

Conference on Romani Studies

Gypsy Lore Society

Belgrade 2022



2022 ANNUAL MEETING OF THE GYPSY LORE SOCIETY
AND CONFERENCE ON ROMANI STUDIES
МЕЂУНАРОДНА КОНФЕРЕНЦИЈА РОМОЛОШКИХ СТУДИЈА
И ГОДИШЊИ САСТАНАК GYPSY LORE SOCIETY, 2022.

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS
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ACADEMIC COMMITTEE

Dr. Tatiana Podolinská

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University of St Andrews

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Member of the Board for the Study of Life and Customs of the Roma at the SASA

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Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts

Aleksandra Hreljac

Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts

Zlatanović, Sanja

Institute of Ethnography, Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts

The Monument to Bakija Bakić in Vranje – Discourses and Practices Linked to Local Identification and Memorialisation

Roma musicians are one of the key symbols of the city of Vranje (southern Serbia). This is the case thanks to Bora Stanković's literary work, in which Roma musicians were depicted as excellent musicians, as extremely adept at playing, singing, and dancing, and as extremely original with a high artistic reach that led to international recognition. Through creative interpretations and the nurturing of the local musical legacy, Roma musicians have transcended local borders, and have made Vranje popular at festivals in Serbia and internationally. This paper explores the role of Roma musicians, especially trumpeters, in Vranje residents' local identification. It especially analyses the discourses and practices linked to raising a monument to Bakija Bakić (Vranje, 1923–1989), who stands out as a symbol of trumpeting in southern Serbia due to the specificity of his musical expression and his prestigious recognition. He is a musician who has started to forge a path for the Vranje trumpeters from the local to the international scene. The city raised a monument to Bakija Bakić in 2006 in Gornja Čaršija, a Roma settlement in which he lived his whole life. The choice of location for the monument (the city centre versus the Roma settlement) was the subject of a polemic, as besides being a famous citizen of Vranje, he was also a member of the Roma community. The paper draws parallels with the processes and procedures underpinning the memorialization of the Roma musicians Janika Balaž and Šaban Bajramović.

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