* had a vital role in strengthening the sense of belonging to the Sydney Croatians. It is not irrelevant that this was done through music since, as Ruth Finnegan points out, "musical performances have been seen as occasions for exploiting the encompassing capacity of sound to marshal a sense of *communitas*" (Finnegan 2003: 186). Similarly, Croatian picnics always included music that Mary and

the members of her generation in the Croatian community "grew up with" and "danced [to] the whole afternoon". So, even though we lack information on what this music was, it seems that the information of *what* was performed is of lesser importance than *where*, *how* and *who with*.

In addition to the aspects of national identification, my other focus was the interaction of music and memory, or "the manner in which musical experience is sustained in memory as both a sound world and an affect-laden recollection of the past" (Kaufman-Shelemay 2006: 20). Some of the interviewees, who could not recollect the music itself, had vivid memories of other aspects of musical performances. All these aspects, including "images of place, artefacts (instruments, dress, programs), visual associations, tactile impressions, bodily rhythms, somatic remembrances, intertextualities across a range of senses" (Finnegan 2003: 190) constitute a part of their musical experience. According to Finnegan, "these complex multimodalities deserve a central rather than marginal place in our experience-ful analyses of music" (ibid.). In a similar way, my attempts at reconstructing music from memory in the interviews resulted in a whole range of recollections, which are not only music-related, but an integral part of multisensory musical experience.

Through our conversations with the Sydney Croatians about their family customs and everyday life at home, we found out that not much attention was being paid to passing the cultural heritage on. If at all, culture was taught almost unintentionally, through cooking, parts of language from words the adults used at home and other things children heard, saw or picked up accidentally. As Julie formulated it, "it was mostly the food and the language". Some of our interlocutors tried to explain this neglect on the part of their parents by describing their difficult life path and lack of time. Also, both children and parents wanted the new generations to "fit in" in the new country, and to have better lives than the ones their parents had. This was the context in which some non-representational aspects of culture, like *gusle* and *ganga* music or children's songs and eating green onions, were practised. The fact that these music idioms were not perceived by the Sydney Croatians as appropriate for public performance only causes further consideration about the ways in which ethnic identities in the diaspora are re-negotiated. In another context, these very traditions could have been exploited to strengthen the identity within a community precisely because of their "different" sound aesthetics, represented as *originality* or *authenticity*. Such cases were already explored in some other ethnographies, for example Sanja Ranković's (Ranković 2012: 2), where a voice-shaking singing style, similar to *ganga*, was emphasized as the most important one for a Serbian diasporic group, precisely because of its archaic sound quality. In Sydney, musical expressions based on the narrow interval style, whose sound aesthetics differs from that of western music, were neglected in favour of the "more western" ones. Still, the search for these non-representational cultural aspects, allowed me to gain a deeper insight into the micro-processes of cultural transmission within the families and homes. Although the interviews were conducted mostly by focusing on national cultural markers because of the overall goal of the project, in order to avoid the trap of over-emphasising ethnic identity and using "ethnicity as the

central lens for analyses of migrant identities and behaviour" (Čapo 2012: 93), I propose that the emotional significance of some of the intimately shared cultural aspects within the Croatian families was connected more to the memory of childhood and the deceased family members. Through these aspects, members of the second and third generation migrants, or the *post-migration generations*, to borrow Jasna Čapo's proposed term (ibid.: 92), kept memories of their parents and grandparents whose lives were very different from their own. As for the first generation Cape Breton Croatians, and the role of traditional music in their lives, I believe that there is more to be said about the fact that some of them brought music records from "the old country". Suitcases and the process of packing for the migrant communities have to do with "not only stuff but also organizing the past, the present and the future" (Löfgren 2016: 61) which means that, according to Löfgren, "pieces of luggage share an aura of being containers of [...] emotions, longings and memories" (ibid.: 60). Although music records were not always brought on the initial trip to Canada, but bought on some of the subsequent visits to Croatia, the fact that they travelled with the migrants to their new homes has to do with some of those "emotions, longings and memories". Traditional, as well as later popular Croatian music fulfilled the need of hearing and remembering the homeland through sound.

Although the information on music formed only a minor part of our interviews with the Sydney Croatians, the analysis of those parts provided useful insights into negotiating representational traditional Croatian music idioms in the diaspora and the positions of dominant and non-dominant traditions. The interviews showed that marginal musical expressions, such as *ganga* and *gusle*, suffered neglect within the Croatian community in Sydney in the first part of the 20th century, in comparison to *tambura*, an established national symbol. On the other hand, publicly marginalized musical expressions as well as very intimate ones (children's songs) still formed a part of inter-family enculturation and had a strong role within personal histories of second and third generation of Cape Breton's Croatian community.

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[19] Excerpts and complete recordings of most of the interviews cited above can be listened to by accessing the project web portal: http://diversitycapebreton.ca/islandora/object/diversity%3A283 accessed 16th April 2017.

SJEĆANJA NA GLAZBU U HRVATSKOJ ZAJEDNICI U GRADU SYDNEYU NA OTOKU CAPE BRETON

U članku se analiziraju narativi prikupljeni intervjuima s drugom i trećom generacijom Hrvata u gradu Sydneyu na otoku Cape Breton u Kanadi. Budući da hrvatska zajednica u Sidneyu danas nema kulturnu koheziju koju je imala u prvoj polovici dvadesetog stoljeća, intervjui su se uglavnom bavili prošlim događajima i sjećanjima na glazbu koja je bila dijelom života zajednice. Analiza pokazuje dvije odvojene domene u kojima se glazba prakticirala: javnu i privatnu. U javnoj sferi glazba je imala ulogu postizanja kohezije zajednice i stvaranja identiteta te je pridonosila isticanju tambure kao hrvatskog nacionalnog instrumenta. U privatnoj sferi glazba je bila dio enkulturacije u obiteljsku sredinu, koja je neke aspekte kulturne baštine približavala članovima druge ili treće generacije. U privatnoj su sferi bile prisutne gusle i ganga, kao i intimnije pjesme za djecu. Te tradicije koje su se njegovale u privatnoj sferi još uvijek su dio emocionalno nabijenih sjećanja današnjih Hrvata na otoku Cape Breton, koja ih vežu s njihovim djetinjstvom i pokojnim članovima obitelji.

Ključne riječi: Cape Breton, hrvatska dijaspora, tambura, gusle, ganga