

Love Sentiments and Love Relations in Rural Yugoslavia

by VERA ST. ERLICH

RÉSUMÉ

La qualité des sentiments d'amour est analysée telle qu'observée dans différentes parties de la Yougoslavie.

La Slavonie a été un foyer de rencontre des cultures orientales et occidentales et ce concours d'influences a favorisé l'éclosion de sentiments joyeux d'amour.

In my studies of family relations in Yugoslavia I came upon several problems peripheral to the subject of considerable interest¹. What is the emotional quality of premarital, marital, and extra-marital relations in different regions? Why do some people (or groups) continually long for love, considering it the highest value in life, and suffer from frustration of it in a measure that may lead to suicide? How is it that some Yugoslavs are good lovers, and even artists in achieving happiness for themselves and their partners, while others almost completely ignore this whole dimension of life, or even despise it? The latter are poor lovers by any standard and know little about the bliss and agony of love.

When I looked for cross-cultural studies to find some clues or answers to these questions, I could find very little. There is scarcely any study that I know of stating the conditions in which love sentiments may grow or wither. The emotional qualities of intimate relationships between the sexes in the cultures of communities I surveyed are seldom discussed nor is the role which these sentiments play in shaping the lives of individuals and families. If the subject is touched upon at all, the term "romance"

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or "romantic love" is often used, words which seem to have a slightly ironical connotation. "Sex" is used mostly in a narrow sense, as in some psychological studies focusing on orgasm. One sometimes wonders whether "love" has become a taboo in American anthropology and social psychology.

It is rather surprising that earlier work on sex relations in "primitive" cultures was not followed by similar studies on the subject. The impressive works on sex relations by Margaret Mead and Malinowski have remained somewhat isolated. I find it especially noteworthy that Malinowski's intriguing statements about love in the Trobriand Islands did not stir much discussion. His brilliant presentation of the role of sentiment and passion among the Trobrianders, the value of emotion in their culture, the aesthetic aspect of sex relations, the close tie between the lovers, the perseverance of the emotional quality of love in marital life, and the role of jealousy — none of these themes has been followed up in further research.

It seems that the climate, especially in North America, is not very favorable for research into these problems. Perhaps certain negative features in home life cause a skeptical attitude toward "romantic love." Scholars and educators have serious doubts about the worth of emotions that are colored by the superficial portrayal of sex in movies and in women's magazines. It may be difficult for them to forget these phenomena and keep an objective view on love in other cultures which they study anthropologically. The full reason for this neglect of the subject will probably be found only when American contemporary culture is analyzed from a detached viewpoint.

The suspicion with which some anthropologists and social psychologists regard sentiment in general is also an impediment when it comes to choosing love relations as a subject for research. In American anthropological works of great merit one can find statements that label "romantic love" as an artificial product inculcated in the public by media of mass communication for commercial purposes. Some authors maintain that young people are being infected with romantic delusions by Hollywood and cheap literature. They assert that sentimental dreaming, enthusiasm for moonlight, and infatuation at first sight are a serious danger for

building up happy and lasting marriages. The same authors further insist that nowhere else in the world do societies rely on the romantic preferences of young people when it comes to marriage. Everywhere they claim, the families concerned arrange marriages for sons and daughters, keeping reasonable consideration in mind, or at least parents try to influence young people to follow such considerations. In most cultures infatuation has been looked upon as a temporary mood or the sad exaggeration of unbalanced youth but not as a satisfactory motivation for starting a new family. Such assertions have little scientific value, although they may be educationally useful. There is no proof that personal attraction and strong sentiment are not the main motivation for marriage in many peasant and "primitive" cultures. The portrayal of love in cheap fiction and shallow movies should not be identified with the real emotions of love and affection whose existence and strong motivational power can hardly be denied.

THE YUGOSLAV EXAMPLE

I will present some results of my studies in Yugoslav rural areas concerning intimate relations between the sexes. Yugoslavia may prove to be a good source to investigate the love and love relationships. For one reason this relatively small European country has been influenced by several differing cultures during its history. These cultural traditions are revealed in the country's various regions, showing up in great contrasts between attitudes, including attitudes toward love relations. Such attitudes range from hostility toward love relations at one extreme to love considered as one of the highest values on the other. I have another reason for choosing Yugoslavia. The peasant character of the country offers an advantage for studying these problems for it protected people's attitudes from the influence of the mass media. When I collected material on family relations in Yugoslavia on the eve of the Second World War, Yugoslavia was a peasant country in the strict meaning of the term (Erlich 1966). Most peasants wore homemade traditional folk costumes. Their economy was to a great extent a subsistence economy. About 80 per cent of the population was defined as peasants and nearly 50 per cent

were illiterate, both figures being the highest in Europe at that time. There were rural districts with more than 90 per cent of the people illiterate. Especially did women fall in this category. Therefore one can be sure that romantic literature and motion pictures did not mold the behavior patterns of these people. The old cultures of the various regions have kept their formative power until this day in spite of the great changes of World War II and the revolutionary developments that followed.

I am using research material taken from surveys I carried out in the four pre-war years in 305 villages in different regions of Yugoslavia using teams of village teachers as interviewers. My main goal was to study family relationships, but in addition to information on marital relations I sought data on pre-marital relationships as well.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

I have explained why, in order to understand behavior patterns in Yugoslavia, it is necessary to know something about the country's historical background. Without such knowledge the contrasting life styles found in different parts of the country remain incomprehensible.

In the 7th century Slavic tribes (including Croats and Serbs) migrated in southern Central Europe and in the Balkans. They separated from other Slavic tribes (including Czechs and Poles) who remained farther north. Many cultural elements among all Slavs reveal their common past, ethnic base, including language, folklore, songs, costumes, and customs. In the Middle Ages, in connection with the disintegration of the Byzantine Empire, several Slavic states emerged in the Balkans and in Central Europe. In the 14th century, when the Ottoman Turks advanced from Asia Minor, they began to conquer these states one after another. The Ottomans (or Osmons, so named after Osman, founder of the dynasty) developed an invincible attacking power as they energetically followed their missionary idea of conquering the world for Islam. In 1389 they achieved a great victory over the Serbs on Kosovo Plain, the defeat of the Serbian armies and

the death of their princes and war leaders remaining in the memory of the people. On this basis a great national epic has grown up while tragic ballads, parts of the epic, kept alive the idea of revenge. Until recently the names of the heroes of Kosovo were still part of everyday speech, and rage over Kosovo continued to stir men even after the Turks had departed from the European scene.

The contact of the Turks with Byzantium had far-reaching historical consequences. Unlike other invading horse-riding nomads, the Turks borrowed many cultural elements from Byzantium, including institutions, administrative knowledge, and artisan skills. They built a powerful empire which ruled for half a millenium over large parts of Asia, Africa, and Europe. For centuries the Ottoman Empire remained one of the strongest world powers, and its culture colored the cultures of Spain, Italy, France and the whole Balkan peninsula. For 150 years they were lords over Hungary in the heart of Europe. When after 250 years of glory the empire showed signs of decadence, the subjected peoples turned against the Turks. Hate and hostility grew, and revolts flared up. Enemies within and without weakened the state, and in the wars that occurred between 1912 and 1918 the Ottoman empire was finally defeated. Turkey disappeared almost entirely from Europe and the institutions of Sultan and Caliph were abandoned, and so were all Ottoman imperial aspirations.

The Turkish conquest of the Balkans divided the southern Slavs into two parts: one half became part of the Ottoman empire and came under Oriental cultural influence. The other became part of the Austrian monarchy and came under Western influence. After Napoleon's fall, the Adriatic coastal strip (Dalmatia), which for centuries had been under Venetian domination, came under Austrian rule too.

After the First World War, when both the Ottoman and the Austrian empires disappeared from the scene, independent national states were founded in Central Europe, among them Yugoslavia. But the different cultural traditions, which for centuries had shaped people in various Yugoslav regions continue to color the Yugoslav way of life until the present day.

TRIBAL, DINARIC LIFE STYLE

In the craggy mountains of the Dinaric Alps — near the Adriatic coast — there lived in antiquity Illyrian tribes, known as great rebels in the Roman Empire and later as its best soldiers. Their descendants are the mountain dwellers of Albania and Montenegro (in Yugoslavia). The Illyrians mingled with the Slavic immigrants, but the region's military and heroic tradition remained and became even stronger when the Turks conquered. The mountain pastoral tribes never adjusted to Ottoman power. Moreover, other rebellious elements from neighboring lands migrated to those forbidding mountains and were adopted into the Montenegrin tribes which as a result grew stronger. "Acculturation" here acquires a specific meaning: That of reaction to provocation. No Oriental elements were borrowed or accepted; rather cultural development showed a contrary trend. As in a photographic negative where white becomes black, and black white, life patterns took on forms contrary to the Oriental ones.

The Montenegrin tribes became the center of the resistance against the Turks. Their leitmotiv was the idea of revenge for Kosovo. Only the heroic deeds of men were valued, the individual deeds and the heroic deeds of one's ancestors. Part of this life style included rivalry between men to attain glory and prestige. The passionate wish was to be first in clan and tribe. As fighting was the main goal, women held a very inferior position, with no say in clan or tribe. This in turn influenced marital relations, as the great distance between man and wife was an obstacle to mutual trust and intimacy. Any expression of tender feeling was frowned upon. The erotic sphere was regarded as not completely legitimate and was only tolerated. Marriages were mostly arranged according to clan interests, and governed by the wish to acquire friends in some strong and glorious clan and family. Frequently unborn children or infants were betrothed for the purpose of strengthening clan ties. There was hardly any courting or erotic play, young people's every word being watched for possible serious consequences. Owing to the inviolability of a pledged word and men's sensitiveness and pride, any untoward advance or broken promise could provoke a blood feud. In content and rhythm, songs from this region are usually fighting songs, lacking

any lyrical element. If in exceptional cases any premarital or extramarital relations developed, they would be under the threat of vendetta or the killing of an unfaithful wife. Male jealousy ran strong, emphasizing prestige and authority, but stressing much less the more intimate fear of losing a beloved one.

Everything connected with love remained subordinated in the tribal Dinaric region. The longing for national freedom and the yearning for glory overshadowed all other aspirations, completely absorbing men's interest. In an environment with such a tradition of belligerence, it is collective aims that dominate, so that men remain subordinated to the demands of their social environment. Independence, personal initiative, and the possibility of improvisation are well-nigh lacking in the individual as well as other private desires and goals. Collective tendencies are far too strong for the eminently individual factor of love to be able to develop. The mutual loyalty of husband and wife is largely a standardized emotion or attitude; it too lacks that intensity of relationships established by a person's own decision.

The whole attitude toward sentiment was treated critically and with suspicion. Only sentiments of parental and brotherly love and of patriotic sacrifice were considered legitimate; any other emotion was considered as running contrary to heroic ethics. The tribal Dinaric life style possessed a certain puritanical or ascetic quality: during fighting and war any contact with one's wife was forbidden. However, hostility against enjoyment was not all-embracing. It was mainly directed against erotic contacts; alcohol, for example, was allowed.

Since many people from the Dinaric Alps migrated to other regions, their life style with its penetrating quality is to be experienced in several parts of the Slavic South and is strongly felt in the Serbian regions.

ORIENTAL STYLE OF LIFE

From the fusion of Slavic and Oriental elements emerged a compound with other specific qualities. The Oriental style of life is a distinct whole which displays itself in an entirely different

atmosphere and in many traits. Similar to the style appearing in the Slavic South, it can be traced in many countries located in four continents, that is, in all European regions which have been under Ottoman or Islamic domination as well as in the Middle East, Asia, North Africa, and in Latin America, where the Conquistadors were permeated with Moorish influences. Although vestiges of it can be found in the whole Slavic South, the style is most outspoken in Bosnia, Macedonia, and the Kosmet area.

Two traits of the Oriental style contrast sharply to the tribal style; private life is considered most important while the philosophy of life is fatalistic. In the Oriental setting, the focus is on personal life. Lacking is a predominant collective goal, like the struggle for liberation and vengeance for Kosovo. Tragic memories of national history are also not cultivated; the fighting spirit is not the highest value, and asceticism is less emphasized. It is not so important what others think of the individual and the judgment of posterity does not enter the mind. Here the soil is favorable for feelings belonging to the intimate sphere, personal happiness not being a matter for reproach. As a result, enjoyment has a strong artistic tinge. The pleasures which are sought cannot be bought by money, or have only an insignificant material worth. Love and friendship stand high on the value scale.

The fatalistic attitude gives people repose and a special dignity. They believe that fate should be allowed to take its course without interference. People under Oriental influence quietly accept things as they come and endure them with equanimity. Love is considered as "written in the book," it is fated and nearly unavoidable. When boys choose a bride, parents are most tolerant, leaving the choice to the sons according to their preferences; they seldom interfere as in other Yugoslav regions. Consideration for people in love is shown in the observation of a student in a Bosnian village who saw a girl with a sad expression. The peasants told him that this girl had been abandoned by her fiancé, who married another girl. The people treated her with great concern and kindness, saying "Only God can lighten such grief."

In spite of this positive attitude toward love — or maybe because of it — the rules of behavior are different from those

found in European or American urban environments. In the Oriental sphere, strong barriers are erected against the contact of the sexes. Since love is considered a great force which may carry consequences for misery as well as happiness, parents try to protect young people, especially girls, from all casual contacts. The desire of young folk for courtship and experiment even when those experiences do not immediately lead to marriage is apt to come into conflict with the family's plans as well as with moral maxims which demand "modesty," "chastity," and "virtue."

Until the end of the Second World War in Yugoslavia, Moslem women kept their faces covered by a veil. They were allowed to go out of the house only for important reasons. Their voices were not supposed to be heard, especially not by men. Similar rules applied not only to Moslem but also to Eastern Orthodox and Catholic girls living in this setting. They were not allowed to look a man directly in the face, to move in a lively way, and when dancing the chain dance (the *Kolo*) they had to show a "respectable" bearing, meaning to move only with very reserved steps, never showing temperament, a glance, or a smile. However, efforts to so condition young people always had only partial success and the measures applied had a twofold effect. The erection of powerful barriers — via prohibition and supervision — often resulted in the opposite of what was desired. Prohibition resulted in great pressure and tension in young people that frequently found an outlet in far more serious acts than would have occurred in a more liberal environment. Despite the rigid climate, the borderline was often overstepped, as the many abductions and elopements show. Readiness for love was not diminished but increased.

Folk customs and songs, too, had a twofold influence. The dancing of the *Kolo* and still more the singing of songs constituted substitutes for intimate contact and provided a safety valve for great pressures. At the same time these activities intensified the inclination for love sentiments. The children always heard these songs and began to sing them long before they had any personal interest in the other sex. With these melodies and the words which went with them, the younger generation absorbed the love yearning which the songs expressed and came to conceive it as the supreme activity of life. Thus, with the songs the young folk

came to accept the fatalistic view according to which any happiness was considered as liable to bring tragic complications of happiness in its train. In this way the younger generation was shaped to a particular preparedness for love in the Oriental sphere. Tension existing between the strict surface morals and hidden desires and passions was maintained and renewed. The tension showed that, although hidden, the emotions were stronger, probably much stronger than in a setting where sex is emphasized and often exhibited in public.

Courting, however, was not impeded altogether, but had to be carried through in an institutionalized way. There was a custom called *Ashik* (a Turkish word), meaning sweet talk or, rather, a serious intimate conversation between a boy and a girl. A Moslem girl might sit at her window (often half-covered by a wooden lattice) and talk to a boy in the early evening. They were left alone and frequently talked half the night, especially by moonlight. Their affection grew and later the young man might ask the girl in marriage from her father. They had the opportunity to build up a deep emotional relationship without interference but without physical contact.

Love in this setting frequently lacks the individualistic note which is part of the nation in a modern setting. For a peasant boy falling in love meant being impressed and moved by the appearance or the voice of a girl, without feeling the need personally to know her very well. In spite of this, his sentiment was not superficial, but might have far-reaching consequences, frequently leading to bride abduction and marriage. Especially in Bosnia were abduction and elopement common on the eve of the Second World War, but more so with Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholics than with Moslems. Young men, helped by friends, kidnapped the girl. After "peace negotiations" with the girl's parents a wedding took place. Such bride-stealing sometimes amounted to real kidnapping, carried out violently against the girl's will. More often the young folks were in agreement and the stealing was from her parents. There are estimates that a third of all Bosnian marriages began with bride abduction.

Marriage relations here showed much more emotional coloring than in the tribal region. With Moslems the traditional Yugoslav

extended family (joint family) — *zadruga* — was not the norm as in other population groups, one of the reasons being that in this joint family the privacy of the married couple could hardly be maintained. Throughout Bosnia demands for sex relations were strong and peasant women would complain about the too-great sexual demands of their husbands.

In the Oriental region, male jealousy was also notorious. For a wife in the presence of a man only for a moment to lift the veil could be considered adultery. One example from a village I surveyed shows this idea: A man working abroad found a post-card with a picture of peasant women from his village who had been photographed in their picturesque folk costumes. The husband recognized his wife in the group and abandoned her. He said that he did not want a wife whose picture anyone could carry in his pocket. Such an attitude may be criticized as possessive by American standards, but the passionate interest in the wife and the affection for her cannot be overlooked. Women from this setting see jealousy as a sign of affection. Such women when they are married in western regions or have a husband who is not jealous, find it difficult to bear his "indifference." Possessiveness can have meaning only where personal independence is highly valued.

The speech of these regions is poetically full of erotic turns and expressions. One can often hear, "There is no greater grief than love." — "*Od sevdaha goreg jada nema.*" Love is expressed by the Turkish word *sevdah* which bears overtones of fate and tragedy. An illiterate boy dictating to a friend a letter to his beloved unwittingly fell into rhyme, and when the writer told him to dictate in another way he tried hard but could not change his style.

Two folk songs will show the general mood (Bowring 1827):

YOUTH ENAMOURED

"Where wert thou, Mishol yesterday?"

"O, 'twas a happy day to me!

A lovely maiden crossed my way,

A maiden smiling lovelily.
And those sweet smiles for me were meant:
I claimed her — mother answered, No!
Would steal her — vain was the intent,
For many guardians watched her so.
There grows a verdant almond tree
Before her house — its bough I'll climb;
Wail like a cuckoo mournfully,
And swallow-like, at evening time,
Pour forth my woe in throbbings deep,
And like a sorrowing widow sigh,
And like a youthful maiden weep.
So may her mother turn her eye,
Pitying my grief, her heart may move,
And she may give me her I love."

MAPLE TREE

O thou brotherly maple tree!
Wilt thou be a friend to me?
Be a brother and be a friend!
To the green grass thy branches bend,
That I may climb to their highest tip!
Look o'er the sea, and see the ship.
Where my lover sits smiling now;
He binds the turban round his brow,
And over his shoulders the shawl he flings,
Which is full of my own embroiderings.
For three long years my hands inwove
Those golden flowers to deck my love:
The richest silk of the brightest dyes
I worked for him, and now my eyes
Would fain my absent lover see.
Assist me, brotherly maple tree!
And tell me if he thinks of me!

As these poems are sung, the melodies contribute much to their emotional coloring.

In the regions under Oriental influence, then, the soil for the development of love is much more favorable than in belligerent areas. Here belligerent goals remain in the background, leaving more space for individualistic strivings. The importance of beauty and enjoyment in the individual sense take over with the Oriental tradition and are favorable to love.

But although in regions which were once under Turkish influence the ground is favorable for love, there is one element sometimes so strong that in real life it prevents the development of love relationships. This is the extreme fatalism which no rational factor has weakened. The fatalistic outlook which up to a point favors the development of love sentiments and relationships, if present in an extreme form, becomes a hindrance to the realization of such relationships. This is especially to be seen in Bosnia. Complete resignation to fate has there prevented activity and forestalled a practical approach to life. Here love relationships have tended to end tragically, it being considered rare for people to attain their aim in love. Love was idealized as seldom attainable. Hence it was restricted principally to songs and expressed yearnings, which became a sort of substitute for real intense experience. The songs, constantly on people's lips have a melancholy note.

This tragic element is shown in the following songs:

REMINISCENCES

He: "And art thou wed, my beloved?

My beloved of long ago?"

She: "I am wed, my Beloved. And I have given
A child to this world of woe.

And the name I have given this child is thine;

So when I call to my little one,

The heaviness of this heart of mine

For a little while may be gone.

For I say not ...'Hither, hither, my son!

But ...'Hither, my Love, my Beloved.' "

(Stanoyevich 1920).

The same theme occurs in the ending of another song, where a dead son speaks to his mother, telling her what is heavier than earth on his grave:

ELEGY

“

.....
Lightly presses the green earth upon me

Heavy is the virgins' malediction;

When they sigh, their sighs reach God's high presence;

When they curse, the world begins to tremble;

When they weep, even God is touched with pity”

(Bowring 1827).

WESTERN INFLUENCES

While half the southern Slavs were exposed for five hundred years to Oriental influence, the other half remained in close cultural contact with the West. Croatia, Slavonia, Dalmatia were part of the Habsburg Monarchy, one of the great world powers. People were shaped by a service, a progressive economy and technology, and also by rational thought. These Austrian regions were fully included in the stream of European culture.

In the region under western influence political and economic conditions changed at a quicker pace; even each decade had its special conditions and, in the western region, with differing speeds, great differences also became manifested among them in spite of their common western coloring.

Throughout a great part of the Austrian region, modern administration and money economy came suddenly at the turn of the century. The stormy inrush caused individualistic attitudes to become extreme; “might is right” became a rule. A crude pecuniary interest developed, pushing aside traditional customs, considerations, and morals. On the eve of the Second World War, a girl's dowry had become the main motive for choosing a bride. Parents frequently compelled a son to marry a girl accord-

ing to their choice which, in turn, was greatly determined by property. The love motif was ignored.

Where the joint family and village community disintegrated, nobody felt responsible for others. Premarital relationships became frequent and many children were born out of wedlock. Boys acquired a cynical attitude toward girls, frequently spoiling the latter's marriage chances, but themselves wishing only to marry a virgin with a large dowry. As a result, there was little romance to be found.

There are considerable differences among various areas under western influence, however, as some of them earlier and others later came into the circle of money economy, and presented other, different circumstances.

In the Adriatic littoral — Dalmatia — western influence bore a Mediterranean tinge. For a whole epoch this area belonged to the Venetian Republic, and the tie with this and other Mediterranean lands gave women a relatively higher standing. This coastal strip early became part of a progressive economy and joined in world trade; its life had a modern aspect. At the end of the nineteenth century, however, the littoral was struck by an economic depression that caused a large number of men to emigrate overseas. They remained in the Americas for long periods or for a lifetime. This trend, once started, never stopped, and in the time of my surveys one could find whole villages without men. Nevertheless, in general, family relations retained an equilibrium and hardly any extramarital relationships occurred. There were, however, engaged boy and girl, their engagement as a rule never being broken off. Yet many brides and women had to do without sex and love because their men had left. The romantic element was not strong, and a realistic and rationalistic mood prevailed. Songs reveal Italian influences; they lack the profundity of feeling of the Oriental sphere.

In spite of differences, there are many elements common to all Yugoslav regions as well as to other Slavic peoples, such as the Czechs, Slovaks, and Poles. A *joie de vivre* and a strong aesthetic element sets most Slavs apart from many other European groups, especially from those who developed a Protestant ethic.

In the Yugoslav western zone we find songs expressing different grades of gaiety, as in the two following:

THE PRICE

How many towns from here to the coast?
Seventy-seven sunlit towns,
And villages green, a thousand!
And all of these I'd give for the street
Where I and my sweetheart first did meet,
And e'en the street I'd give as the price
To meet him again — aye, but for a trice!

(Stanoyevich 1920).

The second song comes from Slovenia, a region with early and gradual adjustment to money economy and a modern state. Its humor and lack of tragic notes is reminiscent of Slovakian or Czech songs:

TROUBLE WITH THE HUSBAND

I married last year,
This year I repent.
Bad husband have I,
With temper like nettle;
My lot I resent.
The frost kills the nettle,
But this husband of mine,
He thinks the frost fine;
By the stove all day long
He does nothing but sit
And says that the frost
He minds not a bit!
In Celovetz 'tis market day,
'Tis market day tomorrow;
I will take my husband there,
And will either there him change,
Or else will sell him at the fair.
Not too cheap I'll let him go,
Because he was so hard to get;

Rather than to cheaply sell him,
Back home again I'll take the man,
And love him — howsomuch I can!

(Wiles 1917).

A monologue was related to me by an old man from the Austrian Military March, an area where western and eastern influences have fused to create an atmosphere favorable for love relations without tragic note. The story was an answer to my questions about extramarital relations in his district and I repeat it here:

UNCLE MILOVAN'S STORY

Youth in the Former Military March

Stana, Mileva, Dara, Milica, all went to school with me. Lovely girls. In peasant dress, I should think so indeed. Married — naturally. But the husband in America or otherwise unable to satisfy the girl. Heavens, some men are hot-tempered, jealous; others human, sensible when they know they cannot satisfy them.

Stana was a wild one, hot-blooded. She died young of high blood pressure. Besides, her mother was the same before her. Whenever her mother reproached her, Stana would say: "My dear Mother, don't talk this way. The apple doesn't fall far from the trunk." She had no children, but a fine farm and garden, a wonderfully run place. But she did like kissing.

Once I was out hunting with her husband, we two alone. All at once he asked me: "Have you ever been with my Stana?" I took hold of my gun, how was I to know he was about "Why do you ask?" I said... "Nothing special, I'm a bit older, I can't give her all she needs." "Are you not ashamed to ask such questions? What would you think, if I were a married man and asked you like that!" He never asked me again, nor did I ever go hunting with him again.

Stana called her husband *Krивонja*, bent thing (not straight, not powerful). "Whether it is a block of wood or *Krивонja* lies down beside me, it's all the same, I just turn over to the other

side and go to sleep as quick as I can. I enjoy my heart's play, I do ... What do I want with money? I have all I want. I love for love's sake, for the sheer pleasure of it."

The principal thing to them is kissing — that's the most important thing — a long time, caressing and kissing. Nothing else matters. Desa was older than me, perhaps thirty when I was a young fellow of twenty. We went to the wood together. When we came out she says to me: "And what's wrong with me? Am I flesh and bones, or a piece of wood? You satisfy yourself in a moment, and what am I? You behave just like my rooster in our chicken coop. Ah, Milovan, my lad, I'd like to meet you when you are 35 or 40." She never let me touch her again.

Dara was an attractive wench; whenever her husband went out, off she went at once into the yard, to look after the poultry, and call her lover through the orchard, pretending to be scaring hawks. Shouting at the top of her voice, "Sh! Sh! You old hawk! I'm here all by myself!" So loud that her lad up the hill could hear and come down.

And Mileva. She had two little girls. Her husband was in America. I lived with her two years. She had gone over the border into Bosnia to a Turkish woman who was a fortuneteller to get a charm so I would love her and nobody else. She caught a bat and got up to other such tricks. "Do you love me, Milovan, my dear?" "Why so silly, can't you see I love you, my love?" Once when I woke up there she was doing charms and incantations over my head. When she saw I was in love with her — and I put it on a lot, just to please her — she would just cross herself in bliss and cry: "Thank you, oh Jesus, thank you, dear Lord!"

She loved me very much. She got pregnant. She had a son by me, and called him Milutin. A fine lad, black-eyed ... the very spit of my little grandson today. When they asked her about the child at the parish office, she said it was hers, but she never mentioned me.

But when the boy asked her, "Mummy, who is my daddy?" she said, "Milovan, he is in the town now." The boy was ten then, he came straight to me in the town and said, "Good morning,

Uncle, I just wanted to have a look at you, I am Milutin." "Well, what would you like me to buy you, Milutin?" "Nothing, I would be ashamed to take it." But I talked him round, and in the end he accepted a pair of ornamented sandals, *opankas*. And an embroidered waistcoat. And a pair of trousers. And a hat. "Oh, how I would like that one with the feather!" I fitted the boy out from tip to toe. After a fortnight there he was again, with three pairs of chickens and fifty eggs. "Mummy sent these — for your love." Then I sent her back a kerchief and an apron.

Then her husband came back from America. My old school friend he was. First he came to see me in the town. We were both glad to see each other. He was a sensible sort of man. "...I, too, have been through all sorts of things in America. Nor has she been alone. Thank Heavens it's a boy!" And he brought Milutin up just like all the other children.

Once I was out hunting with friends, and met Milica, then an old woman, carrying a lot of wood from the forest. She was tired, she was nearly seventy. She sat down with her axe to rest. One of the hunters asked her: "Say, tell us when a woman stops thinking about a man ... you know what I mean!" "I don't know," she said, "You ask my mother, perhaps she knows." Her mother was nearly ninety.

ENVIRONMENT FAVORABLE TO LOVE

It is easier to find factors unfavorable than favorable to the development of happy love relationships. The passionate, belligerent mood of tribal Dinaric society runs contrary to such a development but also in a measure so does the materialistic attitude found in areas with a rapid technical change that have experienced the inrush of a money economy and of rational thought. Even in the region of Oriental cultural influence, with its extreme fatalism and unpractical attitudes, elements exist that endanger such development.

The areas in which love was most frequently realized — not merely dreamed of — was Slavonia and the former Military March. (Slovenia was not included in my survey.) In Slavonia,

money economy entered slowly and gradually. The rich soil yielded wheat and fine timber for export, and the standard of living was relatively high. Early inclusion of the region in the world economy created an atmosphere of stability. As to cultural influences, different ones met in this area, not only Austrian and Hungarian elements, but also Oriental ones. Slavonia had been part of the Ottoman empire for a hundred and fifty years and the Oriental influence is to be found in many areas of life, including intimate relations. The Oriental influence is distinctly felt in the attitude toward love but fused with a feudal tradition it has resulted in greater liberalism and happier moods than, for instance, in Bosnia. Premarital and extramarital relationships were frequent and tolerated and carried no libertine and cynical note, as in some other western areas. The songs of Slavonia in their gay, gracious tunes reveal these cultural components.

Another region with favorable conditions was the former Military March, the frontier area towards Bosnia — Uncle Milovan's district. The Military March was for three hundred years organized as the West's bulwark against Ottoman aggression. It was to a great part settled by immigrants from Turkish regions who had escaped to Austrian territories. In this area two different cultural elements met. The settlers brought with them the Dinaric tradition and the passionate temperament of mountaineers. Under western influence, however, they changed greatly, becoming disciplined Austrian soldiers and famous officers of the empire. With them Oriental elements penetrated the area and show forth clearly in speech, songs, and romantic leanings. After the demilitarization of the Military March at the end of the nineteenth century, when these eternal soldiers suddenly had to adjust to civilian life and to a money economy, many immigrated to the Americas and Australia, mostly without families. In intimate relations the fusion of Oriental, Dinaric, and western elements created an atmosphere favorable for love relations. Unlike on the littoral, many premarital and extramarital love relations occurred and the "grass widow" of the frontier was also known. Nobody expected abstinence and a lonely life, as Uncle Milovan's story shows.

Which factors are pertinent for the development of love relations in these two areas?

In Slavonia the Turkish influence had long played a part, giving relationships a sense of the higher enjoyment and individualism of the Orient. The Ottomans left in the eighteenth century, before the complete degeneration of their institutions had begun. Austria, subsequently ruling in these parts, impressed its own peculiar stamp, influencing people with a tendency toward a relativistic and rational outlook. In the Military March discipline, a more advanced economy and settled public order removed the sense of being exposed to fate. Under Austria, people in the Military March and in Slavonia became equipped to translate their romantic yearnings into reality. It so happened that the tradition of the Dinaric settlers with their great aggressiveness also favored love, once the predominance of political and belligerent aims had been to some extent thrust into the background. Their previous pastoral economy resulted in a certain free, almost nomadic, element, but only in such measure as to lend the general climate some sort of artistic quality.

CONCLUSION

One could compare the disposition for love with a sensitive plant which, though its seed will germinate anywhere, yet after germination it requires particular conditions to come to full development. Various factors are required in the soil in the right proportions and the climate, too, must be favorable. The historical development of a region through the centuries can be compared with the soil in which the plant grows while recent events and the economic situation constitute the climate. This may change more quickly than the soil.

War, enemy occupation, political changes, and economic development may act to modify the disposition for love at any time. But just as regional song style changes only slowly, and the regional character is even slower to change, so even in periods when the climate is unfavorable, a soil favorable to love may nevertheless remain. Stages of economic transformation are relatively transitory, while the soil, or the cultural tradition, changes more slowly.

Love seems to need some irrational component in the soil. Sudden technical change and planned economy do not make a

favorable climate for love relations and emotions. Neither is the tendency for perfect adjustment to collective goals and trends favorable to love. People who depend primarily on the judgment of others — whom David Riesman calls "other-directed" — and tend toward complete conformism are not well suited for love emotions. It seems that some equilibrium between collectivistic and individualistic tendencies is necessary.

New research in Yugoslav regions could contribute to testing these suggested conclusions. Twenty-five or 30 years after the survey which pinned down pre-war behavioral patterns in the various regions, such new research would also show whether behavior patterns in the intimate sphere have been influenced by the strong collectivistic and rationalistic trends of the postwar period, or whether they have been left unchanged. Perhaps other influences have operated on those patterns of behavior.

Cross-cultural studies of other peasant cultures would also help to test some of my hypotheses. Love relations and emotions in countries where institutions and organizations make for both technical and economic development need to be compared with those in countries that stand on a lower level of development. The results of such comparison could shed light on the factors favorable and unfavorable for the development of love sentiments and love relations.

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