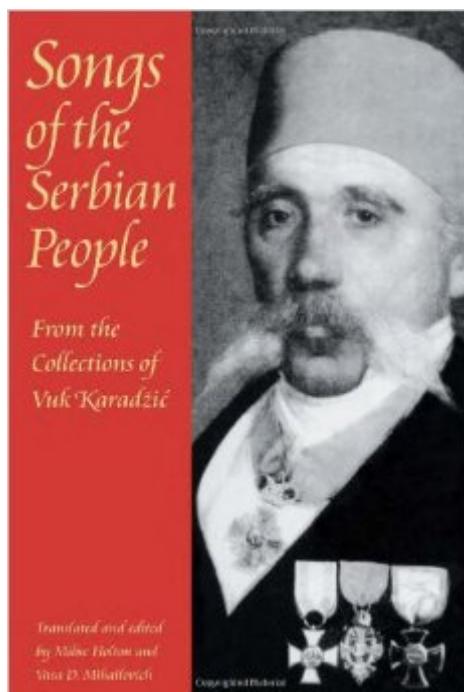


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Songs Of The Serbian People: From The Collections Of Vuk Karadzic (Pitt Russian East European)



Synopsis

In the early nineteenth century, Vuk Karadzic, a Serb scholar and linguist, collected and eventually published transcriptions of the traditional oral poetry of the South Slavs. It was a monumental and unprecedented undertaking. Karadzic gathered and heard performances of the rich songs of Balkan peasants, outlaws, and professional singers and their rebel heroes. His four volumes constitute the classic anthology of Balkan oral poetry, treasured for nearly two centuries by readers of all literatures, and influential to such literary giants as Goethe, Merimee, Pushkin, Mickiewicz, and Sir Walter Scott. This edition of the songs offers the most complete and authoritative translations ever assembled in English. Holton and Mihailovich, leading scholars of Slavic literature, have preserved here the unique meter and rhythm at the heart of Serbian oral poetry, as well as the idiom of the original singers. Extensive notes and comments aid the reader in understanding the poems, the history they record and the oral tradition that lies beneath them, the singers and their audience. The songs contain seven cycles, identified here in sections titled: Songs Before History, Before Kosovo, the Battle of Kosovo, Marko Karadzic, Under the Turks, Songs of the Outlaws, and Songs of the Serbian Insurrection. The editors have selected the best known and most representative songs from each of the cycles. A complete biography is also provided.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I haven't read this edition, but I have grown up reading these poems in my and their native language. The poems were collected from the oral tradition by a great Serbian ethnographer and

linguist Vuk Karadzic who also reformed Serbian spelling system and grammar and wrote first big Serbian Dictionary in 1818. Hence, the expert has chosen the best from the oral tradition that withstood through centuries. Since Karadzic new German, these poems made their way into a German translation first, and many German authors, including Goethe, admired their precise 10-syllable metric, emotions, and vivid depiction of characters. One of the specific literary techniques, persistently used at the beginning of many poems, has a special name --- Slavic Antithesis. The poems can be compared to big national epic poems as Beowulf taken in their entirety. However, all are independent, and as a boy I used to think of them as good fairy tales. The characters are sometimes capable to do improbable things, and some of the poems have a fairy in them, but good always wins over evil. I still remember the achievements of Marko Kraljevic (his surname means The Prince) who was able to do amazing things due to his strength, and how he drinks half of his wine and gives the other half to his horse. But he also asks God to forgive him for killing better knight than himself in "Marko Kraljevic and Musa the Robber". The other characters are more earthly, just as their destiny. I remember the courage of Old Vujadin who after being tortured with broken legs and arms refuses to tell where his friends are hidden, even if the torturers take out his eyes.

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